

DECEMBER 2016

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1972



THE Kingfisher

December 8, 2016, Program

Paul Bannick - A year in the lives of North American owls



Award-winning photographer Paul Bannick will present a new program featuring video, sound, stories from the field and several dozen new images from his new book: *Owl: A Year in the Lives of North American Owls*. Paul uses intimate yet dramatic images to follow owls through the course of one year and in their distinct habitats.

Audiences will witness the four seasons on territory, as each stage in an owl's life is chronicled through rare images: courtship, mating, and nesting. .

All 19 species found in Canada and the U.S. are featured, with a special focus on

the Northern Pygmy-Owl, Great Gray Owl, Burrowing Owl, and Snowy Owl.

Owl is a stunning follow-up to Bannick's bestselling title, *The Owl and the Woodpecker*, giving bird lovers yet another gorgeous photographic tribute, engaging natural history, and a compelling call to preserve the habitats that sustain these most iconic of birds.

The program represents nearly ten years of work in some of the most remote regions of the continent, tracking owls as they move through their lives.

Kitsap Audubon pledges \$20,000 to Preserve Port Gamble forest

The Kitsap Forest and Bay coalition is working to raise \$3.5M by June 2017 to secure almost 3,000 acres of Pope Resources land for public ownership.

This will bring to \$50,000 the amount Kitsap Audubon has donated to preserve conservation land in North Kitsap.

You can donate online at <http://www.SavePG.org> Your December donation will be matched.

Kitsap Audubon launches new website

Check out our new website at www.kitsapaudubon.org

Michael Szerlog has been Kitsap Audubon's volunteer webmaster and wizard behind the curtain for 12 years. He is in the process of doing a total makeover of our website with a new provider, Squarespace.

Help Decorate Mitten Tree

Our December meeting will feature our traditional Mitten Tree decorated with your donated mittens, scarves and hats for the needy. We'll also collect nonperishable food and hygiene items. Diane Bachen and Sharron Ham will deliver your donations to women's shelters and other Kitsap charities that serve those in need. They also collect yarn year round, which Purdy Prison volunteers knit into scarves, hats and items for our Mitten Tree.

Kitsap Audubon Society

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President's Letter - Sandy Bullock

Kitsap Audubon's Board of Directors is proud to announce a pledge of \$20,000 to the Kitsap Forest and Bay Community Campaign to acquire another 2,800 acres of forest land and trails in the Port Gamble Bay area. KAS previous donations, totaling \$30,000 to date, helped protect from development more than a mile and a half of shoreline and bordering forest land, and the important Grover's Creek watershed feeding Miller Bay. The land acquired so far, is now under the protection of Kitsap County, and The Great Peninsula Conservancy. Look for more information on how you can be part of this effort, personally, in this issue of the *Kingfisher*.

I hope you will take some time during this busy holiday season, to treat yourself to some Audubon activities, too. Our program on December 8th by one of our favorite speakers and authors, Paul Bannick, will focus on his new book about owls. His book would make a wonderful holiday gift for a friend or family member, whether they are birders or not. December 17th, hardy Kitsap Audubon teams will be in the field doing the annual Christmas Bird Count. If you've never participated in the CBC before, it's a lot of fun. Our local bays are full of ducks and sea birds, and birders of all skills are welcome.

The women at the prison in Purdy have turned our donated yarn into toasty hats, scarves and mittens for our Mitten Tree again this year. By donating similar articles, non-perishable food and personal hygiene items, you can help bring warmth and cheer to



those who otherwise might be forgotten. This year Sharron Ham and Diane Bachen are in charge of organizing our annual Mitten Tree, and will deliver the gifts collected to local food banks and charitable organizations.

ACOW, is the gathering of Audubon chapters from around the state. This year, our Vice President, Diane Bachen represented Kitsap Audubon at their meeting in Wenatchee. Diane is also a member of the Marbled Murrelet Task Group, working to protect this endangered bird.

