



The Corvid Crier

EAST LAKE WASHINGTON AUDUBON SOCIETY

ISSUE 04-8 – NOVEMBER 2004

Birds of the Coulee Corridor

When: Thursday, November 18 at 7:00 p.m. (after the social hour — note early date)

Where: Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church

Teri Pieper currently serves as the Conservation Chair and Newsletter Editor for Central Basin Audubon Society. She has also served as president of the chapter and has been an avid birder and bird photographer for many years. Teri is currently working as the Facility Project Coordinator for the Coulee Corridor Scenic Byway, which has partnered with Washington State Parks to develop a Watchable Wildlife trail at Alkali Lake along the Corridor.

Several years ago, Central Basin Audubon (the local Chapter covering Grant and Adams Counties) identified a need for a birding map in this region. CBAS volunteers were beset with requests for information about where and when to find certain species of birds, such as sandhill cranes, great egrets, and snow buntings.

Not long after that, the National Audubon Society's Washington field office began creating birding maps, patterning their efforts after the highly successful Texas maps. The first map of the Great Washington State Birding Trail was the Cascade Loop covering Highway 2 and Highway 20 across the Cascades. The Coulee Corridor map was the next one and has been out for nearly a year. Maps for the Olympic Peninsula are in the works.

Teri was instrumental in creating this beautiful, useful, and free map, which guides visitors to the best birding along and around the Coulee Corridor. It is a result of the excellent partnership between National Audubon Society, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Reclamation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington State Department of Transportation, The Coulee Corridor and Central Basin Audubon Society.

Please join us **Thursday, November 18 (1 week early)**, for Teri's insider look into the Coulee Corridor Birding Trail map, the process to create it, and some of the wonderful birding sites on the map. And maybe some that aren't on the current version! Come at 6:30 for the social hour. The presentation follows immediately after a brief monthly meeting, which begins at 7:00.

The social hour, meeting, and presentation are **free and open to the public**. Invite a friend or anyone who is interested in exploring the fascinating birds of the Coulee Corridor.

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

Get Your Corvid Crier Online

You can help save trees and help ELWAS save printing and mailing costs by choosing to receive the Corvid Crier online instead of in printed form. If you would like to choose this option, email Jan@elwas.org or call the office at 425-576-8805.

Our Mission: *The mission of the East Lake Washington Audubon Society is to protect, preserve and enhance natural ecosystems and our communities for the benefit of birds, other wildlife and people.*

President's Message

By Christy Anderson, ELWAS President

Black and White and Healing Shades of Gray

We've heard a lot this year about the American people becoming more polarized than ever before. Points of view have become solidified on one side or another and "don't confuse me with the facts!" seems to be the order of the day.

In the aftermath of one of the most divisive, and nastiest, elections I can remember, how do we pull the pieces together again? Is there a common denominator anymore? Is there anything we can all agree on?

Perhaps it's time we take a look again at something deeper, something simpler. We all do have at least one thing in common. Nature, in whatever form we can connect to it, is a universal need. The natural world soothes us, slows us down, and reminds us, as members of Audubon and the human race, why we came together in the first place.

Why do we like to watch birds? Why do we feed them? What pulls us out on a cold, wet, windy day to do a Christmas Bird Count?!

Entomologist and naturalist E. O Wilson has coined the term biophilia as an innate sensitivity and need to connect with nature. It is healing. It is an emotional, and physical, need. Divorcing ourselves from nature may actually be detrimental to our spirits, our health, our intellects and to the well-being of our society.

This need to have a personal relationship with the natural world is also one of the strongest arguments for the conservation of biological diversity. It's not a "nice-to-have." It is essential to our survival.

Recently, I had the chance to meet a couple of folks who are indeed passionate about that connection. Ruth and Patrick Sullivan, with whom many of you have also birded, bird almost every day, it seems. And both of them have an amazing, childlike excitement about finding birds, even those they have seen hundreds of times. Their enthusiasm was contagious, as was their concern that everyone in our group got a chance to see whatever bird there was, and see it well. Not just a check on the list, their goal was helping us gain an understanding of the bird and how it fit into its environment. Their joy in the birds was as deep as their concern for them.

