

The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

March 2018

Rainier Audubon Membership Meeting

“The World of Wolves”

By Chris Montero

Wolf Haven International

7:00 P.M. March 18, 2018

A little bit of everything wolf. A glimpse at the behavior, physical characteristics, and social structure that make the wolf such a unique animal, along with its history, status and recovery, and the role Wolf Haven plays.

Chris Montero joined Wolf Haven in 2016 as the Outreach Coordinator. After studying Biology in his native Costa Rica, he finished his studies at The Evergreen State College. Chris has worked most of his adult life in conservation, both in Washington State and Costa Rica. He has experience as a field technician and instructor, nature guide, naturalist, National Geographic Student Expeditions trip leader, scientific illustrator, and environmental interpreter. Chris's main interest is carnivores of all kinds: snakes, jaguars, large cats, and wolves.



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 P.M. at the
Federal Way United Methodist Church
29645 - 51st Ave. So. 98001 (in unincorporated Auburn)

New Rainier Audubon Facebook Page

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

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

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.

Upcoming Programs Dale Meland

- April 2018 - "Washington Birds and Climate Change" by Trina Bayard and Jen Syrowitz
- May 2018 - "Bees and Wing Nut Honey" by Emmy Scharnberg

Counting 102—birds at feeders - from eBird

A couple years ago we published the Counting 101 and Counting 201 articles, tutorials for how to more effectively and accurately count birds that you're seeing. Counting 101 focuses on the basics—how to keep track of birds throughout a birding outing, and how to count a flock in parts to estimate the total. Counting 201 takes this a step further, dealing with large numbers and flocks of birds in motion. Counting 102 is intended to take these counting best practices and apply them to feeder birding—a slightly different counting problem, but an important one to address. For anyone who has wondered how best to count and eBird the birds visiting your feeder—this article is for you.

<https://ebird.org/news/counting-102/>

Rainier Audubon Society Directory

Position	Name	Board Member	Phone	email
President	Heather Gibson	Yes	206-226-2050	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
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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
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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
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Mailing	Debra Russell	No	425 829 4008	debrarussell@comcast.net
Lifetime Members	Max Prinsen	Yes	425-432-9965	



Seen & Heard by Calen Randall

2017 Christmas Bird Count Report

125 species and 37,400 birds—a pretty good New Year’s Eve turn out for our CBC! Add to that 60 birders out in the field and watching in back yards. Even though numbers were high, a few species chose to spend their last day of 2017 celebrating out of our Rainier Audubon Circle including Northern Harrier, American Bittern, Wilson’s Snipe, Hermit Thrush, Pacific Loon and Cedar Waxwing. We did have a few nice surprises, 2 Cinnamon Teal at Kent Ponds, 3 Black Turnstone at Redondo, 8 Canvasback at Weyerhaeuser Pond and Renton/Kent area, and 43 Common

Redpoll at Des Moines, Renton and Kent Ponds area. We also saw some significant increases in the following species: Long-billed Dowitcher--5, Anna’s Hummingbird--128, Western Scrub Jay (soon to be listed as California Scrub Jay)—32, American Crow 16,689. Others that aren’t all time highs but the numbers were higher than normal included Common Raven—11, Western Meadowlark—46, Evening Grosbeak—11, California Quail—39, Red-necked Grebe—13, and Harlequin Duck—38.

Thank you to all participants for helping count our birds. Our leaders did a great job getting our territory covered. A special shout out to Roger Orness for the neatest CBC tally sheet! As well, a big bravo to those who helped organize the great dinner and tally event. Well done everyone!

