

# The Corvid Crier

VOL 30, No7 – SEPTEMBER 2010

*The Mission of the Eastside Audubon Society is to protect, preserve and enhance natural ecosystems and our communities for the benefit of birds, other wildlife and people.*

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**Directions to Eastside Audubon**

Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church, 308 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. (corner of 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. S. and State). Take I-405 exit 18 (NE 85<sup>th</sup>, Kirkland). Drive west on Central Way to 3<sup>rd</sup> St. (stoplight). Turn left (south) on 3<sup>rd</sup> St. and follow it as it bears left and changes name to State St. Turn left on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S.

TAKE THE BUS! Routes 540, 230 and 255 serve State Street in Kirkland.



*Suzanne Tomassi - Senior Wildlife Biologist*

***September Program***

*Suzanne Tomassi conducts a presentation about Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) on September 23, 2010*

Suzanne Tomassi, a founding member of Puget Sound Bird Observatory and a senior wildlife biologist with The Watershed Company, will speak at the EAS September 2010 monthly meeting. She will talk about The Institute for Bird Populations' (IBP) Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship (MAPS) program with an introduction and summary, accompanied by slides; on data collection techniques used by banders and ornithologists.

Suzanne has 18 years of experience banding, ageing, sexing, and measur-

ing birds in South East Asia, South America, Canada, and throughout the US. She presently manages a MAPS station at Morse Wildlife Preserve in Pierce County.

The Institute for Bird Populations' MAPS program is a continent-wide effort to assess and track vital rates and population dynamics of North American landbirds in order to inform conservation decisions. Both citizen-science and peer reviewed "State of the Birds" reports reveal declines in many of our

*(Continued on page 5)*

**"Sign Up Now!"**

**Wine and Wings Weekend October 1-3, 2010**

Fall is a wonderful time to bird the Olympic Peninsula. Join us for a tour of some great birding destinations and wineries. The trip includes van transportation, two nights' accommodations with Continental breakfast, dinner (with wine) on Friday and Saturday nights, and all taxes and tips.

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Focus on the Board



Once again the generous donations of EAS members to the Amy McQuade Camp Scholarship Fund sent low-income middle-school students to summer camps in the region. And once again, these lucky campers learned about the interdependence of nature, community and themselves.

To qualify applicants must be recommended by school personnel. Applicants must demonstrate the following:

- Keen interest in the environment, nature, science
- Sense of responsibility
- Commitment to learning
- Ability to benefit from the experience

In return for receiving the scholarship, each student is asked to share his/her experience by writing an article for the Corvid Crier, speaking at a program night or assisting the Education Committee at an event.

Camps were carefully chosen by the Education Committee, and their directors generously contributed partial scholarships

*(Continued on page 8)*

**Eastside Audubon Society**  
 (425) 576-8805 — [www.eastsideaudubon.org](http://www.eastsideaudubon.org)  
 308 4th Avenue S. (Corner 4th Ave. S. and State)  
 P.O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115

### Executive Officers

President	Cindy Balbuena	cbalbuena@comcast.net
Vice President	<b>Open</b>	
Secretary	Carmen Almodovar	calmodovar@eastsideaudubon.org
Treasurer	Jim Kenney	(425) 746-9862
At large board member	Margaret Lie	mli@eastsideaudubon.org
At large board member	<b>Open</b>	

### Committee Chairs/Board (board positions underlined>

Birding	Tricia Kischel	tkischel@audubon.org
Bird Photography	Tim Boyer	tboyer@seanet.com
Field Trips	Hugh Jennings	(425) 746-6351 fieldtrips@eastsideaudubon.org
Native Plant Walks	<b>Open</b>	
Nature Walks	Christopher Chapman	(425) 941-3501 cjchapman19@comcast.net
Bird Questions	MaryFrances Mathis	(425) 803-3026
Conservation Education	Andrew McCormick Mary Britton-Simmons	amccormick@eastsideaudubon.org (360) 794-7163 mbrittionsimmons@eastsideaudubon.org
Communication Newsletter	<b>Open</b> Tamra Chinn	newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org
Membership	<b>Open</b>	
Financial Development	Tim McGruder	tmcgruder@eastsideaudubon.org
Birdathon	<b>Open</b>	office@eastsideaudubon.org

## We want YOU To Consider Joining The EAS Board

Are you ready to take a leadership role in Eastside Audubon? We will be presenting our slate of potential board members at the October program night and are gathering names of those interested in joining our Board of Directors. Why should you consider being on the board? Board membership at EAS provides a unique opportunity to make a real difference. It provides a vehicle that can help you take your passion for birds and the environment and bring your ideas to life in the Chapter. It's an opportunity to build your network, work with great people, and grow personally and professionally. It's a chance to give back in a meaningful way to an organization that you've enjoyed being a part of. AND you can have a lot of fun in the process!

If board membership is something that you'd like to consider, or if you'd like to learn more about what it's like on the board and talk about specific opportunities, please reach out to me (cbalbuena@comcast.net) or speak with any of the current board members. We'd love to have you join us!

—Cindy Balbuena

### **BIRDS OF PUGET SOUND** (Last minute addition to trips)

Back by Popular Demand! Learn by doing! In this four-part course you will learn about basic principles, etiquette, field guides, equipment, and identification techniques for successful birding. For beginners, experienced birders, and people new to the area.

Fall is a great time to bird in the Puget Sound. Join us for all four sessions or choose individual sessions, and have fun. Each session is a new topic.

