



ADMIRALTY AUDUBON PROGRAM

Thursdays at 7 PM
Port Townsend Community Center, 620 Tyler Street (at Lawrence)
All Welcome, Free

January 20, Dam Removal on the Elwha River — Ron Good

Olympic National Park Ranger Ron Good will discuss the removal of the dams on the Elwha River. The dams are scheduled to begin coming down next year in order to restore native fish populations in the Elwha River. Ron will discuss the historical placement of the dams and the political debates that led to the 1992 passing of the Elwha River Restoration Act by Congress.

Ron began his journey as an environmental activist at the first Earth Day events on the Ohio State campus in 1970. He founded the Restore Hetch Hetchy organization in Yosemite Valley, worked as an interpretive Park Ranger at the John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, CA, and was a lobbyist for the Sierra Club.

February 17, History of Kah Tai Lagoon Park — Rick Jahnke

Rick Jahnke will present a history of Kah Tai and discuss the importance of this nature park to the bird population.

- Clara Mason, Program Chair

WHY A PURPLE MARTIN PROJECT?

We live near the northern breeding range limits of the western population of the Purple Martin. Recently the eastern populations have remained abundant. However, the Pacific Coast Martin suffers low numbers and its population has declined from historic levels. The suspected causes for this decline are loss of habitat for nesting due to removal of trees with cavities along our waterways, loss of wetlands and mature forest with their insect factories, and competition with exotic European Starlings and House Sparrows. Starlings and House Sparrows may have also introduced exotic diseases to martins. The WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife has placed the Purple Martin on their list of state species of concern. The Purple Martin is a “candidate” species meaning it could in the future be classified as a “sensitive,” “threatened,” or “endangered,” depending on how many birds return to breed and their success in breeding.

In addition to working to protect and restore habitat, Audubon Chapters in Puget Sound are providing artificial nests for martins to carry them to a better future. It requires annual maintenance of the boxes as well as monitoring during breeding season. In 2006, the late Jay Brevik literally got the Admiralty Audubon Purple Martin Project off the ground. He obtained from the Port of Port Townsend permission to erect four nest boxes he built at the mouth of the Port Townsend Boat Haven. The very first year Martins used the boxes. They fledged four young. Since then their success has varied from several fledglings to zero. August 2010, three fledglings were seen flying with a pair of adults. The chapter’s nest box project has expanded to the Kah Tai Lagoon and the Marine Science Center Pier. In 2010, a pair occupied a nest on the pier. However no young were observed.

We plan to improve our nest boxes for the 2011 breeding season. If you have an interest in joining the project to work on or monitor our boxes, contact Ron Sikes, 385-0307, email sikes@olympus.net.

- Ron Sikes



ADMIRALTY AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, January 8 – Snow/Salmon Creek At Discovery Bay – Gardiner Beach – Blynn Beach

Meet at 8 a.m. at the Park and Ride across from the Port Townsend Safeway, or at 8:25 at the pullout just before the Discovery Bay Railroad Park (vintage rail cars, ice cream) on Highway 20 at the head of Discovery Bay. We will walk the old railroad grade by both creeks, checking out the tidal estuary and bay before going on to Gardiner Beach and Blynn Beach. Be prepared for muddy walking and cold weather. We'll return by Noon. Hard rain cancels. Leader is David Gluckman, phone 379-0360, email cgluckman@aol.com

Saturday, January 22 – Point-To-Point Beach Walk

Meet at the Fort Worden Point Wilson Parking Area at 9 a.m. Go around the Point and walk to Point Hudson, following the beach. Finish at 11 a.m. Leader is Ron Sikes, phone 385-0307, email sikes@olympus.net for more information.

