

MARCH 2023

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1973

CELEBRATING

50
Years



THE Kingfisher

**March 9th Program (6:30-8:00 p.m.)
Hybrid meeting: Both in-person and Zoom**

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

Noted author and photographer John Shewey will give us an inside look at the third-largest national wildlife refuge in the Pacific Northwest. At 187,000 acres, it's also one of the most remote. This sprawling birder's paradise in southeast Oregon's Harney County is many hours distant from the hustle and bustle of urban western Oregon. Malheur NWR is famous for its migratory water birds and for annual sightings of vagrant species—all of which are attracted to diverse habitats that range from high-desert steppe to vast shallow wetlands. In this richly photographed program, we'll examine the best birding hotspots on the refuge and the best times to visit them, and John will reveal a few secrets to help you get the most out of an expedition to this amazing place.

John Shewey has been accused of being a deadbeat slacker, but he steadfastly refutes such charges and insists instead that he is a lifelong fly-fishing addict, outdoorsman, and birding enthusiast. He usually admits to being the editor-in-chief of *American Fly Fishing*, unless you are mad at the magazine, in which case John is likely to deny any involvement. His 35-plus-year career as a writer and photographer has produced countless magazine articles and nearly 20 books. His recent titles include *The Hummingbird Handbook*, *Classic Steelhead Flies*, *Birds of the Pacific Northwest*, and *Oregon Beaches: A Traveler's Companion*.

Photo of Avocets by John Shewey.



To join Zoom Program, Thurs., March 9th, at 6:30 p.m.:

<https://zoom.us/j/91811374785?pwd=Tm12VlBHWGhRYnRQUmg2RIUrMkJpdz09>

Meeting ID: 918 1137 4785 ; Passcode: 935230

To join by telephone: 1 253 215 8782

Meeting ID: 918 1137 4785; Passcode: 935230

Our new meetng place is the North Kitsap High School Library, 1780 NE Hostmark, Poulsbo, WA, 98370. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. and **the program begins at 6:30 p.m.**

Purchase your "early bird" tickets for our 50th Anniversary Celebration, Sunday, May 21st.

<https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/50th-anniversary-celebration>

President's Letter - Lynn Willmott

As we celebrate Kitsap Audubon's 50th year I want to thank all of our members, dedicated volunteers, allied organizations, and legislators who have helped Kitsap Audubon achieve so many stellar programs that support our mission and goals dedicated to environmental education, nature study, the preservation of wildlife and habitat, and the enjoyment and appreciation of our natural areas.

We hope to see many of you at our Anniversary Celebration on Sunday, May 21, 2023 at the beautiful, waterfront Hood Canal Vista Pavilion. We'll have several renowned speakers who have supported KAS over the years, including Hilary Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands. We are also honoring our founding members, several of whom will be joining us at the celebration. **Be sure to purchase your tickets soon!** See page 5 for details.

Our **first-ever "hybrid"** meeting featured popular speaker Connie Sidles, who talked about "Glorious Gulls" to members who joined both in person and virtually by Zoom. I would like to extend a special thanks to Sandy Bullock, Kevin Eyer, and Michael Szerlog who worked hard to finalize all of the preparations to have this successful event at the North Kitsap High School Library. Please join us either in person or by Zoom at our next hybrid meeting.

Kitsap Audubon, with Gene Bullock taking the lead, has agreed to help fund a new osprey nest platform next to the North Kitsap High School athletic field. See article on facing page.

The Conservation Committee is working on several important projects. If you are interested in bird monitoring, community science, or advocacy projects, please consider joining this Committee.

We want to thank long-time member and owl researcher Jamie Acker for arranging with the U.S. Coast Guard for the installation of a MOTUS wildlife tracking station at Point No Point which KAS will fund. See facing page.

Gene Bullock is the KAS liaison to the Point No Point saltwater conversion project. Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group and Blue Coast Engineering are preparing



a proposed plan that would create an estuary refuge for young salmon and enhance their survival.

The Education Committee is organizing programs for several events. KAS will be at the Kitsap County Water Festival at the Kitsap County Fairgrounds on Tuesday, April 18, 2023. This annual day-long event will educate some 1,200 Kitsap County fourth-grade students about the importance of water. We will also be at the annual Earth Day Festival on Bainbridge Island to share KAS activities and information with families and youth.

The Education Committee provides speakers and programs to community organizations that request them and continues to develop new educational programs. Please volunteer to help with our outreach programs!

Kitsap Audubon needs your help!

