

MARCH 2021

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1972



THE Kingfisher

March 11 Program (via Zoom)

A Tale of Two Puffins: Rhinoceros Auklets and Tufted Puffins

Scott Pearson, WDFW Senior Wildlife Research Scientist

Scott will orient you to the remarkable seascape inhabited by both species in coastal Washington. He will focus much of his talk on the work that he and others are conducting to better understand the status and trends of both species, including comparing and contrasting their diet, reproduction and habitat use. Finally, he will discuss population threats, potential conservation actions, and future research and management needs.

Scott is a senior research scientist with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, where he supervises the west-side research team. In addition, Scott conducts his own research on rare and threatened species, with a focus on assessing population trends, identifying factors contributing to population declines, and the effectiveness of management actions. He is currently studying the tufted puffin, marbled murrelet, streaked horned lark, snowy plover, and the impact of pinnipeds on listed salmon.

Photos by Scott Peterson.

March Zoom Program:

Thursday, March 11th, at 7:00 PM

Join with computer or smartphone

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85328919985>

Dial by phone: 253 215 8782

Meeting ID: 853 2891 9985



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Membership database manager urgently needed

Sara Kane has served as our meticulously dedicated membership database manager for the past 15 years; but will step down as of July 1st. We have come to rely heavily on her detailed care and attention to keeping our monthly newsletter mailing lists accurate and up-to-date with new subscriptions, renewals and expirations.

We urgently need someone to step forward and work with Sara during this transition and beyond. Accurate and timely mail and email lists are essential to our survival as a chapter. This is something you can do at home, and would involve just a few hours each month. It does require familiarity with Excel spreadsheets.

Nomination Committee recommends slate of officers

The following slate of officers for the coming year (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022) has been recommended by our Nominating Committee, consisting of Diane Bachen and Robin Dudley. Our annual election will be held during our April meeting. We will also accept additional nominations from our members, if they are submitted before our

April meeting.

President: Lynn Willmott

Vice President: Gene Bullock

Secretary: Judy Willott

Treasurer: Position Open [former treasurers Sandy Bullock and Jennifer Standish are currently serving as "interim" co-treasurers.]

KAS Accepting applications for 2021 scholarships

Kitsap Audubon is accepting applications for up to seven 2021 scholarships, totaling \$11,000. This will bring to more than \$75,500 the scholarships awarded to Kitsap County students by Kitsap Audubon.

Two Ann Sleight Memorial Scholarships of \$3,000 each will be awarded to Kitsap County students who have already completed at least one year in an academic degree program related to our mission of protecting wildlife, habitat and the environment.

Five \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to

graduating high school seniors in Kitsap County who plan to pursue academic degrees in fields related to our mission, such as environmental studies, wildlife biology, marine science and forestry.

Details and application forms are available on our website at <https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/scholarships>. The deadline for mailing or submitting applications online is March 20.

Kitsap Audubon's scholarship program was launched in 2006 by Scholarship Chair Sandy Bullock and Membership Chair Sara Kane.

View previous programs on our website

<https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/video>

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram

Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.Facebook.com/KitsapAububonSociety/>. Kitsap Audubon now has 500 followers on Instagram at <http://www.instagram.com/kitsapaudubon/> Follow us at @kitsapaudubon for beautiful bird photos, event announcements, and general birding education.

Wildlife Sightings - Janine Schutt

On Jan. 20, Milly Bellemere spotted 3 trumpeter swans (2 adults and 1 immature) on Lake Symington. They stayed on the lake for about 2 weeks. Since Jan. 23, Andrea Tiffany has had a pair of intergrade northern flickers visiting her yard. Cyndy Holtz saw a horned grebe close to shore at Rich Passage. While conducting a Climate Watch survey in a clear-cut near Mission Lake (between Green Mountain and Gold Mountain near the Mason County line), Janine Schutt saw 4 male western bluebirds chasing off a Cooper's hawk! Please send your interesting sightings to wildlifesightings@kitsapaudubon.org.

Notable Kitsap Bird Sightings from www.eBird.org:

Jan. 15 near Poulsbo: 1 California quail
Jan. 17 at Fort Ward Park (Bainbridge Island): 1 cedar waxwing
Jan. 19 on Gold Mountain: 1 Townsend's solitaire, 11 western bluebirds
Jan. 19 at Foulweather Bluff Preserve (Hansville): 1 out of season savannah sparrow
Jan. 21 on Bainbridge Island: 1 greater white-fronted goose
Jan. 23 at Foulweather Bluff Preserve: 3 early barn swallows
Jan. 25 at Scenic Beach State Park (Seabeck): 1 northern pygmy-owl
Jan. 26 in Seabeck: 1 eared grebe
Jan. 29 on Kitsap Lake (Bremerton): 2 ruddy ducks
Feb. 6 near Kingston: 1 early female brown-headed cowbird
Feb. 7 near Southworth: 1 herring gull

Feb. 7 at Restoration Point (Bainbridge Island): 1 snow goose, 11 black scoters, 1 black oystercatcher, 90 black turnstones, 30 surfbirds, 1 Wilson's snipe, 1 spotted sandpiper, 1 Iceland gull, 1 merlin

Feb. 9 on Bainbridge Island: 2 northern saw-whet owls

Feb. 10 near Kingston: 2 Virginia rails

Feb. 10 at Point No Point County Park (Hansville): 2 ancient murrelets

Feb. 12 at Chico Creek (near Bremerton): 1 American dipper

Feb. 13 on Bainbridge Island: 1 white-throated sparrow

Feb. 14 near Poulsbo: 1 hermit thrush

Photo of male Anna's Hummingbird in the snow by Janine Schutt.



