

Membership Meeting
 Sunday April 6, 2008
Haiku Workshop
 1:30 pm – 3 pm
 Pearsall Building
 2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen

March/April 2008



The Sandpiper



Don't miss out

13th Annual Shorebird Festival May 2 - 4, 2008

We are fortunate to have Julia K. Parrish, Professor of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences at the University of Washington as our keynote speaker Friday evening 7:30 pm May 2nd at the Central Elementary School. A dessert reception precedes the lecture at 7:00 pm. Prof. Parrish will present a talk entitled "Listening to the Birds: Seabird Ecology and Conservation in the Pacific Northwest."

Each year Grays Harbor and its friends celebrate the return of the tens of thousands of shorebirds that visit the shores of the Grays Harbor estuary. This is a great time to enjoy field trips, lectures, a nature fun fair, banquet and auction, birder's bazaar, poster contest, and world class shorebird viewing. Visit <http://shorebird-festival.com> for more information or call GHAS (800) 303-8498

Field Trip to South Hood Canal

by **Tim O'Brien**

On Saturday, February 16, 2008 I led a Grays Harbor Audubon field trip to the southern portion of Hood Canal. Four chapter members including myself and 4 guests attended the trip. We covered areas including the lower

GHAS launches new look to website www.ghas.org

Grays Harbor Audubon Society has created a bold look and invites you to find out the many ways that GHAS serves our chapter's needs.



Skokomish River valley, Potlatch State Park, Hoodport, Lilliwaup, Union, Twanoah State Park, and a brief side trip to the Lake Cushman area. We ended with 60 species for the day and enjoyed some close looks at a lot of different birds and a few unexpected birds. Here's the recap by location:

George Adams Fish Hatchery (intersection of Highway 101 and Skokomish Valley Road):

American Dipper - 1 located by the small bridge that crosses Skokomish Valley Rd. This bird allowed great close views and even was singing as it hid under the bridge at times.

Lower Skokomish River valley (in and around the Hunter's Farms):

Trumpeter Swans - 8 seen flying to west up the valley)

Mew Gull - most abundant gull species

Herring Gull, Thayer's Gull

American Kestrel -1 perched on a snag

Bald Eagle - they seemed to be everywhere

Eells Creek Trout Hatchery:

American Dipper - 1 seen in a small stream just before the hatchery entrance

Green Heron - 1 flushed out of the creek at the hatchery, it called twice while flying

Potlatch State Park, Saltwater Park (Tacoma Power park):

Awesome close views of several water bird species at both parks:

American Wigeon, Mallard Greater Scaup

Harlequin Duck - 2 males

Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter

Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye

Barrow's Goldeneye

Red-breasted Merganser

Common Loon, Horned Grebe

Red-necked Grebe

Western Grebe - large raft seen closer to Skokomish River estuary

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The President's Perch



By Arnie Martin

If you haven't been to the Grays Harbor Audubon Society website lately (<http://www.ghas.org>), you won't recognize it. Thanks to the work done by Troy Shelby (<http://www.troyshelby.com>) there's a bold new look there. Troy's new graphics with RD Grunbaum's checking that all the links function make the new site a pleasure to browse. An added advantage is that Dean Schwickerath won't have to modify the website using 20 year old DOS-based technology anymore. Thanks to all who helped with the new design.

Janet Strong and I attended a meeting on February 28th at Nisqually NWR about the Grays Harbor Taskforce for eradication of Spartina in Grays Harbor. The Taskforce is composed of personnel from the US Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Agriculture, and the Washington Dept of Fish and Wildlife. They ran an extensive program in 2007 to identify and treat (mostly by spraying during carefully monitored and timed tidal states) Spartina-infested locations. They surveyed from airboats, aerial surveys, and on foot; they found it necessary to treat 2.51 infested acres of the entire 32,000 acres that were surveyed.

The eradication program is continuing for 2008, and we need to keep our legislators (Senators Cantwell and Murray, and Congressman Dicks) informed of the requirement to renew the funding for the program. The program needs to verify that the treatment did kill the plants, and additional treatment will be

needed to eliminate any plants that re-grow from last years seed production and from plants that were too small to identify last year.



The Doppler Roundtable

by Linda Orgel

Over 50 people crowded into a meeting room at the Grays Harbor College Library on Thursday, March 6 to discuss the future of a coastal Doppler Radar station. Senator Maria Cantwell had called for the roundtable to gather information and feedback from academic atmospheric scientists, members of the National Weather Service, county and city first responders, local elected officials, members of the fishing and crabbing industries, and interested citizens. Senator Cantwell joined the discussion via telephone. Staffs from Representatives Baird, Dicks and Inslee and from Senators Cantwell and Murray were also in attendance.

The National Weather Service has several Doppler radar sites in the state, but the current locations can't reach through the Olympic Mountains, leaving what atmospheric scientists call a "black hole" from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the Oregon coast. Scientists, fishermen and community activists have been proposing a new radar station

be built along the coast for years and are hoping the Northwest congressional delegation can obtain the funding from the NOAA budget this year.

