

Admiralty Audubon Pippings

AAS Birding November & December 2021 - Firsts and Thirds!

First Tuesday at Point Hudson

2 November 2021, 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 Saturday at Fort Flagler State Park

6 November 2021, 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 to park. *Trip Leader - Gary Eduardo Perless: 360-643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com.*

Third Friday at Anderson Lake State Park

19 November 2021, 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, Anderson Lake State Park. You will need a Discover Pass to park. *Reserve your space at blmcneil59@gmail.com. Beverly McNeil, Audubon Trip Leader, Nature Photographer.*

We Have A Trips Chair!

Please excuse the happy dance over here at the newsletter desk - but we finally have a NEW Field Trips Chair! Thank you to member Betty Renkor for stepping up to this important position and keeping our members engaged with our trip leaders and birding opportunities. Note our new feature on page 3 - Feather Forecast - Betty's great idea with a inaugural post by Monica Fletcher!

photo right - Least Sandpiper, Kala Point, 14 September 2020.

First Friday at Fort Townsend State Park

3 December 2021, 8:30-11:00 am

Beverly McNeil is offering bird walks at Fort Townsend State Park. These walks 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 5, and you need to email Beverly to register. 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 to park. 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. *Contact Beverly at blmcneil59@gmail.com.*

Third Friday at Anderson Lake State Park

17 December 2021, 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, Anderson Lake State Park. You will need a Discover Pass to park. *Reserve your space at blmcneil59@gmail.com. Beverly McNeil, Audubon Trip Leader, Nature Photographer.*

Betty Renkor

AAS Field Trips Chair

© Beverly McNeil



Our Christmas Bird Count Continues Strong - 2021

With many of us vaccinated and outdoor transmission to have been determined to be of less significant concern, we can have another Audubon Christmas Bird Count 2021 with less uncertainty than last year. Hooray!

National Audubon has however once again recommended that all CBC circles hold off on committing to their Counts until November 15th. While it is true that a dire resurgence of Covid cases may lead the county to lockdown again we hope that this is not the case and that we will be able to have the CBC go forward on Saturday, 18 December 2021. If you would like to participate this year please contact: *Monica Fletcher*, by email: monicaftet@gmail.com or call 360-379-3136.

We are again encouraging Feeder Watchers this year. Almost every year a feeder watcher checks-off a bird that all the others miss. If you are curious about the Christmas Bird Count and what it is all about you can go to National Audubon's website. <https://www.audubon.org/conservation-science/christmas-bird-count>.



© Aven Anderson



© Wendy Feltham

If we do go ahead with the Count there are still a few restrictions on our activity as required from National Audubon. These are their rules.

- 1) Carpooling can only be done with members of one's own household.
- 2) There should be social distancing and/or mask adherence if that is not possible - even outside.
- 3) Activities must comply with all current state and municipal COVID-19 guidelines.
- 4) Allow for flexibility as it is not possible to know individual or family situations with respect to their home or family risks.

I will be emailing out Data and Feeder Watch forms to Route Leaders soon, and assist with placing any new volunteers on one of our approximately 15 routes. Hope to hear from some new folks and we all treasure the usual participants.

Monica Fletcher
AAS Conservation & CBC Chair

Puget Soundkeeper and Port Townsend Marine Science Center Beach+ Cleanup

On 10 October 2021, our chapter joined the effort to clean up our local beaches. The event included a beach cleanup from the ferry dock to the Port plus Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park. We collected 191 pounds of trash that we hauled to the Port dumpster from Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park plus 4 car batteries that Ron Sikes and Deborah Dowd found in the woodland and left next to the trash can near Kearney Street. Park staff picked up the batteries and took them to be recycled (why does anyone dump car batteries at the park? They are easy to recycle!) Anna Bachmann of Puget Soundkeeper said the total number of pounds for the entire event, including an estimation for the car batteries, was 554 pounds.

