



Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society

March 2021

Whidbey Audubon Society is dedicated to the understanding, appreciation, and protection of birds and other wildlife species and their habitat on Whidbey Island and surrounding waters.

Whidbey Audubon Meets Virtually Thursday, March 11

Do Crows Have Language?

Crows fascinate us because they share some of our characteristics. They're smart, often social and make a variety of vocalizations. But do they have a *language* like humans? In this talk, we'll explore some past work on crow vocal communication, as well as some more recent research being conducted with undergraduates at the University of Washington Bothell. We'll discuss what some of those caws might mean and talk about how we might even address the question of whether crows have something akin to language.

Presenter Doug Wacker is an assistant professor of animal behavior at the University of Washington Bothell, where he works with undergraduates to study bird social behavior and communication. He has studied a local communal roost of approximately 16,000 American Crows on the Bothell campus since 2012. He lives in Lake Forest Park, Washington with his two children, Eilidh and Delphinia, his wife Kim and two indoor-only cats.

The program begins at 7:30 p.m. preceded by a membership meeting beginning at 7 p.m. Our monthly programs are free and open to all. If you are not a Whidbey Audubon Society member and would like to attend, please register with a click here: [website](#).

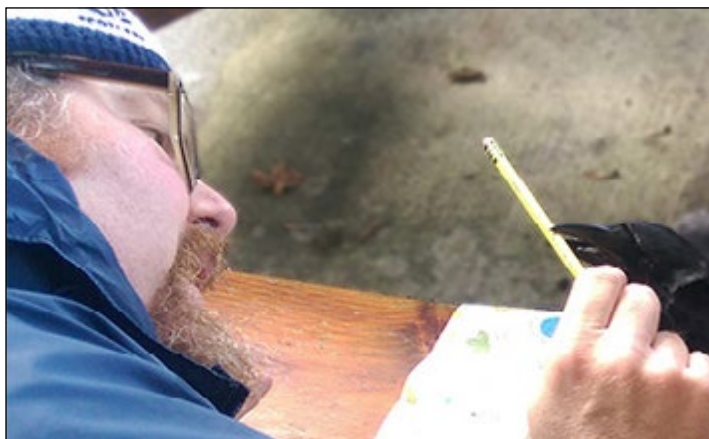


Photo by former student, Bri McCloskey

Professor Doug Wacker engaging with a crow.

We'll send a Zoom JOIN link to all members and registered non-members. If you do not see our Zoom invitation email by mid-morning the day of the program, please check your spam folder. If you still do not find it, contact admin@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org. Registration closes at 8 p.m. on March 10.

And, if you are not a member, please consider joining us. Members receive notifications of upcoming events and do not need to register for our monthly programs.

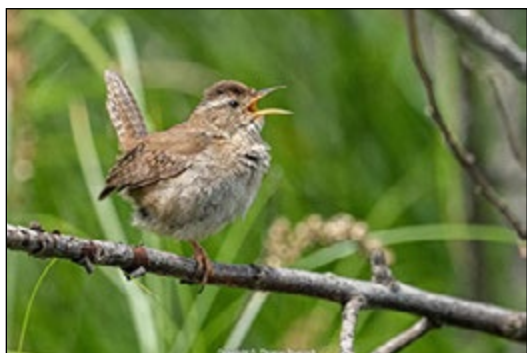


Photo by Thomas Bancroft

Marsh Wren

Upcoming Online Class via ZOOM: Becoming an Expert Birder with Thomas Bancroft

Register now for this online, two-part class from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 9 and Tuesday, March 16. The three-hour course is a \$40 donation.

If you have ever had a bird flash past you and wished you were like the person next to you who instantly identified it, you can be! It's a skill that you can develop, too. Experts use more than just the detailed field marks found in a bird book's precise illustrations. They focus on clues like size and shape, color patterns, behavior,

Expert Birder, see [page 3](#)



President's Column: The Window Seat Perch

Upcoming Classes

The Board and I are dancing around right now. We have 500+ members as of February 10. We are so delighted! Our education is broadening with more courses, and members are showing an interest in all the activities we have planned.

