

Pilchuck Audubon Profile

January 1980

Vol. IX No. 1

CALENDAR

- January 18, Friday. Program Meeting. Jan and Sally van Niel will show some slides taken at Malheur Wildlife Area. Meeting is in Room 308 at 7:30 p.m. at Everett Community College.
- February 3, Sunday. Field trip to Paul Dye's to see the birds in winter plumage. Some birds may be doing mating dances. Meet at 1 p.m. in front of the Coast to Coast store in Frontier Village. Bring boots.
Call Jim Kuhn at 252-0900 to make certain that the trip is not cancelled unexpectedly.
- February 4, Monday. Board Meeting. Call Jan van Niel for meeting place.
- February 15, Friday. Program Meeting. Mike Kyte and Jack Eddy of the Seattle Aquarium will show slides of underwater life.
- February 16, Saturday. Field Trip to see the eagles on the Skagit. Meet at 9 a.m. at Smokey Point Rest Area heading north on I-5, north of Exit 206 at 9 a.m.
- March 3, Monday. Board Meeting.
- March 8, Saturday. Trip to the Skagit to see the Snow Geese.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

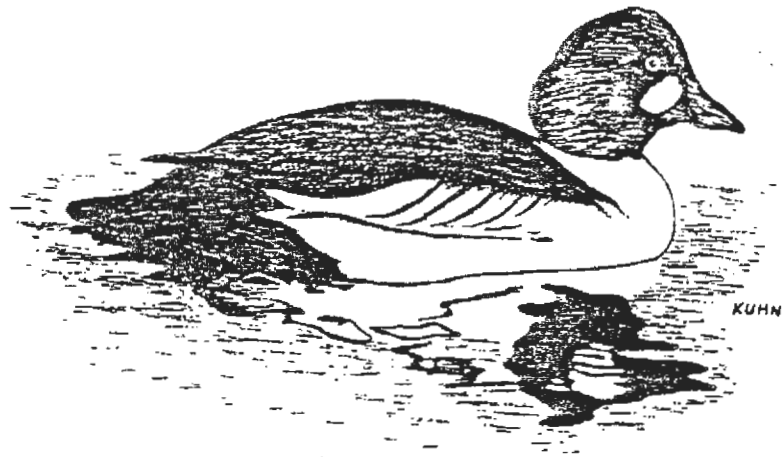
It was a real pleasure to see so many people turn out for the Christmas Bird Count. We had more counters than ever before. Since I did not see all of you at the potluck after the count I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you very much. This goes double to those inactive members and non-members of our chapter. Do let us see more of you.

In another area we need help getting active. The hearings on the Northern Tier Pipeline, which will cross our county, are currently going on. There has been no activity from the voters of Snohomish County so the county commissioners did not even attend the general hearings earlier. For more details see article elsewhere and get active in the fight. Otherwise we will not have any say at all in what happens. The pipeline may be inevitable but only if we are heard from loud and clear will any special safety measures or changes in route even be considered. The pipeline will cross every major stream and river in the County.

The last item is to remind you that our chapter will be sponsoring the Washington State Audubon Council Meeting in Ellensburg this May. We will need help from all of you if we are going to do a good job. Things that will need to be done include, letter writing, lots of cookies or the like to make, arrangements for speakers, collecting and transporting materials to the conference, and helping with all the little last minute things just before and at the conference. Call me at home in the evening if you can help. Thank you.

Jan van Niel
778-7568

Changing one thing for the better is worth more than proving a thousand things are wrong.



COMMON GOLDENEYE

BIRD SIGHTINGS

Jim Kuhn saw a WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN on Mt. Baker. He also saw a RED-TAILED HAWK with an AMERICAN WIGEON at the Everett Sewage Lagoon. The group that went to the Skagit in November also went to Clear Lake and saw a BALD EAGLE with a duck. David Jones and Martha Jordan, of Bothell have observed a SHARP-SHINNED HAWK going after birds at their feeders, as have K.C. and Dorothea Jones in Admiral's Cove. Marilyn Willard of Everett and Jan and Sally van Niel have observed MERLINS going after birds at their feeders. Does this indicate that the drought affected the food supply for the rodents to the point where the rodent population is down and the raptors are depending more on birds for their food supply? It is an interesting thought and one we should continue to study.

Also worth noting is the possible range expansion of the Trumpeter Swan to areas south of the Skagit Valley. Three sightings confirmed as trumpeters have been made from the Arlington - Snohomish area and one swan reported near Lord's Hill. If you see any swans you think may be trumpeters or are in an unusual place please report them to Martha Jordan - 775-0137

PROTECTION ISLAND

Protection Island, west of Port Townsend has been named one of the most unique and endangered ecosystems in the state of Washington, by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It contains the major breeding colony of the rhinoceros auklet in the contiguous United States, with 17,000 breeding pairs; the largest breeding colony of glaucous-winged gulls in Washington; the largest nesting site of tufted puffins in Puget Sound; and a major breeding area for pelagic cormorants, pigeon guillemots and black oystercatchers. It is also an important pupping and loafing area for harbor seals; and is significant for Pleistocene paleontology.

