

THE HERON HERALD



Rainier Audubon Society ~ March 2008

Vol 27 No 2

Check us out on the web: www.rainieraudubon.org

Rainier Audubon Presents: Bird Conservation in Indonesia: Saving the Maleo

Monday, March 17, 2008, 7:00 PM

Marcy Summers is a fourth-generation native of the Puget Sound area. She has a master's degree in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Maine. For over 10 years, she worked for The Nature Conservancy, most recently as Senior Conservation Planner for Indonesia and the Pacific Islands. While living in Indonesia, Marcy discovered Tompotika, an area on the island of Sulawesi that is a refuge for dozens of rare and

endangered species, including the endangered maleo bird. Marcy left TNC to co-found the Alliance for Tompotika Conservation, or AlTo.

In her presentation to Rainier Audubon on Monday night, March 17, she will describe how AlTo has reversed the decline of the maleo bird through an innovative approach using good science, people-to-people partnerships, and art.

Please join Rainier Audubon and learn how a small committed group can change long-standing destructive practices to the benefit of birds and humankind alike. Everyone is welcome. Complimentary refreshments and conversation before and after the program.



THE ENDANGERED MALEO BIRD



MARCY HOLDING A MALEO, WHILE CHILD HELPS TO FEED IT.

*Free
and open to the public*

**March Program
Monday, March 17
7:00 PM**

(doors open at 6:30)

**Federal Way
United Methodist Church**

directions on page 2

Field Trips on Page 4

RAS Calendar

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

RAS Board Meeting

MONDAY, MARCH 17

RAS Program: Saving the Maleo

See page 1 for details

SATURDAY, MARCH 22

RAS Field Trip: Soos Creek Owl Prowl

See page 4 for details

FRIDAY THRU SUNDAY, MARCH 28-30

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival

See page 3 for details

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

RAS Field Trip: Lake Sammamish

See page 4 for details

SATURDAY, APRIL 19

RAS Field Trip: Ocean Shores

See page 5 for details

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

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

DIRECTIONS TO THE CHURCH:

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.

Call for Board Members and Committee Chairs

By Carol Stoner, Rainier Audubon President

It's not just the Republicans and the Democrats who are having an election! Rainier Audubon is, too. Every May, we elect the people who serve on your Board of Directors. Board members serve three-year terms. Because the terms are staggered, only some of the positions are up for election each year.

According to our by-laws, we need a minimum of three board members, but there is no maximum number and we like to have as many people as we can. The more input, the better! The Board meets at Federal Way United Methodist Church on second Wednesdays, September through May, at 6:30 PM. Don't be shy! If you are interested in serving on Rainier's Board, we need you! Please email Carol Stoner at stonefam@gte.net. We are a congenial group and would welcome your participation and good ideas.

We also need some committee chairs. Bernedine Lund has provided the wonderful snacks at our meetings for several years, and is now focusing her energy on rescuing our native trees from invasive English ivy. If you can take her place as Hospitality Chair and bring snacks to share with others once a month (third Mondays), we need you!

Stacy Colombel is our current Publicity Chair. She is looking for a replacement. If you would enjoy contacting our local papers and writing blurbs about our programs and activities, we would like to hear from you. Thank you!

We Need You!

Rainier Audubon has an opening for a Volunteer Coordinator.

This person would research and gather environmentally-oriented volunteer opportunities in the south King County area for our members. If interested, please contact Carol at: stonefam@gte.net



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

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Email materials to:

Nancy Hertzell, editor:
autumn207@comcast.net

Rebecca Westby, layout artist:
hhartist@wildblue.net

Events

Lake Wilderness Arboretum Presents ...

Susan Goetz - Lawn, Lawn Go Away!

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Take back your front yard! See through a designer's eye how a front yard can be low maintenance by using low-water plants, mixed shrub borders, and other attractive elements. Door prizes by Gramma's Garden Nursery.

Location: Tahoma Junior High School at 25600 SE Summitt-Landsburg Rd., Maple Valley

Member fee: \$0

Non-Member Fee: \$0

Material fee for all attendees: \$0

Contact: Phone: (253) 631-0565 Email: info@lakewildernessarboretum.org



Save the Earth One Habitat Garden at a Time

TUESDAY, APRIL 8 AT 1:00 PM

Auburn Garden Club presents Brett Johnson, Native Plant Steward and owner of Green Man Gardens. He will give a native plant trunk show and encourage you to plant natives, conserve water and preserve habitat. Native plants will be available for sale.

