

**Black Hills
Audubon Society**
Olympia, Washington

**Volume 38,
Number 4**

July/August 2007



Sightings

As we head into the lazy, hazy days of summer there won't be much rest for the board of Black Hills Audubon. The Conservation committee is working hard on the many development issues we face these days. With the countless meetings, deadlines for submission and technical nature of the beast, and beast it is, there is barely a moment to catch one's breath.

We have also given testimony for the spotted owl recovery plan, which you will see in the article, has become the Bush plan to log our most precious old-growth forests. I have great difficulty understanding how money is more important than the environment, not only for the owls but the balance for our own species is beginning to hang in never-never land.

There was a global warming meeting in Park City, Utah that our own Kris Schoyen attended along with Nina Carter and Lisa Remlinger, sponsored by National Audubon. Climate change is definitely on the minds of National Audubon. I also will be attending global warming advocacy training in Washington D.C. in late June. Meetings are scheduled to talk with our State Senators at the Capital and boy do I have an ear-full for them!! (let me at 'em)

In August we will hold our annual board planning retreat. We will be working on a new strategic plan for our chapter as well as a policy for endowment giving. Whew, I need a vacation.

I would also like to welcome our newest board members, Debbie Nickerson and Whittier Johnson. We are very excited to have them with us and look forward to their wisdom and expertise in helping guide our work. Thanks also to Jean MacGregor for her many outstanding years of service. Jean is still very active and very helpful in all our endeavors. Hopefully she will catch a tiny breath of summer air.

I would like very much to hear from you, our most treasured members. How do you think we are doing? What would you like to see us do, not do. What would you say our priorities should be. Do you have any good bird stories, jokes or items of importance you would like to pass along? We're in touch, so you be in touch. We're all in this together so just send me an e-mail or letter. I can't wait to hear from you. Happy Summer.

—Linda



***No membership meetings for July and August.
We will resume September 20th.***

Tumwater Warehousing

The City of Tumwater's ability to define its character is being delayed by an alliance of three warehouse companies. Reasonable traffic, clean air, and an aesthetic city, are at risk.

The Tumwater City Council heard testimony June 5th on its draft ordinance. This ordinance would ban warehouses greater than 200,000 square feet from certain roads and 1000 feet from residential areas. This ordinance revision required an environmental review, a SEPA. The warehouse alliance has appealed the SEPA Determination of Non-Significance (DNS). Therefore, the City cannot make a decision on its draft ordinance until a hearing examiner issues a decision on the appeal. The decision will probably be made in July. This gives the warehouses more time to vest under existing weaker regulations.

Rural Rezone

Final hearings on the Rural Rezone will be heard July 2. Please testify or contact your Commissioner if you receive this newsletter by July 2. The hearing will be at the Worthington Center at 6:00 pm (5300 Pacific Ave SE Lacey, WA).

BHAS attended the Open House for the draft on May 29. The County has added an "innovative technique" option to the minority and majority options. County staff state that all options have equal weight, despite the titles of majority and minority.

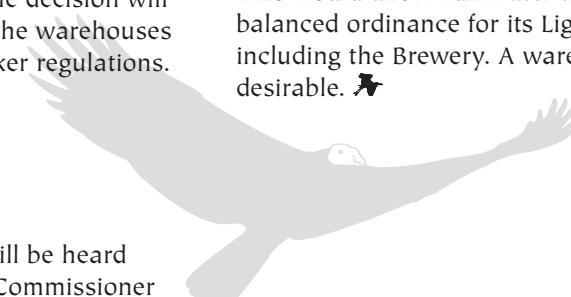
The majority report allows the most development of the rural area. The minority report protects the most amount of land. The minority has more blocks of land, which allows greater connectivity for wildlife. The innovative technique has three variations for calculating housing densities for land with critical areas. Credit for housing density is not given for one) critical areas; 2) critical areas and some critical area buffers, and 3) critical areas and all their buffers. BHAS has been an opponent for granting credit for unbuildable lands for some time.

