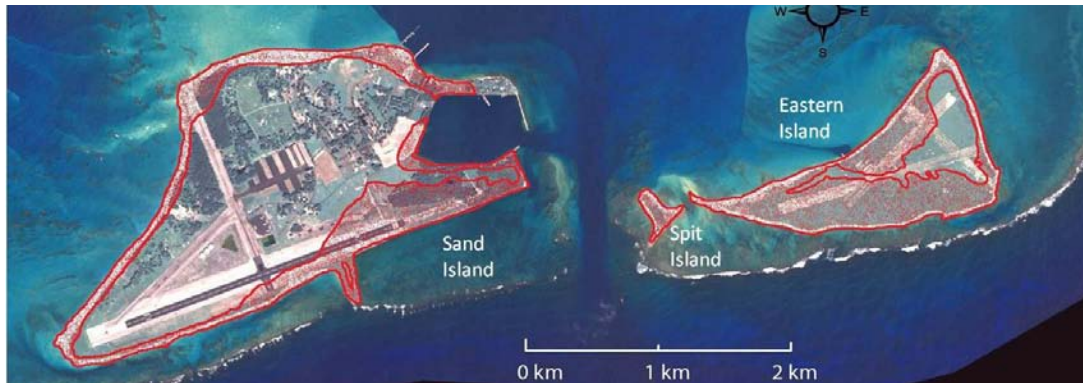


Membership Meeting
Sunday June 5, 2011
Avian Healthcare
Drs. Crawford & Ford
1:30 pm – 3 pm
Pearsall Building
2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen

May/June 2011



The Sandpiper



*Midway Atoll National
Wildlife Refuge*
March 10-11, 2011
Tsunami Overwash

Impact of tsunami on Midway NWR

*by John Cecil,
NAS IBA Program*

For most of March, the world has been watching the results of the Japanese earthquake and tsunami. The consequences, especially at the nuclear plant at Fukushima, are still being measured, and the devastation and human suffering has been both frightening and heartbreaking.

The impact of the tsunami was felt across the Pacific, including the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge.

Midway Atoll is comprised of three islands within an outer reef of approximately 5 miles in diameter. The three islands - Sand (1,117 acres), Eastern (366 acres), and Spit (15 acres) - were hammered by four successive waves around midnight March 10-11. The highest wave was almost 5 feet. The tsunami completely washed over little Spit Island, covered about 60 percent of Eastern Island, and about 20 percent of Sand Island.

Surveys of the NWR reveal that over 110,000 Laysan and Black-

footed Albatross chicks – an estimated 22 percent of this year's albatross production – were lost as a result of the tsunami and two severe winter storms in January and February. At least 2,000 adults were also killed. Fortunately, Wisdom, the senior-aged Laysan Albatross that had recently hatched a chick, did not have her nest overwashed. For a time, Wisdom was not located, but her survival was later confirmed as was that of her chick.

The status of the other NWR superstars, a pair of Short-tailed Albatrosses also raising a chick, is unknown. The chick was washed approximately 100 feet away from its nest, later to be physically returned. But the chick's parents have not been relocated. Since the chick is incapable of fending for itself, the Service is carefully considering whether hand-rearing this bird is appropriate. It is believed that the parents are at sea, gathering food for their chick and will be returning. Thousands of Bonin Petrels were also lost at Midway, but the locations and exact number are not known since these petrels nest in

burrows underground.

Refuge biologists are confident that the albatross populations can rebound from this natural event, but Barry Stieglitz, project leader for the Hawaiian and Pacific Islands National Wildlife Refuge Complex said, "We remain concerned about the compounding effect of this tsunami on the existing stresses of invasive species, global climate change, incidental mortality from longline fishing, and other threats to albatross and other wildlife populations."

If there is any good news to report, it is that only four species of seabirds were nesting at the time of the tsunami: Bonin Petrel, Laysan Albatross (482,909 pair), Black-footed Albatross (28,581 pair), and the single pair of Short-tailed Albatross.

You can view photos from Midway NWR and obtain more details:

<http://www.fws.gov/midway/tsunami.html>

The President's Perch



By Arnie Martin

Just a quick aside to thank all the GH Audubon members and friends who helped during the Shorebird Festival. Also great thanks and high praise to the Festival committee members who worked all year, planning and organizing the Festival, and special praise to the partners, the US Fish and Wildlife personnel from the Nisqually complex and the City of Hoquiam. The partners put in uncounted hours before and during the Festival. You all make the Festival possible. We are still waiting for a couple of invoices before we know how much of a financial success the 2011 Festival was.

