



January Program Meeting

Special Birds of Mount Rainier

January 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker:
Jeff Antonelis-Lapp

To most birders, Mount Rainier National Park is a mecca for subalpine and alpine birds that include Gray Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Bluebird, and many other species. It's also home to highly sought-after species that include Boreal Owl, White-tailed Ptarmigan, and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch. But did you know that it and its neighboring watersheds host Northern Spotted Owl, Marbled Murrelet, and Streaked Horned Lark, all protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act? Join Jeff Antonelis-Lapp, Emeritus Faculty at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, as he shares the status of these key species from *Tahoma and Its People*, his natural history of Mount Rainier National Park book, published this spring by Washington State University Press. Learn more at <https://jeffantonelis-lapp.com/>.



After graduating from college, Jeff Antonelis-Lapp worked two summers at Mount Rainier National Park, igniting a connection to the mountain that endures today. He has summited the mountain, hiked all of its

No December Program Meeting

mapped trails, and completed the 93-mile Wonderland Trail five times.

Jeff began writing *Tahoma and Its People* after being unable to find a current natural history for a course he planned to teach at The Evergreen State College. He conducted more than 250 days of fieldwork for the book, many of them in the company of park archaeologists, biologists, and geologists.

While at Evergreen, he taught Native American Studies, natural history, and environmental education, and served as the Library Dean before retiring in 2015.

When: January 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Where: The comfiest spot in your home!

How to Join: Click the link below to register for the Zoom conference. Once you register, you will receive an email with the meeting link, password, and phone number. When you're ready to attend the meeting on Friday, you can join the meeting one of two ways:

By computer

- Click the meeting link in your email. You may be prompted to download the Zoom application if you haven't already, or you can view it using your Internet browser. Then enter the meeting ID and password to sign in.

By phone

- If you'd prefer to call in on your phone and listen to the program, you can dial the phone number in your registration email and enter the meeting ID and password.

Register for Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlSdOirpzlrGtZQSenEPJ57y9qlyGFECbDs>

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2020 Audubon Christmas Bird Count CANCELLED by Rick Taylor and Brian Zinke



Given the alarming rise of in the number of COVID-19 infections in Snohomish County, we have decided to cancel both Christmas Bird Counts that we sponsor: the Edmonds / South County Circle and the Everett / Marysville Circle.

Our priority is the health and safety of our participants. A majority of our CBC participants are over 65 and, therefore, in the high-risk group for COVID-19. Given that we can't ensure that others in the parks, trails, and piers that we survey as part of the CBC are following the rules and are masked up, we decided to cancel the CBC for this year.

Cancelling the CBC for this year has less of an impact on the long-term data analysis than conducting it in a limited fashion and getting unrepresentative data.

In the absence of the CBC, there are a couple of other ways that you can safely contribute to our knowledge of bird distribution and abundance during the pandemic. 1) [Project FeederWatch](#) is an annual mid-November-through-early-April yard census run by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology. 2) [eBird](#), also by The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, provides a portal for entering your bird sightings all year.

Let's hope that this time next year this pandemic is under control and that we can live our lives normally and conduct our normal CBC. 🦅



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 425.232.6811.

The monthly Profile is available online at

www.pilchuckaudubon.org

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A Message from Audubon's Board Chair Maggie Walker

We've come a long way on this journey, but we still have a long way to go.

For many years now, the National Audubon Society and its leaders have been outspoken about making our organization more welcoming and inclusive. It's no secret that Audubon and other large environmental organizations have been dominated at the staff and volunteer levels by white people and often, at leadership levels, by men. That has to change, because our movement needs the full breadth of talent, energy, and perspective represented in the full diversity of America – so we have to grow and expand. You can see our commitment reflected in the makeup of Audubon's board, executive team and its state and strategy leaders. One of our chapter leaders put it this way: "Audubon for Everyone," and we've made that goal the theme for many of our events and publications because it's just so well said and true.

Last week, a news organization reported on concerns that have been raised by some current and former staff about Audubon's workplace culture. We are sorry for the pain and embarrassment many of our staff, volunteers and partners have felt in this moment. I speak for a board of 35 leaders from across America to say our priorities are action and accountability.

