

Black Hills Audubon Society

Olympia, Washington

Volume 38,
Number 2

March/April 2007



Sightings

Here we are zooming up on Spring and Black Hills Audubon is **bursting** with news and goings on. You will read in the **conservation update** about our recent win, along with Thurston County, regarding the Quality Rock Products appeal. This was a long, hard and well-fought conservation issue. It is with great happiness that we have made it through the dark and cold of winter on this one. Sue Danver led us all the way!

Planning is well under way for our **Annual Dinner and Fundraising Auction**. We have some really nice items coming in and I am looking forward to our guest speaker, Jim Lynch. You will be able to purchase a copy of *The Highest Tide* and have Mr. Lynch give you a personal signing after his presentation. That will be

fun. I am also very excited at the chance to meet you there. We have plenty to celebrate!

Our birding adventures continue to provide many opportunities for beginners and advanced birders. So shed those winter coats and considering going on one of our outings. Your continuing interest in these events is critical to our on-going success. Kristin Stewart does an incredible job for us in organizing these events. It is no small task!

And so it is, with the happiness of spring that we move forward, radiant in the light of a warm sun and fragrant, fresh air that we breathe deeply, giving us strength and nourishment, that we may grow in our work and succeed in our purpose. 🐾

— Linda

Thursday, March 15

Pygmy Rabbits

Dave Hays from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will update us on the department's efforts to protect this endangered species. He will hopefully have just returned from the field where new numbers of this little critter will be re-introduced to the small existing population in Grant County. Dave is an authority on these charismatic not-so-mega fauna.



Thursday, April 19

Gone to the Goonies: Midway Atoll

Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge/Battle of Midway National Memorial, part of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument, is probably best remembered for the WWII Battle of Midway. However, the military has departed and today the islands have gone to the birds. Laysan and black-footed albatross abound with the largest nesting colonies in the world. Midway Atoll also

To next page

BHAS membership meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at the Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 W. 21st Street, in Olympia. Social hour is at 7pm, with programs beginning promptly at 7:30. Driving directions: From I-5 in Olympia, take Exit 105 following the State Capital/City Center route. After the tunnel, turn left (south) onto Capital Way. After 7 blocks, turn right on 21st Avenue. The museum is two blocks down on the left. The Coach House meeting room and adjacent parking are behind the Museum building of Olympia.

Thurston County and BHAS Prevail over Quality Rock Products in the Court of Appeals

On Wednesday, February 6, the Tacoma State Court of Appeals (COA) agreed with Thurston County and BHAS's appeal and reversed a Mason County Superior Court decision. The Court of Appeals denied Quality Rock Products' request for a Special Use Permit to expand its gravel mine, build an asphalt plant, and resurrect a temporary (three small jobs in the late 80s) concrete plant into an enormous concrete facility immediately adjacent to the Black River National Wildlife Refuge.

This victory is significant but we must remain cautious in our optimism during the period when Quality Rock Products has the opportunity to appeal to the State Supreme Court. (This *Echo* article was written February 11 and we believe QRP has 30 days to appeal.)

The COA decision is clear and strong in its agreement with the County's and BHAS's arguments. Basically, the panel of three judges agreed that: 1) QRP did not provide the specific water use information the Board needed to evaluate the total impact on the Black River. The Black River is impaired and no further water withdrawals are allowed from July 1 to September 30. 2) The County Hearing Examiner approved the permit with "no findings as to the specific effect the project would have on the Black River on the Black River" after the BOCC had requested in its remand "a detailed analysis of the impact to the groundwater, aquifer and the Black River."

QRP also argued that their permit should not be denied because we failed to appeal the SEPA Mitigated Determination of Non-significance (environmental review). The COA disagreed. In discussion, Appellate Court Judge Armstrong stated:

"The county issued the MDNS without access to most of the information that the hearing examiner and the Board ultimately based their decision on. For instance, Quality Rock's response to the environmental checklist, that it completed to obtain the MDNS, did not identify the Black River as a surface water body in the proposed expansion's vicinity."

Enough about legal matters—Thank you all!

This battle has taken 5½ years and it probably will have some more twists and turns. Our standing has greatly improved though and we should celebrate that.

We are extremely grateful to the Board of County

Commissioners for joining us in and bearing the court costs for this appeal. Without their participation, our chances would have been greatly reduced. We extend a warm thank you to Bob MacLeod, Cathy Wolfe and Diane Oberquell.

