



THE KINGFISHER

Kitsap Audubon Society — Since 1972

February 2012

February 9, 2012, Program

Little-Known Facts About Northwest Bats

Presented by Curt Black



Kitsap Audubon's Holiday Mitten Tree donations of winter clothing and some 30 pounds of nonperishable food were delivered to St. Vincent de Paul by Byron and Sara Kane.

Photos by Byron Kane

Kitsap Audubon Society meets the 2nd Thursday of each month, September through May, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., on the lower level of the Poulsbo Library, 700 NE Lincoln Rd. Open to the public. Free parking.



Whether swirling out of inky black caves or possibly roosting with us in our homes, many of us forget entirely about bats. Unless you are in a steel-and-glass downtown office tower, chances are you're within 50 feet of a bat. If that bothers you--even a little--you should join us this month. Both kids and adults will share a fun flight through stunning video and audio that should challenge your preconceptions about bats. Join us as we look at how bats and birds have solved the same challenges in very different ways, or occasionally almost identically.

Do you bird by ear? We'll see if you can tell a bat from a bird. We'll finish by considering the conservation needs of both bats and birds. We'll talk briefly about the fungal holocaust that is White Nose Syndrome, often killing more than 90% of hibernating bats in the Eastern US. We'll look at the effects of wind turbines on bats and identify habitat enhancement steps you can take, including the proper construction and

installation of bat houses modified so they really work in Washington State.

Curt Black is an environmental scientist with the EPA, where he works on hazardous waste sites. In his free time he talks and walks all things bat. Curt is a technical advisor to Bats Northwest and helps with their annual Bat Ambassador training. He has also worked with the Washington Bat Working Group and the Northwest Bat Cooperative and the Bat Grid Project. He has a BS in Geology and a BS in Zoology and a Masters in Hydrogeology, all from the University of Texas. He enjoys environmental education, and likes most of all focusing people's attention on the things around us that are usually invisible or under-appreciated. Bats fit that category for many. Curt also enjoys nature sound recording, amateur radio, and pretty much the rest of natural history.

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From the President—Jim Ullrich



Welcome to 2012 and another great start to our Kitsap Audubon Society year. We finished up 2011 with a very, very successful Christmas Bird Count (CBC), thanks to wonderful weather and great coordination by our CBC chair, Gene Bullock, and his entire committee, managing their individual zone's of control. Gene's results for KAS are in this newsletter.

Then our January program speaker, Julia Parrish, gave a magnificent talk on *Citizen Science and what the birds are saying about*

Puget Sound. You are encouraged to get involved with her "Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team" by visiting www.coasst.org or email her at info@coasst.org.

After the great storm of Jan 18-20, 2012, you get a great appreciation for all the hungry birds in our backyards. Despite all the starlings, pushing and shoving at your feeders, all the other backyard birds seemed to find space to get their fill, as well. This leads us to ***The 15th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count,*** or GBBC, sponsored by Cornell University. During February 17-20, 2012, you can take part in a family-friendly, educational activity that is lots of fun, costs nothing, and helps your local birds. Participants count birds in their backyards, at work, in an area park, or anywhere over this four-day period. Enter your data, explore results online, enter photo contest, and win prizes. Just register at www.birdcount.org. Let's light up Kitsap County on Cornell's website with hundreds of daily sightings of OUR Backyard Birds!

See you February 8th at the Poulsbo Library for our educational program on Northwest bats.



Color maps of the Puget Sound Loop of the Great Washington Birding Trail are on sale at Kitsap Audubon meetings for \$5.00.
Photo by Don Willott.

2011 Kitsap Audubon Christmas Bird Count Results

On Saturday, December 17, more than 60 Kitsap Audubon volunteers in eight field teams did our annual census of birds within our designated 15-mile diameter CBC circle. More than a dozen volunteers also did backyard counts. This is the 112th year National Audubon has been conducting these counts, and the 37th year Kitsap Audubon has participated.

