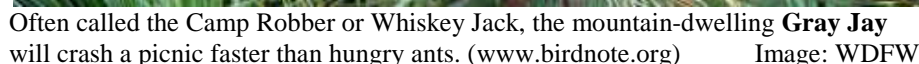




A Publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society

Volume 36 // Issue 4

July / August 2010



Go about .5 mile down Miller Point Rd., and you will see it turn sharply left. Don't take it! Instead continue straight on Waranka Road, down the hill, following the shoreline of the Deep River, about .5 mile to the house. You will go past the local metal collector's, which looks like it is the end of the road, but it isn't. Past that will be an open gate and a sign that says "Welcome to Donkey Holler." Keep going, and you can see the shop and house from the gate – grey with white trim - and three donkeys.

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Support our mission, join WHAS today!

Check type of Membership:

- ☐ New Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$20 check for annual membership)
- ☐ Renewal Chapter Membership **WHAS** (\$20 check for annual membership)
- ☐ I would like to support the work of Willapa Hills Audubon Society.
Enclosed is my additional donation of \$_____.

Membership includes 6 issues of our newsletter *WILLAPA WHISTLER* annually.

- ☐ I prefer to receive the *WHISTLER* by email (Add your email address below)

If you are also interested in membership in the National Audubon Society, please visit <http://www.audubon.org/>.

Please make your check payable to: WILLAPA HILLS AUDUBON SOCIETY or WHAS and mail to:

WHAS, PO Box 399, Longview, WA 98632

We are a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All dues and donations are tax deductible.

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Thank you for supporting your local Audubon chapter -- Willapa Hills Audubon Society!

We will not share your contact information with anyone.

* To announce **occasional** reminders and to communicate last minute schedule changes due to weather or other issues for WHAS programs and field trips.

**To allow members to announce and discuss items of general interest.



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Highlights of WHAS Board Meeting

Charlotte Persons

At the WHAS board meeting on June 12 we discussed an exciting new opportunity—to help conserve Mary Steller's property in Rosburg as her legacy, in partnership with another organization such as Columbia Land Trust. Of course many details need to be worked out; if you would like to volunteer to be on this task force, please contact Steve Puddicombe, Alan Richards, or Larry Brandt. Meanwhile, all members are invited to share in a birding walk/property tour on July 31 during the WHAS Annual Picnic (see page 1 for details). Other significant actions taken by the board were;

- Approval of a letter to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with suggestions as to the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Radar Ridge Wind Project near Naselle, WA;
- Opposition to a new mining proposal for Mount Margaret on the northeastern border of Mt. St. Helens;
- Opposition to mining in the Chetco River, near the southern border of Oregon.

The next board meeting in October will be an all-day "retreat," most of which will be devoted to creating board policy and a five-year plan.

Receive the *Whistler* by email

Willapa Hills Audubon Society now offers delivery of the *Willapa Whistler* newsletter by email. The "*eWhistler*" offers enhanced viewing with color photos and graphics as well as live links to referenced websites and emails. You will receive an email announcing the availability of the *Whistler* on the WHAS website with a link to the webpage that will open in your default web browser. You can read the *Whistler* online or save it to your computer for later browsing. Archived *Whistlers* are available on the WHAS website. Please consider signing up for electronic delivery to reduce paper waste, mail box clutter and expenses associated with printing and mailing of the *Whistler*. Send your full name and e-mail address to our Membership Chair, Gloria Nichols at membership@willapahillsaudubon.org.

Bye Bye Northern Star's Bradwood Landing LNG

By Carol Carver

Northern Star has declared bankruptcy on its proposal to build an LNG terminal at Bradwood, Oregon across from Puget Island and Cathlamet.

On Tuesday May 4, Northern Star Natural Gas announced a "suspension" of the project, followed the next day with an announcement of bankruptcy. Some debtors had apparently been paid in the past including their firms in Oregon but some entities debt, among them: their lawyers Stoell Northwest Natural Gas. Northern Star does not appear to have any assets other than the permit (with unmet conditions) granted by FERC. Columbia Riverkeeper and its coalition members, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission, and the states of Oregon and Washington have a suit against FERC in federal court for granting this permit before the states had exercised their permitting authority. For over five years, environmental activists joined with farmers, fishermen, and foresters have fought against Northern Star in a what has become a victory for our northwest region's way of life.