As of mid-June, some combination of the minority and the innovative technique options might achieve the greatest protection for important wildlife and their habitat in rural Thurston County. We encourage the downzoning of land in the Black River Corridor, Salmon Creek Basin, and western Thurston County in general. However, other areas of the County also deserve to be downzoned including the MacAllister Spring aquifer recharge area. 🦋

Concerns include: warehouses, with alleged few jobs, could consume most of Tumwater's Light Industrial zoned land; these huge impervious projects most likely would increase floods in a known high ground water area, and hundreds to thousands of trucks per day could congest 93rd Avenue, spewing toxic diesel exhaust into Tumwater's air.

Since Target's 2,000,000 square foot distribution center was built, Lacey has limited its warehouses to 200,000 square feet. Lacey has adopted stricter landscape standards and requires sizeable buffers between warehouses. Dupont banned warehousing entirely.

Tumwater should impose an emergency interim ordinance or moratorium, which wouldn't require a SEPA. The City could withdraw the appealed DNS. This would allow Tumwater the time to design a balanced ordinance for its Light Industrial areas, including the Brewery. A warehouse desert is not desirable. 🦋



The Not So Brief Conservation Brief

Quality Rock Products

In early June, the Court of Appeals (COA) finally ruled to publish the decision denying QRP's Special Use Permit (SUP) to expand a gravel mine and allow an asphalt plant immediately adjacent to the Black River Wildlife Refuge. By reversing their February decision not to publish the decision, the COA presumably has increased the importance of the case. If QRP asks for discretionary review (deadline around July 1), the COA will probably respond in two to six months.

Meanwhile, BHAS prods Thurston County, the Department of Ecology, and Department of Natural Resources to enforce compliance of the operations on the original 26 acres. QRP appears to continue to operate with its 5,000 gallons per day exempt well water limit. One questions how QRP has been able to mine for seven years, producing 400,000 tons in 2001-2002 according to their own consultant, when very few acres remained to be mined in 2000. It is time for the County to inspect QRP to determine if QRP is observing its 1985 SUP. 🦋

—Sue Danver, Conservation Chair

South Sound Logistics Center— Formerly Maytown Aggregates

The Port Commissioners decided to present their South Sound Logistics Center (SSLC) update in Tenino on May 14. To their surprise, 140 aroused citizens spoke out against the Port's proposal to have a rail to truck, truck to rail, and warehouse distribution logistics center just southeast of Millersylvania Park. These vocal citizens (Friends of Rocky Prairie- www.friendsofrokyprairie.com) will persist. They are researching and talking to everybody with enthusiasm and alternative ideas. One leader has written a prairie song and is distributing it to radio stations. Another has made ceramic butterflies to call attention to endangered prairie butterflies.

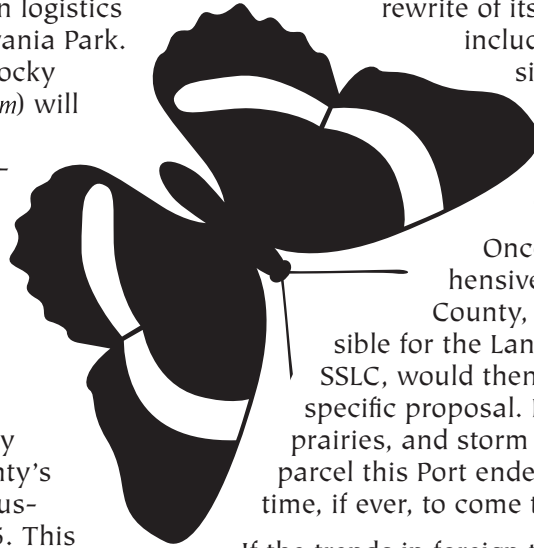
The County has land use authority in this matter. Currently, the County's ordinance does not allow warehousing more than half a mile from I-5. This logistic center is 2.5 miles from I-5.

