

THE

# HERON HERALD



Rainier Audubon Society • November 2006

Vol 25 No.9

Rainier Audubon Presents:

## Lisa Remlinger and Heath Packard from the State Audubon Office

*Free and open to the public*

Please welcome Lisa Remlinger and Heath Packard from the Audubon State Office in Olympia, to our November Program. Lisa and Heath will discuss what Audubon's priorities will be for the 2007 legislative session, and will be ready to answer any questions our members may have about the Audubon organization, its goals, programs, direction, and vision for the future, as well as clarify the relationship of chapters like Rainier to the state and national offices.



Lisa Remlinger is the state office's Chapter and Government Relations

Coordinator. In September 2004, Lisa began volunteering with Audubon's policy office in Olympia. She helped design and produce the Bird's Eye View legislative newsletter, and assisted with the annual legislative reception on Lobby Day. One year later, she joined the staff. She continues in her role with the policy team and has also added the tasks of organizing grassroots advocacy efforts.

Heath Grant Packard is the state office's Policy Director. Heath joined Audubon Washington in the spring of 2001, and now splits his time between three program areas: conservation policy, Important Bird Area conservation, and environmental education advocacy. He keeps elected officials, chapters, and conservation activists informed on issues, coordinates the advocacy efforts of Audubon in Washington, and serves as a board member with the Environmental Education Association of Washington.

Please join us as we welcome Lisa and Heath. Before and after the meeting, Rainier's semi-annual Brown Bag Raffle will be held (see page 6). This is a great time to pick up a few Christmas or other holiday gifts while helping out Rainier Audubon. Doors open at 6:30. Refreshments and conversation available before, during, and following the program.



## 2006 Christmas Bird Count

By Nancy Streiffert

Join Rainier Audubon's 27th annual Christmas Bird Count held this year on Sunday, December 17, 2006. We will spend the day in teams counting birds in our section of south King County. All levels of birding expertise are needed. There will be a leader for each area who knows the "best spots," but the more eyes and ears the better. If you prefer, you may count birds in your own yard as a "feeder watcher." The information we gather becomes part of a national database used for conservation and research purposes.



After a fun, full day of birding, we will gather at Coco's in Federal Way for dinner and to compile the results of our observations. Please join us in this rewarding project. Call Nancy Streiffert (253) 852-8394 or email Nancy\_Streiffert@hotmail.com. Also, see our poster at monthly meetings.

**Rainier Audubon's  
November Program**

**Monday, November 20th, 2006,  
at 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 4 for details

NOVEMBER 12, SUNDAY

## ***RAS Field Trip: White-tailed Kites in the Fall***

See Page 4 for details

NOVEMBER 20, MONDAY

## ***RAS Program\* and Brown Bag Raffle***

See page 1 for details

NOVEMBER 25, SATURDAY

## ***RAS Field Trip: Olympia Area Birding***

See Page 4 for details

DECEMBER 2, SATURDAY

## ***RAS Field Trip: Alki Point***

See page 4 for details

DECEMBER 9, SATURDAY

## ***RAS Field Trip: Kittitas County Birding in Winter***

See page 4 for details

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

*\*Please note: Our programs will be held in a new location this year:*

Federal Way United Methodist Church  
29645 - 51st Ave. So.  
Federal Way



### **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.

## One Person Making a Difference: *Rachel Carson*

**R**achel Carson's 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, exposed the hazards of the pesticide DDT, questioned humanity's faith in technological progress, and helped set the stage for the environmental movement.

DDT was the most powerful pesticide the world had ever known. Unlike most pesticides, whose effectiveness is limited to destroying one or two types of insects, DDT was capable of killing hundreds of different kinds at once. Developed in 1939, it first distinguished itself during World War II, clearing South Pacific islands of malaria-causing insects for U.S. troops, while in Europe being used as an effective de-lousing powder. Its inventor was awarded the Nobel Prize.

When DDT became available for civilian use in 1945, there were only a few people who expressed second thoughts about this new miracle compound. One was nature writer Edwin Way Teale, who warned, "A spray as indiscriminate as DDT can upset the economy of nature as much as a revolution upsets social economy. Ninety percent of all insects are good, and if they are killed, things go out of kilter right away." Another was Rachel Carson, who wrote to the *Reader's Digest* to propose an article about a series of tests on DDT being conducted not far from where she lived in Maryland. The magazine rejected the idea.

