



# Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society  
November 2019

*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 Society Meets Thursday, November 14 in Freeland

### Where Do They Go from Here?

#### How, Why, When and Where Birds Migrate



Connie Sidles

Join master birder from Seattle Audubon, Connie Sidles, for a presentation on where our feathered friends go in the fall to get away from our winter. How do they know when to go? How do they find their way? What motivates them? What do they face on their long journeys?

There is still much we do not understand about how and why birds migrate in the spring and fall, but with GPS (Global Positioning System) sensors and other technology, many of the pieces of the puzzle are now in place. Find out the latest information on bird migration from Connie Sidles, as she takes you with her into the mysterious lives of migrating birds.

Connie is a master birder, former member of Seattle Audubon's Board of Directors, former chair of Seattle Audubon's Conservation Committee, current chair of Seattle Audubon's Publications Committee and author of five books about birds and nature. She currently teaches classes about birds at Bellevue College, Seattle Audubon and the University of Washington.



Photo by Doug Parrott

Although some Peregrine Falcons make their permanent homes in cities now, many still migrate to and from the wilds of the tundra. Some do so over land, where they can hunt for food along the route. But others migrate far out over the Atlantic Ocean, flying from Canada to Brazil in one go. How they do it is a lovely mystery of nature.



**A Reminder: There will be no General Meeting or Shorelines in December. Happy Holidays!**

**November Program, see [page 2](#)**

## Upcoming Field Trips

**Saturday, November 16: FORT EBEL STATE PARK:** The park offers a nice mix of forest and saltwater birds. Offshore are grebes, loons and many other diving birds. Ancient and Marbled Murrelet are possibilities. The forest will have kinglets, woodpeckers, Varied Thrush and more. Come and enjoy a leisurely walk in the woods. We'll meet at 9 a.m. at the end of Libbey Road at Partridge Point for this half-day trip. Carpools will form there and enter the park. Each vehicle entering the park will need

a Discover Pass. Dress for the weather. Snow or ice cancels this event. Trip leader is Steve Ellis, 360-678-2264. Call and leave a callback number if you need more information. No texts, please.

**Tuesday, November 19: ANACORTES SHORELINES.** Explore Ship Harbor Interpretive Preserve and Washington Park in Anacortes. We'll look for ducks, grebes, loons and alcids along

**Upcoming Field Trips, see [page 2](#)**

# Whidbey Audubon Society Financial Report

Whidbey Audubon's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30. Total revenue for the last fiscal year, July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, was about \$39,500, including Birds of Whidbey Class fees for both fiscal years 2018 and 2019. Donations included \$5,000 from Puget Sound Energy to support the osprey platform

## Upcoming Field Trips, from [page 1](#)

the beach and walk the trails and boardwalk through the marsh to see wrens, thrushes, sparrows and other winter birds. We'll be walking for up to an hour on level but possibly slippery trails. Carpools form at Coupeville Prairie Station Park and Ride at 8:30 a.m. and Windjammer Park in Oak Harbor at 8:50. We should be heading home by 1 p.m. Bring your lunch. Bad weather will cancel this trip, check with Kim the day before if the forecast calls for heavy rain, strong wind or ice. Trip leader is Kim Shepard, [kwshepard@gmail.com](mailto:kwshepard@gmail.com), 360-720-1711.

**Saturday, December 14: CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT NORTH:** See article on [page 3](#) for details.

**Saturday, December 28: CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT SOUTH:** See article on [page 3](#) for details.

**Saturday, January 18, 2020: LOONS AT DECEPTION PASS:** Leader: Sarah Schmidt. Meet at 9 a.m. at the north end of West Beach parking lot, Deception Pass State Park. We'll bird beach and lake and hope to see hundreds of Red-throated Loons gathering to feed in the outflowing current of Deception Pass. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Depending on weather and interest, we may do a possible stop at Dugualla Bay on the way back toward Oak Harbor. If you like, bring water, a snack or a hot drink. Dress warmly and prepare for wind. To carpool, meet at 7:30 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Park and Ride in Freeland; 8 a.m. in Coupeville at Prairie Station Transit Park, 201 South Main Street or 8:30 at Walgreen's in Oak Harbor (after SR 20 turns 90-degrees left at Pioneer Way traffic light, the entrance comes up immediately on the right.) Cars parking at state park will need a Discover Pass. Questions: contact Sarah Schmidt, at [4bats@ixoreus.com](mailto:4bats@ixoreus.com) or call 360-929-3592.

