

# The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

February 2015

RAS Membership Meeting

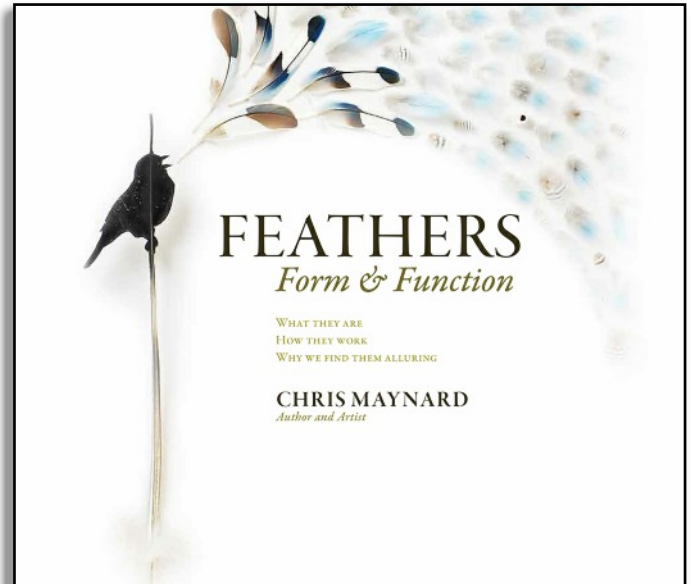
February 16, 2015

## **"FEATHERS FORM AND FUNCTION"**

**Chris Maynard**

Meeting begins at 7:00 PM.

Chris Maynard combines his scientific knowledge, his artistic sense, and his love of feathers and life in a new art form. His message is one of beauty, appreciation of life—especially birds, and conservation. His inspiration originates mostly in his native northwestern United States and his themes appeal to people worldwide.



Since feathers can represent flight, transference, healing, and a bridge between our present lives and our dreams, Mr. Maynard is grateful that his work with feathers has hit a soft-spot in the hearts of many people and cultures. His work is in private collections in the USA and Canada, Asia, Europe, and Australia and has been featured in the media around the world.

Maynard's new book, [Feathers Form and Function](#) is a tabletop feast of his art with text and stories about what feathers are, what they do for the birds, and why we find them alluring.

During his talks, he communicates his enthusiasm for his medium: feathers and the birds they come from, with information about what feathers are, how they grow, and how birds use them. He delights his audience with numerous images of birds, feathers, and his art. After listening to Mr. Maynard, you will see feathers and birds in a new way.

Join us at 6:30 PM for conversation and refreshments.



Rainier Audubon programs are held at

**Federal Way United Methodist Church**

29645 - 51st Ave. So. 98001 (in unincorporated Auburn)





# Marie West-Johnson is our new Backyard Habitat Chair!

I was born in Olympia and have lived in the Puget Sound area all my life. My love of gardening and birding comes from my mom.

I retired from Boeing in 2012 and decided to become involved in my two passions gardening and birding. I am a Master Gardener and enjoy native plants and woodland habitats. I have been watching birds in my own backyard for over 30 years.

My husband Craig and I enjoy the outdoors, hiking and birding. We travel the world in pursuit of birds and botanical gardens.

Every backyard is a unique habitat. That makes everyone a habitat manager. As good habitat managers we need to maintain the health of our own backyards, serve as stewards for the environment, and be an example for others. Backyard Habitat chair will help me blend my two passions.

-Marie



## Upcoming Programs

by Dale Meland

- **March 16** - Charlie Wright - The Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey (COASST) believes citizens of coastal communities are essential scientific partners in monitoring marine ecosystem health. By collaborating with citizens, natural resource management agencies and environmental organizations, COASST works to translate long-term monitoring into effective marine conservation solutions.
- **April 20** - John Marzluff - He and his wife did the Ravens in Maine program for us a few years back. He has a new book out called Welcome to Subirdia, which the Seattle Times recently did an article on. He will be doing a program based on that.
- **May 18** - Dan Streiffert - Yellowstone in Winter - from a tour in February, 2015.

### Rainier Audubon Officers

|                                  |                         |              |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| President                        | Dan Streiffert*         | 253-796-2203 |
| Vice President                   | Steve Feldman*          | 360-802-5211 |
| Treasurer                        | Laura Lavington*        | 253-941-7372 |
| Secretary                        | Heather Gibson*         | 253-856-9812 |
| Program Chair                    | Dale Meland             | 253-946-1637 |
| Field Trip Chair                 | Michele Phiffer         | 206-246-0873 |
| Membership Chair                 | Pat Toth*               | 206-767-4944 |
| Backyard Habitat Chair           | Marie West-Johnson      | 206-817-8754 |
| Conservation Chair               | Dan Streiffert*         | 253-796-2203 |
| Mailing Chair                    | Debra Russell           | 425-271-0682 |
| Hospitality                      | Sandra Embrey           | 253-517-3363 |
| Newsletter Editor                | Dan Streiffert*         | 253-796-2203 |
| Webmaster                        | Treesa Hertzl           | 253-255-1808 |
| Education Chair                  | Annette Tabor*          | 253-927-3208 |
| Christmas Bird Count Coordinator | Alex Juchems            | 253-529-8996 |
| Board Member                     | Max Prinsen             | 425-432-9965 |
| Board Member                     | Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen | 425-432-9965 |
| Board Member                     | Lisa Mesplay            | 253-946-3820 |
| Board Member                     | Ed Stanton              | 206-870-3107 |
| Publicity                        | Tom Sernka              | 253-529-8970 |

\*Also serves as Board Member

Board meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Federal Way United Methodist Church, and are open to all members.

