



# Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society  
June 2018

Whidbey Audubon Society is dedicated to the understanding, appreciation and conservation of birds, other wildlife and their habitats on Whidbey Island and in surrounding waters.

## Whidbey Audubon Meets Thursday, June 14 in Coupeville



### Loons in Our Midst

Loons are the essence of wilderness. Their haunting calls evoke images of forested lakes and remote tundra, yet many of these beguiling creatures are drawn to Whidbey each year.

Which loon species do we host? Where do they come from? What draws them here? When is the best time of year to see 1,000+ loons from a Whidbey beach?

Steve and Martha Ellis will answer these and other loon questions. They'll focus on which fish species are preyed on and how loons catch them (Common Loons can dive to depths of 200 feet). They'll also answer the age-old question, "Are loons loony?"

Come hear the evocative calls — you'll feel transported to a northern lake!

Steve and Martha Ellis have been making natural history presentations and leading field trips for nearly 30 years. Steve is the former vice-president of Whidbey Audubon Society and grew up listening to the calls of loons in Alaska. Born and raised in Arizona, Martha became acquainted with loons when she moved to Whidbey after graduating from Pacific Lutheran University. She is a former Whidbey Audubon Society board member and is a member of the Washington Native Plant Society. The Ellises are longtime residents of Coupeville



Martha and Steve Ellis

### Join Us!

Thursday evening  
June 14

Coupeville  
Recreation Hall  
901 NW Alexander Street

7:00 socializing  
*(donations for snacks welcome)*

7:15 brief meeting for  
awards and recognitions

7:30 program begins

**No programs until October**  
See you at the Bird in the Hand  
Festival September 22

**Have a good summer!**

## Upcoming Field Trips

**Saturday, June 23: PIGEON GUILLEMOT COLONY.** Meet at the Freeland Park & Ride at Trinity Lutheran Church at 8 a.m.

**Note:** No other field trips are scheduled for the summer. However, check out some of Whidbey's special birding spots that are listed on our [Whidbey Audubon Society website](#).

### Whidbey Audubon Society's Guide to 15 Special Spots

- 1. Deception Pass State Park:** Off State Route 20. Old growth forest, wetland, rocky/sandy shore, lakes, tide pools. Loons, grebes, murrelets, other waterfowl, eagles, kingfishers, warblers, swallows.
- 2. Duguala Bay & Lake:** State Route 20, east on Frostad Road, north on Dike Road. Sheltered bay, mud flats, brackish lake. Swans, dabbling ducks including canvasbacks, other waterfowl, wading birds.
- 3. Swan Lake, Joseph Whidbey State Park:** State Route 20, west on Swantown Road to West Beach Road. Rocky/sandy beach, freshwater lake, cattail marsh. Eagles, harriers, wading birds, loons, grebes, sea ducks including harlequin ducks, dabbling ducks, oystercatchers, yellowthroats, marsh wrens.
- 4. Fort Ebey State Park:** State Route 20, west on Libbey Road, and south on Hill Valley Road. Second growth forest, thickets, lake, high bluff, beach. Seabirds and waterfowl, kingfisher, crossbill, woodpeckers, other forest birds including nuthatch, creeper, kinglets.
- 5. Kennedy Lagoon:** State Route 20, east on Madrona Way. Sheltered lagoon. Kingfishers, waterfowl including hooded mer-

**Birding Spots, see page 8**

## Getting to Know Your Board: Patty Cheek

Patty Cheek was one of Whidbey Audubon Society's Members-at-Large. She has recently volunteered to be the Field Trip Chair. Here is some background information:

Patty Ball Cheek learned to drive in her dad's Triumph TR-3 roadster while growing up in Houston, which was a good beginning for a life in the outdoors — in a Triumph, one gets rained on and windblown whether or not the top is up. Later, living in Tucson with her husband, Larry, she found she loved hiking the Southwest's mountains and canyons. After 25 years of water deprivation in Arizona, she took up sea kayaking almost immediately after moving to the Seattle area in 1996. Ten years later she added sailing, receiving US Sailing's bareboat charter certification after two years of classes. She began birding seriously in 2015 and this year is joining birding expeditions

on the Texas coast, southern Arizona, and eastern Washington. While indoors, Patty earned a music degree in organ performance and taught piano and pipe organ for many years, also working as a church organist and choir director. She then made a mid-life switch in careers, earning a bachelor of science degree in nursing and worked as an oncology nurse in Tucson and Seattle for 30 years. She retired, finally, in March of this year to enjoy birding, sailing and gardening full-time. She still misses that TR-3.



### Editor's Note: Correction

Dear Readers,

In our May issue of *Shorelines*, we inadvertently printed page three twice and left out page two. This error only affected paper copies.

