

**Black Hills
Audubon Society**
Olympia, Washington

**Volume 2010,
Number 5**

November/December 2010



Bird-Banding Camp 2010

—*Kathryn Culhane, Olympia High School Senior*

The Cascades Bird-Banding Camp was hosted jointly by the Puget Sound Bird Observatory and the Seattle Audubon. The trip actually started at the Seattle Audubon's bookstore. We drove from there into the Cascades, ending in the Wenatchee National Forest. There, we spent one week learning how to band birds.

I'll be the first to admit that I don't know a great deal more than the general public about birds, so I was more than a little intimidated when I found that many

Continued on page 2

Bird-Banding Camp	1
Used Binoculars Needed	2
Christmas Bird Count	3
BHAS Logo Contest.....	3
Robert Michael Pyle in Olympia	4
Annual Dinner.....	4
Environmental Educator Award	5
Conservation Award	5
ACUB	6
Refrigerator Page	7
Field Trip/Event Details	8
Alternative Gift Fair	9
Birding in Earnest.....	10
Prison Conservation Projects Cut.....	11
Students Monitor Purple Martins.....	14

November, 18th, 7 pm

Vaux's Happening

After working with the American Bird Conservancy to identify which Washington State waterfalls have nesting Black Swifts, Larry Schwitters came over to Audubon to identify and monitor all of the state's significant Vaux's Swift communal migratory roost sites.

The Vaux's Happening project has grown to encompass all of Western North America and has raised awareness and appreciation of this fabulous little swift and its amazing bed time spectacle for the entire length of their migratory route. For more information, please visit <http://www.VauxHappening.org>

*These Monthly Program meetings will be held at the Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 W. 21st St, in Olympia. Social hour is at 7pm, with programs beginning promptly at 7:30 pm. BHAS membership meetings are usually held on the third Thursday of the month (exceptions: no March, July, or August meetings). **Driving directions from Olympia:** From I-5, take exit 105 following the "State Capitol/City Center" route. Go straight, through the tunnel. At the light (Capitol Way) turn left (south). After 7 blocks, turn right onto 21st St. The Museum is two blocks down on the left. The Coach House meeting room and parking are south of and behind the Museum.*

December 16th, 7 pm

The Nisqually NWR Estuary Restoration

Nisqually NWR was founded in 1974 to protect the unique habitats within the Nisqually Delta from development. Over the last few years, many changes have occurred throughout the delta culminating in the removal of the 100 year old Brown Farm Dike over the summer of 2009. The restoration of the tides to over 760 acres of historic estuary at the Refuge and 140 acres owned by the Nisqually Tribe has restored key natural processes that will enhance and sustain fish and wildlife habitat long into

Continued on page 3

Bird Banding

From page 1

of the other students at the banding camp I attended this summer could identify remarkable amounts of birds by both sight and sound. However, I quickly got over my anxiety as I realized that everyone at the camp was really nice, and I could learn a lot from them (and that I wasn't the most inexperienced birder there...).

Banding is actually a lot more complicated than just putting little metal rings on birds' legs. Just catching the bird in the first place is hard enough. We used mist nets, which are impossible to see and almost impossible to extract birds from. Once a bird flies into the net, they get tangled around, so that the bander has to carefully pull tiny bits of string from around the bird's feet, wings, and head. Once the bird has been extracted, a properly sized band is crimped onto their leg. Then, the bander proceeds to age and sex the bird and measure its wing cord and mass.

I extracted a Warbling Vireo, a Wilson's Warbler, and an Oregon Junco, and banded a Golden-crowned Kinglet, two Orange-crowned Warblers, a Yellow Warbler, and three Oregon Juncos. The Oregon Junco seemed to be the bird of the week: we caught over thirty of them altogether, mostly juveniles. However, we caught more exciting birds than just Juncos, including a Williamson's Sapsucker and a Rufous Hummingbird (it was always



Bird Banding Camp-Kathryn Culhane holding Sora Rail

exciting when we caught either a large bird or a small one).

The most exciting capture did not happen in the net, however. Incredibly, we managed to flush a Sora Rail out of the nearby marsh and into camp, where we cornered and caught it against a log. One of the instructors, Dan Froehlich, banded the bird as the rest of us looked on. After it was banded, we all got to hold the Sora and see first-hand where the expression "thin as a rail" originated.

We did more than just capture birds, though. One night we went owling, and though we found more elk than owls (only one person actually saw an owl), it was still pretty fun to be out in the woods with a bunch of people and a tape player, trying to keep quiet. We also played some epic games of soccer, including one in the dark with headlamps. Yet another of our nocturnal activities (we were too busy banding birds to do anything else in the daytime) was viewing the Perseid meteor shower. We actually slept outside of our tents two nights to better appreciate it.

