



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

April 2019

March 26th (Tuesday): Board Meeting hosted by Joan Durgin

March 30th (Saturday)@8:30pm: Lights Out for Earth Hour (see pg 3)

April 2nd (Tuesday) @ 7pm: VAS General Meeting and Program

West Park Community Room, 610 Esther St., Vancouver

April 20th (Saturday) @ 8am: Field Trip

April 30th (Tuesday): VAS Board Meeting at the WestPark Community Room, 610 Esther St., Vancouver

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		M26				M30
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Program

Backyard Habitat Certification Program

Tuesday, April 2nd, 7pm

Susie Peterson, program manager for the Backyard Habitat Certification Program, will discuss the regional program to build or enhance the habitat in our



yards. Portland Audubon and Columbia Land Trust have teamed up to create a unique program that supports urban gardeners in their efforts to create natural backyard habitats. It's through their collective efforts to revitalize ur-

ban landscapes that positive change is made. Together we can make our cities a healthier place, for ourselves and for wildlife.

Remember, we have a new meeting location!

Find us at the **West Park Community Room at 610 Esther St.** (just across the street from the west end of Esther Short Park, or kitty-corner from City Hall). Main parking lot is on the west side, handicap parking is found on the east side. There is an entrance at either side of the building.

Field Trip

Westport & Bottle Beach

Leader: Arden Hagen

When: Saturday, April 20th at 8:00am

Where: Meet at the Salmon Creek Park & Ride

Our April field trip will be to the coastal town of Westport and to Bottle Beach State Park. We will meet at the Salmon Creek Park and Ride for an 8am departure.

We will be looking for shorebirds, seabirds and early passerines. This is an all day trip so pack a lunch and bring your Discover Pass if you are driving.

We will carpool.

Please remember to pay your driver for gas. (\$0.25/mile divided amongst the passengers is a good guideline)

VAS Program Chair Needed!

Love our programs? Want to see more, learn more? We need your talents and ideas as a new volunteer to take over the position as program chair! We hope you would like to take an active part in our group and help organize the wonderful presentations we all enjoy. Please contact Arden if you are interested for more information!

Arden Hagen: 360-892-8872 or iambakerman@comcast.net

Volunteer Opportunities

VAS Program Chair

Help! We need your talents and ideas as a new volunteer to take over the position as program chair! We hope you would like to take an active part in our group and help plan and organize the wonderful presentations we all enjoy. Please contact Arden or any member of the board if you are interested for more information!

Arden Hagen: 360-892-8872 or iambakerman@comcast.net

Peregrine Falcon Monitoring

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is looking for knowledgeable, enthusiastic citizen scientists that would be interested in helping monitor for peregrine falcons in the Columbia River Gorge this spring and summer.

Contact: Carly Wickhem, Assistant District Wildlife Biologist
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat Counties
509-493-2468

Purple Martin Monitoring

We are looking for volunteers to help locate banded Purple Martins at area nesting and roosting locations as they start to arrive this spring. Spotting scopes will be needed, as well as the patience it takes to get an entire band number! We could also use season-long volunteers to help with the banding and monitoring effort.

Contact Randy at re_hill@q.com for more information



INJURED BIRDS: WHAT TO DO?

We have no Bird Rehabilitators in the Vancouver Area that we are aware of. So what should you do if you find yourself in this situation?

Many Birds that hit a window just need some time to rest to get "their wind back" before taking off again.



Try putting them in a box with plenty of air for an hour or more until you hear movement then take them outdoors and test if they are ready to fly off. If not then....

1. Call the **Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center** for information: 503-292-0304. The center is located at 5151 NW Cornell Rd, Portland, OR.
2. Call Arden 360-635-1828 (c) or 360-892-8872(h)
3. If he is available to transport a bird to the Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center, you will be asked to donate a gas mileage compensation and a small donation for the Care Center for the care of the bird at the time of pick up.
4. DoveLewis, a 24hr Animal Hospital in downtown Portland will take the bird overnight if the Portland Audubon Wildlife is closed. 1945 NW Pettygrove, Portland, OR 503-228-7281.

