



Black Hills Audubon Society

Olympia, Washington

Volume 40,
Number 2

March/April 2009

The BHAS Annual Potluck Dinner/Auction

Saturday, March 7, starting at 5 pm at the
Olympia Center.

Several weeks ago, you should have received your invitation to attend the event featuring a talk by **Peter Goldmark, our new Washington Commissioner of Public Lands**. We hope that you have returned your RSVP card by the deadline, (which has now passed).

If by any chance you were not able to respond to the invitation before now, please call Margery Beeler to see if space is still available (360-352-5437, mswampcat@aol.com).

This year's Auction will be **Silent only**. If you

have an item for the silent auction, please contact Margery Beeler before March 4th. If you bring an unannounced item to the event, we will be happy to hold it for the 2010 Auction.

If you have not attended the BHAS Annual Dinner/Auction in the past, you have missed a chance to share food, hear an interesting speaker, and spend time with others who, like you, care about our natural world and how to protect it for future generations.

We hope that some of you will be able to help set up the venue (beginning at 1:30 pm) and/or with cleanup after the event. The more the merrier, and the easier and shorter the effort!

We look forward to seeing you on March 7th

No Membership Meeting or Program in March

Thursday, April 16th Protecting our State's Critters

Jennifer Hayes from Washington Dept of Fish and Wildlife will talk about her agency's role in providing technical assistance and guidance



to various entities regarding the Growth Management Act. Her recent work includes efforts to improve protection of the Mazama Pocket Gopher, and helping local government identify high-quality habitat for planning purposes. Please come join us to learn more about this often misunderstood yet critically important tool to protect our state's precious critters.

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 pm. Driving directions from Olympia: From I-5, take exit 105 following the "State Capitol/City Center" route. Go straight, through the tunnel. At the light (Capitol Way) turn left (south). After 7 blocks, turn right onto 21st Street. The Museum is two blocks down on the left. The Coach House meeting room and parking are south of and behind the Museum.

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BHAS Bird Feeder Cleaning Moves to Fall

We are changing our feeder cleanings from twice a year to once a year, in the Fall.

The Fall Cleaning will be held this year on **Saturday, September 26th, 2009**, at Wild Birds Unlimited in West Olympia. We always need volunteers to help scrub, eat pizza, and have fun. Please contact Deb Nickerson at 360-754-5397 or debranick@gmail.com to sign up to help us and the birds in the fall.

We encourage you to maintain clean feeders throughout the year:

- Scrub the feeder in soap and hot water
- Disinfect in bleach water. (a table-spoon of bleach per bucket destroys any remaining bacteria).
- Clean every two months or so.

BHAS Receives Grant for “Board the Bus” Project

BHAS has just received a grant which will help provide funds to area teachers to assist them with transportation costs to get students out in some of our natural areas. School teachers in Thurston, Mason and Lewis counties can apply for a one time grant of \$100.00 to go to pay bus transportation costs for field trips to wildlife preserves to further their study of the natural world. Teachers should be engaged in academic work surrounding wildlife or watershed education. To apply, please fill out the application in this newsletter or download it from our website by March 15th. Awards will be made after that date. Contact Deb Nickerson at 360-754-5397 or debranick@gmail.com if you have questions.

Birding Classes

The Education Committee is organizing birding skills classes throughout the year. Notice of each is on our Website and in The Olympian newspaper. Watch either of these places for information about them as they arise. If you would like to teach a course for us, please contact Debbie Nickerson at 360-754-5397 or debranick@gmail.com. We would like to see a combination of introductory classes as well as specific classes targeting a particular species, type of bird or focus on a geographic area.

Pelagic Birding Class/Trip with Matt Pike and Westport Seabirds.

Here is an opportunity to learn more about the pelagic species of the Pacific. Participation in this program is two-fold: it includes a class in Olympia on Thursday, August 27th from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the Olympia Center and a trip out of Westport with Westport Seabirds on August 29th from 6am to 4pm. Matt Pike will teach the class and will be a leader on the chartered boat trip. There is a limit of 24 persons. This is expected to fill quickly so contact Matt Pike at hoodedcrow3b@yahoo.com to register. Cost is \$140.00.

