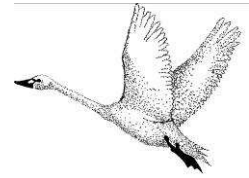


WILLAPA WHISTLER

A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon



Volume 34, Issue 2

<http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org>

March/April 2008

Nurturing the Young

By co-president Steve Puddicombe

In case you hadn't noticed, it's that time of year again when we begin to shake the slumber and winter doldrums from our heads and waken to the expanding light and sweetening air. Time to clean and fill the hummingbird feeder, then secure it to its usual post. Time to venture out into the garden for an afternoon, when it isn't lashing rain, or cut some firewood. Time to get the birdhouses in order for the coming brood. Time to plan.

I must admit, in all my years here at the farmstead the excitement of impending Spring has never dimmed. These days, I joyously note in my daily journal the first arrival of flocks of robins, the first hearty croaking of frogs at night, and the emergence of daffodil stalks from the soaked soil. The sight of the first hummingbird is a thrill, zipping expectantly up to a window if I haven't been quick enough getting the feeder out; and it's always a happy day when the tree swallows show up, just as the flies give up their quarters in the walls and swarm in large billows. I'm as dithered as an expectant father.

And it's certain that soon enough all this activity will result in blooms and calves and hatchlings busting out all over the landscape, reminding me that, for all my enjoyment, this surging activity is the nascent process of mating and reproduction--serious, survival business, and not at all a sure thing. Only by dint of undaunted effort can the young be nurtured to adulthood and the cycle repeated. The energy required is immense, and I find myself yearning for the success of my fellow beings in their unquestioned task, especially those threatened by the shrinking confines of ecological sustenance.

There is evidence that this synchronicity of spirit I feel can be traced to the deep-seated instinct we have to nurture our own young, finely honed through the millennia. No finer tribute to our existence and to the life force can be made than this deep, deep interconnectedness we feel with others of our own kind and with all beings and forms.

These are some of the thoughts I had while driving home from a meeting the other day. It was a preliminary discussion about an environmental education center as envisioned for the Long Beach area, primarily focusing on bird life, and eventually capable of providing learning opportunities to children in communities throughout SW Washington. Willapa Hills has the chance to be a major participant in the process not only as volunteers providing help and expertise, but also as financial supporters in a long-term partnership with State Parks. The four other members of WHAS that attended the meeting and I all feel that this project is worthy of this chapter that has a history of strong educational activity with youngsters. More information will be forthcoming.

We hear the word hope invoked too frequently these days, a half-surrender to despair as much as an affirmation of faith. But even in these cliché ridden times it must still be acknowledged that the future is with our children, and the care and nurturing of them our greatest legacy. It is a joy to see them soak up knowledge and foray awkwardly out into the wider world we also once trekked into with so much vital energy. It is to them that we must bequeath the tenderly watered seed of reverence for all of the earth, sea, and sky.

Please Join Us!

Support Willapa Hills Audubon Society by paying annual dues directly to this chapter. People who join National Audubon Society automatically become members of WHAS, however, National Audubon Society shares only a very small amount of the total dues money with WHAS—*currently less than \$2.00*. So, consider joining the WHAS chapter to help provide programs, field trips, bird counts and education projects here in our four-county region.

Chapter Membership

____ **\$20** for annual membership dues.

____ **\$15** for full time students. *Make check payable to Willapa Hills Audubon Society.*

National Audubon Membership

____ **\$20** for one year introductory membership in the National Audubon Society with Willapa Hills Audubon Society affiliation. *Make check payable to National Audubon Society*

Combination

____ Yes, you can do both options above, if you like. *Please write a check for each (\$20 to National Audubon Society and \$20 to WHAS.).*

Willapa Hills Audubon Society
P.O. Box 399
Longview, WA 98632

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

____ Please contact me about volunteer opportunities

____ Please add me to your Discussion email list

____ New **Y14**

____ Renewal **7XCH**

**WHAS OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSONS**

OFFICERS

Co-President: Betty Mayfield

503-556-6841 bmayfield@opusnet.com

Co-President: Steve Puddicombe

360-465-2205 pudfella@willapabay.org

Past President: Wayne Nelson

503-556-9379 gusdog1@msn.com

Secretary: Charlotte Persons

360-578-3949 cpersons@yahoo.com

Treasurer: John Green

360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com

Director at Large: Russ Kastberg

360-274-7091 rkastberg@cni.net

Director at Large: Gloria MacKenzie

503-556-8253 ggmack@qwest.net

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Programs: Margaret Green

360-575-9238 jgreen2317@aol.com

Education: Darrel Whipple

503-556-9838 dwhipple@opusnet.com

Publishing/Newsletter: Bea & Jim Harrison

830-719-1765 beatriceann@peoplepc.com

PO Box 230 Chinook, WA 98614

Field Trip Co-chairs:

Ann Musché

360-484-7119 mrm@willapabay.org

Pamela Wright

360-560-3772 audubon@zygops.com

Conservation: Steve Puddicombe

503-465-2205 pudfella@willapabay.org

Publicity: Steve Glucoft

360-577-0303 sglucoft@comcast.net

Finance/History: Betty Mayfield

503-556-6841 bmayfield@opusnet.com

Bird Counts: Alan Richards

360-484-7119 mrm@willapabay.org

Willapa Bay Issues: Miranda Wecker

360-484-7128 mwecker@willapabay.org

Wildlife Sightings: Andrew Emlen

360-795-8009 aceasp@pacifier.com

Membership: Gloria Nichols

360-636-3793 johngloriaromeo@earthlink.net

WHAS Web Site: Dick Wilson

360-875-6172 bcfarms@willapabay.org

Nelson Creek Stewardship: Jim and Bea Harrison

Jimharrison2@peoplepc.com

Newsletter Editors

Please send articles and suggestions to Jim and Bea Harrison them at beatriceann@peoplepc.com or jimharrison2@peoplepc.com.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING and SOCIAL
INCLUDING THE MUCH ANTICIPATED JON SCHMIDT, PREVIOUSLY
“BLOWN AWAY BY WINTER STORMS!”**

**Saturday, March 22, 5:00 PM
Cowlitz PUD Building
961 12nd Avenue, Longview**

Fried chicken and an array of salads, beverages, and dessert will be provided
\$5 suggested donation welcome at the door

For food planning, please **RSVP** by March 17 to Margaret at jgreen2317@aol.com or 360-575-9238 or to Gloria at 360-636-3793

Program 6:30 P.M.:

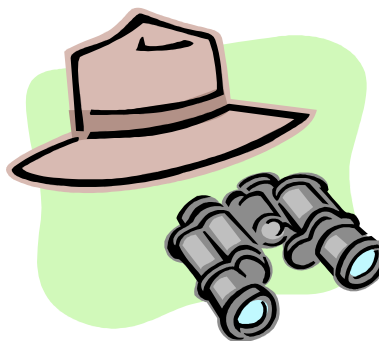
“The Birds of Cape Disappointment: 1900”

Jon Schmidt, the Interpretive Specialist from Cape Disappointment State Park will present his program using slides, old maps and historic photos, Schmidt shares discoveries of past explorers and some of his own he has made along the way.

COME JOIN US FOR A GREAT TIME

May Field Trip

Join us on the third of May on a field trip for shore birds on the Washington coast led by Russ Kopenhauer. We will hit Bottle Beach, Tokeland, and other spring migration hot spots. Call Russ at 360-636-3245 to sign up, space will be limited, so the first 12 people will go. Be sure to pack lunch, water and dress in layers for our unpredictable spring weather.



BIRDING BITS

By Russ Koppendrayer

Some of my birding forays of recent months, in the Longview area, have led to a new site that seems to have promise worthy of regular visits. This is the wetland mitigation area of the Mint Farm Industrial Complex. To reach this site from Ocean Beach Highway (SR4) in west Longview, turn south on 38th Avenue (at Wal-Mart). Go .5 miles to Prudential Blvd., and turn left. In 0.1 miles, turn left onto Crocker Avenue, which is a dead end, with the wetland being a short walk from the end of the road. I've only visited on weekends and had no problems parking at the end of the road, but with on-going development of both roads and buildings, visits at other times may necessitate finding alternate parking.

Once parked, there is a graveled access road along the trees at the north end of the property. This unites with a gravel maintenance road that follows the wetland. My favored style of approach is to don water proof boots (winter) and head across the open field. This has enabled me to find such species as mourning dove, western meadowlark, and a variety of sparrows including many Lincoln's. As you near the wetland, the "planted" snags and the plastic piping of the watering system become apparent. There also appears to be plantings of what I assume are natives. (I definitely can be botanically challenged.) As I approach the ponds, I slow down so as

not to unnecessarily flush the birds. These ponds had a nice assortment of geese and dabbling ducks on the few visits I have made. Once there also was a Merlin using one of the snags as a perch. Four yellow-rumped warblers were fly-catching from the young saplings on another visit.

