

The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

February 2017

Rainier Audubon Membership Meeting

7:00 PM February 20, 2017

“Stronger Together”

Connie Sidles

President Obama, in his farewell address, asked us to lift up our hearts, be not afraid, and pitch in to strengthen our nation. His message resonates with us birders. We have long known that we must take action to preserve nature and keep safe the birds we love. Now more than ever, we need to stay strong and pitch in.

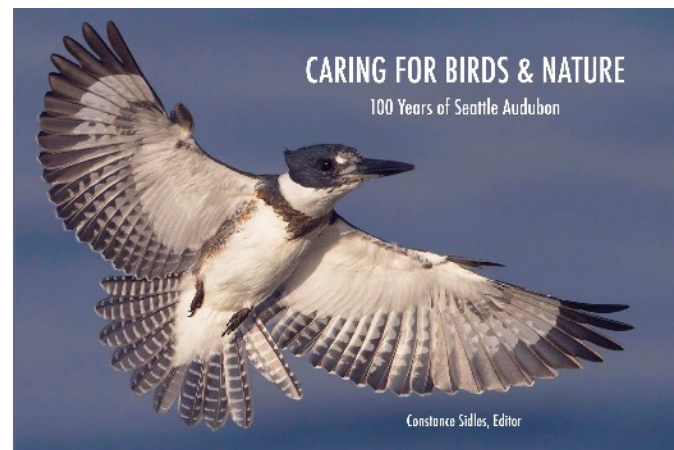
It can be hard to do that, as we know. Sometimes it seems that the tide of development is inexorable. So many headaches, so much to do, losses along the way, and victories that can slip away even after they're won. How can we lift up our hearts, knowing all this?

The answer may lie in the stories of the people who have gone before us, faced similar challenges, never lost hope, never gave up. They gave us the world of nature we keep today: Mount Rainier National Park, Olympic National Park, Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, and scores more. Their stories, told to editor and author Connie Sidles, fill her newest book, *Caring for Birds & Nature*. In broadest terms, this is an oral history of Seattle Audubon's 100 years of effort to help birds and nature. But it is more, for this book tells the tale of how we can shape the future to preserve what we love.

Come hear these inspiring stories, learn how these ordinary people of the past did extraordinary things, and how we can too.

Connie Sidles is a master birder and member of Seattle Audubon's Conservation Committee. She is an award-winning author of five nature books and a storyteller at heart.

Join us at 6:30 for conversation and refreshments.



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.

Rainier Audubon programs are held at 7:00 PM at the
Federal Way United Methodist Church
29645 - 51st Ave. So. 98001 (in unincorporated Auburn)

New Rainier Audubon Google Group / email list

We are combining the old Rainier Leaders email list with the ras-activities list into a new RainierAudubon google group.

The [ras-activities] group has been renamed to [RainierAudubon]. So if you were previously a member of this list, then you are still a member of the renamed group. The only difference being that when you send an email to this group, the address is RainierAudubon@googlegroups.com

I have sent out invitations to join this group to numerous people. If you get an invitation, you can click on it to join the group. You must have a Google account.

If you did not get an invitation, you may request to join the group by going to groups.google.com and searching for "Rainier Audubon". You can then request to join the group.

Alternatively, you can sign up on the RainierAudubon.org website.

New Rainier Audubon Facebook Page

Jay Galvin has created a Facebook page for us. Please check it out at

<https://www.facebook.com/rainieraudubonsociety/>

Read Laura Lavington's article about the Women's March, which I could not fit in this edition.

Dan

Rainier Audubon Society Directory

Position	Name	Board Member	Phone	email
President	Heather Gibson	Yes	253-856-9812	hedder_swedder@yahoo.com
Vice President	Jay Galvin	Yes	253-939-3094	gjgalvin@comcast.net
Secretary	Open			
Treasurer	Laura Lavington	Yes	253-941-7372	laura.lavington@gmail.com
Membership Chair	Pat Toth	Yes	206-767-4944	h2opat@msn.com
Education Chair	Cindy Flanagan	Yes	253-941-3933	camcalcin@hotmail.com
Program Chair	Dale Meland	No	253-946-1637	dmeland@hotmail.com
Field Trip Chair	Barbara Petersen	Yes	253 389 3204	bpbatfan@aol.com
Publicity Chair	Jay Galvin	Yes	253-939-3094	gjgalvin@comcast.net
Backyard Habitat Chair	Marie West-Johnson	Yes	206-817-8754	crgrie123@yahoo.com
Conservation Chair	Dan Streiffert	No	253-796-2203	dan_streiffert@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Dan Streiffert	No	253-796-2203	dan_streiffert@hotmail.com
Webmaster	Treesa Hertzell	No	253-255-1808	Autumn207@comcast.net
Member at Large	Stephen Feldman	Yes	360-802-5211	stephanfeldman@gmail.com
Hospitality	Sandra Embrey	No	253-517-3633	sandra.embrey@gmail.com
Mailing	Debra Russell	No	425 829 4008	debrarussell@comcast.net
Lifetime Members	Max Prinsen	Yes	425-432-9965	
Lifetime Members	Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen	Yes	425-432-9965	

Bad News, People: 2016 Was Officially the Warmest Year on Record

For the third year in a row, Earth has set a new record for its highest average temperature since 1880. And the evidence is everywhere.