I didn't write this article just to chronicle the events of banding camp, however; I also want to say thanks to the Black Hills Audubon for making it possible for me to go. I not only learned about this camp through the Black Hills Audubon, but also received a scholarship of \$400 from them. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to participate in such a wonderful camp! 🦋

Looking For A Few Good Binos

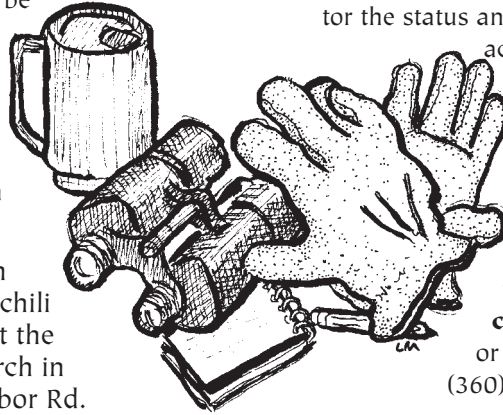
Do you have binoculars that are just too good to throw away, but have fallen to the back of the closet replaced by your Swarovskis and Leicas? The BHAS Education and Field Trip committees have a perfect solution! We would like to develop a stash of decent binos to loan to our budding birders when they ar-

rive for our beginning classes and field trips. Breathe new life into those well-loved but ignored binos while helping our newest group of BHAS birders. It's a win-win for everyone! Contact Shelley Horn @ shelleysmail@me.com or (360) 352-0075 for more details or drop-off arrangements. 🦋

Christmas Bird Count, Sunday, Dec. 19th, 2010

This year's Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be held on Sunday, December 19th. This event, sponsored by BHAS, needs volunteers to spend the day (or part of the day) in the field counting birds in their group's assigned count area. Folks new to birding, or those who prefer, will be partnered with experienced group leaders. This is a serious commitment and a whole lot of fun, and it's also a great way for amateurs to become familiar with our local birds.

The day will conclude with the traditional post-count chili dinner shortly after dark at the Gull Harbor Lutheran Church in Olympia, 4610 Boston Harbor Rd.



What a wonderful way to end the day after being outside on a brisk fall day!

Our count is part of the National Audubon Society's 111th CBC. These events are more important than ever because the results are used as tools to monitor the status and distribution of bird populations across the western hemisphere. Incidentally, almost every year Olympia has the national high count for Golden-crowned Kinglet and, in some years, Winter Wren.

This work is very important and very appreciated. To join in, contact George Walter at cbc@blackhills-audubon.org, or call the BHAS message phone at (360) 352-7299. 🐦

Donate to BHAS through Amazon Purchases

Reminder: If you buy something through Amazon.com, you could be donating to Black Hills Audubon Society at the same time.

BHAS receives 4% of every purchase made through our Book Store Web page (<http://www.blackhills-audubon.org/bookstore/index.html>). These funds are used to support our conservation program, education efforts, and other goals. Our prices are exactly the same as Amazon.com! All purchases are managed by Amazon.com.

Even if you don't buy something that is specifically on our Bookstore web page, if you continue searching in Amazon from our Bookstore page, BHAS will benefit.

Thanks! 🐦

Estuary Restoration

from page 1

the future. Tidal waters were restored in Late September 2009. After over a year of tidal influence, Nisqually NWR Restoration Biologist Jesse Barham will talk about the recent estuary restoration project and the response of the ecosystem. 🐦

BHAS Logo Contest –Calling all Artists

Black Hills Audubon Society needs a logo, so we're conducting a contest and asking artists in Lewis, Mason, or Thurston counties to get those creative juices flowing.

This new logo will be used in the BHAS letterhead, on the website, and on items such as shirts or pins.

The design must contain a local bird or birds and contain the name "Black Hills Audubon Society". Final entries must be at least 300 dpi. If you are not set up to convert the image into a digital format, we can help.

Entries need to be submitted by January 31st, 2011, to bhas@blackhills-audubon.org.

The creator of the winning design will be announced at the Annual Dinner on March 5, 2011, and will receive a lifetime membership to BHAS and a either a vest, t-shirt, or sweatshirt with the new logo.

The winning entry will become the copy-righted property of BHAS.

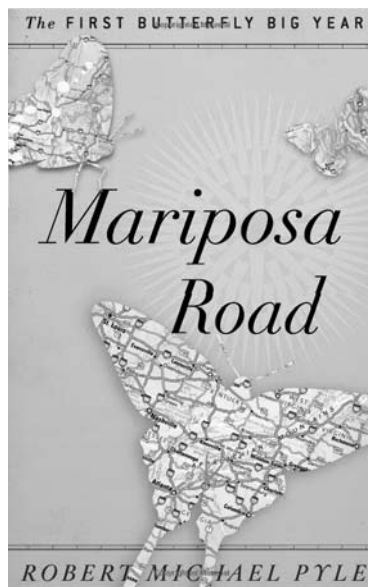
Please see details on the BHAS website. For questions, please contact Debra Jaqua at bhas@blackhills-audubon.org or 360-701-6412. 🐦

Robert Michael Pyle Coming to Olympia

On Wednesday, December 1, at 7pm at Fireside Bookstore, 116 Legion Way SE, Olympia, Robert Michael Pyle will talk about his new book, **Mariposa Road**.

