A Shift and a Shakeup in Swiftdom!

On August 24, a fun group of Tahoma Auduboners assembled their lawn chairs in front of the old schoolhouse in Selleck, Washington, at the invitation of the homeowner. It was a beautiful late summer night with many Vaux’s Swifts flying overhead chattering happily, including perhaps a handful of young swifts from a nest that had fallen down this summer and had been brought here by the rehabber, released, and immediately adopted by this throng of migrating swifts.

As we were enjoying the ambience of this remote end-of-the-road rural town in South King County, Larry Schwittert appeared as our Special Guest Star. Larry started Vaux’s Happening over a decade ago, which collects all the Vaux’s chimney data from known chimneys along the western seaboard as they migrate south in the fall and north in the spring, to monitor numbers and, not incidentally, to try to keep known chimney roosts from being torn down. Selleck’s chimney is one of the four major roosts that Vaux’s Happening was able have designated as an IBA (International Important Bird Area) to help protect these sites.

What’s in Bloom and Why it Matters...

Scott Markowitz - TAS seasonal observer

As the days grow shorter, the plants change color, and the leaves drop, it’s the time of year where our solid, net-stealthy evergreens really sparkle.

This issue’s superstar plant is Morella californica, the lovely Pacific Wax Myrtle. While not exactly a native plant, the Puget Sound Trough, it is a regular all along the coast from California up to Gray’s Harbor, with a tiny hold on Vancouver Island.

This slightly fragrant evergreen shrub makes a lovely hedge, but more importantly produces clusters of small, waxy, bumpy dark purple berries. These berries are very attractive to birds and wildlife, and are one of the principal lure of Yellow-rumped Warblers. These fruits ripen in October and provide the arriving warblers with a rich source of food at a critical time. The Wax Myrtle is the reason the Eastern race of the Yellow-rumped Warbler is called the Myrtle Warbler.

Pacific Wax Myrtle will grow into small trees if pruned, but also makes for a lovely hedging plant that requires almost no care, and provides food and cover to your backyard garden wildlife.

Happenings to look for this season:

- Nectar and nectar-producers return
- Chickadee mushrooms: look up and down in November.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglets return
- Columbian Black-tailed Grouse go into rut in November; keep your eye out for giganteum males
- Keep an eye out for returning Meadowlark, Thrushes, grosbeaks, and robins should already be back.
- To free-board Barnswallows are still active through November, but will die off soon. Wishing the remaining ones success in finding new colonies next spring.

Little did we know at that moment that the swifts’ allegiance to their favorite chimney haunts was about to change drastically, and not for the first time. Merlins have become a major problem to the Vaux’s Swift flyway, similar to what has happened in other locations. Swifts continue to Page 10

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Chip Notes!

TAS Goals 2020

Each year the Tahoma Audubon Board of Directors identifies key priorities for the organization. This effort links all of the various activities to ensure we are one Tahoma Audubon. This year the four priorities that rose to the status of “organization priority” include:

- Strengthen volunteer engagement and leadership at all levels of the organization, which results in greater capacity of committees, improved sustainability of programs and outreach, and clarity and consistency of volunteer roles.

- Provide and promote lifelong nature education and experiential programs in Pierce County, including a curriculum approach to adult education.

- Provide leadership and support initiatives and education of membership and the community on the impact of climate change.

- Encourage and support community science and stewardship opportunities in partnership with local agencies, organizations, and individuals.

As we get ready to fly into 2020 and begin our next big adventure, we know there is a lot of work ahead of us. Our world at times seems to be coming apart, but I for one refuse to be pessimistic. I choose to be optimistic for the very reason that I have a community, my Tahoma Audubon community, together we will ensure that this world has a few more birds, a few more trees, and a few more young adults ready to take on the challenges ahead. In the words of Robert Baden-Powell, “We will leave this world a little better than we found it.”

Connecting with Nature Builds Memories

If you are reading this article, I am sure you have a bird story, or at a least a nature story. This story sits deep within your memory and connects you with nature. I am pretty sure this memory likely occurred long ago, in your childhood, or college years perhaps. Mine was when I was a teenager, and the awe that I felt when a Great Horned Owl flew over me—silent, majestic and massive in size—has stayed with me.

There is something intangible but very real about our memories. I believe that memories of when we were able to get close to nature, to truly experience and connect with Mother Earth, are critical to our mental health. I am also pretty sure as you read these first two paragraphs, one of the first things that will come to mind is, “I need to get out for a hike; it has been so long.” Our busy lives often keep us from connecting with nature on that deep level we had as children. Sure, we steal an hour or so to walk around our closest park, but when was the last time that you walked into the woods and sat down, to just listen and experience the quiet and the awe of the forest? Now think about if that opportunity was not available to you, or if that memory was not there. What if all of our favorite places were houses, private property, or simply gone? What if you grew up in the city and never had a chance to visit Mount Rainier or see a Bald Eagle that “us” birders now take for granted?

Tahoma Audubon is here to ensure that memories are made, that we all have the chance to recall and reflect on times where we just went out into nature and sat down. We do this by inspiring, teaching, and getting children out into nature. So far one of my best “new” memories was watching our nature camp children at Adriana Hess. There is so much expression in a child’s eyes, one who is learning something new by experiencing it directly. They truly could not contain themselves from their excitement.

