

Admiralty Audubon Pippings

AAS Programs March & April 2013

*The public is invited:
Port Townsend Community Center
Lawrence and Tyler*

Thursday, 21 March, 7 pm: Climate Change Is (Not) For the Birds

Changes in climate are occurring and accelerating. The National Audubon Society's Strategic Plan recognizes that *"this unprecedented threat is already disrupting the natural balance and cycles that have sustained birds and other wildlife for millennia."*

AAS President Rick Jahnke will provide an unvarnished update of changes to habitat that challenge wildlife and the outlook for the rest of the century.

Thursday, 18 April, 7 pm: Corvid Natural History and What is Wildlife Rehabilitation?

Ed and Ebenezer, the American crows from West Sound Wildlife, along with their handler, wildlife rehabilitator Elena Fox, have given programs to hundreds of children and adults, sharing facts and stories about crows, life in the wild, and wildlife of all types. These clever birds will give you a unique insight into their world in this family program. You'll get new perspective into the birds that share our world.

West Sound Wildlife is a wildlife hospital and education center that serves the western Puget Sound. In 2011 they treated over 1,000 patients in their hospital and gave educational presentations to more than 5,000 kids and adults. Their mission is to provide injured, orphaned, and sick wild animals a second chance at life and to promote the well-being of wildlife through public outreach, education, and involvement.

Rosemary Sikes

*Programs Chair,
Admiralty Audubon*



*D. Gluckman Flamingo,
photoshopped*



Crows at Kah Tai © Julie Jaman

AAS Field Trips March & April 2013

Saturday, 16 March: Oak Bay & Fort Flagler

We'll start at Little Oak Bay Park, then travel to Indian Island and Marrowstone Island, stopping at the mudflats connecting the islands before going on to Fort Flagler campground

road to the end for a walk along the marine spit. All should meet at 8 a.m. at Little Oak Bay Park off Oak Bay Road, about two miles east from Port Hadlock's four-way stop signs. If you want to carpool from Port Townsend, meet at the Park & Ride near Safeway by 7:15 a.m. I'll meet everyone at Oak Bay Park. *Paula Vanderheul, Trip Leader: 379-8564 or pvanderheul@gmail.com.*

Sunday, 14 April: Crockett Lake

This walking trip starts with walking on the ferry. Meet on the 9:30 a.m. Port Townsend Ferry to Coupeville. We will be on the passenger deck up front looking at sea birds and mammals on our voyage to Whidbey Island. The trip includes walking approx. 1.5 miles round trip to view birds on the west corner of Crockett Lake. There will also be some forest birding going and coming from the shore of Crockett Lake. If time allows we'll look for Brandt's Cormorants on concrete buttress east of the ferry terminal. Wear sturdy shoes, appropriate clothing for the weather. Bring water, lunch, and binoculars. We will plan to return to PT on the 1:15 ferry. We will cancel if there is prediction of high wind and/or steady rain. If you plan to attend please call and leave contact information so if trip is cancelled you can be notified. *Ron Sikes, Trip Leader - 385-0307 or sikes@olympus.net.*

Please note: Participants in all field trips accept all risks and Admiralty Audubon accepts none.

David Gluckman

*Field Trips Chair,
Admiralty Audubon*

AAS Field Trip Reports, January & February 2013

Saturday, 19 January - Kah Tai and Around

Ten birders participated in this Audubon chapter field trip along the southern edge of Kah Tai Lagoon park. Highlights were 5 raptor species, including a very spiffy Peregrine Falcon perched on a utility pole at the east park entrance. Here, in order of sighting, are the 37 species seen: Bald Eagle, Cooper's Hawk, Black-capped Chickadee, American Crow, Double-crested Cormorant, Glaucous-winged Gull, Northern Flicker, Bufflehead, Mallard, American Coot, Ruddy Duck, Common Goldeneye, Red-winged Blackbird, Scaup species, Pied-billed Grebe, Anna's Hummingbird, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Great Blue Heron, Song Sparrow, American Robin, Red-tailed Hawk, European Starling, Red-breasted Merganser, Canada Goose, (probable) Cackling Goose, Pine Siskin, Eurasian Wigeon, Bewick's Wren, Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, House and Purple Finch, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Saturday, 26 January - Irontdale/Chimacum

Creek Park - Seven birders gathered at 9 a.m. in the rain observing the following waterfowl. Pacific and Common Loon, Pied-billed, Horned, Red-necked and Western Grebes; Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Brant flyover, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Killdeer, Mew, Bonaparte's and Glaucous-winged Gulls; Pigeon Guillemot, Rhinoceros Auklet, Belted Kingfisher, Crow and Song Sparrows. One hour walk in light rain and no wind to start the day.

