



The Corvid Crier

East Lake Washington Audubon Society

Issue 05-3 – April 2005

Project CAT: Can Cougars and Humans Co-exist in Kittitas County?

When: Thursday, April 28 at 7:00 pm (after the social hour)

Where: Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church



Gary Koehler is a Research Scientist with the Wildlife Management Program of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Principal Investigator on the Project CAT cougar study. His work has led him all over the world: Kenya to study African lions and predation and lecture at Moi University in Wildlife Management; China to conduct surveys for the Endangered South China tiger; and India for carnivore projects. Gary studied pine marten, wolverine, bobcat, lynx, cougar, and coyote in Washington, Idaho, and Montana and recently completed a comprehensive field investigation of black bears at three study sites in Washington.

He earned a B. A. degree in Biology from Western Washington University and M.S. and Ph. D. degrees in Wildlife Management from the University of Idaho.

In 2001 the WDFW and Cle Elum-Roslyn School District in Cle Elum began an 8-year investigation to find out how cougars are responding to the extensive residential and recreational development that is occurring in western Kittitas County, where people are attracted by the wilderness, wildlife, and clear flowing mountain streams. How will people respond to wildlife and how will the wildlife adapt and respond to these changes?

Gary will show us how scientists are investigating the lives of cougars using GPS collars that reveal the behavior and biology of these elusive animals living amongst the changing landscape. Additionally, he will demonstrate how students from the 3rd to 12th grade participate on various aspects of the cougar research, known as Project CAT (Cougars and Teaching). This program incorporates a 'hands-on' learning experience integrated into science, math, art, physical education and even elementary classrooms. These skills and knowledge provide community members and students, the areas future decisions makers, the understanding for how they may choose to live and plan for their future environment.

Gary will be available after his presentation to answer questions about cougars or Project CAT – even bears if we have time.

Please join us **Thursday, April 28**, for this fascinating presentation, Project CAT: Can Cougars and Humans Co-exist in Kittitas County? Come at 6:30 for the social hour. Enjoy a brief monthly meeting and refreshments from 7:00 to 7:45, followed by Gary's excellent presentation.

The social hour, meeting, and presentation are **free and open to the public**. Invite a friend or anyone who wants to know more about predators in Washington.

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.

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

A Pond Half-full

A French riddle for children illustrates the idea of "exponential growth". Suppose you own a pond on which a water lily is growing. The lily plant doubles in size each day. If the plant were allowed to grow unchecked, it would completely cover the pond in 30 days, choking off all other forms of life in the water. For a long time the lily plant seems small, so you decide not to worry about it until it covers half the pond. On what day will that be?

On the twenty-ninth day. You have just one day to act to save your pond.

So, what's up with the riddles? It's an interesting illustration of the tendency of all of us to wait until a problem or need is really urgent before acting. It's completely understandable. After all, we're busy people. There is just so darn much going on! Work, school, kid's activities, chores around the house, and if we're lucky, some fun things, too. It's been quite a long time since I heard anyone complaining about being bored!

And that brings me around to the subject of volunteering. Where does that fit into our busy lives?

ELWAS is a volunteer-run organization. Volunteers:

- Arrange the monthly meeting speakers
- Set up our great birding classes
- Go into local classrooms and introduce birds and conservation to kids
- Attend local hearings and public meetings to listen and give input on environmental concerns
- Raise funds in many different ways to keep the organization going
- Staff our office and run our library
- Lead bird walks and field trips for members and the public
- Publish this newsletter
- Conduct bird censuses
- Protect and restore natural areas
- And so much more...

How many of these have enriched your experience with ELWAS?

We make time in our lives for what's important. What's important to you? Are you waiting for the pond to be half covered?

Check this newsletter for the listing of volunteer opportunities. Then act! Even a small amount of time helps this entire community of birders.

If not you, who?

East Lake Washington Audubon Society 425 576 8805

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P.O. Box 3115, Kirkland, WA 98083-3115
Web Site: <http://www.ELWAS.org>

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Field Trips Hugh Jennings (425) 746-6351
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Special Events — **Open**
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Gift Wrap Nancy and Jim Roberts (425) 822-1865
Merchandising — **Open**
Membership — **Open**
Hospitality Lyn Bailey (425) 821-4274
E-mail lynbailey@comcast.net
Volunteer Coordinator Emily Winstrom (425) 453-5614
E-mail volunteer@elwas.org



Shop Online

Can't make it to the ELWAS Store during regular hours? No problem! You can visit the ELWAS Virtual Store and buy all your outdoor items online. Just login to the ELWAS homepage (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 your merchandise will be delivered right to your door.

