

FEBRUARY 2024

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1972



THE Kingfisher

February 8th Program (6:30-8:00 p.m. - both in-person and Zoom)

White Birds of Winter - Swans & Snow Geese

Martha Jordan, well-known swan biologist, will present a program on the changing landscape that our swans and snow geese now face in migration and on their wintering grounds. You will learn about their life history, biology, and what influences their distribution across our state and the flyway. She will shed some light on the problems and controversies these birds face on their wintering grounds and what is needed to ensure their future.

Get updated on the swan lead poisoning problem, winter habitat issues, avian influenza, and more. You will leave with resources to help you identify swans in the field. Learn how to help *Get the Lead Out* of both shooting and fishing sporting activities.

Martha Jordan has a B.S. degree in Wildlife Science from Oregon State University. Professionally she has worked both in marine and terrestrial environments throughout Washington and parts of Alaska. In the late 1970s while volunteering to observe snow geese and reading their collars in the Skagit Valley, WA, she began to look at the small group of Trumpeter Swans in the same area. By 1984 she had expanded her survey efforts to all of Western Washington and had contributed much information to both state and federal agencies on the status of Trumpeter Swans in Washington State. She wrote the state's first Trumpeter Swan management plan in 1985. She is still active in both field work and education related to both Trumpeter and Tundra Swans throughout the region. She is currently the Executive Director of Northwest Swan Conservation Association, a regional non-profit. **Photo of Trumpeter Swan by Jay Wiggs.**



Zoom Program, Thursday, Feb. 8th at 6:30 p.m.

To join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/91811374785?pwd=Tm12VIBHWGhRYnRQUmg2RIUrMkJpdz09>

Meeting ID: 918 1137 4785 ; Passcode: 935230

To join by telephone: 1 253 215 8782

Meeting ID: 918 1137 4785; Passcode: 935230

Weather Cancellation Policy

Kitsap Audubon membership meetings may be canceled if driving conditions appear hazardous because of the weather. Guidelines to follow regarding KAS meeting cancellations: Automatic Cancellation if Olympic College evening classes are cancelled in either Poulsbo or Bremerton due to weather. These announcements are available in late afternoon in the media.

President's Letter - Kevin Eger

Happy February! During the big freeze last month, I went out to Clear Creek wetland and enjoyed a little birding. Kinglets, Fox and Golden-crowned Sparrows and a Hermit Thrush were spotted along the trail, but I was not the only one watching. A Cooper's Hawk was surveying the grounds perched atop one of the many snags found there. As our guest speaker Paul Bannick pointed out in October, though these vestiges of dead trees are often cut down or removed from trails and properties, snags provide critical habitat for woodpeckers, owls and many other species, even those without feathers. It is best to leave them up when we can. I am thankful for the members of our Conservation Committee who have been working to shed light on this issue in other areas throughout the County.



Christmas Bird Count Results

This month's newsletter features our results from the Christmas Bird Count surveys. After a few years of terrible weather, it was great to get out on some nice days!

Noted in last month's issue, Nancy Landenberger, former president and leader of KAS, passed away. She has bequeathed a few items to us including field guides, painted coasters, and artwork. We will be giving these away by donation at our March meeting. Hope to see you at the North Kitsap High School library for a great presentation!

As I close out this letter, my thoughts go back to Clear Creek and watching the Mallards, Ring-necked Ducks, American Wigeons, and Green-winged Teals stepping out from their grassy hiding places out on to the ice. I would be remiss not to invite you, the reader, to find ways you can "step out on the ice" this month. If you've never participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count, bundle up and get outdoors or count from your window (Feb 16-19) (<https://www.birdcount.org/>). Sign up to volunteer in some capacity on our website (<https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/volunteer/>)! Join us at our general meeting in person or online! Share your love of birds and wild spaces with others! There are so many things we can do for ourselves and for each other. Have a wonderful month!

