



# Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society  
October 2018

Whidbey Audubon Society is dedicated to the understanding, appreciation and conservation of birds, other wildlife and their habitats on Whidbey Island and in surrounding waters.

## Whidbey Audubon Meets Thursday, October 11 in Coupeville Avian Evolution: How Birds Got to Be Birds

Nature author and student of paleontology Connie Sidles takes you back in time when dinosaurs roamed the earth and nature began to experiment with a new approach to flight — birds. Exciting new fossils of extraordinary detail are being found in northeast China, dating back to the time when dinosaurs began to evolve into birds. Both strange and wondrous, these creatures — and others being discovered all over the world — open our eyes to the ways that evolution has shaped the biome and the birds that we enjoy today.



Source: Ming Bai, Chinese Academy of Sciences

A piece of amber that contains the remains of a 99-million-year-old fossilized bird.

### Join Us!

Thursday evening  
October 11  
Coupeville  
Recreation Hall  
901 NW Alexander Street

7:00 socializing  
(donations for snacks welcome)

7:15 brief meeting

7:30 program begins



Connie Sidles

Connie Sidles is a master birder, member of Seattle Audubon's Conservation

Committee, chair of Audubon's Publications Committee and author of five books about birds and nature. She got her degree in Egyptology from the University of Chicago and still reads the occasional hieroglyphic but has spent her professional career in publishing. She is founder and president of Constancy Press LLC, a small publishing house specializing in nature books. Several of her titles will be available for sale and to be signed.

## Upcoming Field Trips

**Sunday, October 14: NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL BREEDING CENTER.** Join us for a joint trip with the Pacific Rim Institute (PRI) to the Northern Spotted Owl Breeding Center in Langley, British Columbia (BC). This is an all-day trip that will be a wonderful adventure and an opportunity to tour this nonprofit center founded in 2007 to "Keep the Northern Spotted Owl from being extirpated from Canada by captive breeding and release."

We will be traveling by van from PRI with an additional meeting location as we head north, the north parking lot of Home Depot in Oak Harbor since Windjammer parking is closed. Meet at PRI, at 7:45 a.m. and in the north end of the parking lot at Home Depot at 8 a.m.

Cost will be \$25/person for tour fees at the Center and an

additional \$5 for gas fees. *Cash only please.* Bring a current passport or passport card. We will stop in Fort Langley, BC where there's a fast-food outlet. Bring water (some water and plastic cups are available in the van); binoculars, spotting scopes and a camera if you like, and snacks for the ride home since we will not stop for food on the return trip. Prepare to be outdoors for at least three hours. Wear appropriate shoes and clothing for weather conditions.

*Limited spaces available for the trip*, 20 total including both Whidbey Audubon Society and PRI members. All participants must reserve their space by contacting Trip Leader Patty Cheek at 425-246-1766 or [pattypipe@gmail.com](mailto:pattypipe@gmail.com).

Upcoming Field Trips, see **page 3**

## Getting to Know Your Board: Nan Maysen

The Whidbey Audubon has some new board members that we will be highlighting over the next few months. Here is what Nan Maysen, our education chair, has to say:

### 1. Describe what you/your committee does for Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS).

*The education committee develops and responds to opportunities to share information about the birds, their characteristics, habits and habitats with the children and adults on Whidbey, through presentations or participation in events. We support the other outreach activities of WAS. Sometimes we are in classrooms or summer camps or local festivals.*

### 2. How did you become interested in birding?

*Like a lot of us, I became interested in birds in my youth — growing up in a family that enjoyed time outdoors and then through a very inspirational high school teacher. I took a zoology class (in Edmonds) as a 16-year-old and at the end of the year the teacher took 12 students on a four-day camping trip to Wenas Creek, between Yakima and Ellensburg in May. We spent all our time birding and cataloging wildflowers and I have been learning and sharing about both ever since.*

### 3. What's your favorite bird/birding site?

*I don't have a favorite, but I am drawn to beaches and shorelines as well as open water — or perhaps open alpine meadows and forest edges... probably because those are the habitats I enjoy and there are more birds that I can see long enough to watch them or even identify them since there aren't a lot of trees in the way. I have had some wonderful birding experiences in Alaska, (Prince William Sound and Denali National Park).*

### 4. Tell us a bit about your history with WAS: how long you have been a member, what other positions you have held, what have your experiences with WAS have been like...etc.

