

The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

March 2020

Rainier Audubon Membership Meeting

March 16, 2020

“Audubon’s Survival By Degrees report”

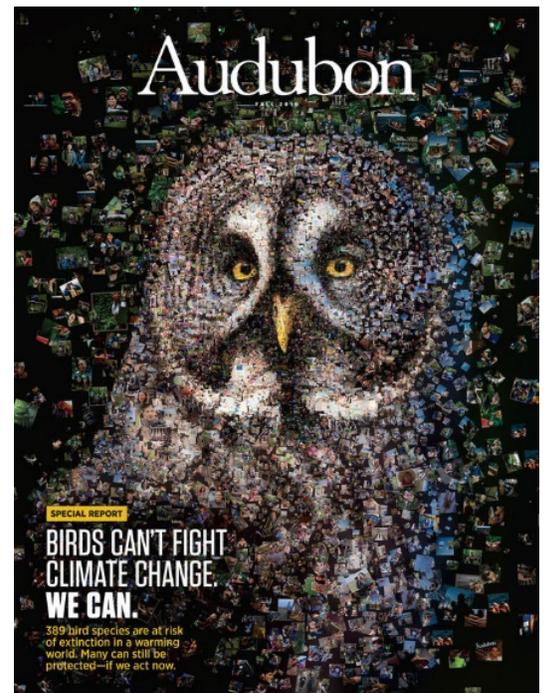
- Ben Silesky

American scientists studied 604 North American bird species using 140 million bird records-including observational data from bird lovers across the country. Audubon plugged their bird data into the same climate models used by more than 800 experts in 80 countries to map where each bird might live in the future under a changing climate.

Washington Audubon’s Ben Silesky will share more, including the steps we can take to help.

To learn more, visit Audubon’s Survival by Degrees webpage

<https://www.audubon.org/climate/survivalbydegrees>



Join us at 6:30 for conversation and refreshments.

RAS Mission Statement:

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems and protect birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity and biological diversity in South King County and the world we

Rainier Audubon programs are held at 7:00 P.M. at the

Federal Way United Methodist Church
29645 51ST AVE S 98001
(in unincorporated Auburn)

**Rainier Audubon
Facebook Page**

[https://www.facebook.com/
rainieraudubonsociety/](https://www.facebook.com/rainieraudubonsociety/)

Upcoming Programs

4/20/2020 Kim Adelson "The Dinosaurs Amongst Us" •
5/18/2020 Sally Vogel "Ethiopian Birds & Mammals"

Heron Herald is Available Online

The current issue of the Heron Herald is available to download from www.RainierAudubon.org. I will try to send an email on our mailing list as soon as it is posted.

**New Rainier Audubon Google
Group / email list**

We are combining the old Rainier Leaders email list with the ras-activities list into a new RainierAudubon google group.

The [ras-activities] group has been renamed to [RainierAudubon]. So, if you were previously a member of this list, then you are still a member of the renamed group. The only difference being that when you send an email to this group, the address is:

RainierAudubon@googlegroups.com

If you did not get an invitation, you may request to join the group by going to groups.google.com and searching for "Rainier Audubon". You can then request to join the group. Alternatively, you can sign up on the RainierAudubon.org website.

Nominations for New Board Members are Open

Board election takes place during our May Membership Meeting. If you are interested, or would like to nominate someone, please talk to a board member.

Field Trips – Heather Gibson

Weekly Bird Walk at Nisqually

Wednesdays 8 a.m. -11 a.m.
Leader: Phil Kelley

Join Phil Kelley on his weekly bird walks as he counts the birds at Nisqually NWR. The group walks to an area near the visitor center to view the entry road estuary, and then takes the boardwalk /trail loop out to the twin barns and the Nisqually overlook area. From there, the group walks the dike, and back to the Riparian Forest.

Bring: Good walking shoes or boots, rain gear, water, snacks, and \$3 for entry fee unless you have a pass. Scopes are welcome.

Meet: At the Visitor's Center Pond Overlook.

Directions: Take I-5 south from Tacoma and exit to Nisqually NWR at exit 114. Take a right at the light.

Sign-up is not necessary. Call or email Phil Kelley with questions. Phil Kelley (360) 459-1499, scrubjay323@aol.com

Clark Lake Park & Soos Creek Trail

Saturday, Mar 21
8:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Leader: Barbara Petersen

Join Barbara Petersen's Burien Wild Birds Unlimited store monthly bird walk for an early spring exploration of Clark Lake Park and Soos Creek Trail. The park offers a variety of habitat types and bird species. Follow trails to the lake and through forest, wetland, meadow and even an old orchard. We'll walk one to two miles at a leisurely pace searching for waterfowl, raptors and returning migrants. We'll then drive to the maintenance shed access of Soos Creek Trail to look for foraging resident birds and signs of spring such as Great Blue Herons carrying sticks to add to their large nests. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes, cameras, warm layers, water and snacks

Meet: at the Burien WBU parking lot at 8:15AM to form carpools, leaving promptly at 8:30. Or meet us at Clark Lake Park on SE 240th Street in Kent at 8:55AM.

