



# The Corvid Crier

EAST LAKE WASHINGTON AUDUBON SOCIETY

ISSUE 05-9 – DECEMBER/JANUARY 2005/2006

**The Appreciation and Conservation of Bats:  
What Northwest Birders Should Know About Northwest Bats**  
**When: Thursday, January 26 at 7:00 p.m. (after the social hour)**  
**Where: Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church**



Unless you are in a steel-and-glass downtown office tower, chances are, at least during summer months, you're within 50 feet of a bat! If that bothers you - even a little - please join us for our January meeting.

Bats swirl out of inky black caves and even roost with us in our homes, yet many of us seldom give a thought to bats and their vital place in our world. Join Curt Black, environmental scientist with the EPA, for a fascinating multimedia presentation.

After briefly dispelling some common myths, we'll prepare to welcome our Northwest bats back from their winter hibernation and migrations. Curt will explore how bats and birds solve many of the same challenges sometimes in very different ways. We will explore the sounds produced by bats and how new tools are allowing us to identify bats on the wing, something that has been impossible until recently. Finally, we will describe the characteristics of good bat houses and the steps you can take to replace bat roosting habitat lost to forest practices and urbanization.

Curt has Bachelor of Science degrees from the University of Texas in zoology and geology and a Masters in hydrogeology. He has teaching credentials in composite secondary science and has worked in the environmental field for more than twenty years. Most of all, he enjoys being outdoors chasing bats, or birds or nature sounds. Mr. Black has traveled extensively and has been to every continent with bats and one without. He is also a crazed amateur radio operator - WR5J - and supports emergency preparedness in the northwest as we all get ready for the inevitable 'big one.'

Please join us **Thursday, January 26**, for Curt's stimulating and thoughtful discourse on Northwest bats. Come at 6:30 for the social hour. Enjoy a brief monthly meeting and refreshments from 7:00 to 7:45, followed by Mr. Black's presentation.

The social hour, meeting, and presentation are **free and open to the public**. Invite a friend or anyone who thinks they might want to fall in love with bats. *Directions to ELWAS office / 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.*

## Annual Christmas Bird Count and Dinner — December 17 (Saturday) 8:00 a.m.



Join fellow bird counters at Marymoor Park just south of Redmond at the north end of Lake Sammamish. Meet before 8:00 a.m. at the west parking lot near the windmill. Wear comfortable shoes/boots, warm clothes and bring lunch. Tallies from our annual CBC will be combined with counts taken throughout the nation to help determine bird distribution and population trends. Birds will also be counted in Central America to keep track of migrants. We welcome anyone who wants to help out - from beginner to expert. Our survey will center on the Sammamish Valley and Plateau, Snoqualmie Valley, Beaver Lake, Pine Lake and Issaquah area. If you choose to stay home and count birds in your backyard, be sure to count for at least two hours. Then call Marilyn Steiner, 425-827-2478, with your results before 5 p.m. on Dec. 17. Results will be tallied at the dinner following the count. Call **Len Steiner at 425-827-2478** or email [MarLenSteiner@aol.com](mailto:MarLenSteiner@aol.com) if you would like to participate. Note - there is a **\$1 a day fee** if you leave your car at Marymoor and carpool with someone.

After the count, enjoy a warm, wholesome meal at 6:00 p.m. at the Northlake Unitarian Church. **Cost is \$5**, which includes dinner of hearty soups, salads, bread, dessert and drinks. You do not have to participate in the Christmas Bird Count to join us for dinner, but please contact the office by Tues., Dec. 12 to reserve your spot at the dinner table. 425-576-8805; [office@elwas.org](mailto:office@elwas.org).



**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.*

## The Energy Conundrum

By Christy Anderson, ELWAS President

You've been hearing a lot lately about oil prices and dwindling reserves. And you've been hearing a lot about not drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. So perhaps you're wondering, what's the alternative?

The world runs on energy, whether from oil, natural gas, coal or electricity. We are all well aware of the environmental costs of oil fields and strip mining, and the impact of what we always thought of as clean energy – hydro-power. Attempts to conserve energy are ongoing, but mostly unsuccessful to this point. We seem unwilling to give up our cars and other aspects of an energy consumptive lifestyle until we have no choice. But that time may be fast approaching.

The concept of alternative, renewable energy sounds like a great idea. Many ideas have been floated from wind to fuel cells. The problem surfaces when you start digging a little deeper.

Wind has been promoted as a benign source of “free” energy. But as we've learned, poorly designed and sited turbines have a tendency to chop up birds in flight. Solar panels are made from silicon, which although abundant, must still be mined and refined.

Fuel cells use hydrogen. Hydrogen is made by heating water to split off the hydrogen from the oxygen. What is used to heat the water? Coal or natural gas. The zero emissions from a fuel cell car are currently offset by the emissions from producing the hydrogen. Not to mention the impacts of mining and drilling.

Biodiesel sounds great; creating oil from plants! Usually, soybeans are used, rather than waste grease from restaurants. But to produce the quantities needed to make it widely available, massive inputs of petroleum products (pesticides, fertilizers) are used. New crops are being researched, though, including a promising one called elephant grass.

