

# The HERON HERALD



Rainier Audubon Society • May 2006

Vol 25 No.5

## The Incredible Island of Madagascar

Everyone Welcome at our May Program  
Wednesday May 17th, 7:00 PM

**B**elow the equator and halfway around the world lies the island of Madagascar, off the eastern coast of Africa. It's a big island, as islands go—about twice the size of Arizona—and has some of the highest biodiversity on the planet. Of approximately 200,000 species found on Madagascar, 150,000 are found nowhere else on earth! Madagascar has wide geographic variety, including coastline, forests, and mountains; and an accompanying wide variety of wildlife, from lemurs to periwinkles to octopus trees.

Join Rainier Audubon at our last program of the season as we welcome **Sally Vogel**, a naturalist, photographer, and retired teacher, who will be presenting a slide-show and program on this beautiful island. Sally runs a small adventure travel company specializing in tours to less-developed countries. Recently, Sally and a group of friends traveled Madagascar from south to north, visiting many of its varied habitats. Her program features pictures and narrative on the people, wildlife, and landscape of this amazing island.



CLOCKWISE FROM  
BOTTOM LEFT:  
PARADISE FLY-  
CATCHER ©RHETT  
BUTLER, SURAKA SILK-  
MOTH, BLACK  
PHOEBE LEMUR, AND  
PANTHER CAMELEON  
©KARL LEHMANN  
COURTESY OF WILD-  
MADAGASCAR.ORG



## May is Birdathon Month

What a beautiful time spring is in the Pacific Northwest! After a long, wet winter, it reminds us all of why we live here. As you make plans to get outside and do some birding, consider participating in the biggest fund-raiser of the year with your favorite organization! Line up one or more sponsors who will contribute a certain amount for every bird you see, or donate a lump sum in your name. If you wish, you can sit at home and watch your feeder. Anything goes! One hundred percent of the money raised through Birdathon will be used to support our educational, backyard habitat, and birding programs. For more information, contact Ross at [raraifan@aol.com](mailto:raraifan@aol.com) or Nancy at [autumn207@comcast.net](mailto:autumn207@comcast.net). Or come to our May membership program (Wednesday, May 17th at 7:00 PM) and pick up a sign-up sheet. We are grateful to everyone who participates as a birder, a sponsor, or a donor. Thank you all.

**MAY  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
RAINIER AUDUBON SOCIETY  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 17, 2006**

**7:00 PM (DOORS OPEN AT 6:30)**

**FEDERAL WAY SENIOR CENTER**  
SEE PAGE 2 FOR DIRECTIONS

**NOTE: THIS WILL BE OUR LAST MEMBERSHIP  
PROGRAM OF THE YEAR.**

**PROGRAMS WILL RESUME IN SEPTEMBER.**

**Field Trips on Page 4!**

# Calendar

## THURSDAY MORNINGS

### **Bird Walks at Nisqually**

See page 4 for details

## MONTH OF MAY

### **Birdathon - Our Biggest Fundraiser of the Year**

See page 1 for details.

## MAY 13, SATURDAY

### **Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival**

See page 3 for details

## MAY 18-21, THURSDAY THROUGH SUNDAY

### **Leavenworth Spring Bird Festival**

See page 3 for details

## MAY 20, SATURDAY

### **RAS Field Trip: Snoqualmie Pass to Vantage**

See page 4 for details

## MAY 20, SATURDAY

### **Abundant Gardening Event**

See page 3 for details.

## MAY 26-29, FRIDAY THROUGH MONDAY

### **Annual Audubon Campout at Wenas Creek**

See page 5 for details.

## JUNE 10, SATURDAY

### **RAS Field Trip: Summer Birds**

See page 4 for details.

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

### **Directions to the Federal Way Senior Center**

- From Hwy 18 take the WEYERHAEUSER WAY exit.
- Turn south, cross over Hwy 18.
- Take an immediate left turn at S. 344th Way, into a highrise business park.
- Follow S. 344th to MILITARY RD. Turn right (south) on Military Rd.
- Turn right on to S. 352nd St.
- The Federal Way Senior Center will be on your right at 4016 S. 352nd Street, Auburn 98001.