By Hannah Waters January 18, 2017

Climate Threatens Birds Worldwide



See how the Red-crowned Crane and thousands of other species worldwide are at risk from climate change.

[Read the Report](#)

We've done it again: For the third year in a row, we've pushed this [pale blue dot](#) that we call home past its previous temperature record.

This morning, scientists from two government agencies—the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)—[announced that 2016 was the warmest year](#) since modern recordkeeping began in 1880. NOAA and NASA each maintain independent datasets of the Earth's temperature record, and both agree that 2016 was nearly 1°C (1.69°F and 1.8°F, respectively) warmer than 19th century baselines.

"These datasets are all singing the same song even if they're hitting different notes along the way," said Deke Arndt, the chief of monitoring at NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information, at today's press conference. "The pattern is very clear."

That pattern is Earth's undeniable warming trend. Sixteen of the 17 hottest years on record have occurred since 2001—a pattern that can't be chalked up to chance. Instead, scientists attribute global warming to fossil fuel-powered plants emitting greenhouse gasses. A warmer atmosphere and ocean alter rainfall patterns and weather (which in turn alter the distribution of plants, animals, and other natural resources) while also melting sea ice and glaciers, causing sea level to rise.

Temperatures in 2015 and 2016 were boosted by a strong El Niño, a natural phenomenon that releases energy and water vapor from the Pacific Ocean into the atmosphere and shifts weather patterns. But 2016's record temperatures can't be pinned on warming from El Niño alone: "It was really global warmth that we saw in 2016, even more so than what we observed in 2015," Arndt said. As evidence, he pointed to last year's [major shifts in polar ice, especially in the Arctic](#). Starting in October and lasting through the end of the year, Arctic sea ice [continued to shrink](#) just

as it should have been refreezing from the winter's cold. The Arctic is more sensitive to changes in global temperature than any other area of the world, and could be a sign that we're approaching dangerous levels of warming.

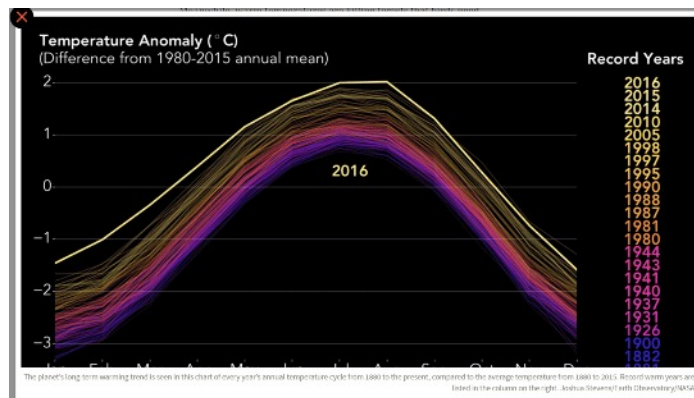


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In 2016, Caspian Terns followed warm temperatures and [nested 1,000 miles farther north](#) than ever recorded. Photo: Marlin Greene/Audubon Photography Awards

The Arctic ice loss in 2016 is among many warming signs that the Earth's climate is changing in ways we can now see and feel. For Arctic birds, warmer air and water largely means shifts in food sources. Some fish species that [previously couldn't survive in the frigid water](#) are now available, while staple foods like Arctic cod are migrating north and to deeper water. [Some birds benefit](#) from these changes, while others [fail to find food](#) and [starve](#).

Meanwhile, warm temperatures are killing forests that birds need. [Yellow cedars](#) in British Columbia, [giant sequoias](#) in California, and [Douglas firs](#) in the West are among the tree species declining as the climate warms. In earlier periods of climate change, before humans settled so much of North America, these trees would be able to migrate to other areas with more suitable temperatures. But today, for many species, there's nowhere for them to move; there are too many houses and roads to establish new forests.



Annual Temperature Cycle from 1980 to 2015

(Continued on page 9)

Seen & Heard by Calen Randall



36th Annual Rainier Audubon Christmas Bird Count Report

On December 26th, 59 birders ventured out for the 36th edition of the Rainier Audubon Christmas Bird Count. The birders ranged from locals to John and Mary-Lou Zolko who were visiting from the Pittsburg, Pennsylvania area. Shoutout to Jeff Jendro for his commitment in making the five hour commute here and back to his home in Longview, just to get out birding in Area 7. Many of the CBC participants were out on their first ever CBC. They need at least 35 more to catch eternal Rainier Audubon member and Area 8 leader Steve Johnson. Steve, who has been sighted in as many Rainier CBC's as Song Sparrows have (all 36), is the only birder from the first count in 1980 that still attends the CBC now.

