

# The Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

October 2018



Rainier Audubon  
Membership Meeting

## ***“Raptor Live”***

*By Craig Moran*

*7:00 P.M. October 15, 2018*

**C**raig Moran graduated from Southwest Missouri University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology with minors in Psychology and Geography. His extensive raptor experience started as a Bald Eagle researcher at Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield MO in 1980, where he worked on observations during breeding seasons and assisting in artificial insemination

research. He later became a fulltime zookeeper continuing to work with Bald Eagles in education programs. Craig later presented a paper on the Bald Eagle breeding program for the zoo in Fresno CA.

Moving to the Northwest in 1984 he flew hawks and falcons during the summer for Point Defiance Zoo. Continuing his involvement in raptors he became a licensed falconer in 1988.

Craig's gained additional raptor experience both as a raptor educator working with zoos in Washington, Missouri (where he worked on artificial insemination of Bald Eagles) and Virginia (where he authored and presented programs on Secondary Uptake of Poison in Raptors). In addition, for 3 years he worked as a researcher on Golden Eagle capture, banding and release projects for Wildlife Research Institute in Montana.

Since 1990 Craig has presented programs on environmental issues, avian biology for zoo volunteer trainees, educational programs on raptor biology and ecology to audiences ranging from elementary student to adults for various organizations. Craig also served as Conservation Chairmen for Rainier Audubon Society for 3 years. In 2000 Craig received his Master's degree in Education to become a biology teacher.

Collectively Craig has dedicated most of his working life to understanding raptors and their important role in the world's ecology. His passion is to help students to adults have a broader understanding of the important value raptor's role is in the world today. Raptor Live is simply to bring nature and the community closer together.

Join us at 6:30 for conversation and refreshments.

### **RAS Mission Statement:**

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

Rainier Audubon programs are held at 7:00 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/>

## 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.

## **BECOME OUR NEXT RAINIER AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

Rainier Audubon is initiating its search for a new membership chair. Please consider volunteering for this very important and vital job.

The membership chair keeps our monthly membership totals up-to-date, invites members of national to join our chapter and is an essential link in insuring that our members receive their much-loved Heron Heralds.

Duties include:

- Receiving data each month from national and adding potential members to the data base
- Inviting these potential members via snail-mail or e-mail to join our local chapter
- Keeping membership data up-to-date monthly – adding new members, renewing members
- Sending the address list to the printers each month for the mailing of the Heron Herald
- Assisting, if needed, with readying Heron Heralds for mailing
- Reporting membership totals to the board each month
- Keyboarding and basic computer skills in Excel a plus.

Current membership chair will train and assist you. If interested, please contact Pat Toth, [h2opat@msn.com](mailto:h2opat@msn.com) or 206-767-4944

## Rainier Audubon Society Directory

Position	Name	Board Member	Phone	email
President	Heather Gibson	Yes	206-226-2050	<a href="mailto:hedder_swedder@yahoo.com">hedder_swedder@yahoo.com</a>
Vice President	Jay Galvin	Yes	253-939-3094	<a href="mailto:gjgalvin@comcast.net">gjgalvin@comcast.net</a>
Secretary	Open			
Treasurer	Laura Lavington	Yes	253-941-7372	<a href="mailto:laura.lavington@gmail.com">laura.lavington@gmail.com</a>
Membership Chair	Pat Toth	Yes	206-767-4944	<a href="mailto:h2opat@msn.com">h2opat@msn.com</a>
Education Chair	Cindy Flanagan	Yes	253-941-3933	<a href="mailto:camcalcin@hotmail.com">camcalcin@hotmail.com</a>
Program Chair	Dale Meland	No	253-946-1637	<a href="mailto:dmeland@hotmail.com">dmeland@hotmail.com</a>
Field Trip Chair	Barbara Petersen	Yes	253 389 3204	<a href="mailto:bpbatfan@aol.com">bpbatfan@aol.com</a>
Publicity Chair	Jay Galvin	Yes	253-939-3094	<a href="mailto:gjgalvin@comcast.net">gjgalvin@comcast.net</a>
Backyard Habitat Chair	Marie West-Johnson	Yes	206-817-8754	<a href="mailto:crgrie123@yahoo.com">crgrie123@yahoo.com</a>
Conservation Chair	Dan Streiffert	No	253-796-2203	<a href="mailto:dan_streiffert@hotmail.com">dan_streiffert@hotmail.com</a>
Newsletter Editor	Dan Streiffert	No	253-796-2203	<a href="mailto:dan_streiffert@hotmail.com">dan_streiffert@hotmail.com</a>
Webmaster	Treesa Hertzell	No	253-255-1808	<a href="mailto:Autumn207@comcast.net">Autumn207@comcast.net</a>
Member at Large	Stephen Feldman	Yes	360-802-5211	<a href="mailto:stephanfeldman@gmail.com">stephanfeldman@gmail.com</a>
Hospitality	Sandra Embrey	No	253-517-3633	<a href="mailto:sandra.embrey@gmail.com">sandra.embrey@gmail.com</a>
Mailing	Debra Russell	No	425 829 4008	<a href="mailto:debrarussell@comcast.net">debrarussell@comcast.net</a>
Lifetime Members	Max Prinsen	Yes	425-432-9965	

