

THE

HERON HERALD



Rainier Audubon Society • October 2006

Vol 25 No.8

Rainier Audubon Presents:

Creating Wildlife Habitat in Your Backyard

Have you been thinking about turning your yard into a wildlife-friendly space? Our October program (Monday, October 16th at 7:00 pm) will feature a slide-show on how to do just that. Hazel Dickinson, former long-time Backyard Habitat Chair for Rainier Audubon, will share her expertise and slides in a presentation that will show you



just how to turn an urban yard into a wildlife-friendly place using native plants and water features. Hazel's program focuses on the plants and birds of the south King County area.

No matter the size of your property, from many acres to just an apartment with a small deck, this program will give you ideas on how to create native habitat to bring birds and butterflies back to your yard. Join us for an evening of fun and entertainment. Doors open at 6:30.



Brown Bag Raffle Back by Popular Demand!

We are happy to announce that at our November program (Monday, November 20th at 7:00 PM), we will once again 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. Then 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.

*Rainier Audubon's
October Program*

*Monday, October 16th, 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

OCTOBER 16, MONDAY

RAS Program: Creating Backyard Wildlife Habitat

See Page 1 for details

OCTOBER 26 THROUGH NOVEMBER 9

RAS Introduction to Birding Class

See page 3 for details

OCTOBER 29, SUNDAY

RAS Field Trip: Parks and Beaches

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

<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.

Support Birds and Habitat:

Vote NO on I-933

Washington birds depend on diverse ecosystems for feeding and nesting. Initiative 933 would threaten these ecosystems by creating loopholes that allow irresponsible developers to pave wetlands and build subdivisions where we now have forests and farmlands. I-933 seeks to turn back the clock on environmental protections by creating a “pay or waive” system, which would force taxpayers to either shell out what could be billions of dollars to make people follow laws that are already on the books, or waive those environmental protections altogether. Initiative 933 would roll back community and environmental protections at least 10 years and open the door for destruction of habitat at an alarming rate.

Farmland provides valuable habitat for many bird species, including Trumpeter Swans. Initiative 933 would open up land for development that is currently protected for agriculture. The NO on 933 campaign continues to gain support in the farming community. Western Washington Agricultural Association has joined the United Farm Workers, Tilth Producers of Washington, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, and many other family farmers in endorsing the NO on 933 campaign. Farmers don't want to have to compete with irresponsible developers for land to grow crops. This would make farming more costly and more difficult for farmers to stay in business. As the Skagit Valley Herald put it in a recent editorial, if Initiative 933 passes... “you can kiss farming good-bye in Skagit County.” Oregon has seen farmland come under attack from its similar, but less extreme, Measure 37. So far, there have been more than 2,800 Measure

37 claims, totaling over \$3.8 billion dollars. Sadly, over 1,100 of those claims are for changes to more than 80,000 acres of farmland.

The diverse and growing coalition of organizations and individuals across Washington state who oppose I-933 include Audubon Washington, the Washington State Council of Fire Fighters, League of Women Voters, American Lung Association of Washington, The Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, Washington Environmental Council, Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, and many more. These groups share the common thread of wanting to preserve the rights of communities and our quality of life by defeating this costly and destructive initiative.

Please help us stop this reckless and costly initiative.

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

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E-mail material to:

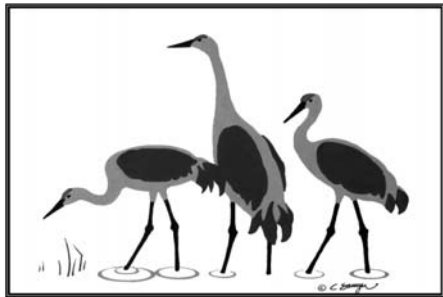
autumn207@comcast.net
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Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Birdfest

OCTOBER 14-15 (SATURDAY-SUNDAY)



Join the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge for their annual birding celebration, BirdFest! There will be guided nature and bird walks, bluegrass music, a birders' marketplace, children's activities, kayak tours, Sandhill Crane tours, food booths, and much more! To get to Ridgefield, take I-5 south to exit 14, go west three miles, and follow the signs to Ridgefield Refuge. Check out the festival website at www.ridgefield-friends.org or call (360) 887-9495 for more information.

