



# Columbia Flyway

VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

*A chapter of the National Audubon Society*

vancouveraudubon.org

Chartered December 18, 1975

March 2019

**February 26th (Tuesday):** VAS Board Meeting hosted by Carol Kohler 360-600-6590 carolkohler98607@gmail.com

**March 5th (Tuesday) @ 7pm:** VAS General Meeting and Program.  
West Park Community Room, 610 Esther St., Vancouver.

**March 16th (Saturday) @ 8am:** Columbia Gorge Field Trip

**March 26th (Tuesday):** VAS Board Meeting hosted by Joan Durgin 360-834-5621 or jdurgin1@hotmail.com

| Su | M  | T     | W  | Th | F  | Sa |
|----|----|-------|----|----|----|----|
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| 31 |    |       |    |    |    |    |

## Program: Show & Tell

Tuesday, March 5th, 7pm

## Field Trip: Columbia Gorge

Saturday, March 16th

Members are invited to share their bird (or other wildlife) photos at the annual "Show & Tell" program. A great time to show off those bird photos you took on a trip, or even from home, with an audience that will truly appreciate them! Please, not more than 20 photos. Use flash drive, computer or I-pad with correct adapter. Please contact Arden Hagen at [iambakerman@comcast.net](mailto:iambakerman@comcast.net) to sign up to present.

**Leader:** Eric Bjorkman

**When:** Saturday, March 16th at 8:00am

**Where:** Meet at the Port of Camas

We'll meet at the Port of Camas and head east on SR 14 at 8am, stopping first at Franz Lake for waterfowl. We'll visit a fish hatchery on the Little White Salmon River in search of American Dipper and possibly Harlequin Duck. Drano Lake is nearby and we'll scan it while keeping eyes out for Bald Eagles and Osprey. As we move east, the habitat changes from the wetter west side of the Cascade Range to the drier east side where pine and oak are much more abundant. The birds change here along with the habitat and we'll be looking for species like Western Bluebird and Lewis's Woodpecker. Other likely stops will be at Catherine Creek and the Lyle-Balch Cemetery where, along with good birding possibilities, we can usually find Western Pond Turtles in a nearby lake, a species not found west of the Cascades. Our target return time will be 3:00 pm depending on weather conditions and the cooperation of the birds.

Bring snacks and lunch as we'll eat in the field.

Contact Eric @ 360-213-6489

**We will carpool.**

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



**Remember, we have a new meeting location!** Find us at the **West Park Community Room at 610 Esther St.**

(very easy to find—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.

### 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](mailto:iambakerman@comcast.net)

# Volunteer Opportunities

## 2019 Songbird Sagebrush Survey

Please join the [Sagebrush Songbird Survey](#) for one last season to experience the joy of a dawn chorus as the sun peeks over the sagebrush...

Classroom/field trainings: mid-March-early April

Surveys: April 11-21, May 2-12, and June 1-9, 2019

**Contact: Christi Norman**, Program Director  
 cnorman@audubon.org  
 360.789.7282

## 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. (See pg 5 for more details!)

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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| Sightings .....    | Wilson Cady.....      | 360-835-5947 ..... | gorgebirds@juno.com        |
| Website.....       | Sherry Hagen.....     | .....              | littlebirder@comcast.net   |



## 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!

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## STOP PLANS TO DRILL IN THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

In late December 2018, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) released its rushed environmental analysis for opening the 1.5 million-acre Coastal Plain of our Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas leasing and development. It offers three alternatives, each of which would auction off all, or nearly all, of the 1.56 million acres of the refuge's coastal plain.

The 20 million-acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is unparalleled in its wild grandeur, ecological wholeness, and vast scale. Polar bears, caribou, muskoxen, wolves, Dall sheep, brown bears, wolverines, arctic foxes, and more than 200 bird species depend on the refuge for survival. The Coastal Plain that the BLM wants to open up to oil and gas leasing provides some of the most important denning habitat for polar bears in the United States. The area is also essential calving grounds for the Porcupine caribou herd and is considered sacred by the Gwich'in people. Oil and gas activity would devastate the area with oil spills, roads, gravel mining, and air and water pollution.

Comments and input on the Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Program Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) are being accepted through **March 13, 2019**. Comments can be submitted through the project website at [www.blm.gov/alaska/coastal-plain-eis](http://www.blm.gov/alaska/coastal-plain-eis).