Thirteen years later, in 1958, Carson's interest in writing about the dangers of DDT was rekindled when she received a letter from a friend in Massachusetts bemoaning the large bird kills which had occurred on Cape Cod as the result of DDT sprayings. Having already amassed a large quantity of research on the subject, Carson decided to go ahead and tackle the DDT issue in a book.

*Silent Spring* took Carson four years to complete. It meticulously described how DDT entered the food chain and accumulated in the fatty tissues of animals, including human beings, and caused cancer and genetic damage. A single application on a crop, she wrote, killed insects for weeks and months, and not only the targeted insects but countless more, and remained toxic in the environment even after it was diluted by rainwater. Carson concluded that DDT and other pesticides had irrevocably harmed birds and animals and had contaminated the entire world food supply.

First serialized in *The New Yorker* in June 1962, the book alarmed readers across America and, not surprisingly, brought a howl of indignation from the chemical industry. "If man were to faithfully follow the teachings of Miss Carson," complained an executive of the American Cyanamid Company,

cont'd on page 7

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

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*E-mail material to:*

**autumn207@comcast.net**  
**cc: hhartist@wildblue.net**

*Editor: Nancy Hertzler*

*Layout Artist: Rebecca Westby*

# Audubon Adventures Classroom Materials for Elementary School Teachers

If you haven't signed up yet for the 2006-2007 Audubon Adventures Resource Kit, it isn't too late. This award-winning program is aligned to the national standards for science and language arts, and easily fits into the curriculum for third through sixth grades. The program is a complete, year-long resource on birds, bees, and bats for one teacher and 32 students. Materials include a 64-page teaching guide full of lesson plans, hands-on activities, duplicating masters, on-line resources, and much more! Plus, each student will receive four newspaper publications on the topics.

The cost for each kit is \$46.00 (\$38.50 plus \$7.50 shipping/handling), but Rainier Audubon has scholarships available. For more information, please contact our Education Co-chairs: Annette and Ross Tabor at (253) 927-3208 or rarailfan@aol.com or visit [www.rainieraudubon.org](http://www.rainieraudubon.org).

## ■ HERE'S WHAT CLASSES RECEIVE


- Audubon Adventures Nature News Tabloid, 4 editions, 32 copies of each edition
- One classroom resource manual
- Endangered habitat poster
- Guide for healthy schoolyard
- Official certificate of participation

## ■ FREE BONUS

- One year subscription to Audubon magazine
- Affiliation with local Audubon chapters
- Local field trip opportunities
- Free access to Audubon's bird and wildlife information helpline

## ■ HOW TO ORDER

Please contact Annette and Ross Tabor at (253) 927-3208 or by email at [rarailfan@aol.com](mailto:rarailfan@aol.com) or visit our website: [www.rainieraudubon.org](http://www.rainieraudubon.org)

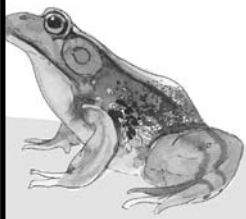


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- A Fourth Grade Teacher



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# 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 walks as he counts the birds at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. The group walks out to MacAllister Creek and back to the visitor center, then takes the boardwalk/trail loop out past the Twin Barns to the Ring Dike, coming back along the Nisqually River Trail. It is a distance of 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, (360) 459-1499, scrubjay323@aol.com.

## *White-tailed Kites in the Fall*

**Sunday, November 12**

**7:15 AM to 6:00 PM**

**Leader: Roger Orness**

White-tailed Kites are not known to migrate, but the dispersal of the young and the possibility of late nesting pairs can be found in fall. Our trip will take us through several valleys where kites nested in the past. Our main target bird will be a fresh-plumaged juvenile. We also should see good numbers of other raptors. This trip is limited to seven people and two vehicles, so sign up early to secure a spot.

**BRING:** Scopes, binos, lunch, and snacks. Be prepared for a long drive, and a long day, returning to Fife at 6 PM.

**MEET:** At the Poodle Dog Restaurant in Fife at 7:15 AM. Depart promptly at 7:30.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take I-5 to exit 137 in Fife. Turn right, and travel through the intersection to the Poodle Dog Restaurant. Meet at the Fife Square sign.

