

Black Hills Audubon Society

Olympia, Washington

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May/June 2008

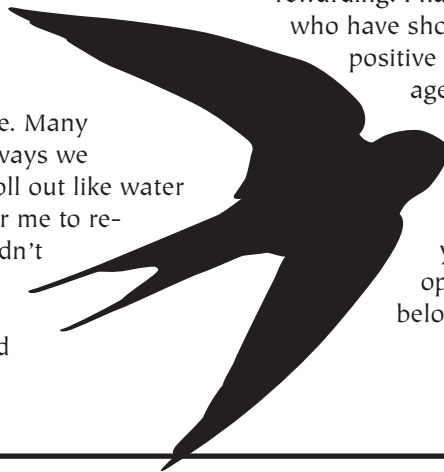


Sightings

This will be my last letter to you as President. It has been a most interesting and difficult year for me both at BHAS and in my personal life. Many things happen that challenge us in ways we never dream of and consequences roll out like water off a duck's back, creating a need for me to resign from the board at this time. I didn't get to fulfill my dream of a long and successful presidency with BHAS, but doing the work has been fun and

rewarding. I have appreciated very much those of you who have shown support toward my effort and given positive feedback along the way. I encourage all of our members to talk loudly and insistently about what you want your Audubon Chapter to accomplish and help the board make it a reality with your continued participation. Thank you ever so much for allowing me this opportunity to serve the creatures of our beloved Mother Earth. 🦋

—Linda



Thursday, May 15 Hooves and Horns

Ungulate, n. Any of a group consisting of the hoofed mammals, such as the ruminants, swine, horses, tapirs, rhinoceroses, elephants, and conies, nearly all herbivorous, many having horns.

Come hear District Biologist for Pierce and Thurston Counties for the State Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Michelle Tirhi talk about the joys and challenges of working with and managing big game species of deer and elk on this side of the mountains. Last month we had marbled murrelet cookies as refreshments. Dare we expect elk-shaped brownies?

Thursday, June 19 Annual Picnic

This month we invite Auduboners and their guests to the traditional potluck picnic at the rose garden shelter in Priest Point Park. We'll begin gathering at 5:00 pm to do a bit of birding, then plan to eat around 6:00. The shelter is covered, so come rain or shine! BYO your own plate and utensils, (but we will supply paper plates, cups, and cutlery for those who forget). Please bring something yummy to share, and we'll provide the soft drinks. In addition, Chester Allen, outdoors reporter for the Olympian, has been invited to join us. This is a great opportunity to get to know new folks of like mind, and see old friends, so we hope to see you there!

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.

Conservation and Education Awards Given at Annual Dinner

It is at once a rewarding experience and a very difficult decision each year when it is time for the Conservation Committee to deliberate on the recipient of the Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award.

Conservation is a key goal of the Black Hills Audubon Society. There are often, in any given year, a lot of individuals and groups that have made great contributions to progress on this goal. But this year, two very different efforts really came to the fore – one in conservation and one in education. Education is another central goal and important activity of our Black Hills Chapter. We wanted to honor each effort with two separate awards. Each had their importance in making a local difference and in complementary areas.

Thus, for the first time, the Conservation Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that the Black Hills Audubon Society give two awards at the annual dinner.

Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award

The first was the Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award, given every year, to citizens that have made a significant difference either in real environmental benefits or improved awareness by the public or governmental agencies on an environmental issue. Friends of Rocky Prairie, has done just this and they were the recipients of this year's Conservation Award.

As with any group, there are the core founders, without whom the initiative would never have happened. They are Sharron Coontz, Diane Sonntag, Dorene Wheeler, Loralin Toney, and Meryl Bernstein. These community leaders mobilized over 500 people in the town of Tenino and surrounding areas into one of the most organized and effective public advocacy groups that we have seen in a long while. Their purpose is to preserve the rural character and long-term environmental health and sustainability of their local community.

Friends of Rocky Prairie made three significant accomplishments in a very short period of time. First, this citizens' group highlighted an important bird

habitat; the prairie. There has been and continues to be enormous development pressure on the prairies in Thurston County. Throughout the state, only three percent of our former prairies remain today.

