

# The Avalanche



North Cascades Audubon Society Newsletter

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

Volume 50, Issue 2

February 2019

## General Membership Meeting with Makenna Johansen and Alysha Evans

Whatcom Humane Society Wildlife Rehabilitation Center

The purpose of wildlife rehabilitation is to treat sick, injured and orphaned wildlife with the goal of releasing them back into the wild. The Whatcom Humane Society Wildlife Rehabilitation Center is the primary facility for Whatcom County, but often receives animals from all over the state. Housing, diet, husbandry, enrichment and medical care tailored to each species maximizes their chances of release. Join Makenna Johansen and Alysha Evans as they discuss the role the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center plays in Whatcom County and as they walk us through the rehabilitation process from intake to release. They will also delight us with details of some of the cases they receive and give us all pointers on when it is appropriate to bring injured birds and animals to the Rehabilitation Center and when we should let nature take its course.

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

**February 26, 7pm**

Whatcom Museum Rotunda Room

*free & open to the public!*

**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

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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 March 2019 issue is...

**February 15.**

Send materials to:

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

## Volunteer Spotlight: Richard Carpenter

### How he became involved with NCAS:

"I wanted to give back to my community, but did not know how. Then I saw the Audubon Society's Mission Statement and it sounded similar to how



I thought about things. So I joined the North Cascades Audubon Society. But the results of the 2016 Presidential Election convinced me that I needed to do more because I feared that nature was going to need all the help it could get.

"I began volunteering with Audubon two summers ago with the Saturday Farmer's Market tabling. Since then, I have become one of our newest trip leaders, and have also assisted with the Whatcom Museum's John M. Edson Hall of Birds helping with outreach to school classes. In the future, I would like to become involved with bird-interested families."

### Why he volunteers with NCAS:

"Each of us has two important days in our life – when we are born, and when we know why we are here. While I was volunteering with Audubon, I realized why I was here – I volunteer with Audubon because helping people to understand birds and nature can inspire people to care about them, and then, they will hopefully want to help preserve and protect birds and nature. That is why I am here."

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## Your Dollars Will Help Kids Connect with Nature!

### Harrison Reserve-Kendall Elementary School Birding & Environmental Education Initiative

You can help provide environmental education to rural, underserved students who will explore and study at the Whatcom Land Trust's 5-acre Harrison Reserve and at 10 acres of pond and wetlands next to Kendall Elementary School. The site is being replanted with bird-friendly plants, and a boardwalk and viewing platform/bird blind will be constructed. The education program will be integrated with our partners' salmon and water quality curricula.

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. NCAS is responsible for raising at least \$11,000 and will match donations dollar for dollar from a bequest targeted towards education. In addition, four members have agreed to match the first \$2,000 in donations.

*Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Harrison Reserve Initiative!*

Donations can be mailed to NCAS or made using PayPal. For more information on the project please contact Steven Harper at: [stevenharper2@msn.com](mailto:stevenharper2@msn.com) or 360-650-9065.

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## Summary of December 2018 Board Meeting

The Board met at the Bellingham Unitarian Fellowship from 7 to 9 pm on December 3 and took the following actions and/or discussed the following issues:

- The Volunteer Coordinator for the Whatcom Land Trust (WLT) reached out to NCAS to see if our members would be interested in accompanying WLT land stewards and staff on tours of WLT properties. The Board agreed to follow up with WLT regarding this request.
- Three Board members participated in Whatcom Land Trust work parties with Kendall Elementary students at the Harrison Reserve site during November. All of the classrooms at the elementary school have expressed an interest in helping with the restoration project.
- The Board agreed to incorporate a Volunteer Spotlight in upcoming newsletters and on social media. These articles will highlight the motivations and experiences of NCAS volunteers.
- The Board agreed to have NCAS make donations totaling \$1,600, to the following community organizations: Wild Whatcom - \$200, Sardis Wildlife Center - \$200, Whatcom Humane Society Wildlife Rehabilitation Services - \$300, Vancouver Avian Research Center - \$300, Northwest Swan Conservation Association - \$200, Islands Oil Spill Association - \$200, and Washington Wild - \$200.

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### Swans and Puget Sound Energy's Avian Protection Program

Thursday Feb 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.

**CAUTION: Bird feeding makes you happy!**

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

108 Ohio Street  
Bellingham  
360-734-0969

[WildBirdChalet.com](http://WildBirdChalet.com)



## February Field Trips *Paul Woodcock, Field Trip Chair*

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. 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. 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 footgear 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.

### 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.

### *Bonus Community Lecture Event:*

#### Raptors Around the World

**Sunday, February 10; 2 PM**

Bellingham Central Library, Lecture Room

International raptor expert and author Sergio Seipke showcases some of the most exquisite raptor photos taken over five years on six continents. Hosted by the Bellingham Public Library, Whatcom Land Trust, Falcon Research Group and North Cascades Audubon Society, this presentation is free to the public and there is no registration required.

