

The Avalanche



North Cascades Audubon Society Newsletter

www.northcascadesaudubon.org

Volume 50, Issue 1

January 2019

General Membership Meeting with Maria Mudd Ruth

On the Front Line for Marbled Murrelets

What happens when you encounter a strange new bird? If that bird is the enigmatic marbled murrelet, you might take note. If you are writer Maria Mudd Ruth, you start taking notes and then suddenly find yourself on a years-long journey in the Pacific Northwest to unravel the story of this endangered seabird and the contested old-growth forests where it nests. You ask a lot of questions of murrelet researchers, field biologists, forest ecologists, timber company executives, and yourself: Why does this bird matter? Why should anyone care about the murrelet? Do we have a moral obligation to save this bird or any other endangered species? Can we all move to the front line to protect earth's beauty and biodiversity?

In this slide-illustrated talk, Maria will discuss the natural history of the murrelet, current conservation efforts in Washington, and the important murrelet advocacy work of the Audubon community in the Pacific Northwest.

Maria Mudd Ruth is the author of more than a dozen books on natural history topics for children and adults. In addition to her latest book, *A Sideways Look at Clouds* (Mountaineers Books, 2017), which won a Nautilus Award in 2018, she is the author of the critically acclaimed *Rare Bird: Pursuing the Mystery of the Marbled Murrelet* (Mountaineers Books reissue, 2013). From her home in Olympia, Maria works as a dedicated environmental advocate, citizen scientist, urban parks booster, volunteer reading buddy, and writer.

Always on the 4th Tuesday of the month:

January 22, 7pm

Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room

free & open to the public!

In this issue...

Topic	Page
Swans & PSE's Avian Protection Program,	2
Lily Point Marine Park & Reserve	3
January Field Trips	4, 5
Winter Wings Festival	5
Harrison Reserve Educational Initiative	6
Falcon Research Group Classes	6
NCAS Board Meetings: Oct & Nov	7

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 February 2019 issue is...

January 15.

Send materials to:

content@northcascadesaudubon.org

NCAS Board Members

Officers

President	Steven Harper
Vice Pres.	Jamie Huson
Secretary	Deborah Kaye
Treasurer	Sue Parrott

Board Members

Conservation	Robert Kaye
Education/Volunteers	Pam Borso
Field Trips	Paul Woodcock
Hospitality	Anne Ziomkowski
Membership	Owen Bamford
Newsletter	Kelley Palmer-McGee
Programs	Steven Harper
Publicity	Kirsten Anderson
Scholarship	Nicole Huson
Website	Jamie Huson

Advisory Board

Member at Large	Rae Edwards
Member at Large	Steve Irving
Member at Large	Chris Brewer
Scholarship	Don Burgess

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

Happy New Year!

From all of us at North Cascades Audubon Society, we are so excited to spend another year with you.



We Value Your Community Support: Join or Donate Today!

With your efforts and involvement, the North Cascades Audubon Society is thriving in Whatcom County! We pride ourselves in providing all of our services free to our community. We hope that you join us in sustaining this vision by donating, becoming a member or by including NCAS in your estate plans. See the last page of the newsletter for a membership sign-up form.

Swainson's thrush, photo by Andrew Reding

© Andrew A Reding

Swans and Puget Sound Energy's Avian Protection Program

February 7, 6:30 PM at the Deming Public Library

Join Mel Walters, biologist and director of Puget Sound Energy's Avian Protection Program, to learn about issues surrounding injuries and deaths of trumpeter and tundra swans caused by contact with high voltage power lines. Mr. Walters will describe what is being done to minimize these occurrences, and will also talk about local swan population trends and distribution, as well as other bird species protected by the program.