**Instructor: Brian H. Bell, Master Birder, Author, Professional Guide**

### **Class Dates, Time and Locations:**

- Session 1: Sat, Oct. 30.** Meet 7:30 AM at Marymoor Park, Parking Lot D. Basic Principles and how to choose binoculars. Field Trip: Marymoor Park, over by noon.
- Session 2: Sat, Nov 6.** Meet 8:00 AM at the Center for Urban Horticulture parking lot (UW campus). Presentation: Field Guides, bird publications and CDs. Field Trip: Union Bay Natural Area (also known as Montlake Fill), over by noon.
- Session 3: Sat, Nov 13.** Meet 8:00 AM at Discovery Park Interpretive Center. Present-

tation: Identification techniques. Field Trip: Discovery Park, over by noon  
**Session 4: Sat, Nov 20.** Meet 8:00 AM at the Kingsgate P&R. Presentation: Birding ethics and etiquette. Field Trip: To be determined, depending on birds of interest. Full day trip. Cost: \$80 members, \$90 non-members. If you can't show up for all the sessions ask about a reduced price. **Reduced price** of \$75 for all 4 sessions for members, \$85 non-members. *To sign up contact Tricia Kishel at [tkishel@eastside-audubon.org](mailto:tkishel@eastside-audubon.org) or call 206-948-3922*

## Meetings

**EAS Monthly Meeting 7:30 pm**  
 Meets third Thursday each month in large room upstairs from EAS Office. Everyone is welcome. Questions? Email [Office@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:Office@eastsideaudubon.org)

**Web Committee 10:30 am**  
 Meets first Thursday each month in EAS Office. All interested parties are invited. Questions? Email [webmaster@eastside-audubon.org](mailto:webmaster@eastside-audubon.org)

**Photo Group 7:00 p.m**  
 Meets second Thursday each month in large room upstairs from EAS Office. Questions? Email Tim Boyer at [tboyer@seanet.com](mailto:tboyer@seanet.com)

**Youth Education Committee 7:00 pm** Email [education@elwas.org](mailto:education@elwas.org)

## Eastside Audubon Office/ Audubon Center

The office is downstairs at Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church in Kirkland, **308 4th Avenue S. (Corner 4th Ave. S. and State).** Directions: I-405 exit 18 (N. E. 85th-Kirkland). Go west on Central Way to the light on 3rd St. Go left on 3rd St. Follow this street (it bears left and changes name to State St.) Then turn left on 4th Ave. S.

**(425) 576-8805**  
**e-mail: [office@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:office@eastsideaudubon.org)**  
**Hours: Mon, Tues, Fri — 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

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[newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org)  
 Subject: EAS Newsletter

or by mail to:

Eastside Audubon Society  
 Attn: Tamra Chinn  
 P. O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115

## Eastside Audubon Survey 2010 Results

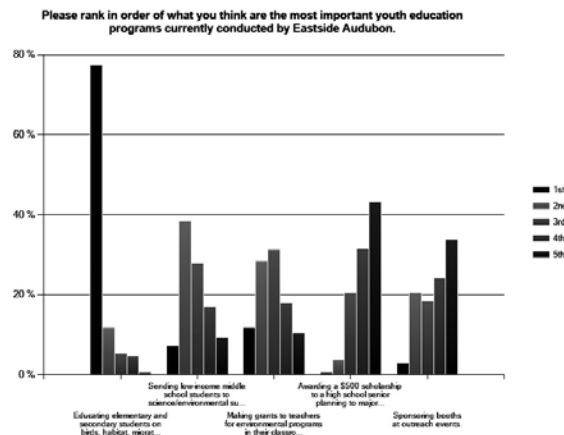
The Board of Directors thanks all those who participated in the survey and will use the information to plan for the chapter's future. We are working hard to keep the birds singing while connecting people to nature!

Preliminary results of the Eastside Audubon Survey 2010 have been compiled and indicate that the members who responded are most concerned about local issues, educating young people and learning more about birds. The response to the questionnaire was an excellent 31% with 173 members completing the questionnaire online or mailing one to the office. Seventy-two percent of the respondents were female compared to 64% of the overall membership, so there is likely a slight bias in favor of the views of female members of the chapter.

### Local Issues, Education and Learning to Identify Birds Seen As Important for Future Planning

Members were asked to rate their preferences for future planning among sixteen items in three categories: youth education, adult education and conservation. The rating averages for these planning items pointed to respondents favoring local projects and issues. Composite scores closest to 1.0 (a first place vote) ranked higher. The charts show the placement preferences for all the items in each area.

#### Youth Education



It was clear that respondents want the chapter to continue its focus on educating elementary and secondary students with 78% of them ranking this item first (1.39). Sending low-income middle school students to camp (2.83) and making grants to teachers (2.87) were preferred next. Least preferred were sponsoring booths at events (3.65), and awarding a \$500 scholarship to a college-bound student (4.13). Some written comments suggested the chapter offer free membership to anyone under age 16, report more on the educational work done with children, offer field trips for children, and start a youth birding club.

(Continued on page 4)

## Board Notes for May 2010

Grants: Andy McCormick, Conservation Committee chair, reported that we received a \$5,559 grant for the Vaux's Swifts Happening in Monroe from the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The grant will pay for a camera, a mount, and an informational kiosk. Many thanks to Larry Schwitters who wrote the grant in our name!

**Tamra Chinn Takes on the Corvid Crier:** Tom Grismer has decided to step down as editor of the Corvid Crier. He's handing over the reins to Tamra Chinn. The board and all of Eastside Audubon thank Tom for his many years of stellar editing, and we also extend a big welcome to Tamra Chinn.

**Juanita Bay Park Ranger to Join with Eastside Audubon:** The board passed a motion to accept the Juanita Bay Park Ranger proposal to affiliate with Eastside Audubon. Tim McGruder, Andy McCormick, and other board members have been working with the rangers to finalize the details of the affiliation.

