

# The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon

May 2019

Rainier Audubon Membership Meeting  
7:00 PM May 20, 2019

## ***“Journey to the End of the World”***

***The Falkland Islands, South Georgia  
Island, and Antarctica***

Dale and Judy Meland

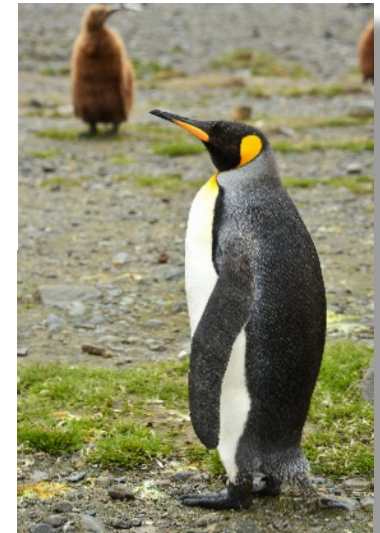
It has been described as the journey of a lifetime, one that will never be forgotten. Dale and Judy Meland took the plunge and spent the month of November 2018 in the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island and finally the continent of Antarctica. Join Dale as he takes you on a cruise through this amazing area. First we stop at the Falkland Islands to visit Black Browed Albatross and Rockhopper Penguin colonies. Next we transit the Southern Ocean to spend five days at South Georgia Island to observe and wander through enormous colonies of King and Gentoo Penguins, Southern Fur and



Elephant Seals as well as other wildlife. Finally we cross into the Antarctic Ocean and spend another five days in the incredible vastness of snow and ice that is the Antarctic. Here we see more penguins including Chinstraps, Adelies and even a couple of Emperors, several whales and seals and numerous icebergs (from tiny bergie bits to massive tabular icebergs).

Dale is a retired Boeing Environmental Chemist and has been the Rainier Audubon Program chair for 25+ years. After all those years of setting up the programs, this will be his first venture into presenting.

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



### 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)

## Rainier Audubon Facebook Page

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

## Heron Herald is Available Online

The current issue of the Heron Herald is always available to download from [www.RainierAudubon.org](http://www.RainierAudubon.org). I will try to send an email on our mailing list as soon as it is posted.

## 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](mailto:RainierAudubon@googlegroups.com)

If you did not get an invitation, you may request to join the group by going to [groups.google.com](https://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](http://RainierAudubon.org) website.

## Backyard and Birds Garden Party!

By Marie West-Johnson

**Save the date Saturday May 25th from 1 - 5 PM.**

You are Invited to a Garden Party.

A Rainier Audubon Society Garden Party is being planned at the yard of Marie West-Johnson. This is an open house garden party on Saturday May 25th starting at 1pm and ending at 5pm. This will also be a Spring fund raiser for our chapter.



So, come enjoy a glass of wine and take a leisure stroll through a small garden just made for birds. The address is 903 Olympia Ave NE in Renton 98056. Parking is just along side the road.

Please RSVP to [crgrie123@yahoo.com](mailto:crgrie123@yahoo.com) or call 206-817-8754. It would be nice to get a head count for purchasing drink and food. Hope to see you there!!

### 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	Barbara Petersen	Yes	253 389 3204	bpbatfan@aol.com
Treasurer	Laura Lavington	Yes	253-941-7372	laura.lavington@gmail.com
Membership Chair	Ken Schroeder	No	253-939-7470	kenschroeder@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	Stephan Feldman	Yes	360-802-5211	stephanfeldman@gmail.com
Hospitality	Sandra Embrey	No	253-517-3633	sandra.embrey@gmail.com
Mailing	Debra Russell	No	425-82- 4008	debrarussell94@comcast.net
Lifetime Members	Max Prinsen	Yes	425-432-9965	
Lifetime Members	Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen	Yes	425-432-9965	

# Helen Engle

## A tribute to the heart of Audubon and Washington conservation —By Cindy Flanagan



Washington's Audubon chapters, including our Rainier Audubon Society.