After the count the CBC attendees got to peruse through some of the old records from the first count. Much has changed on the count since 1980; no longer are Ruffed Grouse spotted in the Green River Valley, several species populations are considerably lower than they were on the counts from the 80's, and the habitat in the circle shrinks yearly. However, there is much to be excited about. 2016's count features over double the number of participants as the first counts did and over 10,000 more birds sighted than the 1980 version. As well, this year four birders 18 and under participated, including 14 year old eBird phenom Adrian Lee. Hopefully many of the kids involved

in our CBC for Kids will help increase that number and expand interest in the bird count for youth. Whatever the case, here's hoping the next 36 years of Rainier Audubon Christmas Bird Counts just as memorable as the first 36!

Here are some of the notable details from the 2016 Rainier Audubon CBC:

Total Number of Birds: 29,927

Number of Species: 119 (All species sighted during count week)

Highlights: The 2016 CBC marked the year of the owl as a total of five species and fifteen individuals were spotted throughout the count circle including four **Barn Owls** (three count week), five **Great Horned Owls**, and four **Western Screech-Owls** (three in the Redondo Canyon). Waterfowl species such as **Canvasback**, **Redhead**, and **Ruddy Duck** have bounced back after low totals on the icy ponds last count. Also on the upswing were finches: **Pine Siskins**, **American Goldfinch**, and **Purple Finch** all posted their highest totals in the past few years.



Other highlights included a **Marbled Murrelet** at Des Moines Marina, three **Black Turnstone** in Area 8, thirty **Harlequin Ducks**, and three **American Dipper**.

Varied Thrush was not the easiest bird to spot on this year's count, unless you were in Area 3, or to be more precise, Ken

Brunner's yard. Ken spotted a wild 44 thrush all hopping outside his house the day of the count! No word was released on the type of new bird feed Ken got for Christmas that brought all the thrush to his yard...

One of my highlights from the count was watching a murmuration of Starlings over the Carpinito's Pumpkin Patch fields. At first the group was merely a small flock, but after a couple minutes of looping over the corn fields, another group of twenty starlings joined them, and then another. After awhile the flock numbered nearly 300 and small bands of Starlings would fly off and rejoin the big flock at random. Often, this behavior in starlings is noted when raptors are nearby. Sure enough, on a telephone wire on the other side of West Valley Highway perched an **American Kestrel** and over on top of a pole a **Sharp-shinned Hawk**. Both stared attentively at the flock of starlings; however, unlike us, I don't think they were conducting a bird count so much as scanning the bird breakfast menu.

Notable Lows: Though seven species not sighted on the 2015 count were seen this December, the 2016 edition of the count was not without some large misses, most notably Northern Harrier. Overall, it was a low year for raptors; however the Northern Harrier was a surprise as 2016 was only the second time, and first since 1997, that a Northern Harrier has not graced the skies on the Rainier Audubon CBC. Where have the harriers gone? As Charlie Wright said, "some years the big Harrier question was which birds did we

double count, not 'did we see any.'" Since November, no Northern Harriers have been sighted closer to the circle than Nisqually and Sammamish.

Another surprising miss was **Green Heron**. The heron routinely sighted at the Old Fishing

(Continued on page 8)

Bio: Calen is a 17 year old birder entering his sixth year writing the Seen and Heard. Currently attending Highline College, Calen enjoys birding in the Green River Valley and around Ithaca, New York.

