



Calliope Crier

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society is people dedicated to the enjoyment and preservation of the natural world. Through birding, education and conservation activities in our community, we raise awareness and promote the cause of global environmental protection.

Volume 47, Number 06

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

June/July 2018



FROM THE BOARD

ANDY STEPNIOWSKI

Our State Audubon Office Works Hard to Further the “Audubon Mission”

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society is one of 25 chapters of Audubon Washington, an organization working diligently to accomplish the Audubon mission on the state level. You, as a member, make a substantial financial contribution to support the varied and very worthy activities of Audubon Washington. In Yakima, across the "Cascade curtain" from western Washington, we too often overlook the critical work our state group performs. This report highlights just a few of the important projects and issues our state group worked on in 2017. The following article is adapted from their annual report.

Conservation

Audubon Washington's most important goal is conservation of our state's fabulous array of natural ecosystems. They are our foremost lobbying group, active in numerous issues that threaten our environment. With a grassroots network that spans the continent, Audubon seeks to create a culture of conservation in local communities through education and advocacy, focusing on the conservation of birds, other wildlife and conservation of important habitats. I admire their strategy of finding common ground between those who threaten habitats and us, who wish to see them preserved. Across the incredibly varied ecosystems in our state, we find the people are as varied as the landscapes; representing a kaleidoscope of perspectives, religions, cultural backgrounds, races and ages. Audubon Washington seeks to join all around a love of birds and a shared vision for healthy habitats.

Sagebrush Songbird Surveys

In eastern Washington, home to 22% of Washington's human population, Audubon Washington has been active in the fight to preserve our vanishing shrub-steppe ecosystem. The songbird survey is part of a multi-year, million-acre survey of the Columbia Plateau to establish a long-term sagebrush avian census that will support conservation and inform policies related to multi-state land use, transportation, energy, and climate planning. Over 100

volunteers, from Walla Walla to Bainbridge Island, put their heads and hearts into training and surveying this season. Teams from 11 chapters headed out in the pre-dawn on cold, wet spring days to detect the mellifluous songs of our sageland birds at 57 sites throughout eastern Washington.

The annual report cites people in action on this project. Mother-Daughter team Marilyn and Amanda Sherling help Audubon succeed in gathering data to protect critical habitat by dedicating their time and expertise for birds. Marilyn took up birding when she retired in Wenatchee, and through dedicated training is now one of the best ArcGIS users in the Sagebrush Songbird Survey project, with skills that go beyond online mapping acumen—she also scouted survey sites on the ground! Amanda is following her mom's example by studying ecology at Wenatchee Valley College, where she works with a shrub steppe ornithology expert to create her own special studies class related to the Songbird Survey.

Protecting Public Lands

Also in eastern Washington, Dana Ward has been a champion of birds and habitat conservation in eastern Washington for years—advocating for the establishment of the Hanford Reach National Monument with Lower Columbia Basin Audubon Society (LCBAS) in 2000. Winner of Audubon's Helen Engle Volunteer of the Year award in October 2016, this stalwart activist continues to lead the charge in protecting and preserving the best remaining shrub steppe in Washington. As federal agencies remediate the Hanford Nuclear site, chapter members from LCBAS had been preparing a thoughtful proposal to expand the Monument and increase access for recreation on these lands while preserving the core habitat areas for sagebrush-obligate bird species. “Expanding the monument would permanently preserve critical habitat to vanishing native birds and other wildlife and save the shrub-steppe landscape for future generations to enjoy,” says

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THIS MONTH'S YVAS CALENDAR

- Aug 14 Board Meeting** is at the home of Denny Granstrand, and Chris Reid, 2011 S. 47th Ave., Yakima
- Aug 23 YVAS Chapter Meeting** at the Yakima Area Arboretum, 1401 Arboretum Dr., Yakima, at **7:00 pm.**

The Yakima Valley Audubon Society meets on the fourth Thursday of January, February, March, April, May, August, September, and October at 7pm at the Yakima Area Arboretum, located at 1401 Arboretum Drive, Yakima, WA. Guests are welcome at these meetings. The Board of Directors meets each month except December at 7pm at locations announced in the Calliope Crier. Members may attend Board meetings; however, please notify the host because of possible space restrictions.



MEMBERSHIP JOY MCKINNEY

Welcome New Members!