Go birding as soon as you can! Take a deep breath. Let the natural world do its job of healing you and those around you. It's time for us to pull together. There's a lot of work to be done.

East Lake Washington Audubon Society

425 576 8805

308 4th Avenue S. (Corner 4th Ave. S. and State)

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Juanita Bay Park Happenings

By MaryFrances Mathis — photo by Caren Park



Fall is in full swing at Juanita Bay Park: the leaves are changing and falling with each small gust of wind; and more winter birds are arriving daily. Some of those recently returned are Wilson's Snipe, Winter Wren, Dark-eyed Junco, and flocks of Pine Siskins and Yellow-rumped Warblers. The gull population is increasing, and if you really want to improve your gull ID skills, spend a couple of hours at Juanita Beach Park. The possibilities: Mew, Thayer's, Herring, Bonaparte's, California, and Western, along with the usually present Ring-billed and Glaucous-winged.

As always, we've had a few surprises: an **American Bittern** was spotted in the beaver pond; a female **Surf Scoter**, a sea duck usually found in salt water, "dropped in" for a day; a juvenile **Peregrine Falcon** (see photo) delighted visitors on a sunny October Sunday afternoon, perching and preening in full view for a couple of hours; a pair of **Common Ravens** circled and called for a few minutes one afternoon; and 4 **White-throated Sparrows**, an Eastern species, put in a rare appearance, joining other sparrows in picking the blackberry bushes clean.

The species list for the Park stands at 155 and counting, and a copy may be downloaded from the ELWAS website. Remember to report those interesting sightings to juanitabay@elwas.org.

CALLING ALL ELWAS MUSICIANS!

The ELWAS Chamber Orchestra is looking for a few more musicians for our annual Christmas Bird Count holiday performance Dec. 18th. If you have an instrument gathering dust in the closet, now's the time to pull it out and join our group! The music will be easy, and any skill level is welcome. We hope to meet sometime in November to start practices. If you are interested, please call or email Lou Ann Harris at 425-652-7603 or montlou@earthlink.net.

Welcome!

Welcome to the following new members of the East Lake Washington Audubon Society. We hope to see you soon at a Membership Meeting or Field Trip.

Call or visit our office if you have any questions. Our friendly volunteers are more than happy to help you.

Nancy Allen, Dorothy Dutton, Nancy Guth, Linda M. Hines, Jacqueline Hughes, Jeanette Jones, Marcia Rundle, Valerie Shinn, D. Swanson, Lyn Topper

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- **Deadline** for material submission is the first Wednesday of the month preceding publication. Send material by email to: newsletter@elwas.org Subject: ELWAS Newsletter or by mail to: East Lake Washington Audubon Society
Attn: Tom Grismer
P. O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115
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AUDUBON CENTER/OFFICE HOURS

The office is downstairs at Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church in Kirkland, **308 4th Avenue S. (Corner 4th Ave. S. and State**, directions on page 5).

Phone number: (425) 576-8805

Email: office@elwas.org

Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Friday

10:00 — 2:00

COMING EVENTS

Parents and children over 8 are welcome on all trips

Check our website at <http://www.elwas.org/events/> for the latest information and for reports of last months' field trips.

November 2 (Tues.) 7:00 p.m. - Conservation Committee Meets first Tuesday of each month in the ELWAS Office.
All interested parties are invited. Questions? Call **Tim McGruder at 425-828-4036**

November 3 (Weds.) 6:00 p.m. — Web Committee Meets first Wednesday of each month in the ELWAS Office. All interested parties are invited. Questions? Email **Nancy Nicklas at webmaster@elwas.org**

November 5 (Friday) 9am – noon -- Marymoor Park
Join us for a morning walk along the nature trail, seeing what birds are in the area. Meets the **1st Friday of each month at 9:00.** Bring binoculars and meet at the SW corner of the Dog Area parking lot. No registration is required. To reach Marymoor Park, take SR 520 east from Seattle to the West Lake Sammamish Parkway exit and follow the signs. The entrance to the park is one block south of the exit. Turn right at the third stop sign, to the Dog Area parking lot. Parking fee is **\$1.00.** **MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026**