Rainier Audubon 2017 CBC Checklist				Species	Total	Species	Total
Species	Total	Species	Total				
Gr Wht-fronted Goose	0	Western Grebe	18	Eared Grebe	0	WestxGlc-Winged Gull	213
Snow Goose	3	Brandt’s Cormorant	1	Gull sp.	68	American Dipper	1
Cackling Goose	2055	Dbl-crested Cormorant	140	Common Murre	0	Golden-cr. Kinglet	140
Canada Goose	1004	Pelagic Cormorant	0	Pigeon Guillemot	2	Ruby-cr. Kinglet	98
Trumpeter Swan	40	Amer. Bittern	0	Marbled Murrelet	0	Hermit Thrush	0
Tundra Swan	0	Great Blue Heron	22	Rhinoceros Auklet	1	American Robin	526
Wood Duck	20	Green Heron	1	Rock Pigeon	615	Varied Thrush	35
Gadwall	86	Osprey	0	Band-tailed Pigeon	1	European Starling	1026
Eurasian Wigeon	10	Bald Eagle	59	Mourning Dove	9	American Pipit	51
American Wigeon	2113	Adult	15	Eurasian Collared Dove	37	Cedar Waxwing	0
Mallard	2285	Immature	5	Barn Owl	6	Orange-crowned Warbler	3
Green-winged Teal	550	No. Harrier	0	Western Screech-Owl	3	Yellow-rumped Warbler	21
Eurasian-Gw Teal	0	Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	Great Horned Owl	3	Audubon’s	14
Blue-wing Teal	0	Cooper’s Hawk	13	Northern Pygmy-Owl (CW)	1	Myrtle	0
Cinnamon Teal	2	Northern Goshawk	0	Barred Owl	1	Townsend’s Warbler	3
Northern Shoveler	195	Red-tailed Hawk	62	Short-eared Owl	0	Common Yellowthroat	0
Northern Pintail	1243	Harlan’s Hawk	0	Northern Saw-whet Owl	1	Spotted Towhee	183
Canvasback	8	Rough-legged Hawk	0	Anna’s Hummingbird	128	Savannah Sparrow	1
Redhead	25	Amer. Kestrel	5	Belted Kingfisher	10	Fox Sparrow	122
Ring-necked Duck	694	Merlin	5	Red-breasted Sapsucker	4	Song Sparrow	454
Greater Scaup	7	Peregrine Falcon	1	Downy Woodpecker	32	Lincoln’s Sparrow	18
Lesser Scaup	72	Virginia Rail	6	Hairy Woodpecker	7	Swamp Sparrow	0
Harlequin Duck	38	Sora	0	Northern Flicker	134	White-throated Sparrow	1
Surf Scoter	39	American Coot	660	Y-shafted	1	White-crowned Sparrow	153
White-winged Scoter	3	Black-bellied Plover	0	Pileated Woodpecker	9	Golden-crowned Sparrow	163
Black Scoter	8	Killdeer	29	Northern Shrike (CW)	1	Dark-eyed Junco	805
Bufflehead	365	Spotted Sandpiper	1	Hutton’s Vireo	1	Slate-colored Junco	0
Common Goldeneye	117	Greater Yellowlegs	0	Steller’s Jay	103	Red-winged Blackbird	439
Barrow’s Goldeneye	54	Black Turnstone	3	Western Scrub Jay	32	Western Meadowlark	46
Hooded Merganser	124	Western Sandpiper	0	American Crow	16689	Yellow-Hd Blackbird	0
Common Merganser	194	Least Sandpiper	0	Common Raven	11	Brewer’s Blackbird	57
Red-breasted Merganser	28	Dunlin	151	Blk-capped Chickadee	322	Brown-headed Cowbird	10
Ruddy Duck	82	Long-billed Dowitcher	5	Mountain Chickadee	0	Purple Finch	5
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	Wilson’s Snipe	0	Chestnut-bk’d Chickadee	139	House Finch	298
Ruffed Grouse	0	Bonaparte’s Gull	0	Bushy	344	Red Crossbill	20
California Quail	39	Mew Gull	45	Red-breasted Nuthatch	31	Common Redpoll	43
Red-throated Loon	5	Ring-billed Gull	31	Brown Creeper	18	Pine Siskin	82
Pacific Loon	0	California Gull	2	Bewick’s Wren	74	American Goldfinch	76
Common Loon	9	Herring Gull	1	Pacific Wren	65	Evening Grosbeak	11
Pied-billed Grebe	71	Thayer’s Gull	4	Marsh Wren	37	House Sparrow	113
Horned Grebe	68	Western Gull	0			Red-Shouldered Hawk	0
Red-necked Grebe	13	Glaucous-Winged Gull	284				

Total Individuals	37,400
Total Species	125

Calen is an 19 year old birder entering his seventh year writing the Seen and Heard. Currently attending the University of Washington, Calen enjoys birding in the South King County and coastal British Columbia region.

