

Our 2019 Accomplishments

Compiled by the PAS Board of Directors and Executive Director

We're proud to represent our Snohomish County and Camano Island communities, and we've been working hard this year to conserve and protect the birds, wildlife, and habitats you love. The list below illustrates all the work we were able to do with your meaningful and steadfast support. As you will see, it's a been a busy year. But with Audubon's [Survival by Degrees](#) report coming out a few months ago, it's only highlighted how much more we must do to save our feathered friends. Yet as we look ahead to the new year, we can't help but be incredibly optimistic. We have a new Executive Director, all of our successes from this past year to build upon, and our unwavering support from you. Our sights are set high for 2020. So here's to the new year and all the promise that it holds—may your binoculars get a little more worn, your boots a little more dirty, and your life list a little longer.

Pilchuck Audubon

Community Science

- **Christmas Bird Count:** Sponsored 2 circles again this year: Edmonds/South County circle and Everett/Marysville circle. Edmonds/South County circle is in the top 25 out of 2,600 circles in terms of participation, and broke its own participation record this year with 202 total participants!
- **Vaux's Swift Monitoring:** Continued monitoring Vaux's Swift for our 12th year.

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PROGRAM MEETING

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 2020

7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Secretive Wetland Bird Survey

Puget Sound Bird Observatory's (PSBO) Regional Wetland Secretive Bird Survey

PSBO has been studying birds across our regional wetlands for the past three years but made a significant expansion of the project in 2018 in order to begin truly assessing the population trends of four under-detected, wetland-obligate species [American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), Sora (*Porzana carolina*), Virginia Rail (*Rallus limicola*), and Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*)] and two wetland-associated species for which there are population concerns [Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*) and Willow Flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii*)].



American Bittern

We are looking to extend and implement this project throughout the Puget Sound trough. We feel the information and assessments are crucial to land management decisions for our region's wetland system.



An area of results we feel may be of particular interest to land managers is the distribution of these species to wetland restoration sites. With this in mind, one of the key goals of this project is to make the data and analysis readily available through the Avian Knowledge Network database. 🦅

BIRDING CLASSES

Taught by Candy Brown

The two classes below will be held at the Frances Anderson Center, 700 Main Street, in Edmonds, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Cost for each class: \$18 for residents, \$20 for non-residents.

To register, call 425-771-0230

WATER BIRDS — JANUARY 15

We will discuss several of the different kinds of ducks that live in the Puget Sound region as well as geese, gulls, blackbirds, herons, shorebirds, and others. We will see the unique nests they make and how their babies are very different from those of songbirds.

MORE AMAZING BIRDS — FEBRUARY 12

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. 🦋



2020

Don't miss the 2020 Stanwood-Camano Snow Goose & Birding Festival, which will be held February 22-23. Come see why the shores and waters of Puget Sound surrounding our community are internationally recognized as crucial habitat for countless birds of sea, shore, and land.

Tours and guides will help you experience one of Western Washington's most spectacular natural events —the annual winter gathering of thousands of Snow Goose and Trumpeter Swans. In addition, we have flocks of wintering seabirds and shorebirds along with many raptors that call Stanwood and Camano home.

Along with great field trips to view Snow Geese, Swans, and Shorebirds, festival-goers can enjoy educational booths and presentations at festival headquarters near downtown Stanwood, Washington. Presentations include a Shorebird I.D. Class provided by Ruth Milner, White Birds of Winter by Martha Jordan, From Russia to the Stilly by Vasiliy Baranyuk, and a live raptor presentation by Sarvey Wildlife Center.

A \$5.00 donation is encouraged to help offset festival expenses, and some presentations require pre-registration. Additional information can be found on the festival website at:

<https://discoverstanwoodcamano.com/calendar/snow-goose-festival-2020/>. 🦋

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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Brian Zinke director@pilchuckaudubon.org
..... Open

- Edmonds Marsh Avian Monitoring: Continued our monitoring efforts at the Edmonds Marsh, including training more volunteer surveyors.
- Climate Watch: Began participation in National Audubon's Climate Watch program by sponsoring survey grids in Snohomish County.
- Puget Sound Bird Observatory's Wetland Surveys: PAS member's volunteered for surveys.
- Community Science mini-symposium held at Puget Sound Bird Fest.

