

**February Program Meeting – February 10**

**What Is a Raptor Anyway?**

Guest Speaker: Thomas Bancroft, PhD

Birders love to look for raptors, and we often talk about these birds. But what are they? Hawks, eagles, and falcons for sure, but what about owls? Some say “vertebrate” eaters with talons, but does that eliminate kites that eat a lot of insects? What about shrikes which seem like ferocious hunters? Lots to think about. Fascinating, too, is how these birds evolved. Recent genetic work shows that falcons are not very closely related to hawks, eagles, and kites. It turns out that their closest relatives are parrots and passerines rather than those other “raptors.” Then, what do we do with vultures?



We will spend our time exploring what a raptor is, the evolution of these groups, and how convergence to exploit vertebrate prey has molded different evolutionary lines. The science of these birds is rapidly changing, and what was thought in the 1970s when I was in graduate school changed dramatically by the early 2000s and is transforming yet again. You might have noticed when you buy a new bird book that the sequence of families and species changed from earlier

versions. We will concentrate on raptors of Western North America but might peek at some from Australia, Africa, Panama, and Brazil. This evening will leave you with much to ponder.

**When: February 10, 2023 at 7:00 PM**

**Where: Online**

**Register for Meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZctceGtqDkqGtNFIs7dnfck-mncBaRqoasA>

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# 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Great Backyard Bird Count

February 17-20

Started in 1998 by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) was the first community science project to collect data on wild birds and [display the results](#) in nearly real time.

For four days each February, people from all over the world come together to count as many birds as they can. This can be in your own backyard, as the name of the count indicates, but can actually be from anywhere—your neighborhood, the local park or beach, your church, your work, even the grocery store parking lot!

Anyone can participate, from beginning birders to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before one of their annual migrations.

To learn more about the event and how to participate, you can visit our website at <https://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/great-backyard-bird-count>. There you'll find information on how to participate, a recorded video of our GBBC training in 2021, and photos of several of our most common backyard birds in Snohomish County. ✍



## Interested in Serving on PAS' Board of Directors?

Our chapter's Board of Directors provides the leadership and direction our chapter needs to fulfill our mission. Our Board is an engaged group, with each member involved in different aspects of the chapter's work. The Board is made up of twelve positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Avian Science Committee Chair
- Conservation Committee Chair
- Development Committee Chair
- Membership Committee Chair
- Member-at-large
- Member-at-large
- Member-at-large
- Member-at-large

Board positions are not lifelong commitments. As such, we are always looking for the next cohort of leaders to fill the ranks and who are passionate about bird conservation and our environment as a whole.

Doesn't this sound like you?

Being a bird expert is not a requirement to serve on the Board. In fact, we welcome and encourage folks from all walks of life to participate on our Board. A Board with a diverse set of



experiences, talents, and knowledge makes us a better organization. And like any organization, we have needs in the areas of finance, communications, science, technology, governance, and relationship building.

Please take a look at the list of positions above. Do any of those pique your interest? If so, please get in touch with either our current President Bill Derry ([president@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:president@pilchuckaudubon.org)) or Executive Director Brian Zinke ([director@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:director@pilchuckaudubon.org)) for more information.

Your service on our Board of Directors will help ensure we can effect positive change in our communities for another 50 years! ✍

# 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update



## Snohomish County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

**Reminder: Comment periods are open!**

We encourage you to review and comment on the County’s Comprehensive Plan update to ensure that protection and conservation of our wildlife, habitats, open spaces, and climate are included in the updated plan. The comment period is open on a rolling basis, with each phase having about a month for the public to weigh in on the plan.

*From the County’s outreach email:*

“The Comprehensive Plan is a document that guides Snohomish County decisions on a wide range of topics and services over a 20-year time period. The Plan acts as the blueprints for development in the county. It will impact neighborhoods, businesses, traffic, the environment, and you. The Plan is also meant to reflect the vision and priorities of Snohomish County communities and residents, while meeting requirements of state and federal law.”

For more information or to submit your comments, please visit the County’s website:

<https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/6075/Policy-Amendments>

Phase	Element(s)	Comment Period
Phase III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parks &amp; Recreation</li><li>• Natural Environment</li></ul>	February 1 – March 2, 2023
Phase IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Urban Core Subarea Plan</li><li>• Housing</li><li>• Urban Tree Canopy Policies</li></ul>	March 1 – 31, 2023
Phase V	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Climate Change</li><li>• Capital Facilities and Utilities</li></ul>	March 31 – May 1, 2023
Phase VI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tribal Coordination</li><li>• Transportation</li></ul>	May 1 – 31, 2023



Instead of starting off with a report about the status of “hot issues” important to Audubon Washington in the State Legislature, I’ll start with instructions on how you can track and comment upon issues right from your home computer! Let your state legislators and congresspersons know how they can protect us and our fellow living creatures through policies ensuring shared clean air and water, and lands of this planet!

