

# WILLAPA WHISTLER

*A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society*

Volume 45 // Issue 1

Spring 2019



Pacific golden Plover--- Image by Tim Boyer—See program info below

## Join us for the 2019 Willapa Hills Annual Meeting Banquet

All Willapa Hills Audubon members are invited to attend the 2019 annual meeting and banquet at the **Kelso Senior Center** on **Friday, March 29, at 5:30 PM**. The event will feature a presentation by guest speaker Tim Boyer (details below) beginning at 7 PM that is open to the general public.

This year's banquet will be a **potluck** and attendees are asked to bring a dish to share that will feed 6-8 people, and your own table service including plates. Cups, coffee and hot water will be provided. The Senior Center will be open at 5 PM for setup so the banquet can begin promptly at 5:30. The Senior Center is located at 106 NW 8th avenue in Kelso, just across from Joanne's Fabric Store near Ocean Beach Highway.

## Photographer and Shorebird Expert Featured At Annual Meeting Banquet

**Tim Boyer**, photographer and shorebird expert will present his program, *“Understanding Shorebirds, The Miracle Of Migration”* on **Friday, March 29, 2019**, at Willapa Hills Audubon's Annual Banquet, as guest speaker, beginning at 7 PM at the **Kelso Senior Center** at 106 NW 8th avenue in Kelso. The general public is welcome. Doors open at 6:45 PM.

He will also lead a shorebird identification class and shore walk beginning at 8:30 AM, March 30, 2019 at the Long Beach, Washington Grange Hall. (check page 5 for the details).

The program *“Understanding Shorebirds, the Miracle of Migration”* is about the epic migrations of shorebirds. Six of the thirty-eight common shorebirds found in Washington are discussed, as we explore the trans-ocean migration of Bar-tailed Godwits, Pacific Golden-Plovers, Sanderling and other birds that cross the majority of the Pacific Ocean.

...continued on page 5

## One Last Lecture An Elder's View

**By President Steve Puddicombe**

If you had one last lecture to give what would you say? That's the premise in David Suzuki's series of recent lectures given to audiences around the world. Suzuki, a well-known Canadian geneticist, nature broadcaster and environmental activist also takes on the mantle of elder statesman and advocates for the accrued wisdom of self-reflection over time. His lectures derive from his latest book, *The Legacy: An Elder's Vision For Our Sustainable Future*.

Suzuki argues that elders, beyond the usual reach of fame and fortune and unhitched from conformity and compromise, with the experience of long life, are in a unique position to speak the unalloyed truth without constraint. Elders, in his view, even have a responsibility to do so.

This isn't about politics: an elder's view is likely to be a conservative one, in the classical Burke-ian sense, one leavened with a nod to tradition and continuity yet aware that new ideas and approaches may better accomplish that view. Or, on the other hand, the long view of an elder can observe the failure of some approaches to do the same. Of course age itself does not necessarily confer upon someone any particular sagacity and Suzuki downplays that in favor of the accumulation of expertise and knowledge, whatever one's span of time.

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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 4 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

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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\*

### Olympic BirdFest 2019

Come Bird in Sequim, Washington, April 12-14, 2019  
Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction & raffle, gala banquet, and more. The featured speaker this year is: John Marzluff.  
Or join the festival pre-trip: a birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands.  
More info and BirdFest registration at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org).

### Othello Sandhill Crane Festival 2019

The 22th Annual festival will be held March 22-24, 2019. For nearly two decades they have celebrated the annual return of nearly 35,000 sand hill cranes to Othello, Washington every March as they migrate north to their breeding grounds in Alaska. The Festival offers an incredible opportunity to view the cranes up-close, with tours led by local experts.  
More info: <http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/>

### Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival

May 3-5, 2019 Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, Hoquiam WA  
Each spring, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds stop to rest and feed along the Washington Coast and in the Grays Harbor estuary during their migration northward.  
More info at <http://www.shorebirdfestival.com/>

