

CELEBRATING

50
Years



THE Kingfisher

SEPTEMBER 2023

Kitsap Audubon Society – Since 1973

**September 14th Program (6:30-8:00 p.m.)
Both in-person and Zoom**

PSE's Avian Protection Program - Haley Olson

Haley Olson oversees Puget Sound Energy's Avian Protection Program. This will be her third presentation to Kitsap Audubon. Under the program, PSE has partnered twice with Kitsap Audubon to relocate pairs of ospreys in Poulsbo, donating the poles, installation crews and a nest platform.

Haley is a Senior Resource Scientist, and in her 15 years with PSE, has become an expert in the field of avian protection. She'll be providing an overview of PSE's efforts to protect birds and improve electrical system reliability, including program goals, methods, and successes. While working in this role, in addition to responding to and mitigating for bird and power line incidents, Haley has developed informational materials; spearheaded efforts to adopt new technology to assist with incident tracking, risk assessment, and proactive efforts; supports avian management and habitat work at PSE's wind and hydroelectric generation facilities; and provides internal training to improve the efficacy of the program. Outside of PSE, Haley has contributed to industry standard-setting publications and assisted with providing industry workshops nationwide with the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee. Her background includes a BS in Environmental Studies and English (Creative Non-fiction Writing), and several years of technical field work, including songbird nest surveys, spotted owl nest surveys, capture, and banding, marbled murrelet nest and habitat studies, and habitat restoration. She enjoys spending time in nature with her young daughter. **Photo of Haley Olson with osprey chick by Melvin Walters.**



To join Zoom Program, Thurs., Sept. 14h, 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 meeting 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.**

President's Letter - Kevin Eyer

September has arrived! The white crowned sparrow fledglings in my yard have long since left their nest box not far from my door. It was quite the year for white crowned sparrows in my neighborhood. As common as they are, their song always brings a smile to my face. Now, as August ends, I am enjoying watching the skies and the water for the fall migrants on their way south.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to a new season! My name is Kevin Eyer, your President for the 2023/2024 cycle. As a teacher, September always marks a new beginning for me, a change that never fails to fill me with excitement. And there is so much to be excited about this year! Our hybrid meetings at the North Kitsap High School Library will be continuing this fall. We had some time to try out new audio equipment this summer, and are really pleased with the result. It is so wonderful to be able to see each other in person once again and yet still have the convenience and accessibility that Zoom provides! I look forward to seeing you at our September program.

Our committees are gearing up for the fall and inviting in new members. Thank you to all those who reached out this summer!

A number of volunteers from our Education Committee had a blast tabling at the Kitsap Pride Festival in July. The Committee also has exciting programs and tabling events already in the works for this fall. The Conservation Committee continues to actively support developments at Point No Point County Park, the Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park, the Hansville Greenway, and the Grover's Creek Preserve. This summer we have made significant progress toward installing a MOTUS Wildlife Tracking station on the Coast Guard tower at Point No Point. A huge thanks to Jamie Acker for leading this effort. Our installation will add to a much larger network of stations, organized by Birds Canada, that collects data points whenever birds and animals equipped with tracking devices pass by stations. Scientists conducting all types of research can access this database. It is truly a fascinating project! Find more information at motus.org. Finally our Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee will be taking steps this year to add accessibility information on local trails to a *Birdability* map, one of several undertakings we will be pursuing this year. Many of you may recall that Virginia Rose, founder and president of *Birdability*, spoke at the Audubon Conference of Washington last year.

Dedicated volunteer Jennifer Standish stepped down from the board and the Conservation Committee this summer, but plans to continue her work with the Volunteer Recruitment Committee, the Christmas Bird Count, Climate Watch, and the annual One Call for All fundraising campaign. We are so appreciative of all her contributions, and are grateful she will continue with us in this capacity. If you are interested in volunteering with us and/or joining our board of directors, please email us at info@kitsapaudubon.org. Information on the types of help we need can be found at kitsapaudubon.org/volunteer.