Private cars are part of the problem, but not all of it. We also ship most products, including food, long distances by truck, burning fuel all the way. Most supermarket food today is shipped thousands of miles. Globalization is contributing to the problem as well. Goods manufactured more cheaply overseas are then shipped back to US consumers. The consumption of fuel for that bargain item makes it an unsustainable option.

There doesn't seem to be an easy answer. There is not yet any entirely benign energy source for either fuel or electricity. We need to think carefully about all the alternatives before we decide one is “the answer.”

In the meantime, getting serious about energy conservation is one thing we can all do as individuals. How we do it, and the choices we make as individuals, and as a nation, will determine what kind of world we have.

## East Lake Washington Audubon Society

425 576 8805

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

P.O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115

Web Site: <http://www.ELWAS.org>

### Executive Officers

<b>President</b>	Christy Anderson	(425) 747-4196 president@elwas.org
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Secretary</b>	Diane Stone	(425) 868-1174 dianestone@hotmail.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	Tim Boyer	(425) 277-9326 tboyer@seanet.com
<b>Executive Director</b>	Jan McGruder	(425) 822-8580 jan@elwas.org

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

<u>At large board member</u>	Amy McQuade	(206) 232-9543 mcburdwchr@aol.com
<u>At large board member</u>	Sunny Walter	(425) 271-1346
<u>At large board member</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Birding</u>	MaryFrances Mathis	(425) 803-3026 MF.Mathis@verizon.net
<u>Adult Education</u>	Melinda Bronsdon	(425) 827-5708
<u>Field Trips</u>	Hugh Jennings	(425) 746-6351 fieldtrip@elwas.org
<u>Nature Walks</u>	MaryFrances Mathis	(425) 803-3026 MF.Mathis@verizon.net
<u>Special Events</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Bird Questions?</u>	Amy McQuade	(206) 232-9543 birdhelp@elwas.org
<u>Conservation</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Advocacy</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Citizen Science</u>	Len Steiner	(425) 827-2478
<u>Conservation</u>	Martyn Stewart	mstew@naturesound.org
<u>Marymoor Park</u>	Megan Lyden	(425) 603-1545 meganlyden@msn.com
<u>Bellefields Clean-up</u>	Kay Barrett	(425) 644-2862
<u>Education</u>	Mary Britton-Simmons	(360) 794-7163 education@elwas.org
<u>Programs</u>	Sunny Walter	(425) 271-1346 sunny@sunnywalter.com
<u>Youth Education</u>	Mary Britton-Simmons	(360) 794-7163 education@elwas.org
<u>Library</u>	Carolyn Kishel	(425) 746-1817
<u>Communication</u>	Ruth Adamski	(425) 823-6189
<u>Historian</u>	Sidonia St. Germaine	(425) 432-4261 shearwater2@msn.com
<u>Newsletter</u>	Tom Grismer	(206) 720-9892 newsletter@elwas.org
<u>Publicity</u>	Tracey Cummings	(425) 788-4663 publicity@ewas.org
<u>Webmaster</u>	Nancy Nicklas	(425) 869-7827 webmaster@elwas.org
<u>Financial Development</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Birdathon</u>	Christy Anderson	(425) 747-4196
<u>Gift Wrap</u>	Nancy and Jim Roberts	(425) 822-1865
<u>Merchandising</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Membership</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Hospitality</u>	Lyn Bailey	(425) 821-4274 lynbailey@comcast.net
<u>Volunteer Coordinator</u>	<b>Open</b>	

## ELWAS Meetings December/January, 2005/2006

**December 6, January 3 (Tues) 7:00 pm — Conservation Committee**

**Meets first Tues of each month in the ELWAS Office.** All interested parties are invited. Questions? Email **Martyn Stewart** at [mstew@naturesound.org](mailto:mstew@naturesound.org)

**December 7, January 4 (Weds) 6:00 pm — 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](mailto:webmaster@elwas.org)

**December 8, January 12 (Thurs) 7:00 pm — Photo Group**

**Meets in large room upstairs from ELWAS Office.** Questions? Email **Tim Boyer** at [tboyer@seanet.com](mailto:tboyer@seanet.com)

**December 13, January 10 (Tues) 7:00 pm — Youth Education Committee**

**Meets in the ELWAS Office.** All interested parties are invited. Questions? Email [education@elwas.org](mailto:education@elwas.org)

**December 19, January 16 (Mon) 7:00 pm — 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. **Len Steiner 425-827-2478**

**December 20, January 17 (Tues) 6:00 pm — ELWAS Board meeting — ELWAS Office.**

**January 19 (Thurs) 7:00 pm — ELWAS Movie Night: "Blue Vinyl" — See article on page 13**

**January 26 (Thurs) 7:00 pm — Monthly Meeting and Presentation — See article on page 1.**

## Marymoor Birdloop Workparties

By Jan McGruder, ELWAS Director



As many of you know, ELWAS is on its way to officially adopting the interpretive trail at Marymoor Park. We're knee-deep in grant writing and working out the details with the County. In the meantime, we're starting with stewardship of the area, which has several noxious plants that should be brought under control.

We've scheduled work parties for **Saturday, December 10 and Saturday, January 21 from 9 to noon.** You'll park in Parking Lot P - the Interpretive Trail parking lot - and follow the gravel road to the trail. We will have signs up!

