

The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society

A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Vol. 30 No. 9

NOVEMBER FIELD TRIPS By Libby Mills

The Discover Pass

Field trip attendees and all other Washington recreationists need to inform themselves about the new **Discover Pass**, issued by the state for parking on State Lands including State Parks, (Deception Pass, Bay View, Larrabee, Birch Bay) Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife lands like the Skagit Wildlife Area and the West 90, as well as Dept. of Natural Resources lands. (Chuckanuts, Blanchard Mountain).

http://discoverpass.wa.gov/

The passes are issued specifically to a single car and can be purchased for a single day (\$10) or as an annual pass (\$30 -\$35) good for 365 days from day of issue. The new pass has become an essential fee in funding our State Parks for our day use, as well as other state lands. Please remember when you share a ride that sharing in the parking fee and gas costs are always welcome donations to the driver.

About the field trips

Beginning birders and their friends are always welcome on Skagit Audubon field trips. Membership in Skagit Audubon is encouraged but not required for participation. Please be prepared for the weather with suitable clothing, and bring field guides, binoculars, and spotting scopes. Carpool whenever possible and contribute to the driver's expense. Watch the email reminders for the late changes and/or additions to the field

Field Trips continued on page 5

NOVEMBER MEETING AND PROGRAM

Birds of the Salish Sea By Ignacio Vilchis

Tuesday, November 8, 2011
7:00 Social; 7:30 Program
Padilla Bay Interpretive Center
10433 Bayview-Edison Road
Mount Vernon, Washington



Marbled Murrelet
Photo from the Wikipedia

Ignacio Vilchis of the SeaDoc Society will introduce us to the problems of the birds of the Salish Sea and the research being conducted to meet these problems. Over 170 bird species use the Salish Sea ~ a 17,000 square kilometer inland sea shared by British Columbia and Washington State. Birds don't care which side of the international border they're on, but most government and nongovernmental organizations in the Salish Sea work only in one country. The SeaDoc Society, however, has a mandate to do transboundary work. Its researchers are pulling together the best science done on both sides of the border. Their end goal is to identify management strategies impacting multiple species and encouraging ecosystem level recovery in both Canada and the United States. Don't miss this unique report on important ongoing Salish Sea research!



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White-winged Scoter Photo by J.B. Smith

MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTIONS

General membership meetings of the Skagit Audubon Society are held at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, 1043 Bayview-Edison Rd., Mt. Vernon, WA-7:00 PM Social/ 7:30 PM Program—on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June. The board of directors meets at the same location at 7:00 PM on the first Tuesday of each month.

Skagit Audubon Society (SAS) membership provides a local chapter affiliation and newsletter, The Flyer, for individuals who want all their funds to benefit their local chapter. Newsletters from additional chapters can be sought by contacting their websites and membership chairs from links at www.audubon.org/states/wa/.To join Skagit Audubon Society please use the form below.

National Audubon Society (NAS) membership is separate from SAS membership and includes Audubon magazine. National Audubon membership does not provide Skagit Audubon membership; however, NAS will assign you an affiliation with a local chapter. To change your chapter assignment call 800-274-4201. To join National Audubon Society use the form below.

Skagit Audubon Society is a Chapter of the National Audubon Society. Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

kagit Audubon Society Membership Form						
Annual membership in the Skagit Audubon Society includes 10 issues of our newsletter, <i>The Sk Flyer</i> , available on our website . Membership includes all members of your household.						
\$20 one (1) year \$40 two (2) years						
I wish to donate \$ to Skagit Audubon Society.						
Name						
Address						
City/StateZip						
Telephone No Email						
Clip form/Mail to/Payable to:						
Skagit Audubon Society P.O. Box 1101 Mount Vernon, WA 98273-1101						
Please do not share my personal information with National Audubon Society. (It is the policy of SAS not to share information with any other groups.)						

Using the form below to initially join the National Audubon Society will ensure that the **Skagit Audubon** chapter receives a cost share to support local programs.