# I-933: Remember These Numbers

BY CYRILLA COOK  
PEOPLE FOR PUGET SOUND

*"This measure would require compensation when government regulation damages the use or value of private property, would forbid regulations that prohibit existing legal uses of private property, and would provide exceptions or payments."*

**B**y now, you have probably heard about the developer's initiative (I-933) filed by the Washington Farm Bureau on February 8, 2006. I-933 would require that local governments and the state either pay property owners if land protections affect their property values, or waive the protection. This initiative, if passed, would actually benefit developers and special interests. It would gut protections for everything from salmon habitat protection to open space to preserving heritage trees to enforcing building size and height restrictions.

Initiative I-933 is bad news to our efforts to save Puget Sound shorelines, improve water quality, and recover salmon, orcas, and seabirds. These protections need to stay in place if we are to save Puget Sound before it is too late. The initiative would:

Make it virtually impossible for the state, cities, and counties to enforce growth management plans, zoning codes, critical areas ordinances, water quality programs, and other shoreline protections that currently protect Puget Sound from irresponsible development;

Force government to approve development that is incompatible with single family neighborhoods and farms and beyond road and transit system capacities, because governments do not have the funds to compensate property owners;

Allow practically any land use to occur on any piece of land at any time, regardless of impacts to neighbors,

farms, schools, and the community;

Pit neighbor against neighbor in land use battles, and would create an atmosphere of uncertainty for responsible property owners and developers trying to do the right thing.

The initiative is similar to Measure 37, adopted in Oregon in 2004, which required local governments to either waive local protections and zoning codes that may affect the value of land, or pay compensation to private property owners. Local governments in Oregon, for the most part, have been forced to issue permits that allow environmental degradation and are incompatible with adjacent land uses and the neighborhood, rather than compensate landowners. There is no requirement to notify adjacent landowners or the public of the proposed development. Rural landowners who initially supported the initiative now have regrets. They had no recourse as their neighbors filed multi-million dollar claims to build casino resorts on farmland.

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*Our advice: Don't sign a petition.*

### **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.

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**cc: hhartist@earthlink.net**

*Editor: Nancy Hertzler*

*Layout Artist: Rebecca Westby*

# Volunteer with Rainier Audubon

## Membership Chair

Needed: Someone to keep our membership database current. Excel or other spreadsheet experience helpful. Please contact Merlin at [mwiese7783@aol.com](mailto:mwiese7783@aol.com).

## Librarian

Our Librarian would come to the monthly membership meetings a little early, and set out our library books for people to browse or check out. At the end of the evening, our Librarian would pack up the books again. That's it! Let us know if you can help. Email Bernedine at [philandbernedine2002@yahoo.com](mailto:philandbernedine2002@yahoo.com) or Nancy at [autumn207@comcast.net](mailto:autumn207@comcast.net).

## Hospitality/Greeter

This position involves coming to our monthly membership meetings about a half-hour early and remaining near the door to greet guests, have them sign in, and put their names in a box for a door prize. At the end of the evening, this person takes charge of the door prize drawing. Email Bernedine at [philandbernedine2002@yahoo.com](mailto:philandbernedine2002@yahoo.com) or Nancy at [autumn207@comcast.net](mailto:autumn207@comcast.net) if you can help.

## "Abundant Gardening" Event

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2006  
9:00 AM TO 12:00 NOON

GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH  
1320 AUBURN WAY SO, AUBURN  
(253) 833-5660

A spring gardening event you won't want to miss! Displays include bonsai, roses, local nurseries, Rainier Audubon, and more! Debra Prinzing, a Seattle-based garden and design writer, and author of *The Abundant Garden*, will be the featured speaker. She is the Northwest Style columnist for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and Garden Editor for *Seattle Homes & Lifestyles* magazine. Tickets are \$5.00 and are available from the church.



# Local Activities & Events

## 6th Annual Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2006 — 10:00 AM TO 3:00 PM  
TUKWILA COMMUNITY CENTER — 12424 - 42ND AVE., TUKWILA, (206) 768-2822

The **Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival** is a free, all-day event with the goal of encouraging and inspiring people to welcome wildlife into their backyards, gardens, and communities. The event will host a variety of activities and educational opportunities on how to attract and support wildlife through gardening and landscaping practices, and creating and preserving wildlife habitat in our region.