Our Library

Rainier Audubon has an extensive library of videos and books for both children and adults, on topics ranging from geology to birds to weather. Any member may request materials to check out. Visit our website at www.RainierAudubon.org to see a complete list. Choose what you'd like to borrow, then email our librarian (Carol — her email address is on the library page of the website for easy reference) and she will bring the requested items to our next monthly program, where you may check them out for one month.

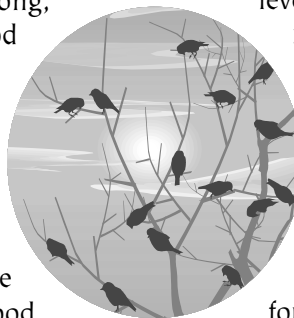


It's Not Too Early to Think About the 2006 Christmas Bird Count

By Nancy Streiffert

As we observe and enjoy the wonder of Fall migration, we can also appreciate and plan for those hardy birds that remain to keep us company through the long, dark, wet winter! It's a good idea to leave some "mess" in your garden, such as flower seed heads and brush piles, for their food and shelter value during harsh weather. If you do not yet have enough native plants producing winter food, keep your feeders clean and full, and provide a source of water for our winter birds.

Another way you can help us all to better understand and protect our winter birds is to join Rainier Audubon's 27th annual Christmas Bird Count. On Sunday, December 17, 2006, we will spend the day in



teams counting birds in designated areas of the Kent-Auburn-Federal Way-Renton-Des Moines-Maple Valley part 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.

Introduction to Birding Class: *Learn Your Birds with Rainier Audubon!*

By Carol Schulz

This month, Rainier Audubon will be offering an "Introduction to Birding" class. This enjoyable class with lectures, quizzes, and field trips gives students a method to identify the birds. Classes will be held at the Federal Way United Methodist Church (see address and directions on page 2) on the following Thursdays: October 26, November 2, and November 9 2006 from 6:30-9:00 pm. The class includes field trips on October 28 and November 4, with an optional third trip. The field trips are educational, a lot of fun, and are in our local area. Your teachers will be Master Birder **Carol Schulz** and Assistant Instructor **Debra Russell**.

We will use the *National Geographic Field Guide to Birds of North America* (3rd or 4th Edition) as the class text. Please bring this field guide to the class. Cost will be \$25 for Rainier members, and \$40 for non-members. For more information, or to reserve a spot in the class, please call or email Carol Schulz, (206) 824-7618, linusq@worldnet.att.net.



Field Trips

By Carol Schulz

Weekly Bird Walks at Nisqually

THURSDAYS 8:15 AM TO 12:30 PM

LEADER: PHIL KELLEY

Join Phil on his weekly bird walk as he counts the birds at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. On the first Thursday of the month, the group walks fairly quickly around the full loop, a distance of over five miles. Other weeks, the trip is shorter, walking out to 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.



Parks and Beaches - Tacoma to King County

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29
8:00 AM TO MID-AFTERNOON

LEADER: STEVE JOHNSON

This is a great time of year to see returning migratory birds. Tides will be good for viewing water birds. Areas are picturesque at a lighthouse and at the beaches. (Bring a camera.) We'll show you our favorite birding spots. We hope to see auklets, Harlequin Ducks, and other waterfowl, all three scoters, sparrows, and forest birds. We will walk short distances from the cars.

BRING: Warm clothes, rain gear, hot drinks, lunch, and water. Scopes are welcome.

MEET: 8:00 AM at 272nd Park & Ride on I-5.

DIRECTIONS: Take I-5 to exit 147 north of Federal Way. Exit onto So. 272nd St. and go west one block to the light. Turn right and go one block into the Park & Ride on the right.

SIGN UP: Call or email Steve Johnson, (253) 941-9852, johnsonsj5@msn.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, binoculars, lunch, and snacks. Be prepared for a long drive, and a long day, returning to Fife at 6:00 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 far end of the parking lot.