## Field Trip Checklist

- ✓ Field trips are free and open to anyone interested in birding or conservation. Bring your friends!
- ✓ Beginners are very welcome.
- ✓ Carpooling is encouraged and even required for some sites with limited parking.
- ✓ Dress for the weather and in layers.
- ✓ Very bad weather cancels a trip. Check with the trip leader.
- ✓ If you have them, bring binoculars, scope and field guides.
- ✓ If you might need them, bring a drink and snack.

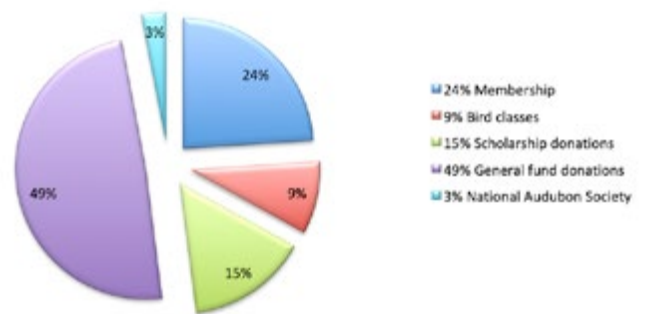
We are always looking for new trip leaders and assistants. If you are interested, please contact Patty Cheek at [pattypipe@gmail.com](mailto:pattypipe@gmail.com).

effort, \$4,000 from Island County and \$4,800 from National Audubon to support the Pigeon Guillemot Research Group.

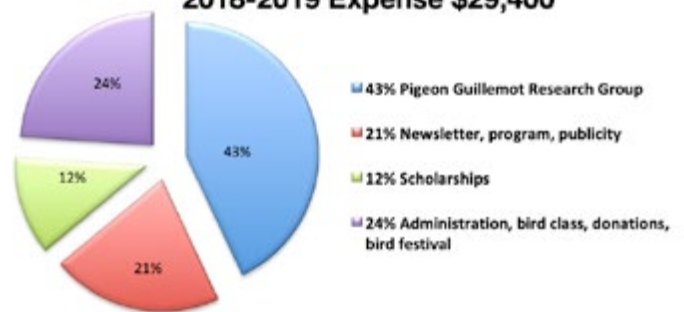
Total expenses were about \$29,400. Total general fund operating expenses were about \$25,900, and scholarship fund expenses were \$3,500. Our net revenue for the year was \$10,100. Whidbey Audubon Society currently maintains sufficient funds for two years of operation, and additional savings are used for special projects.

If you would like additional details, please contact Treasurer Sheri Croll, [treasurer@whidbeyaudubon.org](mailto:treasurer@whidbeyaudubon.org).

2018-2019 Income \$39,500



2018-2019 Expense \$29,400



## November Program, from [page 1](#)

She is founder and president of Constancy Press LLC, a small publishing house specializing in nature books. Several of her titles will be available for sale and to be signed.

For her 70th birthday her husband gave her the gift of a Year of Adventure. So far, she has been to the short grass prairies of Saskatchewan, the edge of the continental shelf at sea, the wilds of Pinnacles National Park and the Grand Canyon and a moth concert with solos by wax moths. She will be fresh from an adventure exploring the native forests, dry lands and open ocean of the Big Island of Hawaii, where she hopes to see the birds that migrate across the Pacific.