To ensure that everyone receives the same information, two of the articles that were missing, appear on this page. An updated "Getting to Know Your Board: Patty Cheek" (Patty is now Field Trip Chair) and "Conservation Futures Update."

The third article was background information on the candidates for the Whidbey Audubon Society board. Since the election is over (and they won!), we will save that information for the continuing series, "Getting to Know Your Board."

Our apologies. *Jenny Brown, Editor*

## Conservation Futures Update

One application was made for Conservation Futures funds this year. Island County, with advice from the Whidbey Camano Land Trust, asks to purchase an additional 40 acres bordering Barnum Point Park on Camano Island. The lot contains over 170 mature holly trees, which the County would remove and reforest with natives, as a start to the eradication of invasive holly throughout the park. Another section, currently covered with blackberry brambles, would replace the parking lot with a larger one (19 vehicles instead of 8). The remaining acreage is forest and a little pond and stream draining into Triangle Cove.

The Conservation Futures Citizens Advisory Board recommends this project enthusiastically in its report due April 17. When the County Commissioners schedule a hearing, the date will show on their website, [www.islandcountywa.gov/commissioners](http://www.islandcountywa.gov/commissioners). [Click red text to connect.]

— *Susan Bennett, Conservation Futures Citizens Advisory Board Member*

**GUILLEMOT**  
**APPRECIATION DAY**  
Friday, June 22nd 2018 3-5 p.m.

*Ott & Murphy Wine*  
**OM**  
204 1st Street in Langley



- It's Happy Hour!
- Data findings/Display
- Appetizers
- Red felt to cut out your own PG feet
- Slideshow

*Everyone is invited to join us to learn more about Whidbey's favorite seabird.*

**Also join us Saturday 6/23 at 8 a.m. to visit a Pigeon Guillemot colony**

Freeland Trinity Lutheran Church Park & Ride (8341 Hwy 525)

[www.pigeonguillemot.org](http://www.pigeonguillemot.org)



## Dates to Remember

### JUNE

- 14: Whidbey Audubon Program: *Loons in our Midst*** with Steve and Martha Ellis, Coupeville, 7 p.m.
- 22: Guillemot Appreciation Day Happy Hour**, Ott and Murphy's Tasting Room, 3 to 5 p.m.

**Dates to Remember, see page 9**



## New Pigeon Guillemot Researcher

The Pigeon Guillemot Research team would like to introduce and welcome our researcher, Madeline Remmen. Madeline received the Whidbey Audubon Society scholarship in 2016. She is a graduate from South Whidbey High School, but in her junior and senior years she attended the Ocean Research College Academy (ORCA) which is a running start program through Everett Community College — where a high school student can be in the marine environment conducting research. Madeline then attended Western Washington University where she is currently pursuing an environmental policy degree with a geology minor. Madeline's other interests include hiking, backpacking, completing triathlons and anything that gets her outdoors.

Madeline Remmen has been contracted to manage the Pigeon Guillemot research data this summer.



## Whidbey Audubon's Birdathon Results



The original Golden Binoculars are mounted on a larger plaque. The original lists winners dating back to 1995, handwritten on the green mount.

The Birdathon provides an excellent snapshot of species on Whidbey Island in early May. Depending on the year, migrating birds such as flycatchers or scoters, may or may not be in evidence while a team is out for their 24-hour window. And that elusive Pileated Woodpecker may prove to be unseen or heard.

During the 2018 Birdathon, six dedicated birding teams sighted a total of 153 species. The Coupevillains retained their hold on the Golden Binoculars for another year

by sighting a total of 129 species. Leader Steve Ellis, accepted the trophy at the May Audubon meeting, for fellow Coupevillains Bill Bradkin, Sandy Shields and Martha Ellis. Congratulations!

An exciting aspect of the Birdathon is that each team may see

birds that are a first for them personally, or that weren't seen by other teams. Some *new* and *unusual sightings* this year include **Snow Goose, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Shrike, Horned Lark, Western Bluebird, Nashville Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Bullock's Oriole and Lewis's Woodpecker.** Lewis's Woodpecker is not currently on the *Birds of Whidbey Island Checklist*, updated November 2016, for the March to May period. The 2018 Birdathon results, along with the last six years of statistics, will be posted to the website under "Stewardship" in the new format, [www.whidbeyaudubon.org/stewardship.html](http://www.whidbeyaudubon.org/stewardship.html). During this period, a total of 199 species have been observed.

Though it is a blast to spend a day running around Whidbey trying to see how many species of birds one can spot, the real focus of the Birdathon is to raise money. Team leaders are still collecting and submitting pledges and donations, but at this point \$3,446 has been deposited, with \$2,178 for the scholarship fund and \$1,268 for the general fund. More information on total donations should be available at the June 14 Audubon meeting and in the September issue of *Shorelines*.

