

UPDATE: Puget Sound Bird Fest Presentations to be Delivered Online



EVENT TRANSITIONS TO A HYBRID MODEL DUE TO INCREASES IN COVID-19 CASES

This year’s Puget Sound Bird Fest, scheduled for September 11-12, will be transitioned to a hybrid event amid growing concerns regarding COVID-19. We had been tracking the rising COVID-19 cases and talking with festival presenters, volunteers, and guests before making the difficult decision to move the indoor activities online.

Saturday presentations that were scheduled in the Edmonds Plaza Room will be delivered online using a Webinar format, and the Saturday exhibit hall will remain closed. Field activities will continue as planned, with limited group sizes and masks required.

“While we were all looking forward to being together for an in-person festival this year, the safety of our communities still remains our number one priority,” said Brian Zinke, Executive Director of Pilchuck Audubon Society. “Although the format has changed, the quality of our presenters has not. We are very excited to be hosting such an amazing lineup of presenters and hope the online format will encourage more people to participate.”

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A special Storytime for Kids courtesy of the Edmonds Library will kick off the online portion of the Bird Fest at 10:00 a.m., followed by award-winning author and naturalist Maria Mudd Ruth’s Keynote presentation “The Not-so-Awkward Auks at 10:30 a.m.; other presentations will follow throughout the day.



Maria Mudd Ruth

Festival participants can also vote for their favorite photo in both the Adult and Youth categories in the annual Online Photo Contest, take a video tour featuring four birding hotspots within an hour’s drive of Edmonds, and enjoy new offerings for kids, including a packet chock-full of crafts and activities for download.

A record number of field activities in and around Edmonds are planned all weekend, with spots left for registration on both Saturday and Sunday. For the latest information, please visit

<http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.com/>

or email Jennifer.leach@edmondswa.gov.

Zoom Webinar Invitation
from the Vancouver Audubon Society

CALIFORNIA CONDOR RECOVERY PROGRAM AT THE OREGON ZOO

September 7, 2021

6:30 p.m. Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_g5kt4PwuQoSyaIHMjz2AgA

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

The Importance of Shared Spaces: *Cherry Valley Unit, Snoqualmie Wildlife Area*

By Martha Jordan (Pilchuck Audubon) and Jeremy Lucas (Eastside Audubon)

You have likely driven by the Cherry Valley Unit wildlife area on your way to and from destinations north and south of Duvall along State Highway 203. If you have not yet stopped by to take a look at the diverse habitat, now is a good time to do so. Although hunting season will be starting September 1, there is still plenty of area to go birding and just enjoy a walk through this diverse wildlife area.

The Cherry Valley Unit is 386 acres located in King County about one mile north of Duvall with access from Highway 203. It is a mix of forest, grassland, and wetland in the Snoqualmie River floodplain. The unit is located at one of the lowest points in the Snoqualmie River valley, so flooding is common from mid-November through April. The unit was acquired primarily for hunting pheasant and dog training along with the wetland value. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has implemented projects to restore salmon populations in the two creeks that flow through the unit.

There is a large parking area just off Hwy 203. There are no restrooms or other amenities. This unit, just like all the other units, is closed during hours of darkness, including the parking lot.

Recreation opportunities include pheasant and waterfowl hunting, hunt dog training, and wildlife and bird viewing. It is also great for just taking a walk in the outdoors. Please note that this unit is popular for pheasant and waterfowl hunting in the fall and winter, and dog training and hunting dog trials in the spring and summer. It is a shared space; please be respectful of the

various users who may also be on the site. There are areas of this unit that are available for wildlife viewing that are closed to hunting and/or dog training. If you do go out during hunting season, we strongly suggest you wear an orange or pink vest or hat for visibility.

Wildlife Viewing

This unit includes deciduous and coniferous forest, uplands, grassland/meadows, streams, wetlands, cultivated farm fields, and hedgerows, offering opportunities to view a variety of wildlife, including waterfowl, raptors, songbirds, and a variety of large and small mammals. A vision for this unit includes expanding agriculture to improve waterfowl habitat and wetland enhancement. Search for what others have seen recently and in the past at Cherry Valley Unit by clicking on this eBird link, <https://ebird.org/hotspot/15284521/media?yr=all&m>. This is a citizen science database portal that provides freely-shared bird lists at 'hotspots,' interactive maps, plus other birding information updated daily. The eBird information shows a checklist with seasonal information on the 115 species of birds reported from this unit.