2016 CBC Results

Species	Total	Species	Total	Species	Total	Species	Total
Snow Goose	CW	Red-necked Grebe	8	Common Murre	2	American Dipper	3
Cackling Goose	1644	Western Grebe	17	Pigeon Guillemot	3	Golden-crowned Kinglet	286
Canada Goose	1339	Brandt's Cormorant	5	Marbled Murrelet	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	112
Trumpeter Swan	34	Double-crested Cormorant	85	Rhinoerous Auklet	14	American Robin	859
Wood Duck	16	Pelagic Cormorant	1	Rock Pigeon	646	Varied Thrush	63
Gadwall	49	American Bittern	1	Band-tailed Pigeon	14	European Starling	1938
Eurasian Wigeon	8	Great Blue Heron	33	Eurasian Collared Dove	66	American Pipit	0
American Wigeon	2069	Green Heron	0	Mourning Dove	7	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Mallard	1901	Bald Eagle	27	Barn Owl	4	Yellow-rumped Warbler	19
Northern Shoveler	151	Northern Harrier	0	Great Horned Owl	5	Audubon's	18
Northern Pintail	855	Sharp-shinned Hawk	10	Barred Owl	1	Myrtle	1
Green-winged Teal	718	Cooper's Hawk	10	Western Screech-Owl	4	Townsend's Warbler	1
Canvasback	2	Red-tailed Hawk	60	Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	Spotted Towhee	188
Redhead	55	American Kestrel	4	Anna's Hummingbird	84	Savannah Sparrow	0
Ring-necked Duck	815	Merlin	1	Belted Kingfisher	12	Fox Sparrow	75
Greater Scaup	23	Peregrin Falcon	1	Red-breasted Sapsucker	12	Song Sparrow	377
Lesser Scaup	63	Virginia Rail	9	Downy Woodpecker	24	Lincoln's Sparrow	10
Harlequin Duck	30	Sora	0	Hairy Woodpecker	2	Swamp Sparrow	0
Surf Scoter	50	American Coot	808	Northern Flicker	159	White-throated Sparrow	0
White-winged Scoter	14	Killdeer	52	Yellow-shafted	0	White-crowned Sparrow	92
Black Scoter	1	Spotted Sandpiper	1	Pileated Woodpecker	14	Golden-crowned Sparrow	145
Bufflehead	399	Least Sandpiper	1	Stellar's Jay	144	Dark-eyed Junco	705
Common Goldeneye	114	Dunlin	41	California Scrub Jay	18	Slate-colored Junco	0
Barrow's Goldeneye	31	Black Turnstone	3	American Crow	7535	Red-winged Blackbird	1229
Hooded Merganser	86	Wilson's Snipe	1	Common Raven	5	Western Meadowlark	1
Common Merganser	176	Mew Gull	68	Black-capped Chickadee	492	Brewer's Blackbird	200
Red-breasted Merganser	45	Ring-billed Gull	2	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	71	Brown-headed Cowbird	80
Ruddy Duck	184	California Gull	0	Bushtit	257	Purple Finch	10
California Quail	16	Herring Gull	2	Red-breasted Nuthatch	37	House Finch	251
Red-throated Loon	2	Thayers Gull	0	Brown Creeper	14	Red Crossbill	12
Pacific Loon	2	Western Gull	0	Bewick's Wren	69	Pine Siskin	317
Common Loon	9	Glaucous-winged Gull	456	Pacific Wren	55	American Goldfinch	104
Pied-billed Grebe	68	WestxGlc-winged Gull	165	Marsh Wren	36	Evening Grosbeak	0

Field Trips - Barbara Petersen



Weekly Birdwalks at Nisqually

Wednesdays 8 am to 11 am
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.

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

Soos Creek Owl Prowls

Saturday Night, Feb 11, 2017
10:30 PM - 1:30 AM
or Sat. Night, Mar 11, 2016;
10:00 PM to 1:30 AM

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), (253) 639-0123. Joe can answer your questions but cannot arrange the sign-ups.

Valley hotspots

Jim Flynn

Saturday, February 11th
Meeting time: 7:30 AM
End time: around 4:00 PM

This trip will make the rounds of the valley, looking for wintering birds at such spots as M Street farm pond (Emerald Downs) in Auburn, Frager Rd. and the Kent and Boeing Ponds as well as the Cedar River delta in Renton, near the airport. We should see a good variety of ducks, gulls and songbirds. The valley always has potential for some less common winter birds like swans, meadowlarks, Northern Shrike and raptors such as American Kestrel. The Cedar River is a great spot for ducks and gulls, including Thayer's and Herring Gulls. This might be your last chance to see some of these birds which migrate elsewhere in spring and won't return until Autumn 2017.

Bring binoculars and scope, lots of layers of clothes and snack/drinks as well as carpool money.

Meeting place: North end of the downtown Kent Park & Ride, 902 W James St (just west of the ShoWare Center)

Sign up with Jim by email, text message or phone call, merlinmania@comcast.net, 206 399 6418.

Sequim and the Dungeness area

Jim Flynn

Saturday, March 11th
Meeting time: 6:00 AM

Sequim is a great birding spot with potential for all sorts of saltwater and freshwater birds, gulls and winter shorebirds, as well as open country birds like harriers and other raptors as well as lots of farm country birds and forest habitat denizens. The scenery is wonderful as well. Note: we usually don't hike out Dungeness spit as this takes a long time and many of the birds there are more easily found at our other stops. We will see the spit and may visit the area around the trailhead.

Bring binoculars, a scope if you have one. Lots of layers of clothes and snack/drinks as well as carpool money.

Meeting place: Star Lk park & ride (S. 272nd St and 26th Ave S, just west of I-5) Note: there are other park & ride lots in the area. Please call before the trip if you are unsure about this meeting spot.

End time: We will probably end up eating dinner in Sequim or in Kitsap Co. so we can keep birding until late afternoon. Back to Kent perhaps 8PM?

Sign up with Jim by email, text message or phone call, merlinmania@comcast.net, 206 399 6418.

Lakes and Parks of Federal Way & Vicinity

Saturday, March 4
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

Raptors of the Kent/Auburn Valley with Roger Orness

Sun Feb 12, 2017 8:00AM - 2:00PM

Roger 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're lucky.