Rosemary Sikes
AAS Programs Chair

photos: upper left - leucistic hummingbird at feeder in Port Ludlow, 2021; lower left - a few of the 15 juvenile Barn Swallows begging from 35 or so parents who were gathering insects above the kelp offshore, and along North Beach on 21 August 2021. A week later, almost all were gone.

AAS Kah Tai Workparties November & December 2021

Sunday, 14 November 2021, 9:00am - noon

We will be planting natives in the woodland and pulling Scots Broom. 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. Bring a shovel and bucket for dirt if you have one. Scots Broom pullers will be provided. *For more information, contact Rosemary Sikes at ptrose53@gmail.com or 360-385-0307.*

Sunday, 12 December 2021, 9:00am - noon

We will be pulling Scots Broom. 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

AAS Programs Chair

The Feather Forecast

These can be the months that try birders' souls. Fewer hours to bird, wind that sends birds deep into their shelters, rain that soaks our supposedly rain proof gear and conditions that threaten optical equipment integrity which can be terrifying for the birder/gear head. But it is also one of the richest times, and really builds up bird species number and individual numbers just in time for New Year's Day first outings of 2022.

This is the time that birds flock, both with their own and with other species. You may notice that there are times when it seems the forest is empty. You hike, you hear nothing but the occasional chip chip of a Pacific Wren on your Cappy's Trail, you wonder if it is a Silent Winter.

Then coming around the sixth bend of the trail you hear the chatter, the chips, the tiny sounds of Golden Crowned Kinglets (if you still have your hearing, oldster). This is your signal to bring the binocs out of their case and enjoy the show. Ruby Crowned Kinglets are back with us from their summer travels, Hutton's Vireo may need to be distinguished amongst the chickadees and Golden Crowned Kinglets. Robins start alarming at your peering presence. You are relieved that all is well in our woods.

This is still the time to look up into the sky when you hear sounds, some skeins of geese are still making their migrational shift, some arriving for the winter into our area, some of our summer geese moving further south. Point Wilson is a pointer south, San Juan Avenue is an avenue, and Beaver Valley and Center Valley beckon as a choice airbnb stay. We should see a few small flocks of Trumpeter Swans flying over Port Townsend during November. Their "honking" sound is similar to Canada Geese so check visually any goose sound you hear as they fly over.

The big news of winter is our winter waterfowl and seabirds. Kah Tai Lagoon fills with impressive numbers of floating dabblers and divers. It can be a birder rush to see the numbers increase daily over one week. Discovery Pond (see note below on reduced access there) hosts thousands of ducks, herons, and eagles and near-to-faithfully shelters about three Canvasback. Center and Beaver Valley do their frequent conversion to water runways, impounding robust ponds and shallow water rinks for birds that last well into spring. This area then attracts hawks, kestrels, and even the occasional Redhead, a rarity. All of our four loons hang out off our inland coast near here now. Can you say Alcids (a seabird family that includes murrelets and guillemots)?

For the truly intrepid storms produce their own special joy. Recent sightings of ocean dependent birds rode into town at Point Wilson and Fort Flagler on the whip-tail of our novelly named bomb cyclone. Shearwaters were numerous, petrels may have been sighted, as they followed the flight ease of lesser winds than those that circled their usual pelagic haunts.

So get out, get wet, go windy and go home with adventures to recount.

Monica Fletcher

AAS Trip Leader, Conservation & CBC Chair
& Feather Forecaster

Access Denied

We are sorry to report that the owner of the land between the Larry Scott Trail and the Discovery/Tukey Pond has posted his property as 'No Trespassing' and we are not allowed to cross his private land to view birds on the pond. This wonderful location provided observation of unique species in our area and is a real loss to birders.