In the **January PROFILE**, I wrote about the top policy matters, important to Audubon Washington and our fellow chapters, which we want addressed in the 2023 State Legislature. Those priorities have not changed. Very little has happened yet to those bills during the past month of the state legislative session. There is much work to do during the 105 days of the session! Refer to the January 2023 PROFILE for bill numbers, titles, and why they are so important to us.

To learn about the full range of our policy matters, click on [Policy Priorities in 2023 | Audubon Washington](#) or type the underlined words and symbols in the search function of your device. It will take you to the website.

Additional information will be posted at [Advocacy | Audubon Washington](#) as the session proceeds to its closing day on April 23.

To track bills as they progress or “die” during the state legislative session, use [Bill Tracker: 2023 Legislative Session | Audubon Washington](#)

Now, if you want to connect with regional and national websites of Audubon to receive “Action Alerts” that allow you to direct comments to your legislators and congresspersons, click or type the underlined links below. You can see how things are going in real time and receive invitations (alerts) to comment directly to your state legislators, US Senators, and US Representatives (you don’t even have to search for names in these systems).

Try it out! You can use the “form letters” provided by Audubon Washington and National Audubon; and add your own, personal words, too. Here are the links or “search words” to use:

The Washington Action Network at: [Join Our Action Network | Audubon Washington](#)

If you receive an alert from another person, just overwrite with your name and residential address.

To receive National Audubon alerts: [Join Our Action Network | Audubon](#)

To find other interesting information at the Audubon Washington website, go to: [AuduBlog | Audubon Washington](#)

**Again, click or type in your computer’s “search block” only the words and letters underlined.**

If you want to contact your legislators and congresspersons on your own, and need addresses and/or phone numbers, go to Pilchuck Audubon’s website. Look for “Advocacy.” Click on it. You will then see links to the Washington State Legislature Directory and the US Congressional Directory. You will also find bill directories for the Congress and our state legislature.



You can track all bills in the State Legislature and the Congress this session by going to that Advocacy link. Over 700 bills were introduced the first week of the State Legislature’s session. I don’t know how many by this writing, but likely in the thousands.

### **Pilchuck Audubon’s Outreach to Our Legislators**

Pilchuck Audubon’s assigned turf now includes 24 legislators whose districts are wholly or partially located in Snohomish County and Camano Island. Because of the new redistricting, we now share some legislators with Auduboners in Chelan County (12<sup>th</sup> District). We have long shared some legislators with fellow Auduboners in King (32<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>) and Skagit (39<sup>th</sup>) counties.

Folk out in the Index, Skykomish, Gold Bar, and parts of the Monroe area are now in the 12<sup>th</sup> District, having the same legislators as folks in Wenatchee, Leavenworth and Chelan.

So, Pilchuck now shares legislative outreach with Audubon chapters in Skagit, Snohomish, King, Island and Chelan counties. Those districts are: 1<sup>st</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 32<sup>nd</sup>, 38<sup>th</sup>, 39<sup>th</sup>, and 44<sup>th</sup>. There are three legislators in each district: two representatives and one senator. Your help in our legislative outreach is more demanding than ever!

*Continued on Page 5*

## Upcoming Classes

Classes will be conducted over Zoom (and recorded if you cannot make the live session).

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

### Fine Feathers

February 14, 21, 28

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Online

Feathers are more than just fluff. Anyone who has watched a duck preen its feathers for hours at a time knows that birds take their feathers very seriously. They should: feathers keep them warm (or cool!), enable them to fly, hide them from predators, and all the while, light up our lives with their beauty. If you've ever wondered about how birds' feathers work, then this class is for you. Master Birder Connie Sidles will share with you all the recent information about how feathers evolved, how they function, why they are colored just so, and who has the most outrageous array.

\$35 for PAS members

\$45 for non-PAS members



Great Blue Heron trying to hide | Photo by Doug Parrott



Hairy Woodpecker | Mick Thompson photo

### Getting to Know Washington's Woodpeckers

March 15

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Online

Jeff Kozma, Wildlife Biologist with the Yakama Nation and lead author of the *Birds of the World* account for the "White-headed Woodpecker," will review key plumage and vocal characteristics needed to identify all 12 of Washington's breeding woodpecker species. Jeff will also discuss habitat and behavioral differences between the species to further aid in identification.

\$12 for PAS members

\$15 for non-PAS members



Red-naped Sapsucker

### Conservation Report, *Continued from Page 4*

The March PROFILE will report on a lot of "our state bills." By that time, bills that have had hearings may be lined up for full-chamber votes. We will know by then to whom among our legislators we must target our final comments before the session ends on April 23.

