



## Pilchuck

# Audubon Profile

MAY 1984

VOLUME XII NUMBER 9

### PILCHUCK AUDUBON ACTIVITIES

#### MAY 5th, SATURDAY

#### FIELD TRIP: WILDFLOWERS AT WASHINGTON PARK

Leader: Grace Patrick (778-5905). Meet at 9:00 a.m. at the bank building at Smokey Point, exit 206 off I-5. We will explore the Washington Park area for all its wonderful wildflowers, some of which are considered quite rare.

#### MAY 10th, THURSDAY

#### FIELD TRIP: SNOHOMISH SEWAGE LAGOON

Leader: Joyce Kelley (568-5974). Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the parking area of the Snohomish Sewage Lagoon. Please call Joyce if you need directions. This evening walk promises a symphony of sound as the song birds return to us. We may also see (or hear) bitterns, herons and a variety of waterfowl. We will bird until dusk.

#### MAY 19th - 20th, WEEKEND

#### ANNUAL MEETING: SPRINGWATCH CAMP SILVERTON

Leaders: Joyce Kelley (568-5974) and Jane Erickson (334-4392). Come to Pilchuck Audubon's "Springwatch" for a weekend at Camp Silverton for enjoying, learning about, and watching nature under the guidance of qualified leaders. It is for everyone: member, non-member, 8 year olds or 80 year olds. More information and a registration form are one page 9. REGISTRATIONS MUST BE IN BY MAY 12th.

#### MAY 26th - 28th, MEMORIAL WEEKEND

#### 20TH ANNUAL WENAS CAMPOUT

See article on page 3 for further information.

#### JUNE 3rd, SUNDAY

#### FIELD TRIP: SKAGIT WRA & LARABEE STATE PARK, BIRD SONGS

Leader: Bob Hamblin (call Bonnie Phillips-Howard, 652-9619, for information). Meet at the bank building at Smokey Point, exit 206 off I-5, at 7:30 a.m. or at 8:00 a.m. at the Skagit Wildlife Recreation Area Headquarters. For those of you who feel this is too early, we will be at the Skagit WRA headquarters until about 9:30 a.m., if you wish to join us later. After this, we will move to Chuckanut Mountain at Larabee State Park. There will be a lot of forest birds here, especially warblers. The trip should take 6-8 hours and we should be able to identify 70 species or more, by song or call. Bring comfortable shoes, a sack lunch and binoculars.

#### EARLY JUNE, EVENING MID-WEEK

#### FIELD TRIP: NW WATERFOWL SANCTUARY

Leaders: Marianne & Gerald McKnight (337-4777). An evening field trip to see newly hatched waterfowl: ruddy duck, bufflehead, etc. You will learn breeding techniques, food requirements, and identification of ducklings. Date will be determined based on hatching progress. Call 337-4777 after May 20th for specific date, time and meeting place.



## OREGON COAST TRIP

By Terri Spencer

From August 30 to September 3 we traveled from Astoria to just north of Crescent City exploring the coast of Oregon. Our goal was to see the entire coast, but, needless to say, we have to go back and see some places we ran out of time for.

The weather was less than perfect at Fort Stevens. But we still saw lots of caspian terns and an immature osprey. We went on to Ecola State Park where I got my first far-away sighting of brown pelicans. What a thrill! I've kept up with their plight since I was little so it was a special treat to see them. We also saw a red-throated loon and several sea lions.

We must have stopped at every pullout along the highway to look for whales and at the beauty. At one of these pullouts (Short Sands Beach Trailhead) we saw seven adult elk and one calf on a hill near the ocean.

That night we stayed at Netart's Bay. Here we saw our greatest treat --- a black-shouldered kite (formerly white-tailed). We watched as it hovered over the marshy areas diving down every few minutes trying to catch dinner. We found out why the campground was free --- mosquitoes! They were totally unbearable. At Cape Lookout we saw a few Stellar's jays, Wilson's warblers and a Douglas squirrel. We back tracked to Tillamook to visit the Tillamook County Pioneer Museum. The top floor is dedicated to nature. One large room has mounted birds placed in natural setting. It is great. You'd swear the birds will move any minute. The room also includes a display of bird's eggs and nests.

One of our next stops was Otter Rock. The Devil's Punchbowl is here but we found the two gray whales playing in the waves more interesting. They were difficult to see as the sun was setting. Just one more treat never to forget.

