

Pilchuck Audubon Profile



Published by Pilchuck Audubon Society Volume 36, Number 3 March 2009

Help the environment: read the *Profile* online

You're reading the *Profile* online. You're already on board. You're saving resources and enjoying bonus content. Maybe you can help sway some of your fellow PAS members to do the same? Here's what you can tell them.

Printing and mailing the newsletter is costly. Help PAS use those funds for projects like the Save Our Swifts campaign or the Osprey Nesting Platform project. How? Take the leap and read the *Profile* on the web. Or, if you just can't adjust to reading it online, go to the web site, download it and print it. Either way, it will save Pilchuck the cost of printing and mailing. And, you'll enjoy additional newsletter content – including color photos in each issue.

To make the change and receive the *Profile* online, go to www.pilchuckaudubon.org, scroll to the bottom of the home page and click the "Contact Webmaster" link. Put "Profile Online" in the subject line of the e-mail message and tell Kathy you want to read the newsletter online. Your e-mail address should be visible to her. But, to be safe, include it in the body of your message. We'll send you a monthly reminder, letting you know when the newsletter is available on PAS's web site.

You'll need Adobe Acrobat Reader to view the online newsletter. It's a free download at www.adobe.com.

If you already read the *Profile* online, but aren't receiving the monthly reminder, maybe we don't have your e-mail address. Follow the instructions above to provide your e-mail address and you'll be on the reminder list, too.

Thanks for helping Pilchuck Audubon save money – and natural resources!

Rest stop fundraiser planned for May

Pilchuck Audubon will provide refreshments and accept donations at the Smokey Point rest area (southbound) from 2 p.m. on May 29 until 1 p.m. on June 1.

The rest area is open 24 hours a day, so we need pairs of volunteers to work four-hour shifts. If possible, please bake or buy cookies or treats for your shift. Even if you can't help at the rest stop, please consider providing treats.

This is an easy fundraiser and it's fun to talk to folks. To sign up, please call Virginia Clark at 360.435.3750.

March program meeting, Fri., March 13, 7 p.m.

Mystery of the toxic swans

Martha Jordan will present a documentary about the lead poisoning of 2000+ Trumpeter Swans in Washington and BC. Martha is director of the Washington Swan Working Group, a non-profit organization dedicated to assuring the vitality and welfare of wild swan populations.

April program meeting, Fri., April 10, 7 p.m.

Jane Dolliver of the UW's Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team (COASST)

COASST believes citizens of coastal communities are essential scientific partners in monitoring marine ecosystem health. Jane will discuss how, after only one training session, you can become a COASSTer, too.

Note location

Everett Firefighters Hall
2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett
See map on back page.

For more information, call 425.252.0926

**Watch www.pilchuckaudubon.org
for the most up-to-date information!**

PAS birdseed sale

Feed your feathered friends – dirt cheap!

Black Russian Sunflower • Wild Bird Seed Mix
Patio Mix • Nijer Thistle • Sunflower and more!

**Call Art Wait at 360.563.0181
before March 16 to place your order.**

Pick up in Snohomish on March 20 or Everett on March 21.

**Support PAS and your feathered friends.
Be sure to call Art now!**

In this issue

| | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|---|
| President's message | 2 | Birdathon | 5 |
| Trip calendar | 3 | Smart Growth report | 6 |
| Swifts update | 3 | Birding highlights | 7 |
| Regional festivals | 4 | Membership info | 8 |

President's message

By Mike Blackbird, President, Pilchuck Audubon Society



One of my favorite birding trips with Pilchuck's Tuesday birders is the winter trip to the Olympic Peninsula and Port Townsend to see lots of over-wintering seabirds.

One of the birding stops is at Fort Flagler on Marrowstone Island. Fort Flagler is one of three forts built in the 19th century to protect the entrance to Puget Sound from hostile navies. The other two forts are Fort Worden near Port Townsend and Fort Casey on Whidbey Island.

Driving into Fort Flagler State Park, I'm reminded that the army's mission is based on destruction, and yet here is an example of the army being an inadvertent steward of the environment.

Essentially, a significant part of the grounds surrounding these forts remain untouched by a developer's shovel. They are as environmentally intact as the day the army sited its first big gun on Admiralty Bay. In the 1950s, when the three forts were decommissioned, the land was turned over to the state and each became a state park.