### Activities include:

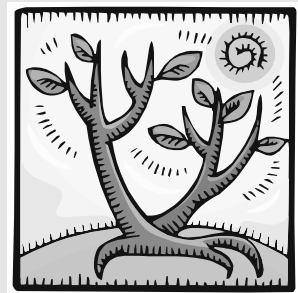
**11:15 AM — BIRDWALK THROUGH THE PARK AND DOWN TO THE RIVER** — led by Carol Schulz.

**3:00 PM — WILDLIFE GARDEN TOUR** — a tour of several certified wildlife habitat gardens in the Tukwila area.

**NATIVE PLANT SALES** — Talk to the experts about what plants will thrive on your property, ask about drought-tolerant plants, and have your questions answered while you purchase the plants that will make your property a wildlife-friendly paradise.

**ARTS AND CRAFTS BOOTHS** — Browse gardening and nature-related product booths including plant sales, gain great gift ideas from the many vendors displaying their wares including artisans from "Best of the Northwest Arts & Crafts Show."

*Rainier Audubon will have a table at this fair. Please stop by and see us!*



## Spring Walks in the Woods

### Federal Way

West Hylebos State Park  
Path: Wooden boardwalk

### Renton

Shadow Lake Bog  
Path: Wooden boardwalk

### Auburn

Green River Community College  
Path: Dirt and wood chips

### Maple Valley

Lake Wilderness Arboretum  
Path: Dirt, wood chips, and gravel

### Kent

Green River Natural Resource Area  
Path: Sidewalk

## *Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival*

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 10:00 AM TO 3:00 PM  
BIRD-WALK AT 11:15 AM

Programs and activities will be presented by the Zoo and other groups on this 2006 Migratory Bird Day. Rainier Audubon, Seattle Audubon, other nature groups, and retail stores will have tables with displays and information for adults and children. Rainier will offer a short bird-walk in the park and along the river. This is a fun, local festival! See more information on page 3.

## *Snoqualmie Pass to Vantage Accessible Field Trip*

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 5:30 AM TO EVENING  
LEADER: JIM TOOLEY

This has been a very popular trip in the past, at the perfect time of year to see many migrant birds. On this big Eastern WA trip, we will target as many bird species as possible at Snoqualmie Pass, Cle Elum, Teanaway, and Vantage. After looking for songbirds at the Pass, we will head east along the I-90 corridor searching for warblers, flycatchers, and dippers. In the Cle Elum area, we will seek out migrant songbirds. We will search for bluebirds and raptors near Teanaway, and then stop at the Teanaway River bridge to look for swallows, ducks, dippers, and other songbirds. In the afternoon, we'll go down the old highway toward Vantage, watching for birds of the sagebrush country. We'll scope the Columbia River and its cliffs before heading for home in late afternoon.

This will be an "Accessible Trip" for folks who can't walk far; our viewing will all be done near cars and along level roads. Also, we will be visiting at many stops where there are restrooms. People doing Birdathon trips are invited, as we hope to get a large trip list! Non-Birdathoners are also welcome.

**MEET:** Kent Park & Ride between James and Smith Streets just east of the Valley Freeway at 5:30 AM.

**SIGN-UP:** Call (before 8:30 PM) or email Jim Tooley, (253) 854-3070, actjct@aol.com.

## *Leavenworth Bird Festival*

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 18-21

Four days of field trips and other activities are offered at this superb spring festival. Last year, trips included boat trips, owling trips, and trips to the mountains and to sage brush country. 157 bird species were seen, including Spotted Owl, Blue-winged and Cinnamon teal, Northern Goshawk, Solitary Sandpiper, Three-Toed and Black-backed woodpeckers, and eight species of warbler! Some trips require advanced registration. See more information on page 5.

## *Wenas Campout Wenas Creek in Eastern Washington*

FRIDAY-MONDAY, MAY 26-29  
MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND

For more information, call or email Carol Schulz, (206) 824-7618, linusq@att.net.

A trip to Wenas, southwest of Ellensburg, is sure to lead to a large bird list including Bluebirds, White-headed Woodpecker, Calliope Hummingbird, warblers, and more. Some folks like to camp out, and some just like to visit for a day. Organized events include FIELD TRIPS, classes, and campfire programs, starting Friday evening. Field trips will be led by advanced birders and naturalists. Many people enjoy hiking, botanizing, and birding on their own. This huge bird sanctuary and other habitats feature the special birds of the eastern Washington forests, lakes, mountains, and valleys. Bring your own water. Sanicans are provided.

