

*Membership Meeting  
 Sunday, April 1, 2007  
 1:30 PM – 3 PM  
 Habitat Lands, Opportunities  
 Perry Spring, GHAS Steward  
 Pearsall Building  
 2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen*

March/April 2007



# The Sandpiper



*Photo by Peter LaTourrette*

## **2006 Impressions of the Christmas Bird Count from a novice and first-timer**

*by Carol Sunde*

### **LBB and the Christmas Bird Count of 2006**

Little brown bird.  
 I am.  
 Flash of motion.  
 Foliage quiverer.  
 I flit. Look  
 I'm here.  
 Who am I?  
 Rich brown  
 black and tail,  
 dark streaks  
 on buff breast.  
 I hop,  
 scratch weedy grasses.  
 Fence sit.  
 I'm not singing.  
 Adjust binoculars.  
 Follow me down  
 the path  
 bordered with bare  
 blackberry vines.  
 You need to  
 count me.  
 Sparrow? Thrush? What  
 kind? Consult  
 Sibley, Peterson, Morse.  
 Identify and  
 then count me.  
 I'll count  
 you birders, too:  
 Happy Twit,  
 Lesser Gray Grumpus,  
 Serious Know-It-All.  
 I'm a brown clever bird.  
 I am.

*Continued on page 3*



*Photo by Perry Spring,  
 GHAS Stewardship Manager*

## **Don't let spring slip away!**

*By Janet Strong*

By now, Spring is coming into full flower, so to speak.

In the Spring, most of us enjoy watching the riot of color in the flowers and the new shiny green leaves, as we listen to the endless chorus of frogs and songs of the birds. But we don't generally pay much attention to the sequence and the timing of nature's annual events. We probably don't see how they all relate to each other. Why are the forests a carpet of colorful blooms in spring but much more subdued, flower-wise, later on? How do birds time their nesting activities. Why do all the different plants and animals do what they do when they do it, in the Spring?

With so many good-for-being-outdoors days, this might be a great year for us all to dig deeply into nature's well-orchestrated strategies for survival, whether in Spring or the rest of the year. We could begin by finding an in-

teresting natural area, as diverse as possible, in a convenient location. It could be a forest, a meadow, a wetland, a stream area, a local park - to have some of each would be ideal. It could be our backyard or the back forty. It should be a place we can and will visit often. Then grab a notebook or an extra calendar and a pencil and start getting to know that special place.

If we sit quietly for awhile, melding into our surroundings, the natural activities will resume and we begin to pick up clues - What's feeding on what? What's emerging together? How does the light play into things? What's blooming? What's hatching? Did the stream change course this winter? What's going on in the wetland?

The more often we visit our site, the more we will notice the changes through time and the more amazed we will become at what really goes on out there in the natural world. I was amazed and intrigued one Spring as I watched two pileated woodpeckers in Capitol Forest doing the oddest thing. These birds, usually found hammering on trees in search of carpenter ants and other edibles, were dangling upside down from the ends of the branches of an alder tree in bloom. They were feeding on alder blossoms or the insects inside them - whichever, I couldn't tell. But it sure was humorous - something I hadn't read about or seen before.

*Continued on page 6*

## The President's Perch



### Volunteer Opportunities Abound

By Jan McMillan

Audubon offers many ways to be active members. Traditionally we've helped with tabling of events, provided outreach education to kids and adults, helped with the Shorebird Festival, written articles and poems for the Newsletter and served on the board or board committees. We have had some opportunities for "hands on" conservation work but with the funding of the Snowy Plover Habitat Restoration Project and the launching of the Wildlife Habitat Volunteer Land Steward Program, our opportunities just grew dramatically. And coming within the next few months will be the newly developed Bottle Beach State Park—designed especially for birders. The park will require volunteer crews to do invasive plant removal, planting of native plants, help with construction and guiding visitors during peak migration times.

I hope you will become a volunteer for one of these programs and spread the word to your friends and colleagues that might be interested. For information on how to volunteer, see the articles on the Snowy Plover Restoration and the Volunteer Land Steward programs in this newsletter. Or you can always call our chapter number: 800-303-8498 and leave a message.

