

# The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

[www.skagitaudubon.org](http://www.skagitaudubon.org)

Vol. 37 No. 1

## JANUARY FIELD TRIPS

By Libby Mills

### About the field trips

Beginning birders and 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 latest information, including any changes and/or additions to the field trip schedule. To be added to the email distribution list contact Libby Mills:

[libbymills@gmail.com](mailto: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, January 6, 2018**

**Samish Flats**

**8:30 am – Noon**

Join us as we explore birds of prey and waterfowl country at the peak of winter birding.

*Field trips continued on pg. 5*

## JANUARY MEETING AND PROGRAM

"Seeking the Aurora Borealis"

Presenter: Katherine O'Hara

Tuesday, Jan. 9, 2018

7:00 Social; 7:30 Program

Padilla Bay Interpretive Ctr.

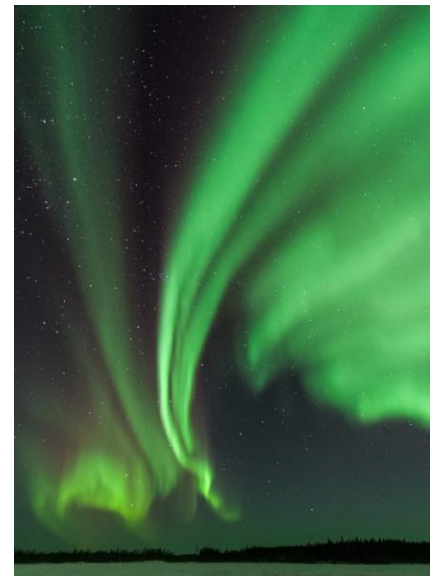
10441 Bayview Edison Rd.

Mt. Vernon, Washington

Winter doesn't have to be dark and gray. Come explore the color and wonder of the aurora borealis with Katherine as she shares with us her journeys of the past five years seeking the elusive, magical Northern Lights.

Her travels have taken her from Alaska, across Canada, to Norway and Iceland, always during the winter months. Through her award-winning images, Katherine's tales of her arctic travels will convey some of the challenges, joys and surprises she encountered, letting you enjoy the beauty of the aurora without having to stay up all night or dress for minus 30 degrees.

Katherine has worked as a banker and as a lawyer, but she has been happiest since leaving those professions and pursuing photography full-time several years ago. Since then, she has won awards and participated in juried shows. She focuses on creating images of nature, human cultures and abstracts, and loves any excuse to share her work with others.



**WINTER BIRDING CRUISE**

**Saturday, Feb. 17, 2018**

**Details on Page 5**



# SKAGIT AUDUBON

## Board of Directors

### OFFICERS

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Vice President: VACANT

Secretary: Ron Holmes

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(781) 290-9083

Immediate Past President: Irene Perry

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[conservation@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:conservation@skagitaudubon.org)

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Bird Sightings: Pam Pritzl

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Webmaster: Ron Pera

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Blue Jay, photo by Ron Holmes.

## 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 <http://wa.audubon.org/audubon-locations/>. **To join Skagit Audubon Society** use the **1st** 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 **2nd** 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.

### Skagit Audubon Society Membership Form

Annual membership in the Skagit Audubon Society includes 10 issues of our newsletter,

*The Skagit Flyer*, available at: <http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter>.

Membership includes all members of your household.

Check one:

☐

\$20.00 one (1) year

☐

\$40.00 two (2) years

Additionally, I wish to donate to Skagit Audubon Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

*Donations of \$100.00 or more receive a personal field trip by a Skagit Audubon field trip leader.*

Check one:

☐

New Membership

☐

Renewing Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

SAS does not share your contact information.

**Clip form/Mail to/Payable to:**

Skagit Audubon Society

P.O. Box 1101

Mount Vernon, WA 98273-1101

Use the form below to initially join the **National Audubon Society**.

### National Audubon Society Membership Form

Annual membership to the National Audubon Society includes a subscription to *Audubon* magazine. Membership includes all members of your household.

