

# WILLAPA WHISTLER

*A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society*

**Volume 38 // Issue 5**

**September /October 2012**



**Cooper's Hawk** -- Image Royce Craig

## Changes for the Better

**By Larry Brandt, President**

Audubon is changing—all the way from the National Audubon Society in Washington, D.C. down to us at Willapa Hills Audubon in Southwest Washington. The purpose of the change is multifaceted and addresses issues of increasing our membership, securing Audubon funding from corporate sources and establishing on-going relationships with federal and state regulatory agencies. Of course, the primary focus is on birds.

A strategy for the future is designed along migratory flyways with Washington Audubon chapters joining those of Alaska, Oregon, California and Baja Mexico to develop common programs in which we can share ideas, resources and funding. The new Audubon Strategic Plan is designed to put emphasis on five conservation initiatives:

First, we will develop conservation strategies, throughout the West Coast to **Put Working Land to Work for Birds**. Ideas will come from members to devise programs to work with farmers, public parks, orchard owners, private forest land holders and the like to think about birds as they carry out their operations. Examples might be using fewer and safer chemicals, turning inferior land into bird habitat or pruning trees during non-nesting seasons.

Second is an initiative near and dear to the hearts of Washingtonians--**Sharing our Seas and Shores**—we must think in terms of **Coastal Stewardship**. We all know how much everybody loves to go to the beach! People, dogs, all-terrain vehicles and horses all use our public beaches to have a fun time. Unfortunately, in several instances we've pressured birds that live and reproduce on these same beaches and beach uplands to the point of extinction. In Western Washington this includes most shore bird residents such as the western snowy plover and horned lark. For example; On Graveyard Spit near Tokeland WA only a single pair of western snowy plover was found nesting this spring. Across the channel at Leadbetter Point on Willapa Bay, efforts have gone on for a decade to preserve habitat for a few of these shore-nesting birds.

*...continued on page 4: Changes for the Better*

## Volunteerism Works

**By Larry Brandt, President**

A few months ago the chief scientist at the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and I were conversing about protection of the western snowy plover on Washington beaches. He asked if Willapa Hills Audubon had any volunteers that would help with a snowy plover project he had budgeted. Of course we had volunteers! (It was wishful thinking on my part.)

He needed people to walk into the nesting sites, three-miles on loose sand, carrying binoculars and a spotting scope. The volunteers needed to have excellent vision and the ability to detect bird features from some distance. Then there is a two-mile walk out after the job was done.

I thought very few people would have interest in this difficult undertaking. To my surprise, 6 members of Willapa Hills Audubon came forward to volunteer for the site survey.

The survey is long since past but the chapter is grateful to those that decided to take action by stepping forward and calling one of the Willapa Hills Audubon board members.

To volunteer your time in the name of bird conservation, one need not agree to walk three-miles in loose sand carrying optical instruments. We have need building and hanging **bird and bat boxes**.

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Bird Photos by Royce Craig throughout

## 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 schedule changes due to weather or other issues for WHAS programs and field trips.

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\*

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### OTHER

### WHAS Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be on September 22, 2012, so we can discuss state-wide proposals for Fall ACOW, which will be Oct. 5—7 in Poulsbo.

We will have two guests speaking

- **Dan Serres from Columbia Riverkeeper**
- **Graham Taylor from Sierra Club**

For time and location check the website, and or contact our president Larry Brandt.

### The Whistler Online

Did you know that you can see all the beautiful bird images in this *Willapa Whistler* in color online on our website? Go to <http://willapahillsaudubon.org> and just click on the *Whistler* in the top menu for this and past issues.

### Cowlitz County Bird Yearlist

**By Russ Koppendrayner**

We continue to chip away at the yearlist, making a few additions here and there. I just did a check and we only have one species available in the yellow code (Townsend's Solitaire) and none in the blue or green codes. This means that all further additions will be species that occur in Cowlitz less than annually.

Still at 196 species we have a good shot at breaking last year's record of 203. Let's get out there and find some unusual fall migrants.