At South Beach Campground we saw rufous-sided towhees, caspian terns, a flycatcher species, black-capped chickadees and a common flicker. We had a friendly resident Townsend's chipmunk at our camp. The South Jetty near Newport produced several brown pelican, white-crowned sparrows, black turnstones, white-winged scoters, common loon, immature Heerman's gull, wandering tattler, red-breasted merganser and mew gulls. Also some harbor seals. A very fruitful area.

On to Seal Rock State Park where chestnut-backed chickadees were everywhere. The scenery and geological formations were fascinating here as everywhere along the

coast. Just south of Cape Perpetua we stopped to see what all those black spots in the water were. They were thousands of white-winged scoters and their young. As soon as we stopped at the Eel Creek Campground we heard birds everywhere. We were in a semi-gully with rhododendrons and other shrubs all around us. Here we saw more chestnut-backed chickadees, cedar waxwing, rufous-sided towhee, and a common nighthawk. A night time walk to the sand dunes here was a work out.

At Haynes Inlet near Coos Bay we counted 21 great egrets and two osprey. We saw another 20 great egrets, a snowy egret, short-billed dowitchers, an osprey, and what we guess to be marbled godwits (questionable) at Pony Slough on the other side of Coos Bay.

In the town of Coos Bay yet another osprey soared over. Bastendorff Beach produced another osprey. We saw so many osprey on our trip I suspect we were witnessing the start of migration south.

At Cape Arago there were lots and lots of both Harbor seals and California sea lions. Black-legged kittiwakes were also present. At Simpson Reef we are sure we saw a shearwater but do not know which one. We then went to Shoreacres State Park where we saw a tiny bird spinning circles in the surf --- a northern phalarope. They are unbelievably small against those big waves.

The last night was spent somewhere along the beach at Gold Beach. Here we watched the brown pelicans fly almost under the waves at sunset. What a peaceful sight. The next morning more pelicans went back up the coast along with hundreds of common terns. Where the Rogue River meets the Pacific Ocean at the Gold Beach South Jetty we saw caspian terns, common terns, two osprey, brown pelicans, wandering tattler, harbor seals and sea lions.

These are only the highlights of places we stopped. As I said before we stopped at every pullout, almost every park and wayside and anything else that was interesting. We observed some extremely beautiful scenery and intriguing geological formations. We saw myrtlewood trees and briefly roamed the redwoods. We followed a short part of Lewis and Clark's trail to Fort Clatsop. We hunted for fossils and played in the tide-pools. We learned and absorbed a whole lot in a week. I will never forget it. It makes me even more staunch in my views for protection of the earth we all share.

## 20TH ANNUAL WENAS CAMPOUT

COLUMBIA GORGE  
By Poncho Muffin

This is a family outing with something for everyone: all-day field trips, early morning bird walks (5:30 a.m.), mid-morning walks, afternoon workshops, and evening campfire programs complete with speakers, songs, and roasting marshmallows. Birds, wildflowers, insects, trees and shrubs, grasses, and natural history photography are featured in the afternoon workshops.

In order to reduce confusion and environmental damage, certain trips have limited attendance. Sign-up sheets will be available at Headquarters. Please indicate on the sheets if you can supply a car for the auto trips. Persons riding with others on the auto trips are asked to contribute \$1.00 apiece for transportation. More walks out of camp have been listed.

Leaders and resource persons are needed for the various trips, walks, and workshops. If you can take a particular event, please contact Hazel Wolf who is coordinating the scheduling of leaders again this year. Her phone is (206) 322-3041; mail address is 512 Boylston East, #106, Seattle, WA 98102.

The campground is very large with plenty of room for everyone. Tables and chairs are in very short supply at the campground; bring your own. Food and housing (trailers, tents, campers, etc.) must be brought. There is no drinking water available at the campground (there is a spring some distance up the canyon). Bring as much water for drinking as you can. Creek water, boiled, can be used for washing and dishes. Gas up at the last gas station (Ellensburg). Also bring rain gear and warm clothing. Last year's heat wave may not be repeated. The days are beautiful but the nights can be cold (dipping below freezing).

