

NOVEMBER 2022

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1972



THE Kingfisher

November 10th Program (7:00 p.m. via Zoom)

Homewaters: A Human and Natural History of Puget Sound By David B. Williams

Homewaters: A Human and Natural History of Puget Sound is an award-winning nonfiction account of the long story of the Sound, tracing human history from the earliest records more than 12,500 years ago to present. Williams also focuses on often overlooked species such as Olympia oysters, rockfish, geoduck, kelp, and herring, as well as salmon and orca. Witty, graceful, and deeply informed, *Homewaters* presents a fascinating and hopeful narrative, one that will introduce newcomers to the astonishing life that inhabits Puget Sound and offers longtime residents new insights into and appreciation of the waters they call home.

David B. Williams is an author, naturalist, and tour guide whose award-winning book, *Homewaters: A Human and Natural History of Puget Sound*, is a deep exploration of the stories of this beautiful waterway. He is also the author of the award-winning book *Too High and Too Steep: Reshaping Seattle's Topography*, as well as *Seattle Walks: Discovering History and Nature in the City*. Williams is a Curatorial Associate at the Burke Museum and writes a free weekly newsletter, the Street Smart Naturalist.



Photo of Copper Rockfish by David Williams.

Zoom Program, Thursday, Nov. 10th at 7:00 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

Question of the month:

How have you made your outdoor spaces more attractive to birds and wildlife?

See member responses on Page 8-9.

For next month, send us an email and tell us about the community science projects you've been involved in. Send your answer to Jennifer Standish by November 10 at magma1306@gmail.com or use this google form: <https://forms.gle/nKJbHSyrFVdhFGdN7>

President's Letter - Lynn Willmott

After two years of gathering virtually, the Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW) returned this time in person at the newly-renovated Dungeness River Nature Center! This annual event is a gathering of Audubon chapter leaders from across the state to network, exchange ideas, and learn about Audubon's conservation, science, and education work across the state. This ACOW was hosted by the Region II Audubon Chapters; Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS), Admiralty Audubon Society, and Kitsap Audubon Society. Ken Weirsema, President of OPAS, took the lead with Audubon Washington to create this wonderful event.

Kitsap Audubon was proud to be a key player in bringing Virginia Rose of **Birdability** to this conference. *Birdability* is the organization she founded to help make birding more accessible, especially to those with disabilities. She shared her experience of becoming paraplegic at the age of fourteen, her career as a teacher, and her creation of the *Birdability Map* to help people of all abilities find accessible trails for bird watching. Visit www.birdability.org

Also introduced at ACOW was *The Bird Migration Explorer*: The first-of-its-kind digital platform combines eBird data and other sources, including telemetry tracking, to record geographic migration data for birds across the Americas. Melanie Smith, National Audubon Society Program Director of the Bird Migration Explorer and Bird Migratory Map, explained the importance of this monitoring resource for both research and political advocacy. www.explorer.audubon.org

The prestigious **Audubon Washington Helen Engle Volunteer of the Year Award** was presented to KAS Board members Don and Judy Willott by Cathie Conolly, Audubon Washington board chair (read article on facing page). Congratulations to Don and Judy for this well-deserved award and thank you for your years of dedicated work to save and restore natural settings for birds and people!



ACOW included a lively panel discussion by Washington State legislators Senator Christine Rolfes, Representative Mike Chapman and Representative Steve Tharinger about passing bird-friendly legislation in the upcoming 2023 legislative session.

Audubon Conservation Priorities

The Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee met on Friday to review priorities for the 2023 legislative session. Audubon priorities include restoring shorelines and protecting working lands (sagebrush/shrub-steppe habitat), with an emphasis on climate adaptation and resilience. To learn more about Audubon Washington's legislative priorities, visit <https://wa.audubon.org/conservation>

We also invite you to visit the Kitsap Audubon information table at Poulsbo's Fish Park during the annual Kitsap Salmon Tours on Saturday, November 5, from 10:00 to 2:00.

Thank you to all of our members for your ongoing support. If you would like to take part in any of our activities, we are always looking for volunteers! Contact me at tvmott@gmail.com

Photo of Lynn Willmott, Virginia Rose and Kevin Eyer by Don Willott

Advocacy Day - December 5 - 6

Please join us for the third annual Audubon Washington Advocacy Day on December 5th and 6th. You'll have an opportunity to meet virtually with legislators in your area and join us in speaking up for birds. [Register here if you'd like to join](#). The upcoming legislative session is an important one. State lawmakers will be considering new climate and conservation investments, and taking on important policy issues like shoreline protection and clean energy.

