

# *The Skagit Flyer*

Skagit Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

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## **September Meeting and Program**

### **What is "COASST"?**

*Presented by Julia Parrish, Ph.D.*

**Tuesday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>.**

**7:00 Social; 7:30 Program**

**Padilla Bay Interpretive Center**

**10441 Bayview Edison Road**

**Mt. Vernon, Washington**

Begun in the late 1990's by Dr. Julia Parrish, the "COASST" program is a community-science project established to identify the carcasses of marine birds found on beaches along the coast of the Pacific Northwest.

A project of the University of Washington, in partnership with state, federal and tribal agencies, environmental organizations and community groups in the coastal communities of Oregon, Washington and Alaska, COASST works to translate long-term monitoring into effective marine conservation tools.

In addition to conducting field research on seabirds for more than 30 years, Dr. Parrish is the current Executive Director of the COASST program and Professor of Ocean Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington.

Come and join us as we learn about this long-term important community-science program, its importance for responsible marine conservation, and how we can become involved.

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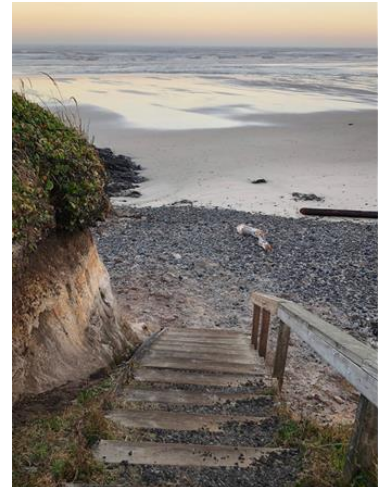
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***PUGET SOUND BIRD FEST***

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***AUDUBON COUNCIL OF  
WASHINGTON - ACOW***

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## SEPTEMBER 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.



**Sunday, Sept. 8, 2019; 12 Noon – 2:30 pm approx.**

**Skagit State Wildlife and Recreation Area, Fir Island Farms (Hayton Access) and Wiley Slough**  
**Fall migrants: Shorebirds; Leader: Neil O'Hara, [neiloh52@gmail.com](mailto:neiloh52@gmail.com)**

Late start for a birding field trip? Tides and timing are everything when trying to watch shorebirds. Scopes and binoculars generally are essential too. Don't forget your Discover Pass for parking. We'll meet at Hayton Access on Fir Island Road, just south and around the corner east of the Snow Goose Produce stand. Look for sign along the road. Official directions: From Interstate 5, take Exit 221 (Lake McMurray/Conway) and turn west. Drive 0.1 mile. Turn right (west) onto Fir Island Road. Drive west 3.2 miles. Turn left (south) at Wash. Depart. of Fish and Wildlife sign. Drive 0.5 mile to parking area.

The birds can be quite distant there, especially when water first starts to fill the basin, so we encourage people who have them to bring scopes. The main focus will be shorebirds, but if they are present in numbers we'll likely see one or two predators (e.g., peregrine, merlin, northern harrier) and of course the fall migration will be in full swing by then so we should see some waterfowl and whatever passerines happen to be passing through. We will probably move to Wiley Slough after the first stop. Please join us for our first fall field trip.

**Wednesday, Sept. 25, 2019; 9:00 am to mid-late afternoon approx.**

**Sauk Mountain Parking Area for Raptors; Leader: Gary Bletsch, [garybletsch@yahoo.com](mailto:garybletsch@yahoo.com)**

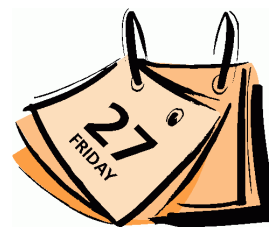
This will be a trip to the parking area of Sauk Mountain, where we will do a "big sit," searching the skies for raptors, especially Golden Eagles. Other interesting birds such as Sooty and Ruffed Grouse and Northern Pygmy Owls are also possible.

Meet at the Bletsch residence at 9:00 am. The address is 8170 Healy Road. It is a Sedro-Woolley address, but Healy Road is between Lyman and Hamilton, along SR 20, between mileposts 75 and 76. Turn south onto Healy Road from SR 20 and look for the old red barn. To minimize the number of vehicles, we can carpool from Healy Road; there is room for quite a few cars in the barnyard. Sauk Mountain Road is a steep, fairly rough gravel road that twists and turns its way up Sauk Mountain, just west of Rockport. It is okay for regular passenger cars; the trailhead parking area can sometimes fill up, but hopefully not on a weekday.

