

# WILLAPA WHISTLER

*A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society*

Volume 33, Issue 4

<http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org>

July/August 2007

## Annual Meeting Highlights

*By Margaret Green*

The two salad recipes are attached (by popular demand! *See Page 5*). We had 40 people in attendance for the supper/social and 4 added for the program.

Highlights of the Banquet would be:

1. The attendance of Lisa Remlinger of Audubon WA who accepted the WHAS donation of \$1000 for their work (lobbying and chapter support).
2. The volunteer achievement award to Alan and Diane Clark, and the honoring of our hard work for the past year by all our volunteers
3. The program "Birding Texas" by Bea Harrison
4. The silent auction which brought in a little over \$800 to support our work
5. Fun door prizes and fun food
6. Signing of post cards for comments on Kalama coal plant and LNG terminal



Some of the 44 people who attended the annual meeting.

*Photo by John Nichols*

## Cowlitz County Fair - Call for Volunteers

WHAS will be hosting a booth at the Cowlitz County Fair, August 1-4, 2007. Anyone interested in helping design the display, erect and dismantle the display, or operate the booth for two or three hours during the fair, please contact Darrel Whipple (503-556-9838) or Margaret Green (360-575-9238). The Education Committee will be calling WHAS members to recruit booth operators during the next few weeks. But don't wait to be called!

## Bluebird Boxes for Cowlitz County

*By John Green*



At the Audubon Wenas campout this May, Art Norred and John Green volunteered to monitor bluebird houses for Yakima Audubon. Art became enthused about starting our own bluebird trail in Cowlitz County. As a result, Art bought materials and built seven bird boxes to be put up near Castle Rock where bluebirds have been known to nest on property owned by WHAS member Alice Richter.

## Annual Picnic

Join us once again at Ruth Deery's house for the WHAS annual potluck picnic. This year's event is scheduled for Sunday, July 29<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM. Bring your own utensils and beverages, and a main dish, salad, or dessert to share. This is a great time to enjoy Ruth's idyllic setting, the Darwinian meadow, and the company of and lively conversation with like-minded friends. For directions to Ruth's (3148 Laurel Rd. Longview), please call 360-423-4658 or email [ruthd@kalama.com](mailto:ruthd@kalama.com).

**Newsletter Editor Needed.** WHAS will need a new newsletter editor for 2008. For more information, contact the current editors, Alan and Diane Clark, 360-795-3905, [alan\\_c\\_clark@hotmail.com](mailto:alan_c_clark@hotmail.com).

***Please Join Us!***

Support Willapa Hills Audubon Society by paying annual dues directly to this chapter. People who join National Audubon Society automatically become members of WHAS, however, National Audubon Society shares only a very small amount of the total dues money with WHAS—*currently less than \$2.00*. So, consider joining the WHAS chapter to help provide programs, field trips, bird counts and education projects here in our four-county region.

**Chapter Membership**

\_\_\_\_ **\$20** for annual membership dues.

\_\_\_\_ **\$15** for full time students. *Make check payable to Willapa Hills Audubon Society.*

**National Audubon Membership**

\_\_\_\_ **\$20** for one year introductory membership in the National Audubon Society with Willapa Hills Audubon Society affiliation. *Make check payable to National Audubon Society*

**Combination**

\_\_\_\_ Yes, you can do both options above, if you like. *Please write a check for each (\$20 to National Audubon Society and \$20 to WHAS.).*

**Willapa Whistler Only**

\_\_\_\_ **\$5** for six issues (one year). *No membership is included with this option. Make check payable to WHAS.*

*For any of the options above, clip this form and mail it with your check to:*

Willapa Hills Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 399  
Longview, WA 98632

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities

\_\_\_\_ Please add me to your Discussion email list

\_\_\_\_ New

**Y14**

\_\_\_\_ Renewal

**7XCH**

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Jimharrison2@peoplepc.com





## Birding Bits

*By Russ Koppendrayner*

Some of the specialty birds of southern California have been high on my wish list of bird species to see for a number of years. Despite a couple of trips to the area, the list wasn't getting much shorter. Since I have a sister living in Pasadena, my visits have been transformed into fine family outings with less birding than I'd originally planned.