Meet at the Auburn Supermall parking lot just north of McDonald's on 15th SW off I-167 at 8:00AM to form carpools and leave by 8:30, return by 2:00PM.

Bring lunch, drinks and snacks, dress for the weather and be prepared for a short walk on a level gravel road inside a closed area of the Kent Ponds/Green River Natural Resources Area.

Space is limited. Call or email Roger to sign up at r_orness@comcast.net or 253 312 6561 (cell)

Olympic Birdfest

April 7-9, 2017

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction & raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: noted nature photographer Bonnie Block.

Join our festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 4-6, 2017. Register separately at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon. Extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 9-11, 2017: two days

exploring northwest coastal Washington. BirdFest registration at www.olympicbirdfest.org.



SHADOW Lake Nature Preserve Events

<http://shadowhabitat.org/>

Bee My Valentine: A Native Pollinator Celebration

2/11/17 from 1pm to 4pm

Join us at the Preserve for an afternoon of educational fun. Craft Valentines, enjoy festive treats, and learn how you can prepare for spring by supporting Northwest native pollinators!

Suggested donation \$10 per participant. This event is open to all ages, but for children under 10, please bring a parent or guardian. Questions? Contact Emily Carlson: emily@shadowhabitat.org or call 425-432-4914

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bee-my-valentine-a-pollinator-celebration-tickets-30337917528>

Winter Warmer

2/24/17 from 5:30pm to 8:30pm

The weather outside might be cold and rainy, but here at the Preserve we have everything you need to make it through this gray season! Join us for libations, cheese, and an evening of light music. Children will have activities as well - crafting wildlife tree cards and snowy owls!

Suggested donation \$10 per participant. This event is open to all ages, but for children under 10, please bring a parent or guardian. Questions? Contact Emily Carlson: emily@shadowhabitat.org or call 425-432-4914

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/winter-warmer-tickets-30338134176>

Owl Prowl

3/10/17 from 9pm to 11:30pm

Join local birding-enthusiasts to learn about owls, their biology, and how to make an owl call! Then, join SHADOW Lake Nature Preserve staff and birding experts for a night-time tour of the Preserve. Practice your owl calls and see if we can entice an owl to respond!

Suggested donation \$10 per participant. This event is open to all ages, but for children under 10, please bring a parent or guardian. Questions? Contact Emily Carlson: emily@shadowhabitat.org or call 425-432-4914

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/owl-prowl-tickets-31137881241>

Make A Splash: World Water Day Celebration

3/25/17 from 11am to 2pm

Celebrate World Water Day by spending an afternoon learning about wetlands! Use a real microscope to look at aquatic organisms, play nutrient tag, and take a tour of our 5,000-year-old peat bog!

Suggested donation \$10 per participant. This event is open to all ages, but for children under 10, please bring a parent or guardian. Questions? Contact Emily Carlson: emily@shadowhabitat.org or call 425-432-4914

Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/make-a-splash-world-water-discovery-day-tickets-30342394920>

Bird of the Month: Brown Creeper

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien

Brown Creepers are tiny woodland birds that love the biggest trees they can find. They have long tails, slim bodies and curved bills. They are streaked brown and buff with white underparts. They have a broad buffy stripe over each eye.

These little birds search for small insects and spiders by climbing upward in a spiral around tree trunks and limbs. They move with short, jerky motions using their tails for support. When ready to move to a new tree, they fly to the base and resume climbing upward.

Brown Creepers breed primarily in mature evergreen or mixed evergreen-deciduous forests. They can be found at many elevations, even as high as 11,000 feet. In the winter, they can be found in parks and suburban areas and may visit seed and suet feeders.

Brown Creepers build hammock-like nests behind loose flaps of bark still attached to a tree five to fifteen feet from the ground. Naturalists didn't know this until 1879.

The Brown Creeper's nest consists of a base made in part out of cocoons and spider egg cases anchored to the inner surface of tree bark with a cup made of fine pieces of bark, fibers, leaves, mosses and feathers.

The male collects the nesting material and the female builds the nest taking up to a month to construct it

The female will lay anywhere from four to nine eggs, usually five or six.

Both parents help feed the babies which fledge in thirteen to sixteen days.

Brown Creepers will often flock with kinglets, nuthatches and chickadees.

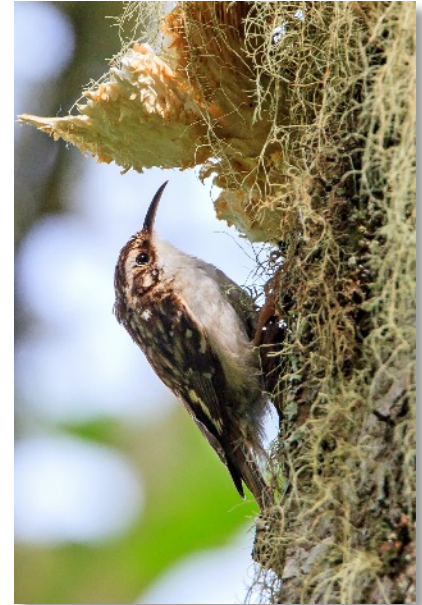
If in a treeless area, Brown Creepers will creep up any vertical object such as a fence post, a telephone pole, or even a brick wall.