In the meantime....

Keep the bird in a box with small air holes.

You might offer water via a dropper, and if necessary watered down puppy chow to supply nutrients.

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We are now on Facebook!

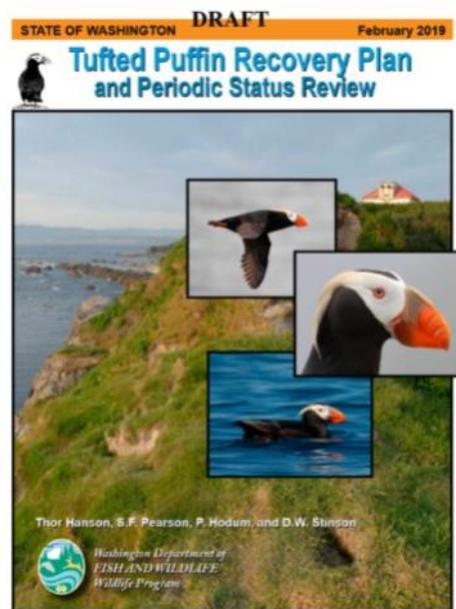
Follow our page @VancouverAudubon to get up-to-date announcements, news, and events from Vancouver Audubon! We also added a group page—you can find the group by just selecting the button "Visit Group" under our page banner. Join the group to share your nature photos and experiences, or to even get ID help!

COMMENTS SOUGHT ON TUFTED PUFFIN RECOVERY PLAN

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is accepting comments on its Tufted Puffin Recovery Plan and status review through May 17, 2019. Tufted Puffins have experienced a dramatic decline along the Washington Coast and there are not any indications that their situation has improved since they were state-listed as endangered in 2015. According to WDFW, “Steep population declines throughout the southern part of its range suggest that the species may be undergoing a significant range contraction. Formerly common in Washington along the outer coast and in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and San Juan Islands, puffins have suffered the reduction and disappearance of many breeding colonies in the state, accompanied by a dramatic population decline. Reasons for the decline are uncertain, but may include reduced prey availability, predation at nesting colonies, human disturbance (mainly historical), or factors related to climate change.”

Specific strategies and tasks are described in the recovery section to help guide recovery efforts in Washington, including priorities for research, monitoring, invasive species management, habitat conservation, and public outreach and education. You can find the recovery plan and status review at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/02051/>

Even if you don't have any specific criticism of the plan and status review, comments affirming the WDFW recommendations and plans provide helpful evidence that the public cares about the species and is monitoring how the state is managing for its recovery.



By Susan Saul

LIGHTS OUT FOR EARTH HOUR

Today, 80% of North Americans live in places from which they cannot see the Milky Way because of light pollution. Darkness actually is habitat. Artificial light fragments that habitat, influences the movements of nocturnal animals, alters predator-prey relationships, disorients migrating birds, and in general has negative consequences for ecological systems and human health. Light pollution doesn't have to be the inevitable side effect of lighting our nights for safety and activity. By following best practices in lighting design, we can preserve starry night skies, even in cities. Did you know the new Vancouver Waterfront Pier's lighting was designed by a Dark Skies engineer to avoid light pollution?

Earth Hour is on **March 30, 2019, at 8:30 – 9:30 pm**, a global effort to raise awareness about light pollution by the simple act of turning out our lights! Earth Hour is now the world's largest grassroots movement for the environment, inspiring millions of people to take action for our planet and nature. Reducing light pollution in our cities is an effort that saves energy, saves birds, and protects our ability to see the night sky. Everyone is encouraged to take part in this hour-long event. You can celebrate any way you want: have a candle-light dinner, go stargazing or simply switch off your lights for an hour.

Take the pledge to reduce light pollution around your home. More information is available at earthhour.org.

By Susan Saul



Feb. 18, John Allinger found 40 **GREATER YELLOWLEGS** in a small pond along the Ridgefield NWR Auto Tour Route.

