

TIME FOR ACTIVISM!

by Kristin Kelly, Executive Director, Smart Growth

Two very important issues are at the forefront of land-use planning in Snohomish County, and both will need our membership to be involved. Look for action alerts from me in your email in March, April, and perhaps later. If you don't think your email address is in our system, please send it to me at execdirector@pilchuckaudubon.org. Your email will be used ONLY by Pilchuck Audubon Society and is not shared by our organization.

Multi-Family Residential (MR) Zoning Ordinance with Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Overlay along Highway 99

While this issue has not yet been scheduled for a public hearing, it is anticipated to be before the County Council sometime this spring. The ordinance was vetted by the Snohomish County Planning Commission in December 2017, and it has recommended approval by the Council.

A brief history of this rezone: This ordinance first came up for consideration two years ago. At that time, the County Council felt there were some problems with it so asked for the Planning Department to go back and fix some of those problems. The MR/TDR Ordinance would rezone the county areas along the eastern side of Highway 99 to multi-family residential and would require developers to buy development rights from participating farmers through the county's TDR program for more density. This is a win-win solution for protecting our valuable farmland, helping farmers financially, and allowing participating developers more profit, while ensuring growth and development occurs in our very urban areas along transit corridors and adjacent to urban services. This is just one tool in the toolbox for ensuring the county meets its obligation to provide housing for our growing population without sprawling further out along the borders of existing urban growth areas and putting pressure to develop our rural areas.

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MARCH PROGRAM MEETING

Friday, March 9, 2018 • 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

FUN, SUN, AND BEAUTIFUL BIRDS

Everett Firefighters' Hall

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

On Friday, March 9, come and join Jon Houghton for an evening of Fun, Sun, and Beautiful Birds. Jon will share his recent trip to The Asa Wright Center on Trinidad Island (off the northern coast of Venezuela) where he and his wife, Kathleen, spent 10 days observing and photographing more than 180 species of birds, including his favorite bird of the trip, the



Jon and Big Blue, a Brazilian Hyacinth Macaw

White-chested Emerald Hummingbird. Jon has traveled and birded in many areas around the world. We thought this sunny warm place looked special and lots of fun, and Jon agreed to share his photos and experiences there.

Jon lives in Edmonds and has worked as a marine biologist, mostly around Edmonds and Puget Sound for a noteworthy career. He continues to work in Alaska when he is not out birding in some exotic location. His PhD is from University of Washington, and he is a graduate of the Seattle Audubon Master Birders program.

Over the past years, he had also participated in the Edmonds and Everett Christmas Bird Counts; he frequently leads birding trips for Seattle Audubon.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Pilchuck Audubon program meetings are open to all. Learn more about birds and wildlife near and far. See the PAS website, www.pilchuckaudubon.org. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. with a brief business meeting followed by the program. ✧

Spring Seed Sale

March 14



Twice yearly, Pilchuck Audubon sells bird seed in bulk as a fundraiser. The 2018 spring sale will be Wednesday, March 14, between 4:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Seed pick-up will be in Everett; there will be volunteers to load the seed into your vehicle.

Types of seed available include sunflower seed (shelled or unshelled), peanuts (shelled or unshelled), cracked corn, millet, safflower, mealworms, niger thistle, suet, and mixes. The most popular seeds are sunflower and the mixes; all will lure many species to your feeders.

You must pre-order the seed you want. If you would like to see a price list, send an email to Carolyn Lacy, newsletter@pilchuckaudubon.org.



Payment is by credit card, check, or cash. If paying with a credit card, you'll need to pay 48 hours before seed pick-up. If paying with cash or check, pay at the time of picking up your seed.

Feed the birds and support PAS!!



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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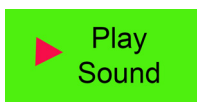
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SLURPING SWANS

by Thomas Bancroft, Audubon Washington Board Member

Eight trumpeter swans stood in the muddy water, their necks bent in an “S”-shaped curve, and their bills half submerged in the mucky mess. A thin layer of water covered the fallow field, and the temperature hung in the high 30s. Their heads moved sideways, in quick even movements, and their mouths opened and shut rapidly. Four bright white adults, as well as four equally large, grayish-white young of the year, fed not more than fifty yards from me. Their elephantine legs held their bodies above the muddy water as they crept through the quagmire, gradually approaching where I froze, transfixed by their size.



