

The Avalanche



North Cascades Audubon Society Newsletter

www.northcascadesaudubon.org

Volume 48, Issue 4

April 2017

General Membership Meeting with Jonathan White

Tides: The Science and Spirit of the Ocean

After nearly losing his 65-foot wooden schooner in a large Alaskan tide, writer, sailor, and surfer Jonathan White vowed to understand the tide. He knew the moon had something to do with it, but what exactly? He read a book, then two. Ten years later, he had read three hundred books and crisscrossed the seven seas to see the largest, fastest, scariest, and most amazing tides in the world. In China he confronted the Silver Dragon, a 25-foot tidal bore that races 80 miles up the Qiantang River. At London's Royal Society, he dug into the earliest Western tide science, which preoccupied thinkers from Da Vinci to Galileo to Newton. In the Arctic he followed an Inuit elder down a small hole through thick winter ice to gather fresh blue mussels in the cavities left by the low tide. With photographs, stories, and short readings from his newest book (Jan. 2017), Jonathan takes his audiences on an enthralling journey into the surprising and poetic workings of the tide. Books will be available at the presentation.

Jonathan White (<http://jonathanwhitewriter.com/>) has written for the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Sierra*, *The Sun*, *Surfer's Journal*, *Orion*, and other publications. His first book, *Talking on the Water* (Sierra Club Books), is a collection of interviews exploring our relationship with nature. White is an active marine conservationist, holds an MFA in creative nonfiction, and lives with his wife and son on a small island in Washington State.

Always on the 4th Tuesday of the month:

April 25th, 7pm

Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room

free & open to the public!

Our next board meeting is on April 3.

Email president@northcascadesaudubon.org
if you would like to join us.

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Mission Statement

The purpose of this society is to promote the study and conservation of birds and other wildlife, their habitat, and the environment; to increase public appreciation of the values of wildlife, plants, and the natural environment; and to stimulate action to protect and preserve them for the future.

Avalanche Staff

Designer/editor: Kelley Palmer-McGee

Writer/editor: Lynne Givler

If you are interested in contributing, the deadline for the May 2017 issue is...

April 15.

Send materials to Kelley Palmer-McGee at:

content@northcascadesaudubon.org

NCAS Board Members

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If you are interested in volunteering with our Audubon chapter, please contact the President at president@northcascadesaudubon.org

Making Broadcast and Cell Towers Safer for Birds

An estimated 7 million birds collide each year with over 100,000 broadcast and cell towers situated throughout the United States. Scientists have recently discovered that migrating birds are drawn to non-flashing lights on the towers. Replacing those lights with flashing lights has resulted in a 70 percent reduction in bird fatalities. There are many towers whose lights still need to be replaced. For all of us who care about birds, we can get involved by learning more about the status of towers in our area and pressing for changes to the regulations governing them.

For more detailed coverage on this issue, visit the following site for a transcript of an excellent show aired on National Public Radio on January 24, 2017: <http://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=510811662>

Backyard Habitat and Native Flora Fair Saturday, April 29, 10 AM- 3 PM Fairhaven Village Green

Learn how to make your yard, schoolyard or business landscape wildlife friendly!

Free activities and items for purchase include:

- Native plant sale with experts from the Washington Native Plant Society to answer your questions
- 1 pm: native plant walk
- Nesting boxes for cavity nesting birds
- Children's activities

This event is sponsored by the Komo Kulshan chapter of the Washington Native Plant Society, North Cascades Audubon Society and Bellingham Parks & Recreation.

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Updated *Birding Oregon Site Guide* Now Available

The following is excerpted from a press release by Chuck Gates.

Many of you have seen or used the *Birding Oregon Site Guide* published and maintained by the East Cascades Audubon Society in Bend. I am proud (and very happy) to announce the completion of the latest revision of this site guide. The guide gives directions and pertinent information to over 1100 birding locations in Oregon. It is organized by county and is meant to be used by Oregon birders and visitors from out of state.

This new version is designed to be more user and technology friendly. You can now use the site guide, in conjunction with your smart phone's navigation capabilities, to get turn by turn directions to the most popular birding areas in the state. What if you don't have time to visit a bunch of locations? What if you are unfamiliar with the county you are visiting? No problem. Check out the Seasonal Hotspot table for each county and you will find the three best places to bird in each season.