Feb. 20, The first **CAPE MAY WARBLER** ever seen in Clark County was found at Ft. Vancouver by Cindy McCormack. She was able to get a couple of photos of it before it was attacked and killed by a **CALIFORNIA SCRUB-JAY**.

We had a flock of 18 **PINE SISKINS** show up at our feeders, our first for this winter.

Feb. 22, John Davis photographed a **SWAMP SPARROW** along Lower River Road in the Vancouver Lake lowlands, another out of the region species that occasionally winters here.

Feb. 26, A juvenile **HARRIS'S SPARROW** was found near the intersection of Highway 501 and Lower River Road in the Vancouver Lake lowlands. This sparrow supposedly winter in Texas and the mid-west and is a Code 5 rarity in Clark County.

March 2, At Round Lake at the end of the Lower River Road, Jim Danzenbaker, John Bishop and David Irons saw the continuing **SNOWY EGRET** and found a **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW**, another east of the Rocky Mountains species.

March 3, Cindy McCormack checked the end of Lower River Road and along with the previously reported birds added **TREE SWALLOW, VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW, and BARN SWALLOW**.

March 4, I saw my first **TURKEY VULTURE** of the year along Highway 14 near the Steigerwald Lake NWR. Thirty years ago when they return at this same time, we had runs of smelt in the Columbia that provided a lot of food to these birds and other wildlife. There must be a lot less food out there now for these early-returning birds.

The first **SAY'S PHOEBE** of the year in our area was found by Rick De Troye at the Steigerwald Lake NWR. This member of the flycatcher family is one of our earliest spring migrants and will probably stick around until the snow melts on their breeding grounds east of the Cascades.

March 7, Despite our having 3" of fresh snow in the morning, we had our first returning migrants at our place six miles east of Washougal: a **BAND-TAILED PIGEON** and a **WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW**.

The **TUFTED DUCK** continued to be reported from Wintler Park and at Marine Park, Ken VanderKamp spotted a **RED-THROATED LOON**.

March 8, Michelle Maani photographed a **SAGEBRUSH SPARROW** at the Ridgefield NWR River S unit, between markers 13 and 14 This is the second one of these birds reported from Clark County this year, they are early returning migrants heading to the east side of the Cascades. There are only a couple of prior sightings in Clark County making this a Code 5 bird.



Cape May Warbler, Ft. Vancouver, taken with phone through binoculars

March 9, There must have been a movement of migrant **SAGEBRUSH SPARROWS** coming through our area, on the heels of the one found in Clark County yesterday, Matt Bartels found one at Bonneville Dam for Skamania County's

first record. He also saw 2 **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS** there. I and quite a few other birders got to see and photograph this bird and John Bishop found a second one at the mouth of the Wind River.

March 10, The **SAGEBRUSH SPARROW** at Bonneville Dam continued and a second one was found there near the dam's visitor's guard shack by Les Carlson.

At the Steigerwald Lake NWR in Clark County, Russ Koppenderayer and Becki Kent found another **SAGEBRUSH SPARROW, a SAY'S PHOEBE, HORNED LARKS** and a **MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD**. Les Carlson visited the refuge and found another **SAGEBRUSH SPARROW** about a half a mile further east near the fish ladder.

March 14, Michelle Maani was walking on the Salmon Creek trail and was alerted by a couple of other birders to the presence of a **EURASIAN WIGEON**, a life bird for her, in the Kline Pond with a large group of **AMERICAN WIGEONS**.

Susan Setterberg spotted her first **TURKEY VULTURE** for the year at Ridgefield NWR.