Thanks to all team members for their great birding and fundraising, and thank you, thank you, to all our Birdathon supporters!

— Kathy Obersinner, Birdathon Chair

## This Island Was Made for You, Me and the Birds

From the **Barrow's Goldeneye** at **Columbia Beach** to the **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** at Deception Pass and all the 101 bird species in-between, Team Shore Thing worked at a very satisfying 24 hours for our 2018 Birdathon day.

The evening of May 1 began with an **American Coot** and a **Cinnamon Teal** at Ewing Marsh and finished up the following

Shore Thing, see [page 7](#)



Birdathon Team Shore Thing in action.

# Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings

**April 25:** Female **Mountain Bluebird** at edge of prairie remnant at Pacific Rim Institute.

— *Joe Sheldon*

**April 27:** I have no idea what kind of bird this is ... have never seen one like it before. On Deer Lagoon sitting on an old fence post almost in the middle of the reserve area of the Lagoon... Very large bird with a white head, chest and back feathers, but dark almost black wings, dark beak and a wide (maybe 2 to 3 inches) black band around its eyes which makes its markings very distinct against the white features. I am sure this is not a juvenile eagle, as I have seen plenty of those here on Shore Avenue.

— *Cathy Donckers*

## *Sightings Editor's Response:*

Cathy, you have given a great description of an **Osprey**. These fish-eating hawks recently returned from their wintering grounds in Central and South America. They are the ones that nest atop cell towers along SR 525.



Female Mountain Bluebird

**April 27:** Two female **Mountain Bluebirds** are still at Pacific Rim Institute in the vicinity of the Cal and Ruth DeWitt Prairie Remnant.

— *Sarah Schmidt*

**April 27:** **Yellow-headed Blackbird** in tree near Crockett Lake. — *Brooks Allen*

**April 28:** **Western Kingbird** on sign on east side of SR20 where it runs north-south along the east end of Crockett Lake. Seen

with Joe Sheldon.  
— *Sarah Schmidt*



Yellow-headed Blackbird



Western Kingbird

**April 30:** **Chipping Sparrow**, one female **Mountain Bluebird** and 17 **Turkey Vultures**. The Chipping Sparrow was near the main residence, the Mountain Bluebird near or in the prairie remnant and the Turkey Vultures are around the sheep area where there are afterbirths from the new lambs. Seen at Pacific Rim Institute. Both the Chipping Sparrow and the Mountain Bluebird are listed as rare on Whidbey. — *Joe Sheldon*



Turkey Vulture

**May 1:** At least two **Myrtles** among the multitudes of **Audubon's** (**Yellow-rumped**)

**Warblers**; two to three dozen **Whimbrels** and about 10 **Greater Yellowlegs** among the flocks of **Dunlin**; two **Snow Geese** on the freshwater side of the dike; 40 to 45 **White Pelicans** and, for the first time in the three years they have come to Deer Lagoon, one bird appears to be sitting on a nest on a small island, separated from the main group by a couple hundred yards. Seen at West dike of Deer Lagoon. — *Darwin Wile*

**May 3:** Beautiful white-striped



White throated Sparrow

**White-throated Sparrow** in our yard this morning. First one in two or three years. Seen on West Beach and Barque Roads, Oak Harbor. — *Carla Corin*

**May 5:** **Lewis's Woodpecker** landed in a tree over our heads (Joe Sheldon and Gideon Seraphine) on the trail from the parked cars at the end of Deer Lagoon Road to the West Dike. Full sun showing the dark red face and pink-red belly. Excellent view but bird flew before picture could be taken. This is a rare bird for Whidbey Island. Confirmation: Both Joe Sheldon and Gideon Seraphine know the species well. It is their first sighting of a Lewis's on Whidbey. — *Joe Sheldon*

**May 4:** About ten **Whimbrels**. Location: In mussel beds at low tide at Monroe's Landing.

— *Brooks Allen*

**May 6:** Female **MacGillivray's Warbler**. Distinctive white arcs above and below eye on a yellowish warbler with gray head. Flitting through cherry and maple trees in our backyard. Rare on Whidbey during spring and fall

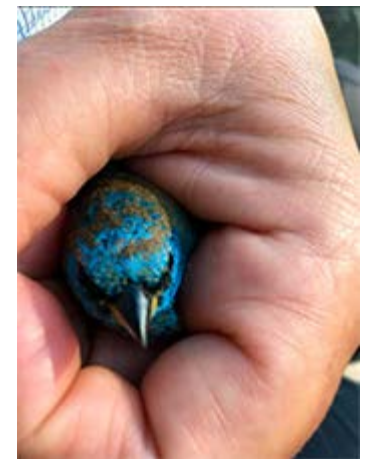
migration. (On May 25, 2016 one stopped here to use the bird bath). Location is near Parker Road, south of Coupeville.

