NCAS Response to COVID-19

For the health and safety of our members and following the guidelines of the Whatcom County Health Department (WCHD) and other government officials, we are not scheduling any events during the month of April. This includes the membership meeting and presentation scheduled for April 28, field trips, and all other educational presentations.

We are hoping that this critical health situation will improve by the end of April and that we can again schedule events during the month of May. We will determine what can be scheduled at the end of April.

The March and April programs have been rescheduled for fall 2020 and more information will be included in our website events section and in the September and October 2020 newsletters. Be sure to check our website for any updates.

We encourage all of our members and friends to stay healthy and to safely enjoy getting outside to appreciate the spring birds as they return.

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Mission Statement
The purpose of this society is to promote the study and conservation of birds and other wildlife, their habitat, and the environment; to increase public appreciation of the values of wildlife, plants, and the natural environment; and to stimulate action to protect and preserve them for the future.

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If you are interested in contributing, the deadline for the May 2020 issue is...
April 15.

Send materials to:
kanderson@northcascadesaudubon.org

Birdy Care Package - The Joy of Birds
Birds bring us happiness in so many ways - especially in trying times. Whether you’re just looking for a lift, unable to enjoy the outdoors, or in desperate need of distraction, look no further than this birdy care package from National Audubon to you. Go to Audubon.org and click on “The Joy of Birds” for an entire package of videos and other resources to cheer up everyone who loves birds.

Summary of February 3, 2020
NCAS Board Meeting
The Board met at the Whatcom Land Trust on February 3rd from 7:00 to 9:00 pm and took the following actions and/or discussed the following issues:

• The Board voted to approve the 2020 budget as modified during the meeting.

• The Board voted to propose an amendment to our bylaws to remove term limits for all officers except that of President. The Board agreed to publish the proposed change to the bylaws in our April newsletter and to schedule a vote by our membership at our next membership meeting on April 28th.

• The Board discussed our chapter’s role in planning for this year’s Audubon Council of Washington event, which will be hosted by Audubon chapters in Northwest Region 1.
WhatcomBirds Listserv Now Being Hosted by NCAS

What is WhatcomBirds?

WhatcomBirds is a listserv that provides a place for people with an interest in local birds to inform each other of bird sightings and to discuss issues relevant to local birds. The listserv’s goal is to advance our understanding of local birds and birds in general and to increase our appreciation of local birds. With over 300 subscribers and almost 20 years of service, WhatcomBirds has been a highly effective tool for educating us all about Northwest Washington birds, and North Cascades Audubon Society is excited and pleased to be able to continue this great service.

Why is it moving?

WhatcomBirds is now being hosted by NCAS after experiencing increasing difficulties with members being blocked by WWU’s cybersecurity. NCAS will oversee the hosting of the website and listserv, and Professor John Bower, the originator of WhatcomBirds, will continue to moderate the listserv content.

How do I subscribe to the Listserv?

There are two ways you can subscribe to WhatcomBirds:

1) Go to https://groups.google.com/a/northcascadesaudubon.org/forum/#!forum/whatcom-birds and click “Join group to post”. Please read the FAQs for all of the information about using WhatcomBirds.

2) Go to the North Cascades Audubon Society website and click the menu “WhatcomBirds”. Instructions on how to join and use WhatcomBirds can be found there as well as at this link: https://www.northcascadesaudubon.org/whatcom-birds

Note: If you have previously been receiving posts and are not receiving them again by April 4 please subscribe again.

If you have any questions or concerns about the website please contact John Bower at jbower@wwu.edu.
Proposed Changes to Bylaws

We’ll be asking our members to vote on these proposed changes to our bylaws at our May membership meeting, if we’re able to hold that meeting.

Old Language

Article V: Officers

Section 1. The elected officers of the chapter shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The president and all other officers shall serve one (1) year terms, no individual may hold the same office for more than three (3) consecutive terms. The board may elect to extend these limits annually for up to two (2) additional terms.

New Language

Article V: Officers

Section 1. The elected officers of the chapter shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The president shall serve a one (1) year term and no individual may hold the president’s office for more than three (3) consecutive terms. The board may elect to extend this limit annually for up to two (2) additional terms. All other officers shall serve one (1) year terms as elected by the membership. There shall be no term limits for vice-president, secretary and treasurer.

Election of 2020 NCAS Officers at May Membership Meeting

The Nominating Committee for this year’s elections for NCAS officers has been formed and includes Owen Bamford, Pam Borso and Paul Woodcock.

If you are a NCAS member and would like to submit names for officers, please direct them to Pam Borso at pborso@northcascadesaudubon.org.