Connie Bickerton, our current board secretary, is now also our Social Media Chair Person. Connie developed and maintains our outstanding Facebook page. "Like" us there, if you haven't already.

In closing, on behalf of the KAS Board of Directors, I want to wish you all a very enjoyable holiday season, and happy, healthy New Year in 2017.

Kitsap Audubon Society meets the 2nd Thursday of each month, September through May, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., on the lower level of the Poulsbo Library, 700 NE Lincoln Rd. Open to the public. Free parking.

Kitsap Audubon Funds IBA Sign

In October, the Kitsap Parks Department installed a new interpretive sign at Point No Point County Park explaining why the location is a globally designated Important Bird Area (IBA). The sign and associated hardware were funded by Kitsap Audubon. Gene Bullock, Kitsap Audubon Education Chair, worked closely with Lori Raymaker of the Kitsap Parks Department to finalize the design.

In the 1970s, Birdlife International began identifying locations considered critical to the survival of one or more species of birds. They have since identified 12,000 of these official designations IBAs (Important Bird Areas). In the 1990s National Audubon became its U.S. partner and began working state by state with chapters and wildlife agencies to identify U.S. IBAs. Audubon has since designated 2,758 IBA locations in the U.S. as critically important to the survival of one or more species of birds. Point No Point County Park is one of 75 IBAs in Washington State.

Point No Point is an important foraging area for wintering flocks of Bonaparte's Gulls, Brant, Common Murres, Ancient Murrelets and local populations of the endangered Marbled Murrelets. Its location on the Pacific flyway and mix of



riparian, wetland and shoreline habitat also make it a key stopover for migrating birds as they rest up before or after crossing the Admiralty Straits.

One of the reasons Point No Point is such a productive foraging area is its unusual tidal currents. Tidal eddies can produce dramatic rip tides that churn the water, causing an upwelling of plankton and small invertebrates. This attracts dense, swirling schools of Pacific

Herring, Pacific Sand Lance and other forage fish. These "bait balls" attract larger fish, hungry flocks of birds – and sometimes even whales! These spectacular feeding frenzies can attract bird watchers from near and far, sometimes resulting in "birding frenzies."

IBA designation does not give a site legal protection, but is intended call attention to its importance to birds and the importance of protecting and preserving the site.

"If we don't educate people about its special importance as an IBA, we've missed the whole point in making it an IBA," said Gene. He proposed the interpretive sign as a way to educate the many visitors to Point No Point about its importance as a global IBA. The Kitsap Audubon Board agreed to fund the production and installation hardware, and the Kitsap Parks Department agreed to install it.

A second smaller IBA sign is displayed on the wetlands trail wildlife viewing platform, which was also funded by Kitsap Audubon. The Kitsap Parks Department recently made the viewing platform wheelchair accessible with the help of Navy volunteers.

Photos by Gene Bullock (sign) and Don Willott (platform).

Marbled Murrelet Update

The draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Long-term Conservation Strategy for the Marbled Murrelet Habitat Conservation Plan is scheduled to be released on December 2, 2016. Comments will be accepted until March, 2017. Comments can be directed to the

Board of Natural Resources, bnr@dnr.wa.gov. The coalition of the Murrelet Conservation Project will be coming out with talking points in response to the DEIS after it is released. There will also be public meetings in Sedro Wooley on Jan. 10, 2017, Seattle Jan. 12, 2017, Port Angeles on Jan. 17,

2017 and Cathlamet, on Jan 19, 2017. A webinar is scheduled for Jan. 24 from 2-3. The link to the webinar will be available at dnr.wa/mmmltcs.

For more information, please contact Diane Bachen, dianebachen@comcast.net or 360-649-6903

Field Trips & Festivals - Al & Andrew Westphal

CBC Training and Warmup at Point No Point, Saturday, December 10th, 9:00 a.m.