November 9 (Tues.) 7-9 p.m. — Education Committee Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month in the ELWAS Office. All interested parties are invited. Questions? For information email: **education@elwas.org** or call **425-576-8805.**

November 10 (Weds.) - 9:00 a.m. Bellevue Botanical Gardens
Join us for a walk through the garden and spend a relaxed morning seeing what birds are in the area. **Meets 2nd Wed. of each month at 9:00 a.m.,** and will finish by lunchtime. Bring binoculars and meet at the front door. Walks are limited to 10 people and **pre-registration is required.** **Call the office to sign up at 425-576-8805.**

November 11 (Thursday) 8:00 a.m. to mid-afternoon Edmonds Marsh and Waterfront
Loon, grebes, alcids, waterfowl, gulls, shorebirds and passerines are all possible near the Edmonds ferry terminal. Meet before 8:00 a.m. just south of the bus stop at the South Kirkland P&R (on 108th Ave. NE just north of hwy 520 and Northup Way) to carpool. Cost/person **\$2.00.** **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

November 13-14 (Sat-Sun) 7:30 a.m. Reifel Bird Sanctuary - Ladner, B.C.
Wintering birds here include dabbling ducks, gulls, rough-legged hawks, peregrines, merlins, and snowy owls. Arctic birds such as snow buntings and Lapland longspurs may appear as well. This is an overnight trip, camping or motels, or join us for only one day. Meet before 7:30 a.m. at south end of Kingsgate P&R: (I-405, exit 20B northbound or 20 southbound at NE 124th St., go west to light at 116th Ave. NE, then right (north) a few blocks to P&R lot). Passenger cost/person **\$12.00.** Call if you plan to go. **Len Steiner 425-827-2478**

Nov. 13 (Sat.) 10 a.m. — Bellefields Trail Walkthrough
Help clean litter along Bellefields Trail in Mercer Slough Nature Park. Meet at the Bellefields Trail parking lot on 118th Ave SE (Bellevue), about a mile south of Greenbaum's Furniture (118th and SE 8th). **Bring gloves, a bag for trash, and binoculars.** -- **John Barrett 425-644-2862**

November 15 (Monday) 7:00 p.m. — Birds in the Balance Meets 3rd Mon. each month at Len Steiner's, 13239 NE 100th, Kirkland. You're welcome to join this group, which assesses bird populations in local habitats **425-827-2478**

November 16 (Tues.) 9 a.m. – noon — Juanita Bay Park
A relaxed walk in the Park, seeing what birds are in the area. Meets the **3rd Tues. of each month at 9:00.** Bring binoculars and meet in parking lot. No registration required.

November 18 (Thursday) 7:00 p.m. Presentation and Membership meeting "Birds of the Coulee Corridor" See page 1 for details.

November 22 (Monday) 9:00 a.m. to noon Birding the Hotspots 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 the Newport Hills Park-N-Ride (I-405, exit 9) and plan to be back by noon. Passenger cost/person **\$2.00.** **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

Dec. 4 (Sat.) 8:30 a.m. to about noon — Burke Museum
Get a guided tour of the ornithology collections at the Burke Museum. Here is your chance to ask questions about Washington birds, ornithology in general, or what is done in the research community of the museum. After the tour we can have lunch at the museum cafeteria, stay to see exhibits, or go birding in the nearby park – all depending people's interest and the weather. Meet before 8:30 a.m. just south of the bus stop at the South Kirkland P&R (on 108th Ave. NE just north of hwy 520 and Northup Way). to carpool and save on parking fees. This trip will be limited to 15 people so please call before Nov. 30 if you plan to attend. Passenger cost/person **\$2.00.** **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

December 9 (Thursday) 9:00 a.m. Des Moines Marina/Saltwater State Park/Redondo
Ducks and other waterfowl, seabirds, and gulls will be the focus of this trip as we scope the water at the marina as well as at the state park. We'll look for songbirds too. Washington State Park decal or \$5 parking fee required. Return early afternoon. Meet before 9 a.m. at Newport Hills Park N Ride, I-405, Exit 9. Passenger cost/person **\$3.** **Joyce Meyer 425-881-5422**

December 11 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m. to noon Green Lake
Walk Green Lake with expert birder, Martin Muller, who has

(Continued on page 5)

ELWAS Endorses Yes on I-297 Campaign to clean up Hanford

By Tim McGruder, Conservation Chair

Washingtonians have a chance this fall to clean up the most contaminated place in the western Hemisphere – the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, right here in our own backyard. Initiative 297 is that chance.

