

WILLAPA WHISTLER

A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society

Volume 40 // Issue 4

July // August 2014



Kingfisher

Image by Roger Amundson

Invitation to the WHAS Annual Picnic for Members and Friends

By Margaret Green

Where: Wake Robin – Longview school district's nature facility

When: Sunday, August 3rd at 1pm

Please join us for the annual summer picnic. The picnic will be held at the Longview School District's Wake Robin Property in Longview. The yearly summer picnic is always a relaxed and fun way to meet and socialize with fellow WHAS members, our friends and interested acquaintances.

Each person or family should bring a dish (salad, dessert, appetizers, casseroles, or other side) to serve 6 – 8 and your own plates, utensils, and any additional beverages. WHAS will provide napkins, cups, and water.

We will chat, eat, and enjoy the beautiful forest setting with possibilities for walks or exploration.

Directions to the picnic:

- At the junction of SR4 (Ocean Beach Hwy) and Coal Creek Rd., turn north onto Coal Creek Rd. and travel approx. 2 ½ miles to Carlon Loop.
- Turn left onto Carlon Loop, cross bridge, driving straight ahead through the gate onto the Wake Robin compound.
- There will be abundant parking.

Conservation Faces Many Challenges

By Steve Puddicombe

Willapa Hills Audubon's mission in terms of conservation of habitat and resources in our region has never faced so many challenges. At a recent Conservation Committee meeting members identified some half-dozen proposed or de-facto import/export facilities for fossil fuels, including coal, oil and LNG, both in Oregon and Washington along the lower Columbia.

We also discussed the transportation issues associated with these proposals; the trains, barges and pipelines necessary to bring the fuels to and from the ports, and the potential for more proposals to surface in the near future.

WHAS has already taken specific stands in opposition to several proposed LNG ports, to the proposed coal export facility in Longview, and the export of oil from Clatskanie; but as new proposals in our region emerge with increasing frequency it has now become necessary to clarify our position on fossil fuel export in particular, in the form of a resolution opposing all fossil fuel export from NW ports.

continued on page 3 Conservation...

In this issue of the *Whistler*:

- 2 Membership Form,
WHAS contact information
Betty Mayfield 1930-2014
- 3 Osprey Nest near Woodland
- 4 Birding and Leisure in
Southern Arizona
- 5 Purple Martins are welcome
at Indian Jack Slough
- 6 Summer Birding
on the Long Beach Peninsula
Longview Reynold's Aluminium
Smelter Cleanup
- 7 Loving Hummingbirds to Death

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 _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Y14:7XCH rev. 2007

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.

-----Clip

OFFICERS

President: **George Exum**
360-431-1174 president@willapahillsaudubon.org
Vice-President: **Steve Puddicombe**
503-465-2205 pudfella@willapabay.org
Secretary: **Carol Carver**
360-849-4324 secretary@willapahillsaudubon.org
Treasurer: **Linda Jennings**
dljennings@opusnet.com
Director at Large: **Stephen Glucoft**
360-577-7720 sglucoft@comcast.net
Director at Large: **John Gross**

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Conservation: **Charlotte Persons**
360-431-1174 cpeople2u@gmail.com
Hospitality: **Gloria Nichols**
360-636-3793 jgnt@comcast.net
Program: **vacant**
Field Trip: **John Green**
360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com
Membership: **Margaret Green**
360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com
Education: **Darrel Whipple**
503-556-9838 education@willapahillsaudubon.org
Finance: **John Green**
360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com
Newsletter: **Ludger Wöhrmann**
360-423-7004 newsletter@willapahillsaudubon.org
Publicity: **Stephen Glucoft**
360-577-7720 sglucoft@comcast.net
Indian Jack Slough Stdshp: **Russ & Ann Kastberg**
360-274-7091 nelsoncreek@willapahillsaudubon.org
Wildlife Sightings: **John Green**
360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com
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*

BETTY MAYFIELD 1930-2014

By Steve Puddicombe

A great friend of the birds of the Lower Columbia and of Willapa Hills Audubon, former board member and past-president, Betty Mayfield, died June 14 in Longview. She was 83. Born in Anchorage, Alaska, she attended university and began a career in journalism in Illinois before relocating to Rainier where she was a reporter for the Clatskanie Chief for nearly 20 years and a supporting patron of both the Clatskanie City and Rainier Libraries, and a member of the board of the latter. Her association with WHAS began in the early '80's.