National Audubon Society Member	ship Form					
Annual membership to the National Audubon Society includes a subscription to <i>Audubon</i> Membership includes all members of your household.						
20 for one-year introductory membership with one chapter affiliation						
Name		_				
Address		-				
City/State		_				
Telephone No	_					
Clip form/Mail to/Payable to:						
National Audubon Society Chapter Membership Data Center	Y21					

For members receiving a paper copy of The Skagit Flyer, the mailing label includes your membership expiration date in the upper right corner. If that date is highlighted in orange it is a reminder that your membership is about to or has expired. All other members will receive an email notice when their membership is about to expire. The Skaqit Flver is published monthly from September through June. Unsolicited material for the next month's Flyer should be sent to the editorby by the third Saturday of the current month. For questions or problems about your Skagit Flyer subscription, contact membership chair: Sheila Pera, skagitmembers@gmail.com



Palm Coast, FL 32142 www.audubon.org

PRESIDENT'S NOVEMBER MESSAGE:

By Tim Manns

It's hard to imagine a project touching more aspects of our lives than the proposed giant coal shipment terminal at Cherry Point supplied by a northbound stream of mile-long trains. Emergency vehicles delayed at rail crossings, coal dust effects on human health, customers blocked from local businesses, giant ships in congested waters, and much more: all results of a scheme by organizations whose records of acting in the public interest are unimpressive. By now we've all had many opportunities to learn about this project, and there will be many more. Why is this project an Audubon issue?

During Washington State's last legislative session, Audubon joined 24 other conservation organizations in the Environmental Priorities Coalition. As in previous years, this group chose a few key issues to emphasize with legislators. One was phasing out coal burning at Centralia, the last coal-fired power plant in Washington. In a collaborative give-and-take with legislators, conservationists, and unions, an agreement was struck. Unfortunately, that's not the end for coal in Washington. Now comes the plan by Peabody Coal and SSA Marine to build a very large coal shipment facility near Ferndale with Burlington Northern/Santa Fe delivering the goods in uncovered cars from Wyoming and Montana's Powder River Basin. Read the details at http://www.coaltrainfacts.org/.

This issue goes to the heart of Audubon's mission "to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity." Coal-burning is a major contributor to global warming whether the burning happens here or in China, where the Powder River coal would go. Climate change is rapidly altering habitats and food sources to which birds and other wildlife have adapted over thousands of years. Many terrestrial and aquatic birds we see in winter nest in the Arctic, where climate change is happening especially fast with a host of ill effects. Acidification of ocean waters absorbing excess carbon dioxide interferes with the growth and reproduction of marine invertebrates with effects cascading through the food chain and affecting the diets of creatures from fish to birds to orcas to people. And the terminal at Cherry Point, its development impacts and the effects of coal dust entering the marine environment; how will these affect the Aquatic Reserve there? Already this most important of all Northwestern spawning grounds for Pacific herring produces far fewer of these fish than it once did. Herring are food for many marine animals, and herring eggs provide essential energy to Scoters and Harlequin Ducks as they return to their breeding grounds. Surf Scoters are one of many Puget Sound marine birds whose populations are in steep decline.

For the sake of wildlife, ourselves, and our communities, we need to insist that the public be heard on the Coal Terminal & Trains issue, that science be fairly applied in decision-making, and that cries of "Jobs!" not blind us to the host of other effects, including the likely loss of already existing local positions. Learn about this issue and contact your legislators and other public servants. They're hearing from the project proponents. They need to hear from Audubon members too.



This column reports submitted sightings. Any rare sightings should be accompanied by detailed written documentation and if possible a photograph. A second person to verify rare sightings is extremely helpful. Do not hesitate to call any observer to help document unusual sightings. Also do not hesitate to call if you need clarification on locations.

Please submit your sightings for the December Flyer to Howard Armstrong godwitsl@wavecable.com or 360-766-6657.