# 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)

## Fall Color and Fall Birds

Leader: Steve Johnson  
Sat, October 27th, 2017  
8:00 AM to early afternoon

Sign up early for this popular annual trip with Steve. Visit picturesque parks and beaches in King County and Pierce County during a great time of year to look for returning fall birds. We'll travel to local parks and beaches along Puget Sound, searching for many species of sea birds and forest birds. This is a good time of year to encounter scenic views and fall color. Expect to walk short distances from the cars.

People who wish to leave early may do so.

**Bring:** Lunch, beverages, and warm clothes. A scope is very welcome.

**Meet:** 8:00AM at the Star Lake Park&Ride north of Federal Way.

**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 (north) and go one block, then turn into the P&R on the right.

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

## Weyco Property and Lake Geneva

Leader: Barbara Petersen

Sat, Oct. 6th, 2018

8:15AM to Noon

Join Barbara for a morning outing in (perhaps) crisp fall weather and finish up by noon. We'll visit the Weyerhaeuser Property and nearby Lake Geneva, checking the lakes for returning waterfowl - a good opportunity to practice duck species ID skills. We'll also walk up to a quarter mile on different trails to see what birds we can find in the woods.

Dress in layers for the weather, bring beverages, snacks and optics.

Meet at Marlene's Market and Deli in Federal Way, 2565 S Gateway Center Plaza, Federal Way, 98003. It's a good place to get snacks and beverages before the trip and lunch after. Please park in the center of the parking lot or closer to S 317th St, away from the Market.

Marlene's is just west of I-5 and north of S. 320th on the back (north) side of Gateway Center. From I-5 take the S. 320th St exit and go west on S 320th. You'll need the right lane. Turn north (right) on Gateway Center Blvd. Follow it around to the right past the Ram and around to the left past the hotel. Turn left onto Gateway Central Plaza, then turn right just beyond Marlene's to access the parking area.

To sign up call or text Barbara at 253 389 3204, or by email at [BPbatfan@aol.com](mailto:BPbatfan@aol.com).

## Upcoming Programs

- Dale Meland

- 11/19/2018 - Robert Howson (Photographer) "Warblers"
- 12/17/2018 - Rainier Audubon Members Shared Pictures/Brown Bag Auction
- 1/21/2019 - Jay Galvin "Great Salt Lake Birding"
- 2/18/2019 - Jerry Broadus "Birds of Borneo"
- 3/18/2019 - Sally Vogel "Wildlife of Brazil's Cerrado and Pantanal"
- 4/15/2019 - John Prucich "The Falconer"
- 5/20/2019 - Dan Streiffert - Malheur NWR



# American Dippers

Dan Streiffert

Last June, Cindy Flanagan and Calen Randall discovered an American Dipper's nest underneath a bridge. Normally, they build their nest behind waterfalls, making them very hard to find and impossible to photograph. So Jay Galvin and I spent several days with these guys getting lots of great photos.