Besides the convenience to you, ELWAS receives a percentage of each sale! I'd say that's a win/win for everyone!



Thank You!

by Jan McGruder

Thanks to Amy McQuade for all her hard work in organizing the bird pictures for the Youth Education committee. Amy spent MANY hours labeling, organizing and filing the hundreds of pictures donated to the Chapter. Call me nuts, but I sure get a warm, fuzzy feeling every time I see all those cataloged pictures!

Spring has Sprung!

With the arrival of Spring, the gardening and fair season is upon us. ELWAS is participating in two garden events and on volunteer fair in April. We hope you'll join us in spreading the word about ELWAS and birds in our community.

"Going Native" at Molbaks: Saturday and Sunday, April 1 and 2 from 11 to 4. ELWAS will be in the greenhouse, along with the Washington Native Plant Society, answering questions about birds in the garden and promoting the Chapter. We've done this event before, and it's a fun day in a beautiful setting.

Woodinville Spring Garden Fair, Woodmoor Elementary School, 12225 N.E. 160th, Bothell, Saturday, April 16 from 9 to 3. This is a fun event in which we participated last year. We'll have a table in the school, along with other non-profit organizations, and will answer questions about ELWAS and birds in the garden. If this year is similar to last year, there will be kid's activities and vendors selling plants and mulching mowers.

Family Resources Center's Eastside Volunteer Fair, Crossroads Mall, Bellevue, Saturday, April 23 from 11 to 4. ELWAS had a booth at this fair last year and it, too, was a lot of fun. As you can imagine from the organizing agency, non-profits of all kinds have booths at this fair. Unlike last year, we will be inside the Crossroads Mall.

Being a-volunteer organization, ELWAS needs your help in staffing these booths. We're looking for 2 people per slot, and we're asking for a 3-hour time commitment per person. If you haven't participated in this type of event before, we'll pair you up with someone who has, and we'll make sure you have lots of materials available as hand outs, or to help you with questions from the public.

To sign up for one of these events, contact Emily Winstrom at volunteer@elwas.org, or call her at (425) 453-5614.

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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

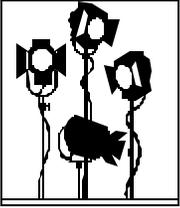
The office is downstairs at Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church in Kirkland, **308 4th Avenue S. (Corner 4th Ave. S. and State, directions on page 4).**

Phone number: (425) 576-8805

Email: office@elwas.org

Hours: Monday, Tuesday and Friday

10:00 — 2:00



Volunteer Spotlight On Jill Keeney

By Amy McQuade

Jill has the oldest Washingtonian background of any volunteer so far. On her father's side, his grandfather's parents came from Sweden to settle in Ballard, then known as Salmon Bay, where Jill's great-grandfather was born in 1881. Both her great-grandfathers were later elected mayors of Bothell. The Bothell high school football field (where our own Jim Rettig used to star) is named the Pop Keeney field, in her grandfather's honor.

Jill was born in the original Waldo Hospital on Lake City Way. She attended Lake Washington School District schools graduating from Redmond High School. At the University of Washington she majored in Sociology and Elementary Education and received her degree in 1971. During those five surrounding summers she worked as a waitress at San Juan's Roche Harbor Resort.

Jill had a very outdoorsy upbringing, and was a birdwatcher from an early age. Her father built wooden bird feeders for the family to keep filled and observe the birds. They loved camping and hiking. His interest in feeding birds probably stemmed from two college-year summers the family spent at an Oregon Cascade Mountain fire lookout. Some of Jill's earliest childhood memories are of the lookout, where the family of four lived in the small one-room cabin. Jill and her sister shared one cot, toe to toe, at ages 2 1/2 and 3 1/2 years of age, and her parents slept in a tent outdoors.

