

# WILLAPA WHISTLER

*A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society*

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May // June 2014



Lesser Goldfinch

*Image by Royce Craig*

## Indian Jack Slough Update

**By Russ Kastberg**

We've been busy at Indian Jack Slough this spring! Columbia Land Trust finished removing most of the hybrid Poplar on the property last fall. They created more wetlands on the north part of the property in the process. The uplands will be planted with Sitka Spruce this spring.

In February, we held an amphibian egg-mass survey on all the major wetlands with 22 WHAS and CLT volunteers. We found over 4000 Red Legged frog egg masses. That's 4000 breeding pairs of frogs! It shows how these newly created wetlands, which are shallow and open to the sun, can provide the type of habitat needed for the amphibians to breed.

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, Russ Kastberg, John Green and Mike Turner installed 7 Wood Duck boxes on the property. 3 more were installed by Russ and Ann Kastberg and Dan Friesz, CLT land steward on March 31st. We now have a total of 17 Wood Duck boxes and several other type boxes installed by WHAS volunteers. A side note: A Barn Owl box, installed in the Red Barn several years ago, shows sign of being used by a pair of Barn owls this year.

Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, saw a CLT sponsored Easter egg hunt/collect tree tube protector's day. There were 8 WHAS and 9 CLT volunteers, age ranging from 2-70+ years old. Some of the native plants within the fenced in area have failed and we were collecting the blue tree tube protectors, which will be used again when planting new stock. There are a few areas where the plantings have failed, mainly due to heavy Reed Canary grass competition and critters chewing. There are plans to prepare these sites again and plant them this fall. Overall, the plantings have done well and they are fast approaching a "free to grow" status.

Our next project on Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, is to install two Purple Martin colonies. WHAS has received a donation from the Cathlamet area and CLT has grant money to purchase the other one. Each colony will have 18 gourd houses. We do have Purple Martins occupying a colony site on the Julia Butler Hansen refuge down on the Columbia River. So, our hopes are to attract more Martins to our area with these colonies. If you want to spend time with a great bunch of people doing good conservation work, keep an eye out for our event announcements and come join us. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [rkastberg!@cni.net](mailto:rkastberg!@cni.net).

## New Board Officers Announced

**By Steve Puddicombe**

The biannual election results for board officers of WHAS were announced at the annual meeting March 29<sup>th</sup>. **George Exum** is our new president; **Carol Carver**, carries on as secretary, as does **Linda Jennings** as treasurer; and **Steve Puddicombe** is the new vice-president. **Stephen Glucoft**, formerly vice-president, is one director-at-large, along with **John Gross**.

Many thanks to **Charlotte Persons** who steps down as president, and to **Larry Turner**, who was a director-at-large for several terms. Also to **Stephen Glucoft** who has served as an officer in varying capacities, and as publicity chair, for many years. Both Charlotte, Larry and Stephen will remain active on the conservation committee. Still needed is at least one more director-at-large.

Board meetings are held at least four times a year, usually quarterly, with the next one slated for June. All WHAS members are welcome and attendance is a good way to explore becoming more involved in leadership and activities. Contact any officer for the location, time and date of our next meeting if interested.

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## Support our mission, join WHAS today!

### Check type of Membership:

- ☐ New Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$20 check for annual membership)
- ☐ Renewal Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$20 check for annual membership)
- ☐ I would like to support the work of Willapa Hills Audubon Society.  
Enclosed is my additional donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes 6 issues of our newsletter *WILLAPA WHISTLER* annually.

We are a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation. All dues and donations are tax deductible

For membership in National Audubon Society visit <http://www.audubon.org/>.

Please make your check payable to:

WILLAPA HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY or WHAS and mail to:

**WHAS-Membership, PO Box 399, Longview, WA 98632.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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### Thank you for supporting your local Audubon chapter -- Willapa Hills Audubon Society!

We will not share your contact information with anyone.

\*) To announce **occasional** reminders and to communicate last minute changes due to weather or other issues for WHAS programs and field trips.

