

THE

# HERON HERALD



Rainier Audubon Society • February 2007

Vol 26 No.2

Check us out on the web: [www.rainieraudubon.org](http://www.rainieraudubon.org)

Rainier Audubon Presents:

## The Fun and Folly of Lake Baikal Presentation by Nina Carter

*Free and open to the public*



NINA CARTER

**L**ake Baikal is the deepest and oldest lake in the world. It is also the largest freshwater lake on Earth (by volume), containing over 20% of the world's fresh surface water and more than 90% of Russia's fresh surface water. A World Heritage Site, it lies in southern Siberia, and is known as the Blue Eye of Siberia.

Nina Carter and her husband Tom Rainey have worked over the past 15 years to save Lake Baikal from various environmental threats, the most recent being just last year when an oil pipeline was proposed within 300 yards of the lake's shore. They traveled to Lake Baikal in August of 2005. On that trip, Nina developed this delightful program on the birds and wildlife of Russia, Siberia, and Lake Baikal.

In January 2005, Nina took over as Executive Director of Audubon Washington. Nina's background includes more than 21 years of experience in public policy and environmental issues. She has worked for various state agencies

including Fish and Wildlife; Ecology; Marine Safety; and Parks and Recreation. She served as an Olympia city councilwoman, and was an adjunct professor in Environmental Studies at the

Evergreen State College. Nina has extensive experience working with non-profit organizations, industry leaders, and state government agencies. She received a BA in both economics and labor studies, and a Master's degree in Public Administration from Evergreen State.

As always, the presentation is free and open to all. Refreshments and conversation available before, during, and following the program.



LAKE BAIKAL SATELLITE IMAGE ©NASA

**February Program**

**Monday, February 19, 2007**

**7:00 PM**

*(doors open at 6:30)*

**Federal Way  
United Methodist Church**

*(directions on page 2)*

**Field Trips on Page 4!**

# Calendar

THURSDAY MORNINGS

## **Bird Walks at Nisqually**

See page 6 for details

FEBRUARY 16-19, FRIDAY THROUGH MONDAY

## **Great Backyard Bird Count**

See Page 7 for details

FEBRUARY 19, MONDAY

## **RAS Program: Lake Baikal (Siberia)**

See Page 1 for details

FEBRUARY 25, SUNDAY

## **RAS Field Trip: Skagit and Samish Flats**

See page 6 for details

MARCH 3, SATURDAY

## **RAS Field Trip: Soos Creek Owl Prowl**

See page 6 for details

MARCH 23-25, FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY

## **Othello Sandhill Crane Festival**

See page 4 for details

<http://www.rainieraudubon.org/>



**Federal Way United Methodist Church  
29645 - 51st Ave. So., Auburn, 98001**

### **DIRECTIONS:**

*Coming from the west:* Take 320th St. heading east, past SeaTac Mall (now called The Commons). Cross I-5 and keep going east down towards Peasley Canyon Rd. At the first light after Military Rd. (321st St.), turn left. Stay on 321st St. as it winds up and around and becomes 51st Ave. So. The church will be on your left at 296th.

*Coming from the east:* Take Peasley Canyon Rd. going west towards Federal Way. At the light at 321st St, take a right. Stay on 321st St. as it winds up and around and becomes 51st Ave. So. The church will be on your left at 296th.

# Christmas Bird Count 2006

By Nancy Streiffert

## **Thank You to 2006 Christmas Bird Count Participants!**

**T**hank you to everyone who participated in the Rainier Audubon Christmas Bird Count. It was a very cold but mostly clear day on December 17, 2006, for the 2006 Rainier Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Only a few days after our severe windstorm, many participants left cold, dark houses — still without power — to count birds. Real dedication, that! Or maybe the incentive was a hot meal at Coco's Bakery Restaurant afterwards!

Twenty-three feeder watchers and 42 observers in the field counted 118 species and 25,839 individual birds. (In 2005, 16 feeder watchers and 42 field observers saw 115 species and 28,828 individual birds. Perhaps the wind blew some birds out of our area!) We had several new area leaders and some new participants. Charlie Wright tallied the totals by species at the dinner, and Mark Freeland compiled the final numbers to send to National Audubon's database.

Seen in the Kent Valley this year, but never before recorded in our count area, was a Gyrfalcon by Gene Hunn.

Thank you again to all participants and I look forward to working with you on next year's Christmas Bird Count.



GYRFALCON ©ILENE SAMOWITZ

*Please see page 10  
for complete results  
of the 2006 CBC.*



SAW-WHET OWL ©ANTHONY X. HERTZEL

Rainier Audubon Society is the  
Washington State  
South King County Chapter  
of the National Audubon Society.

*The Heron Herald* is published by Rainier  
Audubon Society 9 times a year.