Betty was a dedicated and lively member of WHAS throughout her time with us, always attending the Washington State Audubon conferences each year, where she became known to chapters around the State, and an ever-present attendee at board meetings. Betty was a co-President of WHAS for several years. She also served as chair of the Finance Committee, then as chair of Publicity, Membership, and then again at Finance until illness finally forced her, reluctantly, to withdraw several years ago. Known as a stickler for details in any discussion or decision, she was never shy about expressing her opinion, even in dissent, yet, was always a team player. Above all, we on the board miss her unique personality, her wry chuckle and sense of humor: she was a character of the highest order.

WHAS Alert/Announcement e-mails

Willapa Hills Audubon has set up an email list to facilitate occasional communications with friends and members to announce or send reminders about programs, field trips and mission-related actions. It is also used to help communicate last minute schedule changes for programs or activities due to weather closures or other issues.

If you are not receiving these occasional emails yet and would like to be included, please send an email to whasalert@gmail.com with "subscribe" in the subject line and we will add your email address. Of course, we will not share your contact information with anyone

... continued from page one: Conservation Faces Many Challenges

Resolution Opposing Fossil Fuels From NW Ports

The Conservation Committee crafted a resolution and submitted it at the WHAS Board Meeting of June 11, citing the need for a general position with regard to fossil fuel export, in order to act more efficiently in commenting and effecting our influence in the future on these issues. The main arguments in favor of such a resolution included: the relationship between the burning of fossil fuels and negative climate change; the precious nature of our lower Columbia and NW port locations and the environmentally unsound methods of the resource extraction (such as fracking and coal strip mining); the fact that conserving our native fuel is a security and economic concern; and the fact that conservation of energy and the use of alternative energy has not been satisfactory and in keeping with our technological know-how and manufacturing ability. The resolution is addressed specifically to export and does not have a blanket answer for all import proposals, and also leaves the export or transport of derivatives to discussion on a case by case basis. The WHAS Board approved the resolution without opposition. You can read the full resolution at the WHAS website www.willapahillsaudubon.org.

Further discussion of the fossil fuel export proposals revealed that: the Longview coal port Environmental Impact Statement won't be due out until next Spring (2015); oil continues to be exported from Clatskanie despite fines from the State of Oregon as the amount exceeds what has been permitted; the Vancouver Town Council voted to oppose oil export there; hearing dates regarding the Reynolds cleanup in Longview have been set (see Margaret Green's article elsewhere in the Whistler).

Army Corps of Engineers Releases Draft EIS On Cormorant Removal

The Double-crested Cormorant breeding colony on east Sand Island in the Columbia River estuary has been increasing steadily since 1990. At that time the island was made more permanent with dredge spoils, so that 100 nesting pairs has

increased to nearly 15,000, making it the largest breeding site for the species in North America. Other species have also made the island their breeding home, including Brown Pelicans and Brandt's Cormorants. The problem is that the cormorants feed on salmonid smolts. According to the Corps EIS some 11 million up to 17 million smolts are taken per year. The preferred alternative is one that would focus on lethal methods in reducing the colony to some 5,600 nesting pairs. This would include taking eggs and shooting birds, if necessary, but has the advantage of leaving other species unharmed and viable, which would not be the case if hazing methods were employed. Hazing would also leave the DBL-crest Cor species free to move elsewhere in the area and would not necessarily reduce the predation of salmonids in the lower Columbia region. Other alternatives would utilize hazing and other non-lethal methods, and lethal methods if necessary, to remove the birds from E Sand Island, but would not eliminate them altogether or prevent them from nesting elsewhere in the area.

