

CELEBRATING

50
Years



THE Kingfisher

JUNE 2023

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1973

Kitsap Audubon celebrates 50 years



Speakers: WA Public Lands Commissioner Hilary Franz, National Audubon VP Deborah Jensen, Kitsap County Commissioner Rob Gelder, GPC Executive Director Nate Daniel. Photos by Don Willott



No membership meetings in June, July or August
Mag Kingfisher mailing delay caused by U.S. Post Office

Congratulations to us - Lynn Willmott, President

This is the last edition of the *Kingfisher* until September. It is also my last letter as President. I have been so proud to have been able to represent Kitsap Audubon. We have accomplished so much over the past few years and my term has come to a close with the joyful success of the Kitsap Audubon "50th" Anniversary Celebration.

I hope you have enjoyed these past seasons of birds, programs, and exciting news updates. We got through the pandemic with the use of Zoom and we are now meeting at the North Kitsap High School Library every second Thursday evening from September through May via Zoom and hybrid thanks to Michael Szerlog and Kevin Eyer.

This is the perfect time to thank past and new volunteers. We will be sorry to see Pearl Kerber leave us in August. Pearl contributed so much to Kitsap Audubon as a Board member, Education Committee Chair and member of the 50th Anniversary Planning Committee. She developed programs and activities for events like the annual Kitsap Water Festival and Earth Day, with hands-on projects to engage young birders and their families. She, along with Kevin Eyer, created the new **Kid's Page** in the *Kingfisher* and visited a retirement community to provide programs for the residents.

I would like to thank new volunteers Sue DeSilva, Catherine Ward, Dan Froehlich, Jefferson Brown, and Isabella Carlson for their enthusiastic work with KAS on several committees and at many events. We truly appreciate all that these volunteers and others have done to support Kitsap Audubon Society.

I would like to acknowledge Grant Winther, past Board member and generous supporter of Kitsap Audubon, who will now have the title *Board Member Emeritus*. Thank you Grant for all of your contributions to Audubon.

A very special thank you to Vic Ulsh, Kitsap Audubon's Program Chair for the past 17 years. Vic arranged monthly programs on a range of topics important to our members. In Vic's honor, Kitsap Audubon donated \$1,000 to the Kitsap County Parks Foundation designated for support of the Illahee Heritage Preserve. Vic, along with Jim Aho, initiated its purchase and development. As Stewardship Chair of the Illahee Preserve,



Vic continues to manage and maintain this jewel of nature in East Bremerton.

Grovers Creek Preserve

In 2015, KAS donated \$30,000 to help Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) purchase the Grovers Creek Preserve; and KAS just donated an additional \$10,000 for its expansion (see article, page 5). KAS also donated \$5,000 to GPC to help add ten acres to the Hansville Greenway Project. The President of the Hansville Greenway Project is Michael Szerlog who has been Kitsap Audubon's Webmaster and IT expert for 25 years!

Thank you to Cathy Cohoon who successfully spearheaded reinstallation of the Purple Martin nesting gourds at the Silverdale Marina with the assistance of our Purple Martin Chair Sandy Pavey. Cathy tactfully persuaded Silverdale Port Commissioners to approve the project. Well done Cathy! (See article on page 10.)

Congratulations to our four scholarship award winners (see article, page 4). Recipients were selected for academic performance, related interests and activities, and plans to pursue academic degrees in fields related to our mission. Thank you to Sandy Bullock, Scholarship Committee Chair, and its members Michael Szerlog, Lynn Willmott, Pearl Kerber, and Kristina Hart.

Kitsap Audubon honors Gene and Sandy Bullock with Lifetime Achievement Award

Kitsap Audubon Society is proud to honor Gene and Sandy Bullock with this award. To thank them for their many years of countless contributions there will be an installation of an interpretative sign near the Osprey nest platform in the North Kitsap High School athletic field. Gene was instrumental in the installation of several osprey nest platforms in Kitsap County. Gene and Sandy have served as President, Vice President, and Board members, as well as members of multiple committees over the last 23 years. Gene has edited the *Kingfisher* for 18 years. Sandy has led the KAS Scholarship program since its inception and has served as Kitsap Audubon Treasurer 12 out of the last 16 years. Please join KAS in thanking the Bullocks for their heartfelt dedication to our mission.