Their main diet seemed to be Caddisfly larvae, which they gather from under submerged logs and rocks. The larvae are incased in a tube of pebbles, glued together. The Dippers bang these against the rocks or logs until they break open and they can extract the larvae.

See more photos and videos in the American Dipper Album at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/danstreiffert/>

## **The American Dipper - from Wikipedia:**

The American dipper (*Cinclus mexicanus*), also known as a water ouzel, is a stocky dark grey bird with a head sometimes tinged with brown, and white feathers on the eyelids that cause the eyes to flash white as the bird blinks. It is 16.5 cm long and weighs on average 46 g. It has long legs and bobs its whole body up and down during pauses as it feeds on the bottom of fast-moving, rocky streams. It inhabits the mountainous regions of Central America and western North America from Panama to Alaska.

This species, like other dippers, is equipped with an extra eyelid called a "nictitating membrane" that allows it to see underwater and scales that close its nostrils when submerged. Dippers also produce more oil than most birds which may help keep them warmer when seeking food underwater.

In most of its habits, it closely resembles its European counterpart, the white-throated dipper, *Cinclus cinclus*, which is also sometimes known as a Water Ouzel. It feeds on aquatic insects and their larvae, including dragonfly nymphs, small crayfish, and caddisfly larvae. It may also take tiny fish or tadpoles.

The song consists of high whistles or trills - peee peee pijur - pijur repeated a few times. Both sexes of this bird sing year round. It defends a linear territory along streams. Its habit of diving underwater in search of food can infrequently make it the prey of large salmonids like bull or Dolly Varden trout.



The American dipper's nest is a globe-shaped structure with a side entrance, close to water, on a rock ledge, river bank, behind a waterfall or under a bridge. The normal clutch is 2-4 white eggs, incubated solely by the female, which hatch after about 15-17 days, with another 20-25 days to fledging. The male helps to feed the young.

It is usually a permanent resident, moving slightly south or to lower elevations if necessary to find food or unfrozen water. The presence of this indicator species shows good water quality; it has vanished from some locations due to pollution or increased silt load in streams.

# Bird of the Month: Dark-eyed Junco

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien

The Dark-eyed Junco is a medium-sized sparrow. It has a round head, a pale pinkish bill and a long tail with white outer feathers that flash in flight. The male has a dark brown/black hood, a light brown back, buff-colored sides and a white belly. The female has more of a gray hood and is duller and browner overall.

The name "junco" is derived from the Latin word for the rush plants found in wetlands. Dark-eyed Juncos are often called "Snowbirds" maybe due to the fact that many people believe their return from their northern breeding grounds foretells the return of cold, snowy weather. Another possible source for the nickname may be the white belly feathers and slate colored back of the junco which has been described as "leaden skies above, snow below".

Dark-eyed Juncos prefer to roost in evergreens at night but will also use tall grasses and brush piles. They will return to the same roosting site repeatedly and will share it with other flock mates but they will not huddle together.

When nesting time arrives, the female will build a cup-shaped nest on or near the ground and lay 3 - 5 eggs. Typically, they will have two broods a year. The male does not help with incubation of the eggs but does deliver food to the chicks and helps the female defend against predators. Rodents such as chipmunks and deer mice are probably the major predators of junco eggs.

After hatching, the young will leave the nest in 9 - 12 days.

A junco's diet is made up of approximately three parts seed to one part insects. During nesting season the percentage of insects may increase to 50 - 60% of their diet. The seeds of chickweed, ragweed, knotweed, pigweed, lamb's quarters and crabgrass are particularly appealing natural seed sources used by juncos. You can attract these birds to your yard by offering a seed blend with millet and hulled sunflower seeds.

Dark-eyed Juncos can be quite creative in their pursuit of seeds. They have been known to burrow through the snow in search of these tasty morsels. They also practice an interesting foraging method called "riding" where they will fly up to a seed cluster on the top of a grass stem and "ride" it to the ground where they pick off the seeds while standing on it.