Secondly, Friends of Rocky Prairie has brought a much needed attention to the importance of planning on a landscape scale. They brought the arguments of connectivity between habitats and small ecosystems into the public debate. They are successfully arguing the importance of the prairie ecosystem and some of the key ecological functions it provides such as maintaining groundwater flows that contribute to the health of the adjacent wetlands and prairies of Millersylvania State Park and the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area. Most land use planning does not yet consider these important landscape scale factors. But we need to if we are to make progress towards our environmental goals – and even those as basic as preserving our local groundwater supplies for the future.

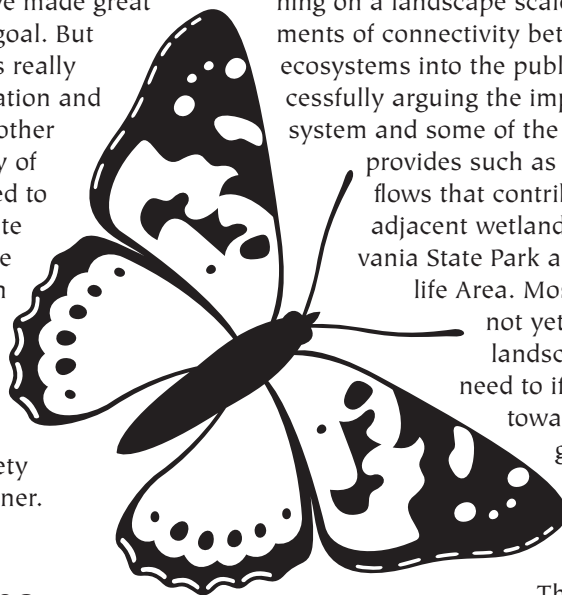
The Friends of Rocky Prairie is ahead of the game. They have also raised essential economic questions in the debate, and they have brought tremendous attention to the importance of public input in the planning process.

The criteria for the Jack Davis Conservationist Award, along with the list of recipients since the award was established, can be found on the Black Hills Audubon website.

The Education Award

The Education Award for outstanding educational achievements went to Tom Schooley and Tim Sweeney for their initiative and creativity in teaming up to produce the TCTV program series, Birdwise Magazine. This program has educated viewers for the last two years on local birds and birding places. Two years is a long time for a series in the TV business and the success of Birdwise shows that they have done much of everything right.

This locally produced TV program on area birds and the people who watch them has been available on the public access cable channels 22 or



Next page

Annual Auction 2008

We are deeply indebted to many local businesses for their generous donations to this year's event and urge you to reward them with your patronage. When you do so, please let them know of your gratitude for their support.

- Applebee's
- Cicada Lounge
- Harlequin Productions
- Mercato Ristorante
- Olympia Food Coop
- Olive Garden
- Orca Books
- San Francisco Street Bakery
- Traditions Fair Trade
- Tumwater Valley Golf Club
- Boston Harbor Marina
- Fireside Books
- Robin Stirtz
- Buck's 5th Ave
- Wild Birds Unlimited
- Bill Voss
- Home Street Bank
- Jessica Jensen
- Linda's Hair Design
- US Electrical Corporation of WA
- Davey @ Chips-a-Flyin

We are also indebted to others who contributed items or services and to those who supported the auction by their purchases. Thank you all. 🐦

Annual dinner

From previous page

29 in the Olympia area. The show was hosted by Tom Schooley and produced and directed by Tim Sweeney, and featured birding news, a calendar of events, birding tips, backyard birding, educational features, and reports of research work. A new 30-minute program was produced each month and repeated twice each week throughout the month. Not only educational, the program was fun to watch. Tom and Tim have a true wit, and they certainly showed that through their creative program. It will be missed.

Tom and Tim gave appreciation to all those who helped make the program happen, including Burt Guttman, Sheila McCartan, Phil Kelley, Rachel York, Ruth Pagel, and Devlin Sweeney. 🐦

—Donna Nickerson, Chair, Conservation Committee

BHAS Election of Officers and At-Large Board Members

Slate of Officers suggested for 2008–2009:

President—Sam Merrill
Vice President—Kris Schoyen
Treasurer—Susan Markey
Secretary—Debbie Nickerson

There are three Board Members at Large openings. Any members interested in serving on the board should contact Debbie Nickerson at debranick@gmail.com or call Debbie at 754-5397.

