

## Admiralty Audubon Pipings

### AAS Birding March & April 2022

#### **First Tuesday at Point Hudson March 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 Saturday Nature Walk - Fort Flagler State Park March 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'll visit the sewage ponds and finish up by noon. Dress for the weather. Bring your Discover Pass. *Trip Leader - Gary Eduardo Perless: 360-643-3529 or gperless@gmail.com.*

#### **Third Friday at Anderson Lake State Park March 18, 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. Anderson Lake State Park. You will need a Discover Pass. *Reserve your space at Bevybirds53@gmail.com. Beverly McNeil, Audubon Trip Leader.*

#### **Fourth Saturday at Indian Island Jefferson County Park - Portage Beach Isthmus Trail March 26, 2022, 10 AM to noon**

Meet at the Portage parking lot, which is the first right after crossing over the bridge to Indian Island. If the tide permits we will walk to the beach, too. Bring your binoculars and dress for the weather. Limited to 5 and everyone must be vaccinated. *Reserve your space with Paula Vanderheul at pvanderheul@gmail.com or 360-774-2479.*

#### **Fourth Saturday at Fort Worden State Park - Surf and Turf**

#### **March 26, 2022, 9 AM until noon**

Come bird the beautiful beach strip from the Parade Grounds to the Lighthouse. We will meet at the Commons Parking lot in Fort Worden. We will walk from there to the Marine Science Center's pier, and then veer into the campground area and out to Point Wilson and back. This walk will focus on the beginning of the serious transit of migrants through our area on their way north. Geese, raptors, and shorebirds are on the move.

Bad bird weather (high winds/real rain) cancels. Limit of ten people. *Contact Monica Fletcher: monicaflet@gmail.com or by phone 360-379-3136.* Depending on the prevalence of continuing, concerning prevalence of Covid-19 in the county, vaccination proof may be asked for.

#### **First Friday at Fort Townsend State Park April 1, 2022, 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 five, 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. Bring your Discover Pass. Please also notify Beverly if you cannot make it so that someone else can take your place. Social distancing and full vaccinations are required. *Contact Beverly at Bevybirds53@gmail.com.*

#### **First Saturday Nature Walk - Fort Flagler State Park April 2, 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.*

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**AAS Birding March & April 2022***(continued from page 1)*

**First Tuesday at Point Hudson**  
**April 5, 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*

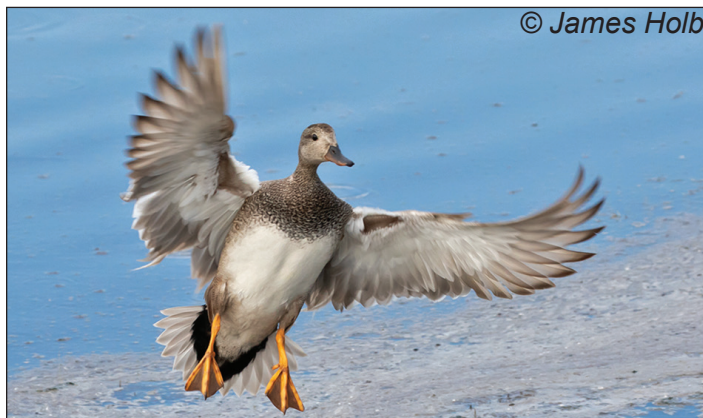
**Third Friday at Anderson Lake State Park**  
**April 15, 2022, 8:30-11:00 AM**

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. Anderson Lake State Park. You will need a Discover Pass. *Reserve your space at Bevybirds53@gmail.com. Beverly McNeil, Audubon Trip Leader, Nature Photographer.*

