

The

# Heron Herald



Rainier Audubon Society

September 2013

September 16, 2013 RAS Membership Meeting  
Meeting begins at 7:00 pm.

## "A Presentation on Wildlife and Highways, Challenges and Solutions in Washington State"

**A**nimals are on the move in the Northwest. They make daily movements for food, seasonal movements as conditions change, and generational movements claiming new ground to call home.

Providing a connected networks of habitats to allow for the safe movement of wildlife is simply termed habitat connectivity.

Conservation Northwest has been working to ensure connections between habitats from the Washington Coast to the BC Rockies since our inception.

Habitat connectivity becomes even more important as the climate changes and animals move to adapt to a changing environment.

Information about where the animals are, how they move, and what specific habitats they use [helps us know best what areas need connecting](#) for Northwest wildlife and what options exist for maintaining and restoring connections. To best secure animals and habitat, we need those science tools, from data, mapping, to modeling.

An ongoing [connectivity working group](#) for Washington's wildlife and habitat is hard at work developing the best available scientific analyses and tools to understand habitat connectivity in our state and neighboring habitats in British Columbia, Idaho, and Oregon. They have created a [statewide scale analysis](#) and

are looking now at climate change and arid parts of Washington. This work helps us know best what wildlife and which habitats most need connectivity for conservation.

Wildlife do not recognize political borders, and therefore [coordination with our neighbors](#) is critical. Each year we reach across borders to bring people together in our annual



Grizzly bears need room to roam

**"The story of our age is nature going to pieces. Nature won't work in pieces, not even those we've made special efforts to safeguard. The future of wildlife is tied to its freedom to roam."** -Doug Chadwick, *The Wolverine Way*

Jen Watkins is a Conservation Associate and began working with Conservation Northwest in 2001 as part of the outreach team for The Cascades Conservation Partnership. She continues to work on connectivity issues in the Central Cascades with the I-90 Wildlife Bridges Coalition and with our national forests program on the Okanogan-Wenatchee and Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forests. Jen graduated from the University of Washington's College of Forest Resources and has a strong interest in community collaborations and wildlife connectivity.



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

### Rainier Audubon programs are held at

Federal Way United Methodist Church, 29645 - 51st Ave.  
So. 98001 (in unincorporated Auburn)

**Directions:** In Federal Way, take 320th St. EAST past The Commons, crossing over I-5 and Military Rd.

At 321st St, turn left. Stay on 321st as it becomes 51st Ave. So. Follow 51st Ave. to 296th. Church will be on your left.

### 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.

## President's Message—Dan Streiffert

### Goals for the Coming Year

Several of our members attended the recent National Audubon Conference at the Skamania Lodge. David Yarnold, current president and CEO of Audubon, wants to put our focus back on birding and conservation. I think this is an excellent idea and would like to see RAS identify some specific goals for the coming year to move us in this direction.

We would very much like to hear your thoughts on this subject. What do you think our priorities should be?

Should we offer more in the way of birding classes? Field Trips?

Should RAS be more engaged in Climate Change and other conservation issues? Coal Trains?

Should we be more active in soliciting new members?

Should we put more effort into fund raising (Birdathon, Auction, etc.)? What should we do with the proceeds?

Should we be more active in providing educational options in our local schools?

Please give this some thought and bring your ideas to the September meeting. What is your vision for Rainier Audubon Society?



Blackpoll Warbler—Nome, AK

### Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW)

**Join us October 5, 2013** at Bellevue College, just off I-90 in Bellevue, Washington for the annual meeting of the Audubon Council of Washington, hosted by Eastside Audubon Society and the King County chapters.

[Kathy Dale, Director of Citizen Science for National Audubon Society](#), will be our key note speaker for the event. Her presentation will focus on the role of citizen science in the Audubon network and demonstrate what Audubon citizen science programs have accomplished towards bird conservation to-date and how they will be used in the future, including an introduction to the new Climate Modeling Project being revealed in October. Kathy is certain to inspire hands-on involvement towards accomplishing local, state and flyway conservation goals.

The 2013 fall WSACC meeting will be held on Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup> in Bellevue, preceding the ACOW conference on Saturday (October 5<sup>th</sup>). The start time for the meeting is between 4:30 and 5:00 PM (exact timing will be posted later), and will last for no more than 2 hours. After the meeting, there will be break for eating (pizza delivery!).

For more information see <http://wa.audubon.org/events/audubon-council-washington-2013>.

