

# The Corvid Crier

EAST LAKE WASHINGTON AUDUBON SOCIETY

ISSUE 06-9— DECEMBER 2006/ JANUARY 2007

## ELWAS Annual Dinner — Thursday, January 25, 2007 at 6:30 pm

After enjoying a delicious dinner, we will celebrate the Chapter's 2006 accomplishments. The new Board of Directors will be installed, and the outgoing Board Members and our many volunteers from 2006 will be thanked.

Members of the Photo Club will give mini slide 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 dessert

H-P ..... bring a hot dish

Q-Z ..... bring a salad

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 25<sup>th</sup> at the Northlake Unitarian Church, 308 Fourth Avenue S. in Kirkland. **Everyone is welcome.**



**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 — Saturday, December 16, 2006



Join fellow bird counters at Marymoor Park just south of Redmond at the north end of Lake Sammamish. **Meet before 8:00 am** at the west parking lot near the windmill. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes/boots, warm clothes and bring lunch. The fee for participating in the CBC is **\$5.00/person** (backyard bird counters are not required to pay the fee). This fee is to offset the printing costs of the final report. ELWAS will fund those who choose not to pay this fee. The money will come from the general budget, so everyone is encouraged to donate the \$5.00 fee. 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. 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. Should you choose to stay at 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 pm on Jan 3. Results will be tallied at the dinner (\$6.50) following the count. Call **Len Steiner at 425-827-2478 or email at: MariLen-Steiner@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 bird count, join ELWAS for a warm, wholesome **meal at 6:00 pm at the Northlake Unitarian Church**. Cost is **\$6.50**, which includes dinner (vegetarian and meat), dessert and drinks. You **do not** have to participate in the Christmas Bird Count to join us for dinner, but **please call or e-mail the office to reserve your spot at the dinner table. 425-576-8805 or 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.*

**Building a Community**  
**25 years of Dedication, Service and Fun**

By Christy Anderson, ELWAS President

2006 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ELWAS as a chapter of the National Audubon Society. In 1981, East Lake Washington Audubon Society was granted a charter from the national organization. Prior to that, Seattle Audubon's territory ranged from the city of Seattle east to the crest of the Cascades. A group of Seattle Audubon members who lived on the east side of the lake petitioned for their own chapter. The area for ELWAS was carved out of the middle of Seattle's. That is why we look like the hole of the doughnut today!

ELWAS was the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter formed in the state of Washington, which now boasts twenty-six chapters. At the time of its formation, ELWAS had thirty-six members and offered one field trip a month.

The first president of ELWAS was Len Steiner, still an active member today. Amy McQuade was the second president, and is still on the Board at age 94. The motto of the new organization was "*Never forget that nature's conservation is man's preservation.*" So, as you can see, conservation has been the heart of the organization from the very beginning.

An anniversary, especially a milestone one, is a time to take stock, look back and consider where the organization has been and where it is going. During the past twenty-five years, ELWAS has grown in so many ways. Our membership now numbers close to 1,000. We offer as many as a dozen field trips a month, along with classes, monthly meetings featuring fantastic speakers, outreach to schools, and involvement with local and national environmental issues. ELWAS held its first Christmas Bird Count in 1981. (*See how you can join this year's count on page 1 of this issue!*) We have one of the most active chapters in the state, and, I believe, in the country.

The cornerstones of ELWAS, Conservation, Education and Birding steer all our various activities. The specifics are ironed out by your Board of Directors each year as part of their planning process.

When I think about the legacy of this organization that was given to us by its founders and early members, I feel honored to be a part of it. And more than a little humbled by the responsibility. Due to its strong roots and dedicated members, ELWAS is a vibrant and effective organization today.