**DIRECTIONS TO WENAS CASCADE PARK** Drive over Snoqualmie Pass and exit at Ellensburg (exit #109). Turn north towards downtown Ellensburg. Gas up now! Turn left onto Daman Road just north of I-90 interchange. Continue on the Daman Road to the Umptanum Road (changes to a good gravel road). You will go up through the famous Shushuskin Canyon, and over Manastash and Umptanum ridges to, eventually, the junction with the Wenas Valley Road. (Watch for the beautiful Bluebirds as a Bluebird trail follows the road.) Turn right onto the Wenas Valley Road. Signs will guide you to the campground from there. Hope to see many people from Pilchuck there as it is a fun weekend and a chance to meet many other Auduboners.

I have been asked to prepare an unbiased report on this field trip. While I agreed to do that, I find as I take pen in hand, that I cannot. You see, I was there. I saw the Gorge. I listened to the pros and cons and I traded opinions and discussed viewpoints. I also saw some viewpoints both pictorially and figuratively, so I am not unbiased. Each of us on the trip and many of you who were not there have seen and heard the information at one of our Program Meetings. It's your turn now; it is for you to decide. The decision must be made soon, and acted upon. A year from now may be too late; the chance to preserve the Gorge may be gone.

The Board of Directors of Pilchuck Audubon has taken a stand to support S.B. 627, sponsored by Senators Packwood and Hatfield of Oregon. The bill is also supported by over 30 other senators; unfortunately, neither senator from Washington State is among those supporters. Instead they back the very weak "Governor's Bill". If you want to act, write your senators and congressmen; in addition, you may wish to join the Friends of the Columbia Gorge, an environmental organization of over 2,000 members fighting effectively for Gorge legislation. For further information on the Columbia Gorge as a political issue, check with your President or Field Trip Chair. They have a bulging file on the issues.

But back to my story. I suspect that out of the 47 people on the bus, at least 46 felt overawed by the natural beauty of the Gorge, and dismayed at the potential loss. These 46 had a great weekend. I do not know for a fact that the 47th did not, but would it not be unusual to have at least one inopportune upset stomach, or one uncontrolled headache?

We did not leave the Lynnwood Park and Ride lot as scheduled. We were ahead of schedule. The bus was full. While most of the people were from Pilchuck Audubon or their friends, members from Skagit and Olympic Peninsula Audubon Societies were aboard too. I think I shall never meet a better group of people. Even our bus driver, Steve Dean of Journeylines, got into the spirit and participated in our hikes and educational programs.

Saturday was sunny, one of those special Western Washington days of spring. The four-hour trip to meet Mike Spranger slid by rather rapidly. John Munn, Snohomish County Extension Naturalist and



**THIS AND THAT**  
From Washington Department of Game

State project WILD coordinator, Larry Broder, is soliciting owl pellets, study skins, skulls and bones that he can include in kits of teaching materials for loan to WILD teachers.

Project WILD, a wildlife education program sponsored jointly by the Department of Game and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, is off to a running start, Broder said. Over 250 educators have enrolled in 30 teacher workshops. Five workshops in March, held in Longview, Bothell, Seattle, Spokane, and at Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, attracted between 35 and 50 participants each.

State wildlife agents are actively enforcing regulations requiring that **CONSERVATION LICENSE DECALS** be displayed on vehicles parked on Department of Game lands. Violations carry a \$40 minimum bail plus court costs.

Conservation license decals can be purchased anywhere fishing, hunting or trapping licenses are sold. They cost \$5.00. Extra decals for additional vehicles cost 50 cents each.

**UPCOMING EVENT IN SEATTLE**

Seattle Zoological Society and the Pacific Science Center have teamed up for a joint lecture by Russell Train, president of World Wildlife Fund-U.S. and former Environmental Protection Agency administrator. He will show slides of the Wolong Panda Reserve in China and talk about third-world conservation and development.

A \$5.00 donation is requested at the door; proceeds will benefit the Panda Project, where the recent bamboo die-off has precipitated a crisis. The program starts at 8 p.m., Thursday, June 21st, at Kane Hall 120, University of Washington. Come early to be assured a seat.

**CONGRADULATIONS**

The officers of Pilchuck Audubon Society for the coming year are Curt Howard, president, Bruce Kelly, vice president, Sally Lider, secretary, and Gerald McKnight, treasurer. Now that we have elected these able and willing people we need to continue our support of their efforts and help whenever possible.