Scopes are useful for the ID of soaring raptors, although binoculars alone will be good enough in most cases. Bring food and water; pack clothing for a variety of conditions, especially if the forecast includes rain. This is not a hiking trip per se, but sturdy shoes are useful just the same. Some may wish to bring a folding chair, although there is a picnic table at the site. There is also an outhouse there. If people have FRS radios, that would be a welcome addition to the equipment. Insect repellent might be a good thing to take on this trip.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

**Sept. 3 – Skagit Audubon Board Meeting**  
**Sept. 4 – Skagit Audubon Hike Wilderness Hike**  
**Sept. 8 – Skagit Audubon Field Trip Hayton Access & Wiley Slough**  
**Sept. 10 – Skagit Audubon Program and General Meeting**  
**Sept. 11 – Skagit Audubon Hike Maple Pass Loop**  
**Sept. 13-15 – Puget Sound Bird Fest; [www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org](http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org)**  
**Sept. 18 – Skagit Audubon Hike Schreibers Meadow Hikes**  
**Sept. 25 – Skagit Audubon Field Trip Sauk Mountain Parking Area for Raptors**  
**Sept. 25 – Skagit Audubon Hike North Baker Lake**  
**Sept. 27-29 – Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW)**  
**Oct. 2 – Skagit Audubon Hike Ruby Arm**



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### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from Jeff Osmundson**

Greetings to our members and friends of Skagit Audubon and welcome to another year of planned meetings, events, field trips and hiking.

As we closed business for the summer the Board was working on an update of the by-laws that Katherine O'Hara had provided in draft form. One of the issues we discussed was term limits. A growing consensus is that we could use some additional help on the Board and committees. Many on the Board feel that our ranks of volunteers are not sufficient to permit term limits that would see some of our longest term volunteers have to leave the Board, at least for a year. Here's where you can help:

- If you would like to try and lead a field trip (it is pretty easy) or have an idea for one, see Libby Mills and the Field Trip committee.
- If you would like to lend a hand spreading the word about Skagit Audubon and presenting programs to all ages of people, see Sheila Pera or join the Education Committee.
- If you have an idea or see another speaker or program that might fit for us contact Carla Helm, or join the Programs Committee.
- Tim Manns on the Conservation Committee could always use help, as can Mary Sinker with the newsletter, Pam Pritzl with Membership and the various committees that help us with our financial picture, see Phil Wright.

Thanks to all of you that have supported the meetings with cookies and treats and feel free to offer help with set up and clean up to support Pamela Maxwell on the Hospitality Committee. There are plenty of ways to help support your Skagit Audubon chapter. We could use the help.

One of my favorite quotes is from E.E. Hale who said: **I can't do everything, but I can do something!**

**Welcome to the New Year for Skagit Audubon!**

**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). Unless otherwise noted, all images, drawings, clip art, etc. appearing in *The Flyer* are in the public domain.

#### **Board of Directors**

President:	Jeff Osmundson.....president@skagitaudubon.org
Vice President:	Jane Brandt.....janeb@skagitaudubon.org
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:	Carla Helm.....carlajhelm@comcast.net
Publications:	Mary Sinker.....publications@skagitaudubon.org
Hospitality:	Pamelia Maxwell
Representative:	Kim Nelson.....kimn@skagitaudubon.org
Representative:	Katherine O’Hara.....katherineoh@skagitaudubon.org
Representative:	Denny Quirk.....denny@skagitaudubon.org
Representative:	Alice Turner.....alicet2@msn.com
Representative:	Don Jonasson.....donjonasson@hotmail.com.....360-299-1415
Representative:	Wes Jansen.....jansenwes7@gmail.com
Newsletter Distribution:	Barbara Craner.....craner2@frontier.com.....360-770-3898
Webmaster:	Ron Pera.....skagitaudubon@gmail.com

**LOCAL vs. NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP** – Although Skagit Audubon is an official chapter of National Audubon, National Audubon membership and Skagit Audubon membership are separate and require separate payment of dues. Your local chapter dues, which stay entirely with the chapter, help fund the printing and distribution of this newsletter, educational outreach programs and other activities that support the Audubon mission. Skagit Audubon depends entirely on volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors and to lead its committees. By supporting your local chapter through paid dues and also joining National Audubon, your membership dollars are put to work at both the local and national level. Although National Audubon does share a percentage of your National dues with your local chapter, it represents a very small portion of Skagit Audubon’s annual budget.