My first experience with the U.S. military being a fortuitous steward of the environment was growing up in north Idaho. Allegedly, on a flight from Washington, D.C., to Seattle, Eleanor Roosevelt noticed Lake Pend Oreille while over north Idaho.

Being aware of her husband's search for a secure inland naval training site, she mentioned it to him. Located at the southern end of Lake Pend Oreille, Farragut became the second largest U.S. naval training center during WWII.

Eventually, after decommissioning, the federal government exchanged the 2700-acre base with the state. Today, Farragut State Park is a jewel in the crown of Idaho's park system.

Fort Lawson, on the then outskirts of Seattle, was built at the turn of the 20th century – at the insistence of Seattle's city fathers – to maintain civil order during a time of social unrest as America's working class demanded a piece of the American dream. When a significant part of the military reservation was decommissioned in the 1950s, Senator "Scoop" Jackson stepped in to make sure the end result was Discovery Park.

It's ironic, when you think about it, that, across the nation, there remain landscapes as they were when the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock because of the benign neglect of our military establishment.

In no way do I diminish a positive role, accidental or not, that the U.S. military has played in protecting the environment. As champions for the environment, when it comes to allies, we take 'em where we find 'em.

Please plan to attend!
Fall ACOW 2009
October 9, 10, 11
Holiday Inn, Everett

About Pilchuck Audubon Society

The Pilchuck Audubon Profile, official newsletter of Pilchuck Audubon Society, is published monthly September-April, and bi-monthly May-August.

Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) is a grass-roots environmental organization with members throughout Snohomish County and Camano Island, Washington.

Our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife, for the benefit of the earth's biological diversity.

Through education, advocacy, and community activism, PAS is committed to bringing people closer to wildlife in order to build a deeper understanding of the powerful links between healthy ecosystems and human beings, and to encourage the involvement of our members in efforts to protect the habitat this wildlife depends upon for survival.

We serve as a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. PAS is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit organization incorporated in the state of Washington.

Newsletter submissions
Submit articles to annette.colombini@pilchuckaudubon.org or mail to 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198, Snohomish, WA 98290. Submissions must be received by the fifth of the month preceding publication. We reserve the right to edit.

Monthly mailing party
Newsletter mailing parties are held the third Wednesday of the month. If you'd like to have some fun with other PAS members, contact Judy Lowell at organicjudy@juno.com or 425.353.8150 for more information.

To contact Pilchuck Audubon Society, call 425.252.0926.

The Profile is also available at www.pilchuckaudubon.org

Board of directors

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| President | Mike Blackbird | 425.670.2491 |
| Vice President | Susie Schaefer | 425.771.8165 |
| Treasurer | Carolyn Lacy | 360.668.2494 |
| Secretary | Kathleen Snyder | 425.438.1505 |
| Education | * Open * | |
| Program Coordinator | Laura Harvell Spehar | 425.672.2150 |
| Volunteer Coordinator | * Open * | |
| Publicity | Bob Sindelar | 360.657.3604 |
| Conservation | Jan van Niel, Jon Baker | 425.778.7568 |
| At Large | David Gladstone | 425.252.0926 |

Committee chairs

| | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Birdathon | Hilkka Egtvedt | 425.347.4944 |
| Bird Sightings | Mara Price | 360.651.9234 |
| Database | Margaret Bridge | 360.862.1694 |
| Field Trips | Art Wait | 360.563.0181 |
| Forest Practices | Kathy Johnson | 360.659.7252 |
| Hospitality | Virginia Clark | 360.435.3750 |
| Legal Advisor | Pete Dewell | 425.259.6269 |
| Membership Chair | * Open * | |
| Newsletter Editor | Annette Colombini | 425.501.8125 |
| Newsletter Mailing | Judy Lowell | 425.353.8150 |
| Webmaster | Kathy Piland | 360.691.7695 |

Staff

| | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Smart Growth | Kristin Kelly | 425.923.8625 |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|

© 2009 Pilchuck Audubon Society. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Opinions expressed are those of the credited writers and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Pilchuck Audubon Society.

Trip calendar

Check our web site at www.pilchuckaudubon.org for the latest information.