We'll be pulling out Scot's Broom, cutting back Himalayan blackberries, and removing English Ivy, especially where it has grown into trees.

Wear work clothes and boots and bring gloves and clippers, loppers or pruning saws if you have them. We'll have some tools on hand, but not enough to go around.

Glenn and Bertha Eades, long-time ELWAS members, have volunteered to coordinate this part of the Marymoor Bird-Loop Project. **Please RSVP Glenn or Bertha Eades at: [gades@seanet.com](mailto:gades@seanet.com) or by telephone at 425-885-3842.**

Hope to see you there!

The Corvid Crier, Issue 05-9 — Publication Date: December 1, 2005.

Published by: East Lake Washington Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115

The Corvid Crier is published monthly by the East Lake Washington Audubon Society except that there are no issues in January, July and August.

- **Deadline** for material submission is the first Wednesday of the month preceding publication. Send material by email to:  
[newsletter@elwas.org](mailto: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
- The "Raven in Flight" used as our graphic logo was created by Tony Angell, and is ©1978 University of Washington Press. Used with permission.

### ELWAS 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.

**Phone number: (425) 576-8805**

**Email: [office@elwas.org](mailto:office@elwas.org)**

**Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Friday**

**9:00am — 1:00pm**



## Birds and Baseball 2006

March 5–12, 2006.



- ⇒ Watch birds and Mariners Baseball in southeastern Arizona
- ⇒ Great birds; exciting baseball (3 games); experienced local guides; tasty food; cozy lodgings
- ⇒ Funds raised for ELWAS Gershon Scholarship Fund
- ⇒ Personalized tour — we're a small group (10-12), so we can be flexible; we build spare time into the schedule for optional activities

**Trip leaders** Tom Grismer (me, the editor of this newsletter) and Woody Wheeler (certified interpretive guide and master birder) invite you to join them on their third Birds and Baseball Tour.

**Our agenda** (tentative, and we welcome your suggestions) will be something like this:

On the 5th, we meet you at the airport and head down to the Casa de San Pedro, a wonderful B&B (we stayed there last year and people were 'raven' about it — the owners love to bake pies and cakes) in the Hereford Bridge/San Pedro River natural area.

On the day of the 6th, we do some birding with local guide Wezil Walraven in the nearby natural area; at night, we go out for some owling (Wezil's favorite) and some dinner at a good local restaurant.

On the 7th, we travel to Chiricahua National Monument (a favorite of past participants) a geological wonderland, where the nice ranger leads us on a walk on Echo Canyon trail, giving us a geologic and natural history overview. That night, maybe we'll eat at the Brite Spot, a colorful local place with tasty food.

We go to Patagonia State Park on the 8th, with Wezil leading a birding and natural history walk. That night, we'll head into Bisbee, an interesting old mining town with lots of fun shops and a really great restaurant (we'll eat dinner there).

On the morning of the 9th, we head to Ramsey Canyon for a guided walk (Nature Conservancy reserve, with fine birding), and then to Tucson for our first Mariner's spring training game (the Mariners are donating our tickets, as they did last year), then check into our Tucson-area lodgings and have dinner.

On the 10th, we join guide Melody Kehl for a walk at Buenos Aires refuge (where I saw my first Vermillion Flycatcher and first Verdin), then to M's game #2, followed by dinner at a local Mexican restaurant.

On the 11th, we head to Sonoran Desert Museum (being sure to visit their amazing hummingbird aviary) and then to our last M's game. Maybe we'll have dinner at the amazing Longhorn Grill...

**Cost: \$1900/person, double occupancy** (includes lodging, ground (not air) transport, guides, most meals)

— Suggested **\$200** per person donation to ELWAS Gershon Scholarship Fund.

— Single occupancy supplemental fee of **\$400**

For info or to save a spot (people are starting to sign up!), contact Tom at **(206)720-9892 tomgr@msn.com**.

We love doing this tour; it's a lot of fun. Whether you're a fledgling birdwatcher or an eagle eye birder, it's a HOOT!

### Invest in the Future of our Natural World: Make a Bequest to ELWAS

You can help accomplish Audubon's goals by including a bequest to Audubon in your will, life insurance or other retirement plans. More information is available on our website at [www.elwas.org](http://www.elwas.org).

**Your Bequest Will Make a Difference.  
Consult with your attorney today!**



**EagleEye**  
VISION CARE, P.S.

Dr. Kerri W. Scarbrough, Optometrist  
17320 135th Ave. N.E. – Woodinville  
(425) 398-1862

**See the birds better!**

## Opportunities for Volunteering

By Jan McGruder, ELWAS Director

ELWAS has openings for several leadership positions. Some of these are for the Board of Directors and others are Committee Chairs. We are also seeking volunteers to fill on-going needs within the Chapter.

Our Board of Directors has six open positions:

At-Large Board Member	Vice President
Financial Development Chair	Conservation Chair
Secretary	Membership Chair

The Board works hard and takes their commitment to the Chapter seriously, but they also have fun.

There are five committees that need leaders. They are:

Plant Sale	Merchandise	Juanita Bay Habitat Restoration.
Birdathon		Community Outreach Events

ELWAS also has several smaller or short-term projects. Bring your expertise and energy and help us with:

- Brochure and publication design
- Merchandise sales/office staffing during Membership Meetings
- Update and maintain the Chapter e-mail lists (Announce, Conservation, and Opportunities @elwas.org)
- Organize and print Welcome letters to new members
- Update and maintain the Chapter web calendar

If you'd like more information on any of these positions, and what would be expected of you, please contact Jan McGruder at (425) 822-8580 or jan@elwas.org for further details.