Special Habitats and Species

The unit is located in critical salmon-priority habitats, particularly for chinook salmon and steelhead. WDFW has implemented projects to restore salmon populations in the two creeks that flow through the

unit. While salmon is one focus, Cherry Valley has an abundance of bird species, including hawks, owls, swans, geese, waterfowl, and songbirds. Deer, coyote, beaver, and river otter, and recently elk, are among the larger mammals on the unit.



Common Yellowthroat | Eastside Audubon Society

For information on other Snoqualmie wildlife units and for all WDFW Wildlife Areas around Washington, please visit <https://wdfw.wa.gov/places-to-go/wildlife-areas>.

A BIRDING WITH AWARENESS REMINDER

BEFORE YOU GET OUT OF YOUR VEHICLE: Please remember to put your Discover Pass on your dashboard or hang it on the rearview mirror. You need a Discover Pass to park in any WDFW Wildlife Area parking lot or their boat access sites. They can be purchased anywhere WDFW licenses are sold and online.

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The Importance of Shared Spaces, continued

Read what is posted on the readerboards/kiosks.

Note if there are other cars in the lot. Be aware that other activities may be happening on the unit such as hunting (big game, waterfowl, and upland bird) during certain dates, hunt dog training, or a scheduled special activity. A reminder that during the fall these areas are pheasant-release sites for hunting, and special hours may apply on pheasant-release days.

If you are out during hunting season, it is suggested that you wear an orange or bright pink vest so hunters can see you.

If you see a wildlife-related issue, including poaching, there are several ways you can report the issue:

- Call 911 to report poaching in progress, a dangerous wildlife complaint, or an emergency.
- Call 877-933-9847 for non-emergency poaching/violation reports.

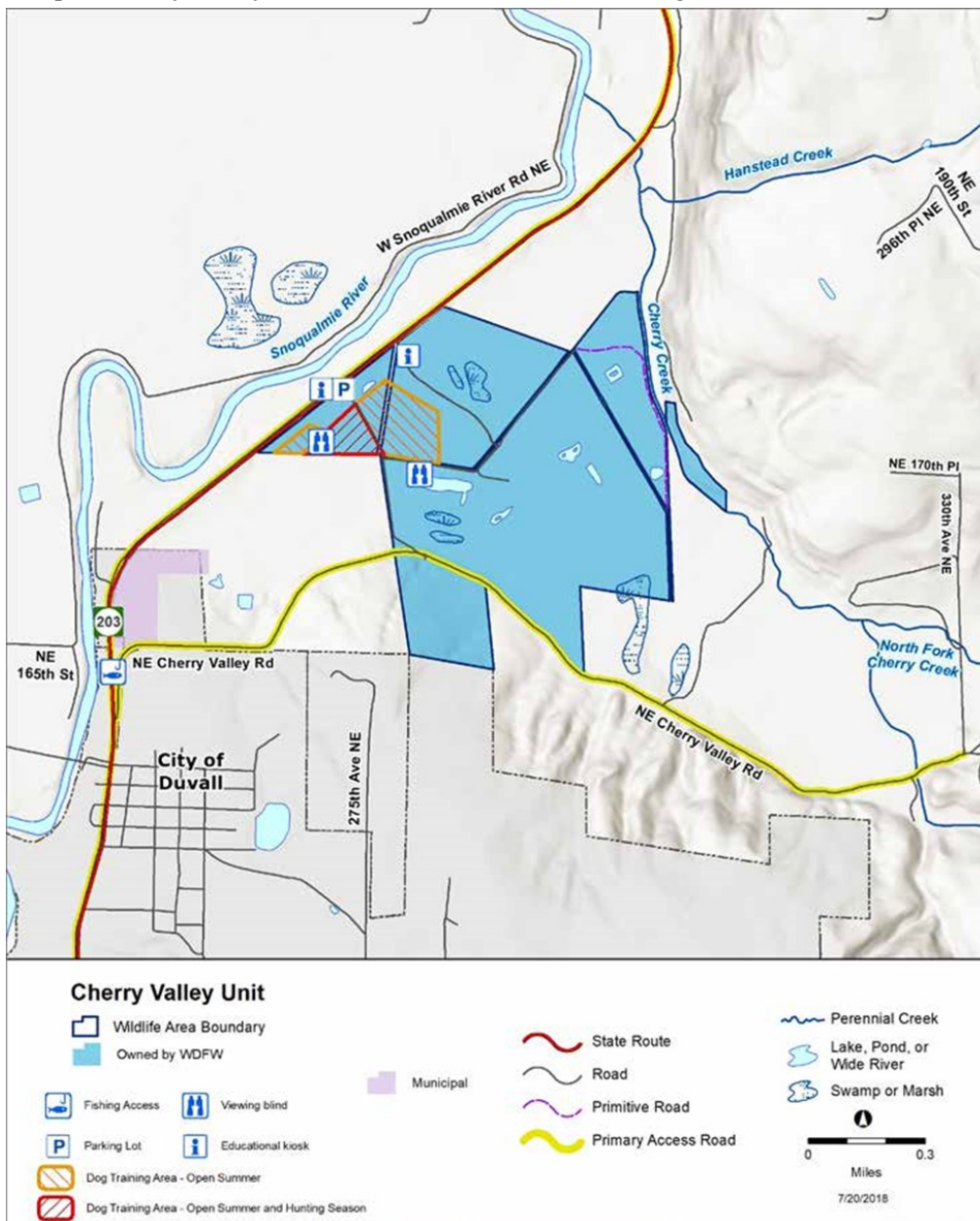
- Send an email to reportpoaching@dfw.wa.gov.

