General Membership Meeting with Audubon Washington’s Trina Bayard and Jennifer Syrowitz

Safeguarding Birds of Washington in a Changing Climate

Can you imagine winter in the Skagit Valley without trumpeter swans, or summers in Minnesota without common loons? According to a first-of-its kind study by National Audubon Society, climate change threatens nearly half the bird species in the continental United States and Canada, including dozens of iconic birds like the common loon, Baltimore oriole and brown pelican. At a local level, the data pinpoint 113 “climate-endangered” bird species that occur in Washington State that may lose 50% or more of their existing range by 2050, according to the projections. Washington species such as the rufous hummingbird, bald eagle and even the currently abundant mallard could lose as much as 75% of their existing range, threatening their long-term survival.

To understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them, Audubon scientists analyzed 30 years of North American climate data and tens of thousands of historical bird observations from the Audubon Christmas Bird Count and U.S. Geological Survey’s North American Breeding Bird Survey. Understanding those links allows scientists to project where birds are likely to be able to survive – and not survive – in the future. The study, which was funded in part by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has numerous implications for conservation, public policy and further research, and provides a call to action for all of us who care about birds.

Come join Audubon Washington's Director of Bird Conservation, Trina Bayard, and Chapter Conservation Manager, Jennifer Syrowitz, to learn more about what climate change projections mean for the bird life of our region and how you can take action to protect the places on the ground that we know birds will need today and in the future, and work together to reduce the severity of global warming. Together we can build a roadmap to a better future for birds and for ourselves.

Always on the 4th Tuesday of the month:
January 26, 7pm at the Whatcom Museum
(in the Rotunda Room of the Old City Hall building)
free & open to the public!
Mission Statement
The purpose of this society is to promote the study and conservation of birds and other wildlife, their habitat, and the environment; to increase public appreciation of the values of wildlife, plants, and the natural environment; and to stimulate action to protect and preserve them for the future.

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Upcoming Board meeting:
January 4

Please email the President if you would like to attend: president@northcascadesaudubon.org

Thank You
For Another Great Year

North Cascades Audubon Society would like to extend a warm thanks to each and every member for being a part of our organization in 2015. We recently held our annual holiday potluck at the Lairmont Manor in Fairhaven to provide an opportunity for members to socialize and share their experiences. If you didn't catch us then, we hope to see you soon.

Photos by Carol Roberts
North Cascades Audubon Society Board Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2015 (November minutes can be found on our website.)

The meeting was called to order by President Pam Borso at 7:00 pm at the WECU Education Center on Holly Street. Board Members Present: Pam Borso, Steven Harper, Sue Parrott, Ken Salzman, Carol Roberts, Steve Irving, Paul Woodcock, and Twink Coffman. Absent: Rae Edwards, Owen Bamford, and Kelley Palmer-McGee.

Secretary’s Report: The November report was approved as submitted. Follow-ups will be added to the minutes.
Treasurer’s Report: Sue presented the treasurer’s report for November along with an updated spreadsheet of donations and scholarships given by NCAS through the past years.

Communications and Input
• Twink suggested that we provide welcome information for new members, especially if receiving the electronic version of the newsletter. More discussion of what we should do for members will be discussed at the retreat.
• Twink noted that there seems to be a problem with email notification of new issues of the newsletter.
• A group of us will move the purple martin houses on Clark’s Point because of creosote piling removal.
• The Cherry Point Survey identification class is going well with approx. 40 participants. Sandy Point is again one of the sites as we have obtained beach access to the site through a neighbor’s property.
• Paul continues to coordinate the upcoming CBC and there are plenty of people to fill all of the required areas.
• The Syre opens in January and Paul, Pam, Owen and Ken will be presenting programs. Steve Irving will also be participating.
• Ken has presentations scheduled at Adult Day Health and the Parkway Chateau in 2016.

Unfinished Business
• Carol reported that everything is ready for the holiday party on Dec. 8. Centerpieces for the tables have been purchased for approx. $50 and Paul has 7 great prizes for the bird trivia contest.

New Business
• Trevor Bloom will come to our board meeting in February to present his results, partially funded by a scholarship from NCAS. He will also be asked to present at the May membership meeting.
• The board suggested exerting extra effort to advertise the January general membership program as Trina and Jen from Washington State Audubon will do a presentation on climate change and the effect on birds. This is an important topic and it would be good to have more people notified of the opportunity.
• Ideas were discussed for the upcoming yearly retreat on January 4. The board decided to prioritize long range planning for the organization along with reviewing the budget for 2016, discussing our membership’s needs, reviewing programing needs, and prioritizing next year’s goals and objectives. Chris Brewer from the Whatcom Museum will be invited to attend in recognition of our strong collaborative efforts with the Museum. Potential new board members, Jamie and Nicole Huson, will also be invited to sit in. Pizza will be provided.