### Thursday, February 7: Skagit Flats and Samish Flats

**Time:** 9 AM to 3 PM

**Trip Leader:** Steven Harper

**Limit:** 11

Registration required: Please contact Steven at [stevenharper2@msn.com](mailto: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.



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### Thursday, February 21: Fairhaven Park, Hoag Pond, Padden & Chuckanut Lagoons

**Time:** 8:30 - 11AM

**Trip Leader:** Bob Myhr

Registration required. Please contact Bob at [romyhr@comcast.net](mailto: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, February 23: Bloedel Donovan, Scudder Pond & Whatcom Falls Park

**Time:** 9 AM - Noon

**Trip Leader:** Richard Carpenter

No registration required. Meet in Bloedel Donovan parking lot, near entrance.

This urban birding trip connects Lake Whatcom, Scudder Pond and Whatcom Creek with the forest that surrounds them. All of this area is excellent habitat and can provide surprisingly rewarding birding. Expect to see ducks, maybe a raptor or two, woodpeckers and a lot of songbirds including nuthatches, wrens, chickadees, finches, juncos, towhees and several species of sparrows. Dippers and barred owls are regularly seen on the creek near the falls, and other surprises are possible. All this is reached on well-established trails.

### Thursday, February 28: Reifel Migratory Bird Sanctuary

**Time:** 8:30 AM - approximately 4 PM

**Trip Leaders:** John & Jane Aspnes

**Limit:** 16

Registration required. Please contact Jane or John at 360-303-2675 or [jdaspnes@alaska.edu](mailto:jdaspnes@alaska.edu).

George Reifel Sanctuary in Ladner B.C. is one of the premier birding spots of the Pacific Northwest. Late February should still be good for viewing hawks, eagles, owls, sparrows, woodpeckers and a large variety of waterfowl. If we have an early spring, some early migrants may also be possible. To accommodate 16 people, three 4-passenger vehicles will be needed in addition to the leaders' vehicle. The gate fee at Reifel is \$5 for adults and \$3 for seniors. Bring a sack lunch. There's a nice warming cabin where we can eat.

*NOTE: A passport, NEXUS card or enhanced driver's license is required for the border crossing. If you have a NEXUS card, please inform your leaders so NEXUS holders can ride together.*

### Saturday, March 2: Semiahmoo Spit

**Time:** 9 AM - Noon

**Trip Leader:** Paul Woodcock

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

Join us once again to bird the beaches at Semiahmoo. Every month is different as the seasons change. See February 2 trip above for more information.

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## Upcoming Birding Festivals

### Winter Wings Festival

February 14-17

Klamath Falls, Oregon

To register and for more information go to: [winterwingsfest.org](http://winterwingsfest.org)

### Wings Over Water Northwest Birding Festival

March 15-17

Blaine, Semiahmoo and Birch Bay

Look for more information in our March newsletter or at: [wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com](http://wingsoverwaterbirdingfestival.com)

### Olympic BirdFest

April 12-14

Sequim

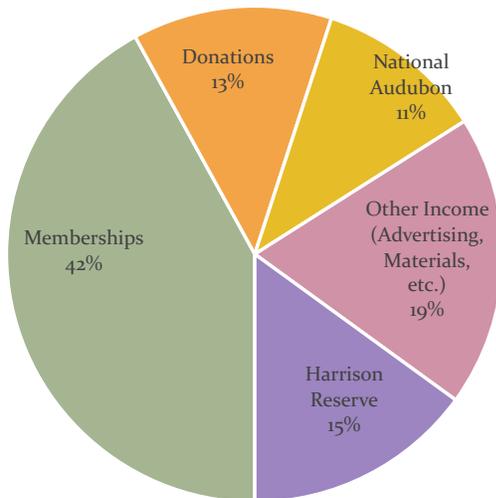
The festival is preceded by a San Juan Islands Cruise on April 9-11 and followed by an excursion to the Neah Bay area on April 14-16.

To register and for more information go to: [olympicbirdfest.org](http://olympicbirdfest.org)

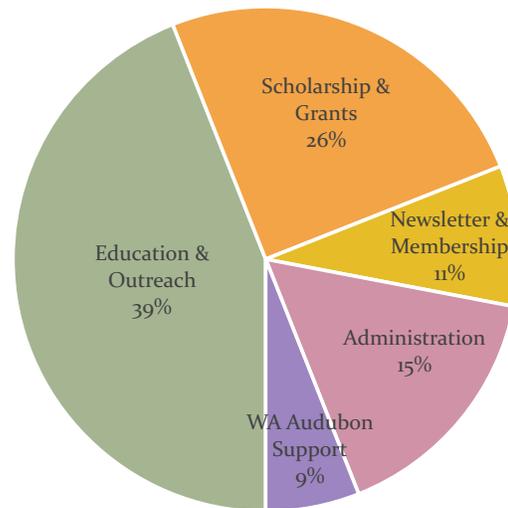
## NCAS 2018 Revenue and Expense Summary

The pie charts below illustrate how our local chapter generated \$16,510 in revenue and how we spent \$13,340 in the 2018 calendar year.

