

Admiralty Audubon Pippings
AAS Birding May & June 2024
Fort Worden Birdwalk, Big Sit, Hawk Watch & Hangout
Saturday, May 11, 2024, 10AM - 1PM

Beginners and newcomers welcome!

A “Big Sit” involves seeing how many birds you can see or hear from a given spot for a given length of time. We’ll run this like an open house and social gathering, meaning you can join or leave at any time. The location will be the magnificent meadow and viewpoint at Alexander’s Bluff (48.137, -122.766) (just west of the Vault Loop Trail) at Fort Worden. We’ll be there from 10 AM to 1 PM. If the weather is nice, this should coincide with vulture and raptor migration, so it will double as a “hawk watch.” Regardless, it should be primetime for spring migration of neotropical migrants (e.g. flycatchers, vireos, warblers, etc.). Bring a lawn chair if you want!



© Steve Hampton

Alexander's Bluff, Fort Worden © Steve Hampton

Early birders can meet at Reveille Cafe by 9 AM (we’ll be there by 8:30 for coffee). From there, we’ll walk up behind the buildings to Battery Way East, ending up at Alexander’s Bluff by 10 AM. This south-facing slope is often very good for birds on a spring morning. No RSVP necessary. Just stop by the bluff any time you want, or join us for the walk up! Trip Leaders are Steve Hampton and Ali Kasperzak. *Contact Steve at stevehampton@gmail.com for any questions.*

Third Saturday at Anderson Lake State Park
Saturday, May 18, 2024, 8:30 - 11:30 AM

Meet at 8:30 AM at the parking area straight down the dirt road just beyond the meadows. Discover Pass required for parking. You must contact leader Beverly McNeil to register: bevybirds53@gmail.com. The group size is limited to 5. If the weather is bad we may cancel. Bring binoculars and water, if desired. Distance is 1.5 miles and time of outing is usually 3 to 4 hours. We normally go around the whole lake on Trail B, Anderson Lake State Park (https://parks.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/anderson_lake_state_park_overview_map_pdf_1.5mb.pdf). Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing for changeable weather. Please avoid wearing bright clothing.

Third Saturday at Anderson Lake State Park
Saturday, June 15, 2024, 8:30 - 11:30 AM



© Beverly McNeil

Fiery-throated Hummingbird at 9,000 ft elevation in Costa Rica, not at Anderson Lake! April 1, 2023.

Meet at 8:30 AM at the parking area straight down the dirt road just beyond the meadows. Discover Pass required for parking. You must contact leader Beverly McNeil to register: bevybirds53@gmail.com. The group size is limited to 5. If the weather is bad we may cancel. Bring binoculars and water, if desired. Distance is 1.5 miles and time of outing is usually 3 to 4 hours. We normally go around the whole lake on Trail B, Anderson Lake State Park (https://parks.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-08/anderson_lake_state_park_overview_map_pdf_1.5mb.pdf). Wear sturdy shoes and layered clothing for changeable weather. Please avoid wearing bright clothing.

Betty Renkor
 Admiralty Audubon Field Trips Chair

Conservation Corner: Opportunities at Short Farm

Short Farm is one of the more popular and interesting local birding spots. It was recently purchased from the Short family by the Port of Port Townsend, a public entity. The Port is currently in a public “visioning process” to determine exactly how the 253-acre property should be managed. The website for that process is here:

<https://portofpt.com/shorts-family-farm/>.

I’ve since been doing some networking to understand where this process might be headed. I believe, under the new management, there is little risk to the habitat. Instead, there is an opportunity for restoration. Some key points:

The land is already protected by an agricultural easement by the Jefferson Land Trust.

The Port purchased the farm with a \$1M grant and \$400K of their own funds. It is obligated to earn 9.5% on their \$400K investment, or \$38,000/yr. (This equates to 2.7% on the entire \$1.4M purchase price). Much of this revenue may come from leasing pre-existing buildings. There is no specific ag operation in mind.