*I've been an Audubon member since the '90s with local chapters where I was living — Edmonds, Bellingham, Skagit and with Whidbey since I moved here two and a half years ago. I was eager to meet fellow birders and learn about the island and took the Birds of Whidbey class last year to do just that. I really value this chapter and the learning through the programs and activities, and the people — wow what a great group! I have enjoyed getting to know the other committee members and appreciate ALL the activities and programs they have developed. Stepping in to the Education Chair role has given me the opportunities to learn from and get to know the other Board members also and to apply my passion for interpreting nature through visual and personal engagements.*

### 5. Tell us a bit of your personal history: where you grew up,



Photo by Ellen Kuhlman

Nan Maysen birding at Mud Bay (also known as Chuckanut Bay on the south side of Bellingham).

places you have lived, education, work, family, travel experiences, etc.

*I am lucky that my growing-up years were spent living in seven different states from Louisiana, California, New York and Washington, and always enjoyed exploring outdoors. My influential zoology teacher in high school (who is still a personal friend at age 92 now) inspired me to pursue a biology degree in college at Western Washington University. It formed the basis for my work in conservation, education and primarily nature interpretation ever since. Work was always blended with family life — raising two daughters (in a marriage for 16 years, then alone) so it has had lots of zigs and zags including program development, volunteer coordination, native landscape design and nature tourism in the Alaska small ship cruise industry. Through it all, the one consistent thread has been a connection with our incred-*

*ible natural world — the amazing complexity and beauty — and working with so many wonderful people in the field to connect others to it through meaningful experiences.*

### 6. How can the membership help you and your committee?

*The Education Committee is a fun one to be part of and other members can be involved without a heavy commitment. Once in a while our committee needs someone to help assist with a presentation or develop materials or even network to set up opportunities. With a large enough team that is familiar with some of their interests, we don't have to rely on a few to carry a heavy load.*

### 7. Anything else you want to share? Profound quote? Funny or interesting bird story? Life list?

*One of my favorite quotes from one of my inspirational people: Rachel Carson:*

*“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”*

## Editor's Note: Other WAS Board Changes and Openings

Emily Terao has left her At-Large Member position. We thank her for her service and we will all miss her. Joe Sheldon is now an At-Large Member after serving as Secretary and before that, Field Trip Chair. Patty Cheek is now Field Trip Chair.

If you would like to be on the Board, there are still At-Large positions available as well as Program Chair and Publicity Chair. We meet the fourth Thursday of the month. Contact any Board Member for more information.

## Conservation Committee News

### *WSDOT Seeking Information on Birds Breeding on Deception Pass Bridges*

In 2019, the Deception Pass bridges are scheduled to be painted. In preparation for this work, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has reached out to Audubon to help determine if birds are nesting underneath the

bridges. Anyone having information on nesting birds is encouraged to contact Becky Rosencrans at [rosencb@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:rosencb@wsdot.wa.gov) or 360-630-6745.

### *Whidbey Audubon Board Urges 'YES' vote on I-1631*

The Board of Whidbey Audubon Society voted to support the passage of Initiative 1631, a bill to impose a fee on industrial carbon emissions. We join Audubon Washington and many local Washington Audubon chapters and urge you to vote "YES."

Washington voters get the chance next month to adopt measures to reduce carbon emissions and reduce greenhouse gases, starting the long, slow, but important, fight to reduce global warming and climate change. There does not seem to be political will to address this issue at the federal level, but the effort has to start somewhere and Washington is the only state that has tackled it so far. This measure is far from perfect, but unlike the attempt two years ago, this bill has the support of virtually all Washington's major environmental groups, has support from diverse economic and cultural communities and many small businesses.