Readers are invited to send in articles, photos or artwork for possible inclusion. Final deadline for material submission is the 18th of the month preceding publication.

All content is subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without permission from the editor.

Email materials to:

**Nancy Hertzelt, editor:**

autumn207@comcast.net

**Rebecca Westby, layout artist:**

hhartist@wildblue.net

# Volunteer Opportunities

## *Native Plant Salvage Foundation Workshop*

### *Design & Plant Choices*

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2007  
6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM

This is the second part of the Naturescaping workshop, for those who want a more in-depth look at designing and installing a “naturescape,” including beautiful water-wise plant choices and combinations. Linda Andrews, of Linda Andrews Landscape & Design, will join Erica Guttman for this information-packed session. Co-sponsored by Stream Team, Thurston Conservation District, and Natural Resources Conservation Service. Contact Erica or Abigail for more information and to register.

ERICA GUTTMAN  
PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
ERICAG@WSU.EDU  
(360) 754-3588, EXT. 110

ABIGAIL GROSCHOPF  
AMERICORPS PROGRAM ASSISTANT  
WSUNPS@THURSTONCD.COM  
(360) 754-3588, EXT. 109



PHOTOS OF RED ELDERBERRY LEAVES AND BERRIES BY STEVEN J BASKAUF ©2003

## *Thurston Conservation District Annual Native Plant Sale*

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2007

12:00 NOON TO 4:00 PM

OLD TUMWATER FIRE STATION  
CORNER OF ISRAEL RD. AND CAPITOL  
BLVD. IN TUMWATER



## *King Conservation District Volunteer Opportunity*

“Garden of Goo” — Native plants grown from locally collected seed are the corner stone of conservation and ecological restoration. Learn about, and actively participate in, growing native plants for stream and wetland restoration and enhancement projects. Activities include starting plants from seed and cuttings, and transplanting and maintaining nursery stock. Activities will occur at the King Conservation District nursery facility in Renton from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

SCHEDULED VOLUNTEER DATES INCLUDE:

FEBRUARY: 9, 10, 23, 24

MARCH: 16, 17, 30, 31

Contact Amy, (425) 277-5581 ext 129, amy.tippary@kingcd.org, for more information on these and other volunteer opportunities.

## **Entertainment Book Fundraiser a Success**

*Our fall Entertainment Book fundraiser was a success! Chapter members sold 45 books with a profit to Rainier of \$6 per book, for a total of \$270 raised. Thanks to Bruce Harpham, Bernedine Lund, and Laura Stiles for selling books to others, and to everyone who bought a book for themselves.*

Laura Stiles



# Birding Festivals

## *Port Susan Snow Goose and Birding Festival*

STANWOOD, WA  
FEBRUARY 24-25, 2007

The area surrounding Port Susan Bay is a rich birding area featuring Snow Geese, Swans, raptors, ducks and much more. It is also the home to many artists and musicians. Last year's first annual *Port Susan Snow Goose & Birding Festival* was an overwhelming success. Close to 1,000 people visited the area, listened to speakers, enjoyed tours where they saw tens of thousand of Snow Geese up close, shopped a variety of vendors, appreciated a variety of fine art, and listened to local music while enjoying a salmon barbecue. For more information on this year's festival, call (360) 629-9562 or visit us online at [www.snowgoosefest.org](http://www.snowgoosefest.org).



## *Olympic Peninsula BirdFest 2007*

SEQUIM AND PORT ANGELES  
MARCH 30 - APRIL 1, 2007

The stage is set for the *2007 Olympic BirdFest*: quiet bays and estuaries, beaches on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, an island bird sanctuary, a five-mile-long sand spit, eel grass beds, and the beautiful Dungeness River valley. We've created a bird-watching vacation for beginners to experts, from leisurely strolls to active hikes. You can bird for a few hours, or all day ... from the dawn chorus to the evening owl prow. We will wake you with coffee, nourish you with locally grown organic food, and celebrate a traditional salmon bake. There will be guided birding trips, boat tours, kayaking, salmon banquet, and many other presentations. For more information, call (360) 681-4076 or visit us at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org).

## *Othello Sandhill Crane Festival*

OTHELLO, WA  
MARCH 23-25, 2007

*The Othello Sandhill Crane Festival* offers many tours for crane viewing, along with specialty tours, which include the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge/Potholes area wildlife tour, Missoula Floods and the Channeled Scablands geology tour, Sage Grouse Lek tour, Lower Grand Coulee birding tour, and Wahluke Slope/Shrub Steppe birding tour. Pre-registration is suggested to reserve your seat as some fill up quickly.

For more information, call (509) 488-2802 or visit us at: [www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org](http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org).