The bankruptcy filings with details of who is owed what can be accessed on-line at Columbia Riverkeeper, www.columbiariverkeeper.org.



Celebrations have taken place in Longview (Land Owners and Citizens Against the Pipeline, LCSC), Puget Island (Wahkiakum Friends of the River, CRK, and LCSC) and Astoria (Rivervision, CRK, and Columbia Pacific Common Sense.) These celebrations were all well-attended, including Willapa Hills Audubon members and members of Oregon Citizens Against the Pipeline from as far away as the Willamette Valley and Mt. Hood.

Other LNG Projects

The WHAS Board has not taken a position on the other LNG projects in our region at the time of this printing.

Here is Carol Carver's take:

Oregon LNG/Leucadia is still proposing an LNG terminal for Warrenton with a pipeline across central Oregon and Mt. Hood to connect to California. Oregon LNG has not yet obtained a FERC permit. Another terminal proposed in Coos Bay has received their FERC permit, but has strong opposition. Also, Northwest Natural Gas has not abandoned plans for a pipeline that would impact Oregon's valleys and Mt. Hood. Activists are continuing to fight these developments for much the same environmental reasons that Bradwood Landing drew opposition. Columbia Riverkeeper will continue to lead a coalition of opposition groups in grassroots efforts opposed to LNG and in favor of domestic sustainable energy options. In the meantime, the Ruby pipeline to deliver Rocky Mountain domestic natural gas to California—mostly along an already designated pipeline route—is moving forward with an anticipated completion next year. Changes in the U.S. natural gas market with a focus on domestic gas that is less costly for consumers than imported LNG are likely to impact the other two Oregon LNG proposals

Help with Taxidermy fee needed

By Darrel Whipple

WHAS is asking members and supporters to donate to pay the taxidermy fee to add a male American Kestrel to the wildlife collection sponsored by WHAS at the Lower Columbia College Biology Department. WHAS uses the bird and mammal specimens in the collection to illustrate its classroom presentations and public programs presented by its volunteers.

We have a beautiful specimen of a male Kestrel that crashed into Frans Eykel's window on Puget Island. As a mounted specimen, this bird will thrill children and adults with its dramatic coloration and elegant lines. Non-birders viewing this mount will suddenly realize that the bird they have casually noticed perched on utility wires is a stunning and magnificent creature viewed close-up. We are really fortunate to collect this excellent specimen – and thankful to Frans for calling us.

The mount will be prepared by Stefan Savides at Avian Design in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Savides is an internationally-recognized artist and award-winning taxidermist.

Anyone who wants to donate to make this specimen a finished mount for the collection should send a check to Willapa Hills Audubon, PO Box 399, Longview, WA 98632. Any amount will be greatly appreciated and will go toward the total cost of \$385. *Painting of the Kestrel by Beth Bailey*



Birding Bits

By Russ Koppendrayer

On the 22nd of May I found out it was possible to OD on birding. After retiring on May 1st, I'd spent at least 4 hours birding every day and usually dawn to late afternoon. But after a six-day swing through Eastern Washington of dawn-to-dusk type birding, I was ready to shut down for a few days. I've regained my senses and have been back at it, and what a spring migration it's been. The migration probably isn't that unique, but my ability to see something different every day as opposed to only snapshots on the weekend has been. At this point I'm pleased with my decision to pick May 1 as a retirement date, which was moved up one month simply because I knew I'd not be able to work in May with all the neotropical migrants arriving and only a few working days left. I enjoyed a bit of short-timers syndrome even with the earlier retirement date.

Besides many days of local birding in Cowlitz County, I've taken numerous day trips as far up the Columbia River as Goldendale and as far North as Nisqually Wildlife Refuge. I'm not sure why downstream on the Columbia was neglected and the Oregon border serves as a barrier for myself as well as many other birders. In spite of the fact that I can see Oregon from my house, I'm as likely to go birding in the Spokane area as cross the bridge toward Rainier. Go figure. The birds certainly don't pay any attention to these arbitrary political boundaries. Also I had the pleasure of volunteering on the Skagit County Spring Migration Count. I met some interesting old time birders as well as spent a pleasant day birding some new territory with someone who knew their way around the area.

