

The Skagit Flyer

Skagit Audubon Society
A Chapter of National Audubon Society

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March Meeting and Program *Flickers and Falcons, Cats and Cars* *Presented by Shona Aitken, Wolf Hollow WRC*

Tuesday, Mar. 12th
7:00 Social; 7:30 Program
Padilla Bay Interpretive Center
10441 Bayview Edison Road
Mt. Vernon, Washington



Since its founding in 1982, Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center has cared for more than 16,000 injured and orphaned wildlife, representing over 220 different species of birds, land and marine mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Located on San Juan Island, Wolf Hollow serves all of San Juan and Skagit Counties and northern Whidbey Island. More than half of the injured and orphaned animals cared for at the center come from Skagit County.

What are the main causes of injury to wild birds brought to Wolf Hollow? How are they cared for and prepared for release back into the wild? Join Shona Aitken, Education Coordinator at Wolf Hollow, to find out more about human impacts on our local wild birds, the work that is involved in rehabilitating them and what you can do to help.

From hummingbirds to elephant seals, the mission of Wolf Hollow is, "To promote the well-being of wildlife and their habitats through rehabilitation of injured and orphaned wildlife, public education and non-invasive research." Visit their website at www.wolfhollow.org and call 360.378.5000 (24/7) to report injured or orphaned wildlife.

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SPEAK UP for nearly 200 species of migratory birds, including our iconic swans, polar bears, and vast numbers of Arctic wildlife to oppose oil drilling on the Coastal Plain in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

COMMENT PERIOD ENDS MAR 13TH
<https://www.blm.gov/programs/planning-and-nepa/plans-in-development/Alaska/coastal-plain-eis>

MARCH FIELDTRIPS, by Libby Mills

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 (if you have them). 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. **NOTE:** If you plan to join a field trip some place other than the described starting point, call or email the trip leader the day before to ensure a successful rendezvous. Trip plans may change.



Tuesday March 5, 2019 Whatcom County Shores

8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The trip will start at Blaine Harbor, and move on to Semiahmoo, Birch Bay State Park and Sandy Point. Depending on how the time goes, we may make other short stops on the way to Sandy Point from Birch Bay State Park. Our stops will focus on water birds, targeting all three Scoters, three Loon species, Grebes, and Long-tailed Ducks plus shorebirds, e.g. Sanderlings, Black Turnstones, and Dunlin. Bring binoculars, scopes, lunch, and wind and rain gear. If coming from south of Bellingham, meet (before and plan to leave) at 8:30 AM to arrange carpools at the Chuckanut Park & Ride lot just south of Exit 231 off I-5. We'll join the leader at 9:15 AM at the Arco Gas Station on Slater Road. Take I-5 Exit 260, turn right from the off ramp and you'll see the Arco station on your right. Wash. State Discover Pass required for parking at Birch Bay State Park. Trip Leader: Andrea Warner 360-734-9881 or warneraj@me.com.

Saturday, March 16, 2019

Nookachamps Creek

8:00 am to 3:00 pm (approx.)

Join us at 8 AM on March 16 for an 8.5 mile walk in the Nookachamps Creek and Big Lake areas. Paul Jay has agreed to lead us on one of his favorite walks to look for waterfowl, woodpeckers, raptors and songbirds. Expect to be walking for about 5 to 6 hours so dress for the weather and pack adequate snacks. We will meet at 17028 Lakeview Blvd (Mount Vernon address) on Big Lake. This location is south of the Big Lake Store and the first driveway on the right after the Nookachamps Bridge. We'll start with a shuttle to the public beach in Clear Lake. For more information please contact Paul Jay (pauljayla@gmail.com) or Jeff Osmundson (jeffo4297@gmail.com).

