

# The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society  
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

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## **JUNE MEETING – PRESENTED ON ZOOM**

**“Where do Magellanic Penguins Go in the Winter”**

**Presented by: Ginger Rebstock, Ph.D.**

**Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM**



Ginger Rebstock is a research scientist at the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels at the University of Washington. She earned a Ph.D. in biological oceanography from Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Dr. Rebstock has worked on projects in California and South Korea, with study species including zooplankton, fish larvae, least terns, and now penguins. She enjoys working with long-term data as well as the fieldwork. Ginger currently spends several weeks per year in Punta Tombo, Argentina at the beginning of penguin breeding season.

Many penguin species, including Magellanic penguins, are migratory and spend most of the nonbreeding season at sea. Most of what we know about penguins, however, is learned at breeding colonies, where most species are easy to study. We can track penguins at sea during the breeding season, when they stay relatively close to colonies and return frequently to incubate eggs or feed chicks. They are much harder to track in the nonbreeding season, when they swim long distances and stay away from land for months. Consequently, we know very little about where Magellanic penguins go and what they do outside of the breeding season. Dr. Rebstock will discuss what we know about Magellanic penguins' winter distribution and behavior, and some of the challenges of learning more.

If you plan to participate in the meeting, please register now to save your spot at: <https://bit.ly/sasjune>. Pre-registration is required and limited to the first 100 registrants. In order to maximize the number of people viewing the virtual presentation, please only have one person register per household. Although you may participate in the meeting using a landline, you will need internet access and a computer, mobile device or tablet to view the presentation. Are you new to Zoom? Please see Pg. 5 for information and resources.

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**July Program Presented on Zoom, Tuesday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. See Pg. 5 for more information.** Your Board of Directors is working to provide additional virtual programs on Zoom over the summer. We plan to send out email notifications and you may also visit our website: [www.skagitaudubon.org](http://www.skagitaudubon.org) or email our Program Chair, Carla Helm, at [programs@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:programs@skagitaudubon.org) for information and updates.



**CHECK OUT our new social media presence on Facebook! You can “Like” or “Follow” for updates on happenings, bird sightings and other interesting features at: <http://www.facebook.com/skagitaudubon>**

**Due to the continuing emergency response to the COVID-19 virus, all in-person meetings, field trips, hikes and other activities have been cancelled until further notice. Please visit our website for updates.**

## VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - Greetings Skagit Audubon members and friends

As a member of the Skagit Audubon Board, I think of you often with hopes that you have stayed healthy and safe during this pandemic. I look forward to the day we can share the joys of nature and birding in person.

The new reality of life during this pandemic has demanded that we change the way we do things. Physical distancing creates a void in our lives and we use technology to stay connected with family, friends, organizations and the rest of the world. The uncertainty of jobs and businesses, travel plans and family visits have required that we practice patience and be grateful for and focus on the positive things in our lives. As the restrictions in activities are lifted we can again enjoy birding in public lands while continuing to follow the physical distancing guidelines with respect for each other.

A deep debt of gratitude to all of the frontline workers who have worked tirelessly with risk to their health, and to the many that have made the transition to working from home to keep society functioning. The importance of every person and every occupation cannot be understated. As we look forward to being able to enjoy the company of each other in Skagit Audubon activities, continue to be safe, look out for each other and take care of yourself.

"It is good to give thanks to the birds, for they are the ones who lift us from our troubled minds." Chief Jake Swamp, Tekarorianeken

Jane Brandt, Vice President

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### **Pileated Woodpecker, by Rosi Jansen (photo by Rosi Jansen)**

Since the extinction of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the Pileated Woodpecker is now the largest woodpecker in North America. About the size of a crow (17"), Pileated woodpeckers are easy to spot with their red heads and the males also have a red mustache. They often announce their presence with a loud vocal call and can be attracted to suet feeders.

Decaying trees are an important food source for Pileated woodpeckers and you'll know when one has been pecking at a decaying tree by the large rectangle-shaped holes this woodpecker makes. If you have the chance to watch these handsome woodpeckers at work on a tree trunk, stand back or you might get hit with large chunks of wood flying left and right. Pileated woodpeckers live in mature forests, mixed woods and also utilize other habitats where large decaying trees are present. Unless a decaying tree presents a hazard to life or property, it is best to leave these trees standing because they provide important food sources and nesting sites for woodpeckers and other birds and wildlife. Pileated woodpeckers nest in holes and begin their nesting season earlier than most songbirds.



We can help to protect birds by delaying tree trimming and major yard work until the fall when nesting is completed and young birds have fledged. Enjoy them while they're nesting and watch the young, who always make us smile!

