

# The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Volume 38, No. 4 [www.skagitaudubon.org](http://www.skagitaudubon.org) Apr. 2019

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## April Meeting and Program-NOTE DATE CHANGE

*What is Bioluminescence?*

*Presented by Chandler Colahan*

Monday, Apr. 8<sup>th</sup> (NOTE: DATE CHANGE)

7:00 Social; 7:30 Program

Padilla Bay Interpretive Center

10441 Bayview Edison Road

Mt. Vernon, Washington



Bioluminescence is what makes some ocean organisms appear to glow. It is a chemical reaction caused by the oxidation of a light producing compound known as luciferin. When this happens energy is released in the form of light. There are two main ways that organisms achieve this ability to light up the darkness.

1. Some organisms can create the light using their own specialized cells, tissues or fluids.
2. There are some species that don't produce their own light. Instead they share a symbiotic relationship with bacteria that live inside their photophores. The bacteria produce the light.

Chandler Colahan earned a BA degree in Ocean Science, Education, and Creative Expression from Western Washington University, Fairhaven College. She's taught kids, managed passengers and crew on ships, and counted jellyfish from a small plane. Maybe she'll tell us the best places to stir up phytoplankton with a kayak paddle.

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### WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND INJURED OR ORPHANED BIRDS OR WILDLIFE

CALL WOLF HOLLOW WILDLIFE REHABILITATION  
CENTER 360.378.5000 (24/7) OR VISIT THEIR WEBSITE  
[www.wolfhollow.org](http://www.wolfhollow.org) for information

Wolf Hollow serves all of San Juan and Skagit Counties  
and northern Whidbey Island

## APRIL FIELDTRIPS, by Libby Mills

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 (if you have them). 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](mailto:libbymills@gmail.com). **NOTE:** If you plan to join a field trip some place other than the described starting point, call or email the trip leader the day before to ensure a successful rendezvous. Trip plans may change.



### **Saturday April 6, 8:30 am to around noon Washington Park and Ship Harbor, Anacortes Leader Phil Wright**

Washington Park is both scenic and a good place to see Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Marbled Murrelets, Pacific Wrens, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and many other birds on the water or in the forest. Plan for a .5 mile walk to Green Point, stopping along the way for both shoreline and forest birds. Next, we will drive to the parking area at the end of Edwards Way to the Ship Harbor Trail. There are some uneven surfaces. Spotting scopes are useful on this trip. Contact the leader if you plan to attend and for possible weather changes. Beginning birders are encouraged to come! Please bring binoculars (and a spotting scope if you have one and don't mind carrying it.) Meet at the parking lot at the beginning of the Washington Park loop drive. Dress for the weather, anticipating wind along the shore. Leader: Phil Wright [phil@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:phil@skagitaudubon.org), 360-299-8212.

### **Rescheduled North Camano Island Birding Saturday, April 13, 8 am to 2 pm. Leaders Alice Turner and Pam Pritzl**

Join us and meet at the Stanwood Starbucks parking lot near QFC. We will tour areas such as English Boom, Utsalady boat launch, Maple Grove County Park, Iverson Spit and Eide Road, depending on time and energy. Arrive early enough to organize car pools as parking is limited in several locations. Lunches or snacks advised. Scopes are helpful. Reply to: [alicet2@msn.com](mailto:alicet2@msn.com) (Alice Turner) to confirm.

### **GREAT AMERICAN ARCTIC BIRDING CHALLENGE March 15 through June 1, 2019**

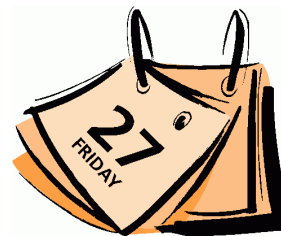
Each spring, birds from all over the United States and from all six continents travel to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other ecologically rich areas of the American Arctic. Birds rely on these pristine habitats for nesting, breeding, staging, and molting.

Birdwatchers across the US can celebrate the importance of the Arctic by participating in this year's Great American Arctic Birding Challenge. Recruit some fellow birders (up to six per team), think of a snazzy team name, grab a pair of binoculars, and find as many different Arctic bird species as you can in your state.