To hide from predators, the beautifully camouflaged Brown Creeper spreads its wings and flattens almost invisibly against the tree trunk.

Besides insects, Brown Creepers eat spiders and spider eggs, some sunflower seeds, pine and grass seeds, acorns and corn, chopped peanuts, peanut butter and suet.

Brown Creepers burn an estimated 4 - 10 calories a day. By eating a single spider, a creeper gains enough energy to climb nearly 200 feet vertically.

The oldest Brown Creeper on record was at least 5 years, 5 months old.



Seen & Heard (Continued from [page 4](#))

Hole and the back pond at Lake Fenwick was spotted two weeks before, on the Kid's CBC, however it was nowhere to be found on the 26th.

Record Highs: There were only two official record highs on the 2016 CBC. Both the **Cackling Goose** and **Ring-necked Duck** surpassed their highs set last year. Cackling Geese nearly double their count high, from 894 last year to a whopping 1644 this count, while 815 Ring-necks were sighted (North Lake by Weyerhaeuser was stocked with them this year). While no other species hit record highs, Anna's Hummingbird came within four individuals of tying the 2014 record of 88.

Participants: Thank you to everyone who participated in the 36th Rainier Audubon Christmas Bird Count, especially all of our area leaders. A special thanks to Cindy Flanagan for her

efforts in planning the count date, organizing all of the participants, and communicating to all of the leaders.

Area 1 Brien Meilleur (Leader), Alex Juchems, Christine Odell (BY)

Area 2 Barbara Peterson (Leader), Pat Toth, Ken Schroeder, Linda Carlson, Mary-Lou Zolko, John Zolko

Area 3 Ken Brunner (Leader), Caren Adams (Leader), Mary Frey, Barbara Rateille, Laura Beden, Mike Scuderi

Area 4 Joe Miles (Leader), Liz Miles (Leader), Brenda Tom (Leader), Linda Bartlett, Nancy Streiffert (BY)

Area 5 Tim Brennan (Leader), Mr. Lee, Adrain Lee

Area 6S David Swayne (Leader), Jay Galvin, Carley Randall (BY), Cameron Randall (BY), Dorothy Flanagan (BY)

Area 6C Calen Randall (Leader), Cindy Flanagan (Leader), Senta McQuage,

Doreen Deaver, Mark Deaver, Katerina Grishina

Area 6N Roger Orness (Leader), Clarice Clark, Etta Cosey, Jerry Broadus, Joanne Cormier, Barbara Carmichal, Liz Cormier

Area 7 Charlie Wright (Leader), Carol Schulz (Leader), Linnaea Wright, Nick Wright, Jeff Jendro, Debra Russell, Illa Pomeroy

Area 8 Steve Johnson (Leader), Jim Flynn (Leader), Lonnie Somer, Laura Lavington, Katie Lavington, Marissa Renavente, Julie Cleary, Scott Hoskin, Penny Rose, Donna LaCasse

As well a big thanks to Heather Gibson for coordinating the CBC Potluck and to Carley Randall, Dorothy Flanagan, Cam Randall, and Annette Tabor for helping set it up. I can't wait for the 2017 CBC with you all!

Field Trip Report:
Barbara Petersen

A Study of Alcids in Flight

On a sunny but very cold day with temperatures in the 20's Pat Toth and I set out with leader Jim Flynn on a quest for ancient murrelets. This field trip had been cancelled on Dec 10th due to poor weather. Only two of us signed up for the new Jan 7th date, and we were glad Jim was willing to go despite the small group.

Jim knew the best places to search for the species we most wished to see. Our quest bird, the ancient murrelet, would be a life bird for Pat. In addition to that bird Barbara hoped to see marbled murrelet and long-tailed duck. After a ferry ride to Port Orchard we headed across the Hood Canal Bridge and on to many great spots on Marrowstone Island including the marina at Nordlund, Fort Flagler State Park Campground and Beach, Marrowstone Point, Mystery Bay State Park, and the Marrowstone/Indian Island isthmus.

It was fun searching flocks of robins for a couple of Bohemian waxwings that had lately been seen with them on the island, but we didn't find them. We were welcomed by a peregrine in flight as we drove into Port Townsend. On Cherry Street there we studied a huge flock of robins and cedar waxwings but again, no Bohemians. We added to our species list at Glen Cove Sewage Pond and Fort Townsend State Park, but the inspiration for this article was our visit to Point Wilson! It may have reached thirty degrees by then but felt much colder given the wind chill factor.