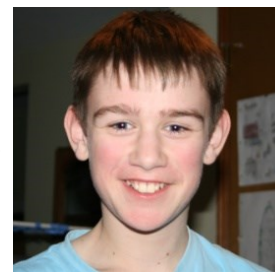
#### RAINIER AUDUBON OFFICERS

|                                  |                         |              |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| President                        | Dan Streiffert*         | 253-796-2203 |
| Vice President                   | Steve Feldman*          | 360-802-5211 |
| Treasurer                        | Ralph Embrey            |              |
| Secretary                        | Heather Gibson*         | 253-856-9812 |
| Program Chair                    | Dale Meland             | 253-946-1637 |
| Field Trip Chair                 | <b>Open</b>             |              |
| Membership Chair                 | Pat Toth*               | 206-767-4944 |
| Backyard Habitat Chair           | <b>Open</b>             | 253-854-3207 |
| Conservation Chair               | Dan Streiffert*         | 253-796-2203 |
| Mailing Chair                    | Debra Russell           | 425-271-0682 |
| Hospitality                      | Sandra Embrey           |              |
| Newsletter Editor                | Dan Streiffert          | 253-796-2203 |
| Webmaster                        | Treesa Hertzell         | 253-255-1808 |
| Education Chair                  | Annette Tabor*          | 253-927-3208 |
| Christmas Bird Count Coordinator | Alex Juchems*           | 253-529-8996 |
| Board Member                     | Max Prinsen             | 425-432-9965 |
| Board Member                     | Erin Wojewodski-Prinsen | 425-432-9965 |
| Board Member                     | Lisa Mesplay            |              |
| Board Member                     | Ed Stanton              | 206-870-3107 |
| Board Member                     | Terry Thurber           | 206-450-5446 |
| 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.

## Seen and Heard by Calen Randall



Welcome back to another season of Seen & Heard. I hope that you all have had many summer birding adventures. My most memorable summer birding outings were the ones where I got to wade like a duck in my kayak.

A couple of days before our family headed on vacation to Sicamous, British Columbia, we were walking along the beach at Marine View Park in Normandy Park. As we were walking along the rocky shore, an Osprey flew over the water fifty feet in front of us. It circled high over the surface before it pulled into a dive, tucking its wings in. It hit the water with a blistering splash. For a moment, we waited for it to emerge from the water. When it did, it took several flaps and flew off—a large fish dangling in its grasp. I was mesmerized. The balance of power and precision was incredible. It had to be exact in the whereabouts of the fish, flawless in its dive, and powerful enough to take off from the water with a squirming fish weighing it down.

While kayaking on the Salmon Arm in Sicamous, my mom and I discovered six fishing Ospreys at a point where a river flowed into the lake. It was even more captivating to watch the Ospreys from the kayaks. They worked in two groups of three, circling around calling to each other in a language that was unknown to my ears. Suddenly, one would rise up above the others and plunge, headfirst into the water. With the lake being so shallow (you could stand knee-deep a hundred feet offshore), it was a wonder that they didn't dive headfirst into a sandbar!

One of the six Ospreys I named Butter Fingers. Repeatedly, it would pull out with a fish, but its grip wouldn't be strong enough, and the fish would slither out. It would rejoin two other Ospreys, who would successfully catch fish, fly off and eat them, and return to catch more. Butter Fingers couldn't get a grip. Butter Fingers' troubles made me wonder what

would happen if an Osprey's foot was injured and it couldn't capture the fish in its vice-like grip. Ninety-nine percent of an Osprey's diet is made up of fish. I hope that Butter Fingers was in healthy condition and had better luck while I was gone.

The gentle rock of the waves engulfed me as I sat in my kayak, captivated by the Ospreys' diving and fishing prowess. Being on the water, I was connected with the Ospreys differently than I was on land. I was able to be closer to the Osprey, yet I didn't feel like I was intruding upon them. I felt like I was part of their habitat, another floating animal that belonged with the water. I was just glad that I wasn't the fish being hunted by the Ospreys.

When the Osprey dove, it looked as though its legs trailed behind it. I wondered, when the Osprey plunged in the water, how did it bring its legs from back to front quickly enough to catch the fish? My question would be answered as another Osprey prepared for its descent. I watched closely as it rose up, tucked its wings in, and pulled its feet in front of its torso—like a diver in a pike dive. It kept its wings in tight until about five feet before it hit the water. It pulled its wings back in a tilted manner so that it could enter the water with no drag and still be able to make two powerful front-strokes and a couple dozen smaller flaps before it flapped out of the water. As it flapped, it would pull its wings into an upside-down V shape, with its wrists facing up. After that, it would pull its manus up so that its wings and its body formed a V. Then it would push its whole wing back, with the tips of its primaries flicking downward. It looked like it was doing the butterfly stroke in midair. Perhaps Michael Phelps' Olympic Butterfly gold medal secret lies in watching the Osprey!

### Recent Bird Sightings:

This summer, my email has been filled with great birding reports. Here is some of what was seen and heard. Thanks to birders Ed Stanton, Carol Schultz, Todd and Ben

McQuage, and Bob and Pat for their reports. (Sorry Bob and Pat, I don't have your last name).

**June 1<sup>st</sup>** Ed Stanton had a couple surprise visitors, in a pair of **Band-Tailed Pigeons**, a first for his yard. Ed's neighborhood has also been regularly visited by **American Goldfinches**.

**July 11<sup>th</sup>** My friends Todd and Ben McQuage were hiking around Colchuck Lake when they ran across a **Grey Jay**. While Ben was fishing, the jay would run across the rocks and stand nearby him. Sounds like she wanted some fish Ben! Todd commented that "it would follow us around and make a hilarious call; we could not help but smile every time we heard it".

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>** Bob and Pat spotted a **Rose breasted Grosbeak** flitting around their feeder for three days. It was very shy, and when it saw Bob and Pat sitting next to the feeder, it fluttered away. It only appeared when a flock of **Black-headed Grosbeaks** came to eat. Not only did Bob and Pat get to observe this amazing bird, they even got some great photos! Awesome sighting Bob and Pat!