In April of this year I circumvented all those distractions by joining a group of seven birders on a nine-day trip led by Brad Schram, author of "A Birder's Guide to Southern California." The itinerary had us meet in San Diego to do some local birding before moving inland for desert birding in the Laguna Mountains and around the Salton Sea. From there we went north of Los Angeles to the Mt. Pinos area, then west to the coast, and down to Santa Barbara, with a boat trip to Santa Cruz Island on the final day.

For me, the trip got off to a rousing start by finding three of my target species at Lake Hodges, our first stop. California gnatcatcher and California thrasher were expected here, but the Lawrence's goldfinch was a surprise at this site. But the highlight of the day was an interaction between a peregrine falcon and a small group of American avocets at the San Diego River mouth. We witnessed the falcon fly in and raise all the shorebirds from the mudflat into flight, except a group of six avocets, who chose to go under water instead. This evasive technique proved to be fatal since the peregrine aborted the chase, and focused on diving at the avocets every time they came up for air. After ten or twelve swoops, one of the avocets breathed a split second too long and was last seen being carried off by the neck in a talon. I had never seen this tactic of defense by shorebirds before, and if this incident is any indication of its effectiveness, I probably won't see it very often again!

The most memorable sighting of the trip occurred on the Cerro Noroeste Road between the village of Maricopa and Mt. Pinos. The terrain here is very hilly and vegetated by grasses. On a far ridge, a black lump was spotted and appeared to move. We stopped to check it out and, through binoculars, there appeared to be two condors; scopes proved there were actually three California condors on a carcass with a flock of ravens waiting their turn. Further inspection revealed that the bird dining, was an adult with an orange head; there two dark-headed juveniles waiting. After the

adult had its fill, it moved aside and the younger birds moved in. To our amazement, the adult soon took off and began to soar along the ridges. As the bird got closer, we could see all the field marks, including the white wing patches and the orange colored head, as well as the wing tags. Yes, these birds were all released from the captive breeding program, but it was quite a pleasure seeing them in their natural habitat and acting and interacting in their age-old manner. This experience was far beyond anything I'd envisioned for this trip.

Enjoy some late summer birding.

## Update on Audubon Washington

*By Gary Blevins, Chair, Audubon Washington Board of Stewards*

I am writing with an update to keep all of you - our valued partners and friends briefed on news that we're certain you'll find of interest.

First, we're delighted to let you know that Nina Carter - who has made such a difference to our mission and vision in several Audubon roles - has agreed to remain as our Executive Director! (We are making her life a little easier with an office move, but more on that later in this memo.)

Second, we're excited about our newly minted Audubon Washington strategic plan designed to protect the birds of the Pacific Flyway. So, whether your heart beats faster at the sight of a "hummer" outside your window or a red tail in flight - we'll be working together in the coming months and years to save habitat for the birds we all love and cherish.

Third, as you may recall, a key part of the Strategic Plan is the "one Audubon" concept. We'll be working closely with all of you, our chapter partners and colleagues, to make that concept a reality on the ground.

Fourth and finally, for business efficiencies we are consolidating our business operations in Olympia around October 1st. We'll continue to have our presence in Seattle at Seward Park, of course, and will have our quarterly events, Board meetings, and speaker's bureau here in the Seattle area. We'll give you more details as they unfold.

We look forward to savoring summer and we wish you and your families time to connect, relax, refresh - and go birding!

## **LNG Terminal at Bradwood—Please attend the public hearing on July 10!**

*Charlotte Persons, Interim Conservation Chair  
Gloria MacKenzie, Director at Large*

On July 10, at Astoria High School Auditorium, 1001 W. Marine Drive, the Clatsop County Planning Commission will hold hearings on zoning changes and comprehensive plan changes requested by Northern Star for building the LNG Terminal. This is the first public hearing before a local governmental body. It is also one of only two chances for state and local governments to reject FERC's siting decision.

We hope that as many people as possible will attend the hearing and wear a "no LNG" button, regardless of whether they want to testify in person. Sessions of the hearing will run 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, 1:30 to 4:00 p.m., and 6:00 to 10:00 p.m.—we especially want a large attendance in the evening. Contact Charlotte or Gloria for a ride.

About 10 days before the hearing Clatsop County consultant PBS&J and County staff reports on safety and zoning changes will be made available to the public. One of the main points WHAS will make in our testimony on July 10 is that any decision should be delayed until the public has a chance to read and respond to these reports and another safety report due out later in the summer.