## 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.

# Seen & Heard by Calen Randall

**T**HE wind whistled overhead, rustling the trees. My clunky boots squelched in the mud, as I picked my way along the dark trail. I paused underneath a long spindly pine, stared up the trunk of the tree, and gave a call. My best hooting “Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all” faded through the Lake Fenwick Frisbee Golf forest. I strained my ears to hear the elusive response call of a Barred Owl. The forest remained still, and no hooting response called back. Unfortunately for me on this Christmas Bird Count dawn, I struck out owling. I felt a little better about my bad luck after learning that Tim Brennan was also shut out owling in Area 5. Ironically, David Swayne, who was owling in Area 6S near West Valley Highway and 285<sup>th</sup>, did not even have to leave his car to sight two Barn Owls.

At the Christmas Bird Count potluck, I conversed with Bill Brynteson about his owling tips. “Knowing the region where an owl lives makes it a lot easier to find an owl,” Bill had said, “and when you see an owl in a certain tree or area, you often can find it there again. The key is knowing where to look.” If you know of any great owling locations in the Rainier Audubon area, send me an email so that we can track more owls in our circle.

Three years ago, my Mom and I had adventured on the Soos Creek Owl Prowl field trip which is led by Joe Myles. We heard Great Horned Owl mating calls, Saw-whet owl, and we saw a pair of Western Screech Owls. The Owl Prowl had been a memorable night. As we had walked back to our cars, Joe Myles had commented on how surprising it had been to have heard five owls on the field trip. “Some nights, you won’t hear any owls,” he had said. I often reflect on that evening and now, I truly realize what an incredible evening it was.

The next few months are an exciting time for owling as mating season is coming. If you haven’t been on Joe Myles’s Soos Creek Owl Prowl, I encourage you to sign up for this year’s Winter Owl Prowl March 7, 2015. Registration is through Kent Parks and Recreation. Call (253)639-0123. The address is Soos Creek Park/Trail 24810 148th Avenue SE, Kent.

Please send your reports to [calenbirds@hotmail.com](mailto:calenbirds@hotmail.com)

## Recent Bird Sightings:

Thanks to this month’s reporters Dan Streiffert, Mike Wetherby, Alex Juchems, and Jane Gardner.

**December 30<sup>th</sup>** Mike Wetherby had a couple surprise visitors to his “man cave (garage)”. One December morning, Mike discovered that a chickadee had snuck under his garage door and was attempting to escape through a closed window. As Mike opened the door to let the chickadee out, he noticed a large shadow-like maple leaf underneath a car. Mike said, “As the garage door closed, that big maple leaf materialized into a hawk that darted to the same window (that the chickadee had tried to exit through).” After Mike reopened his garage, the mysterious hawk flapped up to a wire. With the unidentified hawk perched on the wire, Mike snapped some great shots of the hawk. Mike’s mystery hawk was a **Sharp-shinned Hawk**. Great story Mike!



**January 8<sup>th</sup>** Jane Gardner reported routinely seeing **Pine Siskins** and **Evening Grosbeaks** at her feeder since mid-December.

**January 9<sup>th</sup>** Dan Streiffert also had eight **Pine Siskins** at his feeders. Dan said



“These are the first siskins I’ve seen all year.” On last year’s Christmas Bird Count, we had a grand total of zero Pine Siskins. We have had a few reports of them being sighted this season. It will be interesting to see if their CBC numbers bounce back this year.

**January 14<sup>th</sup>** The Juchem’s backyard has been frequented by **Golden-crowned Sparrows**. Alex Juchems stated “It’s been fun to have the entire family identify both male and female varieties.” As well, the Juchem’s yard was also visited by a **Red-breasted Sapsucker**.

## Mystery Bird of the Month

Tim Brennan saw a flock of these avians on the Christmas Bird Count. Can you guess the birds? Here are the clues:

- A group of me is called a “battery”, a “drift”, a “flush”, a “rout”, or a “shake”.
- In some dry areas, I can live with little or no water, getting my fluids from insects and succulents.
- I sometimes participate in communal brooding, where all of the chicks in a flock are raised by multiple parents. My kind are also known to “egg-dump” or lay eggs in others of my kinds nests.
- Often I am spotted near power lines.
- My plume, or topknot consists of not just one, but six overlapping feathers.
- I am the state bird of California

Who am I?

Answer on last page.

*Bio: Calen is a 15 year old birder. He enjoys birding around Lake Fenwick, Frager Road, and Boeing Ponds—especially with Charlie Wright. Calen is thrilled to revive Charlie’s ‘Seen and Heard’. When not birding, Calen can be seen flying up and down the ice at Kent Valley Ice Center*

# Field Trips by Michele Phiffer



## Weekly Birdwalks at Nisqually

Wednesdays 8:00 am to Noon  
Leader: Phil Kelley

Join Phil Kelley on his weekly bird walks as he counts the birds at Nisqually NWR. The group walks over to an area near the visitor's center to view the entry road estuary, and then takes the boardwalk/trail loop out to the Twin Barns, and the Nisqually overlook area. From there, the group walks the dike, and back to the Riparian Forest.

