



Island Wings

- to enjoy, learn about, & preserve the diverse natural habitats of these islands & beyond

Volume 17 Number 4

January-February 2007

PROGRAM

7pm

Diurnal Raptors of Western Washington

A 21st Century Overview.

Jim Flynn, Presenter

Thursday, January 25, 2007
Land Trust Bldg, 10014 SW Bank Rd.
Contact: Laura Bienen 567-4613

The natural history of raptors and a discussion of the birds' local threats will be presented through slides and discussion by Master Birder Jim Flynn. His program, *Diurnal Raptors of Western Washington--a 21st Century Overview*, covers identification, seasonal migrations, habitat, feeding habits and conservation concerns for the regularly occurring species of hawks, eagles, and falcons of Western Washington.

In addition, Flynn details the challenges the raptors face in our ever-growing Evergreen State. Shrinking habitats, environmental contaminants, wind farms, cell phone towers and other modern facts of life impact our local raptor populations.

Handouts on where to see these birds in their winter grounds and migration hotspots will be provided.

Jim Flynn is a lifelong King County resident and a graduate of the 2001 Master Birding Class of Seattle Audubon. He has taught raptor and shorebird identification for Seattle, East Lake Washington, and Rainier Audubon chapters for the last five years. Traveling to Cape May, the Blue Ridge, and Veracruz, Mexico, to observe migration, Jim has developed a special affection for raptors.

Prior to Flynn's program, the Lorax Club students will present a short program at 6:30.

Submitted by Laura Bienen, Program Chair

PRE-PROGRAM

6:30-7pm

Lorax Club Students

Thursday, January 25, 2007
Land Trust Bldg, 10014 SW Bank Road
See Page 2 for Story

Artists Cheryl Richey and Sandra Kahler
Avian Art, First Friday, Gala Opening
January 5th, 6-9pm, Blue Heron Gallery See P2.



San Juan Heron by Sandra Kahler, charcoal/water color

Bird Blind Planned for Fisher Pond Call for Donations

The Fisher Blind is in the planning stages and needs your donations to build a viewing perch for Fisher Pond's bird watchers. The blind will be sited on Bank Road, on the south side of Fisher Pond and 100 yards west of the present pull-off.

The blind will be a 16x8-foot wood structure, covered on three sides. A wheelchair ramp will enter from the path. A bench and shelf will be along the water side. Viewing ports will be placed at various heights for use by small fry and tall folks with spotting scopes. Posts will be placed in concrete. The footprint will be as small as possible.

The Land Trust will replant native vegetation around the border to replace any disturbed plants and to discourage people from heading to the water's edge.

Pete Murray, Island photographer and birder, is leading the planning and design. He says, "A very prominent sign will be posted by the ramp that reads, *Stay on the Ramp. Violators will be consumed by the dreaded Pond Ogre who is waiting for you by the water's edge.*" He adds, "We will have to find an appropriate orge for that duty however."

To show support, the Island Audubon will match funds donated by its members up to \$1,000. Write your check to Vashon Audubon, PO Box 838, Vashon WA 98070, noting the check is for The Fisher Blind.

Lorax Club Kids Make Wild Connections

By Kathryn True

Sixteen children, their parents and siblings know more about four Vashon eco-systems after joining the Lorax Club this fall.



Alex Koriath (left) and Zach Hershey work on their nature journals alongside a salmon redd during the Shinglemill Creek field trip.

Sponsored by the Island Audubon and Family Link, the program brought kids face-to-face with salmon redds, sunflower sea stars, ripe huckleberries and bullfrog tadpoles. They learned about watersheds,

invasive species, forest succession and the mud that can be carried home on a pair of jeans after a two-hour field-trip to Mukai Pond.

The program consisted of three classroom sessions and four field trips led by Island experts including Bob Furstenberg, David Warren, and Abel Eckhardt, as well as Stephanie Raymond from People for Puget Sound. Gary Shugart wowed the kids with his bird and mammal skins, and was surprised to hear from two families that their cats had brought home flying squirrels.

Audubon members will meet Lorax Club members, see slides of their adventures, and hear excerpts from their nature journals preceding the Audubon presentation, Jan. 25, 6:30-7 pm, at the Land Trust Building. The group also has been invited to be beach stewards responsible for teaching visitors inter-tidal etiquette at Low Tide Festival in May.