Gene Bullock and Al Westphal, co-leaders. No advance registration required. Novice birders and first-time Christmas Bird Counters are encouraged to come out to one of the county's premiere birding locations for some background and training on the annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. This event will address CBC history, procedures, data collection, and bird counting techniques, and should be helpful in preparing for the CBC itself later in the month. (Of course we'll look at some of Point No Point's winter birds too!)

Hansville/Point No Point, Saturday, January 7th, 9:00 a.m. Al & Andrew Westphal, co-leaders. Contact by email westphalac@aol.com (preferred) or phone 206-780-7844 to sign up. We'll return to Point No Point County Park and Norwegian Point for a regular field trip to observe the many wintering waterfowl of our part of Puget Sound and some of the passerines and others in the adjacent fields and wetlands.



Lion's Field/Port Washington Narrows: Saturday, February 18 (half-day). Contact Gene or Sandy Bullock to reserve a spot (360-394-5635; genebullock@comcast.net). This morning field trip to Port Washington Narrows in Bremerton is a tradition started many years ago by Ivan Summers. We customarily end it with lunch at the Boatshed Restaurant. Tens of thousands of marine birds winter in these protected waters, and well-maintained Bremerton parks provide outstanding views plus convenient parking. We'll meet at 9 a.m. at Lion's Field Park on Lebo Lane. We'll also visit Evergreen Park and stop at Lower Rota Vista Park. Kitsap Audubon has installed steps, a handrail and an interpretive sign at this charming little park at the end of Elizabeth Avenue, which offers exceptional views of a unique

colony of Pelagic Cormorants and pair of Peregrine Falcons that nest on the underside of the Warren Avenue Bridge.

Trip Report

Billy Frank Nisqually NWR, October 22. Al and Andrew Westphal led a group of eleven members for a long morning bird walk. Fog was thick enough for the first couple of hours to greatly diminish observations, although a few breaks allowed for terrific looks at a perched Red-tailed Hawk at the visitor center and Northern Harriers hunting over the nearby fields. The species tally was 48, a good result considering the fog. Visibility cleared as we reached the big lookout station at the end of the dike trail, and while there were no extraordinary sightings, we got a nice array of birds including great looks at five raptor species, five shorebird species, plus a decent assortment of little brown birds, and all the geese and other waterfowl that are the main reason for a trip to Nisqually this time of year. The most unexpected sighting of the day was a solitary Barn Swallow out over the ponds, clearly a seasonal straggler, and probably desperate to find his southbound friends!

2016 Kitsap Audubon Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 17, 2016 -- To sign up, contact area leader directly

AREA	WHERE	CONTACT	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
1	Port Orchard	Chazz Hesselein	360-633-0486	chazz@hesselein.com
2	West Bremerton	Brad Waggoner	206-780-9581	wagtail24@gmail.com
3	Chico/Seabeck	Lisa Pedersen	360-830-4768	lisa_mp52@yahoo.com
4	East Bremerton	Victor Ulsh	360-479-6900	vic@bradleyscottinc.com
5	South B I	Lee & Kirk Robinson	206-842-0774	leerob9672@gmail.com
6	North B I	George Gerdts	206-842-8138	geopandion@gmail.com
7A	Silverdale/Keyport	Al & Andrew Westphal	206-780-7844	westphalac@aol.com
7B	Poulsbo	Gene & Sandy Bullock	360-394-5635	genebullock@comcast.net
	Owls	Jamie Acker	206-499-7121	owler@sounddsl.com
	Backyard Count	Janine Schutt	360-830-4446	jeschutt@hotmail.com
	CBC Data Compiler	Janine Schutt	360-830-4446	jeschutt@hotmail.com

Kitsap Audubon 2016 Christmas Bird Count

Saturday, December 17, 2016

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a 117-year-old tradition that has become the longest-running wildlife census on the planet. The Kitsap Audubon Society has been conducting these annual counts in Kitsap County for 43 years.