Portland Audubon has already issued a statement opposing any lethal means in addressing the problem, calling that proposed method a "slaughter" and have called on their membership to support that view. Conservation Director Bob Sallinger believes the focus should be on addressing the primary causes of salmon decline: dam operation and habitat loss. You can view the Portland Audubon statement at www.portlandaudubon.org/news, and there are links to the EIS. Comments will be taken by the Corps until August 4. There will be two public meetings during the comment period: July 10 in Portland, and July 24 in Astoria.

Willapa Hills Audubon has not commented nor taken a position on the issue at this point but the Conservation Committee is studying the EIS and hopes to make a statement soon. If you have any comments to enter into our discussion please contact Charlotte Persons or Steve Puddicombe.

Osprey Nest near Woodland

Image by Robert VanNatta

There is an active Osprey nest west of Woodland next to the Columbia River in a public access area. Robert VanNatta was able to park beside where he set up the camera outside the dike.

He got quite a show that morning as an eagle came by just after these photos were taken, and the Osprey went after the eagle and chased it off.



Birding and Leisure in Southern Arizona

By Margaret Green

It doesn't take much to talk us into a trip to SE Arizona in early spring. The migrants are on the move, the weather is usually balmy and the spirit moves us, so to speak, away from the dark and wet Northwest with winter's grip lingering on Longview.

So on April 14, off we went, heading south. There is much to be said of the journey, for us, nearly a 3 day trip to get to Tucson but I'll focus on the destination. We could have pushed on into the Chiricahua Mountains but East Tucson is worthy of a stop, just for the driving loop in the East Saguaro National Park. This is a popular cycling route for Tucson bikers, but can be a wonderful leisure drive, with many pull outs for birding highlights. The saguaro cactus offer nesting opportunities for cavity nesters, such as the Gila Woodpecker and the abundant Cactus Wren, both extremely noisy and flashy inhabitants. Many of the open desert species can be found including Curved-billed Thrashers, Verdins, and Black-throated sparrows. There are several trails for those who would like to venture out into the scrub. We took a short hike, and were surrounded by bird sound and activity immediately.

Tucson offers many locations on the SE Arizona Birding Trail (map available at visitors' centers) that could keep you busy there for days, but we headed out toward the SE border of Arizona and New Mexico, our destination being Portal, a famed location for birders searching for a sighting of the Elegant Trogon. Portal is nestled in the Chiricahua Mountains which themselves offer fascinating hoodoo formations, plant and animal life. Though on past trips, we stayed in the very low cost (\$4 for seniors) forest service campgrounds, we chose Birder's B & B this year and were happy we did. We need not to have left the grounds and still amassed a very large species list. Cave Creek is the water that provides this area and canyons with its life source. After an ominous beginning, a horrendous lightening storm yielding large hail stones and almost no birds that afternoon (though we can't complain about a Hepatic Tanager), the next morning was glorious with a huge abundance of birds everywhere. A shocking find was the Red-faced Warbler, my nemesis bird for many trips, which we found at the lower creek area, when it usually is seen very high in the canyons. We also found Yellow, Yellow-rumped, and Painted Redstart Warblers, Summer tanagers, Broad-billed and Magnificent Hummingbirds,



Bridled Titmouse and exciting views of an Arizona Woodpecker pair. The place is crawling with birders, but no Trogon sightings had been made, a disappointment, since this has been the place for all our previous sightings.