Birding in Earnest: Dec. 2008 – Jan. 2009

By Bill Shelmerdine

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

During December 2008 and January 2009, a lot of activity was noted and some unusual weather patterns affected birds and birders alike. Waterfowl and gull numbers peaked sharply then seemed to decline just as rapidly late in the period. A strong winter storm arrived on the afternoon of the Olympia Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and brought a pattern that persisted for several weeks.

Unprecedented amounts of snow in the Puget lowlands made travel difficult, and freezing of shallow fresh water areas caused a lot of movement with local waterfowl in particular. Some species that seemed easy to find before the storm became difficult to find or absent, while others (like swans and some of the gulls) appeared after the "thaw".

Waterfowl: A big increase from last time in waterfowl numbers on Capitol Lake was reported by Keith Brady on 10/27. What seemed to be impressive numbers of **Aythya Ducks (Scaup, Ring-necks, etc...)** hung around there through much of the period with a large drop-off in mid-January and very low numbers by 1/24. Waterfowl numbers at the Nisqually Refuge during the CBC (12/14) seemed about average with the exception of **Northern Pintail** numbers; 1495 individuals at the refuge on count day may have been a record. **Swans** seemed particularly tough to find this winter until about storm time. Gary Wiles



observed a small flock overhead just south of Nisqually on count day. On 12/26 Linda Kunze, observed 4 **Tundra Swans** on Capitol Lake (fide. Kelly McAllister). Doug Cannings reported a group of 19 **Trumpeter Swans** on Black Lake on 12/30. They stayed through the New Year but left shortly after. Around the same time, Barb Johnson reported a group of **trumpeters** from a small lake outside of Shelton. And finally a group of 5 were noted along the Chehalis River from Goodrich Road in Lewis County (a regular wintering area) on 1/11.

Rounding out the waterfowl, a flock of 300 or more **Snow Geese** visited the Nisqually area around 12/30. While small numbers or individuals sometimes winter in our area, in my experience this was an unprecedented mid-winter number. These birds may have been displaced from regular wintering areas such as the Snoqualmie or Skagit bottomlands by deep snow and frozen conditions. They did not stay long and disappeared with the receding snow in the lowlands.

Gulls: Gull numbers increased dramatically at Perry Creek in mid-December, peaking in Late December and early January. These gulls and their principle attractant, spawned-out Chum Salmon, both seemed late this year. The flocks at this location are typically dominated by **Glaucous-Winged (GW)** with a fair number of **GW x Western hybrids/ intergrades**. This year, the flock seemed even more mono-species than usual. Through much of December, large flocks were almost pure **GW**. (During CBC week **no Herring or Thayer's** were noted here). In fact Herring Gulls were downright hard to find this year, one might say remarkable by their absence. There were none that I know of
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Birding in Earnest

(Cont'd from previous page)

during Christmas Count week, an unusual miss for the Oly CBC. Species diversity seemed to peak in early January. **Herring, Thayers and Glaucous** were all present by January 2nd; on that day 2 first-year **Glaucous Gulls** were with the small gull flock at Kennedy Creek, while 1 **Glaucous** joined an estimated 750 gulls at Perry Creek. By January 24th, gulls were virtually gone from this area.

Owls: The number of reports of owls for the mid-winter period seemed up this year. A **Barred Owl** showed up at Scott Morrison's place in Lacey around 12/11; it has lingered through the period. A **Western Screech-Owl** found on count day by Keith Brady and Jason Paulios was a very nice surprise for a species that has been increasingly difficult to find in our area in recent years. On 12/14, Scott Mills and Scott Peterson were able to find a

Short-eared owl at Nisqually during the CBC. On 12/26, 2 **Short-eared Owls** were seen at the Centralia Steam Plant by Jerry Swena. The **Short-Ears** found by Paul Hicks south of Tenino in November were still present at the end of January making this a banner winter for this species (but still short of historic numbers). While they used to be regular in winter they have been decidedly uncommon in recent years.

