Join Tahoma Audubon for a program on April 27, when Ann Nightingale, from Rocky Point Bird Observatory, will present a slide illustrated talk on her work monitoring migration habits of the Northern Saw-whet Owl in Victoria, BC, and a nest box project in Boardman, OR. This event is open to the public—all are welcome. Doors open at 6:30 pm for socializing and the program will run from 7-8 pm. Located at the Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 S. Tyler in Tacoma.

Join Tahoma Audubon on May 25, for a program featuring John Marzluff, the author of Welcome to Subirdia. Marzluff will reveal that our suburbs and city parks are often remarkably rich in bird diversity—holding more species than either wilderness areas or urban centers. In fact, suburbs may play a key role in preventing loss of species in the face of dramatic disruptions like climate change. This event is open to the public—all are welcome. Doors open at 6:30 pm for socializing and the program will run from 7-8 pm. Located at the Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 S. Tyler in Tacoma.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S Corner

Join the flock! Spring is full of ways to get involved

It was a delight to get the chance to meet and talk with so many of you at our 48th Annual Meeting and Celebration in February! I hope that you enjoyed the opportunity to meet the Board and staff, learn about our award recipients, explore the museum, and socialize with fellow members and supporters of Tahoma Audubon Society. I also hope that you are feeling energized and looking forward to taking flight with all of the upcoming ways to engage with Tahoma Audubon Society in 2017. I am also pleased to share that we had five individuals from Tahoma Audubon Society join a larger group of individuals from across the state for the 2017 Audubon Advocacy Day. The Audubon Washington staff shared that they had a total of 95 people sign up, which included 27 teen leaders from Seward Park Audubon, Seattle Aquarium, and Woodland Park Zoo. Over 50 percent of the participants this year were going for the first time to the Capitol to talk with their elected decision-makers, which is fantastic! Across all participants in the 2017 Advocacy Day, 27 legislative districts were represented, which included 4 Republican-only districts, 7 Mixed districts, and 16 Democrat-only districts. Having this diversity of representation from participants and legislative districts in the state of Washington, as well as nationally, is why we have earned the reputation that The Atlantic magazine recently described as “one of the oldest and most centrist of conservation-minded groups” in the country.

In the words of David Yarnold, National Audubon Society’s CEO and President, “In a polarized political climate, Audubon’s membership is unique, with members and donors from across the political spectrum, including Democrats, Republicans and Independents. What will your legacy be?”

By giving through your will, you can:
• Make a generous gift intention without depleting income
• Join the Feathered Nest Circle – our legacy society
• Honor or memorialize a loved one
• Reduce your estate taxes

We are here to help!
Call 253-565-9129 or email: andream@tahomaaudubon.org

We are deeply grateful for your generosity!

We have a lot of great opportunities to participate in our mission of connecting people to nature.

Join the flock! Spring is full of ways to get involved

We are community builders, not community dividers because birds create common ground.” And the birds need your continued support!

I hope you continue to look for ways to engage with Tahoma Audubon Society this spring! We have a lot of great opportunities to participate in our mission of connecting people to nature through conservation, education, and recreation, which you can learn more about in this edition, as well as following our monthly electronic newsletter, following us on Facebook, and regularly checking the website for updates.

Thank you for your ongoing support, interest, and engagement with Tahoma Audubon Society! The birds, and our environment, thank you!

The Pierce County Chapter of The National Audubon Society
Located in University Place’s Adriana Hess Wetland Park
2917 Morrison Rd W, University Place, WA 98466
253-565-9278 • www.TahomaAudubon.org

The Audubon Washington staff

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visit tahomaaudubon.org/waystogive

Tahoma Audubon Society’s Feathered Nest Circle

We’re pleased to honor our visionaries who have named Tahoma Audubon in their estate plans making them members of the Feathered Nest Circle. This list updated as of March 16, 2017.

Anonymous (3)  
Jane Brosius  
Dick & Terry Carkner  
Terry* & Bev Conner  
Ruth Daugherty*  
Terry* & Bev Conner  
Jane Brosius  
Anonynous (3)  

Melissa Newell  
Donna Cooper Pepos*  
Barbara Petersen  
Marcus Roening & Heather Ballash  
Sarah C. Slout*  
Beatrice E. Thompson*  
Darby Veec & Kristin Lynett

*Deceased

What will your legacy be?

Making a gift by will is easy!
If you want to help Tahoma Audubon connect people with nature for generations to come, consider including Tahoma Audubon Society in your estate plans.

By giving through your will, you can:
• Make a generous gift intention without depleting income

We are deeply grateful for your generosity!
Tahoma Audubon partners with National Wildlife Federation to train Habitat Stewards

By Emily Kalnicky, PhD

During the month of February, 23 individuals from across Pierce County, WA, including myself, met every Wednesday evening in the Adriana Hess Audubon Center’s conference room as a part of a specialized training program. National Wildlife Federation and Tahoma Audubon Society partnered to offer this training to teach participants how to create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards, and other private and public areas. The program was engaging, fun, and highly informative. By completing the training program, all 23 participants in the program are official “NWF Habitat Stewards” and are committed to a minimum of 30-hours of volunteer work in and around Pierce County, applying the skills learned during the program.

Participants in the February 2017 cohort met and learned from a variety of local conservation professionals, including: South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Mussel Watch; Tahoma Audubon Society; Pierce County Parks and Recreation; Pierce County Conservation District; National Wildlife Federation; WSU Paterno, the PCD liaison for TAS.

needing clearing will be identified by Belinda Himalayan blackberries and English ivy. Places to clean out invasive plants at the park, including the project will be greatly appreciated.

Your chance to appreciate Adriana Hess Wetland Park

By Sally Larson

University Place Parks has designated the Adriana Hess Wetland Park as one of their parks to be beautified. This is an exciting time for Tahoma Audubon and Adriana Hess Wetland Park. Please consider being part of the effort to restore and improve our home park.