[Play Slurping Sound](#)

The slurp-slurp-slurp followed by a pause then more slurping put me into a trance. I was standing on the side of Wylie Slough Road with headsets over my ears and a directional microphone pointing across the road. My digital recorder was capturing every nuance, and the headphones emphasized the mesmerizing sound. Weekly for three years, I would visit my daughter at her Georgetown apartment. We would head out someplace: going for a walk, picking up supplies, or hitting a movie, often stopping on the way back for a fortified fruit smoothie. She'd order tropical fruit, and I'd pick raspberry. My daughter would insist they add antioxidants to mine. We'd grab a corner table where we could chat and slowly drink our concoctions. Slurping came when we were trying to get the last few sips from the bottom.

These swans are huge, twenty-five pounds, as much as a beagle, but larger because birds have hollow bones and large air sacks that displace fluids in their body cavities. In spite of their weight, they are graceful, strong fliers that return each winter to the Skagit from breeding grounds in the north. Two pairs—each with their two full-grown young—were having breakfast. These two families probably had flown together from an Alaska wilderness to winter in these agricultural fields.

These swans were pumping the slurry through their mouths, filtering out plant material. The back and forth motion of their heads moved the bills through the brown suspension, continuing to churn up the water. Their bill lamellae acted like a sieve, and, occasionally, a green

stem or white root disappeared into a mouth. I had watched Trumpeter Swans dig potatoes and graze on grass or growing grains, but never filter plant material from the dirty ooze.

When the cygnets first hatch, the parents take them to good feeding areas, often stirring up the water to make aquatic plants and animals more readily available. The young must eat on their own; the parents don't feed them. These thoughts made me think about my younger days and what we ate at home. We had some variation but often certain nights were specific main courses of chicken, beef, or pork, always with potatoes. The vegetables did change with the seasons. I probably bucked eating beans and spinach. Now, one of the things I enjoyed most was trying new recipes, especially when traveling. Swans had learned to exploit novel foods that weren't part of the environment before Europeans arrived.



It is hard to imagine that the known Trumpeter Swan population was only 69 individuals in 1935. A few additional unrecorded flocks, however, were hiding at the time in Canada and Alaska. Shooting them for their feathers, skin, and meat had decimated the once widespread species. Protection and reintroductions have allowed these swans to recover. In 2005, ornithologists estimated that their numbers had climbed to more than 34,000. Two families, perhaps sisters with their spouses and children, traveling together were right across from me.



[Play Slurping Sound with nervous adults](#)

The adults started to honk sporadically and softly. A nervous gesture, so I grabbed my gear to leave them in peace. ✧



*Photos by
Thomas
Bancroft*

ACTIVISM, *Continued from Page 1*

During the two years of fixing the ordinance, a stakeholder committee of representatives from farming, forestry, development, the Master Builders Association, a land-use consultant, and I came together to agree on incentives other than increased density to inspire developers to build multi-family residential in these areas. The County Council has been briefed on those recommendations.

Now we are waiting for the County Council to schedule a hearing and take action. I have talked with all five council members about this ordinance. I have been told that some of the council members have concerns about not enough parking. While we understand that parking is an issue for multi-family residences, it has been shown that people who choose to live along transit lines do so because they don't want or cannot afford a car. Fewer parking spaces in a development results in more affordable housing. However, if this is an issue preventing this ordinance from going forward, the council can fix this. If our county doesn't start finding solutions to redevelop our urban areas, we will continue to sprawl. Sprawl leads to more air and water pollution, traffic, taxes, and fewer bird and wildlife habitats in our communities.

Docket XIX—Two Urban Growth Area (UGA) expansions in the Southwest UGA (SWUGA) and a Countywide Planning Policy Change that would allow for UGA Land Swaps.

I have written about these two issues in past Smart Growth Reports. After extending the public hearing process four times during 2017 on setting Docket XIX, the next County Council (and hopefully the last one) on this ordinance is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, April 11, in council chambers, 8th Floor of the County Administration Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, in Everett. I have met with all five council members on this issue and the UGA Land Swap policy change. We are asking that the private landowner requests SW-2 and SW-3 NOT be added to the Docket for further environmental and transportation analysis.

