

The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

November 2015

RAS Membership Meeting Brown Bag Auction and Photo Share Party

November 16, 2015

This year's brown bag auction and photo share party at the November 16 membership meeting promises to be a great time! This interactive meeting will give you a chance to show off your bird pictures to the rest of us. You can bring prints to the meeting, or you can bring your iPad or laptop with pictures of the birds you've seen in your yard, on vacation, or on field trips. We will have tables set up for the displays. It will be fun to mingle, look at the pictures, and grab a bite to eat.

As if that weren't enough, on November 16 we will also have the brown bag auction going on at the same time as the photo share. **We would like all donated items to arrive by 6:30 pm.** You can start setting up your pictures for the photo share part of the evening around 6:45 pm. Ticket sales will also begin at 6:45 pm, and tickets will be \$1.00 each. The winning tickets will be drawn at 7:45 pm, and the winners will be announced at 8:00 pm.

In case you have not participated in a brown bag auction in the past, here's how it goes: The donated items will be set up on display. Each item will have a brown paper lunch bag next to it. You will put your ticket in the bag that corresponds to the item you would like to win! There is no limit on how many tickets you may purchase or how many you may put in any one bag.

This is a great way for you to get some early holiday shopping done. It is also a wonderful way to move along some nice items that you have but don't use. Bird- and yard-related donations are always popular, but other things go well too. Did you get a gift card for your birthday to a store where you don't shop? Someone else would love to bid on it. Someone gave you a set of four mugs with birds on them but you already own dozens? Add a pound of coffee and bring them with you on November 16. How about making a gift basket? You can be really creative and have a fun time doing this. For example, a member has already gotten busy and put

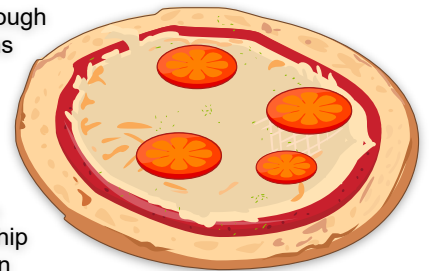
together a car-care gift basket. You can also donate services, like four hours of yard work or pressure washing a driveway. Donated services can also be professional: maybe you're an accountant who can donate a one-hour financial consultation, or perhaps you're a hair stylist who can donate a certificate for a cut. Do you make a fabulous cheesecake? Donate a certificate so the winner can claim it in the future. Everyone can contribute and everyone can bid!



Even if you can't be at the meeting, you can still donate items. We have one item sent through the mail already, and it's a really great one: something you definitely will want for your binoculars. Wild Birds Unlimited of Burien has already donated a beautiful wooden suet feeder with suet cakes. Also, John Marzluff has agreed to personalize and sign a hardbound copy of his recent book *Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers, and Other Wildlife* for the auction.

Remember, the more money we make on November 16, the more wonderful speakers we can have in the future.

As if all this wasn't enough to get you there, your arms laden with donations and bird pictures, a special treat is in store. **We will be having fresh, hot pizza delivered at 7:00 pm that night.** So plan to be there for the membership photo party and auction on November 16: a great turnout will make this a fabulous time for all. See you there.



If you have any questions, please contact treasurer Laura Lavington at 253 941 7372.

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



Mark and Adele Freeland



The Rainier Audubon Society board would like to recognize a couple who has done a lot for Rainier over the years but who has now moved away from our area. Mark and Adele Freeland contributed to Rainier for many years with their time, energy, and money. Mark Freeland donated money quarterly to Rainier through Boeing (his employer) for many years, and his contribution was considerable (when Rainier’s treasurer told the board the details, the board became speechless). In addition to being Rainier’s top benefactors, Mark and Adele gave to Rainier by coordinating the brown bag auction and compiling the Christmas Bird Count results. While they lived in our area, the Freelands were also active in Tahoma Audubon and Friends of the Hylebos.

Mark and Adele have retired to the Silverdale area, where they are both keeping busy. Adele is gardening and birding, while Mark is enjoying his retirement by pursuing woodturning and boat-building hobbies. Mark and Adele: Thank you! We sure are going to miss you!

Since Rainier Audubon Society is a 501 (c3) nonprofit, you, too, can donate to Rainier through your employer, if your employer has a program in place. See treasurer Laura Lavington for more information.