**FROM YOUR EDITOR, by Mary Sinker** It's been an interesting spring so far, with the closure of some of the best birding spots due to the Covid virus, and just when I thought perhaps spring migration was going to pass by, eight American Avocets landed in Stanwood. At the same time, a few hundred Whimbrels made their annual appearance on Camano Island, even a Marbled Godwit joined in. All was not lost and although I didn't get to see the Godwit, the Avocets and Whimbrel helped to remind me to be grateful for the small things and the things we don't expect, even when current circumstances are far from normal. A few days after the Avocets left, our public lands reopened and some of the shorebirds are still here, eagles are nesting, and a Great-horned Owl and her branching youngster at Wylie Slough have been the stars of attention for birders and photographers. Spring has sprung and with warblers and flycatchers arriving, summer promises to be full of birdsong and color. In my own yard, my eBird checklist for birds at home has never been so active, with more than 40 straight days of submissions. I plan to practice birding-by-ear skills and to continue to be grateful for the small things and the things we don't expect. Enjoy the birds of summer and From Your Editor will see you in September – happy birding! Mary

## 2020 BOARD ELECTION TO BE ELECTRONIC -- CONSENT TO ELECTRONIC NOTICE

Dear Skagit Audubon Society Member,

Following up on the notice given in the May *Skagit Flyer*, and in light of current restrictions imposed by the state on large in-person gatherings, SAS plans to hold our annual elections for the Board of Directors electronically.

First, if you are receiving this notice by email, you have kindly provided us in the past with your email address. To help us conduct our 2020 Board elections electronically and to better manage SAS's communications with you in the future, we need your consent to deliver notices regarding SAS business by electronic transmission such as email. To simplify this consent process, SAS is going to deem that you have consented to our use of electronic transmission for notices (such as email or posting to SAS's website), **unless you tell us you do not consent** to such electronic transmission. Your objection to electronic transmission of notices must be sent to [membership@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:membership@skagitaudubon.org) **by June 5, 2020**. If you take no action on this question through June 5, that will constitute consent. Please note you may revoke this consent at any time on written request to the Secretary of SAS. If your email address changes in the future, please remember to notify SAS promptly.

Second, we plan to send out by email in early June an electronic ballot for the Board elections. For those members who have not provided us with an email address, we will send out paper ballots. If you have provided an email address but do not want to vote by electronic means and **want a paper ballot**, you must tell us **by June 5, 2020** by sending an email to [membership@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:membership@skagitaudubon.org). If you have not previously provided us with an email address and wish to do so now with your consent to electronic transmission of notices, please send your email address and consent to [membership@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:membership@skagitaudubon.org).

The slate of nominees for election to the Board of Directors of SAS was provided in the May edition of the *Skagit Flyer* and will be provided again in the ballot itself. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact any member of the Board of Directors.

The Skagit Audubon Board of Directors thank you for your understanding and support.

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### From the Education Committee - Parents, Grandparents: Looking for something to do with kids during this pandemic?

The weather is getting nicer and everyone wants to get outdoors to enjoy the sunshine while still staying safe. There are a number of websites that have suggestions for indoor and outdoor activities kids and adults can enjoy together.

The Audubon for Kids website has loads of ideas for parents and kids to enjoy together. Weekly segments focus on different aspects of birds and birding: <https://www.audubon.org/get-outside/activities/audubon-for-kids>.



eBird (The Cornell Lab of Ornithology) website provides a series of Lessons and Activities for grades K-2 through 9-12. According to the website: "These hands-on activities are designed to explore nature and science with a combination of indoor and outdoor activities that will ease cabin fever." <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/k12/science-nature-activities-for-cooped-up-kids/>.

The Children and Nature Network has a number of family centric indoor and outdoor activities on their website: <https://www.childrenandnature.org/2020/03/16/10-nature-activities-to-help-get-your-family-through-the-pandemic/>.

Another great idea is a bird journal. Our website, <https://skagitaudubon.org/education> has a journal ready to copy. Using an iPhone, smartphone, or point and shoot camera, have the kids take pictures of birds in their yards. Then use a simplified bird guide (or pictures on the computer) to identify the birds. Have the kids draw a picture of the birds in the journal (or attach a copy of the photo). Then have the kids note the major characteristics of the bird. We also have an area in the Education section of the website for kids to post their photos. Send photos to [skagiteducation2@gmail.com](mailto:skagiteducation2@gmail.com).



Hi Birders,

I have had this letter cued up to write since the last big weather week that brought a rain of fresh warblers down into my garden.

Now with some more unsettled weather, the arrival of birds and their passage through the neighborhood is still very noticeable.

First, back three weeks, I was enjoying the goldfinches turning lemon yellow and beginning to sing. The Song and White-crowned Sparrows and Bewick's Wrens, Spotted Towhees too, were the dominant singers. Chickadees, nuthatches, drumming woodpeckers and Pacific Wrens were among the other winter resident birds getting a head start at setting up territories with their songs.