To date, the Nominating Committee has not received any new nominations for these positions. All current officers are willing to run again and include: President Steven Harper, Vice President Jamie Huson, Secretary Deborah Kaye, and Treasurer Sue Parrott.

If we are able to hold the May membership meeting we will solicit any more interested candidates and then vote at that meeting.

Photo: Song sparrow, courtesy of Andrew Reding

Photo: Pileated woodpecker, courtesy of Andrew Reding
Jensen Family Forest Park

By Lorraine Wilde (writing on behalf of the Whatcom Land Trust)

Jensen Family Forest Park is one of the fourteen Whatcom County Parks that have formed with Whatcom Land Trust’s (WLT) involvement, and a park that many have never heard of. The result of a conservation easement with the Jensen family in 2006, the park is managed by Whatcom County Parks that holds a recreational easement. The almost 23-acre park, located at the corner of Birch Bay-Lynden and Stein Roads in Custer, was once part of a 265-acre farm worked by the Jensen Family for at least two generations.

The beautifully forested park stands out from the adjacent field with its mature Douglas fir trees. The Jensen Family owns a nearby farm still in production with an agricultural conservation easement held by WLT. You might notice the raspberries and vegetables growing there as well as hay in the nearby field.

This quiet area provides important habitat for various flora and fauna and a year-round flat, accessible dog- and stroller-friendly 0.7-mile loop trail that leaves from the parking area. To protect birds and other wildlife be sure to leash your pet. While watching for birds along the trail you’ll pass a picnic table and two benches.

Pine siskin have been spotted in large groups in the winter months in nearby conifer forest. Dark-eyed junco, golden-crowned kinglet and varied thrush have been spotted in groups in the fall and winter months foraging on the ground, on vine maple, and on shrubs on forest edges for seeds or insects. Look for the short, jerky motion of the brown creeper probing for insects and spiders in the bark of conifer trees, and for Pacific wren foraging in the forest understory.

In the thicker parts of the second-growth forest you might see great-horned and barred owl and downy, hairy and pileated woodpecker. At different times of the year, the fields to the south are known to have visits from cackling and Canada geese, trumpeter swan, bald eagle, and Cooper’s and red-tailed hawks. Yellow-rumped, orange-crowned, MacGillivray’s and Wilson’s warblers make an appearance in the spring and summer.

Although managed by Whatcom County Parks, WLT volunteer crews occasionally remove blackberry, holly, oriental clematis and other invasive species. You can help out by joining a WLT work party.

Getting There

From I-5 North, take exit 270 and turn right (east) onto Birch Bay-Lynden Road. After approximately 1.5 miles, make a right onto Stein Road and continue for about 0.2 miles. The parking lot will be on the right, marked by a County Park sign.

When you’re looking for a new adventure, add this lesser known Whatcom County Park to your list of stops.

Photo: Jensen Family Forest Park, courtesy of Whatcom Land Trust

Photo: Golden-crowned kinglet, courtesy of National Audubon

CAUTION: Bird feeding makes you happy!

Mon-Fri 10-5:30
Sat 10-4
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The Avalanche is the newsletter of the North Cascades Audubon Society, PO Box 5805, Bellingham, WA 98227. It is published 8 times a year; subscriptions start at $20 per year. The editors welcome articles, artwork, photographs, and letters. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of this organization. Original material may be reprinted if appropriate credit is given. The North Cascades Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

North Cascades Audubon Society
Membership
We hope you will support North Cascades Audubon by joining the chapter locally. Our chapter is locally funded, and we do not receive any portion of donations you make to National Audubon. Your commitment to Audubon is important to us. We will continue to provide you with information regarding local chapter activities through our website and all activities will remain FREE and open to the public.

We're Going Paperless!
Starting September 2020 the newsletter will be more environmentally friendly and solely distributed digitally! The newsletter will be e-published monthly between September and May, including a double issue for November/December.

Please help us ensure you will continue to receive our newsletter by verifying we have the correct email address on file. To make any changes to your contact information please email: membership@northcascadesaudubon.org.

Find us at www.northcascadesaudubon.org or through social media: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @NCascadeAudubon

Join or Renew (circle one)
Please make checks payable to North Cascades Audubon.
Each membership applies to one household.
Does your company match donations? Let them know you donated to North Cascades Audubon Society.

____ $20 Kestrel
____ $35 Merlin
____ $50 Prairie Falcon
____ $75 Peregrine Falcon
____ $100 Gyrfalcon
____ $_____ Other

Name: ____________________________
Address: __________________________
Email: ____________________________