This island is in grave danger and will probably be destroyed for the above purposes if the Northern Tier Pipeline goes through. In fact, there is some evidence to indicate that Northern Tier may be buying up property on the island secretly so they will be able to do what they want with it.

The Save Protection Island organization is having an Adopt a Seabird campaign with the money being raised to be used to buy property on the island. (One fifth is owned by the Washington State Department of Game as a Seabird Sanctuary). Tax deductible donations of \$10.00 for a glaucous-winged gull, \$25.00 for a rhinoceros auklet, \$50.00 for a tufted puffin, etc. Send checks to the Save Protection Island Fund, c/o Admiralty Audubon, P.O. Box 666, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

EVERGREEN ISLANDS

Evergreen Islands, Inc. is composed of people who are trying to protect Fidalgo (with Anacortes), Cypress, Guemes and North Whidbey Islands. One of their goals is to have Heart Lake at the foot of Mt. Erie converted from DNR land to a state park. Ultimately the goal is to have public land holdings stretching from the San Juan Islands Ferry terminal to Deception Pass State Park. The City of Anacortes has granted State Parks an easement for a non-motorized trail across city land. With Heart Lake as part of the project, it will be possible to walk from one end of

Fidalgo Island to the other, through old-growth Douglas Fir by undisturbed lakeshores and along saltwater coast lines by Guemes Channel and Deception Pass. Wildlife that may be seen along the way include osprey, bald eagle, pileated woodpeckers, fox, otter, mink muskrat and many other small mammals.

Contact Rep. John Martinis, Sim Wilson, Duane Berentson, Jerry Vrooman and Senator Lowell Peterson in support of the project. The hotline number when the legislator is in session is 1-800-5626000.

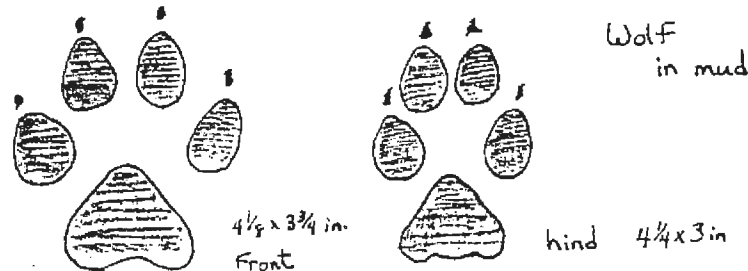
FIELD TRIPS

The field trip on January 5 occurred on a gorgeous day, with the snow flurries coming while we were going from place to place. We looked for bald eagles on Samish Island, around Padilla Bay and on North Whidbey. We also had one group looking for eagles on Lord's Hill and along the Skykomish River. We saw a total of 11 bald eagles, 37 species of birds and got a magnificent view of a peregrine falcon.

Christmas Bird Count -

Due to time constraints a complete summary of the CBC will be made in the February newsletter. Some highlights of the 1979 count were 4 trumpeter swans, a peregrine falcon and one each anna's and rufous hummingbirds. We had 33 people participate on the count. We saw a total of 93 species and approximately 18,700 birds. The number of species seen was the same as last year, but the total birds seen was down about 1,200 birds.

IT WAS A GREAT COUNT, THE BEST EVER
but 1980 will be even better.



NORTHERN TIER PIPELINE

The proposed Northern Tier Pipeline (NTPC) begins with an offloading facility and tankfarm at Port Angeles, travels east to Port Williams near Sequim, then extends approximately 27 miles under Puget Sound passing very close to Protection Island, coming to shore near Partridge Point on Whidbey Island. It then continues on to Camano Island, crossing onto the mainland through Davis Slough to Stanwood. From here it proceeds through Snohomish County crossing all major rivers in our county before entering King County, then over Snoqualmie Pass and on through eastern Washington on its way to the midwest. Currently there is also a plan to build a tank farm near Arlington for the purpose of hooking up to the refineries here in Washington.

Sounds simple enough, doesn't it? BUT what will the impacts be in our county, and in the state if NTPC is permitted to build. Indications are the NTPC does not intend to build its pipeline as carefully and as well as Alyeska built the Trans Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS). For example, they (NTPC) have proposed a leak detection system that is inferior to TAPS.

Currently, hearings are underway to determine whether or not Washington Energy Facility and Siting Evaluation Council (EFSEC) should grant NTPC a permit. EFSEC is a conglomerate of all state agencies that require permits for building energy related facilities.