WATERFOWL

Greater White-fronted Goose 19 at Jensen Access on 9/25/11 (GB); 250+ at Hayton Preserve on 10/6/11 (JB, PP); 249 at Hayton Preserve on 10/9/11 (GB)

Snow Goose 10 at Livingston Bay, Camano Island on 10/2/11 (SP); hundreds at Hayton Preserve on 10/6/11 (JB, PP); 1700 at Hayton Preserve on 10/9/11 (GB) **Cackling Goose** 3 at Wylie Slough on 9/29/11 (JB); 2

at Hayton Preserve on 10/6/11 (JB, PP); 40+ at Hayton Preserve on 10/9/11 (GB)

Black Scoter 1 male at March Point on 9/14/11 (RM)

LOONS, GREBES

Pacific Loon 4 seen from West Beach Rd, Whidbey Island on 10/1/11 (SAS)

Horned Grebe 210 at Jensen Access on 9/20/11 (RM) Eared Grebe 1 at Samish Island on 10/3/11 (RM)

RAPTORS

Broad-winged Hawk 1 light juvenile at Cascade Pass on 9/2811 (RM)

RAILS, CRANES

Sandhill Crane 1 at Skagit Game Range on 9/24/11 (GB); 1 at Hayton Reserve 10/3-9/11 (RM); 1 at Samish Flats on 10/9/11 (RM)

SHOREBIRDS

Black-bellied Plover 21 at Hayton Preserve on 10/9/11 (GB)

American Golden-Plover 1 juvenile at Jensen Access on 10/9/11 RM)

Black Oystercatcher 16 at Green Point at WA Park on 9/25/11 (GB)

Willet 1 on Samish Island on 8/30/11 (RM)

Solitary Sandpiper 1 at Skagit Game Range on 10/3/11 (RM)

Whimbrel 2 at Jensen Access on 9/24/11 (GB)

Hudsonian Godwit 1 at Skagit Game Range on 8/18/11 (RM)

Surfbird 11 at Penn Cove dock on 10/1/11 (SAS) Semipalmated Sandpiper 2 at Samish Flats on

9/23/11; 1 at Samish Flats on 9/27/11 (RM)

Western Sandpiper 500 at March Point on 9/25/11 (GB)

Baird's Sandpiper 1 at Samish Flats on 10/3/11 (RM)

Sharp-tailed Sandpiper 1 at Samish Flats on 10/3/11 (RM)

JAEGERS, GULLS

Parasitic Jaeger 1 on Samish Island on 9/25/11 (GB, spotted by JP)

Heermann's Gull 100's at Green Point in WA Park on 9/25/11 (GB)

American Herring Gull 3 at Howard Miller Steelhead Park on 10/9/11 (RM)

Thayer's Gull 1 at Howard Miller Steelhead Park on 10/9/11 (RM)

TERNS

Common Tern 2 in Burrows Bay, Anacortes on 9/19/11 (BJW); 27 on Samish Island on 9/19/11 (RM)

OWLS

Northern Pygmy-Owl 1 at Hardy Burn gravel lot on 10/8/11 (GB)

NIGHTHAWKS, SWIFTS

Vaux's Swift counts at Northern State Chimney in Sedro Woolley throughout period (TM, KW and others)

HUMMINGBIRDS

Anna's Hummingbird 1 female on Martin Rd on 10/9/11 (RM)

WOODPECKERS

Lewis's Woodpecker 1 on Healy Rd on 9/20/11 (RM) **Red-naped Sapsucker** 1 female at Sauk Prairie on 10/7/11 (RM)

FLYCATCHERS

Pacific-slope Flycatcher 1 female at Hardy Burn gravel lot on 10/8/11 (GB)

Sav's Phoebe 1 at Corkindale on 10/7/11 (RM)

SHRIKES

Northern Shrike 1 at English Boom, Camano Island on 10/9/11 (SAS)

VIREOS

Hutton's Vireo 1 at Camano Island home on 10/5/11 (PP)

LARKS, SWALLOWS

Horned Lark 19 at March Point on 8/31/11 (RM)

WRENS

Bewick's Wren 1 at Corkindale on 9/1/11 (RM)

THRUSHES

Swainson's Thrush 1 in Anacortes yard on 10/9/11 (AD)

WAXWINGS

Bohemian Waxwing small flock at Sauk Prairie on 10/7/11 (RM) **Field Notes continued page 5**



Field Notes continued from page 4

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler 1 near Hillcrest Park, Mt. Vernon on 10/9/11 (TM)