In addition to supporting Audubon's leaders as they take the needed steps to realize our shared ambitions, the board will hire a firm to conduct an independent review of culture, practices and policies. That will complement a series of listening sessions headed up by the board's new ED&I task force to hear concerns, questions and feedback from staff.

The National Audubon Society's Board of Directors is deeply invested in ensuring that diversity, equity, and inclusion is at the core of Audubon's conservation and community engagement work, and its workplace culture for hundreds of employees across America. Audubon and its leaders are making equity for all people a core part of our work. To that end, the Board endorses management's adoption of a number of key steps in partnership with staff, including the creation of an independent ombuds role and the formation of a staff council. **We have come a long way on this journey, but we still have a long way to go.**

The momentum for racial equity in the United States is on a new and exciting trajectory. And there's rightful emphasis on inclusion and leadership from



Great Egret | Photo: John Keller / Audubon Photography Awards

people with disabilities, people of all faiths and political stripes, LGBTQIA+ people, new Americans, and youth. In order for Audubon to meet this moment, our intentions will have to manifest fully in our leadership, staff, and conservation agenda.

As Board Chair, I have the privilege of hearing from a variety of members of Audubon's vast community—from our talented employees, our 600 state and center volunteer board members, chapters, donors, and bird-lovers around the country. I am proud that the values of racial equity, inclusion and belonging for all, and justice are deeply important to our entire community. It's clear that we all believe that the outdoors should be safe and welcoming to all, and that conservation should create a better world for everyone, not just a privileged few. **We must—and we will—continue translating those values into every aspect of our work, and we invite your partnership in this important journey as we keep moving forward.**

Maggie Walker, Chair of the Board
National Audubon Society 🦩

TRIP CALENDAR

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



No Birding Trips in December

Swans Return to Washington

by WDFW and Martha Jordan

Trumpeter and tundra swans have once again returned to Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, and other western Washington counties

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
December 30, 2019

THE SWAN SCOOP

Trumpeter swans that migrate to Washington originate from forested regions of Alaska and Canada's western Yukon and northern British Columbia for the winter. They are the heaviest living bird in North America, with wingspans that can exceed 10-feet. They breed in shallow ponds, lakes, wetlands and rivers, with the largest numbers of breeding pairs in Alaska.

Tundra swans migrate to Washington from windswept tundra habitats of the Alaska Peninsula for the winter. Tundras are smaller than trumpeters, with wingspans up to six feet, and they have a noticeable yellow spot at the base of their eye.



Two Trumpeter swans flying in northwest Washington.

Both species of swan can form long-term pairs and raise their young together, with young birds following the parents during the first year to important stopover and winter areas in search of food and places to rest. Their natural diets are made up of aquatic vegetation and underwater roots and tubers. They often eat with their heads submerged underwater.

However, with changes in the availability of their native habitats, current wintering habitat is supplemented by eating grasses and leftover agricultural crops like corn and potatoes.

Swan populations

Approximately 20,000 trumpeter and tundra swans migrate between November and April. Swans are an

example of a long-lived waterfowl species, with several individuals documented to live more than 20 years. Through the year, about five to 15 percent of swans die from natural causes, and about two percent wintering in western Washington die from hitting power lines or ingesting lead shot or fishing weights.

To protect swan populations, there are no swan hunting seasons in Washington. (The last Trumpeter swan hunting season was in 1918.)



Swans eating leftover agricultural crops.

Reporting deceased or struggling swans

The more complicated problem for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) biologists is lead shot ingestion. Lead shot has been banned in Washington and nationwide for waterfowl hunting since 1991.

But in certain circumstances, old spent lead shot pellets, referred to as "legacy lead", rest in areas that are not covered by sedimentation or don't sink out of reach where foraging swans may encounter the old pellets.

Swans can still pick up and ingest lead shot while foraging in shallow underwater areas, in fields, and roosts where lead shot is present. WDFW and other agencies and organizations have been working since 2001 to locate sources of toxic lead and minimize potential exposure.

To combat swan collisions with power lines, Puget Sound Energy and Snohomish County PUD have installed power line reflectors, leading to a significant reduction in deaths. Unfortunately, collisions still occur with power

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lines and other objects when high winds or foggy conditions cause swans to fly at lower altitude as they travel between roosts and foraging fields.

Wildlife biologists, Puget Sound Energy employees, and volunteers from Northwest Swan Conservation Association work hard to respond to reports of sick, injured, and dead swans.