Board Member Vacancies!

Interested in being a part of the “think tank” of Black Hills Audubon? We have some openings for board members and encourage you to talk to one of us if interested in having a seat on our board of directors. We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm at the State Office on Capital Way. Call Deb Nickerson or Kris Schoyen to find out more. 🐦



Help Tomorrow Today

Leave a Legacy that will last for generations to come. A planned gift to the Black Hills Audubon Society's Conservation Legacy Fund will carry forward your compassion for birds and our natural spaces.

Gifts of stock, bequests in your will, gift annuities, or charitable remainder trusts may help you achieve certain financial goals while providing substantial support for the Black Hills mission. We would be glad to discuss your giving options with you in confidence and with no obligation.

Contact Linda Carter, Chapter President at 360-357-4499 🐦

May is Birdathon Month!

Birdathons are great for raising awareness of birds, promoting bird conservation, and raising money at the same time!

Anyone can participate—as a sponsor, a birder or both!

Here's how it works. You decide where and when during May you want to go birding. Then you find some sponsors to pledge some cents per species. Now go find those birds! Afterwards, report back to your sponsors on how many species you saw, and collect the pledges.

Your birding day does not need to be an intense all-out effort. You would be surprised how many species will show up around your yard and neighborhood over the course of a day. Black Hills Audubon offers several Birdathon field trips to exciting destinations in Washington. Or you just go out on your own to a few local parks. One key to successful birdathon fund raising is giving your sponsors a guess on how many species you may find. If you only expect 25 species, a pledge of fifty cents a bird is only a \$12.50 pledge.

And you don't have to be an expert birder to participate! Field trip leaders will help you find the birds and rack up the number of species!

Contact your friends, family, co-workers, and anyone else to pledge towards the number of birds you hope to see during a 24-hour time period. Sponsors can donate a lump sum in your name, but what is the fun in that. Talk up the drama of the search!

After your Birdathon day, write a short report on the great species you found, figure out the amount each sponsor bet, and ask your sponsors for their pledges.

100 percent of the money raised through the Birdathon will be used to support the Black Hills Audubon Society and its education and conservation programs.

If you'd like to participate fill out the form here. You can also contact Sheila McCartan at blackhillsbirdathon@comcast.net or (360) 357-9170. 🐦

Capital Lake Field Trip Report

On March 22, seventeen people braved a very cool morning for a wonderful walk around Capital Lake. Parents with kids as well as people with four legged friends showed up for the 2-hour outing. The group had a nice mix of beginning to more advanced bird watchers. A total of 38 species were seen from a variety of families including **raptors, ducks, swallows, corvids, gulls, warblers, and sparrows**. Participants become very adept at identifying **piebilled grebes, lesser scaup, bufflehead, mallards** and **coots**. We also had quick looks at a **belted kingfisher, yellow-rumped warblers, and song sparrows**. The **tree** and **violet green swallows** were difficult to distinguish on the wing but when several rested in trees we were able to get more satisfying looks. The highlight for many was along Deschutes Parkway. We heard and saw many **crows** upset at a **red-tailed hawk** that had landed in a tree on the forest bluff. The crows were doing their best to make the hawk go away. Then cresting over the tree-topped hill came the sound of one, then two **ravens** who ignored the nearby raucous and

went about their own business of riding the winds.