— *Sarah Schmidt*

**May 9:** Female **Bullock's Oriole** at my suet feeder! At first I thought I was seeing my first Western Tanager of the year but then I looked more closely and saw the long pointed bill with a grayish lower mandible. The color was a pale orange rather than a true yellow. The bird returned to the suet several times. A new yard bird after 14 years! Seen near Honeymoon Bay Road and Towhee Lane.

— *Linda Bainbridge*

**May 14:** **Lazuli Bunting**:



Lazuli Bunting

non-breeding male. Flew into a house window. Held him for several minutes until he fully recovered and flew off. Location in Clinton. Confirmation is not included on Whidbey checklist; it IS on the Seattle checklist.

— *Dyanne Sheldon*

**May 15:** The male **Eurasian Wigeon** that I saw on the May 8 was still hanging out with some **American Wigeons**. My previous sightings of this species at the lagoon have all been from November to March. Also present was a male **Blue-winged Teal**, a species I've seen several

**Sightings, see page 5**



## Borgman Property Acquisition Finalized

We are happy to announce that the Whidbey Camano Land Trust (WCLT) has closed on the 125-acre Borgman property, a beautiful old farm north of Oak Harbor. The land contains woods, fields and wetlands that harbor many species of birds and other wildlife.

Whidbey Audubon assisted in this acquisition with a \$10,000 grant for habitat protection. While the generous donor, Donald

Borgman, gave over 85 acres outright and gave a conservation easement on the remaining lands, WCLT requires that all property gifts be accompanied by funds to ensure protection, oversight and management. The Land Trust submitted a grant application to Whidbey Audubon for help with these costs. Of Whidbey Audubon's contribution, \$2,000 came from grants received from the Allstate Foundation to be used for habitat preservation. The Allstate grants were made on behalf of Cathy Darracott, a former Whidbey Audubon board member and now retired Allstate Insurance agent. The remaining funds came from Whidbey Audubon's cash reserves. Thank you to the Allstate Foundation, Cathy Darracott and all the Whidbey Audubon members who have contributed generously over the years.

We look forward to working with the Whidbey Camano Land Trust as it develops trails and signage on the Borgman Nature Preserve and will keep you posted about a future field trip to explore this beautiful place.

— *Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair*

## Conservation Column:



### lastics

There has been a lot of news lately about plastic. Plastic in the seas, plastic on the beach, plastic in our food and even in us. Our fleeces made of recycled plastic are shedding microbits every time they are washed and these tiny particles are making their way into the water and up the food chain. The impact of this plastic is not completely known but not likely to be good for us or other lifeforms.

Some towns in Washington have banned plastic shopping bags. Reusable bags seem like an easy fix, with a default to paper bags when you forget your reusable bags (or maybe that never happens to you). But it's not straightforward. Some studies show more energy to produce and distribute paper bags and most cotton grocery bags are made from a water-intensive and chemically-drenched crop. Even the well-intentioned effort can have unintended consequences. Vancouver, British Columbia has just banned plastic drinking straws. You can buy paper straws, reusable metal straws... or maybe we don't need straws?

It is hard to live a low-impact life. But it is possible to learn about the choices available and to be mindful of the costs of convenience.

— *Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair*



## Sightings, from page 4

times at the lagoon, always in the month of May. There was a male **Redhead** as well. I have seen this species only one other time at the lagoon when I saw eight on the first of May, 2016. All three birds were on the marsh (west) side of the lagoon area. There were 72 **American White Pelicans** when I arrived early in the morning. About 55 flew north late in the morning. Location: Deer Lagoon.

— *George Heleker*

**May 17:** Saw another leucistic **Bald Eagle** at Deer Lagoon this morning. It might be the same one, but I can't tell. There was a group of one adult and three juvenile Bald Eagles hanging out on the last house on the beach side of the lagoon when the leucistic adult came in from the bluffs to the North.

— *Peter West Carey*

**May 18:** **Brown Pelican** south sightings, see page 6

## Thanks for the Screens

Whidbey Audubon's project to provide screens to cover the vent stacks of vault toilets in the central Whidbey state parks is complete. Ten screens were delivered to Jon Crimmins, Park Manager, this week. They will be installed soon and will prevent wildlife entrapment at Joseph Whidbey State Park, Fort Ebey State Park, Fort Casey State Park, Ebey's Landing and South Whidbey State Park.

Many thanks to the following, who sponsored one or more screens: Rob and Traci York (2), Frank Ruggiero and Karen Posner (1), Cathi Bower (1), Kim Shepard (1) and the Teton Raptor Center (4).

All Island County facilities with vent stacks already have caps that exclude birds and other wildlife.