Opposition is strong from oil companies and most energy producers — funders of most opposition ads. Although there will be a consumer cost, there will also be a fund to help vulner-

able populations and to encourage alternative energy production. As we watch this country and the world be wracked by historic droughts, storms and floods, it is time to make a change — and I-1631 can start that change.

### *Marbled Murrelet News*

Marbled Murrelets are small seabirds that nest in old-growth forests and are a species of concern as their habitats diminish. These birds are seen off the coast of Whidbey Island, though they are not believed to nest here. The Department of Natural Resources has issued a revised draft environmental impact statement which will govern logging on large tracts of trust lands in western Washington, offering seven strategies to protect Marbled Murrelets. You can learn more about this at [www.dnr.wa.gov/mmltcs](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/mmltcs), where the strategies are described. And make comments until November 6, 2018 at [www.dnr.wa.gov/long-term-conservation-strategy-marbled-murrelet](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/long-term-conservation-strategy-marbled-murrelet).

— Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair

## Upcoming Field Trips, from [page 1](#)

**Saturday, October 20: FIR ISLAND.** Jay Adams will lead a field trip to sites on Fir Island and Skagit County. Meeting/departure times will be 11:30 a.m. from the parking lot behind the Coupeville Library and noon from the north end of the Home Depot store in Oak Harbor. The main purpose of the trip is to look for shorebirds and other fall migrants, including possible Snow Geese. The trip is limited to 10 participants. Register by emailing Jay at [protectionisland8.9@gmail.com](mailto:protectionisland8.9@gmail.com). Registration is first come, first served. No special footwear is required. Spotting scopes are recommended.

**Wednesday, October 24: WHATCOM FALLS PARK IN BELLINGHAM** is #58 on the Cascade Loop Birding Trail. Carpool from Freeland Park & Ride at Trinity Lutheran Church at 7:30 a.m.; in Oak Harbor, the north parking area of Home Depot at 8:15. Bring a lunch. Lots of easy walking but some stairs between trails. Heavy rain or windstorm cancels, so call Steve and Susan Bennett just to let us know you're coming: 360-331-4779 or email [slb@whidbey.com](mailto:slb@whidbey.com).

**Saturday, November 3: CROCKETT LAKE AND SURROUNDING AREA.** Join us for a fun morning of birding at the historic Crockett Lake in Coupeville. Crockett Lake is designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA) in Washington

State and is host to a number of wintering birds species. We can expect to see ducks, shorebirds, seabirds and raptors as we view the area around the ferry dock, meadows and lake.

Meet at 9 a.m. at the Coupeville ferry parking lot. Bring your Discover Pass, binocs and scopes. Contact Ann Casey if you need further information at [cspcoach@aol.com](mailto:cspcoach@aol.com) or 360-331-4679.

### Field Trip Checklist

- ✓ Field trips are free and open to anyone interested in birding or conservation. Bring your friends!
- ✓ Beginners are very welcome.
- ✓ Carpooling is encouraged and even required for some sites with limited parking.
- ✓ Dress for the weather and in layers.
- ✓ Very bad weather cancels a trip. Check with the trip leader.
- ✓ If you have them, bring binoculars, scope and field guides.
- ✓ If you might need them, bring a drink and snack.

We are always looking for new trip leaders and assistants. If you are interested, please contact Patty Cheek at [pattypipe@gmail.com](mailto:pattypipe@gmail.com).



## Unusual Bird Sightings

**August 30: Short-eared Owl** Location: Crockett Lake with the Birding in Neighborhoods South group. The bird was interacting with a **Northern Harrier**. Confirmation: Short-eared Owl is listed as being rare in August according to the Whidbey Audubon Society checklist. *eBird* records for all years show this to be only the second August sighting of Short-eared Owl in the county. The previous sighting occurred at 10 p.m. off Rocky Point Road, north of Joseph

Whidbey State Park in 2010.  
— Jay Adams

**September 9: Black-throated**



Photo by John Schuster

**Black-throated Gray Warbler**

**ed Gray Warbler** at our bird bath. Location: Goss Ridge Road, Freeland.

—John Schuster

PLEASE POST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS to the *Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) website*.