Our Newest 'Certified' Trip Leader!

Paula Vanderheul has joined our list of certified AAS Trip Leaders. She is that rare mix - an unassuming but very knowledgeable birder and we are fortunate to have her (and her charming grandson) in our chapter. Paula was an active member of the Audubon Society of Corvallis from 1991 - 2011, passionately learning how to identify birds from field trip leaders. She was an ASC board member sharing duties as secretary, member at large, field trip leader, Bluebird Trail volunteer, and Nature Center chairman. She's interested in experiencing the Olympic Peninsula and Washington birding areas.

Saturday, 2 February - Dungeness Bay -

Seven birders traveled to John Wayne Marina, Port Williams, Three Crabs, Oysterhouse Park and Cline Spit County Park with lots of birds at all locations (53 species for the morning). The most exciting was a flock of Long-tailed Ducks (30 or more) across from Port Williams in the Sequim Bay outlet current. The following is the list of those seen by some or all: Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Double-crested and Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Trumpeter and Tundra Swans, Canada Goose, Cackling Goose, Brant, Greater White-fronted Goose, Mallard, Gadwall, Northern Pintail, American and Eurasian Wigeons, Green-winged Teal, Greater Scaup, Long-tailed Duck, Surf Scoter, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hooded, Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Northern Shoveler, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, Sanderling, Dunlin, Mew and Glaucous-winged Gulls, Pigeon Guillemot, Marbled Murrelet, Eurasian Collared Dove, Rock Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Common Raven, American Crow, Varied Thrush, American Robin, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, House Finch and House Sparrow.

David Gluckman

Field Trips Chair, Admiralty Audubon

Christmas Bird Count 2012

Forty-two participants braved the cold, windy and rainy day. The winds kept our boaters in the marina. Bob Boekelheide rode the ferry over and back to look for deep water birds.

Our 2012 CBC tally was 110 total species and 10,485 individual birds. Highlights for the 2012 effort were a single Brown Pelican and a single Common Redpoll. Both were seen during count week.

Northern Saw-whet Owl was the only species that reached a new high count, but that count was only two individuals, up from our earlier record of one individual. One big miss for CBC 2012 - no Killdeer were reported.

Dan Waggoner

CBC Chair, Admiralty Audubon

Admiralty Audubon's Interest in the Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park



During its first official year the new Admiralty Audubon Chapter became interested in the fate of what is now the Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park. Founder Eleanor Stopps, first Chapter President Bernard Beck, member Lois Sherwood, and Peter Kaiser made a survey of species on and around the lagoon from June 1978 to 1979. In conversation with the late Eleanor Stopps, she said they realized the area supported a significant diversity of species and was under threat of development. Chapter volunteers have been involved ever since.

Admiralty Audubon participated in the efforts that led up to the first grant to create the park. The Park is a regular part of the annual Christmas Bird Count. Numerous Chapter Field Trips are conducted there. It is now part of the Great Washington State Birding Trail because of the efforts of AAS. A two - year bird survey of the lagoon and uplands has been conducted and published by our chapter. It confirmed there is significant bird diversity for 80 acres. Since AAS began recording bird observations in 1978, 151 species have been seen.

The Park contains a brackish marsh, a shallow lagoon and uplands buffering the lagoon from busy streets and buildings. The uplands offer diverse habitats. Its proximity to Port Townsend Bay allows water birds to utilize the lagoon and bay for shelter and/or feeding dependent on weather and the tides. The lagoon and uplands are productive insect and aquatic invertebrate factories that support both water and land oriented birds. The high population of Townsend voles feeds Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harrier, Barn Owl and Barred Owl, Long-tailed Weasel, and occasional coyotes. The Park provides an opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy nature in an urban setting.