Now in the middle of May the South American and Central American migrants are pouring through. Olive-sided Flycatcher sings "Quick Three Beers", and yesterday brought the first "beeeeeeer" from a Western Wood-pewee. Pacific-slope Flycatchers are whistling among the dead branches of conifers in the darker forest. Swainson's Thrush is making its call note "pwuip" and I heard one understated phrase of a song a couple days ago. Black-headed Grosbeaks are winning in the bright, high volume pure exuberance contest, with the caroling of American Robins similarly making my heart swoon a little. We often think Robins are so ordinary, but take the time to really listen to their song and recognize how lucky we are to have them in the chorus. If your window is open, or the puppy wakes you up at 4:30am, you will hear the Robins waking up too. Next come the trills of the Spotted Towhees.

Even if you don't recognize every song, it's really fun to go out alone and focus on how each song is different from the next. Some are even trills, (Junco and Orange-crowned Warbler, Towhee); some have complex multi-phrase tunes, like the Song Sparrow, the Black-headed Grosbeak, House Finch. Some are raspy calls and not very songful (Steller's Jay and crow), woodpeckers drum each in their own way, maybe on your downspout. Nothing sings more cheerily than the barn swallows lined up on our solar array or the gutter.

Find out what's happening in your neighborhood and write down some notes. Once you see a bird, watch its behavior. The vast majority are making a huge impact on insects and their larvae in forest and field and garden.

I've read that some folks are "so bored they are looking into birding". Well I've always thought paying attention to nature was the delight of the curious, not the bored. But wherever you sit on the spectrum, nature is just the other side of your door or window. Sometimes it's even more interesting on a rainy day than a sunny one. Certainly windy days are the quietest for bird song.

The forest wildflowers like spring beauty and Youth On Age are in full bloom. Washington is at its Rhododendron finest and our old towns around Skagit county are planted in mighty fine brilliant shrubs and perennials. Whether you are walking an urban neighborhood or the edge of the wild, Go Outside! You'll be so glad you did. It's habit-forming.

Your birding buddy and teacher longing to teach...Libby Mills, Field Trip Committee Chair

### **BACKYARD BIRDS, by Mary Sinker**

The Black-capped Chickadee is the happiest bird in my yard. Curious, energetic and friendly, these little birds are like the Energizer Bunny with wings. They're always on the go, no matter the season or the weather. Found throughout a wide variety of habitats, they are easily attracted to feeders offering black-oil sunflower seeds, suet, peanuts, mealworms and peanut butter. Curious about everything in their territory, even people, they might start snatching seeds from a feeder even as you are hanging it up! Black-capped Chickadees travel in mixed flocks that often include warblers, kinglets, woodpeckers and other small woodland birds. They hide seeds and other foods to find later and their complex system of calls keeps them in touch with each other and provides an early warning system for predators in the yard, whether it's a cat or an owl. Chickadees are cavity nesters and readily use nest boxes built to their specifications. The female usually selects the nest site and nesting materials include moss and rabbit fur. Clutch size is 1-13 eggs; 12-13 days incubation; 12-16 days nestling; 1 brood. For more info, visit: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-capped\\_Chickadee](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-capped_Chickadee).



Ron Holmes



## SHIP: A Gem Hidden in Plain Sight, by Neil O'Hara

Anyone who has ever taken a ferry from Anacortes knows the adjacent wetland east of the car staging area. To birds, however, the Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve offers more than mere wetland: a shallow bay; a sandy beach; a shrubby transition zone between beach and freshwater wetland; and drier woods at the east end and along the inland buffer. These microhabitats attract a remarkable variety of birds to such a small area—139 species have been reported on eBird.

SHIP is my closest birding hotspot and an obvious destination while the coronavirus lockdown was in full effect. In the five weeks from March 23 through May 4, I visited the area 16 times and found 74 species in total (up to 42 on a single visit). The migration saw some waterfowl leave (last Common Goldeneye on 4/13, last American Wigeon on 4/20) to be replaced by an influx of passerines (including Yellow-rumped Warbler on 3/30, Tree and Violet-green Swallows on 4/7, Bushtit, Orange-crowned Warbler on 4/13, Purple Martin on 4/16, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow and Wilson's warblers on 4/30).

It takes time to tease out all that SHIP has to offer; my typical visit lasts 1 ½ – 2 hours. The woods near the parking lot on Edwards Way are quiet in winter but when the trees leaf out in spring you may see chickadees, Orange-crowned Warblers and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. A Black-headed Grosbeak nested here in 2019. Moving on into the shrubby transition, look for Anna's Hummingbirds often perched atop a bush close to the trail as they stake out breeding territories. Listen for the *da-da-da-DAA* as a Rufous Hummingbird performs its J-curve mating display, too. Spotted Towhees, sparrows and finches like this area, while the trees beyond the shrubs attract woodpeckers, Pine Siskins and Cedar Waxwings (among others).