Saturday, March 30, 2019

Beginning Birding at Deception Pass State Park

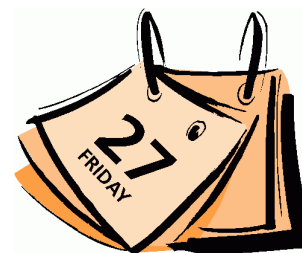
9:00 AM to Noon

Would you like to see what birding's all about? Join some Skagit Audubon members for an introduction to how we find, observe, and learn about birds and why we enjoy birding. We'll talk about field guides, binoculars and spotting scopes, and put them to use. We'll see and hear a variety of birds, large and small, in trees and bushes, and on the water – and, we'll help you identify them. Dress for the weather (expect wind along the shore). Bring binoculars and field guides, if you have them, but don't worry if you don't. Meet at the parking lot for Rosario Beach (Discover Pass required). Leaders: Tim Manns, 360.333.8985 or conservation@skagitaudubon.org and Jeff Osmundson, 360.435.4297 or jeffo4297@gmail.com.

**Cindy Easterson, Project Manager for Puget Sound Bird Observatory's Regional Wetland Secretive Bird Monitoring Project and Puget Sound Team Coordinator for Audubon's Sagebrush Songbird Survey Project will attend our March 12th meeting to share information about these two important community science projects (the Secretive Bird survey includes Skagit County).
Volunteers are needed for both projects in 2019**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

- Mar. 5** – Skagit Audubon Board Meeting
Mar. 5 – Skagit Audubon Field Trip – Whatcom County Shores
Mar. 6 – Skagit Audubon Hike – Goose Rock Perimeter
Mar. 12 – Skagit Audubon General Meeting and Program
Mar. 13 – Skagit Audubon Hike – Around Mt. Erie
Mar. 16 – Skagit Audubon Field Trip – Nookachamps Creek
Mar. 20 – Skagit Audubon Hike – Camano Island
Mar. 27 – Skagit Audubon Hike – Pine and Cedar Lakes/Raptor Ridge/Lake Padden
Mar. 30 – Skagit Audubon Birding Field Trip – Deception Pass State Park



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 Edison 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 Flyer*, for individuals who want all their funds to benefit their local chapter. *The Flyer* is produced monthly from September through June. Printed copies are black-and-white and electronic copies are full color. *The Flyer* is available online at www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter.

Board of Directors

President:	Vacant
Vice President:	Vacant
Secretary:	Ron Holmes.....ronh@skagitaudubon.org
Treasurer:	Neil O'Hara.....treasurer@skagitaudubon.org.....781-290-9083
Immediate Past President:	Vacant

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MARCH HIKES by Joan Melcher

Safety comes first so hikes may be canceled or destinations changed due to weather conditions or other unforeseen circumstances. All the hikes are on a Wednesday and for questions or additional information contact Joan Melcher at

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. Carpools are arranged at the discretion of the drivers.



MAR. 6 GOOSE ROCK PERIMETER Hike a loop that includes Cranberry Lake, beaches, the south side of Deception Pass, Cornet Bay and a 450 foot climb up Goose Rock. Total el. gain for the day is about 1150 feet. Meet at 9 a.m. in the east side parking lot at Cranberry Lake near the main entrance to Deception Pass State Park 6.2 miles for the basic loop hike; add 4.0 miles if you hike on beach south to the naval station border (10.2 miles); You may leave when your car or people has returned to the trailhead. Discover pass required to park in the park. **NOTE: HAVE EAR PROTECTION WITH YOU IN CASE THE WHIDBEY JETS ARE FLYING LOW AND LOUD.**

MAR. 13 AROUND MOUNT ERIE Mount Erie Base Circumference Hike - Hike around the base of Mount Erie through forests. On its south side are occasional views of lakes, straits, bays, passages and islands. Lots of ups and downs for 1300 ft. el gain. 6.3 mile loop or 6.6 with side trip to Whistle Lake view. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the Sugarloaf trailhead near the start of the Mt. Erie Road off the Heart Lake Road located south of Anacortes. Estimated return time is 1:00 p.m. You may leave when you return to the trailhead. **There may be an option to hike up Mount Erie from the south side if a guide is available. Portions of this steep trail include minor scrambling.**

MAR. 20 First Day of Spring CAMANO ISLAND Friends of Camano Island Parks, FOCIP, will lead us on hikes on Camano Island; up to 11.9 miles with shorter options available. Lunch provided; suggested donation of \$3.00. Meet at **7:45 a.m.** in the S.E. corner of the Mount Vernon Safeway parking lot or at **8:30 am** at the Blue Camano Center Building on East Camano Drive. There will be a brief orientation there; hike options will be discussed; maps will be given out; restrooms will be available. Discover Pass required if you park in either Cama State Park or Camano Island State Park.

