

# The Avalanche



North Cascades Audubon Society Newsletter

[www.northcascadesaudubon.org](http://www.northcascadesaudubon.org)

Volume 48, Issue 6

September 2017

## General Membership Meeting with Glen “Alex” Alexander The Diking of the Delta

The lower Skagit Valley is an amazing and popular place for birding. That’s partly because of natural features and partly because of how it was changed by human development. Glen “Alex” Alexander will tell the amazing story of the diking of the Skagit Valley. You may love the magic of the Skagit Valley or you may long to see the way it was, but you will never look at those dikes the same after this presentation.

Glen “Alex” Alexander grew up in Wisconsin on the shore of Lake Michigan. Playing in the woods and on the beach, he developed an interest in nature from his mother, a naturalist. Alex came to Bellingham in 1972 for a temporary internship but, like so many before and since, ended up staying. Recently retired after 27 years as Education Coordinator at Padilla Bay Reserve, he now spends his time working in his forested yard. He is also a citizen scientist and loves hiking and canoeing. Alex has two degrees from Western Washington University: Bachelor of Arts in Education and Master of Education in Environmental Education.

*Always on the 4th Tuesday of the month:*

**September 26th, 7pm** Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room

*free & open to the public!*



*Common yellowthroat, photo by Andrew Reding*

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**Our next board meeting is on September 18.**

Email [president@northcascadesaudubon.org](mailto:president@northcascadesaudubon.org)  
if you would like to join us.

## 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 October 2017 issue is...

**September 15.**

Send materials to Kelley Palmer-McGee at:

**[content@northcascadesaudubon.org](mailto:content@northcascadesaudubon.org)**

## NCAS Board Members

### Officers

President	Pam Borso	360-319-9004
Vice Pres.	Paul Woodcock	360-966-6549
Secretary	Steven Harper	360-650-9065
Treasurer	Sue Parrott	360-650-9065

### Board Members

Education	Chris Brewer	336-207-7505
Field Trips	Ken Salzman	360-756-0347
Membership	Owen Bamford	360-393-3481
Publicity	Twink Coffman	
Newsletter	Kelley Palmer-McGee	360-466-8601
Conservation	Steve Irving	360-384-1618
Archives	Judy Krieger	
Programs	Steven Harper	360-650-9065
Scholarship	Nicole Huson	
Website	Jamie Huson	
Member at Large	Rae Edwards	

### Associated Persons

Scholarship	Don Burgess
Hospitality	Anne Ziomkowski

*If you are interested in volunteering with our Audubon chapter, please contact the President at [president@northcascadesaudubon.org](mailto:president@northcascadesaudubon.org)*

## Coming to your local library: Winter Birds of Whatcom County

Deming Library: Saturday, October 7, 3 -4pm  
Ferndale Library: Saturday, October 21, 2-3 pm  
South Whatcom (Sudden Valley): Saturday,  
November 4, 2-3pm

Who's that bird that just flew in? Join the North Cascades Audubon Society at County libraries this fall for a presentation about the many birds that migrate to our area for winter as well as those who reside here year-round. We'll look at the large seabird populations our waters draw, plus the bald eagles, hawks, owls and backyard passerines you can expect to see this season. Local bird photographer Ken Salzman provides amazing images. Presentations are by NCAS Board Members Ken Salzman and Chris Brewer. Lots of free information about birding available.

## December Holiday Family Bird Count

Audubon families can join us for a fun day during winter holiday break to participate in a bird count at Lake Padden. Each year NCAS joins in the global Christmas Bird Count but our Family Bird Count occurs after the CBC so families can enjoy participating in this winter bird outing together. Our day starts at the Cedar Grove Clubhouse on Bullard Lake for a morning overview of birds we might see. Next, we head across the road to Lake Padden for our bird count. Back at the Clubhouse we'll compile our data while we warm up and enjoy some snacks. Stay tuned for more on this event in our next newsletter.

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## Pearrygin Lake Campout 2017

*Steven Harper, Secretary*

Our tenth annual NCAS Campout was held at Pearrygin Lake State Park group camp June 1-4 with a great group of people, great weather and of course great birding. Approximately 27 members joined together for three days of birding, music, swimming and stargazing. Most stayed at the group camp but we also had a few members staying in the Winthrop area and joining us for the field trips.

Saturday started out with field trips to Pipestone Canyon led by Steven Harper, Beaver Pond led by Paul Woodcock, and Methow River Valley led by Sue Parrott and Pam Borso. Temperatures were in the low 80's, so after returning from field trips many campers used the remainder of the afternoon to laze around in the shade or to swim. On Sunday morning, the group divided into two groups and explored the park along with field trip leaders Paul Woodcock and Steven Harper. On Friday and Saturday nights many campers joined in with an informal sing-along led by Pam Borso.