Yakima: Deborah Severtson-Coffin,
Val and Ken Sveinsson

Thank you for renewing your membership!

Grandview: Janet White

Yakima: Cowiche Canyon Conservancy,
Julie Johnson, Bob and Darlene Fay, Lee and
Edith Hunsperger, Terry Davis, Earl and
Dorothy Derry, Rick Mains, Bob and
Carrie Chicken, Susan Paoella

Selah: Gus and Mary Pooler, Jerry and Margaret
Turner, Clara Eustis

Sunnyside: Lorri Gilmur-Dilman

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Ward.

Just as their effort was getting underway, Hanford came under fire from the U.S. Dept. of the Interior. Audubon Chapters rallied, adding to the nearly 3 million comments submitted to Secretary Zinke during the monument review, telling him why Hanford needs protecting, and encouraging our government to preserve and manage lands that have already been granted monument status. It was announced in July that Hanford would be one of six monuments left untouched, but that victory only underscores the remaining threats to the critical habitat on public lands in Oregon and Utah. Audubon Washington will continue to work alongside our grassroots activists to support the places that birds and people need, today and tomorrow.

Western Washington Projects

In western Washington, where nearly 78% of Washington's population lives, Audubon Washington has more projects and resources to carry on its mission. Case in point: Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor are two of the west coast's most important stopover points for migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. The area is equally important to people: the coastal tribes, communities, and businesses that depend on productive ecosystems. Collaborative conservation action will be essential to ensure a sustainable and healthy future for these estuaries and people that depend on them. Audubon Washington's director of bird conservation, Dr. Trina Bayard, was recently invited into the field with Goose Point Oysters—a family-run oyster



The Shrub-steppe Audubon is working to preserve.

farm that spans two generations. For years, growers have been using toxic pesticides to reduce native ghost shrimp populations that they believe are threatening their livelihoods and destroying the health of the bay. Audubon took this as an opportunity to see the oyster operations firsthand, meet the growers in person, and get a better sense of their challenges. Audubon's environmental review comments won the respect of the scientist representing the growers seeking a permit to apply pesticides in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor. The scientist for the growers found Audubon's comments detailed and thoughtful, and these efforts earned Audubon a place at the table. The conversation was spirited, but both sides agreed about what's most important: the value of the oyster industry to the region,

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Celebration of Life for William J. "Bill" Ryan

December 16, 1919 – April 28, 2018

Please join us in honoring and celebrating the life of William J. "Bill" Ryan.

Come share a favorite potluck dish, memories and stories, and any pictures you might have. Dress is casual.



August 11, 2018
1:00 – 3:00 pm

Yakima Arboretum
1401 Arboretum Drive
Yakima, WA



More information? – soilsisters@live.com 360.794.6081



FIELD TRIPS

SCOTT DOWNES

July 21 (Saturday) - Sheep Lake. Andy and Ellen Stepniewski will lead a trip to Sheep Lake at Chinook Pass. This hike heads to the high country, a great place to be during Yakima's hottest months. We hike 2 miles along a good trail to Sheep Lake. We like this route because it encounters a mosaic of subalpine habitats. First, we cross a beautiful wild flower-covered slope, then dry slopes with brushy huckleberry and mountain ash thickets. Next are stunted forest of firs, hemlocks, and Alaska cedars. Rounding a bend on the trail onto wetter slopes is a taller subalpine forest of subalpine firs, mountain hemlocks, and Pacific silver fir. Beautiful Sheep Lake is ringed by wet sedge meadows, with Yakima Peak's high cliffs looming. An optional extension up to the Sourdough Gap brings us to the edge of the treeless alpine zone. Birds we will search for include Sooty Grouse, Gray Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, and there is the possibility of Pine Grosbeak. Contact Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net or 949-7404) to sign-up and get meeting time and location. Pack a lunch with plenty of fluids. Bring clothing for both warm and cool weather and the possibility of rain.