Sightings should be on Whidbey Island or relate in some way to Whidbey Audubon. Reports should refer to birds or other wildlife that are not commonly seen here. Alternatively, they may refer to migratory birds that arrive outside their normal seasons.

Reports of especially interesting sightings in nearby areas are welcome. Greater selectivity is needed to keep the email volume reasonable so editors will exercise judgment on whether the rarity, proximity and significance of sightings merit inclusion.

These guidelines reflect the interests of local birders. Please respect the essentially scientific nature of the Sightings feature. Thanks for your cooperation.

There are designated spaces to submit your information, such as what you saw, where you saw it and the date and approximate time. Although we are asking those who post to leave a phone number or email address with your sighting, they will not be included on the actual "Sightings" page. Thank you!

Keep up with "Sightings" on the WAS website, on your mobile device at [www.m.whidbeyaudubon.org](http://www.m.whidbeyaudubon.org) or on the *Whidbey Audubon Society Facebook page*.

## Field Trip Report: Deer Lagoon, September 14

Darwin Wiles led us on a wonderful trip to Deer Lagoon starting from his house in Useless Bay. We had 30 participants and we saw 53 species in all. Several experienced birders were along to answer questions since there were so many participants. We had several people (eight that I know of) who were not members of Whidbey Audubon and who were very happy to be with us and became very excited about birding. We saw several spectacular scenes — 22 **Great Blue Herons** just sitting and watching; eight **Osprey**, immatures included and one **Great Blue Heron** all sitting on the posts on one side of the Lagoon and about 100 **Caspian Terns** all screaming away in large flocks. What an incredible day!

— Patty Cheek, Field Trip Chair

## Dates to Remember

### OCTOBER

- 4: **Pigeon Guillemot Potluck**, Freeland, 6 p.m.
- 11: **Whidbey Audubon Program, Avian Evolution: How Birds Got to Be Birds** with Connie Sidles, 7 p.m. Coupeville Recreation Hall
- 14: **Field Trip: Northern Spotted Owl Breeding Center**, Langley, British Columbia
- 17: **Public Meeting on the Marbled Murrelet**, Burlington, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
- 18: **Deadline for November Shorelines**
- 20: **Field Trip: Fir Island and Skagit County**
- 24: **Field Trip: Whatcom Falls Park** in Bellingham **Cancelled**
- 25: **Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) Board Meeting**, Fire Station on Day Road, Greenbank, 7 p.m. Members welcome

### NOVEMBER

- 3: **Field Trip: Crockett Lake and Surrounding Area**
- 8: **Whidbey Audubon Program: Marbled Murrelets** with Maria Mudd Ruth, Freeland
- 22: **No WAS Board Meeting. Happy Thanksgiving!**

## Birding in Neighborhoods South Visits Crockett Lake

**August 30:** Thanks so much to Jay Adams and to everyone who came out to Crockett Lake for a productive morning.

So many **sandpipers** and other shore-walkers that we were able to really observe good distinctions between about a dozen different types of shorebirds. We even added **Baird's Sandpiper** to the Birding in Neighbors (BIN) list.

Plus, a way-early **Short-eared Owl** appeared! Oh — and a **Loon** called and flew by — not something you see every day.

After the flats, some of us added nine more species over at the ferry dock, for a total of 41 for the morning.

Happy Fall Migration.

— Cathi Bower Bird early — bird often

**BIN South** meets every other Thursday. Time varies with the season. Contact Cathi Bower for time and location: [whidbird@whidbey.com](mailto:whidbird@whidbey.com)



Fully adult male Purple Martin



Female Purple Martin feeding babies

## Purple Martins Lagoon Point's Fifth Summer and Those at Crockett Lake

It was a pretty successful summer for the Lagoon Point Purple Martins despite some early nest failures during cool rainy weather. The babies did not get enough to eat

when no bugs were flying. The landlords added to their facilities with happy results. Many of our neighbors, not recognized here, contributed sailboat masts, etc., as perches during the season and that is important to the colony's success. I trimmed my bushes to see my dock better and was rewarded with the sight of baby Purple Martins fledging;

funny and just amazing to view the amateur fliers.