Please consider joining Skagit Audubon as a regular member – we thank you!

## SEPTEMBER 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](mailto: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. **\* means that US Forest Service parking permit is required.**



**Wilderness Hike:** The information about the wilderness hike is too lengthy to print here. Contact Joan Melcher, above, for information.

**NOTE:** change of contact information for Sept. 18th hike---see hike information below.

**Sept. 4: WILDERNESS HIKE\*:** Contact Joan Melcher (see above) for hike information.

**Sept. 11: MAPLE PASS LOOP\*** One of Ira Spring's and Harvey Manning's "100 Classic Hikes in Washington". 7.5 mile loop, 2000 ft el gain. Meet at 7:30 am on the east side of the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot. 3:30 pm return to trailhead.

**Sept. 18: SCHREIBERS MEADOW HIKES\*** Choose from three options—Railroad Grade, Park Butte, or the Scott Paul Trail. Great views if the weather is good. Significant streams to cross by rock hopping or wading. Meet at 7:30 am at the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot. Two trailhead return times: 2 pm or 4 pm; carpool accordingly. Tom Ozretich will be the responsible person in charge. His contact information is: 360-424-8466, [tom.ozretich@gmail.com](mailto:tom.ozretich@gmail.com)

**Sept. 25: NORTH BAKER LAKE\*** Hike over the Baker River suspension bridge, over the Blum Creek bridge and along the northern section of the Baker Lake Trail to Noisy Creek and back, 9.2 miles round trip, slight elevation gain. Meet at 8 am on the east side of the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot. 3 pm return to the trailhead.

**Oct. 2: RUBY ARM:** Hike on the East Bank of Ross Lake Trail over a carpet and under a canopy of fall leaves kicking leaves to your heart's content. Hike to Ruby Arm, Hidden Hand Pass, or part way up Little Jack Trail, 7 to 8 miles round trip. Meet at 7:30 a.m. on the east side of the Sedro-Woolley Food Pavilion parking lot. No parking permit is required. Two different return times; carpool accordingly. 2 pm for those who do shorter hikes; 3:30 pm for those who go longer distances.

**SHIP HARBOR PURPLE MARTIN UPDTE:** On July 27, Stan and Lynn Kostka, and Don Jonasson did an open box check of the Ship Harbor Western Purple Martin boxes. Twenty-seven of the thirty-one boxes were confirmed to have breeding pairs with either eggs or nestlings in the nests. We will continue to visually monitor box activity to develop a database comparing the accuracy of visually monitoring behavior to actual confirmed nesting pairs. Best viewing is at low tide, wear rubber boots and a spotting scope is useful. Photo: Lynn Kostka





**CONSERVATION by Tim Manns** After more than a year's absence from the news, grizzly restoration in the North Cascades is getting attention again. Those opposed to complying with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) by restoring this threatened species didn't get the results they wanted during the 2017 comment period and have now convinced political allies to reopen public comment on the draft restoration plan and environmental impact statement (EIS).



Protecting and restoring birds and other wildlife and their necessary habitat are at the heart of Audubon's mission. The ESA and the Congressionally-mandated mission of the National Park Service similarly call for protection of natural habitat and restoration of species either extirpated or facing extinction. Although the grizzly was listed under the ESA in 1975, and North Cascades was long ago designated a recovery area for the great bear, without funding it was only in 2014 that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and National Park Service began writing a restoration plan.

Organizations and individuals supporting the effort to return this key species formed "Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear." Given the relevance to Audubon's mission, Skagit and other chapters joined this group.