*Update: The staff reports were issued on June 27 and recommended the Planning Commission deny Bradwood Landing's application. **Your input is more important than ever!***

**Written comments are due by 5:00 p.m. June 29 (to be considered before the hearing) BUT can also be handed in at the actual hearing on July 10.** Address comments to Clatsop County Planning Commission, Community Development Department, 800 Exchange St., Ste. 100, Astoria, OR 97103. If you cannot attend the hearing but want to submit comments, arrange with Gloria MacKenzie to fax them to her.

Through the efforts of WHAS co-president Steve Puddicombe, Audubon Washington sent a letter stating its opposition to the LNG terminal to FERC. Steve and new director-at-large Gloria MacKenzie were influential in getting Portland Audubon to send comments to the Clatsop County commissioners. We

need letters from groups like these, but the comments of concerned citizens make a big difference.

For background information to help write your comments, see the WHAS website [www.willapahillsaudubon.org](http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org) or you can attend the informational public forum by Columbia River Business Alliance tentatively scheduled for July 5 in Astoria. For "primary documents" see [www.co.clatsop.or.us/index.asp](http://www.co.clatsop.or.us/index.asp) under "Hot topics: Bradwood Landing LNG". Also very helpful is "An Introductory Guide to Land Use Planning for Small Cities and Counties in Oregon" which can be found in PDF format at [www.lcd.state.or.us/LCD/introductory\\_guide\\_to\\_land\\_use\\_planning.shtml](http://www.lcd.state.or.us/LCD/introductory_guide_to_land_use_planning.shtml)

**To note on your calendars: August 9—13.** At Vista Park and County Fairgrounds in Cathlamet will be a Convergence of groups from the West Coast interested in protecting our coastal waters and watersheds. There will be national and local speakers, workshops, and activities. Contact George Exum at [geo@wwestsky.net](mailto:geo@wwestsky.net) if you have suggestions or wish to volunteer.

## **Conservation News**

*Charlotte Persons, Interim Conservation Chair*

### **\* Spotted Owl Preservation—Please send comments**

On April 26, the Bush administration released the "Draft Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl," which rolls back the last 15 years of protections for the old-growth forests that the owls depend on for their survival. It dismantles a landmark agreement made in the mid-90's. It would eliminate old-growth reserves and allow each National Forest to decide individually how much habitat to protect. The plan's link is <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/ecoservices/endangered/recovery/NSORecoveryPlanning.htm>

**The comments deadline was extended to July 25. If you have not already done so, please send yours to:**

NSO Recovery Plan  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services  
911 NE 11th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97232 OR email: [NSOplan@fws.gov](mailto:NSOplan@fws.gov).  
In addition, *The Daily News* carried an article on June 13 stating that the administration has put forward a plan that would reduce by 22% the number of federal acres put aside for owl protection. All this in the face of data clearly stating that the owl's numbers have declined 50% in the last ten years!

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## Conservation News *(Continued from Page 4)*

We need your help in pushing back against this continuous effort to reduce owl habitat. For more background information for writing your comments, check National Audubon's website, [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org).

### **\* Energy Northwest's Proposed Coal-fueled Power Plant in Kalama**

WHAS members attended the hearing on June 6 in Kalama on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Pacific Mountain Energy Center. Confused by an earlier statement by Energy Northwest that the consortium was reconsidering the proposed plant, only thirty people attended and three people testified. WHAS sent in comments, written by Darrel Whipple. New in that DEIS was official information that the proposed plant *by itself* will increase CO2 emissions in the state of Washington by 7%! WHAS's position is that this plant should not be built until there is scientific proof that sequestration of the CO2 will be a good long-term solution. However, it appears now that this proposal is going forward. Sometime at the end of June or beginning of July Energy Northwest will file a report on its plans for sequestering the CO2 emissions. Stay tuned to the WHAS website [www.willapahillsaudubon.org](http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org) so you can write comments on that report...

### **\*Proposed Mine at Mt. St. Helens**

In early May WHAS sent comments to the BLM on its preliminary decision to grant a lease to Idaho General Mines, Inc., for land on the northeast flank of Mt. St. Helens to allow a permit for mineral exploration. WHAS was the catalyst for a 12-state Audubon alert sent by NAS. As a result of these efforts and those of many other organizations, the BLM received thousands of comments in opposition to the mine, including those of Senators Cantwell and Murray. **Thanks to all of you who sent postcards, letters, and emails.** We will need to send a new round of comments in late August or early September on IGMI's permit request, so be alert for news on this....

