

Christmas Bird Count 2017

By Rick Taylor, Edmonds CBC Co-compiler

Everett-Marysville CBC – December 30, 2017

Edmonds/South County CBC – December 16, 2017

The National Audubon Society’s Christmas Bird Count, which began in 1900 as an alternative to Christmas Day bird hunts, is the longest-running, large-scale, citizen-science project in the world. The CBC provides important data about bird population and distribution trends. The results are tallied and submitted to the National Audubon Society. These long-term population data are used in multiple research projects such as the [State of the Birds](#) and the National Audubon Society’s [Birds and Climate Change Report](#). In addition to collecting valuable scientific data, the CBC is also an enjoyable social event with teams working together over the years. Teams try to beat their records for the number of species they can find in their area.

The Pilchuck Audubon Society sponsors the 15-mile diameter Everett-Marysville and Edmonds Christmas Bird Counts, which will occur on December 30 and December 16, respectively. The Everett-Marysville count area is located between downtown Everett and Island Crossing, extending as far west as the southeast tip of Camano Island, while the Edmonds count, centered near Martha Lake in Lynnwood, occurs in south Snohomish County, north King County, and the southeast tip of Whidbey Island. Some great opportunities exist to join an existing

NO DECEMBER PROGRAM MEETING

Merry Christmas!

Next Program Meeting

Friday, January 12, 2018

7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Everett Firefighters’ Hall

2411 Hewitt Avenue, Everett ([map](#))

team or start a new team. Boat surveys in the Snohomish River Delta and on marine waters (weather permitting) offer a unique opportunity to see waterfowl and sea birds not easily seen from shore. Counts are made on Camano, Ebey, Spencer, Jetty, Whidbey, and Gedney (Hat) islands.

You can participate either by joining a field team of birders covering one of the 28 areas or by independently counting birds at your feeders and in your yard. Also, there are presently open positions for area leaders. New participants, whether experienced, intermediate, or beginning birders, are welcome to join the counts. The Edmonds CBC also counts the massive “river of crows” as the American Crows move to their evening roost site. If you aren’t comfortable with your identification skills or are only available in the afternoon, this is an excellent way to participate. The CBC compilers can direct you to one of these areas after knowing your interests and experience.

As Snohomish County grows and more land is converted into suburban housing, feeder counts grow in importance. We would like to increase the number of people watching their feeders to ensure that we have good coverage of the urban and suburban habitat.

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Christmas Bird Count 2017

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The CBC compilers are:

- **For Everett/Marysville:**
Scott Atkinson (scottratkinson@hotmail.com, tel. 425-210-2716).
- **For Edmonds/South County:**

Bob Schmidt (bobs@world-wide.com, tel. 425-273-1579) and

Rick Taylor (taylorri@outlook.com, tel. 425-214-2764).

Each CBC will have a post-count potluck to share results and enjoy the evening. The compilers will provide the locations and times of these events. ✧



National Audubon Society
Christmas Bird Count

About Pilchuck Audubon Society

The Pilchuck Audubon Profile, official newsletter of Pilchuck Audubon Society, is published monthly.

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 newsletter@pilchuckaudubon.org or mail to 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198, Snohomish, WA 98290. Submissions must be received by the 21st of the month preceding publication. We reserve the right to edit.

To contact Pilchuck Audubon Society, call 425.610.8027.

The monthly Profile is available online at

www.pilchuckaudubon.org

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Supporting Young Birders in Washington State

Watching an idea take hold and develop is one of the most exciting things about working within the non-profit realm. Just such an idea was launched at the recent Audubon Council of Washington annual meeting. Many chapters, including Pilchuck Audubon Society, struggle to be an engaging and inviting place for teens and young adults. So, as the discussion ensued about how to support these young birders, there was a lot of head nodding and thought sharing for how we could support a state-wide effort from our local base.

The program is being fashioned with resource support from the Young Birders Network, an effort launched by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory and hosted by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (<http://ebird.org/content/ybn/>).

If you have an interest in supporting or mentoring young birders, please consider helping develop this program, either working on the State Audubon effort or here at the local level with Pilchuck Audubon. The future of Audubon depends on inspiring and engaging the young people of today, and we need your help in making this great idea a reality. Please reach out to me, Cindy Easterson, either by phone, 425-876-1055, or email, president@pilchuckaudubon.org. ✧



UPCOMING EVENTS, CLASSES, and FESTIVALS *farther afield*

Compiled by Rick Brauer

The December holiday season tends to be a quiet time for bird festivals and classes.