**MEET:** At the camp. Road is rough. Drive last 10 miles slow. For directions to the camp and more information about the event, see page 5.



## *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 MacAllister 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 parking lot just past the Nisqually NWR visitor 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. Phil Kelley, Lacey, (360) 459-1499, or scrubjay323@aol.com.

## *Summer Birds Auburn to Flaming Geyser Park*

SATURDAY, JUNE 10,  
7:30 AM TO EARLY AFTERNOON

LEADER: STEVE JOHNSON

The summer birds will be singing at this perfect time of year for local birding. Peasley Canyon, Green Valley Road, Academy Drive, and both the primitive and developed areas of Flaming Geyser State Park will be on our route. We may see warblers, thrushes, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Red-eyed Vireos, rails, and dippers. This will be a great chance to hear and learn bird song. We may walk up to two miles on trails.

**BRING:** Lunch, drinks, hiking shoes. Wear "quiet clothes" (not swishy rain gear) so we can hear the birds. Scopes welcome.

**MEET:** Peasley Canyon P&R at 7:30 AM. Take Hwy. 18 to the bottom of the hill. Exit out WestValley Rd. P&R is at the bottom of Peasley Canyon just south of Hwy 18.

**SIGN-UP:** Call or email Steve Johnson, (253) 941-9852, or johnsonsj5@msn.com.

## Spring Birding Festivals

### *Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds*

MAY 12-13, 2006 (FRIDAY-SATURDAY)

Puget Sound Bird Fest is a celebration of birds and nature on International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). The City of Edmonds Economic Development and Parks & Recreation Department together are organizing two days of bird-watching and related activities in and around downtown Edmonds, the Edmonds Marsh, and along the waterfront.

Adults and children will enjoy guided walks, indoor expert lectures and workshops, and social activities. Rain or shine, there's plenty to learn about birding, environmentally-friendly landscaping, nature photography, wildlife artwork, and other topics. We look forward to seeing you at Puget Sound Bird Fest!  
<http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.com>.

### *Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest*

MAY 18-21, 2006 (THURSDAY THRU SUNDAY)

The Leavenworth area features spectacular habitats, ranging from snow-capped mountains to sunny Ponderosa pine forests, attracting a wide variety of birds. See Calliope Hummingbirds, White-headed Woodpeckers, Harlequin Ducks, Osprey, Western Tanagers and MacGillivray's Warblers. While birding is the heart of the weekend, activities will also include geology, wildflowers and conservation. Professionally guided trips and activities range from leisurely strolls to active hikes. Fun for experienced and novice birders of all ages!

Pre-registration for Bird Fest 2006 events will be May 1-May 17. For more information, visit  
<http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com>.

## Other Events

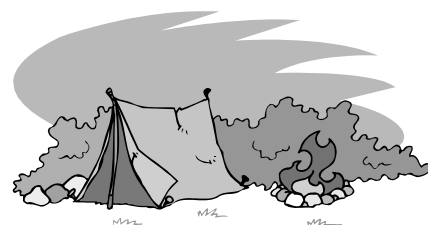
### *Annual Audubon Camp-Out*

MAY 26-29 (FRIDAY THROUGH MONDAY)

For over 30 years, Audubon families have been getting together to camp at the Wenas Creek Campground, southwest of Ellensburg, a free, "primitive" campground officially named the Hazel Wolf Wenas Creek Bird Sanctuary. Wenas offers exceptional opportunities for birding, botanizing, and enjoying spring in the eastern foothills of the Cascades. There are organized field trips, natural history workshops, some of the state's top birders and naturalists, and campfires in the evening with singing and storytelling.

Wenas is open to all at no charge. There are no reservations for attendance or campsites, and there is camping room for all. The center of activity is the Larrison Tree along Wenas Creek.

For details and directions, visit the Wenas website at [www.nwlink.com/~cyrus/wenas.html](http://www.nwlink.com/~cyrus/wenas.html).