Loon, Red-throated	16
Pacific	271
Common	62
Grebe, Pied-billed	28
Horned	737
Red-necked	80
Eared	17
Western	2129
Cormorant, Brandt's	83
Dble-crested	480
Pelagic	247
Heron, Great Blue	30
Goose, Canada - Lge	366
Canada - Small	21
Duck, Wood	6
Gadwall	16
Widgeon, Eurasian	26
American	2559
Mallard	704
Shoveler, Northern	14
Pintail, Northern	40
Teal, Green-winged	508
Duck, Ring-necked	69
Scaup, Greater	664
Lesser	96
Duck, Harlequin	19
Scoter, Surf	1434
White-winged	497
Black	7
Duck, Long-tailed	55
Bufflehead	794
Golden-eye, Common	542
Barrow's	190
Merganser, Hooded	105
Common	278
Red-breastd	153
Duck, Ruddy	150
Eagle, Bald	51
Hawk, Sharp-shinned	7
Cooper's	2
Red-tailed	6
Merlin	0
Falcon, Peregrine	1
Pheasant, Ring-necked	0
Grouse, Ruffed	0
Quail, California	0

Rail, Virginia	1
Coot, American	126
Plover, Black-bellied	20
Killdeer	72
Yellowlegs, Greater	25
Sandpiper, Spotted	6
Turnstone, Black	9
Sanderling	0
Dunlin	251
Snipe, Wilson's	0
Sandpiper, Least	8
Shorebirds, Sp.	1
Gull, Bonaparte's	29
Mew	257
Ring-billed	1
California	0
Herring	0
Thayer's	1
Western	6
Gull, Glaucous-winged	685
GW X Western	81
Murre, Common	0
Guillemot, Pigeon	76
Murrelet, Marbled	0
Auklet, Rhinoceros	0
Pigeon, Rock	164
Pigeon, Band-tailed	0
Dove, Mourning	39
Owl, Great Horned	1
Barn	1
Western Screech	0
Northern Pygmy	0
Barred	6
Northern Saw-whet	4
Hummingbird - Anna's	57
Kingfisher, Belted	26
Sapsucker, Red-breastd	5
Woodpecker, Downy	18
Hairy	9
No. Flicker - Red Shaft	42
Woodpecker, Pileated	13
Vireo, Hutton's	0
Jay, Steller's	37
Scrub-Jay, Western	8
Crow, American	3166
Raven, Common	5

Chickadee, Blck-capped	205
Chest-backed	132
Bushtit	149
Nuthatch, Red-brsted	59
Creepers, Brown	0
Wren, Bewick's	18
Pacific	51
Marsh	3
American Dipper	1
Kinglet, Golden-crwnd	199
Ruby-crowned	72
Thrush, Hermit	1
Robin, American	868
Thrush, Varied	14
Starling, European	344
Waxwing, Cedar	10
Warbler, Orange-crwnd	0
Yellow-rumped	1
Townsend's	10
Towhee, Spotted	124
Sparrow, Fox	38
Song	146
Lincoln's	6
Swamp	1
White-throated	2
White-crowned	14
Golden-crwnd	54
Dark-eyed - Oregon	427
Blackbird, Red-winged	33
Brewer's	0
Finch, House	81
Purple	18
Crossbill, Red	8
Siskin, Pine	114
Goldfinch, American	46
Grosbeak, Evening	0
Sparrow, House	55
Townsend's Solitaire	1
Gray Jay	5
Flicker, Yellow-Shafted	1
Junco - Slate-colord	1
Leucistic Junco	1
TOTAL BIRDS SEEN	22129
TOTAL SPECIES	110

Field Trip Guidelines

John Finkbeiner

Field Trip Chair

360-895-0374

finchlegs@wavecable.com

Field trip guidelines can vary according to leader preferences and the nature of the trip. Trip leaders try to keep some slots open to new people.

1. Trips are limited to 12 participants unless otherwise specified.
2. Children 12 and under are welcome only on designated family trips or with permission of the leader. All children should be accompanied by a parent or adult designated by the parent.
3. Some receive their Kingfisher earlier than others (email versus regular mail, for example). To be fair, please do not call for a reservation before the date specified by the leader.
4. If the weather is questionable, call the leader the morning of the trip to confirm that it has not been cancelled. If you must cancel, do so as soon as possible because others may be on a waiting list.
5. Dress for the weather. Please refrain from wearing white or bright colored clothing.
6. Bring binoculars and cash for ride-sharing (see below), and bring a lunch for all day trips.

Field Trip Transportation

Carpooling is encouraged to reduce costs and limit the parking spaces required. Passengers are asked to share expenses with the driver. A contribution to the driver of \$5 for shorter trips and \$10 for overnight trips is suggested, with any additional expenses, such as tolls, parking fees, etc. divided equally among driver and passengers. On longer trips, shared expenses may be based on mileage.