- Send a text tip to 847411 (TIP411) by entering WDFWTIP, followed by a space, and then enter your report.

- Use the [online form](#) to report a violation.

And remember, please keep your dog on leash at all times while out enjoying your wildlife viewing. Our wildlife areas are not off-leash dog parks.

Map of Cherry Valley Unit | Source: WDFW SWA Management Plan 2018



If you are able and willing, bring a garbage bag and either some collection device (like a stick) or gloves, please do so. Picking up the smaller items is appreciated, especially when out on the unit. The bigger items as well as most of the garbage piles dumped at the parking lots are picked up by volunteers associated with other groups, especially the hunting groups. I keep a hiking checklist and those items are always included in my run-through of everything I need.

REPORT garbage dumping, serious graffiti, damage to signs or kiosks, and damage to the parking lot by sending an email to the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area manager at brian.boehm@dfw.wa.gov. Or you can call Martha Jordan, a member of the Snoqualmie Wildlife Area Citizen’s Advisory Committee at 206-713-3684.

With some knowledge about the shared space, regulations, and what you can do to be part of the active stewardship community, you can not only help protect these areas for wildlife and future generations but have a great and safe time out there. **Now, get out there and bird!** 🦅

Sagebrush Songbird Conservation

Audubon Shrub-steppe Conservation Committee

Summary of June 1, 2021 and July 29, 2021 Meetings

Last year, the state office and volunteer chapters who participated in the Sagebrush Songbird Survey formed a committee to further the use of Sagebrush Songbird Survey data and to promote restoration and conservation of shrub-steppe habitat in Washington State.

The Shrub-steppe Conservation Committee goals are to:

- Elevate public awareness regarding need for restoration and conservation of shrub-steppe habitat
- Foster use of Sagebrush Songbird Survey data by state and local agencies and the public
- Foster steps by agencies and the public to limit wildfires and their effects on shrub-steppe habitat
- Support shrub-steppe funding proviso in the Washington State 2021-23 biennial budget
- Focus restoration and conservation efforts in areas near Yakima and north into the Columbia Basin
- Foster prioritization of long-term shrub-steppe habitat protection in state and local environmental legislation

The meeting summary for June 1 and July 29 meetings of the Audubon Shrub-steppe Conservation Committee follows. We will share meeting summaries to the WASACC google group as we continue to meet roughly every six weeks.

MEETING OBJECTIVES

- Review on-going Audubon WA activities and how chapters can interface with and support them
- Discuss local level engagement by chapters
- Review presentation materials

ITEMS DISCUSSED

- Audubon's involvement with the proposed Scout energy project in Benton County (June 1)
 - Project is going through an EIS process with the State of Washington Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC)

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Upcoming Class

Class will be conducted over Zoom and recorded, so if you cannot make the live session you can still register to receive access to the recordings for a few weeks after class.

Register for class at <https://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/classes>.