Brad Colman, from NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) Seattle Office began the presentations. Mr. Colman reviewed the various methods used to forecast weather and the history of weather prediction along the coast. He believes the NWS gave the coastal communities adequate warning for the December storm and that they've done a good job in coastal forecasting.

Professor Cliff Mass, from University of Washington's Department of Atmospheric Sciences presented a different picture of coastal weather prediction. Prof. Mass has been working to get Doppler radar on the coast for over 10 years. He believes a Doppler in place somewhere between Westport and Pacific Beach would allow for more accurate forecasting. It works like a CAT scan allowing forecasters to see inside the storm. In 2001, a trial station was placed in Westport, which transmitted valuable information to NWS. Prof. Mass stated that the Pacific Northwest has some of most severe storms in the country yet it has the "worst coastal weather radar coverage in the continental United States..."

Dale Beasley, President of the Columbia River Crab Fishermen's Association spoke passionately about the dangers to the fishing industry without proper weather information. He told the audience that there have been 17 fatalities off the coast in recent years, which is 50% higher than the fatality rate in the Bering Sea. He also stressed the need for more buoys, stating that most are either non-functioning or have been washed away.

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Hood Canal Trip continued from page 1

Hoodsport:

Western Gull - at least 2 on the dock

Dunlin - a flock of 150 flying near the shore

Merlin - 1 that grabbed one of the Dunlin

Lilliwaup: the tide was in here so not many new birds seen

Lake Cushman: (we only made one stop near the dam overlook due other roads being closed by snow)

Ring-necked Duck - 1 female seen just before the dam overlook

Pine Siskin - small flock of 6 seen just before the dam overlook

Union: (the actual stop was before Union where we looked into the Skokomish estuary)

Canada Goose

Chinese x Greylag Goose hybrid - 1 possible domestic bird had the body coloration of a Chinese Goose with the dark stripe going up the back of its neck to the top of its head, however it showed white at the base of its bill and the bill was orange, orange legs as well

Northern Pintail - good numbers present here

Twanoah State Park:

Red-throated Loons - 2 spotted

Dunlin 25 counted



Good birding!

Roundtable continued from page 2

In January 2007 FOGH (Friends of Grays Harbor) joined Prof. Mass in filing a budget request to Senator Cantwell's office to fund the Doppler radar station in or near Westport. Grays Harbor Audubon Society wrote a letter of support for the funding. The cost of a Doppler could be from \$4 million to \$9 million. Senator Cantwell is hoping to include funding in this budget cycle when NOAA testifies before the Senate Commerce Committee in March. As many in the audience commented, that is not very much money for something that could save coastal communities millions of dollars in storm damage and loss of lives if we are not adequately warned of the severity of approaching storms.

Olympic BirdFest 2008 Sequim

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 .

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With April Haiku the membership meets poetically

Haiku is a form of poetry that is perfect for birders and naturalists since it requires patience, quiet and spending a lot of time outdoors. In this workshop, participants will learn how to follow the simple haiku form, gain understanding about the essential nature of a haiku poem, and try their hand at writing a haiku.

Workshop presenter Jan McMillan, past president of Grays Harbor Audubon, has been writing haiku since 1998 and has also published a chapbook, *Night Gift*, of her other poetry. Jan will read several of her poems and those written by the master poets like Basho, Buson and Issa as well as other modern haiku poets.

The meeting will be on April 6th at 1:30 - 3:00 pm at the Pearsall Building, 2109 Sumner Street in Aberdeen.

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



Join us for Spring ACOW

For Spring ACOW 2008, to be 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 it's 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 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 where online registration is expected to be available by Wednesday, February 13th.

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.

Photo WDFW



You can help endangered birds

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 Plover* and *Streaked Horned Lark*. 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@wil-lapabay.org

Grays Harbor Christmas Bird Count 2007

By Tim O'Brien

The Grays Harbor Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for 2007 was held on Saturday, December 29th. This was the first year without Bob Morse as the compiler for the count. We want to thank Bob for his many years of coordinating this count. Tim O'Brien of Elma and Dianna Moore of Ocean Shores took over as the new co-compilers this year. The count had over 20 participants from all across western Washington that took to the field for a full day of counting birds in specific areas inside the 15 mile diameter count circle. The weather for the day started out nice with a dry, but chilly morning which then turned over to rain showers starting around 11am.

The day was busy with lots of bird activity. At the post count tally dinner at the Aberdeen Pizza Hut, the counters converged to share stories of the day and to listen to what everyone else found in their areas. The preliminary total number of species seen during the count is currently at 134 species.

Some of the more interesting sightings found during the count include:

Slaty-backed Gull – one adult spotted on Damon Point in Ocean Shores

Brown Pelican – one spotted flying over Damon Point

American Tree Sparrow – one seen in the trees on Damon Point

Gyr Falcon – one seen near the Point Brown jetty in Ocean Shores

Barred Owl – one seen in Dianna Moore's yard in Ocean Shores

Bullock's Oriole – one seen coming to a feeder in Westport

Townsend's Solitaire – one seen in Ocean Shores

A big thank you to all those that helped with the count this year! Dianna and I look forward to everyone returning to help next year in 2008. And remember newcomers are always welcome to help with the count!