SANDHILL CRANE  
©RON NIEBRUGGE  
[WWW.WILDNATUREIMAGES.COM](http://WWW.WILDNATUREIMAGES.COM)

## *Wings Over Water Birding Festival*

BLAINE, BIRCH BAY, AND SEMIAHMOO  
MARCH 31, 2007

Come and join the celebration at this year's *4th Annual "Wings over Water" Northwest Birding Festival*, in one of the Pacific Northwest's premier bird viewing areas. Originally known as the Washington Brant Festival, this year's festival takes on a new look and a new name focusing on the thousands of brant geese and other birds that visit these pristine shores on their annual migration. Events include viewing stations, seminars and exhibits, live raptor displays, walking field trips of Semiahmoo Spit and Blaine's Marine Park. For more information, call (800) 624-3555 or visit [www.washingtonbrant.org](http://www.washingtonbrant.org).

# The Starling in Eastern Washington

By Leonard Wing  
Dept. of Zoology  
State College of Washington  
Pullman, WA

On March 20, 1943, four students in my ornithology class (Stanton Jamison, George Klemz, Warren Bischoff, and Stanley Smith) and I saw a group of five Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) along the road in Spring Flat, eight miles north of Pullman, Washington. The birds were feeding on the ground and were observed from a distance of forty feet. The identification, therefore, is accurate.

REPRINTED FROM: CONDOR VOL. 45, NO. 4,  
JULY-AUGUST, 1943

# Starling in Northern Idaho

By Andrew C. Olson, Jr.



In the course of my recent study of the birds of northern Idaho, Bill Musgrove reported to me that he had observed a Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) on a telephone wire one mile east of Moscow, Latah County, Idaho, on December 13, 1941. He has collected this species in Montana and was certain of his identification, which to the best of my knowledge is the first record of the Starling in northern Idaho, if not in the whole state. This individual was apparently a winter

straggler, as were those seen in western Montana by Wright.

REPRINTED FROM: CONDOR VOL. 45, NO. 5,  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1943

---

## The Lazy, Bird-Loving Gardener's Guide to Winter Clean-up

By Carol Stoner

**T**his winter's strong winds and snows have left a lot of debris in our yards and broken branches on our trees and shrubs. Before you rush out to rake and prune and toss all the twiggy bits into your yard waste container, consider using what winter has left behind to enhance your yard for the birds. Is there an out-of-the-way spot for a brush pile? Wrens, sparrows, and towhees will appreciate the food and shelter a brush pile provides. Branches of different diameters stacked together will create the maze of spaces that these birds love to explore and take shelter in.

You can add big leaves to your brush pile also, such as big-leaf

maple. For smaller leaves such as birch and vine maple, there is no need to exert yourself raking and bagging. Simply run over them with a lawn mower and leave the pieces in place. As they decompose, their organic matter puts good nutrients back into the soil.

The smaller twigs and branchlets that litter our yards after the winter storms can be raked into beds to mulch around shrubs and perennials. As this material composts, it will provide nourishment for the soil and attract bugs for towhees and other ground feeders.

Birds thrive in a more natural, less manicured yard. Recycling winter's

debris on site helps both the plants and the animals that live in your yard.



# Field Trips

By Carol Schulz

## *Weekly Bird Walks at Nisqually*

**Thursdays 8:15 AM to 12:30 PM**  
**Leader: Phil Kelley**

Join Phil on his weekly bird walk as he counts the birds at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. On the first Thursday of the month, the group walks fairly quickly around the full loop, a distance of over five miles. Other weeks, the trip is shorter; walking out to McAllister Creek, back to the visitor center, then out to the Twin Barns and the Ring Dike Trail, totaling about four miles.

**BRING:** Good walking shoes or boots, raingear, water, snacks, and \$3 entry fee unless you have a pass. Scopes are welcome.

**MEET:** At the Visitor's Center.

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

**SIGN-UP:** Call or email Phil Kelley to confirm details: (360) 459-1499 or scrub-jay323@aol.com.

## *Skagit and Samish Flats*

**Sunday, February 25**  
**7:00AM to Late Afternoon**

**Leader: Carol Schulz**

Our target birds are raptors, Snow Geese, swans, falcons, and Short-eared Owls. Rough-legged Hawks should be hunting and perching in these areas. A Washington Fish and Wildlife Vehicle Use Permit (yellow) sticker is required. Limit 10. We will carpool.

**BRING:** Very warm and waterproof clothes - it can be cold and windy on the flats! Also bring lunch, drinks (hot?), and waterproof boots or shoes. We will walk up to one mile. Scopes are very welcome.

**MEET:** Des Moines Park & Ride by 7:00AM. Leave promptly at 7:05!

**DIRECTIONS:** Take I-5 to exit 149. Turn east about 1/2 block to Military Rd. Turn north. P&R is on the left.

**SIGN-UP:** Call or email Carol Schulz at (206) 824-7618, linusq@att.net. Email is preferred. This trip may fill quickly; please register early.