Auburn Senior Center
808 - 9 St. SE
Auburn, WA 98002

Cost: \$1 minimum donation to club

Questions? Call (253) 874-5841 or (253) 839-6023 for more information.

Spring Birding Festivals

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival

MARCH 28-29-30

The Othello Sandhill Crane

Festival has many tours for crane view-

ing, along with specialty tours.

Specialty tours in the past have

included 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. For more information, visit www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/



SANDHILL CRANE
©JOSEPH V HIGBEE

Olympic BirdFest 2008

APRIL 4-6 ~ SEQUIM, WA

Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest 2008 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center! Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, and a traditional salmon bake at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center. New this year — Follow your BirdFest weekend with a three-day, two-night birding cruise of the spectacular San Juan Islands on April 6-8. Visit San Juan, Orcas, and Sucia Islands, and more. Stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort. For more information, visit www.olympicbirdfest.org or contact us by phone, at (360) 681-4076, or by email at info@olympicbirdfest.org.



M.V. OLYMPUS CRUISING BOAT ©NORTHWEST MARITIME CENTER

Field Trips

By Carol Schulz

Soos Creek Owl Prowl

Saturday Night, March 22

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 info about our local owls, then venture outdoors to prowl 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. This year the program is being sponsored by Kent City Recreation Dept.

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

DIRECTIONS: Take James Street 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. Travel about 4 miles, as 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 chainlink-fenced parking lot.

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

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival

Friday - Sunday, March 28-30

Othello, Washington

Reported by Carol Schulz

I'll be heading over to the Othello Sandhill Crane Festival again this year. The FIELD TRIPS and lectures are great. I learn a lot, and see a lot of birds. We especially get to see 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, as well as 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 I 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 or call (866) 726-3445 toll free (after 4:00 PM). The most popular trips and accommodations fill early, so register ASAP. For more information about the festival, call or email me (Carol Schulz) at 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 follow on the way over. Last year, we saw lots of birds on the way over.)

Lake Sammamish

Sunday, April 6

7:30 AM to Early Afternoon

Leader: Amy Schillinger

Join Amy on this popular field trip to Lake Sammamish State Park and surrounding areas during a beautiful time of year. This park near Issaquah has wetlands, trails, woods, and a nice creek and beach. We will explore the area near the mouth of Issaquah Creek, and view a large heronry with Great Blue Herons at their nests. Then we will visit other sites in the area. We hope to see and hear singing spring birds.

BRING: Lunch or snacks, and drinks. Trails can be muddy. We may walk up to one mile.

MEET: At 7:30 AM at the Newcastle Park & Ride, exit 9, north of Renton on I-405. Be careful to turn right (up the hill) to enter the Park & Ride, and do not drive down the ramp to the freeway.

SIGN-UP: Call or email Amy Schillinger, (425) 443-6931, amyschillinger@comcast.net

Field Trips cont'd on next page



“For most birdwatchers, the coming of the warblers has the same effect as catnip on a cat.”

~ Arline Thomas, American

Ocean Shores and Hoquiam

Saturday, April 19

6:30 AM to Late Afternoon

Leader: Guy McWethy

Guy will be leading a field trip to the Ocean Shores area in search of spring migrating shorebirds. The itinerary will include visits to Point Brown Jetty, Oyhut Game Range, Damon Point (or what remains of it), Bill's Spit, and various ocean and bay beaches. We may also visit birding hot spots near Hoquiam. We will seek Surfbird, Rock Sandpiper, Pectoral, and Baird's Sandpiper, Red Knot, and alcids. We may see Sooty Shearwaters flying by offshore. Many shorebird species may be seen. We will keep our eyes open for migrating warblers and ducks. Almost anything can turn up out at Grays Harbor County in the spring! Be prepared for plenty of hiking and walking.

BRING: Foulweather gear, hiking boots, waterproof boots for the game range, lunch(es), drinks. Scopes are very welcome.

MEET: 6:30 AM at McDonalds in Fife. Take I-5 south to exit 137 in Fife. Turn right and get into the left lane. Turn left (go toward Tacoma) and go two blocks on Hwy. 99. Turn left at the light and drive about 1/2 block to McDonalds.