**SIGN-UP:** Call or email Roger Orness, (253) 922-7516, r.orness@comcast.net.

## *Olympia Area Birding*

**Saturday, November 25**

**9:00 AM to 2:00 PM**

**Leader: Carol Schulz**

Fall is the perfect time to visit Olympia and its shorelines. Our state's capital offers a variety of waterbirds and small birds right in the center of town. This weekend trip after Thanksgiving features some walks to wear off the calories and see some good birds, too. Some folks call this our "Diet Trip!" We will walk about two miles. Our first stop will be on the way -- we'll stop at the Nisqually Visitor Center, where we will walk out to the Twin Barns in search of hawks and ducks. Then we will travel to downtown Olympia to visit some favorite saltwater viewpoints and walk a portion of the Capitol Lake Trail. We will be looking for diving ducks, grebes, loons, and other birds. Views of the Capitol can be beautiful from the lake.

**BRING:** Warm clothes, lunch (turkey sandwiches?), hot drinks, snacks and water. Scopes are welcome. Bring a camera.

**MEET:** 9:00 AM at the Hwy. 512 Park & Ride in Tacoma.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take I-5 south through Tacoma to exit 127 (the Hwy. 512 exit). Turn right and immediately get into the left lane. Turn left onto So. Tacoma Way. Travel 1/2 block south, and turn left into the P&R. Meet near McDonalds.

**SIGN-UP:** Call or email Carol Schulz, (206) 824-7618, linusq@att.net.

## *Kittitas County Birding in Winter*

**Saturday, December 9, 6:30 AM to Evening**

**Leader: Charlie Wright**

**Co-leader: Roger Orness**

Come enjoy a day of winter-season birding in central Washington. We will venture over Snoqualmie Pass and visit areas including Swauk Prairie and South Cle Elum along our route. Large numbers of raptors including Rough-legged Hawks and Prairie Falcons are seen wintering in the open, snow-covered fields of Kittitas. Proceeding east, we will reach the Columbia River at Vantage, where waterfowl are sometimes present in vast numbers. Some target species will include unusual loons, ducks, American White Pelicans, and possible rare gulls. Chukar are occasionally seen in the basalt outcroppings here. Bring many layers of clothing for cold weather conditions, and a lunch. Space is limited.

**MEET:** At 6:30AM behind Denny's at Auburn Way So. (Hwy. 164) & Hwy. 18 in Auburn.

**SIGN-UP:** Contact Charlie at (253) 862-0520 or c.wright7@comcast.net. Email preferred.

## *Alki Point*

**Saturday, December 2**

**8:00 AM to Early Afternoon**

**Leader: Jim Tooley**

December is a favorite time to visit the paved trails and beaches of Alki Point in Seattle. We hope to see waterfowl, seabirds, Harlequin Ducks, and shorebirds. The Bald Eagles at Salty's may be working on their nest. Views of Seattle can be very nice, and a restaurant stop at Spud's is a tradition. (Sometimes we observe birds out of the restaurant windows.)

**BRING:** Lunch (or some money to buy lunch), water or hot drinks, and snacks. Wear warm, waterproof clothes. Walking will be minimal, and some folks may want to bird from inside their cars. Scopes are welcome.

**MEET:** 8:00 AM at the Kent-DesMoines Park & Ride located on Military Rd. off of Kent-DesMoines Rd.

**DIRECTIONS:** Take I-5 to exit 149 and turn east toward Kent on Kent-DesMoines Rd. Go 1/2 block. Turn left onto Military Rd. P&R is on the left.

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



# Seen & Heard

By Charlie Wright



Hello birders! The weather is turning, and the birding's picking up in the valley. Fall is the most productive season

for rare birds, and this season it did not disappoint. The two most startling birds this year were a Green-tailed Towhee in Kent, and a Costa's Hummingbird on the Foothills Trail near South Prairie. Keep on birding and reporting!

Twenty-five **Cackling Geese** and 18 Greater White-fronted Geese were at Boeing Ponds 10/1 (KA). Two **Eurasian Wigeons** were at Kent Ponds 10/14. A **Green Heron** was at Riverview Marsh 10/14. The last **Osprey** was seen 10/7. Most surprising was a female **Costa's Hummingbird** observed with two **Anna's**

**Hummingbirds** near South Prairie 9/30 (CW). A very late **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported from Bonney Lake 10/18 (VB). Two late **Common**

**Nighthawks** were north of

Orting 9/28 (Twtrs). Thirty-two **Long-billed Dowitchers** and a Greater Yellowlegs were at Riverview Marsh 10/13 (CW), and 21 dowitchers were there 10/16 (CS).