If you are interested in discussing children's education through Audubon, please contact Kathryn True (Lorax co-leader with Claudia Gross-Shader) at 567-5389.

www.vashonaudubon.org

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Avian Art Supports Audubon

**Opening Gala: First Friday, January 5th,
6-9pm, Blue Heron Gallery**

with live music, wine, and appetizers

Two Seattle-based painters, Cheryl Richey and



San Juan Blue Heron
by Sandra Kahler

Sandra Kahler, will display up to 30 original mixed media paintings that depict birds generally observed in the Northwest, as well as exotic species on view at the Woodland Park Zoo.

Avian art has long been associated by humans with freedom from earth-bound restrictions. Over time and throughout history, bird imagery and symbolism have been featured in myths, parables, dream theories, and art. Because both artists are nature enthusiasts and urban birders, Cheryl and Sandra pledge to donate 10% of their commission on sold art to the Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society. They wish to contribute to the Society's mission to "enjoy, learn about, and preserve the diverse natural habitats of these islands and beyond."

The art show opens at the Blue Heron Gallery on the First Friday, January 5th, 6-9pm, with live music, wine, and appetizers. Please stop by and see the art and meet Sandra and Cheryl.

Upcoming Field Trips Travel To Skagit and Dungeness

Two new field trips are scheduled for next year. One trip will be a float down the Skagit River, January 27 and 28, 2007, to view eagles. The next day for those who overnight around Marblemount, the group will bird the Skagit Flats. The second new trip will be to Dungeness Spit early next year.

See Calendar, Page 4. Contact Sherry Bottoms, 463-1312.

<VOLUNTEER TODAY>

Sue Trevathan is soliciting volunteer help for the 4th grade birding program that takes place in February at Chautauqua Elementary School.

Final dates have not been determined. If you have an interest in sharing your love of birds and spending time developing the same love in children, this is the volunteer job for you. She could use help in the classrooms with the bird skin display, use of binoculars/scopes, and assisting on the all-day field trip to KVI estuary.

Please call 463-1484 or e-mail sue.trevathan@centurytel.net.

Low Tide Beach Walks Make A Splash

2007 Low Tide Celebration

The date for the 2007 Low Tide Celebration has been set. It will be Saturday, May 19, with a -3.2 tide @1:30pm. There's a planning group, once again, that includes Wash. State DNR, People for Puget Sound, Washington Scuba Alliance, Vashon Park District, the Land Trust, and Vashon Audubon. Michelle Ramsden and Rayna Holtz represent Audubon. Volunteers for planning always welcome. Phone Rayna, 463-3153.

2006 Full Moon Beach Walk Wins the Night

Report by Rayna Holtz

What a great beach walk it turned out to be in early November. The rain stopped and the wind died, and the full moon shone on the water and the wet sand, also illuminating the fluffy edges of little sheep clouds that glided across the dark sky. Naturalists, including Islanders King County ecologist Bob Fuerstenberg and Seattle Aquarium's Kathy Sider, joined our ranks and gave wonderful talks about many things, such as how it is that mucus rules the world and how scientists research trying to recreate the powerful mucus used by kelp to cement their holdfasts. We found a tiny but scintillating nudibranch in a piling pond, a *Phidiana crassicornis*, which is translucent with neon orange stripes on its cerata and neon blue-green stripes running along each side of its back. There were sunflower stars in abundance, maybe as many as ten. I've never before seen more than one!

Shore life observed November 4, 2006 at the beach west of the north end ferry dock on Vashon Island

Sea anemones & allies

Sea pen -- *Ptilosarcus gurneyi*; Various anemones.

Sea stars

Mottled star -- *Evasterias troschelli*; Purple star -- *Pisaster ochraceus*; Sunflower star -- *Pycnopodia helianthoides*.

Barnacles

Acorn barnacles -- *Chthamalus dalli*.

Crabs

Red rock crab -- *Cancer productus*; Kelp crab -- *Pugettia producta*.

Purple shore crab -- *Hemigrapsus nudus*; Hermit crabs -- species.

Shrimps

Both translucent tiny ones, up to .75"; and neon green ones, about .75 to 1".

Clams

Horse clams -- *Tresus capax*; Rock oysters -- *Pododesmus macroschisma*; Cockle -- *Clinocardium nuttallii*.

Bay mussels -- *Mytilus edulis*; Rough piddock -- *Zirfaea pilsbryi*.

Limpets

Shield limpet -- *Collisella pelta*; Ribbed (finger) limpet -- *Collisella digitalis*.

Snails

Wrinkled Whelks -- *Nucella (Thais) lamellosa*.

Chitons

Mossy chiton -- *Mopalia muscosa*.

Sea slugs

Nudibranch -- *Phidiana crassicornis*.