As of March 15th, there had not been any reports of a Rufous Hummingbird in Clark County, we usually get the first ones in the end of February. This has been a winter where out of place wintering waterfowl and sparrows were in the limelight, we had multiple sightings of Clay-colored, Harris's and Sagebrush Sparrows, all species with less than a

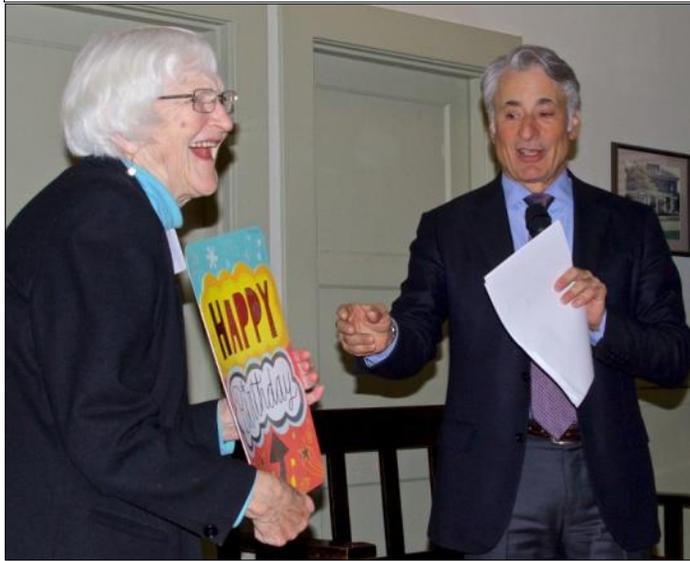
(Continued on page 5)

A MIGHTY AUDUBON OAK HAS FALLEN

Helen Engle, a woman who dedicated her life to preserving wild places, has died at age 93 at her home in University Place near Tacoma. "A mighty oak has fallen," said daughter Gretchen Engle. "She spread her branches really far. She touched so many people." Helen, along with Hazel Wolf, was responsible for starting nearly every Audubon chapter in Washington state, including her home chapter, Tahoma Audubon Society, and our Vancouver Audubon Society. "The very first meeting to organize the Tahoma Audubon Society happened in her living room," Gretchen Engle said. The list of wildlands she helped save or preserve is lengthy: Billy Frank Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, Point Defiance Park, Snake Lake, Swan Creek, China Lake Park, Chambers Creek Canyon, and many others.

Helen was a fierce advocate for birds, taking that passion everywhere, from state capitals to the halls of Congress. She served on the National Audubon Society board and was honored with an Audubon lifetime achievement

Helen Engle & David Yarnold, Nat'l Audubon Society CEO and President



award in 2013.

One of Helen's strengths was networking. With a wide smile and a big heart, she brought people together to make conservation happen. Using coalitions and lobbying, Helen and her friend Thelma Gilmur co-founded the Washington Environmental Council and served as co-chairs. Over the years, her home was the site of numerous meetings, workshops, garden tours, summer solstice picnics and other events. Helen presided over all of them as host

and model to aspiring environmentalists.

Kind wishes can be sent to Helen's family care of:

Gretchen Engle
8502 43rd Street West
University Place, WA 98466

A memorial service for Helen will be held at 3:30 p.m. on May 4 at Mason United Methodist Church in Tacoma.

By Susan Saul

(Wilson Cady's Afield, continued from page 4)

dozen prior records. The Sagebrush Sparrow was added to the Skamania County list with the first of three birds reported found by Matt Bartels. Cindy McCormack also added one new species to the Clark County list with her finding of a Cape May Warbler. In early March, John Allinger photographed a shorebird at the River "S" Unit that Sherry Hagen identified as a Ruff.

Now that the snow is melting off the foothills, the migration is starting to pick up and you can expect to see newly arrived species almost daily from now until the end of May.

As of the writing of this column, there had been 150 species of birds reported from Clark County and only 100 species reported

from Skamania County for the 2019 Cumulative Year List project. Skamania County has very little lowland areas where birds congregate in the winter and few birders venture there in the cold and wind. For more information on this list go to:

<http://www.wabirder.com/bartel.html>

If you have seen a bird not checked off for this year, please let me know. And please continue to send me your sightings for this column. If you are interested in when these species are due to arrive check out this web site which gives the average arrival dates for many species for our area.