By the time you read this column, many of you will have attended Dyanne Sheldon's class on *Habitats of Whidbey Island*. On the day of the course, March 18, we had 57 people registered. Dyanne is one of the instructors for the Birds of Whidbey Class that we offer (usually) every year. She wants to continue educating birders and is offering this course as one of our alternatives. Because of COVID, we had to cancel the Birds of Whidbey Class series of '20 –'21. We are hoping to have it this fall and will decide as we get closer to September. In the meantime, we had a good time with Dyanne on Zoom.

Thomas Bancroft is giving two 90-minute sessions on *Becoming an Expert Birder* on March 9 and 16. He is a talented gentleman who has worked extensively in birding over the years. He has a PH.D. in Ornithology, worked for Carnegie Museum in the bird laboratory and of course, National Audubon Society. He We all have to start somewhere and may never reach the "expert birder" stage, but we can always hope and practice by increasing our skills. As we get more and more engrossed in birding, we pick up tricks from other birders through experiences birding and taking advantage of courses like this. Please sign up soon.

In April, Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser is offering three 90-minute sessions on April 12, 19 and 26 on *Birding by Ear: Listening Is an*

Act of Loving Birds. (BBE) is an important aspect of birding even if you don't hear well. I listened to Nathan Pieplow who wrote the Peterson Book *Field Guide of Bird Sounds*. You would think he has excellent hearing. Not so. He said that helping to see bird sounds with sonograms opened a new door for him. He is still pretty young (40s) and he has an inherited hearing difficulty. If he can do it, no matter if we are limited, we can too. Whitney will show us how through various techniques including sonograms.

Both Thomas and Whitney have offered to give further classes as time goes on. We're excited. Take advantage of these wonderful classes. In the meantime, if you have suggestions to make concerning topics, please send them to me at president@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org.

Have a safe, enjoyable birding month.

— Patty Cheek, President

Would that I were under the cliffs, in the secret-hiding places of the rocks, that Zeus might change me to a winged bird.

— Sophocles, Hippolytus; 428 B.C.

Whidbey Audubon Needs YOU!

Upcoming Nominations for Whidbey Audubon Society Board Positions

Are you a member of Whidbey Audubon Society? Have you enjoyed the class offerings, and camaraderie with other birders? Do you look forward to the monthly newsletter to check out what terrific speaker will be presenting next? Well, making all this happen takes a group of dedicated volunteers and here is your chance to be one.

Later this spring, Whidbey Audubon will have an election to fill the positions of Secretary and Treasurer on our Board. Each position is for a term of two years.

We are also interested in filling several Committee Chair positions. Program, Education and Conservation Committees all have openings, as well as Field Trips, for when those resume. Typically, the Chair leads a committee which shares the work and is not necessarily a Board position.

We invite you to consider increasing your participation in the

running of the Whidbey Audubon Society. Being on the Board is a very rewarding experience and provides greater opportunities to give your input into the direction we take in the future.

Nominations will be taken *from the floor* at the March meeting and elections will be in May.

If you would like to be considered for the upcoming slate or just have questions about what that entails, please refer to the "About Us" page on the [Whidbey Audubon website](http://WhidbeyAudubon.org) for descriptions and contacts. This link will take you to *Our Committees & Bylaws* or click the red text to contact [Cathi Bower](mailto:Cathi.Bower@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org).

Remember, we can't do what we do without YOU!



Upcoming Online Class: Birding by Ear — Listening Is an Act of Loving Birds



Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser to instruct the three-session Birding by Ear class in April.

Identifying birds by their songs and calls can transform both your birding experience and your everyday life. This three-part class introduces “birding by ear” (BBE) — identifying birds by their vocalizations — with a focus on careful listening. The class is appropriate for anyone who is new to BBE or wants to learn more.

Set aside three Monday evenings from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on April 12, 19 and 26 for this class. The donation for all three is \$45.

Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser is the instructor. She first became curious about birds after hanging a bird feeder on her front porch in 1998. She started to wonder which species were coming to visit which prompted the purchase of her first bird field guide. It wasn't long before she and her husband started noticing birds in places other than their front porch, which quickly led to the realization that Washington State is rich in diverse bird habitats. Evening visits to nearby Magnuson Park to watch birds led to weekend excursions to Yakima and Whidbey Island and beyond. A “life list” and a “yard list” were started, and Whitney's friends started to think of her as “the bird person” they know.

For more information and to register, click this link in red text: [Whidbey Audubon Society website](#).

Expert Birder, from page 1

habitat and sounds to make those quick decisions.

This course will help you develop those same skills. Focusing on local common birds as examples, we will work through the five characteristics that expert birders use, so these concepts are at the ready for you to use them.

We will incorporate hands-on work using the Merlin smartphone and tablet app (or a bird book, if you don't have a smartphone). The Merlin app is produced by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and is a handy tool to have in the field, especially as you become familiar and proficient with its features. (Merlin can work all over the world, except for south of the Sahara, so it is also a great tool to have if you travel).

Bring either a smartphone or tablet with the Merlin App or a favorite bird book.

The instructor is Thomas Bancroft. Birds have been a big part of his life since childhood, both recreationally and professionally. Their identification, ecology, behavior and systematics were central parts of his undergraduate and graduate schooling and remain a fundamental interest. He earned his PH.D. in Ornithology and incorporated working at the bird laboratory at Carnegie Museum, and studying Florida Scrub Jays, Blue Jays and Boat-tailed Grackles in graduate school. His fieldwork for National Audubon aided the conservation plan and later as Chief Scientist, Thomas helped National Audubon integrate their work with Birdlife International's work all across the Americas.

Tom is a Scientific Advisor to *BirdNote*, served six years on Washington Audubon's board, volunteers for the Washington Ornithological Society and is the chair of the Naturalist Group at the Mountaineers.

For more information and to register, click [Whidbey Audubon Society website](#) or visit the Events page.

Conservation Column: Help Reverse the Changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act

In 2017, the previous administration attempted to reduce protections for migratory birds by adopting new rules, which were scheduled to take effect now. The new rules have been paused and lawsuits are pending, but National Audubon Society is requesting birders' help.

The *Migratory Bird Protection Act* was passed out of the House Natural Resources Committee in the 116th Congress and had a bipartisan group of 90+ cosponsors. The bill would secure protections for birds and direct the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to develop a permitting process for “incidental take” through which relevant businesses would implement best management practices and document compliance, further driving innovation in how to best prevent bird deaths. It was not passed last year; now it will need to be reintroduced in this Congress in order to be considered again. [Congressman Rick Larsen](#) was an original cosponsor; let him know you support this measure!

You can comment on other bird related issues through National Audubon on their [website action page](#).

— Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair

Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings

February 2: Twenty-five plus **Canvasbacks** easily viewed from Dike Road on Dugualla Pond. They were down near the pump station. Another large flock of ducks was out towards the highway. I didn't have a scope so can't verify the identification, but they may also have been Canvasbacks. There has been so much hunting this year that this is the first time I have seen them.

— *Marcia Lazoff*



Photo by Brian Kenney

Leucistic Bald Eagle.

February 2: Possible leucistic adult **Bald Eagle** — darker than most leucistic photos that I've seen but considerably lighter than most adults I've seen. Location: tidal flats in Useless Bay, seen from beach end of Deer Lagoon dike.

— *Brian Kenney*



Photo by Jan Faulkner

Leucistic Dark-eyed Junco

February 2: Leucistic **Dark-eyed Junco** that has been

frequenting my feeders and yard for some time. Location: Ledgewood Beach.

— *Jan Faulkner*



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Mountain Bluebird

February 5: I saw a **Mountain Bluebird** perched on a post just above the beach. It would fly down to the ground as if it were catching something and then fly back to its perch. Location: on a post above the beach and just north of NAS Whidbey. One of the things it perched on was a sign designating the northern limit of the base.

— *Mary Jo Adams*



Photo by Roy and Ting

A Killdeer pair in the act...