The boardwalk loop through the marsh probably offers the greatest variety. Marsh Wrens begin to trill in early spring and the *con-ker-EEE* of Red-winged Blackbirds sounds year-round. With patience, you may see or hear Swainson's Thrush, Bewick's Wren or warblers among the shrubs and trees, or even a true rarity—I once found an Eastern Kingbird here. Listen for the irregular click call of the resident Virginia Rails, though you probably won't see one.

The trail continues to a viewing station over what is open water much of the year. Fox Sparrows may lurk around the reedy edges in late winter and freshwater ducks sometimes stop by. Check the trees: that dark silhouette may be a Brown-headed Cowbird rather than a Red-winged Blackbird. The boardwalk ends with a platform giving access to the beach, where, in winter, American Wigeons cluster while Buffleheads dive for food in the bay. Gulls, Cormorants and Great Blue Herons often perch on the old pilings. Shorebirds are rare at SHIP but take a look just in case—you may get lucky and see a Killdeer or even a sandpiper. Then walk slowly back and look everywhere again, because SHIP rewards patient eyes and ears—my list is always longer when I get back to the car.

## ARE YOU NEW TO ZOOM? by Mary Sinker

Zoom is an online virtual video conferencing and meeting platform designed to keep people in touch, whether it be grandparents visiting with their grandchildren or high level meetings with a worldwide audience. Some of you may already be using Zoom but if this is your first time hearing about it, I found it to be user-friendly and in the current age of COVID-19, an invaluable resource for staying engaged with work and Skagit Audubon.

From my chair, Zoom is best experienced with either a desktop or laptop computer with a monitor so you don't miss out on the video portion of the presentation. An iPhone, smartphone, tablet or landline phone will also work, just be aware of the limitations of each device when it comes to the whole experience. If you are unfamiliar with any video conferencing platform, I recommend visiting the Zoom website to read up on tips to get the most out of your meeting and to take part in a practice meeting. Zoom is free-of-charge for meeting participants and you will need to download the application to use it. Support and user information can be found at: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Meeting>. Your Board of Directors has successfully used WebEx, a similar platform, for our last two board meetings and the Board is working to provide some virtual programs over the summer using Zoom. In light of the need to cancel several meetings earlier this year due to unforeseen circumstances, we hope you will find the virtual programs enjoyable.

## CONSERVATION, by Tim Manns

There is never a lack of conservation issues crying out for response. They are often threats to areas we value and thought secure: the planned bike path through Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve, Growler flights over spotted owl habitat in Olympic National Park..., but here I'd like to mention a different role Audubon members can play in conservation. Maybe you've seen presentations by Dr. Douglas Tallamy, an entomologist and ecologist at the University of Delaware and inspiring and pragmatic advocate for gardening with native plants as not only good to do, but urgent. Tallamy points out that just 5% of the lower 48 states is in fairly pristine ecological shape while over 40 million acres are lawn, all but dead ecologically. The problem is, "We have destroyed natural habitat in so many places that local extinction is rampant and global extinction accelerating. This is a growing problem for humanity because it is the plants and animals around us that produce the life support we all depend on." While we need not value nature only for how it supports us, Tallamy's urgency might convince people for whom birds, plants, and all the natural world do exist for us alone.



Cedar Waxwing, JB Smith

Tallamy's approach (see his new book *Nature's Best Hope*) adds detail and pizzazz to what we've been told for some time: it's important to support birds and other wildlife in our yards by replacing lawn with native plants. Tallamy



Photo by JB Smith

emphasizes choosing natives supporting the greatest number and variety of butterflies and moths. Why? Because their caterpillars are such important bird food. To have varied and numerous birds, we need plants that support what they eat. This National Wildlife Federation website, advised by Tallamy, suggests plant species: <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/Native-Plants>. Planting native species is a National Audubon campaign too: <https://www.audubon.org/native-plants>. Another good source, Washington Native Plant Society: <https://www.wnps.org/>. And read John Marzluff's *Subirdia* for his 10 principles to make your yard a place that supports birds and other wildlife. Protecting habitat in

remote national parks and wilderness areas and much smaller local preserves is important but insufficient to sustain the biodiverse world we want and need. Our own yards must be part of the bigger conservation picture.

For a recent presentation by Dr. Tallamy:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY4aV5hqkxY&feature=youtu.be>. To receive Conservation Notes on Skagit Audubon issues and occasional alerts, contact [conservation@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:conservation@skagitaudubon.org).



## SAVE THE DATE - July 14<sup>th</sup> - 7 pm

Join us on Tuesday, July 14th at 7:00 pm for a virtual Zoom presentation by Jan Loomis, about her recent work on Midway Atoll with the US Fish and Wildlife.

Jan will talk about the annual albatross nesting census she participated in, and provide an update on other current projects at Midway Atoll. Jan is a member of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Annual Nesting Albatross Census Team and has a 35 year career as an RN and paramedic. Her true love, however, is marine biology, and in particular, shore and seabirds.