Month of Giving

All through January

January 1st - 5th - 500 Business cards +500 FREE

January 7th - 12th - 500 Envelopes +500 FREE

January 14th - 19th - 500 Letterheads +500 FREE

January 21st - 26th - One Poster +ONE FREE

January 28th - 31st - One Calendar +ONE FREE

www.CopySource.com 360.738.1280
Sales@CopySource.com 1122 N. State Street • Bellingham, WA 98225
 Offer valid with coupon until 1/31/19 *Some Restrictions Will Apply

Lily Point Marine Park & Reserve

By Lorraine Wilde (writing on behalf of the Whatcom Land Trust)

Ever taken a birding adventure to Point Roberts? The shoreline birding available at Boundary Bay’s Lily Point Marine Park and Reserve is worth the short drive across the border. Thanks to a conservation easement forged by Bellingham’s Whatcom Land Trust, Lily Point became a Whatcom County Park in 2007. The park encompasses more than 275 acres that includes forested upland bluffs lined with more than 1.4 miles of saltwater shoreline beaches and tidal mudflats with spectacular views of the Strait of Georgia and the orca that pass by.

Archeologists date human occupancy on the point back at least 9000 years. For centuries, Coast Salish native peoples maintained their primary reef net fishery and a summer village for as many as 500 people at Lily Point. Here the Lummi ancestors each year performed their “first salmon” ceremony to assure the annual return of the fish they depended on. They called this place Chelhtenem, “hang salmon for drying.” An 1881 newspaper reported 10,000 salmon caught by three reef nets in six hours. The Land Trust maintains responsibility for the site’s long-term stewardship.

You’ll find bald eagles scouring the beach, great blue herons stalking the tidelands, and a host of waterfowl and shore-birds that visit Boundary Bay. At a past low tide, a delegation from the Trust saw nearly 100 eagles on the beach. This winter the area has been dominated by snow geese, mallards, American wigeons, horned grebes, red-breasted and hooded mergansers, greater scaup, surf scoters, pelagic and double-crested cormorants, common loons and gadwalls to name a few. This winter in the upland forested trail habitat, birders have also spotted northern flickers, Pacific wrens, dark-eyed juncos, spotted towhees, golden-crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets, and house and purple finches.

This incredible site has public restrooms near the parking area. To access the beach, take the Multi-Use Loop Trail 0.3 miles to the Beach Access Trail. Stop there for panoramic views of the point and then take the switch backing beach trail 0.4 miles to the beach. For birding in the upland forest, take the other half of the Loop Trail 0.6 miles back to the parking area.

While you explore the birds and pristine habitat of Lily Point, try to imagine how the Lummi ancestors used the land sustainably for more than 9000 years and be thankful that Whatcom County and the Trust plan to protect it for at least 9000 more.

Lily Point Marine Park: 2315 APA Road, Point Roberts, WA



*Left: Lily Point bluffs
Top right: eagles by Alan Fritzberg*



CAUTION: Bird feeding makes you happy!

Mon-Fri 10-5:30
Sat 10-4
108 Ohio Street
Bellingham
360-734-0969

WildBirdChalet.com



January Field Trips *Paul Woodcock, Field Trip Chair*

Happy New Year! If you have lived in our area for a few years, I probably do not have to take up a lot of space here to convince you how exciting birding can be in our northwest corner during the winter months. The opportunities are plentiful. Huge flocks of snow geese on Fir Island, six species of raptors hunting the Samish Flats, dozens of bald eagles along the Nooksack River, flocks of trumpeter swans in farm fields, hundreds of ducks, grebes and loons at Semiahmoo or five species of sparrows in a suburban blackberry tangle are examples of what you might find. If you are new to the area or new to birding, please feel free to join us and share the excitement. Or if you are an experienced birder, join in for the camaraderie and share your knowledge with others. Resolve to start 2019 with a birding trip or two. We would be pleased to have you along. Check out our trips listed below. We look forward to seeing you in the field or on the beach.

Information you should know about NCAS field trips:

Our field trips are free and open to anyone who is interested. Bring your friends!

Beginning birders are very welcome.

Carpooling is encouraged and even required for some sites with limited parking.

Preregistration is often required to limit numbers and reduce disturbance.

Dress for the weather, in layers, and wear waterproof clothing and footwear as needed.

Severe weather may cancel a trip; contact your leader if concerned or if you cancel.

Bring binoculars, scope, field guide or a necessary parking pass if you have them.