February 8: (Warning: Rated Killdeer content.) We heard two **Killdeer** call, then saw them bow towards each other. The girl then did a full 360 turn, presenting her full Killdeerness. Then, you know. Location: Sierra Country Club. — *Roy and Ting*



Photo by Mary Jo Adams

Eared Grebe

February 9: There was an **Eared Grebe** this afternoon at the Oak Harbor City Marina.

— *Mary Jo Adams*

February 10: Three **American Goldfinches** in the bushes. Location: near Parker and Ninth in Coupeville.

— *Sharon Gauthier*

February 10: **Iceland (Thayer's) Gulls**. For the next month or so, you can fine tune your gull ID skills at the Keystone boat launch parking lot. Yesterday, there were four Thayer's Gulls, two adults and two subadults, at this loca-

tion. They are in close proximity to our hybrid gulls and you can view them all at very close range. Look for smaller size, less bulky and lighter iris color. — *Dave Parent*

February 11: Two **Snow Geese** in a flock of several hundred **Canada Geese** and **Mallards**. Location: Mutiny Bay Blueberry Farm field adjacent to Cameron Road.

— *Dave Parent*

February 24: We saw a large bird gliding toward us and across our field on this cloudless afternoon. It turned out to be a **Turkey Vulture**, and we got great views of it as it flew almost to where we were standing, about 30 feet up, before turning left and over our house. This is the earliest we have seen a Turkey Vulture. Location: two miles southwest of Clinton. — *George Heleker*

More Sightings, see page 6

PLEASE POST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS to the *Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) website*. Select the aqua button, "Report a Sighting." You can also submit a photo using the aqua button labeled "Submit Gallery Photos."

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 or on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/WhidbeyAudubonSociety.

Page Peepers Book Group: *Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds*

Join us Wednesday, March 24 for our book club, Page Peepers, via Zoom. Our hosts are *Mary Bloom* and *Patricia Duarte*, click red text to email either. Gatherings are the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m.

Our book this month is *Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt.

It takes curiosity to lick a bird nest to learn how it tastes, etc.; and pluck to raise 37 baby chimney swifts by hand. Naturalist Lyanda Lynn Haupt has done these things and more. Her collection of essays peers into the lives of such common birds as crows.

— Editorial Review on Amazon

Dates to Remember

Please check our *Whidbey Audubon Society website* for more detailed information and how to enter ZOOM for some of these upcoming events, click the red text.

MARCH

5 or 8: Deadline for Scholarship applications (CHS and SWHS March 5; OHHS March 8)

9: Online Class: *Becoming an Expert Birder* Session 1 with Thomas Bancroft 7 p.m.

11: Whidbey Audubon Program: *Do Crows Have Language?* with Douglas Wacker, 7 p.m. on ZOOM

16: Online Class: *Becoming an Expert Birder* Session 2 with Thomas Bancroft

18: Birds 'n' Beer, ZOOM 5 to 6 p.m.

18: Deadline for April Shorelines

24: Page Peepers Book Group, ZOOM 7 to 8 p.m.

25: Board Meeting, ZOOM 7 to 9 p.m. Members welcome, contact *President Patty Cheek* to attend

*** **Rufous Hummingbirds** return to Whidbey Island this month!

APRIL

8: Whidbey Audubon Program, *Dragonflies and Damselflies* with Dennis Paulson on ZOOM at 7 p.m.

12: Online Class: *Birding by Ear* Session 1 with Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser

15: Deadline for May Shorelines

16: Birds 'n' Beer on ZOOM 5 to 6 p.m.

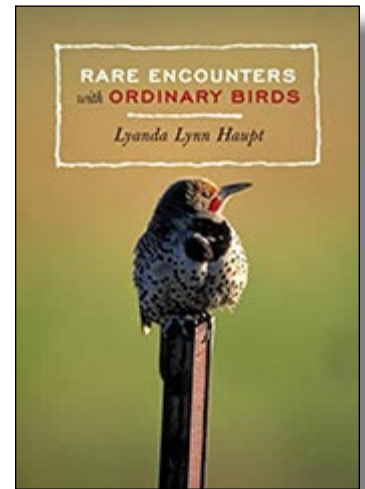
19: Online Class: *Birding by Ear* Session 2 with Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser

22: Board Meeting on ZOOM 7 to 9 p.m. Members welcome, contact *President Patty Cheek* to attend

26: Online Class: *Birding by Ear* Session 3 with Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser

28: Page Peepers Book Group on ZOOM 7 to 8 p.m.