Telling Helen's Nisqually story to this group was difficult. It was the first time leading a Nisqually fieldtrip that I had told the story with Helen being in the past tense. Helen had passed away the week before at the age of 93. While I felt a strong sense of loss, there was a greater pull of inspiration thinking about all of the wonderful work Helen had done throughout her life and how we had so many great places to love nature thanks to her.

I first met Helen in September of 2016. Dan Streiffert of our Rainier Audubon Society had invited Helen to come talk with our Rainier Audubon group at our membership meeting. Our Rainier Audubon had just embarked on a conservation campaign to help save an important birding area in our chapter boundaries--the Weyerhaeuser Campus in Federal Way. I didn't know Helen, but I offered to pick her up at her Fircrest home in Tacoma and bring her to our meeting.

At our meeting, it wasn't hard to see why Helen was so successful in her conservation efforts and rallying people together. She stood up at the front of the room and enthusiastically encouraged people to be active.

"Your lifeblood is your fieldtrips—make sure you have a lot of them and make sure you all get out there and go on them; you need to be in tune with your surroundings."

On the drive back to Helen's home that night, Helen wanted all of the details I could tell her about the Weyerhaeuser Campus situation—who the new owner was, what the development plans were, who the grassroots group Save Weyerhaeuser Campus was and what their mission would be. She was quiet for a bit, and then began, "Cindy, you have a lot of hard work to do for the campus. This is a big, big save. Get educated about the situation and base your knowledge on fact and science. Know all of your government data, like, is the city deficient in park space or trails or open space. Talk in their language. Know all angles."

**T**here on the edge of the sun-lit pond, in the most interesting pose almost basked a Great Blue Heron. It stood with its underwings flipped upwards soaking up every bit of the unexpected mid-March warm day at the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually Wildlife Refuge. A six-year old from our Rainier Audubon family fieldtrip group wisely proclaimed, "This sure is a great place for birds, and for people!"

I agreed and responded to the group, "Did you know that this great place almost became a dump for Seattle's garbage and a shipping port for Weyerhaeuser? Hard to believe, isn't it?" Heads nodded and eyes went big with disbelief. I went on to explain that the wildlife refuge area was the springboard for the formation of the Tahoma Audubon. Helen Engle, a member of the Seattle Audubon, had asked an organizer at Seattle Audubon for help to conserve the refuge. While the organizer was sympathetic to Helen's cause, she told Helen that the Seattle Audubon had enough of its own issues it was trying to fight. So, enthusiastic and action oriented, Helen knew the solution. She and her friend Thelma Gilmur would simply form another organization in the Tacoma area--the Tahoma Audubon and



**Yoga GB Heron**  
by Carley Randall

save the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually Wildlife Refuge. Not only did Helen help to conserve many other important places, she also helped to establish many of

She talked about her conservation work at Nisqually and Willapa Bay. "I used to go around to different meetings and debate against Weyerhaeuser. We both knew each other's arguments so well, that we could have switched places! What is important to remember is that not only do you have to work with the government, you have to figure out how to work with the opposition."

Over the next three years, Helen and I would communicate via email or I would visit her at her home, and we would talk at length about Audubon and places that needed to be protected, including Weyerhaeuser Campus. What amazed me about Helen, is that she kept up this in-depth communication with so many people—inspiring with her great vision, asking insightful thought-provoking questions and always stepping forward with a positive attitude.

There was nothing better than getting a late-night email from Helen—action packed, knowledge-filled, motivating and helpful:

"I have received my Fall 2016 edition of the WA Park Arboretum BULLETIN. An article that begins on page 11 by Cass Turnbull is "No place for Old Trees?" She has written a well-researched article on parks, open space and canopy. I think there are several items in her article from which you could get some wonderful points in the discussions about the Weyco property's future — and other support for parks planning. If you can't find an Arboretum Foundation member with that quarterly newsletter (beautiful color photos!!) try the website: [www.arboretumfoundation.org](http://www.arboretumfoundation.org)

Keep me posted about the Weyco campus issue — I don't see anything in the paper about it."

