



Eastside Audubon  
your connection to nature

# The Corvid Crier

EASTSIDE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL 27, No 10 – DECEMBER '08 / JANUARY '09

*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.*

## HIGHLIGHTS INSIDE:

**Focus on the Board — 2:**

**EAS Office Hours and Directions — 3**

**Annual Dinner — 3**

**Holiday Gift Wrap — 3**

**Gift Ideas — 4**

**Grants & Scholarships — 5**

**Board Notes — 5**

**Field Trips — 6**

**Bird of the Month — 7**

**Volunteer Spotlight — 8**

**Book Review — 8**

**Marymoor BirdLoop — 9**

## Directions to EAS HQ

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.

## Annual Christmas Bird Count and Dinner Saturday, December 20

Come join one of the 8 teams of bird counters in the Eastside Audubon annual CBC. We welcome anyone who wants to help - from beginner to expert. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes/boots, warm clothes and bring lunch. The eight count areas and leaders are:

Fall City – Preston Area -- (Kathy Andrich, 206-390-3159 or chukarbird@yahoo.com)

L. Samm. SP-Cougar Mt.-Issaquah – (Martyn Stewart, 425-836-3849 or mstew@naturesound.org)

Marymoor – Ames L. – (Brian Bell, 425-485-8058 or bellasoc@isomedia.com)

Pine Lake Plateau – (Jim Rettig, 425-402-1833 or jretttiganager@verizon.net)

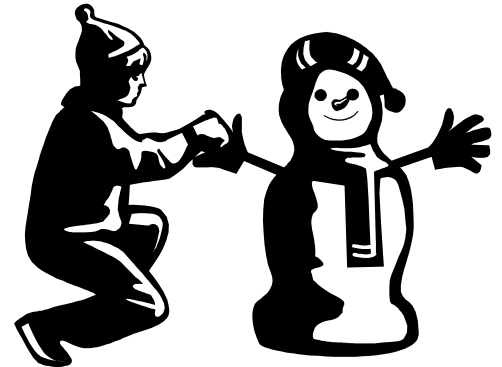
W. Lake Sammamish Parks – (MaryFrances Mathis, 425-803-3026 or mfmathis@verizon.net)

East Snoqualmie Valley – (Joyce Meyer, 425-868-7986 or meyer2j@aol.com)

West Snoqualmie Valley – (Hugh Jennings, 425-746-6351 or hughbirder@earthlink.net)

E. Lake Sammamish Trail – (Tim McGruder, 425-822-8580 or tmcgruder@gmail.com) (involves a 4.5 mile walk)

All those interested in going on one of the counts should call or email the leader for more info and/or to sign up for that count. Everyone is encouraged to support the CBC by donating the \$5.00 fee. The count fees collected during each CBC help cover the cost of generating materials for compilers, producing the annual CBC summary issue, and maintaining the CBC Web site and database. Only those paying the \$5.00 are re-



ported as participants in the National Audubon CBC. The count leaders are responsible for collecting this money.

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. You can also stay at home and count birds in your backyard; be sure to count for at least two hours. – then email Hugh Jennings at [hughbirder@earthlink.net](mailto:hughbirder@earthlink.net) or phone 425-746-6351 and leave a message with your results before 5 pm on December 20. Results will be tallied at the dinner following the count.

After the bird count, counters are invited to join Eastside Audubon for a warm, wholesome meal. Dinner is served at 6 pm and will be held at the Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church, 308 Fourth Avenue S., Kirkland. Cost is \$6.00, which includes dinner (vegetarian and meat), dessert and drinks. All are welcome – whether you're a counter or not. Please **call the office (425-576-8805) for dinner reservations.**

**ELWAS Annual Dinner  
Thursday, January 22 at 6:30 pm**

See Page 3 for details, including pot luck instructions. Everyone is welcome!



Welcome to *Focus on the Board*. With Christy's transition from President of the Chapter, we thought it would be nice to change things up a bit and turn this column into an opportunity for you to better get to know your board members. We will rotate the writing, with each newsletter featuring a different member.

