

Admiralty Audubon Pippings

AAS Birding January & February 2022

New Year's Birdwalk

January 1, 2022, 9:30 - 11:30 am

Join us for our Sixth New Year's Day's bird walk at Irondale Bay Chimacum Creek Park. Meet at 9:30 am at 562 Moore Road parking lot. Enjoy a couple of hours scoping the bay for first of year sea birds, shorebirds, and forest birds. Dress in warm layers with hats, gloves and mask for comfort, and bring binoculars and spotting scope to help identify the waterfowl. Participants must be vaccinated for Covid19 and wear a mask. Limited to 10 birders. *Please contact Paula Vanderheul at 360-774-2479 or pvanderheul@gmail.com.*

First Saturday Nature Walk at Fort Flagler State Park

January 1, 2022, 9:00 - 11:00 am

Meet at the parking lot on the south (boat ramp) side of the Beachcomber Cafe. We first walk to the end of the spit toward Rat Island. This takes about an hour. We then drive to Marrowstone Point near the USGS Fisheries lab. We walk to the point to scope birds. Optionally, we will visit the sewage ponds and finish up by noon. Dress for the weather. You will need a Discover Pass. *Trip Leader - Gary Eduardo Perless: 360-643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com.*

First Tuesday at Point Hudson

January 4, 2022, 8:30-9:15 am

Meet at the rain garden by the beach at the very end of Jefferson Street (where there is parking.) This will be a short walk to note what species are in our area. Note: In case of a strong southerly gale, location will be shifted to North Beach. *Trip Leader - Gary Eduardo Perless: 360-643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com.*



© Beverly McNeil

Bewick's Wren at Anderson Lake, November 2021

First Friday at Fort Townsend State Park

January 7, 2022, 8:30-11:00 am

These walks (limit 5 people) will take 2 to 3 hours and include walking approximately 1.5 miles to look for shorebirds and birds in the woods along the bluffs. Please wear sturdy shoes/boots and extra jacket in case of weather changes. Bring binoculars, We meet at the parking area just down to the left of where you register to camp. Meeting time is 8:30am. You will need your Discover Pass. Please also notify Beverly if you cannot make it to the outing so that someone else can take your place. Social distancing and full vaccinations are required. *Email Trip Leader Beverly McNeil to register: blmcneil59@gmail.com.*

Third Friday at Anderson Lake State Park

January 21, 2022, 8:30-11:00 am

Limit of 5 for each outing and you must be vaccinated. Meet at the very first parking area as soon as you leave the pavement off of Lake Anderson Road before the white gate. Meeting time 8:30 am. Wear clothing for changeable weather, sturdy shoes/boots, binoculars, water, snack optional. Expect to walk about 1.5 miles including a little uphill. Expect to spend 2 to 3 hours depending on sightings. We normally go around the whole lake on Trail B. You will need a Discover Pass. *Reserve your space with Trip Leader Beverly McNeil at blmcneil59@gmail.com.*

Kah Tai Lagoon to Froggy Bottoms

Saturday January 22, 2022, 9:00 - noon

Meet at the Park and Ride NOT the Kah Tai Park Parking Lot. We will spend time looking at our wintering waterfowl, I will have a couple of scopes. We will note what we hear in the shrubbery and trees there and then move up Kearney Street to skirt the bird- rich shrubby areas above the golf course, eventually following the path near Quimper Village and then come back pretty much the same route to our cars. Who knows what one might see! This is a two to three hour walk based on interest and interestingness. Bad bird weather (high winds/real rain) cancels. Limit of eight people; please be vaccinated, boosted and bring masks for close quarters! *Contact Monica Fletcher: monicaflet@gmail.com or by phone 360-379-3136.*

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AAS Birding January & February 2022 (continued from page 1)

First Tuesday at Point Hudson February 1, 2022, 8:30-9:15 am

Meet at the rain garden by the beach at the very end of Jefferson Street (where there is parking.) This will be a short walk to note what species are in our area. Note: In case of a strong southerly gale, location will be shifted to North Beach. *Trip Leader - Gary Eduardo Perless: 360-643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com*

First Friday at Fort Townsend State Park February 4, 2022, 8:30-11:00 am

This walk will take 2 to 3 hours and include walking approximately 1.5 miles to look for shorebirds and birds in the woods along the bluffs. Please wear sturdy shoes/boots and extra jacket in case of weather changes. Bring binoculars and your own water. Group size is limited to five. We meet at the parking area just down to the left of where you register to camp. Meeting time is 8:30am. You will need your Discover Pass. Please notify Beverly if you cannot make it to the outing so that someone else can take your place. Social distancing and full vaccinations are required. *Contact Trip Leader Beverly McNeil to register at blmcneil59@gmail.com.*