Tuesday, March 3 Snohomish city and outskirts

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Snohomish park and ride, located at the junction of Highway 9 and Bickford Ave. Enjoyable, local and relaxed trip. We usually have high species counts and surprises, even delights. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Art Wait, 360.563.0181

Tues., March 10 Johnson-Debay Slough, Clear Lake

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Wal-Mart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. In 2005, we saw four woodpecker species and both Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks. In 2006, Kestrel, Merlin and Red-tailed Hawks. In 2007, we rescued a female Bufflehead caught on old fish line and watched a Merlin eat its prey. Think swans. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tuesday, March 17 North Whidbey Island

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Wal-Mart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Highlights of this trip include beautiful scenery, waterfowl, shorebirds and seabirds – 70 species last year. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Virginia Clark, 360.435.3750

Tues., March 24 Birch Bay, Semiahmoo, Drayton Harbor

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Wal-Mart west of Marysville (I-5, exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Expect Harlequin and Long-tailed ducks, Brant and maybe even a Snow Bunting. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Wilma Bayes, 360.629.2028

Tuesday, March 31 North Everett to south Marysville

Meet at 8 a.m. at Legion Park off North Marine Drive, Everett. Explore the north Everett waterfront and the Snohomish River Estuary. View Osprey, eagles, hawks, waterfowl, shorebirds and gulls. Sixty species in 2007. Pack a lunch.

Leader: Art Wait, 360.563.0181

Saturday, March 14 Illahee State Park, Bremerton

Meet at 7 a.m. behind Everett Mall, next to the transit center by LA Fitness (I-5, exit 189, Everett Mall Way). Carpooling strongly encouraged. Round trip ferry toll \$23.10. Park admission free. Bring lunch, water, good walking shoes, sunscreen, hat and binoculars. We'll pick a moderate loop trail. This is an all-day trip.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633

Saturday, May 9 Weyerhaeuser HQ, Federal Way

Meet at 7 a.m. behind Everett Mall, next to the transit center by LA Fitness (I-5, exit 189, Everett Mall Way). Carpooling encouraged. Bring lunch, water, good walking shoes, sunscreen, hat and binoculars. We'll pick a moderate loop trail. This is an all-day trip.

Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425.244.7633

Notice to field trip participants: Field trips are open to members and non-members alike. No advance notice required unless otherwise stated in the trip description. Trips go, rain or shine. However, in case of snow or ice, contact trip leader! Bring a sack lunch, beverage, binoculars, scope and field guide if you have them. If not, we'll share. Please, no perfume or cologne. Be prepared to share gas money with carpool drivers. Pets, even leashed, are prohibited on field trips. Please leave them at home.

Coming this May ... Birdathon 2009 ... Just do it!

Help prepare for the swifts' 2009 return

Preparations are underway for the spring and fall migrations of the Vaux's Swifts and their stopovers in Monroe.

The community committee has formed four subcommittees: docents and counters, celebration, education and fundraising.

The dedicated work of these subcommittees will ensure we have another great year in Monroe. New people are welcome – and encouraged – to join the committees.

Docents and counters committee: training will be provided April 18. We need many more volunteers. Volunteers need to commit to one night a week for at least a month in the spring (late April until late June) and one month in the fall (late August until mid October).

Monroe swift celebration committee: this fun committee will plan the big fall event, scheduled for Sept. 12 this year.

Education committee: this group will work on community

education, as well as the program for the children at Frank Wagner Elementary school.

Fundraising committee: this committee is responsible for a big fundraiser on April 18 in Monroe. PAS purchased a video shot at the Chapman School in Portland. It has received fantastic reviews. PAS will sponsor a screening at the Frank Wagner School auditorium. We'll collect donations and get the swift spring season off and rolling. Also planned are a bird walk to Buck Lake before the screening and the counter and docent training after it.

To become a member of one or more of these committees, contact Susie Schaefer at susie.schaefer@comcast.net or 425.771.8165.

The next community committee meeting is scheduled for March 11 in the Frank Wagner School library.

Upcoming regional festivals and roadtrips

Port Susan Snow Goose and Birding Festival February 28-March 1, 2009 Stanwood, Washington

This is always a fun festival with lots to see and do – including guided birding trips. PAS will have a table at the festival headquarters, so we need lots of volunteers! Please contact Susie Schaefer to volunteer: 425.771.8165 or susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org.

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival March 20-22, 2009 Othello, Washington

This is an event you don't want to miss! The festival features a number of birding tours – and they all fill up fast. Included in the price of admission are lectures and demonstrations.