As many of you know, the purpose of the Festival is to raise funds to support the environmental program of the US Fish and Wildlife Service for the Grays Harbor Refuge. The results of the this year's efforts by the 2010-2011 AmeriCorps volunteer, Maya Elson, have been obvious from the results of the annual poster contest and the elementary student's field trips to the refuge. She has raised the student's enthusiasm and respect for nature to new heights. Thank you for all the long days of driving to and from the program presentations at the schools, and all the preparation time you spent. Great work, Maya.

The field trips this year have shown me how different the shorebird migrations are from year to year. This year's migration may have been affected by the El Nino/La Nina conditions in the equatorial Pacific, resulting in "bunching up" the migration of the Red Knots.

There have been higher counts of these birds on the GHNWR than during the past. The high count for a single day is now nearly 1,000 birds seen from the refuge (during the week of May 8th). There may be local conditions on their migration route that have changed the counts during previous years of from 20 to 50 birds seen at the refuge during a day, but I doubt this year's records are the result of a tremendous population explosion in this species. Next year's Shorebird Festival will occur May 4th, 5th, & 6th, so perhaps there will be "lots of Knots" for viewing in 2012.

This species has suffered on the Atlantic coast as a result of the fishermen in the Delaware Bay region using the horseshoe crabs as bait in their traps for crabs and lobsters. The horseshoe crab also has a medical use as their blood gels in the presence of certain bacteria. The primary food for the red knots in the Atlantic flyway is the eggs of the horseshoe crab. The Pacific population seems to get by quite nicely without the horseshoe crabs. The Atlantic flyway population's migration timing is closely tied to the horseshoe crab's reproductive cycles, which are tied to the tidal cycles during the spring. There doesn't seem to be such a single-point constraint on the Pacific flyway population, but the tidal state and water temperature probably have an effect on the Knot's prey species on this coast. Some of the studies being conducted by Joe Buchanan of the Washington Dept of Fish & Wildlife may add greater understanding regarding what the Knot's migration requirements are.

The USF&W is currently holding planning meetings to develop Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCP) for the Grays Harbor NWR. The USF&W

will take public input from the public, other agencies, and organizations regarding their interests, concerns and viewpoints about Refuge management issues. The first meeting will be (was held) May 18th in the Port of Grays Harbor Commission Chambers at 7:00 PM, 111 South Wooding St, Aberdeen.

This planning is a required activity for every refuge, a process that happens every 15 years for a refuge. Additional opportunities for input will be announced after the results of the May 18th meeting have been compiled. The Results of the Public Scoping are scheduled for release in the Fall of 2011, with other follow-up meetings to follow. For up to date information on the CCP process, go to <http://www.fws.gov/nisqually/management.html>.

The Audubon board of directors have rescheduled the annual picnic from the first Sunday in June (when it has been cold and drizzly during recent years) to the first Sunday in August (when the weather may be better, and at least warmer). Please see the notice elsewhere in this issue for the location and times. Come to the picnic to see if this was a good move, or not. We hope to see all of you there.

Our long-time members, Franz and Ann Schneider, are going to move to Corvallis, OR to be closer to their daughter. We will certainly miss their cheerful presences at our meetings and their many contributions to the betterment of the community on the Harbor. I hope you both enjoy the benefits that Corvallis offers, including significantly lower rainfall per year, and no traffic problems during the Oregon State summer vacation.



Killdeer in the Sunset

Artist, Clara Park

2011 Grays Harbor 16th annual Shorebird Festival We had sunshine!

by Dianna Moore

Something between 1100 and 1500 people came out to celebrate the spring migration for this year's festival and were rewarded with lots of shorebirds and lots of sunshine. The word got back to Seattle that the sun was shining, and even more people hit the road to see the show, so we had a good number of walk-in registrants and people on the Sandpiper Trail.

Our field trips to Tokeland/Grayland/Westport, Lake Quinalt, and Point Grenville were at capacity, and In Search of Coastal Raptors also sold out. All participants returned with big smiles and high praise for the trip leaders and the birds they had seen. The field trips to Ocean Shores and Westport were equally satisfying; all got to see what they came to see, and all seemed to have a good time. Even our trip leaders enjoyed themselves! The only complaint I heard was from Phil Kelley, the Ocean Shores co-leader, who complained they

had removed his favorite portapotty from the base of Damon Point! (It has been out of operation and 5 ft off the ground on a cement base since one of our famous Pacific storms took out the site on which it stood...at least 2 years ago!)