Jim led us to the shelter of the lighthouse and we trained our scopes on the water. We were fascinated to see several harlequin ducks repeatedly fly by us close in, and then there were

all the alcids! What an opportunity we had to study alcids in flight. Many, many common murrelets flew by in groups of two to twenty (and one huge group of a hundred), many marbled murrelets in pairs and small groups, pigeon guillemots and a few single rhinoceros auklets. I only hope I can retain my new ability to tell them all apart like that in the bright sunshine. Not so easy was separating out ancient murrelets from the marbleds as they streaked by.

Lucky for us Jim found four ancient murrelets floating on the water. Pat had her life bird, and we succeeded in our trip quest! Having also seen the wished for long-tailed ducks in a couple of spots, both of Jim's trip participants came home highly satisfied indeed.



Bad News (Continued from [page 3](#))

The planet's long-term warming trend is seen in this chart of every year's annual temperature cycle from 1880 to the present, compared to the average temperature from 1880 to 2015. Record warm years are listed in the column on the right. Photo: Joshua Stevens/Earth Observatory/NASA

And those are just the start of a long list of 2016's warming signs. More evidence: Last year, the Great Barrier Reef and other Pacific coral reefs suffered from [the worst bleaching event on record](#); coral bleaching is caused by warm ocean water, and [if too many bleaching events occur in succession](#), reefs are unable to recover. Australia's Bramble Cay melomys was [the first known mammal to go extinct because of climate change](#) after its island home was washed over by rising seas. In America, [Louisiana's first climate refugees](#) are trying to move out of harms way; meanwhile, hungry polar bears—themselves climate refugees—[show up in Alaskan villages](#) as their sea ice habitat melts.

Last year also saw the largest international effort to fight climate change: [the signing and ratification of the Paris Treaty](#), which aims to keep global warming within a safe range. The new U.S. administration has vowed to pull out of the agreement and renege on its pledges to reduce carbon emissions. They'd be keen to keep in mind that, in a battle between physics and politics, physics tends to win. And 2016's record-setting temperatures have shown, yet again, that global warming isn't letting up.

Save Weyerhaeuser Campus Update

by Cindy Flanagan

Current Projects

Industrial Realty Group (IRG), the new owner of the 425 acre Weyerhaeuser Headquarter Campus in Federal Way, plods forth in its development plans for the campus; and, if successful, the nature and character of the natural forested habitat on the north end of the campus will be swapped out with warehouses and parking lots. IRG submitted a request for a binding site plan to combine several parcels of land and build three warehouses totaling one million square feet. The location of the site—near the Technology Center-- runs north-south between 336th and 224th, and east-west between Weyerhaeuser Way and I-5. If one was driving along the I-5, no longer would the luring vista of the meadow full of walkers and dogs with the formidable backdrop of a lush 50 year old forest be seen; instead, a conga of semis miraged in the heatwave rising from the asphalt parking lots and 'village' of warehouses.



The Binding Site Plan has not been approved by the city of Federal Way. Currently, IRG has filed an appeal to the Hearings Examiner regarding using a Short Plat as is used for residential developments. IRG must also submit a traffic study.

A significant portion of the Binding Site Plan is in the North Lake watershed. How will cutting down the acres of trees, altering the land and increasing impervious surfaces impact the water quality and water flow that goes to the North Lake? All water from the former Weyerhaeuser Campus drains downhill to the East Hylebos and provides water to the Hylebos stream system. How will the Hylebos steam system be impacted? What will happen to the ground water? How will the bird species diversity be impacted?

19 ACRE SOUTH EAST PROJECT NEAR THE HEADQUARTERS

The site which would have had the fish processing plant is still vested in a land use application and another development is planned. IRG has not released any further information.

CLARIFICATION OF THE 1994 CONCOMITANT AGREEMENT BY KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Both George Weyerhaeuser and former Weyerhaeuser CEO Jack Creighton, who signed the 1994 Concomitant Agreement between Weyerhaeuser and the city of Federal Way have written letters to city of Federal Way's Mayor Farrell and City Council stating that the nature and intent of the campus was not for warehousing or industrial development. Former CEO Creighton states of the intent of the 1994 Concomitant Agreement,

"We worked with the city staff to develop the specific zoning for the campus that would allow Weyerhaeuser's existing uses to continue without requiring special permits. Those uses included typical office activities, research and development facilities, and shipping and receiving facilities—but no true industrial uses or large warehouses."

Creighton further defines the unique character of the campus,

"In drafting the concomitant agreement with the city, we also intended to retain the unique character of the campus. We sought to preserve its open spaces, forested areas, wildlife and trail system, as well as its natural features, including the rhododendron garden, bonsai collection and the shoreline of North Lake."

Creighton concludes,

"I would like to propose that you provide some specific provisions regarding the purchasers of the property. The warehouses and seafood processing plant would generate substantial truck traffic which would present a potential safety hazard for the property and the people in the area. All of this would exceed the bounds of content in concomitant language and should not be approved. The proposal would destroy the unique situation of Federal Way--a large park-like structure adjacent to industrial property."