### Washington State Audubon Campout

Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-27, 2019  
Members of Washington State's Audubon Chapters and their friends gather at "The Hazel Wolf Bird Sanctuary" at the Wenas Creek Campground, located on the east slope of the Cascade Mountains between Ellensburg and Yakima. With a variety of natural history and recreation opportunities, the Wenas Valley is a beautiful area that supports a fascinating assortment of spring flora and fauna.  
Everyone, whether members of Audubon chapters or not, is welcome to join in for this wonderful weekend of enjoying nature!  
See <http://www.wenasaudubon.org> for more information

## Leadbetter Christmas Bird Count Results

By Suzy Whitley



The Leadbetter Christmas Bird Count (and the WHAS) would like to thank the generosity of all of the private property owners and businesses who allowed the birders to access their property to count birds.

A special thanks to Anita's Café in Ocean Park and the Hunter's Inn in Naselle for feeding the birders breakfast and dinner respectively.

The Audubon "Leadbetter" Christmas Bird count falls within a fifteen mile circle on a map that includes the peninsula from 185<sup>th</sup> street north to the tip and around Willapa Bay as far north as Bay Center. There were 28 hardy birders that volunteered their day to count as many birds as they could within this circle.

The total number of species that were counted on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> was 92, down slightly from previous years. The birders had a good day of weather between our coastal storms, but the storms played a role in the low numbers.

Above: Marbled Godwits by Suzy Whitley

Below: 3 Sandpipers and a Red Knot by Steve Hemenway



A few highlights were: 15,433 Dunlin, 174 American Robins, 3 Barred Owls, 2 American Dippers, and 13 snowy plovers. Within count week (3 days before and 3 days after the count) 200 Marbled Godwits were counted. The Trumpeter Swans have gone from a high of 88 in 2011 to 13 this year. What was missing were raptors; no merlin's, sharp-shinned hawks or coppers hawks were seen this year.

### Cowlitz Columbia CBC Results

By Bob Reistroffer

On Tuesday, January 1, 2019 the 37<sup>th</sup> Cowlitz-Columbia Christmas Bird Count (3CBC), the first of the New Year, was conducted. We had 19 field observers and 3 feeder watchers out for the day peering through the fog and finding 89 species of birds. The species count this year was the lowest since 2010. Since 2010 we have had 4 years with over 100 species and the rest in the mid 90's. Our highest species number was 108 in 2013 and 2016.

The count circle was begun in 1982 with 57 species and 4,545 individual birds found. This year we found 89 species and 14,721 individuals. We recorded some all time individual high counts; 597 Tundra Swans, 394 Ring-necked Ducks, 165 Buffleheads, 664 Rock Doves, 13 Red-breasted Sapsuckers, 200 Western Scrub Jays, 98 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 768 American Robins, and 13 Brown Creepers (tied a high).

Thank you to all our field observers and feeder watchers.

### Wahkiakum CBC Results

By Andrew Emlen

We found 109 species (about average for this circle) plus six additional count week species, despite fairly steady rain. The most abundant species in the circle was Greater Scaup with a count of 23,832, followed by Cackling Goose with 12,240. The most unusual species found were a Lesser Goldfinch (a Wahkiakum county and Wahkiakum CBC first) on Puget Island, a Harris's Sparrow on Aldrich Point Road in Brownsmead, and a Lesser Yellowlegs on Jackson-Pentilla Road in Brownsmead (a first for this CBC). New high counts were set for Trumpeter Swan, Cinnamon Teal, Ring-necked Duck (302, previous high 188), Black Phoebe (10, previous high 4), California Scrub-jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, and American Robin (683, previous high 394).

We missed Townsend's Warbler for the first time. A count of 1 Western Grebe was disturbingly low (previous low 23, previous high 245).

The count was hampered somewhat by the government shutdown, as the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge boat could not be used to access the more inaccessible islands (Marsh and Karlson Islands) of the Lewis and Clark National Wildlife Refuge. Nevertheless, most islands were accessed via kayaks. Thanks again to everyone for volunteering!

Other than that, there was a fair representation of the common species in the circle. Full results can be found on Audubon's website: <http://netapp.audubon.org/cbcobservation/>

## Upon logging my 40th Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey

By Darrel Whipple

We could hear them chuckling off-and-on after we stopped for a potty break at the Modrow Bridge.