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#### OFFICERS

**President:** **George Exum**  
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**Vice-President:** **Steve Puddicombe**  
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**Secretary:** **Carol Carver**  
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**Director at Large:** **John Gross**

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**Publicity:** **Stephen Glucoft**  
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**Indian Jack Slough Stdshp:** **Russ & Ann Kastberg**  
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**Wildlife Sightings:** **John Green**  
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**Website:** **Ludger Wöhrmann**  
360-423-7004 webmaster@willapahillsaudubon.org

#### OTHER

Please indicate any **new** information:

I prefer you contact me by:

- ☐ Phone
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Mail

Other options:

- ☐ I prefer to receive the *WHISTLER* by email  
(Add your email address below)
- ☐ Contact me about volunteer opportunities
- ☐ Add me to your announcement email list\*

### WHAS Spring Board Meeting Notes

By Carol Carver

- The Board said goodbye to Larry Turner, who is resigning from the Board and will remain active on the Conservation Committee.
- It was proposed that the Whistler be reduced from 6 to 4 issues yearly in order to save some money and volunteer time. An advisory vote will be requested at the Annual Meeting.
- We need a Program Chair. Training is available and the position involves finding presenters, scheduling presentations, reserving a venue and coordinating with Steve Glucoft for the publicity.
- Board position election nominations were reviewed.
- The Board voted to make a donation to the native plant garden at the Northlake School and donate an honorarium to Ian Thompson
- The Board voted to make a donation to Columbia Riverkeeper specifically for a LUBA appeal.
- The Board voted to authorize the WHAS Conservation Committee to write a comment opposing all oil shipments out of the Columbia River.
- The Board approved WHAS to sign on to a comment letter from Portland Audubon or WA Audubon to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council in regard to alternative 2, option 2.21 of their forage fish plan

### Wenas Campout

**What:** A Memorial Day weekend tradition with Audubon field trips, programs, and fellowship.

**When:** May 24-26, 2014

Enjoy spring birding and wildflowers at their best over Memorial Day weekend! There will be field trips, programs for all ages, and campfire social gatherings. More at <http://www.wenasaudubon.org/>

### Bird Festivals

**Leavenworth Spring BirdFest**

May 15-18, 2014 <http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com/>



## ... continued from page one: New Board Officers

### Committee chairs, Program Committee

On addition to the vacancy of one director-at-large we are still seeking 2-3 members to fill out a program committee and for someone to be our Program Chair. Putting forth programs for our membership and public has always been a vital part of our educational mission and also helps spread the word of our presence in the community, bringing in new members. Many of our current committee chairs and board members have been program chair in the past and the new chair will have plenty of help. Or consider joining one of the many committees you see listed in each issue of the Whistler on page 2. All committee chairs are automatically members of the board.

And thanks to **Carolyn Norred**, a frequent contributor and reviewer of pertinent books in the Whistler, for stepping up to be the new Christmas Bird Count Coordinator. We sponsor three of them and the board is very grateful for her assistance.

### New President

The board and membership welcomes **George Exum** as our new president. He brings a wealth of community experience to WHAS. George is married to Carol Carver, our secretary, and they live at their farm on Puget Island where they raise fresh produce for sale at local markets, as well as their renowned kimchi and sauerkraut products, jams, and pesto. Together they have been effective leaders in the movement to preserve the lower Columbia estuary from LNG port development, and in other areas of conservation and community service.

Proficient birders, they participate each year in the Wahkiakum Bird Count and have traveled the west and beyond

on birding forays and camping trips. George has forged relationships with many diverse groups in the lower Columbia region which will serve WHAS well in partnering and forming coalitions. A chief concern of his is in reaching out to our membership in Pacific County in what was formerly Discovery Coast territory, in Naselle and the Long Beach Peninsula.

The board has committed to holding most of our



Our new president George Exum with his wife Carol Carver

meetings in the Cathlamet area, a more geographically central location, so that we can potentially attract these folks to become more involved.

## Washington Birding Trail ID's Lake Sacajawea

By Margaret Green

10 years ago, Washington Audubon conceived the idea for *The Great Washington State Birding Trail*, patterned after the first and highly successful trail in Texas.

The Washington trail consists of 7 loops throughout the state that highlight special birding "hot spots" as designated by the various Audubon chapters throughout the state.

WHAS participated in the designation of many of the spots on the SW Loop. Lake Sacajawea in Longview was assigned one of the coveted locations on the trail.

Last month the Longview Historic Preservation Commission and the Longview Parks Department approved the placement of 2 signs at the lake marking its designation.



## Update on Conservation Concerns

By Charlotte Persons

### Cleanup the Former Reynolds Aluminum Plant

The 60 day public comment period on the cleanup plan for this site will begin as early as June 2, with a hearing expected for mid-July. An extensive report of water and soil testing, as well as alternative cleanup plans, will be released at that time. Informational meetings will be held by Ecology and Landowners and Citizens for a Safe Community (LCSC) in June to help explain the report. LCSC will also facilitate comment writing. Watch local media for the exact schedules.