Field Trips & Events

Skagit Area and Padilla Bay, Saturday, March 3. Leader: Fay Linger (360-297-3855; ernieandfay@centurytel.net). Each winter, Fir Island and the Skagit area attract some 40,000 Snow Geese, hundreds of Trumpeter and Tundra Swans and up to 15 species of wintering raptors. We'll also visit the National Estuarine Research Visitor's Center on Padilla Bay. A restaurant lunch stop is planned, but bring a snack and drinks. Meet at 7:00 a.m. in the Park & Ride on Hansville Road (entrance just past Albertson's shopping mall near Kingston) to form carpools. We will catch the 7:55 ferry from Kingston and be gone all day. A WDFW Access Parking Pass will be required at some stops, so bring it if you have one.

Bluebird Nestbox Building Party, Sunday, February 19, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Ruby Creek Marsh Wildlife Preserve, 1015 SW Harper Road, Port Orchard. RSVP info@pugetsoundbluebird.org. Puget Sound Bluebird Recovery Project, a nonprofit organization, will be hosting a community event to help construct bluebird nest boxes for use in local bluebird trails. All materials and supplies will be provided. Lunch and beverages will be available.

Olympic BirdFest 2012, March 30-April 1 in Sequim, WA. BirdFest program information and registration may be found at www.olympicbirdfest.org. For assistance contact info@olympicbirdfest.org, or call 360-681-4076.

Three-day Wildlife Cruise to the San Juan Islands, April 1-3, following Olympic BirdFest. This 3-day/2 night round-trip cruise from Sequim, will tour the San Juan archipelago and Deception Pass aboard the M/V Glacier Spirit with a ship-board naturalist. Cost: \$600 per person, double occupancy. Proceeds will benefit the Dungeness River Audubon Center. For reservations, call 360-981-4076, or visit www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon.

Gray's Harbor Shorebird Festival, May 4-6. Celebrate the spring migration of shorebirds in Grays Harbor County. Hoquiam High School, Hoquiam and Gray's Harbor National Wildlife Refuge. For a complete schedule and description of events, visit the festival website at www.shorebirdfestival.com.

Field Trip Report

Port Orchard, Sinclair Inlet & Yukon Harbor – John Finkbeiner, Leader. On Dec. 3, 2011, ten birders met at the board walk in Port Orchard. We had a cloudy day, but the water birds didn't mind. Impressive were hundreds of American Wigeons, estimated about 800. At least two male Eurasians were sighted. Females were probably there too, but we didn't take time to locate them. Hooded Mergansers were at almost all of our stops (15+). From the Kitsap Bank boardwalk in Port Orchard, we located a flock of at least 300 Western Grebes in front of Navy ships docked across the bay. Scopes were needed. Andrew Westphal spotted four Black Turnstones at Black Jack Creek. We found our only Harlequin duck at Waterman Pier, a male -- but where was the female that's usually there? At several stops, we had Greater Scaup, but Lesser's were found only at Little Clam Bay near Manchester (Brackish Water). At the last stop at Yukon Harbor there was a giant flock of American Wigeons (1000+) with several Eurasians. A flock of California and Bonaparte's Gulls were on the pier across the south end of the Bay. Again, scopes were needed. 40+ species were seen. Afterwards, we enjoyed a meal at a local restaurant.

Wildlife Sightings—Joan Carson

Wildlife Sightings by Joan Carson (joanpcarson@comcast.net or phone 360-779-2612).

Sightings by Joan Carson

Time to catch up on fall and winter Sightings in 2011 and now, 2012.

Happy New Year and Happy Birding.

I hope all those who wanted to see a snowy owl have been successful. This has been a great winter for snowies.

Nov. 20, Ian Paulsen while looking for snowy owls (on B.I.?) had 1 greater yellowlegs, 3 Eurasian wigeon and a flock of 22 common mergansers. Nov.

20, Lila & Gary Morris, Hansville, got a photo of a Western meadowlark in their yard. The first they've seen in Hansville. Nov. 17, Rosemary

Courtright, near Seabeck enjoyed watching a sharp-shinned hawk just looking over the territory near Stavis Canyon and occasionally preening itself. Nov. 19, Gene & Linda Daniels,

their bay in Keyport, had a mute swan, the first in ten years. Also have an immature bald eagle. Nov.