Rainier Audubon Officers		
President	Dan Streiffert*	253-796-2203
Vice President	Steve Feldman*	360-802-5211
Treasurer	Laura Lavington*	253-941-7372
Secretary	Heather Gibson*	253-856-9812
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Christmas Bird Count Coordinator	Alex Juchems	253-529-8996
Board Member	Max Prinsen	425-432-9965
Board Member	Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen	425-432-9965
Publicity	Tom Sernka	253-529-8970
*Also serves as Board Member		
Board meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM at the Federal Way United Methodist Church, and are open to all members.		

Sign up for our Google email list!

The intent of this site is to assist in publicizing our activities to members and the general public relating to our club activities. Anyone may join or leave the group at any time. You may sign up on at:

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

RAS Mission Statement

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



Seen & Heard by Calen Randall

the workers for ruining her dinner table (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7hIGazKw8k>). Only four thick concrete barriers remained. I felt sorry for the falcon. How would I feel if lost my bed or could no longer sit in my favorite chair? As her cries echoed in my head, I felt a surge of nostalgia and remembered the first time I had spotted a falcon at the ponds.

The proverb “birds of a feather flock together” has taken a new meaning. The birding hotspot of Boeing Ponds (just north of 212th Street on 59th Place S) often sports large flocks of birds, such as cacklers and Canada Geese, hanging out together to avoid predation. However, recently several birders have reported sighting new groupings at the ponds. Down at Boeing Ponds, one can often bump into a fellow videoing the birds—particularly birds of prey. Ironically, I don’t know his name, but he captures great footage of the birds. You can watch his clips on youtube by typing in the search “sheeprugly”. Like a storm chaser always tracking any sign of rough weather, he is always following birds in the area, so I call him “Bird Chaser”. Lately, Bird Chaser has posted several videos of avian coexistence. The unorthodox pairings have ranged from a crow and an immature Cooper’s Hawk sharing a light fixture, to a Merlin and Belted Kingfisher cuddled up on one of many snags in the Boeing Pond area. I too have spotted a Bald Eagle and a Great Blue Heron hanging out in the same tree down by the ponds. Why would such unusual suspects be hanging out together?

Perhaps this new stick-togetherness can be attributed to the birds’ reaction to the great change at Boeing Ponds. In September, I viewed a Peregrine Falcon devour some unfortunate prey on its favorite Boeing rooftop on the south side of the pond, which construction workers had begun dismantling. A couple of weeks later, my Mom returned from a trip to Boeing Pond and reported the sidings of the entire building had been stripped down. After talking to my Mom about the Boeing demolition, I thought about Bird Chaser and wondered if he had captured any video footage of the demolition. Sure enough, Bird Chaser had. I watched the enormous walls stripped from the building as the female Peregrine Falcon cussed

The chilly December day in 2009, was my first Christmas Bird Count and my first birding trip as a member of the Rainier Audubon. It was also the first time I met birder extraordinaire Charlie Wright. As our band of five stepped past a beaver-felled tree and watched a pair of American Coots stumble along the water’s edge with their clown-like lobbed toes, I asked Charlie what the large building overlooking the ponds was. “Oh that’s just one of the Boeing buildings,” he said, “occasionally you can see a Peregrine Falcon perched up there, just above the fourth story door to nowhere.” As Charlie finished his sentence, out of the corner of my eye I noticed a black raptor flap towards the building. I grinned as I turned to Charlie. “You mean like *that* Peregrine Falcon?” I laughed. The others whirled around. Sure enough, there on the top ridge of the building was a ravenous peregrine, surveying her lands, scouting out a potential breakfast. Over the six years that I have been visiting Boeing Pond, it has been a treat to view one of the falcons scanning the Kent Valley or chomping down a meal. As I stare at the barren concrete remnants of the building and hear the shrieks of the female peregrine, I feel sorry for the falcons that are losing such a treasured spot. Where will I find one of them perched next? How will the pair adapt?

As our society continues to develop and urban sprawl usurps more of our urban wildlife habitats, it can feel like much of our birding world is sliding away. Yet all is not lost in the change. Though losing the favorite falcon perch hurts, the snags at Kent ponds still attract an assortment of raptors, including a Red-shouldered Hawk that has visited last couple winters. Several wooded areas near my house have also recently been developed, but the last stand of farmland around the Green River, where the Trumpeter Swans and migrating waterfowl

congregate remains untouched. Though it is important to conserve much habitat in the Rainier Audubon area, it is utopian thinking to believe that all areas can be protected from human expansion. As the birds continue to adapt to a more human-populated environment, so too must birders adjust to the changes in the habitat and homes of the birds we love.