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>** Throughout the summer, Carol Schultz received notice of some unusual sightings in King County. Not only was Carol busy with other's reports, she was sighting some great birds of her own, as always. In May, Carol was birding along South Centre Parkway and South 200 Street. She was scanning a seasonal pond when she saw four **Pectoral Sandpipers**! While at the pond, Carol also observed **Spotted Sandpipers**, and some **Killdeer** with their juveniles.

**May 30<sup>th</sup>** Carol continued her bird-full May with a trip to Juanita Bay. The day before, Carol received notice that Bill Brynteson, Sandy Daniels, and Kevin Steiner had discovered a

*(Continued on page 11)*

*Bio: Calen is a 14 year old birder. He enjoys birding around Lake Fenwick, Frager Road, and Boeing Ponds—especially with Charlie Wright. Calen is thrilled to revive Charlie's 'Seen and Heard'. When not birding, Calen can be seen flying up and down the ice at Kent Valley Ice Center*

## Field Trips



### 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. The extension adds an additional 2.0 miles total, so the whole walk including the boardwalk extension is now 4.0 miles.

**Bring:** Good walking shoes or boots, raingear, 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

### Tacoma to Nisqually

Saturday, September 14  
8:00 AM to Mid Afternoon  
Leader: Carol Schulz

Early fall can be a good time to see birds in migration. Tacoma's Gog-le-hi-te Wetland and the Commencement Bay logbooms viewed from hwy 509 may offer sights of unusual & interesting shorebirds and seabirds. After viewing birds in Tacoma, we will drive down to Nisqually NWR to eat lunch and walk the trail out to the Twin Barns area. There are always interesting birds to see at Nisqually.

We will walk on level roads and trails for about 2 1/2 miles. Folks who wish to leave early may do so.

**Bring:** Warm clothes, hiking shoes or boots,

lunch, snacks, drinks. Scopes are VERY welcome. Bring \$3. for Nisqually if you don't have a pass.

**Meet:** At McDonald's in Fife at 8:00 AM.  
**Directions:** Take I-5 to exit 137. Turn right and get into the left lane. Turn left, and go 2 blocks on hwy 99 toward Tacoma. Turn left at the light and drive about 1/2 block to McDonald's.

**Sign-up:** Email or call Carol Schulz, [carol.schulz50@gmail.com](mailto:carol.schulz50@gmail.com), 206-824-7618

### Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival 2013

Saturday Sept. 14, 2013  
Memorial Park, Pateros  
8 AM - 3 PM

North Central Washington is home to some of the most amazing species in the northwest, but many people don't know it is also a major pit stop for hawks flying from Alaska to the southwest and Mexico. This September is a great opportunity to learn about this amazing migration, and get face-to-face with raptors of all shapes and sizes. Join the Methow Valley Ranger District, North Central Washington Audubon Society, and HawkWatch International for the third annual Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival! This festival coincides with the peak of southbound raptor migration at Chelan Ridge—the best place in Washington to view this journey. This family event combines free activities in Pateros with trips to the Chelan Ridge site to learn about and celebrate raptors as they journey to winter territories. Please join us for the 2013 festival!

Activities for the whole family. Free!

- Environmental education and interpretation-- learn all about migrating raptors and the ecosystems on which they depend
- See live raptors up close, from the Okanogan Wildlife League
- Hands-on projects for kids, including owl pellet dissections!
- Shop vendors: arts, books, optics, birding gear, and more

Catch shuttles for field trips to the spectacular

Chelan Ridge raptor migration site. Chelan Ridge sits 5,675 feet above sea level along the flyway for migrating raptors like the Broad-winged Hawk. Biologists who live at the Ridge during the migration season will tell how the birds are studied and tracked. See raptors like Sharp-shinned Hawks as they are banded and released. This is an amazing experience with environmental education and interpretation conducted by an on-site educator and Forest Service personnel. **(Please note: field trips are restricted to people ages 11 and above.)**

To reserve a spot on the shuttle to Chelan Ridge, please go to the [registration page](https://hawkwatch.org/component/dtregister/) (<https://hawkwatch.org/component/dtregister/>) on the [HawkWatch International](http://hawkwatch.org/news-and-events/press-center/350-chelan-hawk-migration-festival) website. (<http://hawkwatch.org/news-and-events/press-center/350-chelan-hawk-migration-festival>)

#### More Birding Opportunities:

Field Trip: Birding field trip to Wells Wildlife Area, located between Brewster and Bridgeport. We will walk through managed shrubby uplands and riparian habitat, on dirt roads. Target birds include migrating warblers, thrushes, and waterfowl. Some highlights from last year include Warbling Vireo, Gray Catbird, Lazuli Bunting, Orange-crowned Warbler and Palm Warbler! Please meet in Pateros Memorial Park, at 8:00 a.m. for a departure at 8:10 a.m. We will return to Pateros at 12:00 p.m. Participants will carpool (about a 15 minute drive) to the Wells Wildlife Area parking lot, where a Discovery Pass is required. Bring sunscreen, a hat and insect repellent.

Leaders: Jenny Graevell and Meredith Spencer

Group size limited to 20 people. Sign up by emailing Richard Scranton at [rscran@aol.com](mailto:rscran@aol.com)

For more information please visit the [North Cascades Basecamp](http://www.northcascadesbasecamp.com/programs/?p=805) website. (<http://www.northcascadesbasecamp.com/programs/?p=805>) To register/RSVP for these events, call the Basecamp at 509-996-2334, or email [info@northcascadesbasecamp.com](mailto:info@northcascadesbasecamp.com).