26, Ian Paulsen and Brad Waggoner, located a swamp sparrow off Lovgren Road on B.I., They also had a hairy

woodpecker, flocks of robins and red-winged blackbirds and several sparrows, song, Lincoln's, golden-crowned and white-throated plus

numerous juncos. Nov. 19, Connie Bickerton, Fish Park in Poulsbo, a green-winged teal that she thought

might be a Eurasian race. Nov. 27, Carolyn and Mike Barry reported a snowy owl in Driftwood Keys near Hansville. Many birders headed out

to see it. Those I know of were Ian

Paulsen (who also reported it); Lila & Gary Morris; the Carsons and Jamie Acker.

Dec. 1, John Tullis called Rosemary Courtright to tell her he had a Chinese golden pheasant at his place near Stottlemeyer and Gunderson, Poulsbo.

Bird was there over a week. Dec. 8, Carson's yard, Poulsbo, 5 fox sparrows, 3 Townsend's warblers and a flock of 70-80 common bushtits.

Dec. 8, Neil Johannsen, B.I., had a white-throated sparrow show up in his yard for the fourth year in a row. Dec. 8, Ian Paulsen had a report from someone at Point-No-Point in Hansville that a snowy owl was being pestered by crows. Dec. 13, Cheryl Hughes, Indianola, had a banner birding day in her yard. Between 8:15 am and 9:25 am, she enjoyed the following birds:

Anna's hummingbird, dark-eyed junco, black-capped and chestnut-backed chickadee, red-breasted nuthatches, robin, house finches, song sparrow, Townsend's warbler, Steller's jay, spotted towhee, and on the beach or water in front of her place, 5 common golden eyes, 2 buffleheads, 1 cormorant, 1 Western grebe, 3 surf scoters. The day before, she also had a male purple finch. Dec.

13, Douglas Marshall, B.I., Wing Point, had a spotted sandpiper and 2 ravens. Dec. 16, Nancy Ladenberger, Silverdale, reported a new "yard bird,"

a mature golden eagle. Dec. 19, I received a report from William ? In E. Bremerton. What looked to be a

McCaw parrot was sitting in the top

of a tree near the north end of Sylvan Way. Sounds like an escapee? Dec. 22, Don Haldeman, Port Orchard, had a flock of evening grosbeaks in his yard. Dec. 25, Nigel Ball, B.I., reported that Tweeters had a report of a red-naped sapsucker at Fort Ward. Later on Dec. 29, Brad Waggoner re-found the bird at Fort Ward and determined it was a red-breasted x red-naped sapsucker hybrid. Ian Paulsen also found the bird and sent in this report.

Jan. 3, Ward Starring, Chico Way between Bremerton and Silverdale, reported that a leucistic fox sparrow that visited his yard in 2009 was back.. He's doing some detailed comparing of photos of the two to make sure it is the same bird. Jan. 3, Douglas Marshall had a red-tailed hawk and Townsend's warbler at Wing Point, B.I. Jan. 11, he had a spotted sandpiper at Wing Point. Jan. 8, Kathy Swartz, birding at Ocean Shores got a great photo of an albino nutria (yes, pink nose, ears and feet). Loved that photo Kathy. Jan. 8, Janine Schutt had a Cooper's hawk and a male dark-eyed junco with pied leucism at Wildcat Lake. Jan. 14, Janine Schutt had a sharp-shinned hawk and her yard's first ever male Anna's hummingbird (female was already a regular).

Hope everyone is now back into some serious birding and who knows what this year will bring birdwise. We are enjoying some Hawaiian sunshine and some different birds as this is being written - and it is warm.



Unusual birds sighted during the recent Kitsap Audubon Christmas Bird Count included a Gray Jay in Seabeck, reported by Lisa Pedersen, and a Townsend's Solitaire and hybrid Yellow-shafted/Red-shafted Flicker, reported by Bill and Mary Kay Crews in Poulsbo.

The 15th Annual Great Backyard Bird Count February 17 to 20, 2012 — www.birdcount.org

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the continent. Anyone can participate, from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Participants count birds anywhere for as little or as long as they wish during the four-day period. They tally the highest number of birds of each species seen together at any one time. To report their counts, they fill out an online checklist at the Great Backyard Bird Count website.

As the count progresses, anyone with Internet access can explore what is being reported from their own towns or anywhere in the United States and Canada. They can also see how this year's numbers compare with those from previous years. Participants may

also send in photographs of the birds they see. A selection of images is posted online.