**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>	Jim Rettig	(425) 402-1833 jrettigtanager@verizon.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>	Amy McQuade	(206) 523-6030 mcbdrwchr@aol.com
<u>At large board member</u>	Sunny Walter	(425) 271-1346 sunny@sunnywalter.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
<b>Adult Education</b>	Melinda Bronsdon	(425) 827-5708
<b>Field Trips</b>	Hugh Jennings	(425) 746-6351 fieldtrip@elwas.org
<b>Nature Walks</b>	MaryFrances Mathis	(425) 803-3026 MF.Mathis@verizon.net
<b>Special Events</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Bird Questions?</b>	Amy McQuade	(206) 523-6030 mcbdrwchr@aol.com
<u>Conservation</u>	Tim McGruder	(425) 822-8580 tim@elwas.org
<b>Advocacy</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Citizen Science</b>	Len Steiner	(425) 827-2478
<b>Conservation</b>	Tim McGruder	(425) 822-8580 tim@elwas.org
<b>Marymoor Park</b>	Jim Rettig	(425) 402-1833 jrettigtanager@verizon.net
<u>Education</u>	Mary Britton-Simmons	(360) 794-7163 education@elwas.org
<b>Programs</b>	Sunny Walter	(425) 271-1346 sunny@sunnywalter.com
<b>Youth Education</b>	Mary Britton-Simmons	(360) 794-7163 education@elwas.org
<b>Library</b>	Carolyn Kishel	(425) 746-1817
<u>Communication</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Historian</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Newsletter</b>	Tom Grismer	(206) 720-9892 newsletter@elwas.org
<b>Publicity</b>	Tracey Cummings	(425) 788-4663 publicity@elwas.org
<b>Webmaster</b>	Nancy Nicklas	(425) 869-7827 webmaster@elwas.org
<u>Financial Development</u>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Birdathon</b>	Christy Anderson	(425) 747-4196
<b>Gift Wrap</b>	<b>Open</b>	
<b>Merchandising</b>	Cindy Balbuena	(425) 643-4074 cbalbuena@comcast.net
<u>Membership</u>	Margaret Lie	(425) 823-2686 margaretlie12@gmail.com
<b>Hospitality</b>	Claudia Welch	(425) 827/2548
<b>Volunteer Coordinator</b>	Tricia Kishel	(206) 948-3922 natureisoutside@gmail.com

## ELWAS Meetings December 2006/ January 2007

**December 6, January 3 (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 12, January 9 (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 14, January 11 (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 16 (Sat) — Christmas Bird Count —** See article on page 1.

**January 25 (Thurs) 6:30 pm — Annual Dinner —** See article on page 1.

### Welcome!

Welcome to the following new members of the East Lake Washington Audubon Society.

We hope to see you soon at a Membership Meeting or Field Trip. Call or visit our office if you have any questions. Our friendly volunteers are more than happy to help you.

John Agner  
Linda Bowers  
Del Domke  
Michael Graff  
James Hedlund  
Clair Inghram  
Susan Landis  
Yasuyuki Matsunaga  
Diantha McLaughlin  
Michael Russell  
Shannon Smith  
Sue and Mark Waldin  
Rose Winters

Steve Baker  
Ann Boynton  
Sandra Fetzer  
Fred H. Greer  
Judy Hjorth  
Elisabeth Jacobson  
Dr. and Mrs. Ben Larson  
D. and M. McAusland  
Patricia Oswald  
Eileen Ryan  
Karen Snepp  
H. W. Walker

Ilana & Steve Blatt  
Anne Brastow  
James Glenn  
Kathy R. Harvey  
L. A. Holdren  
Al Jones  
Tom Mansfield  
Ann McCombs  
Robert and Carol Phillips  
Janice Schindler  
Penney Wagster  
Cindy Wambean

### ELWAS HOLIDAY GIFT WRAP

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:

Friday, December 22, 8:30am – 10:00 pm (we'll have 4 shifts of volunteers)

Saturday, December 23, 8:30am – 10:00 pm (4 shifts)

Sunday, December 24, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm (2 shifts)

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



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

## Volunteers – We Need You!

### Website Volunteer

ELWAS has a fairly new website that uses a program that is user friendly and easy to update. We're still converting some of the old content to the new site, and are always adding more to what was initially there. Are you interested and available to help us out? If you're comfortable in using text editing programs (Word, etc.) and have some free time, we sure could use your help.

### Office Staff Coordinator

The ELWAS office is staffed by volunteers on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. We have dedicated volunteers who work in the office on a regular basis. Some days are "Open" with no regular volunteer to cover. We need someone to call volunteers and fill in those open dates.

### Member Welcome Committee Chair

Every month, ELWAS sends a Welcome Packet to each new member, renewal letters to current members, and calls new members to welcome them to the Chapter. Every new member is also a potential volunteer. We need someone to take on this task.

### Movie Night Chair

In the past, ELWAS hosted a Movie Night where films on birds or the environment were featured. There are several wonderful films from which to choose, and this is a great way to reach out to the larger Eastside community. We need someone to head up this event.