With key stakeholders from the 1994 Concomitant Agreement clarifying the intent of the zoning agreement, how will the city interpret the agreement?

Conservancy Efforts Progress

Save Weyerhaeuser Campus group and Rainier Audubon are working in coalition to conserve several areas of the campus: North Lake's western shoreline, the North Lake watershed, Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, the Pacific Bonsai Museum, and many trails that would provide connectivity around the campus and to Federal Way and surrounding cities. We recognize that with the light rail transit coming to Federal Way that urban density will increase. The Weyerhaeuser Campus could provide the open space, urban forest and trail system that so many will crave. An excellent study of light rail development and increased urban density is the Skytrain system that has been built in the Lower Mainland (Vancouver and neighboring cities) in British Columbia. What those cities did right in their planning, **(Continued on page 11)**

Mewsings from Millie

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Buriem

Millie the Muse of Mews

Hello, and welcome back to my musings!

You know, there are a few things that I deem essential to my comfort: plenty of water, adequate food, a warm bed, a clean litter box and a sunny spot to sleep in when possible. Well, just as I have certain preferences concerning my home, so do birds.

Some birds want to live in the protection of the woods, while others want to be in the open. In either case, nesting boxes, otherwise known as birdhouses, can provide a cozy home for cavity-nesting birds.

So, what makes for a good nesting box? To begin with, the wood used for nesting boxes should always be non-pressure-treated wood so nestlings don't come in contact with harsh chemicals. Cedar, pine or cypress are the best choices. For larger boxes, like for owls, plywood can be used.

The walls should be at least 3/4" thick to provide insulation to keep the nest warm. Two 5/8" holes near the top on each of the side walls (four holes in all) will provide adequate ventilation. A sloped roof that overhangs the front by 2 - 4 inches will keep out rain and deter predators.

The box can be put together with galvanized screws. Galvanized screws are

resistant to the elements and provide a tighter seal than nails. Also, screws can be easily removed and put back into place making it easier for repairs and annual cleaning.

Most importantly, the box should not have a perch or be painted bright colors. Bright colors attract predators and although providing a perch is very thoughtful, birds don't need it and predators will use it to gain access to the box.

Knowing a little bit about the tastes of certain birds can help in attracting a particular species to a nesting box. For instance, everyone's favorite, the chickadee, prefers a hole that is 1 1/8" in diameter. The house should be placed 6 - 10 feet above the ground and be near woods or large trees in a yard.

The House Wren is attracted to a hole that is 1" - 1 1/8", with the house at the same height as the chickadee and in the same kind of habitat.

The Northern Flicker likes a hole that is 2 1/2" in diameter and a box that is 10 - 20 feet above the ground near woods.

Of course, there are some birds that just won't use a nesting box. These include the American Goldfinch and Anna's Hummingbird.



Besides helping the birds in our yards, nesting boxes have helped bring back some birds from almost certain extinction due to loss of habitat and/or hunting. The Eastern Bluebird, Wood Duck, Purple Martin and Prothonotary Warbler have all grown their populations due to nesting boxes.

For more information about nesting boxes for over 50 species of birds and for blueprints, go to bit.ly/allaboutbirdhouses.

Until next time,

Millie, the Muse of Mews

Weyerhaeuser (Continued from [page 10](#))

especi ally Burnaby, was made sure they had nearby parks with urban forest, easy access trails and encouraged passive recreation, such as walking. Take note Federal Way—seize the opportunity!

The city of Federal Way has agreed to sign a letter of intent with our group to show our commitment to work together on conserving the North Lake western shoreline. We are asking the City Council to pass a resolution to also agree to work together with us on conservancy. Mayor Farrell has assigned his Senior Policy Advisor to liase with our group. As well, District #30 State Representative Mike Pellicciotti has been hard at work helping learn of possible funding routes that will help us to anchor a conservancy.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We need to anchor support from King County to try to conserve this area. Write to South King County representative of King County Council Pete von Reichbauer and his fellow council members. Ask Councilman von Reichbauer to help conserve

the critical areas of the Weyerhaeuser Campus: the 300 acres of 50-year-old healthy urban forest, the North Lake watershed, the North Lake, the headwaters of the East Hylebos, the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, Pacific Bonsai Museum, the 7+ miles of easy access trails, and of course, the habitat for the diverse wildlife.

Under King County's Land Conservation Plan, King County has a goal of working with cities to save 60,000 acres of high conservation value lands including forest lands, natural areas, and trails. All of which Weyerhaeuser entails. **We need your voice to raise our King County representatives into action to conserve this 425 acre gem!**

District 7 King County Council Representative Pete von Reichbauer Pete.vonReichbauer@kingcounty.gov

For more information visit Saveweyerhaeusercampus.org



"The use of solar energy has not been opened up
because the oil industry does not own the sun."

— Ralph Nader



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