To download a copy of the yearlist goto our website at <http://willapahillsaudubon.org> and click on → *Wildlife Watching & Sightings*, then on → *Cowlitz County Bird List* or just go here: [http://willapahillsaudubon.org/index.php?option=com\\_weblinks&view=category&id=66&Itemid=87](http://willapahillsaudubon.org/index.php?option=com_weblinks&view=category&id=66&Itemid=87)

## Backyard Birding Report

By Larry Turner

It is September. The Violet-green swallows that nested on the porch fledged three young and are long gone. Then we went away for three weeks and most of the abundant American goldfinches and Black-headed grosbeaks did not stick around empty feeders; several that nested nearby have been apparent, along with their young. It is amusing to see the young goldfinches begging from Dad while perched on the thistle feeder with abundant food inside. The Song sparrows scooting across the ground at great speed also provide a good show. The Mourning dove population has been fairly stable. The hummingbirds were delighted with all the garden flowers, darting among them, and have pretty much ignored the feeders. So summer is winding down. Our typical summer dinners on the front porch, watching the birds and the flowers, will soon move inside.

We have not seen too many migrants yet. A flock of Black-throated gray warblers came through, but we have not seen the Wilson's warblers that were here last year. A couple of white-crowned sparrows made an appearance; we do not see them in the summer, so we are guessing they are coming through. The Cedar waxwings are enjoying the wild cherry, but we are not sure if they are local or migrants; they just like the fruits.

There will be more migrants, but the juncos and Pine siskins will follow in abundance. It is time to clean and disinfect



Cedar Waxwing -- Image by Royce Craig

the feeders. This is an important task. See (among many others) [http://web4.audubon.org/bird/at\\_home/bird\\_feeding/feeder\\_main\\_t.html](http://web4.audubon.org/bird/at_home/bird_feeding/feeder_main_t.html) or <http://www.wildbirdmagazine.com/back-yard-birding/clean-bird-feeders-the-right-way.aspx>.

**It's always a great time for backyard birding.**

## WHAS volunteers help with annual Camp Learned-a-Lot

By Darrel Whipple

Continuing a long partnership with local schools, WHAS volunteers presented a program on local owls at the annual Camp Learned-a-lot celebration for Rainier second graders on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at Hudson Park Elementary School.

Hosting the multi-day event and supervising the associated lesson on owl pellet dissection were Hudson Park teachers Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Green and Mrs. Kernutt.

WHAS volunteers Ann Cordero and Darrel Whipple were joined by Friends of Fox Creek volunteers Bill and Claudia Eagle in showing and interpreting the owl mounts from the Lower Columbia River Wildlife Collection. The collection has been developed over the past 25 years by WHAS for educational purposes and is housed at the Lower Columbia College biology lab. Dr. Louis LaPierre at LCC is the principal permittee for

salvage of dead birds, and Darrel Whipple, who started the collection in the 1980s is the sub-permittee.

The volunteers introduced the students to the Barn Owl, Barred Owl, Western Screech Owl, Saw-whet Owl and the Great Horned Owl, making good use of the mounts to identify the features that help these animals survive. Other local owl species discussed were the Northern Pygmy Owl, the Northern Spotted Owl and the occasional Snowy Owl. An additional species identified in the Rainier area this year, the Short-eared Owl, will be an item of discussion as well in future programs.

### Update on MacGillivray's Warbler Mount

By Darrel Whipple

A big Thank You is extended to **Cindy Johnson** of Longview who has donated the full amount needed to have the MacGillivray's Warbler prepared as a mounted specimen in the Lower Columbia River Wildlife Collection.

**Three cheers!**

### Continued from page 1: Volunteerism

Each year we need volunteers to help us conduct the **Christmas Bird Count**. In the late winter and early spring we survey **amphibian egg populations** throughout the local area. Volunteers are needed to help **replant** Lake Sacajewea with **native flora**.

We always need help to educate children at **Earth Day and Kids Day**. So, you see, there is a lot to do. Volunteers do not need to be members of the Society.

Call any of the Willapa Hills Audubon board members and ask how you can get involved.

Watch the Willapa Whistler newsletter, our website and email alerts for specific volunteer requests.



**Continued from page 1: Changes for the better**

Public, private and governmental entities need to get together to form a strategy for sharing our wonderful shores with our feathered friends. Education of the public is critical to this effort.