**Learn more and register your team online at [ak.audubon.org/GAABC](http://ak.audubon.org/GAABC) before May 1st!**

**HAPPY BIRDING!**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR:



- Apr. 2** – Skagit Audubon Board Meeting  
**Apr. 3** – Skagit Audubon Hike – Lily Lizard Lakes Loop  
**Apr. 6** – Skagit Audubon Birding Field Trip – Wash Park/Ship Harbor  
**Apr. 8** -- Skagit Audubon General Meeting and Program (**Monday**)  
**Apr. 10** – Skagit Audubon Hike – Lookout Mtn/Stimpson Family Nature Reserve  
**Apr. 12-14** – Olympic Peninsula BirdFest; <http://www.olympicbirdfest.org>  
**Apr. 13** – Skagit Audubon Birding Field Trip – Camano Island  
**Apr. 17** – Skagit Audubon Hike – Wash Park/Guemes Channel  
**Apr. 24** – Skagit Audubon Hike – Oyster Dome  
**May 1** – Skagit Audubon Hike – Fort Ebey State Park/The Kettles  
**May 3-5** – Gray's Harbor Shorebird & Nature Festival; [www.shorebirdfestival.com](http://www.shorebirdfestival.com)  
**May 16-19** - Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest; [www.LeavenworthSpringBirdFest.org](http://www.LeavenworthSpringBirdFest.org)  
**May 24-27** – Wash. State Audubon Campout; <https://www.wenasaudubon.org>

**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 at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, 10441 Bayview Edison Rd., Mt. Vernon on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June. Social/7:00 pm and Program/7:30 pm. The board of directors meets at the same location the first Tuesday of each month, September through June, at 7:00 pm.

Skagit Audubon membership provides a local chapter affiliation and newsletter, *The Flyer*, for individuals who want all their funds to benefit their local chapter. *The Flyer* is produced monthly from September through June and full color issues are available at: [www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter](http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter).

### Board of Directors

President:	Vacant
Vice President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Ron Holmes.....ronh@skagitaudubon.org
Treasurer:	Neil O'Hara.....treasurer@skagitaudubon.org.....781-290-9083
Immediate Past President:	Vacant

### Committee Chairs and Representatives

Conservation:	Tim Manns.....conservation@skagitaudubon.org.....360-333-8985
Education:	Sheila Pera.....skagiteducation2@gmail.com
Finance:	Phil Wright.....phil@skagitaudubon.org.....360-299-8212
Field Trips:	Libby Mills.....libbymills@gmail.com.....360-757-4139
Hikes:	Joan Melcher.....jdmelcher@comcast.net.....360-424-0407
Bird Sightings:	Pam Pritzl.....birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org.....360-387-7024
Membership:	Pam Pritzl.....membership@skagitaudubon.org
Programs:	Catherine Carter.....programs@skagitaudubon.org
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Newsletter Distribution:	Barbara Craner.....craner2@frontier.com.....360-770-3898
Webmaster:	Ron Pera.....skagitaudubon@gmail.com

## APRIL HIKES by Joan Melcher

Safety comes first so hikes may be canceled or destinations changed due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances. All hikes are on a Wednesday and for questions or additional information contact Joan Melcher at

**jdmelcher@comcast.net or 360.424.0407.** Dogs are discouraged on Audubon-

sponsored hikes and if present they must be on a leash at all times. NOTE: upon

arrival at destination, if cancellation of the hike is determined at the discretion of the Audubon trip leader, any individual who elects to proceed is no longer considered to be a member of an Audubon-sponsored activity. Carpools are arranged at the discretion of the drivers.



**APRIL 3: LILY LIZARD LAKES LOOP (The LLLL) OR TH TO SAMISH OVERLOOK.** The instructions for this Loop are written in a clock-wise order. **OPTION 1:** On Blanchard Mountain hike the Lily Lake, Larry Reed, and Max's Shortcut Trails to Lily Lake and then on to Lizard Lake by way of a connector trail from the North Butte Trail. Return to trail head via the Lizard and Lily Lake Trails. 8.6 mile loop, 1600 ft. total el. gain. Opportunity to go to the Oyster Dome and the North Butte as well. We will divide into a faster and slower group; carpool accordingly. 2:00 pm return to TH for the faster group; 3:00 pm for the slower group. **Option II:** Hike to the Samish Overlook and back. 6.2 miles RT, 500 ft el gain. 2 pm return to TH. **For both options :** Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Chuckanut Drive park-n-ride, exit 231 from I-5 on the east side of I-5. Discover Pass required to park at the TH.