Two days later and on our way to a B & B near Patagonia Lake State park, we stopped at the San Pedro River Riparian Area, where open grasslands offer Green Towhees, Loggerhead Shrike, Red-tailed Hawks, the feeders offer Black-chinned Hummingbirds, multitudes of White-crowned Sparrows, but the walk along the river, was lush with bird life, Vermillion Flycatchers, Hooded Orioles, Summer Tanagers, Common Yellow-throat, Yellow, Black-throated Gray, and Wilson's warblers. This natural area is just a couple miles outside of Sierra Vista, a birding mecca nestled next to the Huachuca Mountains which have many canyon/riparian zones, including Carr and the Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve, each worthy of exploration. Sierra Vista is also the home of Ft. Huachuca another hot spot on the Arizona Birding Trail. We entered the Fort in search of the Sinaloa Wren, a Mexican species seen rarely in the US, but the Tucson Audubon Society web site hot list, gave us the tip. We actually found the spot with no other birders in the vicinity. We stalked, heard and then saw this elusive and skulky species. The euphoria of finding the species and knowing you've found it is only appreciated by another birder who has had this same experience. We were ecstatic! Trogon were known to lurk in Huachuca canyon, but it was late and we were expected in Patagonia, where sightings of the Trogon were guaranteed. Onward fearless travelers.

Patagonia is further west and south, within 20 miles of the Mexican Border. Several years ago, we ventured this way, and by word of mouth, heard of the Patton home, where these locals had created an amazing backyard adjacent to a natural habitat and opened it to the public. Their many feeders attract a huge variety of species. Over the years, bleachers were added to accommodate the many visitors, who gladly donated money toward bird feed and syrup for this magnificent birding opportunity. The Tucson Audubon has since purchased and taken on stewardship of the property. We had views of Indigo Bunting, Bullock's Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeak, Broadbill, Black-chinned, Magnificent, and Violet-capped Hummingbirds, Inca Doves, Long-billed Thrashers, and so many others. This is a must stop in Patagonia. Two other wonderful places which include walking trails as well as seated viewing, are the

Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Nature Preserve and Lake Patagonia State Park, both certain for Trogon sightings, except for the Greens in 2014. Sigh. However, we had wonderful views of nesting Gray Hawks, saw our first Black Vulture of the trip, and worked on our flycatcher identification skills, now pretty certain of the Dusky-capped, Ash-throated, Brown-crested, with the more common, Say's Phoebe and Western Kingbird also seen. We were delighted by a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, even though the Black-capped Gnatcatcher eluded us.

All along the way, our encounters with other birders gave us tips for new places to explore. So this story will be continued in the next Whistler issue, with those explorations a little further West and up and down Interstate 19 between Tucson and the border. Stay tuned.

Purple Martins Are Welcome at Indian Jack Slough

By Russ Kastberg

This spring, Willapa Hills Audubon was fortunate to receive a **donation from Dr. Art Hauge, of Puget Island, in memory of his special friend, Marge Burns.** The Chapter board decided to utilize the donation to help purchase a Purple Martin colony and install it at Indian Jack Slough. WHAS has been partnering to help restore an old farm on Columbia Land Trust property since 2007, called Indian Jack Slough. It is located across Highway 4 from the Julia Butler Hanson Wildlife Refuge, just west of Cathlamet.

In May, volunteers installed the concrete base and erected the Purple Martin colony, which includes 18 gourds installed on a tower that can be lowered to maintain these bird houses. Columbia Land Trust intends to install another colony nearby in the future.

Thank you to all the volunteers helping. The hard work on May 2nd, installing the concrete bases, was completed by Dan Friesz, CLT Steward, Russ Kastberg, Tom Finn, Steve Puddicombe, and George Exum. And on May 4th, Russ and Ann Kastberg, Tom Finn, and John and Margaret Green completed installing the colony. Last reported, by Tom Finn on June 13th, there were no Purple Martins in sight. But, we know they are in the area, both on Puget Island and at a colony close by on the Wildlife Refuge down by the mouth of the Elochoman River.

So, if you are in the Cathlamet area, take the side trip along Nelson Creek road to the Red Barn; take a left on Risk Road and look for the Purple Martin colony off to your left. It is about 100 yards off the road at the left turnout, across from the third house you come by. And, if you see any Purple Martins, please let us know. It may take them some time to find their new home, but we are confident they will be coming.



Summer Birding on the Long Beach Peninsula

By Suzy Whitley

On July 5, 2014 I counted 58 White Pelicans feeding in Baker Bay on the Columbia River between the villages of Ilwaco and Chinook WA viewable from Stringtown Road.