This is your last month to make sure you are on Santa's "nice" list; consider helping his elves on either of Pilchuck Audubon's Christmas Bird Counts (listed elsewhere in the *Profile*).

Weekly Refuge Bird Walk

Every Sunday

Ladner, BC

Did you know that the exceptional George C. Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary just north of the US/Canada border offers a weekly guided bird walk? If you have never visited this special place, this walk would be a great introduction; meets at 10:00 a.m. in the gift shop. <http://www.reifelbirdsantuary.com/birds1.html>

Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival

Jan 12-15

Morro Bay, CA

Every Martin Luther King weekend, more than 500 bird lovers visit Morro Bay, California, a Globally Important Bird Area, to see, photograph, and learn more about birds. Morro Bay is located halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco on the Pacific Flyway. The area offers beaches, state parks, a natural history museum, panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and, best of all, thousands of birds. More than 200 species are usually sighted during the festival weekend. <http://morrobaybirdfestival.org/>

Class: Seals & Sea Lions of the Northern Hemisphere Jan 20

Mount Vernon, WA

When you encounter a marine mammal in or out of the water, do you know who you're seeing? Join Wildlife Biologist David Drummond to learn the differences between the three Pinniped families and their species. The class will explore their ranges, preferred habitats, food, bio-ecology, and fascinating behaviors in the northern oceans.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/all-ages-savvy-seals-and-sea-lions-of-the-northern-hemisphere-tickets-26487717476> ✧

SMART GROWTH REPORT

by Kristin Kelly

Executive Director, Smart Growth



While some of us have been focused on local elections, our Snohomish County Council has requested a recommendation from Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT) on whether the County Council should vote to amend Countywide Planning Policy (CWPP) DP-3, which would allow for Urban Growth Area (UGA) Land Swaps. The County Council is considering this policy change in order to allow for a UGA expansion that otherwise would be illegal under the Growth Management Act, and will also allow developers and a few landowners in the rural area outside Southwest UGA along 43rd Avenue SE to upzone for more homes (Docket XIX, SW-2 and SW-3). Good for a few, but not good for the many.

The Smart Growth Program is opposed to this UGA expansion because it sets a precedent to allow for UGA land swaps at the expense of comprehensive land-use planning that takes into account the impacts to traffic, environment, birds, wildlife, water quality, property, and sustainability of our communities. It also would allow a UGA expansion in one area of the county and mandate a UGA-reduction in another area of the county, which could hurt other property owners' investments and plans.

The SCT Planning Advisory Committee (representatives from the county and city planning directors) in a majority vote on November 9 are recommending to the SCT Steering Committee adoption of the policy change to DP-3. On November 29, the SCT Steering Committee could make a recommendation to the County Council that this policy should be amended. This could happen on this date or at the Steering Committee's meeting in January. Either way, we are asking that the Steering Committee not make this recommendation. We also have requested, and will continue to do so, that County Council deny the Docket XIX proposals. SW-2 and SW-3 would allow a UGA expansion between Maltby Road and 196th Street in Lynnwood.

Since June, the Snohomish County Council has had several public hearings, delaying their decision knowing that there are legal hurdles to overcome. County Executive Dave Somers and his Planning Department are opposed to these UGA expansions, as is Pilchuck Audubon Society and our partner on this issue, Futurewise.

I know this is a complicated issue; all land-use issues are complicated and sometimes rushed through. In my job

as Smart Growth Executive Director, I try to take these complicated issues and make them understandable to our membership and supporters, and am requesting you to help prevent yet another unnecessary urban growth area expansion.

Please contact the County Council members (e-addresses below) and tell them not to allow these UGA expansions or policy changes that would allow for UGA land swaps. Ask them to wait until the next County Land Use Comprehensive Plan Update in 2023 so that everyone can have a voice when and if UGA expansions should happen, where they should happen,

and how best to mitigate for impacts to our environment. They should also be asked to review land-use policy changes that will have detrimental impacts to birds, wildlife, water quality, and our rural and resource lands. Last, the

Council members should be asked to ensure that policy changes actually comply with the Growth Management Act and the County's countywide planning policies.

Please send in your comments before December 6, as written comments are still being accepted; there will be no oral testimony at the Council's hearing at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 6.