Family photo: Kevin and Lauren Eyer and son Ashton.



2023 Audubon Conference of Washington

Audubon Washington and the chapters of the King County region are pleased to welcome chapters from across Washington State for the annual Audubon Conference of Washington (ACOW), September 29 - October 1, 2023, at the Seattle Mountaineer Program Center.

Friday - conservation sessions and voting on WSACC resolutions. Pizza dinner and guest speaker, Rebecca Heisman, author of *Flightpaths*. Saturday morning bird walk plus day of conservation and EDIB workshops. We'll celebrate the winner of the Helen Engle award and hear from guest speaker and researcher Ursula Valdez. Sunday - Field Trip Day! [Register here!](#)

<https://wa.audubon.org/chapters-centers/acow-2023-together-birds>

Kids' Corner: Water for Birds

Did You Know?

Cactus wrens can survive without drinking water! It allows them to live in the hot, dry desert of Mexico and the American Southwest. They survive by getting their water from foods like cactus fruit, and even from insects. They also have special kidneys that help them keep water in their bodies. Even so, cactus wrens must be sure to find shade during the hot day so they don't lose water too quickly. What amazing birds!

Source: BirdNote. (2018, July 30). How Desert Birds Can Survive With Very Little Water. <https://www.audubon.org/news/how-desert-birds-can-survive-very-little-water>

Taking Action: Keeping Birds Hydrated

Has anyone ever told you to "Stay hydrated"? What they probably meant was that you should drink lots of water. Unlike cactus wrens, most birds need a regular supply of fresh, clean water for drinking and bathing just like we do. There were some hot summer days this year, and you can bet there were some hot and thirsty birds!

You can help birds stay hydrated all year by building or buying a small water feature for your yard or deck, like a fountain or bird bath. Be sure to keep the water fresh and clean, and running if possible. Water that stays still, or standing water, may attract insects like mosquitoes that spread diseases. Another way to help birds stay hydrated is by giving them shade. You can do this by putting a large plant outside your door, or planting a shrub in your yard. Be patient! It might take a whole year before you start seeing birds visit. But it's worth the wait!



Cactus Wren, photo credit Ryan O'Donnell, Allaboutbirds.org



A solar-powered water fountain is easy to care for and uses less water and electricity than other types of fountains.

Photo Credit: Kevin Eyer

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>

Point No Point (Hansville): Saturday, September 16th (half-day). Al & Carolyn Westphal, leaders: westphalac@aol.com to register. One the richest birding locations in Kitsap County, we should see some winter seabird arrivals and fall migrants plus the usual birds of this internationally designated IBA (Important Bird Area). Time permitting, we will also bird Norwegian Point Park in "downtown" Hansville. Bring a scope if you have one. Contact trip leader to register and for details.