In 2017 there was a lengthy comment period during which Skagit Audubon weighed in on the draft restoration plan and EIS, supporting Alternative C. Skagit Audubon's letter said, "Just as we support the restoration of the fisher to this ecosystem, we want the grizzly bear to again fill the ecological role it had for thousands of years." The draft plan states, "Alternative C (Incremental Restoration) would seek to release up to 5 to 7 grizzly bears per year for 5 to 10 years to achieve an initial population of 25 bears intended to reestablish reproduction in the North Cascades Ecosystem. It is anticipated that (this) would result in the achievement of the restoration goal of 200 bears within approximately 60 to 100 years."

Despite this proposal's modest scope and lengthy time scale, local elected officials in several counties, particularly Chelan, Okanogan, and Skagit, chose to use grizzly restoration as an opportunity to bash the ESA and national management of public lands. It's easy to score political points playing on people's notions of an animal about which they lack accurate information but will readily hate and fear. The recent politically-driven reopening of the public comment period after 126,000 very largely pro-restoration comments in 2017 signals an unwillingness to stop using this issue. The ESA is constantly under attack by people with no heart for preserving natural areas and wildlife or simply angry that certain lands lie beyond their jurisdiction and off-limits to resource extraction.

For this re-opened comment period, the draft restoration plan and EIS are identical to the one on which many of you commented in 2017. Those comments remain valid. Nonetheless, if the ESA is to be upheld and the North Cascades are to ever again have their full complement of species, it's important to send individual comment letters briefly describing why grizzly restoration matters to you and supporting one of the plan's action alternatives, such as Alternative C. Remember that if this approach to supplementing the tiny existing population (if any) of grizzlies is implemented, several human generations will pass before a viable population again inhabits the wild North Cascades, an area the size of Massachusetts. Generations from now, sighting a grizzly in these mountains will still be a rare event indeed.

**For background information and instructions on commenting, go to <https://www.northcascadesgrizzly.org/> (Friends of the North Cascades Grizzly Bear) and <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=327&projectID=44144&documentID=97321>. The deadline is October 24, 2019.**

**Read about other conservation issues on the Skagit Audubon website: <https://skagitaudubon.org/conservation/notes>.**

## 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

[birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:birdsightings@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

**Wood Duck** 20 at SWAWS on 6-17, 4 on 6-22, 2 on 6-29, 4 on 7-12, 1 on 7-28 (NOH); 6 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 6-26 (NOH)

**Blue-winged Teal** 2 at SWAHR on 7-9 (GB); 2 at SWAWS on 7-12, 1 on 7-28 (NOH)

**Eurasian Wigeon** 1 at SWAHR on 6-8 (GB)

**American Wigeon** 1 at SWAWS on 6-29 (NOH)

**Northern Pintail** 3 at SWAHR on 6-29 (NOH)

**Harlequin Duck** 1 female in Stillaguamish River (Big Four Ice Caves trip) on 6-25 (SAS)

**Hooded Merganser** 1 at SHIP on 6-27 (NOH); 2 at SWAWS on 7-28 (NOH)

### GREBES

**Pied-billed Grebe** 1 at SWAWS on 7-20 (NOH)

### NIGHTHAWKS

**Common Nighthawk** 3 flying over east Sedro-Woolley yard on 6-26 (DW)

### RAILS

**Virginia Rail** 1 at SWAWS on 6-17, 1 on 6-29 (NOH)

### OYSTERCATCHERS

**Black Oystercatcher** 2 at Rosario on 6-20, 3 on 6-24, 1 on 7-23 (NOH)

### PLOVERS

**Black-bellied Plover** 10 at SWAHR on 7-15 (NOH)

**American Golden-Plover** 1 at SWAHR on 7-30 (GB)

### SANDPIPERS and ALLIES

**Willet** 1 at SWAHR on 8-10 (MS) **RARE**  
**Bar-tailed Godwit** 1 at SWAHR on 7-13 (GB) **RARE**

**Marbled Godwit** 1 at SWAHR on 7-13 (GB)

**Least Sandpiper** 3 at SWAHR on 6-29 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 6-29, 4 on 7-1, 7 on 7-20, 1 on 7-28 (NOH)