If you plan to attend, it's imperative you plan ahead as lodging is limited and trips fill up quickly. PAS members may want to head over on March 20 to be there in time for Friday afternoon field trips and workshops and events on Saturday.

Visit the web site at www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org or contact Susie Schaefer at 425.771.8165 or susie.schaefer@pilchuckaudubon.org for more information.

Olympic BirdFest April 3-5, 2009 Sequim, Washington

Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest 2009 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, April 3-5, 2009. Experience the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula ... you just might go home with a new bird for your life list! Check out the offerings at www.olympicbirdfest.org or call 360.681.4076 for a brochure.

Birding in Malheur National Wildlife Refuge May 15-24, 2009 Oregon

Reserve your spot now for a 10-day adventure to Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in southeast Oregon. The trip is planned for May 15-24, 2009, and is limited to 15 people.

You'll spend three days birding on the way down, three days at Malheur NWR and four days driving and birding your way back to Snohomish County. Among the birds you might see: Whitefaced Ibis, Ferruginous Hawks, Sandhill Cranes, Black-and-white Warblers, Lesser Goldfinches, Great Horned Owls, Clark's Grebes, Phalaropes, Bobolinks and many more.

You'll be staying in motels for the entire trip – including one with a hot spring. You can expect great birding and photography on this trip.

If you're interested, contact Bill Lider to get your name on the list: 425.776.0674 or bill.lider@verizon.net.

Ferry County birding June 5-7, 2009 Ferry County, Washington

This is always a fun and fabulous trip, filled with surprises and excitement. Mark your calendars now and watch the *Profile* for more information in the coming months.

*Coming this May ...
Birdathon 2009
Give it a try!*

Initial Osprey nesting platforms now in place!



Osprey nest piles and platforms were installed in Port Gardner Bay on Jan. 29-30. Some platforms were "seeded" with nest materials; others were not.

Photos by Bill Lider

Edmonds Christmas Bird Count results are in

By Jan van Niel

Thanks to the hard work of 29 volunteers, the Edmonds Christmas Bird Count on January 2 was a wonderful success. A total of 107 species were identified with five more spotted during count week (three days before the count and three days after it). On the day of the count, 22,765 birds were counted, which is about average for the area.

Several species were spotted for the first time in years, including a Yellow-billed Loon (reported for only the third time in the 25-year history of the Edmonds CBC) and a Red-naped



Hooded Merganser, by Annette Colombini

Sapsucker for only the fourth time. Snow Geese and Evening Grosbeaks had not been sighted in 5 years.

On the other hand, several species usually reported were missing this year, including Green Heron, Canvasback, Greater Scaup, Harlequin Duck, Dunlin and Western Meadowlark. Exceptionally large numbers of Hooded Mergansers (70), Bald Eagles (23) and Long-billed Dowitchers (92) were seen.

Congratulations to all the counters for a job well done.

Go birding and raise money for PAS

Want to have a lot of fun without spending much money? Go birding! And, while you're birding, help raise funds for PAS by participating in the Birdathon in May.

Birdathon is PAS's biggest fundraiser of the year. It's easy – and it's fun. All you have to do is go birding anywhere in Washington for a total of 24 hours. That 24 hours can be split up over several days or done in one marathon birding trip.

And, although you have to wait until May to do the birding, you can sign up sponsors now. Talk to family, neighbors, co-workers, anyone who cares about the environment.

Sponsor forms are available from Birdathon Coordinator Hilka Egtvedt at program meetings, or you can contact her at either 425.347.4944 or chegtvedt@comcast.net.

More information to come in the April and May issues of the Profile. Please consider becoming a "Thoner" this year!

Port Susan Bay Spring Survey is coming soon.

Watch for dates, time and places in the next Profile!

Recycle old binoculars for kids in Edmonds

Have an extra pair of pocket-sized or beginner's binoculars that you're not using anymore? If so, Edmonds Discovery Programs would love to get them out of your way!

Several of our educational programs require the use of binoculars. With a limited budget, we're not able to purchase enough to replace the worn out ones, so we'd be happy to receive some donated pairs.

If you can help, please contact Sally Lider, Edmonds Parks & Recreation, at 425.771.0227 or lider@ci.edmonds.wa.us.