King County Land Conservation Initiative—an opportunity to protect 65,000 acres of high conservation lands over the next 30 years

- Cindy Flanagan

In January 2018, the King County Land Conservation Advisory Committee released its final report to Executive Dow Constantine and the King County Council. The report provides recommendation of how King County can conserve high value land and water resources throughout the county over the next 30 years (a generation). The goal to conserve 65,000 acres of rural, unincorporated and urban lands is based on a unanimous King County motion in November 2015 that states “It is the policy of the County to ensure that King County remains one of the greenest metropolitan areas in the world by protecting and conserving land and water resources that will enhance our quality of life, strengthen our region’s economy, enhance biodiversity, provide recreational opportunities and promote sustainable forestry and farming and locally grown food.”

Over the next 20 years, King County will see unprecedented population growth—over 1 million people. That is 50 new residents a day for the next 20 years, and the bulk of that growth will be in South King County. As our population increases, our need to preserve open space and urban green space becomes even more important. With pressures of development, the time to act is now, before we lose these last precious wild areas and green spaces.

Rainier Audubon, Eastside Audubon, Seattle Audubon, Vashon-Maury Audubon and the South King County Group of the Sierra Club have all signed on to support a letter encouraging the council to move the initiative to the August or November 2018 ballot. Among the list of signees are strong organizations including Forterra, Save Weyerhaeuser Campus, Mountains to Sound Greenway, and Trust for Public Land.



Rainier Audubon supports the initiative for the following reasons:

- It is proactive—the committee has done a great job identifying high conservation lands throughout the county
- The initiative includes a maintenance and operations budget which will help keep acquisitions clean, safe, and open.
- Our environmental infrastructure is as important to our livability as other infrastructure like utilities, transportation and affordable housing. The initiative is foundational to our environmental infrastructure and maintaining quality of life and wellness.

Whether we are keeping our foothills forested, protecting agricultural land in the Green River Valley or saving the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus urban open space, environmental sustainability is a necessity for all. We have the opportunity now to protect rivers, streams and natural areas that connect our communities and will be there for people of today and generations to come.

We need your help with outreach. Have conversations with your neighbors and family about the need for the King County Land Conservation Initiative. Executive Dow Constantine and the King County Council Members need to know that you value the land conservation initiative. Let them know that King County’s high conservation areas like the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus are critical to our health and quality of life and to our economy. Tell them we need them behind this powerful initiative. Help make a legacy impact on our quality of life—not only for yourself, but for your children, your grandchildren and your community. And of course, for the birds.

Contact your council members at:

www.kingcounty.gov/council/councilmembers/find_district.aspx



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 Prowl

Mar 3, 2018
10:30 PM -1:00 AM
Age: Less than 99

Price: Free

Location: Soos Creek Trail Maintenance Bldg (148th Ave) and Gary Grant Park

Come learn about and see the four owl species that live in Soos Creek Park. After a 45 minute indoor talk you'll head out into the park to locate and view owls in their natural habitat through night scopes. Dress in warm layers.

Register through City of Covington Parks and Recreation.

Lakes and Parks of Federal Way & Vicinity

Saturday, March 10
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

Ellensburg, Vantage and Crab Creek

Saturday, March 24th

Meet at 6:30 AM at the South Renton Park & Ride (205 S. 7th St), just north of Grady Way and Renton Village Shopping Center.

Wear layers as March can be sunny and pleasant or it can be cold and windy. Also: binoculars, snacks, water and sunscreen. Return late, possibly 8 PM?

This should be a great chance to see the early birds and the early wildflowers in the sagebrush steppe east of Ellensburg. Depending on how the season has progressed we will bird some areas between Eburg, the Quilomene Wildlife Area, Gingko State Park, Wanapum Dam area and possibly Crab Creek or Frenchman's Coulee. Species we could encounter include Mt. Bluebirds, Say's Phoebe, Sagebrush and Vesper Sparrows, Horned Larks, Prairie Falcon

(we hope) and waterfowl. Scenery is always lovely along the Vantage Hwy and the Columbia River cliffs.

E-mail Jim Flynn (merlinmania@comcast.net) or call/text (206) 399-6418 to sign up.