Thanks to over 100 Oregon birders for making the best state guide in the country. It's made for birders by birders and IT'S FREE, courtesy of the East Cascades Audubon. Now get out your day planners and start exploring this wonderful state!

Give the new *Birding Oregon Site Guide* a try by going on-line at
<http://www.ecaudubon.org/#!birding-locations/clvb>

The Shared Values Alliance: A Conservation Partnership with the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

The following is excerpted from a letter by Mike Cenci, Deputy Chief, and Becky McRoberts, Community Outreach Liaison, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) Police.

Each year, avian and many other species in Washington State are poached for illicit markets. Fortunately, there is a cadre of dedicated WDFW police officers on the front line of this issue. But while curtailing the illegal take and trafficking of fish and wildlife is a top priority, officers have many competing responsibilities. The reality is that staffing is less than adequate for the job, but the good news is that organizations like yours share many of the same values when it comes to protecting native wildlife and their habitats, and by working together, we can achieve more.

WDFW has a strong desire to expand citizen awareness and to invite active public involvement and participation. We are offering an opportunity to be part of our Shared Values Alliance, and join us in exerting a positive influence on conservation, our outdoor heritage, public safety, and the State's natural resource based communities. This alliance creates an open line of communication to identify existing and potential problems facing our natural resources and the communities that are impacted by them. Using this approach, WDFW police officers and the agency can connect with the changing values and needs of the public and resource-based industries.

We welcome the opportunity to engage with local Audubon chapters, to listen to your ideas and encourage active participation in this statewide conservation endeavor. Feel free to contact Becky at becky.mcroberts@dfw.wa.gov for more information on how you can get involved!

Learn more about our work at
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/enforcement>.

Open Mondays at Our New Location

Mon-Fri. 10-5:30
 Sat. 10-4

108 Ohio St.
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April and Early May Field Trips *Ken Salzman, Field Trip Chair*

Spring is here and the avian population is on the move and changing. Hummingbirds, swallows and warblers, that spend the winter in warmer climates, some as far away as Central and South America, have returned or are on their way back to the Pacific Northwest. Also, our resident birds are becoming more active as we approach mating season. In short..... it's a great time to go birding.

Our field trips are open to everyone regardless of membership in NCAS. Our goal is to offer quality field trips that provide enjoyment and education for all levels of birders. Our field trip leaders, and many of the participants, are enthusiastic about answering questions and helping everyone to focus in on the birds we encounter. So join us for the fun!

Even though temperatures are warmer now, please remember to dress for the weather and wear appropriate footwear. There's nothing like being uncomfortable to ruin an otherwise great day of birding.

Saturday, April 1, Semiahmoo Spit

Time: 9 AM at Semiahmoo Park - ~3 hours

Trip Leader: Paul Woodcock

No registration required

The spit is always a great place to bird. Although most of the regular winter birds will have departed, there will still be many species to be seen. Co-sponsored by NCAS and Whatcom County Parks & Recreation, the trip covers all of the spit and is great for beginning birders. Experienced birders also love this monthly outing.

Friday, April 7, Family Bird Walk

Time: 9:30 AM

Scudder Pond and Whatcom Falls Park

Who's that bird? Bring the family on a spring jaunt by Scudder Pond and into Whatcom Falls Park. Local Audubon birders engage kids and adults in exploring water and forest birds and how they live in urban nature. Meet at 9:30 am at the Bloedel Donovan parking lot, 2214 Electric Avenue, and join us for as long as you like. This easy walk on flat ground is suitable for children five through teens, but all are welcome. Dress for the weather and come rain or shine. Bring binoculars if you have them.

For more information contact Chris: 336-207-7505, chrisboyd353@gmail.com



Bald eagles, photo by Andrew Reding

© Andrew A Reding

Monday, April 17, Connelly and Padden Creeks, Fairhaven and Marine Parks

Time: 8:30 – 11:30 AM

Trip Leader: Bob Myhr

To register: Contact Bob Myhr,

romyhr@comcast.net or 360-933-4352

Join this great "urban" field trip. We will meet at Fairhaven Park and carpool to each of the sites, looking for arriving songbirds, wood ducks, and nesting herons.