— *Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair*

## Please Sign Ballot Initiative 1631 at June Meeting

The Audubon Washington Board unanimously endorsed Ballot Initiative 1631 at its May 16 meeting. I-1631 is the latest effort, sponsored by Clean Air, Clean Water WA, to put a price on the carbon pollution causing climate change. Consistent with past efforts at the ballot and in the legislature, Audubon Washington firmly believes the time to take action is now. In order to get this referendum on the ballot, signatures are being collected statewide. In support of this effort, Whidbey Audubon will be collecting signatures at our general meeting on June 14. Please come, please sign!



— *Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair*

## Sightings, from page 5

of Keystone Ferry at Cormorant platform. — *Carlos Andersen*



Brown Pelican

**May 19:** Female **Yellow-headed Blackbird** first heard, then seen at Lone Lake. It was calling frequently. A **Western Wood-pewee** was in the trees to the west. The above were found by the bird class field trip attendees.

— *Steve Ellis*

**May 22:** **Mystery Passerine** seen this morning at Holmes Harbor. There was someone who looked EXACTLY like a Veery (or maybe a less-marked Swainson's Thrush), except it was foraging along the shoreline in the rocks. No helpful photo, but I watched with binocs for a few minutes from

about 40 feet away, at about a 6-foot tide. Definitely not an immature Robin, or anything else likely that I could figure out. First impression was "what is a Robin doing on the beach by the water?" Perhaps slightly smaller than a robin, "fox-sparrow-brown" (not drab) back and wings. Very pale gray breast, with very pale spotting or striping. Pinkish legs (not dark or yellow). Dark bill, substantial like a robin's. Pale, indistinct eye ring. It was facing East, into good light. When I first saw it, its wings appeared long the way thrushes do, but it tucked them up as it kept pecking along the water line. After about five minutes, I glanced at my notebook for a split second, and when I looked up, it had disappeared and was nowhere to be seen after that. Best guess so far is a first year Swainson's Thrush that didn't know it was supposed to be in the woods.

— *Cathi Bower*

**This is a reply to Cathi Bower:**

It sounds likely from your description that the bird is an **American Pipit**. If that doesn't check out, then look at **Wandering Tattler**. — *Gary Lyon*

**May 24:** **Chipping Sparrow** in

our backyard. While sitting on a bench by our patio in warm afternoon sun, we had a Chipping Sparrow fly in and land a few inches away from our feet, glance up at us, show us its bright rufous cap for two seconds, then fly off! First time we've seen this species in our yard in 18 years of recording sightings. Location: Rhodena Drive, Coupeville.

— *Sarah Schmidt*

**May 28:** After not seeing a single shorebird in Deer Lagoon for almost two weeks, a flock of about two dozen **Whimbrels** just flew in on the salt-water side of the west dike.

— *Darwin Wile*

**May 29:** Martha and I saw a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** at the Dugualla wetland mitigation area. This is the first summer sapsucker sighting I've had in a couple of years. — *Steve Ellis*

PLEASE POST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS to the *Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) website*.

Sightings should be on Whidbey Island or relate in some way to Whidbey Audubon. Reports should refer to birds or other wildlife that are not commonly seen here. Alternatively, they may refer to migratory birds that arrive outside their normal seasons.

Reports of especially interesting sightings in nearby areas are welcome. Greater selectivity is needed to keep the email volume reasonable so editors will exercise judgment on whether the rarity, proximity and significance of sightings merit inclusion.

These guidelines reflect the interests of local birders. Please respect the essentially scientific nature of the Sightings feature. Thanks for your cooperation.

There are designated spaces to submit your information, such as what you saw, where you saw it and the date and approximate time. Although we are asking those who post to leave a phone number or email address with your sighting, they will not be included on the actual "Sightings" page. Thank you!

Keep up with "Sightings" on the WAS website, on your mobile device at [www.m.whidbeyaudubon.org](http://www.m.whidbeyaudubon.org) or on the *Whidbey Audubon Society Facebook page*.

## BIN South Announces an Abundance of Avian Life

**April 26:** What-a-day! We certainly deserved the perfect weather and the great view of "our" **Pelicans!** There are now over a dozen and have been at Deer Lagoon for a few days. It never gets old. Besides watching Pelicans, neither does watching **Bushtits'** nest-building.

So many shorebirds on the mud flats — great comparisons between six different species, from **Whimbrels** to **Least Sandpipers**.

Without any Chickadees or even a Harrier, and with the drive-way **Savannah Sparrows** who just would not turn into something else, we saw and/or heard at least 59 species.

**May 10:** One carload of some of our diehards were treated to a **Cliff Swallow** show over on Smugglers Cove Road.

If you go, *do park safely and mind the fog line* (we parked at the gravel turnout on the corner), and if you were wondering where all the Cliff Swallows are living on the South end, enjoy watching the colony on the eaves of the red barn near the wetland at Scurlock.