Keeping hummingbird feeders thawed

Gene Bullock

Anna's Hummingbirds are thriving because so many people now feed them all winter long. In fact, they now come to winter feeders as far north as Southern Alaska. Winters are comparatively mild in Western Washington compared to most other northern states. But January usually sneaks in a few subfreezing days when temperatures can hover in the teens.

During the recent January cold snap I had good success with bringing my hummingbird feeders in at night and putting them back out at first light. I have had hummingbirds actively waiting for me just before dawn. Duct-taping a couple of hand warmers to the undersides of my bowl feeders can keep them thawed for hours. I also keep other feeders ready to swap out if one freezes. I also shift the water to sugar ratio a little more toward 3 to 1 because it enriches the nectar and lowers the freezing point. Others find success by positioning a light bulb close enough to warm the nectar. One novel approach is to put hand warmers in a styrofoam faucet cover. These usually come with an adhesive rim that will stick to the underside of a feeder. Of course, you can also purchase feeders with built-in heaters.

The most important winter caveat is to refrain from feeding your hummingbirds if your feeders will not be maintained while you are away on winter vacations. In winter, these hardy little birds may depend more than ever on having a reliable source of energy providing nectar. Besides keeping them thawed, please keep them snow free. These dazzling jewels of nature will thank you.

Sadly, hummingbirds are not good at sharing. Hummingbirds are known for their aggressive behavior toward each other and will expend a lot of energy driving other hummingbirds away. The best solution is to put out multiple feeders so everybody gets a turn. Some find that clusters of three or more suitably distant feeders (24 inches or so just a guess) may be shared simultaneously by multiple hummingbirds.

KID'S CORNER

The Great Backyard Bird Count

Do you like looking for birds? Do you like counting? If you do, you're going to love the Great Backyard Bird Count! People from all over the world spend time counting the birds they see, and sharing how many they saw with each other. Last year more than 380,000 people shared the birds they found!

Scientists can use that information to help learn more about where birds are and how many there are. Some people like to spend hours looking for birds, but it's okay if you can only spend 15 minutes birdwatching. Both big and small counts teach about the birds around us!

To be a part of the Great Backyard Bird Count you will need:

- A place to look for birds, like a yard, a park, or the beach
- Something to help you know what birds you are seeing, like a person who is a bird expert, an app like Merlin Bird ID, or a bird book
- A way to keep track of what you see, like a notebook, checklist, or phone app

To find out more, check out

The Great Backyard Bird Count website:



<https://www.birdcount.org/participate>

Find out how to share the birds you heard and saw during your count!

The Kitsap Audubon Christmas and Backyard Bird Count page



www.kitsapaudubon.org/christmas-bird-count

Listen to a story about being a part of a bird count



Field Trips & Festivals - Al Westphal, Field Trip Chair

Liability Waiver Policy: KAS requires field trip participants to complete a liability waiver. This simple online form from our website (<https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/fieldtrips>). Once a waiver has been signed, it will be valid for the remainder of the KAS operating year (September – June).

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS: We ask the following: (1) Each household must sign up by email in advance with trip leaders; (2) be prepared to adhere to directives and advice from our public health departments; and (3) Be courteous toward others: If you are not well, especially coughing, sneezing, or wheezing, please stay home.

Birding Festivals and Events: A complete summary of events statewide may be found at the Washington State Audubon site: <http://wa.audubon.org/bird-festivals-0>

Field Trips:

Port Washington Narrows and Kitsap Lake: Saturday, February 10th. (Half-day, morning). John and Karla Bouck, contact leaders by email at john@creeksideplc.com for questions, signup, and starting time and location. Marine birds winter in these protected waters. We will explore Washington Narrows from Lions Park and Lower Rota Vista Park. We will also explore Kitsap Lake with perhaps a doughnut stop along the way. Kitsap Audubon supports Lower Rota Vista Park at the end of Elizabeth Avenue. This charming park offers exceptional views of a unique colony of Pelagic Cormorants. Kitsap Lake is often birdy and may have surprises this time of year.