Northwest Nature Notes Blog site stated: "In 2010, a small colony of White Pelicans formed on Miller Sands Spit, in the Lower Columbia River, reaching a few hundred pairs by 2012. The Army Corp of Engineers covered the nesting area with dredge spoil that fall, but small numbers continued to be seen the next summer." Read more at:

<http://www.slatermuseum.blogspot.com>.

The Pacific beaches are great roosting places for the Brown Pelican and



Caspian Terns. If you come to the beach to view them, watch for banded birds. Banded birds can be reported to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory at: <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl> and banded Caspian Terns can be reported to: My Banded Bird which is part of Bird Research Northwest. That website is: <http://mybandedtern.org>

Here are some excerpts from the Bird Research Northwest website at <http://www.birdresearchnw.org>

6/2 – 6/8/14: There was a high count for the week of 10,750 Caspian Terns on East Sand Island tern colony.

6/5/14: There were 6,950 California Brown Pelicans roosting on East Sand Island.

Longview Reynold's Aluminium Smelter Cleanup

By Margaret Green

We are currently in a 60-day public comment period for the Cleanup of the decommissioned Reynold's Aluminum Smelter site. Soil, ground water, surface water, and in-river sediments have been tested and several cleanup plans are presented and reported in the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study which is now available on line at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/gsp/Sitepage.aspx?csid=11796> or at the Longview Public Library, for review. Toxic chemicals have been found in several locations on site in soils, ground water, and in sediments in the Columbia River.

You can learn more by attending the Ecology open house at the Red Lion Inn in Kelso, at 4:00 PM on July 16. A public hearing will be held at the same location immediately

following the open house, at 6:30 PM where public testimony will be taken. You can also send written comments by email at Reynoldscleanup.comments@ecy.wa.gov or by US Mail to Dept. of Ecology, Industrial Section, PO Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600 Attn: Guy Barrett.

We encourage you to request the highest level of cleanup to protect the health of workers, community members, and the river, and for the removal of contaminated river sediment to a certified offsite landfill. Please feel free to contact Margaret Green with questions by email to jgreen2317@aol.com or by phone at 360-575-9238.

Written comments must be submitted by August 1.

Loving Hummingbirds to Death

By Kimberly Mason (Excerpt from <http://www.almostdailynews.com/2012/06/08/hummingbirds-dont-love-them-to-death/>)

Part one -- Reprinted with permission

Hummingbirds are easy to attract to a backyard garden, a cinch to keep well fed, and a joy to watch. These sparkling jewels of summer are easy to love. But if you don't take proper care to provide healthy nectar and clean feeders, they're also an easy bird to love to death. Hummingbird feeders must be kept clean and free from mold and fungus, or the tiny hum-buzzers you so enjoy could develop a serious and deadly fungus infection. This infection causes the tongue to swell, making it impossible for the bird to feed. Starvation is a slow and painful death.

But, just in case you need more motivation to keep your feeders clean, think of the children. A mother hummingbird can pass a fungal infection to her babies — who will also die of starvation. Fermented nectar creates liver damage, which will also cause death. When you go on vacation this summer, take down your feeders or leave your feeders in the care of a trusted neighbor.



A Rufous hummingbird flies in for a quick snack, trusting that the nectar offered is safe to drink.

A Cautionary Tale

Vickie Miller, of Chehalis, recently experienced the heartbreaking loss of an Anna's Hummingbird she called "The General."

"The General patrolled our backyard every day for over a year and a half. One day he came home with a swollen tongue and we knew he had a fungal infection,"

Miller said. "We watched our beautiful General die within 24 hours."

"I held him in my hand, inside a warm cloth, to help ease his passing," Miller said. "Please, warn others to keep ALL their



Reader Submitted Photo: Vickie Miller, Chehalis

bird feeders clean." The proper care of hummingbird feeders requires a significant commitment of time and energy. For Vickie Miller, the Anna's Hummingbirds in her backyard have become a year-round commitment. "In the winter, I bring the feeders in at night to keep them from freezing," Miller said. "And I'm very diligent about keeping the feeders clean and scrubbed

between fillings. It is especially important to change the nectar frequently in warm weather, because the nectar will spoil." If you see a neighbor with a dirty feeder, Miller said, "Please, tell them about The General and his fatal fungal infection."