Trip Report

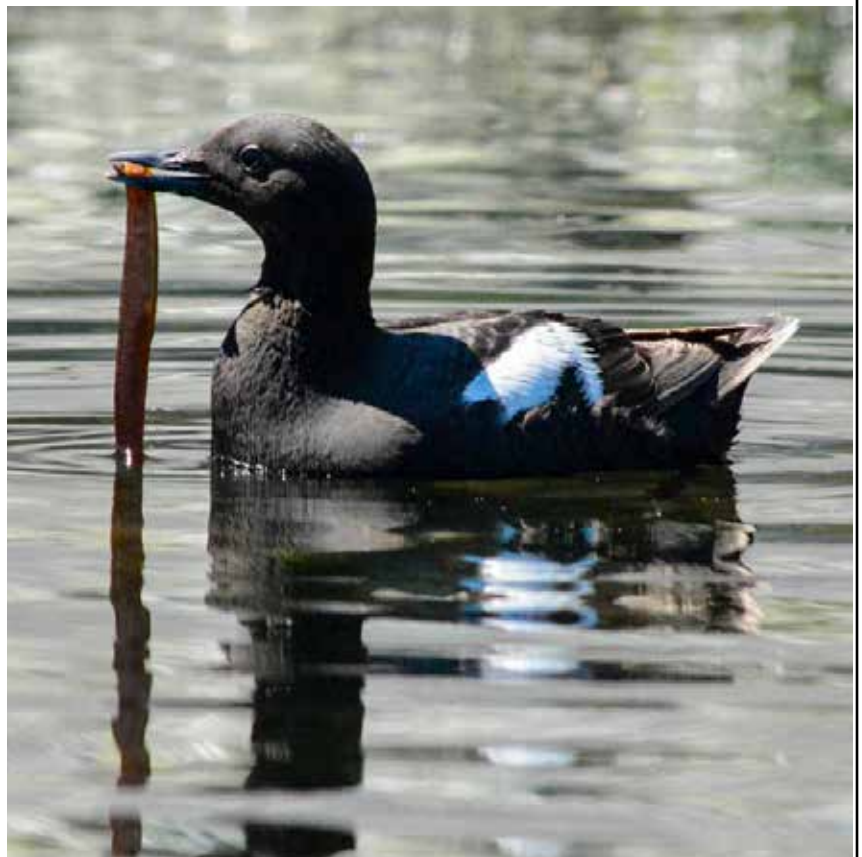
Billy Frank-Nisqually NWR, June 10th. The weather was a bit dreary though luckily no

more than a few drops of rain fell, and eight of us enjoyed a long morning birding our favorite national wildlife refuge. Birds were active and accommodating considering the conditions, and our final tally was an impressive 54 species featuring a nice array of waterfowl, swallows and flycatchers, sparrows and warblers, a handful of raptors, and others. Especially enjoyed hosting several younger new participants, and I hope to see more of Tina, Kate, and Blake when the KAS field trips resume this fall!

Liability Waiver Policy

Beginning this fall, Kitsap Audubon Society asks field trip participants to complete a liability waiver. This will be a simple online form that can be accessed from our website or from an emailed link. Once signed, it will be valid for the remainder of the KAS operating year (September – June). If you do not wish to submit the form online, it will be possible to print it out instead, although the electronic form is preferred whenever possible. Trip leaders will provide detailed instructions upon event registration.

**California Scrub Jay by Deb Morgan.
Pigeon Guillemot by Jay Wiggs.**



Wildlife Sightings - Janine Schutt

As summer gives way to fall, migratory birds are flying south from breeding territory in Kitsap, as well as individuals from much farther north who are simply passing through. One member of this latter group, the Baird's sandpiper, put on a show in early August along the beaches of Foulweather Bluff near Hansville. Multiple birders were treated to close up views of as many as 10 birds, all juveniles who recently hatched in the Arctic tundra. A rare visitor to Kitsap, the black phoebe, was spotted in mid-July, first near Hansville, then a couple weeks later on south Bainbridge Island. Same bird, perhaps? Also, at the end of July, Judy Conlow and her husband reported that a juvenile brown-headed cowbird seemed to have mistaken them for its parents. "Peeps" followed them all over the yard and even around the neighborhood, like a puppy dog, for weeks. At a backyard gathering with friends, Peeps was right there, the life of the party! Gene Bulck reports a mountain quail in Poulsbo. Send your interesting sightings to wildlifesightings@kitsapaudubon.org.

Notable Kitsap Sightings from www.eBird.org:

As always, Point No Point in Hansville is the hottest hotspot in Kitsap!