Sunday, April 8th, 2018

8:30 AM to 12:30 PM

Duwamish River

Leader - Barbara Petersen

Join Barbara for a morning exploration of birding spots near the Duwamish River. You'll want to return to these places often in the spring when they can be quite busy with bird activity. Common sightings include osprey, bald eagle, green heron, belted kingfisher, Western tanager, even Bullock's oriole if the timing's right. We'll visit North Wind's Weir, Cecil Moses Park, Duwamish Hill Preserve, Duwamish Gardens and the river path at Tukwila Community Center.

Meet at the Tukwila Community Center in front of the main entrance by 8:30 AM and we'll finish here at 12:30. We'll walk less than half a mile on paved paths. Bring drinks, snacks, binoculars, scopes, cameras as needed to enhance this half day outing. We'll sharpen our spotting skills, as a few of these spots have a lot of traffic noise.

To sign up email Barbara at BPbatfan@aol.com or call/text 253 389 3204 and leave a message.

Olympic Birdfest

April 13-15, 2018.

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction & raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: nature guide/photographer Claudio Vidal. Join our festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 10-12, 2018. Register separately at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon.

Extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 16-17, 2018: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. BirdFest registration at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

Bird of the Month: Common Redpoll

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien

The Common Redpoll is a small brown and white songbird with heavily streaked sides. It has a small red forehead patch, black feathering around a yellow bill and two white wing bars. Males have a pale red vest on the chest and upper flanks.

Common Redpolls are birds of the arctic tundra and boreal forest. They migrate erratically occasionally showing up in the United States as witnessed by some lucky Washingtonians this winter. They travel in busy flocks foraging frenetically through weedy fields or small trees then swirl away in a chattering mass. During these irruptive years they will also congregate at feeders particularly ones filled with nyjer thistle or millet.

In the wild, Common Redpolls eat small seeds of birch, willow, alder, spruce and pine. They also eat grass and sedge seed and the seeds of wildflowers and the occasional berry.

The nest is built by the female and is made of grass, twigs, roots and tree moss. She lines it with a thick layer of ptarmigan or Spruce Grouse feathers, or with hair, lemming fur, wool or downy plant material.

The female will lay two to seven eggs that are pale green to pale blue with purple spots. The eggs will be incubated for eleven days and the chicks will fledge in nine to sixteen days.

Common Redpolls can survive temperatures of minus 65 degrees Fahrenheit. A study found that they put on 31% more plumage by weight in November than they do in July.



During winter, they tunnel into the snow to roost and stay warm. The insulating tunnels can be more than a foot long and four inches deep under the snow.

The next time you have access to a globe, look at it from the top. Common Redpolls breed around the world in the lands that ring the Arctic Ocean. Worldwide their numbers are estimated in the tens of millions.

Common Redpolls are intelligent birds that have no problem figuring out how to pull in a string to get a hanging piece of food. They often are seen shaking seeds out of birch catkins then dropping to the ground to pick them up.

These birds have a throat pouch that can store up to .07 ounces of seeds. They eat up to 42% of their body weight every day. Common Redpolls are incredibly wide ranging. A bird banded in Michigan was

Become a community steward
at SHADOW Lake Nature Preserve

on Saturday mornings
from 10 am - 2 pm

No materials or experience needed!
Come with warm layers, sturdy shoes, weather appropriate gear, and a water bottle

Winter Restoration Work Party dates
January: 13, 20, & 27
February: 3, 10, 17, & 24
March: 3, 10, 17, 24, & 31

Registration at
shadowhabitat.org/visit

Questions:
Aji@shadowhabitat.org
21656 184th Ave SE, Renton WA 98058
425-432-4914

[/SHADOWLakeNaturePreserve](https://www.facebook.com/SHADOWLakeNaturePreserve)
[@SHADOWhabitat](https://www.instagram.com/SHADOWhabitat)

Get Your Earth On!

YOU ARE INVITED!