Educational opportunities

Woodland Park Zoo offers backyard habitat workshop

Join Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle Audubon, Seattle Parks and Recreation and Washington Native Plant Society at Camp Long for an informative, four-part workshop on creating a backyard wildlife habitat. The workshop begins Tuesday, March 10.

Meet experts and get hands-on experience that will show how to attract birds and other wildlife to your backyard, select and care for native plants, recognize and remove invasive plants species, conserve water, manage your backyard without the use of chemical herbicides and pesticides, place feeders and bird houses, get your backyard, schoolyard or community garden certified as a Backyard Habitat.

For more info or to register, visit the zoo's web site: www.zoo.org and click on the education tab.

Be inspired by environmental writing workshop

Join award-winning environmental authors for a writing workshop on Saturday, April 11, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. This one-day program will include classroom and field-based sessions. The instructors bring unique and complementary perspectives as naturalists, social activists, and historians who have written deeply and provocatively about the urban landscape.

A new generation of writers has begun to explore the relationship between people and place in the urban landscape. In doing so, they are forging a new way to look at nature and a new way to develop deeper connections to place.

The cost for the workshop is \$75; scholarships are available. Lunch is provided. Visit www.burkemuseum.org for more information.

Smart Growth report

By Kristin Kelly, Smart Growth Director

I was fortunate to be vacationing in one of my favorite places – Mexico – during the snowstorms and flooding here. There's been some bad news about Mexico, but my experience was remarkable. Last year, the highlight was helping protect the endangered Olive Ripley Sea Turtles. This year, I was just happy to be swimming in the ocean with hundreds of pelicans and shorebirds.

These are tough times for people all over the world, and I experienced them first hand in Mexico. The small town where I spent most of my time depends heavily on tourists, and it tourism is down. Things are tough in the U.S., but even tougher for poorer countries with fewer social and economic choices.

While our federal government wrangles over immigration between Mexico and the U.S., many people from the U.S., Canada and other richer countries live in Mexico at least several months a year. Many of these folks are doing good things for Mexico, which is no easy task. I met one man who raises funds to provide better schools for the children. And, there are others helping the environment and communities they live in.



Despite the poverty and lack of opportunity, one thing is clear: Mexicans take pride in what they have. They live close to the land, utilizing it for their food supply. That's a lesson the U.S. should learn.

Recently, the county council took two important votes affecting farmland and floodplains. Council members John Koster, Dave Gossett and Brian Sullivan voted to allow the City of Arlington to illegally annex Island Crossing (prime farmland and floodplain), which means commercial development will soon follow.

These same council members voted against the hearing examiner's decision to deny two more KRKO radio towers in the upper Snohomish River valley, where four towers have been erected, but are still not online. This area is also farmland and floodplain.

It's hard to understand the irony of Snohomish County policies and decisions. The executive and council say they want to protect farming and seem to understand that floodplain development is not a good idea. But, the actions of some of these folks fly in the face of that knowledge.

(See "Smart Growth" on page 8)

Awards prove it's not just about birds



Denise Willis and Tanya Geibel, from Penny Creek Elementary, plan to purchase science/conservation books for their students.



PAS member Liz Healy and teacher Teresa Townsell with her award, which she'll use to purchase conservation/science books for her students at View Ridge Elementary in Everett.

Pilchuck Audubon Society recently presented Classroom Conservation Awards to eight elementary teachers from around Snohomish County.

"When most people hear 'Audubon,' they think of bird watching," said Mike Blackbird, president of PAS. "But we're not only about birds. We have a broad and active conservation component, as well."

Thousands of species are lost to extinction each year, according to Jeff Corwin, biologist and host of TV's Animal Planet. He attributes this to climate change and habitat loss.

Three years ago, in an effort to counter this trend and perpetuate their conservation efforts at the grass roots level, PAS established the Classroom Conservation Awards Program for elementary school teachers.

The goal of this program is to instill in elementary students the need to conserve and protect our natural resources.

The \$250 awards, given to as many as 10 teachers each year, help them purchase materials for conservation projects and activities.

For the 2008-2009 year, eight awards were made to teachers in the Everett, Mukilteo, Lake Stevens and Marysville school districts.