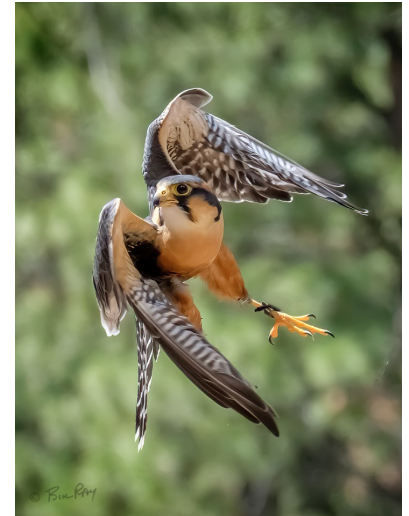
Bird Photos for Novice Photographers

September 15, 22, 29
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Pricing: \$35 for members,
\$45 for non-members

Led by Bill Ray

To quote Ansel Adams: "The most important feature of the camera is the 12 inches behind it." This is certainly true with birds. Thoughtful humans with modest camera gear can be successful when they understand their gear and love their subjects. No need to break the bank or your back to get started.



Falcon sharp turn | Bill Ray Photo
© 2019, All rights reserved

This 3-night class is for novice photographers moving beyond cell phones and snapshots, starting to learn how to step off full auto and edit the images.

Making a successful bird photograph: Tips on "posing" birds, starting in your backyard. See what makes a memorable photograph such as composition and capturing the decisive moment. Learn what's different between bird watching and photography. Discover three typical shooting situations that will help make sense of the technology in the next two sessions.

Camera gear and settings: How to go beyond snapshots with a Bridge, Mirrorless or DSLR camera. Characteristics of birding cameras, including what to look for in a first digital camera. Practical approaches for exposure and focus that largely use the camera's smarts with your selective overrides. Get sharp photos by matching autofocus settings to how the birds move around. Autofocus is the most challenging issue in better bird photos.

Post-Processing to bring out the best, most natural results: In the real world with birds, we are unlikely to capture the photo perfectly in camera—too many moving parts. Consider several popular software editors from free and simple to sophisticated. Just two editing steps can greatly improve your photos. 🦅

The March Point Heronry Expands!



Great news! Skagit Land Trust has acquired additional access at the March Point property. Tim Manns, board member of both Skagit Audubon and Skagit Land Trust, says the land is known to locals as the Moon Property. In an early outreach, some details were provided to us. You can find this information and much more at the Trust's webpage, <https://www.skagitlandtrust.org/news.aspx?postid=6470>.



March Point Heronry trees stacked with nests that support the largest heron breeding area in the Salish Sea.

“At 700+ nests, this heronry may be the biggest colony of Great Blue Herons on the entire west coast of the United States. Skagit Land Trust had a very recent opportunity to purchase and conserve 3.5 acres within the core nesting area of the heronry.

“The Trust will add this property to the 12 acres of the heronry our supporters have already helped us to conserve. The goal was to raise \$70,000 by August 1, otherwise the landowners would have put the property on the market.”

Learn more about the heronry, including the new parts now to be owned by the Trust, and the history of the heronry, by going to the webpage. This heronry is a frequent destination for birding field trips all year long hosted by many Audubon chapters and other groups.

Tim Manns thanks PAS members and friends who donated to this acquisition.

This is the second of two recent land acquisitions made this summer by the Trust. An earlier one was purchase of 50 acres at the entrance to Samish Island where work is now underway to remove junked cars and other trash, and, eventually, a ramshackle house. Samish Island is a frequent destination for PAS field trips throughout the year. 🦩



BIRDING FIELD TRIPS

TRIP CALENDAR

Check our website, <https://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/upcoming-trips>, for the latest information.



Tuesday, September 7 **Fir Island**

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart lot west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd (next to I-5). We will be looking especially for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl and local raptors at Wylie Slough, Hayton Reserve, North Fork, Channel Drive, and wherever else might be worthwhile. Rarities often show up this month. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750.

Tuesday, September 14 **South Whidbey**

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at Eastmont Park & Ride, I-5 exit 189, east side, aiming for the 8:00 a.m. ferry from Mukilteo. Deer Lagoon and Crockett Lake areas always yield a large and varied species list, and the rest of South Whidbey is great birding. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750.