Kitsap Audubon is blessed with dedicated leaders who work diligently to further its mission and provide outstanding programs and activities. It's a labor of love for us, but it's not fair to expect a small handful of volunteers to do it all, year after year. We are eager to share the fun and excitement of helping plan and organize this wonderful organization! Some projects require only a couple of hours of your time now and then. Get in touch with me if you would like to explore volunteer opportunities at tvmott@gmail.com

We have an especially urgent need for someone to work with our professional bookkeeper as Treasurer. It does not require an accounting background, but would include banking receipts and paying our bills.

Photo from February meeting by Don Willott.



Kitsap Audubon accepting applications for 2023 Scholarships

If you are planning a career in Environmental Science, Forestry, Marine or Wildlife Biology or related fields, check out our website, www.kitsapaudubon.org/scholarships for information and to apply online. Up to six \$1,000 scholarship grants are available for 2023 graduating Kitsap high school students, and up to three \$3,000 scholarship grants for Kitsap residents currently working on degrees in those fields.

Kitsap Audubon helping fund new osprey nest platform

Kitsap Audubon will help fund a new osprey nest platform at North Kitsap High School in partnership with the Poulsbo Rotary Club, the North Kitsap School District, Puget Sound Energy and raptor consultant Jim Kaiser. The new platform is expected to be ready when the birds return in early April.

The ospreys have nested on an athletic field light tower for seven years. The birds add nest material each year, so the accumulated weight is now more than 400 pounds and threatens the supporting structure. The existing nest is also a fire hazard and potential source of falling sticks and bird droppings in an area heavily used by students and sporting event attendees.

The NK School District will absorb the cost of removing the existing nest and replacing it with specially designed "excluders" that prevent the birds from rebuilding on that location. Other nearby light towers will also be equipped with excluders.

Puget Sound Energy has generously offered to donate the pole and a crew and equipment to bore a hole and place the pole in the ground. Kitsap Audubon and the Poulsbo Rotary have agreed to share the cost of adding a nest platform to the pole.

Kitsap Audubon collaborated with Puget Sound Energy and Jim Kaiser in 2015 to install a similar osprey nest platform in Poulsbo's Strawberry Field, next to the Poulsbo Elementary School. That pair of ospreys has successfully raised its families there ever since.

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|--|
| | | | OSPREY NEST RELOCATION PROJECT NORTH KITSAP HIGH SCHOOL 2023 | | |
| PROBLEM STATEMENT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural Integrity of Light Pole Compromised by Nest Size/Weight (>400 LBS) • Falling Nest Sticks Present Pedestrian Hazard • Heat from Lamp Fixtures Could Ignite Nest, Injure or Kill Osprey (Protected Raptor Species), and Damage Lamps • Bird Droppings Present Health Hazard (Pathogens) to Student Athletes & Pedestrians | | | | | |
| RECOMMENDATION: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. REMOVE EXISTING NEST FROM LAMP CROSSARM AFTER 2016 NESTING SEASON. WDFW WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED. 2. INSTALL ALTERNATE NESTING PLATFORM 3. RETROFIT 4 STADIUM LIGHT STANDARDS (ONLY THOSE WITH OPPOSING LAMP ARRAYS) WITH CUSTOM NEST EXCLUDER DEVICE. | | | | | |
| <p>James L. Kaiser, Consulting Raptor Biologist Osprey Solutions, LLC 3300 Beach Drive SW Seattle, WA 98116 Office 206-938-1600 Mobile 206-909-4283 Jim_Kaiser@comcast.net www.osprey-solutions.com</p> | | | | <p>NEW OSPREY POLE COORDINATES 47.7347°N, -122.6239°W</p> | |

Kids' Corner: Common Winter Waterfowl

Did You Know?

During the winter months there are quite a few birds that stay in Kitsap County. Primarily birds that live near the water. These common waterfowl include the Harlequin Duck, Canada Goose, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead Duck, and Hooded Merganser.

Many of these birds can be found on the Clear Creek trail, the pond at Battle Point Park, and at Fish Park.

As the weather is warming up, it is the perfect time to go out and try to find each type this month at a local park!

Word Search

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

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

Puzzle created at

<https://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/>

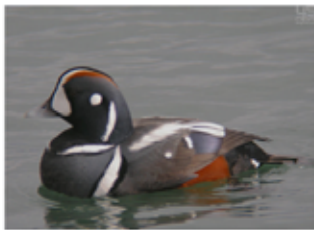
Challenge:

Using the photo check list below, see if you can find these featured waterfowl! You can submit any sightings, photos, and finished checklist to info@kitsapaudubon.org, or tag on us social media!