MAR. 27 PINE AND CEDAR LAKES AND RAPTOR RIDGE OR LAKE PADDEN

Pine & Cedar/Raptor Ridge: Hike to two very pleasant lakes in the Chuckanut Mountain area. Up to 9.4 miles one way with shuttle cars. 1900 ft. total el. gain. The 1.7 mile uphill route from the Pine/Cedar Trailhead is steep. The 5.4 mile down-hill route via the new Raptor Ridge Trail down to the Lost Lake Trail and then on down to the North Chuckanut parking lot is less steep and will lead to Arroyo Park, the Interurban Trail, and finally the North Chuckanut parking lot.

Lake Padden: A number of hike options available from 3.6 to 6.7 or more miles. Relative small elevation gain. **FOR BOTH HIKES MEET AT 9:00 AM** at the North Chuckanut parking lot located off Chuckanut Drive just north of California Street at about milepost 18.5. Return times and shuttles will be determined then.

APR. 3 LILY LIZARD LAKES LOOP (The LLLL) The Loop hike directions are written in a clockwise order. On Blanchard Mountain hike the Lily Lake, Larry Reed, and Max's Shortcut Trails to Lily Lake and then on to Lizard Lake by way of a connector trail from the North Butte Trail. Return to trail head via the Lizard and Lily Lake Trails. 8.6 mile loop, 1600 ft. total el. gain. Opportunity to go to the Oyster Dome and the North Butte as well. We will divide into a faster and slower group; car pool accordingly. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Chuckanut Drive park-n-ride, exit 231 from I-5 on the east side of I-5. 2:00 pm return to trailhead for the faster group; 3:00 pm for the slower group. Discover Pass required to park at the trailhead.

CONSERVATION by Tim Manns

Happily, there's something positive to report this month: the February 12th passage of the Natural Resources Management Act in the U.S. Senate. At 662 pages, S. 47, co-introduced by Senator Maria Cantwell, combines over 100 smaller bills. It's old-fashioned, across-the-aisle law making with something for many parts of the country and much for conservation-minded Audubon people to like (along with a few unwelcome things). The bill passed the Senate 92 to 8 and should do well in the House. A top issue for National Audubon has been reauthorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Over the past half-century the LWCF has used dollars from off-shore oil and gas leasing to buy federal, state, and local conservation lands. S. 47 permanently authorizes this important program. The bill doesn't require a specific level of annual expenditure, but it's a very good step in the right direction, and we have Senator Cantwell to thank. Of local interest, S. 47 permanently withdraws from mining over 340,000 acres of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest around the Methow River headwaters near North Cascades National Park and the Pasayten Wilderness. In 2013 a Canadian mining company announced its intention to drill exploratory holes there for copper. Bi-partisan opposition arose, organized, and thwarted this multi-faceted threat to the environment. Passage of S. 47 reflects the tremendous, bi-partisan support for public ownership and protection of public lands, far exceeding such opposition as seen dramatically in the armed occupation of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge a few years ago and occasionally and more subtly glimpsed in our local elected officials.



In Olympia, Washington, the State Legislature is in the midst of its fast-paced 105-day session, slated to finish in early April. The legislature's composition now offers real opportunity for passage of significant



Great Blue Heron, by Joe Halton

environmental laws. Audubon Washington provides regular legislative updates on pertinent bills at <http://wa.audubon.org/conservation/legislative-session-2019> with suggestions on how you can weigh in. Our legislators want to hear from us. A very strong focus of Audubon and many other conservation groups is House Bill 1211/Senate Bill 5116 to have Washington join California and Hawaii in setting a date (2045) by when the electricity we use will be entirely from renewable sources. The Environmental Priorities Coalition, including Audubon, also posts weekly legislative updates at <https://wecprotects.org/environmental-priorities-coalition/>. Scroll down to "Bills to Watch." Delve more deeply into the progress of bills on the State Legislature's site: <http://leg.wa.gov/>. You can read about individual bills, see who sits on what committees, etc. Scroll down to "Let Your Voice Be Heard" and comment on introduced legislation.

