



Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

December 2014

Calendar

***Tuesday, **Dec. 2, 6:45 pm**: 30 minute mini program before the General Meeting
"VAS Birders go Birding in Florida"

***Tuesday, **Dec. 2, 7:30 PM**: Vancouver Audubon Society's General Meeting at the
Genealogy Society at 717 Grand Boulevard (Grand & Evergreen) in Vancouver, WA

***Tuesday, **NEXT: Jan. 27, 6:30 PM**: VAS Board Meeting hosted by Susan
Setterberg 2207 S Sauk Way Ridgefield 510-278-0869 cell 856-701-2542

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	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	31			

PROGRAM:

Bird World: Insights for Humans from the Amazing Lives of Birds

by Noah Strycker

Birds aren't people, but just how different are they from us? They have the same basic requirements we do: food, shelter, reproduction.

And they can do some amazing things! Approaching bird behavior from new and surprising angles, Noah Strycker explores the astonishing homing abilities of pigeons, extraordinary memories of nutcrackers, self-image in magpies, life-long loves of albatrosses, particle physics of starling flocks, and other mysteries--revealing why birds do what they do, and how we can relate. With humor and wit, and drawing deep from cutting-edge science and anecdotes from the field, Strycker's presentation will leave you with renewed inspiration about our close connections with birds.



ABOUT Noah: This amazing young man has accomplished much since his teen emergence as an outstanding birder. He has studied birds on 6 continents, including Antarctica. He wrote his first book, *Among Penguins (2011)* from that experience. His latest book, *The Thing with Feathers (2014)* is about the fascinating behavior of birds. He is Associate Editor of *Birding Magazine*. Noah is Oregon based.

In 2015 Noah plans to complete a World Big Year to see if he can be the first person to see half of the world species in 1 year..

FIELD TRIP

Christmas Bird Count

The Date has not been set yet but it is usually held toward the end of December

Compiler: **Scott Carpenter, 503-753-1267**

Time: **All Day or as much as you can participate**

email Scott slcarpenter@gmail.com

This is the annual bird count in our area around the Vancouver Lake area and Ridgefield NWR area. If you wish to participate call or email Scott for information or to sign up.

(see page 2 for more info)

Please Note....

There are no...

- Meetings
- Field Trips
- Newsletter

...in January

*There will be a Newsletter mailed during
January for the February events.*



Vancouver Audubon

Christmas Bird Count: December

If you haven't participated in a CBC before, please sign up today. Everyone is welcome.

You don't need to be an expert to help out.

Each group will have a leader who'll assist with identifications so all you'll need to do is help count (this ability is particularly helpful for large flocks of geese!). It's that easy! The CBC is a great way for expert and novice birders to participate in a program that benefits birds all over the Americas. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations and to help guide conservation action.

From feeder-watchers and field observers to count compilers and regional editors, everyone who takes part in the Christmas Bird Count does it for love of birds and with the knowledge that their efforts are making a difference for science and bird conservation.

To sign up or get answers to your questions, contact:

Scott Carpenter at (503) 753-1267 or

email him at slcarpenter@gmail.com

Birds and Warming: It's Personal

Among the 314 North American bird species threatened by climate change are avian residents of every state. Nine state birds, including the Baltimore Oriole, Common Loon and Brown Pelican, are threatened in the states that have adopted them, and some could disappear locally. There over 40 birds on the list for the state of Washington.

For all the listed birds:

<http://climate.audubon.org/all-species>

For the state of Washington listed birds:

<http://climate.audubon.org/geographical-search/washington>

GO PAPERLESS with the VAS Newsletter

If you would rather have a paperless VAS Newsletter then you can email Sherry Hagen at littlebirder@comcast.net to receive a "PDF" copy of The Columbia Flyway in color sent to you. Include the email address that you wish to have it sent to.

The PDF form is also available on line at:

www.vancouveraudubon.org



What eastern bird is this?

Hint: It has recently been listed as a threaten species giving it extra protection since it's numbers have plummeted.

Answer at the bottom of the page.



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Yellow-billed Cuckoo

Important and Boring Issues: How Will the County Grow?

The Update of the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan

The process of updating the comprehensive growth management plan continues on with very few people paying attention. It's no wonder. The issues are complicated and technical. They are not sexy. Still, what is being discussed could -- would -- lead to more sprawl. More habitat loss. Higher taxes or fewer public services or both.