**Total Revenue \$16,510**



**Total Expenses \$13,340**



As one can see, **memberships** provided the most significant source of revenue. **Donations** included member contributions above the \$100 membership level as well as contributions in addition to annual membership dues. Donations also included funds collected at educational events where printed material, resources, nest boxes and brochures are offered to the public.

**Other income** is interest from reserves, campout and program registration fees, and business partner advertising in the NCAS newsletter.

Each year, **National Audubon** provides income to each registered Audubon chapter throughout the country, after an annual activity report is filed.

In 2018, NCAS initiated a fundraising campaign for the **Harrison Reserve**, a partnership with the Whatcom Land Trust and many others. \$2,450 was raised in 2018.

On the expense side, **education/outreach** included stipends to speakers at monthly NCAS membership meetings, printed and other material for outreach, education and field trip activities, and Christmas Bird Count costs.

**Scholarships/grants** were provided to select students at Western Washington University and to seven local non-profit organizations. The students' research and the non-profits' missions are consistent with NCAS's mission and goals, and their work directly or indirectly focuses on protection of birds and their natural habitat.

**Administrative** costs included website development and fees, liability insurance, post office box rental, and other Board and meeting expenses.

**Newsletter/membership** expenses were for printing, mailing and hospitality.

**WA Audubon Support** is an annual contribution NCAS gives to the WA State Audubon Chapter Conservation Manager, a position that supports all local Audubon chapters.

*If you have any questions about the budget, please don't hesitate to contact Steven Harper, President, or Sue Parrott, Treasurer.*

## Look What NCAS Did in 2018!

Here are our 2018 actions that highlight NCAS's dedication to our mission. They were made possible through the support of our members and volunteers. Thank you!

### Making a Difference for Birds - Protecting Birds and Bird Habitat

NCAS partnered with the Whatcom Land Trust in the new Harrison Reserve Project. This project will increase habitat for birds and provide environmental education opportunities for Kendall Elementary School students and the surrounding community. NCAS took action as a major representative on the Whatcom County Environmental Caucus Working Group and joined with Washington and National Audubon and other environmental organizations in opposing numerous efforts that threaten birds and their habitat.

### Monitoring Birds through Community Science

NCAS actively supports community science through a number of actions including: the annual Christmas Bird Count, the ongoing Cherry Point and Whatcom Land Trust property bird surveys, and annual scholarships to select Western Washington University students.

### Creating Bird Friendly Communities

NCAS developed an extensive "Plants for Birds" program and planting guide for our area. The program was presented to audiences at all rural Whatcom County libraries and to a variety of local organizations. The planting guide is now being used to educate consumers at a number of local nurseries.

### Highlighting Climate Threatened Birds

The critical issue of climate threatened and endangered birds was highlighted by integrating our membership meeting presentations with Whatcom Museum's impactful "Endangered Species" exhibit. Twenty local artists created an educational Endangered Birds Holiday Tree display at the Museum. NCAS celebrated our local treasure, the bald eagle, with a series of bald eagle presentations and field trips along the Nooksack River.

### Engaging New Members

NCAS increased its outreach efforts by ramping up our social media presence. We reached out to new audiences through events such as "Wings & Wine", "Birds & Brew", "Audubon at the Museum" and sponsorship of documentaries at the Pickford Film Center.

### Celebrating Birds

Twenty-nine field trips, Birch Bay State Park hikes and our annual Pearrygin Lake Campout were all organized for the community to celebrate the wonderful diversity of birds found in our local area.



*Bewick's wren, photo by Andrew Reding*



*Green heron, photo by Andrew Reding*



*Red-tailed hawk, photo by Andrew Reding*

**HENDERSON BOOKS**

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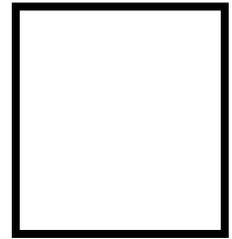
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The Avalanche is the newsletter of the North Cascades Audubon Society, PO Box 5805, Bellingham, WA 98227. It is published 8 times a year; subscriptions start at \$20 per year. The editors welcome articles, artwork, photographs, and letters. Opinions 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](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)

*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)

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