In 2000 some AAS members joined a coalition to protect the Park politically and to enhance the wildlife habitat. In 2001 AAS members signed

an agreement to begin Port Townsend's first Adopt A Park program. Increasing efforts were made to introduce native trees and shrubs of high wildlife value. Also, great efforts were made to secure protection of all 80 acres of the Park. Much has been accomplished. Most notable accomplishment is confirmation by the City of Port Townsend, the State of Washington, and the National Park Service that it will be a protected open space. A Land and Water Conservation Fund grant initiated the creation of the park. Its provisions are critical to the park's future management. Admiralty Audubon is working to ensure the implementation of the original intent to have a passive recreation park where the wildlife values are protected and enhanced.

It also has been a "hands on" project that is within the scope of a small Chapter such as ours. And its proximity to members allows frequent monitoring as well as facilitating political action or volunteer projects benefiting bird habitat. We have hopes of recovering some of the buried lagoon and thus expanding the wetlands. This will make the Park more interesting to visit and will significantly enhance its biological productivity.

If you would like to be involved in this Chapter project you can join our volunteers. They provide the political support for the Park's protection. They work to control invasive exotic plants and litter. They also plant native plants in selected areas to enhance food and shelter for wildlife and add to the beauty of the Park.

If you are not able to participate in the hands-on projects but would like to help, you can donate to the habitat improvements. \$15.00 will purchase 10 plants at our local conservation district plant sale. \$25.00 will purchase 100 feet of irrigation tubing. \$115.00 will purchase a 100 feet of fencing for deer proof plant cages. \$145.00 will purchase a steel weed wrench for pulling out invasive plants. To make a tax deductible donation mail a check to Admiralty Audubon, PO Box 666, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

Ron Sikes

Secretary, Admiralty Audubon

PTSD OCEANS to Skagit Estuary

On 25 January, the Port Townsend School District's K-12 OCEANS PROGRAM made a field trip to the Fir Island area of the Skagit River estuary. PTSD teacher and AAS member Daniel Molotsky assisted by AAS Trip Leader Ron Sikes led a group of students and parents to see the winter wildlife spectacle of the Skagit River Delta.

Daniel's son Joseph spotted swans on Crockett Lake while the caravan was passing through Fort Casey State Park. The group were able to have a close up view of a pair of Trumpeter Swans with their two cygnets. Also other swans were flying in and landing, a spectacular sight with the sun shining on their white plumage. The day was very rewarding with up close views of a field of hundreds of Tundra Swans. Many large flocks were seen at a distance and the total would have to be over a thousand.

During a stop at a WDFW public access the group met a Russian biologist who is tracking Snow Geese that nest on Wrangell Island off the coast of Siberia. Those same geese winter in the Skagit area. Thousand of ducks were also seen including many Northern Pintail, Wigeon, and Green-winged Teal.

Besides the abundance of waterfowl the group also had some close-up views of a Short-eared Owl both perched and flying. Eagles were common and almost every lonely tree had at least an Eagle or Red-tailed Hawk. One tree was occupied by a Bald Eagle and a Peregrine Falcon.

The participants enjoyed a walk on the public trail on the dike paralleling Padilla Bay and just north of SR 20. Then it was back to the ferry and home to Port Townsend.

Great Backyard Bird Frustration

The Great Backyard Bird Count of 2013 was integrated for the first time with eBird. Your newsletter editor was unamused. The old GBBC website and data sets were great fun to follow along on and watch the data accumulate. The new eBird site renders the data both fun-free and unavailable in any meaningful way, at least for the moment. Stay tuned for a future report.

Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park Workparties Continue Monthly

24 March and 21 April 2013

Thirteen volunteers joined the Arbor Day planting of more than 130 trees and shrubs at Kah Tai on 23 February. Sixteen folks participated in the January work party. We're getting a tremendous amount of work done at the Park.