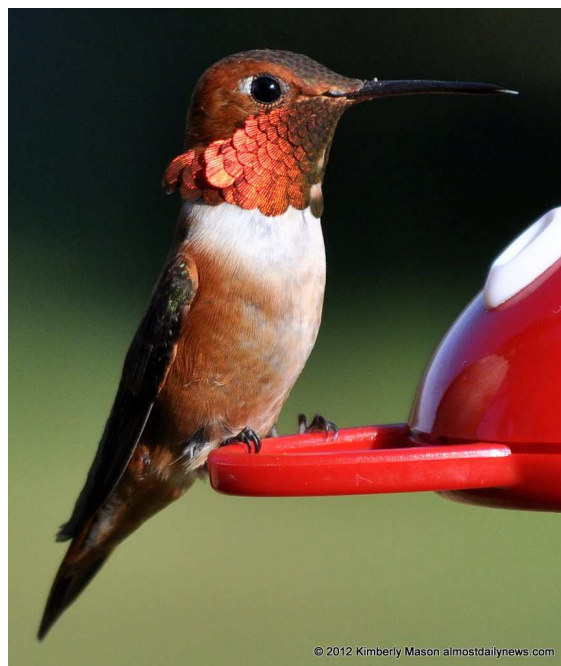
The Basics of Hummingbird Care

Providing a feeder with a perch helps the hummingbirds preserve precious energy while dining. Keep your hummingbird feeder in the shade. I keep my feeder on a swiveling hanger that I can move into the sun to get a good shot at them with my Nikon, and swing back into the shade when I'm done.

To clean your feeder, flush the feeder with hot tap water and use a bottle brush to scrub the sides of the glass jar. Do NOT use soap; soap will leave a residue behind. (If you just can't help yourself and must use soap, a bleach or vinegar and water solution rinse will remove soap residue.) Inspect the feeder carefully for black mold. If you see any mold growth, soak the feeder in a solution of 1/4 cup bleach to one gallon of water for one hour.

To make nectar, mix one part ordinary white cane sugar to four parts water. (Do not use store bought mixtures, do not use honey or any other kind of sugar — just *ordinary white cane sugar*.) Bring to a quick boil, stir to dissolve the sugar, then let the mixture come to room temperature before you fill your feeder. The boiling water will help slow fermentation of the nectar, but as soon as a hummingbird beak dips and drinks, the microorganisms carried on the beak will be transferred into the nectar. If the nectar becomes cloudy, it has spoiled and needs to be replaced. A sugar solution can spoil in as little as two days. If your feeder is hanging in the sun or outside temperatures are high, the nectar may start to ferment in just one day. Put out only as much nectar as your birds will consume in two or three days. If you mix up a large batch of nectar, you can keep the rest in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.

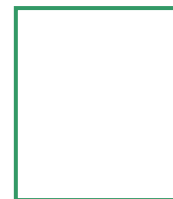
See the next issue for part 2 about local hummingbirds and Thank's to Larry Turner for making this article possible.



© 2012 Kimberly Mason almostdailynews.com



PO Box 399
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 15th of each even-numbered month. Send your contributions to:

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

or email them to

newsletter@willapahillsaudubon.org

The *Willapa Whistler* is printed on recycled paper using soy based ink.



Please recycle your *Whistler*
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.

WHAS Annual Picnic for Members and Friends

Where: Wake Robin – Longview school district's nature facility

When: Sunday, August 3rd at 1pm

See page one for more details.

No field trips or programs are planned for July or August; regular field trips will begin again in September. If something arises that might be of interest to our local birders, a spontaneous trip may occur, and those on the WHAS alert list will see an announcement. Please check page two for details about the WHAS alert list.

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