But it took us a full ten minutes of gaping from various nearby locations before we found the source of the chuckling. Steve spotted two tiny white dots in the steep forest of conifers overlooking the lower Kalama River: two adult Bald Eagles perched shoulder to shoulder on a bare horizontal branch.

"Must be courting," I said. "It's that time of year."

We were nearing the end of the route on that 24th day of January for the Midwinter Bald Eagle Survey, which I have run for WHAS every year since 1980.

On this overcast day that ranged from 46 to 52 degrees F. we tallied 13 adults and 1 sub-adult. We were especially pleased to run across the sub-adult near Castle Rock as it suggests that our resident birds have had recent reproductive success, something that hasn't been a given for lower Columbia River eagles suffering the egg-thinning legacy of PCBs and DDT in the food chain.

The survey covers two latitude-longitude blocks along the Cowlitz and Columbia rivers, originally assigned to WHAS as part of a nationwide study of eagle populations that ran from 1979 to 1989, coordinated by the National Wildlife Federation.

In addition to the eagles we noted 34 other avian species, including a couple Yellow-rumped Warblers, 15



This sub-adult Bald Eagle was found perched in cottonwoods across the Cowlitz River from Castle Rock's historic rock. It concentrated on ripping up what appeared to be a wing of a gull, duck or goose.

Image courtesy of Steve Hemenway

Redtails and 4 Kestrels. But the real treat was to have fifteen minutes of close-up time with the immature eagle of Castle Rock as it munched its meal and posed for photos.

It could hear us chuckling, I am sure, as we slipped away to resume the trip.

## Trinidad and Tobago Comes to Kelso: Rich Birding on the Caribbean Island

By Steve Puddicombe

Mark your calendars. On **Monday, May 20, 2019, Martyn Kenefick** will give a presentation on **birding in Trinidad & Tobago**, the twin-island nation that lies in the Caribbean just north of Venezuela.

**Kenefick will appear at 7 PM, May 20. The program is free and open to the public.** Please check our website or Facebook page for details to come.

Home to 482 species of birds, 68 different bats, 45 snakes, 50 spiders, 30 frogs and toads, 120 Dragonflies, 765 butterflies and close to 3,500 moths; the islands are an introduction to the natural history of South America. Get a great taste of tropical birding in Trinidad's high mountain rain forests, sandy beaches and mangrove swamps, as well as on Tobago's seabird nesting islands and large protected preserves.

Martyn Kenefick has been an avid birder since his early teens, and moved to Trinidad in 1999. He spent 15 years as a birding tour guide and is an author of the **Birds of Trinidad & Tobago Field Guide**. He joined the board of the non-profit Asa Wright Nature Centre in 2015 and is now chair of the Conservation & Education Committee.



Join Willapa Hills for this tropical birding experience.

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**Continued from page one: One Last Lecture - An Elder's View**

And wisdom isn't neatly of only one viewpoint.

Suzuki's lecture hit a chord with me (you can watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S2b7SpLpN5A>). His main interest, of course, is with the natural world; that we have dithered long enough defining the grave threats to its survival, and ours. But, elder wisdom need not dwell in any one place. As an example, when I emerged, more or less unscathed, from the testosterone fog of my teens and twenties I often wondered why no one had ever warned me about what that would be like. I could have used more knowledge and wisdom on that one!

Still, I harken to Suzuki's message about the environment. I mourn the loss of habitat to human over-

population; the pernicious ubiquity of plastic. His message hints at the legacy of Rachel Carson, who had fatal cancer even while testifying to congress about the threats posed by DDT and other chemicals. Environmentalism is a world view, not a pure science; it's a way of seeing our relationship with the world.

Most of us carry forward our wisdom that way, not as scientists or philosophers, but as folks relating our special experience in the natural world to those who love and trust us. Whatever we do we ought to speak up when something needs saying.