## *Soos Creek Owl Prowl*

**Saturday Night, March 3**  
**10:30 PM to 1:30 AM**

**Leaders: Joe and Liz Miles**

Join Friends of Soos Creek Park volunteers Joe and Liz Miles for this late night program and walk exploring the world of owls. We'll start indoors for the first hour learning calls, ID, and information about our local owls, then venture outdoors to prowls for owls. There is limited space for this program. Reservations are required. Best for adults and children over 13 years. Group size is limited to 15. The program is sponsored by Kent City Recreation Dept.

**MEET:** Meet at the Soos Creek Park Maintenance Shop. Soos Creek Park/Trail 24810 148th Avenue SE, Kent.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take James St. east from Kent. (To reach James St, exit I-167 at Willis, turn east to Central, and north to James.) Travel east on James as it becomes SE 240th St. Go about four miles; 240th dips and turns downhill. Turn right (south) on 148th Ave. near the bottom of the hill. The Soos Creek maintenance yard will be down the road about 1/4 mile on the left at a barn and chain-link-fenced parking lot.

**SIGN-UP:** Call Kent Commons, Kent City Parks and Recreation at (253) 856-5000. This trip **FILLS EARLY**. Please register in advance. For further information, email or call Joe Miles at joe.miles@att.net, or (253) 639-0123. Joe can answer your questions, but cannot arrange the sign-ups.



## *Othello Sandhill Crane Festival*

**Friday-Sunday, March 23-25, 2007**  
**Othello, Washington**

**Reported by Carol Schulz**

Join me at the Othello Sandhill Crane Festival again this year. The FIELD TRIPS and lectures are great. I always learn a lot and see a lot of birds, especially OWLS! I also attend a banquet presented by the high school students on Saturday night. There are many birding tours which include local trips for Burrowing Owl and Sandhill Crane; and longer field trips featuring birding, geology, and nature. Many of the tours leave Othello in buses each morning and afternoon. Some birds seen last year on the tours were Sandhill Crane, Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Burrowing Owl, and Long-eared Owl. I stay in accommodations over there and can recommend some to you. The banquet should not be missed! It is famous, and very gourmet! Registration information and tour info is available at [www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org](http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org) or call 1-866-726-3445 toll free (after 4:00 PM). The most popular trips and accommodations fill early, so register ASAP. For more info about the festival, call or email me (Carol Schulz) at [linusq@att.net](mailto:linusq@att.net), or (206) 824-7618. Email is preferred. Bring your own car. [Or ... I leave early on Friday and return on Monday if you want to carpool with me.]

*All Levels of  
Birders are  
Welcome!*



# Catalog Giant Agrees to Support Sustainable Paper Purchasing

**O**n December 6th, Limited Brands, parent company of Victoria's Secret, announced that they will support the protection of endangered forests by:

- *Not using paper from endangered forests or caribou habitat in the Boreal Forest*
- *Increasing post-consumer recycled paper in all catalogs, starting with 10%*
- *Moving toward Forest Stewardship Council certified fiber for non-recycled content*
- *Supporting the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework*

Much of the paper in the one million catalogs that Victoria's Secret sends per day is currently sourced from the Boreal Forest of Canada, one of the world's three largest intact forests. Two acres of the Boreal Forest is being logged per minute, mostly through clear-cutting. A staggering 80% of all Canadian wood and paper exports are purchased by the United States. Most of these trees end up in disposable products such as catalogs, toilet paper, tissue paper, and paper towels.

One of the last great forest ecosystems left on the planet, the Boreal Forest is a major source of North America's fresh water and teems with wildlife including wolves, grizzly bears, and woodland caribou. The Boreal Forest is also the nesting grounds for billions of America's songbirds and waterfowl. The forest's capacity to store carbon ranks it as one the planet's top lines of defense against global warming.

As the latest in a string of high-profile companies, including Williams-Sonoma and Dell, to reject environmentally destructive timber



THE RANGE OF THE BOREAL FOREST IN NORTH AMERICA

practices, and as a major player in the catalog industry, Victoria's Secret has the power to turn the tide of the entire industry toward sustainable paper purchasing. The choice made by Victoria's Secret represents a growing trend toward conservation among corporate giants. In 2006 alone, over 70 companies, with annual sales totaling over \$30 billion (USD), have committed to support the Boreal Forest Conservation Framework, a groundbreaking vision that promotes equal treatment of conservation and development across Canada's Boreal region. The Framework calls for:

Protecting at least 50% of the region in a network of large interconnected protected areas, and

Supporting sustainable communities, world-leading ecosystem-based resource management practices, and state-of-the-art stewardship practices in the remaining landscape.