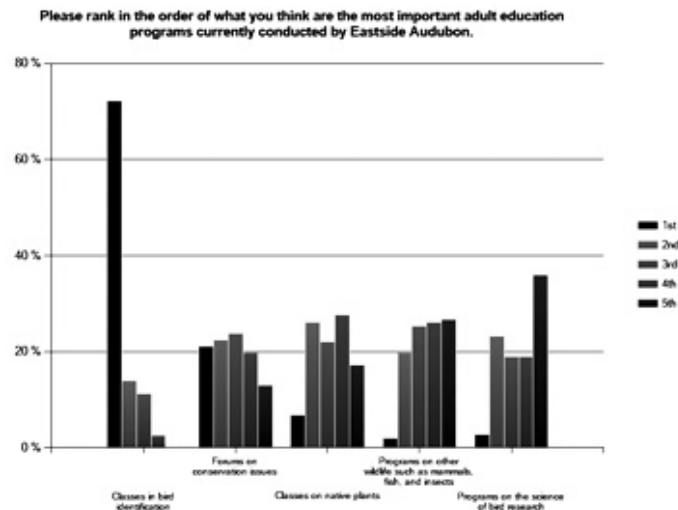
**Program Night Planning:** The board continued its discussion of possible speakers and coordinating speakers with monthly chapter activities.

**Transition:** The board discussed how to handle chapter business in the absence of an executive director. In the interim, we'll look to the executive assistant, the executive board, and volunteers to cover these responsibilities.

**Treasurer's Report:** Jim Kenney reported that the Spring Plant

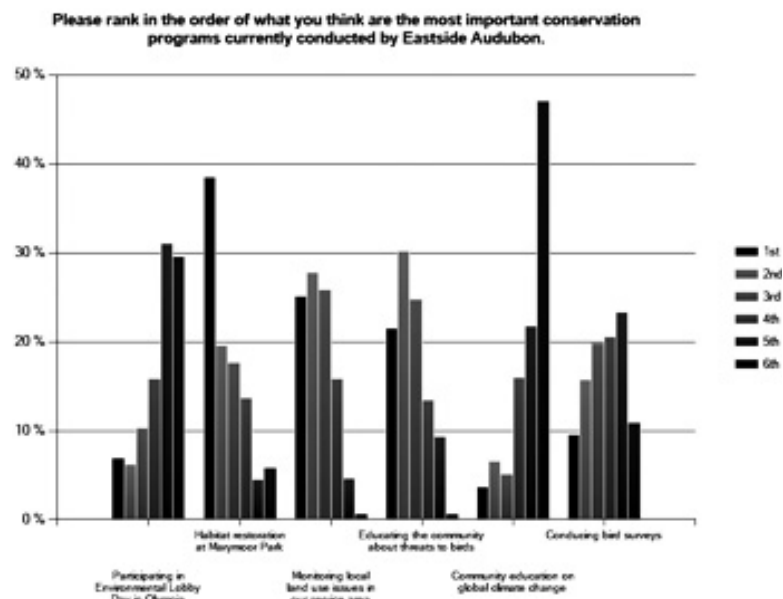
## Survey Results

### Adult Education



Respondents thought holding classes on bird identification (1.44) was the most important adult education item with 72% of them ranking it first. Forums on conservation issues (2.81) and classes on native plants (3.22) were preferred next. Least preferred were programs on other wildlife (3.56) and programs on bird research (3.62). Respondents who wrote comments had an interest in bird banding, bird behavior, and forestry and its effect on birds. One respondent suggested the chapter sponsor policy dialogue meetings open to members.

### Conservation Data



Habitat restoration at Marymoor Park was ranked highest (2.44) among the conservation projects with monitoring local land use issues a close second (2.49), and educating the community about threats to birds third (2.61). Less preferred were conducting bird surveys (3.65),



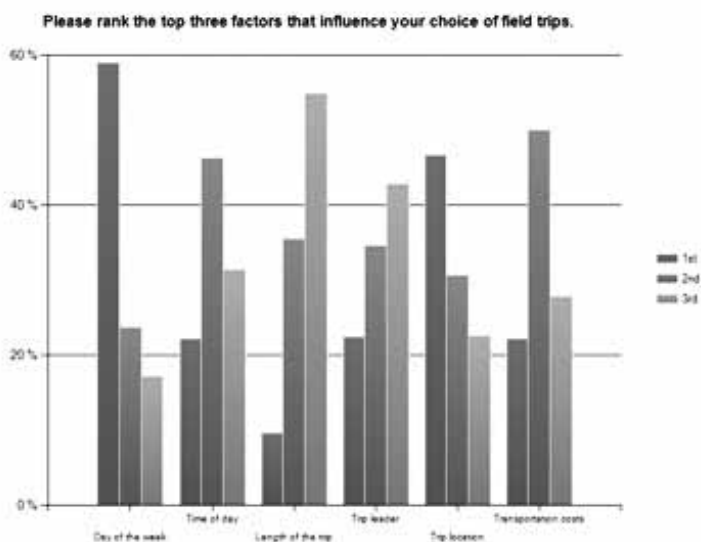
## Survey Results

participating in Environmental Lobby Day (4.47) and community education on global warming (4.87). Some written comments encouraged the chapter to get involved with young people, moving the country toward more sustainable energy, and developing a state water law and growth management procedures.

### Local, Half-day Trips Popular

Respondents had preferences for half-day, local birding field trips (67%). Nearly half (49%) also chose full-day field trips. More than half the respondents preferred field trips on Saturdays (59%) with fewer choosing weekdays (49%) and a good number (44%) choosing Sundays. The totals add to more than 100% because respondents could choose a number of options. More than a third (39%) of the respondents would attend regular monthly trips, but the question did not ask them to clarify if they would go once in a while or every month. A third (37%) of the respondents attended birding trips with other organizations in the past two years.