Author Lyanda Lynn Haupt created and directed education programs for the Seattle Audubon Society. She has worked in raptor rehabilitation in Vermont, Peregrine Falcon reintroduction in Minnesota, and seabird research in the remote Pacific. Her writing has appeared in *Wild Earth Journal*, *Open Spaces*, *Birdwatchers Digest* and *the Prairie Naturalist*. She lives in Seattle with her husband and daughter.



Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds by Lyanda Lynn Haupt, 2004; Sasquatch Books, Seattle; \$15.95

Please register on our website under Events. or [click here](#) for more information. We'll send you the Zoom JOIN link the day of the gathering by 5 p.m. If you do not see it in your email inbox, check your spam folder. If you still do not find it, contact one of our hosts above.

Note: if you registered for the January Page Peepers you do not need to register for this meeting. But if you're unsure if you registered previously, go ahead and register again. No harm done.

Birds 'n' Beer Get-together

Let's get together to socialize and talk about birds on **Thursday, March 18** from 5 to 6 p.m. Bring your pictures to share with the group. Sit back, relax, have a drink or whatever. Just bring your smile and spirit. No charge.



Unless you are on our permanent list for Birds 'n' Beer, submit your information on the *Whidbey Audubon Society website*, or find it under *Events* to receive an invitation via Zoom. Leave a message if you'd like to automatically receive a link for future Birds 'n' Beer events. Also leave a message if you'd like to present photos or discuss something particular at the event.

Don't wait to sign-up, though. We close Birds 'n' Beer registration at 3 p.m. the day of the event. Shortly after 3 p.m. we'll send you an email with the Zoom link. If you can't find the email, please check your spam folder. If you still can't find it contact *President Patty Cheek*.

Birding in Neighborhoods South Does Deer Lagoon

January 28: As they say, *A bad day Birding at Deer Lagoon, is better than a good day at the office.*

That's a paraphrase. And besides, it has nothing to do with last Thursday, because any day observing a **Short-eared Owl** on the hunt is a good day anyhow. Before that highlight, we had imagined the highlight of the day would be watching an adult **Bald Eagle** repeatedly diving after a couple of **Mallards** just yards away from us. We surmised that the Eagle who came out of nowhere, was attracted by the commotion of the two male mallards fighting each other in the waters near the dike. In addition to these shows, a couple of **Green-winged Teals** were also performing, as if it were spring and no one was watching. They were so close to us, that when he wasn't trying to drown her, we had a beautiful look at their exquisite feather patterns. What a treat! As with the Eagle going after it's brunch, we try to put a certain part of these things from our minds.

Somehow the weather was with us once again, and we were able to see and/or hear at least 56 species. Noticeably absent: Pine Siskins. Honest to goodness — not one Pine Siskin at Deer Lagoon that morning! If a Siskin flock is frightened by its shadow, does that mean that spring is on its way?

February 11: Only the most determined were out this morning, including the 44 species we saw and/or heard over at Deer Lagoon. A good-sized flock of **Red Crossbills** hung out in the firs, and we spied a handsome **Lincoln's Sparrow** who's been frequenting the far end of the dike.

Everyone was doing their best to avoid the chill, and after wondering why the heck some nearby ducks were bobbing around in the water, rather than up on the grass, it didn't take us long to realize:

- a.) they're used to it, and
- b.) the water is far less cold than the air temp!

Our cheer kept us warm(ish). We also enjoyed an interesting discussion about visualizing bird songs and calls. See the National Audubon website, "Start Using Spectrograms to 'Read' Bird Songs and Calls" by Nathan Pieplow, April 12, 2017; www.audubon.org/news/start-using-spectrograms-read-bird-songs-and-calls.

— Cathi Bower, *Bird early, bird often*

Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) South meets every other Thursday morning. Time varies with the season. Click the red text to email [Cathi Bower](mailto:Cathi.Bower@audubon.org). BIN South follows county and state guidelines for COVID-19.