According to reviews, *Mariposa Road* is part road-trip tale, part travelogue of lost and found landscapes, and all good-natured natural history. *Mariposa Road* tracks Bob Pyle's journey across the United States as he races against the calendar in his search for as many of the 800 American butterflies as he can find.

Like Pyle's classic *Chasing Monarchs*, *Mariposa Road* recounts his adventures, high and low, in tracking down butterflies in his own low-tech, individual way. Accompanied by Marsha, his cottonwood-limb butterfly net; Powdermilk, his 1982 Honda Civic with 345,000 miles on the odometer; and the small Leitz binoculars he has carried for more than thirty years, Bob ventured out in a series of remarkable trips from his Northwest home.



From the California coastline in company with overwintering monarchs to the Far Northern tundra in pursuit of mysterious sulphurs and arctics; from the zebras and daggerwings of the Everglades to the leafwings, bluewings, and border rarities of the lower Rio Grande; from Graceland to ranchland and Kauai to Key West.... these intimate encounters with the land, its people, and its fading fauna are wholly original. At turns whimsical, witty, informative, and inspirational, *Mariposa Road* is an extraordinary journey of discovery that leads the reader ever farther into butterfly country and deeper into the heart of the naturalist.

Note: Robert Michael Pyle earned his PhD from Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Affairs and is the author of fourteen books, including **Chasing Monarchs**, **Where Bigfoot Walks**, and **Wintergreen**, which won the John Burroughs Medal. The co-founder of the Xerces Society (for the conservation of invertebrates) is a full-time writer living in southwestern Washington. 🦋

Black Hills Audubon Society Annual Dinner and Auction

March 5, 2011, Olympia Center, Olympia

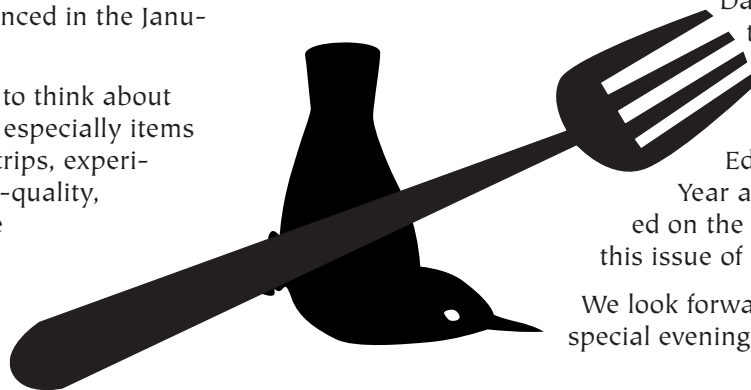
As 2010 draws to a close and we prepare to mount 2011 calendars on our walls, please make sure to note Saturday March 5th as the date for our annual dinner and auction. Our featured speaker will be announced in the January/February *Echo*.

And it is not too soon to think about items for our auction, especially items that are unique (field trips, experiences) as well as high-quality, enticing and attractive items that will appeal to our audience. Gift certificates from your favorite restaura-

rants or service providers are always welcome. If you have something to donate or have any questions, please call or e-mail Margery Beeler (360-352-5437; mswampcat@aol.com).

Instructions for making nominations for the Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year award and the Dave McNett Environmental Educator of the Year award are included on the following page of this issue of the *Echo*.

We look forward to sharing this special evening with you! 🦋



The Dave McNett Environmental Educator Award – Nominating Criteria

Black Hills Audubon is proud to continue recognizing environmental educational efforts by area residents. We would like to receive nominations of individuals who have carried on Dave McNett's tradition of educational excellence by making a positive difference in the lives of living beings through their work as an educator.

Deadline is December 31st, 2010. The award will be presented at the Annual Dinner, March 5, 2011.

The criteria for nominations for this award are:

- Work has generally been within the BHAS geographical base (Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties).
- Nominees may be members of BHAS, but don't have to be.
- Their work has been inspirational to those with whom they have worked or taught.

- Work need not have been done on a volunteer basis but did involve volunteers or one's own volunteer time. One can be a professional in the field of environmental education but need not be.
- Nominees worked collaboratively with others to attain educational goals of informing the public about an aspect of our natural world pertaining to bird habitat or conservation.
- Nominees have worked in the field for at least two years.

Please email your completed nominations, along with a description of why you are nominating the person, by December 31st, 2010, to McNettEnvEducatorAward-nom@blackhills-audubon.org, or mail it to Black Hills Audubon Society, PO Box 2524, Olympia WA 98507. For questions, please contact the Chair of the Education Committee, Debbie Nickerson, at 360-754-5397. 🐾



Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award – Nominating Criteria

This award is primarily for citizens who have volunteered their time and skills in the field of conservation and is intended for persons who have not previously received the award.

The deadline for nominations is Dec. 31st, 2010. The award will be presented at the Annual Dinner, March 5, 2011.

