

Black Hills Audubon Society

Olympia, Washington

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Number 3

May/June 2011



May Is Birdathon Month!

Choose a day in May to go birding, and support Black Hills Audubon with your eyes and ears. Go by yourself, with friends, or join one of the six scheduled **Birdathon** guided field trips. Before you go, estimate the number of species you expect to see, then get your friends, family, and other likely supporters to pledge so many cents per species (for example, 25 cents per species). Fill out the pledge sheet printed in the March-April *Echo*, or in the Birdathon Brochure (on-line at blackhills-audubon.org/pubs/Birdathon-2011-brochure.pdf). Try to get a total of \$1.00 or more per species. The more pledges you get, the more support



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Thursday, May 19, 7-9 pm Return of Wolves to Washington

Presented by Gary Wiles

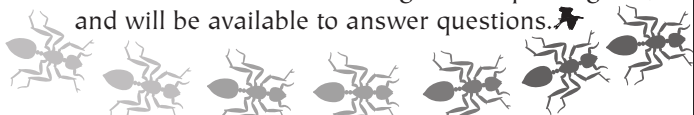
Wolves are perhaps the most controversial species of wildlife in the West right now, evoking strong emotions on both sides of the environmental spectrum. After many decades, Washington is in the initial stage of having its own recovering wolf population. Come and learn more about wolf biology, pack status in Washington, management issues, and WDFW's conservation and management plan for wolves.

Gary is a wildlife biologist with the Endangered Species Section of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in Olympia.

*The monthly Program Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month (usually) at the Capitol Museum Coach House, 211 W. 21st St, in Olympia. Arrive at 7 pm to socialize – programs begin promptly at 7:30. **Driving directions:** From I-5, take exit 105 and follow the "State Capitol/City Center" signs. Go through the tunnel, then turn left (south) at the light on Capitol Way. After 7 blocks, turn right onto 21st St. The Museum is two blocks down on the left. The Coach House is south of and behind the Museum.*

Thursday, June 16, 5 pm Annual BHAS Picnic

This month, we invite Auduboners and their guests to the traditional potluck picnic at the Rose Garden Shelter at Priest Point Park in Olympia. We'll begin gathering at 5 pm to do a bit of birding, then plan to eat around 6 pm. The shelter is covered, so come—rain or shine! BYO 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. David Jennings from the WDFW State Fish and Wildlife Commission will be attending as our special guest, and will be available to answer questions.



Birding in Earnest

By Bill Shelmerdine

To report sightings call 866-9106 or email at georn1@hotmail.com

The period was perhaps best characterized by arriving migrants, decreasing waterfowl numbers, and some lingering uncommon wintering species. Finches and thrushes seemed more conspicuous than usual this winter. **Evening Grosbeaks** continued to be widely reported, and in our area I would have to say the numbers were impressive, while Pine Siskin numbers were dismal. **Thrushes** also had a banner year with periodic influxes of lowland **Varied Thrushes** in several areas. Did anyone else think there were more than the typical numbers of wintering **Hermit Thrushes** around this year? By mid January **Tree Swallows** were being widely reported from Nisqually. By February 6 at least 40 were present, with **Barn Swallows** reported by mid February, and **Violet-green Swallows** reported in early March (which seems a bit on the late side for that species). The **Great Egret** that has been hanging out at Nisqually has been reported throughout the period. And by early February the large concentrations of waterfowl hanging out at Capitol Lake had largely dispersed.

On 2/2/2011, Marve Breece found and photographed a **Swainson's Hawk** on the Nisqually Cut-off Road. The bird was a young dark-phased bird and is the first winter record for our area (It is worthy of note that a bird wintered at Ridgefield NWR a few years ago and may have been the first winter record for Western WA).

A Juvenile **Yellow-billed Loon** was reported from the outer dikes of the Nisqually Refuge. There were few details, and the bird was not relocated.

On 3/7 the first **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported by Bob Sundstrom in Tenino. He also noted that the **Harris's Sparrow** that had been wintering around his place was still present.

