

Membership Meeting
Sunday October 3, 2010
Connie Sidles,
Author, Blogger
1:30 pm – 3 pm
Pearsall Building
2109 Sumner Avenue, Aberdeen

September/October 2010



The Sandpiper



The Harbor fall migration *by Dianna Moore*

It began with a call from my buddy Ruth Sullivan on Sunday August 8th; she and Carol Riddell were birding on the Oyehut Game Range at the south end of Ocean Shores and had discovered a juvenile Hudsonian Godwit on the inner pond. This pond is fed and drained by a tidal channel and at this time of year is shallow with lots of small islands... perfect shorebirding habitat.

Ruth asked me to post the find on Tweeters, the PNW's own birding website. I did so immediately. Ruth re-found the bird early the next morning and dropped by my house to talk about it; I had to go see it for myself. It was easy to find as it was in the company of a group of dowitchers and stood out...and I had help. One of the great things about birders is their willingness to help ID birds for anyone who asks.

There wasn't much response at first, until Ruth posted her photos of the bird, then the response was gratifyingly swift and people began to e-mail me and call me, asking if the bird was still there, and I posted exact directions to getting to the pond.

As more people visited they too posted their findings on Tweeters and the word got out about

the rich diversity of migrating shorebirds to be found on that location, and the list of birds found is a great cross-section of what it is possible to find during the fall migration on Grays Harbor. Here is a list of the birds I saw that week: *Greater & Lesser Yellowlegs, Long-billed & Short-billed Dowitchers, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit, American & Pacific Golden Plovers, Black-bellied Plovers, Semipalmated Plovers, Killdeer, Western Sandpipers, Sanderlings, Dunlins, Stilt Sandpipers (two), Baird's Sandpipers, Pectoral Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstones, Red-necked Phalaropes, Green-winged Teal, Mallards, Canada Goose, Great Blue Heron, Northern Harriers, Peregrine Falcons (two, one immature and having trouble catching a meal), a Cooper's Hawk, Savannah Sparrows, Barn Swallows, Tree Swallows, Violet-green Swallows, and an Osprey.*

I have probably forgotten something...but the above list of 33 birds is pretty impressive for one small spot. I learned a lot from the wonderful people I met, and I can guarantee I will be out there looking same time next year! This is a short period of time to see this many different birds, and it doesn't disappoint. We may have the numbers to brag about for the spring migration, but the fall is making for an exciting time to go birding. Take a break and go out to look in your favorite pond; you might find a surprise!



High school project helps state agencies track dwindling species

by Janet Pearce

This year, the western purple martins arrived in Washington a little later than usual because of our cool, wet spring, but luckily it was just in time for high school students to start their monitoring projects. Scientists believe that the late arrival of these little purple birds was due to the lack of insects. Once it started warming up, insects started flying and purple martins arrived.

For three years in a row, Capitol High School students in Olympia have monitored declining numbers of the western purple martin for the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Most of the students' work happens independently in the late spring and early summer of their junior year. The students meet with a biologist in the field and learn how to observe purple martins and record data. The data they collect helps us understand purple martin nesting behaviors and assists in keeping the birds a common sight in the Puget Sound region.

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The President's perch



By Mary O'Neil

A change of season is upon us. Looking back through time, there was a day when this seasonal change meant a new set of "school" clothes. It was a time to meet old friends who had traveled a different path during the summer months. It was a time of anxiously looking forward to making new acquaintances and of tackling new studies. There was, perhaps, one last trip to the beach for building castles in the sand and daring the surf to send one more "big" wave.

For many years there was no season in my life. Everyday was much the same as the day before: get up; go to work; kiss the kids; cook the meals; sink into a slump at the end of the day. Summer ran into fall; fall ran into winter. What did it matter that the seasons were changing around me. For me, there was no change.

Now here comes the autumn of my life, and again I am forced to face the seasons. The Sandpiper Newsletter is due. A meeting with my friends from last winter is approaching. New friends are waiting to be made.