Festive towel by Helen Engle (left), shares the park’s back story.

Parks Appreciation Day Work Party
Saturday, April 22, 9 am – 12 pm

After the sites have been cleared, Belinda will help Tahoma Audubon volunteers rehabilitate the site with native plants provided by the Conservation District. We are so lucky to have this support! In addition Tahoma Audubon, University Place Parks and the Conservation District have joined together to form an Adriana Hess Habitat Stewardship team. The first meeting for that team was Saturday, March 25.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Parks Appreciation April 22 event, please register through our online calendar at http://bit.ly/TAScalendar or by calling 253-565-9278. We can only take 15 people on the 22nd, so sign up soon to reserve your spot.

To ensure your chance to join us next year mark your 2018 calendar for the first Saturday after Presidents’ Day and join us for the second annual Thelma Gilmur Birthday walk. Cake and ice cream will be served. See you then.

Conserve Matter

Morrison Rd W). There are also two field trip sessions, which will be held on two Saturdays: May 6 and 27. The program is $30, which includes a t-shirt, 24 hours of hands-on training, engaging field trips and a comprehensive training manual with local resources, instruction from local professionals, and continued support from National Wildlife Federation and Tahoma Audubon Society staff. Scholarships are available! No special skills necessary, just a desire and commitment to learning! For more information, and to register: http://nwtaudoma.brownpapertickets.com/

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Celebrating the first annual birthday party at Thelma Gilmur Park

By Sally Larson

Sixteen Auduboners came together Saturday morning February 25, to celebrate the Thelma Gilmur first annual birthday party at Thelma Gilmur Park. Diane Yorgenson-Quinn, one of the attendees, was so pleased to have this walk because she had told Thelma for years she should lead a walk at her park and now Audubon is doing just that. Three former presidents of Audubon attended along with three new members coming to their first walk, plus Thelma’s daughter-in-law Deanna Gilmour, and Audubon’s own historian, Helen Engle. After Helen introduced us to the history of the park we started the half mile walk around the park. We broke up in small groups stopping along the way to enjoy the surroundings. My group was trying to decide if we were hearing a Pacific Wren and one of us had a bird song app on her phone. We played the app and were pretty sure we had the correct bird but the identification was verified when the wren answered our phone’s call.”

We identified 19 species and saw 65 total birds. A really good bird day for an hour walk. We ended the morning with cake and ice cream for all and a chance to talk about Thelma and her legacy to Tahoma Audubon and Pierce County.

To ensure your chance to join us next year mark your 2018 calendar for the first Saturday after Presidents’ Day and join us for the second annual Thelma Gilmur Birthday walk. Cake and ice cream will be served. See you then.
By Joy Dworkin

Join us Sunday, April 23rd from 1:30-3:30 at the Tacoma Nature Center, 1919 South Tyler Street in Tacoma, for the first annual “Poetry in the Park” event! Simply come and listen. Or better yet, come and read aloud a favorite nature-themed poem. Please register to attend this free event and indicate if you will be reading a poem (your own or another author’s). You can register online at www.tahomaaudubon.org or by calling on “Visit our online Sunday link” or you can call 253-565-9278 and leave a message with the front desk or the answering machine.

Poetry and Tahoma Audubon is a natural pairing. Like bird-watching, poetry is all about slowing down, listening, and being receptive. Poems are works of conservation, bringing the past forward into the future. And poetry is a time-honored way for people to reestablish a sense of intimacy with nature.

“Poetry in the Park” will also become a regular means of growing our membership each spring as we invite local poets of all ages to participate. Feel free to help us reach out beyond Tahoma Audubon community members. The event is open to the public and it is free.

Spring Birds of Washington State (3 sessions)
A perfect class for beginner- or intermediate-level birders. Learn to identify over 205 spring bird species found in Washington. Class includes: identification of species, habitat and season, locations, and tools needed. Also presented are birding techniques and ethics. The instructor, David Kaynor, is a member of the Washington Ornithological Society. Required materials: National Geographic Society Field Guide to North American Birds, 6th Edition.

Fee: $50/TAS member, $50/other registrants

Bird Watching in Wash. State (6 sessions, 1 field trip)
A perfect class for beginner- or intermediate-level birders. Learn to identify nearly 300 bird species found in Washington. Class includes: identification of species, habitat and season, locations, and tools needed. Also presented are birding techniques, safety and ethics. A field trip will enhance your learning experience. The instructor, David Kaynor, is a member of the Washington Ornithological Society. Required materials: National Geographic Society Field Guide to North American Birds, 6th Edition.

Fee: $50/TAS member, $50/other registrants

Spring

April 26 – May 10, weekly on Wednesdays, 2 – 4 pm
Adrianna Hess Audubon Center (2917 Morrison Rd W, University Place, WA)
Field trip, May 10 from 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Adrianna Hess Audubon Center (2917 Morrison Rd W, University Place, WA)

By Marsha Williams, Chairperson

A great big THANK YOU to the many donor members of the Tahoma Audubon Society for your generous support for the Nature Day Camp Scholarship Fund and the Teen Internship at Tacoma Nature Center. Your donations make those programs possible again this year. Another big THANK YOU to the former teen interns: Daisy Douglas, Brandon Hawn, Caitlyn Mitchell, and Breanna Smith, who spoke so eloquently of their own experiences as Teen Interns. Those intelligent, hard-working, generous, young adults are committed to environmental education. They demonstrate the value of the few dollars TAS invests in this program. Donations are still needed to meet our goal of $5000.