Yellow-rumped Warbler 1 Audubon's at Anacortes yard on 10/2/11 (AD); 1 Audubon's male in Anacortes yard on 10/9/11 (AD)

Black-throated Gray Warbler 3 at home on Camano Island on 9/24/11 (PP); 1 near Hillcrest Park, Mt. Vernon on 9/29/11 (TM)

Townsend's Warbler 1 at home on Camano Island on 10/5/11 (PP)

American Redstart 1 at Howard Miller Steelhead Park 9/2-5/11 (RM)

Northern Waterthrush 1 at Corkindale on 9/1/11 (RM); 1 at Skagit Game Range on 9/24/11 (GB) Wilson's Warbler 1 at Marblemount on 10/6/11 (RM); 1 near Hillcrest Park, Mt. Vernon on 10/6/11 (TM); 1 at Sauk Prairie on 10/7/11 (RM)

TANAGERS

Western Tanager 1 at Corkindale on 10/9/11 (RM)

SPARROWS

Chipping Sparrow 1 at Sauk Prairie on 10/6/11 (RM);

Field Trips continued from page 1

trip schedule. To be added to the email distribution list contact Libby Mills: libbymills@gmail.com. If you plan to join a field trip some place other than the described starting point, call the trip leader the day before to ensure a successful rendezvous. Trip plans may change!

Saturday, November 5 Weaverling Spit & Tommy Thompson Trail Trestle on Fidalgo Bay

8:30 a.m. to Noon

An easy walk on the Tommy Thompson Trail Trestle across Fidalgo Bay should give views of grebes, loons, ducks, cormorants, gulls, and more. For this trip we also have permission from the Samish Island Nation to explore adjacent Weaverling Spit, where we will look for forest birds and have additional views over the water. Drive into the Fidalgo Bay Resort & RV Park

(directions: www.fidalgobay.com/directions.htm), cross the Tommy Thompson Trail, and turn right. Parking for the trail will then be on your right. Bring binoculars and spotting scopes, and dress for weather conditions near the water. Leader: Tim Manns (360)336-8753 or bct@fidalgo.net,

Saturday, November 12 North Whidbey Island Birding Route 8:30 a. m. to 1:00 p.m.

Join us as we bird an auto route visiting Dugualla Bay, Cornet Bay, Swantown, Penn Cove, and more. This will not be the same trip recently led by Bob Kuntz. Meet at the March's Point Park 'n Ride at the next light east of Sharpe's Corner,

3 at Sauk Prairie on 10/7/11 (RM); 1 at Corkindale on 10/9/11 (RM)

Vesper Sparrow 1 a Howard Miller Steelhead Park on 9/20/11 (RM); 1 at Corkindale on 9/28/11 (RM); 1 at Sauk Prairie 10/7-9/11 (RM)

White-throated Sparrow 3 in Anacortes yard on 10/8/11 (PW)

Lapland Longspur 1 at Marblemount on 10/6/11 (RM) **Indigo Bunting** 1 female at Sauk Prairie on 10/6/11 (RM)

BLACKBIRDS, ORIOLES

Yellow-headed Blackbird 2 at Corkindale on 107/11 (RM)

Rusty Blackbird 1 male Corkindale on 10/9/11 (RM)

FINCHES, WEAVER FINCH

Pine Grosbeak pair on Blue Lake Trail on 9/24/11 (SAS); few on trail between Rainy and Cutthroat Passes on 10/8/11 (GB)

Purple Finch 1 pair at Anacortes yard on 10/2/11 (AD)

(JB) Joan Bird; (AD) Ann Dursch; (GB) Gary Bletsch; (RM) Ryan Merrill; (TM) Tim Manns; (JP) Josh Parrott; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (SP) Sheila Pera; (SAS) Skagit Audubon Society Field Trip; (BJW) Betsy and Jim Walker; (KW) Keith Wiggers; (PW) Phil Wright

north of Route 20 at 8:30 a.m. We'll search North Whidbey Island hoping to find Canvasbacks, Long-tailed Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Harlequin Ducks, and possibly 3 kinds of Scaups. We'll seek water birds both on fresh water and salt water and hopefully shorebirds, especially at Penn Cove. There will be minimal walking, mostly binocular and scope setting in coastal areas. The trip will end around 1:00. Dress for the weather and remember it can be cold in the wind this time of year. (Hot thermos beverages are recommended.) Bring scopes, as many birds will be off in the distance. Leader: Ivar Dolph (360)293-5951 or pidolph@verizon.net