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

Good Fall Birding Area: Kent Ponds

The Kent Valley has been partly industrialized, but still has some undeveloped fields and wetlands. Despite the warehouses, housing subdivisions, and office parks, the northern portion of the valley is still a haven for raptors and waterfowl. One of the last remaining open tracts of land here is the 304-acre Green River Natural Resources Area (GRNRA), also known as the Kent Ponds. This Kent City property

northwest of downtown Kent is bounded generally by the Green River to the west, So. 212th St. on the north, 64th Ave. So. on the east, and the powerline bike and pedestrian trail on the south. It is administered by the Kent Public Works Department as a stormwater control area, a wildlife refuge, and a public education/recreation area. The area contains a wetland with several ponds

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Seen & Heard

By Charlie Wright



Hello everyone. While many of the neotropical migrants are gone or on their way out, October brings a resurgence of raptors and waterfowl in the valley. Birding can

be very exciting this time of year as our winter species gradually start to arrive. Keep up the reports!

A number of Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, and Northern Pintail were the first southbound waterfowl of the season 8/26 (m.obs). A juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk, rare but increasing in Washington, was briefly observed at the Kent Ponds 8/26 (CW/m.obs). A Peregrine Falcon near Bonney Lake 9/4 was observed catching bats as dusk set in (CW). A Merlin streaked past Kent Ponds 8/26 (m.obs). An American Kestrel at Kent Pond 8/25 was the first there in quite a while (RO/MV). A Semipalmated Plover flew over Kent Ponds 8/26 (m.obs).

Four Greater Yellowlegs at Boeing Ponds 9/16 were crouching low in the water, due to a Peregrine Falcon circling overhead. A juvenile Semipalmated Sandpiper was feeding with Least Sandpipers in the constructed wetland at Kent Ponds 8/26 (CW). Anna's Hummingbirds have been on the increase in one area of Bonney Lake, where they are now seen year-round (VB).

A Common Raven flew through Dash Point 8/27 (AF/JJ). Twelve Warbling Vireos visited a Dash Point yard 8/26 (AF). The last Western Wood-Pewees were two at Foothills Trail 9/10 (CW). Winter Wrens showed a sudden increase in numbers



LESSER YELLOWLEGS

at Foothills Trail 9/16 (CW). Two American Pipits were at South Prairie 9/10 (CW). MacGillivray's Warblers on the Foothills Trail included one on 8/25, two on 8/28, and one 9/10 (CW). Kent Pond's Lonely Yellow-breasted Chat was last heard this season 8/26 (m.obs). Three Black-headed Grosbeaks at Foothills Trail 8/25 included a pair of adults and a fledgling still begging for food; this was very late for a family group (CW). A Chipping Sparrow was at Foothills Trail 8/28 (CW). The first Fox Sparrow of the season was at Federal Way 9/15 (MV). The first Lincoln's Sparrows were five at Foothills Trail 8/28; they increased to 15 by 9/15. Pine Siskin numbers continue to be low, though a scattering of reports were received (m.obs).



LEAST SANDPIPER

OBSERVERS: LB-LINDA BARTLETT; VB-VICKI BILTZ; CE-CLARA EASTER; AF-ADELE FREELAND; JJ-JON JENSEN; RO-ROGER ORNESS; CS-CAROL SCHULZ; MV-MARK VERNON; CW-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. 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.

Audubon in the Beginning



Note: In 1886, George Bird Grinnell, editor of Forest and Stream, appealed to his readers to unite for bird preservation and protection. Within one year, 39,000 individuals had joined the Audubon Society (as he named it); but the magazine staff was unable to manage the overwhelming response, and the society folded in less than three years. Ten years later, in 1896, Mrs. Augustus Hemenway took up the mission and formed the Massachusetts Audubon Society. This time the idea endured, and by the turn of the century, more than 15 state Audubon Societies had been formed. The following is taken from the journal Auk, Vol. 15, no. 1, January-March 1898, as the A.O.U. worked to stimulate interest and increase membership in Audubon:

REPORT OF THE A.O.U. COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS

In the days of the old original Audubon Society, I did quite a little work up here (New York) and got two or three local secretaries for the neighboring villages who secured goodly membership lists. With the revival of the work, I have tried to bring the people back into line, and in that attempt have had my eyes opened to the value of local work such as we did in those days. In our village nearly all the members have broken their pledges and are so utterly indifferent to the matter that the former secretary thinks she could not get them back on the membership list even if the fee were only twenty-five cents. She says they were never very much interested, and now care nothing about the subject. We do not want (Audubon) to be a passing enthusiasm, but a vital growth. Country children are peculiarly in need of this bird work. Boys

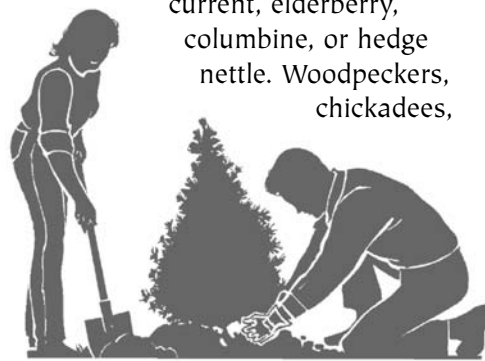
It's October — Time to Plant!