Saturdays at the Burien Community Center
Shorewood Room immediately to the left as you enter

March 17 1:00 – 3:00 PM Climate Change, Carbon Pollution
Yes, Planting Trees Really Does Make a Difference! Co-Host, Plant for the Planet

March 24 1:00 – 3:00 PM Establish a Backyard Wildlife Habitat
A Focus on Native Plants that Support and Attract Birds and Pollinators
Co-Host Habitat Educator, Anna Lindstrom

March 31 1:00 – 3:00 PM Sustainable Garden Practices
Living in Harmony with Nature Co-Host Taryn Koerker, A Founder of the New Start Community Garden in Burien

NATURE STEWARDS
Burien

Port of Seattle

Questions? NatureStewardsWA.org
GraceStiller@comcast.net or 206.795.5783

Mewsings from Millie

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



Did you know that 2018 has been declared the Year of the Bird? This year commemorates the 100th anniversary of the enacting of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and National Geographic, National Audubon Society, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, BirdLife International and more than 100 organizations are joining forces around the world to share stories and science examining how our changing environment is impacting the lives of birds. Thus the Year of the Bird is born!

The goal is to heighten public awareness of birds because of their wonder and beauty and because they symbolize nature's interconnectedness and the importance of caring for our shared planet.

The editors of Audubon magazine asked a number of avian enthusiasts why birds matter. Their responses ranged from practical to poetic, personal to global. There were too many to print all of them but here are a few of my favorites:

Birds make any place a chance for discovery, they make a garden seem wild, they are a little bit of wilderness coming into a city park, and for a bird watcher every walk is filled with anticipation. What feathered jewel might drop out of the sky next? – *David Sibley*, Author

Birds represent a link to both our natural environment and to the possibility of freedom to soar without boundaries – *Rue Mapp*, Founder, Outdoor Afro

Birds matter because they give us wings. And because if we save the birds, we will save the world. – *Pepper Trail*, USFWS forensic ornithologist

When we save birds from large-scale threats we see that what's good for the birds is also good for us. This is true about agriculture, fishing, climate change. As we solve their problems we solve ours. This is about everyone's quality of life. – *Gary Langham*, National Audubon Science Director

Birds are the catalyst for taking me outdoors and shaping the way I live and think. If we can all share this appreciation of the natural world and its positive impact on our lifestyles, the planet will be a different place. – *Richard Crossley*, Birder, Photographer, Author of The Crossley ID Guide

No other creature can transcend earth, evoke beauty, inspire dreams, and ground us in nature as does even the smallest bird. – *Julie Sacco*, Director, North Park Village Nature Center

Birds add beauty to our lives, interesting behavior to observe, and are prime indicators of how well we are taking care of our planet. – *Donna McCarty*, Birdathon Chair, Amos W. Butler Audubon Society

Birds matter because they represent freedom to me, the freedom to come and go. They are frequently not tied down to one place, but spend time in vastly different places on earth, often migrating huge distances. – *Evi Meyer*, Palos Verdes/South Bay Audubon

Birds matter because they are a basic, integral part of the earth's ecosystem. As in any system, the loss of one part will ultimately cause the downfall of the whole. – *Jean Ashby*, Education co-chair, Skagit Audubon

When life becomes heavy and worries pull me down like gravity, I simply look up and suddenly there, in the weightless free air, soaring like kites, flitting from branch to branch, unencumbered, my friends the

birds release my soul and I am free again. – *Carl Schreiner*, Eagle, Nebraska

They provide structure to our native plant communities by spreading seeds and consuming vast quantities of insects. Without them we humans probably would cease to exist. – *Mike North*, Brainerd Lakes Area Audubon Society

Birds hold wisdom. The indigenous people know that to be true. They are messengers. To allow or cause a species to become extinct is to lose that knowledge. Forever. – *Cindy Fogle*, Maggie Valley, North Carolina

They bring hope, beauty, music and wonder to this planet. – *Ramona Sahni*

Visit BirdYourWorld.com to find out more

Until next time,

Millie, the Muse of Mews

Mewsings from Millie

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



Sometimes at night, I gaze out the front window and admire the moon and the stars and muse about their wonder. Being a cat, I am naturally curious and always want to find out more. Did you know that birds are well represented in the constellations and nebulae?

Described by Ptolemy, a Greco-Roman mathematician, astronomer, geographer, and astrologer who lived during the 2nd century,

Cygnus, the Swan, is a beautiful constellation of the northern sky that resembles a swan with outstretched wings. It is the 16th largest constellation in the sky. It has ten stars with known planets. Its brightest star is Deneb, located in the tail of the swan. Deneb is also one corner of the asterism (pattern of stars) called the Summer Triangle. The other two corners of the triangle are the stars Altair and Vega. Vega was known to the Arabs as a swooping eagle. The most famous story associated with Cygnus is the pursuit of Leda, the queen of Sparta, by the god Zeus who disguised himself as a swan.