**APRIL 10: LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN PRESERVE AND/OR STIMPSON FAMILY NATURE RESERVE** The Lookout Mountain trail is on the east side of Lookout Mountain above Lake Whatcom. It opened in 2013. Basic loop is 5.8 miles which includes a side trail to a lookout; elevation gain is 1000 feet. New hiking trails opened recently. The Lookout Mountain TH is located a mile or so south of the Stimpson Family Nature Reserve on the Lake Louise Rd.. Whatcom County hikers should drive directly to the TH. Other hikers meet at the Chuckanut Drive Park-n-Ride in Burlington at 8:30 am. These people will drive to the TH by way of the Alger-Caine Lake Rd., the South Lake Whatcom Blvd. and the Lake Louise Rd. Stimpson Family Nature Reserve maps will be given out at the Lookout Mountain TH. We will meet at the TH about 9 am. You may leave when your group returns to the car. No dogs allowed.

**APRIL 17: WASHINGTON PARK AND GUEMES CHANNEL** Meet at 9 a.m. in **LOT A** at Washington Park in Anacortes; turn right just at the park entrance. The sign says "Picnic Area" with an arrow pointing to the right. Children's' play area is close to this large parking lot. In the past the focus of this hike has been on wildflowers and geology of the area. When you return to your car, you may leave for the Guemes Channel Trail. Instructions to Guemes Channel will be given out at the meeting place.

**APRIL 24: OYSTER DOME** Hike to the Oyster Dome on Blanchard Mountain.

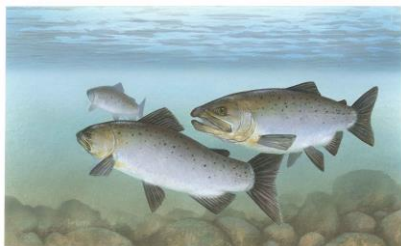
**OPTION 1:** Begin and end at the Pacific Northwest Trail TH on Chuckanut Drive near mile post 10. 9 miles, 2000 ft el gain. **Meet at 9 am at this location.** Hikers need to download the map and instructions from the SWITMO web site, [www.SWITMO.org](http://www.SWITMO.org). Go to the "Great Hikes" page and under "Skagit County hikes" click on "Blanchard, Oyster Dome from Chuckanut Drive and back". You may meet Joan Melcher at the Chuckanut Park-n-Ride by 8:30 am for a map and instructions. **2:30 pm return** to TH **OPTION 2:** Begin and end hike at the Samish Overlook. WA State Discover Pass required at this location. 6.0 to 7.4 miles, 900 ft el gain with a **2:00 pm return** to TH Opportunities for side trips to North Butte, Lily Lake, and Lizard Lake. **Meet at 8:30 a.m.** at the Chuckanut Drive Park-n-Ride, exit 231 from I-5 on the east side of I-5.

**MAY 1: FORT EBEEY STATE PARK & THE KETTLES** This hike will be a self-guided hike at Fort Ebey State Park and/or on the Kettles trails near Fort Ebey State Park. Miles hiked here depend on the individual. The wild rhododendrons may be starting to bloom. Meet at 9 a.m. at the March Point Park-n-Ride. Discover Pass required to park at Fort Ebey State Park.

## CONSERVATION by Tim Manns

On March 12 the President signed the Natural Resources Management Act (re-named the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act), which earlier passed the Senate and House by veto-proof majorities of 92-8 and 363-62. Of key importance in this amalgam of 100 bills is permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). See last month's *Skagit Flyer* for more information. The bill does not include any requirement that money (from offshore oil and gas leases; not general taxes) be put into the fund each year. The day before the bill signing, the President's budget was released with zero funding for the LWCF. Since 1965, this program has conserved millions of acres of wild lands and funded park facilities in every part of the U.S.

At this writing in mid-March, the Washington Legislature is half way through its session scheduled to finish April 28<sup>th</sup>. With the deadline passed for bills to be voted out of their House of origin or die, most of



the Audubon and Environmental Priorities Coalition target bills are still alive. A measure that would have Washington join California and Hawaii in setting deadlines for ending use of coal-generated electricity, and then moving entirely away from fossil-fuel electricity generation by 2045, has passed both Houses. Other active bills include multiple measures supporting the Southern Resident Killer Whales by accelerating recovery of their principal food, chinook salmon, reducing the chance of oil spills and the problem of toxic waste in Puget Sound, and lessening noise and other

disturbance from ships and boats. A partial ban on single-use plastic bags is still moving forward. Last month's *Flyer* describes how to track and comment on bills. Audubon Washington's weekly updates by Adam Maxwell are especially useful.