Scholarships Granted

- 10 grants worth \$4000 were awarded to teachers in the following school districts: Lake Stevens (4), Snohomish (2), Everett (1), Monroe (1), Sultan (1), Granite Falls (1).



House Finch | Mick Thompson Photo

Policy and Community Engagement

- Served as committee members (2) on the Lord Hills Regional Park stakeholder committee.
- Participated in Environmental Lobby Day 2019 for 100% clean electricity.
- Closed out advisory role for WDFW's Leque Island Recovery, begun in 2000.
- Cossed letter with 23 other groups, supporting DNR Trust Land Transfers to conserve forest lands.
- Signed on to Legacy Roads and Trails funding letter with 69 other organizations.
- Signed on to a letter with 59 other organizations and entities calling for better regulation of motorized suction dredge mining in Washington State rivers.
- Collaborated on letter with 12 other groups expressing concerns about continued illegal use of the Monte Cristo "temporary" CERCLA road built through an Inventoried Roadless Area.
- Signed on to letter with Washington Wild and other groups opposing exclusion of the Tongass National Forest from the Roadless Rule.
- Signed on to joint letter with NCCC regarding Mountain Loop Highway Feasibility Study.
- Conducted several site visits, including some with US Forest Service staff.

- Interviewed for several newspaper articles and wrote an opinion piece for the *Everett Herald*, including:
 - [Annual bird count offers a glimpse of climate change impact](#)
 - [Commentary: Clean electricity bill defends nature and nation](#)
 - [The ever-fascinating crow gets attention, from Everett to India](#)
 - [Is it climate change? New birds are here, others disappeared](#)

Educational Programs

- The Birds and the Bees: Hummingbirds and Mason Bees
- Saving Our Orcas
- Turkey Vultures
- Edmonds Save the Frogs Day
- Watershed Fun Fair
- Turtle Time
- Native Pollinators: Garden and Habitat Restoration
- Salamanders and Snakes
- Flying Gems: Dragonflies and Damselflies in the Environment
- Bird Fest 2019
- Little Brown Birds of Winter
- Making Gifts for Birds and Bird Lovers

Birding Trips

- 49 Tuesday trips
- 14 weekend birding trips

Events Sponsored

- Imagine Children's Museum Bird Fest
- Snow Goose Festival
- Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds
- Swifts Night Out

Tabling Events

- Arlington Eagle Fest
- Everett Arboretum Family Day
- Green Everett Day

Fundraising Events

- 16th Annual Feast in the Forest

Administrative

- Hired a new, full-time Executive Director

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Our 2019 Accomplishments

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Smart Growth

Policy and Community Engagement

- Assisted 350 Eastside residents in their attempt to halt an expansion of the North Lateral Gas Pipeline Upgrade in south Snohomish County.
- Set up and facilitated a 3-hour forum with County Executive Dave Somers regarding a variety of land use and environmental issues throughout Snohomish County.
- Tracked and commented on Snohomish County planning project for possible expansion of the Southwest Urban Growth Area eastward across Highway 9; Pilchuck Audubon is opposed.
- Commented at Snohomish County's Planning Commission and County Council opposing digital signage in the rural commercial area along Highway 9 in the Clearview area, which would lead to more urban style development not compliant with the Growth Management Act; ultimately vetoed by the County Executive.
- Commented on amendments to the County's Shoreline Master Plan for PAS and Futurewise.
- Assisted a newly formed environmental network group in Snohomish County, called Livable Snohomish County, who will be working and advocating on several important issues in the coming years, including issues with climate change impacts and adaptation.
- Assisted opposition to a new Costco store in an inappropriate location in Lake Stevens that will impact traffic, wetlands, and fish and bird habitat.
- Commented on Snohomish County Erosion Hazard Plan as it relates to landslide problems.
- Wrote and published two Op-Eds with the *Everett Herald* on Lord Hill Regional Park and the Costco issues.