The signs of this changing season surround us. After our one hot day this summer, the vine maple continues to turn up the heat with its beautiful red leaves. The fall migration is in full swing. Everyone traveling the coastline excitedly reports on the "ribbon of birds offshore" appearing to travel north, but which in reality is looking for the right wind stream to take them off to New Zealand. The black-throated gray warblers and the Townsend warblers

stopped off at the Olympic National Forest to follow the Black Capped Chickadees around the forest for a day or two of feeding before continuing on to their winter "wonder-where" lands.

With this change in the season, it is time once more to dig into the projects and problems that had been shelved for the summer months. Pick up that campaign for membership. Research new ideas for raising funds to support our properties. Get those field trips and education projects back on track. Where's that Shorebird Festival planning committee meeting today?

But today – just because it's raining – doesn't mean that fall has set in just yet. No, I have better things to do today. I think I will go out and buy a new set of underwear.



Purple Martins continued from page 1

One student, Chris Privette, stated, "After the first meeting and not seeing a single bird, I began to feel a little disappointed, but as my team met later in the spring, we started seeing more and more martins and it actually became fun."

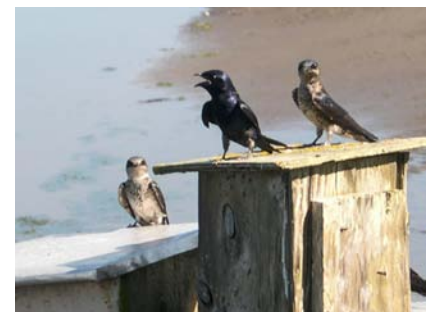
DNR considers the purple martins at Woodard Bay Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA) to be an important species for protection. The students' data on the colony of martins at the NRCA has already helped DNR make important management decisions in 2009 about restoration projects at the site. As restoration begins, the NRCA will retain some of the purple martin boxes in order to

have continued overwater nesting habitat.

The students' data provides a baseline of information for numbers of birds using the site for nesting and it provides information on the colony over time so that DNR and WDFW can begin to compare and see changes.

Thanks to Ruth Pagel with Birds Unlimited in Olympia for lending a spotting scope each year to the students. The Woodard Bay NRCA martin boxes are quite a distance from shore, and we couldn't monitor without the scope.

This project has had a positive impact on the high school students. One student, Erika Longino, says, "The Purple Martin Project opened my eyes to the birder's world." So here's hoping the purple martins show up in time for next year's students!



Patrick Sullivan Young Birders Fund Grant

by Tom Mansfield,

Leah Rensel, 18, of Arlington, is the first recipient of a grant from the WOS Patrick Sullivan Young Birders Fund (PSYBF). The award presentation was made by Ruth Sullivan, mother of the late Patrick Sullivan, and PSYBF chair Tom Mansfield during the WOS Conference banquet June 12 in Wenatchee.

Such a fund was first conceptualized by Andy and Ellen Stepniewski of Wapato to encourage and support young people interested in birding, and in 2005, the Young Birders Fund was formally established. Following Patrick's untimely death in 2007, the fund was renamed in his memory to honor his many contributions to Washington birding. During the past five years, fund trustees have concentrated on building up the endowment.

Leah exemplifies the type of young birder the fund seeks to assist. While completing an impressive list of field projects in her secondary school years (she was a member of Seattle Audubon Teen Birdwatch and attended banding camp, volunteered for WDFW scoter and goose banding, participated in the Dunlin Winter Movements Studies Program, and has been a hummingbird banding volunteer, among other projects), Leah demonstrated solid academic skills, graduating from Arlington High School last year in the top 1% of her class with a 3.95 GPA. She is now a freshman at Linfield College in Oregon. This summer, she is participating in three WDFW projects: Locating Black Oystercatcher nests in the San Juan Islands, and further scoter and goose banding.

Leah's birding experience and

interest in ornithology and biology come quite naturally. Her mother, Ruth Milner, is District Biologist for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in LaConner. With her mother's encouragement and participation in numerous avian programs, Leah has had not only the opportunity to handle and learn about a variety of species, she has also had the benefit of working with professional biologists as a volunteer.