Out of place sightings: At this time of year, there are always a few out of place sightings, often birds from north, east, or upper elevations that may have been pushed our way by weather, food-supply, or just plain wandering. This period was no exception, and other nice finds during the period included the following:

- Jerry Swena reported a **Red-naped Sapsucker** from a private residence near Chehalis on 12/6.
- On 12/13, I saw an immature **Northern Goshawk** in the Steamboat Island area.
- In Mason County, Susan Markey saw a male **Mountain Bluebird** along Highway 3 between Shelton and Allyn on 12/31 (fide. Bill Tweit).
- Jack Zemkie sighted a **Brown Pelican**



on Totten Inlet on 1/29. While reports have increased in South Sound over the past decade, mid-winter records are rare (are there even any January records?)

It is noteworthy that exceptional numbers have lingered north this year and dye-offs have been reported from CA through OR.

Misc Birds.: And to round out the reports, **White-tailed Kites** were found in modest numbers early in the period in south Thurston and north Lewis Counties. Jerry Swena reported 2 from the Stream Plant. Roger Orness averaged 8 **Kites** in 9 trips in Nov/Dec, but found only 1 bird (near Curtis Hill Road) in late January following the December - January Storms.

Next time:

February and March usually bring an increase in **owl** detections with several local species becoming more vocal. Now is a good time to look and listen in suitable habitat. In particular, **Northern Saw Whet and Pygmy** seem a bit easier to find at this time. The period also brings the first of the early spring migrants. By the time this reaches you, the first **Violet and Tree Swallow** will have likely been sighted at Nisqually or along the Chehalis River. Other early migrants to look for include the first **Rufus Hummingbirds, Barn Swallows, Turkey Vultures, and Osprey.**



BHAS Calendar

Field Trips and Events 2009

(See also Field Trips for **Bird-a-thon** in May on page 9)

March 7th, Saturday

Field Trip: Hood Canal
8:30 am to mid-afternoon
Leader: Andrew Beélik

March 7th, Saturday

BHAS Annual Potluck Dinner/Auction
Starts at 5:30pm
Olympia Center in Olympia

Mar 21st, Saturday

Kids and Parents at Capital Lake
9 am until about 11 am
Leader: Sheila McCartan

April 4th, Saturday,

Field Trip: Skokomish Delta
9:00 am to early afternoon
Leader: Andrew Beélik



April 18th, Saturday

Birding along the Chehalis
Bluebird Trail
9:00 am to early afternoon
Leader: Jim Pruske

April 19th, Sunday

Marrowstone Island
Leader: Tom Schooley
7:00 am - 6:00 pm

May 2nd, Saturday

Woodard Bay for Beginners
8 am - 11:0 or noon
Leaders: Sam Merrill and Tracey Scalici

May 16th, Saturday

Eastern Washington Birding
6:30 am - after 7:00 pm
Leaders: Dave and Sherrv Havden

May 22-25, Fri - Mon

Washington State Audubon Campout
Weekend
Wenas Creek Campground

May 30th, Saturday

Exploring & Birding Capitol Forest
8:30 am - late afternoon
Leader: Jim Pruske and Sue Danver

Recycle Used Binoculars for Kids

Do you happen to have an extra pair of pocket-sized, or beginner's binoculars laying around the house that you're not using anymore? If so, Edmonds Discovery Programs would love to get those out of your way! We have several educational programs for schools and daycamps during the spring, summer and fall that require the use of binoculars.



With a limited budget, we're not able to purchase enough to replace the worn-out ones we've been using for the past several years, so we'd be most happy to receive some donated pairs. If you can help, please call

Sally Lider Edmonds, Parks & Recreation, 425-771-0227, or e-mail liders@ci.edmonds.wa.us,
Edmonds Backyard Wildlife Habitat Project
<http://edmondsbackyardwildlifehabitat.org>

Field Trip/Event Details

March 7th, Saturday,

Field Trip: Hood Canal

8:30 am to mid-afternoon

Leader: Andrew Beélik

We'll meet at Potlatch State Park at 8:30 am, bird there till 9:00, then we'll visit the most promising estuaries revealed by scouting from Belfair to the Duckabush. This span encompasses the Great Bend IBA, one of the important wintering areas for waterfowl on inland salt waters. We will see 15 or more species of ducks, starring Harlequin and Black Scoter. we hope.

Other possibilities are Trumpeter Swans, Brant, and Dippers. Raptors and passerines will be a bonus.