BHAS contends that the Port will have to revisit its Comprehensive Plan (correctly called a strategic plan), which has not been updated since 1994, to include this logistic center. An update

by the Port Advisory Committee (PAC) would be insufficient. From observation, the PAC does not appear to provide formal recommendations, to the Port Commissioners. The Port of Olympia, to be credible, must do a major rewrite of its Comprehensive Plan, including an EIS, inviting significant input by the public at large. Extensive scoping should be mandatory in this effort.

Once the Port's Comprehensive Plan is updated, the County, the jurisdiction responsible for the Land Use Permits for the SSLC, would then conduct an EIS for the specific proposal. Due to the wetlands, prairies, and storm water issues of this parcel this Port endeavor may take a long time, if ever, to come to fruition.

If the trends in foreign trade continue, an alternative site most likely will have to be identified if the SSLC is to be stopped. BHAS believes a large polluting industrial site is an incongruous neighbor for an 800 acre State Fish & Wildlife site of significant wetlands and prairies. 🦋



The Port of Olympia Comprehensive Plan

A "Conservation Brief" cannot do justice to the activities by the Port of Olympia. The public process, or lack thereof, by the Port of Olympia administration really deserves a dissertation or manuscript.

Port activists, including Black Hills Audubon Society, want the Port of Olympia to engage in proper environmental and land use procedure. Currently, the Port of Olympia is piecemealing

many projects that are obviously connected. The development of the Port, the rails system, the airport, and the South Sound Logistics Center are all interconnected and deserve an extensive Environmental Impact Statement to assess the effects on Thurston County's quality of life. The citizens of Thurston County, who subsidize the Port, deserve significant input and choice in how Thurston County grows wisely. 🦋

Feds' plan for more logging won't help spotted owl!

By Tim Cullinan and Dominick Dellasala

The column by Ren Lohofener, Linda Goodman and Ed Shepard, ("Meeting will focus on northern spotted owl recovery") that appeared in *The Olympian* May 23rd is misleading because it omits important details about the evolution of the proposed spotted owl recovery plan. The current draft is not the one written by a multi-stakeholder recovery team last summer. That proposal was dismissed by political appointees in the Bush Administration, who ordered substantial changes based on politics, not science.

Last September, the recovery team recommended a spotted owl recovery strategy based on the Northwest Forest Plan, the 1994 federal land management plan still considered the most scientifically credible strategy for balancing conservation and timber production. A few weeks later, the team was notified that a secret oversight committee in Washington D.C. ordered the recovery team to de-link the recovery plan from the Northwest Forest Plan. It directed the team to extensively rewrite its plan, de-emphasizing the well documented link between spotted owl survival and old growth forests.

The motive, of course, is to accelerate the old growth logging, thus rolling back more than a decade of progress in safeguarding the values most demanded by the public – clean water, healthy salmon and wildlife populations, open space, recreation and ancient forests.

Contrary to Lohofener's assertion, the addition of a second alternative was not "to generate the broadest discussion" about recovering spotted owls. The additional alternative was ordered by the oversight committee to allow the Forest Service and Bureau of

Land Management, not the qualified experts in the Fish and Wildlife Service, to decide where and when spotted owl habitat will be protected. This would put the fox in charge of the hen house, and lead to a region-wide shell game that will result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of acres of currently protected old-growth forests, pushing the spotted owl closer to the endangered list.

Although the barred owl is a threat, the recovery team recognized that the legacy of old-growth forest logging is a major cause of the spotted owl's alarming decline. The reduction in old-growth habitat made possible by the oversight committee's arbitrary directives will only make matters worse. Scientists recognize that because the spotted owl is rapidly declining from multiple threats, it needs more habitat protected in fixed reserves, not less.

The recovery team did its best to write a credible plan, but its efforts were thwarted by inside-the-beltway political operatives. Fortunately, the extraordinary level of political intervention has attracted the attention of Congress. Now that more daylight is being focused on the Bush administration's manipulation of science, it is time for the Fish and Wildlife Service to scrap the draft recovery plan and start anew.