Fort Flagler and Marrowstone Island (Jefferson County) Saturday, March 2nd (full-day). Al & Carolyn Westphal, leaders: westphalac@aol.com. A late-winter visit to a bird-diverse state park with excellent access and lots of variety in its habitats, from woodland to wetland and shorelines fronting inlets and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Contact trip leader to register and for details.

Trip Report

Hansville Birding, January 13th. With a beginning temperature of about 17 degrees, three of us gathered in Hansville for a morning of frigid winter birding. This being what will probably turn out to be the coldest day of 2024, there were a LOT of cancelations! It turned out to be a reasonably tolerable if somewhat abbreviated visit with pretty good cooperation from the cold hungry birds. Highlights included several Scrub Jays at a home feeding station, four species of shorebirds, lots of gulls very close inshore, a clutch of Yellow-rumped Warblers browsing in the frozen marsh, and at least three eagles patrolling the land and water. Kudos to Tina B. for joining our tiny group. Always a pleasure!

Al Westphal winter birding at Point No Point County Park in Hansville. Photo by Carolyn Westphal

Poulsbo CBC team at Oyster Plant Park, from left: Colin Tierney and son Ronan, Sandy Bullock, NK High School student Talon Grant, Kevin Eyer, and Linda Archer.



Kitsap Christmas Bird Count

December 16, 2023 (Compiler: Janine Schutt)

Cackling Goose 31	Dunlin 206	Red-breasted Nuthatch 92
Canada Goose 580	Rhinoceros Auklet 10	Brown Creeper 26
Trumpeter Swan 8	Marbled Murrelet 4	Pacific Wren 73
Wood Duck 14	Pigeon Guillemot 48	Marsh Wren 7
Northern Shoveler 9	Common Murre 1	Bewick's Wren 34
Gadwall 3	Bonaparte's Gull 35	American Dipper 1
Eurasian Wigeon 6	Short-billed Gull 47	European Starling 296
American Wigeon 2138	Western Gull 1	Varied Thrush 42
Mallard 715	Herring Gull 1	Hermit Thrush 4
Northern Pintail 33	California Gull 6	American Robin 318
Green-winged Teal 29	Glaucous-winged Gull 561	House Sparrow 138
Ring-necked Duck 50	Iceland Gull 3	House Finch 186
Greater Scaup 162	Red-throated Loon 13	Purple Finch 10
Lesser Scaup 46	Pacific Loon 7	Red Crossbill 10
Harlequin Duck 31	Common Loon 28	Pine Siskin 135
Surf Scoter 802	Brandt's Cormorant 280	American Goldfinch 29
White-winged Scoter 38	Pelagic Cormorant 531	Fox Sparrow 60
Black Scoter 1	Double-crested Crmt. 342	Dark-eyed Junco 644
Long-tailed Duck 16	Great Blue Heron 63	White-crowned Sparrow 33
Bufflehead 810	Sharp-shinned Hawk 4	Golden-crowned Sparrow 132
Common Goldeneye 687	Cooper's Hawk 11	White-throated Sparrow 3
Barrow's Goldeneye 134	Bald Eagle 41	Song Sparrow 274
Hooded Merganser 134	Red-tailed Hawk 13	Lincoln's Sparrow 4
Common Merganser 213	Barn Owl 2	Spotted Towhee 141
Red-breasted Mrgnsr. 123	Great Horned Owl 7	Red-winged Blackbird 86
Ruddy Duck 19	Barred Owl 3	Brewer's Blackbird 2
Ruffed Grouse 1	Northern Saw-whet Owl 10	Orange-crowned Warbler 2
Pied-billed Grebe 23	Belted Kingfisher 53	Yellow-rumped Warbler 27
Horned Grebe 505	Red-breasted Sapsucker 4	Townsend's Warbler 6
Red-necked Grebe 32	Downy Woodpecker 19	Unspecified Species: 840
Eared Grebe 2	Hairy Woodpecker 16	Total individual birds: 15,937
Western Grebe 83	Pileated Woodpecker 10	Total number of species: 122
Rock Pigeon 545	Northern Flicker 94	Number of volunteers: 45
Band-tailed Pigeon 2	American Kestrel 1	
Eur. Collared-Dove 12	Merlin 2	
Mourning Dove 21	Peregrine Falcon 1	
Anna's Hummingbird 119	Hutton's Vireo 4	
Virginia Rail 4	Steller's Jay 39	
American Coot 81	California Scrub-Jay 21	
Black Oystercatcher 2	American Crow 737	
Black-bellied Plover 15	Common Raven 24	
Killdeer 72	Black-capped Chickadee 171	
Wilson's Snipe 2	Chestnut-backed Chickd. 181	
Spotted Sandpiper 6	Bushtit 107	
Greater Yellowlegs 41	Ruby-crowned Kinglet 160	
Black Turnstone 60	Golden-crowned Kinglet 265	