The BHAS Board heartily thanks our attorneys Dave Bricklin and Devon Shannon. This is Devon's first year since clerking at the Court of Appeals, and this is her first significant win. We would like to thank Elizabeth Petrich, County Prosecutor, for her excellent work and dedication to this case.

I personally would like to thank the BHAS Board for keeping faith during this long ordeal.

There has been little time for reflection. I hope to compose a worthy thank you in the next *Echo*. Please remember, we could not have done it without you, our members and neighbors, and your emotional and financial support. Many of you participated in this effort in one way or another. The contributions were crucial but it was the personal conversations, insights, and knowledge that kept me/us going. Let me share one from yesterday; my last of hundreds of positive experiences.

A couple, of very modest income, dared to have a wooden sign advocating for the protection of the Black River Wildlife Refuge in their yard. I occasionally dropped in to update them on the process. On February 10, I went to report our victory to them. They had read the news in *The Olympian*. With huge smiles on their faces they announced that they had joined Audubon. They then asked me to look at the beautiful calendar that Audubon had sent them. There was the February picture of chickadees in their kitchen.

Yes, it was all worth it! 🐦

—Sue Danver

April program

From page 1

has nesting colonies of 15 other seabird species.

However, the albatross face threatening issues at sea and on land—longline fishing, plastics, lead, and invasive species. Valerie Elliott had the opportunity to visit Midway Atoll last December. Her presentation will cover the albatross and other species found on and around Midway Atoll.

Conservation Updates

Cluster Housing Interim Ordinance Language Change

BHAS discovered a major loophole in Thurston County's Interim Ordinance for cluster housing. (An interim ordinance is temporary code used while revisions to the original code are being created.)

BHAS attended the 2004 work sessions and hearings on developing the cluster housing interim ordinance. BHAS believes the intent of the commissioners was that no cluster housing project would be less than 20 acres or greater than 100 acres. We remember that the Commissioners wanted to continue to allow moderate sized clusters during the interim ordinance. Unfortunately, the language of the interim ordinance said "lot" instead of "project" when defining the acreage limits.

This past October, BHAS realized that a developer could align several contiguous lots, connect the infrastructure between the lots, and end up with a

huge, rather than moderate, cluster development. In the worst case scenario, numerous lots could be juxtaposed, on a large parcel of land, such that a project of scores, if not hundreds of houses, could be legally platted. We asked the County Commissioners to clarify the intent of their ordinance language. If this correction is not made, developers could buy huge tracts of land (especially lands with critical areas) and develop urban like developments on County rural lands.

In late January, the County told BHAS that the Commissioners did understand the problem and would enter a formal process to correct the language. Once the preferred language is finalized by the County Land Use attorney, there will be a 60 day notice to the public and a formal hearing to address the language change. 🐾

The Struggle Continues: Action Needed Now

Support Planning Commission's Proposal One

In 2004 Futurewise successfully challenged several aspects of Thurston County's updates to its Comprehensive Land Use Plan to the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board.

The reason for the challenge is that the County's plan fails to protect aquifers, rural character and promotes urban sprawl. Thurston County zoned 21,000 acres at 1 du/5acres (1 dwelling unit per 5 acres).

Based on legal advice from the County's Attorney, the County challenged the Growth Board to the Supreme Court. Their opinion is expected at the end of February.

Should we act now or wait for the Court Decision?

For the last 18 months, the Thurston County Planning Commissioners have been taking public testimony, holding open houses and conducting public meetings to come up with recommendations on how the county can comply with the Growth Board's decision.

Three proposals were offered by the Planning Commission because they could not reach a consensus on any one plan.

Proposal 1 more closely mirrors the public comment received during the open houses and hearings. This plan rezones 39.6% and more adequately

protects rural character and habitat lands.

Proposal 2 rezones 38% but is less protective of rural character and habitat lands. In addition, proposal 2 does not recommend rezoning unbuildable lands. Participants at the workshops in January 2006 identified unbuildable lands as the top priority for rezoning.

Proposal 3 was presented to the County Commissioners as what the county could "get away with." This option barely meets the straight face test. Vulnerable aquifer recharge areas are only protected by 1 du/10 acres if parcels have multiple public benefit. For example, the properties must be all three of vulnerable aquifers, wellhead protection areas and areas with elevated nitrate or chloride levels.