Classroom award recipients for 2008-2009

Everett

Teresa Townsell,
View Ridge Elementary

Veronica Lynch-Wigre,
Cedar Wood Elementary

Tanya Geibel, Denise Willis,
Penny Creek Elementary

LaVonne Peterson,
Jefferson Elementary

Mukilteo

Paul Church,
Discovery School

Lake Stevens
Lindsay Washo,
Hillcrest School

Marysville

Karrie Valasques,
Liberty School

Birding highlights

By Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

December 26, 2008-January 25, 2009

The **Varied Thrush** was spotted throughout Snohomish County this month. They migrate down to the west coast of Washington and Oregon from their breeding grounds in Alaska and Canada and eventually along the coast of California. The **Varied Thrush** is similar to the **American Robin**, except it has an orange eye stripe and orange wing bars with a wide black band for the male and gray band for the female across its rusty breast. Its song is a long eerie, quavering, whistled note followed by another at a higher or lower pitch.



Varied Thrush, by Doug Loucks

Carole and Larry Beason are back with their report from Lake Bosworth. They spotted a **Varied Thrush** in their yard along with 9 **Spotted Towhees**, a **Hutton's Vireo**, 32 **Pine Siskins**, 2 **House Finches**, 4 **Evening Grosbeaks** and a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**. Six **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were spotted on the water along with 7 **Common Mergansers**, 16 **Buffleheads**, 12 **Mallards** and 4 **Lesser Scaups** for a total species count of 33.

Gail Dibernardo reported 3 **Varied Thrush** from her Brier location. She also spotted 7 **California Quail** near Brier Park. Her total species count of 23 included 10 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 10 **Pine Siskins**, 8 **American Robins**, 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers**, a **Brown Creeper**, 2 **Downy Woodpeckers**, 2 **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** and 4 **Anna's Hummingbirds**.

Anna's Hummingbirds and **California Quail** are regular visitors to Hilkka Egtvedt's home in Mukilteo. She reported 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds** and 7 **California Quail** along with a **Varied Thrush**, 2 **Townsend's Warblers**, 25 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 12 **Pine Siskins**, a **White-crowned Sparrow**, 3 **Fox Sparrows**, 2 **Golden-crowned Sparrows**, 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers**, 6 **Song Sparrows** and 11 **Steller's Jays** for a total species count of 27.

Kriss Erickson did not report any **Varied Thrush** from her Everett location, but she did report 17 **Bushtits**, 4 **American Crows**, 6 **Mallards**, a **Hairy Woodpecker**, 4 **Chestnut-backed Chickadees**, 11 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 3 **Steller's Jays**, a **Downy Woodpecker**, a **Bewick's Wren** and an **American Robin** for a total species count of 10.

Verna Hisey spotted 5 **Varied Thrush** at her Lake Stevens home. She also reported a very large number of **House**

Wrens. **House Wrens** are similar to **Bewick's Wrens**, but the **Bewick's Wrens** are distinguished by a white eye stripe. Her total species count of 8 included 11 **House Wrens**, 3 **Steller's Jays**, a **Bald Eagle**, 4 **American Crows**, 4 **Red-winged Blackbirds**, 2 **Spotted Towhees** and 7 **Black-capped Chickadees**.

A **Varied Thrush** made an appearance at Shelia and Michael Huber's Machias home. They also reported 4 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 3 **Hairy Woodpeckers**, 3 **Downy Woodpeckers**, a **Pileated Woodpecker**, a **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, 5 **Northern Flickers**,

11 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, a **Cooper's Hawk** and a **Golden-crowned Kinglet** for a species count of 17.

A **Yellow-rumped Warbler** highlighted Julie O'Donald's report from Bier. Her total species count of 21 also included 2 **Anna's Hummingbirds**, 12 **American Crows**, 6 **Band-tailed Pigeons**, 3 **Northern Flickers**, a **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, 2 **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and a **Hermit Thrush**.

Five **Varied Thrush** visited Mary Sinker's yard in Stanwood. She was busy counting again in January with a total species count of 27. She listed 24 **American Robins**, 38 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 12 **Evening Grosbeaks**, 16 **Steller's Jays**, 36 **Pine Siskins**, 7 **Mourning**

Doves, 2 **Bewick's Wrens**, 2 **Red-winged Blackbirds**, a **Great Blue Heron** and 14 **House Finches**.