I am Cindy Balbuena, the President-Elect, due to take over the reins from Christy in January. I am excited (and yes, nervous too) about stepping into this position. I have big shoes to fill and the chapter means a lot to me. I joined EAS in 2006 after picking up a flier at REI. Self employed at the time and looking for an opportunity to volunteer with an environmentally-focused organization, I was thrilled to learn of all of the volunteer opportunities available and started as the manager of our former Nature Shop.

Although I've always been a lover of birds and nature, joining and becoming involved in the chapter greatly accelerated my learning. I brushed off my field guide, and was constantly coming into the office with pictures of unidentifiable (by me) birds, and recordings of bird songs. There were always plenty of friendly, helpful experts around to help. The more I learned, the more excited I got about learning more. I started to take classes and go on field trips. The birders I met made me feel very comfortable, and I was very impressed with their level of patience and interest in helping me. As I became more involved with the operations side of the chapter, I proposed and, with *lots* of help from the board and many volunteers, put on the chapter's first Nature's Holiday Market.

Working full time again now and unfortunately going on fewer field trips, I probably appreciate even more my smaller encounters with nature. It's a type of meditation for me. Whether it's watching ducks on Larson Lake or admiring our hummingbird as he zooms back and forth to the feeder, appreciating birds never fails to bring a smile to my face, warm my heart, and take my mind off of any stresses of the day.

I'll quickly be back in learning mode as I take on the role of president of the chapter. But in reality, I know that EAS' future success will have little to do with me, and much to do with what we will do together. I'm looking forward to building upon all of the strengths Eastside Audubon already has and getting more people actively involved. I will always be open to your feedback and suggestions. As you might have guessed already, continual learning is one of my core values.

So let me know what's important to you. Email me at [cbalbuena@comcast.net](mailto:cbalbuena@comcast.net). What could we do better; what should we try? Together we can tackle anything! I look forward to working with and getting to know you all.

308 4th Avenue S. (Corner 4th Ave. S. and State)  
P.O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115

**Executive Officers**

<b>President</b>	Christy Anderson	(425) 747-4196 president@elwas.org
<b>Vice President</b>	Cindy Balbuena	(425) 643-4074 cbalbuena@comcast.net
<b>Secretary</b>	Carmen Almodovar	(425) 643-5922 Carmena2001@earthlink.net
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ellen Homan	(425) 836-5838 gammy@isomedia.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>	Helen LaBouy	(425) 868-9706 helenlabouy@mac.com
<u>At large board member</u>	Margaret Lie	(425) 823-2686 margaretlie12@gmail.com
<u>At large board member</u>	Tricia Kishel	(206) 948-3922 natureisoutside@gmail.com
<u>Birding</u>	Brian Bell	(425) 485-8058 bellasoc@isomedia.com
<u>Adult Education</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Bird Photography</u>	Tim Boyer	(425) 277-9326 tboyer@seanet.com
<u>Field Trips</u>	Hugh Jennings	(425) 746-6351 fieldtrip@elwas.org
<u>Native Plant Walks</u>	Sunny Walter	(425) 271-1346 sunny@sunnywalter.com
<u>Nature Walks</u>	Christopher Chapman	(425) 941-3501 cjchapman19@comcast.net
<u>Special Events</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Bird Questions?</u>	MaryFrances Mathis	(425) 803-3026
<u>Conservation</u>	Tim McGruder	(425) 822-8580 tim@elwas.org
<u>Advocacy</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Citizen Science</u>	Tim McGruder	(425) 822-8580
<u>Conservation</u>	Tim McGruder	(425) 822-8580 tim@elwas.org
<u>Marymoor Park</u>	Jim Rettig	(425) 402-1833 jrettigtanager@verizon.net
<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>	Patrick Kelley	(206) 618-9674 birder@pkwrite.com
<u>Historian</u>	Bob Gershmel	(425) 823-8840 rwgusnret1986@yahoo.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>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Financial Development</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Birdathon</u>	Christy Anderson	(425) 747-4196
<u>Gift Wrap</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<u>Merchandising</u>	Cindy Balbuena	(425) 643-4074 cbalbuena@comcast.net
<u>Membership</u>	Sunny Walter	(425) 271-1346 sunny@sunnywalter.com
<u>Hospitality</u>	Claudia Welch	(425) 827/2548
<u>Volunteer Coordinator</u>	Tricia Kishel	(206) 948-3922 natureisoutside@gmail.com

## December/January Meetings

**Dec 3/Jan 7 (Weds) 4:00—6:00 pm**

### Web Committee

Meets first Wednesday each month in EAS Office. All interested parties are invited. Questions? Email Patrick Kelley at [webmaster@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:webmaster@eastsideaudubon.org)

**Dec 9/Jan 13 (Tues) 7:00 pm**

### Youth Education Committee

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

**Dec 11/ Jan 8 (Thurs) 7:00 pm**

### Photo Group

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

**Dec 20 (Sat)**

### Christmas Bird Count and Dinner

See article on page 1.