Fundraising Events

- Collaborated with Futurewise to raise funding to maintain a Smart Growth director in Snohomish County

We're always looking for more help with all of our programs, so if you'd like get involved with any of our activities in 2020, please let Brian Zinke (director@pilchuckaudubon.org) know and he'll get you started! Our needs range from bird surveyors and committee members to volunteers running booth events and helping with fundraisers, so no matter your skill set or time availability, there is a way for everyone to contribute!



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM OUR MEMBERSHIP!

Your Pilchuck Audubon Society Board and Executive Director are planning to meet early in the new year to lay out a strategic plan that meets the mission and vision of the organization for the next three years. Important for that process to be responsive and successful, **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!** Please take a few minutes to let us know what is important to you.

Please take a few moments to email Cindy (president@pilchuckaudubon.org) with any thoughts or comments you would like to share. Here are some topics of discussion that might help prompt some comments, but feel free to simply let us know what's on your mind for the Pilchuck Audubon of the future.

CONSERVATION: Where should we concentrate our energy and resources? Urban/Regional Conservation and Protection? State Conservation issues for public lands/forests? Federal Conservation Issues for public lands/forests, including logging and road-building? Other?

EDUCATION: What would you like to see for monthly program meetings, birding/wildlife and education classes, birding enrichment such as field trips and/or youth activities? Other?

SCIENCE: What is your level of interest in being involved with citizen science such the Christmas Bird Count, Backyard Bird Count, Climate Watch, Edmonds Marsh Monitoring, Breeding Bird Surveys? Other?

ENGAGEMENT: What type of birding outing or opportunity interests you? Would you like to see more opportunities to gather with other birders for food/drink, roundtable chats, games, festivals? Other?

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: Fund-raising and managing those resources is always a challenging topic, but we would like to offer support opportunities that our membership will appreciate. What works? Bird-a-thon? Letter requests? Fund-raising dinners?

Thank you for your input! 🐦



TRIP CALENDAR

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



Saturday, January 4 **Richmond Beach Saltwater Park**
Meet at 8:00 AM at the topmost parking lot of the park, 2021 NW 190th Street, Shoreline. If time permits, we may visit another, nearby park afterwards. Trip leader: Douglas Resnick, 425-776-4811 (cell: 206-617-0019), dresnick1@comcast.net

Tuesday, January 7 **City of 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

Tuesday, January 14 **Port Townsend**
Meet at 7:10 AM at the Edmonds Wade James Theater Parking Lot. The theater's address is 950 Main St., Edmonds, 98020, just east of 9th Ave, on the south side of Main St. We'll take the ferry to Kingston, go through Port Gamble, and across the floating bridge. On the way, we'll visit Marrowstone Island and Indian Island with views of Admiralty Inlet, waterfowl, shorebirds, and seabirds. Previous trips have been memorable and rewarding. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750

Tuesday, January 21 **Snoqualmie River Valley
Monroe to Carnation**
Meet at 8:00 AM at Monroe Park & Ride on Highway 2, one-half mile west of the Fairgrounds. Expect a fun time and exciting birds. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750

Tuesday, January 28 **South Whidbey Island**
Meet at 7:00 AM at the Eastmont Park & Ride, I-5 Exit 189, east side, aiming for the 8:00 AM ferry from Mukilteo. Crockett Lake always yields a large and varied species list, and the rest of South Whidbey is great birding. Pack a lunch. Trip leaders: Wilma Bayes, 360-629-2028, and Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750

Saturday, February 1 **Brightwater Center**
Meet at 8:00 AM at the north end of the Canyon Park Park & Ride (22400 17th Ave SE, Bothell); the nearest I-405 exit is 26. We'll carpool to Brightwater Center. Boots advised. If time permits, we may visit another, nearby site afterwards. Trip leader: Douglas Resnick, 425-776-4811 (cell: 206-617-0019), dresnick1@comcast.net

Tuesday, February 4 **Fir Island**
Meet at 7:30 AM at Quilceda Village Walmart west of Marysville (I-5-Exit 200). Park away from store, to the east,

Winter Gulls of Puget Sound: the Adults

Does identifying gulls make you feel like you're seeing fifty shades of gray? Gulls are one of the most challenging groups of birds to identify. You've been saying that you want to take a gull ID class, so now's your chance!