Education Committee Meeting

The BHAS Education Committee will hold its annual planning meeting on Sunday, June 12th, from 4pm to 7pm at Deb Nickerson's house in Olympia. Dinner will be provided. If you are attending please RSVP by e-mail to Deb Nickerson (debranick@gmail.com) or Shelley Horn (shelleysmail@me.com). 🐦

On 3/12 a **Turkey Vulture** was roosting at Scheider's Prairie (Steamboat Island Rd. and Highway 101). While it appears that a few wintered in our area this year, this may have been one of the first northbound migrants reported.

On 3/16, Phil Kelly reported **Wood Duck** and **Cinnamon Teal** from Nisqually. This would seem to be a very early date for the teal.

On 3/20, Paul Hicks reported the first **Common Yellowthroat** of the season from the Mull Street Marsh area in Tenino.

By 3/31 the **Townsend's Solitaire** that first showed up in our neighborhood on January 8 was still present. While one shows up in this location every few years, the visit is usually brief. This is the first one that I know of that has spent the winter at this location. It has preferred the small local orchard in the area.

Looking ahead, there should be plenty of action with the arrival of spring migrants. Just about anywhere can be good this time of year, and sometimes it's just downright hard to decide where to go. The Grays Harbor Shorebird festival is scheduled for the first weekend in May. Check out one of the many field trips or head out on your own. There should be a good variety of shorebirds species, and numbers are often impressive. And who knows what else might be around the harbor, this is a good time for just about anything. 🐦

Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest 2011

May 12-15, 2011.

This is the annual bird festival held in the Bavarian village of Leavenworth in north central Washington State. The Leavenworth area features spectacular habitats ranging from snow-capped mountains to sunny ponderosa pine forests, lush riparian zones to arid shrub-steppe. Birding is the heart of the weekend, but activities also include wildflower walks, arts events, and family activities to ensure fun and learning for everyone, and for birders of all skill levels. The weekend's keynote speaker is Dr. Terry L. Root, a Senior Fellow at the Woods Institute for the Environment. She is a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and with them shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. She has researched extensively on species response to climate change, and will be focusing on this topic for Bird Fest. For more information, call 509-548-5807 or visit the event website: leavenworthspringbirdfest.com 🐦

Participate in Thurston County's Critical Area Ordinance Update

What are Critical Areas? The Growth Management Act requires local governments to protect five types of critical areas: important fish and wildlife habitat areas, wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. Thurston County's critical areas regulations are a response to that law—they regulate how development and redevelopment can safely occur on lands that contain critical areas. The county's Critical Areas Ordinance dates back to 1994, so many portions are out-of-date and have failed to keep pace with changes in state law. The county is now working to update the ordinance

How does "Best Available Science" Play a Role?

A 1995 amendment to the state Growth Management Act requires counties and cities to apply "Best Available Science" when developing critical areas regulations. Local governments must gather and evaluate available scientific information, and determine which information constitutes Best Available Science. Local governments that choose regulatory approaches that are not supported by Best Available Science must demonstrate how they considered the science and why local circumstances prompted them to use a different approach.

Why are Critical Areas Important?

Critical Areas provide us with essential ecosystem goods and services—aquifers that supply drinking water; healthy rivers and wetlands that maintain natural irrigation, mitigate flooding, and serve as spawning grounds for salmon; and nearshore marine areas that provide valuable fish, shellfish, and other economic benefits to the region. These areas are important both ecologically and economically, and it makes sense to protect them.

The Critical Area Ordinance (CAO) Review Process.

The CAO is one of our most important regulatory tools to ensure both preservation and enhancement of these critical ecosystem functions. The cur-

rent CAO review process allows Thurston County residents an opportunity to help develop reasonable and responsible rules to preserve our healthy critical areas. If it is done well, it will save us the future high monetary costs and uncertain outcomes of restoration.

BHAS' Review of "Best Available Science."