**AAS Workparties March & April 2022**

**Salish Coast Elementary School**  
**Sunday, March 6, 2022, 9:00AM - noon**

Join us for a work party at Salish Coast Elementary School to spread mulch around the native plantings near the north entrance of the school. (It may take up to three workparties with 9 yards of mulch each to cover the area with enough depth to smother the weeds.) Parking on Discovery Road or Grant Street next to the school. Bring a rake for spreading mulch. *For more information, contact Rosemary Sikes at ptrose53@gmail.com or 360-385-0307.*



© James Holb

**Fifth Saturday at Fort Worden State Park - Battery Hill**  
**April 30, 2022, 8AM until 11AM**

We will search for the singing and courting and nesting migrants and residents that make Spring happen! Meet at the Commons parking lot in Fort Worden where we will head up the hill to Memory's Vault and the park's best overlook, taking our time back. This is the month that many species have arrived from Central America and Mexico to play in the local orchestra of bird song.

Bad bird weather (high winds/real rain) cancels. Limit of ten people. *Contact Monica Fletcher: monicaflet@gmail.com or by phone 360-379-3136.* Depending on continued, concerning prevalence of Covid-19 in the county, vaccination proof may be asked for.

*Betty Renkor*

Admiralty Audubon Field Trips Chair

**Please note that Trip Leaders set their own requirements with regard to reservations, number of attendees, masking, or vaccination status for participation. Contact the Trip Leader of each walk for more information.**

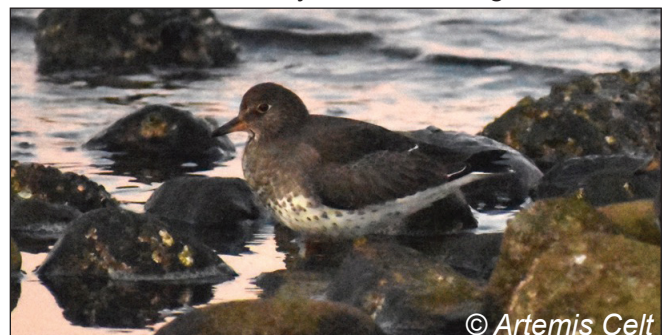
**Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park**

**Sunday, April 24, 2022, 9:00AM - noon**

We will be pulling Scots Broom and other invasives. The Trash Task Force will be joining us to pick up trash and abandoned campsites. 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. 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



© Artemis Celt

*left: Gadwall, Kah Tai, June 2021; above: Surf scoter, Hudson Point, 22 January 2022.*

## Results of the 2021-2022 122nd Audubon Christmas Bird Count

On Sunday, December 19, 2021, 63 field observers and 3 feeder-watchers participated in the Port Townsend CBC. We tallied 121 species with two 'count-week' species (White-throated Sparrow and Townsend's Solitaire). The species count is two above last year, and appears to be the species number record for the history of the Port Townsend Christmas Bird Count.

A unique element of this year's Count was the decision to postpone the Count due to a really nasty weather forecast on the scheduled December 18th original day. Route Leaders were able to find or retain most of their volunteers for the next day. Sunday was calm, warmish (36 - 43° F), and with mild winds only showing up in the afternoon.

Total number of individual birds was 19,239. This is down from last year but do remember that we had over 4000 Pine Siskin last year in that spectacular irruption. In 2019 we had 17,979 total birds. This compiler has not yet looked at all of the historic counts that might determine an average for our circle over the years with which to compare this number. Maybe next time.

In general we saw little evidence of irruptions or any extremely low or high counts. Most species fell somewhere in the middle range of their historic numbers. Five species were a high count for us this year: Red-throated Loon 53, Anna's Hummingbird 146 (we might expect them to get more numerous as their range moves north) Gray Jay 5, and Kestrel 5. Anna's Hummingbird which at 146 individuals seen or heard, is quite a bit higher than last year's high count of 116. The high count recorded for the Red-necked Grebe this year was 465. The Red-necked Grebe is again not only high for us (beating the 1986 record of 425), but last year's count of 327 was a CBC circle record in the United States, so we shall see if that holds for this year. Go Red-necks!