This site seems to hold a lot of promise for future birding. Depending on how water levels are maintained, it could be excellent for shore-birding both spring and fall. Willapa Bay and Gray's Harbor offer world class shore-birding day trips for those of us interior dwellers, but finding these species in Cowlitz County can be challenging, especially in fall. This section of the Mint Farm will get some regular visits from me in the months to come.

While in the area, hike the service roads along the slough going both ways from 38th Avenue just south of its intersection with Prudential Blvd. This can be very rewarding. Species seen in this area include

waterfowl on the slough and sometimes abundant sparrows and finches, marsh wren, Bewick's wren, and hermit thrush. Other passerines have also been observed here, as well as occasional raptors. A high-light was the northern shrike that put in appearances during consecutive winters. A couple hours in the Mint Farm area can bring a nice birding list.

Enjoy the spring birds.



Columbia Diversion Proposed

By co-president Betty Mayfield

Two opposite plans for diverting Columbia River water for agriculture are scheduled for consideration this month by the Washington and Oregon legislatures.

In Washington, Gov. Chris Gregoire has negotiated a plan to release up to 132,500 acre-feet more water in drought years from Lake Roosevelt behind Grand Coulee Dam. This could lower the reservoir up to 1½ feet. Some of this water would remain in the river for the fish, but two-thirds of it would help irrigate thousands of acres of agricultural land in the Odessa aquifer area in eastern Washington, where water pumped from wells for irrigation has lowered the water level. Some would go to cities and industrial users needing more water.

If the legislature approves, the state will be asked to pay in exchange for the Indian tribes' not fighting the water release. The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation would get about \$3.7 million a year and the Spokane Tribe about \$2.3 million a year. Local communities whose boat launches or other facilities might be hurt by the lower level would share an initial \$2.1 million.

Farm representatives say this is not nearly enough water and plan to seek more in the future.

In Oregon, on the other hand, farmers and supporters from the Umatilla basin advocate drawing as much as 80,000 acre-feet of water from the Columbia during the winter, when the river has excess water. The water would percolate to a shallow alluvial aquifer, and some of would be injected into deeper basalt aquifers, for use during dry months. In some underground aquifers the water level has dropped 500 feet because of pumping for irrigation.

The legislature was to consider a bill to provide \$750,000 to complete a feasibility study and to allocate \$500,000 to establish a water mitigation "bank" that would rent or sell unused water rights to Umatilla basin farmers who need water. In addition \$10 million in lottery money grants would be designated for water storage and conservation projects statewide.

WaterWatch of Oregon, a group protecting natural stream flows, took no side, but said they had been assured no water would be taken during the summer.



WHAS members John & Margaret Green, Jim & Bea Harrison and Ann Cordero attended Environmental Lobby Day in Olympia on January 23rd. After hearing an inspiring speech by Governor Chris Gregoire, they attended workshops and spoke to Representative Brian Blake. Senator Hatfield and Representative Takko were unavailable to meet with them. Issues included Evergreen Cities Act, Climate Action and Green Jobs, Local Farms Healthy Kids, and Local Solutions for Global Warming. To learn more go to Audubon's Washington site:
<http://www.audubon.org/states/index.php?state=WA>

*WHAS Conservation Action***UPDATE ON PROPOSED LNG TERMINAL**

By Gloria G. MacKenzie

LNG, A Turning Point?

"LNG: Where's the need? Gov. demands" was the headline from the Daily Astorian, Feb. 15, 2008. This was a marked departure from Governor Kulongoski's previous stance of wait-and-see. The following letter to the Governor outlines the latest developments with a very apparent change in what we have been told with regards to natural gas need for the Pacific NW. This portion was used in my testimony before the Oregon State Agencies Feb. 13 in Astoria.

The Governor's current letter to FERC insisted they halt all reviews until they study all alternatives, and the need for LNG. He further asked for a full analysis of carbon emissions from source liquefaction, shipping and re-gasification.

In his letter on December 13, he wrote a 4-page cover for State agencies on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, which said, "This document was incomplete and flawed.... For the Commission to make LNG siting decisions in a vacuum, without the benefit of the best available information and scientific data, would be a huge disservice to the people of Oregon." State agencies then went on to list 50 pages of incomplete or missing information regarding the proposed terminal facility at Bradwood, Oregon.