Meanwhile here is a look at the current status of two newly proposed fossil fuel development projects in our region.:

### Methanol Plants in Kalama and Clatskanie:

At public meetings in both Kalama and Clatskanie in February, project and community business leaders touted the benefits of twin plants at Port of Kalama and Port Westward to convert natural gas to methanol. These would each require 1.6 billion dollars and thousands of workers to build and would at full expansion employ 180 to 250 employees (depending on which article one reads).

They would use existing pipelines but would increase river traffic as ships transport the product to factories in China to make olefin for producing plastics. Northwest Innovation Works, a consortium of Chinese government and multinational companies, claims that this project is “green” because the process produces less toxins and carbon dioxide than the current processes in China, which use coal or oil to make methanol.

They have also pledged to use local union labor. On the negative side, the plants here will emit some toxic compounds, including nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide. There are also concerns about the safety of methanol, which is highly flammable. The projects are being fast-tracked and hoped to have all permits by last month. Meanwhile, last week Northwest Innovation Works announced plans for a similar plant, but larger, in Tacoma.

### Liquid Propane/Butane Gas Plant in Longview:

On April 9 Haven Energy, a subsidiary of Sage Midstream, announced a project to pressurize propane and

butane gas from the Bakken oil fields in Montana and North Dakota and transport the liquid gas by rail car to the Port of Longview. It will be temporarily stored there until shipped to overseas ports, including Hawaii, Mexico, Asia, and South America, where it will be re-gasified and burned in homes and factories. The butane and propane would otherwise be flared (burned) at the oil fields.

At public meetings on April 20, Haven President Greg Bowles claimed that this would be a green project. Company officials recognize that burning the gas in the U.S. or in China creates the same amount of greenhouse gases. However, the project will be green, they say, because their exporting part of the gases normally flared at the oil fields will increase prices for butane and propane from the oil fields and will incentivize oil companies to sell more gas instead of flaring it.

Details about that possible effect on the oil price are not yet released to the public. The construction phase will create many jobs, and when completed the plant will employ about 20 local workers. However, there are some concerns. Port of Longview may use some public funds, as yet unspecified, to create infrastructure for the project.

While the project will be small in order not to trigger more extensive environmental review, there will be four 100-car unit trains per week coming from the oil fields, which will add to existing unit-car train traffic. Bowles claims that these will be safer rail cars built to a more modern code than those used to carry oil from the Bakken oil fields (the ones that have resulted in many accidents and explosions).

The company plans to use concrete storage tanks built to withstand combat conditions rather than the metal tanks usually used in the industry. Whether these will be strong enough to withstand possible earthquakes on what is acknowledged to be unsafe soils is still a question. More details about these concerns and about safely transporting the gas from the railcars to storage facilities and then to ships will be released in the future, according to Greg Bowles.

## Wood Duck Boxes

By John Green

A big thanks once again to Barney Wheeler for his donation of wood duck boxes; our resident wood ducks will have nest boxes in which to hatch their young. Barney's boxes were supplemented by additional boxes purchased from the WHAS budget.

Early this spring new boxes were placed and old cleaned out in preparation for the arrival of the returning migrants. Pairs of wood ducks have begun appearing at Lake Sacajawea circling the islands where the boxes were placed. Some have been observed perching atop the boxes. It appears the boxes should see a lot of action this year.

Thanks to Barney for his donation of time and materials and to volunteers Russ Kastberg and Mike Turner, who spent many hours erecting the new boxes and refurbishing and cleaning those already existing, we now have boxes at Lake Sacajawea, Indian Jack Slough, and the Longview Mint Farm Mitigation Ponds.

Mike Turner and Russ Kastberg hanging Duck Boxes – Image John Green





## Earth Day Booth a Big Success

By Steve Puddicombe

Hundreds of enthusiastic youngsters visited the WHAS booth at the Earth Day expo in Longview April 19<sup>th</sup>, and area birds can expect lots of bird seed treats as a result. Pat Reistroffer and her husband Bob, longtime organizers of the WHAS booth, assisted by members Pam Wright, Steve Puddicombe, and two local high school volunteers, helped kids produce some 350 bird feeders made with empty TP rolls, hanging string, and the bird seed bound on with peanut butter.