AAS Kah Tai Workparties January & February 2022

Sunday, January 9, 2022, 9:00am - noon

We will be pulling invasives, including Scots Broom, holly, ivy and spurge laurel. Look for the white pickup truck near the bench closest to Chase Bank. The nearest parking is the Chase Bank parking lot on Kearney and Hwy 20. Note that needlenose pliers work well on small hollies and spurge laurels. Scots Broom pullers will be provided. *For more information, contact Rosemary Sikes at ptrose53@gmail.com or 360-385-0307.*

Sunday, February 13, 2022, 9:00am - noon

We will be pulling Scots Broom and other invasives. Look for the white pickup truck on the Benedict Street trail across Hwy 20 from the Safeway gas station. The nearest parking is the Chase Bank parking lot on Kearney and Hwy 20. Scots Broom pullers will be provided. *For more information, contact Rosemary Sikes at ptrose53@gmail.com or 360-385-0307.*

Rosemary Sikes

Admiralty Audubon Programs Chair

First Saturday Nature Walk at Fort Flagler State Park February 5 2022, 9:00-11:00 am

Meet at the parking lot at on the south (boat ramp) side of the Beachcomber Cafe. We first walk to the end of the spit toward Rat Island. This takes about an hour. We then drive to Marrowstone Point near the USGS Fisheries lab. We walk to the point to scope birds. Optionally, we will visit the sewage ponds and finish up by noon. Dress for the weather. You will need a Discover Pass. *Trip Leader - Gary Eduardo Perless: 360-643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com.*

North Beach Sea Watch and Chinese Gardens Saturday February 19, 2022 9AM until Noon

Meet at the North Beach Parking Lot. We will circle the lagoon, and check out the winter residents, especially those that love the area near the warm and misty sewage treatment plant. And then we will see what we see at sea with scopes and luck. High wind or real rain cancels. Limit of eight people; please be vaccinated, boosted and bring masks for close quarters! *Contact Monica Fletcher: monicaflet@gmail.com or by phone 360-379-3136.*

Betty Renkor

Admiralty Audubon Field Trips Chair

WCC Crew at Kah Tai

Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park has benefited in the past from the grant-funded Urban Forestry Restoration Project (UFRP), a collaboration between the Washington Departments of Ecology and Natural Resources for Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crews to improve our watershed by removing invasives in our urban forests. The UFRP grant program ended, but the WCC crews are still available for hire.

Thanks to the generosity of our chapter members, we are again able to bring a WCC crew to work in our chapter's Adopt A Park, just as we did in January 2021. We are very fortunate that the crew that is managed by the North Olympic Salmon Coalition had the first week of January available. Let's just hope the weather moderates a little and the ground at Kah Tai is thawed enough to pull invasives in early January 2022! If you see the crew at work, please welcome them and say thank you!

The Feather Forecast

Hiking and birding on Whidbey Island and the Skagit flats

One of our favorite winter birding excursions is to Whidbey Island and the Skagit flats, to see the amazing assemblages of wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors. Though there are many spots to see birds without stepping very far from your car, we prefer to get out and walk, birding as we go. One of our favorite birding walks is along the bluffs and beach at Ebey's Prairie, just a few miles north of the Coupeville Ferry Terminal. We usually start out by hiking up the bluff. It's a great place to observe Bald Eagles and often find a Northern Harrier hunting along the bluff face. We also like to detour along the short trails into forest to look for wintering passerines—sparrows, wrens, chickadees, kinglets, woodpeckers, the occasional Brown Creeper, and others. Returning via the beach, we like to scope for diving ducks and loons, and we've seen Hooded Mergansers and occasionally shorebirds, in the ponds. If you park at the end of Ebey's Landing Road, (Discover Pass required), the walk is around four miles. If you want to make it a longer hike, with a little more diverse habitat, you can start from the Sunnyside Overlook near the cemetery.

For more information: <https://www.wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/ebey-landing>

Another of our favorite winter walk-and-bird spots is the West 90, where Samish Island Road takes a turn to the right before heading out toward Samish Island. Though most birders stick around the parking lot (you'll need a Discover Pass to park there), we find it more fun to make a loop of a few miles, starting by heading southward through the wetlands, then along the dike, before returning to the car. Waterproof calf-high boots are recommended for this walk, as there are areas where the water may be several inches deep. In the wetlands, we usually get good looks at Short-eared owls, as well as Bald Eagles, and Rough-legged Hawks, and from the dike one can see huge rafts of waterfowl on the bay. Northern Pintails and American Wigeons are plentiful, and we always like to scope the wigeons carefully, as there are usually a few Eurasians among them. We've often see Peregrine Falcons hunting out here, and once, watched a Prairie Falcon eating his catch while perched on a nearby piling. Waterfowl hunters use this area in season, but we've always found that there was enough space for everyone here.