Please be guided by the following set of criteria:

- Work has generally been within the BHAS geographical base (Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties).
- Nominees may be members of BHAS but are required to be.
- Work was a volunteer initiative relying heavily on volunteer time.
- Nominees worked collaboratively with others, including governmental and non-governmental organizations to help resolve an environmental issue.
- Nominees used objective sources of information and reliable data and demonstrated professionalism throughout.

- Nominees worked consistently on the issue and persevered, proving resourceful under difficult challenges.
- Results of the work made a significant difference either in real environmental benefits or improved awareness by the public or governmental agencies on an environmental issue.

Submit the name(s), and a brief description of the effort made by the individual(s) or teams and their progress and successes in regards to the Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award criteria. If you are nominating a team, please list the key individuals who have led the team and their contact information.

Please mail your nominations by December 31st, 2010, to the Black Hills Audubon Society, PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or send email to

Conservationawardnom@blackhills-audubon.org.

The Conservation Committee will review the nominations received and will make a recommendation to the BHAS board members for final selection and approval. The award will be presented at the BHAS Annual Dinner in March 2011. 🐾

The Army Compatible Use Buffer Program (ACUB)

by Jeffrey Foster, PhD

What does training soldiers and airmen for combat have to do with rare species (two butterflies, a bird, and a burrowing mammal)? In our region—south Puget Sound—plenty. Let me explain.

There is abundant evidence (e.g., the journals of early settlers and explorers) that the original landscape was quite different than today. As many as 150,000 acres in Pierce, Thurston, Lewis, and Mason counties were originally occupied by grasslands (or prairies, as they are called in our area), forming a complex mosaic with oak woodlands, conifer forests, and wetlands.

In the mid-19th century, with the arrival of EuroAmerican settlers, this landscape underwent dramatic change. Deliberate burning by Native Americans, which prevented tree establishment, soon ceased and Douglas fir forests began to take over prairies. Grazing and non-native plant species (e.g., Scot's broom) caused widespread degradation of the remaining prairies. Later, farming and urbanization permanently eliminated more prairies. The result is that today prairies cover only 10% of their former extent, and most of what remains is in poor condition, dominated by non-native species.

Prairie loss/degradation has reached the point where some native plants and animals have gone extinct or are at risk of extinction. Four species are candidates for listing as threatened or endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA): the Taylor's checkerspot and mardon skipper butterflies, the streaked horned lark, and the Mazama pocket gopher. The largest remaining populations, and most of the remaining suitable habitat, of these species are found on Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM).

Despite being home to 35,000 military personnel, JBLM is mostly undeveloped land where military training occurs in a variety of natural environments. As a result, JBLM, like many military installations,

has become an island of biodiversity in a sea of development. This poses a dilemma for the Army. How can our primary mission of military training co-exist with another important mission component, conservation?

If the candidate species were to be listed, substan-

tial restrictions on where, when, and how military training occurs could be imposed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, especially in our prairies, which are highly valued for Stryker maneuver training. Such restrictions are one facet of what the Department of Defense (DoD) calls "encroachment," limits on the military mission attributable to incompatible land uses outside installation boundaries.

JBLM is taking several proactive actions to mitigate this situation. First, we manage our soldiers and training lands in a manner that reduces impacts to natural habitats and the species that depend on them. Second, we

repair degraded training lands to a more healthy condition. Third, we restore habitats for specific species, including the candidates. The first three activities are funded at about \$1 million per year. Finally, we work cooperatively with other public and private partners to improve the regional status of the candidate species. The primary vehicle for this is the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program.

The goal of our ACUB program is to prevent ESA listing or, if listing does occur, minimize the impacts on military training by improving the status of the candidate species prior to listing. Our approach to this is acquiring and restoring regional (non-JBLM) prairies, then reintroducing the candidate species onto these lands. This is being done in collaboration with partners: The Nature Conservancy (TNC; day-to-day managers of the program), the Washington State Departments of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) and Natural Resources (WDNR), and Wolf Haven International.

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Continued on page 9

BHAS Calendar

November/December

November 18th, Thursday, 7-9 pm: Monthly Program
Meeting Presentation: *Vaux's Happening*

November 20th, Saturday, 7:00 am to late afternoon, field trip to Ft. Flagler and other Kitsap Peninsula spots

December 1st, Wednesday, 7pm, Robert Michael Pyle will talk about his new book, *Mariposa Road* at Fireside Books

December 11th, Saturday, 10am – 3pm, Alternative Gift Fair, The Olympia Center

December 16th, Thursday, 7-9 pm - Monthly Program Meeting
Presentation: *The Nisqually NWR Estuary Restoration*

December 19th, Sunday, the 111th Audubon Christmas Bird Count and Chili Dinner

January 2011

January 2011, Thursday evening class followed by Sunday field trip, Birding Class: Gulls need love, too.