Very worthwhile getting only a little rain-dampened.

Then on a quick trip to Bush Point public accesses, we were rewarded with **Rhinoceros Auklets**, **Pacific** and **Common Loons**, flotillas of **Red-breasted Mergansers** and some **Pigeon Guillemots** of course, **Red-necked Grebes** and some **Purple Martins**.

**May 24:** Between Lone Lake and Deer Lagoon, a potentially quiet day turned fairly productive.

If anyone had any lingering question about the song of a **Pacific Slope Flycatcher**, a very accommodating one gave us a great listen — over and over and over....

The morning's highlight was probably a toss-up between having detected two **Killdeer** "scrapes" containing eggs, and watching four **Ospreys** bathing near one another, out on the lake side of the west dike.

**BIN South, see page 9**



## Volunteer Corner: Join our Bird in the Hand Festival Team

The 2016 Bird in the Hand event drew hundreds of visitors and provided the public with an opportunity to observe birds up close and personal, with prepared bird specimens from the Whidbey Audubon Society Bird Specimen Library.

Our next free, family-friendly celebration of birds is on Saturday, September 22, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Bayview Farm and Garden in Langley.

We are looking for more volunteers to staff the tables of birds

### From a Former Bird in the Hand Volunteer:

*Ninety percent of the folks who attend are just amazed at the sight of beautiful birds at the “up close and personal” scale! They are mesmerized and typically walk around trying to match their memory of birds in their yards with the birds on the tables. They are looking to get more familiar — they are not looking to become experts!*

*The event team does a great job of preparing you with a discreet set of birds as well as a bit of information about them. Once you can offer a few bits of trivia about the birds on your table, you’re ready for most of the interactions you’ll be engaged in. Seriously, most of the questions I got were in the vein of “what’s the name of THAT bird?” and I had tags to help me quickly offer the answer. The event team will let you know ahead of time which “family” of birds will be at your table, so you can do some quick internet research or Q&A with the team. You’re set!*

*The magic of the event is the sense of wonder it engenders! The birds*

### Shore Thing, from page 3

evening at the Clinton Ferry Dock with 17 separate stops up and down the Island, totaling 103 species that we were able to identify.

First thing in the morning out at Deer Lagoon we saw and/or heard half of our grand total, with no particularly unusual sightings, but we did run across several dear birding buddies there, including Frances Wood out with someone recording from Whidbey TV. What might she be up to now?

The weather could not have been better for our Big Day, and our team had a wonderful time, so thanks for the fun challenge, and Thank You to our generous pledgers, who have contributed to the Whidbey Audubon Society Scholarship Fund on behalf of the 2018 Birdathon.

— Team Shore Thing: Cathi Bower, Kathy Obersinner, Patty Cheek, Mary Bloom

in the greenhouse. It is fun and satisfying to participate, and if you are worried about your bird knowledge, we can pair you with someone more experienced. Little hands are frequently seen reaching over the tabletop to touch, and to everyone’s delight, we encourage this experience. Mostly, the birds tell their own compelling stories, and everyone leaves with a sense of awe and the desire to protect our avian neighbors.

We also need a few strong backs for setup and tear down, carrying tables and boxes of birds.

We welcome anyone who wishes to volunteer for the September 22, 2018 Bird in the Hand Festival to contact Robin Llewellyn at [soaringridge@broadstripe.net](mailto:soaringridge@broadstripe.net) or Cheryl Bradkin at [bradkin@whidbey.net](mailto:bradkin@whidbey.net).

— Cheryl Bradkin and Robin Llewellyn

*are the stars. You’re just the usher.*

***For any of you who are not feeling confident enough to table at Bird in the Hand, I strongly urge you to let that go!***

*And there is always a very knowledgeable “expert” within a table or two’s length from you. You get there early enough to know who’s close to you, their name and how to direct people to them or get their attention to come to you. Never in my tabling experience was anyone ever impatient with me saying “you know, I don’t know the answer to that... let me get so-and-so.” They happily looked and chatted until so-and-so got to us.*

*It is one of my favorite events on the island, and I can assure you I am NOT a birder. Because I’m not, I’m as curious as the people who come to the tables. The questions I ask before the event are the questions the guests ask. This makes for a fun, no-stress, horizon-stretching community event.*

*You will love it! Don’t be nervous!*

— Judy Feldman

## North Bin Touches Down at Deception Pass and Cornet Bay

**May 9:** Have you ever heard of Speed Dating? You spend just a few minutes finding out about someone before moving on to the next person. Speed Birding is kind of like that. The group met at West Beach, scanned the water, recorded the birds seen, then moved on to North Beach, campground trail, Cranberry Lake and Cornet Bay, repeating the process at each stop. I don’t usually advocate this method, but sometimes life gets in the way of a leisurely morning of birding. We topped out

**BIN North, see page 8**



## 15 Birding Spots, from page 1

gansers, goldeneyes, bufflehead, scaup, scoters.