Kitsap Audubon celebrates 50 years

Photo of founders table (from left) Charlotte and Tage Blythman, Dale and Regina Spoor, Helen and Brad Waggoner, and Paulette Waggoner.

Photo lower left: Nate Daniel, GPC Executive Director, presents GPC Community Conservation Partner Award to KAS President Lynn Willmott.

Photo lower right: Sandy and Gene Bullock presented with Kitsap Audubon Lifetime Achievement Award.

Photos by Don Willott.



Kitsap Audubon Awards \$10,000 in Scholarships to four area students

Kitsap Audubon awards up to three \$3,000 Ann Sleight Memorial scholarships each year to area students who have completed at least one year toward an academic degree related to Kitsap Audubon's mission. In addition, Kitsap Audubon awards up to six \$1,000 scholarships each year to graduating Kitsap High School seniors who plan to pursue an academic degree in a field related to our mission. Pictured above are this year's three Ann Sleight Memorial \$3,000 Scholarship recipients (from left): Claire Moe, Evan Gray and Marlowe Lawson. Julia Beatty (far right) will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

Claire Moe, Kingston, WA, is enrolled at Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO. Her major is environmental science/climate change. Claire received a previous \$1,000 Kitsap Audubon scholarship in 2022 as a graduating high school senior.

Evan Gray, Bainbridge Island, WA, is enrolled at the University of Washington, Seattle, and has a double major in environmental science and photo media. Evan received a previous \$1,000 Kitsap Audubon scholarship in 2022 as a graduating high school senior.

Marlowe Lawson, Port Orchard, WA, is enrolled at Western Washington University, Bellingham. Her major is energy policy/management and conservation.

Julia Beatty, Poulsbo, WA, is a graduating senior at North Kitsap High School who is planning to study zoology at Oregon State University.

Kitsap Audubon has awarded \$95,500 in scholarships since 2006 according to Kitsap Audubon Scholarship Chair Sandy Bullock.

Puget Sound Seabird Survey seeking volunteers in Poulsbo, Port Orchard area

Contribute to Science Through Birding

The [Puget Sound Seabird Survey](#) is looking for birders in Kitsap County (in particular the Port Orchard and Poulsbo areas) to join this established Community Science program. Volunteers are asked to conduct seven surveys per season with a small team of fellow surveyors at specific locations. All surveys are synchronized to take place once per month on the first Saturday, October – April.

You will be provided training on the survey technique, and ideally will have good seabird identification skills. However, there are roles on the survey team for birders of all levels.

Now in its 15th season, you'll be contributing to valuable science that monitors wintering seabirds across the Sound and informs important management decisions.

If interested, please reach out to Program Manager Toby Ross t_ross@pugetsoundbirds.org



Grovers Creek Preserve Expansion Project

Kitsap Audubon donates \$10,000 to Grovers Creek Expansion

Kitsap Audubon has donated \$10,000 toward Great Peninsula Conservancy's (GPC) successful campaign to add 38.5 acres to the Grovers Creek Preserve. Kitsap Audubon donated \$30,000 in 2015 toward the original purchase of the 270-acre preserve by GPC.

This special place has 200-year-old trees, abundant wildlife, and wetlands that form the headwaters for the Grovers Creek estuary on North Kitsap's Miller Bay.

Kitsap Audubon donates \$5,000 for Hansville Greenway addition

Kitsap Audubon has donated \$5,000 to Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) to help fund a ten-acre addition to the Hansville Greenway. Kitsap Audubon donated \$10,000 in 2022 to help fund the purchase of a hundred acres for the Hansville Greenway. The Hansville Greenway Association received the 2022 Kitsap Earth Day Award for its leading role in this community-driven effort. Michael Szerlog, President of the Hansville Greenway Association, has been Kitsap Audubon webmaster for 25 years.

Kitsap Audubon donates \$1,000 for Illahee Preserve County Park

Kitsap Audubon has donated \$1,000 to the Kitsap County Parks Foundation, designated for the Illahee Preserve Heritage Park. The donation was made in honor of Vic Ulsh, who recently retired after serving as Kitsap Audubon Program Chair for the past 17 years. Vic has been a leading advocate for the park, which is also supported by the Rotary Club of East Bremerton. Vic has also served as Program Chair for the East Bremerton Rotary Club.