January 15th, Saturday, 9:00 am to noon, Field Trip: Downtown Ducks and Other Birds, too

January 29th, Saturday, 8:30 am - about 12:30 pm, field trip to Nisqually NWR

**Every Wednesday,
Phil Kelley offers a guided
field trip at Nisqually
Wildlife Refuge. Meet at the
Visitor's Center at 8:00am.
Lasts a couple of hours.**

Field Trips and Events

November 20th, Saturday, 7:00 am to late afternoon

Field Trip: Ft Flagler and other Kitsap Peninsula spots

Leaders: Phil Kelley and Ruth Sullivan

This trip will begin by meeting Phil at the Martin Way Park and Ride, leaving there at 7:00 am. Meet Ruth in Tacoma, and then cross the Narrows bridge heading in the direction of Ft Flagler. Stops along the way might include the Bremerton waterfront (alcids and cormorants), Kitsap Memorial State Park (passerines), and Salisbury County Park before crossing the Hood Canal Bridge. Phil and Ruth will also stop if there are good birds spotted, and will end up at Ft Flagler and Marrowstone Island. The goal there will be shorebirds and seabirds. Time permitting, Ruth would also like to visit Ft Warden. Bring food and water, rain gear, binoculars and a spotting scope if you have one. Also 2-way radios would be handy. Call Phil at 360-459-1499 to sign up.

December 1st, Wednesday, 7pm

Robert Michael Pyle will talk about his new book, *Mariposa Road*

Fireside Bookstore, 116 Legion Way SE, Olympia.

Fireside Bookstore will host a talk by well known butterfly expert, Robert Michael Pyle, about his new book, *Mariposa Road*. The talk will be in the lobby of the Olympian Hotel, 116 Legion Way SE. The book tracks his travels around the US to find as many as possible of the 800 American butterfly species. See more details on page 4 of this *Echo*.

December 19th, Sunday, As much of the day as you can spare...a few hours or dawn to dusk.

Audubon's 111th Christmas Bird Count

See more details in the article about the Christmas Bird Count on page 3 of this *Echo*.

January 2011, Thursday evening class followed by Sunday field trip.

Birding Class: Gulls Need Love, Too.

Leader: Matt Pike

Exact Date and Time will be announced on the BHAS web site, <http://www.blackhills-audubon.org>

Birding-basics instructor Matt Pike will teach a gull identification basics class geared toward beginning

to sort out the treacherous montage of gull species present in western Washington each winter. Classroom instruction focuses on learning gull molt cycle and its influence on gull appearance, the differences in molt cycles between gulls that mature at different ages, and the basics of Washington's regularly occurring gulls. The field trip location is bird dependant, but could include locations as far west as the Westport Marina, as far north as the Cedar River mouth on Lake Washington, and any number of places in between. The field trip will focus on field application of the knowledge gained in the classroom, as well as some just plain fun birding. Contact Matt at hoodedcrow3b@yahoo.com for more information. Cost: \$15 to support the BHAS Education Committee.

January 15th, 2011, 9:00 am to noon

Field Trip: Downtown Ducks and Other Birds, too

Leader: Burt Guttman

Black Hills Audubon is lucky to have Burt, who has been leading wonderful downtown winter trips for several years. These trips are primarily targeted for beginning birders, as he teaches participants how to distinguish various types of water birds from one another. They are trips that are quite delightful for all birders, however.

They are a wonderful chance to explore the downtown Olympia waterfront areas with a wide variety of birds; mostly water birds, but passerines as well, along with the occasional raptor.

Burt is a master teacher, as he is a retired TESC professor and really enjoys introducing folks to the delights of bird watching and identification.

Meet at the Marathon Park parking lot at 9:00 am. Be prepared for very cold and very weather, although, of course, that may not be the case. Water birds are not at all bothered by the weather, so no matter what the weather Burt and the birds will be there!

Registration not required!

January 29th, 2011, 8:30 am - about 12:30 pm

Field Trip: Nisqually NWR-

End of Hunting Season

Leader: Phil Kelley

Lots of ducks and geese on the refuge at this time of year, raptors, too. Meet at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge visitor center at 8:00 am. Figure about 4 hours. Bring food, water and dress for weather. Call Phil at 360-459-1499 🦋

ACUB

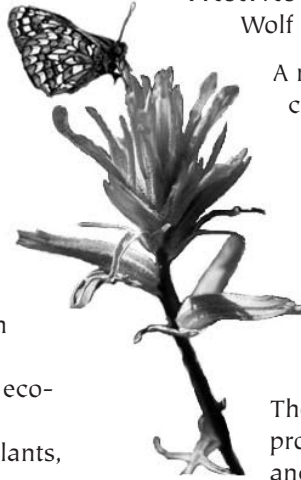
From page 6

Our ACUB program is unique across the nation. Most ACUB programs are focused on land acquisition only. The JBLM ACUB has used all of the DoD funding (so far, \$2.8 million over five years) for land management, while the partners have supplied the land-acquisition funds and additional funding/in-kind support for management. Thus, we are overcoming a common problem in conservation, that of insufficient resources for management of protected lands.