- Chimacum Creek has a major voice here; everyone understands that much of the property will always flood in winter and be a seasonal wetland. That is not at risk. Further channelizing the creek and turning the flooded area into row crops or an orchard is not feasible.
- The property is large (253 acres) – there is enough room for both ag and resource conservation, and possibly restoration in areas where ag is not feasible.
- Habitat for birds, duck hunting, and salmon restoration have extensive overlap here; we can all be partners. The access granted for duck hunters has led to access for birders (on different days of the week).
- Many voices in the community are interested in stream restoration, which may include removing invasive canary grass, restoring some sinuosity, and riparian plantings to shade the stream. This would be good for both salmon and birds.
- The Port’s ownership of the property, rather than a private entity, offers a unique opportunity to protect and enhance the natural and wildlife values of the property.

How we can be involved:

- We can remind them of what we care about – the birds, the habitat, and public access.

- It’s okay to be repetitive because not all of the steering committee gets to all the comments.
- While all the planning meetings are open to the public, only a few are specifically designed to take public comment. The next one is set for Wednesday, May 15.
- One can also email comments at any time (see the website link above).
- The Port Commission will make a final decision on Wednesday, July 10. It’s likely to be more of a general plan than a specific plan.

In February, as the Conservation Chair, I submitted this public comment on behalf of Admiralty Audubon:

“The flooded pastures of Short Farm are currently one of the largest seasonal freshwater wetlands in eastern Jefferson County. The peat soil attests to the historic seasonal wetland that has existed there for millennia. Each winter (October thru May), the flooded areas host several thousand waterfowl, making it one of the largest concentrations of ducks, geese, and swans on the Olympic Peninsula. Over a hundred Trumpeter Swans typically winter there as well, which is one of the largest local concentrations of that species.

Duck hunters, bird watchers, and nature photographers greatly enjoy and appreciate public access to portions of the property. Over a hundred bird species have been documented there in recent years:

<https://ebird.org/barchart?r=L21974906&yr=all&m=>

Admiralty Audubon strongly supports maintaining the waterfowl habitat and public access.”

Steve Hampton

Admiralty Audubon Conservation and CBC Chair



© Steve Hampton

Chipping Sparrow at Short Farm, April 2024.

Feather Forecast for May & June 2024: Migratory Marvels

It's the peak of Springtime, where day breaks with a rush of birdsong and wanes with an equal flurry of activity, as our Neotropical migrants settle in to their newly built or borrowed nesting sites and reclaimed territories. March and April afforded some excitement with early season visitors and rarities such as a female/immature Snow Bunting at North Beach, a female Mountain Bluebird at Point Wilson, and a group of Whimbrels on Marrowstone Island at East Beach. Concurrently, Brants, Black Turnstones and Dunlin gathered en masse at Point Hudson, as Turkey Vultures reappeared at Fort Worden and Canada Geese took to the skies in V formation. As our days continue to lengthen towards the summer solstice, we segue from peak migration into the late spring season, welcoming in warblers, flycatchers and swallows, whilst bidding our seasonal adieus to the many shorebirds, waterfowl and seabirds that head northward to their Arctic breeding grounds.

As we watch the neotropical birds migrate in and overwintering birds migrate out, we can reflect on the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act recently passed by Congress. This bipartisan effort, which reauthorizes the former Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, comes at a critical juncture, where the loss of over 3 billion birds during the past half century intersects with climate change and threatened extinction of numerous species. Under the renewed bill, migratory bird species stand to gain conservation support through increased grant opportunities that will aid critical habitat restorations, facilitate research and monitoring efforts, and promote educational outreach and collaborations in the Western Hemisphere.

This legislation reminds us of the importance of our Pacific Flyway as integral for the many birds we enjoy and encounter throughout each season. Of the 4 major migratory corridors found within North America (i.e., Pacific, Central, Mississippi, Atlantic), the Pacific flyway extends from the Arctic wetlands of Alaska, along the Pacific coast, to the windswept coasts of Patagonia in South America. Many Important Bird Areas (Indian-Marrowstone Island/Oak Bay in Jefferson County) along the route are crucial stopover points for refueling and resting as migratory birds make their biannual journeys.