If you spot a Peregrine Falcon, or another bird in the Rainier Audubon area, or somewhere else, email me at calenbirds@hotmail.com about your sighting. Happy birding!

Recent Bird Sightings:

Unfortunately, there were no reports sent in this month. What have you been seeing lately? Send your reports to calenbirds@hotmail.com.

October 14th, 2015 The first **Varied Thrush** of the winter showed up to our yard halfway through October. Soon after his arrival, a male intergrade **Northern Flicker** stopped by. The flicker sported a flashy red nape crescent and scarlet malar stripe. A couple days later, my family and I walked the boardwalk in Nisqually. Aside from some gorgeous views of Mt. Rainier and the river delta, we spotted a flock of **Northern Pintail**, **Savannah Sparrow**, and a **Northern Harrier**.

Mystery Bird of the Month

This bird can often be seen down at the Redondo Pier. Can you guess the bird? Here are the clues:

- A group of me is known as a “float”, a “padding”, a “brace”, a “raft”, a “flush”, and a “team” of ducks.
- I have a yellow knob on my bill
- I am a very vocal duck
- I will occasionally perform a “wing-flap” where I flap my wings

(Continued on page 9)

Bio: Calen is a 16 year old birder. He enjoys birding in the Green River Valley and the Skagit Valley Flats. Calen is thrilled to continue the ‘Seen and Heard’ for a fifth year. When not birding, Calen can be seen flying up and down the ice at Kent Valley Ice Center or trekking to class at Highline Community College.

Field Trips - We Need a new Chair!



Weekly Birdwalks at Nisqually

Wednesdays 8:00 am to Noon

Leader: Phil Kelley

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

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

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

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

Meet: At the Visitor's Center Pond Overlook.

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

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

Nesting GBH at Soos Creek - Dan Streiffert



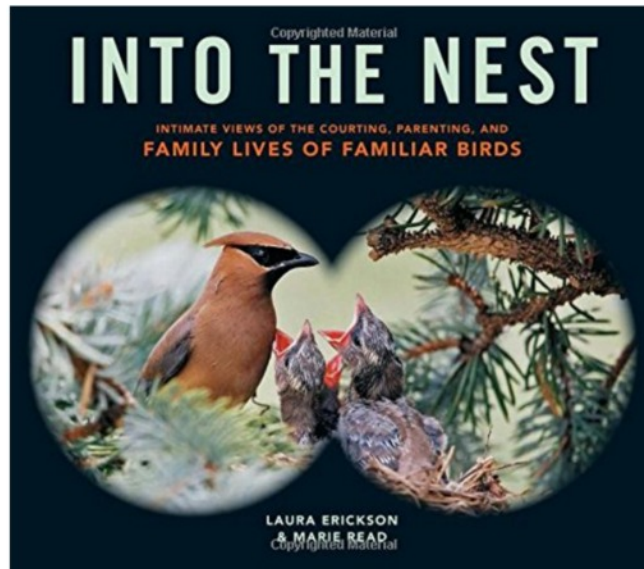
Book Reviews - by Laura Lavington

I discovered a delightful book this fall: *Into the Nest: Intimate Views of the Courting, Parenting, and Family Lives of Familiar Birds* by Laura Erickson and Marie Read. I picked up this 2015 book from the library, and I am even more impressed by the photos than I am by the text (although the text is interesting). Who wouldn't want a trip "into the nest" of some of our favorite birds?

The first section of *Into the Nest* covers some general information about avian reproduction, such as the difference between precocial chicks and altricial chicks. After the authors establish some basics, the rest of the book examines the family lives of different birds. The authors describe the courtship, mating, incubating, and young-rearing of each species covered, and the text is accompanied by a generous amount of photographs. There are photographs of birds building their nests and of birds mating, and most of the sections include a series of photographs depicting the avian young at different ages (it's amazing how much the chicks can grow in only a few days!). The photographs of the cavity-nester chicks thrusting their heads out of the entrance hole are particularly cute (sometimes there are so many

chick heads that I wonder if they will get stuck). You know what else is cute? Fluffy little gull babies.

While my favorite aspect of *Into the Nest* is all the photographs, the text is worth reading as well. In the great blue heron section, I read that in regions where alligators live, herons like to build their nests above alligator-infested waters.