### Nature Walk Coordinator

Currently, ELWAS has monthly nature walks at Juanita Bay Park and Marymoor Park. We would like to expand our walks to other parks on the Eastside. We need someone to work with Parks Departments, walk leaders and our publicity team

### Membership Meeting Greeter

We need someone to attend the Membership Meetings, greet guests as they come in and help them find their nametags and sign in..

### Birdathon Leader

Every May, ELWAS conducts a Birdathon fundraiser, which is our biggest fundraiser of the year. We need someone to promote this event, rally the troops, register teams and track each team's progress.

You may read more about each of these volunteer opportunities on our website. If you'd like even 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. The birds will thank you!**

### Thank You For All Your Hard Work and Commitment

By Tricia Kishel, ELWAS Volunteer Coordinator

THANK YOU... **Nancy Roberts** for washing our windows, **Karen Guy** for taking care of our bird mounts, **Nancy Worsham** for working on the Cats Indoors project, **Z. Scheyer** for sending out Thank You's, to **Jim Rettig** (Vice President), **Ellen Homan** (Treasurer), and **Brian Bell** (Birding Chair) for joining the Board of Directors, to all our Corvid Crier Labeler's **Lea Knapp**, **Peggy Jorgensen**, **Nancy Roberts**, **Jim Roberts**, **Margaret Lie**, **Jim Rettig** and **Tom Grismer**. Thanks to **Lea Knapp** for working on the Kirkland Marina Beach clean-up. Thank you to all that have continued to help out on the Marymoor Loop Project. Thanks to those who helped at the Membership Meeting in October; **Tricia Kishel**, **Carolyn Kishel**, **Cindy Balbuena**, **Sunny Walters**, **Jim Roberts**, **Nancy Roberts**, **Claudia Welch**, **Margaret Lie**, and **Christy Anderson**. Thank you **Rich Smith**, **Kris Swanson**, and **Jim and Nancy Roberts** for volunteering at the Baby Boomers & Beyond event.

We appreciate all you do. *You make the Birds Sing* 🎵🎵



### ELWAS E-Mail Lists

Join one of ELWAS' e-mail lists and be one of the first to learn of special events, conservation issues or volunteer opportunities. It's easy, it's fast, and you suffer from information overload.

Depending on your interests, we have a list for you.

You can learn more about upcoming classes and events by joining our general information list. To join this e-mail list, go to: <http://lists.elwas.org/listinfo.cgi/announce-elwas.org> and follow the on-screen instructions. If you wish to receive your newsletter online, join this list and let us know. You will receive monthly notification when the newsletter is posted to the website.

If you want to keep up on the conservation issues of the day, and learn more about what ELWAS is working on, you can join our conservation e-mail list. To join this e-mail list, go to: <http://lists.elwas.org/listinfo.cgi/conservation-elwas.org> and follow the on-screen instructions.

Interested in volunteering with ELWAS? As events and volunteer needs come up, they are posted to this e-mail list. To join this e-mail list, go to: <http://lists.elwas.org/listinfo.cgi/opportunities-elwas.org> and follow the on-screen instructions.

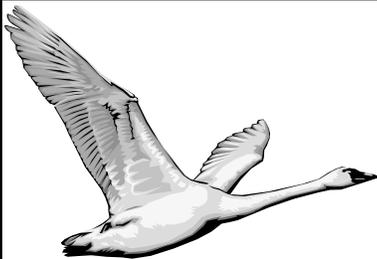
Become involved in the Chapter! Join an e-mail list.



*Congratulations to ELWAS  
on 25 years!*

*Virgie Sheldon*  
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w. [virgiesheldon.com](http://virgiesheldon.com)



### Hotline to Report Dead or Ill Swans Available

OLYMPIA - The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has re-established a hotline for public reports of dead or ill swans in Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish counties, as part of a continuing effort to monitor trumpeter swans that have succumbed to lead poisoning.

Call (360) 466-4345, ext. 266, to report dead or sick swans. Leave a message including your name and phone number, and the location and condition of the swans. The hotline is available 24 hours a day through the end of February.

Lead shot has been banned for waterfowl hunting in Washington and British Columbia for more than a decade, but biologists believe swans are likely reaching shallow underwater areas where spent lead shot is still present.

"People who see sick or dead swans are advised not to handle or attempt to move the birds," said Jennifer Bohannon, WDFW wildlife biologist.