Project Feeder Watch reports that juncos are sighted at more feeding areas across North America than any other



bird. Over 80% of those responding reported juncos at their feeders.

A study in New Hampshire found that juncos spend over 65% of their time on the ground, 20% in shrubs and 16% in saplings or low trees. They were never observed in the canopy of large trees.

Male Dark-eyed Juncos return and reclaim the same breeding territory year after year. Chances are you have many of the same birds at your feeder this winter that you've had in previous years.

Dark-eyed Juncos will have over 30% more feathers by weight in the winter than they do in summer. They will spend the entire winter in a flock averaging in size from 6 - 30 or more birds. Within the flock a hierarchy will be established with adult males at the top, then juvenile males, adult females and finally, young females.

The population of Dark-eyed Juncos is abundant. In North America it is estimated at 260 million birds.

The oldest Dark-eyed Junco on record lived to be 11 years, 4 months old.



# Mewsings from Millie

Reprint Courtesy of Wild Birds Unlimited, Burien



**H**ello and welcome back to my musings!

Hurricanes! Harvey! Irma! Sandy! Maria! and now, Florence!

The Atlantic hurricane season officially begins June 1 and ends November 1 and unfortunately, largely due to climate change, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts similarly fierce or worse storms in the coming years.

We are all aware of the painful toll these storms take on humans but animals and habitats suffer from seawater surges, flooding, high winds, flying debris and all of the mess that is left behind. In addition, greenhouse gas emissions, human alterations to the land such as developments and levees as well as pollution have made habitats and wildlife more vulnerable to the impacts of these storms.

Let me tell you about the rare Puerto Rican parrot as reported in National Wildlife magazine (Aug.-Sept. 2018). This parrot's population had been decreasing for decades due to habitat loss. The numbers were cut in half down to 25 birds by hurricane Hugo in 1989! Thanks to the efforts of the US Fish & Wildlife Services

through captive breeding, release and supplemental feeding, two self-sustaining wild populations were created in El Yunque National Forest in the northeast and Rio Abajo State Forest in the northwest.

Then, here comes hurricane Maria in 2017. These parrots need canopy fruits, leaves and flowers for food plus tree cavities for nesting. After Maria blew through there wasn't a leaf to be seen! El Yunque lost as much as 90% of its 50 plus parrots and Abajo lost 35%.

Fortunately the island's captive population of some 400 birds remains intact in aviaries and will seed a third population in the wild. It is also reported that some trees and shrubs are producing fruit and with continued human help, the parrots will likely survive.

Birds in general face other hazards during hurricane season particularly along migration routes. For example, Sooty Terns pass right through "Hurricane Alley", a long stretch of warm water in the Atlantic where hurricanes become bigger and stronger. Already stressed and fatigued from migrating, if strong winds and rain come at the birds they may be blown off course or simply die from exhaustion.

Birds do, however, possess some "weather management" skills that may help them survive these natural disasters. They seem to be able to detect air pressure changes that signal a storm is coming with enough advance notice that they have time to prepare for adverse conditions.

It was reported that birds in a backyard were "going crazy" eating food in a pouring rain and strong wind days before hurricane Sandy arrived. They "knew" a bigger storm was coming and were loading up on food while they could.

Passerines or perching birds make up more than half of all living birds and includes all songbirds. In inclement weather, these birds can land on a branch or wire and their talons will reflexively close upon contact and remain closed

until the bird chooses to open them again. A bird thus situated will not blow away unless the perch is blown away with it!

Of course, humans must be proactive and help protect birds, wildlife and habitat in the foreseeable future as more of these increasingly dangerous storms occur and threaten to ravage our coastlines and communities.

Some projects that the National Wildlife Federation and its affiliates are in support of include:

**Building Oyster Reefs:** When old concrete breakwaters or levees are replaced with something more natural like an oyster reef, oysters aren't the only things that benefit from it. The oysters themselves nourish birds and filter nutrients and sediments from the sea water improving water quality for aquatic life. In addition, the porous structure adds habitat value attracting fish, crabs and other animals and the oyster shells form little pockets that break up wave action.