We also help preserve memories by protecting Marbled Murrelet habitat, reducing climate change impacts, and engaging in all issues that require a conservationist’s voice. We preserve memories by ensuring everyone has an opportunity to go outside, experience, connect with, and learn about birds and nature.
Feathered Nest Circle

Feathered Nest Circle is small but powerful. We have two staff members, but hundreds of volunteers. Each of us is inspired to protect, connect and teach individuals who want to be fulfilled by interacting with birds and nature. We are also a welcoming community. We not only get folks outside, but we also get folks away from their digital devices to come to meetings and to interact.

As we approach the end of 2019, we ask that you help us reach our fall appeal goal and create a foundation to ensure we can fulfill our ambitious work plan for 2020 and beyond. Of course, if you cannot donate monetarily, we have lots of volunteer opportunities and ways to get involved with Tahoma Audubon. Come join us and start sharing your memories with us.

You can donate online at www.tahomaaudubon.org/annualfund;
Send your donation to 2917 Morrison Rd. W.
University Place, WA 98466;
or call to make a donation over the phone at 253-565-9278.
Thank you for being a member of Tahoma Audubon and caring for birds and nature.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: DAVID BATKER

As we near the end of the 50th anniversary year of Tahoma Audubon, it’s encouraging to know that the torch has been passed and taken up by the generation that follows those illustrious charter members of the organization—families such as the Giddings, Sheridans, and Batkers.

David Batker grew up seeing firsthand the work done by the early members of Tahoma Audubon. His parents, Nell and Ken Batker, are charter members of the organization. David recalls being “dragged along” with his sister and sometimes his brother to Audubon events, to Helen Engle’s home for meetings and picnics, and to many county commissioner hearings.

The hearings would be his first training for a future career as a public speaker and environmental trial expert witness. Not only did he learn from watching the adults, but Roxy Giddings and his mother would tell the children that they should also speak at the hearings, and they would. After numerous defeats, the commissioners denied a damaging land development permit and everyone was shocked at the win. David noted, “Audubon chalked success after success empowering adults and kids in civic action.”

David grew up with his siblings exploring the wetlands and woods in Bresemann Forest. “There was always a lot of wildlife drama,” he recalled. Great Blue Herons and otters would compete for the fish. Hooded Mergansers and Wood Ducks once became a large blended family, with young Wood Ducks following the adult mergansers, and young mergansers hanging with the adult Wood Ducks. He also spotted a Mallard duckling diving like the merganser it was following.

David studied biology and geology at Pacific Lutheran University. He worked at the Centralia coal mine as a geologist. The waste, environmental impact, and growing attention to climate change influenced his decision to pursue a graduate degree in the new field of ecological economics at Louisiana State University. He described this in his book, What’s the Economy for, Anyway? Why It’s Time to Stop Chasing Growth and Start Pursuing Happiness, written with John de Graaf. While at LSU, David worked on toxic waste issues and was involved in the environmental justice movement. He was arrested in a social justice protest, which he laughingly agreed gave him "street cred" and mused that his parents were likely proud of him for it.

David worked for Greenpeace International, assessing and helping to change policies of the World Bank and other international banks, including environmental assessment, energy, forests, water quality, and indigenous peoples. He has been to over 40 countries, working on environmental issues from ocean ecology to climate change. While traveling, he would find SPOTLIGHT continues on Page 10.

What will your legacy be?

Making a gift 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 you can:
Make a generous gift; intention without depleting income;
Honor or memorialize a loved one;
Join the Feathered Nest Circle or any society;
Reduce your estate taxes...

We are here to help!
Call: (253) 565-9278
E-mail: mneve@hahomaaudubon.org
Or visit tahomaaudubon.org/legacysite

We are deeply grateful for your generosity.
Conservation Call Notes

TAS Conference Sets 2020 Legislative Agenda

Kirk Kirkland
Conservation Committee Co-Chair

In September, at the annual conference of Audubon Chapters, Vicki Blitz and Dick Carkner asked for approval of two TAS initiatives to protect farmland from industrial-sized solar energy projects and to increase the budget for the Fish and Wildlife Department.

Initially, the Kittitas County Audubon Society objected. They wanted assurance that shrub-steppe and other wildlife areas would be protected from industrial solar utilities as well as farming. After a discussion at the conference, they agreed to the proposal.

The following week Dick Carkner and Kirk Kirkland met with the leaders of Futurewise and American Farmland Trust to discuss partnership for passing a budget proviso in the next legislative session.

The governor agreed to sponsor the proviso, which would fund mapping the state’s farming and wildlife areas to identify the best locations for solar projects that provide the least harm. Pastures, cropland, and shrub-steppe areas contribute to carbon sequestration, which puts carbon into plant life rather than increasing global warming.

Join the conversation....

Conservation Committee Meeting
University of Puget Sound, Thompson Hall Room 297
November 27, 2019 at 6:30 pm.

More details... recent Committee Newsletter at: https://www.tahomaudubon.org/committee/

Park Junction Project Delayed for Cranberry Harvest

Kirk Kirkland - Conservation Committee Co-chair

The 23-year-old permit to build a golf resort for over 700 people near the Nisqually Entrance to Mount Rainier has been delayed before for many reasons: the death of two investors, the lack of a water plan from the Department of Health, but never before for a consultant to complete his cranberry harvest.