**Continued from page one: Photographer and Shorebird Expert Featured at Annual Meeting Banquet**

We'll look at where they migrate, why they migrate and how they are able to travel so far. These global migrants require global conservation and climate change solutions. In a effort to understand their remarkable journeys we need to look beyond the North American borders and see where shorebirds spend most of their lives."

Tim Boyer is an award-winning nature photographer. His images have been published in many bird and nature magazines. He is a full-time photographer and a graduate of



Seattle Audubon's Master Birder Program. He enjoys sharing his knowledge of photography and birds through workshops and presentations. Shorebirds are his favorite family group of birds, and he spends a lot of weekends on the Washington Coast.

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**Shorebird Identification Class and Walk**


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By Suzy Whitley

**When:**

Saturday March 30, 2019  
Indoor Class 8:30 to 1:00  
Lunch 1:00 to 1:30  
Field Trip 1:30 to 4:30  
Sponsored by Willapa Hills  
Audubon Society

**Where:**

Long Beach Grange ~ 5715  
Sandridge Road ~ Long Beach, WA  
~ Lower Level Back Door ~  
Donations Accepted

**Bring:**

Sack Lunch - All Weather Gear -  
Camera - Binoculars

**Sign up:**

Contact: Steve Puddicombe – Space  
is limited  
Email: [pudfella@willapabay.org](mailto:pudfella@willapabay.org)  
Phone: 1-360-465-2205

Image: Bar-tailed Godwit worn  
feathers – courtesy of speaker



## Board Notes

### By Steve Puddicombe, President

At our last board meeting, January 12, 2019, the main order of business was approving the budget for this fiscal year. Treasurer Sherry Hawkins provided the documentation of WHAS accounts and reserves that show a healthy financial situation and, accordingly, the board approved donations to a variety of local groups including the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center for the North Coast, Friends of the Willapa Bay NWR, Columbia Land Trust and others. Something new is our sponsorship of the educational spot, "Bird Notes" on KMUN community radio out of Astoria (11 AM daily).

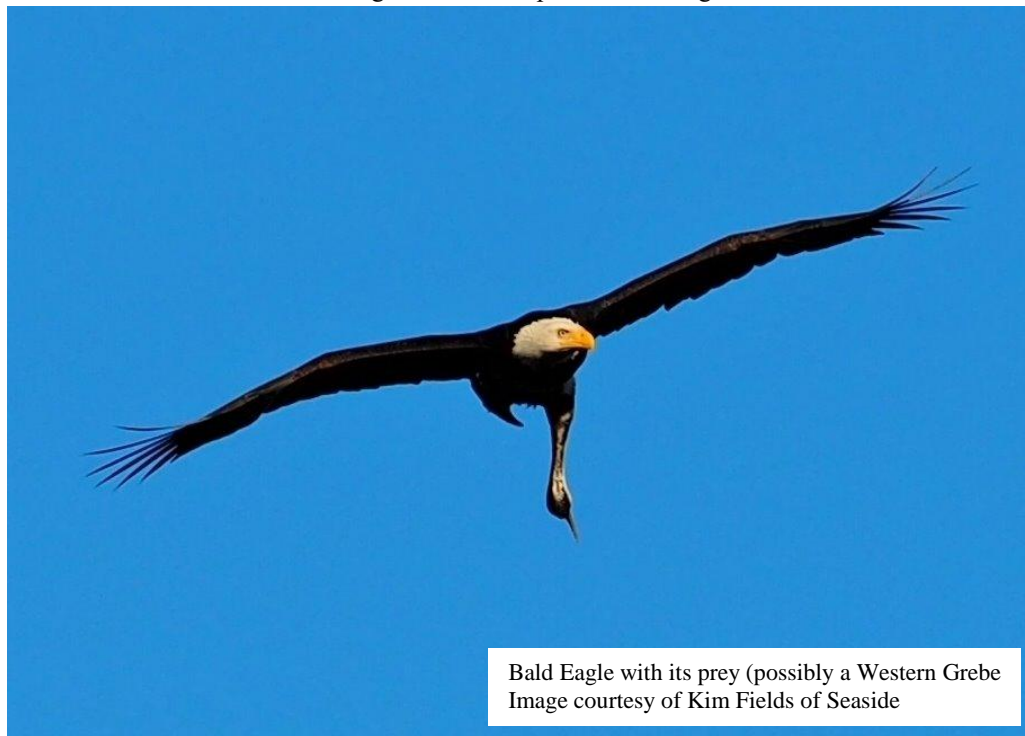
Guests included Rahul Devaskar, Engagement Program Manager, and Lydia Mendoza, Conservation Lead, from the Columbia Land Trust. They outlined some of the conservation projects CLT is currently invested in in our area and expressed their desire to continue to work with WHAS on projects such as the rehabilitation of Indian Jack Slough.