The Kitsap CBC is one of thousands of count circles in the Western Hemisphere involving tens of thousands of volunteers in the U.S. each year.

"We expect to have 60 to 80 volunteers out counting birds on Saturday, December 17," says Gene Bullock, who has been organizing the Kitsap Audubon CBC for more than ten years. "We'll have nine teams covering our 15-mile diameter circle – rain or shine. Our designated circle includes most of Kitsap County, from Poulsbo to Manchester and from Seabeck to Bainbridge Island. It's a perfect excuse to get outdoors and enjoy the hundreds

of thousands of marine birds and waterfowl that winter along our coasts. It's not only fun. It's citizen science that provides important data used by wildlife scientists to monitor the health of our bird populations.

"All skill levels are welcome," Bullock adds. "We have leaders who can identify any bird we're likely to see. But we can always use extra sets of eyes to spot, count and record our sightings. It's a great way to learn if you're a beginner, or sharpen your skills if you're more experienced."

Those unable to join a field team have the option of spending the day counting birds in their own backyard. The backyard count is coordinated by Janine Schutt (jeschutt@hotmail.com). Janine is also Kitsap Audubon's official CBC compiler. She will tally our final results and enter them in the National Audubon database.

The Audubon CBC tradition started in 1900. Commercial market hunters were slaughtering five million birds a year to supply feathers for women's hats. There was also a Christmas tradition called the "Side Hunt," when teams of "sportsmen" competed to see who could kill the most birds and small game in a single day.

Alarmed by the threatened extinction of several species, Audubon ornithologist Frank Chapman organized teams to count birds instead of shooting them. The Audubon CBC has since become the longest-running wildlife census in the world.

The collected data from thousands of CBCs gives wildlife scientists a valuable tool for tracking the health and distribution of North American birds.

To sing up, contact the field team leader directly (see table).

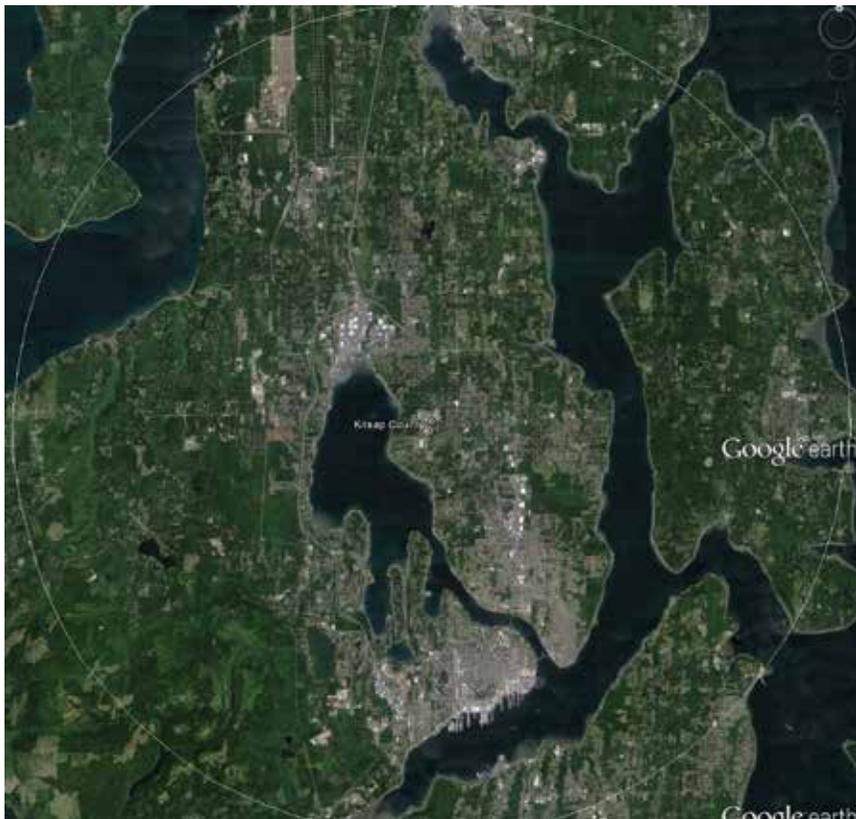


Photo above: Members of the Poulsbo Liberty Bay CBC team, led by Gene and Sandy Bullock. Photo by Gene Bullock