In September, the attorney for the proponents admitted that the water plan from the state still did not have the final work submitted to them. This water plan was an issue at the 2014 status hearing, but the permit was not applied for four years—until 2018. But, no surprise, by the August 2019 status hearing, the application still remained incomplete.

The county holds status review hearings every three years to extend the project’s permit, based on their making progress in the preceding three years. But this time the attorney for the resort proponents was not available, and the scheduled hearing was delayed for 20 months. Then, at the one-day hearing, it became obvious that the only change to the property since 2014 was the addition of a Trump political campaign sign on the property.

The county’s proposal calls for increasing the number of apartments and bus service for commuters who work in Seattle and Tacoma. But without a financial plan for new parks, roads, and bus service, the result will be poor schools, crowded intersections, and a decline in livability in the Spanaway and South Hill urban areas.

County proposes 8-story apartments in Spanaway and South Hill

Pierce County announced that the final decision from the Planning Commission scheduled for November was postponed until a housing analysis was complete and someone was hired for the job. This was an unprecedented move by the planning department. Futurewise, the City of Tacoma and others asked for a Supplemental EIS with more analysis of impacts from the dramatic increase in population to the county in the Spanaway and South Hill urban growth boundary.

Last summer, TAS members asked that the Centers and Corridors proposal be denied for not analyzing traffic impacts and not conforming to Regional Planning Strategies. The Center’s proposal would increase population in the suburban area of the county without providing new roads.

Fire district officials also asked for a delay because adding housing for 94,000 people would exceed the department’s ability to provide fire services for such a significant increase.

Pierce County is currently experiencing a housing boom as 6,000 more people move into the area yearly. The Center’s proposal calls for increasing the number of apartments and bus service for commuters who work in Seattle and Tacoma. But without a financial plan for new parks, roads, and bus service, the result will be poor schools, crowded intersections, and a decline in livability in the Spanaway and South Hill urban areas.
Inspiring Programs Sprout at Tahoma Audubon

The unique opportunities for education and outreach we provide through our programming leaves little down time for the Thelma Gilmur Education Committee, as the programs we offer include school year and summer time! I’d like to take a page out of nature’s book and take advantage of the slowing down of the seasons to reflect on all that we have accomplished with our 2019 Summer Camp programs, and also to look ahead to the coming winter months!

This summer, Tahoma Audubon Society was able to double the amount of preschool-age camps offered at Adriana Hess. Backyard Bird Buddies and Pond Critters ran for two weeks in July and hosted 48 campers. We could not have done this without our teen intern, teen volunteers, guest teachers, or the dedicated front desk docents. Our summer camps are helping teen interns and volunteers build their outdoor educator experiences and resumes, as well as fostering excitement about nature in young campers and inspiring the next generation of conservationists and birders. We are also able to educate and engage people at Adriana Hess through our summer beginning bird walks, as well as a new addition of Ducklings and Downdogs yoga with Yoga Wild, a partner organization.

As we have moved into our school year programming, I am happy to announce that we have enjoyed full enrollment in our Little Sprouts homeschool science programming at Tacoma Nature Center, will be re-introducing Explore the Salish Sea in classrooms, and have launched a new Day Care Story Time at Bates Technical College. We are always looking for more volunteers to join the Education Committee to help us continue to provide the wonderful and unique education experiences that Tahoma Audubon has come to be known for.

Focus on Education

Little Sprouts
Join our partner in education, Tacoma Nature Center, for an hour of fun with your littlest ones! This program features story time, sensory-based activities, songs, and outside time, all focused on the natural world. Doors open at 9:30 for independent discovery. Each topic is offered twice. Pre-registration is required.

Elemental Sprouts: Mon. Dec. 2, 9:45–10:45 a.m.
Elemental Sprouts: Mon. Dec. 9, 9:45–10:45 a.m.
Rocking Out Sprouts: Mon. Jan. 6, 9:45–10:45 a.m.
Ages 2-4 years, $7.00 per child/$5.00 Tahoma Audubon or TNC members

Family Nature Walks
Explore Tacoma Parks during these seasonal naturalist-led family walks. Discover the amazing plants and animals that live in the parks and how they adapt in the different seasons. Not recommended for wheelchairs, strollers or children under 3. Pre-registration is required.

Saturday Jan. 18, 10–11 a.m.
Wapato Park - 6500 S. Sheridan Ave. Tacoma.

All ages welcome, free

Expanding Education through Community Partnerships

This summer, Audubon Chapters from all over Washington got together for the Audubon Conference of Washington (ACOW) which was kicked off with a presentation about education programming at Tahoma Audubon Society. The dedication that Tahoma Audubon has shown for our education programming by hiring education staff, hosting a large and productive education committee and continuing to have stellar volunteers that lead our education programs, has gotten us some positive recognition. In 2019, the education committee started focusing on how to expand our reach through community partnerships and support. I wanted to share a snippet of information shared at ACOW about how we are expanding our education reach.

This year, we have expanded numerous education and outreach programs by cultivating strong partnerships with local organizations such as: Tacoma Housing Authority, Yoga Wild, PCC Farmland Trust, Pierce County Library, Tacoma Ocean Fest, Lakewood Rotary, Sunrise Rotary, Tacoma Public Library, Write 253, Bates Technical College, Tahoma Tree Foundation and many others.