You may receive alerts and pleas from Audubon Washington and your Pilchuck Board, beginning this month, to contact your own legislators and ask them to vote in favor of particular bills. If you have "signed up" to those websites, you will have fulfilled your role as a citizen on behalf of our planet and its creatures! 🐦

## Looking Back

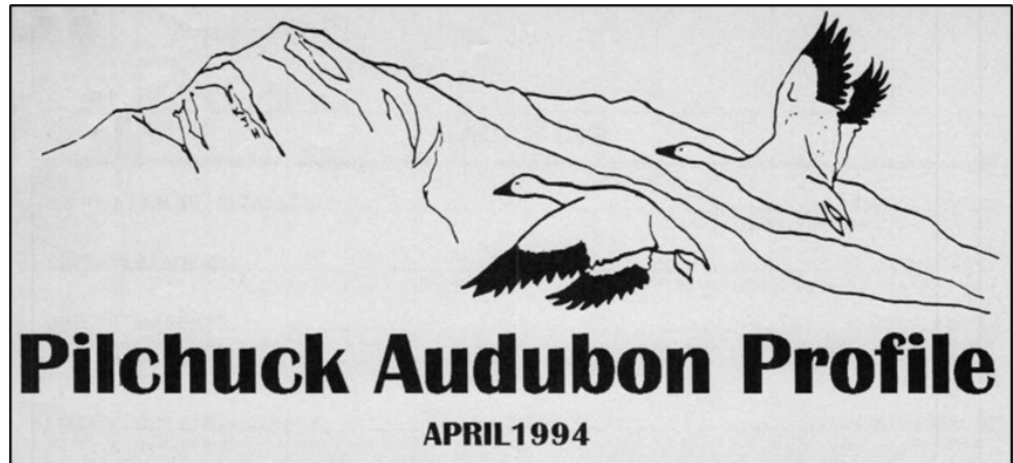
By Brian Zinke

In honor of our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we'll be taking a look back at previous issues of *The Profile* throughout the year to relive some chapter history. This will be a fun opportunity to engage in some retrospection about which issues and activities have been priorities for the chapter and how they have changed—or not—over the years.

### Issue: April 1994

As a locally-focused organization, we do our best to help keep you up-to-date on the goings-on in your communities and keep you abreast of how you can contribute and participate as an informed citizen. In this issue of the *Profile*, we informed our members that the County's Comprehensive Plan update was available for review and public comments.

We highlight this particular article because at this very moment, you too have the opportunity to comment on the County's newest version of the Comprehensive Plan. Different elements of the plan are open for comment at different times during the process.



Education has long been a pillar of what our chapter does. For decades, we've been hosting classes to teach our communities about topics such as birding basics and bird identification. During the past few years, we've revived this tradition and have been offering several classes per year. Learn more about our upcoming classes here: <https://www.pilchuckaudubon.org/classes>

#### BASIC BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

Wondering what that little brown bird is in the backyard? Curious about how to attract birds to your backyard? What are the tools for watching birds? Where can you find birds? Join us in learning the answer to these and other questions. This class is for the beginner. We will discuss tools for watching birds such as field guides and binoculars. We will learn how to identify birds by looking at slides of the more common ones, and then go out on an all-day field trip to look for them in their habitat.

*The instructor for this class is Master Birder Terri Spencer. Terri is currently Pilchuck Audubon's Education Coordinator. She graduated from The Evergreen State College with a B.A. in Environmental Education and has since worked as both a State and National Park Naturalist/Interpreter. An avid birder since 1981, Terri has coordinated the local Winter Bird Count for 5 years, and taught bird ID to students of all ages.*

To learn more and advocate for healthier, wildlife- and habitat-friendly policies, visit the County's website here: <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/6075/Policy-Amendments>

#### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The draft comprehensive plan, also called the General Policy Plan, is available for public review. The plan is intended to guide growth in unincorporated Snohomish County, in coordination with the new plans of its cities and towns, for the next 20 years. The plan is approximately 150 pages long and contains 6 major elements: population and employment, land use, housing, transportation, capital facilities and economic development. The land use element contains 12 sections: urban growth areas, urban development patterns, community structure, urban centers, urban design, rural lands, agricultural lands, forest lands, mineral lands, open space/shoreline and scenic resources, cultural resources and future land use map.

## February President's Report

By Bill Derry

Pilchuck Audubon is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Thank you for supporting us. We have set some ambitious goals for the year in terms of activities and funding. We hope to see and hear from you this year.

My first memory of Pilchuck Audubon was in the 1980's when I was busy creating, then managing the Snohomish County Surface Water Management Division. During those times, PAS was the primary, perhaps only, organization watching land use issues and urging better land use policies and practices. Sally van Niel was on my Surface Water Advisory Board and Ellen Gray was active on land use issues.