Google Earth photo left shows Kitsap Audubon's designated 15-mile-diameter Christmas Bird Count Circle. Its center point is at the junction of Stampede Blvd. and Fairgrounds Road.

Kitsap Audubon History, Conclusion 1983

By Joan Carson

The KAS membership meeting for October was held in the social hall for the Silverdale Lutheran Church. During this period, we were moving the monthly meetings around the County, hoping to entice more members to turn out. That month's program was given by Max Zahn with the Washington State Game Department. His subject was the Olympic Elk (a.k.a. Roosevelt Elk) and the Department's management program which he had headed up for years. Frank Beyer's Beginning Birding Classes were held 45 minutes before the meeting started. October's Field Trip was led by Bob and Susan Ellis and was a float trip on the Nisqually River Delta plus a visit to the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. It would be conducted by Rainier River Runners and last about three hours. The "Wildlife Sightings" for October contained a number of summer sightings and some new birds for the Kitsap Checklist. Bob Wiltermood at Ruby Marsh in Port Orchard reported a Sora on the Marsh in the spring and this was a first as far as he knew. He also had nesting Virginia rails. Other new and rare sightings from Bob included: Blue-winged teal, solitary sandpiper, Swainson's hawk, black and white warbler, Nashville warbler, dusky flycatcher, pygmy nuthatch. Tom Walker in Silverdale also had a new bird, a bobwhite observed and heard at Lake Symington between May 24 and July 20. Enid Rummel in Port Orchard, had a scrub jay in her yard in August. She had seen one once before, about two years ago. The Carson's yard in Poulsbo still one of the Eastern gray squirrels that

arrived a year before. (Both of these two died with that brain problem). It was several more years before the mass invasion began.

November's membership meeting was given by Dave Brittell, wildlife biologist working with the nongame wildlife in this state. He would explain what the Nongame Division was doing and what it had been involved in for ten years. This was the ten year anniversary of when the voters in Washington State passed Referendum 33, the personalized license plate bill. The money generated from the sale of these plates supports Nongame. Upcoming field trips were announced for November and December. In November, Bob Knott would lead a trip to the Nature Conservancy Land in Hansville and to Salisbury Park and Gamble Bay. Participants would be looking for long-tailed ducks, marbled murrelets, rhinoceros auklets and bald eagles. December's main field trip would be the Annual Christmas Count on December 18. Among the Wildlife Sightings was a report from Donna Seaman who had taken her sister from California to the north coast where they saw hundreds of brown pelicans off LaPush and Rialto Beach. This was in September. Many report of these birds came in during late summer and fall and it was questioned if this might be due to el Nino. Margaret Ashworth wrote a plea for members to start choosing their slides for the January membership program. This "Show and Tell" program was made up from photos taken by members and no more than ten per individual could be included.

It was not a contest, just an opportunity for members to share some of their favorite photos of nature subjects.

December's membership meeting would be devoted to the upcoming December Christmas Bird Count. It would be held on December 18 and followed by a potluck dinner. Jim Hein and Frank Beyer were Count Coordinators and they conducted the membership meeting. This was considered a way for anyone interested in the Count to learn what it was all about and to choose an area they would like to count in. Leaders for the different areas would be available to meet with those that would be in their group. January's field trip was also announced at the meeting. The weekend of January 21 and 22 would take in a Skagit river float trip to view the eagles. The second day would be birding the Skagit Flats for more raptors, snow geese, trumpeter swans, ducks and hopefully some owls.