Some points to mention in your comments:

- Oil leasing and development would destroy the wild quality and ecological integrity of both the Coastal Plain and adjacent refuge. lands The DEIS fails to truthfully explain what would be lost by opening the Arctic NWR to oil leasing and development.
- The DEIS fails to fully assess the significant impacts oil leasing and development would have on caribou, especially when caribou are most vulnerable to disturbance—during critical times of calving and raising young. Oil leasing and development on the Coastal Plain would cause caribou populations to decline, which would have significant ramifications over a vast area of Alaska and Canada, and these effects would persist beyond the estimated 130 years of exploitation.
- The DEIS significantly underestimates the amount of carbon pollution that oil leasing and development would add to atmosphere, and fails to truthfully address the implications of exacerbating the climate crisis.
- Fresh water is relatively limited on the Coastal Plain, however the DEIS does not adequately assess the impacts that industry's water use would have on fish and wildlife.
- The DEIS does not thoroughly assess the cumulative effects of oil leasing and development within the Refuge and with current and expanding development across the North Slope and offshore in the Arctic region.

*By Susan Saul*

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

EVERY Memorial Day Weekend, members of Washington State's Audubon Chapters and their friends gather in the Wenas Valley, located on the east slope of the Cascade Mountains between Ellensburg and Yakima. With a variety of natural history and recreation opportunities, the Wenas Valley is a beautiful area that supports a fascinating assortment of spring flora and fauna, and offers the spiritual fulfillment of simply being outdoors in the spring. Everyone, whether members of Audubon chapters or not, is welcome to join us for this wonderful weekend of enjoying nature!



See <http://www.wenasaudubon.org> for more information

**Jan 18,** Les Carlson, Barry Woodruff and I decided to bird Skamania County with the goal of adding some birds to that county's year list. We did fairly well by birding along Highway 14 and ended up adding 39 species to the 2019 year list.

**Jan. 24,** A **FERRUGINOUS HAWK** that had been reported from Dallesport, in Klickitat County was relocated by Randy Hill, this is the largest hawk in North America and there are only a couple dozen pair that nest in Washington State.

Lyn and Gene Topinka a flock of about 1,000 scaup on Vancouver Lake yesterday the flocks around here can contain both **GREATER** and **LESSER SCAUP**.

**Jan. 28,** An unexpected find in the Woodland Bottoms was a **PALM WARBLER** found by Lyn Topinka, strangely winter is the most likely season to find these birds here.

**Jan. 29,** Terry Anderson and Russ Koppendrayner relocated the **PALM WARBLER** just east of the pump station at the Lewis River. This bird stuck around several days and was seen by several other birders including Bob Flores.

**Jan. 31,** A **TUFTED DUCK**, a species of diving duck from Eurasia, was picked out of a flock of similar looking scaup at Wintler Park in Vancouver by Jim Danzenbaker.



**Feb. 2,** Ken Knittle had a **CLAY-COLORED SPARROW** in his Hazel Dell yard, this is a mostly east of the Rockies species that does breed in a couple of places in northeast Washington.

The "Red" **FOX SPARROW**, an unusual subspecies to see in Washington, was at Les Carlson's feeders in Hazel Dell for the fourth time this winter. This is the subspecies that nests in the Yukon and on the East Coast.

A female **HARLEQUIN DUCK** was found at Eagle Creek in the Gorge by Steven Clark, they winter along the rocky coastline and nest on a few mountain rivers on the Washington side of the Columbia River. Sometimes you can see

them near the falls at the little White Salmon Fish Hatchery.

**Feb. 6,** A **RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER** was a new bird for Bob Rowe's yard list. During the winter the birds from the higher elevations drop down to the lowlands increasing your odds of seeing these lovely birds.

**Feb. 10,** A flock of 7 **HORNED LARKS** were photographed by Jen Sandford at the Evergreen Memorial Gardens and another 12 were found on the Dike Trail at the Steigerwald Lake NWR by Rick De Troye. This is a very hardy species that winters in open short grasslands east of the Cascades and is a Code 4 (Rare) in Clark County. To see the rarity codes for the birds of Clark County go to: [http://wabirder.com/docs/Clark\\_list.pdf](http://wabirder.com/docs/Clark_list.pdf)

**Feb. 13,** A **BLACK PHOEBE** was seen at the hunters gate on the Ridgefield Auto Tour Route by several birders including Jim Danzenbaker and Jared Strawderman.