NK/Port Gamble Christmas Bird Count

December 30, 2023 (Compiler: Jennifer Standish)

Great. White-fr. Goose	6	Herring Gull	1	Pine Siskin	912
Brant	134	California Gull	6	American Goldfinch	11
Canada Goose	216	Glaucous-wing. Gull	314	Fox Sparrow	51
Trumpeter Swan	4	Iceland Gull	1	Dark-eyed Junco	690
Wood Duck	2	Red-throated Loon	11	White-crown. Sparrow	107
Northern Shoveler	10	Pacific Loon	159	Golden-crown. Sparrow	112
Gadwall	3	Common Loon	73	White-throated Sparrow	1
Eurasian Wigeon	6	Brandt's Cormorant	8	Savannah Sparrow	2
American Wigeon	1159	Pelagic Cormorant	78	Song Sparrow	184
Mallard	361	Double-crest. Corm.	203	Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Northern Pintail	90	Great Blue Heron	59	Spotted Towhee	108
Green-winged Teal	56	Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	Red-wing. Blackbird	343
Ring-necked Duck	8	Cooper's Hawk	2	Brewer's Blackbird	50
Greater Scaup	56	Bald Eagle	42	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Lesser Scaup	1	Red-tailed Hawk	16	Yellow-rumped Warbler	5
Surf Scoter	594	Barn Owl	2	Townsend's Warbler	6
White-winged Scoter	60	Great Horned Owl	1	Unspecified birds	438
Black Scoter	2	Northern Pygmy-Owl	2		
Bufflehead	561	Belted Kingfisher	23	Total number of species	118
Common Goldeneye	549	Red-breasted Sapsucker	5	Total individual birds	14699
Barrow's Goldeneye	41	Downy Woodpecker	14	Number of volunteers	56
Hooded Merganser	30	Hairy Woodpecker	11		
Common Merganser	570	Pileated Woodpecker	9	Count week birds:	
Red-breasted Merg.	826	Northern Flicker	75	Long-tailed Duck	
Pied-billed Grebe	7	American Kestrel	3	Black Phoebe	
Horned Grebe	348	Merlin	2	Brown-headed Cowbird	
Red-necked Grebe	73	Hutton's Vireo	8		
Western Grebe	14	Northern Shrike	1		
Rock Pigeon	170	Steller's Jay	36		
Eur. Collared-Dove	56	California Scrub-Jay	10		
Mourning Dove	74	American Crow	251		
Anna's Hummingbird	86	Common Raven	55		
Virginia Rail	8	Black-capped Chick.	104		
Black Oystercatcher	9	Chestnut-back. Chick.	126		
Black-bellied Plover	1	Bushtit	64		
Killdeer	12	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	147		
Wilson's Snipe	7	Golden-crown. Kinglet	190		
Greater Yellowlegs	9	Red-breasted Nuthatch	33		
Black Turnstone	1	Brown Creeper	15		
Dunlin	29	Pacific Wren	75		
Least Sandpiper	10	Marsh Wren	14		
Rhinoceros Auklet	7	Bewick's Wren	18		
Marbled Murrelet	12	European Starling	857		
Pigeon Guillemot	44	Varied Thrush	19		
Common Murre	72	Hermit Thrush	1		
Ancient Murrelet	9	American Robin	190		
Bonaparte's Gull	1145	Cedar Waxwing	1		
Heermann's Gull	1	House Sparrow	76		
Short-billed Gull	504	House Finch	198		
Ring-billed Gull	1	Purple Finch	3		
Western Gull	1	Red Crossbill	6		