#### Field Trips



The day of the week (1.58), the trip location (1.76) and the transportation costs (2.06) were ranked as the most important considerations for respondents when deciding to go on a field trip. The time of day of the trip (2.09) was a close fourth. It appears that local, half-day trips on Saturday may be attractive to many respondents.

Respondents appeared less likely to participate in other chapter activities. About a third (34%) of the respondents had attended only four or fewer program meetings in the past two years and another 40% attended none. Only about a quarter (24%) of the respondents attended at least five times in two years. Nearly two-thirds (62%) have never attended an adult education class.

## Board Notes

(Continued from page 4)

Sale brought in more money than last year, grossing \$3100. The board discussed ways to expand and improve this event. Birdathon donations, unfortunately, are running significantly behind last year, and overall our income, including other donations and dues, is about one third less than it was at this point last year.

Visioning: In June, the board participated in a day-long visioning session facilitated by the Executive Service Corps. A good part of the session was spent reviewing the results of the member survey and determining what action to take on member feedback.

— Carmen Almodovar

**Suzanne Tomassi**  
(Continued from cover page)

characteristic birds. Since 1989, MAPS volunteers have collected data aimed at documenting trends as well as providing critical information on more than 200 species. More than 500 stations, each following the same set of protocols and methods, are run during the breeding season. While the most urgent attention may be paid to our rapidly declining species at risk, the importance of “keeping common species common” is a focal point of the program.

“Please join us Thursday, September 23rd. Refreshments and socializing start at 6:30 pm; the meeting starts at 7:00 pm. The presentation is FREE and open to the public. ♦

## Wine and Wings Weekend October 1-3, 2010

*(Continued from front page)*

We'll begin our trip Friday morning on the Eastside and travel to the Olympic Peninsula via the Kitsap Peninsula and Hood Canal. We'll hit some birding "hot spots" along the way and then stop for wine tasting in the late afternoon. Dinner will be at the Alderwood Bistro in Sequim (<http://www.alderwoodbistro.com/>).

Our birding destinations on Saturday will include the Elwha River and Dam, Dungeness River and estuary, and Sequim Bay. In the late afternoon we'll do some wine tasting – including a visit to the century-old barn at Olympic Winery (<http://www.olympiccellars.com/>) - followed by a wild salmon dinner at the Dockside Grill in Sequim. (<http://www.docksidegrill-sequim.com/>)

After breakfast on Sunday, we'll take a leisurely return route to the Eastside stopping for birding as time allows.

Contact Tim McGruder ([tmcgruder@gmail.com](mailto:tmcgruder@gmail.com) or 425-822-8580) to register or if you have any questions. Space is limited, so call soon!

Dates: October 1 through 3  
Cost: \$465.00 double occupancy, includes transportation, room, two dinners, tax and tip. Single supplement add \$110.00. We'll work to pair singles with others interested in room share.

— Tim McGruder

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## Survey Results

### Respondents Support Chapter Leaders

The opinion questions were answered overwhelmingly in the affirmative. Respondents said that learning to be a better birder was important (95.2%), that learning about conservation was important (96.6%), that EAS should partner with other environmental organizations (91.3%), that EAS should partner with local business (98.2%), that EAS should take public positions on issues in the service area (98.8%), and to a lesser degree that EAS should take public positions on issues anywhere in North America (70.1%).

Respondents most frequently emailed, wrote or called their U. S. Senators (54%), and state senator or representatives (45%). They contacted city councilors (29%), the President (27%) and county councilor (14%) less frequently.

### Volunteers and Home Birders

Respondents are involved with the chapter and birds in their yards. Forty percent have volunteered for the chapter and of those who volunteer, 60% have worked between one and five hours a month on average. Others have worked more than 6 hours per month with four stalwarts putting in over 20 hours per month. They feed birds at home (81%) but only a few (21%) have participated in Project Feederwatch. They use native plants in their landscaping (78%) but less than a third (29%) have gone to the Native Plant Sale. A third (33%) have participated in the Christmas Bird Count.

### Corvid Crier Very Important

The Corvid Crier newsletter was clearly important as 82% of respondents chose it as their number one source of information on the chapter and two-thirds (67%) read it cover-to-cover. Three quarters (75%) of respondents now receive the newsletter online. The chapter's Web site was visited by at least 65% of respondents in the three months prior to the survey with 24% visiting it more than four times. Two-thirds (67%) of those who visited the site agreed that they can find what they are looking for. Communication by email is reaching 55% of respondents on the Announcements email list. Some members are on more than one list and respondents are also on the Volunteer list (21%), Conservation list (24%) and Opportunities list (24%). Twenty-nine percent of respondents are not on any email list.

### EAS Members Experienced Birders but Many Are New to the Chapter

Most of those who responded are experienced birders. Over 60% have been watching birds for over 10 years, with 39% watching for

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## Survey Results

over 20 years. They have been less involved in conservation issues, but over 45% have been involved in conservation for more than 10 years. However, a good portion of respondents are relatively new to Eastside Audubon with 40% being EAS members for three years or less. Ten respondents (7%) have been members for more than 20 years.

Respondents ranked their reasons for joining the chapter. Scores closest to 1.0 ranked higher. Learning about birds (1.63) and attending bird watching trips (1.87) were the most frequent responses. The other reasons, a friend or relative was a member (2.14), conservation issues (2.20), seeking like-minded people (2.27) and seeking a volunteer opportunity (2.38), were closely rated. In addition to membership in EAS, the respondents have joined a number of other organizations with 83 respondents (58%) also holding membership in the Nature Conservancy. Many respondents also hold membership in the Sierra Club (29%), Cornell Lab of Ornithology (28%) and Seattle Audubon Society (26%). At least one respondent is also a member of at least one of 52 organizations (16 listed on the questionnaire and 36 written-in) pointing to a wide range of interests among EAS members.

## Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted in June 2010 and asked Eastside Audubon Society (EAS) members and some National Audubon Society (NAS) members about their preferences for chapter activities and future planning, their interests in certain policy questions, and their experience with birding, conservation, and memberships in other organizations. In an attempt to reach as many members as possible a link to the questionnaire on Survey Monkey was sent to all members for whom the chapter has an email address (n=477, EAS=402, NAS=75) and given to or mailed to those EAS members for whom the chapter does not have an email address (n=74) for a total of 551 questionnaires distributed. Of the 551 members, 476 were members of Eastside Audubon, and 75 were members of only the National Audubon Society. All 74 of those without email addresses were members of Eastside Audubon. Members were asked to complete the questionnaire within a week. A reminder email was sent at the end of the week asking those who had not completed it to do so right away. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included in the mailed questionnaires.

A total of 173 questionnaires were returned (return rate = 31%). Emailed members completed 146 questionnaires (return rate=31%) and mailed members completed 28 of which one was unusable (return rate=38%). Of the emailed members 127 were EAS members (return rate=31%), and 19 were NAS only members (return rate=25%).



**Eagle Eye**  
VISION CARE, P.S.

17320 135 Ave NE, #D  
Woodinville, WA 98072  
425-398-1862

**See the birds better!**

## Styrorecycle

Let's continue to recycle chunk styrofoam, styrofoam "peanuts", foam coolers, - all clean - keeping these OUT of landfills. If material has dirty areas, those can be cut away and put in trash. If you acquire chunk styrofoam etc. during summer it can be taken directly to the south Renton recycling location loading dock, or wait 'til September and add to what's brought to our Eastside Audubon September meeting. A wonderful volunteer will then transport our collection to south Renton. Would you be willing to be the transporter some month for our chapter's ongoing service? The chunk styrofoam recycle location is west of IKEA between SW 41st St. and SW 43rd St., Tuesday through Saturday. Check their website: [styrorecycle.com](http://styrorecycle.com) for information.

Did you know #6 styrofoam trays, "clam shells", plastic cups and glasses etc. can be recycled at King County's Bellevue and Mercer Island recycle events? (only those two events presently). #6 is polystyrene and can be chemically taken back to its bead form, then made into many useful things.

—Your compulsive recyclers  
Jill Keeney and Bev Jennings

## Survey Results

### Preliminary Analysis

	Respondents (N=173)	Emailed & Mailed EAS Members (N=476)	All Members (N=1,404)
Gender <sup>1</sup>	N=162 (%)	N=472 (%)	N=1,356 (%)
Female	117 (72)	305 (64)	858 (63)
Male	45 (28)	167 (35)	498 (37)
Location	N =135 (%)	N=476 (%)	N=1404 (%)
Bellevue	46 (34)	149 (31)	428 (30)
Bothell	6 (4)	20 (4)	68 (5)
Carnation	0	2 (0.4)	23 (2)
Duvall	1 (0.7)	5 (1)	23 (2)
Issaquah	10 (7)	23 (5)	115 (9)
Kirkland	31 (23)	99 (21)	228 (16)
Medina	0	1 (0.2)	16 (1)
North Bend	1 (0.7)	3 (0.6)	24 (2)
Preston	0	1 (0.2)	4 (0.3)
Redmond	25 (19)	53 (11)	159 (11)
Sammamish	8 (6)	22 (5)	81 (6)
Snoqualmie	0	1 (0.2)	1 (0.1)
Woodinville	13 (10)	37 (8)	116 (8)
Outside serv- ice area	20 (15)	60 (13)	118 (8)
<sup>1</sup> Total numbers in each category vary because some respondents did not answer these questions.			

An analysis was completed to compare the respondents to the total membership to determine how well they represented the members (Table 1). The overall membership was compared to the combined email and mailed members and both groups were found to be approximately two-thirds female (63% and 64% respectively) and one-third male (37% and 35% respectively). The respondents were 72% female which could indicate a bias in the responses favoring the female members of the chapter. The distribution of respondents and members was similar with a slightly higher percentage of respondents from Kirkland and Redmond than those sent questionnaires and the overall membership. Any bias related to location would likely be slight. This report is the summary of the responses and a more complete analysis of the data will be conducted and reported on at a later time.

— Andrew McCormick

## “Focus on the Board”

(Continued from page 2)

(25-50% reduction in fees) to the program. This year campers attended one of four camps.

BOLD Mountain School focuses on outdoor leadership development for boys through wilderness experiences while Passages Northwest is dedicated to inspiring leadership in girls through the integrated exploration of the arts and the natural environment. Both groups backpacked from the Olympic Rain Forest to the Pacific Coast where they encountered barking seals, crashing waves and eagles nesting in tall cedars. Campers found the experience challenging in spirit, mind and body!

Two camps are closer to home. Wilderness Awareness in Duvall welcomed our campers to the Scout Awareness Overnight Camp, which is devoted to developing a keen awareness of the ancient “scouts” of many cultures. Campers practiced wildlife tracking, learned about edible plants and listened to bird sounds to discover the movement of predators. The Mercer Slough Environmental Center hosts the Pacific Science Center Camp each summer. This year’s theme was “Rocks, Rafts, and Rivers” so EAS campers investigated the forces that shaped the Cascade Region, created a model landscape of mountains, landslides, rivers, valleys, and river-rafted in Eastern Washington.