Saturday, November 19 Samish Flats & Padilla Bay 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

5

This is a mostly drive-and-bird field trip across the raptor-rich Samish Flats and surrounding area. Though justly famous for its raptors, the flats also provide numerous opportunities to spot shorebirds, ducks, and songbirds. Bring a little change for the bakery in case we're in Edison in a deluge. Meet in the parking lot of the Breazeale Interpretive Center at Padilla Bay to arrange carpools. Please bring your Washington state Discover Pass if you have one (for parking at the West-90). Leader: Libby Mills (360)708-6975 or libbymills@gmail.com

No Field Trip over the Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend

Thursday, Dec. 8 ~ Reifel Refuge, British ColumbiaRepeat Popular Field Trip! Leaders: Keith & Jan Wiggers
Details in the December *Skagit Flyer*



Cold season hikes begin this month. We move from the high country to lowland hikes near the water and on the foothills. Hikes may be canceled or destinations changed due to weather, logging, construction or unforeseen circumstances. A hike will be canceled if there are high wind warnings, flooding conditions, or snowy or icy road conditions. Because this is hunting season, wear a bright-colored item of clothing. For information on or questions about the hikes, call JOAN MELCHER 360-424-0407 or email at idmelcher@comcast.net. All the hikes are on Wednesdays. Dogs are discouraged on Audubon-sponsored hikes. If dogs are on a hike, they must be on a leash at all times.

NOVEMBER 2 NORTH CHUCKANUT MOUNTAIN

Hike trails on the northwest side of Chuckanut Mountain. Take the opportunity to hike the Salal, Madrone Crest, Huckleberry, and Hush-Hush Trails that we normally have no time to do on other Chuckanut hikes. The basic loop is 6.8 miles; one can add up to 4.0 miles more. There is up to 2,700 ft. elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the North Chuckanut Parking lot located on the east side of Chuckanut Drive between the Old Samish Highway and California Street. This is about milepost 18.5. You may leave when your car-load has returned.

NOVEMBER 9 HOYPUS POINT, HOYPUS HILL, and ALA SPIT

Hike the 3.5 mile loop trail on Hoypus Point. It is of moderate difficulty, with about a 300 foot elevation gain. One can add additional hikes in the adjoining Hoypus Hill area as well as hiking out to Ala Spit. The Hoypus areas are in Deception Pass State Park. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the trailhead at Cornet Bay in Deception Pass State Park. Cornet Bay has docking facilities and a rest room.

You may leave when your carload is back to trailhead. Most people return between 12:30 and 1 p.m.

NOTE: THE NEW WASHINGTON STATE DISCOVER PASS IS REQUIRED TO PARK ON PARK PROPERTY.

NOVEMBER 16 LITTLE CRANBERRY LAKE

Terry Slotemaker or his designee will lead the group around Little Cranberry Lake in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands. The hike is 6.0 miles, with a 670 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at the trailhead located on "A" Ave between 37th and 41st Streets in Anacortes. You may leave when all in your vehicle return to the trailhead. Historically, all are back by 1 p.m.

NOVEMBER 23 THANKSGIVING WEEK ~ NO HIKE

NOVEMBER 30 LITTLE MOUNTAIN

Explore the trails on Little Mountain, southeast of Mount Vernon WA. Little Mountain is part of the Mount Vernon City Park system. A number of options are available. There will be elevation gains. Meet at 9 a.m. on the Little Mountain Park access road. Park on the side of the road before the gate. (The gate opens at 10 a.m.) The Little Mountain Park access road is off the Little Mountain Road, which is off the Blackburn Road. You may leave when you return from the hike.

DECEMBER 7 EAST SHORE LAKE WHATCOM

The East Shore of Lake Whatcom hike is a fairly level hike among trees beside the east shore of Lake Whatcom. It is a 6.25 miles round trip, with little elevation gain. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the new Chuckanut Drive park-n-ride lot. This lot is on the east side of I-5, off Exit 231 of I-5. You may leave when you return to the trailhead.