Another big thank you to Brenda Miller for her work on the Great Backyard Bird Count at Adrianna Hess on February 18. Adrianna Hess Wetland Park and our Nature Center is a perfect site for this event. Brenda introduced specimens and explained field marks to the families who attended, then led a nature walk in the park and counted more than 20 species—including a Varied Thrush. We all enjoyed watching the process as Brenda entered data from the walk and checked other entries in the area on the website. This citizen science project deserves our attention and continued support. Brenda made it happen this year.

Sally Larson writes about the walk at Thelma Gilmar’s Park in another article in this Towhee. She, too, deserves a big thank you for her stewardship work on that lovely park. More will happen there soon.

Joy Dworkin explains our Poetry in the Park activity coming April 23.

We hope this new event will attract both nature lovers and poetry lovers. Joy moved to the area last September and we welcome her enthusiasm. Thanks for joining Tahoma Audubon, Joy!

Finally, another thank you to Noel and Bill Hager for their 7 year commitment to the TAS Field Trip program. Noel and Bill coordinated 15 leaders on more than 100 field trips in 2016 alone. Bill writes about the surveys that will be conducted in April for Field Trip Leaders and our members and non-members who experience those trips. Please take the time to respond online, so our field trips continue to “connect people with nature.”

A Penguin Told Me a Secret

By Diane Yorgason-Quinn

You could call it a true-life wildlife adventure. You could call it a superb photography portfolio. You could call it a children’s book (which the authors do). You could call it an illustrated travelogue to South Georgia Island. You could call it philosophy. Or you could just look at the pictures. Whatever you do, you will enjoy this beautifully presented book of Charles Bergman’s photos of King Penguins on one of his many visits to the Antarctic with his wife and co-writer, Susan Mann.

Chuck is a former editor of this newsletter, The Towhee, and currently is a volunteer at the JBLM swift chimney where local birders are counting Vaux Swifts and gathering data on another fabled species of bird. In fact, an article he wrote on our swifts will appear in BirdWatching Magazine this fall, so watch for it! He’s written birding articles for all the major periodicals including Audubon, National Geographic, Smithsonian, etc. In his spare time, he’s a professor at PLU, often taking students to Antarctica with him.

This book happened to arise concurrently with the birth of Chuck’s first grandson. He was on South Georgia Island on one his many trips, and while thinking of that baby, a King Penguin approached him. That encounter is recorded in this book.

A Penguin Told Me a Secret (Xlibris, 2016) is readily available (Amazon et al). It would be the perfect accompaniment perhaps to a plush penguin toy for any child. Or for yourself.

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A new spirit for field trips with Tahoma Audubon

Two of the major roles of TAS are to "educate about nature" and "create experience with birds and wildlife."

These roles were exemplified in January when leaders Faye McEachen Hands and Jerry Broadus took 40 students from SAMI (Tacoma Public Schools’ Science and Math Institute) on a field trip around Pt. Defiance. For many students, this was their first time bird watching, and the experience was well received.

In this spirit, TAS is in the process of enhancing its field trip program to make bird watching more accessible, enjoyable, and informative. To do this, we need to hear from field trip leaders, fellow Audubon chapters, members.

By conducting three surveys, we want to learn:

1) From field trip leaders: How to best support them and recruit others to their fold.

2) From our fellow Audubon chapters: What they do "best" and ways to share information and coordinate activities.

3) From members and non-members: What is the current interest and participation in field trips, and what ideas do people have for the future. This survey is online now, and your input is greatly appreciated. It can be completed by anyone, even if you have not participated yet in field trips. We truly want to hear from YOU! Please enter this link into your web browser to complete the survey: https://goo.gl/forms/ShZQXjXpP5k2We welcome your comments and will provide updates in the Tawhee.

— Bill & Noel Hagens, Field Trip Coordinators

Feb

May

Fort Steilacoom Park

May 2nd --8:00 AM to 11:00 AM

(Fort complete description, see our website.)

Second Sundays

Don't miss your chance to visit this special place! Morse Wildlife Preserve, in Graham, WA, is a privately owned nature preserve open to the public on special days throughout the year, including Second Sundays in the months of April-October from 10am-4pm. Second Sundays offer an excellent opportunity to come and learn about becoming a Morse Wildlife Preserve docent. We need help welcoming visitors and student groups through the year. Email: morsewildlifepreserve@gmail.com In partnership with Tahoma Audubon Society, Forterra NW, Tacoma Nature Center, & the Morse Force volunteers.

Call 253.565.9278 for directions.

No pets are allowed; carving is encouraged.

April 9

May 14

June 11

July 9

August 13

Sept 10

October 8

2017 Schedule

April-October from 10am-4pm. Second Sundays offer an excellent opportunity to come and learn about becoming a Morse Wildlife Preserve docent. We need help welcoming visitors and student groups through the year. Email: morsewildlifepreserve@gmail.com In partnership with Tahoma Audubon Society, Forterra NW, Tacoma Nature Center, & the Morse Force volunteers.

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Habitat Hopping – Trip series!

Habitats, including marshes, fields, woodlands and the advantage of spring migration, covering a broad range of ecosystems. We will take one excursion to drive Mounts Road. We will take
wednesday, may 3, 30 am – 12 pm. Trip Leader: Rosanne Becker. A variety of bird habitats will be explored, including salt water, pond and forest. We will meet at the parking area by the pond. The Washington Bird Dash (overnight trip)
Sullivan, David Batker. For this Birdathon trip, Birdathoners may choose to go on one or both parts of the trip. The trip will begin at 8 am by walking the trails at the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (Nisqually NWR). Afterwards, we will have lunch (please bring) and set forth to carpool to Gray’s Harbor National Wildlife Refuge and from there to Ocean Shores on another birding adventure until dusk. The day ends with dinner to recap the day’s counts and activities. Participants are welcome to come for the entire day or for just the Nisqually or Ocean Shores portion. If you choose to do just Ocean Shores, you should plan to be at Nisqually NWR by 11 am for carpooling. When registering, please indicate if you will do the full day or just a portion of the day. Carpooling logistics will be worked out in advance of the trip because vehicles cannot be left at the NWR after dark, so we encourage you to make the entire trip by car. For more information, please contact Mike Sullivan at 360-568-4643.