Wildlife Sightings - Janine Schutt

The frigid temperatures in mid-January brought birds to backyards in droves. John Cohoon enjoyed seeing a varied thrush and at least 20 mourning doves at his backyard "dove spa." Janine Schutt's saucer hummingbird feeder by the kitchen window became a hummingbird B&B. After fueling up for the night, a male Anna's hummingbird decided there was no reason to leave and slept on the feeder all night in temperatures as low as 16° F. Before dawn, he had warmed up and was trying to sip his popsicle. The offering of a fresh feeder was immediately accepted and he fiercely guarded it all day! Send your interesting sightings to wildlifesightings@kitsapaudubon.org.

Notable Kitsap Bird Sightings from www.eBird.org:

Dec. 12 at Kitsap Lake: 1 redhead

Dec. 29 near Hansville: 1 black phoebe

Jan. 1 at Restoration Point (SE Bainbridge Island): 2 cackling geese, 5 trumpeter swans, 3 Eurasian

wigeons, 18 harlequin ducks, 8 black scoters, 8 surfbirds, 4 herring gulls, 8 Iceland gulls,
Jan. 1 at Bainbridge Island Ferry Terminal: 1 eared grebe
Jan. 2 near Port Orchard: 10 brown-headed cowbirds, 70 Brewer's blackbirds
Jan. 4 near Kingston: 1 northern shrike
Jan. 5 at Foulweather Bluff (Hansville): 2 savannah sparrows
Jan. 6 on Bainbridge Island: 16 wood ducks
Jan. 9 near Port Gamble: 1 western gull
Jan. on Kitsap Lake: 1 canvasback, 26 ruddy ducks, 225 American coots
Jan. 10 at Port Gamble: 7 black oystercatchers
Jan. 10 near Indianola: 1 white-throated sparrow
Jan. 11 near Hansville: 6 greater white-fronted geese
Jan. 11 near Suquamish: 1 northern pygmy-owl
Jan. 11 near Hansville: 2 Virginia rails



Photos of Anna's Hummingbirds by Janine Schutt. Bird below spent the night on Janine's feeder, apparently in a state of torpor.



Bird of the Month: Townsend's Warbler

by Janine Schutt

Adding a splash of color to the bleak winter landscape, the Townsend's warbler is one of only three warbler species that winter in western Washington. The orange-crowned warbler and yellow-rumped warbler also make occasional appearances. Wintering warblers often associate with mixed songbird flocks of chickadees, kinglets, and nuthatches. Here are some fascinating facts about the Townsend's warbler:

- First documented by naturalist John Kirk Townsend, for whom the species is named, in 1835.
- Breeds in mature coniferous and mixed forests from northeastern Oregon to southeastern Alaska.
- Winters in the Puget Sound lowlands, coastal forests, southeastern Arizona, and Mexico, with some individuals going as far as Panama. Can be observed anywhere in the West during migration.
- Those that winter in Mexico feed primarily on the sugary excretions, called "honeydew," produced by scaly insects.
- Breeding individuals and those that winter farther north pluck insects and other invertebrates from conifer boughs, usually high in the forest canopy. Also sallies to catch insects in midair. Known to visit suet feeders and occasionally feeds on flower nectar during migration.
- Known to hybridize with the similar hermit warbler.
- Males arrive on breeding grounds before females to establish breeding territories.
- Breeding/foraging territories are fiercely defended by both males and females.
- Prefers to nest on a large spruce or fir limb about 36 feet above ground level.
- Female builds a nest cup of twigs, bark, needles, grass, spider silk, and other plant materials. The nest measures about 4 inches across and 1.5 inches deep.
- Both parents care for a single brood of 3-7 chicks.
- Young leave the nest about 10 days after hatching.

Photos of male (left) and female (right) Townsend's Warblers by Janine Schutt.



How birds survive in winter -- Gene Bullock

Humans have managed to thrive in all sorts of climates by fashioning protective garments from whatever materials they can find. Our inventive use of animal hides, tree bark, and woven fabrics, as well man-made shelters, have enabled us to prosper in some of the most forbidding regions on the planet. But birds as small as hummingbirds manage without a closet full of special-purpose clothing or structures with year-round heating, artificial lighting, and air conditioning. How do they do it?

Songbirds have a layer of down and the ability to puff their feathers for extra insulation. And their feathers are weatherproofed with natural oils that shed rain. They may also stoke their inner fires by ramping up their metabolism. At winter's peak, small songbirds may burn fuel five times faster than in summer. To prepare for winter they may double their fat reserves.

Some birds, such as Black-capped Chickadees, store seeds for the winter. They can remember hundreds of hidden spots where they have stashed seeds so they can find them later.

Birds do, of course, take full advantage of natural shelter, such as dense foliage and natural cavities. Some huddle together for warmth. I have seen small flocks of Smooth-billed Anis hang overnight from a branch in a tightly packed cluster, clinging together for warmth.

Hummingbirds have another amazing defense against extreme cold. They can lower their body temperature to the point that they are in a state of "torpor," and may look lifeless. But they quickly revive once the temperatures rise.

Over millions of years, nature has equipped birds and wildlife to overcome all sorts of natural hazards and challenges. But human ingenuity has created hazards that are overwhelming their natural defenses. We have become less than welcoming to our wildlife neighbors. Insect populations are collapsing all over the globe because of indiscriminate use of pesticides and herbicides. And insects are the primary food for countless species of birds, fish and other wildlife.

You can help birds by planting wildlife-friendly native plants and shrubs and by avoiding lawn chemicals that are toxic to bees and other insects. That includes not buying plants and seeds impregnated with neonic insecticides, which are toxic to bees and insects, and can also be deadly for birds. Widespread agricultural use of herbicides is also decimating weeds essential to the survival of butterflies, moths and many beneficial insects.

Life in nature is already hard enough for birds and wildlife without adding myriad man-made threats to their survival. We need to remind ourselves that when we do the right thing for birds, we're doing the right thing for people too, because we are all in this together.

Anna's Hummingbirds are hardy, resilient visitors to winter feeders. Photo by Jay Wiggs.

Black-capped Chickadees can remember hundreds of spots where they have stashed seeds for winter. Photo by Jay Wiggs



Bird rambles and travels -- Gene Bullock

As an aging birder, I've learned to deal with failing eyesight and hearing. But there are compensations with age, such as growing up in a different time when birds were more abundant. I've had experiences it would be hard to duplicate today. I remember awakening summer mornings to the sounds of Northern Bobwhites, and being startled by coveys of quail exploding in all directions at my feet as I walked in nearby fields. I recall evenings at a lakeside cabin where the tremolo wails and yodels of loons assailed the morning mists and the magical chorus of Whip-or-wills welcomed the dark. On our small farm in Southern Michigan, the evening air shimmered and sparkled with fireflies. As a young boy I once had a staring contest with a Snowy Owl who seemed nearly as big as me.