Act Now

With over 65% of Thurston County voting down I-933, we must now turn and use this voice at the county level. It is crucial that we protect our drinking water, parks and neighborhoods, our family farms, and our quality of life.

Please contact your County Commissioners and voice your support for Proposal 1. You can safely assume that the moneyed interests are already screaming loudly. Here is the County Commission link: <http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/bocc/> 🐾

The Sad Saga of Munn Lake— How some developers play the game

BHAS monitors pre-submission development plans in an attempt to stop the most egregious developments. We may comment on one a year. The Deschutes River Highlands (DRH) on Munn Lake, just west of the Deschutes River in Tumwater, is such a case.

Munn Lake is a 34 acre, relatively pristine lake. It has a long established Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Wood Duck buffer on its east shore. Resident and migratory waterfowl use Munn Lake, which even has boat motor restrictions. Just east of Munn Lake there is a 107 acre parcel of land which borders the Deschutes River. The State Threatened Pocket Gopher, River Otter, a Red-tailed Hawk, and an eagle reside in this parcel of wetlands, woodlands, prairie, and bluffs (now cleared). This “island” of land, nestled between the Deschutes and Munn Lake, is the location for the DRH development.

Sadly, somehow this area was zoned for urban density. The 327 house plat was reviewed by Thurston County. In 2004, the neighbors of Munn Lake challenged aspects of the development, asking protection for their wells and the abundant wildlife. The neighbors argued that pesticide and fertilizer runoff could compromise Munn Lake and the nearby Deschutes River.

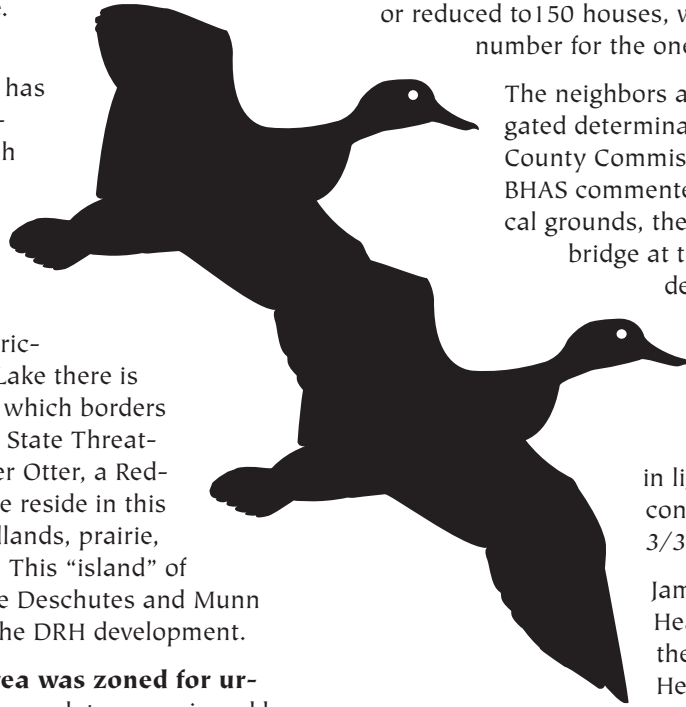
BHAS asked that no residential trail go in the wood duck buffer and that a southern wildlife corridor between the Deschutes River and Munn Lake remain open space. BHAS also fought hard to prevent a southern access to the development. A very expensive bridge would be needed to go over a very low area between Munn Lake and Trail’s End Lake to access the southern end of the development. This bridge would require a Shoreline Permit. Outside of the development and solely to access the development, the bridge would need to be paid for by Thurston County residents. (Federal funds are very unlikely because this road would be a dead end with the Deschutes River east of DRH.)

The City of Tumwater, which will eventually annex the DRH, requested that there be a second access,

which would require the southern bridge. The City of Tumwater made its request for health and safety reasons. Tumwater believes the one northern access for 327 houses, on a major curve of an already busy Henderson Avenue, is inadequate. As a resolution, the BHAS requested that the plat be entirely denied or reduced to 150 houses, which is a reasonable number for the one north access.

The neighbors appealed the SEPA mitigated determination of significance to the County Commissioners. For this appeal, BHAS commented on why, on ecological grounds, there should not be a major bridge at the south end of the development. The Commissioners, in their decision, said that “the southern access will however not be open to general traffic... in light of environmental consideration.” (*Decision*, 3/30/05).