WDFW employees and volunteers from the Washington Waterfowl Association will pick up the birds, Bohannon said. Puget Sound Energy also is assisting the effort by collecting swans killed in power line collisions.

This year, collected swans also will be among the thousands of wild birds WDFW is testing for avian influenza.

For several years, WDFW and other agencies and organizations have been monitoring trumpeter swan mortality in the North Puget Sound area. Besides WDFW, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the University of Washington, the Trumpeter Swan Society, the Washington Waterfowl Association and other non-governmental organizations are involved in the study to locate sources of the toxic lead and remove it from the environment.

***Support ELWAS with: NEW, EASY PCC SCRIP PROGRAM!!!!***

### **RECHARGEABLE CARDS**

PCC has started a new program using rechargeable scrip cards. Cards come initially loaded with \$25 and can be used at any PCC store like gift cards.

Cards may be recharged with a minimum of \$50 and a maximum of at any PCC checkstand at any time.

Each time you recharge your card, ELWAS automatically earns 5% of the amount you applied to it.

Cards are available for sale NOW in the ELWAS office. If you have questions, please contact Megan Lyden (425-603-1548); [meganlyden@msn.com](mailto:meganlyden@msn.com)

## FIELD TRIPS

Parents and children over 8 are welcome on all trips. **\*\*FRS Radio owners, please consider bringing them on 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.

### Dec 1 (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 2 (Sat) 9 to noon—Marymoor BirdLoop Work Party

Join us the first Sat. of the month in restoring native habitat at the Marymoor Park interpretive area. We'll also be building and installing the new kiosk, signs, and boardwalk. Dress for the weather and bring clippers and gloves, snacks and water. Park in lot G, Interpretive Trail parking lot, and follow signs to the work parties. **RSVP Glenn or Bertha Eades at [geades@seanet.com](mailto:geades@seanet.com) (preferred) or at 425-885-3842.**

### Dec 2 (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 170 + bird species that have been seen 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 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**

### Dec 5 (Tues) 8:00 am to late afternoon

#### Samish & Skagit Flats

This is a great time of year up on the Samish and Skagit Flats for raptors and waterfowl. We'll look for eagles, hawks (Red-tails, Rough-legs), perhaps falcons (hopefully 4 or 5 this year), owls (Short-eared) and Trumpeter and Tundra Swans. Come prepared for wet or windy weather. Bring a WDFW parking sticker if you have one. Scopes very helpful. Bring lunch and fluids. Back late afternoon. Meet before 8:00 am at the south end of the Kingsgate P&R. Passenger cost/person \$10.00. **Brian Bell 425-485-8058**

### Dec 9 (Sat) 7:30 am to late afternoon

#### Skagit/Samish Flats Field Trip

This is a chance for those that could not make it on Tuesday to visit this prime habitat. The tidal flats and fields provide habitat for 20,000 + snow geese in winter. (They nest in Siberia). Many buteos, owls, and falcons hunt in the area. Tundra and Trumpeter Swans should also be numerous. Meet before 7:30 am at south end of Kingsgate P&R. Bring a lunch. Passenger cost/person \$10.00. This trip will be limited to 10 people. Call **Mike West at 206-795-4865** to reserve a place.

### Dec 14 (Thurs) 9:00 am

#### 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 and the state park. We'll look for song birds too, particularly at the state park. Meet before 9:00 am at Newport Hills P&R, I-405, Exit 9. Passenger cost/person \$4.00. **Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

### Dec 16 (Sat) 8:00 am

#### Annual Christmas Bird Count and Dinner

See article on front page.

### Dec 18 (Mon) 9:00 am to noon

#### Birding the Hot Spots of King County

**Note** – this Hot Spots trip is on third Monday because 4<sup>th</sup> Monday is Christmas Day. Monthly field trip 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**

### Dec 19 (Tues) 9 am 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**

### Jan 5 (Fri) 9:00 to noon — Marymoor Park

See Dec 1 entry.

### Jan 6 (Sat) 9:00 to noon—Marymoor BirdLoop Work Party

See Dec 2 entry.

### Jan 14 (Sun) 8:00 am to late afternoon

#### Samish & Skagit Flats

This is a great time of year up on the Samish and Skagit Flats for raptors and waterfowl. We'll look for eagles, hawks (Red-tails, Rough-legs), perhaps falcons (hopefully 4 or 5 this year), owls (Short-eared) and Trumpeter and Tundra Swans. Come prepared for wet or windy weather. Bring a WDFW parking sticker if you have one. Scopes very helpful. Bring lunch and fluids. Back late afternoon. Meet before 8:00 am at the south end of the Kingsgate P&R. Passenger cost/person \$10.00.