Like all of her emails, her email closed with "Love Helen."

I received one email from Helen the day before speaking to King County Council about supporting a King County Conservation Futures Grant for the Weyerhaeuser Campus North Lake shoreline. She wanted to make sure to send a few messages. Helen's email reads

"What city, what county, what state wouldn't fight to protect such a resource as this pleasant, well-designed for PEOPLE, PARK-LIKE PLACE! Finished and time-tested!

Cindy will you give my regards to [Council member] Pete von Reichbauer please. I remember him

well, working on some effort of some kind — isn't this awful I can't remember EXACTLY what the issue was.

(Can I blame it on being 91 now?)

I remember him and was hoping we would meet up again some day."

What stands out is not just her commitment to the theme of conservation as seen in her catchy anchoring message about the Weyerhaeuser Campus Save, but her deep respect and appreciation for the people with whom she worked on so many saves. Knowing the name of the save didn't matter—they were all important, but equally important to Helen were the people and the lifelong relationships she created.

Helen had a gift of pulling groups together. The following email message written to key players in the Tahoma and Rainier Audubon chapters:

"Hi all of you!!!

I see a real opportunity for some neat projects. We are all trying to save **agricultural land, open space land, and tree canopies**. We need to get everyone involved. Audubon could be pooling its resources and working toward very good lists of birds (**and other wildlife**).

**Tahoma Audubon, and Rainier Audubon** make up the backbone of South King and Pierce County's farm lands. **Foothills Trail, and its connecting trails are a critical part of this.**

Let's get a clutch of Audubon birders together . . . . Do some thorough inventories, locate all the key people and orgs, plan some really **catchy activities, special days, with prizes, photos, the PRESS**, Etc . Etc. Etc.

We've already lost too much of this critical land!



(I have a few great photos of the places, the people, the river, birds, etc. (dates are 10+ years ago). Dixie: Who has Ernie's slide collection? What a resource!!!)

Get excited about this.....What fun!!! Put on your boots and make it work. Love to you all. Helen"

There is much to learn from these communication excerpts of Helen's. I'm sure if you created a compilation of all of her communication to the many in her tribe that it would fast become the greatest guidebook to successful conservation and advocacy.

Visiting Helen's artsy nature-welcoming home, we'd only be a few minutes engaged in discussion when I'd find a book being placed on my lap and Helen giving an enthusiastic in-depth summary of how the book was such a good read. "Have you read *Eruption: The Untold Story of Mount St. Helens* by Steve Olson? It has an excellent historical background on Weyerhaeuser that you will find very useful." I now have a precious (Continued on [page 7](#))

# 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 visitors' 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](mailto:scrubjay323@aol.com)

## Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

May 3 - 5, 2019

Celebrate the natural world and the spring shorebird migration at this festival in Hoquiam, WA. Some shorebird species can be found all year in Grays Harbor County; others are only here during their migration. A good way to learn about shorebirds is to attend the festival's shorebird identification class and field trip. People come from around the world to view the birds during this migration event of hemispheric importance, and this festival brings people together for that purpose.

For more information go to [www.shorebirdfestival.com](http://www.shorebirdfestival.com).

presentations by local experts along with a variety of educational exhibitors, arts & craft vendors, and native/garden plant sales. Bring the kids as there is plenty to keep the entire family engaged and entertained.

## Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest

May 16-19, 2019

Celebrate the return of migratory birds in the midst of peak wildflower season while enjoying field trips, events and free family activities for all ages and abilities in Leavenworth, Washington, and throughout the Wenatchee River Valley. The keynote speaker on Friday evening, May 17th, will be Richard Crossley, talented birder, photographer and award winning author of 'The Crossley ID Guide' series. Go to [www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.org](http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.org) for more information and to register.