Kids' Corner: Summer Song Birds

Did You Know?

The state bird of Washington is the American Goldfinch, yet the most common bird observed in Washington State is the American Robin?
(sourced: Whatbirdsareinmybackyard.com)

This summer keep track of your bird sightings using eBird, an app and online tool to record bird sightings and pictures in your area. You can see other sightings local to you!

Take a look at the sightings in Kitsap County:

<https://ebird.org/region/US-WA-035?yr=all>

Word Search

Can you find all 9 words related to this month's topic in the word search below?

source: Jennifer Olsen, Education Resources

Challenge:

You can submit any sightings, photos, and finished checklist to info@kitsapaudubon.org, or tag on us social media!

BACKYARD FEEDER BIRDS



Directions: Use the pen or highlighter tool to complete the puzzle.

P I G E O D
I D R I B K W O C M
W R E H C T A H T U N A
T M C P E S U O M T I T P G
G H O H U M M I N G B I R D C V
C T R U I R Y R M G O L D F I N C H
H U W R C P S P A R R O W H T G R O
I A N O N K L B I G C I S C I R O O C E
M F G O I A E O G P B O R A N E R W V L
M F N D N D F R E I B L U E J A Y A R I
U I I P G E I C O E L E U O E E R W O A
H N L E D E N O N G A K N B T H U D B U
E C R C O G C G R A C K L E L I W L I Q
H A K V I H A P L K G G O V A L O B
W T E E P G R O S B E A K I A C G T
S R D R I B G N I K C O M R R C
O C N U J T H R A S H E R O
K R A L W O D A E M S W
P J C A R D I N A L
S P A R R O



WOODPECKER	ROBIN	ORIOLE
SPARROW	BLACKBIRD	MOURNING DOVE
MEADOWLARK	RAVEN	GRACKLE
CHICKADEE	CARDINAL	BLUE JAY
GROSBEAK	STARLING	THRASHER
MOCKINGBIRD	MAGPIE	CHAFFINCH
TOWHEE	COWBIRD	QUAIL
NUTHATCH	PIGEON	JUNCO
PURPLE FINCH	TITMOUSE	GOLDFINCH
HUMMINGBIRD	CROW	WREN

Field Trips & Festivals - Al Westphal, Field Trip Chair

COVID 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>

Billy Frank-Nisqually NWR (near Olympia), Saturday, June 10th (long half-day. Al & Carolyn Westphal, leaders. Another spring favorite! We will walk the boardwalk and trails for several hours in the morning to observe the many species of nesting birds of field and forest as well as summer waterfowl and hopefully a few shorebirds. Event involves several miles of walking on good flat trails. Contact trips leaders to sign up (westphalac@aol.com).

Trip Reports

Theler Wetlands, May 13. Eleven of us gathered at the Theler Community Center for a long leisurely morning of birding the wetland and trails. Besides fabulous weather, we had a number of great sightings. We observed 44 species, notably an interesting, lengthy, and easy to see Orange-crowned Warbler engaged in nest building. Plus the exceptionally cooperative Pacific-slope Flycatcher we started the morning with, and the irritated Warbling Vireo for those who stuck it out all the way to the end. The active and very alert assistance from all participants was the formula for success.

Photo of Leucistic Bald Eagle by Jay Wiggs.

Photo of American Pelicans on Dyes Inlet in Silverdale by Dennis Taylor.



Wildlife Sightings - Janine Schutt

This spring brought Kitsap's first recorded acorn woodpecker, a female, to the neighborhood around Lions Park in East Bremerton. On May 11th, Kitsap's second recorded acorn woodpecker appeared! This time a male visited Kari Freiboth's feeders near Port Orchard for a few days. On May 14th, Michael Szerlog of Hansville spotted a Bullock's oriole in his cherry tree. Michael also said that since the swallows were late to arrive this year a black-capped chickadee took over the swallow nest box...so a Bewick's wren took over the chickadee nest box!

Send your interesting summer sightings to wildlifesightings@kitsapaudubon.org.