Tuesday, September 21 **Camano Island**

Meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Quilceda Village Walmart lot west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from the store, to the east, near Quilceda Blvd (next to I-5). We will bird English Boom, Barnum Point, Iverson Point, Eide Road, and a number of other good birding spots. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750.

Sunday, September 26 **Magnuson Park, Seattle**

This is a half-day trip. Register with the trip leader by September 22; see contact info, below. Also by September 22, please submit your 2021 Field Trip Liability Release via email to director@pilchuckaudubon.org; see <https://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/upcoming-trips>. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Magnuson Park parking lot E5. The park's address is 7400 Sand Point Way NE; Google Maps indicates that the parking lot is the site of the Magnuson Frog Pond Park & Ride. Trip leader: Douglas Resnick, 425-776-4811 (cell: 206-617-0019), dresnick1@comcast.net.

Tuesday, September 28 **Sequim**

Meet at 7:10 a.m. 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. We will bird Sequim Bay, Dungeness Recreational Area, Three Crabs, and, don't forget, Schmuck Road, among other spots. These places always yielded some interesting finds on previous trips. Pack a lunch. Trip Leader: Virginia Clark, 360-435-3750. 🦋



Field Trips Resuming, with Restrictions

It has been well over a year since we have had any birding field trips, but, given the vaccine roll-out, these past several months and reopening status of the state, we are excited to announce that we will begin allowing field trips again in September. However, because the pandemic is not over, we will have additional guidance and restrictions for field trip participation.

For those who are unvaccinated for COVID-19, we will not be able to accommodate your attendance on field trips at this time.

For those who are vaccinated:

- Masks are not needed while outdoors.
- Carpooling with individuals from outside of your house is allowed, but masks should be worn while in the vehicle.
- Maintaining 6 feet of distance between participants is highly encouraged.
- Sharing equipment is discouraged.

[Please read the full guidelines for participating in field trips here.](#) You will be required to sign an annual [liability waiver](#) and acknowledge that you agree to abide by the COVID guidelines before participating in a field trip.

Thank you all for your patience and support these past 18 months! If you have any questions regarding field trips or the current guidelines, please contact Brian Zinke at director@pilchuckaudubon.org. 🦋

June 26, 2021 to July 25, 2021

Carole and Larry Beason just submitted their June/July report. Their total species count of 33 included 4 American Goldfinch, 8 American Robin, 5 Black-headed Grosbeak, 23 Canada Goose on the lake, 6 Dark-eyed Junco, an Evening Grosbeak, 3 Hairy Woodpecker, 5 Mallard Duck on the lake, 13 Purple Finch, an Osprey over the lake, 3 Rufous Hummingbird, 3 Spotted Towhee, 4 Steller's Jay, 5 Tree Swallow, and 4 Violet-Green Swallow.

Carole and Larry Beason's July report included 3 American Robin, 2 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Bald Eagle over the lake, 9 Barn Swallow, 23 Canada Goose on the lake, 2 Common Raven, 6 Dark-eyed Junco, a Great Blue Heron flying over the trees, 7 Mallard Duck on the lake, 3 Northern Flicker, a Pied-billed Grebe on the lake, 14 Purple Finch at the feeders, a Pileated Woodpecker, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Red-breasted Sapsucker, 24+ Red-winged Blackbird, 12 Steller's Jay, 2 Swainson's Thrush, 4 Tree Swallow, and 6 Violet-green Swallow, for a total species count of 35.



Cooper's Hawk | AllAboutBirds.org

Reporting from Edmonds, Sara and Paul Bueren reported 2 Northern Flicker, 2 Sparrow species, 5 Black-capped Chickadee, 3 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 2 Western Tanager, 2 Black-headed Grosbeak, 3 Anna's Hummingbird, 1 Rufous Hummingbird, 1 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Purple Finch, a White-crowned Sparrow, 2 Spotted Towhee, 3 Dark-eyed Junco, 2 Band-tailed Pigeon, 2 American Robin, and 2 Pileated Woodpecker, for a total species count of 16.

Hilkka Egtvedt's report from Mukilteo included 7 Band-tailed Pigeon, 2 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Rufous Hummingbird, a Pileated Woodpecker, 3 Steller's Jay, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, 4 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Western Tanager, 2 Song Sparrow, a White-crowned Sparrow, 2 Dark-eyed Junco, 6 Purple Finch, 5 House Finch, 5 Pine Siskin, 5 Black-headed Grosbeak, and 3 American Goldfinch, for a total species count of 23.