The two groups of people following the update are: on the side of sustainability, mostly Friends of Clark county and a few partners on specific issues and on the side of let 'er rip, Clark County Citizens United (CCCU). The CCCU is a group of land owners, mostly in north county, many of whom appear to be wanna be developers. The CCCU have been haunting every commissioner meeting and planning commission meeting. They are being met with exasperation and some growing sympathy.

The main push is to decrease the minimum lot size in several zones. At present, the minimum lot size in the Agricultural Resource Zone is 20 acres and in the Forest Resource Zone, 40 acres. The CCCU would like to see the minimum for agriculture to be five acres claiming that it would promote farming on small acreages.

Whatever CCCU would like, the staff has analyzed two alternatives in addition to the required no-change alternative. Neither provides for five acre minimums in the resource zones. One alternative would cut those minimums in half so that the Ag zone it would be 10 acres and the Forest Zone, 20 acres. The other alternative would extend land to the Battleground and La Center urban growth areas. There is talk that the two alternatives will eventually be

merged into one. The State Environmental Policy Act requires a full range of alternatives. This is not a full range of alternatives. I will continue to monitor the process and make comments as necessary.

Climate Change: What Can We Do in Washington?

As of this writing, the election is just a few days away. I had occasion tonight to question my legislator (Paul Harris) about climate change and what would he do about it. He requires more education. He also needs more people expressing their concern about climate change to him. As I said in last month's *Flyway*, it would be a good idea to contact your legislator before the session starts in January. By the time you read this, the election will be over and you will know who won.

Next *Flyway*, I will speak more about this issue and other legislative matters. We had a short deadline this month and I have been wearing my political hat and have not had the time to thoroughly check things out. Let's hope the election will mean better news for the environment.

Gretchen Starke 

Snipit

Climate Movement Spans Generations

Scores of Audubon members from across the country joined the more than 400,000 marchers participating in the September 21st People's Climate March in New York. What was perhaps more remarkable than the sheer numbers of marchers was the diversity of the crowd. The many young and multi-ethnic faces in the crowd inspired hope among the grizzled veterans of past movements.

Oct. 13, Jim Danzenbaker had a flock of 92 Turkey Vultures flew over his Battle Ground yard in a span of less than a half of an hour.

Randy Hill participated in annual fall crane survey at Ridgefield, which gave him an opportunity to count at Campbell Lake, the primary night roost south of the River S Unit. It was dark enough to quit at 7pm after they counted 1200 SANDHILL CRANES coming in to wet their feet for the night. Also were roosting here were 173 GREAT EGRETS and 1 SNOWY EGRET.

Oct. 15, The first Clark County SANDERLING for the year was found by Bob Flores in Ruefner's Pond in the Vancouver Lake lowlands.

Oct. 16, At least 2 ACORN WOODPECKERS were found at the Fort Vancouver National Monument on Evergreen Boulevard by Cindy McCormack. There are only a couple of prior records from Clark County. These birds stayed around and were seen by many birders including me.

Oct. 18, Eric Bjorkman found an EARED GREBE on the pond at the Orchard Hills Golf Course in Washougal, the first for the County this year.

There was a RUFFED GROUSE feeding in one of our crabapple trees, we see them there and in the English Hollies just about every winter.

Oct. 23, While birding with Khanh Tran, Les Carlson reached the 600 species seen mark with at least three MOUNTAIN QUAIL that they found near Timber OR.

Oct. 24, A Visit to the Vancouver Lake lowlands by Bob Flores resulted in his seeing a CLARK'S GREBE and BARN SWALLOW on the lake and 5 SURF SCOTERS flying upstream from the end of Lower River Road.

With a rain free morning in Battle Ground, Jim Danzenbaker decided to do a big sit for about 4 hours from his deck. The birds were taking advantage of the calm before the storm and were flying overhead and south, the following list is

just the highlights of what he counted; 1 BALD EAGLE, 1 NORTHERN HARRIER, 1 SHARP-SHINNED HAWK, 26 BAND-TAILED PIGEONS, 438 AMERICAN ROBINS, 20 VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS, 15 AMERICAN PIPITS, 10 YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS, 92 PINE SISKINS and 12 EVENING GROSBEAKS.

Oct. 25, The first BROAD-BILLED HUMMINGBIRD in the state was identified by Matt Schroeder and Carrie Munz of Stabler, a community north of Carson in Skamania County. The bird had been coming to flowers in their garden for about a week before they got good views and a photo of it.