Whether hiking in the Olympic Rain Forest, building a driftwood fort, tracking coyotes or examining rock outcroppings, all the

(Continued on next page)



## “Focus on the Board”

(Continued from page 8)

campers gained valuable insight into nature and themselves. By providing deserving students with such memorable experiences in the outdoors, we hope to create lifelong stewards of our precious environment and perhaps even members of Eastside Audubon!

Thanks to all of you who donated to this wonderful scholarship program in honor of Amy McQuade, who was key to the founding and expansion of Eastside Audubon. And special thanks to the Education Committee, especially Jill Keeney and Margaret Lie, who worked so tirelessly to make these amazing journeys happen for our campers.

—Mary Britton-Simmons

## Eastside Audubon Joins 10-10-10 Global Work Party

350.org the Web site and organization begun by Bill McKibben will again this year be sponsoring worldwide activities to raise awareness about global warming. This year a Global Work Party is planned for October 10, 2010. Eastside Audubon will be participating in this event by moving our monthly work party at Marymoor Park to Saturday, October 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Bring your family and friends and join us at the Meadow kiosk and help with our ongoing program to develop the bird loops and native plantings in the park.

— Andrew McCormick

## Marymoor Birdloop WorkParty

One Saturday a month Ella Ellman and Glenn Eades plan a fun-filled day of conservation activity to maintain and preserve the MarymoorPark Birdloop Habitat in Redmond, WA.

Eastside Audubon invites and welcomes all it's members, their friends, family and anyone else in the community interested in joining the fun and commraderie of preserving a sanctuary for birds as well for humans.

We do the usual digging, planting and weeding. We also build kiosks, artistic environmental bicycle racks (which is still in the works),renovate bridges and walks to designing and putting up friendly, informational signnage about our native birds and plants.

This past July we started pouring the foundation for the bike rack which will be a Black Steel Wetland silhouette of a Great Blue Heron with Cattails and Reeds designed by local artist Paul Casey. Simultaneously another group was pulling Purple Thistle. The pile

was up to their heads. During the last forty-five minutes of our time there, Margie Huff shows up and joins in pulling evasive black raspberry bushes nonstop. Now the pile is way over their heads. Thank you Margie!

During this past August's work-party; in first field to the left of the kiosk, while pulling Purple Thistle and Blackberry Bushes we were rewarded with exciting “volunteer” native baby rose bushes. Apparently they rooted from the native rose bushes we planted last season. Well over a year and a half earlier we cleared the area of invasive Scotch Broom and Blackberry Bushes to plant the native rose bushes. Lots of cardboard and chips were laid down to give the roses the proper conditions with which to take root. A season later - Voila success!

So, Please come by one Saturday and enjoy being outdoors while restoring The Marymoor Birdloop into a truly, beautiful and wondrous native habitat for birds and humans alike.

— Tamra Chinn

**TM CONSTRUCTION**

Tim McGruder ♦ General Contractor ♦ tmcgruder\*\*1480t

Residential Construction  
Remodel, Repair, Carpentry

10% discount for Audubon members

425-457-0465 ♦ tmcgruder@gmail.com

## FIELD TRIPS

Parents and children over 8 are welcome on all trips. **\*\*FRS Radio owners, please consider bringing them on trips.\*\*** See [www.eastside-audubon.org/events/](http://www.eastside-audubon.org/events/) for the latest information and for reports of last month's field trips.

### Meeting Places for Field Trips:

**Kingsgate Park and Ride:** I-405 exit 20B northbound or 20 southbound, N. E. 124th St. Go west to light at 116th Ave. N. E., then right (north) a few blocks to P&R lot (on the left). Meet in the S.E. corner. 1300 116th Way NE, Kingsgate.

**Newport Hills Park and Ride:** I-405, exit 9. 5115 113th PL NE, Newport Hills.

**South Kirkland Park and Ride:** 108th Ave. NE just north of hwy 520 and Northup Way. 10610 NE 38th Pl.

**Tibbetts Park and Ride:** Take exit 15 from I-90, turn right (south) and go past the new multistory Issaquah Park & Ride to the 3rd traffic light. Turn left (east) on Newport Way NW, go one block and turn right (south) into the Park & Ride. Meet at the west end of the parking lot (away from the entrance) to carpool. 1675 Newport Way NW, Issaquah

### September 11 (Saturday) 6:00-8:00 p.m. Vaux's Swifts in Monroe

This is an evening trip to Monroe to watch thousands of Vaux's Swifts go thru their evening ritual before dropping in a chimney to roost for the night. Bring a folding chair or blanket if you don't like to stand for a long time. About an hour before dusk they begin circling and swirling around the chimney as the numbers keep increasing. A few will start making feints at the chimney, then some will start dropping down into the chimney. These are followed by more and more until the sky is empty about dusk. Drive on your own to arrive at Monroe before 6 p.m. Take the Main Street exit and drive to Frank Wagner Elementary School where you will see the crowd of people. A program in the auditorium will begin at 6:00 with an entertaining lecture by local swift expert LARRY SCHWITTERS. Immediately following the lecture, everyone will go outside to watch thousands of swifts descend into the chimney.

Information booths will set up to answer questions about the swift project and the swifts.

### September 11 (Saturday) 9:00 to noon Marymoor Park (Bird-Loop) Habitat Restoration

Join us in restoring native habitat at the Marymoor Park interpretive area. Dress for the weather and bring clippers, gloves, snacks and water. Meet at SE corner of Parking Lot G. Questions? Call office at 425-576-8805

### September 11 (Saturday) 9:00 to noon Magnuson Park-New Wetland Restoration Area

Native Plant Group-Walk in the hardwoods at this Seattle Park which should be showing autumn colors and migrating waterfowl on the lake. Check the EAS website for more information. Meet 8:45 AM. at SE corner of the South Kirkland P&R. Sign up

by Thursday, September 9 w/leader: Jan Johnson at 425-814-5923.

