

The

Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

May 2011

March General Membership Meeting
Monday May 16, 2011 7:00 p.m.
Federal Way United Methodist Church

Dog Days, Raven Nights

Fresh out of graduate school, we headed to the Maine woods to study the winter ecology of the Common Raven. Without the certainty of funding, we were gambling that grants would be approved and research results would come quickly. Our gamble paid off with a 3-year National Science Foundation grant to study ravens with University of Vermont biologist, Bernd Heinrich. As we honed our scientific skills, we learned the ways of the raven as it scavenged across winter landscapes for large animal carcasses. We also learned about the people of Maine: with their assistance and support, we enjoyed the strong family ties needed to survive in the rural economy of western Maine's mill towns. We harnessed the power of our canine companions, using dogs to help haul the huge quantities of raven food needed for our experiments and to explore the recreational outlet of dog sledding. Dog Days, Raven Nights is our story of a three-year adventure, also known as a postdoc. We draw on our extensive field notes, personal diaries, and publications to tell about our work, discovery, fun, and difficulties as we made the transition from graduate students to professional biologists.

John and Colleen Marzluff were raised in small university towns of the mid (Lawrence, Kansas) and western (Socorro, New Mexico) United States. Their life long love of domestic and wild animals led them to graduate school at Northern Arizona University in the early 1980s to study biology. They met in 1983 and married in 1985. Ever since, they have enjoyed a rich biological adventure studying birds and mammals while raising

two daughters. Concurrently, they have lived within a large and evolving pack of dogs. Initially, the pack was one of Siberian Huskies, whom they have raised and recreationally raced for 20 years. Now, border collies outnumber huskies, and they are more apt to be herding or running agility courses than driving the sled. They currently live in western Washington, but fieldwork has taken them across the United States to Europe and Greenland.

Please plan to attend this final program of the season. It promises to be a very entertaining and educational presentation. What better way to welcome in the summer than with sled dogs and ravens. As always, refreshments and conversation will be available before, during and following the program.



Dog Days, Raven Nights

Linocut by Evon Zerbetz .

Rainier Audubon programs are held at

Federal Way United Methodist Church, 29645 - 51st Ave. So.
98001 (in unincorporated Auburn)

Directions: In Federal Way, take 320th St. EAST past The Commons, crossing over I-5 and Military Rd.

At 321st St, turn left. Stay on 321st as it becomes 51st Ave. So. Follow 51st Ave. to 296th. Church will be on your left.

RAS Mission Statement

To conserve and restore natural ecosystems and protect birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity and biological diversity in South King County and the world we live in.

President's Message by Nancy Streiffert

Happy May Day and month! Hopefully, by the time you get this, we REALLY will be having spring weather – I think I said that last month!! Field trip reports are saying the warblers and other migrants are back, rufous hummingbirds are nesting and all the swallow species are dodging the raindrops to soar for insects. I hope you are all out enjoying the change of seasons.

Our May meeting is the last one until September. It is also when we elect our board members. The April Heron Herald included a ballot introducing this year's three candidates. If you cannot be at the May meeting, please mark and send in your ballot by May 13. We will announce our new board members at the meeting after the vote.

One of Rainier's main outreach activities is the Tukwila Wildlife Fair held at the Tukwila Community Center located on the banks of the Green River. We have a table there and meet many families interested in outdoor activities. Carol Schulz leads a very popular birding trip along the river and always sees lots of good species – people line up, returning year after year for this trip! We will need volunteers to be at our table to talk about birds and make buttons for the kids. Please contact board member Annette Tabor to help out.

The RAS board retreat is July 31. Plans and ideas for the coming year will be discussed. If you have any ideas for programs, outreach ideas, education opportunities, etc., please contact me or

any board member.

This is my last president's message. I will be stepping down at the July 31st board retreat. Some new blood and ideas keep an organization strong and vital and moving ahead. I've enjoyed working with the dedicated members of the board and the volunteers who help at meetings and events. I will continue to coordinate Rainier's Christmas Bird Count for 2011 while finding a new coordinator to take over that job in 2012. Thank you for being part of a great organization! Nancy

Volunteer Job Openings

- Publicity Chair
- Treasurer Assistant with knowledge of Quick Books

Contact a Board Member if interested.