Turbotown Field Trips

These one-of-a-kind trips are for participating Birdathoners only—but anyone can be a Birdathoner! Find out how to become one above or by going online to www.tahomaaudubon.org/birdathon.

Important Registration Details:
• Registration for these trips opens Tuesday, April 4 at 4 pm and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.
• On or after April 11 at 4 pm, you can register at http://bit.ly/tahbtrandtrips or by calling 253-565-9129.
• When you register, you will be asked to donate $5 (you can give more, too) to kick off your fundraising page.

Birding With the DuPont Dudes
Saturday, April 29, 8 am – 2 pm. Trip Leaders: Nathaniel Snucker & Bill Brooks. Limit: None.
Join DuPont birding dudes Nathaniel and Bill on a trip around the DuPont area. We’ll meet at the DuPont Community Center parking lot (301 Badger Ave, DuPont), and then the majority of the day will be spent walking trails with one excusion to drive Mounts Road. We will take advantage of spring migration, covering a broad range of habitats, including marshes, fields, woodlands and the Sound. We will be out all morning so don’t forget to bring a lunch, water and snacks!

Habitat Hopping – Trip series!

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is in Snohomish County, straddling the water between Stanwood and Camano Island. This has lately been a hot spot for Short-eared and occasionally Long-eared Owls. In this season it’s also a good viewing area for a nice Great Blue Heron heronry, where we saw approximately 20 nests with many birds in attendance. First off we saw a large white raptor and got excited! Optics revealed it to not be as white as it appeared against the dark background, but still a very pale Rough-winged Hawk! This was a bonus since most of them have gone north now. This was a stunning individual who flew back and forth over the flooded fields, showing its wing markings and even hovering for us! Also in attendance were several Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers. While part of the group tramped off to look for an owl in the thicket, several of us stayed back to see if it showed up there, and we were treated to the beginnings of a familiar song which turned out to be a Western Meadowlark who must have known it was the equinox! He’ll be going across the mountains to eastern Washington right away now! Daffy Ducks (Mallards in this case) lined the flooded fields where hundreds of Swallows, mainly Violet-Green, found flying fodder to refresh them during their migration. Then our other group came rushing back with the news of a Short-eared Owl that had gotten spooked and flown up for them. While they were regaling us with this news, a Wilson’s Snipe flew overhead! Feeling pretty good about the day so far, we headed to the Skagit Valley, seeing small flocks of swans there and there from the road where there were no pull-outs. Bald Eagles, including several at nests, confirmed that they were staying to breed and not going north. Then we found a large flock of Snow Geese! Unfortunately, they stayed far from the road, so we headed for the daffodil fields and were thrilled at the large expanses of sunny yellow!

Since this was billed as a low-impact day, we really celebrated the day by eating at the Farmhouse Restaurant on Highway 20, flush with the visual treats of the morning. But first we had to pass the gauntlet of Brewer’s Blackbirds in the parking lot, the males of whom were full of hormones and displaying in a way not commonly seen, puffing up for their call, looking rather evil, but females were noticing!

Now stuffed with great food, we started south again, taking in the Roozengarde bulb farm and gift shop, where we could tiptoe through the daffies a little ourselves. While posing for pictures, a couple of us were buzzed by an Anna’s Hummingbird, itself getting ready for the glut of flowers that were about to open! On the road again, we were thrilled by a couple of Kestrels. Then back down to Fir Island Road, where we hit the jackpot! That Snow Goose flock was right next to the road across the street from the Hayton Reserve, where plantings were designed to attract them. These birds were so used to gawkers they didn’t mind us at all. The kept a closer look at the Bald Eagle monitoring their movements from a nearby tree than us. Richard Smethurst and Mary Pearse spotted a Blue Goose in the flock, too! This is a game birders play, finding the odd one out. One version you may have experienced is looking for the Eurasian Wigeon among a flock of American Wigeons, or a Eurasian Green-winged Teal among a teal flock.

If you’re counting, we saw at least 100,000 daffodils and a single tulip. It was a pretty good day topped off by more small flocks of swans along the way to the freeway, mostly Trumpeters. Then we got to spend a while gazing at the Space Needle while making our very slow way through Seattle. But our carpools had lots of birds to talk about on the way home, so it wasn’t so bad!

To see more of our photos plus a few little videos, check out the Tahoma Audubon FLICKR site: tinyurl.com/lk7xk92

Bye-bye Snow Geese and Swans. Hello spring flowers!
A birding trip with students from Tacoma School District’s Science and Math Institute (SAMI)

By Jerry Broadus, TAS President

The Tahoma Audubon Society has special interest in connecting young people to the environment through science and math education. TAS President Noel Hagens received a special request for a January birding trip in Pt. Defiance Park from Matthew Lonsdale, a biology teacher at Tacoma School District’s SAMI (the Science and Math Institute). SAMI offers a “J” term for its students, in which the kids break down into interest groups. This year some of the high schoolers who have a special interest in science will learn about “citizen science;” according to Matthew. The forty students wanted the opportunity to experience the birds in Pt. Defiance, where the school is located. So, at 9:00 AM Faye McAdams Hands and I met with Matthew and the students in the Education Building at the Point Defiance Zoo. Faye and I brought binoculars from TAS and we began by handing them out and demonstrating how to use them. Then we visited the overlook to the zoo, where we watched Anna’s Hummingbirds display and practiced with our binoculars looking at several assorted song birds. Then we walked to the park duck pond to view American Wigeons, Mallards, and a Northern Flicker. Following that we proceeded to the waterfront walk where we saw Bald Eagles, Double Crested Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, Common Gold-eeyes, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Mergansers, Glaucous-winged Gulls, and other birds including a Pacific Wren that wanted us out of his territory. We all walked safely to Owen Beach and back to the Education Building. Overall a fine trip considering the cold weather we had been experiencing. Faye and I had a chance to interact with some of the students, and many expressed interest in other Audubon activities. We had a lot of fun.