Two rallies were held in protest of LNG. The first was on December 12, and was held in front of NW Natural's Portland office. The organized crowd of about 200 included a horse trailer, two tractors on trailers and a boat also. The crowd thinned and marched over to where Governor Kulongoski was making a presentation before the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. Media coverage was sparse.

On February 6, lively participants numbered around 300, to listen to speeches by Sec. Of State Bill Bradbury, Jeff Merkley, and Steve Novick, both candidates for the US Senate, and another statement by an aide for Jon Kroger, candidate for Attorney General. Afterwards, many meetings were held with Representative Betsy Johnson, and many other state officials and agencies.

Press coverage for this rally was much better, as was the public hearing in Astoria, which had all three major Portland stations reporting, with news at 11:00pm. A straw poll was held by KOIN, TV, asking if people supported or opposed LNG. 53% were opposed with 47% in favor.

Stay tuned, it ain't over until the big gas-men go back to where they came from.

Update on Proposed Copper Mine

By Charlotte Persons

Those opposing the copper mine bordering Mt. St. Helens National Monument are celebrating two victories. First, on January 24, 2008, the Longview City Council unanimously approved a resolution opposing the mine. Many of our members worked hard to make this happen. The decision was the culmination of two years' work in educating the council through the efforts of WHAS and the Gifford Pinchot Task Force. Also, the unanimous support of the council members for the resolution was in part due to changes in make-up of the council as a result of the last election. Longview has now joined two other Cowlitz County cities, Castle Rock and Kelso, in opposing the mine.

The second victory was U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell's announcement on February 7 that she opposes this mine. She also will work to reform the 1872 mining law, at the request of Gov. Gregoire. The support of our state and federal representatives will be crucial in opposing the proposed mine, and we hope that others will join Senator Cantwell in publicly stating their opposition. The BLM and U.S. Forest Service should be making a decision soon on whether to lease the land to the mining company, now called General Moly Inc. We will alert you when that happens.

COMING IN MAY

Friday, May 2, 6:30 PM

Lower Columbia College, (room to be announced)

WHAS and LCC Biological Society Co-sponsoring

“What Good Are Bugs? The Case For Invertebrate Conservation”

- * You can thank insect pollinators for one third of every mouthful of food that you eat.
- * Grizzly bears in the Rocky Mountains of Montana get over one quarter of their yearly calories from eating moths.
- * Without the lowliest flies in a stream for young fish to eat – your last grilled salmon would have been impossible.
- * In fact the direct benefit of insects to Americans has been calculated to be worth more than \$57 Billion a year.

Scott Hoffman Black, Executive Director of the Xerces Society, an international organization dedicated to protecting biological diversity through invertebrate conservation, will speak. He will explain why we should be concerned with conserving insect habitat and highlight important ways that each of us can better protect this valuable resource. The ecological services of insects, such as pollination, are vital to life on this planet, making them the most

important creatures on earth, but are ones that are often overlooked.

Black is an ecologist and entomologist. He has extensive experience in endangered species and native pollinator conservation. As a researcher, conservationist and teacher he has worked with small issues groups and large coalitions for over 20 years advocating science based conservation. Scott has authored many scientific and popular publications and his work has been featured in newspaper, magazines and books and on radio and TV.



Throughout this year, the noted local butterfly expert, author, and WHAS member, Bob Pyle will be travelling through the United States and Canada to find as many butterflies as possible in order to write a book entitled *Swallowtail Seasons: The First Butterfly Big Year*. To learn more or to make a pledge toward the project go to:

http://www.xerces.org/Butterfly_Conservation/butterflyathon.html

Announcing the Willapa Hills Audubon Society Announcements Email List

Willapa Hills Audubon has decided to set up an email list to facilitate *occasional* communications with members. The purpose of this list will be to announce or send reminders about programs, field trips and mission-related actions that may interest members. It will also be used to help communicate last minute schedule changes for programs or activities due to weather closures or other issues. This email list is designed to convey information only, and will not permit discussion, as the goal will be to keep communications brief and occasional. If someone were to respond "reply to all," only the moderator would receive the email. If you would like to receive these occasional emails, please email WHASalert@gmail.com. You can easily unsubscribe later. Of course, we will not share your contact information with anyone.

Christmas Bird Counts



Twenty one birders, including Jim Harrison and Ann and Russ Kastberg, above, helped survey birds during the 2007 Wahkiakum Christmas Bird Count.