SIGN-UP: Email or call Guy McWethy, lguy_mcw@yahoo.com, (425) 255-9478 (evening), (253) 924-2460 (days). Email is preferred. Trip is limited to eight people. Sign up early for this great shorebird trip which RAS has not offered for several years!



February and March are not our highest months as far as species numbers go. As we move into March, our wintering populations of waterfowl and raptors will start to progressively fade, while few of our spring arrivals have made the trip up here. We can, however, relish those first vanguards of spring. Rufous Hummingbirds and swallows should be around very soon, and once the first individual appears, there is little time before they are everywhere! Keep up the great reports, especially during this time of new arrivals.



WHITE-THROATED SPARROW
©WHATBIRD.COM

Six Canvasback were at Kent Ponds 1/20 (CW/m.obs), and perhaps the same six were at Riverview Marsh 2/10 (JB/CW). The Red-shouldered Hawk at Kent Ponds continued its evasive behavior at Kent Ponds, being spotted briefly in flight on 1/20 (CW/m.obs) and 2/9 (KA). A Short-eared Owl was flying in the meadows at Kent Ponds on 1/20 (CW/m.obs), and two were photographed there on 1/27 (RP). At least two Glaucous Gulls were seen through the winter at the Cedar River mouth in Renton (RM/Twtrs). Two Cedar



CEDAR WAXWING ©CHARLIE WRIGHT, 2007

Waxwings were near Bonney Lake 1/28 (CW). Waxwings normally winter only very near the Puget Sound, and even then are found in small numbers. The trend of very few Varied Thrushes this winter reversed on itself in mid-January. Up to 30 birds were seen in a flock near Bonney Lake on 2/1 (CW). Likely, an increase in snow in the mountains brought these birds down into our area. Up to three Townsend's Warblers visited suet in Federal Way this February (TB), and four or five were in Bonney Lake (CW). A White-throated Sparrow was at Frager Road in Kent on 1/13, and two were near the Old Fishing Hole the same day (KA). Pine Siskins were seen throughout the period in vast flocks of up to 450 birds (m.obs).

OBSERVERS: KA-KATHY ANDRICH; JB-JESSIE BARRY; TB-THAIS BOCK; RP-RAYMOND PARSONS; CW-CHARLIE WRIGHT; TWTRS-TWEETERS INTERNET GROUP; M.OBS-MANY OBSERVERS.

Going Birding?

Report your sightings to Charlie at (253) 862-0520 or email c.wright7@comcast.net.

The Quizzical Owl

by *Thais Bock*



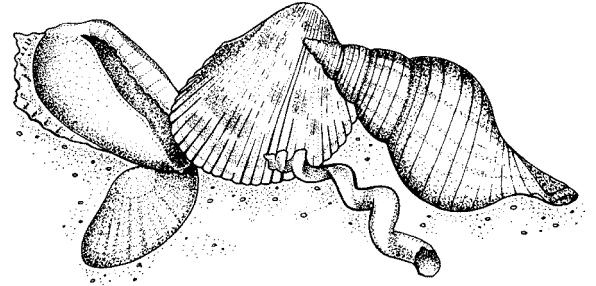
1. Name the falcon found on all continents across the world.
2. What common duck in the eastern U.S. is infrequently seen in western Washington?
3. This sandpiper is named after the color of its breast.
4. Which owl species is the most diurnal?
5. "Fly-up-the-Creek" is a folk name for this heron species.

ANSWERS ARE UPSIDE DOWN

Beach Naturalists Needed!

Are you interested in beaches? Good with people? Sign up to be a volunteer beach naturalist at a Seattle-area beach this summer. Naturalists will receive training from marine and interpretative experts on four week-

day evenings (April 29 and May 6, 14 and 20) and three weekend days (May 4, 10 and 18). Once trained, volunteers spend three summer weekend days educating visitors about



beach ecology and beach etiquette at Carkeek Park, Constellation Park (Alki), Des Moines Beach Park, Golden Gardens, Lincoln Park, Olympic Sculpture Park Beach, Redondo Beach, Richmond Beach, and Seahurst Park.