It is always interesting to note how important a route team can be in finding a representative of a species for our count. We had a few birds show up that were surprising indeed. We had a Blue Jay for only the second time on our CBC. The California Scrub-jay is becoming more reliable here and two showed themselves this year. Steve Hampton, who soloed a route from Uptown to Point Wilson to North Beach, much of it on bike, found not only these three rare jays but also our lone Ring-billed Gull, Saw-whet Owl, and a Red Crossbill. Our boat crew saw four Red Phalarope, and one Herring Gull which don't get recorded often. Steve Hampton also found the count week's White-throated Sparrow. Cate Hopkinson found our Count

Week Townsend's Solitaire. The Point Hudson to Fort Worden route had a lone California Gull, two Cackling Geese hiding amongst 45 Canada Geese and an Orange-crowned Warbler at one volunteer's garden (where warm-up coffee was served en route). The team at Discovery Pond came up with only one, but at least again one, Canvasback. The South County group found our sole Ruffed Grouse and 5 Gray Jays. The Discovery Bay/Anderson Lake team located two Virginia Rail and a Northern Pygmy Owl. The Tri-Area group found one Black Scoter. But it took everybody to flush the birds and get a handle on our situation locally and in great detail. Well done everyone.

Our misses this year were Wood Duck, Savannah Sparrow, Eared Grebe, Killdeer and (we have been spoiled by the boat crew), Yellow-billed Loon.

The most abundant species on our count was the Common Murre (1888) followed in the top ten by American Wigeon (1537), European Starling (1391), Pine Siskin (1219 compared to last year's 4030), Mallard (947), Dark-eyed Junco (772), American Robin (639), Black Turnstone (624) Western Grebe (596) - nice to see those numbers back in mid-range again -, and tenth in number our constant companions the Glaucous-winged Gull and its hybrid form (548). These ten species made up almost 53 percent of our total number of birds. A species with a record low count was the humble American Coot with 13 individuals spotted as last two years were 15 and 16. Not significant we hope.

Compared to the previous day's lousy weather our novel Sunday CBC was stunningly beautiful, productive, and inspiring. It is so great that we went before the big snows. It is so wonderful to be a bird fanatic.

*Monica Fletcher*

Admiralty Audubon Conservation & CBC Chair



© Hillary Smith

Brant fly by, Point Hudson, 8 February 2022

## The Feather Forecast

### First of Season Observations

March is a transition out of our winter. Early in the month look for raptor activity at nest sites as raptors tend to breed earlier than resident songbirds or later-arriving migratory birds. This timing provides the parents with eggs and nestlings to feed a new crop of young raptors. Look for Peregrine activity to increase out at Middlepoint west of North Beach - they nest here on the high cliffs and become conspicuous when they have young.

As March ramps up birders like to note the First of Season birds (FOS in your E-bird notation) that arrive the earliest. These first arrivals are not stopping here to nest but rather heading further north. Turkey Vultures have been arriving since late February and will become common by March and April. Many geese (Canada, Cackling, and Greater White-fronted) and even some Sandhill Crane might be spotted in a flyover flock. Listen for the distinguishable flock calls night and day.

Beaver Valley and Center Valley continue to host our wintering flocks of Trumpeter Swan in the boggy flats of fields that offer food in their dormant winter unplanted state. The swans will move on by mid March and not return to us until December.

April is also a time for raptors to migrate - many people think they are resident, and some are, but many pass over us on their way north. Raptors don't flock like the geese but they are moving north especially in mid-April. Point Wilson campground and beach are good places

to note Red-tailed Hawk, Cooper's Hawk and the occasional Peregrine flying over. Nearby nesting crows, who use extended family as guards to the principal nesting pair, often fly up and raucously harass the passing raptors and thus serve as an alarm for you to look up and spot these hawks as they decamp for Canada.