For more information: <https://www.wta.org/go-hiking/hikes/welts-samish-restoration-site>

Sue Thompson

Admiralty Audubon Trip Leader

2022 Calendar "Birds in & around Port Townsend"

I recently finished my first Admiralty Audubon bird calendar, an educational project intended to motivate people to get out to watch the birds. Contact me directly to request one, there's a limited supply. Here's a link to preview it https://issuu.com/sierramadreadventures/docs/_audubon_calendar_2022_copy_for_web.

Suggested donation \$15-20

to support environmental education projects with kids. Grateful for the community support! Happy Holidays and birdwatching to all! Gary Perless (360) 643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com

Gary Eduardo Perless

Admiralty Audubon Education Chair



Federal judge sides with Washington State against illegal Growler fleet expansion

(Thanks to the Olympic Forest Coalition and Citizens of Ebey’s Reserve for this good news!)

A federal judge sided with Washington State and other plaintiffs in Attorney General Bob Ferguson’s case against the Navy’s violations of NEPA when they expanded the Growler fleet illegally. One of our Olympic Forest Coalition board member’s NEPA and ESA documentation and analysis work was used in this case. The judge’s words included the following:

“...despite a gargantuan administrative record, covering nearly 200,000 pages of studies, reports, comments, and the like, the Navy selected methods of evaluating the data that supported its goal of increasing Growler operations. The Navy did this at the expense of the public and the environment, turning a blind eye to data that would not support this intended result. Or, to borrow the words of noted sports analyst Vin Scully, the Navy appears to have used certain statistics “much like a drunk uses a lamppost: for support, not illumination.”

This is breathtaking prose from a court. And it appears to force the revisiting of moving Growler operations back to El Centro, CA. The Court recommends that the parties meet and produce a joint statement describing a remedy.

<https://citizensofebeyreserve.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Magistrates-recommendation-12-10-21.pdf>

<https://olympicforest.org/federal-judge-sides-with-washington-state-against-illegal-growler-fleet-expansion/>



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© Wendy Feltham

Some less conventional perspectives of feathered beauty: left - an unusual view of a Great Blue Heron having lunch at Kah Tai, 2021; right: One of 17 Turkey Vultures watching the salmon migrating up the Big Quilcene River in September 2021.

AAS Membership Form 2022

<http://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.

A Preliminary Christmas Bird Count Result

The Christmas Bird Count was numerous in species and singular in diversity and logistics this year. A novel thing happened this time when we decided to postpone the Count day until the next day avoiding what would have been very miserable weather of high winds and lush rain. Leaders scrambled for volunteers, people stepped up that hadn't planned on counting, and we had a full if skeletal contingent hitting the thirteen or so routes that were walked and driven. The flexibility and determination of everyone to flush out the birds on a last minute date was really impressive.

We also had a nice 120 species this year. Some of our no-shows this year were the hard-won Yellow-billed Loon, Band-tailed Pigeon, and Savannah Sparrow. But more than making up for them were the elusive Ruffed Grouse, the kestrels, and the becoming reliable Canvasback Duck - just one. This year we got seabird lucky in Ring-billed Gulls, Red Phalarope and Herring Gull (last two seen from our boat crew). A Blue Jay (!!!) and California Scrub-Jays were seen uptown. The rarities like to visit Port Townsend. We did not see any irruptions of Siskin this year. Happily our Western Grebe numbered close to 400. The CBC compiler is still adding up the actual numbers and a proper report will come out next newsletter.

Monica Fletcher

Admiralty Audubon Conservation & CBC Chair



© Steve Hampton



© Artemis Celt



© Dave Grainger



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Photos clockwise from top left: Blue Jay in Uptown Port Townsend, November 2021; Scrub-Jay in Uptown, May 2021; Hooded Merganser male, Kah Tai, 2021; Hooded Merganser female, Point Hudson, Christmas Bird Count, December 2021.

Banner
Design and Art by
Larry Eifert©



Admiralty Audubon Society PO Box 666 Port Townsend WA 98368



© Dave Grainger

Trumpeters at Nisqually/Billy Frank NWR, November 2021.

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Blue-winged Teal, Kah Tai, June 2021.



Coot, Kah Tai, January 2021.