RAINIER AUDUBON OFFICERS

President	Nancy Streiffert	253-796-2203
Vice President	Steve Feldman*	360-802-5211
Treasurer	Jim Tooley*	253-854-3070
Secretary	Heather Gibson	253-856-9812
Program Chair	Dale Meland*	253-946-1637
Field Trip Chair	Carol Schulz	206-824-7618
Membership Chair	Pat Toth*	206-767-4944
Backyard Habitat Chair	Carol Stoner*	253-854-3207
Conservation Chair	Dan Streiffert*	253-796-2203
Mailing Chair	Debra Russel	425-271-0682
Hospitality	Sandra Embry	
Newsletter Editor	Dan Streiffert	253-796-2203
Webmaster	Nancy Hertzell	253-255-1808
Ivy Eradication Coordinator	Bernedine Lund	253-839-3729
Education Chair	Annette Tabor*	253-927-3208
Christmas Bird Count Coordinator	Nancy Streiffert	253-796-2203
Board Member	Max Prinsen*	425-432-9965
Board Member	Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen*	425-432-9965

*Also serves as Board Member.

Board meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month and are open to all members.

Native Plant Sale

The Washington Native Plant Society Spring Sale is the REAL DEAL if you are looking for native plants for your garden. While the King Conservation District annual sale is the most economical way to get quantities of the most common native trees, shrubs and a few ground covers, the WNPS sale on May 7th from 10-4 is the place for more variety and unusual specialty natives. It is extremely popular and lines go around the block hours before opening so be prepared. Some people bring wagons to haul their loot but it is also in a limited space so be ready for a real elbow to elbow experience with fellow plant lovers! It is at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. For information: www.wnps.org



Nancy Streiffert

A Proclamation about the late Thais Bock

By Adele Freeland, Rainier Audubon Society

It's official, the Federal Way City Council approved the suggestion to rename the Brooklake portion of the West Hylebos Wetlands Boardwalk in honor of Thais Bock!

After Thais passed away a year ago, "Friends of the Hylebos" wanted to find a way to honor her for her contributions and conservation efforts in helping to educate others about the birds and eco-importance of the Hylebos Wetlands and Hylebos Creek Watershed.

In compliance with the city rules that require a citizen request to go through the public process, we organized a letter campaign to the mayor's office and the FWay Parks committee. The full council approved the nomination and naming request and on April

5, 2011 the official Proclamation by the Federal Way City Council and Mayor honored Thais Bock for her conservation efforts in greater Federal Way by re-naming the Brooklake Spur trail and Brooklake Overlook at West Hylebos Wetlands Park.

The Proclamation:

WHEREAS, the natural environment and enjoyment of our parks and open spaces are important elements of quality of life in Federal Way; and

WHEREAS, Thais Bock was one of Federal Way's foremost conservationists, active from the early 1970s until her death in 2010; and

WHEREAS, her work to raise awareness about the resources of Dumas Bay and organize support to protect the area resulted in the establishment of Federal Way's Dumas Bay Preserve; and

WHEREAS, her work with the Friends of the Hylebos to preserve the West Hylebos Wetlands and to count its bird species led to establishment of the West Hylebos Wetlands Park and enhanced public appreciation and use of the park among birders and non-birders alike; and

WHEREAS, her work to teach birding skills and to establish annual bird counts in Federal Way and

throughout South King County established enhanced knowledge about our native bird species and their habitats;

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Federal Way City Council, do hereby proclaim **the Brooklake Spur and Brooklake Overlook of the West Hylebos Wetlands Boardwalk to be named for Thais Bock**, and we recognize the significant contribution she made to making the City of Federal Way a

community distinguished by its healthy open spaces and the sounds and presence of native birds.

