

WILLAPA WHISTLER

A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society

Volume 46 // Issue 1

Spring 2020



Larry Schwitters --- Keynote speaker at our Annual Banquett (see below)

Willapa Hills Annual Meeting Banquet and Program

By President Steve Puddicombe

All Willapa Hills Audubon members are invited to attend the 2020 annual meeting and banquet at the McClelland Arts Center on Friday, March 27, beginning at 5:30 PM.

The event will feature a presentation by guest speaker Larry Schwitters (see below) beginning at 7 PM and also open to the general public. Doors for the program will open by 6:45 PM.

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 McClelland Center will be open at 5 PM for setup so the banquet can begin promptly at 5:30. The Center is located at 951 Delaware Street in Longview, in beautiful Victoria Freeman Park.

Vaux's Swift Advocate Larry Schwitters Speaker at Banquet

Vaux's Swift expert Larry Schwitters returns to present his program, "Saving Old Chimneys, Saving Swifts" on Friday, March 27, 2020, at Willapa Hills Audubon's Annual Banquet beginning at 7 PM at the McClelland Arts Center, at Victoria Freeman Park in Longview. The program is free and the general public is welcomed. Doors open at 6:45 PM.

Schwitters is internationally recognized as the preeminent expert on Vaux's Swifts and their status across North America. He is the Project Supervisor for Vaux's Happenings, a non-profit he first organized when working to save a chimney in Monroe, Washington as a migration roost. He now has 80 people chronicling some 14 million swifts, from Yucatan to the Yukon, and has advocated tirelessly to save the chimneys that provide crucial refuges along the migration routes.

The latest success story is a church in Rainier, OR that had grated off their chimney some 20 years ago but had since ceased using the old furnace. Schwitters aided Darrel Whipple, board member of WHAS, to have the grate removed last Spring with Vaux's Swift visits recorded at 190,000 individuals last Fall. You can learn more at www.vauxshappening.org.

A Message to Our National Members

Please become one of the National Audubon Society (NAS) members in our area who supports the local chapter, Willapa Hills Audubon Society (WHAS). Membership dues provide resources directly to the chapter. It is a very significant contribution towards local conservation work and education programs, which benefit our communities. We provide 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 quarterly 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 in the **president's message** on page 3 and on our member form on page 2.

2020 Elections for WHAS Board of Directors

Don't forget to vote in our biennial elections. Officers will serve for 2 years; the next election will be in 2022.

The final tally for 2020 will be at the annual meeting and banquet on March 27.

Candidates this year include Steve Puddicombe; Larry Brandt; Cathy Kendall; Sherry Hawkins and five Board Members-at-Large:

...more info on page 5

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Support our mission, join WHAS today!

Membership renewals are due March 1 of each year. If you prefer to pay by credit card use our online form on our website. Membership includes 4 issues of our newsletter *WILLAPA WHISTLER* annually. Gift Memberships are available online.

Check type of Membership:

- Individual Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$25 check for annual membership)
- Family Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$35 check for annual membership)
- Lifetime Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$750 check for lifetime membership)

We are a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation. All dues and donations are tax deductible
For membership in National Audubon Society visit <https://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 _____ Chapter # Y14

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

Please indicate any **new** information:

I prefer you contact me by:

- Phone
- Email
- Mail

Other options:(Add your email below)

- I prefer to receive the *WHISTLER* by email
- Contact me about volunteer opportunities
- Add me to your announcement email list*
- I would like to support the work of Willapa Hills Audubon Society. Enclosed is my additional donation of \$ _____**

OFFICERS

President: Steve Puddicombe
360-200-4580 president@willapahillsaudubon.org
Vice-President: vacant

Secretary: Cathy Kendall
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Director at Large: Ann Cordero
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Director at Large: Robert Sudar
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trilliumcreamery@gmail.com

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Conservation: Larry Brandt
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Program: vacant
for questions contact President Steve Puddicombe
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360-431-1174 cpeople2u@gmail.com
Membership: Larry Brandt
360-200-4580 lbrandt@cni.net
Education: Chelsea Chandler
chelsea_chandler@live.com
Finance: vacant

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

Donate to WHAS when you shop!