Saturday, February 12 - Kah Tai To Chinese Gardens

Meet at the Kah Tai parking lot by the restrooms at 9 a.m. and finish at North Beach before Noon. A good trip to learn local bird locations. Expect a few other stops at hot spots along the way. Wear appropriate clothing. Leader is David Beatty, phone 575-534-1450 or email djb38@olypen.com

Saturday, February 26 - Annual Skagit County Field Trip

Meet leaders Ken Wilson and Dan Waggoner at the Port Townsend/Coupeville Ferry at 7:30 a.m. if driving with a reservation for the 8 a.m. ferry. Return on the 6 p.m. ferry with reservation. Please check ferry schedules in case these times change. Bring a lunch and appropriate clothing for the weather. Carpooling is encouraged, and contact with the leaders beforehand is also strongly encouraged. Contact Dan Waggoner at 301-1788 or danwags57@gmail.com, or Ken Wilson at tadpoleranch@gmail.com

Wear clothing for cold winter temperatures, wind and rain — rainwear, warm jackets and waterproof footwear appropriate for the terrain. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes (if available) and bird books. Take water and a snack. Heavy rain may cancel some trips, so check if in doubt.

All persons participating in field trips assume all risk of any kind. Neither AAS nor trip leaders accept responsibility for the actions of participants.

- David Gluckman, Field Trip Chair

JOIN US or RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Can we send you the newsletter via e-mail? _____



KAH TAI LAGOON NATURE PARK PROTECTED FOREVER?

This has been a pivotal year for the Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park. Members of the Friends of Kah Tai resurrected the 1981 Land Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant that the City of Port Townsend and the Port of Port Townsend jointly sponsored. It turns out the City, the Port, and the National Park Service (NPS) all lost their copies of the document. Fortunately one of the Friends went down to the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) in Olympia and made copies of the document. With that document comes the hope of preserving the lands surrounding Kah Tai Lagoon forever. The City, NPS and RCO have all agreed on a map designating all land owned by the City and the Port on March 1985 as "6F." That means preserved forever as an outdoor recreation park. The Port has until December 31, 2010 to respond. Hopefully they will honor the commitment made when they signed the LWCF grant in 1981. Time will tell.

- Rosemary Sikes, President Admiralty Audubon

WORKPARTY KAH TAI PARK

On **Saturday, January 8 from 9:30 a.m.-12.30 p.m.**, come join the hardy among us at the Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park. We will remove holly, ivy and Scot's Broom in the grove of trees near the Kearney Street entrance. Park near the bathrooms and walk the main trail toward Kearney Street. Look for the bright green "volunteers at work" banner. I will also have a table set up with cookies and water for volunteers and a sign up sheet. Wear work clothes and bring work gloves and pruners if you have them. Scot's Broom pullers will be provided. They also work well on the small holly trees. For those that prefer to pick up garbage, garbage bags will be provided. See you there.

- Rosemary Sikes, President Admiralty Audubon

INVITATION FROM THE SIERRA CLUB — A KAH TAI LAGOON PRESENTATION

Please join the Sierra Club of the North Olympic Peninsula for our first Port Townsend general gathering. We will be featuring a presentation by Rick Jahnke of Friends of Kah Tai Lagoon who will give the history of the creation of the park, the current development plans that threaten this remnant ecosystem and an overview of the 90 species of birds that inhabit this great place. Please join us at the Port Townsend Recreation Center on **Saturday, January 22 at 10:30 a.m.** We look forward to bringing together our Port Townsend friends to help preserve our last remaining natural treasures. If you have questions, please contact Lucas at hart_lucas@yahoo.com"

NEXT BOARD MEETING Tuesday, January 18, 2011



AAS Field Trip Report

Fort Flagler State Park/Mystery Bay State Park/Oak Bay County Park – October 30
Leader David Gluckman. Seventeen intrepid birders braved sunny (if a bit windy) weather to visit three productive sites along the bay. It was interesting to see the new arrivals in large numbers that bode well for the winter, if they keep coming.