### On my way to Lobby Day via Washington, D.C.



by Jan McMillan

My recent participation in Environmental Lobby Day in Olympia gave me a chance to directly apply what I learned at Audubon's Budget and Appropriations 101 Training in Washington D.C. in January.

The two day training, hosted by Audubon's public policy staff, provided a big picture look at our national environmental priorities and at the important process that takes place between the executive and legislative branches of our government that fund these priorities. The 23 participants from 12 states all had legislators with appropriations responsibilities in the house or senate in addition to backgrounds and interest in advocacy.

The training covered:

- ◆ The State of the Birds and Important Bird Area Issues
- ◆ The Three National Audubon Priorities
- ◆ Audubon's Overarching Public Policy
- ◆ How to Lobby
- ◆ Working with the Media

The Three Audubon Priorities for 2007 are the *Land and Water Conservation Fund*, the *National Wildlife Refuge System* and *Everglades Ecosystem Restoration*.

We spent our final third day "on the hill", lobbying for the three priorities and local priorities from our home districts. I met with environmental staff from Senators Patty Murray's and Maria Cantwell's offices and

with Congressman Norm Dicks from my own congressional district. They all promised support on the three Audubon priorities as well as for the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge and for a Doppler Radar Severe Weather Early Warning System for coastal Washington and Oregon.

I encourage anyone with the time and interest to apply for National Audubon Training events. Trainings are held on a number of environmental topics. In February the training is on Wetland Conservation. These trainings are an example of mutual support between our national organization and local chapters. My trip was fully funded by Audubon. I lobbied for Audubon's priorities, and they helped me increase my knowledge and skills in public policy and advocacy. Now I can use those skills on the priorities of our chapter and Audubon Washington and share them with others.

Are you interested in receiving *The Sandpiper* online? Send us your email address and we can forward the latest issue the moment it is ready to publish or visit <http://ghas.org> to view the newsletter as a color pdf file.

**Impressions continued from page 1**

**Some duck**

Swimming up river, Ann spotted it.  
“Over there on the far shore, just one.”  
“I don’t see it.”  
“Back up past that bush. See”. “Where?”  
“Eleven o’clock in front of that over turned boat.”  
“Oh, yeh, now I see it”.  
“What is it? A Mallard?”  
“Look at that head so deep red it’s black.”  
“Phooey. There she goes.”  
“What do you say?”  
“I didn’t see it clearly. No chance to note lores, coverts, scapulars...”  
“Wasn’t a Mallard. Hybrid maybe?”  
“Call it Unidentifiable Duck.”

**Value lecture for bird counters**

Too common to count—of course not. Starlings and crows have their place in this world—abundance and “inappropriate” acts notwithstanding. Yes, crows eat other birds’ eggs and starlings can devastate gardens. Yet, recall the need for Nature’s dark nature and mysteries like quizzical crows cawing to companions and the flock of starlings flying as a phantasmagorical cloud.



**Bird counting at Seahorse Ranch**

Once home for horses, bedraggled buildings slowly succumb to ruin: a gutter loops like a rusted snake: paint forgets color: windows crack, wink with half a pane, or go missing; a door lies entry to the weed-infested ground. Abandoned years ago. the barn, tackle sheds, training arena house only the echoes and the faint smell of snorting ponies, neighing pintos, duns pawing straw. Quiet and still. Except for wind, birders like us, and furtive creatures seeking shelter and safety. We think owls so carefully climb stairs to the hayloft, look down at floor planks for pellets, up to rafters for dark eyes in a heart-shaped white face. Nope, not this time. Nothing. Just some cobwebs, ghost trappings, and strange tracks in dust.



**Reach out, reach within an ACOW experience**  
by Charolette Reep

The Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society invites all chapters to join us in the Tri-Cities April 13-15, 2007 for the next Audubon Council of Washington Conference. We have an interesting agenda planned, along with enjoyable tours. Our theme is **Reach Out – Reach Within - Hanford Reach.**

**Headquarters –**

The TRAC/AmeriSuites in Pasco Rates: \$74 (King) & \$79(2 Queens) per night, which includes a bountiful breakfast. The TRAC RV Park is \$25 per night

**Tours**

◆Columbia River boat tour of the Hanford Reach – This is an 80 mile tour of the last free flowing stretch of the Columbia River. (extra charge for this tour)

◆Birding walks on Bateman Island, or Johnson Park, or the Chamna Reserve – or maybe some burrowing owl’s in residence.