Examples of bird species that exemplify "migratory marvel" utilizing the Pacific Flyway are Rufous Hummingbirds and Whimbrels. The Whimbrel has been shown, per satellite tag monitoring (see [Birdlife.org](#)), to fly an incredible 18,500 miles round trip between its breeding grounds in northern Alaska to its wintering locale in Chile. By comparison, the tiny Rufous Hummingbird travels an astonishing 12,000 miles round trip from Alaska to Central Mexico each year, the longest migration of any bird species based on a body size and migration distance ratio. Other notable migrants along our Pacific Flyway are the Townsend's Warbler, Western Tanager, Surfbird and Olive-sided Flycatcher.

This year, May 11 marks World Migratory Bird Day. So as we close out the spring season and head into summertime, look upwards to the skies, along our waterways and amidst our foliage, taking time to value the remarkable migratory birds that inhabit our local areas. Too, take heed of the significant roles we all play as stewards of critical habitats, supporting the rich and diverse birdlife we collectively admire.

Here are some relevant migratory species to anticipate while birding this May and June:

Warblers: Yellow, Wilson's, Black-throated Gray, MacGillivray's, and Common Yellowthroat.

Vireos: Cassin's and Warbling.

Wrens: House.

Flycatchers: Olive-sided, Western, Willow, Hammond's and Western Wood-Pewee.

Thrushes: Swainson's.

Sparrows: Savannah and Chipping.

Swallows, Swifts: Tree, Violet-green, Barn, Cliff, Purple Martin and Northern Rough-winged; Vaux's; .

Hummingbirds: Rufous.

Also: Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Bullock's Oriole, Sora, and Osprey.

Miranda Maxwell
Admiralty Audubon Member



A trifecta of Swallows at Theler Wetland Preserve, spring 2024.

AAS Community Program
May 16, 2024, 7:30pm
Port Townsend Community Center
Uptown at Lawrence & Tyler

The public is invited to attend our May community program. Cindy Daily of Discovery Bay Wild Bird Rescue will bring her live Ambassador birds. These birds are ones who have either been rehabilitated after suffering injuries sufficient that they cannot be released to the wild but are calm around humans or have been patterned on humans so that they cannot survive in the wild. Some also serve as foster parents to rescued young of their species. This is a wonderful educational program especially for children to see live birds and learn about their behaviors.

Rosemary Sikes
Admiralty Audubon Programs Chair

AAS Kah Tai Workparties
May & June 2024

Sunday May 12 & Sunday June 2, 9AM - noon
We will have workparties at Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park sponsored by Admiralty Audubon Society.

We will be removing invasives (i.e., Scot's broom, spurge laurel, holly and ivy) and picking up trash. Scot's Broom pullers, garbage bags and garbage grippers and refreshments will be provided. Park in the Chase Bank parking lot and look for the white pickup next to the bench closest to Chase Bank.

May 12 workparty: Invasives removal and trash pickup.

June 2 workparty: We will also be making and installing 20 cages for the fall planting. Look for the white pickup near the For more information email ptrose53@gmail.com or call 360-385-0307.

Rosemary Sikes
Admiralty Audubon Programs Chair



left: The eagles are back to work on their nest at Seaview in North Beach, 22 April 2024. right: A Northern Harrier sitting in the grass beside Chinese Gardens Lagoon, spring 2024.

AAS Membership Form 2024
<https://admiraltyaudubon.org>

name _____ date _____
mailing address _____
city, state, zipcode _____
email address _____ phone number _____

Would you prefer your newsletter by email? paper copy? amount enclosed \$ _____

Send \$20 annual membership to: **Admiralty Audubon, PO Box 666, Port Townsend WA 98368**
or pay online at the 'Join' link via PayPal or credit card

Membership includes 6 issues of our newsletter per year and the right to vote in chapter elections. Chapter programs and field trips are free to the public. We always welcome donations! Dues and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Admiralty Audubon is a 501c3 nonprofit organization.

Volunteers Needed for Pigeon Guillemot Surveys in June-August 2024

Help monitor breeding colony status in a region-wide survey of Pigeon Guillemots sponsored by the Salish Sea Guillemot Network (<http://www.pigeonguillemot.org/>). You must be willing to follow established survey protocols using your own binoculars. A minimum commitment of 1 hour per week for 10-12 weeks is required. Training will be provided virtually and in the field where appropriate. If interested, please email Dr. Brenda Johnson at bsjohnson1@icloud.com using "Pigeon Guillemot Surveys" in subject line.