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A good step would be to appoint independent spotted owl scientists to the recovery team and insure they can work in a process free from political interference. Credible science, not political ideology, needs to determine the best strategy for conserving the spotted owl and the old-growth forests that hang in the balance.

Note by BHAS: Public comments are accepted

until August 25th. To find out State Audubon's position go to www.wa.audubon.org, or call Lisa at 786-8020.

Reprinted from *The Olympian* of June 12, 2007

County should be fighting, not enabling, rural land rush

By Kristin Kelly and Marilyn Hoggarth

It's farmland. It's open space. NO, it's a car dealership!

A recent state Court of Appeals ruling will allow a huge car lot and big box stores to be developed on prime farmland at the intersection of I-5 and Highway 530, known far and wide as Island Crossing. This decision, suddenly reversing multiple previous decisions by growth management hearings boards, the Superior Court, and the Appeals Court itself, is very disturbing. More disturbing is the larger pattern of vanishing farmland and the willingness of elected officials to let it happen. If we, as a state and as a county, are really serious about keeping farming a viable industry here, we need to change the decisions we're making—from the Court of Appeals decision to the decisions made daily about the fate of Snohomish's agricultural lands by our County Council.

Most of what's left of county farmland lies in the floodplains of our two major river basins - the Stillaguamish and Snohomish. Even in these frequently flooded areas, population growth has brought tremendous pressure for development, everything from car lots and airport expansions to radio towers, wetland banks, recreation, and clusters of rural McMansions. Farmers, if buying land to farm, cannot match the prices offered by speculators, and if retiring, can't be expected to sell their major asset at a fraction of its fair market value. If we are serious about keeping a viable farming industry here in Snohomish County, we need policies that truly enable farmland preservation and uphold land use regulation in a consistent fashion.

The County Council needs to listen to local groups like Agriculture for Tomorrow, the Stillaguamish Flood Control District and Futurewise, as well as dozens of neighborhood groups and thousands of citizens who want to protect both farmland and the benefits that a vibrant farming industry brings to the place we all live in. While lawyers and judges may parse the legalities of building car lots on prime agricultural land in the floodplain, the County Council has a broader responsibility.

Our tax dollars should be used to help keep farm-

land protected and producing - not used to fight legal battles to pave it over. Short-term profit is not the only engine of progress and prosperity. Far from it. Locally grown products like milk, vegetables, hay, nursery stock, grains, and seeds and corn for the growing biodiesel industry, support local industry, are fresher, and burn less fuel in transport to the local consumer. Floodplain land kept in agriculture greatly reduces the cost, borne by the public, of flood damage to infrastructure and property, and better protects against impacts to the habitat of wildlife, salmon, steelhead, and the general health of the Puget Sound.

The county is working on a program called Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) to preserve farmland, but progress awaits hard policy decisions. Briefly, TDR enables landowners to recover the market value of their farmland by selling the development rights, thereby preserving the land for agriculture. Developers who purchase these rights can use them to increase building densities elsewhere. But programs across the country show that for TDR to succeed, zoning and density rules must be strict enough to make it a sound business option for both sellers and buyers. County zoning that allows 10-acre subdivision of farmland can make TDR a tough sell, and few developers will pay for higher densities they can get just by making a docket request. This year's docket requests total almost 100 acres of proposed conversions.

The need is immediate. Despite pro-farming rhetoric and some effort to work with farmers, Snohomish County is moving toward a rural land rush, with farmland as a major target. How the council responds will ultimately decide the fate of farming in our county. You just can't expect sustainable agriculture where the land is continually converted piece by piece to housing and commercial development, and farmers increasingly find themselves surrounded by unaffordable land and incompatible uses.

A viable farming industry requires a commitment by everyone. It takes a commitment from the public, from consumers and from county government, in addition to continuing investment by the farmers themselves. It means letting our elected officials know that you do not want any more farmland to disappear. 🐾

Kristin Kelly is Snohomish County program director for Futurewise. Marilyn Hoggarth is president of Agriculture for Tomorrow and a farmer in the Stillaguamish River Valley.