If you believe ELWAS is a cause worthy of your time, give a little of yourself.

### Gift Membership to ELWAS

This holiday season, why not give the gift of a membership to ELWAS? You know the benefits of learning about birds, the fun of field trips and the satisfaction of helping to preserve the natural world. You can share those benefits with others. A year's membership is only \$25. Use the membership form on the back of this newsletter, or call the office at (425) 576-8805.

### Used Binoculars on Hand?

Have you recently purchased new binoculars? Donate your old ones to the Education Committee for use in our youth programs.



## SHOP ONLINE

Want to support ELWAS, but are looking for more than we have in our store? (There you'll find books, notecards, bird feeders, seed and suet.) Visit the ELWAS Virtual Store and buy all your outdoor items online. Just login to the ELWAS homepage ([www.elwas.org](http://www.elwas.org)), click on "Shop Online"! Then follow the links to our online store.

You'll find great deals on books, field guides, audio, video, gifts, seed, feeders, and kid's stuff. Just place your order online, and all merchandise is delivered right to your door. Besides the convenience to you, ELWAS receives a percentage of each sale!

# FIELD TRIPS

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.

## Meeting Places for Field Trips:

- **Issaquah Park and Ride:** I-90, exit 15, turn right (south) go to 2nd or 3rd light, then left into P&R lot.
- **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.
- **Newport Hills Park and Ride:** I-405, exit 9
- **South Kirkland Park and Ride:** 108th Ave. NE just north of hwy 520 and Northup Way.
- **Wilburton Park and Ride:** I-405, exit 12.

## December 2 (Fri) 9am to noon — Marymoor Park

Join us for a morning walk along the nature trail, seeing what birds are in the area. Meets the **1<sup>st</sup> 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 third stop sign, to the Dog Area parking lot. Parking is \$1.

## December 3 (Sat) 8:00 am to noon — Green Lake

Walk **Green Lake** with expert birder Martin Muller who has acquired intimate knowledge of this lake and the 150 bird species found there. **Meet by 7:25 am** at South Kirkland P&R near the bus stop 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 is a maximum of 15. Passenger cost/person \$2.00. **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

## December 4 (Sunday)

### Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary

The Photo Group will be going to the Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary for a day of taking photos and images of the bird life there. There will be opportunities to photograph chickadees, ducks, cranes, towhees etc. We will meet at the SE 8<sup>th</sup> Street Park & Ride in south Bellevue just off 405. Bring some lunch and water. This will be an all day trip, with at least four hours of photographing at the Sanctuary. Please email Tim Boyer if you would like to come along. **tboyer@seanet.com.**

## Dec 8 (Thursday) 9:00 am - Noon

### Des Moines Marina/Saltwater State Park

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 \$5.00 parking fee required. Return late morning. Meet before 9:00 am at Bellevue Wilburton P&R, I-405, Exit 12. Passenger cost/person \$4.00.

**Joyce Meyer 425-881-5422**

## December 17 (Saturday) 8:00 am

**Christmas Bird Count** (see article on page 1)

## December 17 (Sat) 10:00 am — Bellefields Walk Through

Help clean litter along Bellefields Trail in the south end of Mercer Slough Nature Park. Meet at the Winters House (Bellevue Parks) parking lot at 2102 Bellevue Way SE (just north of I-90). Please bring gloves, a bag for trash, and binoculars.

**Kay Barrett 425-644-2862.**

## December 20 (Tues) 9:00 am— noon

### Juanita Bay Park Bird Walk

A relaxed walk in the Park, seeing what birds are in the area. Meets the **3<sup>rd</sup> Tues of each month at 9:00.** Bring binoculars and meet in parking lot. No registration required.

**MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026**

## December 26 (Monday) 9:00 am 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 am at north end of the Newport Hills Park-N-Ride and plan to be back by noon. Passenger cost/person \$2.00.

**Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

## January 6 (Fri) 9am to noon — Marymoor Park

See December 2 entry.

## Jan 12 (Thurs) or Jan 14 (Sat) 7:30 am - Skagit/Samish Flats - Registration Required

Winter birding offers many opportunities for raptors, including Gyrfalcon and Rough-legged Hawk. Swans and Snow Geese are found in the fields along with shorebirds and possibly Short-eared Owls. A WDFW decal is required at some of the birding stops. Bring a lunch. Each full-day trip is limited to 3 cars and 10 people. Choose the date that works best and call Joyce Meyer by Jan. 8th to reserve your day. Meet before 7:30 am at Kingsgate P&R. Passenger cost/person \$10.00. **Joyce Meyer 425-881-5422 and Mike West**

## January 17 (Tues) 9:00 am— noon

### Juanita Bay Park Bird Walk

See December 20 entry.

## January 21 (Sat) 10:00 am — Bellefields Walk Through

Help clean up litter along Bellefields Trail in Mercer Slough Nature Park. Meet at the Bellefields Trail Head parking lot on 118th Ave, SE (Bellevue), about one mile south of Greenbaum's Furniture (118th and SE 8th). Please bring gloves, a bag for trash, and binoculars.