- With Tacoma Housing Authority, we were able to host two large outdoor movie nights with bird focused movies. We are hoping that the success of these events will lead to more partnership in the future
- Yoga Wild continued their summer ‘Ducklings and Downdogs’ yoga at Adriana Hess
- COMMUNITY continues on Page 9
The Science Behind Audubon’s Climate Change Report

The National Audubon Society study on climate change reports that hundreds of bird species across North America are likely to drastically shift their ranges in the decades ahead in response to rising temperatures.

To conduct the study, Audubon’s scientists mapped the current ranges and habitats of 604 bird species across North America, using data from millions of bird observations. They then used climate models to estimate the birds’ future ranges under warming conditions of 1.5 degrees, 2 degrees and 3 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels. The expectation was that many birds will try to move to keep up with shifts in temperature, rainfall and vegetation.

Many species could face major upheaval.

The report classified 389 species as “vulnerable” to 3 degrees Celsius of warming. That means the birds are projected to lose a significant portion of their current range and may have relatively limited opportunities to move elsewhere.

The report also mapped out which bird species are likely to face additional dangers from climate change, such as increased springtime heat, fiercer wildfires or rising ocean levels. For instance, the piping plover, which builds its nests in sandy areas along the Atlantic coast, is expected to see its habitat encroached by the rising seas.

This Audubon report is a more detailed update of the 2014 report on climate change and bird populations. It is consistent with a paper published in the Journal Science, estimating that 29% of birds in the United States and Canada has declined since 1970. Quite simply, there are 2.9 billion fewer birds in the skies today. The present decline, however, was more likely caused by habitat loss and pesticide use, not climate change.

National Audubon Declares Bird Emergency

National Audubon Society released a groundbreaking climate report, Survival by Degrees. “Two-thirds of America’s birds are threatened with extinction from climate change,” said David Yarnold, president of Audubon “It’s a bird emergency.”

Reducing global temperatures to 1.5 degrees C would help preserve 76 percent of them. “If you care about birds this report will break your heart,” said Yarnold. To compile the report, Audubon scientists studied 604 North American bird species. “Birds are important indicator species,” said Brooke Bateman, Ph.D., senior climate scientist lead author on the report. “If an ecosystem is broken for birds, it soon will be for people.”

In Washington state The report found changing climate, habitat, and land-use conditions from a 3 degree C increase in temperature could affect 54% of the 296 species.

Changing habitat conditions like extreme heat in the spring and wild forest fires darkening our skies in summer, will exacerbate impacts to many climate-vulnerable birds. These impacts will be felt by species like the Rufous Hummingbird and Sage Thrasher, as well as Dark-eyed Juncos and Red-breasted Nuthatches.

Most important, the report showed limiting warming to 1.5 degree C cuts in half the risk of climate change impacts on birds in our state.

“This report shows we can make choices today to preserve habitats for birds and people,” said Kirk Kirkland TAS Conservation Co-Chair. “Our chapter is pursuing legislative policies and habitat restoration programs that will start to turn tide on climate change locally.”

You can read the entire National Audubon Society report at: https://www.audubon.org/climate/survivalbydegrees
Birding by Ear the Visual Way

Scott Markowitz - Towhee Editor

With the amazing diversity of birds at the tips of our fingers, it’s hard not to start noticing how differently adapted they are. It’s easy to wonder how the structures of their bodies vary so widely, and why have the different species adapted as they have.

One of the more obvious, though often overlooked of these adaptive features are their wings. We look at their beaks, their feet, their tails, but wings tell a story all of their own.

Wings come in all sorts of shapes and sizes, wielded in so many different ways to achieve the daily needs of the birds. The critical thing to remember, is that wings are tools, and are highly evolved to meet the specific needs for the survival of each species. Travel requirements, foraging, and feeding demands, and predator avoidance significantly contribute to the wing shape of a bird.

Scientists look to the aspect ratio of the wing to help understand the capabilities it has. Aspect ratio is the length of a wing versus its width, and has a great impact on how the wing can be used.

Birds that soar have evolved shorter, broader wings that have lower wing-loading (less weight per area) for their heavier bodies. One critical problem is that a low aspect ratio wing creates a lot of turbulence and undesired drag on the wing. One solution is that some soaring birds fly with spread outer primaries, creating slots between the primaries. This makes each of those individual extended primaries into a high aspect-ratio wing, thus reducing drag and increasing efficiency.

Forest birds on the other hand make use of low-aspect wings for a different reason. Wrens and Song Sparrows skulk in the vegetation, but need to put on quick bursts of speed to avoid predators. Shorter wings allow them the maneuverability they need to pass through tight spaces in the brush, and wider wing dimensions give them the lift they need to get airborne. Warblers, also woodland birds, sacrifice a bit of the maneuverability to wings with a higher aspect-ratio for the efficiency they need for longer migratory flight. Thrushes, highly migratory foragers of more open spaces, have wings with even higher aspect ratios.

Next time you’re out and watching the birds in your neighborhood, take a closer look at the shape of their wings and ask yourself to speculate on why those wings have evolved the way that they did.