Our neighborhood landlord force is now at nine active landlords. Here are the season's results from those who reported:

**Bert Pack:** Two gourds, one piling cavity and two condo nests for a total of five active nests. Bert eventually was

able to observe 16 big babies in four of the nests, and most likely fledged all 16. This is an increase for this Purple Martin landlord.

**Sheri Croll:** Starlings took her piling cavity again for a total of zero active Purple Martin nests. She has committed to add housing and a Purple Martin journal for next season.

**Bob Vierra:** Built a new license plate house and fledged two, as observed by me, Mary. This is in addition to his two fledglings from a house he built a few years back on Dan Brock's dock. This is an increase for this Purple Martin landlord. I think we need to add Dan's name to the Purple Martin landlord list on account of the significant accommodations he has made for these birds.

**Gary Hammer and Jeri Gregory:** one mailbox nest, two consecutive nestings, with four babies eventually fledged. This is an increase for these Purple Martin landlords.

**Mary Hollen:** Four gourds, one mailbox and one piling cavity nest for a total of six active nests. A total of 26 eggs and/or babies were observed in the nests over the course of the season. Likely 11 fledged.

**Neil Kenworthy and Anita Badri:** one piling cavity nest with at least three babies fledged. This is a first successful nest for these Purple Martin landlords.

The colony supported 15 active nests; an increase from last year's 14. A total of 59 babies or eggs were observed in the nests at some point during the season. Compared to last year's 37! No fledgling count is given because our nests aren't observed closely enough to tell. But it is most likely an increase based on the observations we were able to make.

— *Mary Hollen*

## Purple Martins on Crockett Lake

At Crockett Lake, eight Purple Martins were seen around the nest boxes throughout the breeding season. We did not document breeding success. In addition, two Martins were seen in and around an open-ended steel support member on the wharf at the Coupeville boat ramp. We hope to pursue the possibility of installing a couple of boxes there in time for the 2019 season.

— *Jay Adams*

**Note:** See the *Purple Martin Summers* updates since 2014 on the Whidbey Audubon Society website. Select Fact Sheets; [www.whidbeyaudubon.org/purplemartins.pdf](http://www.whidbeyaudubon.org/purplemartins.pdf).

### Dan's Blog: *Purple Martin Majesty*

For a treat, go back to this piece written by Dan Petersen with Craig and Joy Johnson, #148 *Purple Martin Majesty*, published June 27, 2015. There are lots of photos, including Craig's photos with illustrations at [pedersenwrites.blogspot.com/2015/06/148-purple-martin-majesty.html](http://pedersenwrites.blogspot.com/2015/06/148-purple-martin-majesty.html).

## Volunteer Corner: Over 6000 Hours!

Over the past year our members have contributed over 6,000 hours of their time to Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) activities. What did these committee members, board members and individuals accomplish in these hours? Here are some of their activities. This is not a complete list!

- Participated in the Christmas Bird Count, a national research effort
- Participated in Pigeon Guillemot research, a bell weather species for Puget Sound
- Participated in shorebird monitoring and research
- Advertised and presented eight public programs regarding local environmental resources and organizations and one program on individual bird species
- Provided cookies and other snacks for our public programs
- Taught the nine-month Birds of Whidbey Class for twenty-two participants so they could learn about birds and habitat on Whidbey Island
- Provided fourteen field trips to introduce participants to birds and habitat on Whidbey Island
- Published and distributed *Shorelines* newsletter nine times
- Researched and wrote articles for *Shorelines*
- Advertised, interviewed students and then provided three scholarships to high school seniors going into environmentally related fields
- Enrolled sixty-one new members
- Processed 294 renewals
- Organized a Dropbox account for record maintenance
- Established guidelines for grant applications
- Provided educational opportunities at schools and community events to over 210 children and 217 adults