The Saturday morning Fun Run was indeed fun, and what a great day for a run it was. No slogging through the rain and puddles this year!

A total of 579 posters were submitted for the poster contest, and all agreed they were just beautiful. The winners were on display during the festivities upstairs at Hoquiam High School. The Fun Fair had a great turnout with lots to do for all those who stopped by, and wonderful volunteer help to show what was available. Painted faces, button-making, paint-a-shorebird... there was something for all the kids to see and do. One of the surprises was a Brown Booby, newly arrived to the harbor and way out of his normal range off Mexico. The rehab ladies from Hoquiam Licensing had him on view, along with Hoot, the Northern Pygmy Owl, a Merlin, and a young duck in a fancy basket.

We had a real bumper crop of vendors and exhibitors this year, with some great art, books, t-shirts and caps, hand-carved birds and ducks, great optics to try out and (hopefully) buy, and a wealth of information about local conservation issues.

As usual we supported our local communities with our box lunches prepared by Deidra's Deli at the Hoquiam Public Market, and a booth upstairs served food from the Oriole Café in downtown Hoquiam. Tully's Coffee in the old La Vogue's Department Store building even got into the spirit of the festival by offering our festival t-shirts for sale in their store! I love it

when the community gets involved!

None of this would have been possible without the tireless dedication of many, from Sheila McCartan of Nisqually and Grays Harbor NWR, to the Americorp volunteers, to Tracy Wood of the City of Hoquiam (who was everywhere!), to Arnie Martin (always there to rescue a situation) and Lynn Smith of Grays Harbor Audubon, Lynn's son Richard (helping with the kids in the Fun Fair), Jim Ullrich of Wild Bird's Unlimited (our newest board member and full of great ideas)...and many more who gave up their weekend to show off the Grays Harbor shorebirds. A special thanks to R.D. Grunbaum for his patience with all of us in getting the brochure designed and to press, and again to R.D. and his lovely partner Linda Orgel for hosting our dessert reception Friday night before the keynote speaker.

Another year, another spring migration. Bravo!



Did someone say dessert?

****Picnic Date Change****

Mark your calendar for the annual Grays Harbor Audubon picnic, moved to August 7th in hopes we won't get wet! We will meet at Schafer State Park (just across the line in Mason County but I don't think anyone will tell) around 1PM. There is a covered shelter in case it is STILL raining then, with two barbeques and even some fireplaces if needed.

Please bring an edible item to share, something to drink, any dishes, forks, etc. cups or glasses you need to eat with, and we will provide the hot dogs, hamburgers and buns.

Nestled in the southwest corner of Mason/Grays Harbor County line, beautiful Schafer State Park spans 119 acres on the banks of the gentle East Fork of the Satsop River. Steelhead, trout and salmon fishing opportunities abound. Wading and swimming in the shallow waters are popular in the warmer months. Nature trails, horseshoe pits and picnic facilities surrounded by lush forest. Directions are from Highway 12, take the Brady turnoff north, go 0.3 miles to Middle Satsop Road. Go 7.6 miles, then a slight right onto W. Schafer Park Road and follow the signs to the park entrance... another 1.3 miles according to Google Maps.

The river is nearby with hopes we will see an American Dipper...an ouzel for those who remember that name...and trails to walk, trees to admire, and that great forest-y feeling!

Please join us...we would love to see your smiling faces.



Great Backyard Bird Count Produced a "Gold Mine" of Information

Annual event collected massive amounts of data about birds

When tens of thousands of people watch birds and report what they see online, they create a snapshot showing the whereabouts of many hundreds of bird species across the United States and Canada. This annual gold mine of information about birds comes from participants in the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada.

This year, an estimated 60,000 bird watchers of all ages took part in the free, four-day event held February 18-21. Participants identified 596 species and filed 11.4 million individual bird observations. Their reports provide useful information to scientists tracking changes in the numbers and movements of birds from year to year, just as winter is about to melt into spring.