By Carol Stoner

It's October, and although the rains are back, the sun has not disappeared entirely. This cool, moist season is a great time to plant. If you've been thinking about adding bird-friendly natives to your garden, this is a perfect time to visit your local nursery. Fall is a bargain hunter's dream for a gardener because most nurseries want to clear out much of the current stock rather than maintain it through the winter. But how do you choose?

In selecting a new plant, the first thing to consider is the site where it will go. Is the spot sunny or shady? Is the soil well-drained or soggy? How much space do you have? Reading plant descriptions or asking nursery staff for advice will help you find the right plant for your conditions. By looking at the native plants that grow well together in conditions like yours, you can find plants that will be compatible neighbors in your yard.

If you want to encourage hummingbirds, plant natives like red-flowering current, elderberry, columbine, or hedge nettle. Woodpeckers, chickadees,



thrushes, towhees, waxwings, and juncos enjoy the berries of red-twig dogwood, serviceberry, bitter cherry, Oregon grape, and high-bush cranberry. Insect gleaners such as chickadees, kinglets, bushtits, warblers, and vireos use bog birch, oceanspray, native firs and pines, and Douglas fir.

Once you've chosen the plant that fits your needs, it's worth a little extra effort to plant it correctly. A few hours before you plant, sink the pot in a bucket of water to thoroughly soak the roots. Dig a hole twice as wide and deep as the pot. Don't add compost or topsoil to your native dirt; if the soil in the hole is too rich, the roots may not grow out into the surrounding area. When you remove the plant from the pot, check the roots. Many end-of-season plants are "root-bound" with roots circling around the rootball. These plants can strangle themselves, so it's important to pull or wash the roots free and spread them out around the inside of the hole. Be sure the plant is planted at the same depth as before, and water well.

Don't put your shovel away quite yet. Our mild fall temperatures mean plant roots will continue to grow into November or later. The rains that end our summer drought will do much of the watering for us. Planting in the fall is often cheaper and less work and brings the advantage of established plants come spring.

need the guidance of a teacher to give names and point to their own discoveries, to change their egg-collecting interest to a naturalist's interest. And girls need the teaching to give them an outdoor interest in nature; they are our future farmers' wives; more farmers' wives go insane than any other class - from dearth of interests. Here we have an opportunity to give them something that will lend value and meaning to the woods and fields - that will widen their horizons and lighten their drudgery.

Danger to Birds: Cats!

Loss of habitat due to human development is the leading cause of declining bird populations. However, scientists now list invasive species, including cats, as the second most serious threat to birds across the world. Habitat fragmentation provides cats easy access to birds forced to live on smaller tracts of land. Rather than havens for wildlife, these areas can be death traps.

There are more than 90 million pet cats in the United States. A 1997 nationwide poll showed that only 35% are kept exclusively indoors, leaving the majority of owned cats free to kill birds and other wildlife at least some of the time. In addition, millions of stray and feral cats roam our cities, suburbs, farmlands, and natural areas. Abandoned by their owners or lost (stray), or descendants of strays and living in the wild (feral), these cats are victims of human irresponsibility due to abandonment and failure to spay or neuter pets. No one knows how many homeless cats there are in the U.S, but estimates range from 60 to 100 million. These cats lead short, miserable lives.

Scientists estimate that cats kill hundreds of millions of birds each year. Researchers at the University of Wisconsin coupled their four-year cat predation study with data from other studies, and estimated that rural free-roaming cats kill at least 7.8 million and perhaps as many as 217 million birds every year *in Wisconsin alone*.

Most birds killed by cats are members of relatively common species, such as the Northern Cardinal, Song

Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco; others are rare and endangered — the California Least Tern, Piping Plover, Western Snowy Plover, and California Gnatcatcher.