Black Hills Audubon Society has been participating in the CAO review process. We provided reviews of "Best Available Science" which we presented to the County, and which are posted on our website: www.blackhillsaudubon.com. Based on our reviews, we have recommended what

we believe are very reasonable and responsible policy choices. The organization People For Puget Sound has reviewed our reports and supports our recommendations.

Your Involvement. BHAS members are encouraged to help participate in the process of public debate and good governance. You may do this by: (1) attending public meetings and speaking during the public comment periods; and (2) writing the County staff member who is managing the process. He is Andrew Deffobis, and his email address is:

deffoba@co.thurston.wa.us

Cite our recommendations in your comments. Or simply ask Thurston County to protect our critical areas as required by law to ensure no net loss of

ecosystem function, and talk about how protecting these areas is essential for our economy and quality of life. These messages are always welcomed voices of reason for public decision makers tasked with ensuring the public good. 🐦

Critical Areas provide us with essential ecosystem goods and services. These areas are important both ecologically and economically, and it makes sense to protect them. BHAS members are encouraged to help participate in the process of public debate and good governance.

Editor's note: The information in the first two paragraphs of this article was drawn from the Thurston County Critical Areas webpage: www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/critical_areas/criticalareas_home.htm.

Birding Hood Canal in Late February

A field trip report by Jim Pruske

We started at Potlatch State Park, under cold overcast skies. But we were very lucky, for the snow storm two days prior left no signs on the Hood Canal shoreline. We saw a mix of salt water ducks, including a male **Harlequin Duck**, four **grebe** species, and several **Common** and **Red-throated Loons**. This is where we had our highlight for the day: four **Eared Grebes** swimming alongside several **Horned Grebes**. There were at least fifty **Western Grebes** out on the center of the canal.

At Lilliwaup we found an **American Dipper** on the shoreline of Lilliwaup Creek. We found a mix of **sparrows** and **finches** at two homes with bird feeders.

At Hamma Hamma Estuary we walked out to the mouth of the river (we had attained prior permission from land owner). There we saw rafts of **Greater Scaup**, **Northern Pintails**, **Surf Scoters**, **White-winged Scoters**, and **Mew Gulls**. There were **Dunlin** far off at the north end of the estuary. A **Bald Eagle** had perched itself on a tree next to the mouth of the river, discouraging use by shore-

birds and other small water birds.

Before returning to the Skokomish Estuary, we made additional stops at sites overlooking small features of the canal and shoreline. These included the Hood Canal Salmon Hatchery, and the Power Station near Potlatch. We saw many **Pelagic** and **Double-crested Cormorants**, **Barrows** and **Common Golden-eyes**, **Common** and **Red-breasted Mergansers**, and one **California Gull**.

We ended our trip by making a loop around the Skokomish Indian Reservation. We made several stops with views of the Skokomish River Estuary, and one excellent stop on the Purdy Cutoff Road where we saw up close in one flock: **Ring-necked Ducks**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Common Golden-eyes**, **Hooded Mergansers**, **Common Mergansers**, **Buffleheads**, and one **Double-crested Cormorant**. At George Adams Salmon Hatchery we watched a pair of **American Dippers** in Purdy Creek, and a flock of **Hooded Mergansers** fly close over our heads.

My tally for the trip listed 50 bird species. 🦋

Spring Birding in Grays Harbor

A field trip report by Ruth Sullivan

I led a Field trip for Black Hills Audubon Society on Saturday, March 19, to Grays Harbor County. We had some cancellations due to the forecast, but the weather turned out better than predicted. We met at Mud Bay at 7:00 am and returned at 6:30 pm. With five birders and two cars, it was a great trip, with 69 species counted, many in the hundreds of birds.