On March 13 at the Burlington Public Library, Dr. Bill Gaines presented "Ghost Bears – Searching for Grizzly Bears in the North Cascades," arranged by the National Parks Conservation Association. The association, Skagit Audubon, many other organizations, businesses, and individuals are members of the Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly, supporting restoration of this keystone species to the North Cascades in accordance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The North Cascades was designated a recovery zone for the federal and state-listed grizzly in 1997, but progress has been extremely slow. See the Friends website for an update: <https://www.northcascadesgrizzly.org/update-north-cascades-grizzly-feb-2019/>. Dr. Gaines described the biology and life history of the grizzly with comparisons to the black bear. Gaines and his Washington Conservation Science Institute over the last ten years have put out about 650 scented "hair snares" across the 6 million acres of the North Cascades Ecosystem. The snares use barbed wire to snag small amounts of hair for DNA analysis to determine species, individual identity, and more. This effort yielded hair from 641 black bears but none from grizzlies. Cameras captured images at many of the sites. Despite the scale of this effort, Gaines said it still can't be concluded there are no longer grizzlies in the U.S. North Cascades. The 650 snares sampled only 26% of the vast and rugged area of mostly U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service land, and every year there are photographs that can't be definitely identified as black rather than grizzly bear. It is possible there will be yet another public comment opportunity on the Grizzly Bear Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. This would be another opportunity to show that we mean it when we say Audubon's 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." Stay tuned.



## Skagit Audubon Field Notes by Pam Pritzl

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 [bird sightings@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:bird sightings@skagitaudubon.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).

### WATERFOWL

**Greater White-fronted Goose** 7 at Milltown on 2-23 (GB)

**Cackling Goose** 2 on Cockreham Island on 2-17 (GB)

**Northern Shoveler** 2 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH); 6 at Samish Flats on 2-23 (NOH); 3 at SWAWS on 2-23 (NOH); 7 at Samish Flats on 3-2; 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH)

**Eurasian Wigeon** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH); 17 at Samish Flats on 2-23 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH); 2 at Samish Flats on 3-2 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH)

**Greater Scaup** 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH)

**Lesser Scaup** 1 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH)

**Black Scoter** 1 off Samish Island Public Beach on 2-2 and 2-9 (GB)

### GALLINACEOUS BIRDS

**California Quail** 6 (including 1 leucistic individual at Rosario Beach on 2-24 (GB)

### HUMMINGBIRDS

**Rufous Hummingbird** 1 male at Cap Sante, Anacortes home on 3-11 (JH)

### SANDPIPERS and ALLIES

**Black Turnstone** 2 off Rosario Head on 2-16 (GB); 1 off Rosario Head on 3-8 (PP)

**Surfbird** 6 off Rosario Head on 2-16 (GB)

### GULLS and TERNS

**California Gull** 1 at March Point on 2-13 (GB)

**Iceland Gull** 3 “Thayer’s” in Burlington on 2-24 (GB)

### HERONS and ALLIES

**American Bittern** 2 at SWANFA on 2-18 (MS); 1 at SWANFA on 3-7 (PP)

### HAWKS, EAGLES and ALLIES

**Bald Eagle** 1 partial leucistic on Samish Flats on 2-16 (LK); eagle nest on Sullivan Road had 3 eagles in the nest on 3-15 (AW)

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH)

**Cooper’s Hawk** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH)

**Red-tailed Hawk** 1 dark “Harlan’s” on Samish Flats on 2-16 (BCAR); 1 light “Harlan’s” on Samish Flats on 2-16 (BCAR); 1 partial leucistic near Grandview Road, Whatcom County on 3-5 (SAS); 1 (dark morph) on Samish Flats on 3-10 (AW)

**Rough-legged Hawk** 1 on Samish Flats on 2-23 (NOH); 2 at Eide Road, Stanwood on 3-7 (PP); 1 at Samish Flats on 3-2 (NOH); 1 at East 90, Samish Flats on 3-10 (AW)

**Golden Eagle** 1 juvenile on Bow Hill Road near Bow Hill Blueberries on 3-15 (AW)

### OWLS

**Barn Owl** 1 at Minkler Lake on 3-9 (GB)

**Short-eared Owl** 1 on Samish Flats on 3-2 (NOH); 1 on fencepost on Rawlins Road, Fir Island on 3-7 (PP)

### WOODPECKERS

**Hairy Woodpecker** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH)

### FALCONS

**American Kestrel** 1 on Samish Flats on 2-23 (NOH); 1 on Persons Road, Bay View Ridge on 2-23 (AW); 1 on Samish Flats on 3-2 (NOH)