Thanks to all who joined us and a special thanks to Matt Pike from bringing a scope and for helping to spot and identify birds. 🐦

—Sheila McCartan

Education Committee Convenes

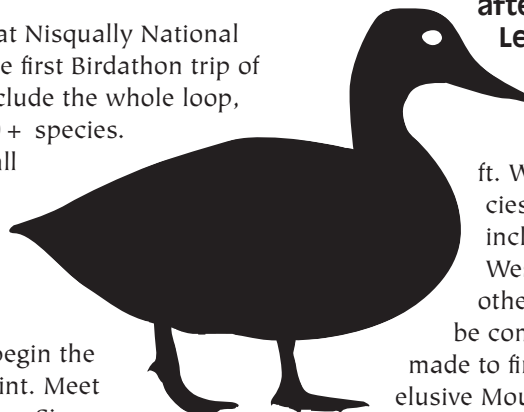
We are looking for more volunteers who wish to help with a variety of education projects. We are going to arrange birding classes, organize talks in schools, staff tables at various local events and work with area teachers to bring curriculum into our schools. There is much to do and the funds which can bring our ideas to fruition. Be part of this committee; there are projects of various scope in which to involve yourself. All are needed whether you have days to volunteer or just a few hours. We will meet at Debbie Nickerson's house at 6:30pm on June 26th. Call for directions and to confirm attendance. The larger the group, the less work each individual has to do. 🐦

Birdathon Trips

(All welcome—anyone may attend)

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge Wednesday, May 7th, 8:15 am to mid-afternoon Leader: Phil Kelley

Join Phil on his weekly walk at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge as he does the first Birdathon trip of the month. This week will include the whole loop, and you can expect to see 60+ species. The spring migrants should all have arrived, and resident birds including nesting waterfowl will be in evidence as well. The walking is easy and level but the loop is 5 ½ miles. Folks are welcome to begin the trip, and turn back at any point. Meet at the visitor center at 8:15 am. Sign-ups are not necessary.



Ridgefield NWR Saturday May 10, 8am –early evening Leader: David Hayden

Join Dave as he looks for continuing migrating birds, passerines, and ducks. Dave expects to see lots of Cinnamon Teal, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, and White-crowned Nuthatches. Possibilities are Black-necked Stilts and Bank Swallows. There will be some walking involved. Bring a lunch in case of bad weather. Meet at the Dept. of Labor and Industries parking lot at 8:00am. Call the BHAS at 360-352-7299 to reserve your spot. Also, this is International Migratory Bird Day and the Vancouver Audubon will have a booth set up at the refuge.

Kittitas County—Snoqualmie Pass to Vantage Saturday, May 10th, 5:30 am to late evening Leader: Tom Schooley

The east slope of the Cascade Mountains provides a wide variety of habitats from the wet forest just over the pass to the dry desert along the Columbia River. Join Tom Schooley in a very full day in Kittitas County searching the firs, pines, cottonwoods, and sagebrush for Vaux's Swift, Gray Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Bank Swallow, Brewer's Sparrow, Veery, Calliope Hummingbird, and Cassin's Finch. Lucky finds may include Prairie Falcon, White-headed Woodpecker, Pygmy Nuthatch, or Clark's Nutcracker. Our target is 100 species for the day. This trip is limited to 12 people/3cars and pledges

of \$1.00 per species, preferably more. Expect a very long non-stop day of birding. We will leave the Martin Way Park and Ride at 5:30 am. We won't return home until after dark. Bring lunch, snacks, liquid, and sunscreen. Call BHAS at 360-352-7299 to register.

Exploring Capital Forest—Spring Sunday, May 18th, 8:30 am to late afternoon Leaders: Jim Pruske and Lonnie Somer

Spend the day exploring Capital Forest from sea level to 2,700 ft. We will be searching for bird species that nest in the forest. Warblers, including Hermit Warblers, Gray Jays, Western Tanagers, woodpeckers and other woodland birds are expected to be common. A special attempt will be made to find Northern Pygmy Owl and the elusive Mountain Quail. Unique elements of Capitol Forest flora will also be examined.

If anyone has specific knowledge or tips about Capitol Forest, please feel free to contact Jim (459-3656) or Lonnie at wheelermombie@comcast.net.

Meet at Mud Bay Park and Ride at 8:30 am. This trip is limited to 3 cars. Call BHAS at 360-352-7299 to register.

Priest Point Park Wednesday, May 21st, 8 am – noon Leader: Woody Franzen

Priest Point Park is one of the Thurston County sites chosen for the southwest WA loop of the Great Washington Birding Trail. Join Woody for a mid-week walk through this beautiful park, while looking for forest birds. There is a limit of 12 participants. Meet at the Rose Garden on the east side of the park at 8:00 am. Call BHAS at 360-352-7299 to register.