2007 Wahkiakum CBC

By Andrew Emlen, compiler

The preliminary total for the 2007 Wahkiakum CBC on December 28 is 104 species; not bad considering the half inch of cold rain that dumped on us. The Arctic Loon which has been attracting birders to Blind Slough was still present, and the Washington side of the river yielded a Say's Phoebe and a Yellow-headed blackbird. Anna's Hummingbird was a new species for the count thanks to the Knopps' feeder, though the smaller hummer they reported earlier in the week didn't

make an appearance. Other less common species for the Wahkiakum circle included White-winged Scoter, Red-necked Grebe, Great Egret, Wrentit, and Rough-legged Hawk.

Greater Scaup numbers are enormous this year. Well over 20,000 were counted, making it by far the most numerous species in the count circle. Misses included Cooper's Hawk, Western Meadowlark (no one able to visit Coffeepot Island, where they're hard to miss) and Horned Lark, despite a trip to Pillar Rock Island. When I discovered that no one had found a Virginia Rail, I took a tape player out into the Hansen Refuge after dark. I thought I was on a fool's errand at first, when the only response out at the ponds was the pounding of rain on the car roof. However, when I tried the cattail marsh on Brooks Slough a Virginia Rail answered right away. I figured that as long as I was there I'd try a Sora call too, and promptly got an answer from a Sora. Then the rain slacked off and I stepped out of the car to try a Pygmy Owl, which we had also missed. A Great Horned Owl promptly came down and flew a tight circle above my head. Then the rain started pounding down again, so I figured I'd quit while I was ahead and drove home. Thanks to all twenty-one participants who made it another successful count!

Leadbetter Point CBC

By: Alan Richards, compiler

For the Leadbetter Point CBC, 12/15/07, we noted **100 species**, including two species new to the Count, and four unusual species, at least in terms of our CBC history. Number of individuals: **45,433**. Temps: low 39, high 48. Winds: 0 to 30 mph. Cloud cover 70% to 100%, light rain at times, but

for less than 5% (0.4 hrs) of the day; generally not raining, 0.1 inch or less, entire day.

New for our CBC, two species: Western Bluebird and Palm Warbler. Other notable species included White-fronted Goose, Redhead, Pigeon Guillemot, and Western Scrub-Jay.

2007 Cowlitz County CBC

By Bob Reistroffer, compiler

On January 1, 2008 the 24th 3CBC was held as part of Audubon's 108th Christmas Bird Count. Twelve field observers and 2 feeder watchers spent the mostly clear day searching from some hard to find birds. This was our 24th official CBC. The temperature ranged from 32° to 48° with winds out of the southwest at 0-10 mph. TOTAL SPECIES: 79 plus 7 others in count week. TOTAL INDIVIDUALS 9,807.

Willapa Hills Audubon Society Presents



Birding Classes 2008

BEGINNING BIRDING

This class is for people who are either completely new to bird watching or who have watched birds for a short time and would like to know more. The class is designed to provide new birders with the techniques and skills to help them identify unfamiliar local birds.

Instruction will include information on birding equipment, reference materials and field guides, identification techniques, field marks and some avian natural history. This class will be taught by two active Willapa Hills Audubon Society members, both of whom are biologists. Carlo Abbruzzese has been watching birds for over 15 years and Ann Musché's time behind the binoculars has been about double that. The first class will be held on **Saturday, March 15th at the Julia Butler Hansen Wildlife Refuge** near Cathlamet **from 8-9:30am with a field trip at the refuge from 9:30am to 12pm**. The second class session will be held on **Saturday March 29th from 10-12am at the Longview Public Library** with a field trip to **Lake Sacagawea from 8am-10am** that precedes the class. The cost for the class is \$13 and class size will be limited to 13 participants.

To register, or with questions, contact Carlo at (puffbird@juno.com) or at (360) 425-6133, or Ann at mrm@willapabay.org (360) 484-7119.

WARBLERS AND VIREOS

Would you like to know more about some of our most colorful and sweet sounding local birds? Doug Robberson will teach a multimedia (including photos, vocalizations, and even some video) class on warblers and vireo species that you would expect to find in SW Washington. The class will be taught on **April 9th from 6-8 pm at the Longview Public Library** with a field trip on **April 12**. The field trip will take place at **Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge from 8am to around 11 or 12**. Doug has been teaching birding classes for Portland Audubon Society, Tualatin River keepers, and the Friends of the Tualatin National Wildlife Refuge for over 10 years and has been birding for 18 years. The cost for the class will be \$8 and space is limited so don't delay!