As the initial focus, West Coast Audubon chapters have selected several "iconic" species to kick off the initiative: Red Knot, Western Snowy Plover, Black Oystercatcher, Pacific Black Brant, Surf Scotter and Western Sandpiper will receive our initial attention.

As members of the Audubon Society, one of our priorities is **Saving Important Bird Areas**. Everyone knows we lose natural areas to residential growth and industrial construction. These types of expansion must be monitored continuously so that we don't destroy important bird nesting, feeding and over-wintering sites. But many bird areas escape our

Willapa Bay and Gray's Harbor (Bowerman Basin). Other locations in Western Washington such as Padilla Bay, Port Susan and the Puget Sound basin will be added later as resources are secured.

**Shaping a healthy climate** Wow! How many ways can you think of to shape a healthy climate? We all work hard on the problems of air pollution and global warming. We recycle newspapers, plastic, bottles and cans. We buy more fuel-efficient cars.

We can all do more of course. Less emphasis is placed on pesticides in our water and soils, lead in streams and lakes, industrial discharge of particulates and heavy metals into the air, and an embarrassment of other examples. We can also look in a different direction from air, water and soil pollution. This initiative element which will be driven by Audubon volunteers' suggestions might include ways to power our society with wind or solar power. Do these fit the concept of Shaping a Healthy Climate? Do you have an idea that we might share with other chapters on a regional scale?

Everyone living in a community of people, no matter how large or small, can help with **Creating Bird-friendly Communities**. Longview Washington is far along in the process of creating a bird-friendly community compared to other cities. Lake Sacajewea is prime habitat for waterfowl and songbirds. The City of Longview recently agreed to delay tree pruning until after nesting season so as not to destroy or disturb nests. Other communities are not as savvy. We live on islands in the forest but few communities have programs to plant trees. There is plenty to do to make our communities bird friendly. This is a perfect educational opportunity!

The Audubon Strategic Plan will, undoubtedly, change as experience is gained and we realize the "Greatest Conservation Impact at Scale" from the initial efforts. First we need conservation projects, offered by members, which can be implemented from Alaska to Baja.



**Red Crossbill -- Image by Royce Craig**

attention completely. This initiative element relates more toward areas known as critical bird habitat. Examples include rest stops for migrating birds, nesting or feeding sites for threatened birds or areas that support large bird populations. The initial sites proposed for inclusion as Important Bird Areas (IBA) are

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## WHAS members mourn the passing of Diane Clark

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**By Darrel Whipple**

WHAS members mourn the passing of Diane Clark (1944-2012), who died August 16 at home in Titusville, Florida, after a year-long battle with cancer.

Diane lived on the Julia Butler Hansen National Wildlife Refuge for 31 years with her husband Al Clark who served as the refuge biologist. She was a frequent volunteer on wildlife management projects, and volunteered her time also to WHAS by helping to prepare the bi-monthly *Whistler*.

Diane and Al were WHAS directors starting in January 2003. They took over editing the *Whistler* with the September/October 2003 edition. Their last issue was

September/October 2007. Al retired about that time from the USF&WS and the couple traveled the country, ending up on the east coast near family members. WHAS sent them off with a gift of a print of wildlife artist John Pitcher's "Columbian White-tailed Deer."

Al survives her at home in Titusville. Their daughter Addy Clark and her husband Jon Trussell and granddaughter Charlotte Trussell live here in Longview.

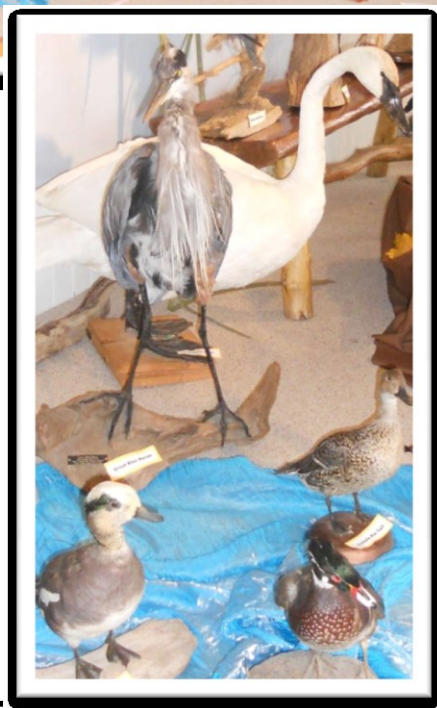
All who knew Diane are invited to a celebration of Diane's life planned for 11 am to 3 pm Sept. 22 at the Duck Inn in Skamokawa. Dress is casual and snacks will be provided.