May 15 at Point No Point: 3 Swainson's hawks

May 18 at Point No Point: 1 snow goose, 1 American pipit

May 20 at Point No Point: 1 Broad-winged hawk

May 22 by Lake Flora Rd. (South Kitsap): 1 yellow-breasted chat

May 25 in Poulsbo: 2 whimbrels

May 25 at Point No Point: 1 herring gull, 16

American white pelicans, 1 Lazuli bunting
June 2 at Point No Point: 1 western kingbird
June 11 near Silverdale: 2 mountain quails
June 12 at Restoration Point (SE Bainbridge Island): 1 long-billed curlew
June 13 at Point No Point: 1 Bullock's oriole
June 14 near Hansville: 1 manx shearwater (seen from the Victoria Clipper)
June 20 at Point No Point: 4 black swifts, 1 western gull
July 18 near Hansville: 160 American white pelicans flying over
July 20 at Point No Point: 1 marbled godwit
July 27 from the Kingston ferry: 1 parasitic jaeger
July 29 near Gorst: 1 Cassin's vireo
Aug. 6 from SE Bainbridge Island: 2 brown pelicans
Aug. 8 from east Bainbridge Island: 1 Cassin's auklet
Aug. 8 at Foulweather Bluff: 2 black oystercatchers
Aug. 9 at Foulweather Bluff Preserve: 1 semipalmated sandpiper
Aug. 11 at Blakely Rocks, off the shore of SE Bainbridge Island: 11 Harlequin ducks, 60 black turnstones
Aug. 12 at Square Lake Park: 2 evening grosbeaks
Aug. 13 on south Bainbridge Island: 1 green heron
Aug. 14 at Blakely Rocks: 1 ruddy turnstone, 3 surfbirds

Photos of Black Phoebe (left) and Black Oystercatcher (right) by Janine Schutt:



Bird of the Month: Baird's Sandpiper - Janine Schutt

Fall migration brings shorebirds to Kitsap's shorelines. While many pass through by the end of August, some continue into September, such as the Baird's sandpiper. The largest of Kitsap's 4 "peep" species (western, least, and semipalmated sandpipers), the Baird's sandpiper is an uncommon migrant that is sometimes spotted along the county's northern beaches. The best place to look for them is at Foulweather Bluff, near Hansville, in August and early September. Here are some fascinating facts about the Baird's sandpiper:

- Long distance migrant that breeds on the Arctic tundra and winters along the West Coast of South America.
- Long, pointed wings and an elongated body allow for distance flying.
- Migration covers about 4,000 miles for most birds and up to 9,000 miles for those that travel as far as the tip of South America, a journey that takes 5 weeks.
- Most adults travel along the Central Flyway through the Great Plains, while juveniles from Alaska follow the Pacific Flyway, passing through Washington in late summer.
- Has a preference for dry habitat, such as

grasslands, rather than the mud preferred by other sandpipers. On beaches in migration, is usually found foraging at the high tide mark, often near other sandpipers, but not alongside them.

- Feeds on a variety of invertebrates which they peck off the ground.
- In 1861, naturalist Elliott Coues named the species for his mentor, Spencer Fullerton Baird of the Smithsonian Institute.
- Males arrive on breeding territory early, while there is still snow on the ground.
- Male performs elaborate aerial ascents and descents to claim territory. Once the females arrive, he switches to a ground display to attract a mate.
- Female, over the course of 4 days, lays a clutch of 4 eggs that has a combined weight that is greater than her body weight.
- Both parents build the nest, incubate the eggs for about 3 weeks, and care for newly hatched chicks, which can feed themselves almost immediately. The female abandons the chicks before they are independent, leaving the male to look after them until they can fly, up to 20 days after hatching.

Photos by Janine Schutt.



Kitsap Audubon Education Committee

The Kitsap Audubon Education Committee and its volunteers provide educational programs and community outreach in a variety of forms, from booth displays at local events to PowerPoint presentations on birds, as illustrated on this page. The committee welcomes new members -- especially those interested in environmental education for children and youth. Kitsap Audubon and all its task groups and committees wholeheartedly embrace and promote diversity and inclusiveness.

Cathy Cohoon (pictured in Kitsap Audubon booth) represented Kitsap Audubon at the Kitsap Regional Library Discovery Play Day.