Following college, Jill worked in Lake Washington District schools for thirty years before retiring in 2001. During those years she instituted class birding trips to Juanita Bay Park where she met Mary Frances Mathis volunteering as a park ranger. Jill joined ELWAS in about 1990, went on field trips, and attended meetings. She became "active" with the onset of retirement as a member of the Youth Educational Committee which you might say was right up her alley. As is quite typical of retirees, Jill is now busier than ever: She does remedial reading/writing teaching one day a week at Benjamin Franklin Elementary school, clerks and does organizing, part time, at a teacher's supply and book store, and tutors four students in their homes two afternoons a week.

Along with the humongous effort she puts into the Youth Education Committee her life is indeed full - what with the time she spends doting on her sister's three young grandchildren.

ELWAS really values volunteerism Jill, and truly appreciates your dedication to young people on the eastside of Lake Washington.

Abridged Minutes of Board Meeting Feb 15, 2005

by Diane Stone

A shorter-than-usual meeting with no major decisions made, but here are some of the main items discussed:

- Treasurer Tim Boyer reported that the chapter is solvent. We spent a little more than we brought in, but all is well with the budget.
- At the upcoming Board Retreat the topic will be "Volunteers - Recruitment and Retaining". Recent focus groups have identified some of the issues, problems and suggestions that need to be addressed.
- Jan McGruder met with church reps to discuss window shades to control the sun during our birding classes.
- We decided to have our first Movie Night, showing "Oil on Ice" on March 14th at 7:00 pm.
- Martyn Stewart, who is standing in for Tim McGruder as temporary Conservation Chairman, announced that World Wildlife Fund has a website at which one can easily request letters sent to our government representatives.
- President Christy Anderson announced that Beach Cleanup Day for Washington State will be April 23rd, anywhere along the Washington State coastline.

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.

Lost Life List!

Please help us find Lynne Mason's lost life list. She has lost track of her National Geographic Bird Book, which had her life list checked off in the back. If you have seen it, please contact her at 425-391-2166 or lynnemason108@yahoo.com.



Birding for a Good Cause

by Christy Anderson

Our early spring has all the flowers popping and all the birds singing earlier than usual. But it has served as a reminder that the best part of spring will soon be here – BIRDATHON!!

ELWAS depends on this, our biggest fundraiser, for a large part of our budget every year. All the activities we offer throughout the whole year depend on this annual May event.

How does it work? There's several ways you can participate.

Sponsor a BIRDATHON team, or individual on a team.

As a sponsor, you can make a contribution to the team, or even more fun, pledge a certain amount of money for each species a team sees during their 24-hour BIRDATHON period. If your team goes further afield than others, they will probably see more species. When you pledge a per-species amount, the team works that much harder to see more species! It is really motivating.

Take a BIRDATHON Special Field Trip.

Several ELWAS volunteers will be leading field trips to various locations around the Puget Sound area. Unlike our usual free field trips, we are asking participants to make a donation to BIRDATHON to come along. Here's a chance to bird and make an important contribution at the same time!

Form a BIRDATHON team of your own!

You can do it! You don't need to be an expert to be a good BIRDATHONer. You can sit in an easy chair and watch your birdfeeders, if you want. The key to a good BIRDATHON individual or team is to collect pledges for the birds you see on your chosen day, no matter where you choose to see those birds. ELWAS will provide everything you need, and need to know. And you may be in the running for one of our sought after BIRDATHON trophies!

What does BIRDATHON make possible?

- Membership meeting speakers
- Bringing the fun and science of birds to elementary classrooms
- Scholarships for college students studying environmental issues
- Helping teachers bring bird-related projects to their students
- Maintaining our facilities and staff
- Everything we do!!

BIRDATHON is a fun way to further the ELWAS mission. Visit the ELWAS website or call the office for

ELWAS Meetings in April

Apr 5 (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

Apr 6 (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

Apr 11 (Mon) 6:00 pm — ELWAS Board — Meets in conference room across from ELWAS office

Apr 12 (Tues) 7:00-9:00 pm — Education Committee

Meets **2nd Tues of each month** in the ELWAS Office. All interested parties are invited. Questions? For information email: education@elwas.org or call **425-576-8805**.

Apr 18 (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**

Apr 28 (Thurs) 7:00 pm — Presentation and Membership meeting See page 1 for details.

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.

April 1 (Fri) 8am to 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 8:00.** 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 **\$1.00.**

April 9 (Saturday) 7:00 a.m.