\$20 for one-year introductory membership with one chapter affiliation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please mail chapter-created new membership forms to address below: (Payable to same)**

National Audubon Society Y21

P.O. Box 97194

Washington, DC 20090-7194

Attn: Chance Mueleck

For membership related questions and address:

Email: [customerservice@audubon.org](mailto:customerservice@audubon.org)

Phone: (844) 428-3826

*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 Skagit Flyer is published monthly from September through June. Unsolicited material for the next month's Flyer should be sent to the editor by the third Saturday of the current month. For questions or problems about your Skagit Flyer subscription, contact membership chair:*

*Pam Pritzl [membership@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:membership@skagitaudubon.org)*



Hikes continue in January with 5 hikes scheduled. Safety comes first so hikes may be canceled or destinations changed due to weather conditions, logging, construction or other unforeseen circumstances. A hike will be canceled if there are high wind warnings, flooding conditions, snowy or icy road conditions, or forecasts of continued heavy rain. All the hikes are on a Wednesday and for questions or additional information contact Joan Melcher at [jdmelcher@comcast.net](mailto:jdmelcher@comcast.net) or 360.424.0407. Dogs are discouraged on Audubon-sponsored hikes and if dogs are on a hike, they must be on a leash at all times. General safety note: upon arrival at the destination, if cancellation of the hike is determined at the discretion of the Audubon trip leader, any individual who elects to proceed is no longer considered to be a member of an Audubon-sponsored activity. Additionally, carpools are arranged at the discretion of the driver(s).



**JANUARY 3, 2018: INTERURBAN TRAIL** - Walk off some of those holiday pounds on the Interurban Trail, several options available. Up to 14 or more miles; slight elevation gain. Meet at 9 am at the Lost Lake Trailhead parking lot, formerly known as the Clayton Beach Parking lot, at the south end of Larrabee State Park on Chuckanut Drive. Return time depends on hike option you select. WA State Discover Pass required for your vehicle.

**JANUARY 10, 2018: FRAGRANCE LAKE** - Hike to a lovely mirror lake above Larrabee State Park. 7 mile loop. 1400 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9 am at the Lost Lake Trailhead parking lot, formerly known as the Clayton Beach Parking lot, at the south end of Larrabee State Park on Chuckanut Drive. You may leave when your carload has safely returned to the trailhead. WA State Discover Pass required for your vehicle.

**JANUARY 17, 2018: SUGAR LOAF and MT. ERIE** - Hike in the popular Anacortes Forest Lands. Terry Slotemaker, 360.293.6514, or his designee, will lead us on a 5 mile hike, 1400 ft. total elevation gain. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Mt. Erie parking lot off the Heart Lake Road south of Anacortes. Most are back to the trailhead by 1 pm. You may leave when you return to the trailhead.

**JANUARY 24, 2018: THE TOMMY THOMPSON TRAIL (The TTT)** - Walk on the Tommy Thompson Trail in Anacortes from the Cap Sante Marina to the far end of the trestle on March's Point (7.2 miles round trip) and, if desired, walk around part of March's Point and back to Anacortes (up to 13 or more miles). Meet at 9 am at the north end of the Marina between the restroom and the Preston river boat. Walking shoes recommended. You may leave when you return to the starting point.

**JANUARY 31, 2018: WHATCOM FALLS & CREEK, BIG ROCK LOOP, AND THE STIMPSON FAMILY NATURE PRESERVE---a number of options**

**I. Whatcom Falls & Creek:** Hike along Whatcom Creek from Whatcom Falls Park to the I-5 Freeway bridge and back, 4.4 miles RT, slight elevation gain.

**II. Big Rock Loop:** Instead of or in addition to the Whatcom Falls & Creek hike, you can do this hike, a 6 mile loop that begins and ends at Whatcom Falls Park. This loop takes the hiker north; some ups and downs; a few short, steep sections; mostly trail with some sidewalk/road walking.

**III. Stimpson Family Nature Preserve:** If you wish to do this hike after **I, II, or both above**, then drive to the Stimpson Family Nature Preserve and hike up to 4 miles there, about 400 ft. elevation gain.

For all of the above, meet at 8:30 am at the I-5/Chuckanut Drive Park-n-Ride near exit 231 from I-5; **OR** meet at 9 am at the Whatcom Falls Park parking lot on Arbor Street off of Electric Avenue. Ride with those who plan to do the hike(s) you wish to do. When all return to your car, you may leave.

**FEBRUARY 7, 2018: LUMMI ISLAND** - THIS HIKE IS DEPENDENT ON THE ROADS BEING DRIVABLE TO THE FERRY TO LUMMI ISLAND. Walk a 7 mile loop on the north end of Lummi Island. This hike offers island, sea, and mountain views. \$7 foot-passenger ferry fare required. Mostly level, walking shoes recommended. **Meet at 8:15 a.m.** at the Chuckanut Drive park-n-ride, exit 231 from I-5 on the east side of I-5. No specified return time although most will take the 1 pm ferry back.