For decades, the U.S. Department of Energy and its predecessors have dumped radioactive waste in unlined trenches in the soil at Hanford. More than one million gallons of liquid nuclear waste has leaked from Hanford's underground storage tanks. That waste is now in the groundwater under Hanford, and some of it is seeping towards the Columbia River. Now the federal government plans to ship more than 23,000 *additional* truckloads of radioactive waste to our state.

That's why a coalition of environmental organization and public health groups, including Washington Conservation Voters, Sierra Club, WashPIRG, Heart of America Northwest, and Physicians for Social Responsibility came together to get Initiative 297 on the ballot. Initiative 297 is the first environmental initiative in a decade. By passing Initiative 297 we can show our elected officials that Washingtonians want our environment and public health protected!

I-297 requires that the U.S. Department of Energy clean up the radioactive waste at Hanford before they ship any more waste to be stored there. It effectively shuts down the government's plans to truck radioactive waste through our cities and towns, past our homes, schools and churches and turn Washington into a national radioactive waste dump.

Initiative 297 stops the dumping of nuclear waste in unlined soil ditches, requires the clean up of radioactive contamination at dumping grounds and of contaminated groundwater, stops the U.S. Department of Energy from leaving high-level nuclear waste in tanks at Hanford, and ensures public, tribal and local government participation in clean up decisions.

Enough is enough. It's time to finally clean up Hanford. Vote yes on I-297 this fall. For more information, go to the Yes on I-297 website at www.YesOnI-297.org

Watershed Stewardship Fair Linking Communities and Resources

Saturday, November 13, 2004 from 10:00 am – 4 pm
Kirkland Senior Center, 352 Kirkland Avenue, Kirkland

Ever thought of organizing a project to restore one of your favorite birding spots, but were overcome with the thought of putting it all together? This workshop is for you, led by folks who've been successful at just that. There will be panel discussion on numerous topics with break-out sessions with small group discussion. Topics will range from funding to grant writing to project management. Participation is free, but you must register in advance by calling 206-296-8312.

Sponsored by Water Tenders and King County.

(Continued from page 4)

acquired intimate knowledge of this lake and the over 150 bird species found there. **Meet by 7:25 a.m.** at South Kirkland P&R near the bus stop (on 108th Ave. NE just north of hwy 520 and Northup Way) to carpool, or meet at Green Lake. We will park at the west end of Green Lake near the Bathhouse Theater and meet Martin on the lake side of the theatre, between the brick building and the water. No sign-up, just show up. Group size a max of 15. Passenger cost/person **\$2.00.**

Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351

How to get to..

- **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.
- **ELWAS Office/Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church,
308 4th Avenue S. (corner 4th Ave. S and State)**
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.

*BIRD
of the
MONTH*

Surfbird
Aphriza virgata
by Hugh Jennings

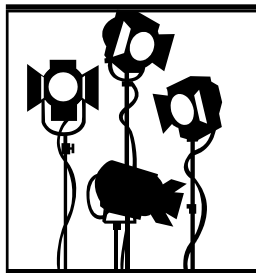


Surfbirds with Black Turnstones by Joyce Meyer.