A program orientation will be held Tuesday evening, April 15, 6:30 PM - 8 PM, at the Seattle Aquarium. To sign up or if you have any questions, please call Charlotte Spang at (206) 245-0143 or email beachnaturalist@seattle.gov.

SPONSORS FOR THIS TENTH YEAR OF THE BEACH NATURALIST PROGRAM INCLUDE AMGEN FOUNDATION, THE FORUM FOR WRIA 9 (GREEN DUWAMISH AND CENTRAL PUGET SOUND WATERSHED), THE FORUM FOR WRIA 8 (LAKE WASHINGTON/CEDAR/SAMMAMISH WATERSHED), THE KING CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PEOPLE FOR PUGET SOUND, THE SEATTLE AQUARIUM, SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION AND THE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE.



Bug of the Month: Beetle



In this world of ours, beetles are a huge success. Scientists estimate that 25% of all animals on earth are beetles — and that there may be between 5 and 8 million different species! With their hardened forewings and tough exoskeleton, beetles are like tanks; and they come with a stunning array of horns, spines, and elaborate antennae. Beetles feed on plants and fungi, recycle dead plants and animals, and eat other invertebrates, too. Depending on the species, they can be garden pests or garden protectors, but no matter how we view them, they provide vital environmental services: They are an important food source for insect-eating birds; woodpeckers excavate beetles and their larvae from failing trees; creepers, nuthatches, and wrens glean beetles from bark and leaves; and birds such as Cattle Egrets which forage on the ground eat them in great quantities.

PHOTO OF RHINOCEROS BEETLE ©KEITH POWER, bugs.bio.usyd.edu.au/

Join Us for the Spring 2008 Audubon Council of Washington Workshop

For the Spring 2008 workshop (April 11 - 13), Audubon Washington has chosen the Sleeping Lady Mountain retreat, located in the foothills of the Cascades outside Leavenworth. This all-inclusive retreat is a leader in environmental awareness, with conservation a primary concern in every aspect of its organization and daily operations.

Friday evening will kick off with a reception and art show, as well as a book-signing by Brian Bell, author of *Birds of Washington State*. Friday evening, we will have our first guest speaker, Dr. Nalini M. Nadkarni, professor at Evergreen State College. Saturday will be dedicated to workshops on leadership in the Audubon community, board development, and fund-raising. Saturday evening will usher in our keynote speaker, Dr. Terry L. Root, a Senior Fellow and university faculty at the Woods Institute for the Environment at Stanford University. Sunday will be dedicated to field trips; options include Chelan-Douglass Land Trust trip, Barn Beach Reserve and Blackbird Island trip, Rocky Reach Dam and Visitor Center, Horan Natural Area, and a biking and birding excursion.

For more information and to register for Spring 2008 ACOW, visit the Audubon Washington website at wa.audubon.org



THE SLEEPING LADY RETREAT IS SEEN HIDDEN BEHIND
SUNFLOWERS AT THE BASE OF THE CASCADES.

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
Questions?	Contact us at: info@RainierAudubon.org
President	Carol Stoner* (253) 854-3207 E-mail: stonefam@gte.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 Max Prinsen (425) 432-9965 E-mail: max.prinsen@comcast.net Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen (425) 432-9965 E-mail: max.prinsen@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 Chair	Dan Streiffert (253) 852-8394 E-mail: danstreiffert@comcast.net
Education	Ross Tabor and Annette Tabor* (253) 927-3208 E-mail: raraifan@aol.com
Field Trips	Carol Schulz (206) 824-7618 E-mail: linusq@worldnet.att.net
Heron Herald, Editor	Nancy Hertzelt (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	Debra Russell (425) 271-0682 E-mail: debrarussell94@comcast.net
Membership	Pat Toth (206) 767-4944 E-mail: h2opat@msn.com
Nestbox Coordinator	Bernedine Lund* (253) 839-3729 E-mail: philandbernedine2002@yahoo.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: johnnamylanigan@yahoo.com
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 Hertzelt (253) 255-1808
National Audubon Office (212) 979-3000
NAS Membership Services 1-800-274-4201

* ALSO SERVES AS A BOARD MEMBER



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RAINIER AUDUBON'S TERRITORY



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 For an extensive list of wildlife rehabilitators
 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

Name

Address

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To join National Audubon, please visit their website at www.audubon.org

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