

WILLAPA WHISTLER

A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society

Volume 39 // Issue 2

March // April 2013



Suzy Whitley 2013

Snowy Owl -- Image Suzy Whitley

Suzy Whitley captured this photo of a female Snowy Owl on January 13th on the Long Beach Peninsula.

Annual WHAS Member Meeting and Program

By Carol Carver and Gloria Nichols

Come celebrate with us. The annual WHAS member dinner and meeting will be held on **Saturday, March 30th at 6PM** at the **Longview Woman's Club**. The address is 835 21st Ave in Longview, on the Kessler side of the lake. This year will be a potluck. WHAS will supply meat and vegetarian pizza, coffee, tea and water. Members can bring something they might like to share: salad, dessert, casserole, bread, appetizer, or something else. We will need to know how many are coming, and your choice of pizza.

Please call either Gloria at (360) 636-3793 or e-mail her at jgnt@comcast.net or call Carol at (360)849-4324 or e-mail her at carver.exum@gmail.com. We need to have a head count by the **27th of March**. If possible when you call, please let us know what you are planning on bringing. Also PLEASE bring your own tableware for all in your party. Let's make this a festive event!

At 7:00 pm, key note speaker, Master Birder and outdoor photographer, **Idie Ulsh** will present "**Feathered Architects - The Fascinating World of Bird Nests**". The program will explore how and where birds make nests and will examine interesting aspects of their construction. Idie Ulsh, Master Birder and former president of Seattle Audubon, has been a birder for 40 years, with an expertise in birdsong. Her interest expanded from birds to other flying creatures, including butterflies and dragonflies, and she was co-editor of photographs for *The Butterflies of Cascadia*.

The program at 7pm is free and open to the public.

A Message to our National Members

By Margaret Greenr

Please become one of the National Audubon Society (NAS) members in our area who annually sends \$20 to join and support our local chapter, Willapa Hills Audubon Society (WHAS). This additional \$20 provided directly to the chapter, is a very significant contribution toward local conservation work and education programs, which benefit our communities. We provide a full calendar of speakers and field trips open to all members of our communities free of charge.

Your membership donation to WHAS also allows us to send you a copy of our bimonthly Willapa Whistler newsletter, which includes project updates and event announcements.

We know donations are discretionary and appreciate whatever level of giving you choose. You will find more details on our member form on page 2.

Cowlitz County Year List

Did you know that we provide a list of birds seen in Cowlitz County on our website? It is maintained by Russ Koppendrayner and updated monthly. To download the latest copy (and see information about previous years) go to our website at

www.willapahillsaudubon.org and look for "Wildlife Watching & Sightings" or for our online readers:
http://willapahillsaudubon.org/index.php?option=com_weblinks&view=category&id=66&Itemid=87

In this issue of the Whistler:

- 2 Membership Application Form, Program Chair wanted, Bird Festivals
- 3 Update on WA State Legislative Sess., Earth Day, Plant trees at Indian Jack
- 4 Amphibian Survey update , Book Review: Dog Days Raven Nights
- 5 Bald Eagle Survey, SWAMP update, Mushroom Growing 101
- 6 WHAS Programs and Field Trips;

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*

OFFICERS

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Wildlife Sightings: John Green
360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com

Website: Ludger Wöhrmann
360-423-7004 webmaster@willapahillsaudubon.org

OTHER

Program Committee Chair Wanted

How would you like to meet fascinating people as you coordinate science-based presentations for the Willapa Hills Audubon Society and the community?

If this sounds like fun to you, you can apply to be the new Program Committee Chair. Our current chair, Bob Arnsdorf, will be moving this summer and we need to find someone to put together programs starting this fall. Please contact Bob at 414-2728 if you're interested in learning more about the position.

Included at no extra charge is a seat on the WHAS board, meeting quarterly, allowing you a unique opportunity to participate in the inner mechanisms of WHAS.

Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

April 26-28, Grays Harbor, Washington

The Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival is timed to match the annual migration of hundreds of thousands of shorebirds as they pause at the Grays Harbor estuary to feed and rest before departing for their nesting grounds in the Arctic. Enjoy Field Trips, Lectures, a Birder's Bazaar, and other. More info: <http://shorebirdfestival.com>

Olympic Birdfest 2013

April 5-7 in Sequim, WA

Bird for a few hours, or all day... from the dawn chorus to the evening owl prow. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, an auction & raffle, banquet, totem tour, and many other events. Stay on for a three-day, birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands. Register separately at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon
BirdFest program information at www.olympicbirdfest.org

16th Othello Sandhill Crane Festival

April 5-7 in Othello Washington

More info: <http://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org>

Input to the 2013 Washington State Legislative Session

By Charlotte Persons

State-wide Efforts

One important partner for Audubon chapters in our state is the Environmental Priorities Coalition of Washington State (EPC). These 21 organizations create a unified conservation voice during the Washington State legislative session. This year the three priorities are:

Toxic-Free Kids and Families--Remove unnecessary flame retardants from children's products and furniture in our homes

Clean Energy Solutions—Develop a climate policy that accelerates clean energy investment

Conservation Works--Promote fiscally-responsible projects to protect natural resources that benefit the entire state

At our January 6 meeting, Willapa Hills Audubon Society board endorsed only the last two priorities because of testimony from an organization of burn hospital physicians at a hearing last year for a similar proposal.

However, unknown to our board, an expose in the *Seattle Times* had revealed that this organization is funded by the chemical companies that make flame retardants, and the examples in the testimony were not factual.

<http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2018162658-flameretardant08.html> At a teleconference on Jan. 9, WSACC, our state-wide organization of chapter conservation chairs, discussed the three EPC priorities and voted to endorse them all. Another priority for WSACC will be to push for continued funding in the operations budget for state departments which protect wildlife habitat. For example, state parks had zero funding in out-going governor Gregoire's proposed budget.

What You Can Do to Influence Legislation

- Email or call your state representative directly. While bills will coalesce at the end of the session, contacting your reps throughout the session will show your passionate interest. Find out which bills matter most from the weekly EPC hotlists: <http://environmentalpriorities.org/hot-list> To find your reps and their contact information, go to the Washington State Government site <http://app.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>
- Write a letter to the editor. Legislators pay close attention to how issues are aired in local media.
- Contact Charlotte Persons, Conservation Co-Chair, to be put on a list for updates on Audubon issues that are not EPC priorities. She will be part of weekly discussions with the WSACC Steering Committee. 360-431-1174 or cpersons@yahoo.com

Chapter Associate for Audubon Washington

At the Audubon WA meeting last October, chapters voted that the new part-time Chapter Associate will devote all energies during the 2013 legislative session toward informing chapters about important legislative developments. WHAS board voted to support the position with this new job description. On February 19, Jennifer Syrowitz began working from the Tahoma Audubon Center office for three days per week. She will work with the EPC and WSACC Steering Committee to identify which bills to follow closely.

Come join us for a day restoring Indian Jack Slough and planting trees!!

Date: Sunday, March 10th

Time: 10:00am to 2:00pm

Location: Indian Jack Slough, Risk Road wetlands

Columbia Land Trust (CLT) is restoring the IJS property, creating Columbia Whitetail deer habitat and restoring wetlands. Willapa Hills Audubon Society (WHAS) has been assisting CLT by doing baseline habitat surveys, such as, amphibian surveys, plant and animal surveys, and restoration work. We will be planting Sitka Spruce trees around the newly created wetlands along Risk Rd.

What to bring: Warm clothes, rain gear and rubber boots. Bring hip or chest waders if you have them. Bring your lunch. We will have warm drinks and water.

We will have plantings tools and trees on site. We also have some waders for loan.

Please RSVP: Russ Kastberg at phone: 360-430-5541 or at rkastberg@cni.net,

Sam Schongalla, CLT Volunteer Coordinator, phone: 360-213- 1214 or at volunteer@columbialandtrust.org.

Directions to Indian Jack Slough: Take Highway 4 west to Cathlamet, WA. Proceed approx. one mile west, cross Elochoman River Bridge, turn right on Nelson Creek Rd., proceed to the Red Barn at Risk Road.

Earth Day

By Pat Reistroffer

Yes, it is fast approaching. Once again will we be hosting a booth at the Cowlitz County Fairgrounds on **Saturday, April 20** to bring awareness to Earth Day.

In the past we have made bird feeders out of TP rolls, peanut butter, and bird seed. They are extremely popular with the kids and their families. We need **2 people at the booth**: one to help with the bird feeders and another one to talk with the adults and share information. There will be some handouts and possibly some of our mounted birds. I will set everything up and be working at the booth most of day but **NEED HELP!!!**

PLEASE consider volunteering to work in the booth for one or two hours on Saturday. Just let me know what times (am or pm) and how much time you could donate to the day. Contact Pat Reistroffer at 360-636-5125 [email- preistrof@aol.com](mailto:preistrof@aol.com)

Indian Jack Slough Amphibian Survey

By Ann Kastberg

"No way!"
"Yes, way."