And of course there was the previously mentioned 6 day swing through Eastern Washington, focusing on sites to the north and south of I-90 east of Vantage. A great trip with lots of special sightings, but at the end leaving me birded out for a few days. On the first day of this trip we made a couple stops in Yakima

County after crossing White Pass. One of these stops at Hardy Canyon produced a Hutton's Vireo, a species typically associated with the west side of the Cascades. I believe this was Yakima County's first report of this species.

Another stop that may have some interest here was at Audubon Lake in Reardon. When this area was threatened with development a few years ago, a successful fundraising effort was made to save this wonderful habitat, including a contribution from WHAS. For those of you familiar with the site and have tried to bird there from the busy road, there is now a new parking lot, short trail, and an artificial knoll with a blind on the south side of the lake. This is reached by driving east on the last street in town before the lake. This spot gives better views of much of the lake as

well as eliminates the traffic problems, and the birds are still there in force enjoying this saved habitat.

On the local front I've been finding Horned Larks on the dredge spoils to the north of Steelscape in Kalama. Not only is this especially late for these birds, but they seem to be associated in pairs at two different spots. It looks as if breeding may be going on here. Unfortunately they don't appear to be the threatened "streaked" subspecies. Also in Kalama at the heronry just to the south of the grain elevator I'm seeing at least seven Great Egret nests. Two years ago this became the farthest north breeding location for this species west of the Cascades and their presence there appears to be expanding.

Onward we go now to the nesting season with the start of the southbound shorebirds by July. Then it'll be time to make daily checks on the Mint Farm ponds to keep track of those events. It's only been a month since retirement and already I can't figure out how I ever had time for work and as for that project of inputting my old birding records into my new computer-well maybe next month. Enjoy the birds.



Shorebird Field Trip Report

By John Green

WHAS finished up the season with a shorebird field trip on May 2nd and will not resume field trips until fall.

Nine hardy souls participated in the shorebird trip on a blustery, wet day. Russ Koppendrayer led the trip and did not disappoint the enthusiastic group by putting us on the birds. We saw most of the target species plus picked up a Red Knot which we do not always see. While we were in a shelter at Bottle Beach the group was able to watch a pair of Bewick's Wrens bringing insects to their young in the nest built inside the structure.

We will continue trips in the fall and if anyone has a favorite spot they would like to share, we would welcome any ideas for trips.



Bewick's Wren; Image: Dave Menke/USFWS

Nelson Creek Restoration – Update

By Russ Kastberg

Restoration activities are underway this spring at Nelson Creek. This is the beginning of restoration activities on the site, following three years of baseline research and planning. Columbia Land Trust (CLT) has funding to do site preparation and planting, so now we can begin to put our plans to work.

On April 16th, a group of WHAS volunteers, CLT, and



the plant nursery company spent the day unloading and distributing native plants and trees to areas that had been mowed and prepared for planting. The next day there were approximately 50 WHAS/Miller Hull volunteers on site working hard scarifying and planting. The group worked hard and managed to get 1800 plants in the ground, along with protector tubes installed. The following week CLT brought in a contractor to finish the job. A total of 9000 plants were planted.

On May 15th, 8 WHAS volunteers met on site with Thomas Burke, CLT GIS coordinator, to conduct mapping of Blackberry. We began with some basic GPS training by Thomas, and then split up into 2-person crews to hike the area, locating the Blackberry patches. Thomas has produced a map showing the size and density of the various patches. This will be

used to set priorities for upcoming Blackberry removal and replanting this year.

We have a new CLT Stewardship Leader, Dan Friesz, working with us now. Plans are underway to do some restructuring of waterways this year when the site dries out. The intent is to create higher ground for planting native plants. The



priority is to create deer habitat. The wetter areas will be formed into ponds and marshes. These areas will all have to be planted to crowd out the reed canary grass that dominates the site at this time.

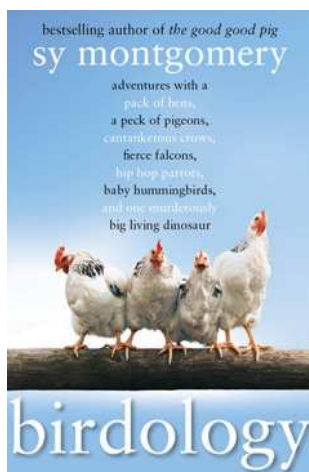
This is an ambitious plan, but we are optimistic we can succeed. We look forward to future volunteer projects at the site. If you have questions about what we are doing, feel free to contact Russ Kastberg at rkastberg@cni.net.