Two new species never reported to the count before included a Brown Shrike in McKinleyville, California, and a Common Chaffinch recorded in Placentia, Newfoundland and Labrador—both species well out of their normal ranges. In Alaska, a GBBC participant observed a

Brambling visiting her feeder—the only one reported for all of North America.

GBBC participants also reported a surprising increase in the number of Evening Grosbeaks this year—the highest number of observations ever for this species during the count and an increase that isn't simply attributable to greater GBBC participation. A closer look finds this upturn especially marked in the northwestern U.S. and in Canada. This uptick is also supported by data entered so far this season from Project FeederWatch, a winter-long citizen-science project from the Cornell Lab and Bird Studies Canada. FeederWatch data have shown sharp declines in Evening Grosbeaks over the past two decades for unknown reasons. Future counts may reveal if this year's increase in GBBC grosbeak reports is a one-time fluctuation or part of a long-term trend.

For the third year in a row, checklists submitted to the Great Backyard Bird Count topped 92,000. Participants set new bird checklist records in 11 states and in 7 out of 13 Canadian provinces and territories, resulting in a new overall checklist record for Canada.

To find out more about these and other trends from the 2011 count, visit www.birdcount.org and click on "Highlights of 2011 GBBC."

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

The Doppler is getting closer

Each day brings improved weather forecasting closer to a reality. Thanks to the tireless, constant pressure and education provided by Professor Cliff Mass of the University of Washington Atmospheric Sciences Department, our central Washington coast will soon have some of the most sophisticated predictive equipment in the United States. The Doppler radar system will provide excellent offshore coverage and we will be able to see even farther at higher altitudes, according to Mass who has a blog which describes the history of the acquisition and what we can expect.

<http://www.atmos.washington.edu/~cliff/Langleyradar.html>

Please visit his website <http://cliffmass.blogspot.com> to find out more about the weather and how you can support UW Weather Prediction Research.



I can see the ocean from here

photos courtesy of Cliff Mass

Membership meeting

This month's membership will be a presentation by Dr. Sonya Crawford of Grays Harbor and Dr. Scott Ford a Poulsbo veterinarian who are celebrated experts in avian health and care. Dr. Ford will talk in particular about eagle anatomy and Dr. Crawford will discuss bird healthcare.

As usual we will serve a variety of refreshments and beverages to augment the afternoon of good fellowship and unravel the mystery of the program. The meeting is held from 1:30 pm – 3 pm at the Pearsall Building 2109

Education Chair Needed

We are in need of someone who has had experience in classrooms as a teacher, teacher's aid, or as a classroom volunteer would be preferable. The pay for the position is non-existent, but it would get you a place on the Chapter's Board of Directors, with all the privileges pertaining thereto (still nothing but the experience). We hope that someone with classroom experience and a conservation bent would like to join our organization.

Lead pellets kill 5 trumpeter swans near Sequim

The Associated Press

Five trumpeter swans found dead in January in the Dungeness Valley near Sequim were all poisoned by lead shotgun pellets they ingested.

A veterinarian with the state Fish and Wildlife Department, Kristin Mansfield, told the Peninsula Daily News the birds' livers contained lethal levels of lead.

The swans pick up the pellets while feeding. They consume grit to help break up food in their gizzards.

Lead shot has been outlawed for hunting since 1991, but remaining pellets have killed hundreds of the federally protected swans in recent years, mostly on wintering grounds in northwestern Washington and southwestern British Columbia.



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Publicity	Vacant

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National Audubon	(212) 979-3000
GHAS Website	http://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
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* _____

Address _____

City _____ *State/Zip* _____

Phone Number _____ *E-Mail* _____

- Heron \$25.00
- Pelican \$50.00
- Falcon \$75.00
- Eagle \$100.00
- The Sandpiper* subscription only \$15
(Fixed or limited income membership or *Sandpiper* newsletter only)

- I am renewing my membership
- I am a new member

To join National Audubon or renew your National Audubon Membership, call 1-800-274-4201.

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!

News & Editorial

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

Membership Meeting
Sunday, June 5, 2011
1:30 - 3:00PM
Pearsall Building

Avian Healthcare
Dr. Sonnya Crawford
Dr. Scott Ford,

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The Sandpiper

P.O. Box 470
Montesano,
WA 98563

How Do I Know When My Membership Is Due?

*For those of you on email, we
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your upcoming renewal date.
If we have mailed your
copy, look in the up-
per right hand corner of
your label and it will give
you your renewal date!*