# Great Backyard Bird Count

By Andy Waters  
Wild Birds Unlimited in Burien

**W**ild Birds Unlimited in Burien will be acting as an Ambassador this year for Cornell's Great Backyard Bird Count. We have February Washington checklists, data forms, and participation guidelines all available at the store. In addition, anyone who wishes to participate but does not have access to the internet can bring their completed forms and checklists to the store and we will gladly enter them online and submit to Cornell Labs. As always, the staff at Wild Birds Unlimited is more than happy to assist in identification of sightings at the store or by phone.

*Wild Birds Unlimited of South Seattle*  
15858 - 1st Ave. So, #106,  
Burien, WA 98148  
[www.wbu.com/southseattle](http://www.wbu.com/southseattle)



*Think globally.*



*Act locally.*

# Results – Kent-Auburn Christmas Bird Count – 12/17/2006

## BIRD SPECIES COUNT

Red-throated Loon	.2	Pigeon Guillemot	.2
Common Loon	.5	Rock Pigeon	.787
Pied-billed Grebe	.69	Band-tailed Pigeon	.43
Horned Grebe	.129	Mourning Dove	.5
Red-necked Grebe	.19	Barn Owl	.3
Western Grebe	.8	Western Screech-Owl	.5
Dbl-crested Cormorant	.108	Great Horned Owl	.7
Pelagic Cormorant	.5	Short-eared Owl	.1
Amer. Bittern	.1	Northern Saw-whet Owl	.1
Great Blue Heron	.29	Barred Owl	.2
Green Heron	.1	Anna's Hummingbird	.27
Trumpeter Swan	.6	Belted Kingfisher	.10
Cackling Goose	.575	Red-breasted Sapsucker	.9
Canada Goose	.365	Downy Woodpecker	.37
Green-winged Teal	.437	Hairy Woodpecker	.6
Eurasian-Gw Teal	.1	Northern Flicker	.132
Mallard	.1642	Y-shafted	.3
Northern Pintail	.961	Pileated Woodpecker	.14
Northern Shoveler	.141	Steller's Jay	.160
Gadwall	.77	Common Raven	.3
Eurasian Wigeon	.12	American Crow	.5440
American Wigeon	.1992	Blk-capped Chickadee	.497
Redhead	.2	Mountain Chickadee	.cw <1>
Ring-necked Duck	.456	Chestnut-bk'd Chickadee	.161
Greater Scaup	.39	Bushtit	.470
Lesser Scaup	.43	Red-breasted Nuthatch	.16
Harlequin Duck	.10	Brown Creeper	.18
Black Scoter	.38	Bewick's Wren	.59
Surf Scoter	.145	Winter Wren	.94
White-winged Scoter	.21	Marsh Wren	.38
Common Goldeneye	.91	American Dipper	.1
Barrow's Goldeneye	.29	Golden-cr. Kinglet	.196
Bufflehead	.244	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	.163
Hooded Merganser	.145	American Robin	.904
Common Merganser	.121	Varied Thrush	.34
Red-breasted Merganser	.25	Northern Shrike	.1
Ruddy Duck	.246	European Starling	.1796
Bald Eagle	.19	Hutton's Vireo	.1
Adult	.15	Orange-crowned Warbler	.3
Immature	.4	Yellow-rumped Warbler	.150
No. Harrier	.11	Audubon's	.70
Sharp-shinned Hawk	.6	Myrtle	.72
Cooper's Hawk	.13	Townsend's Warbler	.6
Red-tailed Hawk	.67	Spotted Towhee	.177
Amer. Kestrel	.2	Savannah Sparrow	.23
Merlin	.1	Fox Sparrow	.159
Peregrine Falcon	.3	Song Sparrow	.537
Gyr Falcon	.1	Lincoln's Sparrow	.145
California Quail	.25	White-throated Sparrow	.3
Virginia Rail	.7	Golden-crowned Sparrow	.255
American Coot	.290	White-crowned Sparrow	.77
Killdeer	.9	Dark-eyed Junco	.556
Dunlin	.662	Slate-colored Junco	.3
Wilson's Snipe	.4	Red-winged Blackbird	.943
Bonaparte's Gull	.3	Western Meadowlark	.21
Mew Gull	.106	Brown-headed Cowbird	.100
Ring-billed Gull	.11	Purple Finch	.7
California Gull	.1	House Finch	.450
Herring Gull	.3	Pine Siskin	.180
Thayer's Gull	.6	American Goldfinch	.141
Western Gull	.1	Evening Grosbeak	.28
Glaucous-Winged Gull	.756	House Sparrow	.145
West x Glc-Winged Gull	.65		
Gull sp.	.111		

cw = Seen during count-week

*New Species for this count, never before seen in this area at this time of year:*

*Gyr Falcon (seen by Master Birder Gene Hunn in the Kent Valley)*

## CBC TOTALS

NUMBER OF OBSERVERS	. . . . .65
IN THE FIELD	. . . . .42
AT FEEDERS	. . . . .23
NUMBER OF SPECIES	. . . . .118
INDIVIDUAL BIRDS	. . . . .25,839