Pets are not allowed on field trips.

Like most organizations, NCAS now requires participants to sign a waiver to participate.

We are always looking for trip leaders or assistants. If you're interested please contact us.

Friday, January 4, Skagit Flats and Samish Flats

NOTE: Steven will offer this field trip again on Thursday, February 7

Time: 9 AM - 3 PM

Trip Leader: Steven Harper

Limit: 11

Registration required: Contact Steven at stevenharper2@msn.com or 360-650-9065

This will be an all-day field trip searching the Samish Flats and Skagit Flats for raptors, snow geese, trumpeter swans and any other interesting birds that happen to be around. The trip will begin and end at the Alger Park & Ride, I-5 exit 240. We will carpool in three cars while we search for birds. Bring water, hot beverages, snacks and lunch to eat on the run. If we have time we will stop at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center for a break and warm-up. Dress to keep warm and bring binoculars and a spotting scope if you have one. We will see trumpeter swans, bald eagles, rough-legged hawks, harriers, red-tailed hawks, and kestrels and will search for other, less common raptors such as short-eared owls and merlins.

Saturday, January 5, Semiahmoo Spit

Time: 9 AM - Noon

Trip Leaders: Jane and John Aspnes

No registration required. Meet at the Semiahmoo County Park parking lot.

Join John and Jane for this regular monthly trip co-sponsored by Whatcom County Parks. The winter waterfowl of Semiahmoo Bay and Drayton Harbor will be on display for your pleasure and excitement. Expect to see two or three species of scoters, harlequins, golden-eyes, buffleheads, hopefully some long-tailed ducks, brant, grebes, loons and cormorants. Bald eagles, great blue herons and belted kingfishers are usually present. And there are always a number of resident and wintering songbirds on the spit for variety. Join the group at Whatcom County's Important Bird Area.

Saturday, January 19, Lake Padden**Time:** 9 AM - Noon**Trip Leader:** Ken Salzman**Registration required:** Contact Ken at 360-756-0347 or kpsalzman@comcast.net.

Winter is a great time for waterfowl at Lake Padden. You can expect such species as American wigeon, ring-necked duck and bufflehead, just to name a few. Rarities in the recent past have been male Eurasian wigeon and redhead. And there are always a number of passerines and a raptor or two.

Thursday, January 24, Fairhaven Park, Hoag Pond, Padden & Chuckanut Lagoons**Time:** 8:30 - 11 AM**Trip Leader:** Bob Myhr**Registration required:** Contact Bob at romyhr@comcast.net or 360-933-4352.

Participants will meet at Fairhaven Park for a south-side urban birding trip. Everyone is welcome as we search for local and migrant sparrows, thrushes, woodpeckers, wintering waterfowl and heron nesting sites. Please be prepared for the weather.

Saturday, January 26, Boulevard Park, Taylor Dock & Marine Park**Time:** 9 AM - Noon**Trip Leader:** Richard Carpenter

No registration required. Meet at Boulevard Park parking lot, west end near the coffee shop.

We'll check out the Bellingham waterfront from Boulevard Park into Fairhaven to find goldeneyes, buffleheads, scoters and other ducks, plus grebes, cormorants and gulls and a few winter songbirds. There are places to stop and warm up along the way.

Saturday, February 2, Semiahmoo Spit**Time:** 9 AM - Noon**Trip Leader:** Paul Woodcock

No registration required. Meet at Semiahmoo County Park parking lot.

Come and join us on the beaches of Semiahmoo for exciting winter birding. We can usually find upwards of 45 species on this field trip in February including 15 species of ducks, three species of loons, four species of grebes, four species of shorebirds, three species of gulls and a dozen species of passerines. Whether you are an expert birder or just starting out, come and be a part of this monthly excursion cosponsored by NCAS and Whatcom County Parks.