Don and Judy Willott Receive 2022 Helen Engle Award

Don and Judy Willott were presented with Audubon Washington's 2022 Helen Engle Volunteer of the Year Award at the 2022 Audubon Conference of Washington (ACOW), held October 1st at the new Dungeness River Nature Center in Sequim. This is Audubon Washington's highest honor, and recognizes outstanding leadership and service to Audubon at both the State and chapter level.

Don and Judy have been long-time leaders for the Kitsap Audubon Society. They have also been prominent leaders and organizers for the Kitsap Forest & Bay coalition as representatives of the Kitsap Audubon Society since the coalition's founding on April 18, 2011. They've helped organize and lead fund-raising campaigns that raised millions of dollars for the purchase of some 3,500 acres of forest and shoreline on Port Gamble Bay. The land preserved by the coalition is now included

in the Kitsap County Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park (PGFHP). Don was appointed to the park's Master Plan Committee and worked with Kitsap County and its consultants to develop the framework for the future management of the park and its resources. Judy serves on the park Stewardship Advisory Committee. Don's photography has been a mainstay of fund-raising campaigns, coalition and park brochures and PGFHP framework documents.

Judy Willott joined the Kitsap Audubon Board in May, 2008, and served as chapter President for two years (2009, 2010). She served as Treasurer for two years (2015, 2016). She also served as Vice President for two years (2013, 2014). She currently serves as Secretary. Judy also served as regional representative on the Washington Audubon Board, representing Kitsap Audubon, Olympic Peninsula Audubon and Admiralty Audubon.

Don Willott has achieved recognition as a leading champion, spokesperson and tireless advocate for nonmotorized trails on Bainbridge Island over the last 20 years or more. He has lobbied aggressively, authored brochures, raised funds, organized related events, and appeared at countless city council and community meetings. He was instrumental in persuading Bainbridge Island to construct a half-mile paved segment of the Sound to Olympic Trail on Bainbridge Island, and integrate it into a system of linked walking trails landscaped with native plants and shrubs. Don served as Kitsap Audubon's Conservation Chair for eight years, and he and Judy have represented Kitsap Audubon on the Washington Audubon Conservation Council.

Don is also Vice-President of the North Kitsap Trails Association and chairs its Sound to Olympics (regional) Trail Committee. The Sound to Olympics Trail is eventually expected to provide a handicapped accessible trail connecting link in the "Great American Rail Trail" from Washington D.C. to the Pacific Coast.

In 2013, Judy and Don Willott received the Kitsap Audubon Kingfisher Award. This is Kitsap Audubon's highest award and recognizes outstanding service to Kitsap Audubon over a period of five or more years.

In March, 2020, Don and Judy were presented with the annual Phyllis Young Award by the Bainbridge Island Land Trust "...in recognition of their many years of service to the community in ways that exemplify the mission of the BI Land Trust, a nonprofit organization that works to protect and preserve the diverse environment of Bainbridge Island."



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>

Theler Wetlands, Belfair: Saturday, November 12th. Al & Carolyn Westphal, leaders: westphalac@aol.com. A long-time favorite for a KAS visit, this year we will try our luck with the residents and arriving winter birds at this restored wetland at the mouth of the Union River. This event involves several miles of walking on good trails. Contact trip leader to register and for details.

Trip Report

Billy Frank - Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, October 15. The hot (Over 70!) sunny weather could only prompt comparisons to past October KAS visits to this terrific wildlife refuge, where five of us met up for a long morning to walk the trails in search of the arriving winter flocks. Flocks were there, though not in numbers customary to this date. Still, we tallied 50 species, the



highlight being lengthy observation of a Bald Eagle devouring a new caught duck. The greatest joy, though, was the family with two young kids, all very enthusiastic if somewhat inexperienced birders. We had the privilege of helping them to identify a Wilson's Snipe they had discovered, which we learned was the 100th bird of their young birding career list. What a great milestone to be a part of, and what Audubon has always meant to me!

***Bald Eagle with freshly caught duck.
Photo by Al Westphal***

Wildlife Sightings - Janine Schutt

Send your interesting sightings to wildlifesightings@kitsapaudubon.org.