It was not until my company relocated us to El Paso in 1980 that I became an avid birder. It was a watershed moment, ending nearly 20 years of leading wilderness canoe trips, first as a Boy Scout leader, and then as a certified whitewater canoeing instructor and leader for the Appalachian Mountain Club. In El Paso we promptly joined both the El Paso Sierra Club Chapter and the El Paso Audubon whose relatively small memberships generously overlapped.

El Paso is noted for its winter birding. It's the winter destination of many migrants from North America and Canada, and lies within the northernmost range of many Mexican migrants and endemics. The paucity of open water in the Chihuahuan desert draws birds to such places as the El Paso sewage treatment ponds. The City of El Paso kindly grants special access to members of El Paso Audubon. If we sat quietly at the edge of the settling pond, the birds would gradually overcome their shyness and come to bathe. It was a marvelous place to see such local species as Phainopepla and Pyrrhuloxia. Other common El Paso area species include Cactus Wren, Rock Wren, Great-tailed Grackle, Golden-fronted Woodpecker and Greater Roadrunner. Western Meadowlarks were among the most joyfully lilting songs we heard each spring. But Mockingbirds have

an unmatched repertoire of songs mimicking other birds. One Mockingbird thought he had squatter's rights to our house. He flashed the white blazes on the undersides of his wings in a threatening display, but abandoned the area when we refused to give up our house.

The surrounding desert and nearby Franklin Mountains, plus weekend camping trips in Texas, Arizona and New Mexico, added myriad bird species to our life lists. The El Paso Sierra Club and El Paso Audubon often had weekend backpacking and camping trips to places as distant as Big Bend, the Guadalupe Mountains, Turkey Creek Canyon, White Sands, and and Sierra Blanca in New Mexico. We often carpooled long distances after work on Friday and spread sleeping bags under the open sky. I remember sharing a hot springs in the dark

with friendly strangers I would never see in the daylight. I remember waking one morning to the magnificent sight of the Leopold Vista in Arizona, prior to a really grueling hike.

In Douglas, Texas, we visited a blind that afforded close looks at Montezuma Quail, and in the evening we watched Poor Wills hawking insects in the hotel floodlights. Other locations produced Gambel's and Scaled Quail, as well as Inca, White-winged Dove and Common Ground Dove.

The only rattlesnake we saw was a large Western Diamondback that had been badly injured by a car. However, tarantulas and scorpions were common. Campers were well advised to shake out their shoes before putting

them on in the morning. And night-time potty runs necessitated good flashlights and watchful caution because of rattlesnakes and other ground-dwelling nocturnal life. It was many years before we saw a live armadillo, but road-kills were common. We finally met a live armadillo in a West Texas park known for nesting Golden-cheek Warblers. The warbler was another life bird for us. Added bonuses on that trip included a culvert full of Cave Swallows, and a tree filled with Mississippi Kites.

Our introduction to birding in El Paso was just the beginning of our birding travels and adventures over the last 45 years.

Photo of Cactus Wren by Jay Wiggs.





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Photos of Phainopepla, Pyrrhuloxia and Mockingbird by Jay Wiggs.

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Kitsap Audubon Society

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The Kingfisher is the newsletter of the Kitsap Audubon Society, P.O. Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370. It is published ten times a year, September to June. Submissions from readers are welcome. We reserve the right to edit for space, grammar or legal reasons. Email text or photographs to genebullock@comcast.net or mail to Gene Bullock, 1754 NE Mesford Rd., Unit 5, Poulsbo WA 98370. Our deadline is the 15th of the preceding month.

To receive your Kingfisher via email and save us the expense of printing and mailing, send your request to genebullock@comcast.net.

Kitsap Audubon Society - Membership Renewal

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or make check payable to KAS and mail to KAS, PO Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370

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The mission of the Kitsap Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world through education, environmental study and habitat protection, and to promote awareness and enjoyment of local and regional natural areas.

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