Festival information will also be updated on our [NCWAS Facebook](#) page.

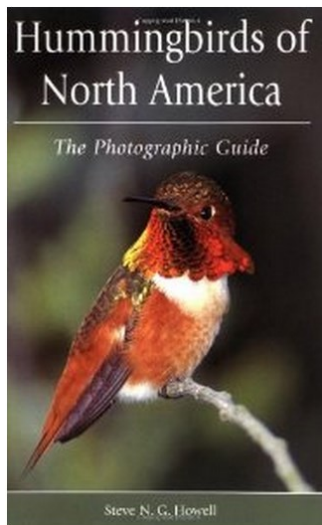
Still have questions?  
Please email: [rscran@aol.com](mailto:rscran@aol.com) or call Richard Scranton: 509-421-3166.

HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE FESTIVAL!

# Hummingbird Book Review

by Laura Lavington

There are so many useful and intriguing books about hummingbirds, so I was unable to select just one, but am instead writing about three. Even then, it was hard narrowing it down!

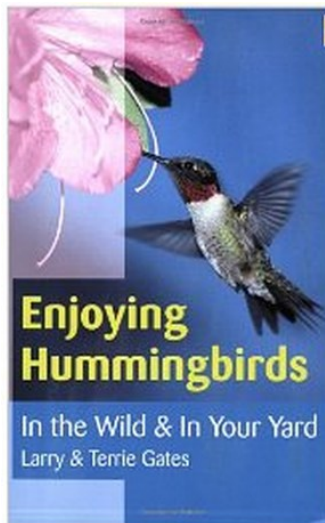
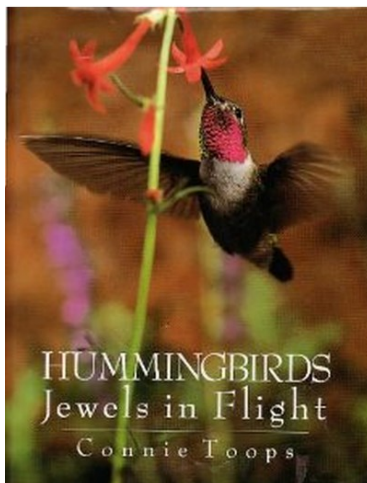


***Hummingbirds of North America: The Photographic Guide*** by Steve N.G. Howell is an identification guide for the 24 hummingbird species that have been seen in North America. One of the things I like about this guidebook is that it focuses on just the birds found within the United States and Canada, so it is able to go into more detail about each species. As the name suggests, the book includes detailed photographs, and it is enjoyable to just flip through the book. Howell's guide is thorough, and has as many as four diagrams of hummingbird body parts, which include everything, such as the ten primaries, undertail-coverts, and post-ocular spots. For the vacationer, the book gives helpful information about the difference between Allen's and Rufous hummingbirds (both are in the genus *Selasphorus* and can be easily confused).

***Enjoying Hummingbirds: in the Wild & in Your Yard*** by Larry and Terrie Gates was first published in 2008, and I appreciate that it is fairly recent, as range maps change (a wonderfully detailed book from

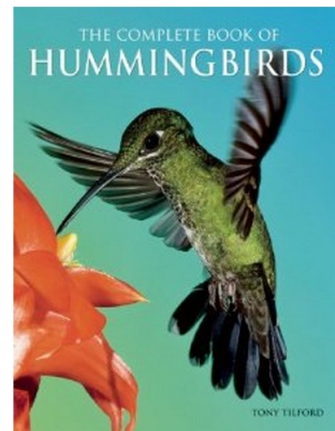
the 1980s did not recognize that Anna's hummingbirds now live in Oregon and Washington). The book describes the 16

species that occur annually in the United States, and while this book includes less information about and fewer photographs of each species than does Howell's book, it is likely sufficient for field identification. The Gates' book is not just an identification guide, also featuring short sections about history, art, and literature. A chart at the back of the book states the regular and rare species found in each state (granted ranges vary within states). *Enjoying Hummingbirds* has a section concerning gardening for hummingbirds, and I like that it details plants for the Pacific Northwest (often the Pacific Northwest is lumped in with California as "the West Coast"). However, other books available do go into more information about hummingbird plants, such as those plants' cul-



tivation requirements. Uncommon in hummingbird books, the Gates' book features information about hummingbird vacations, both within and outside the United States; not only is one told to go to Southeastern Arizona to see hummingbirds, but the book provides information about specific sites and contact information.

The public library system has the 1992 edition of ***Hummingbirds: Jewels in Flight*** by Connie Toops, but Amazon lists a 2005 edition (only available through third party sellers). I am reviewing the library's 1992 version, but I am confident that the updated version would not have significantly changed. This book talks about the lives of hummingbirds, but adds a more personal element, as if we are accompanying the author, a photojournalist, as she discovers the world of the hummingbird. She talks about her first experiences banding (she was very nervous), and in the process we learn how banders prepare the bands, catch the birds, and what they record. In another section of the book, Toops discusses



hummingbird hotspots, but actually travels to those places (rather than just providing a list), detailing to the reader her experiences and what she saw.