Some may choose to continue on the new boardwalk extension which goes out toward the mouth of McAlister Creek. It has benches and covered viewing areas.

The walk totals 2.0 miles roundtrip to the boardwalk extension. In winter the estuary boardwalk will add an additional 1 3/4 miles total, so the whole walk including the boardwalk extension is up to 3 3/4 miles.

**Bring:** Good walking shoes or boots, rain gear, water, snacks, and \$3 for entry fee unless you have a pass. Scopes are welcome.

**Meet:** At the Visitor's Center Pond Overlook.

**Directions:** Take I-5 south from Tacoma and exit to Nisqually NWR at exit 114. Take a right at the light.

**Sign-up** is not necessary. Call or email Phil Kelley if you have questions. Phil Kelley, Lacey, (360) 459 1499, [scrubjay323@aol.com](mailto:scrubjay323@aol.com)

## Raptors of the Auburn/Kent Valley

Sunday, Feb 15, 2015; 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

Leader: Roger Orness

Roger Orness will take us to prime raptor viewing spots in the valley during this very-popular field trip. Past trips have been productive for falcons, accipiters and many red-tails to compare the different color morphs. Eagles could be occupying their nest and there is a chance for an early nesting red-tail, if we are lucky.

**Meet:** We will meet at the Auburn Super Mall parking lot north of McDonalds on

15th SW off I-167 at 08:00 and start at 08:30. We will carpool and return by 2 PM.

**Bring:** Bring your lunch, drinks and snacks, dress warm for the weather and be prepared for a short walk on a level gravel road inside a closed area of the Kent ponds.

Space is limited, so email or call Roger soon to reserve your spot.

Roger Orness, [r.orness41@gmail.com](mailto:r.orness41@gmail.com), [253-922-7516](tel:253-922-7516), [253-312-6561](tel:253-312-6561)(cell)



## Soos Creek Owl Prowls

Saturday Night, [Feb 07, 2015](#) -  
or Sat. Night, [Mar 07, 2015](#);  
10:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m.

Leaders: Joe and Liz Miles

Join Friends of Soos Creek Park volunteers Joe and Liz Miles for this late night program and walk exploring the world of owls. We'll start indoors for the first hour learning calls, ID, and info about our local owls, then venture outdoors to prowl for owls.

There is limited space for this program. Reservations are required. Best for adults and children over 13 years. Group size is limited to 15. The owls program is sponsored by Kent City Recreation Dept.

**Meet:** Meet at the Soos Creek Park Maintenance Shop. Soos Creek Park/Trail 24810 148th Avenue SE, Kent.

**Directions:** Take James Street east from Kent. To reach James St, exit I-167 at Willis, turn east to Central, and North to

James. Travel east on James as it becomes SE 240th St. Travel about 4 miles, as 240th dips and turns downhill. Turn right (south) on 148th Ave near the bottom of the hill. The Soos Creek maintenance yard will be down the road about 1/4 mile on the left at a barn and chainlink-fenced parking lot.

**Sign-up:** Call Kent Commons, Kent City Parks and Recreation, [253-856-5000](tel:253-856-5000). This trip FILLS EARLY. Please register in advance.

For further info: E-mail or call Joe Miles, [friendsofsooscreekpark@q.com](mailto:friendsofsooscreekpark@q.com), (253) 639-0123. Joe can answer your questions but cannot arrange the sign-ups.

## Lakes and Parks of Federal Way & Vicinity

Saturday, March 7th  
8:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Leader: Steve Johnson

Steve will be taking us on an excursion. We had a lot of fun doing this trip last year. We'll visit some of the many lakes and ponds in Federal Way, where we will seek rare to uncommon ducks. We will also be looking for songbirds and seabirds in Fife and Redondo.

In early March we will be looking and listening for early migrants. We may walk up to a mile.

**Bring:** Lunch, drinks (hot drinks?), warm clothes. A scope is welcome.

**Meet:** 8:00 AM at the Star Lake P&R north of Federal Way. Folks who wish to leave early may do so.

**Directions:** Take I-5 to exit 147 north of Federal Way. Exit onto S 272nd St, and go west one block to the light. Turn right and go one block into the P&R on the right.

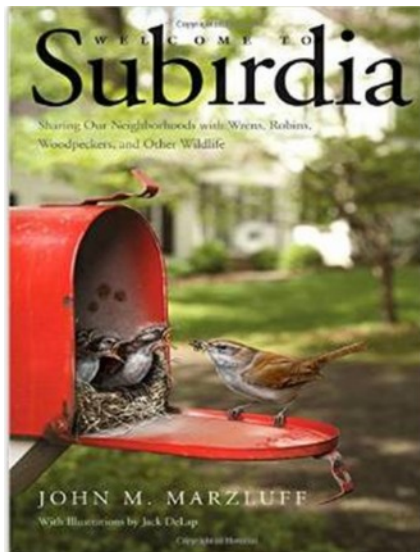
**Sign-Up:** Call or email Steve Johnson, 253-941-9852, [johnsonsj5@msn.com](mailto:johnsonsj5@msn.com)

**Don't forget the link to the Tahoma Audubon Field trips:** [fieldtrips@tahomaudubon.org](mailto:fieldtrips@tahomaudubon.org)

# Book Reviews by Laura Lavington



**W**hen I heard that John Marzluff, University of Washington professor and author of several excellent books about corvids, had a new book out, I was enthusiastic. Further, I found out a couple of months back that John Marzluff is going to be the speaker at Rainier Audubon Society's April 2015 membership meeting, so I knew immediately that a review of his new book would be apropos.