Save the Dates!**Winter Wings Festival 2019****Thursday-Sunday, February 14-17****Klamath Falls, Oregon**

Come experience winter birds at their finest! The 40th Annual Klamath Basin Winter Wings Festival brings together birders and photographers of all stripes to learn and explore with top notch professionals and enthusiastic local guides. Enjoy over 50 guided birding and photography field trips, workshops, receptions, keynotes, and more throughout the Klamath Basin in Oregon and California. The Klamath Basin is renowned for its massive wintering population of bald eagles, but is also prime habitat for many other raptors including owls, as well as a stunning abundance and diversity of waterfowl. The 2019 festival will feature three dynamic keynote speakers: Pepper Trail, George Lepp and Julie Zickefoose.

Sponsored by the Klamath Basin Audubon Society

To register and for more information go to:

www.WinterWingsFest.org**17th Annual Wings Over Water
Northwest Birding Festival****March 15-17 in Blaine, Semiahmoo and Birch Bay**

Look for more information in our February and March newsletters or at:

wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com

**VILLAGE BOOKS
AND
PAPER DREAMS**

IN HISTORIC
FAIRHAVEN
&
DOWNTOWN
LYNDEN

Building Community
Since 1980

villagebooks.com • 360.671.2626 • Open Daily • Free Events!

Every time you click through from Audubon's website to Village Books' website and buy books, Audubon gets 5.5% of the purchase!

Harrison Reserve-Kendall Elementary School Birding & Environmental Education Initiative

The Harrison Reserve-Kendall Elementary School Birding & Environmental Education Initiative is a collaboration with Whatcom Land Trust (lead), North Cascades Audubon Society, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, Whatcom Conservation District, the Mt. Baker School District and Kendall Parents Teacher Association. The initiative will provide environmental education to rural, underserved elementary school students using a 5-acre site owned by Whatcom Land Trust and 10 acres of additional pond and wetlands located adjacent to Kendall Elementary School. To facilitate the initiative the site is being replanted with bird-friendly plant species, and a boardwalk and viewing platform/bird blind will be constructed.

NCAS Role: NCAS is responsible for raising money for the viewing platform/bird blind, for assistance procuring birding education resources for Kendall Elementary School, for guidance on bird-friendly plants for habitat restoration, and other assistance related to birding education. The birding education program will be integrated with the bird-friendly habitat restoration and our partners' salmon and water quality curricula. This will help students develop a better understanding of the conservation value of the connected natural systems of Harrison Reserve and learn actions they can take to improve natural systems function.

Fund Raising Goal: NCAS needs to raise at least \$11,000 for the initiative. We need to raise at least \$5,500 of this total from our members. The Board has agreed to match dollar for dollar \$5,500 in funds from a bequest targeted towards education. In addition four members have agreed to match the first \$2,000 in donations.

How Can You Help? Please consider donating money to the Harrison Reserve Initiative. Donations are tax deductible, and if donated as part of your retirement RMD, they're tax free. All donations will be matched dollar for dollar. Donations can be sent to us at our mailing address or by using PayPal. For more information on the project please contact Steven Harper. (stevenharper2@msn.com or 360-650-9065)

Falcon Research Group (FRG) Winter Raptor Classes

Cost per class: \$175

To enroll, send a check to:

Classes fill quickly!

FRG, PO Box 248, Bow, WA 98232

For more information, visit www.falconresearch.org

Hawkwatching in Western Washington with Bud Anderson

Bellingham Class, sponsored by the Whatcom Land Trust: Thursdays, January 3-31; 7-9 pm at the Unitarian Church

Mount Vernon Class: Tuesdays, January 8-February 5; 7-9pm at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center

Join Bud Anderson of the Falcon Research Group (FRG) for this class focusing on the identifying characteristics, behavior and life cycles of the raptors that winter in Western Washington. Bud is a world-renowned raptor biologist, whose specialty is peregrine falcons. In addition to the five two-hour classroom sessions, the class will be broken down into smaller groups for a daylong Saturday or Sunday field trip on the Skagit Flats. The field trip is a great opportunity to practice identifying raptors with Bud's expertise and assistance. People often comment that the field trip alone is worth the price of the class.