Theler Wetlands via Southworth

We will take the Fauntleroy ferry to Southworth and bird our way to the Theler Wetlands. The wetlands include fresh and salt water marshes, forested uplands, and estuarine habitats. Prepare to walk about 2-1/2 miles. We will return by way of Tacoma. It can be cool and wet so dress accordingly. 150 bird species have been seen in this area. Bring a lunch. Meet before 7:00 a.m. at north end of the Wilburton Park-N-Ride (I-405, exit 12) to carpool. Passenger cost/person is **\$5.00 + share in ferry cost** **Jim Ganley 425-450-0461**

Apr 13 (Weds) 9:00 am — 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 Weds of each month at 9:00 am,** and will finish by lunchtime. Bring binoculars and meet at the front door.

April 14 (Thursday) - 8:00 a.m. - Spencer Island

Explore this wetland located near the Everett Sewage Treatment Ponds. Ducks, shorebirds, hawks, eagles, gulls as well as small birds in brushy and grassy areas are all possible in this varied habitat. Bring lunch; will be back mid-afternoon. Meet before 8:00 a.m. at south end of Kingsgate Park and Ride, I-405. Passenger cost/person **\$3.00.** **Joyce Meyer 425-881-5422**

April 16 (Sat) 10 am - Bellefields Trail Walkthrough.

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 N of I-90) **Bring gloves, a bag for trash, and binoculars.** **Kay Barrett 425-644-2862.**

Apr 19 (Tues) 8:00 am – 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. **MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026**

April 23 (Saturday) 7:00 a.m.

Bowerman Basin/Ocean Shores

Thousands of shorebirds migrate through this area each year on their way to Alaska. The tidal flats between Hoquiam airport and highway 101 have been the focus of national attention. The Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival is May 6-8. Ocean Shores is one of the top year-round birding areas in the state. Meet before 7:00 a.m. at north end of the Wilburton Park-N-Ride (I-405, exit 12) to carpool. Bring a lunch and dress for weather. Passenger cost/person **\$10.00.** **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

April 25 (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

May 3 (Tues) - 8:00 am to noon - Juanita Bay Park Birdathon Trip

Join MaryFrances Mathis for a relaxed morning walk in the park, seeing what birds are in the area. We will meet at 8:00 am and will be finished by lunch time. Bring binoculars and meet in the parking lot. No registration is required but there is a minimum donation of \$25.00 to support Birdathon.

MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026

May 11 (Wed.) — 9:00 am to noon - Bellevue Botanical Gardens — Birdathon Trip

Join us for a walk through the garden, and spend a relaxed morning seeing what birds are in the area. We will meet the at 9:00 am, and will be finished by noon. Bring your binoculars and meet at the front door. No registration is required but there is a minimum donation of \$25.00 to support Birdathon. **Jim Ganley 425- 681-7497**

May 12 (Thurs.) - 7:00 a.m. - Skagit Wildlife Area - Birdathon Trip

A two to three mile walk along dikes, through conifers and along marshes should yield flycatchers, shorebirds, songbirds, rails, and soras. Bring a lunch and enjoy the birds. Vehicles parking at the SWA are required to have a Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife vehicle use permit. This trip is in support of Birdathon with a \$25.00 minimum donation. Meet before 7 a.m. at the Kingsgate Park and Ride to carpool. Passenger cost/person **\$5.00.** **Joyce Meyer 425-881-5422**

JBP Jottings

by MaryFrances Mathis, photo by Margaret Saint Clair

With the advent of Spring, the annual migration of birds begins in earnest. The first to return to Juanita Bay, Tree and Violet-green Swallows, will soon be joined by flycatchers, vireos, warblers, tanagers and orioles...some just passing through on their way to their breeding grounds, and others remaining to nest.

Although most of the wintering ducks have departed, the turtles are emerging from the mud in greater numbers, and competing for space on the remaining logs. With any visit now, you will see swallows performing their incredible aerial displays, and hear the blackbirds, finches, wrens, robins, kinglets, et al, serenading any and all who will listen. Let's celebrate the end of Winter with them, and enjoy this wonderful Park.

Keep your eyes on the trees, bushes, fields and water, check your field guides, and please report your sightings to juanitabay@elwas.org.



Anna's Hummingbird on nest at JBP



Eagle Eye
VISION CARE, P.S.

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

See the birds better!