The Book List

Future Book List:

- Dec 3 and Dec 21, 2019
  The Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century
  By: Kirk Wallace Johnson
  Facilitator: Art Wang

- Jan 7 and Jan 21, 2020
  The Soul of an Octopus
  By: Sy Montgomery
  Facilitator: Don Townsend

The Night Owls

The Night Owl Book Club will be reading the same selections as the Exploring Nature Book Club.

The evening group meets at King’s Book Store at 7 pm, 28 St. Helen’s Ave, Tacoma, on the third Tuesday of the month.

Book club members from the day and evening clubs who purchase the selections at King’s Book Store will receive a discount.

The evening club is expanding and welcomes newcomers!
**Morse Force!**

The Second Sunday program at Morse Wildlife Preserve comes to an end for 2019.

The program starts again in April 2020. Work parties on the second Saturday of the month will continue through the fall and winter. Among other chores, we have 900 native plants to go into the ground as part of the Prairie Restoration Project.

Please consider lending a hand.

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**The 120th Christmas**

**Tahoma Audubon Keeps Count**

_Faye McAdams Hands- Christmas Count Coordinator_

Calling all birders! It’s time for the Christmas Bird Count! As always, Tahoma Audubon holds our CBC on the third Saturday in December, so this year it will be on December 21.

As you may know, the first Christmas Bird Count was held on Christmas Day in 1900—with 27 observers in 25 locations—as an alternative to the Side Hunt that was traditional at that time. Their new idea was to count, rather than to shoot, the birds seen, and it has truly caught on. Last year’s CBC included over 79,000 observers in 2,250 locations!

Join us as we count all of the birds heard or seen in our count circle. It’s a fine tradition that is both enjoyable and useful. The accumulated data is used for various scientific projects and studies. To date, there have been over 200 peer-reviewed articles using analysis from CBC data! This continues to be the largest and longest-running citizen science program in the world. Join us and continue to make history!

After a day in the field, we meet—indoors!—at Tacoma Nature Center starting at 4:30 p.m. to share dinner and stories of the day, and to total up the species at our Tally Dinner. The meal is provided at a nominal cost per birder.

You can sign up directly with one of our eight area coordinators (listed below). If you are unsure of where you want to count, or just want to offer your assistance where most needed, you can call me directly—Faye McAdams Hands, Tahoma Audubon Count Coordinator, home: (360) 275-0553, cell: (253) 278-3712, or email: zest4parus@hotmail.com.

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**The Morse Force Needs You!**

**Second Saturday Work Parties**

Second Saturday of every month... Bring your love of nature, your skill and your enthusiasm to help take care of this amazing reserve.

Contact us at (253) 565-9278

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**Tahoma Audubon Winter Open House**

_Saturday, December 7_  
_Noon to 3pm_  
_at the_  
_Adriana Hess Wetlands Park_  
_2917 Morrison Rd W, University Place_

- Enjoy a guided walk on the trails  
- Find a gift in the bookstore  
- Sample some holiday treats  
- Meet your neighbors  
- Find out more about birds & Tahoma Audubon!
Bird Count is Here!

Come Join the Christmas Count Fun!

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area 1</td>
<td>Art Wang</td>
<td>(253) 752-1714</td>
<td><a href="mailto:artmancy@harbored.com">artmancy@harbored.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area 2</td>
<td>Faye McAdams Hands</td>
<td>(253) 278-3712</td>
<td><a href="mailto:zest4parus@hotmail.com">zest4parus@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 3</td>
<td>Diane Yorgason Quinn</td>
<td>(253) 857-3367</td>
<td><a href="mailto:avosetta@hotmail.com">avosetta@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 4</td>
<td>Roxy &amp; Bill Giddings</td>
<td>(253) 537-3075</td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 5</td>
<td>Nathanael Swecker</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:nathanaelswecker@gmail.com">nathanaelswecker@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 6</td>
<td>Marcus Roening</td>
<td>(253) 756-0215</td>
<td><a href="mailto:marcus.d.roening@gsk.com">marcus.d.roening@gsk.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 7</td>
<td>Bryan Hanson and Ryan Wiese</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:brynosky@aol.com">brynosky@aol.com</a>           <a href="mailto:rwiese@skookum.org">rwiese@skookum.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Area 8</td>
<td>Jody Hess</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jody1310@comcast.net">jody1310@comcast.net</a></td>
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To join the 2019 Christmas Count, contact one of the count area coordinators above, or contact Christmas Count coordinator Faye McAdams Hands.

Field Trip Timeline

- **12/03/19 - Fort Steilacoom Park:** Rain or shine, birders of all ages and skill levels should meet at 8 a.m. at the paved parking lot between the old red barns and Waughop Lake at 8 a.m.
- **12/07/19 - Point Ruston Bird Walk:** These introductory walks welcome everyone and meet at the Baker Building Lounge. The walk starts at 9 a.m. and finishes around 10:30.