Brenda Johnson

Jefferson Coordinator, Guillemot Network



© Hillary Smith



© Wendy Feltham

Anna's-Rufous Hybrid!

Along with the resident Anna's and recently arrived Rufous Hummingbirds at my feeders, a different one appeared. I shared these photos with Jackie Canterbury, Steve Hampton, Barry McKenzie, and Monica Fletcher. Jackie reached out to experts who band hummingbirds in Juneau, Alaska, and they confirmed. To be sure, Steve asked THE hummingbird expert, Shari Williamson, author of Field Guide to Hummingbirds of North America, wondering if the rufous might be feather angle reflections. She replied, "That rufous color is real. The intermediate shapes of the greater secondary coverts and the truncated crown iridescence are hybrid traits seen in other Anna's x Rufous."

You can see there aren't many on eBird: <https://ebird.org/species/x00626> and when I tried to enter mine as a rarity here, it wasn't even an option. I had to enter it as an Anna's X Allen's, as that was the only rare option, and assume someone at eBird can fix it.

Wendy Feltham

Admiralty Audubon Member

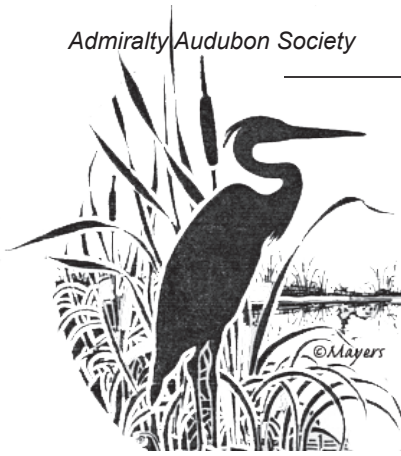


© Wendy Feltham



© Hillary Smith

photos clockwise from upper left: Pigeon Guillemot courtship display ("hunch whistle") at Indian Island; Rufous x Anna's Hummingbird; Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle) at Short Farm; American Coot at Kah Tai, all spring 2024.



Admiralty Pippings

Admiralty Audubon Society of East Jefferson County
PO Box 666 Port Townsend WA 98368

© Hillary Smith



Merlin at Short Farm, April 2024.

Admiralty Audubon Officers and Board

President: Rick Jahnke	360-531-3417	rjahnke@att.net
Vice President: Bill Vogt	360-531-2821	billvogt46@gmail.com
Secretary: Ron Sikes	360-385-0307	b1rdbrush@gmail.com
Treasurer: Rick Jahnke (interim)	360-531-3417	rjahnke@att.net
Field Trips: Betty Renkor	--	betty.renkor@gmail.com
Programs: Rosemary Sikes	360-385-0307	ptrose53@gmail.com
Education: Juliet Rhodes	--	win10ski2019@gmail.com
& Monica Fletcher	360-379-3136	monicaflet@gmail.com
Conservation & CBC: Steve Hampton	530-400-8417	stevehampton@gmail.com
Membership: Clara Mason	360-385-3594	aacmason@olypen.com
Newsletter: Debbie Jahnke	360-531-3415	admiraudub@gmail.com
Member At Large - PI Rep: Craig Wester	360-385-5390	craigwester@olympus.net
Webmaster: Andrew Reding	--	admiraltyaudubon@gmail.com
Website: https://admiraltyaudubon.org		Facebook: https://facebook.com/admiraltyaudubon

The Chapter Considers a Name Change

Due to recent discussions of the controversial history of the name 'Audubon', many formerly Audubon chapters across the country have changed their names, and more are in process. Many other chapters are doing some version of "_____ Bird Alliance", including several Washington state chapters. Our chapter officers and board decided to examine a potential name change.

A note in our March 2024 newsletter asked members with opinions to send them in. Thus far the responses are predominantly positive. Chapter members who wish to express suggestions are encouraged to email the board at admiraltyaudubon@gmail.com.