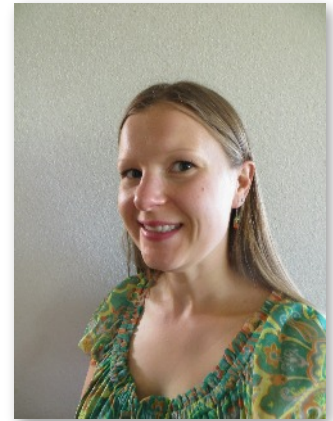
The presence of the alligators protects the nest from predators such as raccoons. I also learned that northern flickers are what is called "indeterminate layers." The female flicker lays one egg per day, and if the egg is removed each day, the flicker replaces it. The book says that one female flicker laid a total of seventy-one eggs! Wow, it seems like that would have worn her out.

I found that *Into the Nest* makes good bedtime reading material: it's fairly

light reading, nothing very exciting happens in the book,

and there are lots of pictures of nestlings cuddled up together (like me cuddled up with my pillow?). As a matter of fact, I had a hard time getting through this book, because it tended to make me sleepy. Maybe "nest" translates to "bed" for me, so that even though the birds in the pictures were often awake, my subconscious saw them and thought "sleep." Please understand, I am not criticizing the book or calling it boring: I'm just giving you a suggestion in case you have a hard time finding reading material that does not make you more awake. I've developed a recent bad habit of watching exciting TV before bed, which tends to make it hard to sleep: quite obviously, I'd do better to snuggle up with *Into the Nest*, instead.

I do have one criticism for this book, **(Continued on [page 8](#))**




Featherhaven

Native Songbird Rehabilitation
featherhavensr@gmail.com
P.O. Box 242, Enumclaw, WA 98022

Bird of the Month: Birds that Cache Their Food

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



where they have cached seeds for up to 28 days. Since a chickadee's brain grows its hippocampus larger in the autumn and winter, it is believed that this helps with its spatial memory.

Nuthatches prefer heavier sunflower seeds over the lighter ones. Be sure to have some sunflower chips in your blend, too, as they



like these 25% more than one in the shell. They cache more in the morning and prefer to hide foods on deeply furrowed tree trunks and the underside of branches. Nuthatches are also known to hide seeds under a shingle or behind wooden siding. Nuthatches can remember where seeds are cached for up to 30 days.

especially fond of peanuts in the shell. They bury them in the ground and are known to cache about 100 in a day emptying a feeder in no time. Watch for them to make repeated trips to your feeders (or an oak tree) and fly off. Try to count how many seeds they are able to stuff into their craw. Some birds are able to hold up to 100 seeds. They travel up to a few miles away to bury their nutritious treasure.

Right now chickadees, nuthatches and jays are hiding food to retrieve and eat at a later time. This behavior is called "caching." Caching helps birds survive during bad weather and when food sources are low. These birds can store hundreds of seeds a day. Each seed is placed in a different location and they generally remember where each one is, even a month later.

By providing an easily accessible food source, you can help your birds with their caching needs.

Chickadees prefer to cache black oil sunflower seeds often eating a small portion before hiding it in and under bark, dead leaves, knotholes, clusters of pine needles, gutters, shingles and in the ground. Chickadees cache more in the middle of the day when visiting feeders. They can remember

Jays love to cache peanuts, sunflower seeds and acorns. They are



The king of all caching birds has to be the Clark's Nutcracker. Clark's Nutcrackers cache tens of thousands of seeds and can relocate them as long as nine months after the original caching even if they are covered with inches of snow!

Other birds that will cache food include crows, ravens and some woodpeckers.

FREE DISCOVER PASSES FOR MEMBERS OF RAINIER AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

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

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

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

Mewsings from Millie

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



Adult Marbled Murrelet

Some people think that it is kind of quirky that I, a cat, live in a store for birds. Well, how about a tiny seabird that nests in old growth forest 40 - 50 miles inland? That's quirky!

The bird I'm speaking of is the Marbled Murrelet. It's a plump, chunky little bird with narrow, pointed wings, fondly referred to by some as the "flying potato". But boy, can it fly! One Marbled Murrelet was clocked at 103 mph! Mom and dad will fly 100 miles round trip from the nest to the sea several times a day to feed each other during incubation and to feed their chick. That's quite amazing!

Not a whole lot is known about Marbled Murrelets. They are related to murre, guillemots, auklets and puffins. Fishermen called them "Australian Bumblebees" and loggers called them "fogbirds" or "fog larks".

The first Marbled Murrelet nest found in the Pacific Northwest wasn't discovered until 1974 - but then who would think to look for a seabird nest 150 feet in the air on the branch of a 200 year old conifer tree? So far, only 160 or so nests have been discovered.