- Provided a \$10,000 habitat preservation grant which was awarded towards the establishment of the Borgman Farm preserve in Oak Harbor
- Responded to the Navy's Environmental Impact Statements regarding expansion of the Out Lying Field
- Surveyed forest practice permits and communicated with citizens applying for permits regarding alternatives to clear cutting
- Established a data base and report on forest practice permits/activity to share with Island County
- Purchased and installed bird exclusion screens on all vault toilets in Central Whidbey State Parks
- Worked with Island County to maintain and improve parking at Deer Lagoon
- Participated in County and State review of the State-wide Growth Management Act (GMA)
- Preserved 42 new specimens for the specimen library
- Loaned bird specimens for educational activities
- Developed displays about birds in Whidbey Island libraries
- Developed publicity posters and announcements for WAS activities and provided these to local news sources
- Revised WAS bylaws which were then approved by the membership

Does something in this list pique your interest? If so please contact Sharon Gauthier, [sharongauthier88@gmail.com](mailto:sharongauthier88@gmail.com) and she will help you get more information.

— Sharon Gauthier, President

## A Reminder to Members

When you renew your membership to Whidbey Audubon Society, you will receive an electronic version of our newsletter, *Shorelines*. If you want a paper copy, we ask that you contribute an extra \$3.00 to defray the costs of printing and mailing.

The email version has a few advantages over the paper version:

- All photographs are in vivid color (the photo of the piece of amber in this month's issue is stunning).
- You receive your copy two to three days earlier than the paper copy.
- You help save paper and thus contribute to the saving of the environment.

So please consider switching if you haven't done so already. You can wait until your expiration month or do it now by contacting Linda Bainbridge at [lkgbirder@gmail.com](mailto:lkgbirder@gmail.com).

## Welcome New and Renewing Members

### New

Toni Schinnerer

Nina Kamberger

### Renewing

Marcia Lazoff (Spotted Towhee)

Phyllis Kind (Pigeon Guillemot)

Linda and Gregg Ridder

Nancy Maysen (Spotted Towhee)

Sheri Croll (Scholarship Fund)

Babette and John Thompson

Wendy Wilson

Ingrid DeJong

Jenanne Murphy

Elizabeth and Ray Jacques (Spotted Towhee)

Phil and Sarah Brazeau (Spotted Towhee)

Barbara and Donald Terao (Scholarship Fund)

Mark and Susan Bigger (Spotted Towhee)

The expiration month for paper copies is on your address label. I will send email reminders to both paper and email subscribers.

— Linda Bainbridge, Membership Chair



## Bird in the Hand Festival 2018

The September 22 Bird in the Hand Festival drew at least 637 people, 438 adults and 199 children, to the Bayview Farm and Garden Greenhouse. Look for more details in the next issue.

Pictured to the right are children dissecting owl pellets to find the tiny bones of rodents which were part of an owl's meal.

Below is the Bird in the Hand team: Cheryl Bradkin, Robin Llewellyn, Sarah Schmidt, Central Whidbey State Park Interpretive Specialist Jackie French, Whidbey Audubon President Sharon Gauthier and Matt Klope of Whidbey Island Taxidermy. The time is 9:15 a.m. and Robin is orienting all the volunteers before the 10 a.m. opening.



### Whidbey Audubon Society Membership

Please make your check payable to **WHIDBEY AUDUBON SOCIETY (WAS)**

Mail to: Linda Bainbridge, 4459 Towhee Lane, Greenbank, WA 98253

Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Y20**

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ (Your issues will be emailed to you.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here to receive your *Shorelines* by mail. Please add an additional \$3 to defray mailing costs.

#### **SELECT a Category of Membership**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Annual Membership \$20

\_\_\_\_\_ Pigeon Guillemot \$75

\_\_\_\_\_ Household Annual Membership \$30

\_\_\_\_\_ Red-tailed Hawk \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ Spotted Towhee \$50

\_\_\_\_\_ Osprey \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Donation to be used for Scholarships

**All memberships include 9 issues of *Shorelines* annually, a WAS window decal, discounts and early registration in our educational classes.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP** for first year National Members only. Receive a joint membership in National and Whidbey Audubon for one year for only \$35. **Make check payable to National Audubon.**

*The Whidbey Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.  
It is Whidbey Audubon policy to never share our membership and subscription information with other groups.*