E3 Washington Builds Support for Environmental Education

Black Hills Audubon is helping to support an exciting statewide process to strengthen and expand environmental education for everyone who lives, works, and plays in Washington. Led by the Environmental Education Association of Washington, "E3" stands for Education, Economy, and Environment underscoring the idea a healthy educational system, healthy economies, and environmental quality are all intertwined and interdependent.

The E3 Washington initiative (www.e3washington.org) is a planning process that will involve 18 regional meetings across the state over a two-year period. On Friday, June 1st, over 200 community leaders interested in or involved in environmental education in Thurston or Mason Counties met at The Evergreen State College for one such meeting; the meeting's participants worked to identify

qualities of the environmentally literate citizen of the future and the strategies required to create these citizens. The recommendations that emerge from each of these regional meetings will lead to regional environmental education plans and also contribute to a statewide plan.

E3 is also a momentum-building effort, in that environmental education must grow. In school and college settings, in workplaces, and in neighborhoods, all of us need the knowledge, skills, and motivation to become the best possible stewards of our landscapes and communities. For that to happen, environmental education needs wider support, more resources, and greater visibility. The E3 Washington initiative represents an exciting first step: watch their website for continuing developments and the emerging statewide plan! 🗺️

Feeders could be killing songbirds

By Lisa Stiffler, reporter

Bird lovers, take heed. Local birds are getting sick and dying of a disease caused by salmonella. The bacteria are transmitted by bird droppings and can be spread among birds at feeders.

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife is advising people to take down their feeders for a few weeks or until the end of summer. The other option is implementing a routine of fastidious daily cleaning.

"You can help a whole lot by cleaning up, but in the face of an epidemic like we have going on, you have to clean every day," said Kristin Mansfield, a Fish and Wildlife veterinarian. "Otherwise, they're probably hurting the birds more than they're helping."

All kinds of birds can carry the bacteria without showing symptoms of the disease, which is called salmonellosis. Sick birds will act tame, fluffing their feathers and allowing people to approach. Little can be done to treat them, Mansfield said.

The birds most likely to get sick are songbirds including finches, grosbeaks and pine siskins. These birds often flock at feeders.

Mansfield said the bacteria are always present, but about every three to four years a disease outbreak occurs. This year is somewhat unusual for how widespread it is, she said. In recent weeks, residents in Eastern and Western Washington have reported about four dozen dead gold-

finches, pine siskins and purple finches.

Some of them were tested at Washington State University to confirm the salmonellosis.

Officials with the state Health Department said it's possible but unlikely that humans could be sickened by salmonella from the birds. Exposure could occur from handling infected birds or their droppings, or if a pet were to catch a sick bird.

Researchers also are waiting to see how local bird populations are affected this summer by West Nile virus, transmitted most frequently by infected mosquitoes. It kills crows, ravens and jays, and causes serious illness in less than one percent of people infected with the virus.

Last year West Nile virus killed more than a dozen birds in Washington. That number could climb.

"We could be in for a big year this year," Mansfield said.

Avian influenza, a disease that has killed countless wild and domestic birds in Asia and parts of Europe, the Near East and Africa, has not been found in the United States.

P-I reporter Lisa Stiffler can be reached at (206) 448-8042 or lisastiffler@seattlepi.com.

Read her blog on the environment at blog.seattlepi.com/environment.

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Celebrating 20 Years with Great Hits

Theme of 20th Annual Summer Lecture Series at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

On Wednesday, July 11, Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge will begin its 20th annual Summer Lecture Series. The 2007 Summer Lecture Series is titled, "Celebrating 20 years with Great Hits," and features a variety of talks on environmental topics ranging from butterflies to global warming. The free lectures are held every Wednesday evening during July and August starting July 11.

All lectures begin at 7:00 p.m. and are held at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center auditorium. Attendance is limited to 100 and seating will be issued starting at 6:00 p.m. on a first-come basis. The entrance fee is waived for those attending the lectures. On lecture nights, the Visitor Center will be open until 7:00 p.m. and again after the lecture. For more information, call the Refuge Office, (360) 753-9467 or visit www.fws.gov/nisqually.