**Renewing Marshlands:** Expanding marsh grass beds helps dissipate wave action and reduces flooding and erosion.

**Improving Coastal Resilience:** Building or rebuilding barrier islands as a first line of defense reduces storm surge capacity and lessens saltwater intrusion and wetland loss in the estuaries creating habitat for migratory and breeding shorebirds and sea birds.

When it all comes down to it, it's not just wildlife but ALL life is at risk when these storms come crashing through. If nature's creatures continue to use and improve their natural survival instincts and people make a concerted effort to protect the earth and its inhabitants by utilizing and building upon the natural protections provided us, the amount of death and destruction will be decreased and our ability to rebound and recover will be more rapid, greatly reducing the aggravation and stress these natural disasters bring to all aspects of the world around us.

Until next time,

Millie, the Muse of Mews

# Audubon Washington Supports Initiative 1631

**C**limate change is the biggest threat facing birds and people, and the clock is ticking. Through our statewide programs, partnerships, and strong member support, Audubon Washington is steadfast in its determination to say 'Yes' to climate action. Today we stand in support of sound science and our vision for a carbon-free Washington and urge our members and all residents of Washington state to support I-1631." -- Gail Gatton, Executive Director, Audubon Washington

"As a leading voice for conservation in the state, our number one priority is advocating for a healthier environment and protecting natural ecosystems for the benefit of birds and people. For this reason, Audubon Washington wholeheartedly supports immediate climate action and is proud to endorse I-1631." -- Doug Santoni, Chair, Audubon Washington Board of Directors

It is time to reject the status quo and legacy of inaction in our state and put what will be the nation's strongest climate policy on the books.

As designed, I-1631 will reduce Washington's carbon pollution by 50 million metric tons by 2050. Additionally, \$250 million annually will be invested in projects to increase the resilience of our waters and forests to the impacts of climate change. This includes restoring and protecting estuaries, fisheries and marine shoreline habitats vital for birds to survive. It also includes programs to improve forest health and reduce vulnerability to changes in hydrology, insect infestation, wildfires, and drought. This is critical support that will protect important bird habitats now and in the future.

## Science Says We Must Act Now

Audubon's Birds and Climate Change Report details how rising temperatures influence the range of 588 North American bird species, finding that 314 of those are threatened or endangered by climate change. In Washington state, 189 species of birds are at risk. During the past 50 years, more than 60 percent of wintering North American bird species have shifted their winter ranges northward. Soon, they may have nowhere left to go. To protect birds in a changing climate, we must reduce the carbon emissions responsible for climate change.

Guided by science and a moral imperative, Audubon Washington has been at the forefront of the climate conversation in our state. We strongly supported I-732, the carbon tax initiative that went before voters in 2016. In recent legislative sessions we advocated for a carbon tax and a 100 percent Clean Energy Standard. Despite the legislature's failure to act, we will continue to advance policy efforts – in the legislature and at the ballot – to reduce carbon emissions and accelerate the transition to clean, renewable sources of electricity.

Along with our endorsement of I-1631, we will harness Audubon's state and national resources to support critical field organizing and signature gathering efforts. At the same time, we will continue to engage our grassroots, grass-tops and business connections to build the political will that is so urgently needed to see effective climate action be passed into law.

## Audubon Council Annual Meeting, October 13

Join us for a day of inspiring speakers at Audubon Council of Washington's Annual Meeting on October 13. Discussion topics include the future of birds in our National Parks, Climate Action in 2019, and chapter engagement through advocacy. Held at the picturesque Brightwater Environmental Education and Community Center located in Woodinville, Washington, the venue is the perfect place to celebrate birds and the people working to protect them.

Rainier Audubon will pay your registration fee for any current members..

REGISTER NOW at <http://wa.audubon.org/chapters-centers/chapter-meetings>





"To save the orca, we must save the Salish Sea." - Tom Wooten



## 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 \_\_\_\_\_