**Kay Barrett 425-644-2862.**

(Continued on page 7)

**BIRD  
of the  
MONTH**

**Greater White-fronted Goose**

*Anser albifrons*

by Hugh Jennings



The Greater White-fronted Goose (GWFG) is about 28" long with a wingspan of 53" and a weight of 4.8 lb. (2200g). This about one-half the weight of the large common Canada Goose. The genus name *Anser* (AN-ser) is Latin for goose. The species name *albifrons* (AL-bih-frons) is from the Latin *albus* meaning white, and *frons* for forehead, hence, white-fronted for white front of face. This goose is slender and agile with long, narrow wings, bright orange legs, pink or orange bill, white tip on tail and a gray upper wing. In flight, note black patches on brown belly, grayish-blue wash on upper wings and white U-shaped rump band.

This goose is found mainly west of the Mississippi River. In the Northwest, they are an uncommon winter resident, usually seen with Canada Geese. During migration, the GWFG are fairly common in the fall and common in the spring migration. From the breeding grounds in southwestern Alaska they take a direct over-water route to coastal Washington. Then they go over the Cascades to a staging area in the Klamath Basin en route to central California for the winter. Large numbers stop briefly at the McNary NWR. Flocks can number in the thousands. The V-formations resemble Canada Geese, but the GWFG flight is more agile. The call is a laughing *kah-lah-aluck*. They nest on the Arctic tundra and winter in open country in mild climates. They are found on marshes, prairies, fields, lakes and bays in the tundra. Most of the geese spend winter where agricultural fields are available for foraging and are near extensive shallow waters for roosting. Wintering flocks leave night roosts before sunrise to fly to feeding areas. Musical honking can be heard from wavering lines of White-fronteds flying overhead at dawn. The GWFGs diet in winter is mostly plant material, seeds and waste grain in fields. During the summer they eat stems and roots of grasses, sedges, horsetail and other plants. They eat a few aquatic insects, and sometimes snails, which are probably eaten with the plants. They forage while walking on land and grazing on food they find on the ground. While feeding in water they submerge their head and neck or upend with tail up and head down.

The GWFG usually first breed at 3 years. A "triumph display" is important to the pair bond. The male briefly attacks another bird, then returns to the female with neck outstretched and wings partly open while both male and female call loudly. The nest is on hummocks or elevated ground near ground that is surrounded by grasses, low shrubs and sedges. The female builds the nest in a shallow depression lined with plant materials; down is added near the end of egg laying. There are usually 3-6 dull white eggs that become stained from the nest. Incubation is by the female for only 22-27 days. The young can walk and swim shortly after hatching. Both of the parents tend to the young, leading them to feeding areas where the young feed themselves. First flight is at about 38-45 days. The young stay with the parents for the first year of their life and often are loosely associated with them for several years.

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**January 22 (Sunday)**

**Snohomish County**

The Photo Group will take a trip to Snohomish County to photograph Trumpeter Swans at a small lake, and there is a good possibility of some flight shots as well. Please email Tim Boyer if you are interested in this trip. [tboyer@seanet.com](mailto:tboyer@seanet.com).

**January 23 (Monday) 9:00 am 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 am at north end of the Newport Hills Park-N-Ride and plan to be back by noon. Passenger cost/person **\$2.00**.

**Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

**January 28 (Saturday) 8:00 am to noon**

**West Seattle Shoreline**

Explore the shores and waters of West Seattle along Elliot Bay and Puget Sound to Lincoln Park. Numerous viewpoints overlook the water and freighters, ferries and sea birds. Expectations include goldeneyes, scoters, gulls, Harlequin Ducks and shorebirds.

Should be done by noon. Meet before 8:00 am at north end of the Wilburton P&R. Passenger cost/person **\$2.00**. **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

## Save the Date! — Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> and Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>

Join us for the following two days in January to get informed and involved to be an advocate for Priorities for a Healthy Washington!

### Priorities for a Healthy Washington Legislative Workshop

**When: Saturday, January 7th, 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM**

**Where: Seattle Pacific University, Gwinn Room**

Attend the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Priorities for a Healthy Washington Legislative Workshop as the state's leading conservation groups prepare for the upcoming legislative session. We'll hear from legislators, environmental lobbyists, members of the media and others regarding the community's *Priorities for a Healthy Washington*. These priorities include legislation for cleaning up Puget Sound, phasing out toxic chemicals that impact children's health, promoting renewable fuels and recycling e-waste. We're also united against attacks on our land protections in Washington State.

The workshop is hosted by Washington Environmental Council. Space is limited, so register online at [http://www.wecprotects.org/join/legworkshop\\_reg.cfm](http://www.wecprotects.org/join/legworkshop_reg.cfm) or call 206-622-8103. Contact Amy Zarrett, WEC Organizer, at 206-622-8103 or [amy@wecprotects.org](mailto:amy@wecprotects.org) with any questions.

### Priorities for a Healthy Washington Lobby Day in Olympia

**An all day event, Thursday, January 26th, 2006**

Join the state's leading conservation groups and hundreds of citizen lobbyists to push for the passage of the *Priorities for a Healthy Washington* legislative package. These priorities include legislation for cleaning up Puget Sound, phasing out toxic chemicals that impact children's health, promoting renewable fuels and recycling e-waste. We are also united to defend against any attacks on our land protections in Washington State.