James Driscoll, the County Hearing Examiner, granted the 327 house development. He allowed a recreational trail through the wood duck buffer. He neither made a Finding of Fact on Tumwater’s request for a second access nor on BHAS’s request for a smaller development. (*First decision*, and *second Amended Decision*, 2/11/05) 🦋



Tenino Urban Growth boundary expansion request

The County Commissioners only expanded the Tenino Urban Growth boundary to include the sewage treatment area. Critical prairie habitat and wetlands were not included in the UGB. BHAS had requested their protection. BHAS thanks member and butterfly expert Bill Yake for his hard work on this issue.

January 16, 2007—

Developers request a third Amendment to Plat

This January, with only ten days notice, BHAS was informed that a third amendment has been proposed for DRH. The developers want to expand the envelope of their entire development. The approximate 250' open space (southern wildlife corridor) between Munn Lake and the Deschutes River would be replaced by housing. With a mandatory fence between the camp to the south and the development, wildlife would be prohibited from moving from the river to the lake.

The neighborhood coalition, emotionally and financially drained, provided about five comment letters. Only the developer, BHAS and the City of Tumwater appeared at the hearing to testify. BHAS argued that SEPA appeal decision was made by the Commissioners with the wildlife corridor intact. Therefore, this request should be denied. The City of Tumwater requested the southern access again. BHAS reminded the court that this southern access had been denied by the SEPA appeal decision. Since the number of houses allowed was not subject to discussion,

BHAS would have liked to but couldn't request the reduction of the plat to 150 houses.

Oddly, there is a blank section in the middle of the plat, in which it appears that another 10 houses could be built. Within this blank area is the statement, "for future development". BHAS commented that the amended plat should be denied with the existence of this undefined area. BHAS wonders whether the developer will come back and ask for a fourth amendment to add ten more houses if he is granted this envelope expansion.

The developer's lawyer dismissed BHAS's comments with "No evidence, only community displeasure with the subdivision and developer was offered. Community displeasure alone is not sufficient to deny a permit."

Welcome to the world of trying to encourage responsible environmental developments. Mr. Driscoll's decision was delayed from February 6 to February 13. We remain in suspense at the time of this writing. 🐾

Imagine the Future with \$100 million for Wildlife, Birds and People!

Remember when the local Audubon members and their land conservancy partners saved the small wetlands near Spokane —Reardon Ponds—from development? You and your chapter met the challenge and raised part of the money to buy the property. Audubon Washington contributed its lobbying expertise to get more money into the state budget for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) to complete the Reardon Pond transaction. We all celebrated the day when the property became a permanent birding site near Spokane! It is a great tourism draw and the local governments love the added tax revenue.

Imagine what we can accomplish with \$100 million for habitat for birds and wildlife! Every month I get calls from Audubon members asking how they can save a small wetland or a forest or a farm in their neighborhood. Those places are home to their favorite Ruby-crowned Kinglet or Cedar Waxwing flocks. I'd like to tell them that \$100 million is available from the WWRP so they can save those special places.

Now, you have a chance to save birds and their habitat by asking for more funding in the WWRP.

Governor Gregoire's budget allocated \$70 million for the WWRP. But, there are over \$100 million in projects waiting to be funded. We think the state Legislature should approve \$100 million for WWRP to save farms, forests, wetland, and special places, like Reardon Ponds. Call your legislators today and ask for \$100 million in WWRP.

For more information and to see what projects are funded in your area go to: www.wildliferecreation.org.

Nina Carter, Executive Director Audubon Washington and Washington Wildlife Recreation Coalition Member

Port Program Most Interesting

Port expert concludes that local communities bear the costs and environmental problems of port development and operations while the region usually benefits.

Around 45 people attended the Audubon and Carnegie Group sponsored lecture by Chris Fowler (1/24/07) on how containerization is changing the paradigm of port and marine operations. Mr.

Continued on next page

Changes to Washington's vesting laws

BHAS attended and entered written testimony endorsing changes to Washington's vesting laws. The revision to an RCW would change the time of vesting from the completion of application, very early on in the process, to the time of "substantial construction."

In its testimony, BHAS provided the following example which illustrated why BHAS endorses HB 1436 and SB 5507.