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TRIP CALENDAR

Check our website at www.pilchuckaudubon.org
for the latest information



Tuesday, December 5 Snohomish Area

Meet at 8:00 AM at Snohomish Park & Ride, located at the junction of Highway 9 and Bickford Ave. Enjoyable and relaxed trip. We usually have high species counts and surprises. Pack a lunch.

Trip Leader: Art Wait, [360-563-0181](tel:360-563-0181)

Saturday, December 9 Wiley Slough and Samish Flats

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. We'll carpool to Wiley Slough in Skagit County and walk the trails. There will likely be mud, so bring your hiking boots, foul weather gear, snacks, and water for the trail. We'll be looking and listening for big white birds, marsh birds, and shore birds. Then we'll drive a short distance further north to the Samish Flats in search of raptors. We will probably stop for a little socializing over a late lunch on the way home. Discover Pass (\$30 annually per car) or \$10 per day.

Trip Leaders:

Jonathan Blubaugh, 425-244-7633, aracfi@msn.com

Lisa Weber, 650-888-9087, 45.lisa@gmail.com

Tuesday, December 12 Lummi Flats

Meet at 7:00 AM at Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5-Exit 200). Park away from store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Short-eared Owl, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Shrike, and Snow Bunting are very likely. Pack a lunch.

Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, [360-435-3750](tel:360-435-3750)

Saturday, December 16 118th Christmas Bird Count Edmonds/Everett/Snohomish

Team Counting Crows meets at the Lowell Riverfront Trail at 7:30 AM. Take I-5 to the 41st St. exit in Everett and go one block east. Take a right on 3rd Av. It jogs left to 2nd Av. Turn left down the hill on Lenora/Lowell-Snohomish River Rd. Just after crossing the tracks at the bottom, turn left into the gravel parking lot. Open to all. No reservations required.

Trip Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425-244-7633

aracfi@msn.com



Tuesday, December 19 Everett to Marysville

Meet at 8:00 AM at Legion Park off North Marine Drive, Everett. Explore the North Everett waterfront and the Snohomish River Estuary, including the Marysville Sewage Facility. View Osprey, eagles, hawks, waterfowl, shorebirds, and gulls. Pack a lunch. Trip Leaders: Art Wait, [360-563-0181](tel:360-563-0181), Virginia Clark, [360-435-3750](tel:360-435-3750)

Tuesday, December 26 No scheduled trip

Saturday, December 30 118th Christmas Bird Count Everett/Marysville

Team Counting Crows meets at Gissberg Twin Lakes Park at 7:30 AM. Take I-5 to the SR 531/Smokey Point exit (Exit 206). Go west on 172nd St. and take a left at the first signal into the Lakewood Crossing shopping center. Turn left into the shopping center and proceed to the I-5 frontage road, Twin Lakes Av. Turn right and the park will be on your right. Go to the second (south) parking lot. Open to all. No reservations required.

Trip Leader: Terry Nightingale, [206-619-2383](tel:206-619-2383),
tnight@pobox.com ✧



Hospitality Chair Needed!

Do you bake an incredible chocolate chip cookie? Or make one of those "to die for" dips that is good with chips or veggies? If you answered "yes!" we need your help. After many years of amazing service as Pilchuck Audubon Society's Hospitality Chair Virginia Clark is passing the mantle. All of us who have savored and relished Virginia's cookies these past years salute her talent and pass along a hearty appreciation for her gifts.

We need someone to help either provide snacks and set up the coffee for our monthly program meetings **OR** organize some folks to take care of these tasks. There is leeway to make this position your own by planning what to bring or purchase as provisions. We need you right away! The January program meeting is just around the corner.

If you are interested in the position of Hospitality Chair, please get in touch with Cindy Easterson either by phone, 425-876-1055 or email, president@pilchuckaudubon.org. Looking forward to hearing from you! ✧



BACKYARD BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS

by Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

August 26, 2017 to September 25, 2017

As the seasons change, so do bird populations. Most of the American Goldfinch have gone south, and now we have more Dark-eyed Junco, Canada Goose, and Pine Siskin and fewer hummingbirds.

Carole and Larry Beason reported 1 American Goldfinch, 2 Anna's Hummingbird, 14 American Robin, 2 Belted Kingfisher, 40+ Canada Goose flying overhead, a Cooper's Hawk in the rose bed, 12 Dark-eyed Junco, 5 Golden-crowned Sparrow, a Great-Blue Heron flying near the shore of Lake Bosworth, a Great Horned Owl in the Spruce tree, 19 Mallard on the lake, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Red-breasted Sapsucker, 40 Red-winged Blackbird, 8 Ring-necked Duck, and 5 Wood Duck on the lake, for a total species count of 36.