BIN North Spends a Cool Day at Dugualla Bay

February 10: The weather was cold, but the birding was hot at Dugualla Bay. Five warmly dressed birders braved the temps and flurries to check out the action. The tide was perfect for the dabblers, divers and shorebirds. We saw **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Dunlin**, **Northern Pintails** and **Mallards**. Add to the mix **Green-winged Teals**, **Buffleheads**, **Wigeons** and both **Hooded** and **Red-breasted Mergansers**. On the pond side we saw **Red-**

winged Blackbirds, **Great Blue Herons**, a **Ruddy Duck** and a **Ring-necked Duck**. There was also a flock of **Canvasbacks** by the near shore. We also spotted a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Fox Sparrow** and some of the first **American Robins** of spring. The best sighting, in my opinion, was by Dave who was able to see around 100 **Canvasbacks** by the west side of the pond on his way home. In all, we saw 35 species on this winter day.

— Marcia Lazoff

Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) North usually meets the second Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m. The group is following county and state guidelines for COVID-19. Click red type to email [Marcia Lazoff](mailto:Marcia.Lazoff@audubon.org) to be added to the email list.

More Sightings, from page 4

February 24: First **Rufous Hummingbird** of the year. I win! About 5 p.m. outside my window. Location: Honey-

moon Bay Road area.
— Linda Bainbridge
Sightings Editor Note: *Marilynn Strayer saw a male Rufous Hummingbird outside her window at 10:30 a.m. today. Sorry, Linda.*

February 27: **Eurasian Wigeon** swimming near the shore at Langley Beach in a flock of approximately 20 **American Wigeons**. — Michael Sheldon

March 1: First **Tree Swallows!!** Roughly 25 swirling over our place on Cultus Bay Road. Right on time.

— Dyanne Sheldon

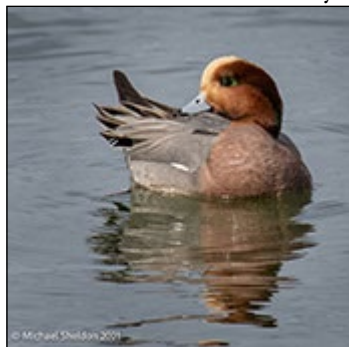


Photo by Michael Sheldon

Eurasian Wigeon

Attention! Birds Still at Risk from Salmonellosis

The Washington Department Fish and Wildlife has extended their moratorium on feeding birds and providing bird baths until April 1. Salmonellosis is still taking a toll on our birds this winter. This disease is usually fatal.

For more information and possible alternatives, go to Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife website. Scroll down to January 27.

Bird of the Month: The Pileated Woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*)

March's bird is hard to confuse with any other Whidbey Island bird - the Pileated Woodpecker. This huge woodpecker has many nicknames: cock of the woods, devil's woodpecker, log cock.... It may be pronounced *PY-lee-ay-tid* or *PILL-ee-ay-tid*. *Pileate* means *capped*, referring to the red crest. We on Whidbey Island are incredibly lucky to have the mature deciduous and coniferous forests and wet habitat that Pileated Woodpeckers prefer. The highest density of this woodpecker species is in the wettest habitats, which have plenty of standing or fallen dead trees and logs.

Even if you are a beginning birder, you can be confident about identifying this bird. About the size of a crow, reminiscent of a pterodactyl, Pileated Woodpeckers are mostly black with white stripes along the head and neck. They sport a bright red triangular crest on a wedge-shaped head, a long neck and a chisel-like bill about the length of their head. Males have a large red crest and red stripe on the cheek, running towards the bill and are



Photos by Jim Gage

Pileated Woodpecker in the apple tree



Click to see this 34-second video Jim Gage took of this Pileated Woodpecker enjoying the apple harvest. On the Whidbey Audubon website, scroll to the March 2021 *Shorelines*.

larger than females who have a red crest like the male, but their cheek stripe is white.