Thanksgiving Day Bird Count - 2004

by Hugh Jennings

This count involves counting all the birds you see in a 15-foot diameter circle over a one hour period on Thanksgiving Day. This count is conducted through Dr. John G. Hewston of Humboldt State University in Arcata, CA and has been conducted for 13 years. Everyone that participates gets a detailed report of the results.

I have summarized the results for 2004 as follows. There were 606 participants who conducted 632 bird counts. This is the first time these numbers have exceeded 500. These counts took place in all eleven Western States plus Alaska. There were 98 counts in 57 localities in Washington state which ranked 2nd overall.. California had the highest number of counts (153) and localities (75).

The top five species for all counts were House Sparrow (3,126), Dark-eyed Junco (3,165), House Finch (2,670), Pine Siskin (1,158) and Black-capped Chickadee (1,159). The Pine Siskin jumped from 20th place in 2003 to 4th place in 2004. After a two year low, this was definitely a "Pine Siskin Year".

The top five species for 64 counts in Western WA were Dark-eyed Junco (494), Black-capped Chickadee (204), House Finch (188), Chestnut-backed Chickadee (180) and Pine Siskin (171). Several species had their lowest numbers - House Finch, Starling, Blue Jay American Robin and American Crow. There were 13 species of sparrows, 9 kinds of finches, 10 species of woodpeckers, 8 of Pigeons and Doves, 7 Hummingbirds, 6 Jays and 4 Chickadees. Seventeen counters did not see any birds in their count circle during their count hour. A large number indicated the arrival of hawks ended their counts early. 10 species of raptors, plus 5 Turkey Vultures and 2 Roadrunners were reported. Counts in WA state reported only one each of the following species: Bald Eagle, Herring Gull, Western Scrub-Jay, Brown Creeper, Winter Wren, Northern Mockingbird and Townsend's Warbler.

BIRD of the MONTH

Barred Owl *Strix varia*

by Hugh Jennings



The Barred Owl (BARR, due to conflict with Barn Owl being BAOW) is about 21" long with a wingspan of 42" and a weight of 1.6 lb. (720 g). This compares with 17.5", 40" WS and 1.3 lb. for its cousin, the Spotted Owl. The genus name *Strix* (STRIKS) comes from the Greek, *strizo*, meaning to screech. The species name *varia* (VAY-rih-ah) is from Latin and means "variegated in plumage". The Barred Owl is stocky, round-headed, broad-winged and short-tailed. The Barred, Spotted and Barn Owls are our only owls with dark eyes. The Barred Owl has no ear tufts and has dark barring on the upper breast and dark streaking below.

It favors mostly dense and thick woods with only scattered clearings, especially in low-lying and swampy areas. It is common in deciduous and mixed woods in the southeast, but in the north and northwest may be found in coniferous trees. The Barred Owl is found throughout eastern U.S., across southern Canada and has recently expanded its range from British Columbia into Washington, Oregon and northern California. It first was noted in Pend Oreille County in 1965 and has since spread throughout the state. Its range expansion threatens the Spotted Owl with which it sometimes hybridizes.

Its distinctive call is a rhythmic series of loud hoots: *who-cooks-for-you, who-cooks-for-you-all*. The call is sometimes preceded by an ascending agitated barking. The owl eats mice, rabbits, reptiles, insects and amphibians. It hunts most at dawn or dusk and seeks prey by watching from a perch or flying through the forest. Courtship includes both male and female bobbing and bowing heads, raising wings and calling while perched together. The male and female often call in duet.

They nest in a large natural hollow in a tree, broken-off snag, or on an old nest of a hawk, crow or squirrel. Two to three white eggs, rarely 4, are laid. Incubation is mostly by the female and lasts 28-33 days. The male brings food to the incubating female. The female may stay with the young much of the time at first, while the male hunts and brings food back for her and the young. First flight is in about six weeks. Barred Owls are permanent residents throughout their range. However, individuals may wander away from nesting habitat in the winter.

Birdathon Coming Up

by Amy McQuade

Coming up so fast it's scary is ELWAS' biggest money-pot replenisher of the year. Our dedicated teams will soon be choosing a 24-hour day in may for their combative forays. The teams search for the most bird species they can see all on that day.