Watershed Park Bird Songs Saturday, May 31st, 7:00am to 10:00am Leader: Jean MacGregor

This walk in one of Olympia's most beautiful parks will focus on bird song and learning the common bird songs of Watershed Park. It is also an opportunity to check out the wildflowers in bloom at the end of May. The trail at Watershed is not long (about a mile and a half), but is steep and can be slippery. Meet at the park entrance along Henderson Boulevard at 7:00 am. Call the BHAS phone at 360-352-7299 to register. 🐾

Regular May/June birding trips—

(Not Birdathon trips)

Toppenish NWR and Fort Simcoe State Park Saturday, May 17

Leave 6 am from Centralia Park & Ride

Leaders: Lonnie Somer & Dave Hayden

Experience some of the east side birds, including the country's western most population of Bobolink. Other species that we might see include Gray Catbird, Eastern Kingbird, Black-billed Magpie, Vesper Sparrow, Mountain Bluebird, Red-naped Sapsucker, Yellow-breasted Chat, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Lazuli Bunting, Lewis' Woodpecker, Golden Eagle, and numerous other species.

This trip is limited to 12 people/3 cars. Expect a very long day and a return home after dark. Bring lunch, snacks, liquid, and sunscreen. Call BHAS at 360-352-7299 to register.

Lewis County

Sunday June 1, 6:45 am to early afternoon.

Leader: Gary Wiles

This trip will visit Teitzel and Little Hanaford Roads in Lewis County. These follow along the South Hanaford Creek valley, which is a beautiful rural farming valley bounded by conifer hillsides. We expect to see an assortment of forest and open country birds, including Purple Martins at perhaps the only location for this species in Lewis County. Meet at the Labor and Industry parking lot in Tumwater at 6:45 a.m. Bring food, drinks, and a scope if you have one. Expect to be done at about 1:00 p.m.

Because of poor parking along the roads, the trip will be limited to 2 cars and 9-10 people. Contact the BHAS phone at 360-352-7299 to sign up.

Woodard Bay for Beginners

Saturday, June 7th, 8 am to 11 or noon

Leader: Sam Merrill

This walk is designed primarily for beginning birders. We will look and listen for woodland birds as we move through the lush forest of cedars and Douglas fir and approach Henderson Inlet where we expect to see cormorants and seals among others.

When the tide is low, Great Blue Herons congregate along Woodard Creek, stalking prey. We expect to do the approximately 2-mile loop, which includes an easy trail with boardwalk sections and return by a pedestrian-only road. To reach the Woodard Bay Natural Resource Conservation Area from Olympia, take Boston Harbor Road north, then right on Woodard Bay Road, crossing Libby Road. Park in a small parking area on the left just before crossing the bridge over Woodard Bay. Bring binoculars if possible. Call Black Hills Audubon at 360-352-7299 to reserve a spot. Limit 15 persons.

Columbia Gorge and Klickitat Region

A two day field trip: Saturday & Sunday, June 21 & 22

Leave at 6:30 am from the Centralia Park & Ride

Leaders: Lonnie Somer & Gary Wiles

Come explore Klickitat birding gems such as Catherine Creek Preserve, Balch Rd., Rowland Lake, Columbia Hills Natural Preservation Area, Conboy Lake NWR, Horse Thief SP, and Klickitat Wildlife Area. Hoped for birds include; Ash-throated Flycatcher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Canyon and Rock Wren, Say's Phoebe, Vaux's Swift, Calliope Hummingbird, Lazuli Bunting, Chipping Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Lesser Goldfinch, Sandhill Crane, White-headed Woodpecker, several species of raptor, and numerous other species.

Because this is an overnight trip, it will be more costly than usual. We will try to find affordable accommodations for the night, and we will eat breakfast and supper at local restaurants. Bring lunch for 2 days, snacks, liquids, and a change of clothes.

This trip is limited to 12 people (3 cars), and each passenger will be expected to reimburse the driver for gas mileage. We will return on the evening of June 22.