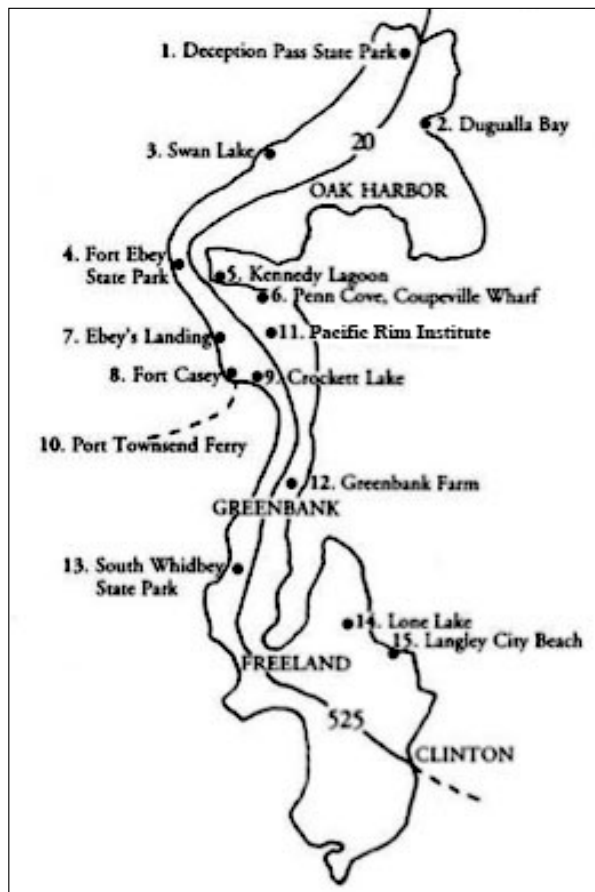
### 6. Penn Cove, Coupeville Wharf:

State Route 20, north on Main Street, west on Front Street. Large saltwater cove. Kingfishers, herons, loons, goldeneyes, bufflehead, scaup, pigeon guillemots. Look for river otters, harbor seals, jellyfish and sea stars.

**7. Ebey's Landing:** State Route 20, Southwest on Ebey Road. High and low bluff, beach, farm fields, hiking trail. Loons, grebes, waterfowl, meadowlarks, blackbirds, raptors.

**8. Fort Casey:** State Route 20, south on Main Street, becoming Engle Road. Rocky beach, forest. Loons, grebes, auklets, guillemots, mergansers, gulls, great horned owls, passerines including chickadees, nuthatches, creepers, winter wrens, warblers.

**9. Crockett Lake:** Adjacent to Fort Casey (see #8). Brackish lake, large sandy spit, open bay. Lakeside: abundant wading birds, waterfowl, eagles, harriers, peregrine falcons, other raptors. On spit: swallows, savannah sparrows. Open bay: auklets, cormorants, guillemots.



**10. Coupeville/Port Townsend Ferry:** Adjacent to Fort Casey (see above). Take a break and walk aboard the ferry for 30 minutes each way on the water. Cormorants, loons, grebes, gulls, guillemots, murrelets. Watch for sea lions and harbor seals.

**11. Pacific Rim Institute for Environmental Stewardship:** State Route 20 south of Coupeville, north on Parker Road. Open prairie and fringing woods. White-crowned and savannah sparrows, swallows, harriers, kestrels, eagles, woodpeckers, occasional western bluebirds.

**12. Greenbank Farm:** State Route 525, east on Wonn Road. Open grassland, cattail marsh, farm pond, viewing platform. Harriers, eagles, red tailed hawks, yellowthroats, marsh wrens, red-winged blackbirds, swallows, herons, waterfowl.

**13. South Whidbey State Park:** State Route 525, west on Smugglers Cove Road. Old growth forest, beach. Osprey, varied thrush, woodpeckers, swallows, passerines including nut-

hatches, creepers, winter wrens.

**14. Lone Lake:** State Route 525, north on Bayview Road, then west on Anderson Road, then south on Lone Lake Road. Lake, woodlot, thickets. Steller's jay, bushtit, quail, waterfowl including mergansers, shovelers, scaup, bufflehead.

**15. Langley City Beach and Marina:** Beach access off First Street and Marina at east end of Wharf Street. Saltwater, thickets. Loons, grebes, cormorants, eagles, waterfowl including mergansers, scoters. Look for harbor seals, gray whales in spring. Sea stars, jellyfish visible from marina pier.