A **Western Scrub-Jay** was in Summer 9/20 (MB/MFM). Seven **Western Bluebirds** were seen near Bonney Lake 10/6; eleven bluebirds were seen flying over South Prairie 10/13. Yet another Western Bluebird was at Kent Ponds 10/14 (CW). The first **Varied Thrush** in the lowlands was at Kent Ponds 9/22 (LB). The first **Northern Shrike** was at Boeing Ponds 10/1 (KA), and another was at Kent Ponds 10/14.



CACKLING GOOSE ©JELGER HERDER

A high count of 910 **Violet-green Swallows** was recorded along Foothills Trail 9/24 (CW). At least 100 **Black-throated Gray Warblers** were seen on the Foothills Trail 9/20 (MB/MFM). A **Green-tailed Towhee** popped up at Boeing Ponds 10/2 (GH), furnishing the second county record. A **White-throated Sparrow** was noted in a Kent yard 9/30 (LB). A Slate-colored race **Dark-eyed Junco** was at Bonney Lake 10/9 (VB). **Pine Siskins** finally arrived in moderate numbers, with a few larger flocks here and there, such as 60 at Foothills Trail 10/13 (CW).



COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD  
©RICHARD WAGNER

Observers: KA-Kathy Andrich; LB-Linda Bartlett; TB-Thais Bock; VB-Vicki Biltz; MB-Marv Breece; GH-Gene Hunn; MFM-MaryFrances Mathis; RO-Roger Orness; CSc-Carol Schulz; DS-Dan Streiffert; CWr-Charlie 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.

## Birding Locations Mentioned in Seen & Heard

**Boeing Ponds (Kent):** From I-5, take exit 152 onto Orillia Rd. Go east on Orillia; Orillia will become So. 212th St. Turn left at the light at So. 59th Pl. and go half a mile. Just past the Boeing Kent Space Center, you will see the first of the ponds. Park anywhere you can and view the ponds. From there, continue on 59th about two blocks to a blocked-off road on the right. Park there and view birds in the water below. Walk to the other ponds on 62nd Ave So. (2005 Thomas Guide: King 685, F-5)

**Kent Ponds (Green River Natural Resource Area)** —This area is bounded generally by the Green River to the west, So. 212th St. to the north, 64th Ave. to the east, and the Puget Power pedestrian/bike trail to the south. Two public gates allow pedestrian access to the site along Russell Road, and another may be accessed by foot or bicycle, along the south bike path. (2005 Thomas Guide: King 685, F-5)

**204th St.** —Small road between Orillia and Frager Roads, just north of 212th.

**McMillin, Orting, and Buckley trailheads** —Take Hwy. 410 east to the Orting/Summer exit (Route 162). Turn right towards Orting. The McMillin trailhead will be on the right just after the bridge. The Orting trailhead is two miles further on the right, located in Orting City Park. For the Buckley trailhead: Take Hwy. 410 to the Park Avenue exit and turn right (east). Turn at the first left onto North River Ave. Go straight to the National Guard parking.

**Des Moines Beach Park** —22030 Cliff Avenue South in Des Moines

**Nolte State Park** —Located north of the town of Enumclaw, Wash., at the western edge of the Cascade Mountains. From east of Enumclaw: On SR 410, turn north on 284th Ave., S.E., (look for sign) and continue approximately seven miles to park entrance.

**Flaming Geyser State Park** —From SR 18: Take the Auburn-Black Diamond Rd. exit. Travel east to Green Valley Rd. Turn right (southeast). Continue on Green Valley Rd. about nine miles to park entrance.

**Smith Bros. Dairy Farms** in Kent valley —27441 - 68th Avenue So, Kent.

**South Prairie (town).** Take Hwy 410 to Bonney Lake and take a right on South Prairie Rd. After four miles, turn right onto Pioneer Way (Hwy. 162) into Puyallup. Just across the bridge is South Prairie.