Thais Bock was one of the founding members of the Tahoma Audubon Society and founder of the Rainier Audubon Society. Through her continued involvement in each, she

was instrumental in developing knowledge and awareness of native bird populations in the South Puget Sound area.

As noted above she played an important role working with her friends, Ilene and Francis Marx, in the preservation of the West Hylebos Wetlands, and she led the successful efforts to preserve the Dumas Bay Preserve and the Peasley Canyon heron rookery.

In recognition of her lifetime of conservation work in the Federal Way area, the Friends of the Hylebos honored her with its Lifetime Stewardship Award in 2009.

As advocates for protection of West Hylebos Wetlands, it has been exciting to see this park become a jewel in the Federal Way park system. The boardwalk improvements, interpretive signs and connecting trails brought the vision of many residents to reality. Dedicating the Brooklake Spur to Thais is a perfect tribute to her dedication to the park.



Ilene Marckx & Thais Bock, 1997



Field Trips by Carol Schulz

Flaming Geyser and Green Valley Road

Saturday, May 21
8:00 AM to Early Afternoon
Leader: Steve Johnson

In May, the migrant birds should be singing on their territory near Auburn and in the beautiful Green Valley east of Auburn. We'll visit Academy Drive, Green Valley Road, and Flaming Geyser State Park. We may see and hear warblers, thrushes, vireos, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Virginia Rail, flycatchers, and more. We may walk up to 2 miles on trails and roads. People who bring their own cars, and want to leave early may do so.

Bring: Lunch, snacks, drinks, hiking shoes. Scopes welcome.

Meet: Auburn Safeway at Auburn Ave & Main at 8:00 AM.

Directions: Take hwy 18 to Auburn, and exit at Auburn Ave (hwy 164). Turn north (right) on Auburn Way and drive 3 blocks north. Safeway sign and gas station is on the left. Park in the lot just beyond the gas station straight out from the right entry door at Safeway at 8:00am.

Sign-up: Call or email Steve Johnson, 253-941-9852. johnsonsj5@msn.com

Wenas Campout

Wenas Creek in Eastern Washington
Friday, May 27 to Monday, May 30,
Memorial Day Weekend.

For more information, call or e-mail Carol Schulz, 206-824-7618. carol.schulz50@gmail.com.

A trip to Wenas SW 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 like to just visit for a day.

Organized events include FIELD TRIPS, exploration, 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. See new website, www.wenasaudubon.org. Road is rough. Drive last 10 miles slow. You also can stay at a motel in Ellensburg, and drive into camp. It takes about an hour to travel on a gravel road from Ellensburg.

O'Grady Park

(near Auburn)
Sun, June 12
7:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Leader: Kathy Andrich

O'Grady Park drops down to the Green River from the Muckleshoot Plateau, and is near Flaming Geyser. It is a primitive park. The trail is 2 miles long, with a gradual drop in elevation of about 300 feet. So the walk back up through a beautiful forest on an old road is not a hard climb. We could see quite a few species at a great time of year. Target species will be Bank Swallows (uncommon in King County), Barred Owls, flycatchers, vireos including Red-eyed Vireo, and orioles. We will drive out on the Muckleshoot Plateau, and return home on the beautiful Green Valley Road. Coming home, we may stop for a bit at Metzler Park. (O'Grady Park is called Metzler Park down on the Green Vly Rd side of the river and we'll pass by it on the way home.)

Bring: Lunch or snacks, drinks, hiking shoes, bug repellent. Scopes welcome but not required.

Meet: Auburn Safeway at Auburn Ave & Main at 7:30 AM.

Directions: Take hwy 18 to Auburn, and exit at Auburn Ave (hwy 164). Turn north (right) on Auburn Way and drive 3 blocks north. Safeway sign and gas station is on the left. Park in the lot just beyond the gas station straight out from the right entry door at Safeway. Please be READY TO GO at 7:30am.

Sign-up: Email or call Kathy Andrich, chukarbird@yahoo.com, 206-390-3159.