Follow-ups
• Pam will put together the agenda for the retreat and all board members are welcome to provide additional suggestions for the retreat.
• Ken will purchase 2 or 3 large pizzas for the retreat depending on the number of participants.
• Steven will contact Trevor Bloom to ask that he present at the May membership meeting and to ask him to come to the February board meeting to give a brief presentation.
• Membership number data will be compiled by Sue and Owen for the retreat.
• Sue will develop the 2016 budget.
• Twink will explore increasing our advertising by contacting Cascadia Weekly, Entertainment NW and the Bellingham Herald Take Five.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 pm
Next Meeting: January 4, 2015 6pm – 9pm yearly retreat at the WECU Education Center, 311 Holly Street.

Steven Harper, Secretary
January Field Trips

Ken Salzman, Field Trip Chair

While the weather isn't always ideal in winter in the Pacific Northwest, the birds don't seem to mind and January is one of the best months for birding in our area. Seabirds and waterfowl winter in the area and there are a number of resident species to be seen. In addition winter is a time when vagrants turn up in our area. Mountain bluebirds, Lapland longspurs and snow buntings have already been seen.

Join us as we enjoy the birds of the Pacific Northwest. All NCAS field trips are open to everyone whether or not they are members of NCAS. Our goal is to provide quality field trips that are enjoyable and educational for all levels of birders. Our field trip leaders, and many of the participants, are enthusiastic about answering questions and providing a worthwhile experience for all participants. So join us for the fun! And please dress appropriately for the weather in order to have the most pleasurable birding experience.

Saturday, January 2, Semiahmoo Spit

Time: 9 AM at Semiahmoo Park ~ 3 hours
Trip Leader: Paul Woodcock
No registration required

These monthly trips are co-sponsored by NCAS and Whatcom County Parks & Recreation and are meant for birders of all skill levels. If you are not a birder but just curious, you are more than welcome to come along and share the experience. January is an excellent time to go birding at the Spit.

Friday, January 8, Samish Flats

Time: 9 AM - 1 PM
Trip Leader: Steven Harper
Pre-registration required - trip limit 8
To register contact Steven Harper: 360-650-9065 or stevenharper2@msn.com

This trip will begin at the Alger Park and Ride, I5 Exit 240. We'll then scour the Samish Flats searching for all of the raptors commonly found during the winter as well as waterfowl and shorebirds feeding in the fields. Bring water and snacks or lunch to eat on the run. Dress warmly and bring a spotting scope if you happen to have one. We're likely to see bald eagles, rough-legged hawks, northern harriers, and red-tailed hawks, and will search for other less common raptors.

Saturday, January 16, Lake Padden

Time: 9 AM - Noon
Trip Leader: Ken Salzman
To register contact Ken Salzman: 360-756-0347 or kpsalzman@comcast.net

Winter is a great time for waterfowl at Lake Padden. You can expect such species as American wigeon, lesser scaup and bufflehead, just to name a few. Rarities in the past few years have included a male Eurasian wigeon and a redhead. And there are always a number of passersines and a raptor or two. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

field trips continued on the next page
Bud Anderson and the Raptors of Western Washington

Thursdays, January 7, 14, 21, 28 and February 4; 7-9 PM

An all day field trip is included, the date and time to be arranged
Classes held at Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship, 1207 Ellsworth Street

Renowned raptor expert Bud Anderson will once again bring to Bellingham his acclaimed class on raptors of Western Washington. Learning about raptors and sharing Bud’s passion will change the way you experience the extraordinary environment in which we live. The class is sponsored by Whatcom Land Trust and makes a great holiday gift for friends, family and yourself!

To register, mail a check payable to Falcon Research Group for $175 to:
FRG, Box 248, Bow WA 98232.
Include your email and postal addresses and phone number

For more information:
Bud Anderson
(falconresearch@gmail.com; 360-757-1911)
or Rand Jack (randfjack@gmail.com)

American kestrel, photo by Andrew Reding

January field trips continued

Wednesday, January 20,
Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary

Time: 8:30 AM - 4 PM, starting at the Ferndale Park & Ride

Trip Leaders: Jane and John Aspnes
Pre-registration required - trip limit 12
To register and arrange carpooling contact Jane or John Aspnes: 360-303-2675 or jdaspnes@alaska.edu

From the Aspnes: January is a good time for hawks, eagles, owls, sparrows, woodpeckers and extensive waterfowl at Reifel. We will be joined by Ginger and Dave Ridgeway, so we will have at least two scopes operating (tall and short!).

We will need two 4-passenger vehicles besides our own and the Ridgeway’s to accommodate everyone.

The gate fee at Reifel is $5 adults/$3 seniors. Bring a sack lunch. There is a nice warming cabin in which to eat lunch.