To register, or with questions, contact Carlo at (puffbird@juno.com) or at (360) 425-6133.

INTERMEDIATE BIRDING

This class will cover some of the lesser known and hard to identify species of Southwest Washington. Some of these species have confusing vocalizations, while others are shy or tend to stay up high so they are not as often seen. This class will be a good follow up to the Beginning Birding class. The class will also focus on species that are difficult to tell apart like Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawk, Hutton's Vireo and Ruby Crowned Kinglet, Great and Lesser Scaup, and Downy and Hairy Woodpecker. The class will be taught on **April 24th from 6-8 pm at the Longview Public Library**. There will be no field trip associated with this class. The cost for the class will be \$6 and space is limited!

To register, or with questions, contact Carlo at (puffbird@juno.com) or at (360) 425-6133.

DO YOU WONDER WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR ENDANGERED BIRDS IN YOUR OWN PART OF WASHINGTON STATE?

Here is a perfect opportunity for you to help two species of such birds:

**WESTERN SNOWY PLOVERS and
STREAKED HORNED LARKS**

Our Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Parks and Recreation are restoring habitat in the dunes of Leadbetter Point State Park to help the plovers and larks. For one season, in 2007, the agency with help from Willapa Hills and Grays Harbor Auduboners and other bird-loving volunteers, has collected baseline data and begun improving the conditions for the birds. In 2008, from April through October, there will be opportunities to assist with surveying and monitoring of vegetation, and if we are lucky, of birds. No prior experience is needed to monitor the vegetation; training will be provided. To survey for birds requires some expertise. Some training is possible.

A small grant makes it possible for us to pay for mileage driven by volunteers to the site. There will

be a training session on Monday, March 24th, in South Bend.

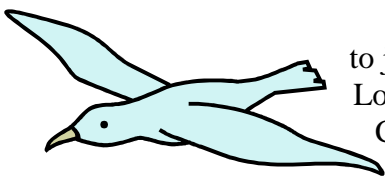
If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact:

Ann Musché, Naselle, Washington 360-484-7119
mrm@willapabay.org



Banded Snowy Plover at Leadbetter
Photo by Jim Harrison

Offshore Birding Trip Available



WHAS is invited
to join Louis LaPierre's
Lower Columbia
College Environmental
Science Class in

chartering a Westport Seabirds pelagic cruise to the outer slope with Mike Donahue (the presenter of the gulls program last year) in May (date to be determined, probably Saturday the 10th).

There will be space for at least 10 non-students on the boat. The cost of the boat trip is \$125 per person. The boat shoves off at 5:30 am from Westport and returns between 3-4 pm. Additional details on the boat trip are at

<http://www.westportseabirds.com/reservations.html>

Louis says, "Although the trip will certainly involve discussion/observation of birds, Pacific Northwest environmental/conservation issues involving marine mammals and fish will also be discussed -- whether or not we see any.

It would be a fantastic experience for the students if a group of knowledgeable and enthusiastic WHASies could come with!"

Interested non-students should sign up and coordinate carpooling by contacting Louis at llapierre@lcc.ctc.edu

Join Us for Spring ACOW

For Spring ACOW (Audubon Council of Washington) 2008, being held April 11th through April 13th, Audubon Washington has chosen the Sleeping Lady Mountain retreat, located in the foothills of the Cascade mountain range outside Leavenworth, Washington. The Sleeping Lady creates an atmosphere that blends seamlessly with nature and the surrounding natural landscape, and provides an environment that fosters creative interaction. This all-inclusive retreat is also a leader in environmentally conscious industry; with conservation a primary concern from its construction through daily operations.

Friday evening will kick off with a reception and art show, including Wildlife Biologist and nature artist Heather A. Wallis Murphy, photographer Teri Pieper, a book display by A Book for All Seasons and book signing by Brian Bell author of *Birds of Washington State*. Friday evening we will also have our first guest speaker, Dr. Nalini M. Nadkarni, a professor at Evergreen State College and at the forefront of canopy studies. Dr. Nadkarni has made a name for herself as “the Queen of the Forest Canopy” through numerous scientific articles and

documentary appearances, as well as two books. Dr. Nadkarni has also become well known for promoting the conversation between the scientific community and the general public.

Saturday will be dedicated to workshops and breakouts on advocacy, leadership/board development, and fundraising. Saturday evening will usher in our keynote speaker, Dr. Terry L. Root. Dr. Root is a Senior Fellow and University faculty at the Woods Institute for the Environment and Professor by courtesy in Biological Sciences at Stanford University. Dr. Root has worked extensively in the research of climate change. Dr. Root has won several honors, most recently, lead authorship of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.