Have you ever seen lumpy water? Look closely at the bottom of this picture. The straight lines are plant stems, but the rounded grape-like shapes are red-legged frog egg masses, tightly packed, fresh, clear and round.



Saturday, February 16 nine hardly volunteers found over 5,000 red-legged frog egg masses at Indian Jack Slough, mostly in newly-created wetlands. About 250 egg masses comprise the group pictured above.

Since WHAS and Columbia Land Trust (CLT) started working together on Indian Jack Slough (IJS) in 2007, a lot of

progress has been made. WHAS provided baseline survey information on birds, trees, bugs and plants as well as amphibians, so that CLT better knew what was on the land. With a lot of planning and hard work, CLT recontoured the landscape of IJS, filling in ditches, clearing away reed canary grass, and creating islands and shallow ponds. The survey shows that red-leggeds are choosing to lay their eggs on little stubbly, barely emergent native plant stems over the monolithic reed canary grass that remains elsewhere on the 180 acre property.

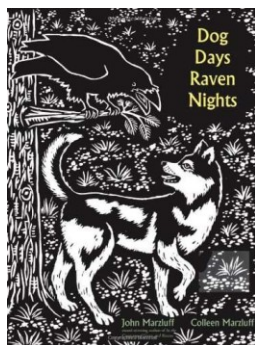


Newly created wetland off Risk Road. Removing reed canary grass allowed the native plants to emerged from the seed bank hidden below the reed canary grass mat.

The timing was great for finding masses, and agreeable weather made it fun. Red-leggeds were the star of the show. Other comers were about 200 long-toed salamanders but only four northwestern salamanders. Still too early for many northwestern salamander or any pacific chorus frogs to be reproducing. They should show up for the March surveys.

Book Review

By Carolyn Norred



Dog Days Raven Nights
John and Colleen Marzluff
Yale University Press 2011

Dog Days, Raven Nights by John and Colleen Marzluff is an engaging account of their three years spent in Maine studying ravens and coming to know and love the sport of dog sledding.

As newlyweds the Marzluffs agreed to move from Arizona to Maine

to work with biologist Bernd Heinrich as he expanded his study of raven life in the backwoods of the state.

Drawing from their journals and field notes, the two record their memories of the adventures and misadventures as they develop the project and their own abilities as scientists in the field.

The story is delightful in its tone and its expressed affection for the people they encounter as the two adjust to the rural culture and their lives in a small cabin in the yard of one of

the local families. Having arrived in the Maine mountains from their life in the Arizona desert, the young couple are presented not only with the challenge of developing an effective raven study project, but also coping with the dramatic, cold winters of the northern mountains. Exploring coping techniques for the weather eventually led Colleen to the world of sled dogs and their keepers. This sport provided them not only with solutions to some of the transportation problems the snow set forth, but also introduced them to the sport of dogsled racing and the folks involved, providing a useful social outlet for the two.

The study requires the two to build a large aviary and populate it with caught and tagged ravens as many as 30 at a time. Eventually the study ends having observed a total population of 300 birds, some of whom they raised from hatchlings, using a syringe as a substitute for a parent's beak.

For this reader, one of the highlights of the book is the insights distance has given the two regarding the human relationships they formed with their mentor, other volunteers on the project, and their north-woods neighbors.

It's a cozy and well-written read.

Bald Eagle Surveyors Spot Thirteen

By Darrel Whipple

The 35th Mid-winter Bald Eagle Survey sponsored by WHAS turned up ten adults and one immature eagle in the two latitude-longitude blocks along the Cowlitz and Columbia rivers between Toledo and Kalama. Two additional adults were located outside the designated blocks during the survey.

Charlotte Persons and I conducted the survey on January 27th, 2013, using a vehicle route that was prescribed in 1979. This year's count is a record number and may be a hopeful

sign for the eagle population, though we would like to see more immature eagles as evidence of successful reproduction.

The survey hours were 8 am to 3 pm, with fog in the early hours. Seven of the eagles were found in the northern block, four in the southern. The extra two were near the southern block. Each block is about eight by twelve miles in size.

Thirty-one other species were noted during the survey, including one Snow Goose in a flock of grazing Cacklers along Mandy Road.