### *International Migratory Bird Day*

THE SECOND SATURDAY IN MAY (MAY 13TH THIS YEAR)

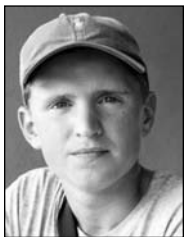
International Migratory Bird Day celebrates the incredible journeys of migratory birds between their breeding grounds in North America and their wintering grounds in Mexico, Central, and South America. The event encourages bird conservation and increases awareness of birds through hikes, bird-watching, information about birds and migration, public events, and a variety of other education programs.

#### *Ways to celebrate:*

- Take notice of the birds around you
- Point out these birds to someone else
- Create or improve habitat around your yard
- Build and maintain a bird feeder or bird house
- Keep your cat indoors
- Reduce your use of pesticides
- Drink bird-friendly, shade-grown coffee
- Buy a Duck Stamp
- Join or give to wildlife preservation groups
- Volunteer your birding abilities to a bird count or study
- Get involved in community land-use planning
- Lead or attend a bird watching walk
- Write a related article for a local paper



IMBD OFFICIAL POSTER 2006  
©RADEAUX



It was a great month to be birding in the Kent area. With a couple of very notable surprises, and a few migrants gradually arriving, there were plenty of birds to keep our interest. The season approaching is the most enjoyable time of year to get out and watch birds. Remember to watch for those Neotropical migrants which visit us all too briefly.

A fairly large flock (15+) of **Tundra Swans** was seen migrating over Bonney Lake 3/30 (NW/CW). Up to 200 Brant were seen between Dash Point and Des Moines 3/31 (MB). A pair of **Cinnamon Teal** returned to Kent Ponds 4/1 (Twtrs). A **Tufted Duck** was seen at Weyerhaeuser Ponds 3/20 (GM) A male **Redhead** was seen at Weyerhaeuser during late March (m.obs). A **California Quail** was on Frager Road 4/21 (MB). A Green Heron was spotted at Hylebos Wetlands 4/18 (AF).

Two **Turkey Vultures** were over Bonney Lake 3/21 (CWr). Another vulture flew over Star Lake 4/15, where uncommon (Twtrs). The first **Osprey** of the year was located at Boeing Ponds 3/27 (HJ/m.obs). A male **Northern Harrier** was migrating over Bonney



BLACK PHOEBE, PHOTO ©CHARLIE WRIGHT

Lake 4/19 (CW), and a female harrier was at Kent Ponds 4/21, though no nesting behavior was seen (RO/MB).

A **Golden Eagle** was migrating over the Foothills Trail 4/6 (CWr). About 30 **Sandhill Cranes** were seen over Issaquah 4/2 (Twtrs). The first **Lesser Yellowlegs** was seen 4/21 at 204th Street in Kent. Up to 50 **Least Sandpipers** were present at Smith Brothers Dairy 4/21 (MB). About two weeks tardy, the first **Rufous**

**Hummingbirds** were finally reported on 3/21 at Green River C.C. (NH) and at Kent (fide LB). Arrival was noted at Auburn 3/22 (MW), Enumclaw 3/23 (FB), and Bonney Lake 3/24. The first reported female was 3/25 at Bonney Lake. The first **Vaux's Swift** showed up near Bonney Lake 4/19, the same arrival as last year (CWr). A **Barred Owl** was seen at Lake Fenwick 4/21 (MB). A **Short-eared Owl** was at Kent Ponds 3/24 (KA), 3/28 (MV), and 4/17 (RO). A **Common Raven** was at Federal Way 4/2 and nearby at Hylebos Wetlands 4/18 (AF). A **Western Scrub-Jay** was present at the usual Frager Road site 3/31 (MB). The first **Northern Rough-winged** and **Cliff Swallows** were at Kent Ponds 4/1 (Twtrs).