## **Salad Recipes from the Annual Meeting**

*By Margaret Green*

### **Rice Salad Vinaigrette**

From Anna Thomas' *Vegetarian Epicure Book Two*.  
Serves 4 to 6.

Cook in a minimum of salted water until they are barely tender and drain immediately:

1/3 cup finely diced carrots

\_ cup green beans, cut in \_ inch bits

Combine the above and the following in a large bowl and toss together:

\_ cup diced celery

\_ cup diced green bell pepper

\_ cup chopped sharp red onion

3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

2 \_ cups cooked rice, warm or cold

Combine the following and whisk until smooth:

4 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

4 tablespoons olive oil

3 tablespoons white wine vinegar

Pour the dressing over the salad, toss until everything is thoroughly combined, and put in the refrigerator to chill for several hours.

Note: I "dress up" the salad by using half grated Romano cheese, placing it on a bed of lettuce, and by garnishing with marinated artichoke hearts, olives, tomatoes, red pepper slices, parsley, etc. Warm rice will make a smoother salad and cold rice one with more texture of rice grains.

### **"WHAS Banquet Potato Salad"**

**Alias "Provencal Salad" from Austin De Croze of Les Plats Regionaux de France!**

Serves 4

6 small tomatoes quartered and seeded, or a couple handfuls of grape or small cherry tomatoes halved.

6 small new potatoes, boiled, peeled (I don't peel) and thinly sliced

2-3 (or to taste) small sweet onions thinly sliced

\_ garlic clove, minced

1 sprig fennel, finely chopped (free plants available from M Green 360-575-9238)

\_ cup ripe Mediterranean(kalamata) olives (pitted are best)

Put all of the above into a large bowl, then toss with caper sauce and chill. This gets better the longer it sits.

### **Caper Sauce:**

2 Tbsp. capers, rinsed, drained, and crushed

3 or 4 anchovies, soaked in water, drained and crushed (optional)

3-4 Tbsp. Fresh lemon juice

\_ cup good olive oil

Whisk all together, adding the olive oil last.

## Disappearing Common Birds Send Environmental Wake-up Call

*Audubon Analyses Reveals Dramatic Declines for Some of Washington's Most Familiar Birds*  
*Press Release from Audubon Washington*

Population declines for some of the most common and beloved birds in Washington State echo the disturbing findings from the National Audubon Society. A new scientific analysis reveals how local and national threats are combining to take a toll on birds, habitat and their habitats across the country.

“These are not rare or exotic birds we’re talking about—these are the birds that visit our feeders and come to our nearby lakes and seashores and yet they are disappearing day by day,” said Audubon Chairperson and former EPA Administrator, Carol Browner. “Their decline tells us we have serious work to do, from protecting local habitats to addressing the huge threats from global warming.”

The national study, based on Christmas bird counts and breeding bird censuses, found that populations of some common birds plunged over the past 40 years, with several down nearly 80 percent. In Washington State, the five common birds in steepest decline are: Evening Grosbeak (down 97%) Bonaparte’s Gull (down 97%), Purple Finch (down 87%), Yellow-headed Blackbird (down 72%) and Western Meadowlark (down 60%). Many Washington residents know these five birds from their backyard bird feeders or they see them while watching wildlife throughout our state.

The dramatic national declines are attributed to a variety of factors, including the loss of shrub steppe, grasslands, mature forests and wetlands, and other critical habitats from multiple environmental threats such as sprawl, energy development, intense management for single resources, and the spread of clean farming techniques. The national study notes that these threats are now compounded by new problems including the escalating effects of global warming and demand for corn-based ethanol.

“Audubon’s new *State of the Birds Report* is important because we have focused our attention on endangered species and failed to notice serious declines in populations of our common birds,” said Gordon Oriens, Professor Emeritus of Biology at University of Washington.

“Here in Washington, the biggest problem comes from cutting up our landscapes into smaller and smaller disconnected pieces. We should keep our landscapes intact and connected for future generations of farmers and foresters. Doing so will keep our common birds in good shape too”, said Nina Carter, Executive Director, Audubon Washington.