In our case, management means activities such as:

- ▶ control of invasive plants (Scot's broom and non-native grasses),
- ▶ using prescribed fire to restore historic ecological processes,
- ▶ growing, planting and seeding native plants,
- ▶ breeding and reintroducing butterflies,
- ▶ moving pocket gophers from sites undergoing development to ACUB properties,
- ▶ plus planning, monitoring, and research.

Our accomplishments so far include acquisition of 1,025 acres of new conservation land, ongoing restoration of these lands (plus 3,222 more acres



of land already in conservation status), and trial reintroductions of the Taylor's checkerspot and the Mazama pocket gopher onto ACUB properties. You may be familiar with these properties: Glacial Heritage Preserve (Thurston Co.); Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Areas (WDFW); Mima Mounds, Rocky Prairie, and Bald Hill Natural Area Preserves (WDNR); Tenalquot Prairie (TNC); and Wolf Haven International.

A real strength of the JBLM ACUB is its cooperative nature. Our ACUB partners work together to set priority recovery actions for each of the target species and typically fund multi-site, multi-partner, and multi-year projects. Projects receive technical review for scientific soundness. The partners all agree that we accomplish much more working together than separately.

The desired outcome of the JBLM ACUB program is a win-win for JBLM, our partners, and the surrounding communities: continued military training, recovery of rare species, protection of open space, and the mutual respect and trust that come with cooperative ventures toward a common goal. 🦋

Dr. Jeff Foster is Installation Ecologist at Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM)



Alternative Gift Fair

When: Saturday, Dec. 11th, from 10am – 3pm

Where: The Olympia Center, 222 Columbia St. NW, Olympia

Website: www.theunitedchurches.org

What: Tired of the commercialized gift giving during the holidays? There are alternatives to the usual holiday gifts.

On Saturday, December 11th, from 10am to 3pm at The Olympia Center, you can purchase a gift in someone's name from organizations which help train the homeless, build homes for families, help protect our environment, and feed the hungry.

This year, let your gift to someone be a week's worth of care for patients at The Neighborhood Free

Medical Clinic; purchase a pig for a hungry family through Heifer International; help conserve wild spaces in Thurston and Mason Counties with Black Hills Audubon Society and People for Puget Sound; support a kitchen garden project with GRuB; buy tools for homebuilding with Habitat for Humanity and learn about the many organizations doing good works around our community and country.

Approximately eighteen organizations, to which you can donate any amount, will be participating. Gift cards will be given to donors which, in turn, are presented to the recipient. You can make a difference in our community and world with your gift to a local charity in a loved one's name. Come to The Olympia Center from 10am to 3pm and feel good about your holiday shopping. For additional information, please call Debbie Nickerson at 754-5397 or visit us at www.theunitedchurches.org. 🦋

Birding in Earnest: August–September 2010

By Bill Shelmerdine

To reports sightings, call 866-9106 or send email to georn1@hotmail.com

Shorebirds and seabirds are often the best game in town at this time of year. This year was no exception, however, this is also a great time for access to the high country and some of the resident specialties found there. Reports from late summer and early fall reflected the variety available from the offshore waters to the Cascade Crest.

In August, several birders (D. Hayden, R. Shaw, and Tweeters) ventured to the high country at Mount Rainier in search of the alpine specialties. **White-tailed Ptarmigan** were reported from the Golden Gate area above Paradise, Burroughs Mountain, and Fremont Peak. **Gray Crowned Rosy Finches** were a bit more widely reported, and generally from the same areas. And speaking of mountains, sometime in August (around the time my note taking lapsed) one or more **Pine Grosbeaks** were reported in the Olympics from the Mount Rose trail in Mason County (Tweeters). This is a bird that breeds sparsely in the Olympics, and is only rarely reported from the southern part of the range.

Throughout much of August, very large numbers of **Sooty Shearwaters** were reported along the coast just offshore. Numbers in the high tens to over one hundred thousand were recorded from Midway Beach to north of Kalaloch. Two **Manx Shearwaters** were in the mix at Beach 5 (Olympic National Park) on September 1st.

On 8/19/2010, surveys conducted at Nisqually recorded several transient shorebirds of note including **Baird's Sandpiper** and **Semipalmated Plover** (Eric Slagle and Shep Thorp). Lingering **Wilson's phalarope** were also observed. (Has breeding been reported here yet? They have become more regular and stay longer into the summer in recent years)

On 8/20 Dave Hayden reported 3 **Black Swifts** from the Cowlitz Valley near Packwood. (John Puschock and Tom Mansfield reported Black Swifts in the same area some days earlier.)

8/21 was a good day on the ocean for Westport Seabirds with 5 **Flesh-footed Shearwaters** recorded and 2, first of the year (FOY) **Buller's Shearwaters** among large numbers of **Pink-footed** and **Sooty Shearwaters**. Subsequent trips have added **Manx** and **Short-tailed Shearwaters** to the list along with a good showing from the regulars: **Albatross**,

storm-petrels, jaegers, gulls, terns, and alcids.