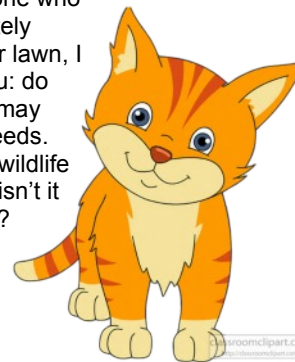
*Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife* reveals an interesting fact: many bird species thrive in the suburban environment, and in some regions (such as ours), a greater variety of birds live in the suburbs than in nearby undisturbed nature. In his book, Marzluff presents data from his field studies along with information from other field biologists across the globe. I won't discuss all of the book's topics—I'll let Marzluff talk to you about them himself in April—but

instead I will mention some of the information that stood out to me.

I have heard people wonder if feeding birds causes those birds to become reliant on people. I read that experts say that that is not the case, so I shrug it off and don't worry about the situation. However, in *Welcome to Subirdia*, John Marzluff gives an actual statistic: birds such as black-capped chickadees get 20 percent of their daily energy requirements from bird feeders if they are available. So, it may seem like those chickadees and juncos don't leave your yard all day to the point that you worry about going on vacation and leaving your feeders unstocked, but according to Marzluff's statistic, your backyard birds are still wild. Of course, that 20 percent is a helpful boost for birds, since they are living in a quickly changing world.

Toward the end of *Welcome to Subirdia*, Marzluff gives ten suggestions to improve the environment for the animals that live in our cities, towns, and suburbs, and the second "commandment" is to keep one's cats indoors. Whether or not to keep cats indoors is a tricky subject about which people have strong feelings, and I have definitely thought about the subject a lot. When we adopted two orange tabby kittens in July, we had to decide then if we were going to allow them to go outside, as our previous cats had done. I knew then that if I let them outside, I would have to stop feeding birds completely (after all, house cats are nonnative predators). We decided to keep the kittens indoors and see how it went—and you know what? Ferdinand and Claudius are extremely happy—they don't seem deprived at all. On the other hand, there *are* consequences if cats go outside: Marzluff states that a free-ranging cat kills one in ten wild birds.

Wow, that's a lot! Another of Marzluff's "commandments" is to not covet your neighbor's lawn, and in that section he shared another interesting statistic: in 2005, 2 percent of the coterminous United States (40 million acres of land) was lawn. The robins seem ok with lawn (although Marzluff says that earthworms are nonnative, which I didn't know), but most other birds don't have much use for it. As someone who has completely removed her lawn, I will warn you: do so and you may get more weeds. Still, for the wildlife in *Subirdia*, isn't it a good idea?



Reading *Welcome to Subirdia*

gave added depth to my understanding of human development, and I appreciated the generally positive tone of the book: discussions dealing with development, habitat loss, and climate change can get gloomy fast, but Marzluff kept a balanced tone that was at times even optimistic. Oh, and I forgot to mention that juncos' tails are evolving in *Subirdia*: you will have to read the book to find out more.

**Featherhaven**  
Native Songbird Rehabilitation  
featherhaven@gmail.com  
www.featherhaven.org

**CHECK OUT THE NEW RAINIER AUDUBON MEETUP GROUP AT**  
<http://www.meetup.com/Rainier-Audubon-Society/>

## 2014 Kent-Auburn CBC Checklist

| <b>Species</b>         | <b>Count</b> | <b>Species</b>          | <b>Count</b> |
|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Gr Wht-fronted Goose   |              | Glaucous-Winged Gull    | 402          |
| Snow Goose             |              | WestxGlc-Winged Gull    | [n]400       |
| Cackling Goose         | 561          | Gull sp.                | [n]7         |
| Canada Goose           | 1907         | Common Murre            |              |
| Trumpeter Swan         | 62           | Pigeon Guillemot        | 7            |
| Tundra Swan            |              | Marbled Murrelet        |              |
| Wood Duck              | 11           | Rhinoceros Auklet       | 1            |
| Gadwall                | 39           | Rock Pigeon             | 662          |
| Eurasian Wigeon        | 5            | Band-tailed Pigeon      | 8            |
| American Wigeon        | 1611         | Mourning Dove           | 14           |
| Mallard                | 1549         | Eurasian Collared Dove  | 100          |
| Green-winged Teal      | 600          | Barn Owl                | 3            |
| Eurasian-Gw Teal       |              | Western Screech-Owl     | 3            |
| Blue-wing Teal         |              | Great Horned Owl        | 2            |
| Cinnamon Teal          |              | Northern Pygmy-Owl      |              |
| Northern Shoveler      | 134          | Barred Owl              |              |
| Northern Pintail       | 1131         | Short-eared Owl         |              |
| Canvasback             | 1            | Northern Saw-whet Owl   | 2            |
| Redhead                | 34           | Anna's Hummingbird      | 63           |
| Ring-necked Duck       | 428          | Belted Kingfisher       | 14           |
| Greater Scaup          | 2            | Red-breasted Sapsucker  | 10           |
| Lesser Scaup           | 61           | Downy Woodpecker        | 30           |
| Harlequin Duck         | 8            | Hairy Woodpecker        | 7            |
| Surf Scoter            | 114          | Northern Flicker        | 188          |
| White-winged Scoter    | 20           | Y-shafted               | [n]          |
| Black Scoter           | 8            | Pileated Woodpecker     | 11           |
| Bufflehead             | 771          | Northern Shrike         |              |
| Common Goldeneye       | 128          | Hutton's Vireo          | 4            |
| Barrow's Goldeneye     | 66           | Steller's Jay           | 151          |
| Hooded Merganser       | 109          | Western Scrub Jay       | 15           |
| Common Merganser       | 110          | American Crow           | 5066         |
| Red-breasted Merganser | 57           | Common Raven            | 8            |
| Ruddy Duck             | 65           | Blk-capped Chickadee    | 466          |
| Ring-necked Pheasant   |              | Mountain Chickadee      |              |
| Ruffed Grouse          |              | Chestnut-bk'd Chickadee | 155          |
| California Quail       | 3            | Bushtit                 | 221          |
| Red-throated Loon      | 12           | Red-breasted Nuthatch   | 44           |
| Pacific Loon           | 1            | Brown Creeper           | 21           |
| Common Loon            | 7            | Bewick's Wren           | 55           |
| Pied-billed Grebe      | 73           | Pacific Wren            | 43           |
| Horned Grebe           | 180          | Marsh Wren              | 39           |
| Red-necked Grebe       | 29           | American Dipper         | 1            |