Sunday will be dedicated to field trips, conveniently leaving from Sleeping Lady. These trips will include a Chelan-Douglass Land Trust trip, as well as Barn Beach Reserve and Blackbird island trip and trip to Rocky Reach Dam and Visitor Center.

For more information on Spring ACOW 2008, visit the Audubon Washington website at wa.audubon.org. Everyone is invited to attend!

Audubon Champions Evergreen Cities Act

Help support House Bill 2844/Senate Bill 6469



As development sweeps across the state, urban trees are destroyed and replaced by impervious surfaces like concrete and blacktop. The State's population is anticipated to grow by 2.3 million by 2030, and action is needed to support planting and maintaining of our urban-forested lands. Currently, only limited numbers of our communities have up-to-date tree inventories, management plans, or tree retention ordinances. Maintaining and planting urban trees can significantly enhance quality of life, air quality and water quality, as well as providing effective storm water management and habitat for birds and wildlife. Increased tree coverage in urban areas can have numerous social impacts as well, including lower energy costs, higher property values, increased consumer spending, and lowered crime rates.

The Evergreen cities bill will help and create infrastructure to retain and maintain urban trees to ensure the Evergreen State is filled with Evergreen Cities for future generations. With session moving forward fast, and adjourning March 13th, it is time to show your support for protection of our State's trees. Visit www.leg.wa.gov, where you can check on the progress of the bill as well as find information on your legislators and how to contact them, or call the legislative hotline at 1.800.562.6000.

Nelson Creek Project

By Jim Harrison

On January 11, 2008 the Nelson Creek Committee met for the first time this year and work continues to progress. The water level data loggers have been installed and are gathering needed information. There was relief in the committee that the loggers survived the heavy December rain and storms.

Andrew Emlen, Darryl Whipple and others continue to survey birds on the property and we installed some screech owl, barn owl and wood duck nesting boxes.

Russ and Ann Kastberg have gathered information on controlling reed canary grass and gave a great report at the meeting. They are also leading an amphibian egg survey. The committee plans to have all surveying done by September and begin working on the restoration plan. The next meeting is March 14th.



Photo by Russ Kastberg

Installing Nest Boxes at Nelson Creek

Barney Wheeler generously built and donated a variety of bird boxes. Thanks Barney!

Puget Sound Bird Fest September 12-14, 2008

PUGET SOUND BIRD FEST in Edmonds is moving! To a different time of year, that is. After three years of the event taking place in May, the 2008 Bird Fest will be in September. It will feature more great speakers, guided walks, field trips on land and water, a marketplace for vendors and exhibitors, backyard wildlife habitat tours, and of course, the "On Wing" Art Show. So, mark your calendar to be in Edmonds September 12-14, 2008 to celebrate birds and nature!



Olympic BirdFest 2008

Sequim-WA

April 4-6, 2008

Visit the rain shadow of the *Olympic Peninsula* to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest—Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, dippers, Black Oystercatchers, Long-tailed Ducks, and more. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, silent auction, and a salmon banquet with our partner, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe.

New this year: A three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2008, immediately following BirdFest. The festival with the most spectacular setting! Contact: Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382; 360-681-4076; email:

info@olympicbirdfest.org ; or go online at www.olympicbirdfest.org .

Birding Belize

By Jim Harrison

Bea and I recently took a respite from all the liquid sunshine and bailed out for warmer and sunnier climes. We decided to go to Belize, a locale we had wanted to visit for many years. We landed on Feb. 2nd in Belize City and took off for Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary. We quickly were glad we had rented a little SUV instead of a sedan. Belize only has two paved roads; a highway that bisects the country from north to south and another from east to west. All the other roads are dirt and not maintained.

Crooked Tree is an island surrounded by a large inland lagoon. It was the first area settled in Belize and the name is derived from the appearance of the cashew trees that grow there. The CT Sanctuary is run by Belize Audubon. Go Audubon!!! We were pleased to find a number of areas protected by Belize Audubon around the country.

It is always exciting to go to a new area to bird and being overwhelmed by all the new bird calls and having unidentified birds all over the place. Heck, Bea had me pulling over before we even go out of the airport parking lot to look at the American Pygmy Kingfisher hanging out at the puddle next to the road.