**BIRD SIGHTINGS**  
**THROUGH APRIL 15**



- Mar. 8 Three **MALLARDS**, a pair of **RING-NECKED DUCKS**, one **HOODED MERGANSER**, and six **VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS** were seen in some beaver ponds east of Lake Chaplain. (Dave Mundell)
- Mar. 9 A flock of 15 **EVENING GROSBEAKS**, a **DOWNY WOODPECKER** and two nesting **GREAT HORNED OWLS** were some of the highlights seen at the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge by Joanne Eberle.
- Mar. 16 A **PILEATED WOODPECKER** was seen for the first time by Nancy Salvadalena. She saw the bird near her home.
- Mar. 17 A **GOLDEN EAGLE** was seen near Ellensburg. (Sally & Jan van Niel)
- Mar. 18 A male **WOOD DUCK** was seen near Silver Lake. (Marianne McKnight)
- Mar. 18 A **BALD EAGLE** was seen near Goldendale, WA. (Sally & Jan van Niel)
- Mar. 20 A single **BAND-TAILED PIGEON** was the first sighted in the Dubuque neighborhood this spring. (Jan Richards)
- Mar. 21 A **BALD EAGLE** attempted to get an easy meal by grabbing a domestic duck from Millie Hamblin's yard.
- Mar. 23 Two male and one female **WOOD DUCK** were observed on Bruce & Mary Esther Kelly's pond.
- Mar. 24 A **SHARP-SHINNED HAWK** was seen in downtown Snohomish. (Fred Bird)
- Mar. 24 The first reported Male **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** was buzzing a wild red currant bush in Jan Richard's yard.
- Mar. 25 Two male **RING-NECKED DUCKS** were seen on Bruce & Mary Esther Kelly's pond near Arlington.
- Mar. 26 A male and female **WOOD DUCK** were observed sitting on the wood duck house built for them by Bruce & Mary Esther Kelly. What a promising discovery.
- Mar. 27 Six to eight **CANADA GEESE** were in the fields north of the Everett Sewage Ponds. (Terri Spencer)
- Mar. 27 A pair of **CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEES** have begun cleaning out a nest house in Jan Richard's backyard.
- Mar. 29 Another **RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD** seen in Oso by Fed Bird.
- Mar. 30 A **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW** was seen in Virginia Clark's yard.

Mar. 30 An adult BALD EAGLE was seen near Harold Reade's Christmas tree farm near Snohomish.

Apr. 2 Three COMMON MERGANSERS were on the river and a pair of RING-NECKED DUCKS and MALLARDS were on the pond of Bruce & Mary Esther Kelly.

Apr. 3 An AMERICAN KESTREL was seen hovering near the 236th St. exit ramp, Arlington. (T. Spencer)

Apr. 5 WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS visited the feeder in the backyard after a two year absence. (Marianne McKnight)

Apr. 7 Twenty-four BAND-TAILED PIGEONS, 75 DARK-EYED JUNCOES and 20 STELLAR JAYS invaded Virginia Clark's yard.

Apr. 9 A COOPERS HAWK was seen flying southwest over Hwy 99 at 128th near Everett. (Steven Howard)

Apr. 11 A GREATER YELLOWLEGS was observed closely in some fields near Kent.

Apr. 14 An OSPREY was at Discovery Bay. (Sally & Jan van Niel)

Apr. 14 A SAVANNAH SPARROW was heard and seen at Terri Spencer's place.

Apr. 14-15 BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS (in breeding plumage), DUNLIN, SHORT- and LONG-BILLED DOWITCHERS have been seen in the fields and tideflats in the Stanwood area. (Sally & Jan van Niel)

Apr. 15 An OSPREY was seen at Twin Lakes County Park. (Sally & Jan van Niel)

CALL BIRD SIGHTINGS TO

Terri Spencer/Steven Howard 435-8602  
Fred Bird (Arlington Times) 435-5757  
Jan Richards 334-2781

SEND YOUR SIGHTINGS TO

Terri Spencer/Steven Howard  
23329 - 27th Ave NE  
Arlington, WA 98223

UNION OIL SWAMP UPDATE  
By Hal Hanson

A viewing platform overlooking the Union Oil Swamp area has been constructed at the south side of Harbor-Square back of Piers Hardware. Red-winged blackbirds and killdeer have been seen.

A MEMBER'S OBSERVATION  
From Virginia Clark

On April 8th Virginia Clark had an interesting encounter with a handsome male evening grosbeak.