There are several traditional wintering duck ponds east of I-5 on 113th, near Case Road. Maybe you have gone there to look and enjoy the presence of ducks. An application for a cluster development, named Littlejohns Estates, was finalized in June 2004 for this location. Forty-seven houses have been platted on 155 acres, scattered amongst the wetlands between I-5 and Case Road. Much of the area is wet and cannot be built on. This area is also in the Salmon Basin drainage for which the County made recommendations in 2003 to limit development because of flooding within the drainage.

Despite all these high water concerns, the developer was granted the maximum of 47 houses. The develop-

er got credit for all the unbuildable lands (wetlands), plus a 52% bonus for clustering the housing.

In August 2004, two months after Littlejohns Estates vested, the County imposed its cluster housing interim ordinance. The interim ordinance eliminated bonus credit to developers for clustering. This development would have been allowed only 31 houses. I am not even sure if construction has even begun in 2007.

If HB 1436 and SB 5507 were to become law (would not be retroactive), and a development like the above were to occur, then it would have to observe the regulations existing at "substantial development" and not at application..... a reduction of 16 houses in the case of Littlejohns Estates.

With individual septic systems squeezed next to wetland buffers, the likelihood is that these wintering duck areas will accumulate too many nutrients and the wetlands will be compromised. With the very high water table, human health might be in jeopardy as well.

Please call your State Representative and Senator and ask them to endorse HB 1436 and SB 5507. 🐾

Study Group from Northwest Earth Institute

Please join kindred souls at Traditions Café for the initial meeting of the course "Discovering a Sense of Place", Wednesday, March 21, at 5 pm. This course is offered by the Northwest Earth Institute's Environmental Education program.

We encourage you to bring friends and family to this gathering for it is a topic that has no borders. Many of you are fans of Wendell Berry and perhaps have read his book, "A Sense of Place". In this book he states, "If you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are. With a sense of place, your identity is defined—to a significant extent—by the natural features of the place where you live".

Most of us in Audubon are aware of our sense of place but we all could use a "tune up". This program is an opportunity to involve other members of our community in understanding this "place" we live in and hopefully bring about changes in the way we accept responsibility for it.

Please feel free to call me at (360) 570-1214. If Wednesday, March 21, at 5 pm, is not convenient for you please contact me. Traditions Café is very

willing to work with us for a time that meets our needs. May I add, their sandwiches are quite good and the gingerbread (with whipped cream) is delicious. 🐾

—Connie Christy

This website for more info on this course is at www.nwei.org. **Traditions Café**, Wednesday, March 21, 5pm.

Port development

From previous page

Fowler's presentation hopefully will trigger the long missing crucial dialogue by the Port of Olympia with Thurston County residents about port economics and the impact of port development on Olympia and Thurston County. 🐾

Chris Fowler's lecture may be seen on public access TV, channel 22 on these dates and time: Thursday 3/1/2007, 1 pm, Saturday 3/3/2007, 9 pm, Thursday 3/8/2007, 1pm, and Saturday 3/10/2007, 8 pm.

BHAS calendar

March 2007

Thursday March 15: Program—Pygmy Rabbits

March 18, Sunday: Chehalis Western Trail, Western Blue Bird Trip, 8 am to late afternoon. Leader Jim Pruske, call BHAS office at (360) 352-7299 to register.

March 30th through April 1st Olympic BirdFest. Sequim, Dungeness River Audubon Center. Program and registration information at www.olympicbirdfest.org. Contact (360) 681-4076, e-mail info@olympicbirdfest.org.

April 2007

April 1, Sunday: Tien Shan Mountains (Mystery Tour), meet at Mud Bay Park & Ride 7:30 am. Leader Tom Schooley, (360) 357-9170. Car-pool limit is four.

April 7, Saturday: Goodrich Pond and Chehalis River Discovery Trail, 8 am to early afternoon. Meet at the Labor & Industries parking lot in Tumwater. Call BHAS to reserve your spot. Leader Dave Hayden.

Thursday, April 19: Program—Midway Atoll

April 22, Sunday: McLane Nature Trail, 8 am to early afternoon. Leader Whittier Johnson. Meet at lower parking lot at McLane Nature Trail. Bring snacks, lunch and water. Call BHAS 352-7299 for reservations.

April 27 through 29: Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival. Call 1-800-303-8498. www.shorebirdfestival.com

May 2007

May 5 and 6, Saturday and Sunday: Central Washington localities, 6 am Saturday to late Sunday. Leaders Gary Wiles and Kristen Stewart. Call BHAS to register.