Advanced Raptor Identification with Bill Clark Padilla Bay Interpretive Center

Fri. 2/15: 7-9 pm classroom instruction

Sat. 2/16: 7-9 am classroom, then field trip until 4pm

Sun. 2/17: 7-9 am classroom, then field trip until 4pm

Raptor expert Bill Clark is returning to western Washington to teach his famous raptor identification course, designed for intermediate to advanced hawk watchers. Bill is one of the world's leading authorities on raptor identification and taxonomy, and co-author of A Photographic Guide to North American Raptors and A Field Guide to Hawks of North America, the raptor field guide in the Peterson series.

Summary of October and November NCAS Board Meetings

October 1, 2018

The Board met at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship from 7 to 9 pm on October 1st and took the following actions and/or discussed the following issues:

- Jill Clark of the Whatcom Land Trust met with the Board and shared some of the insights she has learned about membership development and fundraising from her 25 years of experience working with various nonprofit organizations in the community. She emphasized the importance of connecting with people that share our values, thanking members for their support and publicizing the programs that member donations make possible. Jill shared several ways to implement these concepts that the Board will consider.
- The proposed test on October 6 to see if the protocols used in the State Audubon Seabird Surveys can be made compatible with the seabird surveys currently conducted by the Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve (CPAR) Citizens Stewardship Committee has been postponed indefinitely. CPAR will continue using the current protocol for the remainder of the bird counts in 2018-2019.
- We have received a \$250 donation and a \$2,000 pledge for the Harrison Reserve Project.
- Chris Brewer has stepped down as Education Committee Chair. The Board thanks her for her service. Pam Borso has assumed this position. Chris will remain involved with NCAS as an Advisory Board Member.
- The Board scheduled a tentative date in early February for a Board retreat.

November 5, 2018

The Board met at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship from 7 to 9 pm on November 5th and took the following actions and/or discussed the following issues:

- The Board agreed that our bylaws need to be reviewed and clarified to address the distinction between Board and Advisory Board members. The Governance Committee will continue its work on this project and advise the Board of any proposed changes to the bylaws to be brought forth for membership approval. The Board voted to adopt the revised Board and Committee Chair job descriptions.
- The Conservation Committee submitted a comment letter to the Department of Natural Resources on behalf of NCAS regarding their proposed Conservation Plan for the Marbled Murrelet. Kirsten will send an email to all NCAS members encouraging everyone to submit their own comments to the DNR about this conservation plan prior to the December 6th deadline.
- Judy Krieger has stepped down from her position as Chair of Archives. The Board thanked Judy for her years of service. Pam will assist with Archives until a new Chair is installed.
- The Board agreed to co-host an author presentation on the Secret Life of Beavers at Village Books in Fairhaven on December 14th.
- Board members will gather for a Board Retreat on February 10, 2019 from 1 to 5 pm in the Roots Room of the Community Food Co-op Cordata store.
- Audubon National has partnered with Holbrook Travel to offer birding expeditions to the public and has reached out to local Audubon chapters to help promote these excursions. The Board agreed to obtain more information about this program and to discuss relevant details at a future Board meeting.

HENDERSON BOOKS

734-6855

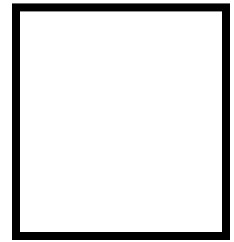
Cash Paid for Books

Bellingham's Largest Used Book Store
Used - Rare - Recent Titles

35 Years Book Buying Experience Shows in Our
Quality Stock and the Prices We Pay

116 Grand Downtown Bellingham

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



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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. Paper newsletters are provided to current, paid members. Help support us - and receive a paper newsletter - by joining the local chapter 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.

Join or Renew (circle one)

Please make checks payable to North Cascades Audubon.

Each membership applies to one household.

Does your company match donations? Let them know you donated to North Cascades Audubon Society.

- \$20 Kestrel
- \$35 Merlin
- \$50 Prairie Falcon
- \$75 Peregrine Falcon
- \$100 Gyrfalcon
- \$_____ Other
- I'd like to go paperless. (include email below)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____