Walking will not exceed one mile. Bring lunch. We will be back to Potlatch by 3:30. Limit: 12 persons, three vehicles. Call Andrew with reservations at (360) 426-6262.

March 21st, Saturday

Field Trip: Kids and Parents at Capital Lake

9 am - about 11 am

Leader: Sheila McCartan

Are you a parent with small kids? Do you like to bird watch but never find the chance to get out? Well here's your opportunity! Join field trip leader, Sheila McCartan for a walk around Capital Lake. Bring your kids in a stroller and let's see what ducks and other birds we can see. This will be a leisurely walk lasting about 2 hours. Meet at Marathon Park at 9am. No reservation needed. Call Sheila at 357-9170 with questions.

April 4th, Saturday,

Field Trip: Skokomish Delta

9:00 am to early afternoon

Leader: Andrew Beélik

Come and join members of the Skokomish Tribe to observe progress in reestablishing the salt marsh in the delta. We will walk the splendid new "boardwalk" to the canal shore, looking for shorebirds and passerines. Then we should see a good variety of waterfowl as we walk the spit. Raptors will be likely; Peregrine Falcons have at times been seen in the delta (no promise). Meet

at 9:00 in the parking lot of the Lucky Dog Casino along US Hwy 101. We will walk about 3 miles. We plan to return to the parking lot around 2 pm. Limit 12 persons and 3 vehicles. Sign up with Andrew, 360-426-6262, or Bethany Tropp of Skokomish Fisheries, 360-877-5213.

April 18, Saturday

Field Trip: Birding along the Chehalis Bluebird Trail

9:00 am to early afternoon

Leader: Jim Pruske

Spend the morning birding along a 2.5 mile stretch of the Chehalis Western Trail with 40 bird boxes. This is the trail that Jack Davis had established 25 years ago. Over the past ten year period, I have found seventy-seven bird species inhabiting the site during the month of April. The trail crosses prairie, ranch pastures, evergreen forest, and mixed forest. A stream is nearby. Western Bluebird, California Quail, American Kestrel, Lincoln Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow and Yellow Rump Warblers are among the species expected to be found.

Meet at Martin Way Park & Ride at 9:00 am.

This trip is limited to 3 cars. Call the BHAS office at 360-352-7299 to register.

April 19th, Sunday

Field Trip: Marrowstone Island

7:00 am - 6:00 pm

Leader: Tom Schooley

Marrowstone Island, in Jefferson County, is a great area for late wintering waterfowl, alcids, and grebes. Plus early migratory land birds and gulls will be on the move. Our target birds will include Bonaparte's Gulls,

Marbled Murrelets, and Black Turnstones at Fort Flagler State Park. The woods should be full of singing Winter Wrens, Hutton's vireos, and Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Expect a long day, but easy walking on our stops. We will return about 6:00 pm. Bring a lunch and be prepared for any kind of weather. Three car maximum or about 10 participants. Meet at the the Mud Bay Park and Ride before 7:00 am.

Call Tom Schooley at 360-357-9170 to sign up.

Field Trip/Event Details (cont'd)

May 2nd, Saturday

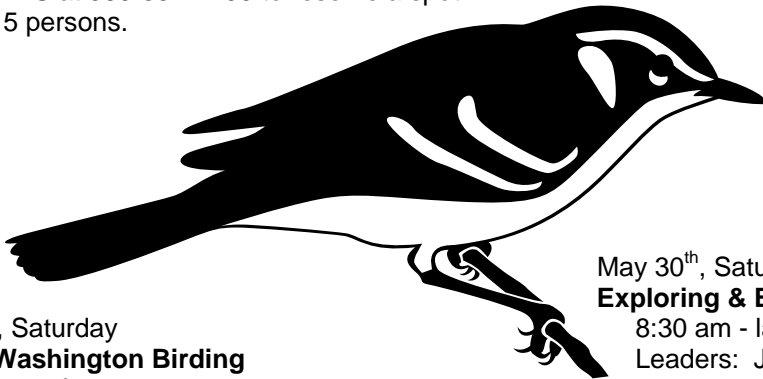
Field Trip: Woodard Bay for Beginners

8 am - 11:00 or noon

Leaders: Sam Merrill and Tracey Scalici

This walk is designed primarily for beginning birders. We will look and listen for woodland birds in spring migrations as we walk through the deep 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 Rd, crossing Libby Road. Park in a small parking area on the left just before crossing Woodard Bay. Bring binoculars if possible.