PAS continues to advocate for better land use policies, protection of open spaces, and restoration of habitat.

### Join Us For the First Green Drinks in Edmonds March 2

Green Drinks is an international organization that provides opportunities to meet other people in your area who are interested in environmental issues. Typically there are not any formal presentations, just a chance to meet like-minded people. There will be people from PAS, the Sierra Club, Edmonds Marsh Estuary Advocates, Edmonds Environmental Alliance, Climate Alliance of Snohomish County and others.

#### Edmonds Green Drinks

**March 2 at 6:00 p.m. | Salish Sea Brewing Co. Boathouse Taproom  
180 Dayton Street, Suite #102, Edmonds, WA 98020-3431**

Phone: +1 425 407-5734

About your organizer: my name is Bill Derry. I am President of Pilchuck Audubon Society. I am involved with a large group of people trying to restore the Edmonds Marsh and Estuary as well as other environmental issues in the Salish Sea area.

Please come join us. We'll be asking for ideas to make this a fun and successful monthly event.

Oh, there will be live music from "The Sidekickers" afterward for those who wish to stay.

<http://www.greendrinks.org/WA/Edmonds>



Pileated woodpecker at my feeder this month.



Downy woodpecker at my feeder this month

Meadowdale Park Estuary

## Help Wanted: Edmonds Marsh Bird Survey Project Manager

After several years of setting up and running our [Avian Habitat Use Monitoring at the Edmonds Marsh](#), Scott Markowitz is stepping away from the role of project manager. Scott has put a lot of time and energy into this project, and we extend our sincere thanks to him!

With that in mind, we are currently looking for someone to take over the role of project manager for this project. The ideal candidate for this position would be detail oriented, have a strong understanding of science/field surveys, and be able to coordinate volunteers. Thanks to the generous support of donors, we have an annual budget for this project of \$10,000 which includes project expenses and funding for a part-time project manager.

If you or someone you know is interested, please contact PAS President Bill Derry at [president@pilchuckaudubon.org](mailto:president@pilchuckaudubon.org).

Thank you! 🍀



Photo by Bill Anderson



### Scoping Comment Period Open Through March 10

The [Everett Link Extension](#) is a mass transit system expansion that will extend Link light rail service north from Lynnwood City Center to the Everett Station area. Now through March 10, you can share your thoughts by submitting comments on the route, station, and operations and maintenance facility alternatives.

*From the Everett Link Extension website:*

#### **What is an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?**

The next phase of this project will be environmental review, which includes the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. The EIS will evaluate the potential adverse or beneficial effects of the alternatives to the physical, human, and natural environment and will also propose measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate significant adverse effects where appropriate. This EIS will be prepared in compliance with both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is anticipated to be

the lead agency under NEPA and Sound Transit is the lead agency under SEPA. The SEPA scoping process is part of local planning and FTA could rely on it for future NEPA evaluations. Decisions made in this local SEPA scoping process may be revisited in the subsequent federal NEPA process.

The EIS will be published in two documents: a Draft EIS and a Final EIS. The Draft EIS will be made available to the public for a minimum of 45 days for review and comment. The Final EIS will address public, Tribe, and agency comments; will include any necessary revisions to correct technical errors; and will add any new information that became available since the Draft EIS was published.

#### **What is scoping?**

The EIS scoping period is an opportunity for the public, Tribes, and agencies to provide input on the scope of the EIS including:

*Continued on Page 9*



# BIRDING FIELD TRIPS

## TRIP CALENDAR



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

**Tuesday, February 7, 2023**      **Fir Island**  
7:30 AM

Trip Leader: Phil Dickinson, 336-692-3760  
Meet at 7:30 AM at the Quil Ceda Village Walmart lot west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from the store to the east near Quil Ceda Blvd (next to I-5). We will explore Wylie Slough, Hayton Reserve, North Fork Access and the farm roads of Fir Island and the Skagit Valley in search of wintering raptors and waterfowl. Pack a lunch.

**Tuesday, February 14, 2023**      **Spencer Island**  
8:00 AM

Trip Leader: Rex Guichard, 206-999-7618  
Meet at 8:00 AM at the gravel parking lot at the Everett Sewage Lagoons. From the south, take I-5 Exit 195 to East Marine View Drive to SR-529, Ross Rd. and Smith Island Rd. past Langus Riverfront Park and around curve to lot. From the north, take I-5 Exit 198 to SR-529, then exit for Langus Riverfront Park along frontage road to Ross Rd. and Smith Island Rd. This will be an easy trip, leaving time for Valentine's Day celebrations. The Everett Sewage Lagoons, northern Smith Island, and perhaps other spots also will be included. Pack a lunch. Dress for the weather.