Pre-registration is required and limited to 100 registrants. Save your spot: <http://bit.ly/skagitaudubonjuly>.

**Birds, Bees, and Wildlife** (article and photo reprinted with permission from the Washington Native Plant Society, Salal Chapter, <https://www.wnps.org/native-gardening/wildlife>)

Native plants provide the food, shelter, and nesting habitat favored by our local wildlife. Make your garden a sanctuary for songbirds, hummingbirds, butterflies, bees and other wildlife using native plants.



For all around practical advice, read Russell Link's books. He describes different zones around your home, includes wildlife photos, construction diagrams, extensive plant lists (not all native), and tells who will use which plant part for what purpose. There's even a "deer resistant" list though he cautions none are guaranteed in times of stress.

To attract wildlife, aim to provide the four essentials of habitat: food, water, cover, and space. Controlling nuisance pests means keeping pet food and kitchens waste out of reach. Bird feeders and

houses need regular cleaning and maintenance. Use of garden chemicals will keep wildlife away and even harm them. Natural gardening benefits plants, critters, watersheds and people!

#### Backyard Wildlife & Habitat Resources

- Pacific Northwest Plants and the Birds that Use Them: use easy to use chart (pdf)
- Link, Russell. *Landscaping for Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1999. Great, well organized, not all native plants.
- Link, Russell. *Living with Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest*. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 2004.
- Seattle Audubon Society has extensive resources on birds, butterflies, etc. Read PDF version of page 45, chapter four, *Gardening for Life - An Inspirational Guide for Creating Healthy Habitat*. Seattle Audubon Society, Seattle, 2003. Audubon At Home is a regional resource for creating backyard habitat.
- National Audubon Society
- King County Department of Natural Resources: See Events & Volunteers (native plant salvage and restoration work), Forestry (home forest steward program), Yard & Garden.
- The Songbird Foundation promotes shade grown coffee and restoring urban habitat to keep the migratory song birds healthy that nest in the PNW and feast in Central American forests.
- USDA National Resources Conservation Service has more information on backyard conservation.
- Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife – check out "Habitat." Join their Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Program which has west and east of Cascades versions. \$10 total cost for instructional materials and a waterproof Sanctuary sign.
- Wildlife Habitat Council: Order *Backyard Conservation – Bringing Conservation from the Countryside to Your Backyard* on-line, 2002.



**Backyard Bird Update –** The Bewick's Wrens, featured in a previous segment of Backyard Birds, have been very busy!

They moved into the oldest and most rustic nest box and built a nest comprised of all sorts of materials, including horsehair, moss, lichen, leaves, small twigs and feathers. They are now incubating eggs!

## Skagit Audubon Field Notes by Pam Pritzl

This column reports submitted sightings. For help with rare sightings or locations, please contact [birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org). For recent updates, check out **ABA Tweeters** and **Skagit County Ebird List** on the SAS website (Birding Menu, Bird Sightings submenu). Please submit your sightings to [birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org](mailto:birdsightings@skagitaudubon.org).

### WATERFOWL

**Snow Goose** 50+ on Samish Island on 5-10 (RWJ) late

**Ross's Goose** 2 at Samish East 90 on 5-8 (GB)

**Tundra Swan** 1 at SWAHR on 5-10 (GB)

**Wood Duck** 2 at SWAWS on 5-8 (JS); 2 in AFCL, Cranberry Lake on 5-11 (YH)

**Common Goldeneye** 1 at SHIP on 4-13 & 5-7 (NOH)

**Hooded Merganser** 2 at SHIP on 4-23 (NOH)

**Red-breasted Merganser** 1 at SHIP on 4-13, 4-18 & 4-20 (NOH)

### GREBES

**Horned Grebe** 1 at SHIP on 4-13 (NOH)

**Red-necked Grebe** 1 to 4 at SHIP from 4-13 to 5-4 (NOH)

### HUMMINGBIRDS

**Rufous Hummingbird** 3 to 4 at SHIP from 4-13 to 5-9 (NOH); 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-30 (JH)

### RAILS and COOTS

**Virginia Rail** 1 at SHIP on 4-16, 4-20, 4-30 & 5-7; 3 on 5-9 (NOH)

### STILTS and AVOCETS

**American Avocet** 8 at Eide Road on 5-2 (MS/JS); 8 at Eide Road on 5-5 (PP) **unusual**  
**Black-necked Stilt** 2 at Big Indian Slough on 5-9 (GB) **RARE**