We look forward to a possible repeat, probably in the Spring, when there will be more birds and when, with a little more time, we could describe some bird related Citizen Science opportunities.

A special thanks to Bill, Noel, and Matthew for setting this up.

Upcoming presentations from the Advanced Birding Club

Noah Strycker presents: Birding Without Borders: An Epic World Big Year

Join the Advanced Birding Club (ABC) of Tahoma Audubon and the Slater Museum of Natural History at the University of Puget Sound as they present writer, author and bird nerd Noah Strycker of Oregon, who became the first human to see more than half of the planet’s bird species in a single, year-long, round-the-world birding trip. Anything could have happened, and a lot did. He was scourged by blood-sucking leeches, suffered fever and sleep deprivation, survived airline snafus and car breakdowns and mudslides and torrential floods, skirted war zones, and had the time of his life. Birding on seven continents and carrying only a pack on his back, Strycker enlisted the enthusiastic support of local birders to tick more than 6,000 species, including Adelie Penguins in Antarctica, a Harpy Eagle in Brazil, a Spoon-billed Sandpiper in Thailand, and a Green-breasted Pitta in Uganda. He shared the adventure in real time on his daily blog (audubon.org/noah) in 2015, and now he reveals the inside story. Noah Strycker, 31, is Associate Editor of *Birding* magazine, the author of two well-regarded books about birds, and a regular contributor of photography and articles to all major bird magazines as well as other media; he blogs regularly for the American Birding Association. Strycker set a world Big Year record in 2015, and his book about the experience will be released in November 2017. His first book, *Among Penguins*, chronicles a field season working with Adélie Penguins in Antarctica (Oregon State University Press, 2011) and his second, *The Thing with Feathers*, celebrates the fascinating behaviors of birds and human parallels (Riverhead Books, 2014). Strycker is also a competitive tennis player, has run five marathons, and hiked the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada. He is based in Oregon, where his backyard has hosted more than 100 species of birds. Visit his website at: www.noahstrycker.com

Wednesday, April 12, 6:45-8:30 pm
Thompson Hall, Room 175
University of Puget Sound
1565 N Union Ave, Tacoma WA

Sievert Rohwer presents: Molt Migration in Western Passerines

Join the Advanced Birding Club (ABC) of the Tahoma Audubon and the Slater Museum of Natural History at the University of Puget Sound as they present curator and Professor Emeritus of the University of Washington Burke Museum, Sievert Rohwer, who will discuss his inside view of molt and what we don’t know about it. He will review his work that feather regrowth can’t be hurried, with the main differences between molt strategies having to do with how many feathers are molted at the same time: Simple (one at a time), Complex (various strategies including stepwise), and Simultaneous, with most feathers molted together. He will start with an addendum to the earlier talk in December 2015 by reviewing new data for Golden Eagles. This molt migration talk will review this issue in western passerines, and consider possible effects of habitat changes due to irrigated agriculture on the decline of some western breeders.

Monday, May 1, 6:45-8:45 pm
Thompson Hall, Room 175
University of Puget Sound
1565 N Union Ave, Tacoma WA

Tickets are $10 and can be purchased online at TahomaAudubon.org. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Tahoma Audubon.
Tacoma Nature Center Volunteer Stewardship

Habitat Restoration Work All ages, welcome, free
Join us for our regular stewardship activities as we care for the park by removing invasive plant species, re-planting areas with native plants and helping those plants thrive. No experience necessary. Come dressed for the weather and prepared to get dirty. Work parties occur rain or shine! Children must be accompanied by adults.
April 7 9:00am – 12:00pm
April 21 9:00am – 12:00pm
May 5 9:00am – 12:00pm
May 19 9:00am – 12:00pm

Tacoma Nature Center Family Programs

Family Nature Walks - All ages, welcome, free
Explore Tacoma Parks during these naturalist-led family walks. Discover the amazing plants and animals that live in these parks and how they adapt in the different seasons. Not recommended for wheelchairs, strollers or children under 5. Pre-registration required.
Spring in the Air
April 1, 10 – 11am Swan Ck Pk – 2620 Pioneer Wy E
April 8, 10 – 11am Wapato Pk – 660 S. Sheridan Ave
April 15, 10 – 11am Oak Tree Pk – S. 74th St & S. Cedar St
April 29, 2 – 3pm Tacoma Nature Center – JP & Tyler
May 6, 10-11am Wapato Hills Pk – 6231 S. Wapato St.
May 13, 1 – 2pm Titlow Pk – 9425 6th Ave
May 20, 1pm- 2pm McKenny Pk – 645 Upper Park St.

Tacoma Nature Center Family Adventure Programs

Mother’s Day Family Paddle - Ages 7 and up $35.00 + tax/person, $31.50 + tax/TNC member
Spend the morning paddling from Owen Beach Park exploring the South Sound shoreline. Enjoy the views of Vashon and Maury Island as we paddle past the new Point Ruston area. Pre-registration required. Meet at 9:30 E D Street, Tacoma.
May 14 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Family Paddle Point Defiance Park - Ages 7 and up $35.00 + tax/person, $31.50 + tax/TNC member
Spend the morning paddling from Owen Beach Park exploring the South Sound shoreline. Enjoy the views of Vashon and Maury Island as we paddle past the new Point Ruston area. Pre-registration required. Meet at Owen Beach, Point Defiance Park, Tacoma.
May 21 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Tacoma Nature Center Homeschool Science

Homeschool students explore science through hands-on experiments and activities. Register early – these classes fill quickly! Note – topics are repeated during the month, so select class appropriate for your child’s age, knowledge and abilities. Contact Lauren with questions or for more information at 591-6439 or lauren@tacomaparks.com.