Reporting from Everett, Kriss Erickson's report included 13 Black-capped Chickadee, 6 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 3 Bewick's Wren, 25 Bushtit, 14 American Crow, 12 Western Gull, 1 Common Raven, 5 Spotted Towhee, 7 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Yellow Warbler, 11 Dark-eyed Junco, 2 Mallard Duck, 2 Varied Thrush, a Bald

Eagle flying overhead, 2 Common Redpoll, 2 Red-breasted Nuthatch, and a Red-breasted Sapsucker, for a total species count of 25.

Maureen Schmitz's report from Everett included 10 American Crow, 3 American Robin, a Bald Eagle in a tree, 3 Anna's Hummingbird, 7 House Finch, 2 Black-capped Chickadee, 2 Northern Flicker, a Black-headed Grosbeak, 3 Song Sparrow, a Spotted Towhee, a Band-tailed Pigeon, and 9 Bushtit, for a total species count of 13.

Mary Sinker's report from Stanwood included 28 American Goldfinch, 25 American Robin, 15 Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Bald Eagle, 5 Bewick's Wren, 15 Black-capped Chickadee, 13 Black-headed Grosbeak, 8 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, 3 Cooper's Hawk, 9 Dark-eyed Junco, 5 Downy Woodpecker, a Great Blue Heron, 5 Hairy Woodpecker, 5 House Finch, 2 Killdeer in the pasture, 16 Mourning Dove, 5 Northern Flicker, 2 Pileated Woodpecker, 10 Pine Siskin, 3 Red-tailed Hawk, 8 Rufous Hummingbird, 10 Song Sparrow, 14 Spotted Towhee, 9 Swainson's Thrush, 4 White-crowned Sparrow, 2 Willow Flycatcher, 2 Wilson's Warbler, and 5 Yellow Warbler, for a total species count of 40.

Reporting from Monroe, Walter Zandi listed a Pileated Woodpecker, 4 Steller's Jay, 2 Hairy Woodpecker, 2 Rufous Hummingbird, 6 Dark-eyed Junco, 3 Northern Flicker, 6 Anna's Hummingbird, 3 American Crow, 2 Mourning Dove, 2 Downy Woodpecker, 2 Chestnut-backed Chickadee, a Brown Creeper, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, 5 House Finch, 4 Black-headed Grosbeak, 9 American Goldfinch, and heard 2 Barn Owl calling, for a total species count of 24.

My total species count of 26 from Marysville included 2 Anna's Hummingbird, 4 Black-capped Chickadee, 3 Dark-eyed Junco, 10 House Finch, 4 Northern Flicker, 4 Black-headed Grosbeak, 4 Spotted Towhee, a Pileated Woodpecker, 5 Mourning Dove, 5 American Goldfinch, a Western Tanager, a Red-breasted Nuthatch, 4 American Robin, 10 American Crow, a White-crowned Sparrow, a Great Blue Heron, 2 Red-tailed Hawk, 2 Purple Finch, and a Peregrine Falcon.

If you are interested in participating in our Backyard Bird Count, please email me at pricemara1@gmail.com or call my cell phone at 425-750-8125. 🦅

2022 Environmental Lobby Day

The 2022 State Legislature session doesn't begin until January. Training workshops for the next Environmental Lobby Day visit to Olympia are scheduled. Audubon Washington is part of the training together with other conservation groups in the Environmental Priorities Coalition. The Lobby Day date has not yet been scheduled. It could be in January or early February, after the session has begun.

If you want to receive virtual training on how to be a "Legislative District Lead" to coordinate lobby meetings with other advocates (not just Audubon chapters) in your legislative district, here is your opportunity to volunteer for this important work. You will learn how to set up and confirm appointments with the legislative staff for Lobby Day. No prior experience is necessary. I've done this along with help from other volunteers here in Snohomish County. Easily done!

Dates for training are September 22, Noon to 1:00 p.m., and September 25, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. If you want to receive this training, please contact me, president@pilchuckaudubon.org.

Snohomish PUD Arlington Microgrid Goes Live

All Snohomish PUD customers received with our July 2021 bills "The Wire," a newsletter that accompanies our bills. If, like me, you always go for the bill and seldom read the newsletter. But the July issue has good news! What follows is an excerpt from the newsletter.