The most exciting find for the period was a **Lesser Sand Plover** (formally Mongolian Plover) found on 8/26 at the Ocean Shores Game Range, by local birder Bob Sundstrom. This is a long awaited first for Washington (there are several records each from Oregon and California). Throughout the period the game range was hot (for shorebirds that is). Pretty much all of the regular species were around, but the list of uncommon or rare species was nothing short of impressive. On 8/20 Michael Carmody, former Olympia resident and BIE columnist, located the first of two **Ruffs** seen there this season. Other great stuff from the area over the season included: **Hudsonian Godwit**, **Ruff (2)**, **Stilt Sandpiper**, and some of the regular but less common shorebirds including **Pacific Bairds**, and **Pectoral Sandpipers**.

In early September, Bill Tweit reported the season's first **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, up to 3 **Anna's Hummingbirds** (unusual for the location) and one **Bairds Sandpiper** at Nisqually.

On 9/7, Paul Hicks reported a noticeable **passerine** movement (migrants) near Tenino. On that day he recorded a total of 60 species including a first year **Hermit Warbler**, 2 **Cassin's Vireos**, and the first **Hermit Thrush** of the season.

Also on 9/7, Dave Hayden located a **Great Egret** and 8 **Common Terns** at Riffe Lake in Lewis County. On the following day, Russ Koppendrayner added a single **Bairds** and 3 **Pectoral Sandpipers** to the species found at the lake.

On 9/8, Phil Kelly noted a **Green Heron** at Nisqually, one of a very few reports for this season. (They have been conspicuous by their absence this year, one might say).

On 9/18, an adult **Arctic Loon** in transitional plumage was reported without details from South Sound, off of Squaxin Island in Mason County. This would be a first for the area and one of very few from the state if confirmed (Tweeters).

And finally on 9/25, Matt Pike observed 2 **Great Egrets** at Nisqually. It has been several years for any local reports of this species in South Sound.

Looking ahead, shorebirds are tapering off, while waterfowl, raptor, and sparrow numbers should be picking up. It is also the season when local salmon begin their push through the estuaries and into local streams. Bird activity concentrates in these areas at that time. Mud Bay, Perry and Kennedy Creeks, and the mouths of the Nisqually and Skokomish Rivers should all be good at this time. 🦋

State Cuts Funding for Conservation Projects at Prisons

by Dr. Nalini Nadkarni, Faculty at The Evergreen State College and Co-leader of the Sustainable Prisons Project

[Editor's note: The Sustainable Prisons Project is cooperating on an Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) project to captive-breed Taylor's checkerspot butterflies at a women's prison. See article on ACUB on page 6 in this Echo issue.]

In this note, we provide an update on the Sustainable Prisons Project (SPP), a collaborative program that brings science and sustainability to incarcerated men and women. This project has been ongoing since 2004, and received funding from the Washington State Department of Corrections (WDOC) since 2008. Our multidisciplinary team—from The Evergreen State College, The Department of Corrections, and cooperating research, education, and conservation groups — has successfully carried out projects concerning sustainable operations, education and training, and conservation and research.

Due to the recent severe state budget cuts that affect corrections operations across the agency, the WDOC has had to terminate our program, as of October 1, 2010, with 20 months remaining on our contract. However, our Co-leader, Dan Pacholke, has extended the reassurance that the WDOC will continue to support this work with available staff effort, access to inmates and facilities, and guidance in shaping our program for the future.

Staff and students at The Evergreen State College are now seeking alternative sources of funding so that we can continue and even expand our program. Our first success has been to procure “bridge funding” from reserves of the Academic Division at The Evergreen State College. This will serve as a temporary bridge to give us “breathing space” through June 2011. It will provide enough support to: maintain our basic operations; provide one science lecture per month (rotated among our current corrections centers); support one graduate student; and initiate a green collar training program in arboriculture. It will also allow us to: maintain our website; connect with the media; and write grant proposals to foundations and individuals to further support and extend our work.

We have also been working with our conservation partners — at The Nature Conservancy, the Washington Dept of Fish and Wildlife, the Oregon Zoo

Foundation, and the Department of Defense [ACUB] — to augment their current funding so that we can sustain our current commitments of raising endangered frogs, prairie plants, and rare butterflies to enhance regional biodiversity and provide training for inmates.

Despite this funding setback, awareness of our project expands. Just yesterday, we learned that our project has been featured on the website of the National Science Foundation - a piece produced by Science Nation, which was filmed at Stafford Creek Corrections Center this summer. It captures very well our vision of linking offenders with science and conservation directly, and the benefits that accrue to all involved. Here is the link:

http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/science_nation/sciencebehindbars.jsp

During these difficult economic times, it has been warming to witness people stepping forward to help as much as they can. We have received hundreds of notes and responses to the WDOC termination announcement on our blog from people around the country and around the world, stating their support for the project, and their desire for it to continue. We will work hard to find ways to keep our program moving forward in the short and the long term. 🐿

Purple Martins

From back page

students' data on the colony of martins at the NRCA has already helped DNR make important management decisions in 2009 about restoration projects at the site. As restoration begins, the NRCA will retain some of the purple martin boxes in order to have continued overwater nesting habitat.