Intermediate Level Homeschool Science Ages 10-12, $12 per student, $10.80 per member child To participate in this class, students should be able to multiply and divide numbers, add and subtract fractions. Each class is offered twice, choose one time.
Apr. 20, 9:30am – 11:30am Wacky Weather
May 19, 9:30am – 11:30am What’s Up?

Upper Level Homeschool Science Ages 12-15, $15 per student, $13.50 per member child Students use problem-solving, cooperative learning, and inquiry-based activities to study different topics and explore careers in the field. To participate in this class, students should be able to calculate averages, percentages and solve simple equations. Optional lab class requires participation in class on previous day.
Apr. 27, 1:00 – 3:00pm Earth Science - Meteorology
May 25, 1:00pm – 3:00pm Earth Science - Astronomy

Brownie Girl Scouts - Brownies, Bugs & Honey Bees April 29, 9:00am – 12:00pm
Get a close-up look at the amazing life of the honey bee, view our live hive, make a beeswax candle, and take an insect safari hike. Earn the Bugs Badge while getting to know our six-legged neighbors! Badge not included.) Must be a Brownie Girl Scout to attend.
$12.00 per girl, adults free

Cadette Girl Scouts – Leader in Action Badge Workshop May 13, 9:00am – 12:00pm
Learn what it takes to earn the LiA badge at this hands-on workshop. Tacoma Nature Center staff will teach the tips and tricks of exploring nature with younger children with games, outdoor hikes and activities. Work with staff to plan and prepare to lead activities of the Brownie WOW! Wonders of Water journey. Then put your skills into action at an upcoming Nature Center event or with your local Brownie troop, and earn your LiA! Great training for Cadette P.A.s! Must be a Cadette Girl Scout to attend.
$15.00 per girl, adults free

Brownie Girl Scouts - WOW! Love Water Journey Workshop April 1, 9:00am – 12:00pm
Spend the morning paddle from Owen Beach Park exploring the Foss Waterway in the Tacoma Metro Park. Learn about the ecosystem in the Foss Waterway, explore careers in the field. To participate in this class, students should be able to calculate average, percentages and solve simple equations.
Ages 10-12, $12 per student, $10.80 per member child

Summer Celebration & Birdathon Awards
Save the date to celebrate summer and socialize with Tacoma Audubon at our summer community meal and Birdathon awards ceremony.
All Tacoma Audubon friends, partners and members are welcome! More details to come in the June/July issue of the Towhee.
Jen Vittetoe, age 34, has been a member of Tahoma Audubon since last year after taking a Spring birding identification class. Jen and her husband, Tony Davila, moved here from North Carolina in 2010. Tony is an Army Warrant Officer stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, and they live in Tacoma.

Jen has always had an interest in the natural world. She received her Bachelor in Science degree from the University of Washington-Tacoma in Environmental Science in 2013. She did lab work and field research at the WSU Extension which got her outdoors. Along with her studies, she spent time observing and enjoying nature in her own backyard, especially while gardening and watching the birds. She developed an ongoing relationship with a pair of crows, and a growing appreciation of their intelligence, as she realized they easily distinguished her from Tony and other neighbors. She decided she should get better at identifying the local birds of the Northwest, and so enrolled in one of the Tahoma Audubon classes.

While taking the class, Jen met staff member Andrea Michelbach, and found out about flexible volunteering opportunities. Jen began staffing the front desk at the Adriana Hess Center on Wednesdays. On her first day she was paired up with long-time volunteer Vera Cragin, who showed her some of the duties of the job. One important task was to learn the proper way to scrub and clean birdfeeders, something Jen has taken care to do with her own feeders at home. Jen also worked with Andrea to compile and analyze the extensive data from last year’s membership survey and put the results together to present to staff and the board. Andrea appreciated the insight and ideas generated by Jen’s work with the survey and said, “I’m amazed at how Jen’s mind is always problem-solving and considering ways to make Tahoma Audubon an even better organization. She will look at tiny problems as well as big-picture problems, and come up with creative and practical approaches to a solution.”

Jen has been inspired by the passion the people in the Pacific Northwest have for taking care of the environment and its wildlife. She has found a place with Tahoma Audubon where she can nurture her own passion for nature while learning more about its complexity, and enjoy the camaraderie of other like-minded people. She recently joined the Membership Committee and hopes to play a role in engaging others with the programs and opportunities that are offered, with a particular interest in getting more families of JBLM involved. She’s also interested in ways to get UW-T students involved in service learning with Tahoma Audubon.

Yakima River Canyon Birding Festival

Come bird with KEEN (Kittitas Environmental Education Network) for 3 days during the second weekend of May and discover the natural beauty of Central Washington State! Kittitas County features diverse and spectacular habitats. The Yakima River Canyon is an Audubon Important Bird Area (IBA) with some of the highest densities of passerines and birds of prey in the State. The Yakima River Canyon Bird Fest will offer expert-led field trips, vendors, extended field trips, workshops, lectures, and keynote speaker, Paul Bannick, and more! Come join us for spring in the shrub-steppe! More info: www.ycic.org KEEN: 414 South Willow St, Ellensburg, WA 98926

Meet Your Neighbors...Chickadees

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Save time, Save $$ and get Finest Bird Seed in Puget Sound

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Tahoma Audubon’s Volunteer Spotlight shines on Jen Vittetoe

Jen Vittetoe, age 34, has been a member of Tahoma Audubon since last year after taking a Spring birding identification class. Jen and her husband, Tony Davila, moved here from North Carolina in 2010. Tony is an Army Warrant Officer stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, and they live in Tacoma.