**Jan 22 (Thurs) 6:30 pm**

### Eastside Audubon Annual Dinner

Article on this page.

## 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**

**office@eastsideaudubon.org**

**Hours: Mon, Tues, Fri — 9:00am - 1:00pm**

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The Corvid Crier is published monthly by the Eastside Audubon Society except that there are no issues in January or August.

**Deadline** for material submission is the first Wednesday of the month preceding publication. Send material by email to:

[newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org)

Subject: EAS Newsletter

or by mail to:

Eastside Audubon Society

Attn: Tom Grismer

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

## Eastside Audubon Annual Dinner Thursday, January 22 at 6:30 pm

After enjoying a delicious dinner, we will celebrate the Chapter's 2008 accomplishments. The new Board of Directors will be installed, and the outgoing Board Members and our many volunteers from 2008 will be honored.

Back by popular demand - members of the Photo Club will present several short musical fade dissolve shows of their work. You can bet there will be some wonderful bird pictures!

Please bring a dish that serves six, corresponding to the first letter of your last name:

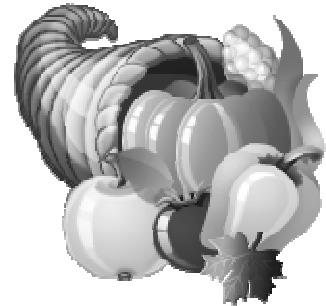
A-G ..... bring a hot dish

H-P ..... bring a salad

Q-Z ..... bring a dessert

Beverages and bread will be provided, and we will use the church's "china" and flatware.

Dinner starts at 6:30 pm on Thursday, January 24th at the Northlake Unitarian Church, 308 Fourth Avenue S. in Kirkland. **Everyone is welcome.**



## Annual Holiday Gift Wrap



Calling all volunteers for the annual Holiday Gift Wrap!!! This is the 20th anniversary for this great fundraiser, and it's an event for which our

Chapter is known. When REI was located in the Overlake area, Amy McQuade convinced the manager that it would be a nice idea to let our group set up a table in the corner of the store.

In those days, we'd wrap gifts for the 30 days before Christmas - and sometimes it was pretty quiet. Now we've pared it down to the busy week before Christmas. Though the hours are shorter and both the Chapter and REI have grown up, it's still a lot of fun and one of our best fundraisers.

Join other Auduboners and have fun wrapping gifts and raising money for Eastside Audubon at REI Redmond Towne Center.

We'll be wrapping gifts for the 5 days before Christmas, with 4 different shifts each day, as set out below.

Please let us know what shift(s) you'd like to help out.

Saturday, December 20:

9:00 to 12:15; 12:15 to 3:30; 3:30 to 6:45 and 6:45 to 10:00 pm

Sunday, December 21:

9:00 to 12:00; 12:00 to 3:00; 3:00 to 6:00 and 6:00 to 8:00 pm

Monday, December 22:

9 to 12:15; 12:15 to 3:30; 3:30 to 6:45 and 6:45 to 10 pm

Tuesday, December 23:

9:00 to 12:15; 12:15 to 3:30; 3:30 to 6:45 and 6:45 to 10 pm

Wednesday, Dec. 24:

9:00 to 12:00; 12:00 to 3:00; 3:00 to 6:00 and closing at 6:00 pm

To sign up, please call Helen LaBouy at 206-915-1345 or e-mail [helen@labouys.com](mailto:helen@labouys.com).

If you are unable to volunteer for a full shift and you can give at least two hours, please let us know.