Shop at Amazon through <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-0951287>. Choose "Willapa Hills Audubon Society" as your charity and we'll receive 0.5% of your purchase total.

Olympic BirdFest 2020

Come Bird in Sequim, Washington, April 16-21, 2020
Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction & raffle, gala banquet, and more. The featured speaker this year is: Scott Pearson. Or join the festival pre-trip: a birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands.
More info and BirdFest registration at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

Othello Sandhill Crane Festival 2020

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.
The 23th Annual festival will be held March 20-22 2020. More info: <https://www.othellosandhillcranefestival.org/>

Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival

April 24-26, 2020 Grays Harbor NWR, 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/>

Time for Renewal

By President Steve Puddicombe

This issue of the Whistler marks the first of a new year and decade and with anticipation of Spring. And, as was explained in our last issue, WHAS transitions to a yearly membership renewal date and ends the cumbersome practice of calling for membership renewal on a monthly basis. **This is the official announcement that all chapter memberships are now up for renewal.** We will no longer send individual notification. And since this is an election year, all our chapter members and national members will receive this Whistler with a self-addressed envelope with detaching membership form.

Please note that as part of this transition we've created new WHAS membership categories: instead of just the one individual membership of the past we now have an individual, family and lifetime option. You can send a check with the enclosed self-addressed envelope or use our new credit card payment option online at www.willapahillsaudubon.org. If you want to give a gift donation to someone you can do so most easily at our pay site online. The pay site will also make it easy to donate if you want to support one of our conservation initiatives or if you just want to increase your support at any time.

WHAS recognizes that some of you have just recently renewed or have done so in the last few months. So, we will wait to update our membership rolls until after next year's call for renewal and leave it to you to determine the best time to renew until then. **And if you are currently a national-only member in our territory, we invite you to join us as a chapter member**

as well. It's never been easier to do and you'll help support our local efforts. We thank everyone for your continued support and patience during this process!

Another initiative we'll be pursuing in the coming months **is to enhance your ability to volunteer or contact us with comments, suggestions and concerns.** This effort will involve creating a new volunteer link at our website making it easier for you to specify your interests. We also hope to link to a page highlighting specific current volunteer outreach. **Right now we have a need for people to help bird banding Purple Martins in June and July; birding experts are needed for surveys in the Nature Conservancy holdings in the Ellsworth Creek watershed near Naselle in May and June;** and there are half a dozen other opportunities, from manning our Earth Day booth to lobbying on behalf of conservation issues in the area. And we have several board committees that can always utilize help. WHAS is committed to fulfilling our mission of citizen science, conservation and enjoyment of the natural world through the feathery prism of birds. Please join us!

I'd like to thank Ludger Wöhrmann, our webmaster, for all his patience and expertise in bringing about changes at our website. And thanks to Larry Brandt, Sherry Hawkins and Gloria Nichols for all their efforts in our ad hoc committee to create a pay site online.

If there is joy in life, it's in accomplishing worthy goals with dedicated people.

Willapa Hills Audubon Society and Friends of
Skamokawa presents

Kyleen Austin

Exploring the Waters of the
Pacific Northwest

A Solo Kayaker's Journey

Sunday March 15, 2:00 PM
River Life Interpretive Center
Central School/Redmen Hall
1394 W. SR4, Skamokawa, WA (360) 795-3007

www.friendspfskamokawa.org

fos1894@gmail.com

Volunteers Needed for WHAS Booth at Earth Day

By Gloria Nichols

It's the 25th Anniversary!! I have signed Willapa Hills Audubon Society up for a booth. Ann Cordero is helping me. We will be calling for volunteers, or you can call me at (360)636-3793 and ask how you can help.