Pileated Woodpeckers need snag trees. - Carrie Griffis

Wildlife Sightings - Joan Carson

Wildlife Sightings (joanpcarson@comcast.net, or (360-779-2612)

Geese seem to be dominating the Sightings this fall, especially the snow geese. It's a long drive to the Skagit Flats region and where snow geese are the stars of the show. However, this year, smaller numbers are showing up closer to home. The first report came in from Chuck and Joan Bakeman in Sequim on October 31. They reported seeing a flock of sixty or more birds. Traveling with these geese were two trumpeter swans, the first to be seen this fall. Jeanne Snouwaert and I birded the area on November 1st and saw about 100 birds plus the swans and a large flock of Canada geese. Michael Barry, another Sequim resident counted 170 geese on November 10, but said their numbers began dropping and they appeared to be moving on. He also said small flocks of the swans were off Schmuck Road and the Sequim Airport. In addition, thousands of cackling geese and smaller numbers of the larger Canada are feeding in the Schmuck/Grays Marsh area. On November 13, a surprise report from Marlene Turner in Agnew, was of 14 snow geese. Closer to home, Brad Waggoner mentioned he saw a small flock of snow geese over Bainbridge Island in September. Historically, the numbers of snow geese seen on the Olympic Peninsula have been small, as few as one or two birds. It will be interesting to see

what numbers they show up in this year. If you are interested in seeing the geese or the swans, a good place to start in Sequim is the fields where Port Williams Road and Schmuck Road meet. Flocks of Canada geese might be worth a second look this fall. In addition to the growing numbers of cackling geese, some interesting hybrids and possible domestics are traveling with them.



On October 19, Barbara McKenna, on Liberty Bay reported a greylag goose traveling with a flock of Canada geese. November 14, Kathleen Parizo, east of the John Wayne Marina in Sequim and from the Discovery Bay Road, saw a hybrid greylag/swan goose with a flock of Canada geese.

October 30, Kathy Swartz in Port Orchard sent in a photo taken at her feeder where a large band-tailed dove and the smaller mourning dove were feeding side by side while a Steller's jay looked on. October 20, Gene Daniels, Keyport, reported an active double-crested cormorant colony of at least 200 birds are seen southwest of the causeway going into Keyport. He found one partially eaten bird. October 4, Ian Paulsen passed along

reports from Eric Hoffman, and Brad Waggoner of a Lapland longspur at Fay Bainbridge Park. October 3, Bob Wiltermood, Ruby Creek Marsh in Port Orchard sent in a photo of 30 wood ducks on his front lawn, just in front of the Marsh. He also reported a black-chinned hummingbird in the Marsh this summer, another first for the area's growing birdlist.

September 29, Jan

Shandera had a new bird in her area. A Wilson's snipe stayed around for several days feeding near Salmonberry Creek.

September 13, E.G. DeMare, reported an eagle's nest on one of the Keyport power

poles. It was on the town's side of the fence alongside the Base. Two young were in the nest. Has anyone else seen this nest? On September 9, Ray Pardo in Manchester had a new bird in his yard. Two Eurasian collared-doves showed up. He has heard them calling and finally they introduced themselves.

Golden-crowned sparrows, white-crowned sparrows and fox sparrows arriving at the feeders signals it's time to keep an eye out for the rare white-throated sparrows. Almost every year, a few are seen. Be sure and let everyone else know if you see one – and other wildlife sightings you encounter – bears included.

Photo by Jay Wiggs



Kitsap Audubon Society

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Kitsap Audubon Society - Membership Renewal

Make check payable to KAS and mail to KAS, PO Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370

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The mission of the Kitsap Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world through education, environmental study and habitat protection, and to promote awareness and enjoyment of local and regional natural areas.

Visit our website at www.kitsapaudubon.org