## Volunteer Corner

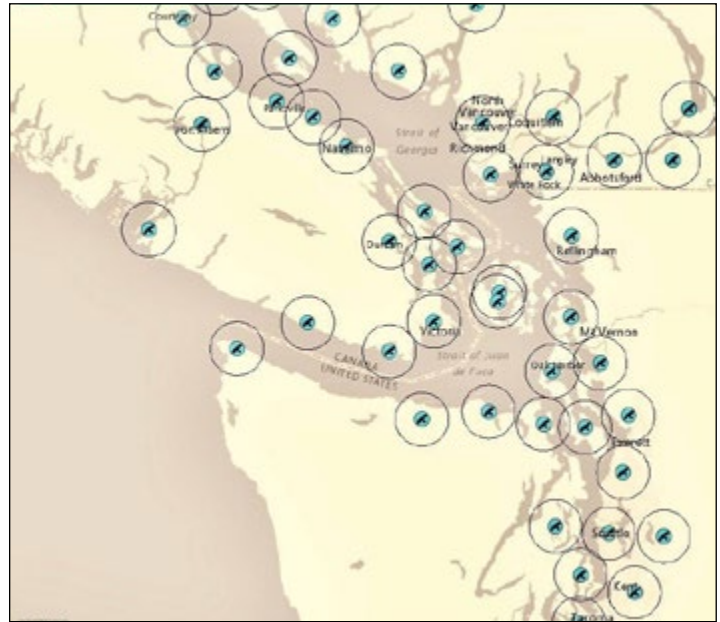
# Join Us on the 120<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Bird Count

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is a long-standing program of the National Audubon Society, with over 100 years of community science involvement. It is an early-winter bird census, where thousands of volunteers across the U.S., Canada and many countries in the Western Hemisphere go out over a 24-hour period on one calendar day to count birds.

Each participating group is assigned a 15-mile diameter circle that is then divided into areas to be surveyed. All individual birds are counted and listed on a custom bird list for the region. This information is then compiled and sent to National Audubon.

*The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years.*

— [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)



From [www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count](http://www.audubon.org/conservation/join-christmas-bird-count)

## Christmas Bird Count Circles of the Salish Sea

### Whidbey Island has two circles:

**Whidbey North** will be participating on **Saturday, December 14**. Folks who are not already on an established team should contact Jay Adams at [protectionisland8.9@gmail.com](mailto:protectionisland8.9@gmail.com) by December 1.

**South Whidbey** CBC day will be **Saturday, December 28th**. Sign up deadline is Saturday, December 7 with an emphasis on those who might like to lead an area. Contact [govinda@whidbey.com](mailto:govinda@whidbey.com).

You don't have to be an expert birder in order to take part. Spotters, compilers, drivers and cheerleaders are also needed. You can even count the birds in your yard and pass the list on to Jay or Govinda who will add it to the correct area. It's a great way to do your part to help.

**Please join us!**

## Dan's Blog: The Backyard Birds of Fall

by Dan Petersen with Craig Johnson, #371, October 12, 2019, [pedersenwrites.blogspot.com/2019/10/371-backyard-birds-of-fall.html](http://pedersenwrites.blogspot.com/2019/10/371-backyard-birds-of-fall.html)

**Editor's note:** Dan's Blog is published every Saturday morning. Type this website into your browser: [pedersenwrites.blogspot.com](http://pedersenwrites.blogspot.com). If you'd like to be added to Dan's email list to receive the link to the latest post each week, write to Dan Petersen at [dogwood@whidbey.com](mailto:dogwood@whidbey.com).

“Recently our view of the Olympic Mountains changed from mostly bare rock to lovely, snow-laden peaks,” remarked my blog partner, Craig Johnson. “A secretive little Hermit Thrush appeared in our yard the same day, sunning and foraging for berries and insects. What a rare treat for Joy and me

“Hermit Thrushes breed in the mountains, but come down to lower elevations in the fall and winter months,” Craig said.

I had asked Craig if he wanted to do a piece about the birds of fall and winter in our area. One day later he got back to me with these images and remarks.

“A covey of over 30 California Quail take dirt baths and forage for seeds along the edge of our yard, while dozens of Golden-crowned Sparrows also hunt for seeds and



Photo by Craig Johnson ©2019

The secretive Hermit Thrush, with the Olympic Mountains as a backdrop.

**Dan's Blog, see page 7**

## Sightings

**September 28:** A **White-throated Sparrow**, tan-striped morph. Briefly sitting in an apple tree at close range but soon disappeared into dense vegetation. Seen just off Bury Road, in Clinton above the farm fields.