Found all along the Pacific Coast, Marbled Murrelets inhabit calm, shallow coastal waters and bays. They dive, soaring effortlessly through the water, foraging for tiny fish and other small sea creatures.

When nesting time comes, Marbled Murrelets seek out a wide horizontal branch on an old conifer. The nest is a bed of soft moss and lichen. When laid, the single green speckled egg is well

camouflaged from its major predators, Steller's Jays and Ravens.

Mom and dad take turns incubating the egg, changing places every morning at dawn. One will sit on the egg while the other forages for food at sea.

After about four weeks, the down-covered chick will hatch and mom and

dad will both work on feeding it. In another four weeks, the chick will leave the nest on its own during the night and head to the sea.

But all is not good in the Marbled Murrelet world. Besides the threats of possible oil spills and getting tangled in gill nets, loss of habitat due to logging has caused their population to decline.

Fortunately, the Marbled Murrelet Survival Project is working with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to establish a conservation strategy. Go to their website, call 360-742-4808 or e-mail kevin@murreletsurvival.org with any questions or if you would like to help make a difference.

Until next time,

Millie

The Muse of Mews



Murrelets in Flight



Marbled Murrelet Chick



CHECK OUT THE NEW RAINIER AUDUBON MEETUP GROUP AT

<http://www.meetup.com/Rainier-Audubon-Society/>

No More Butterfly Bushes - Nancy Streiffert

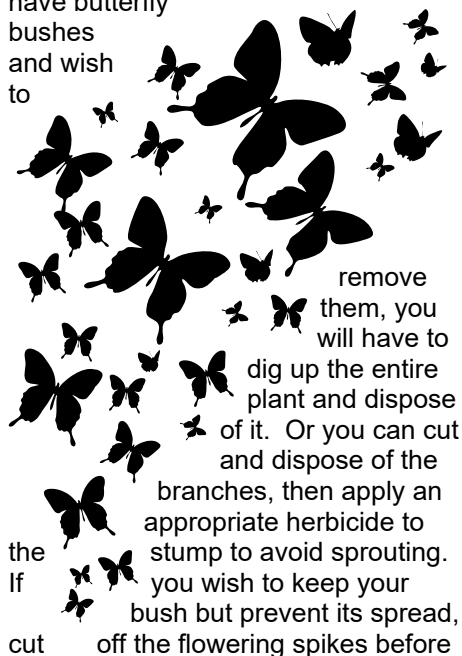
From Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

NO MORE BUTTERFLY BUSHES!

In the past, WDFW has encouraged the planting of butterfly bushes (*Buddleia davidii*) to provide nectar for butterflies. (Other names are summer lilac or orange eye.) A better understanding of how invasive the most common species of this exotic plant can be, especially on the west side of the state, led to the listing of *Buddleia*, especially *B. davidii*, as a Class B Noxious Weed by the Washington Noxious Weed Control Board in 2005. Some of the already printed materials from WDFW advocate the plant's use – IGNORE THIS IDEA AND PASS IT ON – THE PLANT IS INVASIVE AND CROWDS OUT NATIVE BUTTERFLY-FRIENDLY PLANTS.

It is a particular pest along rivers where it crowds out the insect and bird friendly willows but doesn't provide the food for both larvae and

mature butterflies that willows do. Escaped bushes from wind blown seed are pervasive in Western Washington. The plant is hard to remove – it will resprout from rootstock if cut to the ground. If you have butterfly bushes and wish to



remove them, you will have to dig up the entire plant and dispose of it. Or you can cut and dispose of the branches, then apply an appropriate herbicide to stump to avoid sprouting. If you wish to keep your bush but prevent its spread, cut off the flowering spikes before

they produce fruits and cut off the flower stalks in the FALL when the seeds are most apt to disperse.

In Oregon, it is now against the law to sell butterfly bush. The Washington Department of Agriculture has not put butterfly bush on the prohibited plants list. As a Class B noxious weed, Washington requires control of the plant and encourages removal where possible.