## Thank You to Our Volunteers

Program Night is a great opportunity for volunteers to help out. It takes a lot of people to make sure the evening goes smoothly. Thank you to **Carmen Almodovar, Christy Anderson, Brian Bell, Mary Britton-Simmons, Jill Keeney, Tricia Kishel, Helen LaBouy, Margaret Lie, Tim McGruder, Jim and Nancy Roberts, Sunny Walter, and Claudia Welch.**

Three volunteers spent a few hours sorting through and organizing the youth education materials. Thanks to **Mary Britton-Simmons, Jill Keeney and Margaret Lie.**

We've had a lot of help with mailings and projects in the office. Thanks goes out to **Lea Knapp, Peggy Jorgensen, Margaret Lie, Glenis Nielsen, Caren Park, Jane Wallace, and Jim Wheeler** for newsletter and special mailing labeling.

Thank you to the "Harried Potters" who helped pot up seedlings in the greenhouse. The mature plants will be used at Marymoor Park and at our May 2 Plant Sale. Those who helped were **Cindy Balbuena, Helen LaBouy, Patrick Kelley, Lea Knapp, Jan McGruder, Jim Rettig, Lorraine Smith, and Claudia Welch.**

The work parties at the Audubon BirdLoop are making great progress. During the winter months we're concentrating on planting more trees and native plants in the areas we've removed blackberries. In November, these volunteers got started on the hundreds of plants we have to get into the ground: **Jenny Buening, Patricia Clarke, Glenn Eades, Therese Eby, Ella Elman, Marlee Elston, Robert Gershmel, Andrew McCormack, Tim McGruder, Johnny Penning-**

**ton, Jim Rettig, Jim and Nancy Roberts, Sharon Rodman, Dolores Tanno, and Sunny Walter.**

If we've missed anyone – Thank You! You know who you are and by your own generous commitment, you set a wonderful example and demonstrate the power of individuals to effect significant change. We greatly appreciate your generosity and your leadership and we know that you are our most passionate promoters.

We cannot thank you enough for your invaluable contributions as a volunteer. Our goals require sincere and committed volunteers and we are grateful for the energy, enthusiasm, and dedication you bring to your role as an Eastside Audubon volunteer.

## Holiday Gift Ideas That Keep on Giving

The holidays are fast approaching and we're all thinking about gifts for our families and friends. This year, instead of buying and wrapping gifts, consider a waste-free holiday. There are many reasons to give "experiences" instead of "stuff".

It's a joy to give and receive, and unlike the chocolates that just add pounds or the trinkets that get stuck in a drawer, experiences are something anyone can enjoy during the long winter months. And you'll be supporting local businesses participating in the Waste Free Holidays Program.

Also, experiences are good for the planet! Consider the fact that every year our trash output increases by 25% between Thanksgiving and New Years Day.

Eastside Audubon offers several opportunities to give eco-friendly gifts and your support will help the Chapter continue to fulfill its mission. Here are some ideas to get you started.

1. Gift Certificate – Buy a certificate valued at \$25, \$50 or \$100, which can be used towards purchasing a Membership, a Birding Class, or workshop;
2. Sponsor a Program Night with a gift of \$250;
3. Contribute to the Amy McQuade Summer Camp Fund and send a child to a week's summer camp – an experience they would not otherwise be able to afford;

You can also participate in King County's Waste Free Holidays Program. Stores and organizations are offering a 10% to 15% discount on a wide variety of activities, entertainment and services. You can learn more on the King County website: <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/wastefreeholidays/>

### *The Wandering Albatross*

by Pablo Neruda

The wind sails the open sea  
Steered by the albatross  
That glides, falls, dances, climbs,  
hangs motionless in the fading light,  
touches the waves' towers,  
settles down in  
the disorderly element's  
seething mortar  
while the salt crowns it with laurels  
and the furious foam hisses,  
skims the waves  
with its great symphonic wings,  
leaving above the tempest  
a book that flies on forever:  
the statute of the wind.

(from *Art of the Birds*, Jack Schmitt, translator)

## October Board Notes

Jan McGruder, executive director, is recruiting volunteers to rehab our office. It appears that we will stay in our current offices for a while, so plans include painting and making more efficient use of the space.

The board reviewed prices for t-shirts and hats that will sport our new name and logo. Both items will be used as an incentive to encourage members to

donate \$100 or more.