— *Tom Leschine*

**October 2:** Four **American White Pelicans**. I have never seen them here — beautiful! Location: In Useless Bay, just off Double Bluff Beach. Confirmation: Listed as irruptive. — *Judy Howard*

**Editor's Note:** *White Pelicans have been spending the summer on Deer Lagoon and environs for the past few years. It is still a wondrous sight to see these magnificent birds!*



Photo by Patricia Prochaska

## Western Scrub Jay

**October 2:** **Western Scrub Jay** came to my suet feeder on my deck and spent time in my yard. It's the first time I have ever seen one here. Location: Lagoon Point on Smugglers Cove Road.

— *Patricia Prochaska*

**October 5:** I got a good look through my spotting scope at a **Black Scoter** yesterday afternoon at Maylor's Point on the Seaplane Base in Oak Harbor. It was among a group of about 200 **Surf Scoters**. There were also a few **White-winged Scoters**. — *Mary Jo Adams*

## Sightings

**October 9:** **Marbled Godwit**. This bird was first seen on October 5 in essentially the same location, i.e., near the tip of the peninsula of dry land that ends opposite the viewing platform at Crockett Lake. Two birds were present on the 5th. Today's bird, the larger and longer-billed of the two, has been present every day since. — *Jay Adams*

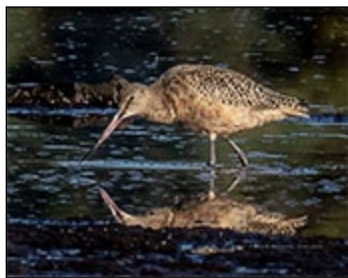


Photo by Michael Sheldon

## Marbled Godwit

**October 10:** Attaching a photo of the **Marbled Godwit** described by Jay Adams in his post yesterday. Location: Crockett Lake.

— *Michael Sheldon*

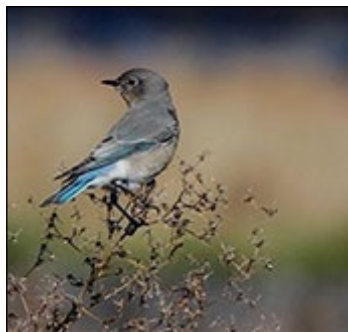


Photo by Carlos Andersen

## Mountain Bluebird

**October 11:** **Mountain Bluebirds** at Crockett Lake, west of viewing platform and on south side of gravel road.

— *Carlos Andersen*

**October 11:** At Crockett Lake, **American Pipits** also **Marbled Godwit** still present. Also had a flyover of about 20 **Greater White-fronted Geese**. — *Carlos Andersen*

## Sightings



Photo by Carlos Andersen

## American Pipit

**October 12:** A **Willet** was with a flock of **yellowlegs** at Grasser's Lagoon in Penn Cove. We saw it from the SR 20 pullout. The **Marbled Godwit** was still at Crockett's Lake this evening.

— *Steve Ellis*

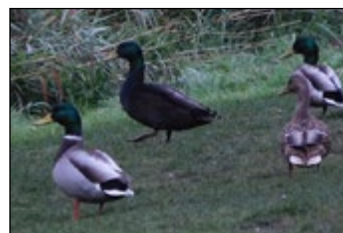


Photo by Linda Griesbach

## Hybrid Mallard drake, center

**October 15:** Apparent **Mallard hybrid drake** seen with other male and female Mallards. Note its dark legs. Any idea what this mix might be? Location: North end of Lone Lake on private property.

— *Linda Griesbach*

**October 18:** Literally thousands of **ducks and gulls** around leeward shores in Deer Lagoon and one **Peregrine Falcon** riding the winds and scoping out everything. Dramatic. — *Darwin Wile*

**October 20:** **Mountain Chickadee** along with a **Black-capped Chickadee** outside my kitchen window. Feeding in a Japanese maple tree; moved about but was back and forth for approximately 15 minutes. Location: Cultus Bay Road and French Road. **Confirmation:** Mountain Chickadee doesn't show up on the Whidbey Audubon check-

## Sightings

list. — *Dyanne Sheldon*



Photo by Ruth Richards

## Western Willet

**October 22:** **Willet** (Western type). Seen roosting in with Greater Yellowlegs, Grasser's Lagoon. Confirmation: One wonders if this is the same bird reported by Steve Ellis on October 12.