Our recommendation is supported by the County Executive, the Planning Department, and the Planning Commission, and it complies with the Growth Management Act, the Multi-County Planning Policies, and the County's own county-wide planning policies. In tandem with this ordinance, the County Council asked Snohomish County Tomorrow to give a recommendation on whether or not to amend a county-wide planning policy to allow for UGA land swaps and also to add another policy that would allow for UGA expansions of this magnitude. Thankfully, Snohomish County Tomorrow has recommended against both of these policy changes. Allowing UGA expansions in one area while reducing a UGA in another area is not good land-use policy and would set a precedent of undermining long-range planning and the Comprehensive Land Use Plan 8-year Updates. It would disrupt planning for transportation, capital facilities, and environmental protections. It would also pit people against people for their property rights and investments. ✧



REPORT: Bird Walk Along Two Trails in Lynnwood February 3

by Douglas Resnick, Trip Leader

Lisa, Steve, and I began the morning's outing near dawn at the Lynnwood Transit Center. The weather was warm for winter, with only an occasional mist as precipitation. We visited several spots along Scriber Creek, then we walked around the municipal golf course, observing a total of 34 species of birds; for details, see the eBird lists for the sites mentioned below.

A short flight of stairs leads from the transit center to Scriber Creek Trail. The trail leads quickly to Scriber Creek Park, where we departed the trail and headed across a lawn to visit the park's pond. Several ducks later, we walked on, finding a variety of sparrows foraging on the ground.

Leaving the park, we crossed the street to Sprague's Pond Mini-Park. We were able to observe some of the pond's waterfowl over the fence as we walked along 200th, after which we obtained a wider view of the pond from its west side, nearest the signed entrance to the park. Turning around, we found a variety of sparrows at the neighbor's feeders.

Crossing 200th, we followed the trail past another pond, thence to Scriber Lake Park. We walked the loop trail around the lake, then retraced our steps to 200th.

On the return part of the route, we walked along the north side of 200th in order to observe another side of the nearby pond and the reappearance of the creek, kitty-corner to Scriber Creek Park. The original trail led us back to the transit center, from which we drove to the next site.

The remainder of the outing was at the Lynnwood Municipal Golf Course. We entered the trail, which runs along the fence bordering the golf course, from behind the parking lot of the adjacent courthouse. In addition to birds of bush and tree, we were able to observe waterfowl, which flock to the ponds on the course. Amid a large flock of American Wigeons alternately foraging on the lawn and swimming in one pond, we found two Eurasian Wigeons. On the far side of the course, Lisa spotted a bird, whose situation caught us by surprise: a Pileated Woodpecker was foraging among the wood chips next to part of a tree that evidently fell and was then cut into smaller pieces. We finished the outing just before noon. ✧

BIRDING CLASS

Spring 2018 Class
Taught by Candy Brown

MORE AMAZING BIRDS

Many interesting and beautiful birds visit our region at different times of the year or are permanent residents. We will look at and discuss the habits of sparrows, warblers, wrens, woodpeckers, cedar waxwings, and more.

Edmonds at Frances Anderson Center — Wednesday, March 7, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. \$15 for residents, \$17 for non-residents. To register, call 425-771-0230. ✧

TRIP CALENDAR

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



Saturday, March 3

Lake Ballinger

Meet at 7:30 AM near the entrance to the parking lot of the Mountlake Terrace Transit Center (<https://www.communitytransit.org/busservice/transit-centers-and-parking>). We'll carpool to Ballinger Park, then walk along Lake Ballinger's perimeter and inside the park.

Trip leader: Douglas Resnick, [425-776-4811](tel:425-776-4811) (cell: [206-617-0019](tel:206-617-0019)), dresnick1@comcast.net

Tuesday, March 6

Snohomish City and Outskirts

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

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

Tuesday, March 13

Point Roberts

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. Bring your US Passport or Enhanced Driver's License. Shorebirds, waterfowl, seabirds, raptors, and maybe a puffin or phalarope. Pack a lunch.

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

Tuesday, March 20

Samish Flats

Meet at 7:30 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. Want to see what a premier birding area offers at its best season? Come along. Pack a lunch.