Aquila is the eagle that carried Zeus/Jupiter's thunderbolts. Like Cygnus, this constellation was also described by Ptolemy. Its brightest star is Altair which I already mentioned as one vertex of the Summer Triangle.

Just south and west of the eagle's tail in the constellation, Scutum, is the Wild Duck Cluster. This is an open star cluster which resembles the V of a flight of wild ducks. This asterism contains hundreds of very bright first magnitude stars. If you found yourself on a planet near the center of this cluster, the sky would be full of brilliant stars 3 – 50 times brighter than Sirius, the brightest star in our sky. I imagine it would be quite spectacular!

Northern astronomers knew nothing of the southern polar region. The constellations of the southern sky are inventions from the 16th century onwards. Dutch astronomer, Petrus Plancius, used the observations of navigators to create a dozen new ones. These constellations have few named stars and lack associated myths but six of them represent birds.

Apus is a small constellation representing the Bird of Paradise. The name comes from the Greek word meaning "footless" as there was a mistaken belief that the birds had no feet and floated in the air held up by their plumes.

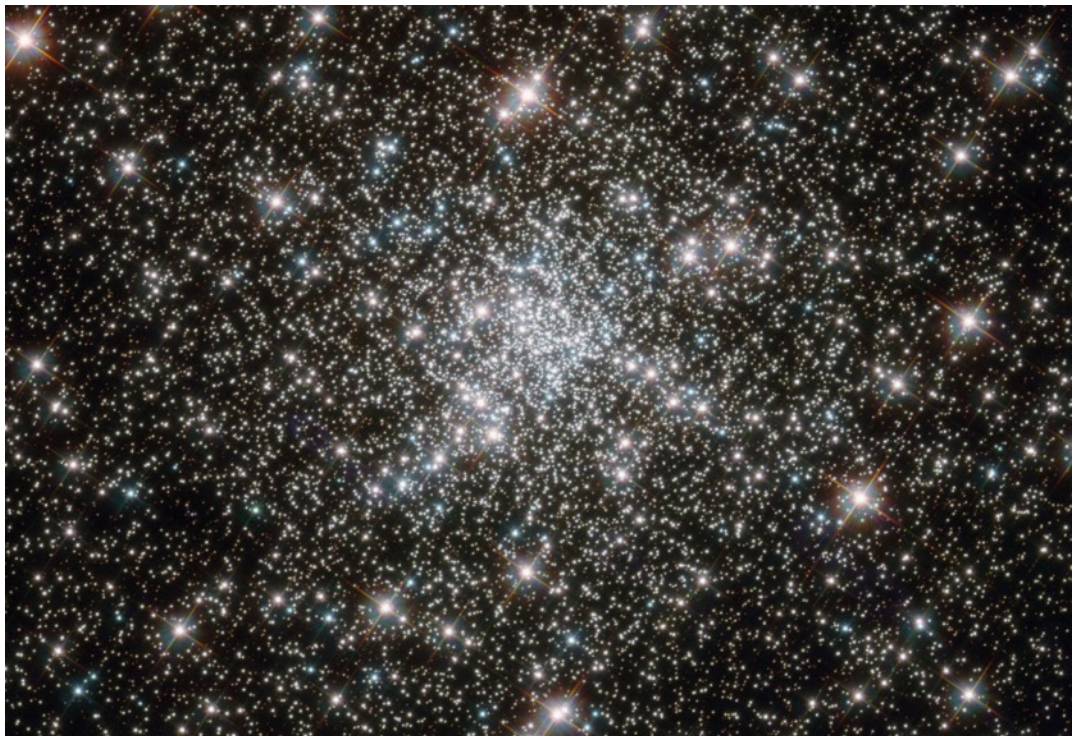
Pavo was unknown to the Greeks, but the peacock echoes Greek mythology. Peacocks drew the chariot of the goddess, Hera (wife of Zeus). Pavo includes five stars with confirmed planets. Its brightest star is Peacock, Alpha Pavonis.

Pavo's neighbor is Grus. Grus is a crane. This constellation was formed out of the traditional constellation, Piscis notius and some of the stars have Arabic names.