The object is to raise funds for habitat conservation, particularly for migrating birds, which are in grave danger without that habitat, and for funds to help in educational programs for children in their appreciation of the natural world. The team competition is motivated by the desire to have your team's name engraved on at least one of the trophy cups on that shelf in the office. The Golden Girls team, for instance: Ruth Adamski, Irene von Tobel, Mary Jo Heacox and me, haven't yet managed it, but hope springs eternal, (as well as spring) and this year we're going to make it.

How does it work? We ask you to pledge an amount you can afford. Then the Golden Girls in our case, choose an area, usually dependent on the weather forecast, and have at it until they drop. What I have found so much fun about Birdathon birding is how different it is from an ordinary field trip . . . the ceaseless search for new birds, moving on, and within-the team spotting rivalry.

Then we send our sponsors (you?) the results of our twenty-four-hour bird chase in a nice letter, and you send ELWAS money. We think this is a pretty neat way to raise money for the main Audubon cause. Don't you?

Some of you will be getting such a letter from me. Others may be contacted by other teams. Or go to the ELWAS Website and make a pledge there. Or start your own team! There's a way for everyone to participate.

Birdathon Field Trips

Unsure of where to get started with Birdathon, but want to participate? Join a Birdathon field trip and learn more about this Audubon tradition. You'll have a nice day of birding with an experienced leader, and an opportunity to support the Chapter.

May 3 (Tues) - 8:00 am to noon - Juanita Bay Park — Join MaryFrances Mathis for a relaxed morning walk in the park, seeing what birds are in the area. We will meet at 8:00 am and will finish by lunch time. Bring binoculars and meet in parking lot. No registration required but there is a minimum donation of \$25.00 to support Birdathon. **MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026**

May 11 (Wed.) - 9:00 am to noon - Bellevue Botanical Gardens — Join us for a walk through the garden, and spend a relaxed morning seeing what birds are in the area. We will meet at 9:00 am, and will finish by noon. Bring binoculars and meet at the front door. No registration required but there is a minimum donation of \$25.00 to support Birdathon. **Jim Ganley 425- 681-7497**

May 12 (Thurs.) - 7:00 am - Skagit Wildlife Area — A two to three mile walk along dikes, through conifers and along marshes should yield flycatchers, shorebirds, songbirds, rails, and soras. Bring a lunch and enjoy the birds. Vehicles parking at the SWA are required to have a Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife vehicle use permit. This trip is in support of Birdathon with a \$25.00 minimum donation. Meet before 7 at Kingsgate Park and Ride to carpool. Cost/person \$5. **Joyce Meyer 425-881-5422**

Upcoming ELWAS Classes

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND! WASHINGTON'S WOODPECKERS — With Brian Bell

Join Master Birder **Brian Bell** to explore the world of woodpeckers in Washington. Twelve species inhabit our state from sea level to the boreal forests to the semiarid valleys of Eastern Washington. In class, we will view an illustrated presentation and discuss habitat requirements, examine seasonal distribution, learn identification tips, and listen to vocalization and drumming patterns. There will be half day field trip in Western Washington on Saturday, April 9 and a full day trip to Eastern Washington on Sunday, May 22. Last year the class saw ALL of the species of woodpeckers common in Eastern Washington on an awesome field trip!

Brian is the current president of the Washington Ornithological Society and is a professional birding and natural history guide. He teaches birding at local community colleges and has birded extensively throughout the West and the United States.

Class: Thursday, April 7, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM at the ELWAS offices in the Northlake Unitarian Church in Kirkland.

Field trips organized at the class meeting. Saturday, April 9 and Sunday, May 22.

Cost for lecture and field trips: \$65.00 for ELWAS members, \$85.00 for nonmembers.

Registration: Call the ELWAS office Monday, Tuesday or Friday at 425-576-8805 to register. Registration closes April 4, 2004.

****Class limited to 20 participants, 15 class and field trip, 5 class only.**

INTRODUCTION TO COASTAL SHOREBIRDS — With Jim Flynn, Master Birder

If you confuse plovers with peeps or have ever despaired at sorting out all of those long-legged and long-billed brown shorebirds, then sign up for this introductory level shorebird class and learn how to make sense of the muddle of mud-probing shorebirds. Slides and information sheets on habitat, season of occurrence, size, and overall shape of shorebirds will help you narrow the choices to the one or two most likely species. From there the final ID is within reach! During the field trip to Grays Harbor and Tokeland we will see most of the common coastal shorebirds in their colorful breeding plumages.