A classroom session will cover identification of adults of all the gulls that regularly occur in Washington in winter. There will be a half day (8:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.) field trip to visit several local gull hotspots on south Lake Washington.

Class: January 29, 7-9 p.m.

Location: Snohomish County PUD
Room TC2-BC
2320 California Street
Everett, WA 98201

Field Trip: Saturday and Sunday, February 1 and 2
Instructor will lead field trip both days; **participants will sign up for one of these days** at the first class. If there are 12 or fewer in the class, the field trip will be on Saturday only.

Cost: Class: \$30 for members, \$40 for non-members
Field trip: \$30 for members, \$40 for non-members
Youth (24 or under): \$15 for lecture, \$15 for field trip

Limit: 40 for lecture
30 for field trip

How to Register:

RSVP to director@pilchuckaudubon.org

Pay [online here](#), choose "Other" in the dropdown box, and write "Gull Class" in the comments box

Or send a check to:
Pilchuck Audubon
1429 Avenue D, PMB 198
Snohomish, WA 98290



near Quilceda Blvd. and next to I-5. Expect almost anything. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark 360-435-3750

BACKYARD BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS

October 26, 2019 to November 25, 2019

by Mara Price, Sightings Coordinator

Hope everyone is enjoying all the birds we have this season, especially the Snow Goose that fly over in large flocks.

Reporting from their really great location on Lake Bosworth, Carole and Larry Beason listed 3 Anna's Hummingbird, a Bald Eagle, 2 Belted Kingfisher, 12 Bufflehead on the lake, 14 Canada Goose on the lake, 3 Common Raven flying overhead, 10 Dark-eyed Junco, 3 Downy Woodpecker, a Fox Sparrow in the ferns, 7 Golden-crowned Sparrow, 11 Hooded Merganser on the lake, 5 Lesser Scaup near the dock, 2 Northern Flicker, 3 male and 12 female Purple Finch at the feeders, 12 Red-winged Blackbird, 7 Ring-necked Duck and 2 Wood Duck on the lake, for a total species count of 37.

Hilkka Egtvedt's report from Mukilteo listed 3 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Hairy Woodpecker, 9 Northern Flicker, a Pileated Woodpecker, 5 Steller's Jay, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Bewick's Wren, a Song Sparrow, a White-crowned Sparrow, 2 Golden-crowned Sparrow, a White-throated Sparrow, 13 Dark-eyed Junco, 3 House Finch, and 6 Pine Siskin, for a total species count of 20.

Reporting from Everett, Kriss Erickson listed 16 Dark-eyed Junco, 4 American Robin, 2 Bewick's Wren, 26 Bushtit, 8 Northwestern Crow, 2 Western Gull flying overhead, a Golden-crowned Kinglet, 8 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 16 Black-capped Chickadee, 9 House Finch, 2 Song Sparrow, 2 Hairy Woodpecker, 65 European Starling, 5 American Goldfinch, 3 Spotted Towhee, and a Varied Thrush, for a total species count of 22.

Mary Sinker's total species count of 25 included 9 American Robin, 7 Anna's Hummingbird, 12 Black-capped Chickadee, a Brown Creeper, 12 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 60 Dark-eyed Junco, 5 Downy Woodpecker, a Great Blue Heron at the creek, 4 House Finch, 19 Mourning Dove, 5 Northern Flicker, a Pileated Woodpecker, 3 Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Red-tailed Hawk, 9 Song Sparrow, 12 Steller's Jay, 2 Varied Thrush, 5 White-crowned Sparrow, and 5 Pacific Wren.

Reporting from my home in Marysville, my count includes 5 Black-capped Chickadee, 50+ Canada Goose in the fields, 25 Dark-eyed Junco, a Hairy Woodpecker, 2 Kinglet species, 4 Northern Flicker, 2 Pileated Woodpecker, 6 Steller's Jay, 30+ Rock Dove on the wires, 19 Mourning Dove, 7 House Finch, a sky full of Snow Goose flying over, and a Varied Thrush, for a total species count of 20.