**Tuesday, February 21, 2023**      **Port Townsend**  
(assuming two-ferry schedule; check back for updates)  
7:10 AM

Trip Leader: Phil Dickinson, 336-692-3760  
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. This popular winter trip focuses on various sites around Port Townsend, including Marrowstone Island, Fort Flagler, Fort Worden, and Kah Tai Lagoon. Pack a lunch. Dress for the weather, including possibly windy conditions.

**Tuesday, February 28, 2023**      **North Whidbey Island**  
7:30 AM

Trip Leader: Phil Dickinson, 336-692-3760  
Meet at 7:30 AM at the Quil Ceda Village Walmart lot west of Marysville (I-5 exit 200). Park away from the store to

the east near Quil Ceda Blvd (next to I-5). Fidalgo Island and North Whidbey Island offer a variety of lake and waterfront settings for wintering waterfowl, including Campbell Lake, Rosario Beach, Deception Pass, Ala Spit and Dugualla Bay, and Admiralty Bay. There will be good opportunities to see seasonal songbirds as well. Pack a lunch. Dress for the weather. ✍

## 2023 Field Trip Waivers

All field trip participants must sign an annual liability waiver. This year's waiver is an online form, which can be found at the top of our [Upcoming Trips](#) page of our website or at the link below. Even if you've recently signed a 2022 waiver, we'll need you to sign a new one for the current year. Thank you!

### [2023 Waiver](#)

Please review our [current field trip guidelines as relates to COVID-19 here](#). ✍

*Continued from Page 8*

## Everett Link Extension

- The project's purpose and need.
- Topics or issues to study in the EIS.
- Light rail route/stations and OMF North site alternatives.

Your input will be shared with the Community Advisory Group (CAG), Elected Leadership Group (ELG), Sound Transit Board, and FTA to help inform decision-making on the alternatives to study further in the EIS. Once all comments from this scoping process have been reviewed and recommendations have been made by the CAG and ELG, the Sound Transit Board will identify alternatives for the Draft EIS and may also identify a preferred alternative.

To learn more about the project, please visit the [Everett Link Extension website](#). To submit comments, you can:

- [Visit their website](#)
- Email your comments to [everettlinkcomments@soundtransit.org](mailto:everettlinkcomments@soundtransit.org)
- Leave a voicemail at (425) 492-7218
- Send a letter to:  
Everett Link Extension  
Kathy Fendt  
Sound Transit  
401 S. Jackson St.  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Tributes to Virginia Clark

It is with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Virginia Clark in December. Virginia was one of the earliest members of Pilchuck Audubon, serving as the Membership Committee Chair in the mid-1980s and the Hospitality Chair for more than two decades after that. Most recently, she was the Field Trip Committee Chair and greeted everyone on the Tuesday birding trips with her famous cookies. Virginia was loved by many, and our hearts are heavy with this news.

### Kathleen Snyder's Memories of Virginia

Virginia was my mentor, my friend, and my kindred spirit. I met her when I retired and started birding with the Tuesday Pilchuck group in 2010. Over the years, we spent more and more time together birding and had some really wonderful trips – British Columbia, Eastern Oregon, Eastern Washington, and the Washington coast. She taught me so much of what I know and showed me the joy that spending time in nature brings. These are things that you should know about her:

Virginia had a spiritual relationship with “Mom” and consistently sought her help with Tuesday weather.

Beneath that rough exterior was a heart of gold who would feed anyone – friends, family, strangers. To Virginia, food was her expression of love and appreciation.

Virginia was a staunch environmentalist who kept up with current affairs and had strong political views.

Virginia played many vital roles for Pilchuck Audubon. She joined in the late 1960s and started leading field trips in the 2000s. She worked on the Membership Committee, the Classroom Conservation Awards Committee, Christmas Bird Counts, Snow Goose Festivals, Festivals of the River, and Eagle Fests in Arlington. When Pilchuck had an office in downtown Everett, Virginia was a regular staffer there and also presented bird slide shows to other organizations.

However, the role for which she is most well known was Hospitality Chair. Her cookies, sweet breads, and pies were legendary, and there were folks who attended program meetings mainly to enjoy her goodies.

In 2011, Virginia and Art Wait were awarded the Pilchuck Audubon Volunteers of the Year award in recognition of all their efforts.

Virginia was a force of nature who introduced many folk to the joys of birding in general and the benefits of Pilchuck Audubon membership in particular. PAS and I will miss her greatly.



L to R: Kathleen, Virginia, Art

### Wild in the Woman : Ode to Virginia

She opened the car hatchback  
on our very first day.

It was at the first stop of the day.  
Always the very first stop.