Sign Up:
Call the WBU store at (206) 241-3201, or text/email Barbara at (253) 389-3204 bpbatfan@aol.com

Lake Wilderness Walkabout

Saturday, April 11
8:00am-10:30am
Leaders: Calen Randall & Cindy Flanagan

Lake Wilderness is a birding gem in our Rainier Audubon territory. On this walking trip, we will explore waterfowl on Lake Wilderness, check out Jenkins Creek for Great-Blue and Green Heron, walk through the Lake Wilderness Arboretum and along the Cedar River trail. We should get a strong showing of woodpecker species and woodsy birds like Brown Creeper and Red-breasted Nuthatch—maybe even a Hutton's Vireo. A great way to start your Saturday morning—come join us.

Meet at 8:00am in main parking lot in front of Lake Wilderness Lodge
[22500 SE 248th Street](#),
Maple Valley, WA 98038

Sign up with Cindy:
camcalcin@hotmail.com or text
(253) 315-0799

Field Trips cont'd

Birding Basics Classes at Seahurst Park

A Spring Outdoor Experience

Sat April 4th & Sun April 5th, 8:30 - 10:30 AM

and/or

Sat April 25th & Sun April 26th, 8:30 - 10:30 AM

Kevin O'Malley and Barbara Petersen will be teaching Birding Basics classes this April for beginners, intermediate and expert birders wanting to further their knowledge about birding. Classes will focus on bird language, behavior, habitats, nests and bird tracks. Birding is a fascinating recreational activity. Participants will learn to talk more in depth about birds they are seeing and hearing. Burien's Seahurst Park has both forest and saltwater habitats offering a great diversity of bird species. Binoculars are recommended but not required. Kevin is lead naturalist at South Sound Nature School. Barbara leads bird walks and field trips for Wild Birds Unlimited and Rainier Audubon.

Classes will be \$50.00 per weekend. Maximum 8 participants. For more information and to register go to: southsoundnatureschool.org

Olympic Bird Festival

Olympic Birdfest 2020

April 17-19, 2020

This festival will be preceded by our San Juan Islands Cruise on April 14-16; and followed by an excursion to the Neah Bay area of coastal Washington on April 19-21.

Link to the Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/s/olympic-peninsula-birdfest/1799174853548304/>



Photo: Cindy Wolf

Morse Wildlife Preserve Open Days

Don't miss your chance to visit this special place! Morse Wildlife Preserve is a privately-owned nature preserve, open to the public on special days throughout the year, including Second Sundays in the month of April-October. This year those days will be April 12, May 10, June 14, July 12, August 9, September 13 & October 11. The events are from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The events are free, with donations gladly accepted. Please leave pets at home. Carpooling is encouraged. For more information, email morsewildlifepreserve@gmail.com.

Cindy and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

By Cindy Flanagan

It was the start of February, February 1st to be exact. It was a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day. Unlike Alexander from author Judith Viorst's 1972 children's book classic, I didn't start the day with chewing gum in my hair, but I was in a sticky situation.

The Puget Sound region was under a Wind Advisory: high winds with wind gusts up to 40 mph. And today, of all days, was our monthly Puget Sound Seabird Survey at Brown's Point Lighthouse, Dash Point State Park and Dumas Bay Wildlife Refuge.

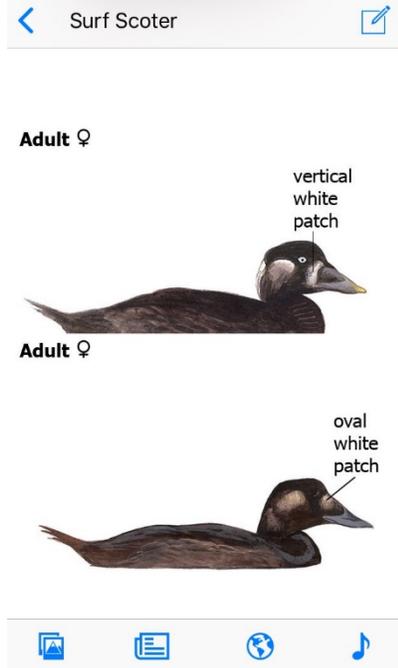


FIGURE 1 SIBLEY APP COMPARISON SURF SCOTER AND WHITE-WINGED SCOTER FEMALES

Our team met and completed our 30-minute survey at Brown's Point, with a handful of diehards: cormorants, gulls, some Horned Grebes and a duck here and there. No Marbled Murrelets or Rhinoceros Auklets. Short on seals and sea lions, but the dogs were loving the new lighthouse lake that the rains had converted from a playing field. Even a raft of kayakers was held out of the sound as the winds wreaked havoc. On a positive note, I was thrilled with how well my one-month old Vortex Razor scope had worked in the spray and wind. The clarity and the depth of field was excellent and the large focus ring meant I could keep my mitts on while I birded.