To report, call 360-466-4345 ext. 266. Leave a short, detailed message with your name, number, location, and the swan's condition.

SWAN SPOTTING

Below are some places where WDFW staff suggest visiting for a chance to spot these large white birds while they're here in Washington:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Skagit Wildlife Area | Fir Island Farms Game Reserve;
Johnson/DeBays Swan Reserve |
| Skagit Valley area including Edison/Bow | |
| Lynden | Wiser Lake |
| Ferndale | Tennant Lake |
| Monroe | Crescent Lake and fields around
the Crescent Lake Wildlife Area;
Old Honor Farm Area |
| Snohomish | Shadow Lake (at the
Bob Heirman Wildlife Park) |



Swans flying off into the sunset.

Washington's trumpeter and tundra swans head north for the summer months. Now is the time to see them, before the Trumpeter swans return to the forested regions of Alaska and Canada's western Yukon and northern British Columbia and the Tundra swans return to the windswept tundra of the Alaska Peninsula.

From Martha Jordan

The Northwest Swan Conservation Association has a new website. There is information on our native swans, both Trumpeter and Tundra. There is a [Where to Watch](#) page that gives information and interactive maps to find the locations, including the ones listed in the WDFW article. You can also download our [Swan ID pamphlet](#) which includes information on geese and white pelicans.

The mid-winter swan surveys and other white birds of winter (Snow Goose)

Every January WDFW conducts a mid-winter swan survey in Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Island, San Juan, and King counties. Every five years there is a comprehensive survey that is western Washington-wide. January 2021 is the 5-year survey, and we would like to expand it to include parts of eastern Washington as well. We need more volunteers to count swans in Snohomish and King/Pierce counties in late January. This is a COVID-19 safe activity—you can do it alone, mostly from inside your car, with a window mount and scope or just outside your car with a tripod and scope. I will provide the training, including helping with swan ID if needed, and official forms and maps. The folks who have participated in the past have really enjoyed seeing swans in new places.

If you are interested in swan watching with a purpose and have between 3-6 hours to give on one day, please let me know. (If you do not have a window mount, there are some for loan. I also have an extra scope to loan if you do not have one).

If you want to help with swan surveys during the entire season, especially in the north Snohomish County area around Stanwood and Norman Road to the east side of SR 2 area, or in the Carnation-Fall City area and up to Duvall, these are areas we need more volunteers. Even once or twice will be helpful.

If you see swans in these locations while out birding or driving around, please report them to us even if you post to eBird. We are working with WDFW to better refine our numbers for swans in these areas. Also, if you see Snow Goose in Snohomish County east of I-5 or in King County, please let us know.

NWSCA: www.nswans.org
martha@nswans.org
206-713-3684 📧

Fall rains and winds remind us what is typical for this time of year in the PNW. My feeders are busy with the usual migratory birds heading south. Northern Flickers and a male Pileated Woodpecker are pecking away at the suet blocks. Spotted Towhees join other birds feeding on the suet droppings on the ground. It is all normal here!

We all know this December and, in fact, most of 2020 will not be typical—not for PAS; not for Audubon, not for any of us at home, work, nor out in the world.

A year ago, Rick Taylor, Edmonds Christmas Bird Count Co-Compiler, had a front page story about the then-upcoming 2019 CBC. Rick has a very different story in this PROFILE.

The December 2019 PAS Trip Calendar offered many options to join trip leaders Doug Resnick, Virginia Clark, Jonathan Blubaugh, and Art Wait for weekly trips in King, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties. There is no trip calendar this month.

But for the birds, not much has changed as evidenced by Mara Price's Backyard Birding Highlights.

Elsewhere in this month's PROFILE is an article by Maggie Walker. She is Chair of the Board, National Audubon Society; a long-time Audubon Washington leader; and a Shoreline, Washington, resident.

PAS Future

Your Pilchuck Audubon Society Board and Executive Director Brian Zinke, with the help of individual PAS members, have done much to cope with the challenges of 2020. We are very much bringing new meaning to the phrase "adaptive management." Many thanks to our new board members and committee chairs.

Our 2020 birding classes and monthly programs continued thanks to the marvel of ZOOM and new features on our website. Attendance at the 2020 events set records. As you will see in this edition of PROFILE and again in the January PROFILE, more classes and programs are in our future via ZOOM and other webinar systems.