- **12/09/19 - Beginning Bird Walk at Adrianna Hess Audubon Center:** A great walk for beginner or intermediate birders on easy to navigate gravel trails. Bring your binoculars or borrow a pair! The walk starts at 10:00 a.m. at the Adrianna Hess Audubon Center.
- **12/12/19 - Theler Wetlands** Join leaders from the Advanced Birding Club for a walk through this great estuary on the Union River in Belfair. Begins at 8:00 a.m.
- **12/19/19 - Eagle’s Pride Golf Course** Meet at 8 a.m. at Bldg 1512, at the Driving Range Tee. Anyone is welcome to join, no base pass necessary. Bring binoculars.
- **12/26/19 - Theler Wetlands** Join leaders from the Advanced Birding Club for a walk through this great estuary on the Union River in Belfair. Begins at 8:00 a.m.
- **01/04/20 - Point Ruston Bird Walk:** These introductory walks welcome everyone and meet at the Baker Building Lounge. The walk starts at 9 a.m. and finishes around 10:30.

This is not a complete list of the TAS offerings. Please visit our website for the most up to date list.

COMMUNITY

Continued from Page 5

and added ‘Yoga with the Birds’ as an additional partner offering in their schedule. They have also supported us by donating new TAS membership benefits.
- Along with PCC Farmland Trust, we partnered to host a ‘Birding on the Farm’ event and brought 35 people out for a bird walk at Wild Hare Organic Farm. We are also looking forward to a No Farms No Beer joint fundraising event with them on November 7th.
- Our Poetry in the Park program has seen tremendous growth through our sponsorships and partnerships with Pierce County Library and Tacoma Public Library coming on in official capacity. We have also partnered with Lakewood and Sunrise Rotary to sponsor poetry signs, Ocean Fest Tacoma to give voice to local youth poets, and Write 253 to lead a poetry workshop.
- Through a partnership with Bates Technical College, we introduced a new day care nature story time which reaches an underserved demographic of youth and connects them to nature!

The Thelma Gilmur Education Committee is comprised of passionate and dedicated volunteers who manage to do an enormous amount of work. This work is expanded by the support and partnership of many other organizations that recognize and encourage our mission.
time to relieve some of the tense work by birding. His life list is over 1,600.

Another Tahoma Audubon connection in his life is that he and his former wife, Isabel de La Torre, were the first caretakers to live at the Morse Wildlife Preserve in Graham. He remembered doing a lot of work to fix up the small house, and has good memories of living on a nature preserve. Lloyd Morse would visit and share stories. David worked with Thelma Gilmur to get funding for the bird tower that stands there today and identified Olmstead land, later added to the Preserve. One of their two children—Rafael and Gabriel—Rafael, the oldest, was born there. One day, infant Rafael was crying and a doe came close, detecting a distressed baby animal. David’s sons, representing the third generation of Tahoma Audubon, attend middle school and the University of Washington-Tacoma.

David co-founded Earth Economics in 1998, a nonprofit and global leader in science-based economics that advises organizations on making sound investment and policy decisions that take nature into account. His path to that leadership, and his current career as an independent consultant for Batker Consulting, was influenced heavily by his Audubon experiences. He witnessed the passion, dedication, and hard work that it took for his parents and their cohorts to get decisions made and policies changed that benefitted the birds, the environment, and those of us who live here. As David pointed out, “To place land under conservancy protection takes time and tremendous effort.”

David noted, “Audubon is foundational to who I am. Childhood to adulthood as part of Audubon, I learned that together we can conserve land, change policy, see birds, improve our world, and the proof of this is always before us: Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually WR, Snake Lake, Conservation Futures, and far more victories. Moreover, working with Tahoma Audubon is joyful. My advice is to continue embracing diversity, bringing in young and old to be involved in Audubon’s work. More everybody! That is crucial.” He added, “Tahoma Audubon has always been on the cutting edge of conservation here in Pierce County and even beyond. Let’s keep it that way, let’s stay there.”

**Swifts: A shift and shakeup...**

SWIFTS  
Continued from Page 1

to shorebird numbers with the recovery of the Peregrine. In 2016, another of the IBA sites, Northern State Hospital in Sedro-Woolley, came up empty after a stunning history of up to 20,000 swifts in a single night. Merlins were thought to be the reason. Now, in case there had been doubts about that, the first important roost found in the state, at the Wagner School in Monroe, has gone bust. The fall season started out fairly normally, but then Merlins found the candy store. The swifts didn’t stick around, but vacated just before the community swift festival. But where did they go? Now that the season has ended and numbers are being added up, it looks like they came to Pierce County’s great collection of chimneys at JBLM!

We had a fabulous season at JBLM, but it’s sobering to be reminded that those extra swifts were stolen from the Wagner School. The total number of roostings of swifts this season has actually been slightly higher than usual among the IBA sites, reflecting probably not more birds, but more chimneys being watched by more counters at JBLM after the Wagner School was abandoned. And now JBLM has also attracted Merlins in the last couple of weeks of the migration. Our swifts have reacted by spreading out to alternative chimneys on base. We had thousands at Chimney 2493 at the same time as Chimney 2068 was sucking in the birds, and smaller numbers at other chimneys. This means we will be perennially short-handed for counters with all the extra chimneys to count on the base, and there might be more. You can help! Contact Diane Y’Q at Avosetta@hotmail.com. Spring counting season begins mid-April.

JBLM Garrison Commander Colonel Duncan visited our main chimney and has taken an interest in our swifts, and more protection is forthcoming. Remember, they don’t build ‘em like that anymore. We must protect the old chimneys!