## RAS 2006 CBC Participants

### IN THE FIELD

CAREN ADAMS	KIRK SCARBROUGH
LINDA BARTLETT	AMY SCHILLINGER
MERRI BERG	CAROL SCHULZ
TOM BOWDEN	BONNIE SCOTT
BOB & PAT BRANDT	SANDY SIEBER
KEN BRUNNER	CAROL STONER
JEFF COHEN	DAN STREIFFERT
PATTI COOLSEN	NANCY STREIFFERT
JIM FLYNN	VERN & JEANNIE SUMNER
NANCY HERTZEL	DAVID SWAYNE
GENE HUNN	ROSS TABOR
GEOFF JACKSON	SUE TERRY
STEVE JOHNSON	MICHELE TIRHI
CAROL JOHNSON	BRENDA TOM
JOE & LIZ MILES	JIM TOOLEY
ROGER ORNESS	RON TOONEN
BARBARA PETERSEN	RYAN WIESE
WILLIAM POWELL	CHARLIE & GORDON WRIGHT
DEBRA RUSSELL	MERLIN WIESE

### FEEDER WATCHERS

THAIS BOCK	LEN & BLYTHE PEYTON
MARGO COTTER	TED & KRIS RIPLEY
BRUCE HARPHAM	KEITH & TONI ROBAR
JIM & HEIDI HILL	CAROL SCHULZ
JEAN LOTTER	CATHEA STANLEY
BERNEDINE LUND	ED & BLYTH STANTON
ELAINE & HENRY MAROS	JUNIOR & LILLIAN STEPHENS
BARBARA NYLUND	LAURA STILES

*Event organized and coordinated by Nancy Streiffert*

*Species tallied and checked by Charlie Wright*

*Data compiled and submitted by Mark Freeland*



# Christmas Bird Count 2006

By Charlie Wright

**T**he 2006 Kent-Auburn Christmas Bird Count was a success, thanks to our determined participants, consisting of 42 counters in the field and 23 feeder watchers. The count regrettably occurred just after a major wind event, which wiped out power for much of the area. But those stalwart birders able to do so ventured out and counted regardless, and they were lucky with favorable weather on count day. Though the temperature was cold and a few teams saw a snow flurry or two in the morning, the day was calm and perfect for lots of bird activity.

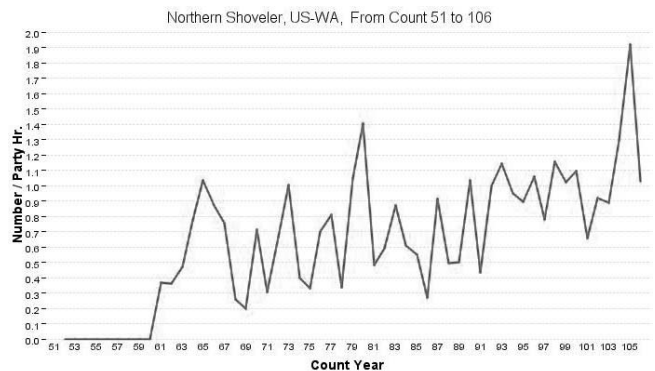
As always, our count turned up some very interesting results. The most unexpected sighting on count day was a Gyrfalcon seen quickly by two birders near the Smith Brothers' Dairy. Several trends pop up even without doing the intensive analysis of scientists. Of Western Grebes, a species in sharp decline in the Puget Sound at least, only eight were tallied. Our count of 27 Anna's Hummingbirds broke last year's record, as this species continues to colonize our area. This year's Lincoln's Sparrow count was another all-time high. Low numbers of Pine Siskins were found this year, although somewhat elevated from last year's total of zero!

Most folks ended the day at Coco's in Federal Way, with warm food and good company for the species count-down.

We would all like to thank Nancy Steiffert for her excellent coordinating efforts, and Mark Freeland for doing the considerable behind-the-scenes work with the all-important data.

# Track Any Bird's Population Trend Using CBC Data

**T**he National Audubon website has a very cool feature which allows you to track any bird's population trend using Christmas Bird Count data from the last 100 years. Go to <http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/hr/index.html>. Scroll down to the box called Make a Graph. Then choose what bird you want to track, the years you want it tracked, and in which geographic region, and the program will create a graph for you. The one at right is for the Northern Shoveler in the state of Washington from 1950 to 2005.