Call BHAS at 360-352-7299 to reserve a spot. Limit 15 persons.



May 16th, Saturday

Eastern Washington Birding

6:30 am - after 7:00 pm

Leaders: Dave and Sherry Hayden

This trip will cover the Quilomene Wildlife Area, Vantage, French Coulee, and Birder's Corner. We will look for Sage Sparrows, Sage Thrashers, Say's Phoebes, Golden Eagle, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, White-throated Swifts, Black-crowned Night Herons, shorebirds, and waterfowl. It is also possible to find Burrowing Owl. There will be some easy walking. Meet at the Martin Way Park and Ride before 6:30 am, and expect to return there after 7:00 pm. Bring lunch, water, snacks, etc. This trip is limited to 10 people. Call the BHAS office at 360-352-7299 to reserve your spot.

May 22-25, Fri - Mon

Washington State Audubon Campout Weekend at Wenas Creek Campground

EVERY Memorial Day Weekend, members of Washington State's Audubon Chapters and their friends gather in the Wenas Valley, located on the east slope of the Cascade Mountains between Ellensburg and Yakima. With a variety of natural history and recreation opportunities, the Wenas Valley is a beautiful area that supports a fascinating assortment of spring flora and fauna, and offers the spiritual fulfillment of simply being outdoors in the spring. Everyone whether members of Audubon chapters or not is welcome to join us for this outing, which is attended each year by around 200 men, women and children and a large number of birds which, we like to think, enjoy being watched ever as much as we enjoy watching them.

See more information at:

<http://www.wenasaudubon.org/>

May 30th, Saturday

Exploring & Birding Capitol Forest

8:30 am - late afternoon

Leaders: Jim Pruske and Sue Danver

Spend the day exploring Capitol Forest from sea level up to 2,700 ft. We will be searching for bird species that inhabit streams, mixed forest, and second growth forest. Dipper, Hermit Warbler, Gray Jay, Hermit Thrush, and Fox Sparrows are expected. We should also find Pygmy Owls. A special attempt will be made to find Mountain Quail. Other unique elements of the flora and fauna will be examined. Club moss and liverworts are a specialty. We will identify butterfly species as well.

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

(cont'd from back page)

How Climate Change Impacts Our Birds

Climate Change Risk	Effect on Habitat	Effect on Birds	WA IBA High-risk Birds
Sea level rise	Inundation, erosion, and degradation of natural shoreline	Loss of breeding habitat for beach nesting species; loss of feeding and stopover sites for Pacific Flyway migrants	Western Snowy Plover, Rock Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher
Wildfire patterns	Increased weed invasion, loss of native plants, habitat conversion, erosion of soil and reduction of stream/river quality	Significant decline in quality of shrub-steppe ecosystem leads to fragmentation of habitat and bird populations, and extirpation of area-specific species; reduction in quality of coniferous forest habitat leads to further decline of old-growth dependent species but allows influx of pioneering, insectivorous species	Spotted Owl, Flammulated Owl, Greater Sage Grouse, Ferruginous Hawk, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Sage Thrasher, Sage and Brewer's Sparrows
Warming temperature; wetter winters, drier summers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increases temperatures at all elevations. Decreased snowpack means less water for wetlands, lakes, rivers. Increasingly severe storms ▪ Changes in location and timing of flora and fauna life cycles 	Birds pushed into higher or more northerly ranges to maintain optimum body temperatures. Increased mortality risk from exposure to extreme weather. Fewer wetlands especially in eastern Washington for breeding and fall migrating waterbirds	White-tailed Ptarmigan, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, American Pipit, Northern Shrike; Western and Clark's Grebes, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Black Tern, Long-billed Curlew
		Disruption of food availability on migration routes and in breeding grounds	70% of Washington birds are migratory and therefore vulnerable to this effect
		Disruption of avian life cycle events, e.g., breeding and nesting; increased vulnerability of nestlings and of parents during period of feeding young	Common Murre, Gray Jay
Atmospheric and ocean circulation patterns	Increase in ratio of El Niño to La Niña cycles resulting in warmer, nutrient-poor coastal waters and stronger wave-caused shoreline erosion	Reduction in food availability for oceanic and coastal birds plus inability to find shelter, or suitable nesting or breeding places increases vulnerability to predators, injury, and disease	Marbled Murrelet, Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets, Tufted Puffin

The 2009 reports by Audubon Washington and by the National Audubon Society are available on the web at wa.audubon.org. The reports include suggestions for individual action.