We started at Satsop, taking the Wenzel Slew Road from Vance Creek, where we had our most birds of the day because the fields were all flooded. We saw a huge group of 300 **Northern Pintails**, many **American Wigeons**, one **Eurasian Wigeon**, 5 **Trumpeter Swans**, over 100 **Glaucous-winged Gulls**, our first of many **Mew Gulls**, our first of the day's 7 **Red-tailed Hawks**, many **Tree** and **Violet-green Swallows**, and the first of the day's 8 **Marsh Wrens**. Next we took

Brady Loop Road from the North side, where we saw 5 **Eurasian Collared Doves** in someone's yard. This is almost the same place where Patrick and I found the first sighting years ago. Right across from there we had a nice bright adult **Rough-legged**

Hawk. The man who lived in the house came out with his binoculars and found out what kind of Hawk he been seeing for the longest time, which made him extremely happy! Further down the road we counted a flock of 60 **Trumpeter Swans**, with 7 **White-fronted Geese** mixed in. Further down the road we had 300 **American Wigeon** and 150 **Dunlin**. Close to Foster Creek Road there were 200+ **Dusky Canada Geese** (*occidentalis*) in a solid group.

I last saw these beauties years ago, down around Woodland, and it seems that this subspecies is seldom found. Jim Pruske took



Participants on the March 19 Grays Harbor County Field Trip. Photo by Jim Pruske.

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BHAS Calendar

May is Birdathon Month! (* indicates a **Birdathon** field trip)

May 4, Wednesday – *Field Trip: Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge.
8:00 am to noon.

May 6, Friday – Field Trip: Chehalis Bluebird Trail. 8:00 am to 1:00 pm

May 7, Saturday – *Field Trip: Black Lake Meadows. 7:00 am to 11:00 am.

May 8, Sunday – *Field Trip: Woodard Bay. 9:00 am to noon.

May 14, Saturday – *Field Trip: Olympia's Waterfront. 9:00 am to noon.

May 15, Sunday – *Field Trip: Birding by Kayak along West Bay.
9:00 am to noon.

May 19, Thursday – BHAS Program Meeting: Wolves. Capitol Museum
Coach House. Socialize at 7:00 pm, program begins at 7:30 pm
sharp.

May 21, Saturday – *Field Trip: Biking and Birding the Chehalis
Western Trail. 8:30 am to noon.

May 27-30, all weekend – Annual Wenas Audubon Campout.

June 2011

June 4, Saturday – Field Trip: Elma Hills. 6:45 to noon.

June 11, Saturday – Field Trip: Woodard Bay for Beginning Birders.
8:00 to noon or 1:00 pm.

June 16, Thursday – BHAS Annual Picnic at Priest Point Park. Begins
at 5:00 pm. (See page 1 of this Echo for more information.)

July 2011

July 30, Saturday – Field Trip: Mt Rainier (probably Paradise)
7:00 am to late afternoon

Found Items!

The following items were left behind at the March 5
Annual Dinner:

1 glass punchbowl and ladle (had a fresh fruit cup in it),
1 pair of barbeque tongs, 1 set of salad tongs, 1 6 x 8" baking pan
(had chili pistachios in it)

Please call Patt Brady to arrange for pickup at 360-459-2276.

Field Trips and Events

* Birdathon events 

May 4, Wednesday, 8:00 am – 12 noon

***Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge** 

(est. species: 60)

Leader: Phil Kelley. No sign up required.

May 6, Friday, 8:00 am to noon or 1:00 pm

Birding along the Chehalis Bluebird Trail

Leader: Jim Pruske.

Identify bird species nesting in bird boxes located along a 2.5-mile stretch of the Chehalis-Western Trail in southern Thurston County. The trail adjoins prairie, ranch pastures, evergreen forest, mixed forest, and a stream. The Chehalis Bluebird Trail was originally created by Jack Davis over thirty years ago. Today there are forty bird boxes along the trail. Bird species that nest in the boxes include Western Bluebirds, Tree Swallows, Violet Green Swallows, Black-capped Chickadees, Chestnut-backed Chickadees, and House Wrens. A total of eighty bird species have been seen from the trail during the month of May in the previous seven years. Ravens, California Quail, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Chipping Sparrows, White-Crown Sparrows, and Western Scrub Jays are very common. This bluebird trail is now a paved portion of the Chehalis Western Trail located south of the Olympia Airport. The round trip walk is about five miles long. Participants should wear shoes designed for walking on asphalt pavement. We will meet at the Martin Way Park & Ride at 8:00 am. Then we will car-pool to the site, which has limited parking space. Bring your lunch and binoculars, and also garden shears and gloves if you want to help trim back a few of the overgrown blackberry vines and shrubs. Call the Black Hills Audubon Office at 360-352-7299 to make a reservation.