To register, contact the BHAS office at 360-352-7299. 🐾



BHAS calendar

See Field Trip Descriptions for details.

Birdathon trips for May:

Wednesday, May 7th, 8:15 to mid afternoon. Leader: Phill Kelly

Saturday, May 10th, 5:30am to late evening, Kittitas County—
Snoqualmie Pass to Vantage
Leader: Tom Schooley

Sunday, May 18th, 8:30 am to late afternoon, Exploring Capital Forest
– Spring
Leaders: Jim Pruske & Lonnie Soner

Wednesday, May 21st, 8 am to noon, Priest Point Park
Leader: Woody Franzen

Saturday, May 31st, 7 am to 10 am, Watershed Park Bird Songs
Leader: Jean MacGregor

May–June Regular Field trips:

Saturday, May 17th, 6 am to evening, Toppenish NWR and
Fort Simcoe State Park
Leaders: Lonnie Somer & Dave Hayden

Sunday, June 1st. 6:45am to early afternoon, Lewis County
Leader: Gary Wiles

Saturday, June 7th, 8 am to noon, Woodard Bay for Beginners
Leader: Sam Merrill

Saturday and Sunday, June 21st & 22nd. Leave at 6:30 am on the 21st.
Return evening on the 22nd: Columbia Gorge and Klickitat Region
Leader: Lonnie Somer & Gary Wiles

Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) Membership form

Type of Membership—check appropriate box

Yearly benefits:

Member of Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter (BHAS) only

Singles or household

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

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)

- \$20, first-time member price
- \$15, Senior or full-time student

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!

Most of the dues go to support national efforts.

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

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

- \$10 chapter newsletter only

Please make check payable to Black Hills Audubon Society.

Receive the chapter newsletter, *The Echo*

- I would like to help Black Hills Audubon's programs of education and conservation.

Enclosed is my additional donation of \$_____

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

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/zip _____

Phone/Email _____

My check for \$_____ is enclosed.

Please fill out this form and mail it with your check to the appropriate address:

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

Membership
Black Hills Audubon Society
PO Box 2524
Olympia WA 98507

Membership
National Audubon Society
225 Varick Street, 7th floor
New York, NY 10014

Thank you for supporting the Black Hills Audubon Society!



Black Hills Audubon

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Black Hills Audubon Society

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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. Editor: Linda Carter. 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 Deb Jaqua at djaqua@comcast.net

Deadline for the July/August 2008 issue is **June 10, 2008.**

Clean Feeders for Spring!

Thank you so very much for another successful Bird Feeder Cleaning day. We were so grateful it did not rain on us as we scrubbed feeders from 9 to 3 on Saturday, April 5th. Thank you to Ruth Pagel and her wonderful staff for hosting this event again. Their help makes this possible. We get our hot water from Top Foods, which is always so accommodating to us each year – thank you also. Many volunteers make this project possible and without them and their dedication to the messy task, we could not offer this service to the public. I am so grateful to the following for rolling up sleeves and working that day: Kris Schoyen, Jean MacGregor, Margery Beeler, Whittier Johnson, Maria Ruth, Donna Nickerson, Susan Markey, Sam Merrill, Mike O'Malley, Jane Poole, Jordanna Averett, Rick Presley, Keisha, Amanda Putzier, Deb Jaqua, and Jeff Foster . Be looking for word of our next feeder cleaning in October. 🐦



Don't Miss Out: Be a Part of Birdathon

What a beautiful time spring is in the Pacific Northwest! May is a great time to see birds in our area. As you make plans to go outside and do some birding, consider participating in a fund-raiser for your favorite organization. Line up one or more sponsors who will contribute a certain amount for every bird species you see within a 24-hour time period or donate a lump sum in your name. If you wish, you can sit at home and count backyard birds, or go one of the Birdathon field trips described in this issue of *The Echo*. Anything goes! If you can't go birding for a day, sponsor someone who can. Be early and sign up now. Pledge sheets and any other information you need are available by contacting Sheila McCartan at 357-9170 or blackhillsbirdathon@comcast.net. 🐦

Black Hills Audubon Society
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