Fort Flagler – Hundreds of Dunlin and Sanderlins with 50 or 60 Black-bellied Plovers and two Black Turnstones were along the rocky shore by the inland boat ramp. Harlequin Ducks were along both shorelines along with a large number of Horned Grebes, an occasional Red-necked Grebe, Common Loons, Pelagic and Double Crested Cormorants, Red-breasted Mergansers, Pigeon Guillemots, Buffleheads and Glaucus-winged Gulls. We also saw our share of Dark-eyed Juncos, a pair of Northern Flickers, Bald Eagles in the trees and a Red-tailed Hawk hovering in the wind along with a para-sailer hanging over the bluff. In the ponds by the rifle range were Gadwall, Green-winged Teal, American Widgeon and Mallards in small numbers because of the low water in the ponds.

Mystery Bay – Belted Kingfisher, a flock of 15-20 Horned Grebes, Red-breasted Mergansers, Surf Scoter, Common Loons and one Lesser Yellowlegs (seems unusual for this location, but the beak was short).

Oak Bay City Park – Northern Pintails, California Gulls, Mew Gulls, Gadwall, Long-billed Dowitcher, Green-winged Teal, Bufflehead.

South East Jefferson County – November 12

Leader, Dan Waggoner. Six hardy birders joined me on an Audubon field trip to the southern part of the county. Some of the highlights included a Northern Harrier and an Eurasian Wigeon on East Quilcene Bay Road, a large flock of Common Mergansers at Indian George Estuarine and 200+ Harbor Seals hauled out at the mouth of the Dosewallips State Park. But to Jo Reeves, an American Dipper was the big reward (she was the one who spotted it). We ended up with a total of 49 species.

Point Wilson – December 11

Leader, Bob Whitney. Ten warmly dressed birders accepted the wind at Point Wilson to watch a spectacle of 2500-3000 Common Murres flying into the Sound from the west in flocks of 15 to 60 every few seconds. Many landed on the waters 500 yards in front of Point Wilson, feeding in the tide line. In addition to the usual Glaucus-winged Gulls (and hybrids) feeding voraciously on fish balls and a Stellar's Sea Lion that kept his head out of the water watching us watching him (with some vocalization help from us), there were lots of birds to see. Hundreds of Marbled Murrelets and a few Ancients flew by along with Common, Red-throated and Pacific Loons, Pigeon Guillemots, Pelagic and Double Crested Cormorants, Surf and White-winged Scoters, Red-breasted Mergansers, Harlequin Ducks, Buffleheads, and Black Brant. Early arriving rain chased everyone home by 10:30.

- David Gluckman, Field Trip Chair



Wax Myrtle Connection



David Gluckman

As their relative, the eastern Myrtle Warbler, the Audubon Warbler eats the berries of Pacific Wax Myrtle (in the west - *Morella californica*). The larger your Wax Myrtles become, generally the more berries they provide and the more likely they are to attract the warblers. During winter the Audubon Warbler consumes the berries presumably because they have high nutrition and are easier to find and catch than insects. Audubon Warblers are often seen in the fall in the Kah Tai Lagoon Park eating insects. As cold weather

arrives they often disappear. However, a flock of them appear just west of the Park where they flit back and forth from mature Doug Fir to a large Wax Myrtle. They can be seen plucking and swallowing the waxy berries.

Myrtle occurs in the wild, growing on sand on our west coast, but it can also live in Puget Sound landscapes. You could plant the Pacific Wax Myrtle in your landscape to attract Audubon's Warbler. Myrtle grows best in a sunny location. Water it during the summer until it is a few years old and vigorously growing. Visit www.wnps.org or <http://biology.burke.washington.edu/herbarium/imagecollections.php> to learn more about this plant.

- Ron Sikes

Bird Photography Workshop

Photographer David Gluckman will teach a workshop on big lens photography, primarily with birds as the subject matter, at the Fort Worden Campus of Peninsula College, on **January 11, 2011 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**, with an hour for lunch.

Half the time will be spent in the classroom – including some work with Photoshop and Lightroom on specific images – and half outdoors shooting, weather permitting.

Enrollment is limited to 15 participants.
Cost: \$45.00.

See page 29 of the Peninsula College Winter 2011 Class Schedule for more details and how to register.



Long-billed Curlew

- David Gluckman



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TALK TO US.....

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.admiraltyaudubon.org

Read or post bird sightings

Download a checklist of birds