May 7, Saturday, 8:00 am – 11:00 am

***Black Lake Meadows** (est. species: 30) 

Leader: Kristin Stewart.

Call 360-951-7152 to sign up.

May 8, Sunday, 9:00 am – 12 noon

***Woodard Bay** (est. species: 25) 

Leaders: Meagan Thorn and Robin Shoal.

Call 360-951-7152 to sign up.

May 14, Saturday, 9:00 am – 12 noon

***Olympia's Waterfront** (est. species: 30) 

Leader: Sheila McCartan.

Call 360-951-7152 to sign up.

May 15, Sunday, 1:00 pm—4:00 pm

***Birding by Kayak along West Bay** 

(est. species: 20)

Leader: Deb Nickerson. Snacks will be provided! Call 754-5397 to sign up.

May 21, Saturday, 8:30 am – 12 noon

***Biking and Birding the Chehalis Western Trail** 

(est. species: 40)

Leader: Deb Nickerson. Snacks will be provided! Call 754-5397 to sign up.

**May 27-30, Memorial Day Weekend
Annual Audubon Campout at the Wenas
Creek Campground**

Every Memorial Day weekend, members of Washington State's Audubon Chapters and their families and friends gather in the Wenas Valley, on the east slope of the Cascade Mountains between Ellensburg and Yakima. The Wenas Valley is a beautiful area that supports a fascinating assortment of flora and fauna, and offers the joy of simply being outdoors in the spring. The weekend offers daily field trips and other activities. This campout is attended each year by around 200 people. For more information, go to the event's website: www.wenasaudubon.org. (For a BHAS member's experience of the 2010 Wenas Campout, see the article on page 2 of this *Echo*.)



June 4, Saturday, 6:45 to noon

Field Trip to Elma Hills

Leader: Gary Wiles

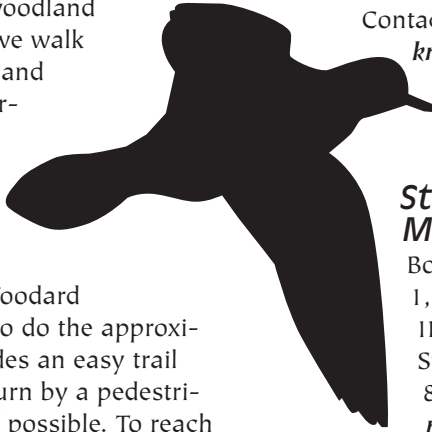
This trip will visit the hills north of Elma. The hills are private forestland, with lots of clearcuts, young forest, and some lovely creek valleys. Target birds will be grouse, Band-tailed Pigeons, Olive-sided Flycatchers, and MacGillivray's Warblers. Meet at the Mud Bay Park and Ride at 6:45 am. Bring snacks, drinks, and a scope if you have one. Expect to be done by about noon. The trip is limited to 3 cars or a total of 12 people.

Call Gary Wiles at 360-943-8786 to sign up.

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**June 11, Saturday, 8:00 am to 11:00 or noon
Woodard Bay for Beginning Birders
Leaders: Sam Merrill and Tracey Scalici**

This walk is designed primarily for beginning birders. We will look and listen for woodland birds in their nesting season as we walk through the deep forest of cedar and Douglas fir and approach Henderson Inlet, where we may see Cormorants, Purple Martins, seals, and other animals. When the tide is low (around 9:00 am that morning), Great Blue Herons may 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. Bring binoculars if possible. To reach the Woodard Bay Natural Resource Conservation Area from Olympia, take Boston Harbor Road north, turn right on Woodard Bay Road (which briefly joins Libby Road), then turn right again onto Woodard Bay Road. Park in a small parking area on the left just before crossing the bridge over Woodard Bay. Call Black Hills Audubon at 360-352-7299 to reserve a spot. Limit 15 persons.



a fair amount of elevation gain, and participants should wear sturdy shoes or boots for hiking. Also, weather on any mountain can change rapidly so be prepared for all eventualities, including rain gear, sunscreen, etc. Bring food and water for the day.