And then the birders gathered  
like goldfinches at black oil seed feeders.  
Chocolate chip, macadamia nut,  
butterscotch, shortbread, oatmeal raisin.  
Surprises. What will it be today?

This is how the morning trip always began  
as the ache of waking in the early morning  
dissolved  
with cookies and coffee.

Years of birding, leading, learning, teaching  
She could answer almost any question.  
Whip smart. Funny. Stern. Tireless. Kind.  
She held us all in line and yet she laughed,  
at times  
at the futility of trying.

It wasn't hard to imagine her in a classroom  
managing schoolchildren. Engaging them with  
stories and humor and rewards.  
Deciding who gets the star for today.  
And teaching them to be wary to cross her.

A force of nature.  
A sugar maple tree. A Redwood.  
She often seemed to me akin to  
the solidity of the forest  
A solid trunk grown over decades.  
Sometimes yet,  
like launching wings of a passerine.  
Undaunted by wind or chilly rains.  
Ready to flit to the next location.

Formidable.  
Yet fallen by a careless judgment.  
Watching her wilt was painful.

Grateful for her kindness and leadership.  
Her lessons stay with us.  
She is gone, now, and like seasonal migrants,  
We remember those moments.  
Her song remains in our hearts.

– Ann Kramer

## Tributes to Virginia Clark, continued

### Phil Dickinson

When this OCD birder moved to Snohomish County from North Carolina in early 2016, I was eager to continue my obsession with new birds and new habitats. What better way to do this than to connect with other area birders, and what better way to do that than show up for a Pilchuck Audubon Tuesday outing. Of course, that is when I met Virginia Clark.

One early May morning, I arrived at the Walmart Quil Ceda parking lot for a day of birding on Camano Island. Virginia immediately made me feel welcome among strangers. That first day, I rode with Jim Beneteau and Virginia. It was a wonderful day of exploring birding hotspots along the Puget Sound shoreline, and we learned a bit more about each other.

Virginia had reservations about my birding skills those first few trips. I knew eastern birds, but here we had new birds with unfamiliar calls. However, she was always there to help. Yes, the Pacific Wren has this little two-note chip. And, that's a Bewick's Wren song, not a Song Sparrow's!

I know that Virginia led these trips for many years, but it amazed me how she could navigate by memory around every road along dozens of trip itineraries in Washington and British Columbia. She never missed a turn, although Jim sometimes missed the instruction. I pride myself on my navigation skills, but I had met my match and then some.

I also learned that birding with Virginia meant breakfast breads and cookies. Trip participants could not wait to check out the day's offerings at our first stop. Now, this is birding at its best! Pies also were a Virginia specialty. Every summer, Virginia invited us to her home for a communal feast that would include her tasty potato salad and a choice of eight or nine different pies to sample.

Virginia loved her birds, except maybe the dozens of Band-tailed Pigeons that would raid her yard. What a treat it was to visit her finches, grosbeaks, woodpeckers and hummingbirds throughout the year – and, yes, the pigeons. And, on our trips, she took as much pleasure as anyone in nearly all the birds she would find.

Side note: Virginia had a strong relationship with "Mother Nature." Precipitation was rare on our Tuesday trips. Before each outing, Virginia talked to Mother Nature to let her know that this was not a day for rain,

snow or bitter cold. We were rarely disappointed.

Virginia spread her passion about birds to others, not just on Tuesdays, but also countless community citizens and children at local birding events like Arlington's Eagle Festival. And, she eagerly took part in PAS's Birdathon fundraising efforts. In 2020-2021, she joined a few of us in scouring Washington from Tokeland to Othello to find over 200 species to maximize those pledges. She not only loved the birds but knew they mattered and supported Audubon conservation efforts.

We all loved Virginia – her warmth for others, spirit, energy, giving, love and knowledge of birds, and, yes, her baking. I did not know Virginia as long as others, but she has left me with so many memories I will treasure. She is sorely missed and will be long remembered in our hearts.



Bev Davenport Photo

### Pam Pritzl

I've known Virginia for over 20 years. She was an excellent birder and readily shared her knowledge and scope with everyone. She welcomed all and I always chuckled when she told us we were behaving like the first graders she taught for many years. One can't think of Virginia without mentioning the homemade cookies she brought every week and her famous summer picnic at her house. I'm heartbroken that she is no longer with us.

## Tributes to Virginia Clark, continued

### Valerie Wade

I met Virginia when I was birding my first time with Pilchuck Audubon. Unknown to me, Kathleen Snyder (former President of Pilchuck) was leading the group that day. But Virginia wanted to lead. So, the gathering of the group that morning to carpool and bird was tension-filled. They were both strangers to me, so I just watched and waited. My thoughts were that maaaybe I did not want to join this group? Shortly after we started birding, Virginia started to tell the group where the next birding spot was; but Kathleen stepped forward and told her that SHE was the leader and Virginia would not DARE take over! Before I could gasp at the angry words, Virginia burst into laughter and went over and hugged Kathleen. Whew. I quickly learned that they were good friends and that Virginia would respect 'boundaries' of others.