Finally, there's an easy way you can help protect the few Great Blue Heron nesting colonies in Skagit County. Attend the Skagit County Commissioners' hearing March 11 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. about proposed changes to the Comprehensive Plan. Skagit Land Trust, which protects several heronries, has submitted an amendment, and your presence is needed to show public support. There's a lot going on nationally, regionally, locally, and we can be part of it!

How is your nest box project coming along? Did you know that you can register your nest box (or any kind of nest) with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology? Visit the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at <https://secure.birds.cornell.edu> for more information and to register (free).

Skagit Audubon Field Notes by Pam Pritzl

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

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

WATERFOWL

Snow Goose 1 dark morph on Polson Road, Samish Flats on 2-5 (AW)

American Wigeon x Eurasian Wigeon hybrid 1 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Hayton Reserve on 1-28 (GB)

Black Scoter 1 at Samish Island Public Beach on 1-26; 2 there on 1-27 (GB)

PIGEONS and DOVES

Mourning Dove 14 on Oregon Avenue, Anacortes on 1-23 (JB)

PLOVERS

Killdeer flock in Bow on 2-9 (KR)

ALCIDS

Ancient Murrelet 2 off Samish Island Public Beach on 1-27 (GB)

GULLS and TERNS

Bonaparte's Gull 20 off Washington Park, Anacortes on 1-26 (GB)

Western Gull 1 at March Point on 2-9 (GB)

California Gull 1 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Wylie Slough on 1-28 (GB)

Herring Gull 1 at March Point on 2-9 (GB)

Iceland Gull 1 "Thayer's" in Burlington on 1-21 (GB)

HAWKS, EAGLES and ALLIES

Bald Eagle 13 in "eagle tree" on Samish Flats on 1-30 (KR); 1 "leucistic" at East 90,

Samish Flats on 2-2 (MS); 15 soaring above Mt. Scott in the strong wind on 2-10 (AW)

Cooper's Hawk 1 at east Stanwood home on 2-2 (MS)

Red-tailed Hawk 1 dark morph on Samish Flats on 1-14 (YH); 1 Harlan's on Person's Road, Samish Flats on 2-2 (AW); 1 dark morph at Skagit Wildlife Area, Hayton Reserve on 2-5 (AW); 1 Harlan's on T-Loop Road, Samish Flats on 2-5 (AW); 1 Harlan's on Estes Road, Samish Flats on 2-10 (AW)

Rough-legged Hawk 1 dark morph on Sullivan Road, Samish Flats on 1-26 (AW); 1 male on Sunset Road, Samish Flats on 2-5 (AW)

OWLS

Barn Owl 1 on Samish Flats on 1-30 (KR)

Great Horned Owl pair hooting at east Stanwood home on 2-1 and 2-12 (MS)

Snowy Owl 1 (found by Marv Breece) at East 90, Samish Flats on 1-21 (GB)

Northern Pygmy-Owl 1 at Rasar State Park on 1-27 (GB)

Burrowing Owl 1 at farm near Burlington (private property) on 1-19 (GB) **RARE in Skagit County**

Barred Owl 1 at Pilchuck Tree Farm, Victoria tract on 1-27 (MS)

Short-eared Owl 10 on Samish Flats on 1-29 (KR)

WOODPECKERS

Red-breasted Sapsucker 1 near Pleasant Ridge on 2-10 (JH); 1 at Cap Sante home, Anacortes on 2-11 (JH); 3 at Camano Island home on 2-12 (PP)

FALCONS

American Kestrel 1 male and 1 female base of Samish Island on Samish Island Road on 2-2 (AW)

Merlin 1 at West 90, Skagit Flats on 1-27 (AW); 1 on Beaver Marsh Road on 1-31 (AW)

Gyr Falcon 1 on Maupin Road, Fir Island on 2-6 (AW); 1 off March point on 2-9 (GB)

Field Sightings continued on pg. 7

Field Sightings continued from pg. 6

Peregrine Falcon 1 adult on Sunset Road, Samish Flats on 2-2 (AW); 1 adult on Bayview/Edison Road on 2-2 (AW); 1 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Hayton Reserve on 2-10 (AW)