Participants were again very excited with the birding as the campground area was teeming with birds including veerys and yellow-breasted chats. A total of 110 different bird species were positively identified during the weekend. Highlights this year included lazuli buntings, golden eagles, American redstarts, common poorwills, yellow-breasted chats, Cassin's vireos, Williamson's sapsuckers and veerys. Especially exciting was observing the incredibly cute baby American coots on the pond at the entrance to the park and the seemingly ubiquitous gray catbirds.

We are planning on having the campout again next year and it's tentatively scheduled for May 31 - June 3, 2018. If you have suggestions for next year's campout please contact me with any feedback. This campout continues to be very popular thanks to the participation of all the great participants.

### Whatcom Museum's Hall of Birds

*Opened March 16, 2017; Ongoing; Old City Hall. The article was originally published on the Museum's website.*

This new exhibit in Old City Hall provides a glimpse into the local history and culture of the Victorian Era, when taxidermy flourished and mounted animals often decorated interior spaces. For the Museum, this collection of birds is also important to the building's history. If it hadn't been for John M. Edson, Old City Hall might not be standing here today. While city officials were considering demolishing it, Edson saw an opportunity to not only save the building, but also to create a public museum within its walls. He dreamed of having a permanent home for his bird specimen collection, and the museum became the perfect showcase.

Now, more than 75 years later, the Whatcom Museum has taken this important collection and reinterpreted it as an educational experience. Designed in collaboration with the North Cascades Audubon Society, the new exhibit provides 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 provides a variety of interactive opportunities, including video clips of birds in our local habitats, audio files of Puget Sound area bird calls, and hands-on activities for children. We look forward to sharing this important collection with visitors for years to come.



*American coots, photo by Doug Brown*

**Open Mondays at Our New Location**

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

108 Ohio St.  
corner of Cornwall  
Bellingham  
360-734-0969

WildBirdChalet.com



## September Field Trips *Ken Salzman, Field Trip Chair*

Fall is right around the corner. Shorebirds have already been sighted along the coast for the past month and their movement is reaching its peak. Songbirds will soon follow suit. If you are also feeling the urge to move you can vicariously experience the thrill of migration by heading out to our fields, forests and waterways to observe the southward flow of an astonishing variety of remarkable winged creatures. They never fail to impress. At the same time you can enjoy our remaining days of summer weather and experience the subtle changes that come as one season slips into another.

North Cascades Audubon field trips are open to everyone, members and non-members, free of charge. See you in the field!

### Saturday, September 2, Semiahmoo Spit

Time: 9 AM at Semiahmoo Park - ~3 hours

Trip Leader: Paul Woodcock

No registration required

These monthly trips are co-sponsored by NCAS and Whatcom County Parks & Recreation and are meant for birders of all skill levels. If you are not a birder but just curious, you are more than welcome to come along and share the experience. Semiahmoo is a special place and September should be an outstanding time for shorebirds, waterfowl, and other seabirds as well as raptors and songbirds.

*Purple martin, photo by  
Andrew Reding*



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## Help Wanted

**Field trip leaders are needed!**

We are looking for those of you with:

1. A love of and enthusiasm for birding
2. A reasonable knowledge of and skill related to identification of birds in our area
3. A willingness to share your knowledge and skill related to birding

If you would like to volunteer or have any questions about becoming a trip leader please contact Ken Salzman at:

360-756-0347 or [kpsalzman@comcast.net](mailto:kpsalzman@comcast.net).

## NCAS Represented at National Audubon Convention 2017

This summer two of our board members, Jamie and Nicole Huson, were awarded scholarships to attend the National Audubon Convention in Park City, Utah. They were two of the 24 attendees representing many chapters from across the state including: Lower Columbia Basin, Tahoma, Seattle and Rainier Audubon chapters, and the Seward Park Audubon Center. This year's theme was *Elevating Audubon: America's Most Effective Conservation Network*. Jamie and Nicole took part in seminars learning about board building, creating equity and diversity in chapters, and protecting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. They also participated in the Pacific Flyway meeting, where they made connections and heard news from the other states in our flyway- Alaska, California, and Oregon. Please feel free to talk with them at our membership meetings and they can share with you the latest news from our flyway and beyond.