**Brian Bell 425-485-8058**

### Jan 20 (Sat) 8:00 am to noon — West Seattle Shoreline

Explore the shores and waters of West Seattle along Elliot Bay

*(Continued on page 7)*

## BIRD of the MONTH

### Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus* by Hugh Jennings



#### Pine Siskin *Carduelis pinus*

The Pine Siskin (PISI) is about 5” long with a wingspan of 9” and weight of 0.53 oz.(15g). The genus name *Carduelis* (Card-dyou-EE-liss) is from the Latin *carduus*, thistle (eats seeds of thistle). The species name *pinus* is Latin for pine, which is its common name, apparently from the siskin of Europe, a yellow-green finch. *Siskin* apparently is derived from Danish *sidsken* or Swedish *siska*, a “chirper”.

It is small with a short forked tail and rather long, pointed wings and a thin, pointed bill. Although it is patterned like a sparrow, its shape, actions, and call notes all indicate that this is really a goldfinch in disguise. This bird is brown above, light below and brown streaked overall. There is yellow on the wings and base of the tail, but this is not always seen on perched birds. In flight, a yellow stripe the length of the wing can be seen.

After nesting in conifer woods, Pine Siskins move out into semi-open country, where they roam in twittering flocks. They often descend on fields of thistles or wild sunflowers and cling to the dried flowers, eating the seeds. They also feed on insects, including caterpillars and aphids. Although found at all elevations, they tend to be at higher elevations in summer and descend to lowlands in winter. Numbers vary from year to year and they often irrupt in large numbers, appearing at feeders with American Goldfinch.

The song is a mixture of trills and rapid warbles. Calls include a buzzy, ascending “zreeeee”. According to F. Schuyler Mathews’ book “Field Book of Wild Birds and Their Music,” the call note is identical to that of a Goldfinch and the full song is a medley of notes similar to that of the Goldfinch but lacking its irrepressible jollity and “cut glass” clarity of tone – in fact, the song is decidedly wheezy.

Pine Siskins may nest in loose colonies or isolated pairs. The nest (built by the female) consists of grasses, twigs, rootlets, bark strips and lichens, lined with feathers and fur, and placed on an outer conifer branch about 3-50 feet above ground. The female incubates 3-4 darkly spotted, pale greenish blue eggs for 13 days. The male feeds the female during incubation. The young depend on the parents for food and warmth while in the nest and fledge after 14-15 days. (Photo by Joseph Higbee of Spanaway, WA).



#### Field Trips (Continued from page 6)

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 (I-405, exit 12).

Passenger cost/person **\$2.00. Hugh Jennings 425-746-6351**

#### Jan 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 26 (Tues) 9 am to noon—Juanita Bay Park Bird Walk — See Dec 19 entry.**

#### January 27 (Sat at 7:00 am) – January 28 (Sun) — Reifel Migratory Bird Refuge/Delta B.C.

We’ll walk the trails at Reifel, looking for resident and wintering passerines, along with raptors, owls, and waterfowl. Sunday will bring stops at Boundary Bay (Snowy Owls), Point Roberts, and Drayton Harbor. Scopes helpful. Bring passport, lunch, and money for admission (\$4 adults, \$2 seniors), and overnight. Meet before **7:00 am at South Kirkland P&R**. Return by 6 p.m. on Sunday. This trip is in conjunction with the Seattle Audubon and is limited to 5 people from ELWAS. Call leaders **MaryFrances Mathis 425-803-3026 or Megan Lyden 425-603-1548** to reserve a place. **Passenger cost/person for the two day trip is \$15.**

#### February 3 (Sat), 7:00 am – an all-day event. — Ocean Shores and vicinity

Nowhere else in Washington state can one find ten different habitats in such a small area, from long sandy beaches to tidal salt marshes, from a rock jetty to mudflats, from sand dunes to woodlots, and more. Even on a wet winter day (and the sun may shine!), seeing a hundred species of birds is an attainable goal. Dress for the weather, however, and be prepared to walk the jetty to look for Rock Sandpipers. Bring binoculars and scopes, lunch and fluids. Meet before 7:00 am at the Wilburton Park-N-Ride (I-405, Exit 12) to carpool. Passenger cost/person: **\$14.00. Jim Rettig, 425-402-1833.**