### OYSTERCATCHERS

**Black Oystercatcher** 2 at SHIP on 4-13 & 4-30 (NOH; 2 at Bowman Bay on 5-7 (RWJ))

### PLOVERS

**Semipalmated Plover** 2 at March Point on 4-19 (GB); 4 at Eide Rd on 5-2 (JS/MS)

**Killdeer** 1 at SHIP on 4-26 & 5-4 (NOH)

### SANDPIPERS and ALLIES

**Whimbrel** 120 on Rekdal Rd., Camano Island on 4-24 (PP); 200 on Rekdal Rd., Camano Island on 5-3 (MS/JS); 24 on Butler Flats on 5-8 (GB)

**Marbled Godwit** 4 at March Point on 4-19 (GB)

**Least Sandpiper** 2 at SHIP on 4-20 (NOH)

**Western Sandpiper** 1 at SHIP on 4-20 (NOH)

**Long-billed Dowitcher** 14 at SWAWS on 5-10 (MS/JS)

**Solitary Sandpiper** 1 on Butler Flats on 4-27 (GB)

**Wilson's Phalarope** 2 at Samish East 90 on 5-8 (GB)

### ALCIDS

**Rhinoceros Auklet** 2 at Washington Park, Anacortes on 4-29 (YH)

### GULLS and TERNs

**Caspian Tern** 2 at SHIP on 4-28 (NOH)

### LOONS

**Common Loon** 1 at SHIP on 4-13, 4-16, 4-18, 4-23 & 4-28; 2 on 4-26 (NOH); 2 flying over (yodeling) east Fidalgo yard on 5-11 (RW)

### PELICANS

**American White Pelican** 9 at March Point on 5-6 (GB); 8 at Iverson Spit, Camano Island on 5-8 (PP); 9 at March Point on 5-9 (RWJ)

### IBIS

**White-faced Ibis** 5 at SWAWS on 5-10 (GB)

### RARE

### OSPREYS

**Osprey** 1 to 3 at SHIP from 4-13 to 5-9 (NOH)

### HAWKS, EAGLES and ALLIES

**Bald Eagle** 1 at SHIP on 4-16, 4-26, 4-28 & 5-4; 2 on 4-30 (NOH)

**Sharp-shinned Hawk** 1 at SHIP on 5-9 (NOH)

**Broad-winged Hawk** 1 near Cockreham Island on 5-7 (GB) **RARE**

### OWLS

**Great Horned Owl** 1 at Barney Lake on 4-24 (TM); 2 at SWAWS on 5-10 (MS/JS); 1 at SWAWS on 5-12 (RWJ)

**Northern Saw-whet Owl** 1 NEAR Cockreham Island on 4-27 (GB)

### KINGFISHER

**Belted Kingfisher** 1 at SHIP on 4-13, 4-16, 4-18, & 4-20 (NOH); 2 in AFCL, Cranberry Lake on 5-11 (YH)

*Field sightings continued on pg. 9*



*Field sightings continued from pg. 8*

#### **WOODPECKERS**

**Red-breasted Sapsucker** 1-3 seen daily at east Stanwood home throughout sighting period (MS/JS)

**Downy Woodpecker** 1 at SHIP on 4-16, 4-20, 5-1 & 5-9 (NOH); pair creating a nest hole at SWAWS on 5-12 (RWJ)

**Hairy Woodpecker** 1 female at WA Park, Anacortes on 5-9 (RWJ)

**Northern Flicker** 2 at Anacortes yard on 4-21 (YH); 1 at Rosario on 5-12 (YH)

#### **FALCONS**

**American Kestrel** 1 at SHIP on 4-18 (NOH)

#### **FLYCATCHERS**

**Olive-sided Flycatcher** 1 at east Fidalgo yard on 4-30 (RW)

**Western Wood-Pewee** 1 at east Fidalgo yard on 5-5 (RW)

**Hammond's Flycatcher** 1 calling at east Fidalgo yard on 4-21 (RW)

**Gray Flycatcher** 1 at south Cascade Rd on 5-1 (GB) **Unusual**

**Dusky Flycatcher** 1 at Bacon Creek on 4-26 (GB)

**Pacific-slope Flycatcher** 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-29 (JH); 1 at SHIP on 5-4 (NOH); 2 at east Fidalgo yard on 5-5 (RW)

**Black Phoebe** 2 at SWAWS on 5-12 (RWJ)

**Western Kingbird** 1 at Martin Rd. on 4-30 (GB)

#### **SHRIKES**

**Northern Shrike** 1 near Cockreham Island, remaining late, on 5-5 (GB)

#### **VIREOS**

**Cassin's Vireo** 1 at Bacon Creek on 4-26 (GB)

**Warbling Vireo** 2 at Camano Island yard on 5-2 (PP); 1 at east Fidalgo yard on 5-4 (RW); 1 at SHIP on 5-7 (NOH)

#### **SWALLOWS**

**Purple Martin** 3 to 25 at SHIP from 4-16 to 5-9 (NOH); 1 flying over east Fidalgo yard on 5-5 (RW)

**Tree Swallow** 6 at Bowman Bay on 5-7 (RWJ); 4 at SWAWS on 5-12 (RWJ)

**Bank Swallow** 2 near Cockreham Island on 5-6 (GB)

#### **BUSHTITS**

**Bushtit** 3 at SHIP on 4-13; 2 on 4-18 & 4-26; 1 on 4-30 (NOH)

#### **NUTHATCHES**

**Red-breasted Nuthatch** 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-23 (YH)

#### **WRENS**

**Marsh Wren** 4 at SWAHR on 5-8 (JS)

**Bewick's Wren** 2 seen daily at east Stanwood home throughout sighting period (MS/JS); 1 at SHIP on 4-18; 4-20, 4-23 & 5-7 (NOH)