Book Review

By Margaret Green

It is common to appreciate birds for their beauty or for their lyrical songs. It is not so common to think of a hummingbird as a bubble fringed with iridescent feathers or air wrapped in light, or to think of the Cassowary as a living dinosaur. Does a hawk's need to hunt represent pure wildness and make one wonder if human thinking gets in the way of truly living in our surroundings?

Sy Montgomery's book *"Birdology"*; Adventures with a pack of hens, a peck of pigeons, cantankerous crows, fierce falcons, hip hop parrots, baby hummingbirds, and one murderously big living dinosaur", **Free Press 2010**, shares rich stories of birds with interesting facts of their physiology and new insights into their behavior. The book will enrich you as their many mysteries unfold. The author uses beautiful prose to tell intriguing facts and interjects real science about these mostly



common birds. She shares personal experiences that expand our understanding. We follow her family's integration with the flock of chickens in their backyard coop. We read amazing stories of the homing pigeons, which made a difference on battlefields throughout history, even into the 20th century. We read of Alex, the African Grey Parrot who learns to speak with humans. The author asks us to wonder, "What do our words mean to the birds who use them? How much of our language do they understand?" On our own, we begin to wonder why does Snowball, the dancing cockatoo respond and interact with those humans who watch him improvise to new music.

Montgomery opens the door to a fascinating world of birds and poses questions which stimulate us to watch and listen a little more intently to the birds we encounter.

Avian Bird Signs Featured on History Walk

By Margaret Green

On May 15, Longview Park Superintendent, Al George led 20 citizens on a walking history tour of Lake Sacajawea. As well as lake history, the Avian Interpretive Signs were featured on the tour. These signs were designed and installed through the efforts of Willapa Hills Audubon Society in partnership with the City of Longview and are now a prominent feature on the lake, offering both art and educational opportunities to Park patrons. WHAS member, Margaret Green spoke to those gathered, telling the story of the signs' history as a memorial to WHAS founding member Ruth Deery. Margaret shared the importance of Lake Sacajawea as a site on the SW Loop of The Great Washington State Birding Trail. She also pointed out that the signs are meant to encourage observation, listening, and learning. Those in attendance had many positive comments about the beauty of the signs and expressed their appreciation. Several carried binoculars and there was much talk of birds throughout the walk.

Al shared an intriguing story of a resident brown pelican, which spent many years at the lake in the 40's. Because the bird was without a mate, it was named Gloomy Gus. In May of 1948, the Cowlitz Valley Moose Lodge bought and imported

another pelican in hopes of cheering Gus. "He was not impressed", Al told the group, and eventually, Gus left the area. As far as we know, this is the only pelican sighted at Lake Sacajawea.



The Dahl family shared a story of their encounter with a wood duck in the early 90's. The duck, hoping for a nesting site, entered the chimney of their lakeside home at Maple and Kessler, flying down the chimney and into the living room. Leslie Dahl was able to capture the duck and remove it safely. However, several days later, upon returning from a short vacation, the Dahl's found the duck and its predictable mess, once again, in the living room. Again, the duck was safely removed, but the Dahl's do not have fond

memories of that wildlife encounter. Since that time, WHAS member Barney Wheeler, has constructed 4 wood duck boxes, which have been placed on the lake's two islands. We are happy to report that they have been in use for several years.

A checklist of the birds reported seen at Lake Sacajawea can be found on the WHAS web site. Check the Wildlife Sighting section. The direct link to the file is:

http://willapahillsaudubon.org/WHAS_files/Birdlists/2010lake_sacajawea_birdlist.pdf.

Beware of Vampires!

By Beatrice Harrison

When Bela Lugosi said "Let me bite you on the neck", in the original Dracula movie, he was giving you fair warning that he was about to suck you dry. But, these modern-day vampires I want to tell you about may not give such a clear warning.

The vampires I am talking about are the ones in your house that are draining your pocketbook dry. My mama used to always say "Waste not, Want Not". (I think she got that from Benjamin Franklin). Anyway, Mama, I have found a new way to heed your advice.

Here is the scoop: Even when common household appliances are turned off, they continue to use electricity. They are in what is known as "stand-by- mode". Anyone as old as me can probably remember when it took five minutes for the television to warm up. Well, modern appliances such as computers, televisions and microwaves don't need to warm up, and therefore use a surprising amount of energy just sitting in standby mode. This wasted electricity can add up to a lot of money over a short period. It is sometimes up to 10 percent of an average household's energy costs. Here are a few examples of annual costs for someone paying 11 cents per kilowatt hour.