Wednesday, May 3, South Whatcom County

Time: 8 AM – 1 PM

Trip Leader: Steven Harper

Trip Limit: 12

To register: Contact Steven Harper,

stevenharper2@msn.com or 360-650-9065

This trip will focus on Whatcom Land Trust and Whatcom County public lands on the south end of Lake Whatcom and the headwaters of the Samish River. Spring migrants will be passing through and the local birds will be singing up a storm. We will focus not only on observing and identifying the birds by sight, but also identifying birds by their songs. All levels of birders are welcome. Bring snacks, lunch and water.

Saturday, May 6, Semiahmoo Spit

Time: 9 AM at Semiahmoo Park - ~3 hours

Trip Leader: Paul Woodcock

No registration required

Co-sponsored by NCAS and Whatcom County Parks & Recreation, the trip covers all of the spit. This is a great trip for novice as well as expert birders.

The Art of Photographing Birds

Tuesday, April 11; Thursday, April 13; and Tuesday, April 18; 6-9PM at WCC
Field Trip: Saturday, April 15; 9AM-2PM

Ken Salzman will be teaching this class on bird photography that includes a photo field trip. The final class will be a critique session.

For more information contact Ken at kpsalzman@comcast.net. Register online at www.whatcom.edu

Birds and Brews Coming in May!

We are excited to announce a new outing in May called Birds and Brews. This event will begin with a short bird walk in Fairhaven and end at a local brewery with lively conversation. More information on times and location will be available in the May newsletter and on our website.



© Andrew A Reding
Anna's hummingbird, photo by Andrew Reding

Yakima River Canyon Bird Fest

Friday, May 12 – Sunday, May 14
Near Ellensburg

Kittitas Environmental Education Network (KEEN) is hosting a new birding festival this year- the Yakima River Canyon Bird Fest. Events include guided field trips, workshops (photography, birding by ear, bird illustration), family-oriented activities, a kids' day camp, keynote speaker Paul Bannick (on owls), a banquet at Red's Yakima River Canyon Resort, an owl prowl, self-guided field trips (maps provided), and more! You can get all the information on the website:

<http://www.ycic.org/yakima-river-canyon-bird-fest>

John M. Edson Hall of Birds at the Whatcom Museum

Opens Thursday, March 16

The Whatcom Museum's founding collection of mounted birds is reinterpreted as an educational experience at Old City Hall. Designed in collaboration with the North Cascades Audubon Society, the new exhibit will provide opportunities to learn about bird migration, conservation success stories, birds in peril, and the importance of studying bird specimens today. Alongside the interpretive panels and the birds themselves, the Hall of Birds will provide a variety of interactive opportunities for all ages.

Admission to the Whatcom Museum:

Free for members | \$10 general | \$8 youth (6-17), student, senior and military | \$5 ages 2-5 | Under 2 free
For more information visit: www.whatcommuseum.org | info@whatcommuseum.org | 360.778.8930

Botulism Caused Gull Deaths Near Port of Tacoma

The following is from a March 2 news release from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Botulism caused the deaths of at least 30 gulls near the Port of Tacoma last month, according to final test results received by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The botulism detected was a type C toxin that is not associated with disease in humans, according to the report from the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wis. Other lab tests for viruses, heavy metals, organophosphates, and other bacteria were negative.

Earlier tests had ruled out avian influenza virus, avian cholera, and lead poisoning. No other animals were affected and no evidence of water pollution or contamination was found. Although results are still pending from tests for marine algal toxins at a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) lab, the lack of other affected species indicates harmful algal blooms were not involved.

WDFW veterinarian Dr. Katie Haman and WDFW wildlife biologist Emily Butler, who led the investigation, said the gulls may have picked up the botulism toxin when scavenging in the area. "Botulism is a bacteria frequently associated with fish kills and decaying carcasses that gulls often scavenge," Haman said. "We'll never know for sure what the gulls ate that caused the botulism toxicity, but since a limited number were impacted, it looks like it was a localized event." Although no further gull deaths or sickness have been reported this month, Haman said people should not handle birds without protective gloves and should keep dogs and other pets from scavenging bird carcasses.