Brian Bell, birding chair, reported that we have leaders for all seven sectors of our annual Christmas Bird Count, which will occur on December 20, 2008. Leaders and contact numbers appeared in the November newsletter.

Patrick Kelley resigned as the communications chair but will continue as

our webmaster.

The board is planning its annual retreat to review goals for 2008 and also plan for the upcoming year. Just as an fyi, board members have paid for their own food and lodging, so there has been no cost to the chapter for these retreats.

— Carmen Almodovar

## EAS Offers Teacher Grants and a College Scholarship

Do you know a teacher interested in environmental education? A student keen on science? If so, have them check out Eastside Audubon's website. The Len Steiner Grant Fund has \$500.00 available in increments of \$150.00 per teacher for classroom en-

vironmental projects. Both elementary and secondary teachers may apply.

Through the Brian Gershon Scholarship Fund, EAS offers a \$500 college scholarship to a student interested in pursuing a degree in science with emphasis on the environment. High

school seniors are eligible to apply.

More information, including the applications, may be found on the EAS Web site under Education (Grants and Scholarship).

— Mary Britton-Simmons





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

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

**See the birds better!**



### *Haiku*

A snow-draped pine  
Makes a crossbill diner.  
What's a chickadee to do?

— Andrew McCormick

## FIELD TRIPS

**Parents and children over 8 are welcome on all trips. \*\*FRS Radio owners, please consider bringing them on trips.\*\***  
See [www.eastsideaudubon.org/events/](http://www.eastsideaudubon.org/events/) for the latest information and for reports of last month's field trips.  
Non-members of Eastside Audubon will be charged an additional \$5.00.

### 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.

### Dec 5 (Fri) 9:00 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 (Parking Lot D). 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 Dog Area parking lot. Parking is \$1.

### Dec 6 (Sat) 9:00 to noon

#### Marymoor Park Habitat Restoration

Join us in restoring native habitat at the Marymoor Park interpretive area on the 1st Saturday of every month. Dress for the weather and bring clippers, gloves, snacks and water. Meet at Meadow Kiosk in Parking Lot G. Free parking passes are provided. **Jim Rettig 425-402-1833**

### Dec 9 (Tues) 9:00 to noon

#### Phantom Lake Nature Walk, Bellevue

We will be searching for wintering waterfowl. Dress appropriately and bring binoculars or scope. Phantom Lake Directions: From I-90, take 148th Avenue SE exit (BCC exit, 11B) north. Turn right on SE 16th Street. Turn right on 156th Avenue SE. Turn left into Phantom Lake parking lot. Call **Tina** with questions at **425-562-2469**.

### Dec 13 (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 (on 108th Ave. NE just north of hwy 520 and Northup Way) to carpool, or meet by 8:00 am 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. Passenger cost/person \$2.00. **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

### Dec 16 (Tues) 9:00 to 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> Tuesday of each month at 9:00**. Bring binoculars and meet in parking lot. No registration required.

### MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026

### Dec 20 (Sat) 8:00 am to 4 pm

#### Annual Christmas Bird Count and Dinner

See the front page article for complete details..

### Dec 20 (Sat) 9:00 am – Watershed Park

A 2-hour nature walk in this Kirkland park takes place the **3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month** at 9:00 am. Nature walks enter the park off NE 45<sup>th</sup> Street, north of the railroad tracks on 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, east of 108<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. Watershed park has more than 70 acres of mostly upland second growth forest; there is some riparian habitat. Several plant and bird species can be seen in the park. Bus stop nearby on 108<sup>th</sup>, near 45<sup>th</sup>. Limited street parking. Native Plant Walk participants are invited to join us to see what plants and birds we can find in winter.

**Jan Johnson 425-814-5923**

### Dec 22 (Mon) 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 (I-405, exit 9) and plan to be back by noon. Passenger cost/person \$2.00.

**Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

### Jan 2 (Fri) 9:00 to noon — Marymoor Park

See Dec 5 entry.

### Jan 3 (Sat) 9:00 to noon

#### Marymoor Park Habitat Restoration

See Dec 6 entry.