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Jan. 16 to March 15, 2017

New Members
Lauren Benton, Lynn Bernstein, Melissa Clarke, Steven & Renee Copeland, Cornelia Cross, Dan Fear, Nora Flemming De Sandoval, Richard F Gilgert, David Krawchuk, Susan LaFantasie, Beverly Niemann, Lisa Pedersen, Nathansalei Sweeney* , Joyce Tice, Linda Campbell, Renee & Abi Wagner

Returning Members
Kristi & Roger Anderson**, Greg Anglemyer, Thomas Tice, Linda Campbell, Renee & Abi Wagner

Support TAS with this promotion!

When you renew your Tahoma Audubon Chapter Membership and donate an additional $50, you will receive a $25 gift certificate to Wild Birds Unlimited in Gig Harbor**

This is a great way for you to provide additional support to Tahoma Audubon for birds and their habitats throughout Pierce County, and a great way to say thank you to our members with a gift in return for their generous donation. A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to Jim Ulrich of Wild Birds Unlimited for his continued support of our organization.

*Please note that if you accept the $25 gift certificate offer, the tax-deductible portion of your donation is reduced by $25 (eg, if you donate $50 and opt to receive the certificate, $25 of your donation is tax deductible).

Help Tahoma Audubon get 5% of sales from Wild Birds Unlimited in Gig Harbor

If you are a Tahoma Audubon Society Member you will receive a free set of “Bino-Straps” with your optics purchase. And, for every purchase made by a Tahoma Audubon Member, will receive 5% of the sale!

So, please visit the experts at Wild Birds Unlimited in Gig Harbor for all your birding and optic needs and help YOUR Tahoma Audubon! If you are not a member of our chapter, please join us! Our next meeting will be on March 7th.

Wild Birds Unlimited
3120 1/2 Harborview Drive, Gig Harbor, WA 253-851-2575 or 800-851-2575
Like us on Facebook or go to gigharbor.wbu.com.

Exploring Nature Book Club

During our February 7th meeting we discussed the book “Your Brain on Nature” by Eva Selhub and Alan C. Logan. Emily Kalinsky was our facilitator and in preparation for the discussion she identified the key themes for readers to consider. Club members enthusiastically participated in the conversation. How nature exposure influences our empathy, as well as our neurological connections was fascinating. The authors did a convincing job explaining their position with scientific evidence.

At our March 7th meeting we discussed “The Hidden Life of Owls” by Leigh Calvez. Diane Yorgason-Quinn was our facilitator and she invited Leigh Calvez to attend our meeting. Book club members not only had their books signed by the author but also the experience of having the author participate in the discussion. It was a wonderful experience for all. Thank you so much Diane YQ and Leigh Calvez!

Our April 4th meeting celebrated National Poetry month. Members read different books by poet Mary Oliver and brought their favorite poem to share with club members. Thank you Marsh Williams for the wonderful facilitation! Book Club meetings occur on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm at Adrianna Hess Audubon Center in University Place.

Future selections include:


Sept. 5th “The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt’s New World” by Andrea Wulf. Facilitator Helen Engle.

The Night Owl Book Club

...will be meeting April 18th at King’s Book Store at 7 pm, 218 St Helen’s Ave, Tacoma. The group will be discussing “Welcome to Suburbia: Sharing our Neighborhoods with Weens, Robins, Woodpeckers and Other Wildlife” by John Marzluff. John will be the speaker at the May 25th Tahoma Audubon Membership meeting at the Tacoma Nature Center at 7 pm (Social 6:30-7:00pm). The May 16th meeting will discuss “H is for Hawk” by Helen MacDonald.

King’s Book Store has these books available for purchase and there is a discount Night Owl Book Club members.

New members are welcomed and more information is available at our website tahomaaudubon.org. Look at Book Club.


*Canopy-level member
**Monthly canopy-level member

Special thanks to our canopy-level members for their sustaining support!

New Chapter Membership Levels:

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<th>INDIVIDUAL LEVELS</th>
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<td><strong>Introductory Membership $20</strong></td>
<td>All new members will receive a joint membership with National and Tahoma Audubon for 1 year, including the Audubon Magazine and the Towhee mailed to your home.</td>
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<td><strong>Individual Renewal</strong> $30</td>
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<td><strong>Senior Individual</strong> ($50.00) $25</td>
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<td><strong>Student/Jr. Audubon</strong> $15</td>
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<td><strong>Tip:</strong> If you have more than one in your household and would like to both be members and receive full benefits, consider joining at one of the household levels, which would cost less than 2 senior memberships.</td>
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| **Checks payable to:** Tahoma Audubon 2917 Morrison Rd. W. University Place, 98466 | Tahoma Audubon Society, established in 1969, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Tahoma Audubon is the Pierce County Chapter of National Audubon. As an Introductory Member of TAS, you will receive a joint membership with National and Tahoma Audubon with Audubon Magazine for one year. Renewing your chapter membership ensures that we can collectively continue to do our work in Pierce County. At all levels, Tahoma Audubon members will receive a discount for classes and workshops where fees are paid; a 10% discount in our Nature Shop, support of Important Bird Areas (IBA) and state and national conservation agendas; a newsletter (The Towhee) mailed to their home, unless they opt for an electronic notification; free participation in field trips; free family events; recognition in our newsletter; and invitations to special events and volunteer opportunities. Oak, Cedar, and Fir membership levels will receive additional invitations to exclusive events. All membership fees are 100% tax deductible. For questions about membership, call 253-565-9129 or email andream@tahomaaudubon.org.

New chapter membership levels:

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<th>HOUSEHOLD LEVELS</th>
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<td><strong>Oak $600.00 or $50.00 online</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Cedar $300.00 or $25.00 online</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Fir $144.00 or $12.00 online</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Family/Dual Senior</strong> $40</td>
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<td><strong>Military (active &amp; retired)</strong> $35</td>
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APRIL 2017

Hiking & Birds on Anderson Island 4/9/2017, 8:30 am – 5:30 pm Details on page 5.