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

Tuesday, March 27

Point No Point

Meet at 7:10 AM at the Edmonds Wade James Theater Parking Lot. The theater's address is [950 Main St., Edmonds, 98020](http://www.edmonds-wade.com), just east of 9th Ave, on the south side of Main St. We'll take the ferry to Kingston and bird the voyage, the docks, Point No Point, and Foulweather Bluff. Waterfowl, shorebirds, and passerines, and much beauty and serenity. Pack a lunch.

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

Saturday, April 7

Two Gulches in Mukilteo

Meet at 7:30 AM near the entrance to the parking lot of the Swamp Creek Park & Ride (<https://www.communitytransit.org/busservice/transit-centers-and-parking>). We'll carpool first to Big Gulch Trail Park, then to the Japanese Gulch Conservation Area.

Trip leader: Douglas Resnick, [425-776-4811](tel:425-776-4811) (cell: [206-617-0019](tel:206-617-0019)), dresnick1@comcast.net

Sunday, April 29

Corson Wildlife Refuge

Please join Pilchuck Audubon and Academia Latina for a Kid's Picnic and Birdwalk at Corson Wildlife Refuge. I will lead a

caravan. Meet at noon at Everett Station, 3201 Smith Ave. Park in the northwest corner of the parking lot, across Smith Avenue from the Everett Station building. We'll carpool to Lake Stevens. This nature preserve features 160 acres of ponds, fields, marshes, and a large collection of exotic birds. Total distance will be between 2-4 miles with minimal elevation gain. Actual distance will depend on how ambitious the group is feeling. We will have a picnic on the grounds at 1:00 PM and then begin our explorations. Trip Leader: Jonathan Blubaugh, 425-244-7633, aracfi@msn.com ✧

PAS ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual business meeting and board election takes place the evening of the April program meeting Friday, April 13, at 7 p.m., at the Everett Firefighters Hall.

This year, the offices of President and Secretary are open. If you are interested in running for either of these offices, would like to nominate someone, or need more information on each position's duties, contact us by phone at 425-610-8027 or send an e-mail through the "Contact Us" page at pilchuckaudubon.org. We will also take nominations from the floor. The business agenda also includes:

Summary of the year's budget

Presentation of Volunteer of 2017 Award

Plan to attend this important meeting!

UPDATE ON SUSIE'S LONG FIELD TRIPS SPRING 2018

The Klickitat trip scheduled for May 26-29 is almost full, so please email garden@pilchuckaudubon.org if you are interested in joining the trip this year. We will establish a waiting list as there are often last-minute changes.

The second, longer spring trip is now scheduled for June 9-14. We will be heading to Central British Columbia, going as far north as Prince George. This 6-day trip is limited to 12 people in 3 cars. For this 6-day, 5-night trip, there will be lots of driving. We will be looking for Magnolia Warblers and other birds not usually seen in Washington.

Contact garden@pilchuckaudubon.org if you are interested in going on this trip or have questions. A waiting list will also be established for this trip. If this trip goes well this year, we may consider doing it again next year. ✧

CONSERVATION REPORT

by Allen Gibbs, Conservation Chair

March 8 is final day of the 2018 regular legislative session. No signs that a round of special sessions is in the offing. Look for email alerts during the remaining eight days from our state office asking us to contact some of our legislators via email or voice to support any of the bills listed below that are still alive.

Below are the top three priority bills of Audubon Washington mentioned in the February PROFILE. President Cindy Easterson and I joined nearly 270 other conservationists in Olympia on January 22 to lobby for their passage. Here is current status of each as of February 23.

Senate Bill 6253 is alive in the Senate Rules Committee, to be scheduled for floor debate. As it is tied to the budget, its deadline for action in the Senate is February 28 to then move to the House. This bill is the “100% clean energy bill” and tops Audubon’s priority list.

Senate Bill 6203 is the carbon tax bill. It has enjoyed a lot of rewriting to gain bipartisan support, which means in the minds of some that it is now weaker than when requested in January by Governor Inslee. One thing hasn’t changed. It is acknowledged by supporters to be a regressive tax. They say bill language will compensate folks of low income. It cleared Senate policy and fiscal committees on February 23. It is now in Senate Rules Committee to be scheduled for a floor vote. No doubt it will be a long floor debate with both Rs and Ds voting in support and against.