During Lobby Day you will hear from legislators who are championing the Priorities for a Healthy Washington legislation, receive training on how to lobby from top environmental lobbyists, and meet face to face with your elected officials. And don't forget the party in the evening!

Lobby Day is hosted by People for Puget Sound. To register go to [www.pugetsound.org/lobbyday](http://www.pugetsound.org/lobbyday) or contact Jim Dawson at [jdawson@pugetsound.org](mailto:jdawson@pugetsound.org) or (360) 754-9177.

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### **A Green Holiday — Trees and Trimmings**

Each year, more than 35 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States, as are 10 million of the artificial variety, which consist of metal and plastics made from nonrenewable petroleum. Consider how you decorate and dispose of them--real trees can give back to wildlife, but both kinds will last for centuries in a landfill.

- Consider buying a live tree (with a root ball) that's native to your region, and then plant it outside after the holidays are over.
- Instead of buying new decorations, look in thrift and antique stores, which can be treasure troves of ornaments and lights.
- Decorate an indoor tree with natural items that can be returned to the earth: seed-pods, dried flowers, autumn leaves, nut shells, pieces of bark, milkweed fluff, and berries, to name just a few.
- Wondering what to do with those leftover Styrofoam plates and take-out containers? Try cutting out snowflakes or snowmen, add a little glitter or paint, and hang them as homemade ornaments.
- When it's time to take down the Christmas tree, place it outside as valuable shelter for birds and small animals during the long cold winter.
- Decorate an outdoor tree just for wildlife. It can be adorned with strings of unsalted popped popcorn, dried fruit, and peanuts in the shell, and with ornaments like pinecones spread with peanut butter and suet.



Read "365 Days of Christmas" <http://magazine.audubon.org/audubonathome/audubonathome0511.html> in the November-December 2005 issue of Audubon magazine for more ideas, and check National Audubon's website at [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org).



## CONSERVATION CORNER — Get Conservative!

By Jim Rettig

I am halfway through Jared Diamond's book Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed. In the first half of this book he discusses the reasons why the Easter Island, the Pitcarin Island, the Anasazi, the Maya, and the Norse Greenland societies came to an end. For most of them, damage to the environment was one of the major causes. The damage usually resulted because of deforestation which led to soil erosion which led to the lack of ability to produce enough food. Before the final demise of these societies, there were cycles of abundance and scarcity. When food was plentiful, populations increased. But then in times of scarcity, food production was unable to meet the needs of all the citizens and many died. If too many years of scarcity took place one after another, and then a drought took place, or a hurricane, or some other major natural disaster, that would often bring the society to an end.

While I haven't finished the book, I know that Mr. Diamond ends the book with a message of hope. I think he thinks we are smart enough to learn from past mistakes and so to make mid-course corrections for a new future. I hope so. But every day I read articles that describe worldwide environmental damage which includes continued attempts to log old growth forests and new threats to the recovering forests of the New England states; over-fishing in all our oceans; disappearing coral reefs; global warming; loss of wetlands; the loss of more than 6,000,000 acres of precious and irreplaceable Amazon rainforest in the last 12 months; not enough water for human beings and other species; the loss of biodiversity. Add to this a natural disaster or two, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, droughts, and these may take some nations (Haiti, Rwanda?) over the edge.

Lest you think this may be true for other places around the world but not the US, Diamond's first chapter is all about Montana. There are about 20,000 abandoned mines in the state which will be leaking acid and other toxins into waterways essentially forever. Because of clearcutting, water temperatures in some rivers are higher than optimal for fish spawning and survival, snow melts more quickly and the water, instead of slowly melting into groundwater aquifers, is eroding hillsides which increases sediment in the rivers and streams. Soils are losing their fertility because of erosion, overgrazing, noxious weed infestation, excessively hot forest fires that sterilize the soil, and salinization. And Montana is becoming warmer and drier, which means less water for Montanans and their cattle and rivers and so on. Air quality too is less than it used to be. Missoula's air gets trapped from time to time in temperature inversions and the air can be as bad as that in Los Angeles. And we all thought Montana was pristine!

So, what are we to do? First, you might want to read this book. It is full of insights. Second, get passionate about the future health of this Spaceship Earth. For the sake of your children, your grandchildren, and the seventh generation. There is nowhere else we can turn. If we trash this planet, we're toast. Which is to say, get in touch with your elected officials at every level of government and let them know what you think and feel. Third, get active in ELWAS, whose mission is to protect, preserve and enhance natural ecosystems and our communities for the benefit of birds, other wildlife and people. Get conservative: become a conservationist!

## ELWAS HOLIDAY GIFT WRAP

By Nancy Roberts

We'll be wrapping gifts (and accepting donations to ELWAS) at REI in Redmond Town Center again this year. Help ELWAS by bringing your gifts to be wrapped. Volunteers will be needed for the following dates and times:

Wednesday, December 21:	11:00 - 2:00, 2:00 - 5:00, 5:00 - 8:00
Thursday, December 22:	11:00 - 2:00, 2:00 - 5:00, 5:00 - 8:00
Friday, December 23:	11:00 - 2:00, 2:00 - 5:00, 5:00 - 8:00
Saturday, December 24	9:00 - 12:00, 12:00 - 3:00, 3:00 - 6:00

Questions or interested in helping? It's fun and it's very easy! Call Jim and Nancy Roberts at (425) 822-1865.