July 11: Wings of Beauty

Speaker: **Idie Ulch**, Founding President, Washington Butterfly Association, Photo Editor of "Butterflies of Cascadia"

July 18: Restoring the Friendly Flame: Fire in the Dry Forests of the Pacific NW

Speaker: James Agee, Professor of Forest Resources, University of Washington

July 25: A New Earthquake Paradigm for Western Washington

Speaker: Brian Sherrod, Research Geologist, U.S. Geological Survey and University of Washington

August 1: Reflections on 25 Years of Rainforest Studies

Speaker: Nalini Nadkarni, Faculty, The Evergreen State College

August 8: Rainbows on the Wing: Dragonflies

Speaker: Dennis Paulson, Author, Director Emeritus, Slater Museum of Natural

History and University of Puget Sound

August 15: The Future of Water, Ice, and Snow Under Global Warming

Speaker: Peter Rhines, Professor of Oceanography and Atmospheric Sciences, University of Washington

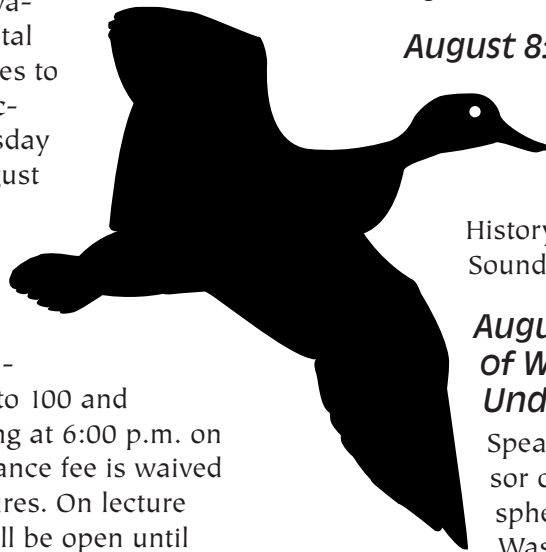
August 22: The Secret Lives of Whales: Tracking the Movements and Underwater Behavior of Blue and Humpback Whales

Speaker: John Calambokidis, Research Biologist, Cascadia Research Institute

August 29: Wildlife of South Puget Sound —Ramblings about Seldom Seen Critters

Speaker: Kelly McAllister, Habitat Connectivity Biologist, Washington Department of Transportation

For more information contact
Sheila McCartan (360) 753-9467
sheila_mccartan@fws.gov



Field Trip Reports

Birding in Eastern Washington Trip Report

Thirteen birders participated in BHAS's two-day field trip to eastern Washington on the first weekend of May. The trip started with a life bird for many of us at Elk Heights east of Cle Elum, where three **Black-backed Woodpeckers** were observed. This species was also new for Virginia Mouw and her 660th North American bird. It was exciting for all of us to share this bird with her. Life birds don't fly by often for Virginia anymore. The woodpeckers stayed with us for a long time, moving up the burned snags starting at ground level, giving us close looks and a good show.

The rest of the trip was just as wonderful, with 110 bird species sighted on the trip, most of which came as we meandered east of the Columbia River in Grant and Adams Counties. Frenchmen's Coulee and its walls of columnar basalt gave us extended looks of two **Chukar, Rock Wrens**, a **Prairie Falcon**, a **Raven** nest with chicks, and the song of the **Canyon Wren**. Other stops yielded sightings of **American Avocets, Wilson's Phalaropes, Black-necked Stilts, Swainson's Hawks**, many other birds, and even 41 painted turtles! Near the end of the first day outside Othello, we watched two **Burrowing Owls** sitting on top of a concrete irrigation ditch and a third poking its head out of a nest hole, totally camouflaged with the cement and ground. The last stop of the day

was to see the declining Washington Ground Squirrel in Warden.