# ELWAS CLASSES

## RECOGNIZING BIRD BEHAVIORS

Once you have identified the mystery bird, ever wonder what it is doing? Our avian friends display a fascinating array of discernable behaviors. We will learn how to differentiate between the three broad categories of social, grooming and feeding strategies. Once inside these ethological zones, you will be amazed at the diversity of activity! This fun-filled experience opens up a whole “new window” for your birdwatching. So, if “preening, pecking and pouncing” intrigue you, join us Friday, March 9 for the lecture and Saturday, March 10, for the field trip.

Instructor **David Drummond** is founder and President of the Merlin Falcon Foundation and a Research Wildlife Biologist and naturalist. 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, and has taught ornithology at Olympic Park Institute and the North Cascades Institute.

**Class: Friday, March 9, 2007, 6:30 – 9:30 PM**, lecture and discussion. Class will meet at the Northlake Unitarian Church, 308 Fourth Avenue, Kirkland. Class limited to 20 participants. Registration required.

**Field Trip: Saturday, March 10, 2007. 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM.** Snohomish -Skagit County area. Transportation to be arranged at the class. Bring your lunch. No registration for the field trip only.

**Cost:** Lecture and field trip \$60.00 per person/ELWAS member, \$75.00 per non-ELWAS member. Class and field trip limited to 20 participants.

**Registration:** Call the ELWAS office to register at (425) 576-8805. Office open Monday, Tuesday and Friday mornings. *Registration closes Tuesday, March 6.*

## WORKSHOPS SPONSORED BY THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee offers a variety of student workshops. All presentations are interactive, hands-on and can be adapted to the needs of students. A walk to look for and identify birds can be added to any of the presentations below and usually lasts at least 30 minutes. For more information or to schedule a workshop, contact the education chair at: [education@elwas.org](mailto:education@elwas.org).

### *Introduction to Birds #1:*

Age range: kindergarten through sixth grade

Length: 40-50 minutes

Description: The workshop teaches students what makes a bird a bird. Students will connect various birds with their need for a supportive environment and will learn to appreciate birds as a part of the wonder of the natural world. The workshop can be adapted to the audience.

### *Introduction to Birds #2:*

Age range: kindergarten through third grade

Length: 30 minutes

Description: The workshop teaches students what makes a bird a bird. Students will learn about the wide range of diversity in birds and the basic functions of wings, feet and beaks.

### *Using Binoculars:*

Age range: third and fourth grades

Length: 50 minutes

Description: The workshop focuses on how binoculars work. Students will learn how to follow moving objects with binoculars. In addition, they will learn how to communicate to others the position of birds through descriptive words.

### *Using Field Guides:*

Age range: second through sixth grades

Length: 20 minutes

Description: The workshop focuses on teaching students how to use a field guide. The students will learn the parts of a field guide and how to locate specific birds and read a field guide.

### *Slide Presentation:*

Age range: kindergarten through high school

*(Continued on page 9)*

Length: depends on the audience

Description: The slide presentation can be adapted to the audience and can be focused on a number of habitats, such as backyard birds or water birds.

*Introduction to Owls:*

Age range: third through sixth grades

Length: 45-60 minutes

Description: The workshop focuses on the general characteristics of owls. Students will learn to appreciate how form and function work together in the owl's ears, eyes, beaks, talons and feather. In addition, they will learn how an owl hunts, catches and eats prey.

*Wetlands Workshop:*

Age range: third through sixth grades

Length: 60-70 minutes

Description: The workshop uses slides taken at Juanita Bay Park to teach what wetlands are, why they're important and the typical plants and animals found in nearby freshwater wetlands.

*Nest Building:*

Age range: kindergarten through sixth grades

Length: 20-30 minutes

Description: The workshop focuses on the various nests that birds build. Students will make a small nest with an egg in it to take home.

*Bird Beaks and Food #1:*

Age range: kindergarten through sixth grades

Length: 30 minutes

Description: The workshop focuses on the types of food that birds eat with special emphasis on beaks. Students will make a simple feeder to take home.