It proposes a new tax on fossil fuels of 12 per metric ton of carbon emissions, down from \$20 proposed by Inslee. The new tax would begin in 2019. Beginning in 2021, it would increase annually by \$1.80 per metric ton until capped at \$30 per ton. As a fiscal bill, there is no deadline on this bill until last day of the session.

House Bill 2338 is dead this session. It would establish low carbon fuel standards, requiring fuel producers and importers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Washington State would have joined California and Oregon with a similar standard. Supporters will try again in 2019 session.

Of lower Audubon WA priority are the following bills.

Senate Bill 6086 and House Bill 2957 have both moved out of chambers of origin, calling for net-pen Atlantic salmon farming to be studied or leasing phased out by 2025. HB 2957 is moving ahead, passed with bipartisan support, and is in the Senate Rules Committee to be scheduled for floor vote.

House Bill 2562 and Senate Bill 6548 differ in ways to establish private landowner fire service associations to fight wildfires. This applies mostly in eastern Washington where some private lands are not now covered by any firefighting district or by DNR. HB 2562 is dead for this session. SB 6548 remains active. It calls only for a joint task force study. ✧



Report: Family Picnic and Birdwalk to Washington Park Arboretum

by Jonathan Blubaugh

On February 18, Pilchuck Audubon Society and Academia Latina visited Washington Park Arboretum in Seattle for a picnic and birdwalk. This was the weekend of the Great Backyard Bird Count. Academia Latina leader Rosamaría Graziani suggested the Arboretum on this weekend. I responded, “There is no place I’d rather go for the Great Backyard Bird Count than the Arboretum.”

At the last minute, we learned about impending cold weather. We got a pleasant surprise at the beginning when a pack of Cub Scouts and their leaders joined us. This added additional kids, and we couldn’t have been happier. We learned that they had read of our outing in the *Profile*. Perfect.

We met at the visitors’ center and had our little picnic out back, but the weather was already very cold with scattered snow flurries. We lead the group down to Lake Washington near Foster Island. There were plenty of ducks, so we started taking a count on the eBird mobile application. Many waterfowl in their shiny new plumage had already begun to engage in courtship behavior. We sheltered among big trees whilst we waited for the waterfowl enthusiasts to get their fill of the courting waterfowl. As we marched through the gardens, discussions ranged from mushrooms to invasive species to leaf shapes and arrangements of the plants with biology professor Sue Miller, who often stopped to point out features. The students and I were enthralled; she brought so much knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm.

The arboretum is a botanical garden of trees jointly managed by the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and the City of Seattle. The groves and glens are arranged by family—for example oaks, pines, and lindens. It is a teaching park with trails making it accessible to all. Recent construction has developed a brand-new bike route that makes access easy for wheelchairs as well. The value of this urban park is incalculable, and it makes us the envy of many other cities.

Pointing our Deadly Nightshade berries motivated tons of questions from the kids for which I had no answers. All I know is to not eat them and wash your hands if you handle them. Here’s a Wikipedia link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solanaceae>.

We saw at least nineteen species of birds, but our tally on eBird is an undercount due to our haste to quit the lakeshore early.

Thanks to PAS Vice President Terry Nightingale and his wife, Professor Sue Nightingale, for co-leading and sharing their wealth of knowledge.

Here’s a list of most of the birds we saw (bear in mind an undercount): about 15 Wood Duck, 2 Gadwall, 14 Mallard, 4 Northern Shoveler, 2 Green-winged Teal, a Bufflehead, two domestic hybrid ducks (completely tame), a Pied-billed Grebe, a Great Blue Heron, a Cooper’s Hawk, 3 Bald Eagle, a Glaucous-winged Gull, 20 crows, an American Robin, a well-seen Varied Thrush on the trail, a Song Sparrow, and a Spotted Towhee. I also heard a Chestnut-backed Chickadee and a Golden-crowned Kinglet. ✧

BACKYARD BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS

by Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

December 26, 2017 to January 25, 2018

It's been a very interesting winter so far. The ducks and sea birds are enjoying all the rain that leaves large pools of water in the fields.