Support for the science program of Audubon Washington comes from the generosity of an anonymous donor and individual supporters.

May is BIRDATHON Month

Why should you participate in BHAS's second annual Birdathon? Because Washington's native birds and their habitat need your protection. One of the most effective ways you can help is by joining together with your fellow Audubon members, celebrate Washington's birds, and raise funds for Black Hills Audubon Society.

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

You do not need to be an expert birder. If you're entirely new to Birdathon, it works like a walk-a-thon. Birdathoners will collect pledges for finding and counting bird species. It's a competitive and educational event for any level of birdwatcher, as well as for the family and friends who cheer them on.

You can join our guided trips, organize your own trip, or count independently. All guided trips are led by birding experts and are a great way to make new friends and connect with other bird lovers. Guided trips range from intensive all day trips to more relaxing walks in our local birding hot spots.

You can join in the fun for gathering as little as \$35 in pledges. Pledge yourself or have your friends and family pledge you. It's a unique and highly effective way to support Black Hills Audubon Society. To participate, complete the registration form below. For more information contact the Birdathon Coordinator Sheila McCartan at blackhillsbirdathon@comcast.net or call (360) 357-9170.



Guided Birdathon Trips

Olympia's Waterfront – kids welcome!

Leader: Sheila McCartan
Saturday, May 2, 3 hours
Estimated species: 20

From Kennedy Creek to Capitol Peak

Leader: Whittier Johnson
Saturday, May 9, all day
Estimated species 40

Bowerman Basin to Ocean Shores

Leader: Phil Kelley
Saturday, May 16, all day
Estimated species 70

Thurston County Dawn to Dusk

Leader: Matt Pike
Sunday, May 17
Estimated species: 70

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

Leader: Woody Franzen
Thursday, May 21, 4 hours
Estimated species: 40

See Registration Form Next Page

BIRDATHON Fund-Raiser

May 1 – 31, 2009

Name _____

Evening Phone _____

E-mail _____



- I will go birding for the BHAS Birdathon and will recruit at least \$35 in pledges.
- I will sponsor a birder at \$_____ per bird species the birder sees. Name of birder _____
- I wish to sponsor a Trip Leader(s) _____ at \$_____ per bird species seen.

Leader: Sheila McCartan	May 2	Olympia's Waterfront	est. species 20
Leader: Whittier Johnson	May 9	Kennedy Creek to Capitol Peak	est. species 40
Leader: Phil Kelley	May 16	<u>Bowman Basin to Ocean Shores</u>	est. species 70
Leader: Matt Pike	May 17	Thurston County Dawn to Dusk	est. species 70
Leader: <u>Woody Franzen</u>	May 21	Nisqually NWR	est. species 40

- I wish to join a Birdathon Trip(s) _____ and will recruit at least \$35 in pledges.

For more information, contact blackhillsbirdathon@comcast.net, or call Sheila McCartan at 360.357.9170. Thank you for your support!

Send completed form to:
Birdathon, P.O. Box 2524, OlyWA98507

CONSERVATION UPDATES

Submitted by Donna Nickerson,
Conservation Committee Chair

Gravel Mines and Asphalt Plants:

In March, the Thurston County Planning Commission will be deliberating revisions to the siting and permitting of gravel mines and asphalt plants. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for March 18th. The Board of County Commissioners will then consider the revisions, with an additional public hearing perhaps in late March or sometime in April.

BHAS continues to monitor the process and comment on recommendations to help ensure that the regulations developed will reflect the intent of the Task Force's recommendations. These recommendations include a comprehensive approach to

identification of mining sites based on gravel availability and quality, effects on the natural environment and human safety concerns, and a requirement that site identification should precede mining proposals.