Off we went to Dash Point State Park, unsure if the park would be closed with felled trees. Ironically on this terrible, horrible, no good, very bad day, luck was in our favor. The park was open. Off we went for our next seabird survey. The waters were a little more birdy than Brown's Point with Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Horned Grebe, a loon and of course, a couple of large flotillas of Surf and White-winged Scoters. Scanning through the hundred plus scoters with my scope, I began questioning a smaller group of female scoters and whether they were Surf Scoters or White-winged Scoters.

Our team quickly engaged in discussion of the key markings of the female Surf Scoter and the female White-winged Scoter. I pulled out my phone and opened my Sibley's App, which has a great comparison feature to compare two different species. I walked over to the group and we began discussing

the differences between the two female species: the female Surf Scoter having a vertical white patch at the base of its bill and the female White-winged scoter having more of an oval white patch. Not to also mention, the female Surf Scoter having the white patch at the back of its head.

As we continued our conversation, a terrible, no good gust of wind blasted our backs and ripped out onto the sound. Swept away with it was my brand-new tripod and Vortex Razor Spotting Scope. Realizing that my scope was about to get its first drink of the Puget Sound, we all raced to catch it, unsuccessfully, all of us grasping air. Kerplunk! Right into the grungiest, grossest, gloomiest puddle of water. Of course, lens first! Oh boy!

One of my teammates retrieved my scope. The lenses were covered in seafoam and sand. My first reaction was to wipe the lens, and then I realized if I did that, I would scratch the lens. I was better to wait until I got home where I could use my lens cleaning blower brush. But things got much worse at home. When I brought the scope inside and got some of the crud off the lens, I discovered my lens had cracked.

What would I do now? Tantrum and throw my scope as far as I could launch it? I decided against the launch and, instead, looked inside the box that the scope came in and read the warranty.

OUR VIP WARRANTY IS ABOUT YOU, NOT US.

VIP stands for a Very Important Promise to you, our customer. We will repair or replace your Vortex® product in the event it becomes damaged or defective—at no charge to you. If we cannot repair your product, we will replace it with a product in perfect working order of equal or better physical condition.

You see, it doesn't matter how it happened, whose fault it was or where you purchased it. If you ever have a problem, no matter the cause, we promise to take care of you. You can count on the VIP Warranty for all Vortex Optics riflescopes, prism scopes, red dots, rangefinders, binoculars, spotting scopes, tripods and monoculars.

- **UNLIMITED LIFETIME WARRANTY**
 - **FULLY TRANSFERABLE**
 - **NO RECEIPT NEEDED**

The VIP Warranty does not cover loss, theft, deliberate damage or cosmetic damage that does not hinder the performance of the product.

Really? Was it too good to be true? I filled in the service request, packaged up my scope, mailed it off to Vortex Optics in Wisconsin and waited. A week later, I received an email from Vortex Optics titled, “Your glass is in good hands”. In the message, a confirmation that my scope would be repaired/replaced and back in my hands in 1-3 weeks and a message about its VIP warranty:

“Optics are meant to be used outside - often times in the harshest environments imaginable. Couple that fact with "life" happening, and there's a lot that can impact your prized optical instruments. One thing is certain - from cliff drops to camp destroying brown bears and house fires to hurricanes - The Lifetime - Unconditional - Transferable -No-Fault Vortex VIP Warranty has you covered.”

For me, the VIP warranty was the prize in my cereal box. Vortex Optics did not disappoint. The lesson learned is to research your warranty when purchasing expensive optics. Often the retailer is quick to offer an insurance for a price. However, if your warranty is lifetime, transferrable and covers skydiving drops, bear chews and fires, you will not need to spend the extra money.

What does it all mean? A VIP Warranty like Vortex Optics means that when it comes to your scope or bins, you will never ever have a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad birding day. Even if the wind blows your scope in the grungiest, grossest, gloomiest puddle. You are covered.

The
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Rainier Audubon Society
PO Box 778
Auburn, WA 98071

It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government
to save the environment. - Ansel Adams

Nonprofit Organization
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Rainier Audubon Membership Subscription or Renewal Form

One-year Membership in Rainier Audubon
\$25—Individual Membership / \$30—Family Membership

Circle one New / Renewal

For new members:

How did you hear about Rainier Audubon Society?



To join or renew, mail this application with your payment to:

Rainier Audubon Society - Membership _____

PO Box 778

Auburn, WA 98071

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Are you interested in:

- Volunteering?
- Field Trips?
- Classes?

(Please circle)