## Tukwila Backyard Wildlife Festival

May 11, 2019, 10 AM - 3 PM

Tukwila Community Center

Celebrate wildlife, nature and gardening at this annual festival which features

## Field Trip Report - Barbara Petersen

**O**n a sunny but chilly March morning Jay Galvin introduced eight birders to an area he's been visiting for a long time, the Enumclaw Plateau. Highlights viewed there were a distant perched Turkey Vulture, a perched American Kestrel that launched and flew right over the group, a traffic-halting Killdeer walking in the road, and oh so many Bald Eagles. Many adults and immatures were observed in flight, perched in treetops and standing on the ground in the fields. Of interest was a fourth vehicle observed following our caravan of three cars, hanging back, never passing us, as an hour or more ticked by. When we eventually pulled onto a busy highway the mystery vehicle was replaced by a Sheriff's car, which followed us through our turn onto a side street before turning on his lights and pulling over our third car, driven by none other than our chapter president, Heather! She said the sheriff politely asked if we were lost, chuckled when she lifted her binoculars and explained that we were watching birds, and left us to enjoy our morning. I'm glad he decided to let us go - this time. We moved on to Flaming Geyser State Park where we enjoyed listening to at least three Virginia Rails calling continually. One walked out into the sunshine twice, flew across a bit of open water toward us, and disappeared into the reeds. A pair of Wood Ducks and a pair of Hooded Mergansers hid from us as best they could. A pair of Red-breasted Sapsuckers stood out beautifully on a white birch trunk in the sunlight. A pair of Chestnut-backed Chickadees were seen on a snag out in the marsh, one using its small bill to work on a woodpecker hole. A male Hairy Woodpecker worked on another snag, chips flying. Tree Swallows were seen entering and exiting a hole more than once. It was a lovely day in the field. Thanks, Jay!

# Seen & Heard by Dan Streiffert



**M**y prime target for Easter is the Wild Horses on Steens Mountain. Jo from Joseph Oregon, another volunteer for the Friends Of Malheur Refuge (FOMR), has been showing me some great photos and I am inspired. It's a sunny morning after a day of solid rain. Actually, it's been cold, rainy and windy most of the month. Breakfast at sunrise and I'm off. I have about 60 miles to go before the action starts.

down the CPR. At the pond, a couple of Canada Geese fly by as well as a few Mallards. The road is too tempting, so I decide to follow the CPR to the end of the refuge, then head on to the Steens Mountain turnoff and the horses.



8:17 – I spot a male Ring-necked Pheasant and take a grab shot before he's in the brush.

8:22 – I flush a Black-crowned Night-Heron and try a couple quick flight shots. But of course I did not have time to

adjust my exposure and the shots are too dark. I play tag with him for about a half a mile.

8:28 – I'm flushing a variety of ducks as I drive along and I keep shooting, but it's just too dark to get a good shot. I spook another



Pheasant but cannot get a clear shot.

7:00 AM - About 11 miles from the refuge Visitor Center where I am staying, I buzz past a small herd of Mule Deer on the side of the road. I slowly come to a stop and backup. There are about 10 of them in the morning sun and the colors are just fantastic. So I take a few photos and I'm off.

7:30 - I pass two Turkey Vultures on the fence. So again I back up and catch them just before they take off.

7:38 – I'm driving through some rocky canyons looking for marmots sunning themselves on the rocks. Instead, I find a Cooper's Hawk perched on the rocks.

7:56 - With all the rain we've been having, the south part of the refuge is covered with water. The Center Patrol Road (CPR) runs along the east levy of the Blitzen River, which flows into Malheur Lake from Steens Mountain. The river has been channelized through this area and the fields are flooded on both sides. I decide to make a short detour to Benson Pond just a mile or so

8:32 – About 30 American Coots are all taking a bath together. I take a short movie. The Red-winged Blackbirds are displaying on the barbed-wire fence, so I



take some more photos. A few days ago I got some great photos here of an American Bittern stalking some kind of frog in exactly the same place.