Spectacular Swifts in Selleck

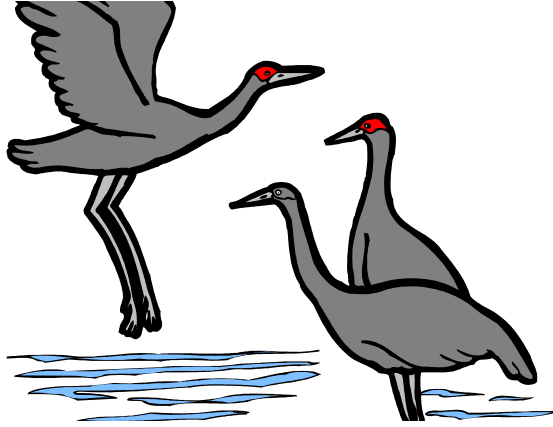
Just a reminder, May is the month the Vaux's Swifts return to the Old Schoolhouse in Selleck. A half hour before sunset on a dry evening is a great time to watch several hundred swifts assemble and swirl into the chimney. We are fortunate to have such an important roosting site in our area. I hope you take the opportunity to enjoy the spectacle.



May is Birdathon Month!

What is it? It's "birding for dollars". Count as many bird species in one day as you can!

Choose any one day in May. Get friends to sponsor you and send them a list of what birds you saw. Proceeds support Audubon activities in South King County, Washington state and sanctuaries.



It's fun! Earn money for chapter activities while enjoying a birding field trip led by an expert birder. The desire to add more species to your life list adds to the excitement.

It's easy! Sponsors are happy to support your efforts, and many look forward to being asked again the following year. They especially enjoy your list of bird species seen. We will provide helpful hints, examples of solicitation and report letters, prizes for birders and thank you gifts for sponsors, and one-on-one help as needed.

Great field trips! Choose from several chapter field trips led by experts, or go on a trip of your own. Be lazy (bird at your feeder) or be creative (create your own Birdathon experience). All ages can participate!

Why do it? We need the money! The portion of your membership dues that the chapter receives does not even pay for the total cost of sending your newsletter. Birdathon is our largest fundraiser, and we depend on it to provide a stable funding base for our many activities. Funds raised go for services and activities such as our wonderful newsletter, postage, chapter voicemail and PO box, printing of brochures, envelopes, pro-

grams (speaker fees), environmental education activities, conservation committee activities, etc. We wouldn't want to have to cut back on any of our activities!

Our goal for 2011 is \$2,000—\$3,000, which is attainable but only if everyone helps! We need as many birders with

sponsors as possible, and if you can't bird, you can sponsor someone else. Bottom line—you will be showing that you

care about the quality of life in South King County, now and in the future.

Sign up on the volunteer clipboard, and we will contact you with all the information you need. Field trips will be published in the newsletter.

—Annette Tabor

I'll Never Do It Again

By Anonymous

I don't litter. If you look in my car, you'll see the wrappers and receipts that haven't made the trip to recycling or garbage cans.

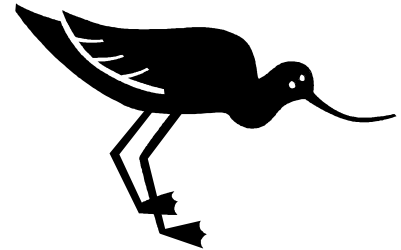
However, I haven't been so virtuous when it comes to "biodegradable" materials. The healthy apple, nibbled to the core, often has ended up being tossed out the car window because there was no place to put it, and besides, it was biodegradable. The only problem with this practice is that apple cores bring rodents to the roadside, and rodents bring raptors. Wildlife rehabilitators tell us that the majority of hawks that come to their facilities have been injured by cars. Now my apple goes into the car with a container for the core. No more littering, biodegradable or not!