Reporting from Mukilteo, Hilka Egtvedt still reports her 2 California Quail. Her total species count of 21 included 3 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Pileated Wood-Pecker, 3 Northern Flicker, 2 Steller's Jay, a California Scrub Jay, 5 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Sparrow, 6 Dark-eyed Junco, 3 Purple Finch, 7 House Finch, and 3 American Goldfinch.

Debbie Dern's report from her home in Snohomish included 3 Anna's Hummingbird, a Pileated Woodpecker, 5 Steller's Jay, 5 Black-capped Chickadee, a Spotted Towhee, an American Robin, 7 Dark-eyed Junco, a Downy Woodpecker, 26 Canada Goose flying over, a Eurasian Collared-Dove, a Common Raven, a Barred Owl in a tree hunting for rodents, and a Cooper's Hawk, for a total species count of 16.

Reporting from Everett, Kriss Erickson listed 6 American Robin, 2 Bewick's Wren, 6 Steller's Jay, 10 Northwestern Crow, 3 Mallard Duck flying overhead, 23 European Starling, 2 Northern Flicker, 23 Black-capped Chickadee, 36 Bushtit, 23 Cedar Waxwing, 12 Canada Goose, a Red-breasted Sapsucker, 2 Golden-crowned Kinglet and 2 White-breasted Nuthatch, for a total species count of 25.

Mary Sinker's report from Stanwood included her highlight of the month, a Northern Pygmy Owl. She also reported 11 American Robin, 7 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Bald Eagle, 12 Black-capped Chickadee, 6 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a Brown Creeper, 25 Dark-eyed Junco, 4 Downy Woodpecker, a Great Blue Heron at the creek, 18 Mourning Dove, a Red-tailed Hawk, 6 Spotted Towhee, 14 Steller's Jay, 4 White-crowned Sparrow, and 4 Pacific Wren, for a total species count of 28.

My total species count of 22 from my home in Marysville included 10 American Crow, 20 American Robin, 4 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 6 House Finch, 2 Hairy Woodpecker, 12 Dark-eyed Junco, a Great Horned Owl, a Cooper's Hawk on top of the feeders, 2 Great Blue Heron, 18 Mourning Dove, 5 Kinglet species, a Song Sparrow, 7 Steller's Jay, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 5 Northern Flicker, and a Barred Owl that sat on top of the feeders waiting for a squirrel to come out of hiding.

If you are interested in participating in our Backyard Birding count, please email me at pricemara1@gmail.com or leave a message on my cell phone at (425) 750-8125. ✧

Trip Report

BIRD WALK IN VARIOUS PARKS IN CENTRAL EDMONDS

4 November 2017

by Doug Resnick

Doug, Jonathan, Judy, and Terry met at dawn at the Edmonds Park and Ride for a walk through several parks in central Edmonds. We observed 25 species of birds on this trip.

The first snow of the season had fallen the previous day. Although there was no precipitation on the morning of the 4th, the temperature was still low: 35 degrees Fahrenheit at the start of the outing. We carpooled to the first birding site, then walked the remainder of the route. Jonathan was kind enough to scribe via eBird, baring his hands to the cold weather.

The first site was Pine Ridge Park. We heard only a few birds at the start, but waterfowl were present at Goodhope Pond, whose water level had been restored by recent rains after a dry summer. The birds of tree and bush came out as we continued our walk through the tunnel to Pioneer Way and Shell Valley Road. From there, we followed Yost Park Road and Sword Fern Trail through Yost Park and out to Olympic Ave.

We continued our walk to Hummingbird Hill Park, a site new to most of those on the trip. This is a discreet pocket of greenery approached by a downward slope from Edmonds Street. As we passed one particular house along the way, Jonathan and Terry recognized that we were passing a house they knew. Jonathan phoned Susie Schaefer, who invited us to watch the birds at the feeders in her backyard, which gave us close views of Golden-crowned Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, a Fox Sparrow, and hummingbirds.

From there, we continued east to Emerald Hills Park, a private park with public access. In addition to admirable views of Puget Sound, the adjoining Emerald Hills Pathway offered us a chance to view birds feasting on berries that had fallen on the pathway. The path led us back to Yost Park, which we now traversed via Highline Trail and Shell Creek Trail.