### Sept. 14 (Tuesday) 8 a.m. to noon Lake Sammamish State Park

This urban park offers a wide assortment of birds and habitats due to its varied ecosystems. The trip will involve walking approximately 2-3 miles. Dress appropriately (rain-proof in layers; some of the trails can be muddy if wet). Just inside the main entrance, take the first left into the large parking lot and meet at the northeast end. Co-led by Sharon Aagaard and Stan Wood. NO PRE-REGISTRATION NECESSARY. Call Sharon with any questions, 425-891-3460.

### September 21 (Tuesday) 9:00 to noon Juanita Bay Park Bird Walk

A relaxed walk in the Park, seeing what birds are in the area. Meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 9:00. Bring binoculars and meet in parking lot. No registration required. MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026

### September 21 (Tuesday) Naches Pk Mt. Rainier NP. Autumn color walk

Native Plant Group-Jim and Nancy Roberts will lead a leisurely 3 mile walk at treeline around Naches Peak at Chinook Pass. The autumn colors should be lovely with a spectacular view of Mt. Rainier. We may see migrating raptors. Bring binoculars, lunch and water; dress for cool weather. We'll stop at the famous Black Diamond Bakery en route; for

blueberry ice cream on the return. Meet at the NE corner South Kirkland Park & Ride, before 7a.m. to carpool with shared costs. For more information and to reserve your space call leader, Nancy Roberts at 425-822-1865 no later than Sun Sept.19. Expected return by 6p.m. Rain will cancel..

**September 27 (Monday)  
9:00 a.m. to noon**

**Birding the Hot Spots of King County**

Monthly field trip on fourth Monday of each month to wherever the birds are. Meet before 9:00 a.m. at north end of Newport Hills Park-N-Ride (I-405, exit 9). Plan to be back by noon. Passenger cost/person \$2.00. Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351.

**Oct. 13 (Wednesday)  
8 a.m. to noon Lake Sammamish State Park**

Please read above the Sept. 14th trip to Lake Sammamish State Park. NO PRE-REGISTRATION NECESSARY. Co-led by Sharon Aagaard and Stan Wood. Call Sharon with any questions, 425-891-3460. ♦

**Bird Of The Month**

**By Andrew McCormick**

<i>Length</i>	<i>15 in</i>
<i>Wingspan</i>	<i>38 in</i>
<i>Weight</i>	<i>12 oz (350 g)</i>
<i>AOU Band code</i>	<i>SEOW</i>

**Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***

The Short-eared Owl is an open country, ground-nesting species and one of the world's most widely distributed owls. One of the ten subspecies worldwide is Pueo (Pu-a'-o), the Hawaiian Short-eared Owl *A. f. sandwichensis*. In Hawaiian mythology Pueo is The Protector and is among the oldest physical manifestations of the aumakua, the ancestral guardians of Hawaiian families. The saying, "A no lani, a no honua," says that Pueo is the guardian owl that belongs to both heaven and earth (Schweitzer).

Worldwide this owl prefers grasslands and marshes and is most frequently a winter visitor to Western Washington, but in 2010 birders were treated to many days of early evening spring viewing of an actively hunting owl at Marymoor Park in Redmond, WA. The Short-eared Owl has a buoyant, moth-like flight. It is a diurnal owl which is generally



Photo credit: Gary Gluhm.

more active in the early evening. On the breeding grounds in the spring the males exhibit a dramatic courtship display of high altitude gain and a sudden shallow stoop with audible wing clapping under their body as they descend.

The Short-eared is a close relative of the Long-eared Owl and shares the genus *Asio* from the Latin *Axio*, the little horned owl, but is not closely related to the Great Horned Owl

*Bubo virginianus*. What ear tufts that are present rise from the center of the forehead and are so small they are rarely seen and not useful for identification. The species name *flammeus* also from the Latin for flaming, or flame colored, refers to the tawny plumage. Owl is a derivative of the Anglo-Saxon *ule* (Holloway). Females are generally larger and darker colored than males.

*(Continued on next page)*



The color of Short-eared Owls resembles dried grass with mottled brown and rust on the head, back and upper wings. The breast is heavily streaked and the under wing and belly are lighter colored with a clear black carpal (“wrist”) mark. The head is large and round and frames the facial disk containing yellow eyes in dark patches. It flies low over fields which it shares with the Northern Harrier which can rob the owl of its prey (Alderfer).

Unlike many owls Short-eareds build their own nest which is usually a shallow depression on the ground lined with grass and feathers. Anywhere from three to eleven eggs can be deposited with

6-8 the usual number. Incubation varies from three to five weeks. The eggs hatch asynchronously usually in the order of laying, so the earliest hatched have an advantage for survival. The nestlings start walking from the nest in about two weeks after hatching. This pre-fledging dispersal from the nest saves some nestlings from predation by mammals (Kaufman). First flights begin in another four to five weeks.

The population of Short-eared Owls fluctuates with the population of small rodents which comprise the bulk of their diet. They will range long distances in search of prey and typically require long stretches of grasslands. Being

sensitive to habitat loss some populations have fallen where habitat has become fragmented and naive prairies have been converted to agricultural use (Wiggins, et al). Nevertheless, the Short-eared Owl, the Hawaiian bird of power, is doing well.