◆Arid Lands Ecology Reserve (possible – not assured at this point)

◆Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) for those who want a different type of tour. (no charge) Go to [www.ligo-wa.caltech.edu/](http://www.ligo-wa.caltech.edu/)

**Speakers**

◆Jack Nisbet, author of Sources of the River, the story of explorer David Thompson, will present “Birding Between the Mountains, 1800-1860.”

◆Mike Denny, recipient of Audubon Washington’s Science Award, giving a presentation on Owls

◆A special talk/presentation on the Hanford Reach National Monument

The Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society looks forward to welcoming you to the Spring 2007 ACOW Conference. Registration details will be available soon. Visit <http://www.lowercolumbiabasinaudubon.org>



photo by Jack Haverty

**Grays Harbor and Willapa Hills Audubon Chapters receive \$15,000 grant for Snowy Plover Habitat Conservation Project**

Audubon recently received \$88,000 from The David and Lucille Packard Foundation to support seven habitat conservation projects targeting endangered shorebirds at Important Bird Areas (IBAs) on the Pacific Coast. Projects were also funded at Pilchuck Audubon in Washington State (habitat conservation in Port Susan Bay) and Mendocino, San Diego and Santa Barbara Audubon Chapters in California. International projects were also funded in Mexico and El Salvador.

Grays Harbor and Willapa Hills Chapters were funded to restore western snowy plover and streaked horned lark habitat at Leadbetter Point and Damon Point, two of our important coastal IBAs. Through this project ten volunteer scientists will be recruited and trained to assist State Parks staff and scientists from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to survey and help to restore a minimum of 4 habitat sites. They will also identify sites for additional future restoration. Funds from the project will be used to provide a stipend for volunteer coordinator(s), mileage for volunteers, volunteer training and to purchase GPS units, digital cameral and day packs.

Anyone interested in volunteering for this two (2) year project,

which will start later this spring, should contact Grays Harbor Audubon at 1-800-303-8498.

Grays Harbor Audubon is grateful to Audubon and the David and Lucille Packard Foundation for the opportunity to help in this vital habitat conservation effort. We will provide updates in The Sandpiper as the project progresses.

***GHAS Mission***

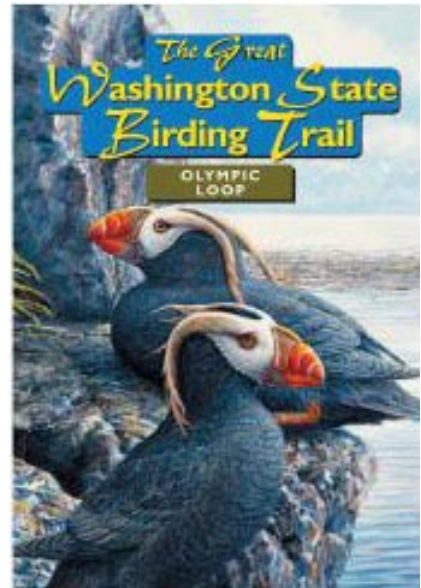
The mission of the Grays Harbor Audubon Society is to seek a sustainable balance between human activity and the needs of the environment; and to promote enjoyment of birds and the natural world



photo by Perry Spring

**Membership meeting April 1st, no foolin' Habitat Lands and Volunteer Opportunities**

Ever wanted to see some of the 3000 acres we are protecting for wildlife habitat? At our next membership meeting on April 1st, we will have a powerpoint presentation of the estuaries, rivers, shoreline, forests of our Wildlife Habitat Program. Perry Spring, Grays Harbor Audubon's Stewardship Manager, will provide a story through pictures of the wildlife, plants, and features of our properties as well as share preliminary information on the Volunteer Stewardship Program we are initiating this year.