We returned through Pine Ridge Park, bringing everyone back by noon, as requested. Several of us reconvened at Portofino Restaurant and Bar for lunch. ✧

TRIP REPORT: Destination Malheur, 8-15 June 2016

by Reg Reisenbichler

The following is a summary of the exploits of seven intrepid birders from Pilchuck Audubon Society traveling from Snohomish County to Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and back 8-15 June 2016. They were Kim Kendall, Carolyn Lacy, Judy Lowell, Paula Parsons, Carlos Pintos, Reg Reisenbichler, and Barb Smith. Our fearless leader, Susie Schaefer, could not go because of a last-minute health problem. We counted 140 bird species during this venture. The report will be published in several parts due to space limitations.

The group met at Reg and Kim's house in Brier on Wednesday, June 8, at 5:45 a.m. and then again at the Brickyard Park and Ride on I-405 at 160th Street for final consolidation into two cars for the trip. Baggage included lunches and several breakfasts for the entire week so the cars had little room to spare. We had to deal with miles of backed-up traffic but finally reached I-90 and were then able to breeze up to Snoqualmie Pass and on to the Cle Elum bakery to test pastries. At Ellensburg we took Highway 821 through the Yakima Canyon, stopping at the mouth of Umtanum Creek where the birds were putting on a great midday chorus. Our sightings included Yellow-breasted Chats, Lazuli Buntings, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Prairie Falcon, and Two-tailed Swallowtail Butterflies.

We continued to Highway 97, stopping at Brooks Memorial State Park near Goldendale for lunch. Sightings included Brewer's Blackbird, Steller's Jay, N. Flicker, B.H. Cowbird, Western Tanager, and Swainson's Thrush.

*Paula,
Carlos,
Judy, and
Barb
preparing
lunch at
Brooks
Memorial
State Park.*



We crossed the Columbia River and took I-84 west to the mouth of the Deschutes River, where we birded the lush riparian habitat for about one hour. Mulberry trees were loaded with tasty berries, attracting both birds and birders. Sightings included Canada Goose, Common Merganser, Bald Eagle, California Quail, Belted Kingfisher, Cedar Waxwing, Bullock's Oriole, and Western Kingbird. We proceeded west to The Dalles and then south on Highway 197, passing through scenic Tygh Valley and rustic Maupin, a pleasant little town (catering to river boaters and fishermen) where the highway crosses over to the east side of the Deschutes River. We ate dinner

and spent the night in Madras along Highway 97.

The next morning (Thursday, June 9) we visited Lower Bridge on the Deschutes River west of Terrebonne, a small, lovely canyon with a healthy riparian area and good numbers of birds (Borden Beck Wildlife Preserve). Sightings included Bullock's Oriole, House Wren (nesting in a trailside plastic bag dispenser), Yellow Warbler, Lazuli Bunting, BH Cowbird, five species of swallow including Bank Swallow, American Robin, BH Grosbeak, Red-tailed Hawk, and American and Lesser Goldfinch. We continued south on Hwy 97, stopping briefly at Newberry Volcanic National Monument south of Bend. Most notable at the monument were the many Pandora Moth caterpillars crawling (or squashed) on the ground.



*Pandora Moth
Caterpillar*

We continued south to Highway 31 and on to the Silver Lake Ranger Station, where we ate lunch. Birds observed included Red-naped Sapsucker, Common Nighthawk, Turkey Vulture, and swallow spp. We finally reached our second primary target of the day, Summer Lake Wildlife Management Area. Some of the birds we saw were Cinnamon Teal; Northern Shoveler; Sandhill Cranes tending their rusty-colored chick as they negotiated the thick marsh vegetation; American Bittern; Gadwall; Ruddy Duck; American Coot; Eared, Western, and Pied-billed Grebe; Wilson's Phalarope; Willet; American White Pelican; Northern Harrier; Forster's Tern; Black-crowned Night Heron; Black-necked Stilt; Curlew; White-faced Ibis; Yellow-headed and Red-winged Blackbirds. With the day evaporating, we persevered, stopping only briefly for a photo of the town sign for Paisley, in honor of Susie's beloved dog. We stayed overnight at the Lakeview Lodge Motel along Highway 395. ✧



Black-necked Stilt | Mick Thompson

To be continued in January 2018

Pilchuck Audubon Society
 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198
 Snohomish, WA 98290-1742



**Pilchuck Audubon Society
 Membership Information**

Support your local Audubon chapter by becoming a member. PAS dues are tax deductible (consult your tax professional for details). The PAS tax ID number is 91-6183664.

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