**Merlin** 1 in Edison on 3-1 (AW)

**Gyrfalcon** 1 juvenile on Fir Island on 2-16 (BCAR)

*Field sightings continued on pg. 7*

*Field sightings continued from pg. 6*

**Peregrine Falcon** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH); 1 juvenile on Wylie Road, Fir Island on 2-23 (AW); 1 on Persons Road, Bay View Ridge on 2-23 (AW); 1 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH); 1 adult on Sullivan Road, Samish Flats on 3-10 (AW)

#### **FLYCATCHERS**

**Black Phoebe** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH); 1 or 2 at SWAWS throughout sighting period (GB)

#### **SHRIKES**

**Northern Shrike** 1 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH)

#### **SWALLOWS**

**Tree Swallow** 1 at SWAWS on 3-7 (PP); 1 at SWAHR on 3-9 (GB)

#### **WRENS**

**Bewick's Wren** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH)

#### **KINGLETS**

**Golden-crowned Kinglet** 1 at SWAWS on 2-18 (NOH)

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** 1 at La Conner home between 1-15 & 2-18 (RJ); 1 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH)

#### **THRUSHES**

**Varied Thrush** as many as 8 week of 2-18 (RJ)

#### **CATBIRDS & MOCKINGBIRDS**

**Northern Mockingbird** 1 in Anacortes continuing since 2-26, observed by many (GB)

#### **RARE IN SKAGIT COUNTY**

#### **FINCHES and ALLIES**

**House Finch** 1 “yellow phase” in Anacortes yard 2-1 to 2-14 (YH)

**Cassin's Finch** one near Cockreham Island on 2-16 (GB) **RARE**

**Red Crossbill** birds heard at Rasar State Park on 2-17 (GB)

#### **SPARROWS and ALLIES**

**Swamp Sparrow** 1 or more at Thilberg Road on 3-9 (GB)

**White-throated Sparrow** 2 at Camano Island home throughout sighting period (PP); 1 at Edgewater Park, Mount Vernon on 2-24 (GB)

#### **BLACKBIRDS and ORIOLES**

**Western Meadowlark** 10 on Samish Flats on 3-2 (NOH)

**Bullock's Oriole** 1 male on Guemes Island in January and February (SK)

#### **WARBLERS**

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** 2 at SWAWS on 2-27 (NOH); 2 at SWAWS on 3-10 (NOH)

(GB) Gary Bletsch; (BCAR) Bill Clark  
Advanced Raptor Class; (JH) Joe Halton; (YH) Yvonne Houppermans; (NOH) Neil O'Hara; (RJ) Rosi Jansen; (LK) Larry Kellems; (SK) Stephanie Kavanaugh; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (MS) Mary Sinker; (SAS) Skagit Audubon Society Field Trip; (AW) Andrea Warner; (SWAWS) Skagit Wildlife Area Wylie Slough; (SWANFA) Skagit Wildlife Area North Fork Access; (SWAHR) Skagit Wildlife Area Hayton Reserve

**FROM YOUR EDITOR** – I was beginning to wonder if spring would ever come but it's here now and I'm excited to get into the garden. Gardening for birds is always rewarding because different plants will attract different birds, and a greater variety of plants, trees and shrubs means a greater variety of birds. **Red Flowering Currant** attracts hummingbirds, towhees, thrushes, waxwings and woodpeckers. **Red Huckleberry** attracts doves and orioles. Grosbeaks, towhees, waxwings and woodpeckers are attracted by **Pacific Crabapple**. The conifers that are staples of our landscapes provide shelter, nesting places and food for a variety of birds for different reasons; and, bonus they come in many shapes and sizes. National Audubon maintains a searchable native plant database ([www.audubon.org/native-plants](http://www.audubon.org/native-plants)) as does the Wash. Native Plant Society Salal Chapter (<https://www.wnps.org/salal>). **Happy Gardening!**

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

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Skagit Audubon Society Membership Form**

Annual membership in the Skagit Audubon Society includes 10 issues of our newsletter, *The Skagit Flyer*, available in color at <http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter>. Membership includes all members of your household.

Check one: \_\_\_\_\_ \$20/one year \_\_\_\_\_ \$40/two years \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal  
Additionally, I wish to donate to Skagit Audubon Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_. Donations of **\$100 or more** receive a personal field trip by a Skagit Audubon field trip leader.

Mail form and payment to: Skagit Audubon Society  
PO Box 1101  
Mt. Vernon WA 98273-1101

Name: _____	Areas of Interest (check all that apply)
Address: _____	Birds_____ Gardening_____
City/State/: _____	Education_____ Conservation_____
ZIP: _____ Phone: _____	Field Trips _____ Hiking _____
Email: _____	Other: _____

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