Notable Kitsap Bird Sightings from www.eBird.org:
April 21 at Clear Creek Trail (Silverdale): 1 American bittern

April 25 at Olympic High School: 8 mountain bluebirds by the football field

April 26 near Hansville: 59 snow geese flying over

April 27 at Point No Point (Hansville): 1 American kestrel

April 28 at Point No Point: 1 Swainson's hawk, 1 lesser goldfinch

April 29: 6 greater white-fronted geese near Port Orchard

April 29 at Point No Point: 1 golden eagle

April 29 at Clear Creek Trail: 4 cackling geese

April 29 near Hansville: 3 solitary sandpipers

April 29 at Point No Point: 1 Say's phoebe

May 2 near Hansville: 1 dusky flycatcher

May 2 at Point No Point: 2 whimbrels

May 4 at Point No Point: 1 western meadowlark

May 6 at Restoration Point (SE Bainbridge Island): 48 Harlequin ducks, 2 black oystercatchers, 1 Townsend's solitaire, 1 Nashville warbler

May 6 near Poulsbo: 2 cinnamon teals

May 7 in Poulsbo: 1 hermit thrush

May 8 at Point No Point: 2 long-tailed ducks, 1 merlin

May 8 near Port Orchard: 1 barn owl

May 9 at Green Mountain: 1 sooty

grouse

May 10 at Point No Point: 4 American white pelicans, 1 Lewis's woodpecker

May 12 near Kingston: 1 sora

May 12 near Silverdale: 1 mountain quail

May 12 in Port Orchard: 1 green heron

May 13 at Point No Point: 2 yellow-headed blackbirds, 1 western kingbird, 4 American pipits, 7 Lazuli buntings, 3 evening grosbeaks

May 13 near Kingston: 1 blue-winged teal, 1 Virginia rail, 1 Wilson's snipe

May 14 near Port Orchard: 8 sandhill cranes flying over

Upper photo (left): First Kitsap County record for Acorn Woodpecker, female photographed by Janine Schutt near Lion's Park in East Bremerton.

Upper right: Male Acorn Woodpecker photo by Kari Freiboth in Port Orchard.

Lower left: Scissortail Flycatcher photo by Janine Schutt

Lower right: Pair of Whimbrels at Point No Point. Photo by Arlen Price.



Bird of the Month: Pigeon Guillemot - Janine Schutt

An endearing seabird of Puget Sound and Hood Canal waters is the pigeon guillemot. A member of the alcid (or auk) family, it is related to auklets, puffins, murrelets, and murrelets, but tends to feed closer to shore than its cousins. Thus, it is often the most noticed alcid from shore. Here are some fascinating facts about the pigeon guillemot:

- Summer plumage is all black with a prominent white wing patch. In winter, the plumage changes to white and mottled gray. Legs and feet are bright red.
- Very vocal with a high pitched whistle.
- Mostly year-round in its range along the West Coast from southern California to Alaska and northeast Asia.
- There are 5 recognized subspecies, which vary by region and size.
- Has a preference for rocky coves.
- Forages in nearshore waters by diving as deep as 150 feet to the seafloor in search of worms, crustaceans, and small fish.
- Upper jaw has sharp serrations, called *palatal denticles*, which hold a single fish in place while the

parent transports a meal to its young.

- Uses its wings and feet for propulsion underwater.
- Breeding begins between 3 and 5 years of age.
- Male courts the female by flashing his scarlet feet and circling her in the water and while on land.
- Nests on rocky cliff ledges or in burrows, often on remote islands and sea stacks, either individually or in colonies.
- Pairs are monogamous and will retain their bond for multiple breeding seasons.
- Both parents incubate 1 or 2 eggs for about a month and feed the nestlings for another 4-6 weeks.
- Fledglings stumble from the nest to the water and can immediately swim and forage independently. They are capable of flight after another 3 weeks.
- Highly susceptible to the perils of oil spills and other marine pollution, as well as fish nets and introduced mammals on islands used for nesting.

Photos by Janine Schutt.



Kitsap Audubon Community outreach



Photo upper left by Lynn Willmott: Kitsap Audubon Education Committee volunteers Sue DeSilva and Gene and Sandy Bullock talk about birds with groups of students at Kitsap County Water Festival. The annual event brings some 1,100 Kitsap County 3rd and 4th graders and their teachers and parent chaperones together for a full day of workshops and exhibits about the importance of water.