8:41 – A flock of White-faced Ibis fly by and I grab some more flight shots. A

Willet is feeding in the newly sprouted grass. The short grass makes it ideal for spotting the wildlife. In another week it's going to be much harder. I spook another Pheasant, this time on the left-hand side and I manage to catch him just as he's lifting off. It's a bit over-exposed, but I might be able to rescue it.

8:47 – There's a lone Sandhill Crane in the field. This time of year they are pairing up and starting to nest. Cranes generally stay in family groups, except when nesting. So there must be another in the area. I have found two Sandhills on a nest near Burns so I take some time to scan the area. No luck. Another large flock of White-faced Ibis comes by. This time I'm ready for them and I get several keepers. As I look up from my camera, a large flock of American White Pelicans is circling up high. They cooperate by descending and I get about 20 great flight shots. I keep *(Continued on [page 7](#))*

**(Seen and Heard - Continued from [page 6](#))**

thinking about the horses. At this point I'm pretty much committed to running down the CPR as it's faster than returning to the main highway. They recently put fresh gravel on this part as it was partially covered with water two weeks ago. Unfortunately, the gravel has sharp edges, and I've been warned not to go above 15 mph to avoid flats.

9:03 – There's a pair of Black-necked Stilts wading through the freshly watered grass. Steens Mountain is begging to show itself in the east as the clouds lift at its base. There is a lone dead tree in the foreground and it looks dramatic against the snow in the background, so I try for nice landscape. The mountain is covered with snow which is just now starting to melt. Since snowmelt from Steens feeds Malheur Lake during the spring and summer months, this means the lake has the potential of getting quite large this year.

9:17 – A female Common Merganser floats past me on the Blitzen River. There are two Mule deer with a fawn across the valley with the mountain in the background.

9:30 – I spot a Leucistic Ring-necked Pheasant on the other side of the river. All white with a red head. One of the volunteers got a photo of him just yesterday. He is behind some brush so I move slowly forward. I flush another Pheasant just in front of me and they both fly off.

9:38 – A Red-tailed Hawk flies by.

9:55 – I arrive at the P Ranch, which is at the end of the CPR. There is a Bald Eagle nest here with at least one chick in it. We have been monitoring this nest, as well as one closer to



the refuge, which has two chicks in it. These are the first of these species that have nested on the refuge in over 100 years! I spend some time scoping the nest, but cannot see any little heads poking up. Time to head for the horses...

As it turned out, I eventually found a lot of horses, but I'm not sure if any of them were "wild". And they were all pretty much feeding with their heads in the grass. Not the kind of photos that Jo from Joseph gets. Maybe I'll have better luck on another day.

*Bio: Dan is an ##-##-old birder entering his ### year writing the Seen and Heard. Currently Spending the Month of April as a volunteer with the Friends of Malheur Refuge, Dan enjoys exploring new birding areas in Washington and Oregon.*

**Helen Engle (Continued from [page 4](#))**

collection of 'Helen's Great Reads'. Helen's last recommended excellent reads were *The Invention of Nature* by Andrea Wulf and *The Hour of Land: A Personal Topography of America's National Parks* by Terry Tempest Williams. Included with Helen's recommendations, a Terry Tempest Williams highlighted quote:

"This is what we can promise the future: a legacy of care. That we will be good stewards and not take too much or give back too little, that we will recognize wild nature for what it is, in all its magnificent and complex history--an unfathomable wealth that should be consciously saved, not ruthlessly spent. Privilege is what we inherit by our status as *Homo sapiens* living on this planet. This is the privilege of imagination. What

we choose to do with our privilege as a species is up to each of us."

Like so many birders, Helen loved the simplicity of exploring nature. But what was it that took Helen beyond just 'getting something from nature'? What made Helen one of Washington's greatest conservationists?

Helen was a legacy of care. She was a good steward and took less and gave back more—saving nature and nurturing individuals so that they too, not only understood and enjoyed nature, but also understood their privilege of imagination and chose to care too.