Carole and Larry Beason are excited to report the arrival of Evening Grosbeaks, which they have not seen in a very long time. Their total species count of 40 also included 3

Anna's Hummingbird, a Bald Eagle over the lake, 2 Brown Creeper, 23 Bufflehead and 6 Common Merganser on the lake, a Great Blue Heron, a Great Horned Owl, 4 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 24 Mallard Duck flying over, 4 Purple Finch, 2 Red-tailed Hawk, a Red-breasted Sapsucker, 14 Red-winged Blackbird, 2 Ring-necked Duck, and 2 Varied Thrush.



Photo © Mick Thompson
Male Evening Grosbeak

Reporting from Snohomish, Debbie Dern listed 2 Pileated Woodpecker, 4 Steller's Jay, 5 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 4 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 3 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 House Finch, 2 Varied Thrush, 12 Canada Goose flying over, a Red-breasted Sapsucker, 2 Eurasian-collared Dove, and 9 Bushtit, for a total species count of 21.

Hilkka Egtvedt's report from Mukilteo included a Bald Eagle, 3 Northern Flicker, a Pileated Woodpecker, 4 Steller's Jay, 3 American Crow, 5 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Bewick's Wren, a Spotted Towhee, a Song Sparrow, 3 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 22 Dark-eyed Junco, and 21 Pine Siskin, for a total species count of 18.

Kriss Erickson's report from Everett listed 4 American Robin, 2 Spotted Towhee, 2 Bewick's Wren, 7 Steller's Jay, 4 Song Sparrow, 11 Northwestern Crow, 14 Western Gull, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 24 Black-capped Chickadee, 12 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a Hairy Woodpecker, 16 Dark-eyed Junco, a Pacific Wren, 4 Red-winged Blackbird, 2 Green-winged Teal, and an American Kestrel, for a total species count of 18.

Reporting from Stanwood, Mary Sinker listed 10 American Robin, 5 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Bald Eagle, 15 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 Brown Creeper, 9 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 10 Kinglet species, 2 Fox Sparrow, 5 Hairy Woodpecker, 20 Dark-eyed Junco, 22 Mourning Dove, 15 Pine Siskin, a Red-tailed Hawk, 10 Red-winged Blackbird, 8 Spotted Towhee, 2 Varied Thrush, 3 White-crowned Sparrow, and 4 Pacific Wren, for a total species count of 29.

My total species count of 24 from Marysville included 50+ American Crow swarming in the trees, 4 Black-capped Chickadee, 27 Dark-eyed Junco, 22 Mourning Dove, 4 Northern Flicker, a Pileated Woodpecker, 4 Steller's Jay, a Varied Thrush, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, 75+ Rock Dove on the wires, 3 Glaucous-winged Gull, 80+ Mallard Duck in the water in the fields, 30 Brewer's Blackbird in the trees, and 2 Trumpeter Swan flying over.

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. ✧

Report: Family Picnic and Bird-walk at Scriber Lake Park

by Jonathan Blubaugh

On January 28, Pilchuck Audubon Society and Academia Latina visited Scriber Lake Park in Lynnwood for a picnic and birdwalk. Thanks to Rosamaria Graziani for the generous donation of her time in organizing the outing for 32 people, including 11 elementary-grade children.

For the last couple of years as we have begun our work with this group of students, we began teaching them the English names for Pacific Northwest plants and birdlife that we came across on our trips. Students received awards for reciting to Rosamaria the names of the flora and fauna that Terry and I had taught during the walk. This time she asked us what questions we should pose at the end of the walk to encourage the children to try to learn as much as possible and qualify for prizes. I thought about it and determined that I was going to ask much broader questions about the park, and some basic conservation questions in general.

So, this year instead of tree and bird names, I asked questions like, "What can we do protect the park?" and "What kinds of things harm the park?"

These open-ended questions are far more difficult, requiring a much higher level of learning than mere memorization. Obviously, these kids are brilliant, quick learners. They immediately grasped the concepts, repeating afterward to us that avoiding littering, staying on trails, removing pet waste, and even minimizing pesticide use would help the park and help keep the lake waters clean.

