



ADMIRALTY AUDUBON PROGRAMS

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

March 17, Birds of Midway Island — Elston and Jackie Hill

In May 2010 Elston and Jackie Hill visited Midway Island, a U.S. territory in the Pacific Ocean, known for an infamous battle of WW II. Today Midway Island is no longer a military base and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a preserve. There is one airstrip, and planes take off and land only at night, to protect the birdlife. Elston and Jackie will share their incredible pictures of Laysan and Black-footed Albatross and other bird species protected on Midway Island, as well as their stories about exploring this rare place.

April 21, Pleasant Harbor Development — Barbara Moore-Lewis

Barbara Moore-Lewis is active with a citizen group based in Brinnon that opposes the current Pleasant Harbor development plans. Barbara will share pictures and stories of this beautiful area and bring us up to speed on the changes planned and the resulting impact on the environment.

- *Clara Mason, Program Chair*

GREAT COUNTING, BIRDERS!

The annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) (see <http://www.birdcount.org>) concluded on February 21, 2011. This four-day event is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada and sponsorship from Wild Birds Unlimited. Checklists can be entered online until March 1, so this report is preliminary.

At press time, Washington State ranked sixth in total number of species reported and hovered in the top ten states for number of checklists submitted. It is certainly not preliminary to say that Port Townsend area birders participated with enthusiasm. A few of the species that made a significant appearance in the Port Townsend counts, but were uncommon to rare elsewhere in the area, include Ruddy Ducks, Rhinoceros Auklets, Ancient and Marbled Murrelets and Common Murres.

Port Townsend currently ranks 4th in Washington State for numbers of bird species reported, only slightly behind Sequim, Seattle and Olympia. It ranks 4th for number of checklists submitted, led only by Seattle, Olympia, and Vancouver, all cities just a bit larger than Port Townsend. Thanks to all greater Port Townsend area birders who participated and whose dedication has highlighted the diversity and accessibility of our region's birding opportunities.

- *Debbie Jahnke, Membership Chair*



ADMIRALTY AUDUBON FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, March 12th – 12:30 p.m., Travis Spit & Sequim Bay

Meet at Port Townsend Park & Ride, near corner of Landis and 12th St. at 12:30 p.m., Wear sturdy hiking shoes, as the first 1/8th mile is cobble before it becomes a sand beach. Bring water, snack, binoculars/scopes, etc. For more info call 385-0307. Leader Ron Sikes, call 385-0307, email sikes@olympus.net

Saturday, April 9th – 9 a.m., Oak Bay, Indian Island & Fort Flagler State Park

Meet Dan Waggoner at Oak Bay Park at 9 a.m., or the Park and Ride to share at 8:30 a.m. Be prepared for damp walking. Ending by 12 Noon. Leader Dan Waggoner, danwags57@gmail.com

Saturday, April 23rd – 9 a.m., Inland Fort Worden

Meet at the Commons parking lot and then take a loop road that trails to the bluffs to look for woodland brush and conifer bird species. (Definite elevation gain, but slow pace.) Out and back in two and one-half hours, starting at 9 a.m., ending around 11:30 a.m. Leader David Beatty, djb38@olypen.com djb38@olypen.com

Cautionary Note – All persons participating in field trips assume all risks of whatsoever nature or kind. Neither AAS nor trip leaders accept any responsibility for the actions of any persons who participate.



This Northern Mockingbird has been seen since September behind Nordland General Store, 1000 miles north of its usual range.

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.

JOIN US or RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

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

Or would you prefer to receive a paper copy? _____

Send \$20 annual membership to: Admiralty Audubon, PO Box 666, Port Townsend WA 98368



ENVIRONMENTAL LOBBY DAY

George Yount and I represented Admiralty Audubon at Environmental Lobby Day in Olympia on February 15. Over 500 citizens from Washington State and nine people from District 24 met at United Churches across the street from the Capitol to learn more about the Environmental Priorities for the day and how to lobby our legislators. We then met each of our three legislators Jim Hargrove, Kevin VanDeWege and Steve Tharinger face-to-face to discuss the Environmental Priorities.

Three Environmental Priorities are:

Clean Water Jobs Act (SB 5604/HB 1735)

Toxic runoff from our roads and urban areas is the number one water pollution problem in Washington and it is only fair that polluters of our water pay to clean up after themselves. A 1% fee on toxic runoff pollutants, like oil, pesticides, herbicides and other hazardous substances, would provide a polluters-pay approach to directly fund local projects to clean up toxic runoff before it enters our water in communities across Washington. By levying a 1% fee on the wholesale value of toxic runoff pollutants, this legislation will generate \$100 million annually to pay for local projects through a competitive grants process.

Coal Free Future for Washington (HB 1825/SB 5769)

The 40 year-old TransAlta plant in Centralia is Washington's only coal fired plant and it produces 10% of the states CO2 emissions, the largest from any one source, and 80% of the mercury and nitrous oxide, both toxic pollutants. Coal pollution is linked to serious health problems including learning disabilities, cancer, heart and lung disease, and asthma. This legislation ensures a responsible, well-planned transition for Lewis County beyond dirty coal to cleaner burning natural gas by 2020 that will continue to provide jobs for the local community.