<http://www.oregonbirds.org/phenology.html>



Say's Phoebe (Dmitry Mozzherin)

By Wilson Cady



Species Spotlight

Purple Martins

It's spring! Time to watch for the first of the "scout" Purple Martins to arrive. These adult males should start arriving during the last week of March or first week of April. The adult females should arrive a few weeks later, while the subadults usually arrive by mid-May.

Our subspecies, the Western Purple Martin (*Progne subis arboricola*) return from their South American wintering grounds to nest along the coastal side of California, Oregon, Washington and SW BC.

These beautiful birds are the largest of the swallow family and tend to forage at higher altitudes than our other swallows. They are aerialist insectivores, meaning they hunt and catch insects while flying.

Identification

When many people think of Purple Martins, they picture



Adult male and adult female Western Purple Martins

the pure blue "purple" adult male. While he is quite striking, the females and subadults look a little different, so lets go over each plumage type.

General shape: Long wings, deeply emarginated (forked) tail, flat bill with slight hook (typical of swallows).

Size: Our largest swallow (smaller than a robin, but larger than a sparrow)

Adult Male

Wow! These guys are handsome! They are almost completely covered in plumage that appears **metallic or steely purplish-blue**. Quite striking when seen in good lighting. Otherwise, they just look all dark.

Adult Female

A **pale collar** is probably the most distinguishable feature. She will be mostly pale to brownish underneath, and will have an **iridescent purplish-blue crown "strap", back and wing coverts**. Her **undertail coverts will have some wide, brown centers**.

Subadult (SY) Male

This guy was born in the previous year and will likely make his first attempt at mating. He mostly resembles a subadult female, but will have **scattered (many to a few) steely blue adult-type feathers**. The pattern of these feathers is unique to the individual and can even be used to recognize specific males at times!



2 examples of subadult males

Subadult (SY) Female

This is a female that was born last year and will likely attempt her first nesting. She resembles the adult female, but **more brownish on her crown, back, and wing coverts**.

Her **undertail coverts will have very fine brown streaks** in the centers (or completely lack any brown).



Fledgling

These young birds will resemble the subadult female, but have a shorter tail, with a much shallower fork. That's because the tail is still growing in. Don't expect to see these youngsters until August!

Vocalizations

Purple Martins have a wonderful variety of sounds, including chortles, creaks, warbles, and clicks! Many times, this is how to find the foraging birds, since they are flying so high they can be difficult to see. Listen to some of their sounds here:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Purple_Martin/sounds

They produce many sounds, including specific ones for predators, fledgling "support", dawn song, and flight contact calls.

By Cindy McCormack

Photo credits to Randy Hill, Russ Smith, and Martine Yen. Thanks!



Adult Female

Refuge 20/20

A new website, Refuge2020.info, was created as a collaborative effort of The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, the Columbia Gorge Refuge Stewards, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, to keep you informed about the many wildlife habitat and public access improvements to be completed or underway by 2020. The name is also an acknowledgement that these projects are bringing clarity to the vision of how National Wildlife Refuges will serve the Portland-Vancouver community well into the future.

Current Projects affecting access to the refuges:

Ridgefield NWR Carty Unit

Habitat Improvement: Oak Release

Beginning March 18, the Carty Unit at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge will undergo a process known as an "oak release." This involves removing faster growing conifer trees, mainly Douglas fir, in order to create more ideal growing conditions for Oregon white oak trees.

The Oaks-to-Wetlands Trail will close north of the Oak Overlook (the end of the paved portion of the trail) for approximately six weeks during tree cutting. The trail will remain closed for up to two additional months in order to ensure the site is safe from falling debris. Look for the trail to re-open north of the Oak Overlook in June or July.