| <b>Species</b>        | <b>Count</b> | <b>Species</b>         | <b>Count</b> |
|-----------------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Eared Grebe           |              | Golden-cr. Kinglet     | 313          |
| Western Grebe         | 6            | Ruby-cr. Kinglet       | 187          |
| Brandt's Cormorant    | 2            | Hermit Thrush          | 1            |
| Dbl-crested Cormorant | 194          | American Robin         | 1012         |
| Pelagic Cormorant     | 3            | Varied Thrush          | 43           |
| Amer. Bittern         |              | European Starling      | 1466         |
| Great Blue Heron      | 51           | American Pipit         |              |
| Green Heron           | 2            | Cedar Waxwing          |              |
| Osprey                |              | Orange-crowned Warbler | 4            |
| Bald Eagle            | 22           | Yellow-rumped Warbler  | 12           |
| Adult                 | [n]15        | Audubon's              | [n]12        |
| Immature              | [n]5         | Myrtle                 |              |
| No. Harrier           | 3            | Townsend's Warbler     | 5            |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk    | 4            | Common Yellowthroat    |              |
| Cooper's Hawk         | 17           | Spotted Towhee         | 158          |
| Northern Goshawk      |              | Savannah Sparrow       | 1            |
| Red-tailed Hawk       | 75           | Fox Sparrow            | 110          |
| Harlan's Hawk         | [n]          | Song Sparrow           | 420          |
| Rough-legged Hawk     |              | Lincoln's Sparrow      | 7            |
| Amer. Kestrel         | 6            | Swamp Sparrow          |              |
| Merlin                | 2            | White-throated Sparrow | 3            |
| Peregrine Falcon      | 2            | White-crowned Sparrow  | 49           |
| Virginia Rail         | 19           | Golden-crowned Sparrow | 160          |
| Sora                  | 1            | Dark-eyed Junco        | 757          |
| American Coot         | 829          | Slate-colored Junco    | [n]          |
| Black-bellied Plover  |              | Red-winged Blackbird   | 302          |
| Killdeer              | 19           | Western Meadowlark     |              |
| Spotted Sandpiper     | 1            | Yellow-Hd Blackbird    |              |
| Greater Yellowlegs    |              | Brewer's Blackbird     | 100          |
| Black Turnstone       |              | Brown-headed Cowbird   |              |
| Western Sandpiper     |              | Purple Finch           | 14           |
| Least Sandpiper       |              | House Finch            | 220          |
| Dunlin                | 95           | Red Crossbill          | 50           |
| Long-billed Dowitcher |              | Common Redpoll         |              |
| Wilson's Snipe        | 2            | Pine Siskin            | 703          |
| Bonaparte's Gull      |              | American Goldfinch     | 82           |
| Mew Gull              | 51           | Evening Grosbeak       | 7            |
| Ring-billed Gull      | 3            | House Sparrow          | 148          |
| California Gull       |              | Red-Shouldered Hawks   | 1            |
| Herring Gull          | 2            |                        |              |
| Thayer's Gull         | 2            | Total Individuals      | 21980        |
| Western Gull          | 25           | Total Species          | 118          |

[n] means "Not countable as species"