## OWLS OF KING COUNTY with Jamie Acker — February 4, 2006.

Join this ELWAS class for a fabulous illustrated presentation on our local owls. The daytime class presentation will discuss nighttime owling, owl physiology, and information concerning each of the owl species seen in King County. Jamie will share information about his ongoing study of Barred Owls, as well as his study of migrating Northern Saw-whet Owls on Bainbridge Island.

The field trip is a night time owling experience where participants should plan on experiencing excellent views and calls of Barred Owls, as well as the Northern Saw-whet Owl, and possibly views and/or calls of three other species.

Jamie Acker has been a birder for over 30 years, and has specialized in studying the owls on Bainbridge Island since 1995, in particular the Barred Owl. He has led "owl prowls" regularly for the past eight years on Bainbridge Island for Kitsap Audubon. He is a licensed owl bander and has banded many of the Barred Owls on Bainbridge, and in the last three years, equipped some with radio telemetry. He has also recently begun banding Northern Saw-whet Owls in an attempt to help further understand this common migratory owl. Through his "owl prowls," much has been learned about the habits of these owls.

**Class:** Saturday, February 4, 2006, 10:00am – 2:00pm

**Class location:** Unitarian Universalist Church, Kirkland.

**Field Trip:** Bainbridge Island, Sunday, February 5, 2006, 2:50 am –sunrise.

Registration opens December 5, 2005.

Call the ELWAS office to register.

**Fee:** Class and Field trip: \$45/ELWAS member, \$60 non-ELWAS member.

**Class Only:** \$35/ELWAS member, \$45/non-ELWAS member

*Field trip will be limited to 10 participants determined by the order of registration at the ELWAS office.*

*The field trip is not suitable for children under 16 years of age.*

Beverages and snacks will be provided at the daytime class. You may bring your lunch.



### Community Environmental Forum

Please join a Community Forum brought to you by local environmental groups in Washington! This event will feature elected officials talking about important environmental issues and will be moderated by KUOW's "Weekday" host Steve Scher. Take advantage of opportunities to ask questions, build relationships, and share your environmental concerns with your community. We hope to see you there!

**Date:** Tuesday, December 6th

**Time:** 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm Sign-in and refreshments  
6:00 pm - 8:30 pm Forum

**Place:** Bellevue Art Museum, 510 Bellevue Way NE

**RSVP:** Email [eastkingforum@weave.org](mailto:eastkingforum@weave.org) or call Jill Wasberg, (206) 374-0760, x103



### Gift Idea — ELWAS Class

Stuck for a holiday gift idea? Classes at ELWAS are fun and interesting! You probably know the perfect person to appreciate the gift of a bird class. How about Beginning Birding (see page 11) or Owls of King County?

The recipient of such a thoughtful gift will have a great time, and learn more about the fascinating world of birds. Why not take a class together?! Call (425) 576-8805.

# WINTER BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS



Do you wonder why **Birding** is the fastest growing recreational activity? **Find out why!**

Join us and *make 2006 a Birding 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 1-31 & 2-7. 6:30—9:00 PM (classes only)  
Sat 2-4 or Sun 2-5 (morning only field trip)  
Sat 2-11 or Sun 2-12 (all day field trip to Skagit Flats)

**LOCATION:** ELWAS office: 308 – 4<sup>th</sup> Ave S. – Kirkland (classes only)  
(lower level of Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church – enter on State St)

**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 (Mon, Tues & Fri; 9am-1pm)

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

## **SPECIAL REPORT: Audubon's Role in the Search Efforts for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker**

In April, conservationists worldwide celebrated the rediscovery of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. This winter, Audubon will be an active participant in the upcoming search efforts for the bird.

Audubon will be well represented on all federal Recovery Team Groups, which were formed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its partners to craft a plan for the conservation of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Greg Butcher, National Audubon Society's Director of Bird Conservation, is a member of the Executive Committee, whose responsibilities include being the final arbiters of creating policy to control access to an area if there are sightings of the bird, reviewing the status of the recovery, and discussing any "big picture" policy issues. Additional Audubon staff on the Recovery Team Groups include Ken Smith, State Director of Audubon Arkansas, who is on the Corridor of Hope Conservation Team; Dan Scheiman, Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon Arkansas, who is a member of the Biology Working Group; Bruce Reid, Deputy State Director of Audubon Mississippi, who is on the Habitat Management and Conservation Working Group; and Ellen Fennell, Audubon Arkansas' Director of Development, and Madge Lindsay, Executive Director of Audubon Mississippi, who are members of the Communications Working Group.

Audubon Arkansas has teamed up with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to be a part of the search itself in the Big Woods region of Arkansas. Cornell is leading the search in the Big Woods from November 2005 to April 2006, where two groups of volunteers will be searching in the Cache River and the White River National Wildlife Refuges for two week blocks. To help with the efforts, Audubon Arkansas has hired a Volunteer Coordinator, an integral part of the search team, who will train and supervise volunteer researchers to use equipment, learn how to use and collect data, and understand data entry protocols.