Port of Tacoma workers reported on Jan. 22 that at least 30 gulls were found dead or dying in and around Commencement Bay. The birds were all glaucous-winged gulls or glaucous-winged/western gull hybrids, some of the most common gulls on the West Coast. At least a dozen more dead gulls were reported by the public through Feb. 5, and 31 sick gulls showing signs of weakness and/or paralysis were taken to state-licensed wildlife rehabilitation centers. Twenty-five of the 31 sick gulls were taken to the Progressive Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) in Lynnwood. Other gulls went to Puget Sound WildCare, Fair Isle Animal Clinic, and West Sound Wildlife Shelter. Sixteen of the gulls at PAWS and one at Puget Sound WildCare recovered and were released. Two gulls at West Sound Wildlife Shelter are doing well and will be released soon.

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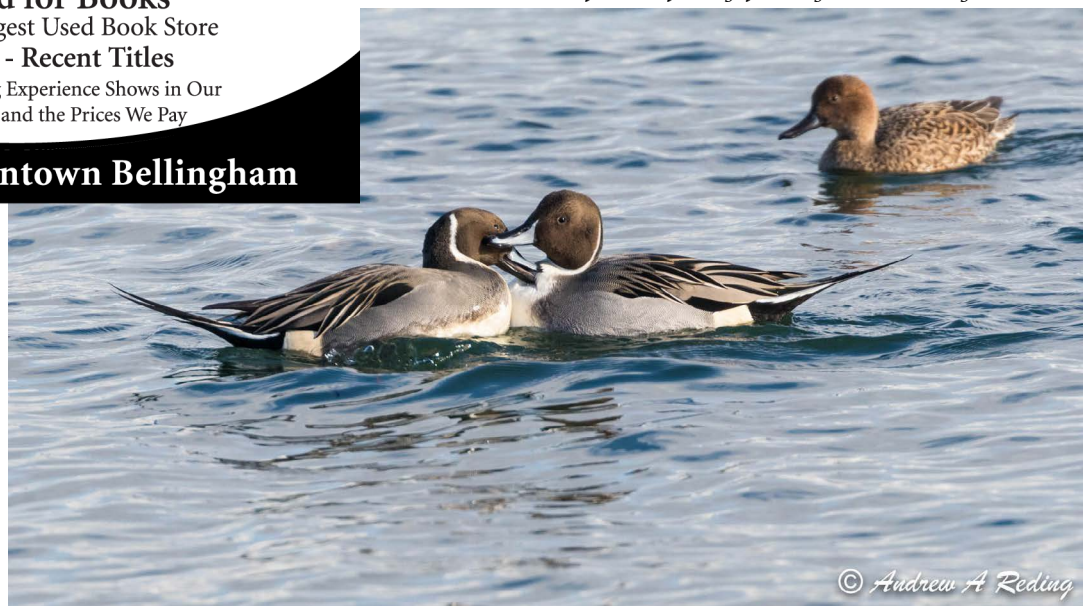
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Northern pintails sparring, photo by Andrew Reding



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North Cascades Audubon Society

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

RE Sources Library

February 13, 2017, 7:00 PM

Board Members Present: Ken Salzman, Rae Edwards, Steven Harper, Sue Parrott, Jamie Huson, Nicole Huson, Twink Coffman, Chris Brewer

1. Additions to Agenda – Additions added below
2. Approval of January Minutes - Approved
3. Treasurer's Report – Sue went over the Treasurer's Report and the budget. Everyone was ok with both.

4. Communications & Input

CBC update newsletter article – Hopefully, there will be an article in the April newsletter. Pam will follow up.

WOW update – Ken and Chris gave updates. Paul will be getting people to sign up for the viewing stations. Pam will be in charge of the table and logistics surrounding that at the WOW.

Mature trees letter to city update – Rae suggested that a positive approach with suggestions be included as well as criticism regarding trees coming down in Fairhaven in any letter that will be written. Rae will continue to work on the letter. It will be reviewed by the board and then approved at the next board meeting.

Museum update: no information yet on when the bird exhibits will be open. Pam should follow up.

WOS meeting update – Sept. 21-25 at Semiahmoo. Ken is looking for field trip leaders.

Website update – No update as of yet. Jamie is working on it.