*Bird Beaks and Food #2:*

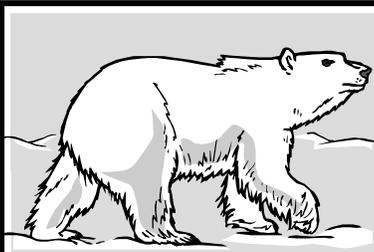
Age range: second through eighth grades

Length: 60 minutes

Description: The workshop focuses on bird beaks and the food that birds eat. Students will make a wooden bird feeder to take home. Note: There is a charge for this workshop to cover the cost of the bird feeder.

Additional resources can be found at the following Web sites:

- [www.inhs.uiuc.edu/chf/pub/virtualbird/educational.html](http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/chf/pub/virtualbird/educational.html)
- [www.birds.cornell.edu/schoolyards](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/schoolyards)
- <http://www.enaturalist.org/index.htm>
- <http://eelink.net/classroomresources-directories.html>



***SAVE THE DATE! -- March 20, 2007***

***Rally for the Arctic***

***Now is the time for us to stand together and make our voices heard. The Arctic Refuge will only be saved permanently if citizens take their message directly to Washington, DC. Join us and tell Congress that the Arctic Refuge is too wild to drill!***

**What:** Join thousands of Americans for a rally and a day of lobbying. Demonstrate to your elected officials your support for permanently protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

**Who:** Everyone who wants to see America's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge protected for wildlife and for our future generations, not exploited for oil company profits!

**When:** Tuesday, March 20, 2007 **Where:** West Lawn of the Capitol, Washington D.C.

**For more information, contact:** [laurele@alaskacoalition.org](mailto:laurele@alaskacoalition.org) or (503) 285-1900



## CONSERVATION CORNER — SAVE OUR NATIONAL TREASURES

By Jim Rettig

For the last ten months or so I have served as a representative from ELWAS to the St. Edward State Park Advisory Committee. We have dealt with a variety of issues, and discussed a variety of points of view regarding them all. One of the major issues for the park, some think it is the major issue, is what to do with an 60- to 70-year-old dormitory building, which may become a national historic site. This building has been sitting empty for at least 30 years. The first floor of this four-story structure is used now and then for wedding receptions, meetings, and other events. The reason it remains empty is because the State of Washington has no money to make it into anything useful. (It might take \$30 million to bring it into compliance with all the new building codes.) Who has that kind of money?

Some commercial enterprises do. So one of the suggestions is that the building become a hotel and brew pub. The company would spend the money to renovate the building, and then rent rooms and run a restaurant and brew pub on the property. So the overarching question is, Do we privatize/commercialize our public property? This very thing is now happening at King County's Marymoor Park. The money crunch has been felt by every level of government. The City of Kenmore, for example, has no money to buy land (if it could find any) to build ball fields for Little Leaguers.

King County looks to commercial enterprises and parking fees to raise money for parks. Washington State has no money to deal with St. Edward. And remember when the Bush Administration suggested that our National Park Rangers become employees of private companies? Moreover, the National Park Service is reeling from an estimated \$7.1 billion maintenance backlog! Even as it serves an astounding 280 million visitors each year!

Why can't we pay for our parks? Three reasons, from my point of view:

First, our national priorities are all wrong. We spend billions of dollars fighting unnecessary wars overseas when those same dollars could be used much more profitably fighting terrorism by meeting the needs of the poor and hopeless around the world and by strengthening out democracy at home.

Second, the US tax code has been rewritten for the benefit of the wealthiest 1%, so the middle and lower classes are subsidizing that 1% and there is little money for other items.

Third, not only has the tax code been rewritten, but the mantra of the last 45 years of "No new taxes" has reduced government income to such a low point that there is no money for the common good, for parks, for example. This is unconscionable. These policies are "not merely failing to maintain expanses of land, bodies of water, and a collection of buildings," notes Texas populist Jim Hightower. "They are also failing you and me, failing past generations who fought to establish our magnificent systems of parks, and failing our children and all future generations who should receive America's public parks in even better shape than they came to us." For a nation of incredible wealth, this political failure is a damning stain on our professed ideals of the common good and of good stewardship.

Want to do something about this? For more information, agitation, and legislation concerning our national park service, contact one or all of these groups: Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), [www.peer.org](http://www.peer.org); National Parks Conservation Association, [www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org); the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees, [www.npsretirees.org](http://www.npsretirees.org). For the state parks, go to the Washington State Parks website. Go to the websites of your local county and city. Ask your elected officials at all levels of government why we don't have money for parks and open space.