Word Bank

battlepoint
duck
goose
merganser
waterfowl

bufflehead
fishpark
harlequin
ringneck



Harlequin Duck

photo credit audubon.org- Rev&Audy



Canada Goose

pc: wdfw.wa.gov/, Jason Askim



Bufflehead Duck

pc: Liron Gertsman |
Macaulay Library



Hooded Merganser

pc: Birdweb.org- Tom Grey

CELEBRATING
50
Years



**Kitsap
Audubon
Society**

**Celebrating 50 years of unceasing advocacy
for birds, wildlife habitat and the environment.**

We celebrate and honor our visionary founders, our nearly one-thousand devoted members, and the community partners, leaders and environmental champions who have stood with us in our mission to protect wildlife and the places they need.

Hood Canal Vista Pavilion, Port Gamble, WA
Sunday, May 21, 2023 - 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. - Brunch included
"Early Bird" Tickets \$20 per person until May 1st
Tickets \$25 if purchased after May 1st
Final deadline for reservations: May 8th

Purchase tickets at:

<https://www.kitsapaudubon.org/50th-anniversary-celebration>

Speakers include:

- › Hilary Franz, Washington Commissioner of Public Lands
- › Rob Gelder, North Kitsap County Commissioner
- › Deborah Jensen, Executive Director, Audubon Washington
- › Nate Daniel, Executive Director, Great Peninsula Conservancy



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>

Poulsbo's Fish Park, Saturday March 25th (half-day). Al & Carolyn leaders (westphalac@aol.com). This is a gem of a local park with lovely wooded areas and open spaces appealing to lots of little brown birds. It also offers good access to the Dogfish Creek estuary for possible waterfowl and seabirds. Plan on a couple of hours at the park followed by an optional excursion to the Poulsbo waterfront.

Trip Reports

Washington Narrow & Bremerton Area, January 28th. A dozen of us gathered at Lions Park in

Bremerton to enjoy visits to a number of local birding locales in the area. We started with a great study of two wigeon species and a hybrid bird to boot, then onward to the traditional stop at Lower Rota Vista Park to view the Pelagic Cormorants and Peregrine Falcons that nest beneath the Warren Avenue Bridge. With seabirds exhausted, we diverted to Kitsap Lake and were treated to the sight of three Trumpeter Swans! We ended a terrific day at Erland's Point. Thanks to Karla Bouck for her expertise and leadership!

Fort Flagler/Marrowstone Island, February 11th. A big group of fifteen of us gathered for a full-day multi-stop adventure in the Marrowstone Island area. With nice weather, great company, and a tally of sixty species, we had a great day. Highlights included eight shorebird species observed closely and a Bald Eagle taking a small waterbird and having to swim to shore with it before rendering and consuming it. Nature at work!

Photo below top left of Kitsap Audubon group at Kitsap Lake by Justin Carrington.

Photos of Black-bellied Plover and group at Ft. Flagler by Don Willott.



Wildlife Sightings - Janine Schutt

Since November, there have been repeated sightings of a swamp sparrow at Foulweather Bluff Preserve near Hansville. Since December, a pair of long-eared owls have been roosting by the trail at Theler Wetlands in Belfair. Also since December, a ruddy turnstone has been spotted multiple times along the Port Orchard waterfront. On January 10 in Manette (East Bremerton), Vic Ulsh spotted a first-year snow goose in a flock of Canada geese and a Townsend's solitaire eating berries. Send your interesting sightings to wildlifesightings@kitsapaudubon.org.

Notable Kitsap Sightings from www.eBird.org:

Nov. 17 at Foulweather Bluff Preserve: 1 snow bunting
Nov. 19 in Keyport: 1 canvasback
Dec. 10 at the Clear Creek Trail (Silverdale): 1 American bittern
Dec. 17 at Bangor: 2 ruffed grouse, 2 evening grosbeaks
Dec. 31 at Norwegian Point Park (Hansville): 1 western meadowlark
Jan. 1 at Restoration Point (SE Bainbridge Island): 10 snow geese, 2 tundra swans, 32 Harlequin ducks, 13 black scoters, 2 black oystercatchers, 27 surfbirds, 2 ancient murrelets, 1 herring gull, 9 Iceland gulls, 1 mountain bluebird, 1 hermit thrush, 35 American goldfinches, 1 swamp sparrow
Jan. 2 at the Southworth Ferry Terminal: 2 trumpeter swans

Jan. 3 near Kingston: 1 Virginia rail, 1 peregrine falcon, 2 brown-headed cowbirds
Jan. 4 on north Bainbridge Island: 1 northern saw-whet owl
Jan. 4 at Port Gamble: 1 eared grebe, 4 black oystercatchers, 1 western gull
Jan. 5 near Fort Ward Park (SW Bainbridge Island): 1 white-throated sparrow
Jan. 5 in Yukon Harbor: 3 herring gulls, 28 Iceland gulls
Jan. 6 on Green Mountain (near Seabeck): 2 Townsend's solitaires
Jan. 6 near Hansville: 4 Wilson's snipes
Jan. 8 at Dickerson Creek (Bremerton): 2 American dippers
Jan. 10 in Port Gamble: 3 black scoters, 5 long-tailed ducks
Jan. 10 at Kitsap Lake (Bremerton): 3 ruddy ducks
Jan. 10 at the Clear Creek Trail: 10 cackling geese, 1 northern shrike
Jan. 11 in Port Orchard: 2 greater white-fronted geese

Photo of Ruddy Turnstone in Port Orchard by Arlen Price.