Ridgefield NWR "S" Unit

Public access improvement: River S Bridge Replacement

Beginning March 18, construction will begin to replace the existing single-lane bridge that provides access over Lake River to the Auto Tour Route and the Kiwa Trail at Ridgefield NWR River S Unit. The new bridge will be two lanes wide and will cross over both the railroad tracks and the river

Access to the Auto Tour Route changed to weekends only (Saturday and Sunday). There will be no public access to the River S Unit Monday through Friday.



(360) 253-5771

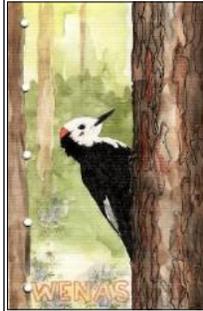
Everything for the Wild Bird enthusiast™

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56th Annual Washington State Audubon Campout The Hazel Wolf Bird Sanctuary at the Wenas Creek Campground Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-27, 2019

You're invited to attend a celebration of birds, bats, butterflies, botany, and the beauty of spring in eastern Washington!

The 56th Annual Wenas Audubon Campout will take place on Memorial Day Weekend (May 24-27, 2019) at the The Hazel Wolf Bird Sanctuary at the Wenas Creek Campground (SW of Ellensburg).



This casual and friendly gathering offers a variety of activities, including birding field trips, wildflower walks, field sketching, owl prowls, and campfire presentations PLUS special guest speaker, corvid researcher Dr. Kaeli Swift, Ph.D. You do not need to be an Audubon member to attend. All are welcome to this family-friendly event.

Visit the Wenas Audubon website (www.wenasaudubon.org) for directions, an outline of field trips and programming, and more information (2019 program coming soon). The campout is free and open to all ages. No reservations or registrations needed; just show up, set up camp, and participate in activities.

Donations are encouraged to cover SaniCans, signage, and other administrative costs. Every vehicle must display a Washington State Discover Pass (<http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov/>). Barring high fire danger, campfires will be allowed.

Follow us on Facebook, too! We'll be sharing photos and stories from past years, as well as tips from Wenas Campout pros to help make your trip a fun and memorable experience. [facebook.com/wenasaudubon/](https://www.facebook.com/wenasaudubon/)



Contacts:

General questions? Contact Carol Kohler, carol-kohler98607@gmail.com

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

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*Mission Statement:
Vancouver Audubon
believes in the wisdom
of nature's design and
promotes this through
education, involvement,
stewardship, enjoyment
and advocacy.*

April 2019

THE COLUMBIA FLYWAY is the monthly newsletter of the Vancouver Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Publication **deadline** is at the board meeting each month.

VANCOUVER AUDUBON ** MEMBERSHIP & DONATION COUPON

Membership dues support speaker programs, Flyway production and conservation projects.

_____ I wish to become a member/renew membership to Vancouver Audubon for \$20/year.

_____ I wish to support Vancouver Audubon with an additional donation of \$ _____

_____ I wish only to support Vancouver Audubon with a donations of \$ _____

_____ I prefer to receive the VAS Flyway by printed copy _____ by email _____ [PDF]

Membership Renewal date:

September 1st

VAS will not share your information with any other organization. However, we may send out a limited number of time sensitive news items we feel are important to club membership.

Chapter Code: Y13

Please include this coupon and make check payable to and send to:
Vancouver Audubon, P.O. Box 1966, Vancouver, WA 98668-1966

For more information, call
George Mayfield 360-360-687-0360 (membership)

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

For additional information on membership to National Audubon, got to <http://www.audubon.org/>

Going Green with the VAS Newsletter!

VAS will be transitioning to an all-digital newsletter format by next fall. To continue receiving a VAS newsletter, please be sure we have your correct email address. An electronic newsletter saves paper and printing and mailing costs. Since our printed edition numbers had fallen so low, the publisher cannot set the press for them any longer. Until June, printed copies will be printed manually, so you may see a difference in paper and ink. Digitally, you can enjoy the newsletter in full color and easily follow shared hyperlinks! E-mail George at gomayf@comcast.net to have the PDF version of *The Columbia Flyway* sent to you.

PDF version also available on the website: vancouveraudubon.org