Autumnal Arbor Day 2021

The City of Port Townsend has been a Tree City for 21 years, a designation conferred by the Arbor Day Foundation. We celebrate Arbor Day in the autumn, when it is best to plant trees here, given our mild winters and dry summers. Although Arbor Day is all about trees, we all know that if all you have is trees and no understory, what you have is a tree farm, not habitat. This year, approximately 80 young native trees and understory shrubs were donated anonymously by AAS members to the City to be given to anyone who showed up and promised to take proper care of them.

On 17 October, a table was set up at Mountain View Commons, with two City Parks Board members, one Planning Commissioner and one City Councillor volunteering to hand out red alder, Garry oaks, Douglas hawthorn, cascara, mock orange, evergreen huckleberry and red-flowering currant.

Our chapter planted alder, Garry oaks and red-flowering currant at Kah Tai in October and we will plant more understory shrubs in November. This year we will also be able to donate some natives to a wonderful South County collaboration among the Washington Native Plant Society, the Jefferson Land Trust and the Quilcene School District for student-led restoration efforts.

Those Lombardy Poplars

There has been much in the recent news about the Lombardy poplars along the Sims Way corridor. The poplars are non-native, short-lived, brittle and invasive. The trees on the Port side are causing serious problems with the high-voltage lines and a collaboration by the Port, PUD and the City is planning to remove the poplars, underground the power lines, add a walking path and replant with predominantly native species that can handle high winds and salty roots. More conifers and a diverse canopy will also improve carbon sequestration in the face of climate change.

On the Kah Tai side, a landscape plan developed in 1986 for the park but never completed describes the planting of natives behind the poplars, with removal of the poplars as the natives grow in. The native trees have been planted and are grown in and it is time to open up the view to appreciate them and give them

some room to spread their branches and accomodate the birds and other species they support.

Stay tuned as the Port, PUD and City work through this process and we begin to see our

beautiful and important native species where they belong - along our view corridors.



Common Merganser hen with ten chicks, Duckabush River, 20 June 2021.

© Artemis Celt

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.*

Tagged Canada Geese

We have received reports and photos of Canada Geese with what seem to be unusual banding, but such bands are apparently not so unusual. AAS Member Wendy Feltham shares the following: "The Canada Goose (photo top right) with a neck band was resting at Chinese Gardens lagoon on 21 August 2021. I'd never heard of neck bands! I wrote to USGS, since they follow banded birds, and they sent me a certificate saying he's a male, HATCHED IN 2017 OR EARLIER, LOCATION: NEAR CORDOVA, VALDEZ-CORDOVA CENSUS AREA, ALASKA, USA."

A researcher wrote to Wendy on iNaturalist: "I believe the red neck bands also represent the Dusky subspecies of Canada Goose." Wendy says, "He identified my goose as the Dusky subspecies." Wikipedia says: "The dusky Canada goose (*Branta canadensis occidentalis*) is a subspecies of the Canada goose. They are the darkest variant, similar to the Pacific cackling goose. Tagged dusky geese have red bands with white letters on them attached to their neck. They represent one of the smallest populations of Canada goose in the Pacific Northwest."

Note that this same banding appeared on a Canada Goose at Kah Tai in the summer, photographed by Artemis Celt in June 2021(photo middle right), and it is possible it is the same goose, given what is visible of the tag number.



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© Dave Grainger



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Photo left - Great Egret at the Fernhill Wetlands Preserve, Forest Grove OR, on 17 September 2021. Photo above - Pacific Golden-Plover at Fort Flagler, 9 October 2021. It was first sighted among Black-bellied Plovers by Barry McKenzie.

Banner
Design and Art by
Larry Eifert©



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Virginia Rail at Kah Tai, July 2021

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© Hillary Smith



Bonaparte's Gull, Point No Point, 2021

Birding Books For The Future

Generous AAS members have donated many wonderful birding books to the chapter. It was decided to offer those books to the next generation. A chapter member family with connections in the Port Townsend and Quilcene School Districts will divide the bounty between the two school districts so that our community young folks have access to some fine reference books for birding.