The students' data provides a baseline of information for numbers of birds using the site for nesting and it provides information on the colony over time so that DNR and WDFW can begin to compare and see changes.

Thanks to Ruth Pagel with Wild Birds Unlimited in Olympia for lending a spotting-scope each year to the students. The Woodard Bay NRCA martin boxes are quite a distance from shore, and we couldn't monitor without the scope.

This project has had a positive impact on the high school students. One student, Erika Longino, says, “The Purple Martin Project opened my eyes to the birder's world.” So here's hoping the purple martins show up in time for next year's students! 🐿

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* BHAS Board Member

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Black Hills Audubon Society is a non-profit organization. A member chapter of the National Audubon Society, it represents Audubon members in Lewis, Mason and Thurston Counties.

Our goals are to maintain, restore and protect our ecosystems for future generations, and to promote environmental education and nature-based recreation.

Monthly program meetings are usually held at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday evening of each month, September through June, at the Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 West 21st Street, in Olympia.

Board meetings are usually at 5:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. The site varies from month to month; please call the message phone number to inquire as to the location.

Phone and e-mail messages are welcome, but please remember that we are a volunteer-based organization, and it may take us a few days to get back to you.

The Echo is published bi-monthly. Editor: Deb Jaqua. Layout and design by Lee Miller. Graphics by Nature Icons/Ultimate Symbol unless otherwise identified. Ducks on page 5 and loon above by Kirsten Munson.

Material for *The Echo* should be sent to PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or e-mailed to Deb Jaqua at webdeb1@gmail.com. The next *Echo* will be the January/February 2011 issue, the deadline for which is November 29th.

Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) Membership form

Type of Membership—check appropriate box

Member of Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter (BHAS) only

Singles or household

- \$20, regular member
- \$35, regular member for 2 years
- \$50, regular member for 3 years,
- \$15, senior or full-time student
- \$25, senior or full-time student for 2 years
- \$35, senior or full-time student for 3 years

Please make check payable to Black Hills Audubon Society.

All dues go to support local Black Hills Audubon chapter efforts.

Receive the chapter newsletter, *The Echo*, which describes local chapter conservation action, events, and field trips.

Member of Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter and National Audubon (both)

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Please make check payable to National Audubon Society.

Renewals: please renew your National Audubon Membership by filling out the forms sent to you by National and sending directly to National Audubon. Thanks!

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Receive the award-winning national magazine, *Audubon*, and the chapter newsletter, *The Echo*.

Chapter: C 9 Z Y12 0 Z

Subscription only—receive the chapter newsletter, *The Echo* (does not include membership)

- \$10 chapter newsletter only

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Black Hills Audubon Society is a 501(C)3 organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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High School Students Help Save Purple Martins

By Janet Pearce, DNR

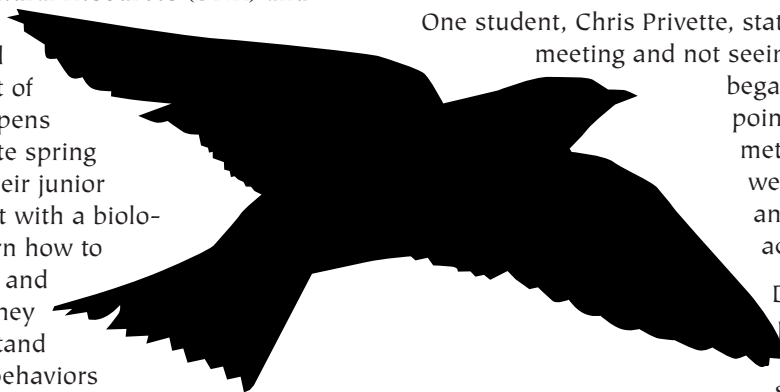
For three years in a row, Capitol High School students in Olympia have monitored declining numbers of the western purple martin for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Most of the students' work happens independently in the late spring and early summer of their junior year. The students meet with a biologist in the field and learn how to observe purple martins and record data. The data they collect helps us understand purple martin nesting behaviors and assists in keeping the birds a common sight in the Puget Sound region.

This year, the western purple martins arrived in Washington a little later than usual because of our cool, wet spring, but luckily it was just in time for

high school students to start their monitoring projects. Scientists believe that the late arrival of these little purple birds was due to the lack of insects. Once it started warming up, insects started flying and purple martins arrived.

One student, Chris Privette, stated, "After the first meeting and not seeing a single bird, I began to feel a little disappointed, but as my team met later in the spring, we started seeing more and more martins and it actually became fun."

DNR considers the purple martins at Woodard Bay Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA) (http://www.dnr.wa.gov/AboutDNR/ManagedLands/Pages/amp_na_woodard.aspx) to be an important species for protection. The



Continued on page 11