Notable Kitsap Bird Sightings from www.eBird.org:

Sept. 16 at Point No Point (Hansville): 2 ancient murrelets
Sept. 17 at Point No Point: 2 parasitic jaegers, 1 common tern, 4 Lincoln's sparrows
Sept. 23 from Jefferson Head (east of Indianola): 1 brown pelican, 1 Leach's storm-petrel
Sept. 23 at Manchester State Park: 2 surfbirds
Sept. 23 on Bainbridge Island: 1 Townsend's solitaire, 2 hermit thrush
Sept. 24 at Point No Point: 1 California quail
Sept. 25 at Foulweather Bluff Preserve (Hansville): 2 pectoral sandpipers
Sept. 28 at Foulweather Bluff Preserve: 1 sora

Oct. 2 at Blakely Rocks (near SE Bainbridge Island): 15 Harlequin ducks, 2 black oystercatchers
Oct. 3 in Gorst: 1 lesser yellowlegs
Oct. 3 at Chico Creek (Bremerton): 2 ruddy ducks
Oct. 3 at Otto Jarstad Park (Gorst): 1 American dipper
Oct. 4 in Gorst: 3 great egrets
Oct. 6 at Clear Creek Trail (Silverdale): 1 Vaux's swift
Oct. 8 near Port Orchard: 1 lesser goldfinch
Oct. 7 at Fay Bainbridge Park: 1 eared grebe
Oct. 10 from Jefferson Head: 1 short-tailed shearwater
Oct. 11 south of Port Orchard: 2 mountain quail
Oct. 15 at Point No Point: 2 snow geese, 1 Leach's storm-petrel
Oct. 15 at Hawley Cove Park (Bainbridge Island): 2 Virginia rails
Oct. 15 at Foulweather Bluff: 1 Lapland longspur

Christmas Bird Count - Jennifer Standish

Each winter, volunteers from Kitsap Audubon participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count. National Audubon's CBC is the nation's longest running community science bird project. It began in 1900 when ornithologist Frank Chapman suggested an alternative to traditional Christmas hunting competitions, and instead proposed a census of wintering birds. Now tens of thousands of volunteers participate each year in thousands of CBC circles throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Kitsap Audubon organizes two CBC circles. One is our Kitsap circle, which includes areas in Bainbridge Island, Poulsbo, Silverdale, Seabeck, Bremerton, and Port Orchard. The other is our North Kitsap/Port Gamble circle, which includes areas in Poulsbo, Kingston, Hansville, Port Gamble, and the Hood Canal. Each circle is 15 miles in diameter and is divided into segments covered by designated field teams. Field teams record all the birds seen or heard at each of their assigned locations on the designated count day. If you live within the count circle, you can also conduct a feeder or yard watch.

CBC Scheduled Dates

The scheduled dates for this year's counts are:

Kitsap Circle: Saturday, December 17

North Kitsap/Port Gamble circle: Saturday, December 31

Native plants aid Birds

Kitsap Audubon photographer Don Willott found Kitsap Audubon VP Kevin Eyer shopping for native plants at a Bainbridge Island native plants sale.

People who care about wildlife choose native plants and shrubs over grass and nonnative plants because they provide superior food and cover.

Wildlife advocates urge homeowners to consider replacing manicured lawns with wildlife friendly native plants which require less water, fertilizer and pollution-generating maintenance. Homeowners are also urged to shun pesticides, herbicides and neonicotinoid-treated seeds and plants.



New to CBC?

Have you ever wanted to participate in the Christmas Bird Count, but weren't sure how to get involved? It's easy to sign up by contacting the field team leader for the area you are interested in. Leaders and their contact information will be published in the Kingfisher prior to the count day.

Be sure to sign up early, because some areas are popular and do fill up. If that happens, you'll be asked if you'd like to join a different area.

The CBC takes place rain or shine, so be sure to wear layers and bring your rain gear. You'll also want to bring drinks and snacks or a lunch. Don't forget binoculars. A spotting scope can be helpful if you have one, but isn't required.

You'll also need to have a way to record your sightings. All of our CBC checklists are submitted to eBird. Most volunteers use their phone and the eBird mobile app to record their checklists in the field, but you can also record sightings on a paper checklist and add them to eBird later.

All of the checklists submitted are reviewed by the compilers. Our Kitsap circle compiler is Janine Schutt, and our North Kitsap/Port Gamble compiler is Jennifer Standish. Janine is also the coordinator for feeder/yard watches for both counts. The data is reviewed and submitted to the National Audubon CBC database.