During this hearing process we can bring up areas of concern and ask that they be looked into. Questions can be asked, and answers required ONLY if we as citizens of Snohomish County are willing to take the time to safeguard our resources. Perhaps a pipeline is inevitable, but we can make our wishes known and try to get as much mitigation as possible where it is warranted. As things stand now, EFSEC does not feel Snohomish County cares much about the pipeline route through their county. Our county commissioner did not attend

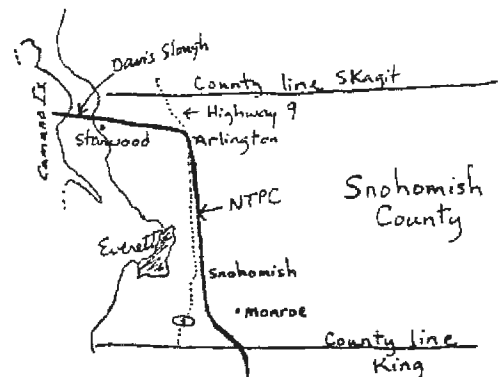
the land use hearings late in 1979, AND the commissioners have received little or no input from the citizens of the county regarding the pipeline. In order for them to know the wishes of the people we must contact them, tell them our concerns and urge them to attend the meetings and hearings of EFSEC with renewed interest.

While the pipeline traverses much of our county, some areas are more sensitive to disturbance or damage from construction or oil spills. Some of these areas are the crossings of the Stillaguamish River and Skykomish River, and the Davis Slough area between Camano Island and Stanwood. These rivers are important wildlife and fish habitat -- what will the effects of construction and any spills be in these freshwater areas? The Davis Slough area is the connection between Skagit and Port Susan Bays. If a spill were to occur here it would affect both saltmarsh bays as well as the Stillaguamish River because of tidal action.

Can we afford to let these areas get only the minimum required by law, when with a bit of effort we can get better safeguards or a route change? These are real possibilities. Perhaps its time we all did more research into the impacts of the NTPC through our county. The county planning office has a copy of the NTPC EFSEC environmental impact statement as well as other information relating to the pipeline as it traverses our county.

Let's take the example set by Island and Clallam Counties residents and let our voices be heard to protect our resources the best we can. Snohomish County will be lost without you.

For further information contact Sally van Niel (778-7568) or Martha Jordan (775-0137).



CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

Part I was published in the November issue. Here we present part II and III.

Ethic II: Thoughtfulness of Habitat

- o Avoid trampling fragile habitats, especially marshes, grasslands, wildflowers and tangles. Stay on established pathways. Damage to the habitat affects all species in the ecosystem.
- o When practical, pool transportation to birding areas to save energy and reduce environmental impact.
- o Keep motor vehicles on established roads and parking areas. One set of tracks invites others. In fragile ecosystems tracks may last for decades and severely degrade the habitat value.
- o Obtain permission for entry to private lands and when necessary on government lands. Respect the occupant's privacy and property. Don't block rights-of-way; leave gates as you found them.
- o Walk single file in fragile areas. Small groups reduce adverse impact on the habitat and require narrower paths and roads, and smaller parking areas.
- o Leave no litter.
- o Plan restroom stops to avoid pollution of the habitat.
- o Be extremely careful with fire. Avoid smoking while walking; press out cigarettes on rocks or mineral soil. Carry butts with you.
- o Use discretion in divulging information on nests and rare and endangered birds, especially in fragile habitats.

Ethic III: Thoughtfulness of Birders

- o Keep down unnecessary talk, noise and disturbance so that all birders in a group have the opportunity to exercise their full facilities of sight and hearing.
- o Put the interests of the group before your own. Keep the birding group together so that interesting and rare or unusual sightings can be shared until all interests are addressed.
- o When with a group of mixed birding abilities the leader or better birders should assist others in identification and should point out field marks, habits and ecological relationships.
- o Avoid excessive use of squeakers and "pishing"; it may reduce their effectiveness and may annoy other birders.
- o Drive lawfully and use common sense and consideration of other drivers.
- o Be sensitive to the efforts and energies of fellow birders. In identifying and reporting the rare and unusual, always err on the side of "over-identification" so there is less chance of wrong identity. Be prepared to justify identifications adequately with good descriptions or photographs to minimize perpetuation of errors in the literature. When possible take notes in the field, including not only diagnostic markings, but voice and habits to validate identification.

When possible prior to reporting a rare or unusual sighting, have another birder of better or equal ability locate and verify your identification.

- o When birding at a private home be considerate of your host's time and property.



Sandpiper

PAS BOARD

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V. Pres: Martha Jordan (775-0137)
Secretary: Joyce Kelley (568-5974)
Treasurer: Carl Holmes (387-4631)

Conservation: Sally van Niel (778-7568)
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Education: Lee Henderson (353-7213)

To join Pilchuck Audubon Society, which includes membership in National Audubon Society and the magazine "Audubon", as well as the Pilchuck Audubon Profile, fill out the application and send to PAS.

NAME _____

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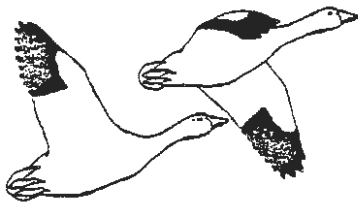
TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP:

____ Individual (\$20.00 per year)

____ Family (\$25.00 per year)

____ Other

To subscribe to the Profile, send \$2.00 to Pilchuck Audubon Society, P.O. Box 1618, Everett, WA 98206.
(Another \$2.00 per year for first class postage.)



Pilchuck Audubon Society

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