**Foothills Trail** —Follow directions to South Prairie (above). Trailhead for the Foothills Trail is in South Prairie just after Rainier Avenue.



## Mark and Adele Freeland Honored

**R**ainier members Mark and Adele Freeland have volunteered with Friends of the Hylebos for the past 20 years. They have served on the board many times and given thousands of hours of volunteer work in just about every aspect of the Friends' programs. This year, the Friends honored Mark and Adele with the prestigious Ilene and Francis Marckx Wetlands Stewardship Award, presented to them at the annual Ruby Dance dinner. The award is named after the founders of Friends of the Hylebos. Mark and Adele also volunteer their time and energy with Rainier Audubon; Mark is our compiler for the Christmas Bird Count and also, jointly with Dale Meland, maintains Purple Martin boxes in the Hylebos waterway. Adele will be in charge of the Brown Bag Raffle we are having at our November program. We are indeed lucky to have Mark and Adele in our community, giving of their time and energy to help preserve our wildlife and environment.



MARK AND ADELE FREELAND  
RECEIVE THEIR AWARD

## Brown Bag Raffle at Our November Program Night

**W**e are happy to announce that at our November program (Monday, November 20th at 7:00 PM), we will be having a Brown Bag Raffle. There will be a huge display of wonderful nature-related gifts and goodies (and some not nature-related - last year, we noticed a tempting and delicious-looking chocolate basket as well as several original watercolor paintings). Come early and browse the items available. These are not garage-sale quality items! You can purchase as many tickets as you wish, just \$1 each. Write your name on a ticket and drop it into the brown bag next to the item you want. At the end of the evening, we will draw one ticket out of each bag and the winner gets to take the item home. It may seem early now, but by November 20th, we'll all be thinking about gifts for the upcoming holiday season. Hope to see you there!



## 25 Most Common Feeder Birds Seen in Our Region

Dark-eyed Junco  
House Finch  
Black-capped Chickadee  
Pine Siskin  
American Robin  
Northern Flicker  
Steller's Jay  
Rufous-sided Towhee  
Chestnut-backed Chickadee  
Song Sparrow  
Red-breasted Nuthatch  
European Starling  
House Sparrow  
American Crow  
Downy Woodpecker  
Varied Thrush  
Sharp-shinned Hawk  
Fox Sparrow  
Bushtit  
Purple Finch  
American Goldfinch  
Red-winged Blackbird  
Rufous Hummingbird  
Hairy Woodpecker  
Golden-crowned Sparrow



DARK-EYED JUNCO  
©DAN STREIFFERT

## Rachel Carlson...

CONT'D FROM PAGE 2

"we would return to the Dark Ages, and the insects and diseases and vermin would once again inherit the earth." Monsanto published and distributed 5,000 copies of a brochure parodying *Silent Spring* entitled "*The Desolate Year*," relating the devastation and inconvenience of a world where famine, disease, and insects ran amuck because chemical pesticides had been banned. Some of the attacks were more personal, questioning Carlson's integrity and even her sanity.

Her careful preparation, however, had paid off. Anticipating the reaction of the chemical industry, she had compiled *Silent Spring* as one would a lawyer's brief, with no fewer than 55 pages of notes and a list of experts who had read and approved the manuscript. Many eminent scientists rose to her defense, and when President John F. Kennedy ordered the President's Science Advisory Committee to examine the issues the book raised, its report thoroughly vindicated both *Silent Spring* and its author. As a result, DDT came under much closer government supervision and was eventually banned. The public debate moved quickly from whether pesticides were dangerous to which pesticides were dangerous, and the burden of proof shifted from the opponents of unrestrained pesticide use to the chemicals' manufacturers.

The most important legacy of *Silent Spring*, though, was a new public awareness that nature was vulnerable to human intervention. Rachel Carson had made a radical proposal: that, at times, technological progress is so fundamentally at odds with natural processes that it must be curtailed. Conservation had never raised much broad public interest, for few people really worried about the disappear-

## An Unexpected Visitor

BY THAIS BOCK



AMERICAN REDSTART ©LARRY BOND

**W**ith the warmth of a June day and soft breezes brushing through deciduous trees in my backyard, the lack of birdsong in mid-morning seemed strange. But this was the height of the nesting season and many birds were patiently sitting on eggs while already a few young birds were out and about, exploring new and unknown territory.