Bird of the Month: Hairy Woodpecker

by Janine Schutt

A frequent visitor to suet feeders in forested backyards is the hairy woodpecker. Almost identical in appearance to its diminutive counterpart, the downy woodpecker, the hairy woodpecker is an important part of the forest ecosystem. Here are some fascinating facts about the hairy woodpecker:

- Medium-sized woodpecker with a broad range that stretches from Alaska to Panama.
- Central American "hairies" are smaller with light brown underparts instead of white like their larger northern counterparts.
- Less common than its cousin, the downy woodpecker.
- Measures 8-9 inches from head to tail, which is 1/3 longer than a downy woodpecker.
- Can weigh up to 3 ounces, as compared to a 1-ounce downy woodpecker.
- Resident of mixed forests, with a preference for mid-elevation areas with mature trees.
- Primarily forages for insects on tree trunks and also eats fruit, seeds, tree sap from sapsucker wells, and suet from backyard feeders
- Known to feast on larvae of problem insects, such as bark beetles and gypsy moths.
- Excavates a new tree cavity each year in which to raise its young.
- In less than two weeks, a pair can chisel out a nest chamber in a snag that is 8-12 inches deep with an entrance hole 1.5 to 2 inches wide.
- Considered a keystone species, whose previously used nests provide nurseries for squirrels, chickadees, nuthatches, bluebirds, and northern pygmy-owls.
- Juveniles have a red cap that fades within a few months.



Photos of male (right) and female (below) Hairy Woodpeckers by Janine Schutt.



2022 U.S. State of the Birds Report

In 50 years, birds have increased overall in wetlands, a singular exception that shows the way forward for saving birds and benefiting people.

Ten of the Tipping Point bird species, all of which have lost 50 percent or more of their populations in the past 50 years, are on a track to lose another half in the next 50 years if nothing changes.

A newly released **State of the Birds report for the United States** reveals a tale of two trends, one hopeful, one dire. Long-term trends of waterfowl show strong increases where investments in wetland conservation have improved conditions for birds and people. But data show birds in the U.S. are declining overall in every other habitat — forests, grasslands, deserts, and oceans.

Published by 33 leading science and conservation organizations and agencies, the 2022 U.S. State of the Birds report is the first comprehensive look at the nation's birds since a landmark 2019 study showed the loss of nearly 3 billion birds in the U.S. and Canada in 50 years.

Findings included in the 2022 State of the Birds report:

- More than half of U.S. bird species are declining.
- U.S. grassland birds are among the fastest declining with a 34 percent loss since 1970.
- Waterbirds and ducks in the U.S. have increased by 18 percent and 34 percent, respectively, during the same period.
- Seventy newly identified Tipping Point species have each lost 50 percent or more of their



populations in the past 50 years, and are on a track to lose another half in the next 50 years if nothing changes. These species, none of which are currently listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act, include beloved gems such as the Rufous Hummingbird, songsters such as the Golden-winged Warbler, and oceanic travelers such as the Black-footed Albatross.

The report advises that meeting declining birds' tremendous needs will require a strategic combination of partnerships, incentives, science-based solutions, and the will to dramatically scale up conservation efforts.

The beloved Rufous Hummingbird is one of 50 "tipping point" birds identified in this report. Photo by Jay Wiggs

NWF Habitat Steward Training

Are you interested in creating habitat for wildlife? Do you want to do your part to keep Washington wild? The National Wildlife Federation is offering multi-week virtual training to teach you how to create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards, and other places in your community. The training will be held twice a week over two weeks in November 2022. In addition, there will be in-person field experience opportunities offered pertaining to local habitats. Benefits include: a comprehensive, digital training manual with local resources, instruction from local professionals, engaging field opportunities, certification as a habitat steward volunteer, and continued support from NWF staff. A variety of

topics will be presented on habitat restoration, PNW ecology and wildlife, natural yard care, invasive plants, native plants, & much more! Classes will be held via Zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays in November from 6-9pm. The dates are: 11/7, 11/9, 11/14 and 11/16. Multiple field opportunities will be encouraged to expand learning in the Western Washington area. The cost of the training is \$20. *Note: scholarships are available! No one will be turned down due to lack of funds.* Once registered the Zoom link will be emailed to you. To register for the training, please visit <https://westwahst.brownpapertickets.com> or contact Crystal Lloyd at WAEducation@nwf.org, or call (206) 577-7816.

Question of the month:

How have you made your outdoor spaces more attractive to birds and wildlife?

Here is how several Kitsap Audubon members answered this question:

"We've planted natives, adding a couple of serviceberry for example. We also have sword ferns for ground dwellers refuge.

I'm hoping to add a winter flowering mahonia or two and a red flowering currant for hummers as we replant after construction.

The sparrows love the rosemary seeds. I know that's not native here in Puget Sound, but it fills a niche.

We always keep a clean birdbath, one on the ground and one higher.