"... the PUD is energizing its innovative Arlington Microgrid and Clean Energy Center. Located near the Arlington Airport, the new project employs state-of-the-art technology to demonstrate the multiple uses of energy storage, including grid resiliency, renewable energy integration, grid support, and electric vehicle integration.

"Think of the Arlington Microgrid as a clean energy generator with a day job. When connected to the grid, the system will send power generated by the 500-kilowatt solar energy array on site to PUD customers. But if the microgrid is 'islanded' and independent from the grid, it will have the ability to provide electricity to critical PUD facilities in the event of a storm or natural disaster.

"To help fund the project, the PUD was granted \$3.5 million in funding from the Washington state Clean Energy Fund, covering over a quarter of the project's costs."

Pilchuck Audubon and all other Washington State Audubon chapters have urged creation of this fund as one of many important steps to be taken toward 100% clean energy.

There is more information about this topic at <http://www.snopud.com/newsroom/custpubs.ashx?p=1178>.

Then scroll down to "The Wire" Newsletter, July 2021, for the rest of this article.

Everett City Council Adopts Tribal Land Acknowledgment

Here is an excerpt from the August 26, 2021, edition of *The Daily Herald*.

"The historic connections between Everett and native inhabitants could be further tied by a tribal land acknowledgment resolution the Everett City Council approved Wednesday by a 6-0 vote. Everett is just the second city in Snohomish County and one of a small but growing list in the state to have made such a statement..."

I urge PAS members to read the article to learn more about the heritage of the Tulalip Tribes' ancestors who lived throughout Everett and other parts of Western Washington.

Snohomish County Councilwoman Dunn selected to serve on EPA Committee

Here is an excerpt from the August 25, 2021, edition of *The Daily Herald*.

"Snohomish County Councilwoman Megan Dunn was appointed Wednesday to a federal Environmental Protection Agency committee.

"She will serve as Washington's only representative on the 39-member Local Government Advisory Committee. The group includes a mix of leaders from cities and counties from across the country. Together, they're tasked with forming recommendations and policies to promote environmental protection."

We will learn more about these important announcements in coming months. ✍

Fishing Owls in Washington

by Kenneth Trease



You bet! I had seen posts on various sites about Barred Owls catching and eating crayfish but I had never witnessed it myself. So when a birding friend called and asked if I was interested in a trip to try and find these owls, I quickly seized the opportunity. My friend had photographed one of these owls the week before at Whatcom Falls Park in Bellingham. Whatcom Creek runs through the heart of this busy urban park and supports at least one pair of Barred Owls.

We arrived at the park at 8:00 a.m. to start our search. We slowly searched along both sides of the creek looking for owls.

By lunchtime we had found two owls roosting quietly along the creek and mostly sleeping. After lunch we split up and



started searching both sides of the creek and would keep in touch by cell phone. About 3:00 p.m., we found another owl roosting near the creek, and he/she seemed to be eyeing the water a lot. Suddenly, the owl flew down to the shoreline and appeared to be after some unseen prey—probably a small rodent—but came up empty. It returned to its perch for a few minutes before again flying, this time right down into the shallow creek.

When it flew to a nearby log, it had a crayfish in its talons. We watched as it quickly ripped off the large front pincers and then swallowed the crayfish whole. We both got a few shots of this action, but the deep shade and slow shutter speeds made for a lot of blurry shots.



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About 15 minutes later, the owl flew down to the creek and caught another crayfish. It flew back to the same log and proceeded to bite off the large pincers and swallow the rest of the crayfish whole.

I had just witnessed an amazing owl behavior that, until recently, I didn't even know existed. I had read some online sources indicating that Barred Owls in other parts of their range are known to catch and eat crayfish. Some owls can show a slight pink



tinge on their breast feathers when a large part of their diet is crayfish. I did notice that the owls we saw that day had a very bright orange-yellow color on their feet. Although these photos don't show it well, these owls also had a very bright orange cere (the bare fleshy area at the base of the bill). I think these bright colors may be due to their diet. It was a fantastic birding experience and one I would highly recommend. If you would like to try for these owls, it will take a lot of patience. We spent almost the entire day waiting to see them fishing, but it was well worth it. 🦉