Contact Kristin at 360-456-5098 or kristinstewart01@comcast.net.

Other South Sound Events

**Stream Team Sound Stewards
Marine Creature Mondays**

Boston Harbor, July 11 & 18; and August 1, 8, 22, & 29. Two sessions each day: 11:00 am and 1:00 pm. Contact Michelle Stevie for more information: 360-753-8336, mstevie@ci.olympia.wa.us.

**South Sound Estuary Association
Beach Naturalist Summer Schedule**

Explore low tide beaches at Frye Cove County Park, Priest Point Park, Burfoot Park, and Tolmie State Park with trained Beach Naturalists. See the SSEA website for dates and times: sseacenter.wordpress.com.




**July 30, Saturday, 7:00 am to late afternoon
Mt Rainier—probably Paradise
Leader: Kristin Stewart**

This is our annual trek to do very casual high-elevation birding while enjoying the wildflowers. We almost always go to Paradise, but in the event of rainy weather there, Sunrise is another option. In spite of the casual nature of the trip, it does involve

**Birdathon
Field Trips**

Continued from page 1

you'll be providing for BHAS! After your birding trip, collect your pledges and send them to **Birdathon** Coordinator Sheila McCartan, 1909 Lakemoor Place, Olympia, WA 98512 by June 30.

There are six guided **Birdathon** Field Trips offered in May. Reservations are required for most of these trips. See listings on page 6 for details; **Birdathon** field trips are listed with a grey bar and the **Birathon** icon ().

**Western Field
Ornithologists
Conference**

Sierra Vista, AZ August 17–21, 2011

If you've never been to southeast Arizona during the late summer season (or even if you have), this is an opportunity you won't want to miss. Besides a program of speakers and workshops, we will offer field trips to all the southeast Arizona hotspots looking for local specialties like Scaled and Montezuma quail, Gray, Short-tailed, and Zone-tailed hawks, a dazzling variety of hummingbirds and flycatchers, Elegant Trogon, Red-faced Warbler, Cassin's, Botteri's, Rufous-winged, and Five-striped sparrows and much more. To see full conference details, go to www.westernfieldornithologists.org and click on the 'Annual Conference' banner in the middle of the page.

Wenas Campout 2010

by Josh Scalici

My best friend Oliver and I had an amazing and adventurous time at the Wenas 2010 campout. Our first day, coming into the campsite and seeing Wenas creek wind its way around the lush pine forest was a sight enough to make us want to set camp next to it. Setting up the tent was tricky because we had to avoid trampling the beautiful wild purple iris that were in bloom. After setting up camp, we looked across the creek and saw the marshlands inviting us to come explore. There was however, a dilemma. How do we get across the creek? We carried long thick logs that we found around the campsite and built a sturdy bridge so we could cross. When we crossed the bridge the first thing we saw was a complexly built beaver dam. There were also beaver tracks in the mud. After exploring, it was time to go inside the tent and go to sleep. It was hard to sleep the first night because of cold nipping at my face and the sound of the rushing creek.

On our second day, we awoke to a bright sunny morning. As soon as we got out of the tent we packed our daypacks for our hike through Black Canyon. We followed our tour guide to the can-



Josh Scalici (left) and Oliver Farnsworth check out a bluebird box at the 2010 Wenas Campout.

yon by car and saw lots of birds on the way like Bullocks Oriole, Magpie, and Western Tanager. When we got to the canyon we didn't even have to leave the parking lot before we spotted even more spectacular species of birds like the Western and Mountain Bluebird, and the bright yellow

American Goldfinch (our state bird). Hiking along the trail we saw a pitch-black Darkling Beetle about the size of a wine cork. Our guide asked the group if they would like to see a particular species of bird. My mom really wanted me to see a Lazuli Bunting. About 30 minutes into the hike we got a chance to see its bright blue feathers.