Save the date: Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park Master Plan public meeting – March 16

As described in our February Kingfisher article, please join us in planning next steps for this amazing park!

When: Tuesday, March 16, from 6:30 to 8: p.m.

Where: Virtual meeting - Register on the new Master Plan website, which goes live on March 3rd at portgambleforestpark.com

Bird of the Month: Brown Creeper

by Janine Schutt

The brown creeper is a small, friendly, mostly quiet songbird of Kitsap's forests. Resembling a fluttering leaf in flight, a brown creeper may land on a tree trunk right next to someone who may be completely unaware of its presence. Here are some fascinating facts about the brown creeper:

- North America's only member of the treecreeper family.
- Found throughout the West, from the coast of Alaska to Mexico, and the Northeastern US. Many breed in southern Canada and winter in the South and across the plains states.
- Year-round resident of Washington's coniferous, deciduous, and mixed forests, but prefers mature Douglas fir trees.
- Nearly impossible to see from behind, as the brown tones in its plumage disappear into the pattern of the bark for effective camouflage.
- Easier to detect from the side, where its contrasting white belly is visible.
- Forages by creeping upward, while spiraling

around a tree, probing for spiders and insects hiding under tree bark.

- Uses its long, decurved bill to snatch up the unsuspecting arthropods.
- Has large claws and a long, stiff tail for hitching its way up a tree.
- Capable of clinging to the underside of branches, but cannot move downward. After climbing high in one tree, it will fly to the base of another tree to begin a new ascent.
- Male's territorial song resounds throughout the forest.
- Nests on snags, usually building a nest cup under a large piece of peeling tree bark. Parents cautiously approach the nest from beneath it.
- Parents split the brood of 5 or 6 chicks and each parent cares for half the brood for two or more weeks after they have fledged
- A recognized indicator species of a healthy forest ecosystem.

Photos by Janine Schutt.



Court rules that Army Corps permitting of Industrial Shellfish Aquaculture Unlawful

Court Agrees Army Corps Violated Several Key Environmental Laws.

(Seattle, WA) -- The U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed Center for Food Safety's (CFS) and Coalition to Protect Puget Sound's (CPPSH) victory in their lawsuits seeking to revoke the Clean Water Act general permit used to authorize the vast majority of commercial shellfish aquaculture in Washington state.

"This is a major victory for our shorelines and marine wildlife, and an unmistakable message to the Corps that it cannot flout its duties to protect our environment," said Amy van Saun, senior attorney at Center for Food Safety and counsel in the case. "The Court confirmed what we have argued for years: Industrial aquaculture has seriously harmful environmental impacts and regulators must rigorously evaluate them when deciding whether or not to allow it."

In October 2019, the Federal District Court for the Western District of Washington ruled in CFS's favor, finding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) issuance of Nationwide Permit 48 (NWP 48) for commercial shellfish aquaculture unlawful, including for failure to adequately evaluate cumulative impacts to the environment from the tens of thousands of acres of aquaculture. In June 2020, the court vacated the permit, finding that the Corps' errors went to the "heart" of the Clean Water Act and National Environmental Policy Act and the potential harm to the environment outweighed the economic consequences. Although the district court did allow some activities to go forward, including planting through the remaining 2020 season and harvest through March 2022, the aquaculture industry groups appealed the decision and appellate argument was held on February 2, 2021.

The 3-judge appellate panel unanimously agreed with the District Court, holding that the Corps failed to support its approval of NWP 48, violating the Clean Water Act and National Environmental Policy Act. Describing the Corps' reasoning as "illogical," the Court focused on its failure to analyze the admitted cumulative impacts of adding industrial-scale shellfish aquaculture to an already-impaired environment, and its reliance on a "limited scientific study" to justify a much broader determination of minimal impacts. The Court further rejected the Industry Appellants' attempt to supply reasoning for the Corps that the agency itself never articulated. Finally, the Court confirmed that the Corps may not rely entirely on later review to justify a nationwide permit and national environmental assessment.

"The Coalition to Protect Puget Sound is very pleased with the court's ruling. It sends a clear message to the Corps that things need to change. We hope the Corps is listening," said Laura Hendricks, director of the Coalition to Protect Puget Sound Habitat.