**Semipalmated Sandpiper** 2 at SWAWS on 7-20 (NOH)

**Western Sandpiper** 23 at SWAHR on 6-29, 40 on 7-15 (NOH); 7 at SWAWS on 7-20 (NOH)

**Short-billed Dowitcher** 1 at SWAWS on 7-12 (NOH)

**Long-billed Dowitcher** 30 at SWAHR on 7-15 (NOH)

**Lesser Yellowlegs** 1 at SWAWS on 7-12 (NOH)

**Greater Yellowlegs** 1 at SWAHR on 6-29 (NOH); 13 at SWAWS on 7-12 (NOH)

**Wilson's Phalarope** 1 on Channel Drive on 7-30 (GB)

### ALCIDS

**Common Murre** 2 at Rosario on 7-23 (NOH)

**Rhinoceros Auklet** 2 at SHIP on 6-27 (NOH); 35 at Rosario on 7-23 (NOH)

### GULLS and TERNS

**Franklin's Gull** 1 at SWAHR on 5-23 (GB)

**Heermann's Gull** 2 at Green Point, WA Park, Anacortes on 7-8 (GB); 4 at Rosario on 7-23 (NOH)

**Caspian Tern** 4 at SWAHR on 6-29, 5 on 7-12, 1 on 7-15 (NOH)

### PELICANS

**American White Pelican** 29 at Jensen Access on 5-27 (GB)

*Field sightings continued on pg. 8*

*Field sightings continued from pg. 7*

## **VULTURES**

**Turkey Vulture** 2 at Rosario on 6-20, 1 on 6-24 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 6-22, 1 on 6-29, 1 on 7-28 (NOH)

## **OSPREYS**

**Osprey** 1 at SWAWS on 6-22, 1 on 7-28 (NOH); 1 at SHIP on 6-27, 2 on 7-19 (NOH); 1 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 7-13 (NOH)

## **HAWKS, EAGLES and ALLIES**

**Northern Harrier** 1 at SWAWS on 6-17, 1 on 6-22, 1 on 6-29, 1 on 7-28 (NOH); 1 at SWAHR on 6-29, 1 on 7-12, 2 on 7-15 (NOH)

**Red-tailed Hawk** 1 at SHIP on 6-27 (NOH); 1 at SWAHR on 7-12 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 7-20 (NOH)

## **OWLS**

**Great Horned Owl** 2 in Eaglemont neighborhood, Mount Vernon on 5-22, 1 on 5-29 and 2 on 5-31 (LH); 1 at SWAWS on 6-29 (NOH)

## **WOODPECKERS**

**American Three-toed Woodpecker** 1 on the Easy Pass Trail on 5-19 (GB)

**Pileated Woodpecker** 2 at Little Mountain on 6-2 (NOH); 1 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 7-13 (NOH)

## **FALCONS**

**Merlin** 2 juveniles in Burlington City Park on 7-26 (LE)

**Peregrine Falcon** 1 at SWAWS on 7-12 (NOH)

## **FLYCATCHERS**

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** 3 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 6-26 (NOH)

**Willow Flycatcher** 1 at SWAWS on 6-22, 2 on 7-28 (NOH); 1 at SHIP on 7-19 (NOH)

**Dusky Flycatcher** 1 at Corkindale on 5-18 (GB)

**Pacific-Slope Flycatcher** 3 at Little Mountain on 6-2 (NOH)

**Black Phoebe** 5 (pair with 3 fledglings) at SWAWS on 5-25 (GB); 1 at SWAWS on 6-17, 1 on 6-22, 1 on 6-29, 1 on 7-28 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 7-29 (JH)