December 9 is our new Audubon Advocacy Day across Washington State. For obvious reasons, Auduboners will not be trekking off to a "2021 Environmental Lobby Day" in Olympia. We will be meeting from the comfort of our homes with our respective state legislators via ZOOM. New for us, new for our legislature. We will continue urging better legislation for 100% carbon emission-free

energy programs, and, in what will be lean times for the state coffers, at least some forward movement in protecting birds and bird habitats by the WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Ecology.

Federal Scene

Susan Jane Brown, staff attorney, Western Environmental Law Center, issued a memo on November 24, 2020, containing an analysis of the new Forest Service NEPA Rule issued November 19, 2020.

She compared the final rule to the draft rule which had been issued for public comment in 2019. PAS, along with hundreds of environmental groups across the country, had objected to most of the draft rule. Ms. Brown's report is too lengthy to share here. Suffice it to say, it is an unexpected victory for conservationists! Following is a brief extract from Ms. Brown's analysis.

"On November 19, 2020, the Forest Service published its final rule amending its NEPA procedures. Dramatically different than the proposed rule published in June 2019, the final rule nevertheless establishes six new categorical exclusions (CEs) and adopts the 'determination of NEPA adequacy (DNA)' tool commonly used (and often abused) by the Department of Interior agencies.

"This memo reviews the content of the final rule and compares the final rule with the conservation community comments submitted on the proposed rule in August 2019. . . . (T)he federal agency took seriously our comments and dramatically altered its proposal in response to public comment. This is an important accomplishment to be celebrated!"

I point out that while the Forest Service is an agency in the Department of Agriculture, much of its NEPA Rule process requires consultation with the Interior Department regulatory agencies.

PAS will stay tuned to what this means for our backyard Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

It is sufficient to say National Audubon is working with many North, Central, and South American conservation

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September 26 to October 25, 2020

Carole and Larry Beason spotted a Northern Spotted Owl on a trip to Mt. Rainier this month. Their report listed 6 American Robin, 3 Anna's Hummingbird, a Belted Kingfisher, 2 Common Raven, 12 Dark-eyed Junco, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 3 Hairy Woodpecker, 3 Northern Flicker, 3 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 2 Pileated Woodpecker, 12 Purple Finch, 3 Red-breasted Sapsucker, 40 Red-winged Blackbird, 8 Spotted Towhee, 4 Wood Duck, a Hutton's Vireo, and 200+ European Starling along Marsh Road; over the lake: a Bald Eagle and an Osprey; on the lake: 4 Barrow's Goldeneye, 18 Bufflehead, and 4 Mallard Duck; 200 Canada Goose flying over, and a Great Blue Heron on the dock, for a total species count of 38.

Reporting from Mukilteo, Hilka Egtvedt listed a Great Blue Heron in her neighbor's tree, 11 Band-tailed Pigeon raiding the bird feeders, 2 Anna's Hummingbird, a Downy Woodpecker, 2 Hairy Woodpecker, 3 Northern Flicker, a Pileated Woodpecker, 6 Steller's Jay, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, 3 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 5 Bushtit, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, 5 American Robin checking the Mountain Ash berries, 20+ European Starling, 2 Spotted Towhee, 4 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 8 Dark-eyed Junco, 7 House Finch, and 9 Pine Siskin, for a total species count of 22.

Kriss Erickson's report from Everett included 25 Black-capped Chickadee, 9 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 2 Bewick's Wren, 10 Steller's Jay, 12 American Crow, 6 Western Gull, 34 American Robin in the yard, 10 House Finch, 4 Anna's Hummingbird, 4 Northern Flicker, 4 Song Sparrow, 235 European Starling, a Cooper's Hawk flying overhead, 2 Hairy Woodpecker, 12 Dark-eyed Junco, 2 Varied Thrush, 2 Red-winged Blackbird, and 8 Canada Goose flying over, for a total species count of 21.