- Status of sagebrush songbird data (June 1)
 - The models are complete – Trina has a meeting later this month on how to use it, what it means
- Review of CRP/RCPD latest from USDA (June 1)
 - Voluntary Stewardship plans (VSP) are being studied in order to better understand the way the measures of success have been developed and used
- Presentation materials (June 1)
 - Teri has got a folder set up in Box that now has presentations that Trina and Andy have been using
- Update on Audubon WA plans for engaging on solar project proposals (July 29)
 - Audubon WA is looking at current projects and also looking at a proactive strategy with developers and EFSEC, to steer development towards areas that will not negatively impact birds and habitat. Audubon WA is working with the Clean Energy Initiative, Conservation Northwest, Nature Conservancy, and American Farmland Trust to develop a mapping tool that will include information that speaks to many aspects of wildlife, habitat, and agriculture as they may relate to solar siting.
- Update on Audubon WA shrub steppe conservation strategy development (July 29)
 - The Draft Strategy for Audubon Washington's Sagebrush Program is in a draft and discussion form at this point
- Fire communication resources (July 29)
 - Teri shared a document with resources for communication around fires, for outreach, for social media
- Opportunities for outreach to county planners with SSS maps (July 29)
 - Adam has started outreach to planners and spoke with Paul Jewell who heads the Washington State Association of Counties, he used to be a commissioner in Kittitas
- Outreach/PowerPoint (July 29)
 - Reviewed status/availability of PowerPoint presentations

OUTPUTS/DECISIONS

- Audubon's Clean Energy staff is going to be following the proposed Scout energy project
- Over the next several months, Robin will continue to develop ideas about how Audubon can interface with the VSP process
- Individual chapter representatives should pass on Teri's fire communication resources document to people who are responsible for social media
- Adam suggested chapters reach out to local planning entities, to share our maps and make suggestions on

protection of habitat for use/adoption in local planning processes

- Legislative outreach should employ a two-prong approach – do what we can to raise the profile locally, while working for top-down legislation as well
- Date for next meeting: 30th of September, 3 – 5

ACTION ITEMS

- Committee members will review the Draft Strategy for Audubon Washington's Sagebrush Program by the end of August
- Committee members should pass on fire communication resources document to people responsible for social media
- Trina will talk to Ryan (WDFW) about SSS habitat layers being added to the Audubon app.
- Trina will talk the Mary Huff about VSP and the maps and data that we have
- Mark will reach out to one of the Chelan County commissioners once the mapping is in Arc GIS to give him a view of what this effort on shrub steppe is and why it matters
- Teri and Art will get together soon to status where we are in terms of presentation materials
- Teri will send approximately two-week update/reminders on this work

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mark Johnston will replace Rich Scranton as representative from North Central Washington Audubon

IN ATTENDANCE

Committee Members

Teresa Anderson (Audubon Washington) – June 1 and July 29

Trina Bayard (Audubon Washington) – June 1 and July 29

Art Campbell (North Central Washington Audubon) – June 1 and July 29

Lindell Haggin (Spokane Audubon) – June 1

Mark Johnston (North Central Washington Audubon) – July 29

Robin Priddy (Lower Columbia Basin Audubon) – June 1 and July 29

Richard Scranton (North Central Washington Audubon) – June 1

Andy Stepniewski (Yakima Valley Audubon) – July 29

Other Attendees

Adam Maxwell (Audubon Washington) – July 29 ✍

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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Pilchuck Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable corporation registered with the Washington Secretary of State. Your contributions are tax deductible.

TRIP CALENDAR

Check our website, <https://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/upcoming-trips>, for the latest information

Birding Trips — See Page 6



In Case You Missed It ...

We certainly miss seeing everyone in person. However, 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 recent programs. Enjoy!

A Dead Tree's Excellent Adventure

Presentation by Ken Bevis
Washington Dept. of Natural Resources

[Watch the Recording](#)

Making Your Yard a Bird Haven

Presentation by Kim Adelson

[Watch the Recording](#)

Measuring the Impact of Military Flights on the Olympic Peninsula Soundscape

Presentation by Lauren Kuehne

[Watch the Recording](#)

Snohomish PUD Natural Resource Protections

Presentation by Laura Zorick

[Watch the Recording](#)

Dead Birds Do Tell Tales: A Citizen Science Story

Presentation by Dr. Julia Parrish

[Watch the Recording](#)

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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