Enjoying the serenity of the quiet morning, I was suddenly startled by hearing a repetitive and unfamiliar song coming from somewhere in the dense bushes and trees far back on my property. I was pretty sure it was a warbler, but in typical warbler fashion, the bird never stopped moving while constantly singing — and I hadn't a clue as to its identity. Warblers can be notoriously difficult

to glimpse as they flit and sing and keep on the move through the leafing-out of new deciduous growth.

And so it was with my futile efforts, trying for that one defining glimpse as the warbler continued to sing and move through the trees and bushes. Finally the unknown bird disappeared and my one chance for identifying a new warbler (not to mention a new "yard bird") was lost — or so I thought.

Later in the day, while again enjoying the patio, much to my surprise, the rapid singing, flitting mystery bird was heard again. This time, it seemed to be moving a bit closer. With binoculars in hand, I moved as stealthily as possible towards the Oregon Ash tree where the warbler was; and then I caught, at eye level, a two-second look at a stunning **American Redstart** in full breeding plumage. Unmistakable with its all-black head, neck, and back, and brilliant orange wing and tail patterns.

American Redstarts can be located in the far northeastern corner of the state, but are quite unusual in western Washington. Finding one in suburbia in my Federal Way backyard was really exciting — and amazing too.

ance of wilderness. But the threats Carson had outlined — the contamination of the food chain, cancer, genetic damage, the deaths of entire species — were too frightening to ignore. For the first time, the need to regulate industry in order to protect the environment became widely accepted, and environmentalism was born.

*From Natural Resources Defense Council*

**Think globally.**



**Act locally.**

## Musings of a Backyard Birder

BY LINDA BARTLETT

It's a fine late September morning and the spider webs in the tall grass are covered with dewdrops, backlit by the morning sun. The grasshoppers will be singing their "farewell to summer" songs when the sun gets a little higher. With binoculars around my neck, I set off around the yard, searching for fall migrants. I am happy to see the mourning dove is still here. She's perched now in the bare branches on the top of one of the alders, and has been in the yard for a couple days. It's really cool to glance out my office window and see her walking along the wood chip path in front of the house.

In the top of the neighbor's tall cedars is a large flock of Cedar Waxwings. The robins and juncos are streaming in from somewhere — there seems to be no end of them — arriving for winter. These paler-chested robins are coming down from the north. Our bright-chested ones are moving south.

Overhead the jays are paddling their way with their distinctive flap-flap-glide motion — bills stuffed with nuts, searching for good places to cache them for the winter.

Under the large cottonwood tree, where I am standing now, Golden-crowned Sparrows are singing, and there is a White-crowned Sparrow in the underbrush with them. A Bewick's Wren scolds near by. What fun to have several of these cheeky little guys regularly in the yard now that the native plants have filled in and become thickets.

Among the chickadees in the cottonwood, there is a Golden-crowned Kinglet working his way from leaf to leaf. His crown is so BRIGHT! Moving on down the driveway, I see a Townsend's Warbler in a cedar tree. What a beauty. Are there other warblers here this morning? Several days ago, we heard the Varied Thrush, but I don't hear him today.

When I reach the L-shaped corner of the neighbor's drive, I get comfortable, leaning back against the fence to check out the chit-chit-chit I'm hearing from the willows and cottonwoods around the pond. The leaves are turning yellow and some are dropping. There must be a dozen Yellow-rumped Warblers in that group of cottonwoods! Eventually, as I watch them, they

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## Thank You and Goodbye to Hazel and Bob

After 10 years of volunteering their time and talents to Rainier, Hazel and Bob Dickinson are moving away. Rainier's October program began with a big thank you to Hazel and Bob. Last year, Hazel was instrumental in the work to protect 25 pristine acres along Puget Sound in Federal Way from being sold to a housing contractor. She wrote letters, attended city council meetings, led field trips, and developed a Power Point program; and in the end, the land was preserved when the City of Federal Way agreed to purchase and protect the land. Hazel also was Rainier's first Backyard Habitat Program Chair. In this role, she organized our Backyard Habitat Contest and tours, and led the program as it evolved and changed



DEB RUSSELL PRESENTS A THANK YOU CAKE TO HAZEL AND BOB (L-R: DEB, HAZEL, ADELE FREELAND, AND BOB)

over the years. She developed two wonderful slide shows for Rainier, one on how to attract wildlife and birds to one's backyard, and the other on landscaping with native plants. She has presented these programs at Wild Bird Stores and gardening clubs around our geographic area, and also at some of Rainier's monthly meetings. Audiences all agree Hazel is a wonderful speaker, knowledgeable, well-spoken, and friendly. Rainier Audubon thanks Hazel and Bob for their years of valuable work and unforgettable contributions on behalf of the environment and wildlife of south King County.