The Surfbird (SURF) is about 10" long with a wingspan of 26" and weight of 7 oz. (190 g). The genus name *Aphriza* (ah-FREE-zah) is from the Greek, *aphros*, froth, sea foam, meaning "to live in sea foam". The species name is from Latin for twiggy, made of twigs, and streaked, in allusion to heavily streaked back and breast in summer plumage. The name Surfbird is given because it feeds at the surf line when on the coast, without minding the flying spray. The Surfbird spends the winter, as well as during migration, on West coast rocky coastlines pounded by the surf, often scrambling over rocks just above the reach of the waves. In summer, it breeds on barren, rocky tundra above treeline high in the mountains of Alaska and the Yukon Territory. The actual nesting grounds were not discovered until the 1920s. The wintering range is from southeastern Alaska to southern Chile. In Washington, the Surfbird is a fairly common but local

migrant, winter resident on rocky saltwater shorelines. Some favorite sites include the West Seattle shoreline, Penn Cove, Fort Flagler, Ediz Hook, Neah Bay and jetties at Ocean Shores and Westport.

The Surfbird's short blunt-tipped bill (very much plover-like) and short yellow legs are distinctive in all plumages. In summer the head and neck are evenly streaked with gray; breast and sides marked with chevrons; reddish-brown patches on sides of back. In winter the bird is gray overall except for a white belly with dark spots. When in flight the white tail has a broad black band at tip, and the white stripes on the wings are distinctive. In summer on the tundra they feed mostly on insects, spiders, snails and a few seeds. On the Pacific coast where it spends most of the year its major feeding method involves removing barnacles, limpets, and young mussels from rocks with a quick sideways jerk of the head. The Surfbird's bill is adapted for this behavior. It nests in mountain rocks or rocky shores above timberline with nest a natural depression lined with dead leaves and lichens on a dry, open ridge. To protect the nest, it will fly up at the face of intruders such as caribou. There are four buff-colored eggs, spotted with dark reddish brown marks. The downy young leave the nest soon after hatching and both parents tend the young. The chicks find all their own food. The incubation period, development of the chicks and age at first flight are not well known.



Spotlight On Tom Grismer, Editor, Corvid Crier

By Amy McQuade

Tom is from prairie country, born in East Chicago, Indiana. Early on he was schooled in Hammond, Indiana and later in Chesterton, Indiana. He graduated from Chesterton High School, where his father taught History and Social Studies. Then he attended Indiana University in Bloomington, earning a degree in Sociology with a minor in Psychology. But feeling educated seemed to elude him, so after working at various odd jobs here and there – day laboring, janitorial and in department stores, he returned to Indiana University where he received a M.S. in Computer Science. Later, he moved to Austin, Texas, and after working for several years at Texas Instruments and at the University of Texas, he received another Masters Degree in Education. And he felt better.

It was while working at Texas Instruments that he met his wife, Paula; they have one son, Lincoln, who was celebrating his 19th birthday the day I first interviewed Tom for this article. After attending a computer convention in San Antonio, Tom moved the family to Redmond and he went to work for Microsoft.

Before leaving Texas he had taken a birding class, with field trips in the fabulous "Hill Country" in central Texas, where he developed enough outdoor enthusiasm to volunteer as park ranger at Juanita Bay Park in Kirkland after his retirement from Microsoft. But it was while working on the 1998 Patty Murray senatorial campaign that he met Helen Engel, former National Audubon Society Board member. Next thing he knew he was an Audubon, Washington State Steward, attending meetings in Olympia. Tom had been thinking about having closer ties to a chapter; luckily the vacant Corvid Crier Editorship was an opportunity he just couldn't pass up, with the resultant, excellent, on-time newsletter you hold in your hand.

Tom is a wonderful example of what organizations like ELWAS are often in need of. Isn't there an empty niche on page two you might like to have a go at? Or just call Jan at the office. She can always use some help.

Upcoming ELWAS Classes

LOONS, GREBES, ALCIDS AND WATERFOWL

Improve your winter birding skills! Locate and identify species that winter in Puget Sound and local waterways. Learn more about those beautiful ducks and geese that winter in the Northwest. Demystify the loons, grebes and auks on our waterways.

Two classroom sessions using slides and recordings and one full-day field trip will teach you the identifying characteristics and vocalizations of these interesting birds.

Note: This is not the Waterbirds course previously advertised but does cover some of the same material.