The board also reluctantly accepted the resignation of George Exum as vice-president and chair of the finance committee. He and wife Carol Carver have been active participants in bird counts, educational programs such as "Wings Over Willapa", as well as in various positions on the board. We thank them for their dedicated service and wise counsel over many years and hope to see them at events when they can attend.

Mark your calendars for our next regular board meeting on Saturday, April 6, 2019, time and location to be announced. WHAS members are always welcome to attend and to otherwise contact the

board with suggestions and comments.

Finally, the WHAS board would like to recognize and congratulate friend and ally Jackie Ferrier, manager of the Willapa Bay National Wildlife Refuge complex, as having been designated "2019 Paul Kroegel National Wildlife Refuge System Refuge Manager of the Year" by the National Wildlife Refuge Association; the first time a woman has received the award in the 25 years of its existence. The announcement listed as accomplishments, "Her efforts on *Spartina alterniflora* eradication, dune restoration, protections for listed species including plovers, larks, and endangered Columbian white-tailed deer are only a few examples of the remarkable work she is doing on behalf of species and refuges."



Bald Eagle with its prey (possibly a Western Grebe)  
Image courtesy of Kim Fields of Seaside

### Thayer birding software available free for young birder

As of now any young birder in school will be able to download the new version 7.7 of Thayer's Birds of North America at NO COST. All others still need to buy the regular version. Thayer Birding Software founder, Peter W. Thayer, decided that this would be the perfect way to celebrate his 70th birthday.

You can get the software by using a Young Birder code, in our case use **WillapaHillsAudubonYoungBirder** where it asks for the promo code.

Though be warned: The software package is huge, about 7.5GB and it will take a while to download depending on your internet connection.

Get the software at [www.thayerbirding.com](http://www.thayerbirding.com)

### Final Cowlitz County Bird List for 2018

#### By Russ Koppendrayer.

I believe this was the first time in the history of this project that we added NO new species in the final two month period. Never the less we had a very nice year breaking through the 200 barrier again with 201 species.

Three of those species were seen in the county for the first time ever. They were as follows: A Broad-winged Hawk was seen by an experienced hawk watcher who happened to be counting migrating Turkey Vultures in September at the Woodland Bottoms. A flock of Common Redpolls at a west Longview park in January that were part of a massive irruption of this species in all of Washington during the winter of '17-'18. Also a Dickcissel made a stop at a bird bath north of Kelso in early June and was photographed by the owner.

The only species that was a big miss was Dunlin, a shorebird that can overwinter here in small numbers, and if we miss them then we find them in spring migration. Not this year for whatever reason. On to a new year of exciting birding in Cowlitz County to see what it has to offer.

Download this and other years pdf here:

<https://willapahillsaudubon.org/index.php/bird-lists/cowlitz-county-bird-list>

## WHAS February Field trip to Billy Frank Nisqually Nat'l Wildlife Refuge

By John and Margaret Green

11 hardy birders braved the devastating forecast for cold and precipitation to make the trek to the refuge just north of Olympia and Lacey, Washington. Though it was cold and windy in the early morning, it was really wonderful to have a basically rainless and sometimes sunny day. The birds did turn out, to the tune of 44 species, including 17 species of waterfowl: geese, herons, and ducks, shorebirds and gulls, 4 raptor species including 12 bald eagle, and a smattering of song birds. It was very special for some to actually see a Virginia Rail and also have the entire group watch a Sora, lurking in the marsh. Also, very special was the opportunity to see the Montane "race" or subspecies of the Song Sparrow which is not normally found in this area of the country. The group walked 3 miles in 3 hours, braving the long boardwalk that is suspended above the



Nisqually estuary. We even saw a few seal sprawled on the bank. It was generally agreed that we would return in a couple of months to explore the forest loop for migrating song birds. See the announcement below.