# 2014 Christmas Bird Count Participant List

- Field**
- Area 1**  
**Leaders** - Alex Juchems, Grace Oliver and Ollie Oliver  
**Participants** - Steve Caldwell, Sue Cooper, Alex Juchems, Matthew Juchems, Sara Juchems, Grace Oliver, Ollie Oliver, Ed Stanton, Ross Tabor
  - Area 2**  
**Leader** Barbara Petersen  
**Participants** - Lucia Faithfull, Adele Freeland, Jay Galvin, Dan Streiffert, Pat Toth, Cheryl White
  - Area 3**  
**Leaders** - Caren Adams and Ken Brunner  
**Participants** - Mary Frey, Mike Sanderi
  - Area 4**  
**Leader** Brenda Tom  
**Participants** - Ron Toonen
  - Area 5**  
**Leader** Tim Brennan  
**Participants** - Hope Andersen, Jes Ericksen
  - Area 6N**  
**Leader** Roger Orness  
**Participants** - Kathy Andrich, Jerry Broadus, Clarice Clark, Etta Cosey, Joan Michaels, Susan Myers, Scott Ramos, Mike Walker
  - Area 6C**  
**Leaders** - Calen Randall and Cindy Flanagan  
**Participants** - Cameron Randall, Carley Randall
  - Area 6S**  
 David Swayne (Leader)
  - Area 7**  
**Leaders** - Carol Schulz and Charlie Wright  
**Participants** - Bill Brynteson, Linnaea Chapman, Marilyn Jones, Illa Pomeroy, Debra Russell
  - Area 8**  
**Leader** - Steve Johnson  
**Participants** - Merri Berg, Marisa Benavente, Jim Flynn, Carol Johnson, Laura Lavington, Katie Tylczak
  - Feeder Watch**  
 Nancy Streiffert (Area 4), Cathea Stanley (Area 7), Blythe Stanton (Area 7), Sharon Gustafson (Area 8), Annette Tabor (Area 8)

## White River Valley Museum

### Of a Feather: Artists, Birds and the Northwest

### January 14 – June 7, 2015

*As this region's winter birds roost outdoors, admirers can appreciate their beauty in an inspired indoor setting.*

On January 14, as the Northwest's wintering eagles dive and feed on local salmon, the White River Valley Museum opens a powerful northwest art exhibit of works featuring and inspired by birds.

This exhibit presents seemingly disparate works of art and ties them together with a common subject matter--birds. The collection reveals artists inspired by place and nature, by birds as metaphors for human experience and hope, and by more than a touch of the divine and mystical.

Of a Feather is composed of 26 major works of art from 19 northwest artists, working in a variety of media including stone sculpture, jewelry, sumi, printmaking, papier-mâché, oil, acrylic, wood, and feathers. Highlights include: Michael Spafford's print series entitled 13 Ways of Seeing a Blackbird, Morris Grave's oversized and ethereal Black Swan and Bill Holm's wooden transformation mask, Sea Eagle Changing to Sun.

Local artist, scholar and guest curator Kenneth Greg Watson comments, "Northwest art lovers are coming to view Auburn's White River Valley Museum as a special place between Seattle and Tacoma where they can experience and enjoy art of the finest quality. Of A Feather will continue this gem of a museum's reputation for innovative exhibits with world class art and broad regional appeal."

Of a Feather is sponsored by 4Culture. All of the artwork is on loan from other museums, galleries, artists and collectors.

**Location**  
 918 H Street SE  
 Auburn Community Campus  
 Auburn, WA 98002  
 (behind the Auburn Library, in Les Gove Park)

**Hours**  
 Wednesday - Sunday, noon - 4:00pm and every First  
 Thursday from 6 - 8pm.



## Mewsings from Millie

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



Hello and welcome back to my musings!

I overheard someone the other day talking about the Wolf Moon. I wondered what that meant. After my people left for the day, I decided to hunt around on the internet and see what I could find out.

It appears that giving different names to the full Moon dates back to Native American tribes ranging from New England to Lake Superior. The tribes kept track of the seasons by giving distinctive names to each recurring full Moon. The name was then applied to the entire month in which the full Moon occurred. Early settlers continued the custom and created some of their own names. Below is a list of full Moon names according to the Farmers Almanac.

**January - Full Wolf Moon** - The wolves are heard howling hungrily outside the Indian villages amid the cold and deep snows of winter. It is also referred to as the Old Moon or the Moon After Yule.

**February - Full Snow Moon** - The heaviest snow usually falls during this month, hence the name for February's full Moon. Some tribes called it the Full Hunger Moon as weather conditions made hunting difficult.

**March - Full Worm Moon** - As the ground begins to thaw, earthworm casts appear bringing the return of the robins. Northern tribes called this the Full Crow Moon because the cawing of crows signaled the end of winter. It is also known as the Full Crust Moon because of the crust formed on the snow due to it thawing during the day and freezing at night. Because this time of year marks the time of tapping

maple trees, it is also known as the Full Sap Moon.

**April - Full Pink Moon** - This name comes from the herb moss pink or wild ground phlox which is one of the earliest widespread flowers of the spring. Other names include the Full Sprouting Grass Moon and the Egg Moon. Some coastal tribes called it the Full Fish Moon because the shad would begin to swim upstream to spawn.

**May - Full Flower Moon** - Flowers are blooming everywhere during this time, hence the name. Other names include the Full Corn Planting Moon or the Milk Moon.

**June - Full Strawberry Moon** - The season is short for harvesting delicious strawberries during the month of June so the full Moon is named for this scrumptious treat.

**July - Full Buck Moon** - New antlers of buck deer push out of their foreheads in coatings of velvety fur creating this name. It is also called the Full Thunder Moon due to the frequency of thunderstorms this time of year and also the Full Hay Moon.

**August - Full Sturgeon Moon** - During August, sturgeon are most readily caught. Some tribes knew it as the Full Red Moon because it can appear reddish as it rises and it is also called the Green Corn Moon or Grain Moon.

**September - Full Corn Moon or Full Harvest Moon** - This full Moon marks the time when corn is supposed to be harvested. If it occurs closest to the autumn equinox, then it is called the Harvest Moon. This can occur in September or October. This would be the time to gather corn, pumpkins, squash, beans and wild rice.