In case you didn't initially notice this huge bird flying overhead,



Photo by Kathy Obersinner

An adult feeding its juvenile Pileated Woodpecker.

the strident *wuk-wuk-wuk* will likely draw your eyes upwards. Did you know that in the old Tarzan movies which were set in Africa, this was the call they used in the background? Pileated's flight is mostly direct, their wingbeats are smooth and rowing, (not undulating, like most woodpeckers), and their underwings flash white. Their flight call resembles that of the Northern Flicker, but is slower, lower pitched and often trails off at the end. When feeding, their call is more of an irregular *cuk-cuk-cuk*.

Walking through the forest, you may hear a pileated woodpecker's heavy, slow drumming without ever seeing the bird itself, sometimes accompanied by a slower *wuk-wuk-wuk*. Drumming is used to establish territory, with some tapping for communication between pairs. If uneasy or disturbed, the pileated will call, and if an owl hoots or comes into contact, it reacts quickly and vocally.

Diet

If you see a large rectangular or oblong shaped cavity several inches deep, in the trunk of a dead or dying tree, it's the work of the Pileated Woodpecker searching out its favorite food, carpenter ants. These birds love ants and insects, excavating with slow solid thumps, using their long barbed tongue and sticky saliva to capture them. Their long necks give them the reach that smaller woodpeckers lack. Because they use their bill so extensively, it can wear down, but luckily for them, it continues to grow throughout their life. Pileateds may strip off a piece of bark a foot long to get at prey, and other woodpeckers or wrens may come to feed off the fragments. They feed at all levels of the forest and you may be surprised to come upon this large bird foraging on logs or at the base of a tree.

Nesting

Pileated Woodpeckers are monogamous, mating for life. They prefer large trees for nesting and may use the same tree in fol-

Pileated Woodpecker, from page 7

lowing years, but excavate a new cavity. Old nest cavities will become shelter for many species, including swifts, ducks, bats, owls, other woodpeckers and martens. After laying three to five white eggs, the male and female share incubation and brooding duties. The young are fed regurgitation and leave the nest after 24 to 30 days. Young stay in their parents' territory for three to five months. Though close to the same size, you can tell them from the adults by their bright orange punk hairdos and their feathers are less glossy.

If you have dead or dying trees on your property, and it is safe to leave them, consider doing so, as they provide habitat not only for the Pileated, but other woodpeckers and nuthatches. Pileated Woodpeckers may visit your backyard bird feeder for suet. If you are interested in attracting them to your yard, go to the Cornell Lab All About Birds, to find out what they particularly like to eat and which feeder is most suitable.

— *Kathy Obersinner*



Photo by Kathy Obersinner

Pileated Woodpecker scarfing up suet.

The Whidbey Audubon Society Reaches 500 Members

A new milestone in the history of Whidbey Audubon occurred when our 500th member signed up for membership recently.

On October 13, 1981, nineteen members of Seattle Audubon living on Whidbey Island got together and began the new chapter for the island. Our membership has steadily grown in the past 40 years, but a spike has happened in the past few months probably due the large numbers of people who have signed up for our online classes. Many new members are from out of state.

Our 500th member, Betsy Pobanz, is from Austin, Texas. Jann Ledbetter, our membership chair, contacted Betsy and asked her to comment:

Serendipity. It's what led me to become the 500th member of the Whidbey Island Audubon Society!

My sister, Nancy Pobanz, and her husband David Wade (of Eugene, Oregon) met Paul Bannick in a chance encounter in South Central Oregon a few years ago. They maintain contact with Paul and through him found out about his Whidbey Island Audubon Society presentations in December. Nancy passed on the link, we registered and enjoyed the Paul Bannick series very much.

I am a native of Eastern Oregon and although my husband, Barry Newberger and I currently live in Austin, Texas, Malheur Wildlife Refuge is a favorite place of ours to visit. In addition to the love we have for birding, Barry enjoys nature and bird photography. Dan Streiffert's February program drew our attention and while registering for it, joining WAS in support of your creatively active organization seemed a good idea,

We have never had the pleasure of visiting Whidbey Island. We spend at least two months each summer in Central Oregon

and I'm thinking a visit to your Island while we're in the Pacific Northwest would be a nice side trip!