The PSYBF request from Leah was for a \$750 grant to assist with a four-week course through Linfield College called Plant/Animal Interactions in Costa Rica. The course will commence in January 2011. Part of the course will be to develop an independent research project – and while Leah has not yet identified her solo project, she plans to focus on some aspect of birds – possibly the neotropical migrants that breed in Washington. When her Costa Rica studies are completed, Leah will be sharing the results of her life-changing experience with the WOS membership.

While the trustees continue their efforts to grow the PSYBF endowment, they encourage young birders to consider this financial resource for such activities as attending a birding conference or related event, field trip, youth birding camp, bird banding school, research, or census work.

Further details and the PSYBF grant application can be found on the WOS website <http://www.wos.org>



l to r Ruth Sullivan, Leah Rensel, Tom Mansfield, photo by Mike Denny

Grays Harbor Paper tour

by Arnie Martin

I was fortunate to be able to be the high bidder at the 2010 Shorebird Festival for the Grays Harbor Paper tour and two cases of their Harbor 100% recycled paper. The paper works great in my home printer, and I was able to take 3 friends with me on the tour!

The tour began with a view of the loading area, where many of the products used in the manufacture of the paper arrive, many via rail. The main component of the 100% post-consumer recycled paper is the 100% post-consumer recycled pulp, which comes from Halsey, Oregon. Other raw materials are calcium carbonate which is a filler, used to fill the gaps between wood fibers; starch, which is used to improve paper strength, and optical brighteners. Also, no chlorine is used in the process, the pulp is bleached using hydrogen peroxide, which ensures no chlorine is discharged into the plant's waste stream.

A very important part of the manufacturing process is the use of biomass in generating the steam and electricity used in the plant. Wood waste (slash) is gathered locally, primarily from nearby logging sites, and trucked to the plant where it is mechanically ground into usable sizes for the boiler fuel. The use of the wood waste for fuel allows the power generated to be classified as carbon-neutral, which lets the excess electricity generated by the three turbines to be sold as renewable energy credits. In fact, in 2008, no fossil fuels were used in power generation, and by using local sources for wood waste and special light-weight trailers in its transportation, fossil fuel used in transportation is minimized.

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Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds

September 10-12, 2010

Plan on being in Edmonds September 10-12, 2010, for the sixth annual PUGET SOUND BIRD FEST! The 3-day event includes speakers, guided walks, land and water-based field trips, exhibits and educational activities for children and adults, and a tour of certified backyard wildlife habitats.

Friday evening features an opening reception with keynote speaker, Seattle author and naturalist Lyanda Lynn Haupt. Her book *Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness* was an LA Times and Seattle Times Best Book of 2009. Saturday field trips include a morning Birding Cruise on Puget Sound with the Edmonds Yacht Club, and a bus trip to Monroe Saturday evening to see thousands of Vaux's Swifts. There will be workshops and presentations all day on Saturday at the Frances Anderson Center including sessions focusing on hummingbirds and Trumpeter Swans, bird photography, how to choose and use bird feeders and nest boxes, and an introduction to live raptors from the Sarvey Wildlife Center. The featured activity on Sunday will be a tour of the new Willow Creek Hatchery Wildlife Habitat and Native Plant Demonstration Garden, and certified backyard wildlife habitats in Edmonds. So, mark your calendar to be in Edmonds September 10-12, 2010 to celebrate birds and nature!

Visit our festival website for more details: www.pugetsound-birdfest.org. Volunteers are needed! If you are interested in volunteering at Puget Sound

Bird Fest or serving on a committee, please call Sally Lider at 425-771-0227, or e-mail lider@ci.edmonds.wa.us.

Washington Audubon meeting (ACOW)



Northwest Audubon Chapters are hosting the "New Directions for Washington Audubon" on Saturday, October 16th at the Padilla Bay National Marine Reserve in Bay View State Park. This will be only a one day conference to discuss the Future Of Washington Audubon. This is one of the most important conferences we have done. We are keeping it to one day to concentrate on Washington Audubon.

More details and logistics to come.

Bay View State Park is a 25-acre camping park with 1,285 feet of saltwater shoreline on Padilla Bay. Over 11,000 acres of Padilla Bay are designated as National Estuarine Sanctuary. Breazeale Padilla Bay Interpretive Center is located a half mile north of the park. The park offers views of the San Juan Islands fronting Padilla Bay, one of 15 existing national marine estuaries. On clear days, park users see the Olympic Mountains to the west and Mt. Rainier to the south.