Impressions from the Field Trip to Nisqually Wildlife Reserve

By Margaret Green, photos by Carolyn Norred



It was toe-numbing cold at the refuge that morning in late January. But it wasn't miserably gusty and raining as it can be and was earlier in the week. A group of 9 hardy WHAS members braved the elements and were properly rewarded with views of many species of duck in the ponds. Hopping among the trees and many shrubs, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Brown Creepers, and Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets gave us great views. High on perches in the trees were the Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcon. As we ventured out onto the long board walk over the salt water estuary of the Nisqually River, the saltwater specialists appeared. We found Red-breasted Mergansers, Surf Scoters, and a Red-throated Loon as well as Dunlin on the flats. A very special treat was the Northern Shrike (very seldom seen in our local area) settled on a reed only 15 feet from the group for lots of views through the scope, though it was hardly needed. In all 48 species were seen for a great day in a beautiful place.



SWAMP, Southwest Washington Amphibian Monitoring Project, Well Under Way

By Ann Kastberg

The 2013 egg mass survey season is off and counting. Formal surveys have been done at Indian Jack Slough, the Mint Farm, SLC, the Castle Rock Sports Complex and Germany Creek as well as more casual surveys in various ponds around and about. Red-legged frogs and long-toed salamanders are laying. A few northwestern salamander and tree frog masses have been found. They should be under way by the time you read this article.

Repeat surveys will be done at the sites mentioned above. Carlo Abbruzzese plans a series of surveys at the newly acquired DNR site of Lacamas Prairie. The Portland Zoo has partnered with SWAMP to survey at the Steigerwald Wildlife Refuge. So there are plenty of opportunities to don waders and get out in the fresh air for science and nature.

If you'd like to get information on survey dates and results, please contact Ann Kastberg at acwikman@cni.net or join SWAMP on Facebook.

Mushroom Growing 101

By Bob Arnsdorf

Please join Lower Columbia College Professors Kyle Hammon and Louis LaPierre and the Willapa Hills Audubon Society on **Wednesday, March 27 from 6-9 pm in LCC room SCI 107** to learn the basics of cultivating **delicious oyster and shiitake mushrooms**.

Participants will make and take home their own personal fungus farms. Cost is \$10 to cover materials.

Space is limited and a reservation is necessary. Call Bob at 360-414-2728 to reserve your spot.

Tid Bits

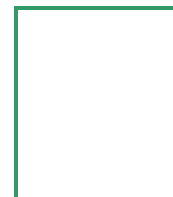
By John Green

Did you know?

According to Cornell Lab of Ornithology, birds which migrate at night use flight calls that are different than most of the vocalization these birds use during the day.



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.

March 9, Saturday and April 13, Saturday: Second Saturday Lake Sacajawea Bird Walk

Meet at 8:00 AM at the Hemlock Square off Kessler Blvd and Hemlock in Longview. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars if you have them. The leader will have a scope for better views. The walk will last about 1 ½ hours. No pre sign up necessary.

March 16, Saturday: Woodland Bottoms

We'll be leaving Longview at 8:00 AM and are hoping to see cranes, nesting owls & eagles in addition to a Great Blue Heron and Great Egret rookery. Bring snacks and/or lunch. We plan to return to Longview before 2:00 PM. The number of participants will be limited, so sign up early via email jgreen2317@aol.com or calling 360-575-9238 to John Green.

March 27, Wednesday: Mushroom Growing 101 from 6-9pm at Lower Columbia College in room SCI 107

Participants will make and take home their own personal fungus farms. See page five for more information and to find out how to reserve your spot.

April 25, Thursday: Shore birding at the Washington Coast

Our group will gather at Lynn Point on Willapa Bay at 11:00 AM to catch the best tides for seeing all the migrating shorebirds. This will be up to at least 4 hours of good viewing. The Grays Harbor Shore Bird Festival is April 26, 27, and 28 and we have timed our trip for those who might want to extend their birding into the weekend and join in the festivities. To sign up, email jgreen2317@aol.com or calling 360-575-9238 to John Green. We will develop a carpooling plan with directions and more detail once participation is finalized.

Saturday, March 30th at 6:00pm at the Longview Women's Club **WHAS annual member dinner, meeting, and 7:00pm program**. See page one for details about the dinner meeting and how to RSVP. At 7:00 PM, the key note speaker, Master Birder and outdoor photographer, Idie Ulsh will present "*Feathered Architects - The Fascinating World of Bird Nests*". The program is free and open to the public.

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