I ended up birding almost every week after that. It has now been 8 years! Not only was Virginia the leader most of the time; she also spent all of Monday baking 4-5 dozen cookies to bring for us on Tuesdays. I don't know how she did it; how she had all that energy! As a newcomer, I told her I would be willing to make some cookies, too, to make it a little less work for her. She almost beheaded me with a NO! She told me that was her 'special super power' and that we were all her close friends. She expressed that love through her scrumptious and much-anticipated cookies. When we are birding for 10-12 hours, sweet snacks like that really do help.

Shortly before Virginia died, she hosted her annual 'birding in her backyard'. This was held in July of each year. We'd meet at her Arlington house, then bird the immediate area for a few hours. She stayed behind and prepared to serve a full luncheon to all of us upon our return. We often had 30-40 people that day! She had spent 4 days prepping it all: from sliced ham to cooked chicken to breads and cheese, and salads (including her 'famous' homemade potato salad); finished off with 6-8 kinds of homemade pie. WOW! Virginia was in her early 80's by then. Where did she get that stamina?!

Virginia was a retired 1st and 2nd grade teacher. She would occasionally tell little vignettes from those days. One of the funniest was her method of keeping those restless students quiet and calm when indoors. She would tell them, on the first day of school, that there was a herd of miniature horses that lived on the room's carpet. They had to tiptoe quietly when on the carpet so they didn't accidentally step on a mini-horse.... 🐾. Then, on the last day of school before summer, she told them to wave goodbye to the mini-horses. So they all did! Did you know that your children's teacher might lie to them?! It was such a clever solution and it still makes me laugh.

We all miss Virginia so much; and especially on Tuesdays. She left a big hole in our lives and in our hearts. She was an expert birder. She was an expert baker. She was an excellent leader. She was an excellent friend. And, she was one of a kind.

### Allen Gibbs

Virginia's leadership with Tuesday field trips was for me a first rate education experience! To go to the best places to see and hear certain birds was wonderful! That she attracted other experts over the years is her gift to future birders!

### Sue Welsh

Virginia was the heart and soul of our Tuesday birding group. She was kind, funny, gracious, and knowledgeable. I will miss her always.



### Teri Martine

(who provided the photo above)

In addition to leading a flock of Pilchuck birders every week, and always with an ample supply of her home-baked treats for everyone, Virginia hosted an annual summer picnic for the group at her home. She always insisted on providing the whole feast, including homemade pies in nine flavors! Truly a welcoming and generous spirit who delighted in sharing birds, baked goods, and hearty laughs at every opportunity — she is missed by many.

## Tributes to Virginia Clark, continued



Virginia feeding Sandhill Cranes

Photos on this page courtesy of Rex Guichard

### Amy Perkins

When I began birding with Pilchuck, I was a brand new birder and I only knew the names of a few yard birds. Thankfully, Virginia was so welcoming, helpful and friendly to newbies that I continued attending on Tuesday trips. I stuck close to Virginia and learned so much from her. If she had been less friendly or hadn't learned everyone's names, I might never have stuck with it. She set a wonderful example for us all, and I found the other regulars to be friendly and helpful as well, willing to share scopes and identify the same bird over and over for me. Of course no one could ever forget her wonderful cookies and delicious pies - we never figured out how she could make so many in a day. She was an amazing woman and she has been and will be, missed so much.



2016 Birdathon Timberdoodles Team

### A MEMBER'S OBSERVATION From Virginia Clark

On April 8th Virginia Clark had an interesting encounter with a handsome male evening grosbeak.

He hit her front window, knocking himself cockoo. She put their Springer Spaniel in the house and went to see what she could do. She picked up the dazed bird and proceeded to pet it and talk to him. He sat on her finger as if it were a perch and stared at her. They spent another five minutes together. She then set him on a branch in her apple tree. Finally he flew off.

Virginia writes of the experience, "They are such a beautiful bird up close. Their white dots on black and the beautiful blending of yellow must make them one of nature's remarkable creatures. Those five minutes were like being in another world of quietude and tranquility".

From the May 1984 PROFILE

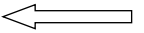
### John Hollis

I will remember Virginia's enthusiasm & great humor. She was always willing to share her knowledge with everyone.

## Tributes to Virginia Clark, continued



A Tuesday  
birders'  
lunch in  
July,  
prepared  
and served  
by Virginia  
at her home



PAS  
Tuesday  
birders  
out to  
find the  
birds



Photos courtesy of Rex Guichard



## Our 2023 Fundraising Goals

By Jeff Hambleton, Development Committee Chair

This year, Pilchuck Audubon will celebrate 50 years of working for bird-friendly communities. We have set an ambitious goal of raising an additional \$20,000 this year to further our programs.