Two more **Varied Thrush** were reported in Darlene Walker's yard on Camano Island. She also spotted a **Great Horned Owl** in the forest and a **Great Blue Heron** on the water. Her report included 8 **Tundra Swans**, a **Ringed-necked Pheasant**, 6 **Pine Siskins**, 30 **Bushtits**, 3 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, a **Townsend's Warbler**, 12 **Black-capped Chickadees**, an **Anna's Hummingbird**, 10 **Dark-eyed Juncos** and 5 **Spotted Towhees** for a total species count of 22.

Dick Vanderhoff sent his report of the bird species he spotted while vacationing in Orlando, Florida. He listed **Black-naped Fruit Dove**, **Wing-barred Seedeater**, **Purple Gallinule**, **Inca Tern**, **White-faced Ibis**, **Yellow-billed Hornbill**, **Reichenow's**



Song Sparrow, by Bonnie Forrester

(See "Birding highlights" on page 8)

Birding highlights ...

(continued from page 7)

Weaver, Green-rumped Parrotlet and 51 different species at the Water World Aviary. Sounds like a very interesting place to visit.

Annette Colombini's report from her home in Marysville included 8 **American Crows**, an **American Robin**, 4 **Northern Flickers**, 6 **Steller's Jays**, 2 **Varied Thrush**, 2 **Fox Sparrows**, 12 **Dark-eyed Juncos**, 7 **Black-capped Chickadees**, 3 **House Sparrows**, 6 **Pine Siskins** and 2 **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** for a total species count of 11.

Although Annette and I both live in Marysville, I live in a rural area with large fields that fill with water each winter and draw a lot of waterfowl and gulls. I did not spot the **Varied Thrush** this month, but I did see large numbers of waterfowl in the fields – too many to count. My total species count of 23 included 30 **American Crows**, a **Mourning Dove**, 6 **Trumpeter**



American Robin, by Paul Kusmin

Swans, hundreds of **Mallards** and **Glaucous-winged Gulls**, 30+ **American Widgeons**, 14 **Canada Geese**, 20-30 **Snow Geese** flying over, 3 **Red-tailed Hawks** and 3 **Fox Sparrows**.

Jonathan Blubaugh visited his mom over the holidays and sent a report from Ocean Shores. The waterfowl included a **Pied-billed Grebe**, 2 **Double-crested Cormorants**, a **Great Blue Heron**, 6 **Mallards**, a **Lesser Scaup**, 4 **Buffleheads**, 8 **Common Goldeneyes**, a **Merganser** and a **Red-breasted Merganser**. He also included a list of the usual backyard birds that included a **Yellow-rumped Warbler** for a total species count of 27.

If you are interested in becoming a reporter for "Birding Highlights," please contact me at 425.750.8125 or e-mail me at pricemara@clearwire.net.

Smart Growth ...

(continued from page 6)

The State Department of Agriculture recently released its long anticipated report titled: "Future of Farming." The purpose of this project was to develop recommendations to keep farming "competitive and profitable" for the next 20 years. The report states that more than 87,000 acres of Washington farmland are lost each year. Unbelievable! (You can read the report online at www.agr.wa.gov/fof). Another source of farming information, the 2007 Census of Agriculture, was recently released. (It's available at www.agcensus.usda.gov).

These reports show a good news/bad news census. The bad news is we are losing farmland at high rate. The good news is that farm income is up, and farming is an important economic component in the state and county. We have lost farmland on the east side of the mountains, but gained farmland in portions of the west side of the state.

Some of us believe farming is important to Snohomish County and are willing to speak out against bad policies and regulations that allow farmland to become car lots, big box stores and ballfields. It's not enough to support a Transfer of Development Rights program, like the City of Arlington and the county say they do. Support must be implemented consistently to save our remaining designated farmland.

People are scared. Rightfully so. Lots of folks invested in land in Snohomish County when they were young in hopes a large return on investment in their retirement years.

But, as we realize now: no investment is free from risk. And when it comes to land use and development, nothing is set in stone. It is dictated by the present needs and responsibilities of all. And sometimes rules and regulations change because of unforeseen circumstances, such as increased population in the county, and laws passed at the federal and state levels.

Many citizens are unhappy with the recent votes of the county council. But, we need to focus on the future as there are other issues that will affect our county. And, I need your help to push our decision makers in the right direction.