— *Jay Adams*

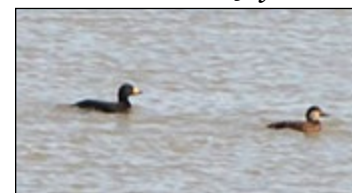


Photo by Mary Jo Adams

## Black Scoter pair

**October 23:** There were a lot of great birds around Crescent Harbor this afternoon. I saw a male and female **Black Scoter** among a large flock of **Surf and White-winged Scoters**. I also saw a **Northern Shrike** and what I believe was a female **Mountain Bluebird**.

— *Mary Jo Adams*



Photo by Carlos Andersen

## Snow Buntings

**October 28:** With Jay Adams,

**Sightings, see page 6**

## Conservation Column: Big Science

In a major article in the September 19, 2019 issue of *Scientific American* magazine (“Silent Skies: Billions of North American Birds Have Vanished” by Jim Daley) reported that we have lost three billion breeding birds in North America since 1970 — a 29 percent decline. These numbers were calculated using “point-in-time” counts and actual radar images of migrating birds. The declines correlate to loss of habitat, insect reductions and agricultural practices.

On October 10, 2019 National Audubon released a scientific study showing that 389 North American bird species are vulnerable to extinction from climate change. This study was based on 140 million direct bird observations from 70 data sets, including the Christmas Bird Counts, e-Bird, and international records from Mexico and Canada. In Washington state, 54 percent of our 296 species could be threatened with extinction by climate change of 3 degrees Celsius (5.4 degrees Fahrenheit). Some birds can go to higher altitudes, summer farther north or fish farther offshore in search of cooler temperatures, but for many, there is no other appropriate habitat available for relocation. You can see the exact birds affected in Island County and how varying degrees of warming could impact them on the National

Audubon website at [www.audubon.org/climate/survivalby-degrees/county?zipCode=98239](http://www.audubon.org/climate/survivalby-degrees/county?zipCode=98239). These are discouraging reads.

In addition to trying to get political change, there are still things we can do personally and at the local level to reduce emissions, protect habitat and support birds. It’s a list you’ve probably heard, and hopefully done, but now we need to carry it to our friends, families, neighbors, workplaces and communities:

- ✓ Reduce use of fossil fuels, conserve energy, consume less.
- ✓ Make your lawn smaller and replace with native plants.
- ✓ Prevent bird strikes on windows.
- ✓ Prevent cat predation of birds.
- ✓ Use no pesticides or herbicides on your lawns and gardens.
- ✓ Reduce, reuse, recycle.

And call and write your legislators, at all levels, and demand that changes be made. We don’t want to be the last generation that sees Rufous Hummingbirds arrive on Whidbey Island in the spring.

— Kim Shepard, Conservation Chair

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## Recycling Plastic

Markets certainly don’t look like they did a few years ago, and in much of America it’s no longer clear when there will be any market at all for post-consumer plastic. But this is just a setback, not a strategic reversal in the effort to “reduce, reuse, recycle.” It’s a reminder that we still have things to learn, and that not all problems can be solved at the local household level — even if we’re caring and motivated. Our consumer culture needs better integrated, more sophisticated and efficient systems to handle the common materials used in manufacturing and packaging the products of daily life.

It’s important to remember that glass, metal, paper and cardboard — the great bulk of recycled household materials — are still welcome in the marketplace and still make great sense to collect and direct toward another useful life. But right now, plastics do present a problem.

... I have one particularly nice small clear plastic box at home, “made with 70 percent recycled plastic bottles,” that once held organic strawberries. It’s made from polyethylene terephthalate [a number “1”], which has been considered a “good”, easily recycled plastic. But my beautiful berry box may now be treated like a contaminant in the remaining “waste streams” that aim to recycle the daily flood of consumer packaging. Too much plastic of too many kinds has ended up among the more common water bottles, making the sorting of post-consumer material too complicated for economic efficiency. So since it doesn’t look like a bottle, it is not welcome — regardless of the actual material it’s made of. I may just keep it, as a reminder of

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*Island County Commissioners are uncertain about the future of recycling and how it will look on Whidbey if markets don’t improve for the materials.*

— South Whidbey Record 9/28/19

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*the days when we thought we could “just throw it in the bin” and all would be well. ...*

“The right thing” for most post-consumer plastic these days is a one-way trip to a landfill. Reduce and reuse can still work, but only the most common and uniform “plastic bottles” are being effectively recycled. It won’t always be like this, but for now more plastic things just need to go “away.”