Your donations, with previous generous gifts from Phil and Laura Zalesky, support classroom grants to recognize and promote conservation education at the elementary school level.

PAS offers educational opportunities at local bird festivals and online offerings on bird identification, photography, habitat restoration, and preservation. We offer custom presentations to community colleges, libraries, rotary clubs, senior centers and more. We have at least weekly field trips for all levels of birders.

We promote and participate in national community science projects like the Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, and Climate Watch, as well as local projects monitoring the Vaux's Swifts in Monroe and Avian Habitat Use at the Edmonds Marsh. Pilchuck Audubon volunteers drive the success of these projects.

Finally, PAS is a powerful advocate for conservation, habitat protection, and promoting climate and bird-friendly policies at all levels of government.

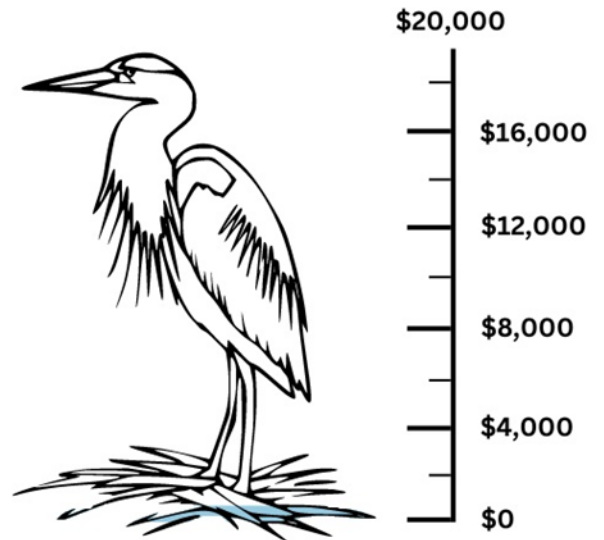
Your membership and contributions to PAS allow our chapter to improve and expand our educational programs, collect more data to inform decision-making, and have a louder voice in the conservation arena.

Here's how to help PAS achieve these goals:

- Encourage friends, neighbors, and fellow birders to [join Pilchuck Audubon as a chapter member](#). It is the affordable and core first step that links members to the mission of Pilchuck Audubon.
- Volunteer your time to help with community science projects, educational offerings, and advocacy.
- [Today, we ask for your generous donation](#) so that we can continue to expand our impact in your community.

Finally, join us this fall on October 7 at the Feast in the Forest to celebrate Pilchuck Audubon's 50 years as "Champion of the Environment."

[Donate to our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Campaign](#)



## 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.

- Student ..... \$15
  - Senior ..... \$30
  - Adult ..... \$35
  - Family ..... \$50
  - Lifetime Member (one-time payment)..... \$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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Send me these via e-mail (check all that apply & include your e-mail address above):

- Profile Newsletter     Program Announcements     Action Alerts

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 9**



## 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!

### Meadowdale Beach Park Estuary Restoration Project (MBPERP)

[Watch the Recording](#)

### Nesting Success and Recruitment of Western and Clark's Grebes in Idaho

Presentation by Anne Yen

[Watch the Recording](#)

### Reproductive Ecology of the White-headed Woodpecker in Washington's Ponderosa Pine Forests

Presentation by Jeff Kozma

[Watch the Recording](#)

### Of Puffins and Petrels

Presentation by Peter J. Hodum, Ph.D.

[Watch the Recording](#)

### Up in Smoke: How will birds respond to smoke pollution in the age of megafires?

Presentation by Olivia Sanderfoot, Ph.D.

[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](mailto:newsletter@pilchuckaudubon.org) or mail to 1429 Avenue D, PMB 198, Snohomish, WA 98290. Submissions must be received by the 21<sup>st</sup> 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](http://www.pilchuckaudubon.org)

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	Jay Ward ..... 425.418.5444
	Douglas Cooper ..... <a href="mailto:douglas@pilchuckaudubon.org">douglas@pilchuckaudubon.org</a>

### Committee Chairs

Bird Sightings	Mara Price ..... 360.722.5752
Community Science Coord.	Sherrill Miller ..... <a href="mailto:field.birds.pas@gmail.com">field.birds.pas@gmail.com</a>
Communications	Vacant ..... <a href="mailto:communications@pilchuckaudubon.org">communications@pilchuckaudubon.org</a>
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### Staff

Executive Director/ Development Director	Brian Zinke ..... <a href="mailto:director@pilchuckaudubon.org">director@pilchuckaudubon.org</a>
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