Female Long-eared Owl at Theler Wetlands by Janine Schutt.



Bird of the Month: Marsh Wren - Janine Schutt

Some of Kitsap's noisiest songbirds come in small packages. Our three year-round residents of wrens are often heard before they are seen. Pacific wrens live in forests, Bewick's wrens prefer open scrubby areas, and marsh wrens inhabit marshes. Early spring is when all three species are most vocal, with the chatty marsh wren winning the prize for the greatest exuberance. Here are some fascinating facts about the marsh wren:

- Migratory throughout much of North America, but year-round in western Washington and other parts of the American West, as well as the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts.
- Breeders in the northern United States and southern Canada winter in the southern United States and Mexico.
- Inhabits freshwater wetlands, tidal saltmarshes, and agricultural canals encompassed by tall grass.
- Regularly seen at Point No Point County Park and Foulweather Bluff Preserve near Hansville, parts of the Clear Creek Trail in Silverdale, and Theler Wetlands in Belfair.
- Measures five inches from head to tail and is roundly shaped. Has a dark brown back with white flecks, light brown sides, and pale underparts. A long, white eyebrow runs below its brown crown. Tends to hold its barred tail straight up in the classic wren pose.

- Often grasps two different cattail or reed stalks simultaneously, with a foot on each stem.
- Has a repertoire of up to 200 songs of incessant rattles and trills, which males belt out as they compete against each other for females.
- Primarily eats insects and spiders, which are gleaned from the stems of marsh plants and the water's edge. Sometimes grabs a flying insect.
- Males are known to be polygamous, mating with multiple females per breeding season.
- As fierce defenders of their territories, both males and females destroy the nests and eggs of other species and even other marsh wrens, perhaps to eliminate competition amongst shared resources.
- Males build several "dummy" nests each year, constructed with woven strips of grass that are anchored to sturdy stalks of vegetation like cattails and bulrushes. After the male escorts the female around the unfinished nests, she selects her favorite and finishes it with a lining of fine grass, soft plants, and feathers.
- Females usually have two broods per breeding season with four to five eggs in each clutch. Males help raise the second more often than they help with the first brood.
- As a result of increased preservation and restoration of wetlands, populations have increased over the past 50 years.

Photos by Janine Schutt.



Volunteer Opportunity: Puget Sound Seabird Survey

The Puget Sound Bird Observatory needs volunteers for its Puget Sound Seabird Survey (PSSS) program. The PSSS takes place on the first Saturday of each month from October to April. Volunteers survey at 160 sites throughout Puget Sound, including Point No Point, our local Important Bird Area.

The PSSS uses the "distance sampling" survey method. Although it might sound complicated, the survey protocol is actually quite simple. Participants record each bird that they see on the water within 300 meters of the survey location. Landmarks are provided to help judge distance. The bearing (direction) of each bird is recorded using a compass, and the distance from the horizon is recorded using a ruler.

For each survey date and location, there will be a four-hour window in which the survey can be conducted. This is based on high tide, but is sometimes adjusted for daylight. Each survey lasts between 15-30 minutes. Entering the data into the Puget Sound Bird Observatory website takes about 15 minutes per survey site.

Birders of all skill levels are welcome to sign up. Beginning birders can be paired with more experienced birders to help them as they learn to identify seabirds. "Seabirds" in this case can include geese, swans, diving and dabbling ducks, loons, grebes, cormorants, gulls, terns, murrelets, Pigeon Guillemots, auklets and puffins. Raptors such as hawks, eagles and falcons are also recorded since their presence may affect the behavior of the seabirds.

More information can be found at <https://www.pugetsoundbirds.org/about-psss> or you can sign up at <https://www.pugetsoundbirds.org/contact-1>

Photo by Jay Wiggs of osprey nesting on North Kitsap High School athletic field light tower. Kitsap Audubon is working to relocate it to a new nest platform nearby.



Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

Facebook: <https://www.Facebook.com/KitsapAububonSociety/>

Instagram at <http://www.instagram.com/kitsapaudubon/>

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Twitter handle: @KitsapAudubon

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

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Kitsap Audubon Society

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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

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:

- | | |
|--|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Annual Membership \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family LIFE Membership \$500 |
| <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 \$ _____ Audubon Adventures \$ _____ 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>