#### **KINGLETS**

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet** 2 at SHIP on 4-18; 1 on 4-23 (NOH); 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-23 (YH); 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-30 (JH)

#### **THRUSHES**

**Western Bluebird** 1 at Corkindale on 4-22, 4-26 & 5-4 (GB)

**Swainson's Thrush** 1 singing at east Fidalgo on 5-11 (RW)

#### **WAXWINGS**

**Cedar Waxwing** 1 on Fir Island on 5-11 (JBS)

#### **FINCHES and ALLIES**

**Pine Siskin** 1 at SHIP on 4-13, 4-20 & 4-23; 4-26 & 5-7; 3 on 4-18 (NOH); 3 in Anacortes yard on 4-28 (YH)

#### **SPARROWS and ALLIES**

**Vesper Sparrow** 1 at Corkindale on 4-26 (GB)

**Savannah Sparrow** 2 at SHIP on 4-26; 1 on 4-30 (NOH); 1 on Fir Island on 5-11 (JBS)

**White-throated Sparrow** 2 at Camano Island yard on 5-2 & 3 (PP)

#### **BLACKBIRDS and ORIOLES**

**Yellow-headed Blackbird** 1 on Minkler Flats on 4-19 (GB); 1 near Dewey Beach, Fidalgo Island on 5-8 (AP)

**Brown-headed Cowbird** 4 at SHIP on 4-20 & 5-4; 3 on 4-26 & 4-30; 1 on 4-16 & 4-23 (NOH); 2 in Anacortes yard 4-20 to 5-5 (YH)

#### **WARBLERS**

**Orange-crowned Warbler** 1 to 3 at SHIP from 4-13 to 5-9 (NOH); 1 in Anacortes yard on from 4-29 to 5-5 (YH); 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-29 & 4 on 4-30 (JH)

**Common Yellowthroat** 1 at SHIP on 4-30 (NOH)

**Yellow Warbler** 2 at SHIP on 4-30; 1 on 5-4, 5-7 & 5-9 (NOH); 2 in Anacortes yard on 5-13 (YH)

*Field sightings continued on pg. 10*

*Field sightings continued from pg. 9*

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** 1 at SHIP on 4-13 & 5-4; 2 on 4-23 (NOH); 2 “Myrtle” at Barney Lake on 4-24 (TM); 4 “Audubon’s” at Barney Lake on 4-24 (TM); 2 female “Audubon’s”, 1 male “Audubon’s”, 1 male “Myrtle” at east Fidalgo yard on 4-26 (RW); 1 in Padilla Bay area on 4-28 (KR); 1 female “Myrtle” in Anacortes yard on 4-29 & 2 male “Audubon’s” on 4-30 (JH); several in Bow/Blanchard area on 5-7 (KR)

**Black-throated Gray Warbler** 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-30 (JH); 1 at Camano Island yard on 5-1 (SRP)

**Townsend's Warbler** 1 heard in east Fidalgo yard on 4-26 (RW); 1 at Anacortes yard on 4-30 (JH); 1 male in east Fidalgo yard on 4-30 (RW); 1 male at Camano Island yard on 5-2 (PP)

**Wilson's Warbler** 1 in Hillcrest Park, Mt. Vernon on 4-24 (TM); 1 male at east Fidalgo yard on 4-26 (RW); 1 in Padilla Bay area on 4-28 (KR); 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-29 & 1 male on 4-30 (JH); 2 at SHIP on 4-30 & 5-7; 1 on 5-4 (NOH); 1 in Anacortes yard on 5-13 (YH)

## TANAGERS and ALLIES

**Western Tanager** 1 in Padilla Bay area on 4-28 (KR); 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-30 (JH); 1 at east Fidalgo yard on 5-1 (RW); 5 males on suet (at one time) at east Fidalgo yard on 5-4 (RW); several in Bow/Blanchard area on 5-7 (KR)

**Black-headed Grosbeak** 1 in Anacortes yard on 4-30 (JH); 1 at SHIP on 5-4, 5-7 & 5-9 (NOH); 2 males at SWAWS on 5-12 (RWJ)