**Olympic Loop Great Washington Birding Trail map is here!**

Unveiled at a rollout in Olympia on Environmental Lobby Day the Olympic Loop map is here and ready to guide birders on a fantastic journey from the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge around the Olympic Peninsula and back to the Hood Canal, with over 50 stops along the way. Grays Harbor sites include Friends Landing, the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge at Bowerman Basin, the Humptulips Estuary, Damon Point, Ocean Shores North Jetty, Point Grenville, the Campbell Tree Grove and Lake Quinault. With the production of this map and last years Southwest Loop map, community partners including Audubon chapter members, Grays Harbor Tourism, Grays Harbor County, the City of Aberdeen, Ocean Shores and others have created a tool that will bring birders from all over the country to Grays Harbor for some wonderful birding. Congratulations and thanks to everyone who helped to make these maps a reality! You can pick up your free map at the April 1st Members Meeting. See front page for time and place.

## Imagine the Future with \$100 million for Wildlife, Birds and People!

By Nina Carter

Remember when the local Audubon members and their land conservancy partners saved the small wetlands near Spokane --Reardon Ponds -- from development? You and your chapter met the challenge and raised part of the money to buy the property. Audubon Washington contributed its lobbying expertise to get more money into the state budget for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) to complete the Reardon Pond transaction. We all celebrated the day when the property became permanent birding site near Spokane! It is a great tourism draw and the local governments love the added tax revenue.

Imagine what we can accomplish with \$100 million for habitat for birds and wildlife! Every month I get calls from Audubon members asking how they can save a small wetland or a forest or a farm in their neighborhood. Those places are home to their favorite Ruby-crowned Kinglet or Cedar Waxwing flocks. I'd like to tell them that \$100 million is available from the WWRP so they can save those special places.

Now, you have a chance to save birds and their habitat by asking for more funding in the WWRP. Governor Gregoire's budget allocated \$70 million for the WWRP. But, there are over \$100 million in projects waiting to be funded. We think the state Legislature should approve \$100 million for WWRP to save farms, forests, wetland, and special places, like Reardon Ponds. Call your legislators today and ask for \$100 million in WWRP.

For more information and to

see what projects are funded in your area go to: <http://www.wildliferecreation.org>.

*Nina Carter is the Executive Director of Audubon Washington and a Washington Wildlife Recreation Coalition Member.*



### 12th Annual Prairie Appreciation Day Saturday May 5, 2007 10 am - 4 pm Littlerock, WA

Celebrate the wonder of spring outside on the South Sound prairies during our 12th Annual Prairie Appreciation Day at the Glacial Heritage Preserve! This all day event includes exciting workshops on birds, wildflowers, butterflies, gardening with native plants and ethnobotany. Explore the prairies at your own pace and bring the kids for a hayride and a chance to meet the Big Blue Gopher! Wheelchair accessible activities for individuals and groups will be available at the Washington Department of Natural Resources Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve.

Directions: Take I-5 to Exit 95 (the Littlerock exit). Go west through Littlerock (past the gas station and tavern) to the T-intersection at the Mima Road/Waddell Creek. Go south (left) on Mima Road 2.7 miles. You will pass an obscure green and white sign on the right that says "Weyerhaeuser Mima nursery" at the beginning of fields of tiny evergreen trees. Take the next

left onto an unmarked gravel road, where there is a tree farm on the near side of the intersection and a few houses on the far left side of the intersection. Please be sure to adhere to the 10 mph speed limit as there are often dogs and small children nearby. Follow the road to its end and park near the gate. For limited mobility/wheelchair accessible tours turn right on Waddell Creek Road at the T intersection and go 0.7 miles north. Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve is on the left.

[www.prairieappreciationday.org](http://www.prairieappreciationday.org)  
Contact: [gdiehl@tnc.org](mailto:gdiehl@tnc.org)

### Save the Date

for the

### 12th Annual Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

Friday through Sunday,  
April 27th through 29th

Highlights include

- ◆Friday Night Key Note Speaker, Paul Bannick
- ◆Field Trips to Westport, Tokeland, Bottle Beach, Ocean Shores and more!
- ◆Trips to the Refuge Boardwalk to see Birds
- ◆Saturday Night Banquet and Auction
- ◆Workshops, Lectures
- ◆Vendors

We will need lots of volunteers. Contact Jan McMillan at (360) 258-1004 if you would like to help at this year's festival.