*To find the universal elements enough; to find the air and the water exhilarating; to be refreshed by a morning walk or an evening saunter; to be thrilled by the stars at night; to be elated over a bird's nest or a wildflower in spring — these are some of the rewards of the simple life.*

~ John Burroughs



## A New Ivory-Bill Sighting

By Rachel Dickinson, National Audubon Society.

**O**n September 25, 2006, a new set of credible sightings of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker was reported from the panhandle of Florida. Geoff Hill, an ornithologist from Alabama's Auburn University, is lead author of a paper published in *Avian Conservation & Ecology* that presents evidence of a population of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in a remote river basin along the Choctawhatchee River near the town of Bruce, in the Florida panhandle. (The scientists will not reveal the exact location for fear of disturbing the birds.) Hill and his team present acoustic evidence and documented sightings, just as Cornell's team did in April 2005 when they announced ivory-bill sightings in Arkansas. What they don't have, however, is the smoking gun — a photograph or video of the bird.



Even so, says John Fitzpatrick, the director of Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology, which has led the ivory-bill search for the past two years, "The news coming out of Florida is very encouraging and is getting everyone psyched about this new search season. One thing this is doing is broadening the focus to search the whole range of the bird."

Hill and research assistants Tyler Hicks and Brian Rolek were kayaking a section of the Choctawhatchee River in May 2005 when Rolek spotted an ivory-bill in flight and then Hill heard a double-knock. They then noted very large cavities in trees (more than five inches high and four inches wide—too big for Pileated Woodpeckers) and bark scaling on recently dead trees—a

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RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET ©DAN STREIFFERT

cross over the driveway one by one, and are working over the alders and hazelnut bushes on our side. Now there's a Ruby-crowned Kinglet flitting around in the hazelnut bush.

With the sun at my back, I feel good - grateful to be alive, happy to be standing in this pleasant spot, witnessing new arrivals that signal a change of weather and season. We've finally had a good rain that was much needed. In spite of one of the driest summers I can remember, the native plants have done well. I'm glad now that my yard contains a good variety of them, which are attracting fall migrants and will sustain many birds through the coming months. I just love to stroll around the yard these beautiful fall mornings and observe who's doing what on which plant!

As I continue along the driveway towards my neighbor's yard, I observe that his alder, willow, cottonwoods, hazelnuts, and elderberries are missing. "Weeds, brush and trash trees," unfortunately, is the way most people still seem to regard these species. His yard, with its many stately evergreens, is neat and nice to look at but oh so quiet and still compared to mine with the lively kinglets, warblers, sparrows, finches, wrens, woodpeckers, etc, all busy eating, singing, and chasing each other around in our brush.

Recently I've noticed the House Finches seem to be fond of green pyracantha berries — they are consuming them just outside my bedroom window. And two Purple Finches were eating the red honeysuckle berries the other morning. In the variegated elderberry, a junco perched on a large cluster of the small black berries, eating one after another. The evergreen huckleberry has Song Sparrows and Golden-crowned Sparrows eating its fruit now. Indeed this is a season to be thankful - for the bounty of our own gardens and for the many fruits, berries, nuts, and insects out there being used by the birds and wildlife.

## Save Your Stamps, Save the Birds!

BY THAIS BOCK

**B**ig commemorative stamps (U.S. Postal Service) such as Disney figures, Constellations, Latin dancers, Olympic Games, Marian Anderson, Henry Fonda, 50's Sports Cars, Moss Hart, and many others, can be sent to England's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, who will sell them to stamp collectors and put the proceeds towards saving threatened land and open spaces, and creating reserves for birds and other wildlife. Both old and new issue commemorative stamps are welcome. If you receive a letter in the mail which has one of these stamps on the envelope, carefully cut a one-inch or larger border around the stamp and mail it to: Thais Bock, 29620 - 10th Pl. So., Federal Way WA 98003. *Thank you!*



## The Quizzical Owl

by *Thais Bock*



1. Named after a Dutch aristocrat and zoologist, what rare shorebird was discovered at Ocean Shores in November 2005?
2. A flock of geese flying overhead is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Name at least two gallinaceous birds in our state.
4. A supercilium is the \_\_\_\_\_ on a bird.
5. Snails are the favorite food of this bird of southeastern marshes.