Our next monthly work parties at the Kah Tai Park are Sunday March 24 and April 21 from 9am to noon. We will again focus on pulling Scot's Broom and picking up garbage. We are making a noticeable difference but there is more to do. Park at the Chase Bank parking on Kearney and Sims Way. Look for Ron's white chevy pickup and the green volunteer sign. Wear layered work clothes and bring work gloves. Homemade cookies, hot tea, water, weed pullers, and garbage bags will be provided. Hope to see you there. *Email rosemarysikes@olympus.net or call 385-0307 for more information.*

Rosemary Sikes

Programs Chair, Admiralty Audubon



Volunteer Bjorn and his dad Dan Greenman helped with planting native trees and shrubs at Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park, co-sponsored by Admiralty Audubon and the City Parks, Recreation and Tree Board.

CBC Chair Emeritus, Dick Johnson

Dick Johnson has been our chapter's Christmas Bird Count leader for more than three decades, and somewhat more recently, Dan Waggoner has taken on the electronic aspects of the count. Dan has now stepped up to lead our CBC effort. Thanks, Dan.

And heartfelt thanks to Dick for his tireless efforts on behalf of the Count and our chapter. We know he won't be resting on his laurels!

Sculpture Design and Placement Selected for Eleanor Stopps Tribute

Sculptor Tony Angell writes, "I'm delighted with your decision to proceed with the sculpture of Courting Guillemots. These lovely species are of course indigenous to Protection Island and along with the auklets, are truly representative of the enduring marine bird life that so depends on this unique Preserve. Their beauty is also exceptional and a compelling subject for an artist to interpret in sculpture."



The design by renowned Northwest sculptor Tony Angell has been selected for the Eleanor Stopps memorial. At left is his sketch of Pigeon Guillemots courting. The Northwest Maritime Center has agreed to host the sculpture installation. Current plans include mounting the bronze sculpture on a basalt base.

Estimated completion will be sometime into July of 2013. Part of the schedule will be determined by the calendar of the casting foundry.

Donations for the sculpture would be very welcome. Checks for 'AAS Memorial Fund' can be sent directly to First Federal Bank, PO Box 1510, Port Townsend WA 98368. Donations can also be made via a PayPal link at <http://eleanorstopps.blogspot.com>, where you can follow the progress of this beautiful tribute to our chapter founder and to Protection Island.

AAS Brochure Updates

AAS Chapter board members have completed new editions of two chapter brochures: the 'Bird Checklist' and 'Where to Find Birds'. Both have been expanded a bit to include more of our chapter region. The new checklist is our 5th edition, and can be downloaded from our Chapter website at <http://admiraltyaudubon.org> at the Checklist link in the toolbar. The new 'Where to Find Birds' will be available on the website shortly. Printed copies are available at the Visitor's Center at the Haines St. Park and Ride in Port Townsend.

If You're National, You're Local Too

National Audubon members who live in our chapter region are automatically chapter members. National provides chapters access to a list of such members but it includes very few email addresses or phone numbers so contact requires postage, paper and time. While National forwards a small fraction of member dues to our local chapter, it is insufficient for our small chapter to send printed communications to our National-only members. If you know of National members who would like to be on our electronic-only list, please ask them to contact the chapter at admiraudub@gmail.com.

AAS Membership Form [http://admiraltyaudubon.org]	
name _____	date _____
mailing address _____	
city, state, zipcode _____	
email address _____	phone number _____
Would you prefer your newsletter by email? <input type="checkbox"/> paper copy? <input type="checkbox"/> amount enclosed \$ _____	
Send \$20 annual membership to: Admiralty Audubon, PO Box 666, Port Townsend WA 98368 Membership includes 5 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!	



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Next AAS Board Meeting

The next Admiralty Audubon Board meeting will be held on 19 March at 7 pm. For more information about the meeting and location, contact the chapter President (rjahnke@att.net).

We need Education, Conservation and Publicity Chairs. Please consider applying for one of these important volunteer positions.

Dues News

Paper newsletter recipients: Your address label shows the date (month-yr) your membership expires. If you are over six months late, this will be your final newsletter. If the date disagrees with your records, let us know. **Electronic newsletter recipients** will receive an email reminder. Dues are the chapter's source of operating funds.