Regardless of the status of the species, each wild animal suffers when captured by a cat. Once caught by a cat, few birds survive. Cats carry many types of bacteria and viruses in their mouths, which can be transmitted to their victims.

Even if treatment is administered immediately, only about 20% of these birds survive. A victim that appears healthy after such an attack may die from internal hemorrhaging or injury to vital organs. Infection from the cat's teeth or claws or the stress of capture usually results in death.

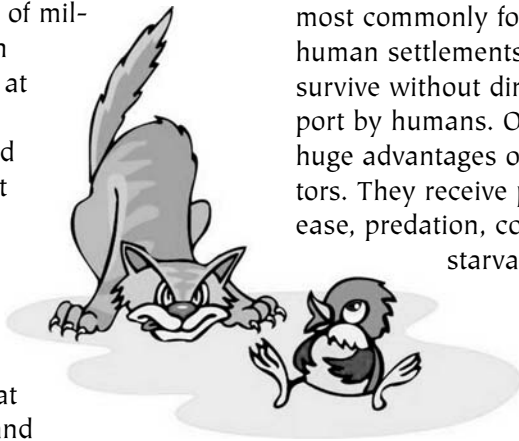
Cats cannot be blamed for killing wildlife. As with our native wild cats (bobcat, mountain lion, etc.), hunting is instinctive; yet domestic cats are not adapted to a life in the wild where hunting for food is a necessity.

Outdoor domestic cat populations are most commonly found in and around human settlements, and most do not survive without direct or indirect support by humans. Owned cats have huge advantages over native predators. They receive protection from disease, predation, competition, and

starvation. Cats with dependable food

sources are not vulnerable to changes in prey populations. Unlike

many native predators, cats are not strictly territorial. As a result, they can exist at much higher densities and may out-compete native



COLLARED
ARACARI

Journal from Costa Rica

By Barbara Petersen

Note: Rainier member Barbara Petersen spent several weeks in Costa Rica this summer. These are excerpts from her journal.

...AWAKE AT 5:30, UP AT 6:00, OUT THE DOOR WITH ALL MY GEAR AND DOWN THE ROAD A WAYS ... too soon, my shoulders told me they are done carrying everything at once. Saw interesting birds in the cloud-fog, but soon headed up to the house to bird the easy way.

The Collared Aracaris came to the feeder, and many other species, while Swallow-tailed Kites wheeled above - it was

visual sensory overkill at times with so many exciting things to see at once. So this is where I should have stayed all morning. The highlight so far has to be the Broad-billed Motmot that came right here to the patio. Found an Oropendola and some Toucans just by looking through the scope at distant trees.

In a very humid sun break now, I should try one of the trails. It has rained lightly off and on... Then it was such a nice afternoon, pushing 4:00, and I decided to walk to the river. Yup, tried to kill myself - what a hike. But on the way down, I was rewarded with Gray-headed Chachalacas at the feeder and a perched White Hawk! Saw a Buff-rumped Warbler twice, once on the trails and again near the river. I barely looked at birds on the way back up, yikes. There was an Oropendola near the house when I finally arrived (a ball of sweat with frizz for hair).. a lot of parrots have flown by, but don't stop. Saw movement on a far hill and scoped two Crested Guans eating in a small tree. Is there no end to the species here? Hate to see the sun go down. Some Red-lore Parrots just landed on the far hill.