Why Count Birds?

Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Bird populations are dynamic; they are constantly in flux. No single scientist or team of scientists could hope to document the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time.

We need your help. Make sure the birds from your community are well represented in the count. It doesn't matter whether you report the five species coming to your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's outing to a wildlife refuge.

Your counts can help us answer many questions:

- Where are winter finches and other "irruptive" species that appear in large numbers during some years but not others?
- How will the timing of birds' migrations compare with past

years?

- How are bird diseases, such as West Nile virus, affecting birds in different regions?
- How will this winter's snow and cold temperatures influence bird populations?
- What kinds of differences in bird diversity are apparent in cities versus suburban, rural, and natural areas?

Scientists use the counts, along with observations from other citizen-science projects, such as the Christmas Bird Count, Project FeederWatch, and eBird, to give us an immense picture of our winter birds. Each year that these data are collected makes them more meaningful and allows scientists to investigate far-reaching questions.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada and sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited



While most of us hunkered down inside during our January snow storm, Janine Schutt put on her camouflage clothing and snapped these photos of the birds in her backyard. Clockwise from top left: Varied Thrush, Song Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee, and Fox Sparrow. On next page: Anna's Hummingbird.

2012 Environmental Priorities

Washington State Audubon is a member of the Environmental Priorities Coalition which, each year, chooses three or four priorities that will be its primary focus in the upcoming Legislative session.

This year, the Environmental Priorities Coalition will work to protect the things that are most important to Washington's families – our kids' health, rebuilding our economy, and maintaining our clean air and clean water.

Our 2012 Environmental Priorities are:

Toxic-Free Kids

Protecting children's health from cancer-causing flame retardants and helping to put businesses on the path to using chemicals that won't harm the environment or their bottom line.

Fulfill Our Clean Energy Initiative

Sustaining the success of I-937, our state's voter-approved clean energy initiative, in bringing investments, jobs, and economic development throughout Washington.

Pollution-Free Prosperity

Preventing attempts to weaken, delay, or roll back state environmental laws and programs that are critical for clean air, clean water, and healthy communities.

These priorities reflect that in tough times, we have to focus on what matters most. As we head into the 2012 Legislative Session, we are on the edge of losing the basic safeguards for our environment – if those fall, it will impact all of us, across the state. But we also must keep moving forward – on protecting our kids from toxics and building on the success we've already seen in growing the clean energy economy.

The 2012 Environmental Priorities seek to maintain the core things that make our state great: our clean air and water, our clean energy commitment, and the health of our children.

Accomplishing these goals will take all of us working together.

We'll need your help more than ever. Throughout session, we'll let you know when a phone call or email to our legislators is essential.

For decades, Washington has been a leader on smart environmental policies, and that record of success is because Washingtonians have consistently stood up to say that the health of our environment is important and affects all of our lives. Working together, I know we can continue this tradition.

The Environmental Priorities Coalition is a network of leading environmental

groups in Washington state who believe we can have a strong economy that provides everyone with the opportunity to prosper, and a clean, healthy and safe environment for ourselves and our children. Formed in 2003, the Environmental Priorities Coalition selects priority issues each legislative session that are important to protecting public health and welfare.

The Environmental Priorities Coalition is a combined effort of:

- American Rivers
- Climate Solutions
- Conservation Northwest
- Earth Ministry
- Environment Washington
- Fuse
- Futurewise
- Heart of America Northwest
- The Lands Council
- League of Women Voters of Washington
- Lutheran Public Policy Office
- National Wildlife Federation
- The Nature Conservancy
- NW Energy Coalition
- People for Puget Sound
- Sierra Club Washington
- Surfrider Foundation
- Transportation Choices Coalition
- Washington Conservation Voters
- Washington Environmental Council
- Washington State Audubon
- Washington Toxics Coalition
- Zero Waste Washington



Winter provides some of the best bird watching of the year. Wintering waterfowl, ducks, grebes and loons find the sheltered, ice-free coasts of Washington State irresistible, and gather in great numbers in sequestered bays and inlets. The pair of Lesser Scaup above was photographed by Don Willott.



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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

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- (Contact KAS Treasurer for LIFE Membership payment options)

\$ _____ **Additional donation for scholarships and/or Audubon Adventures (designate).**

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

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 www.kitsapaudubon.org