More information: <http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/detail.asp?weed=15>

Into the Nest (Continued from page 5)

and it is a common problem I've noticed in American books about birds. Birds from the eastern part of North America are depicted more than western birds in *Into the Nest*. For example, in the section about pigeons, the book covers rock pigeons and mourning doves. Now, I know that the native eastern pigeon (the passenger pigeon) is extinct, but the book could have included the band-tailed pigeons instead of the nonnative rock pigeon. The bluebird chapter ostensibly covers eastern, western, and

mountain bluebirds, but almost all of the pictures in that section are of eastern bluebirds. Similarly, there are more pictures of Baltimore orioles than Bullock's orioles. And of course, the book includes blue jays instead of Steller's or scrub jays. However, enough of the species covered in the book live on both sides of the country, so I definitely think the book is still worth checking out from the library. In fact, now that I think about it, I think that after I return the book to the library, I may order a copy from Amazon. By the way, if you are interested, there is also a Kindle edition of *Into the Nest*. I am not sure if

the photos would look better on Kindle, or if one could see them better by looking at a print copy.
You know what I'm interested in? I would like the authors to do a version of *Into the Nest* about squirrels. Wouldn't you like to see photos of our adorable native Douglas squirrel curled up in its cavity? Oh, and baby squirrel pictures! I think I'd also like to see squirrels sleeping in their summer dreys high up the trees (how do they keep the babies in the dreys?). Maybe it will happen. Maybe.

My testimony given at the Aberdeen DEIS hearings on the Westway and Imperium Expansion Projects

My name is Dan Streiffert, and I live in Kent Washington. I am a retired software engineer and currently the Chair of Rainier Audubon Society, which covers South King County.

There is a section in the DEIS (Page 6-10) dealing with Greenhouse Gas Emissions. Table 6-5 shows the estimated CO₂ emissions factors associated with the combustion of the products that could be shipped through the facilities. From these data, it is estimated this will result in an additional 26,494,153 metric tons of CO₂ per year. The report then states that "This crude oil can only be transported to U.S. refineries, which are limited in capacity by law. Therefore, this oil would replace oil currently used in U.S. refineries **and there would be no net increase in overall emissions.**"

In fact, compared to a conventional oil well, the extraction of these Bakken sands is about twelve percent dirtier¹, in terms of CO₂ emissions, so it would appear that producing the same amount of oil with Bakken sands would in fact increase overall emissions. So it appears to me that the DEIS conclusions in this section are incorrect.

Furthermore, this Friday, the House of Representatives is voting to lift the 40 year old ban on oil exports. Even if this vote is unsuccessful, if we are to have any hope of controlling Climate Change, we need to urgently reduce CO₂ emissions, not simply hold them at their current level. These projects are not carbon neutral, and these permits must be denied.

Dan Streiffert

You may submit your own comments at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/geographic/graysharbor/terminals.html>

¹ **American Oil Revolution** By STEVE AUSTIN for OIL-PRICE.NET, 2013/01/02

Seen an Heard (Continued from [page 3](#))

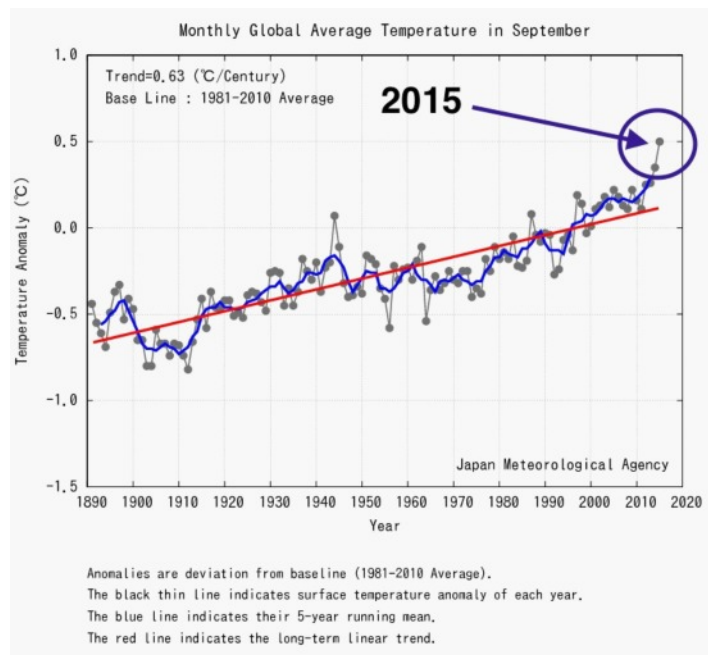
and raise my body out of the water.

- I often take off from the water much more abruptly than most other ducks
- I'm not white-winged and I don't surf
- I have a colour in my name, but it's not very bright.

Who am I?

Answer on last page.

Send your sightings/hearings to calenbirds@hotmail.com I love reading your reports!



Answer: Black Scoter



"Money has to serve, not to rule."
- Pope Francis



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



Name: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Phone _____

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