Our Rainier Audubon's efforts continue on the Weyerhaeuser Campus Save. Helen may not be listed as a key player, but her guidance and wisdom laid out the foundation of our strategy and our professionalism. Like so many others and so many organizations, we are thankful for Helen's leadership and

guidance. Her legacy of care perpetuates.

Cheers to our Helen-mother of Washington Audubon. If each of us lived with an ounce of passion, care and engagement that Helen had, there would be no worries on our planet.

Thank you, Helen, for your love and nurturing of nature, of people and of our planet.

-Love, Rainier Audubon

# JOIN THE GLOBAL BIG DAY CHALLENGE SATURDAY, MAY 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**e** Bird's Global Big Day is around the corner. Take the Rainier Audubon Challenge: form a birding team and join in on the Global Big Day fun.

Global Big day runs from midnight to midnight on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. All you do is get out and go birding. You chose the place and time. Then, enter your bird sightings onto eBird.org or—while you are out in the field—use the eBird Mobile app <https://help.ebird.org/customer/portal/articles/2411868>

Everyone's sightings will be entered into a single massive Global Big Day list—while also collecting data for scientists to use to better understand birds. You can keep track of all of the day's stats on the Global Big Day page <https://ebird.org/globalbigday>

If you don't have an eBird account, go to **ebird.org** to create an account. Click the **Get started** tab and follow the steps.

## Rainier Audubon Challenge

Last year, we had 2 teams participate in the Rainier Audubon Challenge for Global Big Day. Throughout the day the two teams kept in touch about what they were seeing and where they were—and of course, both were competing to see how many species they saw.

We have two teams registered so far:

Barbara Petersen's clan will be celebrating Global Big Day in honor of Pat Toth, long-time outstanding member of Rainier Audubon. The team is hush on their chosen path, but have a penchant for digging up great rarities. Last year, Clan Petersen spotted a Wilson's Phalarope at M Street in Auburn.

Team 2TallyBirdy, consisting of Calen Randall and Cindy Flanagan, are doing a cross state birding bonanza: starting on the eastern border at Coeur D'Alene and Spokane traveling along 90 then venturing along Hwy 101 to Grays Harbor and finishing at Hoquiam. Hoping to shatter the 100 species mark!

Global Big Day is the perfect day to participate in Rainier Audubon's annual fundraiser: Birdathon. Get sponsors to donate money for each species you see while you are out on your Global Big Day. Or, have them donate a flat rate for your birding day. A sponsor sheet is included in this Heron Herald or go to [RainierAudubon.org](http://RainierAudubon.org) to get a sponsor sheet.

Join in on the fun! If you form a team, and want to participate in the Rainier Audubon Challenge, contact Cindy Flanagan 253-315-0799 or email [camcalcin@hotmail.com](mailto:camcalcin@hotmail.com)



## Dungeness River Audubon Center—An Invitation to help “Inspire Wonder”

The Dungeness River Audubon Center is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year with a capital

campaign to expand the building and create better access to the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s Railroad Bridge Park near Sequim. Thanks to the partnership between the Center, Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, and the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe; we’re more than halfway to our fundraising goal of \$3M.

We were recently awarded a “last-in” \$300K grant from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust – which means we won’t get the money if we can’t complete the rest of the campaign. If you’ve been one of the thousands of people who have visited the Center and Park, for BirdFest or otherwise, we hope you’ll consider making a gift to help us meet this challenge.

View a video to see the Center and Park and how they interact with visitors...and contribute through the website at [dungenessrivercenter.org](http://dungenessrivercenter.org). For more specific questions, please contact Center Director Powell Jones at 360-681-4076.





# The Month of May is Birdathon



It's "birding for dollars!" Count as many bird species in one day as you can! Choose any day in May. Get family, friends and co-workers to sponsor you, then go birding! Afterwards, send them a list of what birds you saw, and they will donate X amount for each species you saw (i.e. 25 cents). Or they can just donate a flat fee. 100% of the proceeds support Rainier Audubon activities in south King County.