The mystery of the disappearing bird seed

by Becky Durr

The bird feeder is empty. It holds 3 quarts of black oil sunflower seed and I just filled it up yesterday morning. Or did I? I'm not sure. Maybe it was the day before. Still, that's a lot of birdseed in a short time. They must really be hungry.

The bird feeder is empty again. Was it getting low last night? I can't remember.

What? Empty already? How can that be? We ought to get a security camera for that bird feeder.

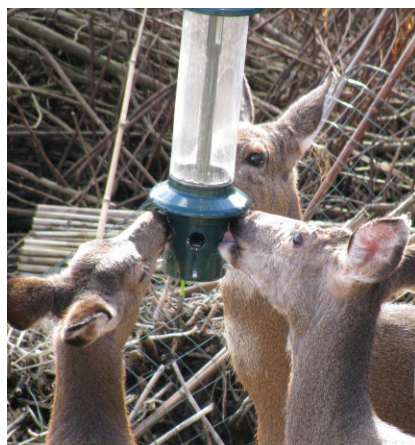
Empty? Didn't we just fill it up yesterday? Or did we? I can't believe those little birds could eat so much. What's going on? The seed seems to disappear at night. There's no seed spilled on the ground. The only tracks I see are deer tracks, but they are everywhere. I'm pretty sure it isn't squirrels or chipmunks, because they've tried and tried and by now they know they can't get into it. Both the feeder and the pole are squirrel/chipmunk/rat-proof. I suppose band-tailed pigeons could eat that much, but the feeder is also pigeon-proof. Besides, the bandtails don't come around during the winter. A bear would just knock the feeder on the ground and break it, plus leave tracks. I can almost imagine a raccoon taking it down, eating all the seed, and then carefully replacing the feeder, just for fun, but come on! Could it possibly be a person? Who would do that? And why? It's empty again! This time I know it was completely full this morning. It really is a mystery. We do have a lot of birds, yet they have never eaten this much before, and we've been feeding them over 20 years. We've been

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Mystery continued from page 4 buying 50 pounds of seed every week! We can't let the feeder go empty during the winter, can we?

Suddenly, the mystery was solved. One day in February, we happened to look outside at the right moment.

Deer. Three big deer were all feeding at once, while also knocking some on the ground for the little one who couldn't reach the feeder. When I went outside I could hear their tongues loudly clacking against the feeder, and they did not stop until all the seed was gone.



Where raptors soar: Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival

Join the Methow Valley Ranger District, North Central Washington Audubon Society, and HawkWatch International for a free family event to learn about and celebrate raptors as they

journey to winter territories. Shop vendors, see live birds, and take a field trip to the spectacular Chelan Ridge Raptor Migration Site. This amazing, interactive raptor event will take place at Memorial Park in Pateros, Washington on September 25, 2010 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The festival will have art projects for kids, hands on activities, and raptor exhibits. Attendees can also go on birding field trips with experts to identify waterfowl and migrating songbirds while exploring along the Columbia River. During the day, shuttles will run from Pateros to Chelan Ridge where families, bird lovers, and learners of all ages will be able to see raptors like Sharp-shinned Hawks up close before they are banded and released. This is an amazing experience with environmental education and interpretation conducted by an on-site educator, Forest Service personnel, and other volunteers.

On Sunday, continuing the celebration of Hawk Migration, the North Cascades Basecamp, a festival sponsor, will be hosting a pancake breakfast with an expert speaker and then providing a guide for a field trip to Harts Pass, another excellent place to view migrating raptors. Call 509-996-2334 or see their website www.NorthCascadesBasecamp.com for more information or see their booth at the festival in Pateros.