8th Annual Leavenworth Bird Festival

Thurs-Sun, May 12-15, 2011

4 Days of Field Trips and Activities are offered at this superb spring festival, May 12-15. Many field trips are offered including owling trips, raft trips, trips to the mountains and field trips to sage brush country. Last year 152 bird species were seen! There were 10 species of warbler, 10 species of raptors including N. Goshawk and Golden Eagle, 6 species of swallows, 7 species of sparrow including Lark Sparrow, 9 species of flycatchers, 6 species of woodpecker including Black-backed, and much more. This is the bird festival to see migrants! Some trips require advanced registration. See

www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com



Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival

- Bird Walk in the Park and along the Green River

Saturday, May 14
9:45 AM to 10:45 AM

A bird walk in the park and along the river will be offered on Migratory Bird Day. Programs and activities will be presented by several groups at this festival. RAS, Seattle Audubon, retail stores, and nature groups will be there. This is a fun, local festival! Birdwalk starts near Audubon Booth at 9:45. More info and directions at

<http://backyardwildlifefair.org>

The Quizzical Owl

By *Thais Bock**



1. Name the grebe with the red eye in an all white face.
2. Birds born with feathers are called precocial; what are birds born without feathers called?
3. What member of the grouse family in eastern North America became extinct as recently as 1932?
4. Name the two species of flycatchers formerly lumped together as Traill's Flycatcher.
5. This is the only species of Rail showing white patches on its wings in flight.

**Reprinted with permission from Djana Bock.*

Answers are on bottom of page.



Mewsings from Millie

Hello and thank you once again for taking some time to meander through my maze of musings! I've been feeling somewhat giddy with thoughts of spring being here so if I seem to be rambling a bit more than usual, please bear with me.

Congratulations to everyone who participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count this year! Over ninety-two thousand checklists were turned in and new bird checklist records were set in eleven states! Approximately sixty-thousand people reported five hundred ninety-six species and made 11.4 million bird observations! Now that's a lot of bird-watching going on!!

With the weather becoming nicer, people are venturing out into their yards and gardens. There is a Pacific Northwest native plant that is an

absolute hummingbird magnet - flowering red currant or as gardeners know it, ribes sanguineum. Both Anna's and Rufous hummingbirds just love it! Plant some of this north-west beauty in your yard and you are sure to have the flying jewels of the bird world come for a visit.

I'm always hearing people in the store talking about how much fun they have feeding the birds. Many of these same folks also want help thwarting one nemesis of birdfeeding - squirrels! I've heard one trick to try is to mix hot, red cayenne pepper (capsaicin) in with the birdseed. Ground or crushed dried chili pods can also be used. The squirrels are repelled by the taste and smell of the cayenne but birds' sense of smell and taste are not strong enough to detect it and it does not harm them in any way. So, if squirrels or other mammals are spoiling your bird-feeding fun, give hot pepper a try!

The other night I was surfing the net after my people had gone home and I came across a very interesting and quite humorous website out of Britain called "Fatbirder". One article that caught my eye was about birdwatching slang. Now I don't know if the terms only apply to British birders but I wanted to share some of them with you:

Tick - a species new to any list you might have if you keep a list, that is

Lifer - a species you have never ever seen before anywhere in the world; a tick for your life list

Megatrick - an excellent tick; perhaps the bird is rare and possibly very colorful

Crippler - a megatrick which leaves you emotionally crippled by its beauty and/or size as well as its rarity

LBJ - little brown job; many birds are small and brown and look alike. Females and immatures are often identified as LBJ's.

BOP - bird of prey; BOPS aren't always easily identified so this can be a handy acronym

Twitcher - an obsessive list-keeping birder who goes out of their way, sometimes traveling miles, to see a rare bird found by other people

Dude - a casual birder who prefers nice surroundings and pleasant weather; is usually satisfied with common birds that would make a twitcher crazy with boredom

Birder - anyone in between a twitcher and a dude; excited about birds and good at identification; knows local birding hot spots; birders find

(Continued on page 7)

Answers to Quizzical Owl: 1. Clark's Grebe, 2. altricial, 3. Heath Hen, 4. Alder and Willow Flycatchers, 5. Yellow Rail

Community Clean Up Report

Mikhaila B. Gonzales
Project & Outreach Coordinator

Save Habitat And Diversity Of Wetlands kicked off Earth Month with a neighborhood clean up on Saturday, April 2. Our fearless Audubon representative, Carol Stoner, lifted energy high and trash could be seen flying out of ditches and into her swelling trash bag! Boy Scouts and their families, together with the Hammond and Mendoza families, 23 of us all together, removed 13 bags of trash and 11 bags of recycling from 184th Ave SE and Peter Grubb Rd!