Our second day began at Moses Lake Park viewing a pair of **Townsend's Solitaires**. Next was a visit to Potholes Reservoir to see Washington's large-

est heron rookery, where many nests of **Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons**, and **Double-crested Cormorants** were present. We then drove north to Wilson Creek, where coulee walls held a **Barn Owl**, another **Raven** nest, and a pair of **Ferruginous Hawks** chasing a **Golden Eagle** from their territory.

This location also contained a lakeside pasture, where four species of **blackbirds** were seen: **Tricolored, Yellow-headed, Red-winged**, and **Brewer's**.

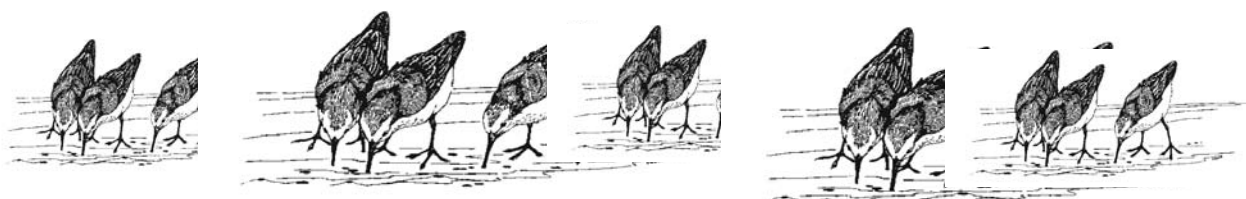
It was a wonderful weekend, with desert flowers blooming among the sagebrush. The blue lupine, pink and lilac phlox, red paintbrush, and yellow flowers made the shrub-steppe seem as if we were in an Impressionist painting. Thank you to trip leaders Gary Wiles and Kristen Stewart for this field trip. It was well organized and we all enjoyed great views of birds that we don't normally get to see in western Washington. 🐦

— Jan Sharkey

Field Trip reports continued on page 11



Virginia Mouw – longtime BHAS member and avid birder.



BHAS calendar

July 2007

Thursday mornings weekly, beginning at 8:15 am. Nisqually Wildlife Refuge birding hikes. Meet at the Nisqually check-in desk. This is for more experienced birders. On the first Thurs. of the month, they walk the 5 1/2mi. loop and on the other days they walk the McAllister Creek trail and north to the photo blind loop. No registration necessary, just show up. Leader Phil Kelly

August 2007

Thursday mornings, begins at 8:15 am: Nisqually Wildlife Refuge birding hikes. Meet at the Nisqually check-in desk. No registration necessary, just show up. Leader Phil Kelly.

August 4, Saturday: Paradise at Mount Rainier. 6 am to late afternoon. Leader Kristin Stewart. Meet at Martin Way Park and Ride. Come prepared for mountain weather. Bring food and water. Limit of 4 cars, approximately 16 participants. Call BHAS office at 360 352-7299 to register.

The nearly annual trip to Mt Rainier is more about enjoying the wildflowers, and the beauty of the mountain, than it is about hardcore birding. We do usually hike to Panorama Point in search of White-tailed Ptarmigan, and Gray-crowned Rosy Finches and have been successful about half of the time. The trail to Panorama Point is about 1600 feet of elevation gain from the parking lot, and is reasonably strenuous. No one is expected to hike the whole way if they do not wish to do so, although the best wildflowers are found at the higher elevations at this time of the year. Mountain birds are not abundant, but sometimes we have nice sightings.

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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.

General membership meetings are 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 at 5:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month. The site varies from month to month, so please call us at the office if you would like to sit in.

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. Editors: Bill and Linda Johnson. Layout and design by Lee Miller. Graphics by Nature Icons/Ultimate Symbol unless initialed.