**October - Full Hunter's Moon or Full Harvest Moon** - The leaves are falling, the deer are fattened and it's time to store meat for the long winter ahead. It's also easy to spot fox, rabbit and other game in the harvested fields. This moon has also been called the Blood Moon or Sanguine Moon.

**November - Full Beaver Moon** - This is the time to set beaver traps before the swamps freeze to ensure a supply of warm winter furs. Also, the beavers are actively preparing for winter. This moon has also been called the Frosty Moon.



**December - Full Cold Moon or Full Long Nights Moon** - Nights are at their longest and darkest and the cold of winter fastens its grip. It is also called the Moon Before Yule.

A legend from the native peoples of the Pacific Northwest explains how Raven brought light to the darkness at the beginning of the world. When the Great Spirit created all things he kept them separate and stored in cedar boxes. He gifted these boxes to the animals who existed before humans. When the animals opened the boxes, all the things that make up the world such as mountains, fire, water, wind and plant seeds came into being. Seagull was given the box that contained all the light of the world.

Seagull coveted the box and refused to open it. All the people begged Raven to persuade Seagull to open the box and release the light. Raven asked, demanded, flattered and even tried to trick Seagull into opening the box. Seagull still refused. Finally Raven became angry and stuck a thorn in Seagull's foot until the pain became so great it caused Seagull to drop the box. The box flew open and out of it came the sun, moon and stars allowing the first day to begin.

I hope you have enjoyed my little bit of "moonlighting". Now, for me, it's lights out!

Until next time,

Millie

The Muse of Mews

# Bird of the Month: Towhees

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



Spotted Towhee

- Towhees are usually shy sulkers and rush for cover at the slightest disturbance.
- There are six species of Towhees in North America; Spotted, Eastern, Green-tailed, Canyon, Abert's and California. Only the Eastern Towhee is found east of the Mississippi River.
- Towhees are members of the sparrow family.
- Towhees are ground feeders and use a hop-and-scratch foraging method. While jumping forward with its head and tail up, it kicks its strong legs backwards to uncover seeds and invertebrates in the leaf litter on the forest floor or underneath feeders.
- In 1586 John White became the first European to discover and draw the Eastern Towhee. He had come to North Carolina as the governor of Sir Walter Raleigh's doomed colony on Roanoke Island.
- The name "towhee," a simulation of the bird's call, was coined in 1731 by the naturalist and bird artist, Mark Catesby.
- The Eastern Towhee and the Spotted Towhee were both named the Rufus-sided Towhee until 1995 when they were determined to be genetically separate species.
- Northern populations of the Eastern Towhee are migratory; southern populations are year-round residents.
- The Spotted Towhee seems to be somewhat hardier than the Eastern Towhee, as it withstands lower temperatures.
- About 30 percent of the Spotted Towhee's food is insects and the rest is seeds and berries.
- The bold white spots on the Spotted Towhee may help it blend into sun-dappled undergrowth.
- Early in the breeding season, male Spotted Towhees spend the morning singing their hearts out trying to attract a mate. They have been recorded spending 70-90% of the morning singing. After finding a mate, they spend only 5% of their time singing.
- The oldest recorded Spotted Towhee was 10 years 8 months old.
- Spencer Baird was the first person to describe the Abert's Towhee in 1852. He named it for Lt. James William Abert, a U.S. Army topographical engineer, who obtained the specimen during a survey of New Mexico.
- Abert's Towhees average two successful broods a year despite living in a harsh hot and dry environment, but it may take as many as six nesting attempts to produce the two broods.
- California Towhees aggressively defend their territories year-round and often battle their own reflections in windows and other reflective surfaces.
- The California Towhee was first named as a separate species in 1839. By 1886, it had been lumped in with the Canyon Towhee and both were renamed the Brown Towhee. In 1989, DNA studies once again separated the two species.
- California Towhees are known to use the morning dew on plants as a source of water.
- Female Green-tailed Towhees distract predators away from their nest by dropping straight down to the ground and running away in a mouse-like fashion.

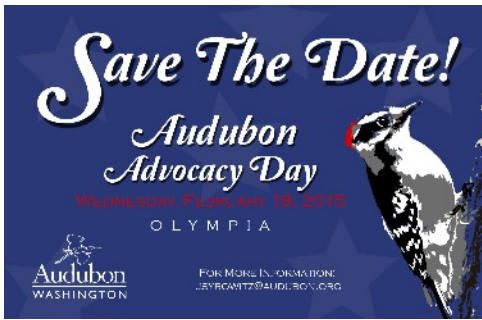
## FREE DISCOVER PASSES FOR MEMBERS OF RAINIER AUDUBON SOCIETY

To support our state parks – and to boost membership - the local chapter of the Audubon Society, called the Rainier Audubon Society, is giving away free Discover Passes to any new member who joins Rainier Audubon during 2014.

All you have to do is come to a meeting, join up and get your free Discover Pass. The cost of joining is \$25.00/individual and \$30/family. The cost of a Discover Pass is normally \$35.00 dollars so you've just saved \$10.00 and you have a year's membership in the Audubon Society and a year's free access to all of the state parks in Washington.

Each Discover Pass can be used for any two vehicles you own. Just fill out two license plate numbers on the Pass, hang it from the rear view mirror of whichever car you're taking, and you're good to go for a full year of state park recreation.