In my own practice I find this difficult, even after making an effort to think it through. Part of the solution is, obviously, to use fewer things packaged in plastic. For me it has also been important to refocus on what can be done today — especially when the CAN is made from aluminum. (Aluminum is so extremely energy intensive to make that you can think of it as “frozen electricity.” Fortunately, it’s also easy to recycle).

Don’t stop your own recycling. Don’t stop encouraging your neighbors and your friends. ...And you might want to think about how to let our elected officials know we all have to get better at this, as soon as possible.

— John Lee, Conservation Committee Member

# BIN South Visits Possession Point and Deer Lagoon

**October 10:** This morning at Possession Point was one of those rare days that Loons outnumber alcids. A few **Rhino Auklets**, many **Common Loons**, a couple of **Pacific Loons** and so many **grebes** of all sorts drifting on the currents. Plus **Harlequins**, the diverse **gulls** we might expect, **Cormorants** sharing a rock with harbor seals and sharing another rock with a **Heron**, and some very vocal seals out on the buoy. We never did decide if the seals were encouraging or discouraging their buddy to hop up there with them.

We lucky few birders were totally tickled with ourselves for nailing a gorgeous morning at the beach — could have stayed all day and nearly did. We saw and/or heard 33 species.

Unfortunately, we only spotted one woodpecker to speak of, but he was a good one — a striking intergrade **Northern Flicker** flashing his golden tail feathers and posing among madrona berries. Wow.

Also, a **Hermit Thrush** hopped around on the beach for a while. Apparently this Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) group has not spotted one on a Thursday walk in recent memory, as the species had to be added onto our list here.

If you go down to Possession Point State Park, it is not to be confused with the Island County boat launch farther down the road. A Discover Pass is required to park in the state park lot. Check for low-ish tides in order to get out to the point.

**October 24:** Duck season is on at Deer Lagoon. Among the hundreds and hundreds of **American Wigeons** on the flats, not but one shorebird to be seen, but it was a good one! One single **Marbled Godwit** cruised the mud amongst the wigeons and

gulls. No other peeps or pipers, and we didn't even spy the two or three Eurasian Wigeons that the numbers of AMWI might have indicated.

Also notably absent were raptors of any kind. But we did see and/or hear a total of 43 species, which (especially including the Godwit) makes for a plenty satisfying morning.

— Cathi Bower *Bird early, bird often*

**Birding in Neighborhoods South** meets every other Thursday morning. Time varies with the season. Contact Cathi Bower, [whidbird@whidbey.com](mailto:whidbird@whidbey.com).

## Field Trip Report:

# From Snipe to Shrike at Marymoor Park

Ten Whidbey Audubon members traveled to Marymoor Park near Redmond and met up with members of Seattle Audubon and Pilchuck Audubon for a tour of the park. We followed the Audubon Trail along the slough, out to the boardwalk with views of Lake Sammamish and around through the open fields. Highlights were four **Wilson's Snipe** at the beginning of the walk near the slough and a single juvenile **Northern Shrike** as we neared the parking lot at the end of the walk. Watched a **Bald Eagle** take an **American Coot** on the lake and observed a **Great Blue Heron** colony with the birds still perched near the nests.

— Frances Wood, *Field Trip Coleader*

## Sightings, from page 4

we saw two **Snow Buntings** at

Crockett Lake west of viewing platform along gravel road. Also discovered one **Willet** with **Yellowlegs** in the lake.

— Carlos Andersen



Photo by Libby Hayward

Are these Tundra Swans?

**October 28:** Five **Swans** (Tundra?) at Deer Lagoon were visible from west dike trail and Double Bluff Road. Photos are lousy but maybe

someone can identify them.

— Libby Hayward

**October 28:** **Willet** (Western sub-species). Seen with **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Western Sandpipers**, **Least Sandpipers**, and **Dunlin**.