A very early **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** was reported near Weyerhaeuser 4/5 (Twtrs). Last year's **Black Phoebe** returned for another visit at M Street near Emerald Downs. It was found 3/31 (MB) and seen through at least 4/10 (m.obs). A **Say's Phoebe** visited a small park in Prairie Ridge 3/23. Probably the same one was at South Prairie 3/28

(CWr). The Boeing Ponds Say's Phoebe was seen 4/7 (GM) A **Townsend's Solitaire** found a juniper in Bonney Lake 4/3 (VB), and one visited a *Pyracantha* in Auburn 4/16 and 4/18 (CWh). **Orange-crowned Warblers** were heard singing at Hylebos Park 4/10 (AF). A very early **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was heard at Dash Point State Park 3/31 (TB), and another early arrival was at Weyerhaeuser 4/2 (CWr). The first



PACIFIC SLOPE FLYCATCHER

**Savannah Sparrow** sang at Kent Ponds 3/23 (KA), and they were very common on Foothills Trail 3/28. An apparent **Slate-colored type Fox Sparrow** was seen at Foothills Trail 4/6 (CWr). The first territorial **White-crowned Sparrows** were heard 3/26 (TB). A **White-throated Sparrow** showed up in an Issaquah yard 4/21 (AS). **Red Crossbills** are absent from the area, while **Pine Siskins** remain low in most areas.

Observers: MB-Matt Bartels; TB-Thais Bock; FB-Fred Boesche; LB-Linda Bartlett; AF-Adele Freeland; NH-Nancy Hertzell; HJ-Hugh Jennings; KA-Kathy Andrich; GM-Guy McWethy; RO-Roger Orness; AS-Amy Schillinger; CS-Carol Schulz; MV-Mark Vernon; MW-Merlin Weise; CWh-Cheryl White; CWr-Charlie Wright; NW-Nick Wright; Twtrs-Tweeters; m.obs-many observers.

## Going Birding?

Report your sightings to Charlie at (253) 862-0520 or email [c.wright7@comcast.net](mailto:c.wright7@comcast.net). E-mail is preferred.

Everyone who enjoys birds and birding must always respect wildlife, its environment, and the rights of others. In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first.

## Code of Birding Ethics

**1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment. Support the protection of important bird habitat.**

- To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming. Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, or of Special Concern, or



WATCHING BIRDS FROM  
BEHIND A BIRD BLIND

is rare in your local area; keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover. Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

- Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other peo-

ple in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private land-owners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

- Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

**2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.**

- Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.
- Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.
- Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders

alike.

**3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.**

- Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.
- Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.
- If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dan-

gers posed by artificial hazards.

**4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care. Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a group member.**

- Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.
- If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

*The pedigree of honey  
does not concern the bee;  
A clover anytime, to him  
is aristocracy*



~ Emily Dickinson

If you do not know the Western Crabapple, you really need to meet an old friend of mine! Back in 1993 when I was first getting into native plants and birds, I was eager to learn about everything that was growing on our property. We had a tree about 25 feet tall, that was rather plain-looking and I was thinking about removing it to make more room for the native plants I was learning about, which would attract birds. But before I did, I really wanted to know what it was, and nobody I asked seemed to know. I cut the small fruits in half and looked at their seeds, trying to figure out what family they belonged to. Eventually, I sent a sample of the fruit and the leaf to a 'crabapple expert' at the WSU Extension Unit in Mt. Vernon; they did some research and wrote back, telling me it was an "Oregon" or Western Crabapple, *malus fusca*. They also sent some interesting literature about this native plant.

There has been some confusion as to its name. In the past it has been called both *malus* (apple) *fusca*, and *pyrus* (pear) *fusca*. The little elongated fruit that ripens in October is yellow, tinged with pink on the sunny side, and green in the shade. It is very tart and acidic, and the native peoples who ate them found they would ripen with time and become softer and sweeter when stored under water. The fruit also softens after a frost. This small tree was much prized by coastal tribes who gath-

ered its fruit in large baskets and used them in trade. They also valued the very hard wood, which was used as wedges to split cedar planks for their longhouses.

The Extension folks mentioned that the Washington Park Arboretum in Seattle contains a lovely old specimen of a Western Crabapple that was growing there before the arboretum was established in 1934. I made the trip up just to see it, and found this large old-timer growing just across from the Graham Visitor Center. I was delighted to see it had a beautiful shape with deeply fissured bark. Returning to my own tree, I began to realize that there were Varied Thrushes underneath it in the winter searching among the leaves for the fallen fruit that the earlier birds had missed, and saw what a treasure I

had. Before we moved, I watched grosbeaks, waxwings, and robins feeding in this tree.