## Last Chance!

### Come Visit NCAS at the Bellingham Farmer's Market on Saturday, September 16

With the help of many volunteers, NCAS has been tabling at the Bellingham Farmer's Market on the third Saturday of the month from April through August. September will be our last month of tabling in 2017. We have found the booth to be an engaging way to dialogue with community members and out of town visitors about birds. People stop by to ask about the nest boxes we have available, or the display that shows the impact of climate change on our four climate ambassadors: bald eagle, rufous hummingbird, trumpeter swan, and tree swallow. People have questions about birds they have seen, or want to know what they can do to attract birds to their backyard. We have offered every visitor to our booth a short handout on our four climate ambassadors, with information on what all of us can do to help reduce the impact of climate change.

A special thanks to the members of the Birds and Climate Change Work Group for designing the booth, and to all the volunteers who shared their time and passion for birds while staffing the booth, including:

Mary Ann Percy, Margarette Grant, Marj Leone, Darrel Weiss, Mary Jo Aegerter, Steven Harper, Canaan Cowles, Deborah Kaye, Bob Butterfield, Chris Brewer, Michael Sennett, Mary Rawlins, Kirsten Anderson, John Aspnes, Jane Aspnes, Jacqueline Anderson, Doug Brown, Richard Carpenter, Steve Irving, Owen Bamford, Pam Borso and Sue Parrott.



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## Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival 2017

*Saturday, September 16, 8 am - 3 pm*  
Pateros, WA

Join the Chelan and Entiat Ranger Districts, North Central Washington Audubon Society, and HawkWatch International this fall for the eighth annual Chelan Ridge Hawk Migration Festival! This family event combines free activities in Pateros Memorial Park with trips to Chelan Ridge to learn about and celebrate raptors as they journey to winter territories. At the park participants will find vendors, live raptors, interpretive booths, and projects for kids.

Friday night, September 15, an expert from HawkWatch International will offer a workshop on raptor migration and field identification to prepare you for your trip up to the ridge the following day. The trip to Chelan Ridge lasts four hours and includes seeing banded raptors released. A field trip to Wells Wildlife Refuge from 8 am to noon will also be offered.

More information and on-line registration for the various events can be found at [www.ncwaudubon.org](http://www.ncwaudubon.org).

Contact Richard Scranton at [rscran4350@yahoo.com](mailto:rscran4350@yahoo.com) with any questions.

## Puget Sound Bird Fest in Edmonds, Washington

*Friday-Sunday, September 15-17*

Mark your calendars for the return of a beloved fall tradition for nature lovers throughout the Northwest- the 13th annual Puget Sound Bird Fest. Acclaimed as one of the Seattle area's best events on [www.events12.com](http://www.events12.com), this festival celebrates birds and nature on the beautiful shores of Puget Sound with speakers, guided walks and field trips, Puget Sound boat tours, exhibits, and educational activities for children and adults.

For more information and details - including details on the 2017 Puget Sound Bird Fest Poster Art Contest - visit the festival website at:

[www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org](http://www.pugetsoundbirdfest.org)

## North Cascades Audubon Society

### Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

August 7, 2017, 7:00 PM

**Board Members Present:** Pam Borso, Paul Woodcock, Kelley Palmer-McGee, Steven Harper, Sue Parrott, Ken Salzman, Rae Edwards, Owen Bamford, Twink Coffman, Nicole Huson and Jamie Huson

1. Additions to Agenda – No additions
2. Approval of May Minutes - Approved

3. **Treasurer's Report** – Sue discussed the June and July treasurer's reports and the year-to-date budget report, including nest box revenue (much higher), the educational material and printing category, and scholarships. The board discussed whether there should be separate categories for printing for each category. The board decided to discuss this more at the annual retreat when they are establishing the budget. We discussed reallocating the swan expenses to the community grant category (Museum as recipient) as it is technically a pass-through donation.

#### 4. Committee Reports as needed:

- Climate Group update: Sue has gotten volunteers for August and September tabling at the Farmer's Market. She believes it is very successful and will be considering continuing next year. Most people believe it is fun and good publicity for Audubon as it has ended up having a broader focus than just climate change.
- Education update – Pam ran through all of the upcoming events scheduled by the education committee. (See attached update from the education committee.) Ken discussed buying binoculars for events.
- Scholarship Committee: Nicole mentioned that everyone was very appreciative of the scholarships at WWU. A group of people will develop criteria for next year's WWU scholarships. Nicole will coordinate the scholarships for the WCC classes. (See March meeting minutes.)
- Website update: Jamie discussed potential new membership software called Square Space which would only be \$12/month and includes support. It supports PayPal, Google Docs and Apple Pay. He will send it around for review. He is continuing to investigate a membership database.