## RAS Winter Trips Were Successful and Fun

By Carol Schulz

**S**everal winter-season field trips were very nice, with good birds and enthusiastic people. Charlie Wright and Roger Orness led a trip on Dec 9, 2006, called "Kittitas County Birding in Winter." Two carloads of people went to Ellensburg and Vantage and got to see 67 raptors, including a beautiful (and close) Golden Eagle. We saw two Peregrine Falcons in the Ellensburg area, where they are quite uncommon. We also finally found two Rough-legged Hawks. Down in the Vantage area, again we saw lots of birds. Charlie and Roger led us south on Huntzinger Road from Vantage. Kathy Andrich was already over there birding, and pointed out some very close Gray-crowned Rosy-finches above us in the rocks, where they roost in old Cliff Swallow mud nests. That was a real treat. It is hard to see these birds up close like that. Thanks to Roger and Charlie for the Golden Eagle and the other good birds.



ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK  
©JOSEPH V. HIGBEE

On December 30, Kathy Andrich led a trip to some Renton areas. We met at Ivar's at Coulon Park. We saw a number of birds before a cold fog rolled in. We then drove over to Black River near the heronry. Great Blue Herons, a number of duck species, and a variety of different small birds were active in the area and there was no fog. We had a good time there. We drove back to Coulon and lunched at Ivars. After lunch, some folks left, but four of us drove over to the mouth of the Cedar River; we walked out on the dock at the kayak center, and there right below us was a beautiful SLATY-BACKED

*cont'd on page 11*

# The Quizzical Owl

by *Thais Bock*



1. What is the term for bird-banding in the United Kingdom?
2. The song of what sparrow resembles that of a particular insect?
3. Name two passerines sometimes referred to as Butcher Birds.
4. This small state's official bird is of the barnyard variety.
5. What bird of the southern states is called a "water turkey"?

ANSWERS ARE UPSIDE DOWN BELOW

## Stop the Spread of Invasive Species: What You Can Do

**Y**ou can help stop the introduction and spread of harmful invaders in your community and conserve biodiversity.

■ If you don't know it, don't grow it! Avoid buying or growing plants that are known to be invasive such as purple loosestrife, English ivy, and Oriental bittersweet. Be especially careful when buying plants and seeds on the internet or by mail order—you may unknowingly contribute to the spread of an invasive species from one part of the country to another. Although some companies have voluntarily withdrawn known invasives from sale or labeled these species high risk, many have not. Lists of known invaders can be obtained from state and federal agencies as well as non-profit groups such as The Nature Conservancy, state Native Plant Societies, and various Exotic Pest Plant Councils.

■ If you see your local nursery selling invasive plants or seeds, let them know about your concerns. Most are interested in avoiding problem species and will listen.

■ Avoid buying and planting mixtures of seeds, especially ones labeled "wildflowers." Many contain invasive species. Others are too poorly labeled to tell.

■ Landscape and garden with plants native to your area. Although

many non-native plants are not invasive and can be grown without risk, emphasizing natives (especially pollinator-friendly species) can provide other advantages such as food, cover, or nesting sites for butterflies and birds. Native plants also require less water, fertilizers and pesticides.



EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL

©NANCY LOEWENSTEIN, WWW.FORESTRYIMAGES.ORG

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

©DAVID CAPPAERT, WWW.FORESTRYIMAGES.ORG



■ Don't dump your aquatic plants or aquarium water into local waters. Many plants for water gardens and aquaria are highly invasive. Eurasian watermilfoil, a notorious aquatic weed

that spreads rapidly and replaces natives, is one example of a plant that became established after being discarded from a personal aquarium.

■ Be a good neighbor. Never dispose of unwanted plants or lawn or garden clippings in a nearby park or natural area. Invasive plants can spread from plant fragments, seeds, and berries.

■ Share your knowledge about the harm that invasives cause with your family, your friends, your coworkers, and your neighbors.

■ Join a local invasive plant eradication effort. Many parks and nature reserves (e.g., Audubon sanctuaries) manually remove invasive plants with the help of local volunteers. These outings are a great way to get some exercise, enjoy time outdoors, meet new friends, and gain the satisfaction of knowing that you're helping to protect our natural world.

■ Learn to recognize common invaders and keep an eye out for signs of new ones. Check trees, gardens, vacant lots, roadsides, yards, agricultural areas, wetlands, ponds, and lakes. If you think you've found a new infestation, contact your county agricultural agent or state Department of Natural Resources. Early detection is crucial to stopping an invasive from becoming permanently established.

SOURCE: UNION OF CONCERNED SCIENTISTS

# Field Trip ... *cont'd from page 7*

GULL! A real rarity! Thank you, Kathy!

On January 6, 2007, Joe and Liz Miles led an owl prowl at Soos Creek. It was very successful. Weather had been bad (as usual this year, with all the snow and ice), so many participants cancelled. But there was a waiting list, and a full group showed up for the trip that night. On the way to the field trip, the leaders watched two Barn Owls flying over an upper field. During the trip, participants saw and heard!!! two Great Horned Owls and one Western Screech-Owl. Wow!