Additionally, Audubon Arkansas has funding which will go towards their Ivory-billed Woodpecker recovery work, and the organization has submitted a proposal to the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to obtain some of the state funding for the recovery efforts. Audubon Arkansas is also partnering with five private landowners to restore at least 3,500 acres in the Big Woods, and will be submitting a proposal on the landowners' behalf to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a private land stewardship grant. In addition, as a member of the Big Woods Conservation Partnership - started by the Nature Conservancy after news of the rediscovery was announced - Audubon Arkansas will work with many other conservation organizations to preserve the habitat of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the Cache River-Lower White Rivers region. The region, which is also home to a variety of other species of birds, is designated as an Important Bird Area (IBA).

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### **Grab your binoculars and come to the Olympic Peninsula BirdFest Friday March 31 to Sunday April 2, 2006 in Sequim, Washington.**

**The stage is set for the Olympic BirdFest:** quiet bays and estuaries, beaches on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, an island bird sanctuary, a five-mile-long sand spit, eel grass beds, and the beautiful Dungeness River valley.

**The "players" are ready for a Washington Bird Watching weekend:** Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, and Pygmy-Owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration.

We've created a bird watching vacation for beginners to experts, from leisurely strolls to active hikes. You can bird for a few hours, or all day ... from the dawn chorus to the evening owl prowling. We will wake you with coffee, nourish you with locally grown organic food, and celebrate a traditional salmon bake.

**Come and enjoy Olympic BirdFest 2006:** From guided birding trips, boat tours, kayaking, salmon banquet, and many other presentations. Our festival has a full slate of extraordinary offerings waiting for you to enjoy.

See the BirdFest website at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org) where you can read detailed descriptions of all of the offerings for this Olympic BirdFest weekend on the Schedule of Events Booklet. Download a PDF of the registration form and register by mail now!

The Olympic BirdFest is a partnership of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, Dungeness River Audubon Center and Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.

For more information email: [info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org)

## JBP Jottings

By MaryFrances Mathis

With the changing of the seasons, we see a changing of the avian population at Juanita Bay Park. Passing through over the last couple of months have been several species of shorebirds, making use of what little shoreline was exposed. In the trees and shrubs, many migrant warblers, vireos and flycatchers have been seen foraging in preparation for their long journeys south. And all the swallows have "packed up" and headed out.

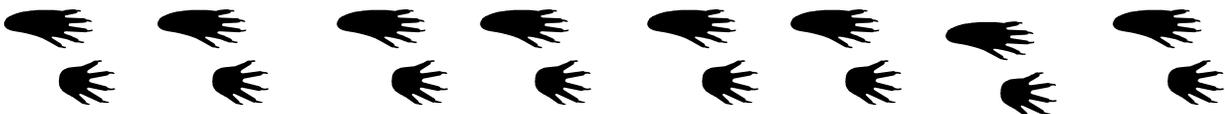
In replacement, the ducks, resplendent again in their breeding finery, have returned to Juanita Bay, to spend their winter feeding and choosing mates for next spring. **Common Loons** and **Western, Red-necked** and **Horned Grebes** are appearing in small numbers in their winter plumage, **American Coots** are back in force, and the sparrows are once again populating the blackberry thickets. Another sign that winter is really on the way, the nesting Swainson's Thrushes have been replaced by **Hermit** and **Varied Thrushes**.

Some of the interesting sightings:

- 25 (!) **Wilson's Snipes** were counted foraging in the mud at the far end of the causeway.
- **Turkey Vultures**, seen in the spring flying north, were seen heading south.
- A covey of 11 **California Quail** have been seen in the park for the past few weeks.
- With the usual cadre of sparrows, have been at least two **White-throated Sparrows**. Last year two over-wintered, so maybe that will happen again. Also, a **Swamp Sparrow** was a one-day wonder at the end of October.
- Recently, a **Mourning Dove** was spotted, and also the newest addition to the park list, a **Western Scrub-Jay**. This jay species is common in Oregon and southern Washington, and seems to be extending its range more and more into the Puget Sound area.

**Cooper's** and **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, both adult and immature, are now lurking in the trees and shrubs hoping to snare an unsuspecting songbird. And the first wintering raptor of the season, a **Merlin**, was seen streaking through the park, chasing its "lunch."

So even though the weather is getting colder and wetter, don't let it discourage you from enjoying this beautiful park. There is a lot of wildlife to be enjoyed over the next few winter months.



### MOVIE NIGHT Blue Vinyl

**Date:** Thursday, January 19, 2006

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church, 308 Fourth Avenue S., Kirkland

Join us for the documentary movie, *Blue Vinyl* (93 minutes) and after-movie discussion. With humor, hope and a piece of vinyl siding firmly in hand, Peabody Award-winning filmmaker Judith Helfand and co-director Daniel B. Gold travel from Helfand's hometown to America's vinyl manufacturing capital and beyond in search of answers about the nature of polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Her parents' decision to "re-side" their house with this seemingly benign cure-all for many suburban homes turns into a toxic odyssey with twists and turns that most ordinary homeowners would never dare to take. The result is a humorous but sobering and uniquely personal exploration of the relationship between consumers and industry in this feature-length documentary.