Aug 24-26 (Friday-Sunday). Washington Coast Pelagic Boat Trip and Shorebirding. This is an extraordinary opportunity to view seabirds in deep waters beyond the Continental Shelf off the Washington coast as well as migrating shorebirds along the coastal estuaries. It involves two nights in a motel or camping (August 24 and 25) and a nine-hour boat trip (\$150.00) on a Westport Seabirds Pelagic Trip. Late August is a very good time to view a high diversity of bird species not normally seen from shore such as albatrosses, shearwaters, fulmars, storm-petrels, skuas, jaegers, terns, and gulls. Marine mammals such as whales, dolphins, and porpoises are also often seen. Late August is also excellent for lots of migrating shorebirds. More than 20 species are possible! Friday afternoon and after the boat trip on Saturday and again Sunday morning we will scour the top shorebird locations in the Grays Harbor area. Contact Andy Stepniewski (steppie@nwinfo.net or 949-7404) for more information about the trip, lodging or to sign up. **You must book soon so he can reserve spaces on the boat. Early reservations are a must for both the boat trip and accommodations in August.**

The only way to see most seabirds on the Washington Coast is on a pelagic boat trip

Here are some of the possibilities for the August 25 pelagic trip



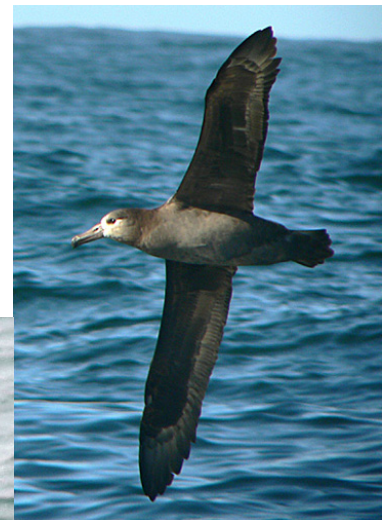
Flesh-footed Shearwater



Laysan Albatross
(left)

Black-footed
Albatross (right)

Pomarine Jaeger
(below)



Pink-footed Shearwater



Northern Fulmar (right)



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that farmers play a valuable role as environmental stewards, pesticide use is far from an ideal solution to the ghost shrimp challenge—and that we will continue working together to find better, more sustainable solutions to the problem. Recent action by the Department of Ecology indicates growers will need to find alternatives in the near future as the permit application for the pesticide was denied.

Nurturing Urban Naturalists

Seward Park Audubon Center in Seattle was founded in 2008. Their guiding vision was to create a community where families participate in urban habitat stewardship together, children would have access to the outdoors and nature education, and people of all ages could support their love of birds and advocate openly to protect and enhance their diverse urban neighborhood. Now in its 10th year, the Center is delivering on all aspects of this vision, and offers year-round programs for all ages. Judith Lee first experienced the Center when her daughter Mei came to summer camp years ago. That program sparked a curiosity and appreciation for nature that grew as time went on, fostered by the programs, forest and community that Seward Park Audubon Center consistently provided. It was only natural that Judith would choose the Center as the venue for a milestone birthday party; that when Mei graduated from high school, they invited friends and loved ones to cele-



Oyster Farm in Willapa Bay, Pacific County, WA

brate in this special place; and that when she was looking for a special Mother’s Day gift this year, that Mei would buy tickets for the duo to attend Morning Treats & Tweets—Audubon’s Saturday birding program. Offering opportunities like these for the community to participate in life-long stewardship, advocacy and education programs with families and friends helps Audubon develop a conservation ethic that helps bird-friendly urban communities thrive.

Also at the Seward Center, during the latest season of Urban Naturalist Lectures, Audubon Washington recruited naturalists, authors, and photographers with to pose meaningful questions, provide insight, and promote conservation. These community gatherings connected folks to the larger worlds of conservation, art and science all without leaving the neighborhood. From New York Times writer Timothy Egan to the captivating wildlife photographer Paul Bannick to the esteemed scientist and author Estella Leopold, Audubon was honored to present the work of great minds, and elevate conversations that explore the health of our world, its wildlife, and our human impact.

From Center Director Joseph Manson, "I am especially proud of teen leaders like Thuy Luu—a passionate young woman who advocates for the change she wants to see in her community. She joined our



Young urban Naturalist scoping a feathered friend.

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Tenacious Roots program, rising to leadership by recruiting and inspiring her classmates to restore the forest of Seward Park and fight climate change, earning her this year’s Tracey Silva-Wayling Award for emerging female leaders. I am thrilled that she has been accepted to the University of Washington College of Environment, and look forward to continuing to support her journey of conservation leadership.”