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The Quizzical Owl

by *Thais Bock*



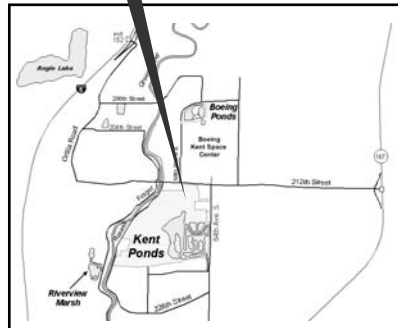
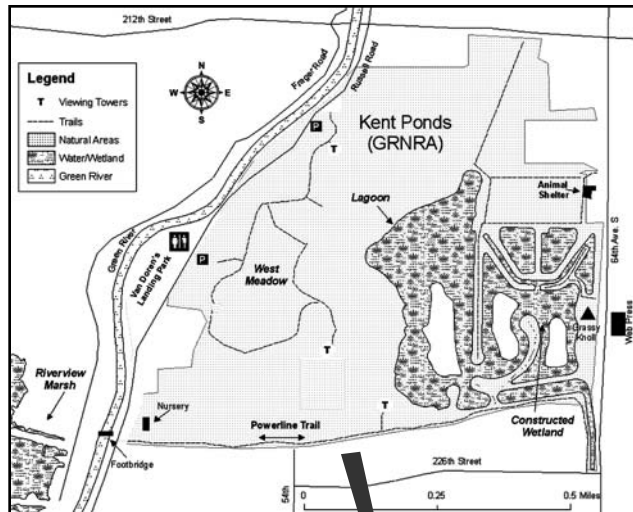
1. This egret seems to "dance" while feeding in the shallows.
2. Murres and guillemonts are in what family?
3. The Anasazi people may have been the first to domesticate this native bird.
4. Without using wing power hawks often stay aloft in air conditions known as _____.
5. Name the small towhee found in the southeastern part of our state.

ANSWERS ARE UPSIDE DOWN BELOW

Good Fall Birding Area: Kent Ponds ... cont'd from page 4

and three viewing towers. Look for raptors on snags, including perched Peregrines, and for flying raptors, including Merlin. Check for waterfowl in the ponds. American Bittern can sometimes be seen, and Virginia Rails occasionally call.

American Coots, Pied-billed Grebe, Gadwall, Cooper's Hawk, and Red-tailed Hawk breed in this area. Lazuli Buntings have been seen in the summer. From one of the birding towers, birders got good views of a Baikal Teal in the winter of 2004-2005. This rarity was first discovered by Charlie Wright and the GRNRA census team in mid-December 2004 during the monthly GRNRA birding census, in which Rainier Audubon participates.



DIRECTIONS: From I-5, take Exit #152 (Orillia Road) east. Continue several miles until Orillia turns into 212th St. To visit the west side of the property, turn right (south) on Russell Road along the Green River. There are several parking lots on the left side of the road that give you access to the viewing platforms.

To bird the east or south side, continue on 212th to 64th Ave. Go past the animal shelter and park in the lot near Web Press. Walk the short trail to the grassy hill — a good spot to

view the wetlands — or walk to the south along the power-lines at the southern border of the property. Access to the west meadow is possible 9:30 AM-4:00 PM Tuesday through Sunday in winter and spring; 9:30 AM to dusk in summer and fall. Birding from the power-line trail or from the grassy hill is possible anytime. There are restrooms at Van Doren Landing Park across Russell Road from the ponds. (2005 Thomas Guide: King 685, F-5)

Cats... cont'd from page 7

predators for food. Unaltered cats are also prolific breeders. A female cat can have three litters per year, with four to six kittens per litter.

What can you do to help the situation? If you own a cat, keep it indoors. When we let our cats outside, we are placing a higher value on the freedom of our pet than on the life of the cardinal or chickadee it kills.

If you feed birds in your yard, locate feeders away from windows and brushy vegetation where neighborhood cats can hide. Keep your feeders clean and well stocked. Where possible, establish a brush pile for wildlife away from feeders. Avoid using pesticides. If you have a bird bath, locate it where there is no place close by for neighborhood cats to hide and stalk the bath.

Cats are not ultimately responsible for killing our native wildlife — people are.



2007 Entertainment Books are now available



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Rainier Audubon 2006-2007 Member Survey

1. What Audubon subject area(s) are you interested in? Rank in order, with 1 being the most interesting:

- ___ Local birds and birding in general
- ___ Birds, specific (i.e. seabirds, birds of wetlands, warblers, endangered birds, etc.)
- ___ Creating wildlife habitat in your backyard
- ___ Information about Pacific Northwest native plants
- ___ Local animal life
- ___ Conservation and environmental issues
- ___ Wildlife of other countries
- ___ Photographing birds
- ___ Egg and nest identification
- ___ Other

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

3. How do you think we can improve Rainier Audubon as an organization that is responsive to the needs of our community?

Thank you!

Please mail your completed survey to:

Rainier Audubon Society
P.O. Box 778
Auburn, WA 98071

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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The newsletter is also available online.
 Check it out at our website: 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:

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