Photo upper right by Pearl Kerber: Kitsap Audubon Education Committee volunteers talk about birds with families and children at the annual Earth Day event in Battle Point Park on Bainbridge Island.

Silverdale Purple Martin Colony restored

Kitsap Audubon volunteer Cathy Cohoon has led the restoration of a Purple Martin colony on Dyes Inlet in Silverdale that was abandoned and forgotten when previous custodian Paul Carson passed away in 2015. With the aid of Kitsap Audubon Purple Martin Chair Sandy Pavey, equipment provided by Kitsap Audubon and other volunteers, Cathy installed a set of gourds on one of the remaining pilings.

The untended former colony was removed during Port of Silverdale renovations and the removal of old creosote-soaked pilings.

Kitsap Audubon funds and supports active Purple Martin colonies in Poulsbo's Oyster Plant Park, Eagle Harbor on Bainbridge Island and in the Brownsville and Seabeck marinas.

Paul Carson and John McDonald started the Kitsap Audubon Purple Martin program about 25 years ago and led the program for more than a decade. Sandy Pavey became Purple Martin Chair 13 years ago, and has been providing guidance and training for other Purple Martin volunteers, in addition to maintaining the Brownsville colony.

Photo by Emily Strong shows Purple Martin installation crew (from left) Cathy Cohoon, John Bouck, and Nick and Doug Fogle. The gourds were soon investigated by Purple Martins, so it seems likely to become a thriving colony.



Audubon Washington Board Retreat

Kitsap Audubon member Judy Willott now serves on the Audubon Washington Board, representing Region 2, which includes Kitsap Audubon Society, Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society and Admiralty Auduon Society. Judy and Don participated in a recent Audubon Washington Board retreat and field trip in Cle Elum.

Photos by Don Willott.



Photo from Kitsap Audubon 50th Anniversary Celebration (from left): Audubon Washington Region 2 Representative Judy Willott, Audubon Washington Executive Director Deborah Jensen, Olympic Peninsula Audubon President Ken Wiersema, and Audubon Washington Chapter Network Manager Teri Anderson. Photo by Don Willott

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Follow us on Twitter at @kitsapaudubon

Twitter handle: @KitsapAudubon

Recorded programs: <https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/video>

Kitsap Audubon Society

President: Lynn Willmott

Vice President: Kevin Eyer

Treasurer: Sandy Bullock,

Secretary: Judy Willott

Immed. Past Pres: Lynn Willmott

At-Large Board of Directors:

Gene Bullock

Pearl Kerber

Jennifer Standish

Don Willott

Grant Winther- Board Member Emeritus

Standing Committee Chairs:

Field Trips: Alan Westphal,

Conservation Co-chairs:

Kevin Eyer, Lynn Willmott

Education Chair: Pearl Kerber,

Live Meeting Greeters: Milly Bellemere & Bob Schumacher

Membership Administrator:

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Programs: Lynn Willmott

Purple Martins: Sandy Pavey

Wildlife Sightings: Janine Schutt

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Publicity Chair: Gene Bullock

Webmaster: Michael Szerlog,

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The Kingfisher is printed on recycled paper by Blue Sky Printing and mailed by Olympic Presort, both family-owned local businesses.



Kitsap Audubon Society

P.O. Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370

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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 the expense of printing and mailing, send your request to Info@kitsapaudubon.org

Kitsap Audubon Society - Membership Renewal

Join/Renew online at <http://www.kitsapaudubon.org/membership>

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

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address: _____

- Check here to receive your Kingfisher via Email and save us the expense of printing and mailing. Members receive ten issues of the Kingfisher newsletter each year.

Select Category Of Membership:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Annual Membership \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual LIFE Membership \$300 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing Annual Membership \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting Annual Membership \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Annual Membership \$75 | (Contact KAS Treasurer for LIFE Membership payment options) |

Additional donation: Scholarships \$ _____ Other \$ _____

The Kitsap Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Your contact information is not sold, disclosed or shared with any entity outside KAS.

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.

Visit our website at <https://www.kitsapaudubon.org>

