



# THE Kingfisher

**November 10, 2016, Program**

## **Bhutan and its birds** by Brian Bell

Brian Bell will return to give his second program this year for Kitsap Audubon. This time he will talk about the small country of Bhutan and its birds. Bhutan is only about 100 miles wide by 200 miles long; but it has some 620 species of birds, plus unusual mammals. Situated within the Himalayan Mountains, it is 72% forested, with 45 species of Rhododendron.

Brian Bell has been birding for more than 40 years in much of the United States, and parts of Canada, China, Tibet, northeastern India, and in Bhutan. He is coauthor of the popular field guide *Birds of Washington State*. He has taught the Seattle Audubon Master Birder program, and also teaches birding classes for East Side Audubon, and both North Seattle and Shoreline Community Colleges. Brian is a



past President of Washington Ornithological Society and has served on the Board of WOS for eight years.

Brian is a well-known and popular birding guide, and has led numerous field trips for Seattle and Eastside Audubon and the Washington Ornithological Society.

**Photo: Rufous-necked  
Hornbill by Brian Bell**

## **SavePG.org Port Gamble Forest Campaign**

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

Kitsap Audubon and its members have been a very active part of this coalition over the last six years.

Donations can be sent using the <http://www.SavePG.org> website managed by Forterra, the land conservation nonprofit that is leading this campaign.

## **Weather Cancellations**

If our monthly meeting is cancelled because of hazardous driving conditions, we will make every effort to inform you. Local radio and TV usually announce school closings, including Olympic College. If evening classes at Olympic College are cancelled, you should assume our meeting is cancelled.

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## President's Letter

We were so sorry to cancel October's meeting, and miss Dr. John Marzluff's great program on Subirdia. But because of the dangerous weather warnings, we felt it was the only thing to do in the interest of the safety of all concerned. We tried as best we could to get the word out, and hope no one was inconvenienced by the rather last-minute cancellation. We hope to be able to reschedule the program at a later date.

With recent knee surgeries behind me, it's good to begin enjoying some of my favorite activities, like Kitsap Audubon meetings, again. Many thanks to Janine Schutt for taking over for me at the September meeting, and to Diane Bachen for chairing our first Board Meeting of the season.

Although last November's book sale was a real success, there are still a number of wonderful books on birds, birding, and birding trips left over. This year there will be a selection of these books each month, on the counter where we formerly had magazines to share. Please take a few minutes to look them over and if you see something you want, a donation container will be available.

Our annual Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Saturday, December 17th this year. It's always a fun event, and also a chance to participate in serious citizen science. The data our count circles provide, taken as a whole, supply scientists with important information about the success and declines of various bird species. So whether you're a novice birder or "old timer,"



volunteers are needed at all skill levels.

Many thanks to Sharron Ham and Diane Bachen, who have taken responsibility for our Mitten Tree. If you have any yarn you would like to donate, just drop it off at any of our meetings. They will see that it gets to Kathy Swartz, who will pass it on to the women at the prison in Purdy. Our past Mitten Trees have overflowed with the beautiful hats, scarves and mittens made by the women at the prison.

Thank you to all the KAS volunteers and members who help to create this community that I so value and enjoy. Whether you donate hours, dollars, or both, your concern for the welfare of our birds, wildlife and the health of our planet matters a great deal.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving, warmed with the memories of holidays shared with family and friends.

**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.**

# Field Trips & Festivals - Al & Andrew Westphal

**Owl Prowl with Jamie Acker:**  
**Sunday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 a.m.** Jamie's early morning Owl Prowls on Bainbridge Island are a unique experience. He knows all of the owl spots and will call them right into your view. Because of his long-term studies of the Bainbridge owl population, he is on a first-name basis with many of the resident owls. Call him after 4:00 p.m. at 206-499-7121 or e-mail [owler@sounddsl.com](mailto:owler@sounddsl.com) for a reservation, instructions, and meeting location.

**Birding Bainbridge Island:**  
**Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup>.**  
**Brad Waggoner, Leader,**  
[wagtail24@gmail.com](mailto:wagtail24@gmail.com), 206-780-9581 to reserve a spot. One of

Bainbridge Island's elite birders, Brad will lead a trip to a number of the island's hot spots, with observations likely to include waterfowl, shore birds, song birds, and the occasional raptor. Bring a bag lunch to eat during a mid-day break in the field. Meet at the Phelp's Road park & ride lot (near Day Road and Hwy. 305) at 8:30 a.m. **GROUP SIZE IS LIMITED; ADVANCE REGISTRATION REQUIRED.**

**CBC Training and Warmup at Point No Point, Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 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!)

**Kitsap Audubon Annual Christmas Bird Count; Saturday, December 17.**  
 All skill levels welcome. To sign up, contact area leader directly (see list below).