Finally, if you are looking for photographs of exotic species, I recommend ***The Complete Book of Hummingbirds*** by Tony Tilford. All four of these books are available on Amazon for less than \$20 and also from the King County Library System.

# National Audubon Conference

## National Perspective

### Summary! National Audubon Convention 2013

The first National Audubon Convention in thirteen years was held earlier this month in Stevenson, WA at Skamania Lodge. Our Washington Chapters were well represented - 18 of 25 chapters had leaders and members in attendance! Additionally, six state staff members attended, along with seven state board members. What a great opportunity to share renewed Audubon energy and enthusiasm!



### Congratulations Helen Engle!

During the Saturday evening banquet, our own Helen Engle was honored by National Audubon Society with its 2013 Lifetime Achievement Award. This award recognizes individuals for lifelong work devoted to conservation with an exceptional record of leadership and achievements through coalition-building, creative thinking and perseverance. "People like Helen truly make Audubon amazing," said Audubon President & CEO David Yarnold. "Her boundless energy and commitment to conservation amazes and inspires those around her. She demonstrates the power of a citizen network like Audubon." You can read the entire press release [here](#).

*The NAS convention was like a long*

*overdue Family Reunion, with new people to get to know and old-timers to embrace in memories of wonderful shared battles and triumphs. I am proud of the leadership at National Audubon and sensed that the "grassroots" are happy with President David Yarnold and the NAS VPs. We belong to a wonderful Society! - Helen Engle (Tahoma Audubon)*



### One Audubon

As you likely know, National Audubon recently identified five main conservation strategies on which to focus its work and reorganized its priorities along four major flyways that resemble the migratory path of birds, enabling state offices, chapters, and centers to work together on shared issues and concerns. During his opening plenary remarks, Audubon President & CEO, David Yarnold noted, "The benefit of our Chapter network is that you have people who really understand state and local issues. But you can't just work in individual communities because that's not how birds live. We weren't working at a scale to match the threats to the environment throughout the lifecycle of birds." Now, working together we can affect conservation change at the landscape scale, using birds as our metric for success. Go Team Audubon!

*We have heard a lot about One Audubon lately, but at this gathering I felt it with every conversation and workshop. I'm honored that Washington State could host such a historic moment as this. - Todd Burley (President, Audubon Washington Board)*

*I expected to meet interesting people, hear some good ideas, and see beautiful scenery. I did not expect to be blown away time and time again by passionate conservationists, come away completely energized by more ideas than I can use in years, and become totally committed to the "One Audubon" ideal promoted by our new national president, David Yarnold. - Kathleen Snyder (President, Pilchuck Audubon)*

### Program Summary

Convention program and workshop offerings were numerous and it was a challenge to choose which sessions to attend! Umbrella topics followed the five main conservation strategies of Climate Change and Clean Energy, Working Lands, Sharing Our Seas & Shores, Bird Friendly Communities, and Important Bird Areas. Other major topic areas included: Building Capacity for Conservation, Diversifying the Conservation Community, Fundraising, Education and more. If you were unable to attend the Convention, there will be opportunities to learn from those who did. Chapter leaders in attendance will hopefully share what they learned with their members at their next board meeting and Audubon Washington is preparing depositories of information and resources for our network to access. We will also share Convention energy and disseminate information at the **upcoming ACOW meeting, happening October 5, 2013 in Bellevue -registration is NOW OPEN**. This is an **exciting time** to be a part of Audubon!



*(Continued on page 10)*

# National Audubon Conference

## Rainier Members Perspective

### Thoughts from Barbara Petersen

- Excellent planning! "Tracks" and workshop choices for every level of involvement and interest areas, whether it be policy-making, research or backyard birdwatching and photography.
- Variety of activities and events for attendees including a live raptor show, Yakama native dance performance and panel presentations. In the early morning we could go on a bird walk, do yoga or go running with National Audubon's CEO, David Yarnold. Evening choices included a reception banquet, salmon bake, a dance, and a dine-around in nearby Hood River, OR.
- Multiple opportunities to meet people from up and down the Western Hemisphere and beyond. Great networking and sharing opportunities that connected us and united us.
- My first workshop was in Track 9: Making Connections through Art and Science. It was called "Birds, Native Plants and Insects" by Jerry W. Davis - my new hero! His message was such an important one, delivered with great and sincere passion. This workshop was very moving and informative. I wish we could bring him to the Puget Sound area to speak at all of our local chapters' meetings.
 

"Insects are declining worldwide. Only an ecological fool would think that this is a good thing. We are starving our birds out of existence with our 5,000 species of non-native and invasive plants which occupy over 115 million acres and will double in five years." - Jerry W. Davis (1990)
- I also attended "Wind, Wildlife and the Path to Bird Friendly Wind Ener-

gy" by Mike Daulton, Janet Ellis and Garry George, offered in Track 2: Shaping a Healthy Climate and Clean Energy Future. I went seeking facts and a broader picture of the wind energy and wind farm issues, and I was not disappointed. Wind energy must be harnessed. Many people have worked and are working to negotiate with companies to reach compromises favoring wildlife as much as possible, such as Janet Ellis' story in Montana. Her small Audubon chapter succeeded in getting wind machines installed 1/2 mile away from a ridge containing several Swainson's Hawk nest sites, instead of the planned 1/8 mile away.