Kids also received packets of seed to take home with them in hopes of producing a new generation of backyard birders. Pat also had tubs of seed filled with hidden treasures, such as bird feathers and small sea shells for toddlers to rummage through, and plywood wing cutouts for older kids, designed to give a direct sense of the physiology of flying. Adults had the occasional question about a bird song and

species identification, and several requested membership forms to WHAS.



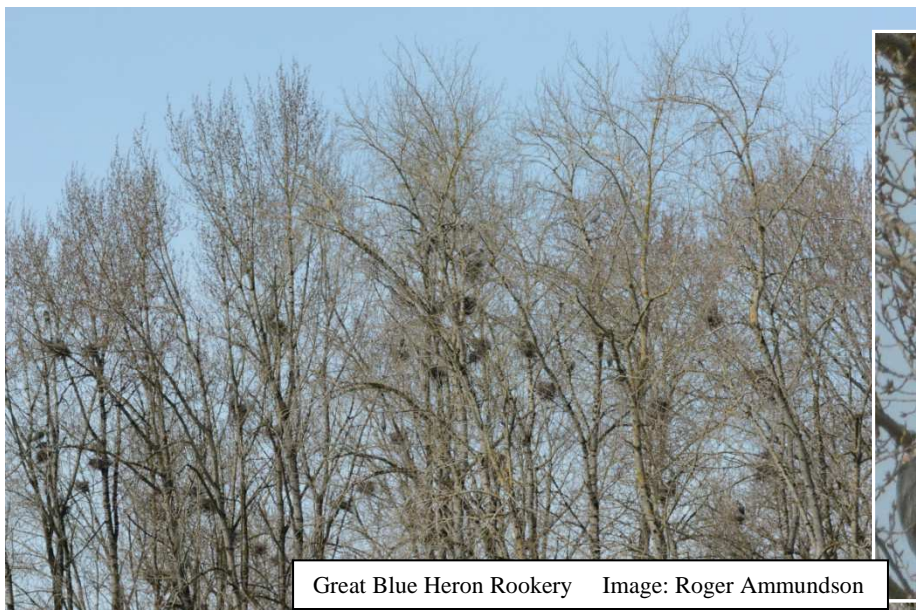
Local high school volunteers at the WHAS Earth Day booth.  
Image Pat Reistroffer



Pam Wright helps size up the wingspan of a visitor at the WHAS Earth Day booth.  
Image: Steve Puddicombe

## Images from recent field trip to Woodland Bottoms

By John Green

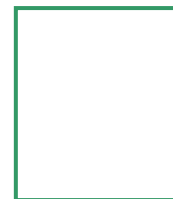


Great Blue Heron Rookery Image: Roger Ammundson





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Longview, WA 98632



The *Willapa Whistler* is the bi-monthly publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society (WHAS), a chapter of the National Audubon Society.

**TEMP -- RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Complimentary copies are sent to organizations and prospective members. All WHAS activities and programs are open to the public.

Articles, information, wildlife sightings and artwork are welcomed. The deadline for inclusion of material in the *Whistler* is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each even-numbered month. Send your contributions to:

WHAS *Whistler*, PO Box 399, Longview WA 98632

or email them to

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

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or pass it on to a friend.

### WHAS Programs and Field Trips

WHAS events are free and open to the public (Unless otherwise noted). Check the website calendar for the latest information and updates.

#### **Saturday, May 10 – Second Saturday monthly Lake Sacajawea Bird Walk.**

Meet at 8:00AM at Hemlock and Kessler Blvd. in Longview, in front of the Playground. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars if you have them. The leader will have a scope for better viewing. We should see some early spring migrants, Osprey, and possibly even Bulluck's oriole. This walk will last no more than 1 ½ hours. No reservations required.

#### **Monday, May 19, 6:30 PM - "Of Butterflies and Bigfoot"**

Dr. Robert Michael Pyle, renowned author, will present a fascinating blend of natural history and lore as part of Mount St. Helen's Institute Science Pub Lecture Series, "Views and Brews". The lecture will be held at the Kelso Theatre Pub, 214 S. Pacific Avenue, Kelso, WA. Suggested donation is \$10.

Go to [www.mshinstitute.org](http://www.mshinstitute.org) and check the Program "[Volcano Views and Brews](#)" for additional information.

*The Mission of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society is to support ecologically responsible ways of life, to help maintain biologically diverse habitats, and to promote environmental understanding and enjoyment of nature.*

**Check out our website at [www.willapahillsaudubon.org](http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org)**