Marine worms

Calcereous tube worm -- *Serpula vermicularis*.

Seaweeds

Bull kelp -- *Nereocystis luetkeana*; Eelgrass -- *Zostera marina*;

Sea lettuce -- *Ulva*; Rockweed -- *Fucus gardneri*.

SWAN'S NOTABLE SIGHTINGS

Fall and early winter brought us some very good birds. Highlights follow compiled from Ed Swan's emails.

October 9: Around noon, a first winter **Franklin's Gull** was feeding close in shore first at the exercise bikes along Tramp Harbor at Portage and later farther south around the curve of the harbor. Oct 15: Matt Bartells, Nancy and Gene Hunn, Michael Hobbs and MaryFrancis Mathis . . . found a number of good birds, including Franklin's Gull at Pt. Robinson, between 10-11am.

October 14: Sue Travathan led the monthly field trip this morning and found . . . at Ellisport a male and a female **Eurasian Wigeon** associating together like a breeding pair which is unusual for here. I went to look for the Eurasian Wigeon and missed them. . . . However . . . I noticed two female ducks swimming across between the beach and the pilings that looked somewhat different. So I took a closer look and got out my Sibley's and they turned out to be female **Gadwall**, of which we have only a few records for Vashon.

October 16: T. Martino at Wolftown had a **female saw-whet owl** brought in over the weekend that had been mauled by a cat. Prognosis looked good for its healing and release to the wild.

October 27: I got a call from Ellen Call, who lives near Peter Pt. just south of Fern Cove, about a group of **swans** swimming in Colvos Passage. I went up and saw them off Fern Cove . . . (They) were too far out to see if they had yellow on their beaks . . . but their bill shape appeared to me to be that of Tundra Swans. I counted 20. Oct 29: Kathryn True has had at least three groups of **Tundra Swans** fly overhead Friday and Saturday. Oct 31: Dan Willsie saw six swans circling over the center of the island and then heading west yesterday and thinks they were most likely **Trumpeters**. We've had singles stop in at Fisher's Pond and probably Mukai Pond before. Nov. 1: Don Norman had 5-6 more swans of indeterminate species over Maury Island on Monday. Nov 8: Richard Rogers saw two flocks of swans heading south over Wax Orchards yesterday afternoon. Nov 19: Rich Siegrist was another flock of swans over Tahlequah earlier this week.

November 20: Photographer Debra Paulsen showed me a picture this weekend of a bird photographed Oct 9 on Vashon and asked for help with identification. . . . With help from Gary Shugart, the bird appears to be a **Townsend's Solitaire**. All but one of Vashon's solitaire records fall in April. We have one winter visit. This is the first fall migrant that has been noticed.

November 30: Tramp Harbor was very birdy today when I went for a run. At the end of the fishing pier swimming around with the scoters (which used to be called coots) was a single **American Coot**, the first reported in a year or two for Vashon.

December 14: Gary Shugart found 3 **Ruddy Ducks** on the inner harbor. . . . These are the first of the year.

January-February 2007

Saturday, January 13, 8-10am -- Ober Park 'n' Ride

ISLAND AUDUBON FIELD TRIP -- *Monthly Second Saturday*

Bring binoculars/scope if you have them! *Sherry Bottoms 463-1312.*

Thursday, January 25, 7pm -- Land Trust Building.

VASHON AUDUBON PROGRAM -- Diurnal Raptors of Western Washington--A 21st Century Overview. Slides and presentation by Jim Flynn. Prior to the scheduled program, we are expecting a short presentation from the Lorax Club, which will begin at 6:30. *Laura Bienen 567-4613.*

Saturday and Sunday, January 27-28

Skagit River and Flats Trip -- Take a float trip Saturday down the Skagit to see eagles; stay the night at Skagit River Resort (1-800-273-2606); Sunday explore the Flats for swans, snow geese and hawks. Limited to a party of 16. *Sherry Bottoms 463-1312.*

Thursday, February 1, 7 pm -- First Thursday every even-numbered month.

VMIAS BOARD MEETING -- Phone Ed Swan for confirmation, 463-7976.

Saturday, February 10, 8-10am -- Ober Park 'n' Ride

ISLAND AUDUBON FIELD TRIP -- *Monthly Second Saturday.* Bring binoculars/scope if you have them! *Sherry Bottoms 463-1312.*

PLAN AHEAD: UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Tuesday, March 27

A one-day field trip to the Dungeness Spit area. *Sherry Bottoms 463-1312.*

Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society

P.O. Box 838

Vashon Island, WA 98070

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