- Computer & monitor – \$68.00

- VCR – \$10.00
- Game console - \$25.00
- Plasma TV - \$160.00!

You might be surprised at how much money you can save by taking a few simple steps to stop wasting this electricity. By simply putting these appliances on a power strip or surge protector and turning the strips off when you go to bed at night or when you are out for the day, you can not only save yourself a lot of moola, but also reduce the amount of energy needing to be produced. Dim your CRT screens, turn off lights and unplug anything not being used. According to some sources, vampire energy is costing US consumers 3 billion dollars a year. That is about 68 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity wasted a year, and amounts to the electricity generated by 37 power plants, at the expense of over 97 billion pounds of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere.

When I heard about this, it became a challenge for me to see how many things in my house I could turn off! Mama would be proud.

Book Review

By Carolyn Norred

***An Eagle Named Freedom*, Jeff Guidry, William Marrow, 2010.**

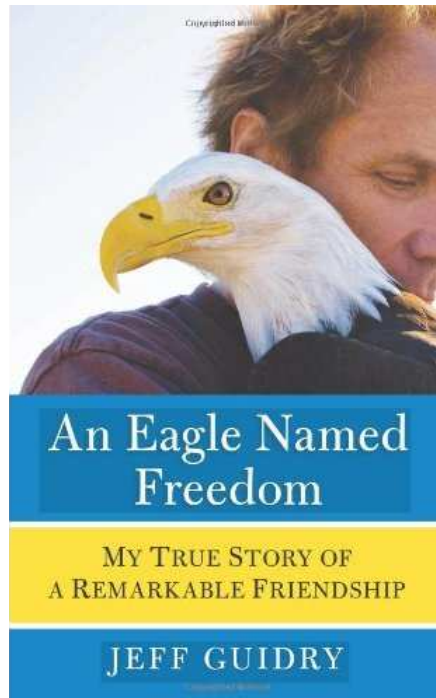
When a young eagle, drastically injured with both wings broken, arrived at the Sarvey Wildlife Care Center in northern WA state, volunteer, Jeff Guidry, was assigned to her care and keeping. Over the weeks of rehabilitation, the two of them developed a strong bond and Jeff gave her the name, "Freedom." As fate would have it, she was not able to fly again, and so she continued to live at the center, and she and Jeff became a team, working together on wildlife educational projects with schools and other organizations.

Guidry and Freedom came to trust and rely on each other in a deep and surprising relationship. After Freedom's recovery and the two of them had been working together for some time, Jeff was diagnosed with cancer. As he fought the disease, he continued to visit and work with Freedom. The relationship gave him courage and comfort. "In trusting that Freedom and I would have a long time together, I'd found the advantage -call it an edge-that I needed beyond even extraordinary human support. Freedom and I were balanced on that edge."

When Jeff learned that his cancer was in remission, he drove to the center to see Freedom. He jessed her up to take her for a walk, "I felt Freedom's injured left wing drape over my right shoulder. Then I realized she had brought her right wing clear around to touch me in the middle of my back. I could feel the tips of her primaries pressed into my body. I could feel the bones in her

wing on my shoulder. I looked down and saw the ends of her feathers as though I wore a dark eagle cape. In that instant I felt my friend enfolding me in a full embrace.

I leaned back. She had never done this before. We looked straight at each other...She gently touched her beak to my nose....The world was gone. It was just Freedom and me."



The day I finished this book, our local newspaper, The Daily News, ran a story about a female bald eagle that had been shot and left to suffer at Dibblee's Point just across the river from us in Rainier, OR. The injured eagle was discovered and delivered to the Wildlife Center of the North Coast in Astoria, OR.

Although she is still carrying nearly three dozen shotgun BBs lodged in her body, she is up and about. The last news report was that she is apparently blind in her left eye. This will prevent her being released to the wild and she will either be euthanized or kept for "educational purposes."

My reading these two stories together left me grateful for Jeff Guidry and his writing. He closes his book with a plea for support of wildlife care centers such as Sarvey and the Astoria facility. Support of course can be provided by donations of either money or time, but I

want to suggest that reading and sharing a book like Guidry's with as many folks as you can interest in it, is yet another way to support the centers and, better yet, support the wild beings that share the planet with us..