GOLDEN EAGLE ©CHARLIE WRIGHT

On January 20, I led a trip to Oak Bay and Ft. Flagler north of Hood Canal Bridge. (Scheduled Leader Jeff Antonelis-Lapp had to leave town to go to a funeral.) At first we only had one participant signed up, but ended up with nine people. It was wonderful! We had clear weather, and no wind. We had a trip list of 62 species including Brant geese, Harlequin Ducks, seven species of shorebirds, and best of all, 22 Long-tailed Ducks lined up close in front of us at Ft. Flagler. It was a very nice day!

And we are now looking forward to some warmer weather!



## Rainier Audubon Society

*Rainier Audubon Society is the Washington State South King County Chapter of the National Audubon Society. Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, and to protect birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity and biological diversity in South King County and the world we live in.*

Web Site	..... www.rainieraudubon.org
Chapter Voice Mail	..... (253) 939-6411
President	Nancy Hertzl* ..... (253) 255-1808 E-mail: autumn207@comcast.net
Vice President	Steve Feldman* ..... (360) 802-5211 E-mail: StephanFeldman@gmail.com
Board Members	Tricia MacLaren ..... (360) 802-0304 E-mail: t.maclaren@att.net Debra Russell ..... (425) 271-0682 E-mail: debrarussell94@comcast.net
Backyard Habitat Chair	Carol Stoner* ..... (253) 854-3207 E-mail: stonefam@gte.net
Christmas Bird Count	Nancy Streiffert ..... (253) 852-8394 E-mail: nancy_streiffert@hotmail.com Charlie Wright and Mark Freeland (compilers)
Conservation	POSITION OPEN
Education	Ross Tabor and Annette Tabor* (253)-927-3208 E-mail: rarailfan@aol.com
Field Trips	Carol Schulz ..... (206) 824-7618 E-mail: linusq@worldnet.att.net
Heron Herald, Editor	Nancy Hertzl ..... (253) 255-1808 E-mail: autumn207@comcast.net
Heron Herald, Layout	Rebecca Westby ..... (253) 951-5427 E-mail: hhartist@wildblue.net
Historian	Thais Bock ..... (253) 839-2044 E-mail: tbock29@concentric.net
Hospitality	Bernedine Lund* ..... (253) 839-3729 E-mail: philandbernedine2002@yahoo.com
Mailing Crew	Linda Bartlett ..... (253) 631-1959 E-mail: lbart@scn.org
Membership	Merlin Wiese ..... (253) 833-3907 E-mail: MWiese7783@aol.com
Nestbox Coordinator	Merlin Wiese ..... (253) 833-3907 E-mail: MWiese7783@aol.com
Programs	Dale Meland* ..... (253) 946-1637 E-mail: dmeland@hotmail.com
Publicity	Stacy Colombel ..... (206) 433-8222 E-mail: sacolombel@zipcon.com
Administrative Asst.	Amy Flanigan ..... (253) 826-0003 E-mail: johnamyflanigan@yahoo.com
Shadow Lake Bog	Max & Erin Prinsen ..... (425) 432-9965 E-mail: max.prinsen@comcast.net
Sightings	Charlie Wright ..... (253) 862-0520 E-mail: c.wright7@comcast.net
Treasurer	Jim Tooley* ..... (253) 854-3070 E-mail: ACTJCT@aol.com
Web Editor	Nancy Hertzl ..... (253) 255-1808
State Audubon Office	Nina Carter ..... (206) 652-2444 E-mail: ncarter@audubon.org
National Audubon Office	..... (212) 979-3000
NAS Membership Services	..... 1-800-274-4201

\* ALSO SERVES AS A BOARD MEMBER



Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Kent, WA 98031  
Permit No. 441

TIME VALUE MATERIAL



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Inside Your February 2007 Issue

Calendar . . . . . Page 2  
 Vounteer Opps . . . . . Page 3  
 Birding Festivals. . . . . Page 4  
 Field Trips . . . . . Page 6  
 Quizzical Owl . . . . . Page 10

**RAINIER AUDUBON'S TERRITORY**



**NEED HELP FOR INJURED WILDLIFE?**  
 For an extensive list of wildlife rehabilitors  
 and other wildlife resources,  
 visit our Chapter Web Site at:  
<http://www.rainieraudubon.org/>

**Audubon Membership Subscription Form** 

**Rainier Audubon Society (RAS) Membership .....\$15**

A one-year membership in Rainier Audubon Society includes nine issues of the Heron Herald newsletter; participation in all our field trips and activities; and fun monthly membership meetings. Plus, we'll add you to our email listserv, so you'll get all the latest information online. (Make checks payable to Rainier Audubon.)

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

RAINIER AUDUBON SOCIETY  
 P.O. Box 778  
 Auburn, WA 98071

To join National Audubon, please visit their website at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

Name .....

Address .....

City.....

St.....Zip.....

Phone .....

Email .....

Y16 7XCH