**Eastern Kingbird** 1 at SWAWS on 6-3 (AT); pair on north end Harrison Road, Sedro-Woolley on 7-13 (DW)

## **VIREOS**

**Hutton's Vireo** 1 at Cap Sante, Anacortes home on 7-6 and 7-24 (JH)

## **CORVIDS**

**California Scrub-Jay** 1 on Lincoln Hill, Mount Vernon on 7-19 (BC)

## **SWALLOWS**

**Purple Martin** 1 at Fox Road near Clear Lake on 6-14 (GB) **rare inland**

## **BUSHTITS**

**Bushtit** 10 at SWAWS on 6-17 (NOH)

## **CREEPERS**

**Brown Creeper** 1 at Rosario on 6-20 (NOH)

## **WRENS**

**Bewick's Wren** 2 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 6-26 (NOH)

## **WAXWINGS**

**Cedar Waxwing** flock in Bow yard on 6-1 (KR)

## **FINCHES and ALLIES**

**Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** 9 at Cutthroat Pass on 7-22 (GB)

**Pine Grosbeak** 2 on the Easy Pass Trail on 5-19 (GB)

## **SPARROWS and ALLIES**

**Brewer's Sparrow** 1 at Corkindale on 5-23 (GB)

**Fox Sparrow** 1 below Sahale Arm on 7-16 (GB)

## **CHAT**

**Yellow-breasted Chat** 1 at Green Pond on 5-27 (GB)

*Field sightings continued on pg. 9*



*Field sightings continued from pg. 8*

## **BLACKBIRDS and ORIOLES**

**Bullock's Oriole** 1 male at SWAWS on 6-3 (AT); pair in east Sedro-Woolley yard on 6-17 (DW); 7 on Cockreham Island on 7-20 (GB)

## **WARBLERS**

**Orange-crowned Warbler** 1 on Little Mountain on 6-2 (NOH); 1 at Rosario on 6-20, 1 on 7-23 (NOH); 1 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 6-26 (NOH); 1 at SHIP on 6-27, 1 on 7-19 (NOH)

**Common Yellowthroat** 1 at SWAWS on 6-17, 3 on 6-22, 1 on 6-29, 1 on 7-12, 1 on 7-20, 1 on 7-28 (NOH); 3 at SHIP on 6-27 (NOH); 1 at SWAHR on 6-29, 2 on 7-12, 1 on 7-15 (NOH)

**Yellow Warbler** 4 at SWAWS on 6-17, 4 on 6-22, 3 on 6-29, 1 on 7-12, 1 on 7-20, 1 on 7-28 (NOH)

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** 4 at Rosario on 7-23 (NOH)

**Black-throated Gray Warbler** 2 on Little Mountain on 6-2 (NOH); 1 at SHIP on 7-19 (NOH)

**Wilson's Warbler** 3 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 6-26 (NOH); 1 at Rosario on 7-23 (NOH)

## **TANAGERS and ALLIES**

**Western Tanager** 1 at Lake Erie on 6-23 (NOH); 1 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 7-23 (NOH)

**Black-headed Grosbeak** 3 on Little Mountain on 6-2 (NOH); 1 at SWAWS on 6-22, 1 on 6-29, 1 on 7-20 (NOH); 1 at Cranberry Lake, Anacortes on 6-26 (NOH); 1 at SHIP on 6-27 (NOH)

(GB) Gary Bletsch; (BC) Brenda Cunningham; (LE) Larry Edwards; (JH) Joe Halton; (LH) Lisa Hopkins; (NOH) Neil O'Hara; (KR) Kerry Rye; (SAS) Skagit Audubon Society Field Trip; (SHIP) Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve; (SWAHR) Skagit Wildlife Area Hayton Reserve; (SWAWS) Skagit Wildlife Area Wylie Slough; (AT) Alice Turner; (DW) Daria Wheatley; (MS) Mary Sinker

## **SAVE THE DATE: Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW)**

HOST REGION: SW Chapters (Vancouver, Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor, Tahoma, Black Hills)

**WHEN: September 27-29, 2019**

WHERE: Vancouver Water Resources Education Center, 4600 SE Columbia Way, Vancouver, WA

REGISTRATION: \$40/person

THEME: 100% Audubon

Inspired by our recent victory in passing the 100% Clean Energy legislation, we have been reflecting on all we can accomplish when we – as an Audubon community – are 100% committed.

In this year's ACOW, we will focus on big initiatives that could impact 100% of Audubon chapters. Key speakers include the director of Audubon's new Migratory Birds Initiative and the leader of the Campus Chapter Program.

During this weekend, we'll reserve time to share our work, learn from each other, identify opportunities to collaborate and network with Auduboners from across the state.

ACOW will start on Friday afternoon with education and conservation committee meetings, followed by pizza and an evening speaker. We will meet all day Saturday and conclude with field trips on Sunday to see cranes and other special birds in the region.

Registration and discounted lodging info available at: [www.audubon.org/chapters-centers/chapter-meetings](http://www.audubon.org/chapters-centers/chapter-meetings).