## 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	<a href="mailto:chazz@hesselein.com">chazz@hesselein.com</a>
2	West Bremerton	Brad Waggoner	206-780-9581	<a href="mailto:wagtail24@gmail.com">wagtail24@gmail.com</a>
3	Chico/Seabeck	Lisa Pedersen	360-830-4768	<a href="mailto:lisa_mp52@yahoo.com">lisa_mp52@yahoo.com</a>
4	East Bremerton	Victor Ulsh	360-479-6900	<a href="mailto:vic@bradleyscottinc.com">vic@bradleyscottinc.com</a>
5	South B I	Lee & Kirk Robinson	206-842-0774	<a href="mailto:leerob9672@gmail.com">leerob9672@gmail.com</a>
6	North B I	George Gerdt	206-842-8138	<a href="mailto:geopandion@gmail.com">geopandion@gmail.com</a>
7A	Silverdale/Keyport	Al & Andrew Westphal	206-780-7844	<a href="mailto:westphalac@aol.com">westphalac@aol.com</a>
7B	Poulsbo	Gene & Sandy Bullock	360-394-5635	<a href="mailto:genebullock@comcast.net">genebullock@comcast.net</a>
	Owls	Jamie Acker	206-499-7121	<a href="mailto:owler@sounddsl.com">owler@sounddsl.com</a>
	Backyard Count	Janine Schutt	360-830-4446	<a href="mailto:jeschutt@hotmail.com">jeschutt@hotmail.com</a>
	CBC Data Compiler	Janine Schutt	360-830-4446	<a href="mailto:jeschutt@hotmail.com">jeschutt@hotmail.com</a>

**Point No Point's location, mixed habitat and tidal eddies make it a key link on the Pacific flyway. Tidal rips churn plankton to the surface, bringing "bait balls" of sand lance and herring that attract the larger fish and birds that feed on them. Spectacular feeding frenzies can also cause "birding frenzies," as flashmobs of bird watchers flock to the area. This photo by Don Willott is from a recent Kitsap Audubon "rip tide" field trip led by Al Westphal.**



# Restorative Thinning in Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park - Evan Stoll

When it was purchased by Kitsap County in 2014 the Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park property had been planted in Douglas fir for use as lumber. The trees were spaced close together for optimum harvest, leaving little room or light for native plants or trees. If the park was left alone a natural diverse forest would redevelop in a few hundred years.

In order to speed up that process, benefit wildlife and improve the survival of new trees, Kitsap County Parks is providing "restorative thinning" in PGFHP, as well as other County Parks. In that process smaller and less healthy trees are removed, leaving the biggest individual trees. Clumps of old and young tree are left without any thinning ("skips") to create a two-tiered forest canopy. In other areas

small forest openings ("gaps") are created to provide a diverse habitat for wildlife. The density, spacing, and average size of the trees that are left is based on site-specific considerations.

Shade-tolerant tree species (e.g., western red cedar, western hemlock) may be planted when thinning is completed, to create a second canopy that enhances species diversity and vertical canopy structure. A natural forest and a tree farm can be clearly seen on a short hike on Millie's Trail. The lower section contains a mixture of cedar, maple, alders. The upper part is a tree farm.

When you see restoration work being done in the park, relax. The forest is being weeded for a more productive environment.



**Judy Willott inspects Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park thinning notice. Photo by Don Willott**

## Habitat Steward Training

National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Habitat Steward Training will be offered in Kitsap during November.

The two-week Training will show you how to create wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards, and other private and public areas. The 30-hour training program will take place Mondays, November 7 & 14; Thursdays, November 10 & 17; and Saturdays, November 12 & 19. Monday classes will be held at the Downtown Bremerton Library from 5:30-8:00 p.m.; Thursday classes will be HELD at Poulsbo City Hall from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Saturdays will consist of habitat restoration field trips throughout the county and will last from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

This training is engaging, fun and highly informative and you

get to meet and interact with local conservation professionals and other similarly interested folks! Expert speakers will present on topics such as: rain gardens, gardening for wildlife, native plants, noxious weeds, habitat restoration, and much more!

Cost of the training is \$30 to cover classroom materials. Note: scholarships are available! No one will be turned down due to lack of funds. We will provide coffee, tea, and snacks at each training session – you are welcome to bring a brown bag dinner.

To register for the training, please visit <http://kitsapnwf.brownpapertickets.com/> or email Sarah Bruemmer at [WAHabitatCoordinator@nwf.org](mailto:WAHabitatCoordinator@nwf.org).