South of here, we now have more roosts, including several in Chehalis and a “new” old chimney in Rainier, Oregon, across from Longview, where a protective grating was removed from a church, whereupon it was immediately found by many thousands of swifts! It’s good to know our wee birds have good rest areas along their road to Mexico. They obviously have scouts out looking for good sites all the time, which also increases their possibilities if they have to hotfoot it to get away from the local falcon hoodlums. Seeing the migrating swifts enter a chimney should be on everybody’s bucket list! Just ask those of us who have experienced it. Counting swifts is useful, but more than that, seeing them is intoxicating and perhaps transformative. You’re doing them a favor to census them, but they give you even more.

Thanks to our excellent counters this fall at JBLM: Burney, Heather, Kay & Dale, Mike & Jodi, Donna, Sheri, Joe & Maggie, Betty, Tara, Andrea, Julie, Patt, Tom, Lessie, Jerry & Clarice, Ann, Scott & Adam.

Be sure to check out the photos and videos that you have all contributed this fall! Swifts kaleidoscopic choreography can be hypnotic. Check it out!

**SELECKSWIFTS:**
https://tinyurl.com/y4z8v6r

**JBLM SWIFTS:**
https://tinyurl.com/yya7ufro

**CHEHALIS SWIFTS:**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJb2AE12Gg and https://tinyurl.com/yysabued

**RAINIER, OR (Longview, WA):**
https://tinyurl.com/y54karwj
Washington Birds Are Endangered by Climate Change

Art Wang - TAH Board of Directors

The news has been bad for birds in the last few months, but there is still hope if we take action now. The National Audubon Society released a comprehensive study this month that shows two-thirds of the species of North American birds are endangered by projected levels of climate change.

This report, Survival by Degrees: 389 Bird Species on the Brink, documents how birds would be devastated by a projected 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees F) increase in temperature. But if we can lower the increase to 1.5 degrees C, as recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Paris Accord, we can help improve the chances for 76% of those species.

Iconic Washington species such as the Rufous Hummingbird, which dazzles us in the spring with its brilliant colors, the White-crowned Sparrow, which fills our suburban neighborhoods with song every spring and summer, and the Swainson's Thrush, which lifts our hearts in the woods with its ethereal songs, would be devastated by a 3 degree temperature rise. Not only would the hummingbird's breeding habitat be affected (losing 71% of its current range), but the species times its migration to coincide with flowering plants in our lowlands in early spring migration and in our mountains in fall migration. The timing of migration, in which tiny hummingbirds fly thousands of miles to Mexico for the winter, would be totally disrupted.

The National Audubon study follows recent reports and historical analyses that show a 3 billion decline in individual birds over the last 50 years in the U.S. and Canada. This study looks forward to the future to project the impact of climate change. It uses scientific data to show that 389 out of 641 species are at risk of extinction from climate change. Data include 140 million bird observations from 72 data sets, including 50 years of records from the annual Tacoma Christmas Bird Count held by Tahoma Audubon, our local chapter.

Without significant climate change mitigation, Washington average temperatures are projected to increase from 2010 levels to the end of the century by 6.2 degrees C (11 degrees F) during the warmest month and 3.9 degrees C (7.1 degrees F) during the coldest month.

But we've also demonstrated that we can take effective action to reduce the increase in global temperatures by addressing greenhouse gas emissions. For example, Audubon pushed for the successful passage of our nation's strongest legislation for 100% clean electricity in the 2019 legislature. We will be pushing for similar improvements in our transportation system in the next legislative session.

Other steps we can take include protecting habitat for birds and using more native plants, which provide more food for birds. But the most important step is to address the biggest threat to our birds – climate change.

Art Wang represents Audubon chapters in Washington, Oregon, and Alaska on the National Audubon Society Board. He is a past president of the local Tahoma Audubon chapter and is a former legislator and judge.

Go birding and contribute to science!

Are seabirds in the southern Salish Sea increasing or decreasing in numbers? Which species are changing their range? Help us find out. The Puget Sound Seabird Survey (PSSS) is a community and citizen science project managed by Seattle Audubon that empowers volunteer birdwatchers to gather valuable data on wintering seabird populations across the southern Salish Sea.

You can contribute to this vital seabird science by joining the fourteenth season of this exciting project. We are now recruiting enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers to help us monitor the status of our local wintering seabirds. Training on survey methodology will be provided at multiple locations throughout the Puget Sound area from mid-September until the first week of October. Volunteers should ideally be able to identify Puget Sound’s seabird species and be available on the first Saturday of each month, October through April, to conduct a 30-minute survey. But if determining between Lesser and Greater Scap is a challenge, we'll team you up with more knowledgeable surveyors. To help us determine each volunteer's seabird identification skills, take our quick, fun Seabird ID quiz.

To learn more about the program, including training locations, visit www.seabirdsurvey.org. If you would like more information or are interested in taking part, email Toby Ross, Senior Science Manager, at tobyr@seattleaudubon.org.

Want to see your name in print? Contribute to The Towhee!

The Towhee needs a plant expert, contributors to Bird University and the front page, photographs of Audubon events, and a lot more. Get in touch by calling the Tahoma Audubon Office or by emailing editor@tahomaudubon.org.

CALENDAR: continued

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Fort Steilacoom Park Bird Walk
Join Scott Saunders and others for birding at Fort Steilacoom Park in Lakewood. This monthly guided walk will happen rain or shine (unless the rain is torrential).