Taking Action on Climate

Audubon is taking seriously the role to be the voice for birds in a warming world by advocating for policies that reduce the carbon pollution causing climate change and protecting the places that birds need now and in the future. In fall 2016 our state organization co-lead a statewide campaign to tax carbon pollution, Initiative 732, the first of its kind in the country. Although the measure did not pass, more than 1.2 million voters demonstrated their concern about our warming world and demanded action to lessen its impacts on communities, wildlife, and future generations.

In the aftermath of this effort, Audubon Washington continued to fight for common sense climate solutions for birds and people in the 2017 legislative session. Audubon support helped achieve some big victories in the updated state’s renewable energy incentive program, ensuring that solar power will continue to be part of our solutions around climate change. Forest health and fire resiliency bills that focused on restoration and proactively addressing wildfire risk in eastern Washington also passed with your support. By accelerating the adoption of solar power and decreasing the risk of catastrophic wildfire, we are reducing Washington’s carbon pollution footprint - one of the most important things we can do to protect birds and people from the threat of climate change.

Although there were four carbon pricing bills put forth



Solar panels on a YVAS member’s garage

this session, none of them moved forward. Audubon Washington will push forward solutions that will dramatically reduce carbon emissions, by continuing to identify and craft policies - both in the legislature and at the ballot - that will take bold steps to address climate change.

Go Solar, Washington!

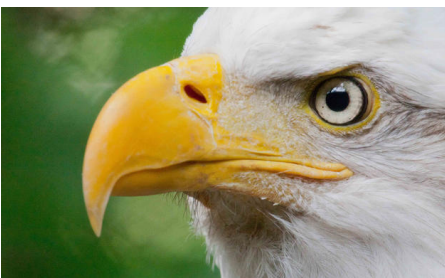
Increasing the use of solar power – a local, renewable energy source – is another way to reduce carbon pollution from fossil fuel generated electricity. Yet, while solar energy technology is booming in the United States, it remains far behind among the ways we produce and consume electricity in Washington. *Go Solar* was launched this year to help local leaders see how they can help their communities reap the benefits of solar by setting ambitious goals for generating solar power and creating smart programs to reach those goals. Your support will help us pass solar resolutions in cities across the state; visit the Audubon Washington website to learn how you can be involved and make Washington a leader in the clean energy revolution.

“I have strong admiration for our well-connected grassroots network that spans the country. No other organization can nourish stewards for our natural world and cultivate bird advocates the way Audubon can,” Jen Syrowitz Chapter Conservation Manager.

How you can help, right now

Be a Voice for Birds

Decision-makers need to hear from you. Sign up for Audubon Washington’s Action Alerts and you will have an opportunity to weigh in on proposals that impact birds.



Get Involved

Birds need YOU! Get involved in helping to preserve our birds and their habitats today. There is something for everyone!



Take Action on Climate Change

Does your decision-maker know that climate change is the number one threat to birds? Ask for their help to protect the birds, the places, and the planet we love.



Yakima Valley Audubon Society Membership

Join/renew my annual membership to the Yakima Valley Audubon Society to receive 10 issues of the Calliope Crier and all chapter benefits. National Audubon membership and Audubon Magazine are not included.

Yakima Valley Audubon Society Membership.....\$ 25.00 per household
 YVAS Senior (62+) ____ OR Student Membership ____ (please check one).....\$ 15.00 per household
 Yakima Valley Audubon Society Life Membership\$ 500.00 per household

New Member ____ Renewing Member ____ (please check one)

In addition to my membership payment of \$ _____, my check includes an additional donation of \$ _____
 ____ I do not want to receive any solicitations or communications from NAS (please check if applicable)
 ____ I prefer to read the Crier online and not receive my copy by mail (please check if applicable)

Please make any corrections to your contact information as needed.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Email address _____

Please return this form and your check payable to: YVAS Membership, P.O. Box 2823, Yakima, WA 98907

If you have any membership questions, contact Joy McKinney at joycatbird@gmail.com or 698-4110.

2017 YAKIMA VALLEY AUDUBON OFFICERS AND BOARD

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Coming Attractions:

July 21 Sheep Lake field trip

Aug 23 Chapter Meeting - 7:00 p.m

Aug 24-26 Washington Coast field trip