The Rainier Audubon Society meets monthly at the United Methodist Church in Federal Way, and presents programs on all aspects of nature, birding, conservation, outdoor photography, and many other topics that adults and children who love the outdoors enjoy. For more information go to [www.RainierAudubon.org](http://www.RainierAudubon.org).



### Audubon Advocacy Day

Over 12,000 Audubon activists received the Audubon Advocacy Day announcement/sign up today through our new alert platform. We look forward to seeing many of you in Olympia on **February 18<sup>th</sup>** for a day of activist action alongside **National Audubon CEO David Yarnold**.

### Forage Fish

**HB 1152 – Concerning the management of forage fish resources. SUPPORT**

This year's first bill regarding forage fish management was introduced to the House yesterday, sponsored by Democratic Representatives [Fitzgibbon](#), [Stanford](#), [Dun shee](#), [Tharinger](#). The bill looks to implement smelt and sand lance spawning surveys throughout Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and trawl surveys to evaluate the prevalence of all species of forage fish throughout the Sound. Stay tuned for details on this and other forage fish related bills as they move forward and for ways you can help us protect marine bird food resources and nearshore habitats.

### Oil Transportation

**SB 5087 – Concerning oil transportation safety. SUPPORT**

Sponsored by 20 Democratic legislators, the Governor's request bill regarding safe oil transport through Washington was introduced in the Senate yesterday. This bill has 5 main components:

Gives the public information on how oil is moving through our communities

Expands the barrel tax to include trains and pipelines (not just vessels) and increases the tax from 4 cents/barrel to 10 cents/barrel

Ensures that companies carrying oil, not taxpayers, pay for cleaning up all oil spills

Improves over-water transport safety requirements

Broadens the definition of oil to include bitumen (tar sands) and broadens the definition of facility to include railroads that transport oil

**More info:** [EPC priority one pager](#)

**SB 5057 – Concerning the safe transport of hazardous materials. OPPOSE**

**Public hearing** in the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment & Telecommunications was today – **THANK YOU to Sam Merrill**, Black Hills Audubon, for signing in and testifying against this bad legislation.

Unfortunately, a few days before SB 5087 was introduced, Senator Ericksen introduced an opposing oil transport bill. Similar to last year, this weak, oil-backed bill is:

Focused on planning/studies (that are already required)

Lacks public disclosure/community right to know clause

Provides a grant program for first responders funded by raiding MTCA

**More info:** [Governor oil bill vs. Ericksen oil bill one pager](#)

### Carbon Pollution Accountability Act

Both Senate and House sponsored bills to be introduced – **no bill number(s) yet. SUPPORT**

**Public hearing** planned for January 27<sup>th</sup>.

The Carbon Pollution Accountability Act (CPAA) is Governor request legislation that aims to:

Make polluters pay for carbon emissions

Enforce our state climate laws

Reduce harmful emissions in the future

Generate needed revenue to make smart investments across the entire state

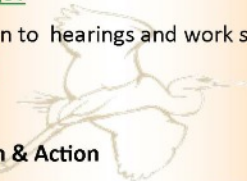
**More info:** Draft bill, 2 pagers, and informative articles available on our [legislative webpage](#).

### Strategy

Both the *Oil Transportation Safety Now* and the *Carbon Pollution Accountability Act* priorities are part of a larger multi-year collaborative climate campaign, to be officially launched in Olympia the same day as the CPAA Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> hearing. Stay tuned for more details.

## 2015 Legislative Session

- The 2015 Legislative Session is scheduled from January 12 to April 26, 2015.
- Audubon Advocacy Day is scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, 2015.
- Audubon Washington legislative updates are posted at <http://wa.audubon.org/legislative-session-2015>
- For up-to-date legislative information, visit [www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov)
- Watch or listen to hearings and work sessions on [www.tvw.org](http://www.tvw.org)



### **Communication & Action**

Weekly legislative updates will be sent from the state office to the WaGeneral and WSACC listservs. If you are not on one of these lists, please sign up now to be among the first to know about statewide Audubon issues! To sign up, visit <http://wa.audubon.org/communication-tools>.

New in 2015, Audubon Washington will send out participatory action alerts around our most pressing issues. Be sure to take advantage of these easy activist actions and help us show the power and extent of our grassroots network!

The goals, strategies, and combined priority actions and events that will take place throughout the session are outlined in the [2015 EPC Legislative Action Plan](#).

**Save these dates** to your calendar and stay tuned for more information!

**Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup> – Legislative Action Conference Call:** a monthly conference call with interested activists (if interested, please email the [Chapter Conservation Manager](#)). The goal will be to provide activists a consistent update on where the priorities are and actions that are scheduled in the upcoming month. Both Priority campaigns will be incorporated in each call.

**Saturday, January 31<sup>st</sup> – Priority Forum:** a forum for both priorities with a goal to provide educational opportunities to build a network of distributed activists for session and beyond.

Answer: California Quail



“The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.  
The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference.  
The opposite of faith is not heresy, it's indifference.  
And the opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.”  
— Elie Wiesel



## Rainier Audubon Membership Subscription or Renewal Form

### One-year Membership in Rainier Audubon

- \$25—Individual Membership
- \$30—Family Membership

To join or renew, mail this application with your payment to:

Rainier Audubon Society - Membership  
PO Box 778  
Auburn, WA 98071



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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