Above: Black-tailed Deer -- Right: Male Hooded Merganser

## Field Trip to Nisqually Forest Loop - Saturday May 18

By John and Margaret Green

Join WHAS for a return to **Billy Frank Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge** to check out migrating song birds.

Our breeding songbirds should be back from their long journey to southern and warmer climes in Mexico and South America. We will get to see a different refuge as the trees will be leafed out and most of the waterfowl will have left for their breeding grounds in Alaska and Canada. There should be some nesting

waterfowl, such as Mallards, Cinnamon Teal, and others. The weather should be milder than we endured in February.

We will meet at refuge headquarters on **Saturday May 18** between 8:15 - 8:30 AM. We will walk the forest trails and explore for about 3 hours. Driving distance is 77 miles north from Longview. We will be encouraging car pooling. Group size will be limited so sign up early. To **sign up**, call John Green (360-430-8569) or email [jgreen2317@aol.com](mailto:jgreen2317@aol.com).

## Field Trip for Spring Migration at Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Refuge

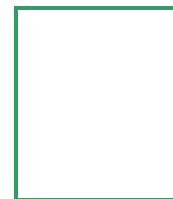
By Charlotte Persons

Come see raptors, songbirds, waterfowl, and maybe the elusive threatened little deer at **Julia Butler Hansen Columbia White-Tailed Deer National Wildlife Refuge**. It is off Highway 4, 5 miles west of Cathlamet, WA. Meet trip leaders Kyleen Austin and Andrew Emlen on **Sunday, April 21, 2019**, at the headquarters' entrance between 8:00 and 8:15 for a 3 - 4 hour

tour by car and on foot on level roads. Dress for the weather and bring your own snacks and water. To **sign up**, call Charlotte Persons (360-431-1174) or email [cpeople2u@gmail.com](mailto:cpeople2u@gmail.com). Group size will be limited. Distance from Longview is 30 miles; carpooling will be encouraged.



PO Box 399  
Longview, WA 98632



The *Willapa Whistler* is the quarterly publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society (WHAS), a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Complimentary copies are available for free on our website.

TEMP -- RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Most WHAS activities and programs are open to the public.**

### **Send in your stories & photos**

Articles, information, wildlife sightings and artwork are most welcomed. The deadline for submissions is the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, May, August and November. 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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## **WHAS Programs and Field Trips**

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

### **Willapa Hills Annual Meeting Banquet**

All members are invited to attend the 2019 annual meeting and banquet on Friday, March 29, at 5:30 PM; more info on page 1

### **Understanding Shorebirds, The Miracle Of Migration by Tim Boyer**

Friday, March 29, 2019, after the Annual Banquet, at 7 PM. The general public is welcome. Doors open at 6:45 pm, more on page 1

### **Shorebird Identification Class and Shorebird Walk**

Saturday March 30, 2019: Indoor Class 8:30 to 1:00 --- Field Trip 1:30 to 4:30 --- More info on page 5

### **Field Trip for Spring Migration at Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Refuge**

Sunday, April 21, 2019 at 8:00am – more info on page 7

**Earth Day celebration** at the Cowlitz Expo Center in Longview on April 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Fieldtrip: Nisqually Forest Loop**

Saturday May 18 at 8:15am --- more info on page 7

**Trinidad and Tobago Comes to Kelso: Rich Birding on the Caribbean Island** with Martyn Kenefick

Monday, May 20, 2019, more info on page 4

**Other programs and field trips will appear on our website and will be announced through our email alert system.**

More information about the alert system here: <http://willapahillsaudubon.org/index.php/member-services>

*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.*

**Updates are on our website at [www.willapahillsaudubon.org](http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org)**