# SKAGIT AUDUBON JANUARY CONSERVATION REPORT

## BY TIM MANNS

**State Legislature:** The State Legislature begins its short (non-budget writing), 60-day session January 8. We hope for early approval of the Capital Budget, which failed to pass last session, held hostage for lack of agreement on implementing the State Supreme Court's Hirst Decision. Hirst has to do with water rights and rural development, with implications for salmon recovery and upholding the rights of tribes and other senior water rights holders. Passage of the Capital Budget should also provide the funds needed to protect Blanchard Forest's core 1,600 acres here in Skagit County.

**Audubon Washington Legislative Priorities:** Audubon Washington has set four priorities for the coming state legislative session, the first being "100% Clean Energy". In partnership with Climate Solutions, Audubon will work for passage of a bill mandating that by 2030 no electricity used in Washington would come from burning coal, and by 2050 all electricity here would be from clean sources. To further this goal, Audubon and other groups will hold a Lobby Day in Olympia January 22<sup>nd</sup>. To participate (please do!), go to <http://wa.audubon.org/conservation/legislative-session-2018> for registration and information. Sign up there to receive action alerts too. Audubon's great strength as a force for conservation in Washington State is its 15,000+ members distributed statewide in 25 chapters.

Audubon's other priorities for the session address Atlantic salmon net pen aquaculture, fire protection in eastern Washington, and funding for coastal research in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor, places essential to many thousands of migratory birds. Audubon also joins over 20 other conservation groups in the Environmental Priorities Coalition pressing for mutually agreed priorities in the State Legislature. This year those include passing a healthy food and packaging act, funding the oil-related safety measures passed last session, and putting a price on carbon pollution.

Since my last report, the Skagit County Hearing Examiner approved Andeavor's (formerly Tesoro) Shoreline Substantial Development Permit for its Clean Products Upgrade Project. The Examiner did not find the arguments of the many commenters, including Skagit Audubon, sufficient to deny the permit or impose conditions. Six conservation groups are appealing the decision to the Skagit County Commissioners, an act of impressive optimism.

**Long-Term Management Strategy for Marbled Murrelet Habitat:** In last month's report I incorrectly stated that the Board of Natural Resources, overseeing the Department of Natural Resources, had selected a preferred alternative for the Long-Term Management Strategy for marbled murrelet habitat on state trust lands. It's more complicated. The board has selected an alternative (a modified version of one of six alternatives which DNR developed) as recommended by staff which now will be further studied before being declared the "preferred". Details of the modified alternative are not yet out. However, at the most recent meeting of Skagit County's Forest Advisory Board, staff person Kendra Smith, who had testified for an even less protective alternative, stated that the chosen one would probably mean no further decrease in DNR lands available for logging in Skagit County. However, that is not welcome news to timber companies, which want fewer restrictions, nor to counties very reliant on income from state trust lands. The chosen alternative is also not welcome to conservationists, whose modeling shows it would mean the demise of the murrelet in Washington. The bird's population has declined 44% here since 2001. A coalition of conservation groups, including Audubon, is advocating for a different approach which would both meet the financial needs of timber-dependent counties and protect the murrelet. This is a long and complicated tale with more chapters to come, including ones to which we can contribute our comments.

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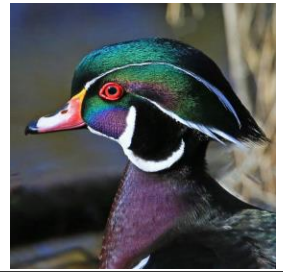
Audubon Washington "engages diverse people across the state to conserve birds and their habitat."  
Visit [www.wa.audubon.org](http://www.wa.audubon.org).





### *Field Trips continued from page 1*

We will meet at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center and then work our way around Bayview and Samish Flats seeking white birds, raptors, shorebirds and more. Dress for the weather and bring a lunch or snack, your binoculars and scope if you have one. We will meet at Padilla Bay Interpretive Center parking lot to carpool. Contact us to confirm the trip in case of poor road or weather conditions. Leaders: Irene and Mark Perry, 931.623.2084 or [irene@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:irene@skagitaudubon.org). Don't forget your Discover Pass!