### **Come Bird With Us -- Olympic BirdFest 2007 Sequim, Washington, March 30 - April 1, 2007**

The stage is set...quiet bays and estuaries, sandy beaches, a five-mile-long sand spit, and a protected island bird sanctuary on the Strait of Juan de Fuca; wetlands, tide pools, rainforests, and lush river valleys. The players are ready ... Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, and Pygmy owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat and kayak tours; a traditional salmon bake at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center, and more.

Come bird with us and experience with others the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula ...you just might go home with a new bird for your life list! Check out the offerings by going online or calling for a brochure. Sequim is just a ferry ride and short drive from Seattle...in two hours you'll be in the rain shadow of the Olympics...it's worth the drive.

Program information and registration can be found online at: <http://www.olympicbirdfest.org>.

To contact us by phone, call 360-681-4076 or e-mail us at [info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org).

## Two Ways to Become a Better Educated Consumer

By Bev Jennings

There has been a growing number of chemicals in our lives, and to live wisely we'll have to become even better label readers. So, through information being distributed by our county, and the Toxic-Free Coalition of Washington State, we'll become informed, questioning people. Workshops are being presented, information is given and we need to pay attention!

Recently, a presentation was given in Bellevue on safer cosmetics. The implications of what we use as consumer products are wide-ranging. There are potential toxic effects to the user, to those involved in manufacturing, and eventually, many of these products end up in our water supply (streams, lakes, Puget Sound and our tap water). This is a concern with pharmaceuticals, as well.

There is great concern about cosmetic use. There is lack of safety oversight in cosmetics and personal care products. At the recent workshop and panel discussion, information was included stating that cosmetic companies are being confronted, and encouraged to correct manufacturing methods and change ingredients. Some companies have already signed the "safe cosmetics" compact.

Two chemicals that have become especially prevalent are phthalates (THAL-ates)- used to plasticize and soften materials used in many consumer products, especially those that include PVC (polyvinyl chloride). Phthalates have many scientific names we need to learn, such as BzBP, benzylbutyl phthalate, which have uses including vinyl flooring, car care products, personal care products; DEP, diethyl phthalate, used in personal care products (deodorant, aftershave lotion, perfume, cologne, shampoo hair gel, hand lotion).

"EcoDeals" is a new program that educates us as shoppers, and in making wiser purchases for home renovation and many other types of products. ELWAS is a participating member of EcoDeals in an effort to promote the importance of thinking about the impacts of the things we buy. Let's begin to really learn more about what we are using.

There are several websites to help us make wise decisions:

[www.EcoDeals.org](http://www.EcoDeals.org)

[www.Safecosmetics.org](http://www.Safecosmetics.org)

[www.pollutioninpeople.org](http://www.pollutioninpeople.org)

### Nature Cruise on the Viking Star

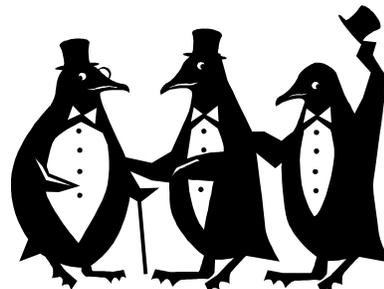
ELWAS members and others have enjoyed many Nature Cruises out of La Conner with Viking Cruises on the Viking Star boat owned by Ken McDonald. In the past five years the operation of Viking Cruises was taken over by Bob and Marci Plank. They have decided to end this operation and Ken's health is such that he can't continue the cruises. Therefore, ELWAS will not be having a Nature Cruise in February, 2007.

Both the Viking Star and Viking Cruises are currently for sale. If you know of anyone who might be interested in more information Viking Cruises and/or the Viking Star, please email: [info@vikingcruises.com](mailto:info@vikingcruises.com) or contact Ken McDonald at 360-466-2751. The Viking Star is listed with Boats & Harbor: [www.boats-and-harbors.com](http://www.boats-and-harbors.com).

### Collared Swans

Swans are once again gracing our valleys and skies. The Swan Society ([www.swansociety.org](http://www.swansociety.org)) asks that if you see a swan wearing a neck band (red, yellow, green or black or possibly blue) please try to read the code on the collar. They are tracking the trumpeters for a lead poisoning study.

You can send the information directly to Martha Jordan of the Swan Society at [swanlady@drizzle.com](mailto:swanlady@drizzle.com)



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

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

**See the birds better!**