Monday, January 2 ~ Padilla Bay Christmas Bird Count

Once again, time for the annual <u>Padilla Bay Christmas Bird Count</u>!

Put the date <u>Monday January 2nd</u> on your calendar! Then contact Bob Barry, 360-299-8443, <u>dabarrybest@frontier.com</u> or Alice Turner <u>alicet2@msn.com</u> to let them know you're ready to take part in this important citizen research project.

Christmas Bird Counts gather scientifically useful information!



Easing into Fall... More Yard Birds

Photos and text from Joe Halton's Blog Birds of Different Feathers http://joehalt.blogspot.com



Downy Woodpecker

......I had another good day in the yard on Saturday despite the cloud cover. I'm almost, but not quite, tiring of taking photos of woodpeckers. This is a male **Downy Woodpecker** on the side of a Madrona tree, but we also have Hairy woodpeckers and Northern flickers visiting the yard many times on a daily basis.



Chestnut-backed Chickadee

.....I moved a rock bird bath, which is extremely heavy, to a better viewing/photography location. The move was only about two feet but this is a solid block about 16-18" cubed! At any rate one of the first benefits of the move was this **Chestnut-backed Chickadee** having a drink from the bird bath. I later photographed both a Chestnut-backed chickadee and a Black-capped chickadee on the bath at the same time.......



Eastern Gray Squirrel

...... Several days ago I took a nice photo of what I understand is an **Eastern Gray Squirrel** so it's up first. I have four or five which frequent the yard



Brown Creeper

I spent more time in the yard yesterday... mostly hoping for one of the rarer fall migrants. I didn't get that, but I did manage to photograph a **Brown Creeper**. I noticed that it bathed in one of the bird baths then paused for just an instant which was enough for me to snap several photographs. This bird spends its time traveling UP tree trunks extracting insects from the cracks in the bark, a task for which it's well-suited given its relatively long, down-curved bill. If it were not for the birds' almost constant motion this bird would be extremely difficult to spot due to its almost perfect camouflage.

December 13th Skagit Audubon Society's Annual Picture Potpourri & Potluck

Skagit Audubon Society members ~ [mail your 5 favorite nature photos from both here and abroad by Dec. 5th

to Libby Mills, libbymills@gmail.com, (Resolution 1 ~ 4 mb works best)

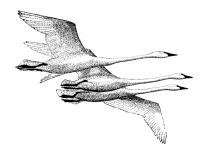
Libby is gathering digital photos and making a "slide show" of them for projection at the Dec. meeting.

We look forward to an evening of sharing among the membership. It's not a contest, just a show!

!!! Have fun participating!!!



SKAGIT AUDUBON SOCIETY P.O. BOX 1101 MOUNT VERNON WA 98273





Join Project Feeder Watch
Make Your Bird Watching Count
The 25th season of Project Feeder Watch
Begins November 12
To learn more and to sign up,
visit www.feederwatch.org

November 2011 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Oct 30	Oct 31	1 SAS Board Meeting: 7:00	2 Hiking: North Chuckanut Mountain	3	4	5 Field Trip: Weaverling Spit & Tommy Thomp- son Trail Trestle
6	7	8 General Meeting: Social 7:00 PM/ Meeting 7:30 PM	9 Hiking : Hoypus Point , Hoypus Hill & Ala Spit	10	11	12 Field Trip: North Whidbey Island Birding Route
13	14	15	16 Hiking: Little Cranberry Lake	17	18	19 Field Trip: Samish Flats, Padilla Bay Deadline SAS June Flyer
20	21	22	23 No Hike: Thanksgiving Week	24 Thanksgiving Day	25	26 No Field Trip Thanksgiving Week
27	28	29	30 Hiking: Little Mountain Dec 7Hiking:East Lake Whatcom	Dec 1 Dec. 8 Field Trip: Reifel Refuge, BC	Dec 2	Dec 3 Field Trip: Samish Island

Visit the Skagit Audubon Society Website at www.skagitaudubon.org

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