Wood Duck, by Ron Holmes

**Thursday, January 18, 2018**  
**Reifel Bird Sanctuary, British Columbia**  
**7:30 am to Late Afternoon**

Andrea Warner and Ron Holmes will be our guides for a trip to the ever-popular birding sights in southern BC borderlands around Reifel Bird Sanctuary. Feed chickadees from your hand, observe waterfowl and their iridescent plumage at close range, and look for Saw-Whet Owls. Meet to arrange car pools at 7:30 am across from the Cook Road exit/Highway 99 **Starbucks**. This is just south of Cook Road on Highway 99. Come early enough to buy your coffee and use the restroom and **leave by 8 am. Yes, it will barely be light when we leave but will be morning when we get to our destinations.** Bring appropriate ID for the border crossing – either a passport or an enhanced driver's license – a crossing-friendly lunch, and a few dollars for the entry fee and bird feed at Reifel. There may be additional stops for any special birds reported in nearby areas. Here's the link to the bird sanctuary to check out the information they provide (rules, bird checklist, etc.): <http://www.reifelbirdsantuary.com/index.html>. Please contact leaders: Ron Holmes, [ronaldeholmes@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldeholmes@gmail.com) or Andrea Warner, [warnerj@me.com](mailto:warnerj@me.com) if you plan to attend.

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## WINTER BIRDING CRUISE

**Saturday, February 17**

**9:30 AM to 12:30 PM**

**Birding aboard the *Blackfish III***

Expert birder Gary Bletsch will help us find and learn about seabirds, shorebirds, waterfowl, and possibly other wildlife up close and personal in their natural habitat. The *Blackfish III* will leave Skyline Marina in Anacortes bound for Williamson's Rocks and other points either side of Rosario Strait. We'll depart at 9:30 AM sharp. Please arrive between 8:45 and 9:15. We'll return about 12:30 PM. *Blackfish III* is well-designed for birding, with room for everyone both inside and out. Dress warmly. Waterproof jacket and pants would be best. We will have some hot beverages, but you might want to bring a thermos and snacks. Cost: \$60.00 per person. Reservations required: phone or

e-mail Tim Manns (360-336-8753 or [bctm@fidalgo.net](mailto:bctm@fidalgo.net)). To confirm your place (limited to 30), Skagit Audubon must have your check or money order made out to "Skagit Audubon" no later than the February 13<sup>th</sup> Audubon monthly meeting. Please mail the check or money order with "boat cruise" in the memo line to: Skagit Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1101, Mt. Vernon, WA 98273. If paying in cash, please do so at the January or February Audubon meeting. In case of inclement weather, the trip will be



postponed to Saturday, February 24.

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## LaConner Birding Showcase Jan. 27-28, 2018

More info: [www.lovelaconner.com/explore-amazing-birds-winter-experience/](http://www.lovelaconner.com/explore-amazing-birds-winter-experience/)

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Photo by Mary Sinker

**WINTER FEAST:** Simple and fun to make. Enjoy watching many birds (and of course the squirrels) feast on this festive homemade wreath.

Supplies: 1 grapevine wreath, peanut butter, assorted seeds, nuts and fruits. Wire for hanging.

Assemble everything on the ground beneath where you plan to hang the wreath. The birds and squirrels will quickly clean up any spillage on the ground. Cover the wreath with peanut butter. Add seeds, nuts, and fruits (mix and match to suit the preference of your local birds). Hang up! This wreath contains peanut butter, black oil sunflower, and fresh cranberries.

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## **BIRDS OF WINTER: A SKAGIT VALLEY EXPERIENCE**

### **December 2017-February 2018**

In its inaugural season, Birds of Winter seeks to showcase the Skagit Valley's winter birding at its best. With six different habitat clusters containing more than 20 birding sites, there is something for everyone. Many quality opportunities are offered to view swans, snow geese, eagles, shorebirds, waterfowl, raptors and owls.

Educational opportunities include, "a wide variety of talks and classes for birders of any level." For example, you can "learn about swans with Martha Jordan, raptors with Bud Anderson or migratory birds with Libby Mills."

Birds of Winter also connects visitors with birding tours and workshops as well as places to eat and overnight accommodations.

For more information, calendar of events, schedules for tours and workshops, maps, driving directions, and birding sites please visit: [www.birdsofwinter.org](http://www.birdsofwinter.org) or [info@birdsofwinter.org](mailto:info@birdsofwinter.org).

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## **GARDENING FOR BIRDS**, tips to make your yard attractive to winter birds, from National Audubon Society

**Create a songbird border** of native trees and shrubs to shelter your yard from the wind. Choose berry-producing landscape plants, such as juniper trees and shrubs like dogwood, serviceberry, and viburnum; many boreal birds, such as the Cedar Waxwing, the Yellow-rumped Warbler, and several sparrow species, eat berries during the winter. Fall is the perfect time to plant, says Kress, though be sure to put wire-mesh cages around the new plants to protect them from mice, deer, and rabbits.