## Impressions from the Show "For the Birds" at Redmen Hall in Skamokawa

Images by Carol Carver

Redmen Hall will be celebrating the end of summer with a collection of art, crafts, and whimsy titled "For the Birds". This is an opportunity to see a display of mounted birds from the **Willapa Hills Audubon Society** titled *'The Lower Columbia River Wildlife Collection'* around which pictures, paintings, quilts, carvings, prints and more will be shown.

Redmen Hall is in Skamokawa, Washington (1394 SR-4). Opening hours are Thursday through Sunday: 12 noon to 4 p.m. until September 30.



### 3CBC New Years Day 2013

By Bob Reistroffer

It is time to start planning for the January 1, 2013 3CBC (Cowlitz -Columbia Christmas Bird Count). This will be our 30th official year and we hope it will good weather. Our count will be a part of the 2012 International Christmas Bird Count. We will be out for an 8 hour period covering an area 15 mile diameter area looking for any birds that will let us see them. We hope to have very cooperative birds this year.

Please plan to join us this year. It is a great way to start out the New Year. To sign up, call Bob Reistroffer 360-636-5125 or breistrof@aol.com. I'll form teams or **you can put together your own team for the area of your choice**. I will get information to all participants by mid-December when I have teams figured out.

**Sign up soon – I will be out of town Christmas week.**

I have reserved the back room at the Masthead Restaurant, 1210 Ocean Beach Hwy for the compilation meeting. I told them we would arrive between 4:30 and 5pm. I will get a map and driving directions to all participants.

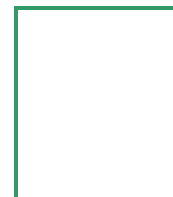
**This will be my last year as Compiler. I will work with the new volunteer when filing this report so you will know how it works.** The reworked web site makes the reporting a lot easier now days. Please let me know soon so we can start working together. I would like to have you go through the whole process this year.

**HOPE TO SEE YOU 1-1-13 !**





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 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).

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.

**Wednesday, October 17th at 7:00 pm** at the Wollenberg Auditorium at Lower Columbia College in Longview:

The Willapa Hills Audubon Society and the Lower Columbia College Biology Society welcome back outdoorsman, photographer and veteran guidebook author **Craig Romano** to Longview to discuss his adventures while researching his latest book, *Backpacking Washington*. The presentation is free and everyone is invited to attend."

**Second Saturday of each month at 8:00 AM** at the Hemlock Square at Lake Sacajawea in Longview:

WHAS teams with Longview Parks and Recreation to conduct a monthly **bird walk** around the lake in Longview. (Dress for the weather, and bring your binoculars.) Upcoming dates for these 1 ½ hour tours will be October 13, November 10, and December 8 (which will be combined with our yearly walk and coffee social at the Green's.)

**Tuesday, November 6 at 6:30 pm** at the Longview Library:

Please join the Willapa Hills Audubon Society in welcoming US Fish and Wildlife Service biologist **William Ritchie** as he discusses the **unique ecology of the Marbled Murrelet**, a small seabird that nests in old growth forests in the Pacific Northwest, and what we can do to conserve this threatened species. All are welcome to attend and refreshments will be served at this free program."

In **October** we will visit Ridgefield to welcome the fall migrants and hopefully the returning **Sandhill Cranes**. This trip will be spent mostly in our vehicles with some short walks included.

In **November** we hope you will join us for a trip to Woodland Bottoms for more **migrating waterfowl, cranes, and raptors**.

More details will be announced via the WHAS gmail alerts, WHAS website, newspaper and radio.

*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)**