Climate group update- They will meet at the end of Feb. and are still moving ahead on tabling at the Farmer's Market.

Bird class: February 22 and 23 at ReSources – This has all been arranged and Canaan Cowles will teach the class.

Feb. 15 presentation by Melanie Driscoll – Steve gave an update. People are encouraged to come and help out at the resource table.

Update on WWU scholarships – Nicole created a new poster and it has been sent to Don and she already has received an inquiry from a student.

Legislative updates from Jennifer Syrowitz – Sue wondered if everyone is receiving these updates from Audubon Washington. Everyone is getting the updates except Chris. Sue will send the info to Chris for sign up.

5. Old Business

Swan update – The swan is at the taxidermist and the taxidermist needs a payment to start. Sue will send payment.

Waiver form – Chris presented three different field trip and activity liability waiver forms. The board gave suggestions for changes to the waiver forms and the education committee will revise forms and bring them to the next board meeting. We also decided to use the individual liability forms for more “risky” events or with children. Chris gave two examples (City of Bellingham and Wild Whatcom) and we need to adopt a version of one of these at the next board meeting. Chris also presented information on background checks. Sue will move ahead with establishing an account for getting background checks with the Washington State Patrol.

Membership software- Jamie is still checking on a platform to use.

Suggestion box for membership meetings – Ken is waiting for Pam to return to get hold of a nesting box.

Scholarships for WCC classes – Ken will follow up.

Holiday party credit – We can use the credit for next winter's holiday party.

6. New Business

Consider scholarships for high school seniors – This item will be considered at the next meeting when we find out who placed it on the agenda.

Bird friendly broadcast towers – Sue was interested in having an article in the newsletter and having a person take on the challenge of chasing down towers that should have lights changed to flashing lights. We will continue to discuss this and Sue will possibly work on an article.

7. Committee Reports as needed

Education Committee update -

Museum programs and other events for May- August with March 1 deadline for Museum Calendar – Nobody at the meeting had any suggestions for events. Pam will need to follow up.

April Birds and Brew event and other activities – The education committee described their concept for their Birds and Brew outing. They also showed us the concept poster for the event and their ideas for this coming year such as a Scudder Pond Walk. They passed out their write-up of concepts for this coming year. See handout. We agreed to wait until summer 2018 for children's summer camps.

Upcoming Programs:

February 15: Melanie Driscoll, Deepwater Horizon: Effects of the Oil Spill on Local People and Wildlife

Feb 28: Steve and Martha Ellis: Loons of the Salish Sea

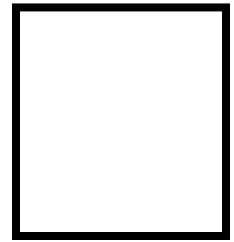
March 28: Matt Christensen and Sarah Brookes, Friends of Semiahmoo Bay: Stewardship North of 49th Parallel

April 25: Jonathan White: Tides: Science and Spirit of the Ocean

May 23: Kathleen Bander: Bats

Adjourn - Next Meeting, March 6, 2017. 7-9 PM WECU Ed Ctr
311 Holly St, Bellingham, WA

North Cascades Audubon Society
PO Box 5805
Bellingham, WA 98227-5805



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Find us at www.northcascadesaudubon.org or through social media:
Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram at @NCascadeAudubon



The Avalanche is the newsletter of the North Cascades Audubon Society, PO Box 5805, Bellingham, WA 98227. It is published 8 times a year; subscriptions start at \$20 per year. The editors welcome articles, artwork, photographs, and letters. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of this organization. Original material may be reprinted if appropriate credit is given. The North Cascades Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

North Cascades Audubon Society Membership

We hope you will support North Cascades Audubon by joining the chapter locally. Your commitment to Audubon is important to us. We will continue to provide you with information regarding local chapter activities through our website and all activities will remain FREE and open to the public. If you are interested in receiving a paper copy of the newsletter, you can join the local chapter for one year at any of the levels to your right. The newsletter is published monthly between September and May, including a double issue for November/December. All issues are also available online. If you do not wish to receive a paper copy, email membership@northcascadesaudubon.org.

Please check your mailing labels for accuracy, including the expiration date. To make any necessary changes, please send an email to membership@northcascadesaudubon.org.

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