

*Membership Meeting*  
*Sunday October 7, 2007*  
**Nature Journaling**  
*1:30 pm – 3 pm*  
*Pearsall Building*  
*2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen*

September/October 2007



# The Sandpiper



## Volunteers Work for Snowy Plover Habitat Restoration

On July 29th and September 7th, volunteers joined Department of Fish and Wildlife staff to measure vegetation at the Snowy Plover Habitat Restoration research site at Leadbetter Point on the Longbeach Peninsula. Volunteers included Susan Clark and Linda Bierma from the Shoalwater Bird Club, John and Margaret Green and Ann Muche from Willapa Hills Audubon, Janet Strong, Mary Ann Spahr and Jan McMillan from Grays Harbor Audubon and Lisa Remlinger from Audubon Washington. Also participating were WDFW Field Staff Kathy Gunther and WDFW AmeriCorps worker Merran Owen.

Dave Hayes, Endangered Species Biologist with WDFW led the volunteers, starting with training on plant identification and measuring and setting up the 4 point cross grids. The most prevalent vegetation is an invasive species, American beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligul*) dubbed “bad grass”

by the volunteers. Also present is native American dunegrass (*Elymus mollis*, “good grass”). The group also found non-native purple beach pea (*Lathyrus japonicas*). The greatest find of the two days was a beautiful stand of coastal, saltwater loving yellow sand verbena (*Abronia latifolia*). The group spent some time gathering seed pods for planting later.



*Abronia latifolia*

Kathy Gunther surveyed the research site in late June and early July and found only one plover nest, later abandoned when a windstorm covered the eggs with sand. The only other bird found

at the site during her survey was a savannah sparrow.

The goal of the two year project is to restore the native dune ecosystem of the western snowy plover and streaked horned lark by controlling non-native beach grasses. The volunteer component of the project is funded by a Packard grant to Grays Harbor and Willapa Hills Audubon Chapters through Audubon Washington.

The plant measuring is due to be completed this fall. Other volunteer work days will be scheduled periodically through the winter and into next year. Anyone who would like to volunteer for this project can please contact Jan McMillan at [mcmomjan@comcast.net](mailto:mcmomjan@comcast.net) or email Arnie Martin at [Arnold6martin@comcast.net](mailto:Arnold6martin@comcast.net).

*Volunteers shown in photo above are from left to right:*

Jan McMillan GHAS President  
Merran Owen WDFW AmeriCorps Worker  
Ann Muche Willapa Hills Audubon  
Dave Hayes WDFW  
Mary Ann Spahr GHAS member

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## The President's Perch



### *Going Green on the Harbor*

*By Jan McMillan*

It is a little bit heartening to see the consciousness of the country slowly beginning to recognize the threat we all face from global warming. Ever the eternal optimist, I believe it is starting to get through to people the tremendous price we will pay if we don't take steps to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses in our environment.

Things change one person at a time and when enough people are seeing the need for the change, it reaches the critical mass needed to seriously begin to plan for and implement the needed broader changes. Many people have begun to make those changes close to home. We're purchasing energy efficient light bulbs and appliances, installing water saving toilets and showers, trying to buy locally grown produce and engaging in many other energy saving activities that will help turn the tide.

The next level is for our cities and counties to join in the effort. That is beginning to happen. Here in Grays Harbor County leaders are beginning work on a new program called "Building a Sustainable Grays Harbor". This program will identify the economic and environmental priorities for the county in hopes

of reaching a sustainable Grays Harbor by the year 2020.

Two of Grays Harbor Audubon board members participated in a recent forum of over 100 political, business, labor, environmental and other community leaders. At tables of 6 or 7 we discussed the question "In the year 2020 how will we know we've build a sustainable economy in Grays Harbor?"