Location: Crockett Lake - along the near shore a bit west of the viewing platform. Possibly the same bird first reported by Steve Ellis at Grasser's Lagoon.

— Jay Adams/Carlos Andersen

**October 28:** **Marbled Godwit**. Location: foraging in Deer Lagoon, salt water side of west dike. — Darwin Wile

PLEASE POST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS to the [Whidbey Audubon Society \(WAS\) website](http://www.whidbeyaudubon.org).

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](https://www.facebook.com/whidbeyaudubon).

## Field Trip Reports: Fir Island

Jay Adams led a small group, six birders, up to Fir Island and vicinity on September 23. We got up really early and went without reward until about 10:30. Then, the tide started coming in and we saw an astonishing 52 species for such a quiet beginning. Species we saw were typical birds we usually see. No rarities though. **Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Black-bellied Plover, Killdeer, Dunlin, Least Sandpiper, Western Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Greater Yellowlegs, Ring-billed Gull, Olympic Gull (Glaucous-winged x Western gull), Caspian Tern, Eurasian-collared Dove, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Peregrine Falcon, American Crow, Barn Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Marsh Wren, Bewick's Wren, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Fox Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-Crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Red-winged Blackbird, House Finch, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch and House Sparrows.** Thanks to all who participated.

— Jay Adams, trip leader

## Deer Lagoon

On October 15 Darwin Wile led 16 birders from the Island and the mainland. With substantially less than favorable weather (terrible winds), we managed to log 45 species. The bird of the day, I suppose, was either the solitary male Eurasian Wigeon or the juvenile Snow Goose — take your pick. Conspicuous by their absence were the shorebirds — not a single one!

Here's the list: **Snow Goose, Canada Goose, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Eurasian Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Ring-Necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon, Pacific Loon, California Quail, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Mew Gull, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Eurasian Collared Dove, Mourning Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, European Starling, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Dark-eyed Junco, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Red-winged Blackbird, House Finch, Pine Siskin and House Sparrow.** Thanks to all who came.

— Darwin Wile, trip leader

## Dan's Blog, from page 3



All photos by Craig Johnson © 2019

Craig and Joy's yard is home to more than 30 California Quail.

broad-leaf weeds."

Bird activity undergoes a big shift in the fall from its peak in the spring mating season, when many species migrate to the Puget



American Crows are smart, crafty and open to building a relationship with us!

Sound region and start singing to attract a mate with whom to raise young. Spring brings an explosion of insect activity and flowering plants to provide abundant nourishment. In the fall, many birds have to work harder to find what they need.

"Migratory bird species add diversity and beauty to our Puget Sound region every spring, so it's sad to see them leave for the winter," Craig said. "But fall can be just as exciting and colorful for those of us who love birds. The sheer

Dan's Blog, see page 8

## BOB Awarded to Winging It

For the first year offered, the Bronze Owl Bank (BOB) Award goes to the Winging It team (Janet Hall, Sarah Schmidt, Libby Hayward and Dyanne Sheldon), who brought in \$2,566! On behalf of her team, Sarah Schmidt accepts "Bob" at the October meeting.



### Dan's Blog, from page 7

number of birds in our yard is remarkable, especially considering we live in a typical neighborhood of closely-spaced homes.”

Craig and Joy's property offers an asset for wildlife that's missing from other nearby yards. It has a small strip of trees in the back, and a brushy lot next door, both of which provide precious habitat.

“For the past fifteen years, American Crows have bred in our yard, making use of our dead Madrona tree to get branches for building nests in nearby tall conifers.

“We've built a relationship with these crafty corvids,” Craig said. “Sometimes we give them salmon skin, and once in a while Joy and I receive a ‘crow gift.’ Google that phenomenon. These birds are a treasure trove of fascination.”

“Another corvid we love to see is the Steller's Jay. They feast on Yellowjackets and other flying pests, and we occasionally toss them a raw, unsalted peanut. One of our jays can mimic a crow perfectly, in addition to Cooper's and Red-tailed Hawks, and several other bird species.”



Steller's Jays wait for Craig to toss them a raw peanut.