To receive up-to-date information about meetings, public hearings and legislation, join my e-mail list. If you aren't sure we have your e-mail address, or if your e-mail address has changed, please let me know at kristin.kelly@pilchuckaudubon.org.

Recently, two land use code changes were adopted by the council: Urban Residential Design Standards and Rural Cluster Subdivisions. These recent ordinances are on their way to the county executive, who can either sign them or veto them. I hope to share the outcomes in the next Smart Growth Report.

On February 24, the planning commission will conduct a public hearing on Docket XIII Batch 2 amendments to the comprehensive plan, which includes proposed changes to the fully contained community policies and regulations and changes to the forest transition areas.

Pilchuck Audubon Society will testify on these amendments. County council hearings will be most likely in May. If you're part of my e-mail list, you'll receive information and action alerts so you can get involved.

Please tune in to KSER 90.7-FM Mondays at 8:45 a.m. for updates on meetings and hearings surrounding land use issues.

Save the date

Feast with Friends, Saturday, August 27, 6 to 10 p.m., Angel Arms Works, 3rd and B, Snohomish.

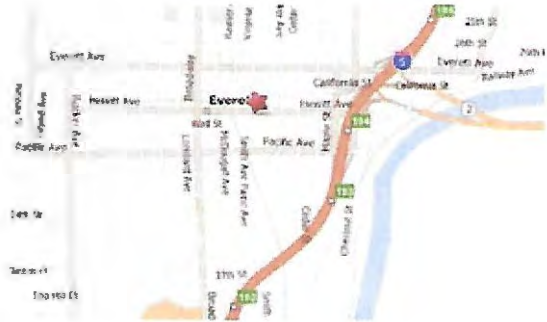
**March program meeting
Friday, March 13, 7 p.m.**

Mystery of the toxic swans

Martha Jordan will present a documentary about the lead poisoning of 2000+ Trumpeter Swans in Washington and BC.

**Everett Firefighters Hall
2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett**

We need volunteers to help clean up after program meetings. If you're able, please lend a hand.



For more information, call 425.252.0926

**Watch www.pilchuckaudubon.org
for the most up-to-date information!**

**Martins have new
digs in Edmonds**

When the lovely Purple Martins return to the Edmonds waterfront this spring, they will find eight outstanding new houses just for them. They look like big white plastic gourds and we hope the martins will like them. PAS member Carol Riddell is the one to thank for the new homes. She and Duane Karna, with help from others in Edmonds, put up the new boxes in late February.



Welcome back, Purple Martins. And, thank you, Carol!

Purple Martin, by Keith Bowers

**Coming this May ...
Birdathon 2009
More info in coming issues**

Audubon membership information

Joint membership in National Audubon Society (NAS) and Pilchuck Audubon Society (PAS) includes National Audubon Society's quarterly magazine *Audubon* and Pilchuck Audubon Society's *Profile* newsletter for one year. Cost is \$20 for an Introductory Membership or \$35 for renewals. When you join National Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of Pilchuck Audubon Society.

However, PAS receives none of your national dues to support its programs. Local membership in Pilchuck Audubon Society includes a one-year subscription (10 issues) to Pilchuck Audubon Society's *Profile* newsletter. Cost is \$25. A special limited income category is also available for \$16.

Local PAS membership

- New member\$25
- Renewal\$25
- Lifetime PAS member..... \$1000
 - 10 monthly payments of \$100
 - 4 quarterly payments of \$250
 - 1 payment of \$1000
- Donation..... \$_____

Make check payable to:
Pilchuck Audubon Society

Mail your check and this form to:
*PAS Membership Chair
1429 Avenue D, PMB 198
Snohomish, WA 98290*

NAS membership

(includes PAS membership)

- Introductory membership \$20

Make check payable to:
National Audubon Society

Mail your check and this form to:
*PAS Membership Chair
1429 Avenue D, PMB 198
Snohomish, WA 98290*

NAS renewal

(includes PAS renewal)

- Renewal \$35

Make check payable to:
National Audubon Society

Mail your check and this form to:
*NAS, Membership Data Center
POB 52529
Boulder, CO 80322-2529*

- I'd like to save PAS money and read the *Profile* on the web at www.pilchuckaudubon.org. Please don't mail it to me. I've included my email address at right so you can let me know when each issue is available.
- Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.
- I am interested in the Conservation Committee.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____