In our new place, one of my neighbors went back and looked at some old section maps with an inventory of the vegetation growing in our vicinity in 1867 and found the Western Crabapple mentioned. It occurs in moist woods, edges of standing and flowing water along the Pacific Coast from southern Alaska to northern



California. A friend once told me how she recognizes it out in the wild: it has a slightly toothed leaf that looks like a mitten with two thumbs.

Another interesting thing to me about this plant — in some places, it will grow to be a proper tree, but in other places, I've seen it growing as a shrubby thicket. It is often encountered along fence rows, where the birds have planted it. These crabapples grow in sun or shade, but probably produce better in sun. Mine, which was a sapling from the old tree in my former yard, was planted in my new yard about six years ago, in full sun, and is already 15 feet tall and has bloomed and borne fruit the past two years.

The blossom goes from pink to white and opens up anywhere from mid-April to mid-May. It has a flat-topped cluster, looking much like regular apple blossoms. And like apple blossoms, it's heaven to stand anywhere in the vicinity when this tree is in bloom!



AN 1833 DRAWING OF *MALUS FUSCA* (THEN CALLED *PYRUS RIVULARIS*) FROM *FLORA BOREALIS-AMERICANA* OR *THE BOTANY OF THE NORTHERN PARTS OF BRITISH AMERICA*, BY WILLIAM JACKSON HOOKER, LL.D, F.R.A., AND L.S. THIS DRAWING WAS DONE FROM A COLLECTION BY DAVID DOUGLAS.





**M**en do not commonly see what is before their eyes or hear what rings in their ears unless it is pointed out to them in a tone of accepted authority and given public importance. Let the newspapers announce that tonight there will be a flight of herons over the city: the streets and housetops will be thronged long before dusk with citizens scanning the sky. But unless the flight is thus accredited, it will do no good for me to stop the passer-by and point it out to him. He will simply shrug me off and hurry on to the movies ... I have observed as many as 150 vultures circling low in one flock over Connecticut Avenue when it was crowded with people, and none taking notice. Yet many of these people will go to the zoo to gaze upon the caged turkey vultures.

~ Louis J. Halle, 1947



**BIRD ID: May  
Words-of-the-  
Month**

## *Nevada State Bird & State Flower Western Meadow Lark & Golden Rod*

COLORING PAGE FOR CHILDREN



# The Quizzical Owl

by Thais Bock



1. This owl belongs to a family of its own unlike all other North American owls.
2. When a bird shows reduced pigment, or paler than normal plumage, it is termed \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What family of finches nests above timberline in the mountains?
4. This vulture-like scavenger, the national emblem of Mexico, only reaches into southern Texas, Arizona and Florida.
5. A young feathered bird, after leaving the nest but still dependent on its parents for food, is called a \_\_\_\_\_.

ANSWERS ARE UPSIDE DOWN BELOW

by *Merlin Wiese*

## Did You Know?

..... that BIRDATHON is Rainier's largest fund raiser of the year?

I am sure some folks will wonder just what it is that requires more funds, since we already get \$15 a year for memberships. Actually, the \$15 primarily goes to preparing and mailing our monthly newsletter. Rainier is involved in many more activities than publishing a newsletter and holding monthly meetings. Rainier members donate their personal time and skills to these activities, but there are always other costs involved — materials, rental fees, etc. Recently we put together a Power Point presentation in response to the often-heard question, "Who are you and what do you do?" We were even surprised ourselves once we had everything compiled and looked at all the activities we are involved in.

Besides the cost of preparing, printing, and mailing our newsletter, this list includes:

- Monthly meetings with guest speakers who usually receive a stipend, plus we have to pay for

rental of the hall.

- Birding field trips and bird identification classes
- Educational activities — Audubon Adventure series at seven elementary schools — Rainier pays for materials and provides them free to the schools.
- Presentations on birds and native plants to such groups as garden clubs, Scout Troops, senior centers.
- Information booths with hand-out materials at events such as the Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Habitat Fair and the annual Shadow Lake Bog Frog Frolic.
- Participation in and contributions to local environmental projects such as the Shadow Lake Bog, Auburn Environmental Park, Camp Kilworth and the Green River Natural Resource Area (Kent Ponds).
- Presentations on Backyard Habitat and sponsoring an annual drawing where the winner receives a free consultation with a Backyard Habitat expert.
- Cleaning, restoring, and monitoring the Purple Martin boxes at the West Hylebos Waterway.
- Participating in the annual Christmas Bird count; we pay a fee for every participant.
- Maintaining the Rainier website

As you can see, the list is long and there are costs involved with everything, so it is imperative that we raise funds to support these activities.