I had mistakenly thought that we were going to avoid any major weather events this winter as we

had made it through January with mild weather. February brought snow and Varied Thrushes finally showed up in our residential areas where they visit feeders and devour the berries and fruit that remain on our ornamental plants. Hawthornes, holly, Highbush Cranberries, cotoneaster and pyracantha all provide fruit during the winter that are relished by multiple species.

The first Rufous Hummingbirds should be arriving here by the first week of March and by the end of the month Osprey, Band-tailed Pigeon, all of the swallow species and Orange-crowned Warblers and Common Yellowthroats should be back.

As of mid-February, 135 species of birds have been reported from Clark County in 2019 and 77 have been seen in Skamania County. Please report your sightings to me for this column or post them on the Vancouver Audubon Society Group Facebook site.

*By Wilson Cady*

# Peregrine Falcon Citizen Science Monitoring

**Background:** Peregrine falcons populations in the United States experienced a well-documented decline after the introduction of the DDT insecticide in the late 1940s. In 1970, the US Fish and Wildlife Service listed peregrines as federally endangered. In 1980, Washington state followed suit, listing the species as state endangered after confirming only five nesting pairs statewide. Peregrine populations began rebounding after the use of DDT was restricted and eventually banned in the US. Other environmental regulations and a captive breeding program that released approximately 6000 peregrines into the wild also aided in recovery. The species was federally delisted in 1999 and state delisted in 2016. Since 1990, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has documented an increase in territories occupied by peregrines each year, recording 108 territories occupied in 2009, and estimating 148 occupied territories in 2016. Other than a dip in 2009, nest success within occupied territories has also increased based on nesting surveys performed at a random sample of sites. Overall, the peregrine falcon population in Washington State is considered to be stable or increasing.



Despite delisting, the peregrine falcon is still designated a federal species of concern and a “priority species” by the state of Washington. WDFW currently develops site-specific plans to avoid or reduce disturbance to nesting peregrines. One of these sites is Beacon Rock in the Columbia River Gorge, which is one of the most successful peregrine nesting sites in the state. A portion of Beacon Rock is closed to rock climbing during the nesting season, so this site is monitored for peregrine activity each year. WDFW and the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area

(US Forest Service) are interested in monitoring the occupancy and nesting success in other territories of the Columbia River Gorge where nesting peregrines may be disturbed by recreation or other human activities.

**Volunteer Description:** The volunteer/s will be required to visit a site a maximum of four times to determine if the territory is occupied, and, if so, to monitor for nesting behavior and nest success. All monitoring is done from a distance using binoculars and a spotting scope as to not disturb the animals. Each visit can last up to four hours and should occur when peregrines are most active – early morning or late evening and under suitable weather conditions (i.e. not heavy rain, snow or high wind). The volunteer/s must be physically able to stand/sit for long periods of time while looking through binoculars and/or a spotting scope. All sites to be monitored in 2019 occur between Beacon Rock State Park and Lyle, WA on the Washington side of the Columbia River Gorge. The survey period is from mid-March to mid-June. The individual surveys must occur within predetermined blocks of time, but otherwise can be flexible.

## For More Information, Please Contact:

Carly Wickhem, Assistant District Wildlife Biologist  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Clark, Skamania, and Klickitat Counties  
509-493-2468 or [carly.wickhem@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:carly.wickhem@dfw.wa.gov)

## Banded Horned Lark Reports Needed

If you know an area near you where larks are frequently sighted, there is chance a banded lark may be among them! Any information on the location of banded larks is extremely valuable, as it will help us substantiate our findings and better understand the wintering ecology of our population.



Devin de Zwaan, University of British Columbia  
[drdezwaan@gmail.com](mailto:drdezwaan@gmail.com)  
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# Species Spotlight

## Separating a Hutton's Vireo from Ruby-crowned Kinglets



Ruby-crowned Kinglet photo by Sherry Hagen



Hutton's Vireo photo by Sherry Hagen

For two species in completely different families, the Hutton's Vireo and the Ruby-crowned Kinglet look remarkably alike. Both are tiny, can be a wonderful color of olive-green and pale yellow to a dull olive and cream, depending on plumage freshness. Both have white wing bars and a white eye ring. We can find both species in western Washington, but the Ruby-crowned Kinglet is markedly more common and much easier to find, especially in winter. Of course, if the male kinglets are feeling a bit frisky, as is happening more frequently as spring approaches, that brilliant red crown they flash makes identification simple!

Aside from that jewel of a crown, which is NOT always present or visible, there are a few rather simple characteristics that can help you identify a Ruby-crowned Kinglet without looking too closely.