Oct. 26, With the for potential storm affected birds showing up along the Columbia River, Jim Danzenbaker first checked from Frenchman's Bar Park and found 2 BONAPARTE'S GULLS, 1 PARASITIC JAEGER, a RED-NECKED PHALAROPE and a COMMON LOON. From the end of Lower River Road he saw a PACIFIC LOON and at Wintler Park he spotted 1 RED-NECKED GREBE and 4 COMMON LOONS.

Bob Flores was also looking for birds affected by the strong windstorm from along Lower River Road, and found; 65 AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS, 27 SNOW GEESE, 1 GREATER SCAUP, 4 WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS, 1 RED SHOULDERED HAWK, 1 BONAPARTE'S GULL, 6 VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS, and 2 late migrating VAUX'S SWIFTS.

On a futile quest to see the Broad-billed Hummingbird, Les Carlson, Ken Knittle and I were treated to close-up views of a calling NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL at the Schroeder's home. On our way home we stopped at Bonneville Dam and were delighted to see 2 HEERMAN'S GULLS there, the first record of this saltwater species in Skamania County. A check from the Franz Lake NWR overlook produced a male EURASIAN WIGEON, 3 GREAT EGRETS and 8 DUNLIN.

[Afield continued next page]

Vancouver Audubon

Oct. 27, After a futile search for the Heerman's Gulls at Bonneville Dam, Lyn and Gene Topinka made a brief stop at the Franz Lake NWR overlook and had views of 8 sleeping TUNDRA SWANS, the first of hundreds of swans that winter there attracted by the bulbs of the Wapato that cover about half of this shallow lake. These bulbs, also known as Indian Potato, were a major food of both Native Americans and wildlife. Unfortunately the non-native Common Carp also love to eat the submerged bulbs and have reduced the plants to isolated stands, Sauvie Island was originally called Wapato Island.

Les Carlson and I returned to search again without luck for the Broad-billed Hummingbird, but this time there were 2 NORTHERN PYGMY-OWLS circling the home where the bird had been reported. On the way home we stopped at the Franz Lake NWR overlook and there were few birds on the lake at that time.

Oct. 29, One late TURKEY VULTURE and a lingering COMMON YELLOWTHROAT were seen by Cindy McCormack at the Ridgefield NWR River "S" Unit. She also spotted 11 WESTERN BLUEBIRDS, a species that was first discovered by John Kirk Townsend when he was at Ft. Vancouver in 1835, they now are uncommon here due to nest competition with Starlings.

During November the local birding focus changes to waterfowl and raptors as the wintering ducks, geese, hawks and owls arrive. Many of these birds can be observed from your vehicle by driving the Auto Tour Route at the Ridgefield Refuge. Other good spots to check are the Vancouver Lake and the surrounding fields and ponds in the lowlands. The diked in area of the Woodland Bottoms, west of I-5 has many wintering birds hunting and feeding over these croplands. And the rafts of diving ducks in the Columbia River can be viewed from Dike Access Road. For directions to these sites visit the Vancouver Audubon Society webpage.

Birding at this time of year often is like playing

"Where's Waldo?", it involves searching through concentrations of geese, ducks and gulls for any unusual birds such as Emperor Goose, Brant, scoters, Tufted Duck, Long-tailed Duck or any of several gulls from Eurasia. Flocks of blackbirds could contain Rusty or Tri-colored Blackbirds and White-throated, Harris and Clay-colored Sparrows might be seen in with Golden or White-crowned Sparrows. So far this winter several very rare birds have been found in our state including Black-headed Gull, Eurasian Hobby and a Northern Wheatear. If you come upon anything you feel is interesting or out of the ordinary please contact me or Arden and Sherry Hagen or Eric and Tammy Bjorkman as soon as possible.

Wilson Cady, 360-835-5947

INJURED BIRDS: WHAT TO DO?

We have no Bird Rehabilitators in the Vancouver Area that we know 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.



1. Call the **Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center** for information:
503-292-0304
5151 NW Cornell Rd, Portland OR
2. Call Arden or Sherry Hagen for information: 360-892-8872
If they are available and a bird requires transport to the Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center then the volunteers suggest they receive a gas mileage compensation and a small donation to the Care Center for the care of the bird at the time of pick up.
3. There is 24 hr **Animals Hospital called DoveLewis** in downtown Portland that will take the bird overnight if the Portland Audubon Wildlife is closed.
1945 NW Pettygrove 503-228-7281
4. Please do not call other Board Members since they are unable to help at this time.

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.

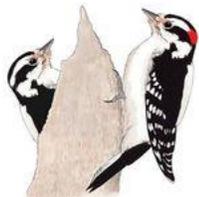
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December 2014

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.

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