If you would like to participate in our Backyard Birding count, please contact me at pricemara1@gmail.com or leave a message on my cellphone at 425-750-8125. ✍

BIRD WALK AT KENMORE PARKS

7 December 2019

by Douglas Resnick, Trip Leader

Lisa, Terry, Jonathan, Judy, and I met on a cool, rainy morning at Lynnwood Transit Center. We carpooled to Kenmore Park and Ride, where we met Martha and Kelli, and where we began our birding.

This Park and Ride has its own eBird hotspot, most likely due to the presence of a heron rookery on the other side of the fence. Although the herons were absent, which is reportedly not unusual for this time of year, many other birds were present. Mallards and gulls flew overhead, and we saw Golden-crowned Kinglets in the trees. The heavy cloud cover provided poor lighting in the early morning, though, so birding by ear was favored. In addition to the usual sparrows and wrens, we heard two Virginia Rail call.

As the rain lightened to a mist, we made our way to Log Boom Park. This site has a paved trail that joins the Burke-Gilman Trail to the west and reaches the North Lake Marina to the east. We walked first to the west, taking advantage of several views of Lake Washington from its northern shore to observe waterfowl. Numerous Canada Goose, Ring-necked Duck, and Bufflehead were in the water, along with several Hooded Merganser. A pair of Bald Eagle also visited the water, one of them snatching a fish, which it then carried to a nearby tree for a meal. After walking back to the east, we ventured out onto two public-access piers, which granted us views of Canvasback, Gadwall, Common Merganser, and Double-crested Cormorant. On the way back to our vehicles, we spotted a number of songbirds, including two American Goldfinch, in the vicinity of a cluster of bird feeders.

Martha bid us adieu, then the remainder of the party set out for Wallace Swamp Creek Park. The northern part of the park has dirt trails, while a paved trail leads south and west, crossing over the creek via a bridge. Rain by now was intermittent, but the ground was wet, and the creek was rushing. At one point, we encountered a flock of small birds, including Black-capped Chickadee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Downy Woodpecker, foraging in the trees and bushes. In the distance, we heard a Steller's Jay call.

We finished birding around 12:30 p.m., having reported observations of 31 species in eBird. We reconvened at the Hodge Podge Cafe for lunch. ✍

TRIP REPORT: FAMILY PICNIC AND BIRD WALK TO EVERGREEN ARBORETUM

By Jonathan Blubaugh

On December 8, Pilchuck Audubon Society, Academia Latina, and the North Sound Birders' Meetup visited Evergreen Arboretum & Gardens and Legion Park in Everett for a picnic and birdwalk.

Academia Latina leader, Rosamaria Graziani, informed me that we had 28 participants. I'm not sure if that included the PAS and Meetup contingents. We had about seven people from Meetup plus myself and PAS Treasurer Judy Hall in attendance as well.

We had good weather for December in Washington, cool, mostly cloudy, and free of rain for the duration of the event. We started out in the arboretum, which I particularly enjoyed because many of the plantings are labeled. From there, we also spied the neighbors' backyards for birds because the residents had feeders that were attracting a variety of winter birds. The arboretum also abuts a city golf course where a flock of Canada Goose announced their arrival with familiar honking.

Rosamaria, having set up feeders at her home as well, was excited to share the results. Along with the expected hummingbirds and usual backyard suspects, she has also been feeding the crows. The crows are loyal and appreciative. Rosamaria shared that they had brought her shiny bobbles as gifts. We've heard of such behavior before on TV, but it was so cool to hear it firsthand! Please see the photo below of the collected treasures bestowed upon her by her murder of crows.



Treasures brought to Rosamaria by her crows.

After the gardens, we wandered apart. I went off in one direction toward ball fields, beyond which we found our national symbol (Bald Eagle) calling loudly. They were perched just north of the park high in a tree with a commanding overview of the mouth of the Snohomish River. The park sits on a buff with great vistas to the north and west where the Snohomish flows into the sea. Some of our group went the opposite way toward the

west with its view of the harbor, city, Jetty Island, Hat Island, Possession Sound, and Port Gardner. We doubled back and rejoined them. From the overlooks, we added a few marine birds to our list. The chatter of a kingfisher far below alerted us to his presence as well as a flock of Killdeer. There was some unwelcome noise from an off-road four-wheeler splashing through the mud on the Highway 529 right below.