### Vocalizations

These two species may look similar, but they are easily separated by voice alone. You don't need to see these birds to identify them!

#### **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**

**Calls**—quite different from their song or their cousin, the Golden-crowned Kinglet. It is almost rude, a rough, usually two-note call, although they can be given in quick series of many if agitated.

**Song**—they have a wonderful song, certainly one of my favorites. It makes me grin every time I hear it. They may do portions of the song, or even sing it softly—I figure these are practice sessions! It's a wonderful variety in one song—kind of a high-pitched rev up (like a tiny engine try-

ing to turn over), before erupting in a fantastic series of warbles. [Listen to the song here.](#)

#### **Hutton's Vireo**

**Calls**—They have a variety of sounds they make, but you will find their most typical call is very distinct. It can be rather subtle when included in a mixed flock, especially when they are "talking" quietly. It's a rather whiny, yet very vireo-like call. They also have a wonderful "scold" call.

**Song**—a repeated series of "zu-wee," with usually no variation in the phrases. There can be individual variation in the pitch or clarity of the notes, but the rather boring repetition of the phrase is a great clue! [Listen to the song here.](#)

### Activity

Both birds are active feeders, but you will find that the Ruby-crowned Kinglet is much, much more active. Think hyperactive. I don't think they know how to hold still! They often flit their wings as they move from branch to branch. The Hutton's Vireo is a more deliberate forager and will sometimes hold still. If you think you have a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and it says in one place for more than a second or two without moving, check again!

Okay, now that you are giving that bird another look, let's go over a few field marks that will help you convince yourself that you are looking at a Hutton's Vireo and not one of the zillion Ruby-crowned Kinglets in the area!

*(Continued on page 7)*

**Bill**—Ruby-crowned Kinglet bills are thin and delicate-looking. Hutton’s Vireo bills are thicker and stubby, with a slight hook at the tip (if you can see it well).

**Wing bars**—Both have two white wing bars, but the Ruby-crowned Kinglet has a black patch below the lower wing bar (the lower wing bar is formed by the tips of the greater (secondary) coverts), the vireo does not have this black patch.



*Ruby-crowned Kinglet—see the yellow feet and black wing patch?*

**Legs/feet**—if you see yellow on the feet, it’s a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Hutton’s Vireo have bluish-gray legs and feet. Ruby-crowned Kinglet have blackish legs with yellowish feet, usually mostly the “pads”. This can be difficult to see in a constantly moving bird!

**Lores**—Hutton’s Vireo have pale lores (that area in front of the eye), Ruby-crowned Kinglet have darker coloration on the lores.

Since Ruby-crowned Kinglets are so common, it is best to study them closely and learn their field marks, habits, and sounds well. Once you have, a Hutton’s Vireo will be much more obvious when you encounter one!



*Hutton’s Vireo—notice those bluish legs!*

*By Cindy McCormack*

## Identification Summary

### Ruby-crowned Kinglet

Harsh, abrupt call, usually two notes

Complex song w/high pitched intro and warbling finish

Blackish legs, yellowish feet

Black patch below 2<sup>nd</sup> wing bar

Darker lores

Narrow, petite bill

Very active, flits wings often, flits & flutters between branches constantly

### Hutton’s Vireo

Whiny call, scolds, other vireo-type calls

Simple song, repeated “zu-wee” or similar

Blue-gray legs & feet

No black patch below 2<sup>nd</sup> wing bar

Pale lores

Stouter bill (vireo bill)

Less hyper, more likely to stay still for short periods

## Potential Multiple-day VAS Field Trips

We are looking at a few potential fund-raising field trips for this year. If you would be interested in participating in one or more of these trips, **please contact Cindy at [nwbirder@gmail.com](mailto:nwbirder@gmail.com)**. Continued planning will be based on interest.

1. NE Washington (Stevens, Pend Oreille Counties) in June
2. Okanogan Highlands in June
3. Malheur NWR in early fall



## Audubon Council of Washington is scheduled to be held in the Southwest Region in Fall 2019!

Audubon Washington needs volunteers from the Southwest Region to help with planning. Gail Gatton and her staff, particularly Teri Anderson, the Chapter Network Manager, will be engaged in the planning. Contact anyone on the VAS board if you are interested in additional information or would like to help.

Items needed: \*Meeting space \*Accommodations \*Field trips \*Agenda

**VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY**

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

**March 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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_ 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)

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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](http://vancouveraudubon.org)