### Jan 14 (Weds) 8:00 am to 4 pm — Samish & Skagit Flats

The Samish & Skagit Flats are great this time of year for raptors, including hawks, eagles, falcons and owls. We'll usually see both species of swans and lots of waterfowl. Wintering shorebird flocks may zoom by, and there is a good chance of loons, grebes and alcids. Bring a lunch. Weather is changeable so bring protection from wind and rain, and waterproof footwear. Meet at 8 am at the south end of Kingsgate P&R to carpool. Passenger cost/person \$20.

**Brian H. Bell 425-485-8058**

### Jan 17 (Sat) 9:00 am – Watershed Park

See December 20 entry.

### Jan 20 (Tues) 9:00 to noon

#### Juanita Bay Park Bird Walk

See December 16 entry.

### Jan 26 (Mon) 9:00 to noon

#### Birding the Hot Spots of King County

See Dec 22 entry.

### Jan 31 (Sat) 8:00 to noon — West Seattle Shoreline

Explore the shores and waters of West Seattle along Elliot Bay and Puget Sound to Lincoln Park. Numerous viewpoints

*(Continued on page 7)*

**Rhinoceros Auklet *Cerorhinca monocerata***

Length	15 in
Wingspan	22 in
Weight	1.1 lb
AOU Band code	RHAU

The Rhinoceros Auklet is named for the horn at the base of its bill. It is in the genus *cerorhinca* (*horn-nose*) from the Greek *keras*, horn, and *rugkhos*, snout. *Rhinoceros* is made up of the same two Greek elements which are reversed. Auklet, a little auk, is derived from the Old Norse *alka*, which refers to a number of northern birds (Holloway).

With its dark gray head and dark back and chest the Rhino can be difficult to see on the water. Fortunately, its angular head and heavy, yellow-orange bill provide a distinctive silhouette. Its belly and undertail coverts are a dull white. In breeding season the horn is whitish and prominent at the base of the bill but it sheds by fall. Also impressive during breeding are the two sets of white facial plumes. These however fade in winter. Most of the Rhinos in Washington waters winter at sea but individual birds can often be seen in Puget Sound. The birds make mooring and coughing sounds on the breeding grounds, but at other times of year are fairly silent.

In March and April, Rhinos head to their island nesting colonies primarily along the coast of British Columbia and Southeast Alaska. Smaller numbers nest on the Farallon Islands off California and on Protection Island, WA. The birds construct a shallow nest lined with moss and twigs in a side chamber of a burrow which they have dug 5-10 feet into a grassy or wooded hillside. A single egg is incubated by both parents for 40-50 days and the young bird leaves the nest



in another two months. Rhinos are the only auklets that are nocturnal feeders. Scientists think this is a new behavior in response to kleptoparasitism by gulls and attacks by Bald Eagles which hunt for auklets on the breeding sites (Gaston and Dechesne). The bird has a distinctive but poorly studied mechanism for herding fish such as sand lance and herring by emitting bubble trails which seem to prevent the schools from breaking up. They are able to capture fish while holding others in their bill and are able to return a "bill load" of one to several fish back to the nest (Gaston and Dechesne).

Rhino populations are stable but can be at risk to local predators in the burrows because of their low birth rate. This is partially balanced by a greater opportunity to breed during their long life span which can reach 25 years (Sibley). Conservation efforts have been successful.

Eradication of raccoons (British Columbia), foxes (Alaska) and rabbits (California) has allowed Rhinos to reestablish their colonies. In 1968 sheep were removed from Protection Island and the number of burrows rose from 3,500 to 28,000 by 1974 (Gaston and Dechesne). The Rhinoceros Auklet is a small bird on a big ocean, so look for them on Puget Sound.

Audio and video clips can be found at this link on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology Web site <http://animalbehaviorarchive.org/asset-SearchInterim.do?sessionId=E0439C2929D0750A0669888B0E30DF24>

(Photo credit: Gary Luhm. References available upon request at [amccormick@eastsideaudubon.org](mailto:amccormick@eastsideaudubon.org) )

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**Field Trips — continued from previous page**

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 (I-405, exit 12). Passenger cost/person **\$3.00. Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

**Feb 7 (Sat) 7:15 am to 5 pm**  
**Marrowstone Island & Port Townsend**

We'll search out loons, grebes, alcids, waterfowl, shorebirds and sparrows as we make our way north toward Marrowstone Island and on to Port Townsend. There are usually hawks and eagles around also. Dress for weather conditions and possible wet and muddy ground. Bring a lunch. Meet no later than 7:15 at the south end of Kingsgate P&R to carpool. Passenger cost/person **\$14 plus share ferry costs. Brian H. Bell 425-485-8058.**

## Welcome to Our New Members

Welcome to the following new members of Eastside Audubon. We hope to see you soon at a Program Meeting or Field Trip. Call or visit our office if you have any questions. Our

friendly volunteers are more than happy to help you.