- I went to an exciting workshop in Track 3: Citizen Science where I got to see "Hummingbirds @ Home: Audubon's First Citizen Science Project in more than 15 years."( <http://birds.audubon.org/hummingbirds-home> ) This was described to us by Gary Langham and Lynne Hoppe, who ask for our patience as they work out some bugs. Hummingbirds @ Home can be accessed through phone or computer, and I'm eager to participate! The web site states specific start/end dates but they have decided to run the project year round, so give it a try.
- I also attended the large Pacific Flyway meeting, another workshop called "The Joy of Bird-Watching: Inspiring Your Audience to Love Birds" by Joe Ellis, Paul Bannick's particularly inspiring keynote slide presentation at Saturday evening's banquet, and the Closing Plenary, a panel of five speakers including Janet Schmidt with REI Portland and Connie Holsinger of the Terra Foundation, during which we were given ideas, and moved to action, on the topic Supporting Inno-

vation through Grants.

### Thoughts from Pat Toth

The National Audubon Society held its first convention in 15 years the weekend of July 13 at the lovely Skamania Lodge on the Columbia River.

I, along with two of my colleagues, was fortunate to attend. I say fortunate as I had no idea what to expect since the society had not met as a national entity for so long and this convention turned out to be absolutely awesome.

Over 500 people were there with one hundred and forty two chapter leaders attending from across the flyways as well as 127 Audubon staff members from 27 states. There were some international attendees also. It was exciting to meet and chat with so many like-minded people from across the country and around the world!

There were numerous opportunities for field trips on the days before and after the actual meeting as well as morning bird walks over the weekend.

The first evening, David Yarnold, president and CEO of Audubon for the last three years, welcomed us and awed us with his intellect and foresight. He has been working diligently to put the national society's focus back on birding and conservation. He is sick and tired of conservation being a political football as he called it, and repeatedly stated that "conservation has no party". His mantra is "Passion, Action, Network" and from what we all experienced throughout the weekend he is dead serious about it.

After David's inspiring talk we were entertained and enthralled by a Yakama elder and his two sons who sang a spiritual song and then danced for us. In their elegant

*(Continued on page 10)*

## BIRD OF THE MONTH: WARBLERS

Warblers are small, insect-eating song birds that typically have a warbling song. Although they do not frequent bird feeders, they may be attracted to moving water. Read on to learn some interesting information and fun facts about warblers that may be seen in our area during the summer.



Yellow Warbler

The Yellow Warbler's brilliant plumage helps to easily identify it. During the summer, males sing their sweet song from willows, wet thickets and roadsides across almost all of North America. Several other resident forms can be found in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. Males in these populations may have chestnut caps or the entire head may be chestnut colored.



Townsend's Warbler

A bird of the Pacific Northwest, the Townsend's Warbler nests in coniferous forests from Alaska to Oregon. It winters in a narrow strip along the Pacific Coast and in Mexico and Central America. On the wintering ground in Mexico, the Townsend's Warbler feeds extensively on the sugary excretions of scale insects. It will defend territories around trees infested with the insects against other Townsend's Warblers.



Wilson's Warbler

blers as well as other bird species.

A common warbler of willow thickets in the West and across Canada, the Wilson's Warbler is easily identified by its yellow underparts and black cap. It is the only migrant warbler found in tropical high plains. The Pacific coast populations have the brightest yellow foreheads and faces.

A broad black mask lends a touch of mystique to the male Common Yellowthroat. Look for these furtive yellow-and-olive warblers skulking through tangled



Common Yellowthroat

vegetation, often at the edges of marshes and wetlands. Listen for the witchety-witchety-witchetysongs of these very vocal birds. The Common Yellowthroat is one of the most numerous warblers and was one of the first bird species to be catalogued from the New World when a specimen from Maryland was described in 1766. Common Yellowthroats sometimes fall prey to Merlins and Loggerhead Shrikes. The oldest Common Yellowthroat on record was 11 years, 6 months old.

A beautiful bird found at forest edges and in thickets, MacGillivray's Warbler breeds



MacGillivray's Warbler

across much of the Pacific Northwest and the Rocky Mountains. They nest from near sea level to as high as 9,842 feet in elevation. MacGillivray's Warbler was named by John James Audubon for his friend and editor, Dr. W. MacGillivray.

A small but striking warbler of the American west, the Black-throated Gray Warbler is found in pine and mixed oak-pine forests west of the Rocky Mountains. The Black-throated Gray Warbler is considered a short-distance migrant, moving from its breeding areas in the western United States only as far south as Mexico.



Black-throated Gray Warbler

A small, rather drab warbler of shrubs and low vegetation, the Orange-crowned Warbler is common and widespread in the West but is much less common in most of the East. The Orange-crowned Warbler is



Yellow Warbler

divided into four subspecies with the Pacific Coast form being the brightest yellow. The boreal-nesting form of the Orange-crowned Warbler has one of the latest fall migrations of any warbler, not leaving its Canadian breeding grounds until late September or October.

All information courtesy of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology





**Mewsings from Millie**

Hello and welcome back to my mewsings!

Recently, I was pawing through the latest edition of Birdwatching magazine. The publication had asked people all across North America to name the ten birds they most wanted to see. Over 900 people responded! I thought it would be fun to share the list with you and an interesting fact or two about each bird.