Jim Flynn is a graduate of Seattle Audubon's Master Birder Program and has been birding in Washington for over 20 years. Jim also wrote the bird sightings column for Rainier Audubon for five years and has taught classes for several chapters and has led numerous field trips throughout the state.

Classes: Monday, April 25th and Tuesday, May 3rd, 2005, 7-9 PM

Location: Northlake Unitarian Church, 308 Fourth Avenue South, Kirkland

Field Trip: Saturday, May 7th.

Cost: \$65 ELWAS members, \$80 non-members.

No registration for field trip only.

Call 425-576-8805 on Monday, Tuesday or Friday to register. Registration closes Tuesday, April 19, 2005.

Limited to 15 participants

SPRING BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS — With Mike West, Master Birder

See page 10 for description

NEOTROPICAL SONGBIRDS OF THE CASCADE FOOTHILLS — With David Drummond

Study those gorgeous migratory songbirds of the Cascade foothills with David Drummond, wildlife biologist and birding specialist. This class will focus on the **Flycatcher, Vireo and Wood Warbler** families that spend the summer in our area. Mr. Drummond will discuss family characteristics, taxonomy, identification marks, habitat, song, behavioral ecology and home country. The full day field trip will visit riparian areas along the South Fork of the Stillaguamish River in Snohomish County where we hope to see at least 10 species in the above families plus many other birds of the area.

David is known for his enthusiastic approach to bird identification and student assistance. He has more than 20 years experience as a guide, adventurer and instructor.

Class: Thurs, June 2. 6:30 to 9:30 PM. Class will be held at the Northlake Unitarian Church, 308 Fourth Ave South, Kirkland.

Field Trip: Sunday, June 5, 2005. Full day.

Cost: \$45 ELWAS member/ \$65 nonmember.

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(Continued from page 9)

Registration: Call the ELWAS office at 425-576-8805. Office is open Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Registration closes Friday, May 27.

No registration for the field trip only.

Field Guide: National Geographic Birds of North America, 4th Ed. – may be purchased at ELWAS Nature Center.

Call 425-576- 8805 on Monday, Tuesday or Friday to register. Registration closes Thursday, April 28, 2005.

Limited to 20 participants

East Lake Washington Audubon Society presents

SPRING BIRDING FOR BEGINNERS

Join us and keep your New Year's resolution to **have more fun** this year! **J**

Two field trips and three 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. Spring migrants & breeding birds of Washington will be emphasized.

DATES: (3) **Thurs. May 5, Tues. May 10 & Thurs. May 12. 6:30—9:00 P.M.** (classes only)

Sat 5/7 or Sun 5/8 (morning only field trip – ½ class goes each day)

Sat 5/14 or Sun 5/15 (all day field trip to Eastern Washington – ½ class goes each day)

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

COST: \$95 (ELWAS **members**) \$120 (**non-members** – chapter membership is \$25)

Fee waiver available (based on need) – inquire for details

Register soon - class size limited!

call **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**

Forum—Society for Ecological Restoration Northwest

The Society for Ecological Restoration Northwest invites you to an evening forum on April 6 at 7:30 PM at Town Hall in Seattle. Includes special guests Terry Tempest Williams, Andrew Light, Stuart Cowan, David Conrad, and Alex Stefan. Katherine Baril will host the discussion. Tickets are \$15 and available at <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/878>.

Each of our guests presents a compelling vision with real world benefits. Each is working on elements of a vision for the future that not only incorporates protection and restoration of the natural environment but also includes tools and concepts of sustainable cities and culture.

Oil Spill Training

by **Tim McGruder**

The recent oil spill at Draco Passage near Vashon-Maury Island coated numerous birds and soiled miles of beaches. Paid personnel were quickly overwhelmed with the clean-up effort and volunteers were needed to help with the mess. Because so few volunteers had the required training, it took additional time to train them before they could be deployed. In an effort to reduce deployment time for future oil spill disasters, a volunteer training will be held for wildlife search & rescue responders by Washington State Dept. of Fish & Wildlife. The class is on Sunday, April 10 from 11:50 to 5. If you or anyone you know is interested, please call Jackie Wolf at 360-378-5322 for more information.