*Slip away continued from page 1*

There are many good reasons for us all to get better acquainted with our natural world and how it works, both for each of us and for its benefit. Regular visits to some natural place for observation can allow us to step outside ourselves for awhile and forget our stresses and problems. We can learn so much and deepen our appreciation of the clever tricks different species use to survive. The concepts of partnership, competition, multiple-use, physical fitness and more will have new meanings. We may be able to pass on that appreciation and knowledge to others or to the body of scientific information. Over time, we may be able to translate our appreciation into action on behalf of these delicate and complex natural systems that we, in fact, depend upon in so many ways.

So, Go, Spring!



*photo by Perry Spring*



### **Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds May 18th – 19th, 2007**

The third annual Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds has something for every birder! This year's event includes the "On Wing" Juried Art Show throughout the month of May at the Edmonds Conference Center (201 - 4th Ave N), culminating with an artists' reception, on Friday evening, May 18th. Following the reception Paul Bannick, Seattle nature photographer, will give a presentation entitled "Wild Wings, A Photographic Celebration of Northwest Birds".

On Saturday, May 19th, guided walks and field trips take advantage of birding opportunities in local parks, wildlife reserves, along the Puget Sound shoreline and at the Edmonds Marsh. Indoor activities take place at the Frances Anderson Center (700 Main St), including speakers on topics ranging from Birdwatching Basics and Identification of Common Backyard Birds, to Bird-Friendly Gardening, Bird Photography, Raptor Education, and Birds of Puget Sound. Many of the activities will appeal to children, including "The Migration Game" at the marsh.

The Edmonds Plaza Room (650 Main St) will be the sight of our Exhibit Space and Marketplace for Vendors all day Saturday. Festival attendees will be able to view exhibits, shop for bird and nature-related items, and bid on a silent auction of artistically decorated bird houses. Saturday evening's keynote speaker in the Plaza Room will be Dr. Jeff Price, on "A Bird's-Eye View of Global Warming".

Puget Sound Bird Fest is a celebration of birds and nature and International Migratory Bird Day. This event is organized by The City of Edmonds Parks & Recreation and Economic Development Departments. Edmonds is stop #1 on the Cascade Loop of the Great Washington State Birding Trail. While you're in town, drop in our historic Main Street shops and restaurants, and conveniently stay the night in one of our local hotels or bed and breakfast inns. For more information, and a complete schedule of activities, visit our website at: [www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org](http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org).



### **Olympic BirdFest 2007**

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, and a banquet with our partner, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. The Birdfest with the most spectacular setting! Contact: Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382; (360) 681-4076; [info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org) [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org).

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National Audubon	(212) 979-3000
GHAS Website	<a href="http://www.ghas.org">http://www.ghas.org</a>

*Please Fill Out and Mail Back*

**ANNUAL GRAYS HARBOR AUDUBON  
CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

If you would like to join Grays Harbor Audubon Society (GHAS), please fill out the form below, **make check payable to Grays Harbor Audubon Society** and return it with your check to:

**Grays Harbor Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 470  
Montesano, WA 98563**

Chapter Memberships include a subscription to *The Sandpiper* newsletter. All Chapter Memberships above the Sandpiper category provide financial support to our Chapter. The Grays Harbor Audubon Society is totally self-supporting.

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Heron   | \$25.00  |
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- I am renewing my membership  
 I am a new member

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If your newsletter is stamped with **Last Issue-Please Renew**, be sure to fill out the Membership Form above and send it in to keep your membership active and keep receiving the newsletter!  
Thanks!

**No Foolin'  
Membership Meeting**  
*Habitat Lands, Opportunities  
Perry Spring reports*

Pearsall Building  
2109 Sumner Avenue  
Sunday, April 1, 2007  
1:30 - 3:00 PM

**News & Editorial**

send materials to  
P.O. Box 1044  
Westport, 98595-1044  
or email to  
rd@olearycreek.com  
Copy deadline May 6th



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