Mary Sinker's report from Stanwood included 6 American Goldfinch, 22 American Robin, 9 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Bald Eagle, 18 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 Brown Creeper, 11 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 53 Dark-eyed Junco, 5 Downy Woodpecker, a Golden-crowned Sparrow, a Great Blue Heron at the creek, 2 Great Horned Owl, 7 House Finch, a Killdeer in the pasture, 22 Mourning Dove, 7 Northern Flicker, a Pileated Woodpecker, 32 Pine Siskin, 6 Song Sparrow, 9 Spotted Towhee, 16 Steller's Jay, 2 Varied Thrush, and 6 Winter Wren, for a total species count of 32.

Reporting from Monroe, Walter Zandi listed 2 Pileated Woodpecker at the suet, 6 Steller's Jay, 2 Hairy

Woodpecker, American Robin, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 8 Dark-eyed Junco in the garden, 3 Northern Flicker, 4 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 House Finch, 3 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 American Crow, 2 Spotted Towhee, a Song Sparrow, and 11 Canada Goose flying overhead, for a total species count of 14.

From Marysville, my report included a ball of 40-50 Pine Siskin flying around the yard, 2 Anna's Hummingbird, 4 Black-capped Chickadee, 3 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 2 Downy Woodpecker and 2 Hairy Woodpecker at the suet, 8 House Finch, a Cooper's Hawk, a Common Raven in the trees, 4 Northern Flicker, 2 Pileated Woodpecker, 8 Mourning Dove, a Song Sparrow, 4 Spotted Towhee, 4 Steller's Jay, 30+ Rock Dove on the wires, a Great Horned Owl, 45+ Canada Goose flying over, 5 American Crow, and 25+ Swan flying over the fields, for a total species count of 21.

We are still looking for more participants for the Bird Report. If you are interested, please contact me at pricemara1@gmail.com or 425-750-8125. 🐦



Save the Date!

February 27 and 28, 2021

The 2021 Plant Sale will be pre-order and drive-through pick up this year again. The shop opens in January so now is the time to start planning! Help your local birds by adding some native plants to your yard or balcony that will serve as resources for food and shelter. For more information about the sale, visit the [Snohomish Conservation District's website](https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds).

For more information on which native plants are beneficial for birds, please visit:

<https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>

From this website, you can search your personal zip code to determine the native plants in your area that would help the birds! 🐦

Looking Ahead

Continued from Page 6

groups to restore important protections in the MBTA, which this administration has removed. This is one of NAS' top priorities; NAS appreciates that the Biden administration is in support!

Alaska

For reasons not yet clear, the current administration via the US Army Corps decided not to issue permits for development of the Pebble Mine in the Bristol Bay delta. This news greeted us on Thanksgiving Day!

Look for news after January 20 about hoped-for withdrawal by the new administration of the Tongass National Forest roadless rule exemption, and also an end to permit processing for new fossil fuel drilling in Alaska's wildlife refuges. 🐦

Audubon in Washington Advocacy Day 2020



In the midst of public health and economic crises, climate change and habitat destruction continue to imperil birds, people, and our communities.

In 2021, legislators must chart a path towards economic recovery that equitably invests in a climate resilient future. On December 9, join Audubon members from all over Washington to meet with your legislators and advocate for birds and the places they need to thrive.

Join us in the morning for coffee, then meet with your legislators before closing out the day with a happy hour. Audubon Washington will provide training, help schedule meetings, and make sure you're prepared to speak up for the birds.

[Join us and let your advocacy take flight!](#) 🐦

In Case You Missed It ...

It was a busy summer of online programs here at Pilchuck Audubon! While we certainly miss seeing everyone in person, one of the benefits of online programs is that we can record them. We know you all have busy lives and can't always make the live presentations, so in case you missed one, below are the links to watch our line-up of programs from this summer. Enjoy!

A Dead Tree's Excellent Adventure

Presentation by Ken Bevis, Washington Dept. of Natural Resources. [Watch the Recording](#)

Swifts Night In: Vaux's Happening, 15 million and counting. Where we've been and where we're going

Presentation by Larry Schwitters. [Watch the Recording](#)

Leque Island Estuary Restoration Project

Presentation by Loren Brokaw, Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. [Watch the Recording](#)

Puget Sound Bird Fest

Presentations by Dr. Kaeli Swift, Rick Taylor, Alan Mearns, Scott Markowitz, Bev Bowe, and more!
[Watch the Recordings](#)



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.

- New Member..... \$28
- Renewal..... \$28
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 - 4 quarterly payments of \$250
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