Birders of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them, and wear footwear and clothing appropriate to the weather. Birders may join or leave at any point during the walk.

Check the Tahoma Audubon Calendar page on the website for more information.

Tuesday, Jan. 7, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Theler Wetlands Bird Walk
Join leaders Faye Hands and John Riegecker of the Advanced Birding Club of Tahoma Audubon for a walk through this great estuary on the Union River in Belfair.

For questions, contact Faye at zest4parus@hotmail.com, or visit the Tahoma Audubon Calendar Page.

Thursday, Jan. 9, 8-11 a.m.

Beginning Bird Walk at Adriana Hess Audubon Center Park
This late morning bird walk is perfect for beginning and intermediate birders. We will be exploring the park and the Adriana Hess Nature Center on a short loop. This walk is wheelchair and stroller accessible. Bring your binoculars or borrow ours!

Mon. Dec. 9, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Eagle's Pride Golf Course Bird Walk
A monthly field trip on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Meet at 8 a.m. at the starting point, Building 1514, Driving Range Tee. Eagle’s Pride Golf Course in DuPont. You’ll exit I-5 at the Mounts Road exit. Anyone is welcome to join, no base pass necessary.

For more information, contact Dennis at avnacres4birds@outlook.com, or check out the Tahoma Audubon Calendar Page.

Thursday, Dec. 19, 8-10 a.m.
Field Trips and Activities

Fort Stellacoom Park Bird Walk
Join Scott Saunders and others for birding at Fort Stellacoom Park in Lakewood, where 146 species have been identified over the years. This monthly guided walk will happen rain or shine (unless the rain is torrential).

Birders of all ages and skill levels are welcome. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you have them, and wear footwear and clothing appropriate to the weather. Birders may join or leave at any point during the walk.

Check the Tacoma Audubon Calendar page on the website for more information.

Tuesday, Dec. 3, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Point Ruston Bird Walk
Join field trip leader Art Wang at Point Ruston for this monthly bird walk. This walk is an introductory level walk, but anyone is welcome to join. A variety of water birds and occasionally even whales can be seen.

Please dress for the weather and meet at the Baker Building lounge at Point Ruston. There is a fee for parking.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
Habitat Steward Restoration Event
Join in and volunteer to help restore and maintain the habitat of the Adriana Hess Wetland Park in University Place.

Volunteers are asked to bring their own tools to help remove ivy and English Blackberry. For more information, please contact Belinda Paterno at (253) 845-9770 x117. No RSVP required.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Winter Open House at Adriana Hess
Come join us for our annual winter open house! Enjoy a guided trail walk, find a gift from our bookstore, sample holiday treats, and find out more about Tacoma Audubon at this enjoyable event.

Saturday, Dec. 7, 12 p.m. – 3 p.m.
Beginning Bird Walk at Adriana Hess Audubon Center Park
This late morning bird walk is perfect for beginning and intermediate birders. We will be exploring the park and the Adriana Hess Nature Center on a short loop. This walk is wheelchair and stroller accessible. Bring your binoculars or borrow ours!

Monday, Dec. 9, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Theler Wetlands Bird Walk
Join leaders Faye Hands and John Rieger of the Advanced Birding Club of Tahoma Audubon for a walk through this great estuary on the Union River in Belfair. For questions, contact Faye at zest4parus@hotmail.com, or visit the Tahoma Audubon Calendar Page.

Thursday, Dec. 12, 8-11 a.m.
Eagle’s Pride Golf Course Bird Walk
A monthly field trip on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Meet at 8 a.m. at the starting point, Building 1514, Driving Range Tee, Eagle’s Pride Golf Course in DuPont. You’ll exit I-5 at the Mounts Road exit. Anyone is welcome to join, no base pass necessary.

For more information, contact Dennis at avnasarbird@look.com, or check out the Tahoma Audubon Calendar Page.

Thursday, Dec. 19, 8-10 a.m.
120th Christmas Bird Count
Come be a part of the longest running community science program in the world, as we count every bird herd or seen in our count circle.

After the day of counting, we meet to share dinner stories of the day at the tally dinner at the Tacoma Nature Center (Snake Lake).

See page 8-9 in this edition of Thewhee, or the TAS Calendar for more information on how to participate!

Saturday, Dec. 21, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Theler Wetlands Bird Walk
Join leaders Faye Hands and John Rieger of the Advanced Birding Club of Tahoma Audubon for a walk through this great estuary on the Union River in Belfair. For questions, contact Faye at zest4parus@hotmail.com, or visit the Tahoma Audubon Calendar Page.

Thursday, Dec. 26, 8-11 a.m.
Point Ruston Bird Walk
Join field trip leader Art Wang at Point Ruston for this monthly bird walk. This walk is an introductory level walk, but anyone is welcome to join. A variety of water birds and occasionally even whales can be seen.

Please dress for the weather and meet at the Baker Building lounge at Point Ruston. There is a fee for parking.

Saturday, Jan. 4, 9-10:30 a.m.
Habitat Steward Restoration Event
Join in and volunteer to help restore and maintain the habitat of the Adriana Hess Wetland Park.

Volunteers are asked to bring their own tools to help remove ivy and English Blackberry. For more information, please contact Belinda Paterno at (253) 845-9770 x117. No RSVP required.

Saturday, Jan. 4, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.