You can also conduct your Birdathon birding on one of our field trips. Earn money for chapter activities while enjoying a great field trip led by an expert birder. Or just stay at home and count bird species at your feeder. Or be creative and come up with your own Birdathon experience. Sponsors are happy to support your efforts, and many look forward to being asked again the following year. They especially enjoy your list of bird species seen.

Why do it? Rainier Audubon needs the money! The portion of your membership dues to Rainier Audubon covers only a portion of the costs associated with running a successful Audubon chapter. Birdathon is our largest fundraiser, and we depend on it to provide a stable funding base for our many activities and services such as: printing and mailing our chapter's newsletter, general administrative costs, programs (speaker fees), environmental education activities, conservation committee activities, etc., We wouldn't want to have to cut back on any of our activities due to lack of funds! Sponsor sheets are available at Rainier Audubon membership meetings!



Dancing Sandhill Cranes - Hines, OR  
Photo by Jay Galvin

# King County Parks Levy on August 6 Ballot

**P**ut August 6<sup>th</sup> on your calendar—that is when the King County Parks Levy hits the ballot thanks to an 8-1 King County Council vote in support of the Parks Levy. In February, Executive Dow Constantine proposed renewing the current King County Parks Levy, which will expand and connect regional trails, improve access to green space and recreation, and help keep parks clean, safe, and open. The proposed levy is a renewal of the current King County Parks Levy which expires at the end of the year.

Our region is rapidly growing, and access to nature and open space is the foundation of healthy living. Many key birding areas in the Rainier Audubon boundaries are on these King County supported trails and open space. Further open space acquisition will mean more opportunity to protect forested areas, water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat. The 54-acre North Lake shoreline in Federal Way that Rainier Audubon is working on conserving is one open space area that could benefit from the renewed Parks Levy, not only for acquisition, but also for maintenance and operation of the property.

The proposed levy would create \$810 million in funds over six years. It would cost a home owner who has an assessed property value of \$500,000 about \$7.70 a month. King County Parks would use proceeds from the levy to:

- Build and design regional trails, including missing links and crossings over rivers and highways
- Acquire more open space lands that provide recreation opportunities for people and protect forestland lands, water quality and habitat for fish and wildlife
- Improve trailheads by adding parking and signage
- Repair hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding trails
- Replace turf on 11 ballfields
- Rehabilitate play area equipment in six parks
- Maintain park infrastructure, such as pathways, roofs, fencing, and electrical systems

## Go birding and make a difference!

**A**re seabirds in the southern Salish Sea increasing or decreasing in numbers? Which species are changing their range? Help us find out. The Puget Sound Seabird Survey (PSSS) is a community and citizen science project managed by Seattle Audubon that empowers volunteer birdwatchers to gather valuable data on wintering seabird populations across the southern Salish Sea.

You can contribute to this vital seabird science by joining the thirteenth season of this exciting project. We are now recruiting enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers to help us monitor the status of our local wintering seabirds. Training on survey methodology will be provided at a location near you in September and early October. Volunteers should ideally be able to identify Puget Sound's seabird species and be available on the first Saturday of each month, October through April, to conduct a 30-minute survey. But, if determining between Lesser and Greater Scaup is a challenge, we'll team you up with more knowledgeable surveyors. To help us determine each volunteer's seabird identification skills, visit [www.seabirdsurvey.com](http://www.seabirdsurvey.com) to take our quick, fun Seabird ID quiz.

Learn more, including training locations, at [www.seabirdsurvey.org](http://www.seabirdsurvey.org) and email Toby Ross, Senior Science



Manager [tobyr@seattleaudubon.org](mailto:tobyr@seattleaudubon.org) if you would like more information or to take part.