Christmas Bird Count impressions, 2007

By Carol Sunde

1. *Many years ago, the Christmas Bird Count replaced the Christmas Bird Hunt.*

White egrets got to retain their feathers and their lives, enrich life not decorate hats.

2. There are not pigeons at Pigeon Point but pine siskins and bushtits flutter from tree to tree like leaves in a purposeful wind and an eagle coasts through rain-soaked skies: or stumble across blackberry brambles rewarded.

3. *We adore the rusted velvet head with brushed-back shaggy crest of the merganser riding the Humptulips too soon blurred away into raindrops sliding down binoculars.*

4. From the uppermost reach of a tall snag the peregrine falcon watches. She sees 11 mallards, 36 western sandpipers, and 19 Canada geese. Below her tree, suddenly 1 great blue heron stalks off, a gray hunchback, scaring the shorebirds into a white wing maneuver. Turning her head 1/8th of an inch, the falcon waits. We watch the falcon wait.

5. *A male bufflehead who dives into the bay—his body striking white contrasted against rich black—confounds the eye with acts of here-not-here. We cheer when he comes, sigh when he goes, think incredible.*

6. The pleasure of the day is not only the birds, it is the muted magenta, gold, gray and brown variations of winter; the One Who Knows saying, Listen. A Bewick's wren sings. Pleasure is walking over a bridge in the company of happy labs; the rain washing worries away; the laughter over a lunch of Irish stew and soda bread.

Volunteers Help Jump Start Bottle Beach Restoration

by Lisa Lantz
Washington State Parks

Visitors to Bottle Beach State Park will see changes underway in the park's uplands. On January 26th, 39 volunteers joined staff from the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to plant nearly 4000 native trees and shrubs between the park's Grays Harbor shoreline and Redman Slough.

Previously, the area had included an impenetrable tangle of Himalayan blackberry and "old growth" Scotch broom. Prison crews removed the invasive species, but Parks' staff was still faced with the daunting task of re-planting the area with natives. This problem was solved by a group of hard-working volunteers who dedicated their

Saturday to planting bundles of elderberry, Pacific crab apple, salmonberry, and other native species.

With representatives from the Grays Harbor and Black Hills Audubon chapters, Grays Harbor and Pacific County Master Gardeners, Ocosta High School, Kinnikinnick Garden Club, AmeriCorps, and the local community, the volunteers contributed 138 hours to the project.

"The volunteers not only improved the park's habitat, they also developed a sense of community and desire to provide ongoing stewardship of the area," said Kathy Hale, the volunteer coordinator for State Parks' Southwest Region.

The project, which was made possible by funding from the Washington State Parks Foundation and the Coastal Protection Fund, is a first step in restoring

habitat at the park.

Future restoration efforts will center on the park's freshwater wetlands. In addition to restoring native vegetation, State Parks hopes to further enhance wildlife habitat by placing features such as woody debris, nesting boxes, and frog boards.

Kelli Burke, a State Parks' Environmental Planner, has been managing the restoration efforts at Bottle Beach. "Restoring native vegetation on the site will enhance the aesthetic appeal for park visitors, improve accessibility, and enhance wildlife habitat. Our native plant selections focus on species that provide food and cover for wildlife," she said. The restoration work will complement the development of wildlife-viewing facilities at the park. Construction of a trail and bird blinds is slated to begin this spring.



Photo in upper left shows the park uplands prior to the restoration project. Volunteers begin the planting process.

13th Annual Prairie Appreciation Day

Saturday May 3rd, 2008

10 am - 3 pm

Littlerock, WA

Explore the South Sound prairies with the wildflowers in bloom, during the 13th Annual Prairie Appreciation Day at Thurston County's Glacial Heritage Preserve. Learn about birds, wildflowers, butterflies, gardening with native plants and ethnobotany. Enjoy a hay-ride across the prairie. Special activities for children. Entrance available until 3 pm but all are welcome to enjoy the prairie until 4 pm. Wheelchair accessible activities for individuals and groups will be available at the Washington Department of Natural Resources Mima Mounds Natural Area Preserve – please contact Birdie Davenport at 360-596-5144 to schedule tours. All events are Free. No Pets. For more information, please visit www.prairieappreciationday.org or contact Peder Engelstad (pengelstad@tnc.org).

Directions: Take I-5 to exit 95 (the Littlerock exit) about 10 miles south of Olympia. 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 some big brown fields, the Weyerhauser tree nursery, then a tractor crossing sign. Take the next left onto an unmarked gravel road. Follow the road to its end and park near the gate. There will be signs on the day of the event.

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GHAS voice mail	(800) 303-8498
State Audubon	(360) 786-8020
National Audubon	(212) 979-3000
GHAS Website	http://www.ghas.org

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
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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.

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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!

The Sandpiper

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