***FROM YOUR EDITOR – The Journey  
of O-86, by Mary Sinker***

She was one of several thousand snow geese foraging in an agricultural field a couple of miles west of Conway. It was a lovely early March day and we were out looking for snow geese. It didn't take long to find them given that it's not uncommon to have 50,000 snow geese spend the winter in the Skagit Valley.

She was different though because she was wearing a bright red and white neck collar. I really wanted to know more about her and to do so, I would need to be able to read the whole collar. Fortunately, she was at the front of her group and I was able to read her collar through my binoculars. After reporting the collar to the Bird Banding Laboratory, a few weeks later came the certificate showing she was hatched on Wrangel Island in 2015 (or earlier) and had been banded on 7/21/16. She'd made the 2,400 mile journey from Wrangel Island to the Skagit Valley and back a few times and looked to be in great condition.

Wrangel Island is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, located 100 miles north of the Siberian mainland, and the northernmost breeding location for 100 species of migratory birds. Snow geese share the much sought-after nesting spots with Snowy Owls and Arctic Foxes, both of whom will prey on bird nests when their main food source, lemmings, are in short supply.

Being naturally curious, I've delved into various publications and online sources to find out more about these iconic birds of winter. The steadily increasing population of Snow Geese both returning to Wrangel Island to breed and to the Skagit Valley to winter can probably be attributed to several factors. It's estimated that as much as 60% of the snow goose population on the Pacific Flyway now spends the winter in the Skagit Valley rather than continuing on to Central California.

The shorter distance from Wrangel Island to the Skagit Valley saves valuable energy. In addition to traditional marshland forage, the birds can also be found regularly feeding on residual agricultural crops – potatoes and corn are particular favorites.

As I write this, fall migration has begun and in a few short weeks, these iconic birds of winter will begin to arrive - a few at first and then by the thousands to descend once again on the fields, bays and marshes of the Skagit Valley.

Hopefully O-86 will make the journey successfully.



**Snow Geese, by Mary Sinker**

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## **PUGET SOUND BIRD FEST IN EDMONDS**

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Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds, Washington is an annual fall celebration of birds and nature found on the beautiful shores of Puget Sound. It is listed as one of Seattle's best events on [events12.com](http://events12.com), the web site of events currently over 12 months in major cities.

This three-day event includes speakers, guided walks, land and water-based field trips, exhibits, and educational activities for children and adults. Plan to spend the weekend in Edmonds, birding and meeting other birders, naturalists, photographers, and people engaged in fascinating bird research projects.

**WELCOME 2019 KEYNOTE SPEAKER TIM BOYER!**  
***UNDERSTANDING SHOREBIRDS, THE MIRACLE OF MIGRATION***  
**Friday, September 13, 2019**  
**7:30-9pm Edmonds Plaza Room (doors open at 7pm)**  
**FREE, BUT [ADVANCED REGISTRATION](#) IS REQUIRED**

*Understanding Shorebirds, the Miracle of Migration* is about the epic migrations of shorebirds. Six of the thirty-eight common shorebirds found in Washington are discussed, as we explore the trans-ocean migration of Bar-tailed Godwits, Pacific Golden-Plovers, Sanderlings and other birds that cross the majority of the Pacific Ocean. We'll look at where they migrate, why they migrate and how they are able to travel so far. These global migrants require global conservation and climate change solutions. In an effort to understand their remarkable journeys we need to look beyond the North American borders and see where shorebirds spend most of their lives.



Tim Boyer is an award-winning nature photographer. His images have been published in many bird and nature magazines. He is a full-time photographer and a graduate of Seattle Audubon's Master Birder



Program. He enjoys sharing his knowledge of photography and birds through workshops and presentations. Shorebirds are his favorite family group of birds, and he spends a lot of weekends on the Washington Coast.

Tim has a degree in Recreation and Parks Management, had a career as mountain guide in Alaska, Washington, Canada, Mexico and Ecuador. He's been to the top of North America (Denali) 6 times. Toss in a few marathons, an 18 year stint at a large non-profit where he was once the Corporate Controller (which he still can't believe) and you can see he's ready for adventure. He's been a photographer

since high school, (you know back when they used black & white film). He always knew he would have three different careers but didn't think that Bird Photography Workshop Leader would be number three.

**SKAGIT AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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