Kitsap Audubon booth volunteers at the 2023 Kitsap Pride Festival included, left to right: Kanako Shimura, Annie Bui, Mark Tuvim, Lynn Willmott, Michelle Noll Tucker, Gene and Sandy Bullock. Missing from photo - Cathy Cohoon.

Education Committee volunteers have given dozens of PowerPoint presentations on birds to Kitsap community



Clear Creek Trail
 On Wednesday, June 28th Discovery Play Day explores Birds of Clear Creek. Who's nipping around? Enjoy stories, crafts, and trail exploration and become wildlife detectors and search for clues of wildlife, especially birds.
 Clear Creek Task Force in partnership with the Kitsap Regional Library offer Discovery Play Days which feature hands-on learning and outdoor fun! Young children and their parents join for safe, fun, fun for stories and activities. Then hit the trail to explore nearby ecosystems.
 New location! We'll be exploring the birds of the north valley in park at the dog/kate park and follow the paved path south down to the shelter.
 It all begins at 10:00 a.m. with storytime. Then move on over to the craft station to make a bird mask or a pair of binoculars. And then it's off on a short hike on the trail and chat with rangers to spy birds singing in the trees. The program ends around noon and families are invited to bring a sack lunch to enjoy a picnic. This is a rain or shine event so dress for the weather and a short walk.
 So we can properly prepare, please register here:
<https://www.kitsaplibrary.org/programs/2023-06-28-10-00-00>



OSPREY NEST PLATFORM



Osprey nest platform installed
March 30, 2023, thanks to:

- North Kitsap School District
- Kitsap Audubon Society
- Poulsbo Rotary Club
- Puget Sound Energy donated pole,
platform and installation
- Osprey Solutions, LLC

Ospreys are unique among raptors in their ability to hover and dive for fish, their sole food. They are migratory, returning by April to raise two to three young. Ospreys mate for life, but each bird makes its separate way to Central/South America in September.

Photos by Philip Rowston and Jay Wiggs

This sign commemorates Kitsap Audubon's 50th Anniversary and honors Gene and Sandra Bullock for their innumerable contributions to bird conservation and environmental education.



Osprey interpretive sign

The Kitsap Audubon Board directed Gene Bullock to design and produce an interpretive sign (pictured above) that will be placed near the new North Kitsap High School Osprey nest platform. The two-foot by three-foot sign will be installed by the North Kitsap School District.

Kitsap Audubon has helped fund relocation of three pairs of Ospreys in Kitsap County. Kitsap Audubon partnered with the Poulsbo Rotary, the North Kitsap School District, Osprey Solutions LLC, and the Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Avian Protection Program to install the newest osprey nest platform near the North Kitsap High School athletic field. PSE donated the poles, installation crews and a nest platform for both Poulsbo nest platforms.

Kitsap Audubon also donated \$5,000 toward the cost of a new osprey nest platform for a pair that have been nesting on an athletic field light tower at Olympic High School.

Eight years ago, Kitsap Audubon partnered with Puget Sound Energy to relocate an osprey pair that had been nesting on a light tower in Poulsbo's Strawberry Field. Kitsap Audubon recently hired an arborist to reduce the accumulated weight of that nest because it threatened the supporting structure. The ospreys watched as the arborist worked and promptly began adding nest material.

The Poulsbo Ospreys are especially attracted to the area because of the pond behind the North Kitsap School Horticultural Building. The Poulsbo Lions Club stocks the pond with trout for their annual Kids Fishing Derby. Poulsbo Lions Club members enjoy knowing they are helping support two families of ospreys plus a family of otters.

Photo of NK High School Osprey nest platform by Jay Wiggs





Jay Wiggs

Kitsap Audubon Society

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Co-Vice Presidents:

Lynn Willmott, Gene Bullock

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

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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 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

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining Annual Membership \$75 | (Contact KAS Treasurer for LIFE Membership payment options) |

Additional donation: \$ _____

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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>