Our **instructor** will be **Brian Bell**, Master Birder with Seattle Audubon and president of the Washington Ornithological Society. Brian is a professional birding and natural history guide and regularly teaches birding classes for Seattle Audubon, ELWAS, and Shoreline and North Seattle Community Colleges. He has birded extensively throughout most of the USA.

Class: Thursdays, November 4 and 11 from 7:00 to 9:15 P.M. Limit 20 class and field trip, 5 additional class only. Class will meet at Northlake Unitarian Church, 308 Fourth Avenue, Kirkland, WA 98033.

Field trip: Sunday, November 21. Limit: 10. *No registration for the field trip only.*

Cost: \$55 ELWAS member, \$70 non-ELWAS member.

Registration: Call ELWAS office to register at 425-576-8805. This popular class will fill quickly so call NOW to register.

BASICS OF BIRD PHOTOGRAPHY WITH TIM BOYER

This class is designed for anyone who is interested in taking better bird photographs. Whether you're a digital photographer, a film photographer or you capture images with a digiscope, the basic elements of bird photography are the same. We will cover composition, perspective, quality of light, getting close to our subjects, vision and style, photographing birds in action, and some of the best places for bird photography. So come prepared to learn more about the "art" of bird photography, rather than how to operate your camera or digiscope.

The first evening session will cover composition, light, getting close and other basic topics. Then we'll meet on either the following Saturday or Sunday and take pictures together. We'll go to a couple of local parks where winter birds hang out and see what we can do. In our second evening session we will critique our photographs, discuss what worked, what didn't work and why. We will also discuss where to locate some of the best spots to photograph birds in Washington and the US.

Tim is an amateur birder and photographer and a member of our own ELWAS chapter. He has been photographing the natural world for 30 years and concentrating on bird photos for the last 4 years. His bird photographs have appeared in national magazines such as *Birder's World*. Check out his website at www.timboyer.com for a look at his work.

Class: Thursdays, February 10 and 17, 2005 from 7:00 to 9:15 PM. Classes held at the Northlake Unitarian Church in Kirkland. No registration for the class only.

Field Trip: Saturday, February 12 OR Sunday, February 13, 2005. *No registration for the field trip only.*

Cost: ELWAS member \$45, non-member \$60. Fee is for the class and field trip instruction only. You provide your own camera equipment and supplies.

Registration: Call the ELWAS office at 425-576-8805.

WINTER BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS WITH MIKE WEST

See page 8 for details

WINTER BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

If you've never gone birding, or if you're a beginner and want to learn more or sharpen your skills – join us, and keep your New Year's resolution to **have more fun** next year!

Two field trips and two class sessions in a relaxed, informal setting can get **YOU** started! The basics of bird identification, birding etiquette and ethics, equipment selection, field guides and local birding areas will be covered. Winter raptors, waterfowl and feeder birds will be emphasized.

DATES: (2) Tuesdays 1-18 & 1-25 6:30—9:00 P.M. (*classes* only)
Sat 1-22 *or* Sun 1-23 (morning only *field trip* – ½ class goes each day)
Sat 1-29 *or* Sun 1-30 (all day *field trip* to Skagit Flats – ½ class goes each day)

LOCATION: ELWAS office: 308 – 4th Ave S. – Kirkland (classes only)

COST: \$75 (ELWAS members) \$100 (non-members – *chapter membership is \$25*)
Fee waiver available (based on need) – inquire for details

Register soon - class size limited!

call the ELWAS office @ **425-576-8805**

Field guide used for class is 4th edition of *National Geographic Birds of North America*
(May be purchased at **ELWAS Office/Nature Center**)

Abridged Minutes – Board Meeting

Sept 21, 2004

By Diane Stone, Secretary

The Board took action on several items of business. We added a new Board position called Birding. We voted to make an emergency contact form to be available at each of our extended field trips (overnight or longer). We voted to revise the policy that reimburses field trip drivers for their expense.

Some of the other topics we discussed were: Considering a contribution to the Herons Forever cause in Renton. Announcement of the "Upper Texas Coast" trip offered by Wings. Nancy Nicklas is working on the on-line new member form. Tim McGruder brought us up to date on conservation news that came out of his attendance at the Critical Areas of King County hearings and discussions that were held concerning the meadow area and the interpretive trail in Marymoor Park. We also considered the purchase of a video projector as more of our speakers are needing this equipment.