We enjoyed a mild cast over day, and only after the last group headed back to the workshop did we see some showers.

We hope to see you in the fall for our next neighborhood clean up!

Sign up for our new Google Group!

We have recently created a new group to serve as an email list server for Rainier Audubon. The intent of this site is to assist in publicizing our activities members and the general public relating to our club activities. Anyone may join or leave the group at any time. You may sign up on our website or at:

<http://groups.google.com/group/ras-activities?hl=en>

Puget Loop Report

Report by Carol Schulz
RAS Puget Loop Birding Trail Chairman

April 12 and Apr 14, 2011 are RAS's biggest series of site visits with Audubon WA. Yesterday, Apr 12, Christi Norman and Brid Nowlan of Audubon WA visited with us. Christi told us that 10 Audubon chapters are working on this final loop for the WA birding trail. That is the most chapters she has worked with for any of the loops.

Our morning visit on Apr 12 was to Soos Creek. Many thanks to Mark Johnston and Joe Miles who took them on a nice tour. Christi, the Birding



Trail Program Director, and Brid, a volunteer, were very impressed! Mark Johnston should be thanked for nominating this site! The tour started at the main trailhead at the Maintenance Yard & Barn, 24810 - 148th Ave SE where they watched a GBH building its nest. Then they visited the ponds north of there, Gary Grant Park trailhead on S 208th, and finally the trailhead at Lake Meridian.

In the afternoon, Chrisi and Brid visited

with us at Seahurst Park in Burien. Steve Roemer, Burien City Parks Operations Director, met us there. He is an expert on the huge park, the restoration of the mile-long beach, and he knows his birds! Maureen Ellis, the park birder and bird-count expert joined us. I had nominated Seahurst. We had a great visit and managed to see some good birds including close-in Bonaparte's Gulls in breeding plumage, very-close and beautiful Barrow's Goldeneyes, and a Horned Grebe with that in-between plumage that

is so special. It looked like an Eared Grebe because the "horns" on its head are still wispy-feathery as it goes into breeding plumage. Very interesting view for all of

us.

On Thurs, Apr 14, Christi, Adele Freeland, and I will tour Tukwila Pond, Green River Natural Resources Area (Kent Ponds), and Flaming Geyser State Park. It is finally feeling like spring, and those areas should look very nice. Maybe we will see some migrating birds!

Mewsings from Millie

(Continued from page 6)

rarities for twitchers and are usually quite happy to help dudes

Dip Out On - fail to see a particular bird

Grip Someone Off - if you dip out on a bird and someone else doesn't, he or she has gripped you off

Stringy - suspect identification; a claimed rarity that turns out to be a common bird

Blimey, I hope you jolly well enjoyed learning about British birdwatching slang!

Speaking of learning, believe it or not we still have a few more collective nouns to file away. There sure are a lot of them! How about a dis-simulation of birds, a flight of comorants, and a horde of crows.

Until next time,

Millie, the Muse of Mews



Rainier Audubon Society
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Auburn, WA 98071

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
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Permit No. 441

"I can remember when the air was clean and sex was dirty"

—George Burns

Rainier Audubon Membership Subscription or Renewal Form

One-year Membership in Rainier Audubon

- ◇ \$20—Individual Membership
- ◇ \$25—Family Membership

To join or renew, mail this application with your payment to:
Rainier Audubon Society - Membership
PO Box 778
Auburn, WA 98071



Or go to <http://www.rainieraudubon.org/> to enroll online.

Name: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

RAS Chapter membership includes 9 issues of the Heron Herald annually but does not include AUDUBON magazine.