These are some of the themes that emerged and in the year 2020 we will see:

- ◆ An educational system that has prepared students for jobs and careers that pay living wages. Our youth no longer have to leave the Harbor to find jobs that will support their families.
- ◆ Grays Harbor College is now a four-year university.
- ◆ The Harbor has a diverse workforce that reflects a wide age range and ethnic diversity.
- ◆ Businesses and Industries proudly meet and exceed high standards and legal requirements for the work they do.
- ◆ Our community celebrates and honors our history and culture.
- ◆ Many historic buildings of cultural or historic significance have been preserved and unsafe and dilapidated buildings that have no cultural historic significance have been torn down.
- ◆ Cities, businesses, labor, and environmentalists share and work toward common goals.
- ◆ Our river front has been responsibly developed and is a draw for tourists and enjoyed by people who live here.

The County has provided \$50,000 in seed money and a

woman from Hoquiam who wished to remain anonymous has contributed \$50,000. The project needs an additional \$300,000 to \$500,000 to develop and implement a plan that will get us to the vision.

This plan will only succeed if ordinary citizens get involved and stay involved as the plan is developed. I urge Grays Harbor Audubon members to follow the plan closely in the newspaper and attend the local community meetings. County Commissioner Al Carter and others are providing strong leadership to this effort. Please don't hesitate to talk to Commissioner Carter if you have any questions and want to provide input. He can tell you the ways to get involved.



### **Annual Picnic a success**

The GHAS annual picnic held at Friends Landing was a treat for all who attended. The weather was great, the food plentiful and the fun fantastic! Anxiously awaiting next year.



## Sustaining Gardens

by Janet Strong

Red, orange, amber, golden, yellow, purple...and the greens – spring, Irish, blue-green... vibrant colors fill my basket as I carry it from garden to kitchen. At this time of year my land is so good to me, rewarding me many times over for all the labor in spring and early summer. From March through November I can harvest some food, herb or flower from greenhouse or garden – from early lettuce and spinach to late kale and cherry tomatoes under glass.

Whether we have a hot (tomato) or cool (cabbage) summer, vegetables and fruits flourish every year in a reasonably well-tended garden in the northwest. A greenhouse or hotbed greatly extends the growing season in both directions while providing a rearing home for tender seedlings.

Raising a garden and storing its bounty can sustain us with a dependable food supply independent of stormy weather in central California, bacterial contamination of veggies, soaring shipping costs and market fluctuations. Our sustenance is fresher, tastier and richer in vitamins than average grocery store fare.

Gardens also sustain us in other ways. All that pushing, pulling, bending, yanking, reaching and hauling can eliminate our need to drive to the fitness center. (I often refer to my plot

as “Gym.”) And we have less need for foodstuffs hauled for 1500 miles (on average) to our local supermarket. In a very real sense we are sustaining the environment and certainly saving energy. If most of us raised at least some of our yearly produce, or purchased it from local farmers’ markets, there might be a palpable dent in our nation’s energy gluttony.

The tartness of that first tomato, the sweetness of fresh-picked corn, the succulent tenderness of early cabbage – little can compare to the pride and satisfaction of growing these mouth-watering treasures. Having extra produce, beyond zucchini!, to share with friends and family fosters good feelings in the giver and the recipient, too. We and our gardens can create valuable gifts that are truly part of ourselves. And we can share our bounty with those less fortunate or less able.

Personally, my garden sustains my soul. I am grateful for the soil, for the bees who swarm in to pollinate the blossoms, for the fence that keeps out the marauding deer. But I most thankful for the amazing tiny packets of DNA that sprout, grow and produce food and flowers faithfully year in and year out. It is a real miracle.

About a dozen excuses for not raising our own food circulate around every neighborhood. Bad back, poor soil, too busy, no room for a garden, too much work, out of town too much, hate yard work – all of these have merit but can be overcome to a great extent by a person who really sees the value in an owner-grown food supply. I know a paraplegic woman whose husband built her waist-high raised beds so she could pursue her passion for gardening.