May 12, Saturday: Eastern Columbia Gorge and Klickitat region. 7:30 am to early evening. Leaders Lonnie Sommer and Kristin Stewart. Meet at Martin Way Park and Ride. Bring lunch, water and snacks. Call Lonnie at (360) 866-8119, or email at wheelermombi@comcast.net.

May 19, Saturday: Ridgefield NWR, 8 am to early evening. \$3.00 entrance fee per vehicle. Meet at the Labor & Industries parking lot. Call BHAS to reserve your spot. Leader Dave Hayden.

May 20, Sunday: Scatter Creek Wildlife Area, 8 am to afternoon. Meet at the entrance parking lot near the caretaker's house and barn. Bring food and water. Leader Whittier Johnson, call BHAS office 352-7299 for reservations.

Board of Directors 2006-2007

Officers

President: Linda Johnson 503-957-1812
lindashair@comcast.net

Co-Vice Presidents:

Margery Beeler.....360-943-5709
mswampcat@aol.com

Kris Schoyen360-754-1710
kshoyen@hotmail.com

Secretary: Susan Markey360-438-9048
slmarkey@comcast.net

Treasurer: Mike O'Malley.....360-943-2369
michael.omalley@comcast.net

Board Members At Large

Connie Christy..... 360-570-1214
constancechristy@msn.com

Carol Evans 866-8531 carollouh@msn.com

Jean MacGregor..... 360-866-0166
JeanMcG@thurston.com

Sam Merrill.....360-866-8839
smerrill@zhonka.net

Committee Chairs (Board Members)

Membership: Margery Beeler360-943-5709
mswampcat@aol.com

Conservation: Sue Danver..... 360-705-9247
sdanver7@aol.com

Webmaster: Deb Jaqua 360-491-3325
djaqua@comcast.net

Field Trips: Kristin Stewart360-456-5098
kristinstewart01@comcast.net

Programs: Kris Schoyen 360-754-1710
kshoyen@hotmail.com

Echo Editors: Bill and Linda Johnson
..... 503-957-1812
lindashair@comcast.net

Member Volunteers

Forest Issues: David Jennings 360-866-7551
nativeforest@gamil.com

Echo Designer: Lee Miller 360-753-0942
aleemiller@igc.org

Bird ID: Dave McNett.....360-357-3695

Bird Sightings, Bird ID, Birding in Ernest:

Bill Shelmerdine..... 360-866-9106
gorn1@msn.com

Bird Feeder Cleaning.....360-754-5397
debbienickerson@ mac.com

Office Support: Carol Evans, Carolyn Harmon

Black Hills Audubon Society

1063 Capitol Way So., Rm 205, Olympia, WA 98501

Phone: 360-352-7299

Website: www.blackhillsaudubon.com

E-mail: bhas@blackhillsaudubon.org

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 May/June 2007 issue is **April 10, 2007.**

Northwest Certified Forestry

NCF is a non-profit membership and services program developed by the Northwest Natural Resource Group to assist small forest landowners with optimizing the economic and ecological potential of their forestlands. We accomplish this goal by developing and promoting a variety of conservation driven markets and tools that, taken together, help landowners receive higher values from their forestland.

As part of our work, NCF has developed the region's first marketing program that distinguishes locally produced forest products harvested from small forestlands. We have accomplished this by building a network of landowners, wood product manufacturers, lumberyards, and buyers that specialize in forest products that are certified to the high performance standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

NCF provides the following services to our members:

- Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification
- Local, regional, and national market development for FSC certified forest products
- Customized marketing assistance
- Educational workshops and training courses on topics relating to innovative forest management and marketing strategies



- Assistance identifying conservation and financial assistance programs
- Assistance identifying additional income opportunities from forestland
- Referrals to high quality natural resource professionals
- Information services (publications, website, newsletter, e-mail bulletin, on-line business contacts database)
- Ecosystem service market development (e.g. carbon credits)

As you work with forest landowners, please keep NCF in mind as a resource for assisting landowners with the day-to-day management of their forests.