ANSWERS ARE UPSIDE DOWN BELOW

## Ivory-billed Woodpecker...cont'd from page 9

characteristic ivory-bill feeding technique. Their discovery prompted a year-long search. Hill invited Daniel Mennill, an ornithologist at Ontario's University of Windsor, to join him. Mennill, an expert in bio-acoustics, erected seven listening stations in the area where the ivory-bill sightings were occurring.

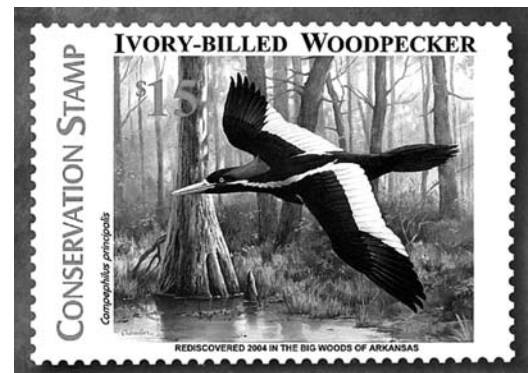
From May 2005 to April 2006, the Auburn-Windsor search team documented 14 sightings, identified more than 300 sounds that are strikingly similar to those associated with known ivory-bill and *campephilus* (including kent calls and double-knocks), monitored 20 cavities that fit within the ivory-bill's size range, and noted numerous examples of bark scaling. "Tantalizing seems to be an overused word these days, but the observations and data from Florida, as well as from Arkansas, are truly tantalizing," says Jerome Jackson, an ornithologist from Florida Gulf Coast University and author of *In Search of the Ivory-Billed Woodpecker*. "Among the promising evidence are recordings of double-knock raps, apparently being given by two birds in response to one another, and kent vocalizations."

"Using sound-analysis software to scan the recordings from the swamp, for the first few weeks we only iso-

lated sounds of branches breaking and gunshots firing," says Mennill. "But by the middle of January we had a breakthrough. My students starting isolating double-knocks that sounded just like the double knocks I've heard from pale-billed woodpeckers in Costa Rica. We knew we were on to something big." There are no known historical recordings of double-knocks made by ivory-bills, so researchers use other *campephilus* species, like pale-billed woodpeckers, which also make double-knocks, for comparison.

Geoff Hill calls his first season searching for ivory-bills along the Choctawhatchee River a success because "we repeatedly relocated birds, made many sound recordings, and found abundant evidence of the birds' presence." But he also calls that first season a "dismal failure" because of his team's failure to obtain a clear picture of an ivory bill. This winter, his team will use remote-imaging cameras borrowed from Cornell. "Our only goal for this coming winter and spring is to get that elusive clear image," Hill adds. "Everything else—enumerating the population, assessing the habitat use, making management plan—begins after we prove that the birds exist."

In a fund-raising effort aimed at preserving Ivory-billed Woodpecker habitat, Larry Chandler has painted an image of the ivory-bill to be used as a commemorative stamp. The stamps are about 1-3/4 by 2 inches, a little larger than a postage stamp. Money raised from the stamp will go to the Big Woods Conservation Partnership, formed to protect the Cache River bottoms where the bird lives. (This coalition includes the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Arkansas Game and Fish Foundation, and the Nature Conservancy.)



The stamp can be purchased on the internet (<http://www.ivory-bill-woodpecker.com>) or by telephone (877-522-7376). The program will help the Ivory-billed Woodpecker by providing funding for public education, habitat acquisition, and research expenses. Please purchase Ivory-bill Woodpecker Conservation Stamps or the accompanying limited edition print to help protect this magnificent bird. You'll be proud to display this beautiful stamp print in your home or office as a symbol of your contribution.

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- \_\_\_ Other

2. What do you like or dislike about the Heron Herald newsletter? How can we improve it?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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