Second Sundays at Morse Wildlife Preserve 4/9/2017, 10 am – 4 pm. Details on page 5.

Early Bird Breakfast 4/10/2017, 7:30 – 9 am. Details on page 3.

Beginning Bird Walk at the Audubon Center 4/10/2017, 10 am – 11:30 am. Details on page 5.

Thelma Gilmer Education Committee Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place 4/11/2017, 1:30 pm – 3 pm

Tahoma Audubon Board Meeting Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place 4/11/2017, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm


Noah Strycker presents Birding Without Borders: An Epic World Big Year 4/12/2017, 6:45 pm – 8 pm. See details on page 8.

Thelma Wetlands Bird Walk 4/13/2017, 8 am – 11 am. See details on page 5.

Membership Committee Meeting Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place 4/18/2017, 1 – 2:30 pm

Conservation Committee Meeting University of Puget Sound, Thompson Hall, Room 208 4/18/2017, 6:30 – 8 pm

Night Owl Book Club King’s Books, Tacoma, WA 4/18/2017, 7 – 9:30 pm. See details on page 11.

Wednesday Bird Walks at Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually NWR* 4/19/2017, 8 am – 11 am. See details on page 5.


Birding Eagle’s Pride Golf Course 4/20/2017, 8 am – 11 am. See details on page 5.


Parks Appreciation Day Adriana Hess Wetland Park 4/22/2017, 9 am – 12 pm. See details on page 5.

MAY 2017

Delight in Flight Earth Day Celebration® Featt Arts Center (1402 S 11th St, Tacoma) 4/22/2017, 12 – 3 pm

Join Feast, Tinkertown and Tahona Audubon for a day celebrating Earth Day and Birds. Activities include making up-cycled bird figures out of repurposed materials and more!


CLASS: Spring Birds of WA (3 sessions) Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place 4/26 – 5/10/2017, 2 – 4 pm. See details on page 4.


BIRDATHON: Birding With The DuPont Dudes 4/29/2017, 8 am – 2 pm. See details on page 6.


Youth Bird Drawing Contest Entry Deadline 4/30/2017, See details on page 10.

ABC: Sievert Bowler presents Molt Migration in Western Passerines 5/1/2017, 6:45 – 8:45 pm. See details on page 8.

Fort Steilacoom Bird Walk 5/2/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.

Exploring Nature Book Club King’s Books, Tacoma, WA 5/2/2017, 1:30 - 3 pm See details on page 11.

Thelma Wetlands Bird Walk 5/3/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.

Theler Wetlands Bird Walk 5/3/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.

Conservation Committee Meeting University of Puget Sound, Thompson Hall, Room 208 5/3/2017, 6:30 – 8 pm


Sehmel Homestead Park Birding Field Trip 5/5/2017, 8 am – 11 am. See details on page 5.

CLASS: Bird Watching in WA State (6 sessions, 1 field trip) Tacoma Nature Center 5/5 – 6/19/2017, 6:30 – 8:30 pm See details on page 4.


Birdathon: Theler Wetlands Bird Walk 5/6/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.

Theler Wetlands Bird Walk 5/8/2017, 10 – 11:30 am. See details on page 5.

Tacoma Audubon Board Meeting Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place, WA 5/9/2017, 1:30 pm – 3 pm

Theler Wetlands Bird Walk 5/9/2017, 8 am – 11 am. See details on page 5.


Second Sundays at Morse Wildlife Preserve 5/14/2017, 10 am – 4 pm. See details on page 5.

CLASS: Migration in Western Passerines 5/15/2017, 9 – 11 am. See details on page 5.

Second Sundays at Morse Wildlife Preserve 5/15/2017, 8 am – 11 am. See details on page 5.


Conservation Committee Meeting University of Puget Sound, Thompson Hall, Room 208 5/16/2017, 6:30 - 8 pm

Night Owl Book Club King’s Books, Tacoma, WA 5/17/2017, 7 – 9:30 pm. See details on page 11.


Theler Wetlands Bird Walk 5/18/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.


Conservation Committee Meeting University of Puget Sound, Thompson Hall, Room 208 5/16/2017, 6:30 - 8 pm


Beginning Bird Walk at the Audubon Center 5/28/2017, 10 – 11:30 am. See details on page 5.

Thelma Gilmer Education Committee Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place, WA 5/29/2017, 1:30 pm – 3 pm

BIRDATHON: Migration in Western Passerines 5/31/2017, 7 am – 3 pm. See details on page 6.


Youth Bird Drawing Contest Artist Awards & Reception 5/24/2017, 6:30 – 8 pm. See details on page 10.

Tacoma Audubon Board Meeting Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place, WA 5/31/2017, 6:30 – 8 pm. See details on page 1.

Birdday Ends! 5/29/2017 See details on pages 1, 6, & 9.


June 2017

JUNE 2017

Fort Steilacoom Bird Walk 6/6/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.

Exploring Nature Book Club Adriana Hess Audubon Center, University Place 6/6/2017, 1:30 – 3 pm. See details on page 11.

ABC: Presentation [TBD] 6/6/2017, 6:45 – 8:45 pm See details online.


Sehmel Homestead Park Birding Field Trip 6/7/2017, 8 am – 10 am. See details on page 5.

Theler Wetlands Bird Walk 6/8/2017, 8 am - 11 am. See details on page 5.

Second Sundays at Morse Wildlife Preserve 6/11/2017, 10 am – 4 pm. See details on page 5.

Beginning Bird Walk at the Audubon Center 6/12/2017, 10 – 11:30 am. See details on page 5.

CLASS: Migration in Western Passerines 6/12 – 6/27, from 6:30-8pm at the Tacoma Nature Center (1919 S Tyler). Details page 1.