Your referrals will assist us with building a new and successful model for marketing locally produced and sustainably grown forest products in our region. If you are interested in learning more contact:

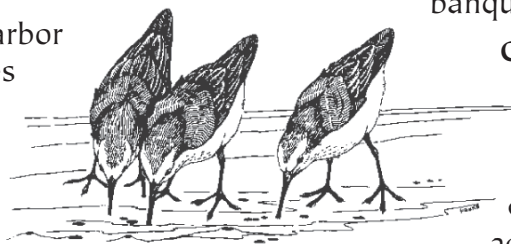
Kirk Hanson, NCF South Sound Regional Manager, Northwest Natural Resource Group PO Box 6373, Olympia, WA 98507-6373
Cell: 360-316-9317;
kirk@nnrg.org;
www.nnrg.org

Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

April 27-29, 2007

Celebrating the Spring Migration of Shorebirds in Grays Harbor County

The 12th Annual Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival promises you a great nature experience. Witness the migrating shorebirds at Grays Harbor National



Wildlife Refuge. Take part in a variety of events including field trips, lectures, exhibitors, vendors, authors, a run/walk, banquet and auction.

Come be a part of the celebration! 🦋

1.800.303.8498;
www.shorebirdfestival.com; dlmoor2@coast-access.com

Upcoming Field Trips and Events

Chehalis Western Trail Western Bluebird trip Sunday, March 18th, 8 am to afternoon Leader: Jim Pruske

Jim was the original inheritor of the late Jack Davis's work and Bluebird Trail to reestablish a population of Western Bluebirds in the BHAS area. The area at the time was not part of any established trail project, and ultimately was so overgrown with Scot's Broom that it was inaccessible. It then was incorporated into the Chehalis Western Trail project, and once again Jim could find and maintain the bluebird boxes. It also became part of the Project Bluebird area. The result is that Jack and Jim's previous work has been successful! Join Jim on this late March trip to see the last of the wintering species and the early spring arrivals. The bluebirds themselves are usually in evidence from Jan through fall. There might be Red Crossbills, Purple Finch, White-crowned Sparrows, Yellow-rumped warblers, Tree and Violet-green Swallows among the 63 species that might be seen. Jim usually birds this area at least once a month throughout the year, and knows which species breed there, in addition to knowing the wintering species.

As usual bring lunch and snacks, and dress for the weather. Meet at the Timberland Library building on Tumwater Blvd. SW at 8:00am. Call the BHAS office at 360-352-7299 to register.

Olympic BirdFest 2007 Sequim-WA March 30 - April 1, 2007

Visit the rain shadow of the *Olympic Peninsula* to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest—Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Dippers, Black Oystercatchers, Long-tailed Ducks, and more. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and a banquet with our partner, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. The Birdfest with the most spectacular setting!

Contact: Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382; 360-681-4076; info@olympicbirdfest.org, www.olympicbirdfest.org.

**Date: April 1, 2007
Destination: Tien Shan Mountains
(Mystery Tour)
Leader: Tom Schooley, (360) 357-9170
Meeting time: 7:30 am; Meeting place:
Mud Bay Park & Ride**

Hop aboard our Mysti-Aire flight to the Tien Shan Mountains of Central Asia. Birds of note in this little-known region include the Ibisbill, Fire-fronted Serin, and Isabelline Wheatears. We may traverse several thousand feet in elevation to sample the many life zones, so plan to bring your own oxygen. Although there is a 13 time zone difference to this destination, we shall return by dinnertime thanks to Mysti-Aire's exclusive rights to the space-time continuum. Four car-carpool limit, bring food and drinks. Dress for the weather.

Goodrich Pond and Chehalis River Discovery Trail Saturday April 7, 8am-early afternoon Leader: Dave Hayden

The Goodrich pond along with the newly opened river trail, has made this area the hot spot for birds in Lewis County. Dave hopes to find some lingering waterfowl, possibly some swans, raptors, shorebirds, migratory birds, and any other possible surprises. The trail is approximately a two-mile round trip. Dress for the weather. Meet at the Labor and Industries parking lot in Tumwater at 8am. Call the BHAS at 360-352-7299 to reserve your spot.

McLane Nature Trail, Sunday April 22nd, 2007 8 am to early afternoon. Leader: Whittier Johnson

McLane Nature Trail, one of the Great Washington Birding Trail sites, is a delightful mix of forest ages, with a wonderful large beaver pond. It features several breeding birds, such as Wood Ducks, and Pied-billed Grebes, both of which should be there in April. There may even be some wintering waterfowl remaining in the area. There are year round Winter Wrens and Hutton's Vireos, and woodpeckers of various stripes. There should be early Black-headed Grosbeaks, Pacific Slope Flycatchers, and Rufous Hummingbirds. Swallows should be there as well. It is also a treat to see Rough-skinned Newts. McLane is a "demonstration forest" and is due to be partially logged by the Department of Natural Resources that owns and manages the area. This is a great chance to see it before that happens. It has also been some number of years since Whittier has led a field trip, and we are delighted to have him back! This trip will be limited to 10 participants, and is especially geared to beginning birders. Meet at the lower parking lot at McLane nature trail at 8 a.m. As usual, dress for the weather, it can be damp

in the forested areas. Bring snacks, possibly lunch, and water. Call the BHAS office at 360-352-7299 to reserve a spot.