Legislative Brief

BHAS signed in at the respective hearings to support the following draft legislation:

House Bill 1409 – the Rescue Tug Bill.

This bill would require that all oil tankers, cargo vessels and large cruise ships coming into the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound pay for the standby response tug service at the mouth of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. This service has previously been paid for by state and federal taxpayer funds. What is significant is that it will now shift the burden of paying for the tug to

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CONSERVATION UPDATES (cont'd)

those companies that are putting our ecosystem at risk. This follows the "Precautionary Polluter Pays Principle".

The Rescue Tug has been stationed at Neah Bay since 1999 and was responsible for 40 rescues or assists of oil tankers, cargo vessels, and other vessels in the region. This bill will also require that the Tug have response capabilities in the event of a spill. If passed, it will help protect numerous bird species – from the Western Grebes in the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary to the Greater Yellow Legs in Southern Puget Sound's Mud Bay - from the risk of a devastating spill.

Senate Bill SB 5735 and HB 1819 – the Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Bills. Key elements of these companion bills would: authorize the Department of Ecology to create and allowance trading program; create a cap and trade work group; specify the emissions covered; set compliance obligations and penalties; allow offsets; and recommend financial incentives for forestry. These companion bills follow the successful I-937 Clean Energy Initiative passed in 2006, and will also help Washington State meet its economic and climate crisis challenges by providing what nationally is recognized as a common solution – to reduce greenhouse gasses while stimulating the economy with jobs that invest in a green economy.

The Conservation Committee will continue to learn about and support legislation during this session that improves our environment. One important legislation is **HB 1172 – Implementing a transfer of development rights program.** As of this writing (February 6, 2009) this bill is in the

General Government Appropriations Committee, and BHAS is sending letters of support as appropriate. Transfer of development rights (TDR) is a market-based mechanism that can preserve working farm and forest lands. The state

loses an average of 23,720 acres of farmland to development annually. While this bill creates only a voluntary TDR program, it will be an opportunity for many counties to better focus growth in the central Puget Sound's urban areas while permanently protecting the region's rural and resource land from encroaching development. BHAS has consistently urged Thurston County to improve both its applicability and implementation of TDRs.

Also important will be opposing legislation that is harmful to our environment.

To find out more information and track the progress of these and other pieces of legislation, please go to <http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature>

If members have questions or comments on BHAS support of the bills proposed during this session, please contact Donna Nickerson at D.J.Nick@comcast.net

Coordination with other Groups

BHAS signed on to the Resolution authored by the Washington Wilderness Coalition that calls on President Barack Obama to uphold the 2001 National Forest Roadless Area Rule. Washington has more than 2 million acres of roadless areas in our national forests that could be harmed by the building of new roads. Upholding the Roadless Area Rule will provide numerous public benefits that range from securing unspoiled habitats for thousands of threatened, endangered, and declining species, to helping to preserve water quality and riparian buffers that are often characterized by old-growth forests which are home to the Northern Spotted Owl. ■

Board of Directors 2008-2009

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Black Hills Audubon Society

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E-mail: info@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.

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: Deb Jaqua. 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 webdeb1@gmail.com.

Deadline for the March/April 2009 issue is **April 5, 2009**

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*.

CHAPTER: C9ZY120Z

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!



How Climate Change Impacts Our Birds

Audubon Society and Audubon Washington have released reports showing the effects of climate change on bird populations nationally and in the Pacific Northwest.

SEATTLE, Feb. 10 – Like canaries in coal mines, birds across America are giving early warning signs of what climate change portends for our landscapes and, ultimately, ourselves, according to new reports issued today by the National Audubon Society and Audubon WA .

The overall study by Audubon scientists examines 40 years of avian data and shows that nearly 60% of species that winter in North America have moved northward or inland – sometimes by hundreds of miles – most likely in response to climate change.

“Climate change is exacerbating the threats that already exists for our birds, as well as raising new ones,” said Don McIvor, science coordinator for Audubon Washington, a state field office of the national organization.

Five years ago, Audubon Washington’s first **State of the Birds** analysis showed that Washington’s growing human population and fragmentation of habitat has severely affected natural places critical to many bird species

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