James Allison, Brenda Burnett, Bruce and Janet Eder, Tom Gergen, Jeff Hoerth, Stephanie Kerns, Mike Lavelle,

Patricia Minden, Rosalind Rich, Robert Rothman, Phil Sandifer, Alison Suttles.

## Volunteer Spotlight



Ever wonder who's behind those great snacks and drinks at our monthly meetings? Step forward, Claudia Welch.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, she moved with her family to Huntington, on Long Island, where Claudia discovered bird watching when her Mom set up a bird feeding platform on a window sill. She spent time in New England with summers on her relatives' farm in Massachusetts and schooling at Vermont College. After college, she worked as a medical assistant.

So, how did a gal from New York make the connection with Eastside Audubon? In 1959, she left work to travel with a girlfriend through Western Europe and moved to Washington in 1960. She met a friend who took

her birding, which sparked her interest in Eastside Audubon. She said at that time there were very few members. Amy McQuade and Len Steiner were the leaders.

When asked to pick her favorite bird, she said, "That's hard, but I like the nuthatch because it comes into my backyard and sits on me to feed!" She said it talks; she can hear a murmur sound, not a typical bird sound, when it sits on her.

Claudia has taken birding classes from Dennis Paulson, a well-known birder and dragonfly expert, spent many years doing backyard bird counts for another organization, and recently enjoyed our field trips. Her favorite experience was a month-long trip to visit friends in Kenya, Africa, in the late 1980s. She saw amazing birds and while driving was chased by a rhinoc-

eros and an elephant.

Claudia has enjoyed her last four+ years as an Eastside Audubon member. She said, "I like the people, and I love membership programs. The programs are very rewarding to see. I give accolades to those who organize the slides."

In addition to hospitality, Claudia helps Audubon in the office, the library and has worked on the Marymoor Birdloop Trail. She also volunteers at the Kirkland Library.

— Marlene J. Meyer

## New Book by Kenn Kaufman

**Flights Against the Sunset** – *Stories that Reunited a Mother and Son* by Kenn Kaufman, 2008, Houghton Mifflin.

"Flights Against the Sunset" is definitely a book for birders, but not only for birders. This short memoir tells stories from Kenn Kaufman's birding life from the time he was sixteen and left home on his own – to bird. You may have read his "Kingbird Highway" about that period of his life.

This book is less structured and covers

a longer time period, really a collection of stories of a life devoted to birds, taking the reader all across the globe. The essays are bound together by their subject matter and by short connecting passages in which Kaufman talks to and about his dying mother. He is telling her the stories. As he seeks to entertain and distract his mother, and us, with tales of his travels and birds magnificent and humble, he also finds some larger truths in life. His musings weave together the varied tales with life experiences we all have, birders or not.

A fiercely independent man, Kaufman does find that coming home does have some lessons, and love, for even an expert birder.

-- Christy Anderson



## BirdLoop Takes on a New Look

Despite a heavy rainfall on Friday, sixteen people spent three hours Saturday morning, Nov. 1, weeding and planting new plants in the East Meadow, and installing two of four new interpretive signs. We were blessed with dry and warm weather, and felt the first raindrops at noon, just as we were leaving. Thanks to all who came out

on this November morning.

Each month the BirdLoop looks better! On December 6, 9 to noon, and on January 3, 9 to noon, we meet again to weed and plant, and perhaps install more signage. As the saying goes, **many hands make light work**. So if you want to help keep the birds signing at Marymoor, come out and join us

on the 6th.

We need you! Join others for fun work and a fun time. And bring your friends.

— Jim Rettig



Level-headed volunteers install trail signage



Planting native plants