BIRDATHON can be fun and rewarding, and there are several ways in which one can participate. You can be a birder and get sponsors to donate either a small amount for each species you see on a birding trip (5, 10, or 15 cents per species) or just a flat amount. You can go on one of our free field trips or do one of your own. You can be a sponsor and commit to a certain funding level to a particular birder. You can sponsor yourself and see how many species you can find in one 24 hour period. I sometimes do both. I will sponsor a birder and sponsor myself. I like to see if I can better my previous year's count. So far, I have not been able to get over the 100 mark.

Give BIRDATHON a try — we need your help. Please turn to page 1 for additional information on how you can join in the fun. And maybe also consider donating some time to one of the above-listed activities.



Answers to Quizzical Owl: 1. Barn Owl, 2. leucistic, 3. Rosy Finches, 4. Northern Caracara, 5. fledgling

## What's so bad about English Ivy?

**G**ardeners and homeowners in the Pacific Northwest have planted English ivy for years as an attractive, low-maintenance alternative to lawns; it is evergreen, relatively pest-free, cold-hardy, fast-growing, and requires little care. It also does not like to stay contained. When ivy spreads beyond its intended borders within an urban landscape, as it inevitably does, it causes tremendous damage to all three zones of a plant community—the forest floor, the shrub layer and the canopy.



In the understory, it forms a thick evergreen mat which quickly smothers and kills other plants and shrubs. This tangled mat is not used by our native wildlife. If there is a tree nearby, it then begins to climb. Interestingly, ivy only reaches maturity and goes to seed after it has grown up a vertical surface, a fact that may be the driving force behind its vigorous climbing habit. As a climbing vine, it engulfs and kills the tree branches one by one as it wraps around them and continues on up, blocking light from reaching the tree's leaves. The tree itself is steadily weakened by the choked, dying branches and by the sheer weight of the vines it is now carrying. The estimated weight of ivy removed from one tree in Olympic National Park was 2100 lbs.

There are no biological controls currently available for English ivy.

If you have ivy in your yard, make sure it stays contained. If you don't have ivy, don't plant any.

## How long does a bird live?

Generally, the larger a bird is, the longer its life expectancy. Small birds, such as migratory songbirds, appear to live as little as two years, on the average. They could live longer — for instance, one Black-capped Chickadee is known to have lived 10 years and an American Goldfinch 7 years, but life in the out-of-doors for a little bird is dangerous and unpredictable, and most of their lives are cut short. Predators, disease, accidents, migration stress, starvation, habitat loss, and hunting are among the hazards. Bigger birds seem to live longer. Many waterfowl have survived as long as 30 years, and gulls and albatrosses have been recorded at 30 to 40 years of age.

## 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.*

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TIME VALUE MATERIAL



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The newsletter is also available online.  
 Check it out at our website: [www.rainieraudubon.org](http://www.rainieraudubon.org)

**NEED HELP FOR INJURED WILDLIFE?**

**Deer Creek Wild Animal Rehab**

9004 Vernon Rd, Everett, WA . . . . . (425) 334-8171

**PAWS Wildlife Center**

15305 - 44th Ave. West, Lynnwood . . . . . (425) 787-2500

**Sarvey Wildlife Center** . . . . . (360) 435-4817

FOR AN EXTENSIVE LIST OF WILDLIFE REHABILITATORS VISIT OUR CHAPTER WEB SITE  
 AT <http://www.rainieraudubon.org/rehab.htm>

**OTHER RESOURCES**

- Bats Northwest . . . . . (206) 256-0406
- Dept. of Fish and Wildlife . . . . . (425) 775-1311
- Falcon Research Group . . . . . (360) 757-1911
- King Conservation District . . . . . (425) 277-5581 x120  
 or fax . . . (425) 277-5588
- Rare Bird Alert - Western Washington . . . . . (206) 281-9172
- Washington Native Plant Society . . . . . (206) 527-3210
- Wolf Haven . . . . . (800) 448-9653

**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)

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