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## Conservation efforts on Weyerhaeuser Campus Continue

**E**fforts to conserve the 54-acre North Lake shoreline on the Weyerhaeuser Campus continue. The city of Federal Way submitted a request to the state for \$1 million dollars in the 2019-20 Capital Budget Funds. The ask is supported by State Representatives Mike Pellicciotti and Kristine Reeves, and State Senator Claire Wilson.

In addition, Forterra, the conservation organization, who is working with Save Weyerhaeuser Campus, Rainier Audubon and the city of Federal Way has applied for a \$4 million grant from King County Conservation Futures.

The cost of the acquisition of the North Lake property (the longest undeveloped lake shoreline in South King County) is expected to be in the ball park of \$8-10 million. To date, the owner of the property, Industrial Realty Group, has not agreed to sell the land—even though the property has been identified as one of King County’s high conservation lands. Forterra has made efforts to purchase the property; however, IRG has publicly announced that preservation on the campus of the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden, the Pacific Bonsai Museum and trails will occur when IRG gets its approval to build 1.5 million square feet of warehouses and over 2 million square feet of impervious surface.

### TAKE ACTION

Join Save Weyerhaeuser Campus’ petition to let IRG know that you support Responsible Development on the Weyerhaeuser Campus, that includes selling the North Lake Shoreline 54 acres to Forterra for conservation.

- Preserves the integrity of one of Federal Way’s most historically significant sites
- We believe that 1.5 million square feet of warehouses that can bring as many as 800 semi-truck trips a day to our community does not meet these development standards and the community’s needs.

We support an alternative development plan, such as mixed-use concept, that can bring greater lifestyle and economic benefits to our community.

In addition, we seek a written long-term plan for this unique property, so that we know with certainty what will be developed and what will be preserved. We urge you to work with Save Weyerhaeuser Campus to draft a development plan that our community and our region can support.

Here is the online link to Save Weyerhaeuser Campus’ petition. (An easy way to paste this link into your internet browser is to go to Rainier Audubon’s Online Heron Herald edition at [rainieraudubon.org](http://rainieraudubon.org), select tab “Read our May newsletter”, find this article and click on the link):

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfUgS4m-umOIU2Cp0FsSB5ijCOB-bW7BS5fAAREqdvMDCa-Tg/viewform>

## Petition to IRG for Responsible Development

March 7, 2019

Attention: Industrial Realty Group

We support responsible development on the historic Weyerhaeuser Campus, as advocated by Save Weyerhaeuser Campus on behalf of our community and the region.

Responsible development must meet the intent of the Washington State Growth Management Act, the Puget Sound Regional Council’s Vision 2040 plan, the City of Federal Way’s Comprehensive Plan and the 1994 Concomitant Zoning Agreement between Weyerhaeuser and the City of Federal Way.

Among other provisions of these documents, we support development on the campus that:

- Blends buildings into the environment through appropriate scale and screening
- Improves mobility of vehicles and people
- Protects forests, meadows, wetlands and watershed
- Contributes to a livable, inclusive community
- Provides permanent public access to open space
- Brings living-wage jobs and long-term tax base to the city
- Conserves the western shoreline of North Lake



*Photo by Carley Randall*

Rufous Hummingbird extracting soft cattail fibers on the Weyerhaeuser Pond shoreline. This Rufous Hummingbird, a species in decline due to loss of breeding habitat and on the conservation watch list, is one of many nest-makers on the Weyerhaeuser Campus. Over 120 bird species depend on the 400+ acres of unique urban natural habitat of the Weyerhaeuser Campus.



Rainier Audubon  
Address Line 1  
Address Line 2

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Kent, WA 98031  
Permit No. 441

It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment. - Ansel Adams



## Rainier Audubon Membership Subscription or Renewal Form

One-year Membership in Rainier Audubon  
\$25—Individual Membership / \$30—Family Membership

Circle one New / Renewal

For new members:

How did you hear about Rainier Audubon Society?

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Rainier Audubon Society - Membership

PO Box 778

Auburn, WA 98071



Are you interested in:

- Volunteering?
- Field Trips?
- Classes?

(Please circle)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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