In the same mass migration are our shorebirds going north in April. Point Hudson, Marrowstone Point, Fort Flagler campground, and Oak Harbor's back bay are excellent places for shorebirds like Dunlin, Black-bellied Plover, Western Sandpiper, and Sanderling. Discovery Bay and Point Wilson sometimes host Whimbrel which are striking in size and bill.

A number of 'first of season' birds show up in these two months, (or depart us like Black Turnstone flocks that winter here): Swallows, warblers, American Goldfinch, and hummingbirds. Rufous Hummingbirds arrive with the blooming of pink flowering currant. Savannah Sparrows show up in fields and grassy shore areas. A favorite mid-to-late April visitor are pairs of Mountain Bluebird that take a beach vacation at Point Wilson before heading into the Olympic highlands.

So like our tourists, March and April are the harbingers of future packed skies, full habitat, and lots of music to come.

*Monica Fletcher*

Admiralty Audubon Conservation & CBC Chair

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.*

## Kah Tai - Replacing Invasives

Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park was created with a federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant in 1980 that purchased private parcels in the area to connect the publicly owned lands. A subsequent state development grant (from IAC, now RCO) led to a park design from Bassetti/Norton/Metler/Rekevics, Architects and MacLeod/Reckord and Jestena Boughton, Landscape Architects. An integral part of the design was a 12-zone planting plan of native species. Coupled with that plan was the explicit intent to remove hybrid Lombardy poplars. The planting plan was ignored by officials due to conflicts among the various public entities that owned Kah Tai land.

Hybrid poplars are described in the literature as invasive and fast growing, supporting little wildlife and when they occur in groves as “voids of biodiversity.” What they are doing at Kah Tai is exactly that. The upper right photo shows a madrone planted by the chapter several years ago when there were no poplars around it, but it is now surrounded by hybrid poplars at least three times its height. The lower photo shows what was once a single row of hybrid poplars along Sims, now becoming a dense grove from suckering. Nothing of wildlife value grows beneath them. Elsewhere in the park, much native understory thrives, planted by our chapter and by birds using the native trees to roost and feed.

Our chapter has been planting natives in the park for decades but they can't outcompete the hybrid poplars. We now have an opportunity for the City, Port and PUD to work together on both sides of Sims Way and underground power, improve stormwater management in the face of climate change, improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and connectivity, and finally have ‘the right tree(s) in the right place’ while the boatyard will be able to use all its land on the south side of the highway and not lose more than an acre to hybrid poplars. After nearly forty years of delay, it's time to recognize and complete the grant-funded landscape design for Kah Tai.

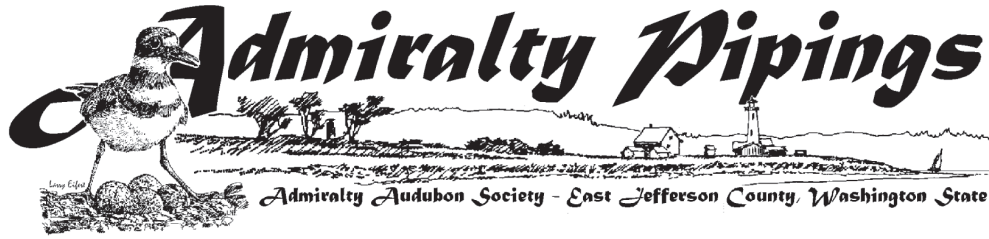


*Hybrid Lombardy poplars showing invasive behavior by suckering at Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park just south of the lagoon shore (top) and along Sims Way/Highway 20.*