As our population grows, Earth Day 2020 is more important than ever. Join us this year at the County Expo Center on April 18th, 10 a.m - 3:30 p.m.

Come celebrate with us! Support this successful family event and help raise the profile of our shared environmental challenges. It's lots of fun as well!!.

We usually have two children's activities: making bird feeders with peanut butter as glue for seeds on toilet paper rolls, and measuring kids' arm spans against wooden bird wings that are duck-sized to eagle-sized.

Image provided by Steve Puddicombe



Update on the Children's Discovery Museum

By Ann Cordero

The Children's Discovery Museum has some new science programs for families. The second Sunday of the month has been designated Science Sunday. Also, nature story times are offered every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m.

Science Sunday is sponsored by a grant from the Junior Women's Service League. Each program provides educational activities on specific science themes, books on display, crafts and something to take home. Past programs have included rocks, capillary action in flowers, wind, water, calcium, snow and ice, and reptiles.

The theme on March 8 will be robotics. The program for May 10, Mother's Day, will be soap making. For the June 14 program the Willapa Hills Audubon Society and Home Depot will partner with the museum and children will be able to build bird



houses. On April 12 the museum will be closed for the Easter holiday.

Remember that the Children's Discovery Museum is open for fun and play five days a week, Wednesday through Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with extended hours on Fridays until 7:00 p.m.

Visit it and enjoy the adventure! And we welcome donations of picture books about nature that will be suitable for story time and will become a part of our circulating nature library.

Images courtesy of the Ann Cordero

2020 Elections for WHAS Board of Directors

Our **biennial system** means that officers serve for 2 years with the next elections 2022. The final tally for 2020 will be at the annual meeting and banquet on March 27 (see page one).

Candidates this year include Steve Puddicombe (President); Larry Brandt (Vice President); Cathy Kendall (Secretary); Sherry Hawkins (Treasurer) and five Board Members-at-Large: John Gross, Darrel Whipple, Ann Cordero, Robert Sudar, and Randy Bergman. All candidates are running unopposed, but there is a slot for write-in candidates on the ballot.

Anyone interested in serving WHAS is urged to come forward as we need chairs and members for three committees—Field Trips, Programs, and Stewardship and Science. If you are interested, contact any of our current officers. All committee chairs are also automatic WHAS board members. We have a new procedure for ballots that follows the 2016 amendment to the WHAS Constitution and Bylaws. **The ballot is attached to this *Whistler* only for WHAS members.** If you are not a member of the chapter, or are only a NAS member, and you wish to join WHAS and vote in this election, please contact the membership chair, Larry Brandt. Or you can join and vote before the WHAS annual meeting/dinner on March 27.

36th Cowlitz-Columbia CBC Results

By Bob Reistroffer

On Wednesday, January 1, 2020 the 36th Cowlitz-Columbia Christmas Bird Count (3CBC) was conducted. We had 18 field observers and 2 feeder watchers out for the day peering through rain and low clouds and finding 95 species of birds. The species count this year was in the normal range for this count.

The count circle was begun informally in 1982 with 57 species and 4,545 individual birds found. In 1984, after two informal years, we started our first official 3CBC.

This year (our 36th official count) we found 95 species and 11,732 individuals. We recorded some all time individual high counts; 32 Great Egret, 30 Wood Duck, 16 Thayer's Gull, 27 Common Raven, plus 5 Eurasian Wigeon. There were some Low counts too, 24 Common Merganser, 15 House Finch. Also we had 5 count week birds Ross's Goose, White-Throated Sparrow, Barred Owl, Ruffed Grouse, and Hermit Thrush

Thank you to all our field observers and feeder watchers.

Leadbetter Christmas Bird Count Results

By Robert Sudar

Strong coastal storm systems in the preceding days gave way to better weather on Saturday, December 21st, as 29 intrepid counters took part in the Leadbetter Point Christmas Bird Count. The count circle is centered in Willapa Bay and includes about half of the Long Beach Peninsula along with a considerable portion of land on the east side of the bay. The counters were distributed over seven portions of the circle, recording species and numbers from before daylight (when a Great Horned Owl was heard!) until dusk. Overall, 97 species were seen (or heard) on count day and two more during "count week".