He hit her front window, knocking himself cockoo. She put their Springer Spaniel in the house and went to see what she could do. She picked up the dazed bird and proceeded to pet it and talk to him. He sat on her finger as if it were a perch and stared at her. They spent another five minutes together. She then set him on a branch in her apple tree. Finally he flew off.

Virginia writes of the experience, "They are such a beautiful bird up close. Their white dots on black and the beautiful blending of yellow must make them one of nature's remarkable creatures. Those five minutes were like being in another world of quietude and tranquility".

[Editor's note: Dr. Douglas Yearout, DVM, recommends when finding a dazed bird, put it in a dark confined box (shoebox) and put the box in a quiet place in the house. Release the bird after a few hours in a small room just in case it may have something broken and you have to re-capture it for professional treatment.]

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\* Application for joint membership in National Audubon Society and Pilchuck Audubon Society.\*  
\* Includes National Audubon's bimonthly magazine AUDUBON and Pilchuck Audubon's monthly \*  
\* PROFILE newsletter for one year. Make your check payable to National Audubon Society. \*  
\*  
\* NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ Check type of membership \*  
\* \_\_\_\_\_ desired. Mail application \*  
\* ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ and your check to Pilchuck \*  
\* \_\_\_\_\_ Audubon Society, PO Box 1618, \*  
\* CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_ Everett, WA 98206. \*  
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\* \_\_\_\_\_ \*  
\* For additional help or Membership Records information contact Gerald McKnight at 337-4777 \*  
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## SIX WEEKS-A-BIRDING II

By Jan Richards

We left Yellowstone Park via the west exit and drove through the Gallatin Valley, Big Sky, and the Spanish Peaks Primitive Area, all uniquely "Montana" in character.

We found our way to the Missouri River Headwaters outside of the Three Forks/Bozeman area. Lewis and Clark must have really loved Montana. So much is named after them, or Charles Russell. The state is awesome, and I don't mean that in Valley girl talk!

The Missouri River hosts so much wildlife, the list seems endless. We saw more pelicans, double-crested cormorants, black-crowned night herons, white-headed woodpeckers, catbirds, orioles, eastern and western kingbirds, merlin, yellow-headed blackbirds, marsh wrens, kingfishers, great blue herons, western grebes, pileated woodpeckers, meadowlarks, and on and on.

I had never been so impressed by rivers, until we followed the Snake and Missouri Rivers through several states. So many kinds of rivers...the Clark Fork is green, glacial, and peaceful as it melts into your eyes. The headwaters of the Columbia in Canada--a mere creek.

A jog into Helena and the Charles Russell Art Museum let us know what the Missouri looked like before the dams. The Great Falls have changed. Mr. Russell's paintings are history on canvas. I left the museum wondering if the passing of the great buffalo herds and the loss of the condors, whose range used to be greater, were linked.

Montana Highway 200, between Great Falls and Missoula, crosses through Helena National Forest and the southern end of the Bob Marshall/Scapegoat Wilderness Areas. The bluebird house campaign is in full swing on that road. They will need more fence posts soon. The mountain bluebirds appreciate the effort here, as well as on the Clark Fork, by their presence.

Continuing on into Couer d' Alene, we met up with the new grandparents. We traveled to Glacier Park together. I saw my first mountain goat, thanks to my scope. Bear warnings were leafletted enmasse.

The Rocky Mountains in Glacier are as spectacular as in Wyoming. The infamous, Going-to-the-Sun Highway, had my mother hiding on the floor of the motor home. The road was built in 1932, and not meant for today's vehicles. Traces of new snow powdered the peaks. We saw more Columbian ground squirrels, pikas, prairie dogs, bighorn sheep, and white-tailed deer. A

Williamson's sapsucker was a highlight, as well as golden eagles, ospreys, and a Cooper's hawk.

After a side-trip to Browning and the Museum of the Plains Indian, we left the company of my folks and headed north to Canada. Alberta, being prairie land, held species like burrowing owl and rough-legged hawk, and less common ruffed grouse and yellow-rumped warblers.

The Creston Wildlife Center in British Columbia was a final highlight of our vacation. Boardwalks lead through a cattail marsh, edging a pond, giving access to views of northern phalaropes, yellow-headed blackbirds, yellowthroats, black terns, bank swallows, pied-billed grebes, ospreys and nests, eastern kingbirds, common snipe, pine siskins, and kingfishers. Northern painted turtles were abundant. The interpretive center was very nice and worth the jaunt. Out of Creston, a creek near Ripple Mountain held a dipper.