**#10: Blue-footed Booby** - its namesake feet are the reason why this bird is so popular. Carotenoids consumed while eating determine the shade of blue and both males and females select their mates depending on how bright their feet are. The Blue-footed Booby can be found on the Pacific Coast from Mexico to central Peru. In Mexico, it is common in the Gulf of California and on the coast from San Blas south to Oaxaca. Also found in the Galapagos Islands.

**#9: Green Jay** - An absolutely gorgeous bird with a blue crown, black throat and breast, blue and black face, emerald back, yellow-green belly and yellow outer tail feathers. The Green Jay is one of many bird species that uses tools. It can be found in South Texas, Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras and is rapidly expanding its range north and east.

**#8: Ferruginous Pygmy Owl** - this little owl is about the size of a bluebird and weighs 2.5 ounces but has been known to prey on Gambel's Quail and hispid cotton rat! It dines mainly on grasshoppers but also eats scorpions, cicadas, reptiles and birds. The Ferruginous Pygmy Owl can be found in South Texas, southern Arizona and from Mexico to Argentina.

**#7: Kirtland's Warbler** - Blue-gray above and yellow below, this little warbler is the only eastern warbler that John James Audubon never saw. He died four months before the bird was discovered. Kirtland's Warbler breeds in the northern portion of lower Michigan, the state's upper peninsula, central Wisconsin and eastern Ontario. It winters on Eleuthera and other

islands in the Bahamas.

**#6: Spotted Owl** - the Northern Spotted Owl is a true subspecies while the California and Mexican Spotted Owls form a second genetic subspecies despite being geographically isolated from one another. There are more than 200 Mexican Spotted Owls living in Grand Canyon National Park where they use narrow steep-walled canyons with ledges and caves to protect themselves from the daytime heat and to provide nesting sites and foraging habitat. Spotted Owls range from southwestern British Columbia to central and southern California, New Mexico, Arizona, southern Utah, southwestern Colorado, western Texas, and eastern and central Mexico.

**#5: Atlantic Puffin** - the size of the bill and the number of grooves it has increases as the Atlantic Puffin grows older. These darling birds thrive in seas between 32 - 68 degrees Fahrenheit. They love to eat butterfish and prefer to hunt from 4 - 8 a.m. and 4 - 8 p.m. Atlantic Puffins remain underwater less than a minute and dive to an average depth of 33 feet. Atlantic Puffins breed on the coasts of Maine, eastern Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Britain and northern Europe. They winter at sea.

**#4: Gyrfalcon** - a large raptor whose name may be a hybrid of the Old High German word "gir", meaning vulture, and the Latin "falx", a farm tool with a curved blade, a reference to the bird's hooked talons. It has been documented that Gyrfalcons rely on old nesting sites. In Greenland, researchers visited 13 nesting sites, tested the age of the droppings, and found that four sites had been in use for at least 1,000 years! The Gyrfalcon breeds in arctic regions from Alaska to Greenland and Scandinavia to Siberia. It winters in Canada and the northern United States and across central Eurasia.

**#3: Elf Owl** - this little bird is less than 6 inches long and weighs about 1.4 ounces. Elf Owls are known to gang up on or "mob" much larger predators including Great Horned Owls, gopher snakes and ringtails to avoid being eaten or having their nests raided. The Elf Owl is easiest to find in southeastern Arizona from late March through mid-July when it is most vocal. It remains in its breeding range in the United States until early October then migrates to Mexico.

**#2: Whooping Crane** - this stunning bird is five feet tall. It is over-all bright white with a red crown and red and black facial skin. In flight, black wing tips can be seen.



Almost driven to extinction the Whooping Crane is endangered. In the wild, there are approximately 273 cranes in the flock that migrates between Texas and northern Canada. There are 106 birds in the reintroduced flock in the east, 28 non-migratory cranes in southern Louisiana and 20 non-migratory birds in central Florida. There are 183 Whooping Cranes in captivity for a total of about 610 birds.

And the #1 bird that people want to see: California Condor - this bird has a nine-foot wing span. It is mostly black with white wing linings. Its unfeathered head is gray until the bird is 5 or 6 years old then it turns pinkish orange. The California Gold Rush nearly led to the condor's extinction. People shot deer, elk and antelope using lead ammunition and unrecovered carcasses became food for scavenging birds. Hundreds of condors died from lead poisoning after consuming bullet fragments and lead poisoning continues to be a primary reason for the bird's limited recovery. The California Condor ranges from central and southern California to the Grand Canyon, southern Utah and Baja California. There are approximately 404 California Condors with 73 living in Arizona and Utah, 132 in California, 29 in Baja California and 170 in captivity.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about the 10 "most wanted" birds of North America. All information courtesy of the August 2013 issue of Birdwatching magazine.

Until next time,

Millie

The Muse of Mews

**National Audubon Convention** (Continued from page 6)

The convention gave me an excellent opportunity to network and meet leaders from across the country. Before the convention, I was aware that there was a large Audubon community, but it seemed very distant to me. In getting to know other chapter leaders as well as national Audubon staff, I got a clearer picture of our interconnectedness and our common goals. I only hope that I can share this sense of purpose and this energy with my chapter. - Dora Rajkhowa (Treasurer, Eastside Audubon)

The convention was an inspiring and engaging weekend... Two main themes emerged: 1) the need to scale up our bird conservation efforts to plan and implement projects in flyways and across the Western hemisphere to have significant and measurable impacts on conservation and 2) the necessity of the environmental movement as a whole and Audubon as a grassroots organization to reach out to new audiences and diversify our members, participants, and volunteers. - Krystal Kyer (Executive Director, Tahoma Audubon)

Photos capturing the Convention can be seen here: <http://www.audubonconvention.org/#!convention-photos/c1jr>.