The constellation Tucana, the Toucan, is fairly undistinguished but is notable because it contains the Small Magellanic Cloud, a companion galaxy to the Milky Way.

The mythological Phoenix was a bird that lived for 500 years before being consumed by fire. It was then resurrected from the ashes as a young bird. The constellation that represents it contains six stars with known planets.

The Aboriginal culture of Australia contributed the Emu, a dark nebula (an opaque cloud



Revised February post which omitted some text and photo. - Editor

Save The Weyerhaeuser Campus

by Cindy Flanagan

Funding Efforts to Acquire Open Space on the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus Continue

Good news! The City of Federal Way has listed conserving open space on the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus as one of its top priorities for its 2018 State Legislative Priorities. As well, the city has agreed to apply for a 1-million-dollar King County Conservation Future tax fund for the fiscal year 2019 that would help conserve the 54-acres along the North Lake shoreline. Estimates of the cost to acquire the North Lake shoreline piece are approximately \$8-10 million; however, no formal appraisal has yet been done. Forterra, Save Weyerhaeuser Campus, the Rhododendron Botanical Garden, and the Pacific Bonsai Museum have written a letter of intent to the city of Federal Way that their group will raise the \$1 million of matching funds required for the Conservation Futures Tax Fund (CFT).

We applaud the city for its efforts and continued support. Last year, the city gave \$1 million dollars of Storm Water Management. Presently, we have raised \$2 million towards the property acquisition. If King County awards the city another million dollars for the CFT in 2019 and the Forterra stakeholder group raises the matching million dollars, we will have \$4 million dollars towards the acquisition.

IRG Development Proposals on the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus Still Undergoing Review Process

Two of the three IRG land use applications to develop warehouse and distribution centers on the Weyerhaeuser Campus continue to be processed by the city of Federal Way. These are Warehouse A & Warehouse B, which are both situated next to the headquarters building on the east side of the headquarters. The two warehouses would be built on 32 acres of beautifully forested land. We are encouraged that the city, meticulous in its land use application review, has issued a fourth technical letter to IRG with 12 pages of requirements that include asking for more extensive studies and information to be gathered by IRG. Among the city requests are the following:

- IRG must conduct a downstream analysis that stormwater impacts from Warehouse A & B would have on areas downstream in the East Hylebos;
- IRG must Eliminate Wetland and stream buffer impacts during the construction phase, and if IRG is not able to eliminate the wetland impacts, IRG will need to change its application from a Process III to a Process IV which would require more in-depth wetland analysis and review;
- IRG must provide a full survey report of the historic preservation of the Weyerhaeuser Campus (Note: In Fall of 2017, the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) deemed that the Weyerhaeuser Campus is eligible for listing on the

National Register of Historic Places. IRG has not submitted this information to the city.)

The third IRG land use application, which involves developing approximately 140 acres of forested land around the Technology Center, is proposed. IRG plans to build 3 warehouses for a large-scale warehousing and distribution center of 1.1 million square feet. Currently, the city has not deemed the application to be complete and therefore has not begun processing the application. IRG must submit all required items. Our concern with this proposed development is deforestation, impacts to North Lake and the Hylebos Watershed, loss of wildlife habitat, and increased carbon emissions and pollution with increased vehicle traffic that would add an additional 3000 vehicles and 756 semi-truck trips to and from the campus daily via S 320th Street.

Why is protecting the Weyerhaeuser Campus open space so important to the Rainier Audubon?

The campus is an Important Bird Area for the Rainier Audubon with 120 bird species living in and around the campus. The Washington Fish and Wildlife department has designated the North Lake and Weyerhaeuser Campus area a high waterfowl concentration area. For half a century the public has had access to over 7 miles of walkable trails. Our King County population is increasing by 50 people a day, and over the next twenty years we will see a one million person increase in King County, with the majority of the settlement being in the South King County region. Loss of this regional natural gem to development would be tragic—we need more open space and we need to protect our urban forests, our watersheds and habitat for wildlife. We encourage you to make a difference by letting your legislators know—local, county, state and federal levels—that you value saving the open space on the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus.

<http://saveweyerhaeusercampus.org/>



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“The Congress, the Administration and the public all share a profound commitment to the rescue of our natural environment, and the preservation of the Earth as a place both habitable by and hospitable to man.”
—President Richard Nixon



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