I was visiting Craig and Joy a few weeks ago when this bird went into its routine. Craig's ear caught every shift, and he laughed at the performance. ...

...Hawks are another

A = Juvenile Sharp-shinned Hawk. B = Adult Sharp-shinned Hawk. C and D = Juvenile Cooper's Hawk. E = Cooper's Hawk molting into adult plumage. F = Adult Cooper's Hawk. Note the juvenile's iris is yellow. It becomes orange as the bird ages, until becoming deep red.



Dan's Blog, see page 9

## Plant Natives for Birds

The Whidbey Island Conservation District's annual native plant sale order form is online. Order between now and January 31, 2020. Go to the Conservation District's website for details, [whidbeycd.org](http://whidbeycd.org).



**ALL ABOUT Garry Oaks**

WHIDBEY ISLAND'S NATIVE OAK TREES

Find out why Garry oak trees and their ecosystems are important in our landscape. Discover the cultural history of these oaks and the rich living legacy they represent in our island environment.

Learn how to identify Garry oaks and see specimen collections. Get tips on collecting acorns and planting these imperiled trees.

For adults.  
Presented by Oak Harbor Garry Oak Society

**TUESDAY, NOV. 12**  
2 p.m.

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Find out why Garry oak trees and their ecosystems are important in our landscape. Discover the cultural history of these oaks and the rich living legacy they represent in our island environment.

Learn how to identify Garry oaks and see specimen collections. Get tips on collecting acorns and planting these imperiled trees.



# Dates to Remember

## NOVEMBER

- 9: **Class: Growing a Year-Round Hummingbird Garden,** 10-11 a.m. [www.padillabay.gov](http://www.padillabay.gov) to register
- 12: **Garry Oaks Program, Oak Harbor Library,** 2 p.m.
- 14: **Whidbey Audubon meeting: Migration: Where do they go from Here?** Freeland
- 16: **Field Trip: Fort Ebey State Park**
- 19: **Field Trip: Ship Harbor Interpretive Park and Washington Park, Anacortes.**
- 28: **No board meeting. Happy Thanksgiving!**

## DECEMBER

- 12: **No General Meeting**
- 12: **Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) Board Meeting,** Coupeville Methodist Church, 7 p.m. Members welcome.
- 14: **Christmas Bird Count North.** See article on [page 3](#)
- 19: **Deadline for January Shorelines**
- 28: **Christmas Bird Count South.** See article on [page 3](#)

## JANUARY

- 9: **Whidbey Audubon Meeting: Cooper's Hawk Research,** Freeland
- 16: **Deadline for February Shorelines**
- 18: **Field Trip: Loons at Deception Pass**
- 23: **WAS Board Meeting,** Coupeville Methodist Church, 7 p.m. Members welcome

## Dan's Blog, from [page 8](#)

common fall visitor, Craig said. "Coopers and Sharp-shinned Hawks make numerous forays into our yard this time of year."

These hawks can be hard to differentiate sometimes. Craig put together a graphic [[page 8](#)] to help with that.

So even though bird activity is very different in the fall than spring, there is always something unexpected to look forward to.

Go to Dan's Blog for rich color images and the whole story, [pedersenwrites.blogspot.com/2019/10/371-backyard-birds-of-fall.html](http://pedersenwrites.blogspot.com/2019/10/371-backyard-birds-of-fall.html).

## Welcome New and Renewing Members

**New:**  
 Mike Bolte  
 Steve & Nancy Johnson (Spotted Towhee/Scholarship)

**Renewing:**

Joan Benedusi	Pam & Scott Wessel-Estes
Sarah Schmidt (Spotted Towhee)	Becky Bolte
Patricia France (Spotted Towhee)	Ingrid De Jong
Susanne Ohrvik	Janet & Blair Paul
Bill and Lauren Young	
Mark & Susan Bigger (Spotted Towhee)	
Stephen & Susan Bennett (Scholarship)	

## Whidbey Audubon Society Membership

Please make your check payable to WHIDBEY AUDUBON SOCIETY (WAS)  
Mail to: Jann Ledbetter, 1112 Maple Place, Coupeville WA 98239

Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Y20**

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| \$ _____ Additional Donation to be used for Scholarships |                             |

**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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