## Thank You Field Trip Leaders

On behalf of the many birders who enjoyed our field trips this year, I want to thank the field trip leaders who graciously give their time, talent and enthusiasm in making these trips possible. Without these volunteer leaders, Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) would not be able to offer these important and enjoyable outings to such locations as Reifel Migratory Bird Refuge, Fort Ebey State Park, Protection Island cruise, Earth Sanctuary, Whatcom Falls, Smith and Minor Island and Edmonds. We also have enjoyed birding at some local and seasonal favorite sites like Deception Pass, Crockett Lake, Deer Lagoon, the Greenbank Farm and more.

**Special thanks** to our leaders: Linda Bainbridge, Susan Bennett, Bev Bowe, Sharon Gauthier, Steve Ellis, Martha Ellis, Dave Parent, Sarah Schmidt, Joe Sheldon, Kim Shepard and Ann Casey. We appreciate your numerous contributions to our program and look forward to joining you on another WAS Field Trip next season.

— Ann Casey, Field Trip Chair

**Editor's Note:** Ann Casey has retired as field trip chair. Thanks, Ann, for your enthusiastic dedication to organizing all our fabulous field trips.

Patty Cheek, who has been a Member-at-Large on the WAS Board, has agreed to be the new field trip chair starting in September. Please give her your support and offer to lead a trip.

## BIN North, from page 7

at 20 species including **Black Oystercatchers** and **Pigeon Guillemots**, both favorites to see. We also saw many **Common Loons** in breeding plumage. It seems like we have seen more each year that are hanging around. Noticeably absent were the Northern Rough-winged Swallows from the bank on the north end of the parking lot. Cornet Bay rewarded us with the **Purple Martins** at their nesting boxes. It was a short, but sweet outing and shows you that even a little time spent birding is better than no time at all.

— Marcia Lazoff

**Birding in the Neighborhoods (BIN) North** meets the second Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m. The group will be meeting during the summer. Contact Marca at [mlazoff@comcast.net](mailto:mlazoff@comcast.net) for location information.



## Dates to Remember, from page 2

**23: Guillemot Appreciation Day Field Trip** to a colony. Meet at Freeland Park & Ride, 8 a.m.

### JULY

**8: Deadline for Whidbey Camano Land Trust calendar photo contest**

**12: No Whidbey Audubon Program or Shorelines**

### AUGUST

**9: No Whidbey Audubon Program or Shorelines**

**16: Deadline for September Shorelines**

### SEPTEMBER

**13: No Whidbey Audubon Program**

**14 to 16: Puget Sound Bird Fest** in Edmonds, [www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org](http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org)

**22: Bird in the Hand Festival**, Bayview Farm and Garden, Langley 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## BIN South, from page 6

There were some obvious absentees and only a few **Pelicans**, but there was an odd duck here and there (no reference to our participants), including a **Cinnamon Teal**, some **Cedar Waxwings** passed through, and the **Bushtits** were busy at their nest.

We saw and/or heard 57 species.

— *Cathi Bower, Bird early — bird often*

**Birding in the Neighborhoods (BIN) South** meets every other Thursday morning. The time varies according to season. The group will continue to meet during the summer. Contact Cathi at [whidbird@whidbey.com](mailto:whidbird@whidbey.com).

## Welcome New and Renewing Members

### New

Betsy Brace (Pigeon Guillemot) Louise Richardson  
Ellie and Michael Sheldon

### Renewing

Diana P Nelson Kathy Stella  
Margaret Elphick Sheryl Norris  
Carole Tyson (Spotted Towhee) Irene V Christofferson  
Susan Sato & Steven Ferronato Frank & Mary Taylor  
Wendy & Mark Visconty Lee Kanning & Petra Lopez  
David Allen & Kathy Stetz Arlene Diamond  
Corinne Ludy & David Roberts-Ludy  
Ann Linnea & Christina Baldwin (Spotted Towhee)  
Jim Somers & Melissa Merickel (Spotted Towhee)  
Claudia George (Spotted Towhee)  
Deb & Tony Schiro (Spotted Towhee)  
Janet Hall & Nicole Luce (Spotted Towhee)  
Annette Barca (Scholarship Fund)

The expiration month for paper copies is on your address label. I will send an email reminder to both paper and electronic subscribers.

— *Linda Bainbridge, Membership Chair*

## Whidbey Audubon Society Membership

Please make your check payable to **WHIDBEY AUDUBON SOCIETY (WAS)**

Mail to: Linda Bainbridge, 4459 Towhee Lane, Greenbank, WA 98253

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**All memberships include 9 issues of *Shorelines* annually, a WAS window decal, discounts and early registration in our educational classes.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP** for first year National Members only. Receive a joint membership in National and Whidbey Audubon for one year for only \$35. **Make check payable to National Audubon.**

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