**California Condor photographed in Vermillion Cliffs National Park in Arizona by Phil Best.**

# Wintering Birds From the Arctic - Gene Bullock

November can seem bleak. The trees are bare of leaves and the flowers of summer have given up their last withered petal. But avid bird watchers are smiling because November can bring some of the best bird watching of the year. That's when millions of Arctic birds find winter havens in sheltered coves and inlets along the Washington coast.

Of course spring and fall migrations are a feast for eye and ear as tens of millions of birds filter through our forests, making their primordial pit stops along our Pacific flyway. But winter offers a six-month window on some of the year's best bird viewing. Rafts of marine birds linger all winter long, arriving in November and staying as late as May before heading for their northern breeding grounds.

To waterfowl and marine birds that breed in the Arctic, Kitsap looks downright tropical. Our waterways rarely freeze, and our 234 miles of saltwater shoreline are rich in shellfish and the mud-dwelling marine organisms they feed on. Unlike little birds that skulk in the bushes, marine birds feed within easy viewing, and don't tend to hide if watchers stay at a "comfortable" distance. While winter weather can test your resolve, winter birding can be leisurely, giving birders more time to study differences in bill shape, winter plumage, size and behavior.

Kitsap shorelines and waterways host an amazing diversity of wintering birds, including up to five species of loons, six species of grebes, three species of scoters, at

least six species of geese, more than a dozen species of gulls, and dozens of species of ducks and shorebirds. More than 300 species of birds have been seen in Kitsap County.

Wintering flocks can be found almost everywhere along our coastal waters. Point No Point County Park in Hansville is one of Kitsap's premier bird watching locations because of the tidal currents in Admiralty Inlet. Tidal eddies form rip tides that churn the water, bringing up



***Rafts of Surf Scoters feed along Kitsap shorelines during the winter. Jay Wiggs***

plankton that attracts sand lance and herring. The swarming "bait balls" of forage fish lure larger fish and hundreds of feeding birds. Spectacular "feeding frenzies" are a spectacle that can cause "birding frenzies," as flashmobs of bird watchers flock to the area from near and far.

But Kitsap has lots of great vantage points for viewing winter birds, such as Salsbury County Park near Port Gamble, Old Mill Park on Dyes Inlet, the Port Orchard waterfront and, my personal favorite, Lion's Field on the Port Washington Narrows. Kitsap Audubon has a brochure on "Where to Find Birds in Kitsap County" that can be downloaded from our website at [www.kitsapaudubon.org](http://www.kitsapaudubon.org).

Backyard bird watchers relish the winter procession of birds seeking handouts at feeders. The backyard bird conventions can also bring surprise visits from Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks, which make a meal of small birds attracted to feeders.

A decade ago, Anna's Hummingbirds were rarely seen in winter; but as more and more people leave their feeders up all winter, the Anna's have thrived. An Anna's Hummingbird weighs less than a nickel, and can hover and fly forward, backward, even upside down, at speeds reaching 40 miles-per-hour, with hearts beating up to 1220 times a minute. They require a lot of calories to maintain their phenomenal energy output.

Once the more aggressive Rufous Hummingbirds migrate south in early August, they are quickly replaced by Anna's that will visit all winter long if feeders are left up and kept full. It may mean bringing feeders in at night to prevent freezing, or keeping a second feeder ready to swap if one starts to freeze. Wintering hummingbirds outside your window can be a daily delight; but please don't go away on long winter vacations and leave feeders unfilled. Once they learn to depend on your feeders in the winter, they need a dependable supply to survive. Ask a neighbor to replenish feeders while you are away.

Winter birding is not for everyone; but it can provide some of the most varied and dependable wildlife viewing of any season of the year.



## Kitsap Audubon Society

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The Kingfisher is the newsletter of the Kitsap Audubon Society, P.O. Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370. It is published ten times a year, September to June. Submissions from readers are welcome. We reserve the right to edit for space, grammar or legal reasons. Email text or photographs to [genebullock@comcast.net](mailto:genebullock@comcast.net) or mail to Gene Bullock, 1968 NE Lind Ct., Poulsbo WA 98370. Our deadline is the 15th of the preceding month.

To receive your Kingfisher via email and save us the expense of printing and mailing, send your request to [genebullock@comcast.net](mailto:genebullock@comcast.net).

## Kitsap Audubon Society - Membership Renewal

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

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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- Check here to receive your Kingfisher via Email and save us the expense of printing and mailing. Members receive ten issues of the Kingfisher newsletter each year.

### Select Category Of Membership:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Annual Membership \$75   | (Contact KAS Treasurer for LIFE Membership payment options) |

**Additional donation:** Scholarships \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Audubon Adventures \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**The Kitsap Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.**

Your contact information is not sold, disclosed or shared with any entity outside KAS.

*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](http://www.kitsapaudubon.org)**