**Central Washington Localities
Saturday May 5th, and Sunday May 6th,
6 am Saturday to Late afternoon/evening
Sunday.**

Leaders: Gary Wiles and Kristin Stewart

This is advance notice for an extended Eastern WA trip in May. We have not tried a 2 day trip (at least not since I have been the Field Trip Chair), but we are now! This trip will be in the Central WA area, probably including Gingko State Park, the Moses Lake area, the Potholes Reservoir, Columbia NWR, and possibly Dodson Rd. We will be targeting displaying Western and Clark's Grebes, Burrowing Owls, early returning sparrows of E WA such as Sage Sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow and Vesper Sparrow, along with Sage Thrasher and Say's Phoebe, migrating warblers and shorebirds. We hope to find shrikes, and waterfowl, as well as Am Avocets and Black-necked Stilts, and hopefully Tri-colored Blackbirds.

We think we will try to stay at the Moses Lake

Motel 6 so as to keep costs relatively affordable. We will, of course, carpool and will limit the trip to 4 vehicles (15-16 folks). We will need to eat dinner and breakfast out probably, but hope everyone can bring lunch for each day. Participants will also be expected to pay their share for gas, and their share or their motel costs, depending on whether they share a room.

This will be a more expensive trip than we usually do, to target birds we don't usually see here on the Westside. We will be firming up details for the next *Echo*, but wanted people to have a chance to think about the trip and plan for it. Call the BHAS number at 360-352-7299 to register.

**Eastern Columbia Gorge and Klickitat
Region, Saturday, May 12th, 7:30 am
to early evening.**

Leaders: Lonnie Somer & Kristin Stewart

An all day field trip that will include stops near Bingen, Lyle, and Maryhill. Possible species include Lesser Goldfinch, Lewis' and Acorn Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches, Rock & Canyon Wrens,

Continued on next page

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Field Trips

Continued from page 11

perhaps some early Ash-throated flycatcher, and other species that are uncommon on the western side of the Cascades. This will be an all-day trip limited to 12 persons. Meet at the Martin Way Park and Ride at 7:30 am. Bring lunch, water, and snacks. Call Lonnie at 360-866-8119 or e-mail him at wheelermombi@comcast.net to register.

Ridgefield NWR

Saturday May 19, 8am–early evening

Leader: David Hayden

Join Dave as he looks for continuing migrating birds, passerines, and waterfowl. Expect to see lots of Cinnamon Teal, some Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and White-breasted Nuthatch. Possibilities are Black-necked Stilts, and Black Tern. There will be some walking involved, about 1.5 miles. Bring a lunch and dress for the weather. Meet at the Labor and Industries parking lot in Tumwater at 8am. Call the BHAS at 360-352-7299 to reserve your spot. Note, there is a \$3.00 entrance fee per vehicle.



**Scatter Creek Wildlife Area,
Sunday May 20th, 2007, 8 a.m. to afternoon.
Leader: Whittier Johnson**

Scatter Creek is another Great Washington Birding Trail site, and a totally different setting than the McLane Nature Trail trip that Whittier is leading in April. Scatter Creek is remnant western Washington prairie, with Oregon ash, Garry Oak, and along Scatter Creek are Douglas Firs and their shrubby components. May is a wonderful time to see prairie wildflowers, and the trip is worth doing even without birds. But prairie birds should be in evidence. There might be Western Meadowlarks, Savannah Sparrows, Green Herons, Bullock's Orioles, Red-eyed Vireos, Western Scrub Jays, House Wrens, and perhaps American Kestrels. Meet Whittier at the entrance parking lot near the caretaker's house and barn at 8 a.m. The Scatter Creek trip is geared to beginners and limited to 10 participants. Wear weather-appropriate clothes, and bring food you might want. Call the BHAS office at 360-352-7299 for reservations. 🐦

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