As has been the case every year there were some interesting results, both encouraging and disappointing. On a positive note, there were record numbers of Pacific Loon (8), Pied-bill Grebe (27), Spotted Towhee (86), Brown Creeper (8), Double-crested Cormorant (128), Red-winged Blackbird (500), Brewer's Blackbird (192), Bald Eagle (58), Pine Siskin (953), Ring-billed Gull (1425!), Eurasian-collared Dove (125) and Belted Kingfisher (28). That's a lot of new record highs!

On the other hand, there were no Scaups of either species at all, along with no Mourning Doves and only a single Coot. There were also no Great Egrets or Bitterns, species which are not always seen but still a disappointment when we can't include them. I remember seeing my first Great Egret on the 1981 count, the first time I participated, in the Bay Center area. I find it interesting that I now see them so frequently in the Longview area, but they appear to remain only an occasional visitor to the coast.

Wahkiakum CBC Results

By Andrew Emlen

On December 30, 2019, 25 volunteers participated in the 22nd annual Wahkiakum CBC. Calm weather and 47 degree F temperatures allowed us to find over 51,000 individuals of 119 species, our second highest species tally and just one shy of our all-time high of 120 species. The most abundant species in the circle this winter was Cackling Goose, with a tally of 20,967, breaking the previous high count of 16,099. Second was Greater Scaup with a tally of 4878, along with 3072 Greater/Lesser Scaup. Third was European Starling at 3663. A Northern Waterthrush at the Julia Butler Hansen Refuge tide gate was not only new to the count but also a Wahkiakum County first. Many birders went to see it in the days following the count.

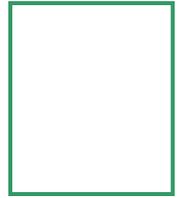
A Lesser Yellowlegs in Brownsmead and a trio of California Quail on Shingle Mill Road were also new to the count. Other unusual species included Barrow's Goldeneye, Clark's Grebe, and Common Yellowthroat. For the third winter running, three Turkey Vultures are wintering on Puget Island; this winter, all three were seen on count day. The endangered "Streaked" Horned Larks appear to be thriving under the Army Corps of Engineers' management for them on Whites Island; 36 were seen in the circle on count day.

New high counts were set for Cackling Goose, Trumpeter Swan (20, previous high 9), American Kestrel (39, previous high 20), Chestnut-backed Chickadee (144, previous high 119), Red-winged Blackbird (873, previous high 801), and Brown-headed Cowbird (13, previous high 9).

Notable misses included Rock Pigeon and Great Horned Owl.



PO Box 399
Longview, WA 98632



TEMP -- RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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.

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 15th 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.

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



Please recycle your *Whistler*
or pass it on to a friend.

Find us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Willapa-Hills-Audubon/1386609461578276>

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.

Exploring the Waters of the Pacific Northwest – A Solo Kayaker’s Journey

Kyleen Austin presents on Sunday March 15 at 2pm at Redmen Hall in Skamokawa, more info on page three

Willapa Hills Annual Meeting Banquet

All members are invited to attend the 2020 annual meeting and banquet on Friday, March 27, at 5:30pm; more info on page 1

Saving Old Chimneys, Saving Swifts by Larry Schwitters

Friday, March 27, 2020, after the Annual Banquet, at 7pm. The general public is welcome. Doors open at 6:45 pm, more on page one

Earthday at the Cowlitz Expo center in Longview on April 18th

WHAS made changes to membership by switching to a yearly renewal date. All membership renewals are due at the beginning of the year. And we have new membership levels. See page 2 and 3 for the details.

Don't forget to vote for WHAS Board Officers! See ballot attached to this issue for all WHAS members!

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>