**Make a brush pile** in the corner of the yard to shelter the birds from predators and storms and to provide night roosting places. Put logs and larger branches on the bottom and layer smaller branches on top.

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**SKAGIT AUDUBON will be volunteering at Port Susan Bay for the Arlington Eagle Festival on Feb. 3, 2018 from 10 am - Noon**



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 to  
[birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org)

For recent updates on bird sightings, check out **ABA Tweepers** and **Skagit County Ebird List** on the SAS website (Birding menu, Bird Sightings submenu).

#### **WATERFOWL**

**Wood Duck** 4 east of Lyman on 12-3 (GB)  
**Redhead** 4 off Bay View State Park on 11-25 (GB)

#### **GALLINACEOUS BIRDS**

**Wild Turkey** 15 near Samish River bridge on Bow-Edison Road on 11-23 (NOH)

#### **RAILS and COOTS**

**American Coot** 3 at Barnaby Slough on 12-3 (GB)

#### **ALCIDS**

**Ancient Murrelet** 12 at Samish Island Public Beach on 12-10 (GB)

#### **LOONS**

**Red-throated Loon** about 300 seen off West Beach, Deception Pass State Park on 12-8 (PP)

#### **HERONS and ALLIES**

**Green Heron** 1 flying over Blanchard wetlands off Chuckanut on 12-2 (KR)

#### **HAWKS, EAGLES and ALLIES**

**Bald Eagle** 37 in the Samish Flats on 11-23 (NOH)  
**Northern Harrier** 7 in the Samish Flats on 11-23 (NOH)  
**Northern Goshawk** 1 at east Stanwood home on 12-3 and 12-16 (MS); 1 at home on Swinomish Reservation on 11/8 (R&WJ) **UNUSUAL**  
**Rough-legged Hawk** 2 on Samish Island Rd on 11-1 (R&WJ); 1 on La Conner-Whitney Rd on 11-4 (R&WJ); 3 in the Samish Flats on 11-23 (NOH); 5 on the Samish Flats on 12-8 (PP)

#### **OWLS**

**Barred Owl** 1 on Colony Road on 12-12 (KR)  
**Short-eared Owl** 5 in the Samish Flats on 11-23 (NOH)

#### **WOODPECKERS**

**Hairy Woodpecker** 1 on Fragrance Lake trail on 12-7 (KR)

**Northern Flicker** 1 "intergrade" at home on the Swinomish Reservation throughout siting period (R&WJ)

#### **FALCONS**

**American Kestrel** 1 in the Samish Flats on 11-23 (NOH)

**Peregrine Falcon** 1 in the Samish Flats on 11-23 (NOH)

**Prairie Falcon** 1 at Hayton Reserve on 11-18 (GB)

#### **CORVIDS**

**Blue Jay** 1 at feeder in Bow throughout sighting period (BC); 1 at feeder in Bow on 12-2 (GB); 1 at feeder in Bow on 12-12 (R&WJ); 1 at feeder in Bow on 12-13 (RH)

#### **FINCHES and ALLIES**

**Common Redpoll** 4 at DeBay's Slough on 12-10 (GB)

#### **BUNTINGS**

**Painted Bunting** 1 at feeder in La Conner on 11-19 (GB); 1 at feeder in La Conner on 11-20 (R&WJ)

**(GB)** Gary Bletsch; **(BC)** Barry Christiansen; **(RH)** Ron Holmes; **(NOH)** Neil O'Hara; **(R&WJ)** Rosi & Wes Jansen; **(PP)** Pam Pritzl; **(KR)** Kerry Rye; **(MS)** Mary Sinker

### **SWAN HOTLINE**

If you see a dead, sick, or injured swan, call the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife 24-hour hotline: (360) 466-4345, ext. 266. Do not handle the bird. Leave a short, detailed message with your name and phone number plus the location and condition of the swan(s). WDFW collects information to assess the impact of lead poisoning and power line collisions, the main causes of accidental swan deaths.