All Washington Chapter participant quotes can be read here: <http://wa.audubon.org/documents/national-audubon-society-convention-2013>  
Thank you for sharing your experience!

Audubon's New Strategic Plan for Flyways can be viewed at <http://www.audubon.org/audubons-strategic-plan>

## Bird Brainz

by Carley R



**Cliffy the claustrophobic swift**

**National Audubon Convention** (Continued from page 7)

and elaborate costumes with beautiful, intricate beadwork, eagle feathers and porcupine quills, their dancing was awe inspiring and powerful.

The actual meeting days were absolutely packed with options. Each day there were nine or more different tracks offered in the morning and afternoon. Topics included saving important birding areas, shaping a healthy climate, creating bird friendly communities, sharing our seas and shores, conservation, citizen science, volunteers and fundraising to name a few. The days were very well organized, the presentations well-done and the speakers enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

Did I mention the food was outrageous?

Anyway, it was an incredible experience and I believe we all came away feeling refreshed, energized and feeling more closely connected to national than we've felt in a long while.

## Volunteers Needed!

Please contact a Board Member

- Door Greeters for Membership Meetings
- Articles for Heron Herald—send to dan\_streiffert@hotmail.com
- Field Trip Chair
- Conservation Chair.
- Projection & Sound setup person for meetings.

**Seen & Heard** (Continued from page 3)

pair of **Black Terns** at Boeing Ponds! Black Terns are listed as a code four (rare) in King County. Low and behold, Carol and her sister saw a Black Turn at Juanita Bay! Carol said that "It perched for about an hour, and then flew away for an hour. It came back and perched on the same stick below the west boardwalk platform". While at Juanita Bay, Carol also spotted a **Wood Duck** family, and heard a flock of **Red Crossbills**. After her birding adventure at Juanita, Carol stopped by Boeing Pond to catch a glimpse of the Black Tern residents there. To her delight, one flew overhead amongst a cluster of swallows, and continued flying around for about forty-five minutes.

**August 3<sup>rd</sup>** After being alerted about a **Northern Mockingbird** at Boeing Ponds, Carol took a look around the ponds in hopes of viewing it. Though the elusive mockingbird was nowhere to be seen, Carol saw nine different species of shorebirds! At first, birding was slow and only the **Pectoral Sandpiper** was out and about, but when an unknown raptor flew over, the ponds were abuzz with movement. Carol spotted a **Semi-palmated Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Semi-palmated Plovers, Spotted Sandpipers**, and a dozen **Long-billed Dowitchers!** Thanks for the great reports Carol!

**August 13<sup>th</sup>** While at Sicamous, I also was surprised to discover a strange scene. In one tree a heron-less Great-blue Heron nest was nestled in the crook of two branches. In the tree next to it was a **Great Blue Heron** wearing a grumpy morning face. On the

opposite side of the tree was a **Bald Eagle** who also looked particularly grouchy. Though the two were not surprising species to sight, it was odd to find the two birds sharing a tree together!

**Mystery Bird of the Month**

Alex and Sara Juchems spotted one of these in their backyard. Here are the clues:

I am one of the few birds that will damage and remove Brown-headed Cowbird's eggs from my nest

A group of me is known as a "split" or a "pitch"

Unlike most songbirds, both males and females of my kind sing. However, the two genders of my kind, sing different songs

My nest is not always placed inside my territory

Along with my eastern cousin, I was originally called a Northern Oriole, due to crossbreeding between our two species

Contrary to popular belief, I am not closely related to my cousin from Baltimore

I am named after William Bullock, an amateur naturalist

Who am I?

Send your sightings/hearings to [calenbirds@hotmail.com](mailto:calenbirds@hotmail.com) I love reading your reports!

**Birding Trail's Puget Loop For Sale**

Delight your favorite birders with the newest – the seventh and final – map of the Great Washington State Birding Trail: the Puget Loop. Hot off the press, this signature route features 220 of our 346 annually recorded bird species around Puget Sound from Seattle to Mt. Rainier, plus Lake Washington, Kitsap Peninsula; and Vashon, Bainbridge, Whidbey and San Juan islands. .

**On Sale at our Membership Meeting and at Wild Birds Unlimited (Burien Store <http://www.southseattle.wbu.com/>).**

All proceeds go to Rainier Audubon. **\$4.95**

Answer: Bullock's Oriole

**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 2013.

All you have to do is come to a meeting, join up and get your free Discover Pass. The cost of joining is \$20.00/individual and \$25/family. The cost of a Discover Pass is normally \$35.00 dollars so you've just saved \$15.00 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](http://www.RainierAudubon.org).



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“People would rather believe than know.”  
— [Edward O. Wilson](#)

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One-year Membership in Rainier Audubon

- ◇ \$20—Individual Membership
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*RAS Chapter membership includes 9 issues of the Heron Herald annually but does not include AUDUBON magazine.*