The return to the U.S. near the Grand Forks/Danville crossing, was graced by a blue grouse and a golden eagle.

One final brief visit with friends and a jog to Kootenai Falls gave us another glimpse of the true Montana spirit. An old cowboy was selling a book of his poems as people viewed the falls. The book called "Flash of Time," by Don McGrady. The cover had photos of an astronaut planting a flag on the moon, and an old Conestoga wagon.

We returned home tired and "birded out". It was a great vacation!!!

### MALHEUR NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE TRIP

Come on an exciting field trip to Malheur National Wildlife Refuge on June 10-14. You will also learn about natural history of Eastern Oregon.

The course is being offered by Jan and Sally van Niel through Everett Community College. The class will meet Tuesday evening, June 5, at the College to get a general introduction to the area, the birds expected to be seen, and any other pertinent information.

Last time a similar group went down at this time of year, they saw 125 species of birds. The birds may be quite different this year due to the extensive flooding.

The estimated cost of the trip is \$118.00 plus 2 dinners and 2 breakfasts in Elmer going and coming.

For further information call Sally or Jan van Niel, 259-7151 days, or 778-7568 evenings.





## IN SEARCH OF GREY WHALES

By Joan Lucas

We discovered on our first whale-watching trip out of Westport in mid-April that "spy hopping" whales in Grays Harbor are as hard to find as the elusive bitterns in marshes. We saw three individuals early in our three-and-a-half hour tour across the bar, but never saw them again and did not catch a glimpse of any others. But we thoroughly enjoyed the thrill of being on the ocean and seeing the birdlife as a reasonable substitute.

A small group of four people showed up for the hour-long seminar on grey whales that preceded the trip. Vicki, a second-year fisheries student who conducted the lesson on whales, explained what "spy hopping" is. It appears the whales are poking their heads above water to check for landmarks...or to look for people who are whale watching!

Captain Cooper explained one reason our sightings were sparse was because the whales were playing in the rough surf where he was reluctant to venture, in the interest of keeping all passengers dry and on board. By law the boats are obliged to keep their distance from the migrating mammals and to turn off their motors to avoid harassment. Thus, powerless to nose the boat into oncoming waves, the 55-foot "Mac's Effort" was soon rocking vigorously as breakers plowed into the sides of its hull.

A curious gull tracked our boat for more than an hour, drawing the attention of everyone on board, including the three deck hands. Apparently this strikingly beautiful gull expected us to catch fish instead of glimpses of whales and hoped to benefit from the residue of our catch. Its charcoal grey body, dark legs and red bill marked it as a Heerman's gull, but conspicuous white wrist patches that decorated its wings like oversize headlights frustrated our attempts to label it.

Reading "Birds of North America" in an attempt to gain a positive identification, while rising and falling over cresting seas quickly gave me a queasy stomach. I watched the ocean swell and rise under our craft and felt the boat heave and drop alternately without ceasing.

As bulging waves carried us skyward all eyes searched the liquid acres for signs of a fluke or head. But to no avail.

Harvesting the waters were common loons, scoter, cormorants, pigeon guillemots and common murrelets. Cassin's auklets slid in unison over cresting waves like tiny dots connected by some invisible web that held them together as one organism. Sooty shearwaters swooped and wheeled on the wind, daring the waves to catch a down-turned wingtip.

As tidewater flooded the bay, the waters calmed to a ripple. The wind only messed our hair a little as we sidled up to float six to unboard.

Audubon's Master Guide held the answer to the unusual gull: "A very small percentage of adults [Heerman's gull] shows conspicuous white patches on the upper side of the wings at the wrist (greater primary coverts)".

Another bird sighting east of Westport sent us delving into the pages of the Master Guide again. A large, streamlined falcon, smooth and creamy white, glided gracefully a few feet above our car. A close look at its underside yielded enough diagnostic characteristics to convince us we had seen a gyrfalcon. It is described in the Audubon Encyclopedia as being the prized bird of falconers for centuries. It's destined, too, to become the prize of our day in Westport.

### **Pilchuck Audubon Society**

P.O. Box 1618, Everett, Washington 98206



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