SHRIKES

Northern Shrike 1 at Maupin Road, Fir Island on 1-16 (JOC)

SWALLOWS

Tree Swallow 3 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Wylie Slough on 2-2 (GB); 1 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Wylie Slough on 2-5 (AW)
Barn Swallow 10 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Wylie Slough on 2-2 (GB)

DIPPERS

American Dipper 1 near Rockport and 2 near Marblemount on 1-13 (YH)

KINGLETS

Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1 in Bow yard on 2-4 (KR)

THRUSHES

Townsend's Solitaire 1 on Lincoln Hill, Mount Vernon on 1-23 and 1-30 (TM)
Varied Thrush 3 female and 1 male at east Stanwood home on 2-4 (MS); flock in Bow neighborhood on 2-4 (KR); 3 in yard at 12th Street, Anacortes on 2-4 (JB)

FINCHES and ALLIES

Purple Finch 1 at Skagit Wildlife Area, Wylie Slough on 2-5 (AW)

SPARROWS and ALLIES

Swamp Sparrow 1 at West 90, Samish Flats on 1-26 (GB)

White-throated Sparrow 1 (or 2) throughout sighting period at Camano Island home (PP); 1 in Cap Sante neighborhood on 2-10 (JH)

Golden-crowned Sparrow pair at Burlington home throughout sighting period (LE)

Dark-eyed Junco 1 “slate-colored” at Anacortes residence throughout sighting period (JOC)

WARBLERS

Orange-crowned Warbler 1 at Anacortes residence 1-15 to 2-8 (JOC); 1 at Burlington residence seen occasionally throughout sighting period (LE)

Yellow-rumped Warbler 20 “Audubon’s” at Cap Sante Marina on 2-5 (JH)

Townsend's Warbler 1 on Lincoln Hill, Mount Vernon on 2-8 (TM)

TANAGERS and ALLIES

Western Tanager 1 female at Mount Vernon residence since 2/8-2/15 (JE)

MAMMALS

Bobcat tracks observed at east Stanwood home during the recent snow (MS)

(GB) Gary Bletsch; (JB) Jane Brandt; (JE) Jerry Eisner; (LE) Larry Edwards; (JH) Joe Halton; (YH) Yvonne Houppermans; (TM) Tim Manns; (JOC) John O’Connell; (PP) Pam Pritzl; (KR) Kerry Rye; (MS) Mary Sinker; (AW) Andrea Warner

From Your Editor by Mary Sinker

There’s nothing like a snow day to inspire a new project and it was my husband Jeff who suggested we build a nest box for a Barred Owl. We have the right habitat and two summers ago we observed a Barred Owl fledgling in the woods along our creek, so why not! With a plan-in-hand, we headed to Lowes and soon realized we were one of the few customers not in search of either a snow shovel or Ice-Melt! Back in the workshop, with the snow falling outside, the plan came together and now that the snow has melted, the box is safely mounted 15 feet up a sturdy tree alongside the creek (the branches in the photo don’t obstruct the entrance). Barred Owls begin nesting later than Great-Horned Owls, so there’s a chance we could attract a pair this year; more likely though it will be another year or two. However, in the meantime, perhaps someone else will move in – we’ll keep an eye on it.



**SKAGIT AUDUBON SOCIETY
PO BOX 1101
MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Skagit Audubon Society Membership Form

Annual membership in the Skagit Audubon Society includes 10 issues of our newsletter, *The Skagit Flyer*, available in color at <http://www.skagitaudubon.org/newsletter>. Membership includes all members of your household.

Check one: _____ \$20/one year _____ \$40/two years _____ New _____ Renewal
Additionally, I wish to donate to Skagit Audubon Society, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, in the amount of \$_____. Donations of **\$100 or more** receive a personal field trip by a Skagit Audubon field trip leader.

Mail form and payment to: Skagit Audubon Society
PO Box 1101
Mt. Vernon WA 98273-1101

Name: _____	Areas of Interest (check all that apply)
Address: _____	Birds_____ Gardening_____
City/State/: _____	Education_____ Conservation_____
ZIP: _____ Phone: _____	Field Trips _____ Hiking _____
Email: _____	Other: _____

(To join National Audubon Society, a separate membership, please visit: www.audubon.org)