As to the district court's partial nullification of the permit, the Court of Appeals held that full vacatur is the presumptive remedy and upheld Judge Lasnik's compromise remedy, rejecting the Industry Appellants' claim that the court was required to allow "nearly 900 aquaculturists to continue their operations in full without any further review by the Corps." The appeal was pursued by industry trade group PCSGA and Taylor Shellfish. The Corps itself did not appeal the Judge's decision and has already re-issued NWP 48, along with 15 other NWPs, although the Biden Administration has signaled it will review these NWPs. CFS and other groups recently notified the Corps of their intent to sue for failure to ensure the protection of endangered species before issuing these permits.

Join Puget Sound Bird Observatory for the 2021 season of the Regional Wetland Secretive Bird Monitoring Project

We need your help! Whether you have a few hours to offer or would like to take a deep dive into surveying wetland birds across the region, Puget Sound Bird Observatory (PSBO) project managers will match your availability with our needs for avian monitors across this project to seek out American Bittern, Sora, Virginia Rail and Green Heron within the Puget Sound area. There will be approximately 200 wetlands that need surveyed this season. Each wetland has between 1 and 5 survey points, with most sites having 3 points. Each point takes roughly 20 minutes to fully survey. The three survey windows for this year's effort span from March 29, 2021, to June 13, 2021, with lots of opportunity to choose dates and locations that meet your availability and willingness to travel. Additional information can be found on the website: www.pugetsoundbirds.org

COVID-19 safety protocols have been developed, including delivering full training manuals and remote tutorials for all community science participants.

We highly value the time and talent gifted us by community science participants across our region and provide all-encompassing training so that all levels of birders can participate. Helping with this unique bird surveying effort with PSBO is a great way to learn more about the birds and other wildlife in your local area. Surveying often takes you to areas that you would not normally visit, and creates excellent opportunities to expand your bird-sense. To participate in this effort, you will receive training to develop skills, such as GPS navigation, broadcast surveying, distance sampling, and habitat identification.

For additional information about the project and/or to volunteer to help with this project, please email Cindy Easterson at eastersonfamily@msn.com or call (425) 876-1055

Photos of American Bittern and Pacific Wren by Mand Weger.



National Audubon member?

National Audubon Members receive **complimentary** copies of our membership newsletter, the *Kingfisher*; but our programs are supported entirely by our dues-paying chapter members. Please consider becoming a chapter member and helping support our outstanding educational programs, multifaceted community outreach and passionate advocacy for birds, wildlife habitat and the environment. You'll find a membership application on the back page of every issue of the *Kingfisher*.

Should you feed birds? - Gene Bullock

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife leans toward discouraging bird feeding because of the additional hazards it introduces. They are not wrong about the hazards. Encouraging birds to congregate at feeders can help spread disease, and makes them more vulnerable to predators.

Audubon encourages **responsible** bird feeding, and focuses on measures that minimize those risks.

Audubon has some compelling arguments on its side:

1 – Bird feeding is a powerful way to engage people -- especially families and children -- in a life-long fascination with birds and nature studies. And simply stated, people want to save what they know and love. According to surveys by the U.S. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, birdwatching is second only to gardening as our favorite outdoor pastime. It even outranks hunting and fishing. It has become an especially welcome respite and antidote for the pandemic lockdown.

2 – Birdwatching and related book, equipment, travel, and other related businesses generate more than \$100 billion in annual U.S. revenues (based on U.S.DFW surveys), pumping billions of dollars into local businesses. Its economic importance further spurs efforts to protect birds – and because of the dramatic declines caused by climate change and other man-made threats, our birds need all the friends and advocates they can get.

3 – There is ample evidence that some bird species are thriving because of bird feeders; as well as evidence that many species are coming through the winter in better health because of the supplemental feeding.

Dont interrupt winter feeding of hummingbirds

The Anna's Hummingbird is a notable example of species that have directly benefited from winter bird feeders. Twenty years ago they were a rare winter visitor in the Pacific Northwest. They extended their range further north as more and more people left their nectar feeders up all winter. They are now regular visitors to winter feeders as far north as Southern Alaska. Taking hummingbird feeders down during severe winter weather can threaten their survival because they have learned to rely on this source of supplemental feeding. And contrary to WFDW warnings, hummingbird feeders do not contribute to the salmonella problem.

Salmonellosis

Salmonella is a normal inhabitant of the bird gut; but can multiply to infectious levels if feces are allowed to accumulate. The best solution is regular cleaning and sanitizing using a solution one part bleach to nine parts water. Follow with a clean water rinse and dry.

If you encounter dead or dying pine siskins, the usual advice is to take seed and suet feeders down for a week or two to prevent previously sickened birds from re-infecting feeders.

The main irruption of pine siskins, brought on by the failure of seed and cone crops across northern Canada, seems to have subsided, and the need for drastic measures greatly lessened. However, the need to keep feeders clean will never go away. It's at the heart of **responsible** bird feeding.

Kitsap Audubon Society

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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 or mail to Gene Bullock, 1754 NE Mesford Rd., Unit 5, 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.

Kitsap Audubon Society - Membership Renewal

Join/Renew online at <http://www.kitsapaudubon.org/membership>

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

Name _____ Phone _____

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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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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 <https://www.kitsapaudubon.org>