Raised beds, mulches, patio pots, cloches, compost, hand

tools of every description, lightweight rototillers – these are but a few of the ingenious devices available to gardener-wannabees. Experienced Master Gardeners and the media of all kinds are out there to assist folks with any problem. Teaching people to garden and raise their own food is fostering their health, independence and perhaps their reconnection to the earth upon which we all depend. Teaching children to garden is an investment in the future of humanity.

## Membership Meeting

Sunday, October 7, 2007

1:30 - 3:00 pm

Pearsall Building, Aberdeen

After a short welcome and period of taking-care-of-business Dianna Moore will lead a discussion on how to begin and maintain a nature journal. The emphasis will be on the changing seasons, and what shows up when. We are all concerned with the possible changes taking place with the warming of the earth and as observers of our own areas of familiar territory we are in a unique position to help identify the changes, if any, occurring in our own back yards.

As an admitted bribe, a Nature Journal and pen will be given to the first 15 people to sign up with Dianna at the meeting.

## Mike Farrell

Star of M\*A\*S\*H and a leading environmental and social activist is coming to Grays Harbor. He will be appearing at the Bishop Center, Grays Harbor College on October 19th at 7:30 PM. Tickets available at the door, \$15.

## Grays Harbor Audubon acquires land next to Bottle Beach

As a result of a settlement by Friends of Grays Harbor's attorney Knoll Lowney over the Links Golf Course in Westport, Grays Harbor Audubon has purchased approximately 40 acres of what is known as the Blair Property, land next to Bottle Beach State Park. Bottle Beach is currently being developed by State Parks as the first ever state park designed especially for birding. The new Audubon property includes a slough, meadowlands and wetlands that will be preserved as wildlife habitat.

Grays Harbor Audubon members Jan McMillan, Dianna Moore, Robert Morse and Diane Schwickerath provided input and suggestions to the Bottle Beach park designers including the design and placement of the viewing platforms, location of trails, handicapped amenities and other features. The chapter will also help with the design and placement of interpretive signs and provide volunteers during the peak shorebird migration seasons in the spring and fall. Jan McMillan, Grays Harbor Audubon President states; "Acquiring land next to Bottle Beach will provide a contiguous and protected habitat for wildlife in the area. Especially important is the management of the flood gates, now on Audubon property, that allow bay water to flow into the slough. The flow of salt water affects the natural vegetation in the area."



### Hummer notes

*by Ruth McCausland*

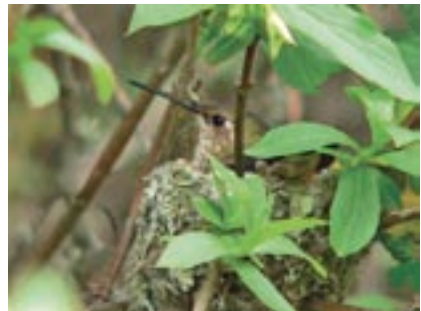
For several years I was involved in the U. W. Bird Nesting Project. When we moved to Tokeland, one of the things I noticed was the number of rufous hummingbirds around a neighbor's fuchsia basket hanging on the porch. Another neighbor had a syrup feeder that was so busy the birds were trying to drink while he was carrying the feeder to the hanger. There obviously was an opportunity to record nests but first it was necessary to see where they were and what they looked like.

The first two nests I saw were on spruce tree branches, perhaps fifteen feet from the ground with no chance to see what was in them. When approaching the tree I quickly learned that the female clicked when she felt the young were in danger. This tiny thing would also click at and harass any crow that showed an interest in a nest.

One day when I was working along the edge of our property, a female rufous was annoyed at me for being there. She was considerably higher than my head and was going back and forth like a pendulum. Evidently there was a nest nearby and I was determined to find it. After a few minutes of remaining motionless with no result, I moved out of the bird's sight but could still see her. I got down on one knee, close to the brush on the neighbor's property and watched from behind the gorse bush.