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Audubon Calls Administration's Move Toward Removal Of Marbled Murrelet Protections Wrong And Not Based On Credible Science

Portland, OR, Friday, September 10, 2004 - In a move that can only be described as politics trumping science, the Bush administration redefined the population of Marbled Murrelets in Washington, Oregon, and northern California in preparation for removing the bird's Endangered Species Act protections.

Administration officials announced that Pacific Northwest Marbled Murrelets would no longer be considered distinct from murrelets in Canada and Alaska, disregarding recent recommendations by independent, private-sector scientists, as well as their own scientists, to recognize the differences and keep federal protections in place.

"We need Endangered Species Act decisions to be based on real science if the Act is to provide a safety net for imperiled birds like the Marbled Murrelet," said Bob Perciasepe, Chief Operating Officer of National Audubon Society. "The Administration is using junk science to cut holes in the safety net big enough for an old growth forest to fall through."

For more information, visit www.audubon.org/news/press_releases/murrelet.html.

Membership Data Sharing Policy

By Jan McGruder

The ELWAS Board has recently approved a policy to share, and at the same time protect, ELWAS' member information. A very few times a year, ELWAS will provide mailing labels to organizations in support of specific causes which ELWAS endorses. The new policy strictly limits use of this information, and it requires that these third parties sign a contract to uphold the confidentiality of this information.

If at any time you would prefer not to receive information on important issues from third parties, you may always opt out of this service. Simply fill out the membership form attached to the newsletter, select the box for "Do not share my name or address with organizations," and return it to ELWAS.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact me at jan@elwas.org. This policy is limited to the East Lake Washington Audubon Society, and in no way reflects the membership policies of National Audubon Society.

ELWAS Works to Protect Critical Habitat

By Tim McGruder, Conservation Chair

In 1995 the State Legislature voted to require all city and county governments to use Best Available Science (BAS) to update their Critical Areas Ordinances (CAO) which affect wetlands, streams and forests. That was a good thing, but they didn't get around to including a deadline until two years ago. The deadline they agreed upon is December 1st, 2004 and for nearly two years the process of updating CAO's has methodically moved ahead. As the December 1st deadline draws near the pace is picking-up.

King County will hold its last hearing on October 18th with final passage likely by the end of the month. The County's proposal was met with small but vocal opposition. Last month a collection of amendments were added to respond to landowner concerns. The final version will go a long way to improve environmental quality in the rural area. The area with little improvement is the unincorporated urban area. Stream and wetland protections are still too weak. We'll have to work on that next year.

Recently I've been tracking the progress of the City of Woodinville's update. The CAO is one small part of a much larger package the City is working on this year and there is a strong sense that the CAO is getting lost in the shuffle. City Staff told me that the Planning Commission had been working on the CAO for two years, yet it's difficult to tell from my perspective. Before one of the Planning Commission meetings last month, I overheard two of the commissioners talking. One asked the other what the word "riparian" meant. The second commissioner finally asked a staff member what the word meant after struggling with it for a moment. I found this to be remarkable given the length of their review.

But more important is the fact that numerous areas in the draft are still too weak. Today I received a copy of a letter from the State Department of Ecology sent to Woodinville that is highly critical of the draft. In response to my testimony on concerns about BAS, one senior Staff member stated that the requirement is that they only consider, but not apply BAS. He went on to say that "all eyes are on Woodinville" because they're way ahead of most other cities in their process. For this reason it will be important that Woodinville get this right. I'll continue to monitor the progress and report to you on the outcome.

But my participation isn't enough! The final stretch is the most critical and your help is vital to improve wetland, stream and forest protection by signing up for our Conservation email list (go to www.ELWAS.org to sign up). Alerts will help you to know when and to whom to send crucial email messages about important habitat issues. Many thanks go to those of you already on the list, who have sent numerous messages and have joined me at public hearings. The successes we've had couldn't have happened without your help!