Paper, plastic or cloth — What kind of bag do you use?

by Trudy Bialic, Editor, PCC Sound Consumer – PCC Natural Markets

(January 2005) — Paper or plastic? Which type of bag is more environmentally sound? Is it better to cut down old-growth trees and tropical rain forests to make paper, or better to use oil to make plastic bags that choke animals, clog sewers and aren't biodegradable? PCC management has spent many hours studying the problems with paper and plastic bags, looking for a better solution. The best answer is that it's time for every shopper to rephrase the debate as Paper, plastic or cloth? As PCC Merchandiser Paul Schmidt notes, "If we all do our part, the need for paper and plastic can be eliminated altogether — by using cloth bags."



The problem with paper

The most common complaint about PCC's paper bags is that Weyerhaeuser makes them. Why is PCC supporting Weyerhaeuser, a company known to be cutting trees from old-growth areas and rain forests? Schmidt has taken the lead in reviewing PCC's purchasing agreements and is working with Rainforest Action Network (RAN) to find an alternative supplier. He reports that there are three major U.S. companies that make grocery bags — Weyerhaeuser and two other companies based in the Southeast.

The two other companies buy off the spot market, meaning there's no guarantee of where their trees are coming from to make paper bags. Genetically engineered (GE) poplar trees are believed to be one source, but the location of GE plantings are kept secret from the public and that makes the source virtually impossible to trace. Also, because these two other companies are based in the Southeast, more fuel and more raw materials are used to transport the finished

product to the Northwest.

Weyerhaeuser, meanwhile, is said to be the only major paper bag manufacturer that relies on its own forests for raw material. Published documents show the percentage of trees that Weyerhaeuser cuts down in Canada (where it has received several awards for sustainable forestry practices), is less than 2 percent of the total acreage owned, but it still includes old-growth timber.

Another issue with paper bags is the amount of post-consumer recycled content they contain. Schmidt says Weyerhaeuser bags contain approximately 43 percent recycled content, while the two other companies are refusing to quote the recycled content in their product — although it reportedly can vary from zero to 90 percent.

However, neither of the other two companies can produce paper bags for PCC. They earn more money making boxes, and the machines that make the outside of corrugated boxes are the same ones that make bags, so they're not converting to bag production.

Schmidt's conclusions on the problems with paper bags: there's no gain in purchasing paper bags from the Southeast because of the uncertain source of the trees, potentially less recycled content, and the use of more energy and materials to transport them. Additionally, PCC would pay 20 percent more for paper bags from the Southeastern companies, even if they could supply us. It'd be a lose-lose situation all around. That leaves PCC buying bags from Weyerhaeuser.

The problem with plastic

The majority of all plastics today are oil-based. There are some attempts underway to make plastics from a cornstarch base, but so far these products can't hold up under the weight of groceries; they're brittle and break through from sharp corners, and they're made from genetically engineered corn. Some experimental work also is being done to genetically engineer plants to produce bioplastics, through so-called biopharming.

Schmidt is currently looking at one more plastic option: an "OxoBiodegradable™ plastic bag made by EPI Environmental Products Inc. EPI claims its plastic is 100 percent degradable with no harmful residues, and begins to degrade in about 18 months. In contrast, conventional plastic bags are expected to persist for decades.

Conclusions

Schmidt points out that new technology is developing every day and bag technology is one of the fastest-growing sectors. He's been searching for alternatives, getting samples and checking them out. As soon as he's confident that there's a good alternative to what PCC is relying on now, he'll make the switch. That time could come soon, as Schmidt is sensitive to the environmental costs and the need to find another way.

Consider this, too: PCC spends about \$150,000 a year to buy shopping bags — about 1.2 million paper bags and 1.5 million plastic bags. Of those, customers brought about 400,000 of them back to stores to reuse for their groceries — less than 15 percent of the total. And that's despite a longstanding PCC program to provide a two-cent rebate for every bag customers bring in for reuse.

Plastic bags may be recycled, too, and all PCC stores have recycling bins. But the vast majority winds up in landfills. Both paper and plastic bags disposed of in a landfill can be dug up virtually intact many years later; neither decomposes well in a landfill.

Which brings us to us, the consumer. What will it take for us to start using cloth every time we shop? I confess — I have numerous canvas bags, my intentions are good, but sometimes I forget to take them along when going to shop, or don't have them with me when I make an unexpected stop. This year, I've pledged to bring a canvas tote along as part of my daily routine. After all, it's up to you and me to make the need for paper and plastic bags go away.