**Evening Grosbeak** 10 at Barney Lake on 4-24 (TM); 30+ on Lincoln Hill, Mt. Vernon after 5-5 (TM); 12 at east Stanwood home on 5-14 (MS/JS)

## MAMMALS

**River Otter** 2 at Bowman Bay on 5-7 (RWJ)

**Harbor Seal** 2 at Bowman Bay on 5-7 (RWJ)

**Muskrat** 2 at WSAWS on 5-10 (JS)

(AFCL) Anacortes Community Forest Lands; (GB) Gary Bletsch; (JH) Joe Halton; (NOH) Neil O'Hara; (YH) Yvonne Houppermans; (RWJ) Rosi & Wes Jansen; (TM) Tim Manns; (AP) Anne Peeples; (SRP) Sheila and Ron Pera; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (KR) Kerry Rye; (SHIP) Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve; (JS) Jeff Sinker; (MS) Mary Sinker; (JBS) JB Smith; (SWAHR) Skagit Wildlife Area Hayton Reserve; (SWAWS) Skagit Wildlife Area Wylie Slough; (RW) Regan Weeks

**MEET THE WILSON'S WARBLER**, who winters as far south as Panama and breeds as far north as the northern coast of Alaska. Wilson's Warblers call Western Washington home when it comes to raising their young, and these striking yellow warblers (males have black caps on their heads) are a sure sign that migration and the summer breeding season are well underway.

These diminutive birds are not shy about elevation heights, breeding up to 11,500 ft. and wintering in the high-elevation cloud forests of Mexico and Central America. In Western Washington, they use maple, alder, and young conifer forests as well as blackberry streamside habitats.

Wilson's Warblers pair up for the breeding season but the female selects the nesting site and builds the nest alone. She tucks the nest into the base of a tree, shrub, flowering plant, log or clump of grass. She uses a wide variety of materials including leaves, moss, bark and fine plant materials. Although the female incubates the eggs herself, her mate helps feed the young after they hatch and fledge. If a predator comes near the nest, the female may act like she has a broken wing in an attempt to draw the predator away from the nest. This behavior is also associated with other birds, including Killdeer. Wilson's Warblers have 1-2 broods; 2-7 eggs per brood; 10-13 days incubation; 9-11 days nestlings.

Unfortunately, Wilson's Warblers have declined by about 61% from 1966-2015 according to the North American Breeding Bird Survey. The reasons for this decline are attributed to habitat loss in their wintering rounds, migration routes and breeding grounds. Brood parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds is also a contributing factor. When a Brown-headed Cowbird lays an egg in the nest of an unsuspecting Wilson's Warbler, the warblers raise the cowbird chick along with their own chicks, which can come at the expense of the warbler chicks. For more information, visit: [www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Wilsons\\_Warbler](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Wilsons_Warbler). Photo by Mary Sinker



## ABOUT SKAGIT AUDUBON

— 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. General membership meetings are held at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center, 10441 Bayview- Rd., Mt. Vernon on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June. Social/7:00 pm and Program/7:30 pm. The board of directors meets at the same location the first Tuesday of each month, September through June, at 7:00 pm.

Skagit Audubon membership provides a local chapter affiliation and newsletter, *The Skagit Flyer*, for individuals who want all their funds to benefit their local chapter. *The Skagit Flyer* is produced monthly from September through June and full color issues are available at: [www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter](http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter). Unless noted, all images, drawings, clip art, etc. appearing in *The Skagit Flyer* are in the public domain. We reserve the right to edit.

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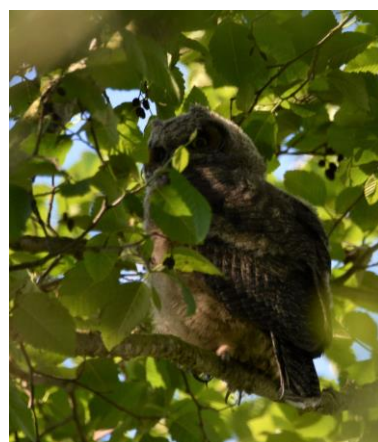
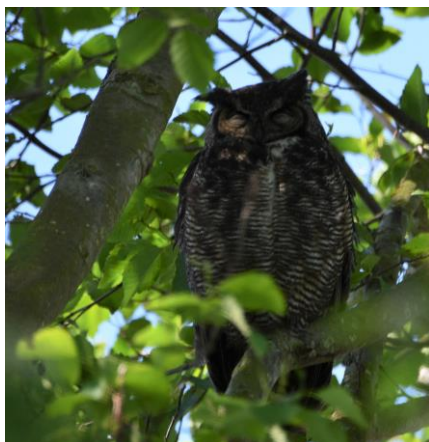
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### Mother's Day at Wylie Slough, Great-horned Owl, photos by Mary Sinker



**SKAGIT AUDUBON SOCIETY  
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