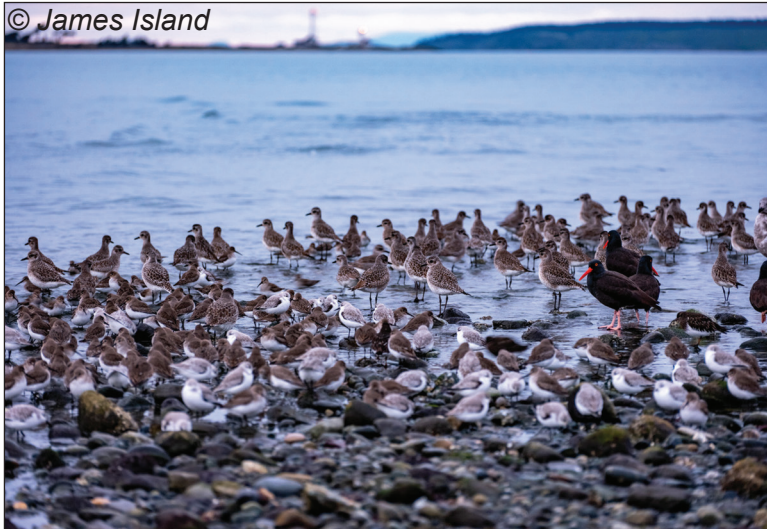
## Plants for Birds

Our chapter participation in National Audubon's Plants for Birds effort led to a modest grant to develop the native gardens along the front walk at Salish Coast Elementary. If you would like free advice about native plants for our area, please contact Ron Sikes, [b1rbrush@gmail.com](mailto:b1rbrush@gmail.com). Ron is our chapter representative for the program. You can learn more at <https://www.audubon.org/PLANTSFORBIRDS>.

Banner  
Design and Art by  
Larry Eifer©



Admiralty Audubon Society PO Box 666 Port Townsend WA 98368



© James Island  
Black-bellied Plovers, Black Oystercatchers, Dunlins, Sanderlings, Black Turnstone at Hudson Point near sunset on 22 January 2022.

## Admiralty Audubon Officers and Board

President: Rick Jahnke	360-531-3417	<a href="mailto:rjahnke@att.net">rjahnke@att.net</a>
Vice President: Bill Vogt	360-531-2821	<a href="mailto:billvogt46@gmail.com">billvogt46@gmail.com</a>
Secretary: Ron Sikes	360-385-0307	<a href="mailto:b1rdbrush@gmail.com">b1rdbrush@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer: Bob Tyer	360-379-1610	<a href="mailto:bwtyer@gmail.com">bwtyer@gmail.com</a>
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Education: Gary Eduardo Perless	360-643-3529	<a href="mailto:gperless@gmail.com">gperless@gmail.com</a>
Conservation & CBC: Monica Fletcher	360-379-3136	<a href="mailto:monicaflet@gmail.com">monicaflet@gmail.com</a>
Membership: Clara Mason	360-385-3594	<a href="mailto:aacmason@olympen.com">aacmason@olympen.com</a>
Newsletter: Debbie Jahnke	360-531-3415	<a href="mailto:admiraudub@gmail.com">admiraudub@gmail.com</a>
Member At Large - PI Rep: Craig Wester	360-385-5390	<a href="mailto:craigwester@olympus.net">craigwester@olympus.net</a>
Webmaster: Andrew Reding	--	<a href="mailto:admiraltyaudubon@gmail.com">admiraltyaudubon@gmail.com</a>
Website: <a href="http://admiraltyaudubon.org">http://admiraltyaudubon.org</a>	Facebook: <a href="https://facebook.com/admiraltyaudubon">https://facebook.com/admiraltyaudubon</a>	

## Donation Receipts for Tax Purposes

Admiralty Audubon is fortunate to have very generous members and many include additional donations with their dues. Remember that your dues also count as a donation. The IRS does not require taxpayers to submit a receipt with their taxes for individual donations under \$250.

If you are one of our members who donates

and you want a receipt for your donation of any amount, please email or call Ron Sikes, our chapter secretary, and he will send one by email or postal mail. Ron will automatically send a tax receipt for donations of \$250 or more as required by the IRS. *Please contact Ron at [b1rdbrush@gmail.com](mailto:b1rdbrush@gmail.com) or 360-385-0307*