On the last day of our trip, Oliver and I volunteered to check the blue bird boxes, hoping to see tiny blue visitors. As we drove up to the first box, we opened it up to find 4 little baby birds, waiting for their mother to come and feed them. The rest of the bird boxes weren't as spectacular. About 4 of the boxes had nothing but a nest, except one, which had a mother sitting on her eggs. She was so startled, she flew out, grazing my face. We recorded the data and then sent it to the scientists to conduct their research.

I would say that the Wenas Audubon campout is an event you should never miss. 🐦

Grays Harbor

From page 4

some photos of some in flight, and for me this was the Bird of the Day! After the geese flew off we had a nice male **Pileated Woodpecker**, and passed through a place where there is always a high count of **American Robins** during migration.

Off to Bottle Beach where we supposed to be at 10:00 am to beat a super high tide. The water was coming in fast, but we got there in time to count the shorebirds. From the parking lot we saw over 1000 **Dunlin** and 65 **Black-bellied Plovers**, our only **Great Blue Heron**, and many **Marsh Wrens**. On the way out, where the bridge is, we heard a **Virginia Rail** calling. Close to Patrick's bench we had some great views of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** (all Myrtle). We had no response calling for the Virginia Rail on Acosta Road.

Next we headed over to Westport. On the way we had 2 more **Red-tailed Hawks**. The water was high, so we had no shorebirds, but many **Common Loons**, all in different plumage. We had a high count of **White-winged Scoters** (25), some **Surf Scoters**, **Mew Gulls**, **Western Gulls**, and some **Horned Grebes**. The water was so high in Tokeland, and we saw no Marbled Godwits. We did see 14 **Whimbrels** and 3 **Willetts**, 4 **Red-breasted Mergansers**, and 40 **Brant Geese**, plus **Western Grebes** and **Common Goldeneyes**. Midway Beach was deserted, but we had **Ravens**, **Bewick's Wren**, and **American Coot**. We completed the trip in John River. Although we did not hike, we added a **Killdeer**, a **Kingfisher**, and a **Varied Thrush**. A highlight was seeing 21 Roosevelt Elk, which are often there in the late afternoon. Our last birds were 2 **Cooper's Hawks** near the turn by Twin Harbor State Park. 🐦

BHAS 24th Annual Dinner and Auction a Record-Setting Success

Nearly 200 people attended Black Hills Audubon Society's 24th Annual Dinner and Auction on March 5th. The event filled our space at the Olympia Center to the point of overflowing, a trend we hope continues as BHAS membership grows. Attendees enjoyed the auction, plant sale, scrumptious potluck offerings, camaraderie, and the fascinating presentation on dragon and damselflies by Dr. Dennis Paulson. The Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award was presented to the Chehalis River Council, and Susie Vanderburg received the Dave McNett Environmental Educator of the Year Award. Stew

Congratulations to our 2011 Award Winners!

At the BHAS Annual Dinner, the **2011 Dave McNett Environmental Educator of the Year Award** was given to Susie Vanderburg. Since 1992, Susie has been an integral part of the environmental education community. She served as Thurston County Storm and Surface Water Utility's first Public Involvement and Education Coordinator where she developed and implemented Stream Team and created school programs to align with Stream Team projects. Currently she leads Environmental Education at the new LOTT WET Science Center. In presenting the award, Education Committee Chair Debbie Nickerson related the positive experiences of many teachers who have worked with Susie. With this award, BHAS honors Susie's long-time dedication and personal commitment to our community.