The five bird species especially hard hit in Washington include:



Evening Grosbeak populations are down 97 percent in Washington and 78 percent nationally. Several years ago they were regular visitors to the Puget Sound area; fewer

are seen every year. Declines may be due to competition with House Finches, or the spread of disease through, perhaps, unsafe feeder practices. Bird feeders should be cleaned regularly and platform feeders should be avoided.



Wintering Bonaparte’s Gull populations are also down by 97%. These are the smaller gulls most beginning birders recognize easily because of their black heads in spring

look like Napoleon’s hat. Cause of decline may be attributed to declining food sources, such as herring in Puget Sound.



Purple Finch populations have declined by 87 percent, especially in suburban areas, probably owing to competition with introduced House Finches. In aggressive interactions, House Finches nearly always win.



Yellow-headed Blackbirds are medium-distance migrants that breed in wetlands in semi-arid areas in British Columbia and Washington and winter mainly in the Southwestern United States and Mexico. They may be affected by farming techniques that leave few vacant strips of land or wetlands, by pollution, and introduction of exotic fishes. Yellow-headed Blackbirds have declined by 72 percent in our state.

*(Continued on Page 7)*



## Disappearing Birds *(Continued from Page 6)*



Anyone traveling in Eastern Washington knows to listen for the Western Meadowlark's melodic song. However, Western Meadowlarks are threatened by the loss of grasslands, and their populations are down 60

percent. Huge stretches of grasslands have been converted to agricultural row crops, or severely reduced in quality due to poor grazing management. The potential conversion to biofuel crops (like corn) of farm lands currently protected in the Conservation Reserve Program for conservation puts even more pressure on Western Meadowlark populations.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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360-789-0792

Gordon Orians, University of Washington  
206-364-5743

Gary Blevins, Chairman, Audubon Washington Board  
509-863-2659

Don McIvor, Science Advisor, Audubon Washington  
509-997-9456

### Photo Credits:

*Evening Grosbeak* by George Jameson

*Bonaparte's Gull* by H.R. Spendelow, Jr.

*Purple Finch* from Wikimedia Commons

*Yellow-headed Blackbird* by G.C. Kelley

*Western Meadowlark* by George Jameson

## Helen Engle Receives Callison Award

*From the Audubon Newswire, June 18, 2007*

NEW YORK, NY – On May 24th the National Audubon Society (NAS) announced that it has named the recipients for its 13th Annual Charles H. Callison Awards., and one of the recipients is our own Helen Engle, former member of the Board of Stewards for Audubon Washington and an active leader of the Tahoma Audubon Society in Tacoma. The awards, which were presented to the winners at the May 2007 Audubon Global Warming Retreat in Park City, Utah, recognize individuals who have made remarkable contributions to conservation through creativity, coalition building, creative thinking, outreach, and perseverance. Awardees are nominated by their peers in the field: Audubon Chapter members, state board members and Audubon staff. In its press release about

the award, National Audubon Society observed, "Helen Engle's fifty plus years of environmental activism are an inspiration. She has been the Audubon matriarch of Washington State, working with Audubon staff and volunteers from throughout the region. Her contributions range from her role as founding president of the Tahoma Audubon Society, to editor of The Towhee newsletter for ten years, to positions as a member of both the Audubon Washington Board of Stewards and the National Audubon Society board of directors. Helen's willingness and style of bringing people together and building common consensus have brought about change that no one would have thought possible." In addition, Helen has served on the boards of numerous local, state and regional non-profit and governmental organizations, and has won many awards for her contributions.



John and Margaret Green canoeing the slough on the Nelson Creek property. *Photo by Bea Harrison*

## Fight Global Warming in Your Own Backyard

*From the Audubon Newswire, June 18, 2007*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – With luxurious long days and (at last!) warm weather, you may be spending more time in your backyard. But did you know that your own yard can make a difference for habitat conservation and environmental health? Audubon at Home features a wealth of information about reducing or eliminating pesticides, conserving water, protecting water quality, removing exotic plants, planting natives, and more. Check it out at [http://www.audubon.org/bird/at\\_home/index.html](http://www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/index.html).





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The *Willapa Whistler* is the bi-monthly publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Articles, information, wildlife sightings and black-and-white artwork are welcomed. The deadline for inclusion of material in the *Whistler* is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each even-numbered month. Complimentary copies are sent to organizations and prospective members. All WHAS activities and programs are open to the public. The *Willapa Whistler* is printed on recycled paper using soy based ink.

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*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.*



**Where have the purple finches gone? See article on page 6.**