Editor note: The shot eagle has since been released into the wild.

Puget Sound Bird Observatory's Cascades Bird Banding Camp for Adults

Learn bird-banding techniques in Washington's Cascade Mountains during the Puget Sound Bird Observatory's Cascades Bird Banding Camp for Adults, July 25th-31st, 2010. Under the guidance of expert trainers, participants will focus on the basics of net placement, bird handling and net extraction, aging and sexing, and molts and plumage.

Participants gain valuable skills while documenting how birds use moist high-elevation meadows in the Cascade Mountains to replace their feathers and prepare for southward migration. The training follows North American Banding Council guidelines and includes six mornings of banding at various locations and six nights of camping at a semi-remote

campground in the Naches Ranger District of the Wenatchee National Forest. No birding or banding experience is necessary. Cost: \$700 +\$50 materials fee; PSBO member cost: \$650.

Course fees include training, meals and group camping equipment (personal tents optional but not required). Space is limited, complete the registration form

<http://www.pugetsoundbirds.org/PSBO/PSBOBandingCampReg2010.pdf> and mail with a \$100 deposit to reserve your spot. If you have questions, contact Sarah@pugetsoundbirds.org.

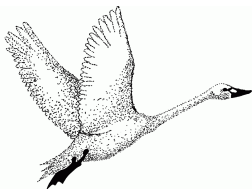
Details and registration form available at www.pugetsoundbirds.org

The Whistler Online

Did you know that you can read the *Willapa Whistler* online on our website? To see the **pictures in color** or in case you missed a previous issue go to <http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org> and just click on the *Whistler* in the top menu.

Lake Sacajawea Cleanup

The Canoe Club in a joint stewardship with Mt. St. Helens (hiking) Club is organizing the 2010 Annual Lake Sacajawea Cleanup on Saturday, July 10, from 10:00 a.m.—12:00 noon. Ken says, "Please leave July 10th open for helping to clean up Lake Sacajawea. I'm looking for volunteers." For details and to sign up, call Ken Wood 360.423.2466



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PO Box 399
Longview, WA 98632

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Longview WA 98632

The *Willapa Whistler* is the bi-monthly publication of the Willapa Hills Audubon Society, a chapter of the National Audubon Society.

Complimentary copies are sent to organizations and prospective members. All WHAS activities and programs are open to the public.

Articles, information, wildlife sightings and artwork are welcomed. The deadline for inclusion of material in the *Whistler* is the 15th of each even-numbered month. Send your contributions to:

WHAS Whistler,
PO Box 399, Longview WA 98632

or email them to

newsletter@willapahillsaudubon.org

The *Willapa Whistler* is printed on recycled paper using soy based ink.

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WHAS Programs and Field Trips

For more information and further details check the WHAS web site: www.willapahillsaudubon.org

WHAS Annual Picnic

Saturday, July 31

See page 1 for details

Summer is a quiet time for organized WHAS activities. We expect our members to disperse and pursue their own fantasies within the natural world. This is a time when the powers of observation are rewarded with the beauty of the season. We hope you encounter nesting birds, blooming wildflowers, and lovely flutter-bys (the delicate damsels, powerful dragons, and wispy butterflies tickle the imagination). It is also a time for wonderful wandering, solo or with like-minded friends. Enjoy.

Field Trips will resume in the early fall.

Watch for the next **Community Conversations lecture series** at Lower Columbia College. This fall's theme is "*The Green Earth: Our Playground & Responsibility*." Presentations will be at noon on Thursdays in the Wollenberg Auditorium, Rose Center for the Arts, from Sept. 23 - Dec. 2, excluding Veterans Day and Thanksgiving. Check the next Whistler, the WHAS website or the LCC site, www.lowercolumbia.edu/conversations, for more information.

Free **taxidermy workshop** planned for fall at Lower Columbia College. Date to be determined.

Bob Stone, retired taxidermist, has graciously offered to lead a taxidermy workshop. Planning is still in the rough stages, but we anticipate that participants will learn how to prepare study skins and parts of birds and mammals. Bob will also share the finer points of taxidermy as it applies to more technical mounts. Contact Louis LaPierre (llapierre@lowercolumbia.edu; 360.442.2884) for more info and to be added to the contact list.

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.

<http://www.willapahillsaudubon.org>