At Crooked Tree we stayed at Bird's Eye View Lodge. No need to explain that one. We saw a number of new species while we were there. Bare-throated Tiger Heron, Forked-tailed Flycatcher and Boat-billed Heron were three of my favorites. The Northern Jacana were everywhere. Not just by the water as you would expect but in the pastures with the livestock. We finally got good looks at limpkin which we had only glimpsed in Florida years ago. But, regrettably, the Jabiru Storks eluded us. On a boat trip up Black Creek we saw our first but not last howler monkey in the wild. Overall we were pleased with Bird's Eye View Lodge and highly recommend it.

Next we visited the Belize Zoo on our way to Western Belize. This famous zoo only has native wildlife which are rehabbed and kept in natural settings. We next stayed overnight at a research station across from the zoo. This is an education facility, but also has some cabins for rent overlooking a lagoon. This is also the headquarters

for the Belize Birds without Border program and the Peregrine Fund.

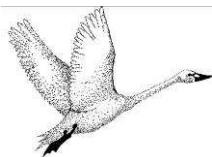
We continued to pick up more new species as we traveled into the montane jungle of Western Belize. Once while trying to locate some very vocal parrots near a Mayan ruin, we saw a tayra, a large weasel like animal that the locals call a bush dog. The tayra, it seems was the cause of the commotion from the parrots and when it finished crossing the road in front of us and disappeared into the jungle the parrots immediately shut up.

We soon found ourselves back at the coast where we stayed on the beach at a place run by some expats from British Columbia. It seems that a lot of folks for the Northwest also like to hide from winter in Belize.

As we bounce back and forth from coast to jungle we found ourselves at Mayflower-Bocawina National Park at Mama Noots Jungle Lodge. This is an eco-lodge located in the middle of this national park. The lodge has about ten acres of landscaped grounds planted in various fruit and flowering trees, which attract a variety of tropical birds. We could have spent all our time just birding around the property and not even enter the surrounding jungle, but we decided to hike to the top of scenic Antelope Falls which we could see in the distance from the lodge. When we got to the bottom of the falls we looked up and were greeted by two Swallow-tailed Kites soaring above the falls. Bea's favorite birds at Mama Noots were Long-tailed Hermit hummingbird and Masked and Black-crowned Tityras and Yellow winged and Golden-hooded Tanagers.

Our last stop was Caye Caulker, one of the beautiful off shore islands. Our birding highlight of this destination was getting up close to so many Magnificent Frigate birds. These famous food thieves swoop down to the beach to collect their share of the fish when the local fishermen clean their daily catch.

Bea and I fell in love with Belize, its friendly people and plentiful wildlife. We saw 111 species with approximately 24 being new life species. But we missed a lot of birds, so I guess we will just have to go back!



Willapa Hills Audubon Society
PO Box 399
Longview, WA 98632

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage PAID
Permit No. 8
Longview, WA 98632-7058

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The *Willapa Whistler* is the bi-monthly publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Articles, information, wildlife sightings and black-and-white artwork are welcomed. The deadline for inclusion of material in the *Whistler* is the 15th of each even-numbered month. Complimentary copies are sent to organizations and prospective members. All WHAS activities and programs are open to the public. The *Willapa Whistler* is printed on recycled paper using soy based ink.

The Mission of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society is to support ecologically responsible ways of life, to help maintain biologically diverse habitats, and to promote environmental understanding and enjoyment of nature.

UPCOMING WHAS PROGRAMS

Mark Your Calendar

Note from the program chair: The cancellation of our last two programs due to bad weather was unavoidable, and we apologize. We attempted to reach as many of you as possible by email, phone, and radio announcement. We are now proud these programs are back on the schedule.

Friday, March 7, 6:30 PM Lower Columbia College, Main Bldg #119, Longview (On Maple Street, directly North of the Longview Library)

“French Guiana: A Brief Natural History”

WHAS members and biologists, Louis LaPierre and Pamela Wright, tell of their research

Saturday, March 22, 5:00 PM Annual Meeting, 6:30 Program

Cowlitz PUD Auditorium, 961 12th Ave., Longview

“The Birds of Cape Disappointment: 1900”

Cape Disappointment Interpretive Specialist, John Schmidt shares slides and stories

Friday, May 2, 6:30 PM Lower Columbia College, Longview (room to be announced)

“What Good are Bugs? The Case for Invertebrate Conservation”

Scott Black, Executive Director for the Xerces Society speaks about the value of protecting and preserving the diversity of our insect populations