## UPCOMING 2018 BIRDING FESTIVALS

### **Birds of Winter: A Skagit Valley Experience**

Dec. 2017-Feb. 2018, more info: [www.birdsofwinter.org](http://www.birdsofwinter.org)

**Skagit Eagle Festival:** Sat. and Sun. in Jan. (full weekends); more info [www.skagiteaglefestival.com](http://www.skagiteaglefestival.com)

**LaConner Birding Showcase:** Jan. 27-28, more info [www.lovelaconner.com/explore-amazing-birds-winter-experience/](http://www.lovelaconner.com/explore-amazing-birds-winter-experience/)

**Arlington Stillaguamish Eagle Festival:** Feb. 2-3, more info [www.arlingtonwa.gov/index.aspx?page=427](http://www.arlingtonwa.gov/index.aspx?page=427)

**Winter Wings Festival:** Feb. 15-18; Klamath Basin Audubon Society, Klamath Falls, OR; more info [www.winterwingsfest.org](http://www.winterwingsfest.org)

**Port Susan Snow Goose and Birding Festival:** Feb. 24-25; Stanwood, WA; more info [www.snowgoosefest.org](http://www.snowgoosefest.org)

**15<sup>th</sup> Annual Olympic Bird Fest:** Apr. 13-15; Dungeness River Audubon Center, Sequim, WA; more info [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org)

**Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival:** Apr. 27-28; Hoquiam, WA; more info [www.shorebirdfestival.com](http://www.shorebirdfestival.com) and 360.289.5048

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**ESCAPED FARMED ATLANTIC SALMON** from Cooke's Cypress Island facility still being caught in the Upper Skagit River.

As reported by the Seattle Times on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> (<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/violations-prompt-washington-state-to-cancel-atlantic-salmon-farm-lease-at-port-angeles/>), Atlantic salmon from the Cypress Island facility owned and operated by Cooke Aquaculture Pacific are still being caught by the Upper Skagit Tribe 42 miles up the Skagit River.

Confirmed by WDFW to be salmon from the massive escape over the weekend of Aug. 21<sup>st</sup>, the Atlantic salmon were not dead or decomposing somewhere as originally believed by both state officials and Cooke representatives.

More than 105,000 of the escaped salmon have not been accounted for despite assurances from state officials that the salmon posed no threat to the native Pacific salmon population. Tests conducted so far have found most of

the salmon did not have food in their stomachs and were not sexually mature at the time they were caught. (<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/escaped-atlantic-salmon-found-42-miles-up-skagit-river/>.)

The future of net-pen salmon farming for Cooke in Washington is uncertain with the recent termination of the company's lease at its Port Angeles facility and the introduction of legislation in Olympia to terminate all of Cooke's leases in Washington State.

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## WHAT IS FEEDERWATCH?

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Project FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance.

Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs. You can count birds as often as every week, or as infrequently as you like: the schedule is completely flexible. All you need is a bird feeder, bird bath, or plantings that attract birds.

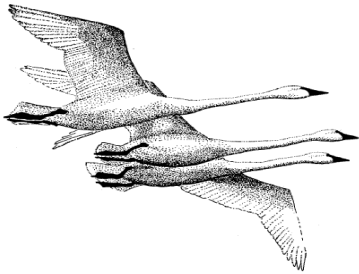
There is an \$18 annual participation fee for U.S. residents (\$15 for Cornell Lab members). Canadians can participate by joining Bird Studies Canada for CAN\$35. The participation fee covers materials, staff support, web design, data analysis, and the year-end report (*Winter Bird Highlights*). Project FeederWatch is supported almost entirely by participation fees. Without the support of our participants, this project wouldn't be possible.

For more information and to register please visit: <https://feederwatch.org/about/project-overview/>





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



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### *January 2018 Calendar*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 SAS Board Meeting 7:00 PM	3 Hike Interurban Trail	4	5	6 Field Trip Samish Flats
7	8	9 SAS General Meeting 7:00 PM Social; 7:30 PM Program	10 Hike Fragrance Lake	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Hike Sugar Loaf and Mt. Erie	18 Field Trip Reifel Bird Sanctuary, BC	19	20
21	22	23	24 Hike Tommy Thompson Trail (TTT)	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 Hike Whatcom Falls, Big Rock, Stimpson Family Nature Preserve	Feb. 1	Feb. 2	Feb. 3 10 am –Noon Volunteering at Port Susan Bay for Arlington Eagle Festival
Feb. 4	Feb. 5	Feb. 6	Feb. 7 Hike Lummi Island			

Visit the Skagit Audubon Society Website at [www.skagitaudubon.org](http://www.skagitaudubon.org) The Skagit Flyer is printed on recycled paper