To see a video clip of the Short-eared Owl’s moth-like, quartering flight visit the Macaulay Library at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology <http://macaulaylibrary.org/video/flashPlayer.do?id=19895>

References available upon request: [amccormick@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:amccormick@eastsideaudubon.org)

— Andrew McCormick ♦

## **CONSERVATION IN OUR LIVES**

### **The Gulf of Mexico Four Months Later: What Have Environmental Organizations Been Doing?**

The Gulf oil gusher disaster began on April 20, 2010 when British Petroleum’s (BP) Deep-water Horizon drilling rig exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico. Eleven men were killed in the fire and explosion. As of this writing in mid-August it appears that BP has stopped the flow of oil into the Gulf and is preparing to permanently close the well by pouring concrete into it. Oil has been dispersed into deep water plumes by chemicals applied by BP. Tar balls and crude oil have washed onto beaches and salt marshes from Louisiana to Florida. Birds, fish, turtles and sea mammals have been found dead or severely oiled. Coastal fishing

has been brought to a standstill. President Obama has ordered a six-month moratorium on deep water oil drilling.

A number of environmental organizations and government agencies have been involved in volunteer and scientific activity. A search of their Web sites reveals the work being done and is presented here mostly in their own words.

National Audubon Society: A new, “report by Environmental Defense Fund, National Audubon Society and the National Wildlife Federation, “Common Ground: A Shared Vision for Restoring the Mississippi River Delta,”

outlines the necessary steps to restore and rebuild an ecosystem that has lost more than 2,300 square miles of wetlands—an area larger than the state of Delaware—since the 1930s.

“Our Louisiana Coastal Restoration and Mississippi River Initiative staff were first on the scene, to assess the impacts and help guide and coordinate the emergency response. Shortly thereafter Audubon’s Oil Spill Volunteer Response Center opened its doors in Moss Point, Mississippi. The facility is a hub for a range of critical response activities, from assisting bird rehabilitation specialists to monitoring the spill’s impacts, to making nets, cages and other materials essential to bird rescue. Many are helping to assess the impacts of the spill on birds through the Coastal Bird Survey – a new program that will help guide

*(Continued on next page)*



and inform long term recovery efforts.”

Cornell Lab of Ornithology: “Birders are reporting observations including those of oiled birds to eBird and will make that data available to scientists studying the Gulf area. The Cornell Lab’s bioacoustics team will deploy 22 marine autonomous recording units at the bottom of the ocean to document the oil spill’s impact on marine life, including sperm whales and Bryde’s whales.”

If you are going to the Gulf Coast please review the Cornell Lab’s guidelines for recording your observations on eBird.

American Birding Association: Drew Wheelan, ABA Conservation Coordinator, has been in the Gulf monitoring birds. Here is a snippet of his latest report: “Another question to ask is about the “dispersments” [sic]. ... One of the main problems with dispersments is that they use large amounts of oxygen from the system when they break down. They have sprayed much of this stuff very close to shore here, and the common sight of foam on the water, and on the beach is taken as common knowledge proof of that, as the locals have never seen foam in their waters before. This demand for oxygen in an area that historically experiences dead zones due to low oxygen levels is massively irresponsible at best, and could be considered criminal take at worst. The statements that they have not used these chemicals near shore is absolutely false, I have personally come into contact with them as have many

people here on Grand Isle. In conclusion, a lot of fish are dead. A lot of birds are eating the dead and dying fish. A lot of oil is still in the water and saturating the sands and marshes.”

Natural Resources Defense Council: The Web page has a staff blog called Switchboard that posts a summary and links to other publications. The NRDC is also focusing on preventing BP from deep water drilling in the Beaufort Sea above the Arctic Circle.

National Wildlife Federation: “NWF, along with its five Gulf state affiliates and other partners, are establishing an extensive Gulf Coast Volunteer Surveillance Network to track and report on the impacts of the oil spill, support wildlife rescue and rehabilitation efforts, and restore damaged delicate coastal ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico.

We are recruiting people in the Gulf area with developed wildlife observation skills (birders, hunters, anglers) and with a respectable knowledge of local lands and waters.”

Sierra Club: Their focus is on prevention of more spills. “The biggest mistake anyone can make is to assume that a disaster like Macondo/Deepwater spill couldn’t happen where they live. In reality, oil spills happen all the time and all over the place. Just last month, we saw horrific photos of oil-soaked workers after a shore-to-tanker pipeline exploded in Darian, China. It looked pretty bad, but the Chinese (as you might expect) were quick to play down the severity of the leak.

Last week saw another oil disaster -- this time closer to home -- when an Enbridge Energy pipeline burst and dumped nearly one million gallons of crude oil into Talmadge Creek and the Kalamazoo River, which runs directly into Lake Michigan.”

Ducks Unlimited: “As waterfowl migrations approach, millions of ducks, geese and other migratory birds will be headed toward the Gulf Coast. In some years, as many as 13 million ducks and 1.5 million geese have wintered in the Gulf Coast region. In recent weeks, Ducks Unlimited has been working to increase awareness of the risks these birds may face in the wake of the Gulf Coast oil spill.”

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: “543 personnel are actively engaged in the response, working to protect wildlife and their habitats, including 36 national wildlife refuges. They are also assessing the damage from the oil spill in preparation for the work that will be needed to restore the Gulf of Mexico.

1,869 visibly oiled birds have been collected alive by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the states and our partners in response to the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill. Of those, 773 birds have been rehabilitated and released.”

With nearly 5 Million barrels of oil released, the BP gusher is the world’s largest accidental release of oil into marine waters. It will take many years to completely assess the damage caused and much longer for the Gulf to recover.

— Andrew McCormick

# The Corvid Crier

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#### **Planned Giving**

Consider giving a planned gift to Eastside Audubon to support environmental education and conservation for generations to come. Because Eastside Audubon is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, your charitable gift will be tax deductible. Your gift can go toward the permanent endowment fund, to a specific program or as a gift to our general operating fund. Remember 100% of your contribution will go to fund the programs of Eastside Audubon.

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