This festival is scheduled to coincide with the peak of southbound migration of raptors at Chelan Ridge—the best place in Washington to view fall migrating raptors. All three partners have a mission to provide education to our communities and this hands-on event is a great opportunity. This educational effort is focused on raptors and the ecosystems upon which we all rely. According to

Kent Woodruff, a biologist for the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forests, "The Chelan Ridge project is good news for hawks, which in some cases still face challenges for survival. It's also great for nature enthusiasts who like to see animals in the wild doing what comes naturally and see scientists at work trying to learn more about the raptors as they migrate south to spend the winter."

To pre-register for the field trips leaving from Pateros and to reserve a space in the shuttle to Chelan Ridge, please call 509-731-4790.

For more information about this free festival, please visit www.ncwaudubon.org/ or email festival@ncwaudubon.org.

North Central Washington Audubon Society works to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and their habitats, for the benefit of people and the biological diversity of North Central Washington.

HawkWatch International (HWI) is a Salt Lake City-based nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving the environment through education, long-term monitoring, and scientific research on raptors as indicators of ecosystem health.

Methow Valley Ranger District, U.S. Forest Service celebrates 100 Years of Caring for the Land and Serving People.



GH Paper continued from page 3

The plant still does manufacture paper derived from virgin pulp (not recycled), but has increased the percentage of recycled pulp use each year since 2001. They promote the sale and use of 100% post-consumer recycled paper to their markets, and have landed several high-profile customers, such as the State of Washington, Seattle Mariners, and the Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival. Seriously, Grays Harbor Paper has donated the paper for the Festival during the last several years, which we greatly appreciate.

The plant emissions, both air-borne and water-borne, meet DEQ standards for their industry, the solid waste from the plant's liquid waste treatment (grey-lime) is used as fertilizer on a local farm, and the solid waste (boiler ash) has been used for fill and road construction.

The tour participants all enjoyed the tour, and all received generous samples of Harbor100 (100% post-consumer recycled) paper.

Membership Meeting

Our Membership Meeting for Oct 3rd will feature author, birder, blogger and friend to Tweeters readers, Connie Sidles. Her most recent book, "In My Nature, A Birder's Year at the Montlake Fill" is 32 essays arranged into four seasons, documenting the birds who visit the fill and the observations she makes about the need for wild nature in our lives. She will donate a percentage of all books sold at the meeting to GHAS... and you can get her autograph!

We will meet at 1:30PM at the Pearsall Bldg, 2109 Sumner Avenue Aberdeen.

Refreshments will be served.

GHAS Board of Directors

Steve Hallstrom	273-9280	letusfarm@earthlink.net
Arnie Martin	612-0437	arnold6.martin@comcast.net
Dianna Moore	289-5048	dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Mary O'Neil	533-9833	deed2et2et@yahoo.com
Linda Orgel	648-2476	ldotorg@olearycreek.com
Renee Prine	268-0485	alexandrineprine@yahoo.com
Diane Schwickerath	495-3101	deananddiane@gmail.com
Janet Strong	495-3950	strongjan@centurytel.com

Chapter Officers

President	Mary O'Neil 533-9833 deed2et2et@yahoo.com
Vice President	Arnie Martin 612-0437 arnold6.martin@comcast.net
Treasurer	Diane Schwickerath 495-3101 deananddiane@gmail.com
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Committee Chairs

Newsletter	R.D. Grunbaum, 648-2476 rd@olearycreek.com
Membership	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Conservation	Janet Strong, 495-3950 strongjan@centurytel.com
Education	Renee Prine, 268-0485 alexandrineprine@yahoo.com
Field Trips	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Program Chair	Dianna Moore 289-5048 dlmoor2@coastaccess.com
Hospitality	Linda Orgel 648-2476 ldotorg@olearycreek.com
Publicity	Vacant
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Other Audubon Contacts

GHAS voice mail	(360) 289-5048
State Audubon	(360) 786-8020
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.

A SPECIAL GIFT

We know that the economy is causing difficulties for everyone, but we know that GHAS provides special effort to protect habitat for birds and other living things. Enclosed is a special gift to GHAS to keep our organization off the endangered species list.

\$ _____

How Do I Know When My Membership Is Due?

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

News & Editorial

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

***Membership Meeting
Sunday
October 3, 2010
Author Constance Sidles***



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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 Sandpiper

P.O. Box 470
Montesano,
WA 98563