Audubon welcomes its newest member and hopes to meet her soon!

Welcome New and Renewing Members

General Fund Donation:

From Amie Berlin in the name of Clint Archambault

From Paul Branson in the name of Roy and Betty Branson

New Members:

Cheryl & Dennis Kamera, Spotted Towhee

Barbara & Dan Lavaty

Judith Ray Gordon

Polly Widen

Steven Raab

Tisa Seely & Mark Helpenstell

Kim Wiklof

William Rieck

Renewing Members:

Geda Condit, Osprey

Anne Baum

Kristen Griffin, Spotted Towhee

Joseph K. Sheldon

Amy & Chris Gulick

Lori Holt

Kathleen & Gregory Sivertsen

Sharla Matthews

Nancy Maysen

Wendy Dion

Michael Seraphinoff & Susan Prescott

David & Louise Kankel, Pigeon Guillemot

Traci & Robert York, Pigeon Guillemot

Patty & Larry Cheek, Pigeon Guillemot

Matt & Govinda Holtby, Spotted Towhee

Volunteer Corner

Regional Wetland Secretive Bird Monitoring Project

The Puget Sound Bird Observatory needs your help for the 2021 season of the Regional Wetland Secretive Bird Monitoring Project.

There will be approximately 200 wetlands that need to be surveyed this season; each wetland has between one and five survey points with most sites having three points.

COVID-19 safety protocols have been developed, including delivering full training manuals and remote tutorials for all community science participants.

We highly value the time and talent gifted us by community science participants across our region and provide all-encompass-



Photo by PSBO volunteer, Mandy Weger

American Bittern

ing training so that all levels of birders can participate. Helping with this unique bird surveying effort with PSBO is a great way to learn more about the birds and other wildlife in your local area.

For additional information about the project and/or to volunteer to help with this project, please email Cindy Easterson or call 425-876-1055.

Whidbey Audubon Society Membership

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

Mail to: Jann Ledbetter, 1112 Maple Place, Coupeville WA 98239

Or pay online with PayPal or a credit card, www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org/membership

Name _____ Shorelines Recognition? ___Yes ___No

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 \$10.00 to defray mailing costs.

SELECT a Category of Membership

- Individual Annual Membership \$20
Household Annual Membership \$30
Spotted Towhee \$50
Pigeon Guillemot \$75
Red-tailed Hawk \$100
Osprey \$250
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.

Whidbey Audubon Society

Whidbey Audubon programs are 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month except December, July and August

Meetings are conducted virtually this year using ZOOM, register at www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org

Whidbey Audubon Board and Committee Chairs 2020-2021

President.....	Patty Cheek
Immediate Past President.....	Sharon Gauthier
Vice President.....	Dave Allen
Secretary.....	Cathy Queeno-Wall5
Treasurer	Sheri Croll
Programs	OPEN
Membership Chair	Jann Ledbetter
Newsletter Editor	Jenny Brown
Conservation Chair	Kim Shepard
Education Chair	Nan Maysen
Field Trip Chair.....	OPEN
Publicity Chair.....	Susan Prescott
Webmaster.....	Dave Krause
Board Member-at-Large	Cathi Bower
Board Member-at-Large	Joe Sheldon
Board Member-at-Large	Dave Krause
Board Member-at-Large	Kathy Obersinner
Christmas Bird Count North Chair.....	Jay Adams
Christmas Bird Count South Chair	Govinda Holtby
Birdathon	Kathy Obersinner
Scholarship Committee	Ann Sullivan
Hospitality Chair	OPEN
Newsletter Mailing	Marcia Lazoff
Specimen Library.....	Robin Llewellyn

General Meeting and Program

Thursday, March 11

7 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

Do Crows Have Language?

with Doug Wacker

Online Classes

Tuesdays, March 9 and 16

Becoming an Expert Birder

with Thomas Bancroft

Mondays, April 12, 19, 26

Birding by Ear — Listening is an Act of Loving Birds

with Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser

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Whidbey Audubon Society

P.O. Box 1012

Oak Harbor, WA 98277