Material for *The Echo* should be sent to PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or e-mailed to Linda Johnson at lindashair@comcast.net

Deadline for the September/October 2007 issue is **August 10, 2007.**

Goodrich Pond and Trail Trip Report

This morning, Sherry and I led a Black Hills Audubon trip to the Goodrich pond and trail. The day started off rainy but eased throughout the morning, so we could all enjoy the walk. The pond was about a quarter full, but had lots of activity. **Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Bufflehead, Northern Shoveler, American Wigeon, and Mallards** dominated the pond. As for shorebirds, 10 **Dunlin**, two **Greater yellowlegs**, 6 **Killdeer**, and 4 **Long-billed Curlews** were seen. Lots of **swallows** were flitting about everywhere, which include **Tree, Violet-green, Barn, and Cliff**, Some **Wood Ducks** and **Common Mergansers** were seen on the river, and a pair of **Bald Eagles** were perched next to their nest tree.

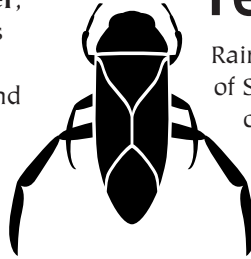
Golden-crowned Sparrows are still lingering, and **White-crowned** and **Savannah Sparrows** have shown up. **Common Yellowthroat, Orange-crowned Warbler, Scrub Jay, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, Varied Thrush,** and

Morning Dove were all seen along the trail.

The **curlews** were seen foraging in the muddy edges along the pond and up on the grassy banks to the right. Now is the time to check the pond on a regular basis to see what else shows up. 🦋

— Dave Hayden

Chehalis River Discovery Trail trip report



Rain, that's what we woke up to on the morning of Saturday, April 7. With no sign of letting up, our field trip to the Chehalis River Discovery Trail was in serious jeopardy. At the parking lot our group gathered, and a vote was put out. Do we or don't we? Amazingly, a unanimous decision was made. The trip was on. Scanning the pond at the trailhead was the first part of our journey. We saw **American Wigeons, Green-winged Teals, Pintails, Buffle-**

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heads, Shovelers, Dunlin, and Greater Yellowlegs. Our best birds of the day were four **Long-billed Curlews**, which were a first for Lewis County. Our walk along the trail did not disappoint our group, either. We saw **Red-breasted Sapsucker, Brown Creeper, Varied Thrush, Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Cliff Swallow, Scrub Jay, Bald Eagle** at the nest, **Wood Duck** in a back slough, and Black-tailed Deer. As our trip came to a close, we were all educated by Janet Strong from the Chehalis River Basin Land Trust, on the history of this new trail and land purchase by the city of Centralia. On the bright side (no, not the sun), we managed to tally 46 species for the day despite the weather conditions. 🦋

— Dave Hayden

Ridgefield Trip Report

On May 19th, I led a Black Hills Audubon field trip down to the River “S” unit of Ridgefield NWR. The main highlight of the day was 21 **White-faced Ibis** located at the northern end of Ruddy Lake. While scanning the Ibis with our scope, we noticed one with a darker face, and lacking prominent white markings around the eye. We assumed it may have been

a **Glossy Ibis**, but before we could get any photos or study the birds for a little longer, they all flew off towards Bachelor Island. Only four remained, but our Ibis in question left. That’s just how things go sometimes.

During the day we searched for more Ibis at other locations, but found none. Our group had such a good time the first time around, we all opted to make a second trip around.

Other noted birds were: one breeding plumage **Eared Grebe, Northern Pintails**, one **Eurasian Wigeon** in the mix with **Americans**, two **Blue-winged Teal**, one **Green-winged Teal**, many **Cinnamon Teal** and **Ruddy Ducks**, 5 **Redheads**, 3 **Lesser Scaups**, two **Great Egrets**, three **American Bitterns**, heard many **Sora** and **Virginia Rails**, two **Greater Yellowlegs**, 3 **Turkey Vultures**, 3 **Western Wood Pewees**, one **Willow Flycatcher**, one **Northern Rough-winged Swallow**, 3 **Vaux’s Swifts**, 3 **White-breasted Nuthatches**, several **Yellow Warblers**, one **Wilson’s Warbler**, 11 **Yellow-headed Blackbirds**, two **Bull-ock’s Orioles**, two **Black-headed Grosbeaks**, and one **Western Tanager**. 🦋

—Dave Hayden

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