Of course there is nothing like a garden gone to seed. I was reminded to add this as I watched the juncos on my vegetable/flower garden! Good reason not to get around to cleaning it up!" **Judy Willott**

"Viking Park management does not allow birdseed or suet feeders, so we have a bird bath. This summer has been so dry, the birds have really used it!" **Sandy Bullock**

"We live in a senior mobile home park that bans seed and suet feeders. But we maintain three year-round hummingbird feeders, and we are famous among Rufous and Anna's Hummingbirds far and wide, both resident nesting birds and passing migrants. They may not know us by name, but many of them recognize us by sight! They will sometimes let us know when we are shirking our duties and failing to keep them supplied with clean, fresh solution. We always hope for favorable reviews on the hummingbird communications network." **Gene Bullock**

"Judy and I have a city lot in Winslow, and 15 acres of forest & field along the Larry Scott / Olympic Discovery Trail near Port Townsend. In Winslow, we are reducing impervious surface and continuing to plant a larger proportion in native plant habitat & reducing lawn. In our 1,000 feet along the ODT, we are doing ecological thinning for forest health and restoring wetland for habitat conservation & restoration. A much larger scale--and providing trail users a better experience with nature.

But we are also working hard on creating a greenway with the STO. By proactively creating the STO on Bainbridge largely in WSDOT right of

way, we are claiming a significant part of the row for active transportation in nature, lined with forest & fields. Instead of losing that space to concrete & asphalt a lane or intersection at a time to single occupancy vehicles.

And a big part of that is removing invasive species like blackberry & scotch broom, keeping or restoring trees, replanting native understory. The Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation with its Friends of the STO Fund is a key partner. We are doing the maintenance to keep the invasive out, and augmenting native plant communities.

In Port Gamble, beyond conserving the 3,500 acres, we now have developed a master plan to guide ecological restoration for habitat in several ways. We have collaborated with Forterra on negotiating with Rayonier, Tribes, and County to purchase timber rights which save habitat and visitor experience with nature.

A buffer of mature trees is being saved along more than a mile of STO. Timber rights for other areas of trees about 15 years old (since the last clear cut) will be conserved so that we can progressively thin and add diversity of species, and it never again will be clear cut. " **Don Willott**

"A few years back I did some research on improving backyard habitats. I found out about the National Wildlife Federation (NWF)'s Habitat Certification program. The NWF provides an outline of what is needed to certify your backyard including a food, shelter, and a water source. When you are certified you can get a sign to put out in your yard and start a trend! The first year after buying our home, my wife and I set to work removing the ivy in our backyard and planting native flowers (and some non-invasive pollinator-friendly nonnatives). As part of a grad school project, I put together a flyer for my neighbors providing resources on what to plant and I shared some of my plant purchases from the Kitsap Conservation District with those interested. Creating a habitat friendly environment is even more powerful when you work alongside neighbors to build habitat corridors through your backyards, and I think we are making a little progress every year! This winter I finally bought a solar-powered water fountain to provide a continual source of running water in my backyard. It is not connected to a hose, but pumps the water into motion when the sun is out. I refill it when it is low, which is not as

often as one might think!. In the spring I finally got to see some chickadees move into the birdhouse I built the year prior, some to-whees nested in our bushes, and then a great horned owl visited for several nights in the summer. Not bad for our space! Each year we take one more tiny step forward, but I know it makes a difference.”

Kevin Eyer

“I started two big projects in my yard this year. First, I removed a section of my front lawn and replaced it with native ground cover. Next, I started to build a pondless waterfall to provide a source of running water. I’m hoping the sound will attract more warblers to my yard and I’ve placed lots of rocks in the middle of the stream so birds have a place to perch. Next up is removing the invasive ivy and scotch broom.” **Jennifer Standish**

For next month, send us an email and tell us about the community science projects you’ve been involved in. Send responses to Jennifer Standish by November 10 at magma1306@gmail.com or use this google form: <https://forms.gle/nKJbHSyrFVdhFGdN7>

Visit our display at Poulsbo’s Fish Park during the annual Kitsap Salmon Tours

Saturday, November 5th, from 10 - 2 p.m.

Photo, from left: Pearl Kerber, Kevin Eyer and Gene Bullock represented Kitsap Audubon at the 2021 Kitsap Salmon Tours in Poulsbo’s Fish Park. Photo by Karl Ostheller



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Kingfisher Editor: Gene Bullock,

GeneBullock@comcast.net,

360-394-5635

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Kitsap Audubon Society

P.O. Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370

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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 _____

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- 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.

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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>