A passport, NEXUS card or enhanced drivers license is required for the border crossing. Let us know if you have a NEXUS card.

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Help Wanted
Field trip leaders are needed!

We are looking for those of you with:
1. A love of and enthusiasm for birding
2. A reasonable knowledge of and skill related to identification of birds in our area
3. A willingness to share your knowledge and skill related to birding

If you would like to volunteer or have any questions about becoming a Trip Leader please contact Ken Salzman at: 756-0347 or kpsalzman@comcast.net.
LONG BEACH PENINSULA, Wash. –
December 2, 2015 –

Annual migrations as well as seasonal changes bring unique wildlife viewing opportunities to Southwest Washington’s Long Beach Peninsula from December 2015 through April 2016. Wildlife enthusiasts can spend a day or more spotting numerous bird and mammal species including gray whales, trumpeter swans and peregrine falcons.

“This is a great time to view wildlife on the Long Beach Peninsula,” said Andi Day, Executive Director, Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau. “Opportunities to see less common species from easily accessible viewing sights make the region ideal, particularly on clear weather days.”

Migrating gray whales heading south can be seen from vantage points such the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center at Cape Disappointment State Park in Ilwaco from mid through the end of December. In March, returning gray whales can be spotted more easily as they tend to stay closer to the shoreline with newborn calves.

The acrobatic humpback whale is making a comeback in the region. Several were seen feeding in the Columbia River near the Washington side of the Astoria-Megler Bridge in the fall of this year. Cetacean lovers anticipate their return during their northward migration in the spring.

“A great deal of migrating waterfowl including mallards, pintails, American wigeon, green-winged teal, and Canada geese, and sandpipers, dunlins, godwits, and more are using the estuaries of Willapa Bay, Port of Ilwaco and the Columbia River right now,” says Jackie Ferrier, Willapa National Wildlife Refuge. “Quite a few raptors including bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and northern harriers, are present as well.”

According to Ferrier, winter is a good time to visit snowy plover habitat at Leadbetter Point and beaches to the south, as the birds are more mobile in the winter. From March 15 to September 30, the beaches in the refuge and state park are closed to public access to protect snowy plover during nesting and while vulnerable chicks are running around.
Trumpeter swans are predicted to make their annual return to Black and Loomis Lakes in late December. Snowy owls have made a showing for the last couple of years and a return is hoped for this year as well.

For excellent wildlife watching opportunities, nature and bird observer Suzy Whittey recommends Hines Marsh, accessed by the Martha Jordan Birding Trail. “Hines Marsh is a unique, natural treasure,” says Whittey. “The area is an important biological interdunal ‘island’ for wildlife and birds between Willapa Bay and the Pacific Ocean.” Whittey adds that Hines Marsh is thought to be the largest interdunal, freshwater wetland remaining in North America. It provides important habitat for the trumpeter swan as well as over 100 species of other birds including songbirds, raptors and waterfowl. Many mammals like otter, deer, elk and black bear also live in the area.

“The best times to bird the area is between September and April, or when the mosquitoes hatch,” adds Whittey. The Martha Jordan Birding Trail parking lot, located 2.7 miles north of Oysterville Road on Stackpole Road on the northern tip of Washington’s Long Beach Peninsula, affords access to the marsh. After crossing the short boardwalk from the parking lot, the marsh is reached by walking about one-half mile on a flat, two-track gravel road. Beyond the marsh is private property.

With several distinct ecosystems in a span of 28 miles, the Long Beach Peninsula boasts over 300 species of birds and includes Pacific Ocean seashore and marshland, lake, inland waterway, wetland, Columbia River, and Willapa Bay habitat.

For updates on winter birding, please monitor www.facebook.com/willapaNWRcomplex. For more information on wildlife viewing on the Long Beach Peninsula, please access https://funbeach.com/birding-2/ or call the Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau at 360.642.2400.

Article provided by Carol Zaborsky
PR for the Long Beach Peninsula
carol@zaborskypr.com
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North Cascades Audubon Society Membership

We hope you will support North Cascades Audubon by joining the chapter locally. Your commitment to Audubon is important to us. We will continue to provide you with information regarding local chapter activities through our website and all activities will remain FREE and open to the public. If you are interested in receiving a paper copy of the newsletter, you can join the local chapter for one year at any of the levels to your right. The newsletter is published monthly between September and May, including a double issue for November/December. All issues are also available online. If you do not wish to receive a paper copy, email membership@northcascadesaudubon.org.

Join or Renew (circle one)

Please make checks payable to North Cascades Audubon. Each membership applies to one household.

Does your company match donations? Let them know you donated to North Cascades Audubon Society.

___ $20  Kestrel  
___ $35  Merlin  
___ $50  Prairie Falcon  
___ $75  Peregrine Falcon  
___ $100 Gyrfalcon  

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