Time passed, the clicking went on and on but she did not make any effort to settle in a nest. I gave up before she did. As I lowered my head and got ready to stand up, about a foot away from my face was the nest with two little beaks pointing upwards. The startled watcher quickly backed up so that the poor thing could feed her hungry babies without human interruption. Baby hummers grow fast and the pair was able to leave the nest in three more days.

What a learning experience this was. Female hummers love the thorny gorse and this noxious weed grew all over in the empty lot in front of us. From then on, it was easy to locate nests. The Ornithological program was the recipient of over 100 rufous hummingbird nests found in Tokeland plus a few others in the beach area. My record year 54 nests, about half of which were successful.



### ***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

## **Nominating Committee report**

The Annual Meeting and election of the Board of Directors will be on December 2nd at the regular bi-monthly Member's Meeting. The Nominating Committee Chair, Gary Utter, will be working with his committee in the next few weeks to put together a slate of Nominees. If you have names to suggest, please contact Gary at [kngutter@coastaccess](mailto:kngutter@coastaccess) or call him at 360-289-0157.



## **Shorebird Festival Planning Committee seeks new members**

If you have a little time to spare this year and would like to be a part of one of the most successful events on the Harbor, the Shorebird Festival Planning Committee could sure use your help. The committee, composed of representatives from Grays Harbor Audubon, Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge, the City of Hoquiam, Port of Grays Harbor, Grays Harbor Tourism and ordinary citizens meet once a month October through April. Members help plan field trips, the auction and banquet, publicity, activities for kids, the vendor/exhibit and community participation. The planning committee is a fun and flexible group and welcomes new members. If you are interested in volunteering, call the Grays Harbor Audubon Voice Mail phone line at (800) 303-8498.

## **Chehalis Watershed Festival October 13th *save the date!***

On Saturday, October 13, the second Chehalis Watershed Festival will take place in our own back yard, at the Log Pavilion in Aberdeen, next to Top Foods. This all-day celebration will be the final chapter in Chehalis Watershed Week, from October 6 through the 13th, featuring lots of activities throughout the Chehalis basin.

The festival will highlight the great things going on in the basin to benefit fish, wildlife and healthy streams. Activities for children and the whole family will be featured, including a giant salmon. GHAS, the Chehalis River Council and the Chehalis River Basin Land Trust will be among the many groups with attractive booths.

GHAS members will lead two birding trips during Watershed Week – at the Grays Harbor Refuge on Thursday, October 11, from 4-6 p.m. and again on Saturday, October 13 (Festival Day) at Grays Harbor College from 8-10 a.m. The former will feature shorebirds wending their way southward and will commence at the Sandpiper Trailhead. Participants on the GHC trip will meet at the Bishop Center and will likely see a variety of field and forest birds in their winter plumage.

Watch for the festival pamphlet and more details on this second celebration of the wonderful watershed we all call home. Last year's and the very first Chehalis Watershed Festival was held in Centralia at Riverside Park. It was deemed a great success and the beginning of a long series of annual Watershed Festivals. The 2007 Festival will continue this new tradition.

## **GH Alliance presents forum November 14th**

***Not just a pretty face - toxins beyond skin deep***

Featuring author Stacy Malkan from her new book *Not Just a Pretty Face: The Ugly Side of the Beauty Industry*. Ms. Malkan chronicles the story of breast cancer activists and environmentalists who took on the world's largest cosmetics companies to demand safer, non-toxic products. This scathing investigation delves deeply into the problem of toxic chemicals in everyday personal care products, and peels away less-than-lovely layers to expose an industry in dire need of an extreme makeover.

The evening discussion will include a panel of experts on toxins found in our homes and at work. the forum will be held from 7:00 - 8:30 PM, Carpenter's Hall, 316 East 1st Avenue, Aberdeen

## **Fall ACOW heads for the rain shadow Oct 19 -21st**

Hello from Sequim,

We are busy organizing what we hope will be a memorable ACOW gathering October 19-21! We anticipate a sold out conference and thus encourage everyone who is planning to attend to please send in their registrations. Registration forms can be found at [www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org](http://www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org).

The Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS) Habitat Restoration and Poster project is developing very well and we look forward to seeing a variety of ideas from other chapters.

See you soon! Sue Chickman, Conference Chair



## Count birds this Thanksgiving

*By Becky Durr*

I believe it was 1992 when I read an article in *The Sandpiper* about a new bird count for twelve western states that would take place on Thanksgiving Day. It sounded so easy because the counter could decide where to count birds, and it could even be from a window! The counter could even decide what time to conduct the count, which would last only one hour. A checklist to be mailed in afterwards was also included in our newsletter. I have been participating in this count almost every year since that first one, and I encourage you to join in this year.

We have some busy moments during the day on Thanksgiving, but we can usually set aside one hour for the count. I prefer being outside if possible, because I see more that way, but last year I remember sitting inside the window at my sister's house in Seattle because it was storming outside. The counter establishes an imaginary 15 ft diameter cylinder in an area attractive to birds (perhaps including feeders, water, or vegetation that birds will use). We try to count each individual bird that comes within the cylinder during the hour. I look forward to this peaceful hour on Thanksgiving day, but for me another benefit of this count is receiving a very interesting newslet-

ter from the coordinator of the count. Dr. John Hewston's Bird Awareness Newsletter is published about three times annually. Each year several issues are devoted to detailed analysis of the count results.

Last February, a 12-page report was sent to the 390 counters. You can find out numbers of species counted by state, trends in bird populations, numbers of counts, comparisons with other years, and other facts. If you like birds, you will also find other interesting articles in the newsletter. Last year there were 74 counts in 45 locations in Washington. There were 49 counts in Western Washington. If you would like to be involved in the Thanksgiving Bird Count which takes place this year on November 22, 2007, I suggest you write to Dr. John Hewston. His address is Natural Resources Building, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521. The phone number is (707) 826-3731 or 822-5288. There is no cost to participate. You will receive instructions and a field tally form with the next issue of the newsletter.



## Victory declared: Mission Accomplished!

This summer, GHAS' "Scots' Broom Committee" declared victory over its green nemesis on the Audubon property along Forrest Avenue in Westport. For six seasons this stalwart crew has wielded saws, pruners, hatchets and, recently, a weed wrench in its assault on the hardy invasive. After each session of hacking and yanking for two hours, our weed warriors sat down for a picnic and relaxation. Finally, completing this year's work, they looked around to find **NO MORE SCOTS' BROOM LEFT!**

GHAS extends hearty congratulations and thanks to all committee members for their persistence and dedication – to Renee Prine, Carol Sunde, Jan McMillan, Ann Haarer, Franz Schneider, Barbara Fandrich and Jan Strong. Thanks to Steve Hallstrom for the use of his powerful weed wrench.



## Announcing for Birders...

The Grey Gull Motel in Ocean Shores offers a discount to birders staying with them and the discount is good year round. They also welcome birders to use their parking lot for Ocean Shores birding events.

The Grey Gull is a member of Grays Harbor Audubon and is located at 651 Ocean Shores Blvd. NW, Ocean Shores on the Washington Coast.

## GHAS Board of Directors

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Secretary	Theressa Julius, 537-4386 tmjulius@tss.net

## Committee Chairs

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Conservation/Habitat	Dean Schwickerath, 495-3101 dschwick@techline.com
Education	Janet Strong, 495-3950 strongjan@copper.net
Field Trips	vacant
Program Chair	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Hospitality	Renee Prine, 268-0485
Publicity	Jan McMillan, 268-1004 mcmomjan@comcast.net

## Other Audubon Contacts

GHAS voice mail	(800) 303-8498
State Audubon	(360) 786-8020
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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- 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!

# The Sandpiper

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Friends Landing  
Pearsall Building  
2105 Sumner, Aberdeen  
1:30 - 3:00 pm  
October 7, 2007*



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*How Do I Know When My  
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