Clean Fertilizers, Healthier Lakes and Rivers (HB 1489/SB 5194)

When phosphorus in fertilizer washes off our lawns into lakes, rivers, and Puget Sound, it causes rapid growth of weeds and algae blooms that can harm fish, wildlife and public health. Our businesses and local governments have spent millions on wastewater treatment upgrades to control their phosphorus discharge. Managing the sale of phosphorus lawn fertilizer costs almost nothing and reduces the amount of phosphorus entering our waterways. It will save money and jobs, and clean up our lakes and rivers; a win-win for our economy and the environment.

For more information, visit www.environmentalpriorities.org

Now it is your turn. Please email your legislators: Senator Jim Hargrove hargrove.jim@leg.wa.gov, Representative Kevin VanDeWege, vandewege.kevin@leg.wa.gov, and Representative Steve Tharinger, steve.tharinger@leg.wa.gov and ask that they support these Environmental Priorities.

- Rosemary Sikes, President, Admiralty Audubon

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS: Tuesday, March 15 and Tuesday, April 19



WAYFINDING: 21ST CENTURY INTERPRETATION AT KAH TAI

Port Townsend recently received a National Park Service (NPS) - Preserve America Grant to improve conventional signage and incorporate electronic wayfinding via smartphone in conjunction with the plan to develop city-wide WiFi access. Although electronic wayfinding will include retail and other commercial enterprises, the rich natural history of our region should not be neglected. Visitors and residents want information about our spectacular natural environment, and it should be made available with this new technology.

At a recent City Council workshop, City Manager David Timmons noted that the success of the project will be determined by whether it helps citizens navigate our city and access information more effectively. What works for residents will work for visitors.

The City's grant proposal includes three as-yet unidentified nonprofit partners in the development of the effort. Rick Sepler, the NPS grant's project manager for the City, has been willing to discuss the possibility of using Admiralty Audubon's bird survey data set for Kah Tai Lagoon Nature Park for a model electronic wayfinding effort. Electronic wayfinding is intended to allow multiple levels of data mining, and we have a very rich data set to mine for Kah Tai.

Electronic wayfinding, a key component of the "distributed interpretive experience," is an ideal tool for a non-consumptive activity like birding. No walls get built, no habitat is diminished. Content is readily updated, unlike in conventional static interpretive displays. And Kah Tai is the perfect location, since the Park was created with funding from the National Park Service 30 years ago.

- *Debbie Jahnke, Membership Chair*



AAS Field Trip Report

Salmon Creek/Snow Creek & Discovery Bay, January 8 – Leader, David Gluckman.

A small group worked through the frost and hunters' guns along the head of Discovery Bay to find a few ducks and sparrows. It was a mostly pleasant trip interrupted by occasional gunfire and hunting dogs. This was our first AAS field trip to this area and will probably be the last until after hunting season. The birds were very skittish and hard to find. The following were seen: Great Blue Heron, Double Crested Cormorant, Bufflehead, Canada Geese, American and Eurasian Widgeon, Mallards, Dunlin, Glaucus-winged Gulls, Mew Gulls, Song and Fox Sparrows, Common Loon, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Wilson's Snipe. From here we went to the Gardiner Boat Ramp which was a lot quieter. Out in the water of Discovery Bay we added the following species: Horned Grebes, Pigeon Guillemots and a beautiful pair of White-winged Scoters very close to shore.

Point Hudson to Point Wilson, January 20 – Leader, Ron Sikes.

Our field trip group of eight enjoyed a calm and mild January morning on our bird watch/walk from Point Wilson to Point Hudson. We enjoyed every bird we saw and the 30 different species that were mostly water birds. There were some land birds along our route including an overhead flock of Red Crossbills and a male Anna's Hummingbird doing its famous aerial dive. We saw Barrow's Goldeneye Ducks, seldom seen around Port Townsend. We also saw Common Goldeneye. We enjoyed good views of Long Tailed Ducks. Usually they are further off shore. The Surf Scoters were enthused about the mild weather and increasing day length and were exhibiting courtship behavior. Along the way there were Red Breasted Mergansers, Bufflehead Ducks, Common Loons, a pair of Rhinoceros Auklets, Pigeon Gillemtots. A Gaucous Winged Gull brought a fish to shore, perhaps a very large mud skipper. There were a pair of Brant and a pair of Black Oyster Catchers at Point Hudson and a lone female Common Merganser on the beach at Point Hudson.



©David Gluckman
Brant Geese are showing up late and in smaller quantities this year.

Kah Tai to Chinese Gardens, February 12 – Leader, David Beatty.

A small group of AAS members braved 40 mph winds for a look at a few hot spots for wintering birds in Port Townsend. Highlights were several Hooded Mergansers on the lagoon and adjacent small pond; and a very spiffy male Eurasian Wigeon in a flock of American Wigeons near the Public Utility Building viewing site off Kuhn Street in North Beach. This is one of the few seen in the area this year.

- David Gluckman, Field Trip Chair



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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