#### 5. Communications & Input

- Audubon National Convention Report: Jamie and Nicole gave a report. They each received a scholarship from WA State Audubon which covered all expenses. They did a lot of networking with other chapters and especially with Western Flyway chapters. One of the key focuses is the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. Nicole described a session on board succession and process. Jamie talked about some of the keynote speeches and the focus on diversity by Audubon. Both Jamie and Nicole have some handouts on some of the initiatives of National Audubon which they will happily distribute. There was a suggestion that we discuss some of the National Audubon initiatives at future board meetings.
- Background checks: Pam will continue to work on this and do background checks on all of the people interested.
- WOS meeting update- All half-day field trips have been cancelled because of lack of interest.
- Holiday Potluck: Pam will contact the YWCA to try to schedule Tuesday, Dec. 12.
- 2018 Pearrygin Lake Campout: May 31-June 3 is a go and make sure to reserve it.
- Newsletter input due by August 15

6. **Old Business-** The Swan is finished and is now at the Museum and we need to finish transferring ownership. It will be in the Endangered and Vulnerable Species exhibit and the Museum will be working on a plaque regarding the memorial to the Garlicks.

#### 7. New Business

- Port Properties Bird Surveys – Judy Kreiger suggested that we pursue the idea of conducting bird surveys on Port properties if new Port commissioners are elected that are amenable to the idea. It was agreed that we will discuss this further after the election.
- 2018 Officers – Pam noted that people need to begin thinking about who should be the new president and vice-president of NCAS as neither Pam nor Paul can continue next year per NCAS bylaws.

#### 8. Programs & Events

Farmer's Market: August 19 and September 16

Audubon at the Museum: August 27, September 24, October 22 and November 26; 1:30 – 3:30pm

September 26 Glen "Alex" Alexander

October 24 Ed Deal

November 28 Evelyn Brown

December 11 Holiday Party at YWCA

Diking the Skagit River Delta

Seattle's Adaptable Urban Cooper's Hawks

Stuck in the Middle: The Ecology, Knowledge Gaps or Misunderstandings, and Issues Surrounding Forage Fish

*... continued on page 7 ...*

... *continued from page 6* ...

January 24 James Walker  
February 27 Dick McNeely

Dragonflies and Damselflies?  
Unusual Bird Videos?

Museum: Audubon presence at January 18, 2018 Presentation for Museum Advocates group

**Adjourn** - Next Meeting, September 4, 2017. Improv Playworks 1011 Girard St, Bellingham, WA 98225

## Education Committee Update for August 7, 2017

**Fall 2017 Bird 'n Brews:** Jamie and Nicole are selecting a date for a fall event to keep this on a roll!

**Library Outreach to County communities:** See September newsletter for details. Talk with Chris or Ken if you're interested in presenting one of these programs in the future. We'll have materials at a table so anyone can help with that, too.

**Family Winter Bird Count:** See September and October newsletters for details.

### Education Priorities for 2018

- 20-40 age group—Nicole and Jamie currently doing Birds 'n Brews
- Family—Chris and Ken currently working on this
- Outreach—discussion around whether this should be a part of education—or can we help with some of the planning to take some of the load off Sue?

### Other Great Ideas

- Jamie suggested a running PowerPoint of events, activities, etc. playing before each meeting so people can get some of this info while waiting for the meeting to start. He will put one together for the September meeting.
- Ken has been researching possible binocs we might purchase for new birders to use on field trips.

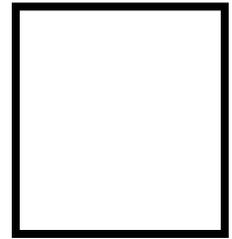
## Whatcom Museum Endangered Species Exhibit: September 8, 2018 – January 6, 2019

Art Curator Barbara Matilsky is creating an exhibit on endangered species, with substantial funding from the Nordcliff Foundation and the NEA. Chris has been in conversation with her about putting together community programs that tie into this exhibit and expand awareness of the critical issues related to species extinction, habitat loss and other survival issues, and conservation efforts. This is a good opportunity for NCAS to share information about the 2014 State of the Birds report and offer relevant conservation programming. Chris will be working on this when she returns. Anyone want to work on it or have ideas? By the September meeting there should be some brainstorm ideas to share with the board. Chris provided the Curatorial Narrative and the current press release for the exhibit.



*Black oystercatchers, photo by Andrew Reding*

**North Cascades Audubon Society**  
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## 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](mailto: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](mailto:membership@northcascadesaudubon.org).

## Join or Renew (circle one)

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