At the same event, **The Jack Davis Conservationist of the Year Award** was given to the Chehalis River Council. This grassroots group organized in 1992 in response to the need to implement "The Chehalis River Basin Action Plan," which identified water quality issues in the basin. The Council has since broadened their efforts to include other basin-wide issues such as flooding and fish passage. They continue to work as watchdogs over development issues facing the basin—notably, how to address flooding problems and still preserve the natural environment, and assessing the effects of forest practices. In presenting this award, BHAS recognizes their ongoing stewardship of the basin and their on-the-ground connections with its residents. 🐦

Henderson led a special appeal for financial contributions to the BHAS Habitat Conservation Fund, raising nearly \$4,000 in pledges. Abundant thanks to all who volunteered with the plant sale, auction, dinner set up, and for the clean-up assistance.

The Auction at this year's Annual Dinner had a new and special feeling in its separate, larger space. It produced a record number of items offered (144), a record number of bidders (65) and a record total of money raised (\$4,500). We thank all of you who supported BHAS with your pledges and auction purchases. We are also deeply appreciative of our members and supporters who donated so many excellent auction items, and grateful to the following local businesses for their generous donations. We urge you to reward these businesses with your patronage. When you do so, please let them know you appreciate their support of Black Hills Audubon Society.

- Alpine Experience
- Anthony's Hearthfire Grill
- Buck's 5th Ave
- Budd Bay Cafe
- Childhood's End Gallery
- Compass Rose
- Deerfoot Herbs
- Dinners Done Right
- Fireside Book Store
- Fish Tale Brew Pub
- Gary's Olympia Auto Service
- Gull Harbor Mercantile
- The Happy Gardener
- Mercato Ristorante
- Moore's Tree & Co
- Jon Ohman
- Orca Books
- Paintbrush Design
- Perennial Gardener
- R W Morse Company
- Traditions Fair Trade
- Tumwater Printing
- Wholesale Sports
- Wild Birds Unlimited
- The Wine Loft

We hope to see all of you, and more, at our quarter-century event in 2012. 🐦

—Meagan Thorn



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Committee Chairs may also serve as Board Members.



* BHAS Board Member

Black Hills Audubon Society

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E-mail: 4info@blackhills-audubon.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.

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

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

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

The Echo is published bi-monthly. Editor: Robin Shoal. Layout and design by Lee Miller. Graphics by Nature Icons/Ultimate Symbol unless otherwise identified. Fledgling above and sparrow on page 2 by Kirsten Munson.

Material for *The Echo* should be sent to PO Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507, or e-mailed to Robin Shoal at rzshoal@comcast.net. The next *Echo* will be the July/August 2011 issue, the deadline for which is June 5. 🐦

Black Hills Audubon Society (BHAS) Membership form

Type of Membership—check appropriate box

Member of Black Hills Audubon Society Chapter (BHAS) only

Singles or household

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

Please make check payable to Black Hills Audubon Society.

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

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

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

- \$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*.

Chapter: C 9 Z Y12 0 Z

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!



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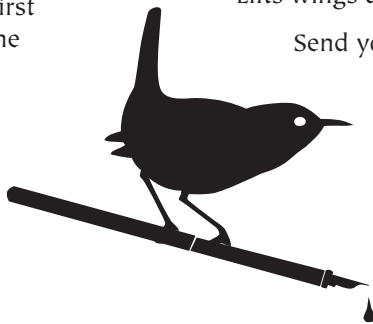
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bird haiku

April was National Poetry Month, and May is Birdathon Month. We put these two events together and came up with the idea for a Black Hills Audubon Society haiku collection. If you feel as inspired as we do about birds, spring, and poetry, please send us your original bird- or birding-related haiku. The basic haiku form presents a compelling idea, theme, or experience in three phrases. The first phrase consists of five syllables, the second phrase is seven syllables, and the closing phrase is again five syllables. Here are a few examples:

Chickadee-dee-dee
Flits in, takes one tiny seed
Gone again in brush



May is Birdathon
I look for birds everywhere
What will I see next?

March and April rain
A soggy grey migration
May might bring rainbows

Crow struts across walk,
Shrugs feathers like a jacket,
Lifts wings and flies off.

Send your original haikus to the *Echo* editor: rzshoal@comcast.net.

We will publish them in future *Echo* newsletters as space allows. All published haikus will be anonymous, unless you tell us you want your name published with your haiku.

—RZS