Going forward, I will be striving to help teach these young, eager learners the underlying concepts behind conservation and habitat protection. Sharing this with young people is now more critical than ever with the range of dire threats such as drilling, anthropogenic warming, pollution of the Salish Sea, science denial, loss of protected habitat, and so much more.

We all get a vicarious thrill with the children's joy of a walk in the park, viewing the birds, feeding the ducks, and just enjoying the woods outdoors with their friends. Priceless. Thanks to PAS Vice President Terry Nightingale for co-leading and sharing his wealth of knowledge.

Here's a list of most of the birds we saw: 17 Canada Goose, 8 Gadwall, 40 tame Mallard (swarming the people for stale bread next to the "Do not feed the birds" sign), 12 Ring-necked Duck, 5 Bufflehead, a Great Blue Heron, a Bald Eagle, an American Coot, 4 Glaucous-winged Gull, 2 Band-tailed Pigeon, an Anna's Hummingbird (practicing his spectacular diving display), 5 Northern Flicker, 16 crows, a Black-capped Chickadee, 9 Bushtit, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, a Yellow-rumped Warbler, two House Finch, and 5 House Sparrow. We also heard the following: Steller's Jay, Pacific Wren, Spotted Towhee, and Red-winged Blackbird. ✧

Noteworthy Events for Your Consideration

Program Meeting **March 9**

Olympic BirdFest **April 13-15**

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction and raffle, gala banquet, and more. Featured speaker is nature guide/photographer Claudio Vidal. Join the festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands April 10-12. Register separately at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon. Extend your festival with the Neah Bay post-trip on April 16-17, 2018: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. BirdFest registration at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

Grays Harbor Shorebird & Nature Festival **April 27-29**

Hoquiam Washington / www.shorebirdfestival.com
(360-289-5048)

Yakima River Canyon 2018 Bird Fest **May 11-13**

A weekend of field trips (in and around Ellensburg and Kittitas County), workshops (avian illustration, photography, native plants for birds), a river raft trip, falconry demonstrations, keynote speaker John Marzluff from the UW (corvid and urban bird specialist) at the banquet, silent auction, and good company with other folks who share your passion. In and around Ellensburg, WA. Visit the website www.ycic.org for schedule and registration information. ✨

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UPCOMING EVENTS, CLASSES, and FESTIVALS farther afield

Compiled by Rick Brauer

Wings Over Water **March 16-18** **Blaine, WA**

This festival celebrates the incredible variety of migratory birds that flock to the coastal waters of Drayton Harbor, Birch Bay, and Semiahmoo Bay at the northwest corner of Washington. This major stopover on the Pacific Flyway between Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, BC, is designated as an Important Birding Area (IBA) and is the anchor for the North Cascades Loop of the Great Washington State Birding Trail. <http://www.wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com/>.

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival **Othello, WA**
March 23-25

The 21st annual Othello Sandhill Crane Festival focuses on the spring return of the Sandhill Cranes to our region. The highlights of the festival are tours to view the cranes, the distinctive volcanic geology, lectures, children's programs and an art contest. <https://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/>

Overnight Dinner Event: 50 Years of **Diablo, WA**
Wildlife Science in North Cascades National Park
March 31-April 1

Come learn about historical and current wildlife research and monitoring projects with Roger Christophersen, wildlife biologist at North Cascades National Park. Roger works on the frontlines in monitoring wildlife in the park, including wolves, bears, pikas, marmots, and wolverines. He's going to share stories, photographs, and data that show how these populations are doing, their successes, and the challenges that lie ahead. <https://ncascades.org/signup/programs/spring-dinner-50-years-of-wildlife-science-in-the-north-cascades>

Great Louisiana Bird Fest **Mandeville, LA**
April 10-12

The Great Louisiana BirdFest is held each year in the spring when many species are migrating north through Louisiana from Mexico and South America. The location in southern Louisiana makes this an excellent time of year for birding. The weather is typically warm but not yet hot, and the trees are usually leafing out, but still thin enough for improved visibility. BirdFest trips will visit varied habitat including swamps, wetlands, pine savanna, and hardwoods of southeast Louisiana. Among the many excellent birding locations scheduled for this year's BirdFest is Pine Island, a rookery located in a private preserve. <http://northlakenature.org/birdfest/>