Next we returned to the gardens for those who missed them on the first go 'round. Photo ops and selfies also proved to be in order.

Here's a list of most of the birds we saw: 40 Canada Goose, 30 Mallard, 3 feral pigeons, a pair of Anna's Hummingbird, 12 Killdeer, a Ring-billed Gull, 34 Glaucous-winged Gull, a Double-crested Cormorant, a Cooper's Hawk, two Bald Eagle, the Belted Kingfisher, six crows, a Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 54 European Starling, 14 American Robin, 3 Dark-eyed Junco, and a Spotted Towhee. I also heard a couple of Black-capped Chickadee, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, a Song Sparrow, a Red-winged Blackbird, and a Yellow-rumped Warbler. All were uploaded to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology via the eBird mobile application. 🦅



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Looking to volunteer with Pilchuck Audubon? Here are some upcoming opportunities:

Snow Goose Festival Booth – We need folks to help man our table at the upcoming Snow Goose Festival in Stanwood, Washington, on Saturday, February 22, 2019.

Hospitality – If you like to bake cookies or plan snacks for a crowd, please let us know you'd like to help with hospitality for our monthly membership meetings.

Board of Directors Openings – Interested in helping to direct and guide the organization over the next two years? We have several opportunities to serve.

Contact Brian Zinke at director@pilchuckaudubon.org for more information. 🦅

New Friends and New Birds for My First CBC

by Mandy Weger, PAS Communications Chair

It was still dark outside as my husband, Mike, and I gathered our binoculars, camera, and snacks in preparation for our first ever Christmas Bird Count on December 14. As we drove to the designated meeting point to start our day, we wondered if the knowledge we'd gathered over the last year as newbie birders would be a help or a hindrance to the group's efforts to collect data about the local bird population.



Golden-crowned Kinglet counted during the Christmas Bird Count on December 14 in the Edmonds/South County Circle | Photo by Mandy Weger

If you had told me a few years ago that I'd be waking up at the crack of dawn on a cold, wet, December day to spend 9 hours outside counting birds, I might have doubtfully raised an eyebrow. But when we moved to Washington from New Jersey three years ago, we immediately fell in love with the diverse landscapes suddenly accessible to us—moss-covered, old-growth forests, mountain trails with breathtaking views, beaches within a few minutes' drive. Mike and I threw ourselves into exploring the area, hiking every weekend, and we soon found that we'd stop to watch the birds we came across. It wasn't long before that jolt of excitement I felt at seeing a new bird turned into embarking on adventures specifically to see birds, and all of a sudden I found myself standing outside in the dark with a few strangers at 7 a.m. on a chilly December morning.

It turns out, those strangers were incredibly welcoming, fun, and high-spirited as we set out for a long day of counting birds by sight and by ear in the

Edmonds/South County region. They were eager to share their knowledge and quick to point out sightings that I had missed. I was pleased that all of my hours watching birds, using the Merlin bird ID app and playing the Wingspan board game had paid off—not only was I able to identify more birds by ear and sight than I had believed, but I was able to add to my knowledge through their helpful guidance. I added a couple of lifers (Ring-necked and Wood ducks, as well as an Orange-crowned Warbler by ear only), and had a blast doing it.

In total, our group of six counted 644 birds from 43 species during the course of the day, finally calling it quits as it started to get dark again. This year's Christmas Bird Count was my first time participating in an activity through our local Audubon chapter, but it certainly won't be my last. If you're thinking about volunteering or getting more involved in conservation efforts in Snohomish County, there are a number of opportunities for you regardless of skill level, and we need volunteers! View our current [volunteer projects](#), our [upcoming trips](#), and [classes](#) to learn how you can get involved. 🦋

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
- Lifetime Member\$1,000
 - 10 monthly payments of \$100
 - 4 quarterly payments of \$250
 - 1 payment of \$1,000
- Donation\$ _____
- My employer will match my contribution
My employer's gift-matching form is enclosed with my contribution

Make checks payable to **Pilchuck Audubon Society**

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

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
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Send me these via e-mail (check all that apply & include your e-mail address above):
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