Wild Birding ~ How's the Weather? Part 3: Cold

By Doug Schonewald

Cold weather is something I grew up with. I find that it affects me less than wind or heat, but has a definite effect on birds and their habits and activities. Cold drives passerines into the deepest thickets, where the vegetation moderates the temperatures. At the same time, it increases their need to feed to maintain body heat. Pursuing birds at this time is difficult. Dense thickets provide the best choices for the birder searching out passerines, as most land birds will be found here. Species of water birds are often concentrated and more available (especially in the Columbia Basin) and are often a better choice, as it is possible to peruse them at a distance and then get into a vehicle for warmth when the cold becomes too much.

Some birds can be found at no other time of year and are actively chased during the coldest of winter months. Montane irruptions typically occur during the coldest of the winter months (though there are often indicators prior to the onset of cold weather) and often, unusual birds can be found during these irruptions. Notable examples are the chickadee/nuthatch/jay irruption of 2004/2005. A smaller irruption of montane birds occurred as recently as 2005/2006 (Pine Grosbeaks/crossbills), and, if the early numbers of nuthatches and unusual birds such as Mountain Chickadees and nutcrackers are any indication, we could well see another montane irruption in 2007/2008.

During spells of cold weather, there are times when birding can be downright excellent. Cold weather can produce rare or unusual species such as Northern Hawk Owl, Falcated Duck, Tufted Duck, Iceland Gull, and others too numerous to mention here. In addition, birds that normally must be chased in the high mountains sometimes show up in the lowlands; Mountain and Chestnut-backed chickadees, Pine Grosbeaks, Steller’s and Blue jays, Red

19th Annual WOS Conference, September 14-17, 2007

by Kathy Andrich

The 2007 Washington Ornithological Society Conference was held in Aberdeen September 14 through 17. A nice turnout of approximately 120 people attended the conference this year, and a total of 203 species of birds were spotted. Thursday evening kicked off registration. Old acquaintances were renewed; out-of-town folks and new-to-the-conference birders were welcomed in the meeting room at the Guest House International Inn and Suites in Aberdeen, which served as the registration area and where the board list of species seen at the conference was located.

The Guest House meeting room was also where the 100% organic cotton T-shirts, specially designed for WOS, were unveiled and sold for $20.00 apiece. The design depicting many of the shorebirds of Washington State was created by John Schmitt, a California based artist, who has a number of illustrations in the current National Geographic Field Guide. The T-shirts turned out very nice and were a big hit with conference goers.

The weather was mostly cooperative for the land-based field trips, although a handful of these were canceled due to high numbers of birders wanting pelagic trips. All Friday trips were land-based, while Saturday, Sunday, and Monday offered both land-based and pelagic trips. All of the pelagic trips were able to go out to sea this conference, although Monday was a rough day on the water. The Saturday trip was held aboard the Monte Carlo from Westport Seabirds, captained by Phil Anderson. The Sunday and Monday trips were held aboard the Discovery from Cachalot Charters, captained by Dave Camp. Bart Whelton, a departing WOS board member, was intrepid enough to sign up for all three pelagic trips. Following is his summary of the pelagic highlights.
The Washington Ornithological Society was chartered in 1988 to increase knowledge of the birds of Washington and to enhance communication among all persons interested in those birds. WOS is a nonprofit educational organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. For information about the Society, contact an officer or board member, or write to:

Washington Ornithological Society
P.O. Box 31783
Seattle, WA 98103-1783

About WOS Publications

WOSNews

WOSNews, the newsletter of the Washington Ornithological Society, is published bimonthly to inform members about Society business, bird sightings, ornithological research, and the fun of birding. Readers are welcome to submit articles, announcements, illustrations, photographs, and other items to the editor for consideration.

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WASHINGTON BIRDS

The Washington Ornithological Society publishes a scholarly periodic journal, WASHINGTON BIRDS, Joe Buchanan, editor. The purpose of WASHINGTON BIRDS is to publish information on birds of Washington state and the Pacific Northwest. Papers of general interest independent of geographic region will also be considered. Subject matter may include, but is not limited to, geographic and ecological distribution, seasonal status and migration, breeding biology and general natural history, conservation, identification, faunal lists, site guides, field techniques, and reports on current research. Manuscripts for consideration should be sent to:

Joe Buchanan
2112 Ravenna Ln SE, Olympia 98501
BUCHAJBB@dfw.wa.gov

Web Site

http://www.wos.org

Visit the WOS website for up-to-date information on:
- Meetings and field trips
- WOS annual conference information and forms
- Christmas Bird Counts
- Checklists (printable)
- Rare Bird Alert numbers
- Newsletter companion, with color photos and web links

Contact the webmaster, Michael Hobbs, at WOSWeb@wos.org.

Membership News

Just a little reminder from your membership chair: if you have any changes to your address or email please pass them on to me via email or in writing. Send corrections to Membership@wos.org or to PO Box 31783 Seattle WA 98103-1783.

We are striving to improve our member support which will include publishing the directory on a regular basis. In 2002 we initiated a “Welcome to WOS” letter for new members that includes a complementary checklist and information about membership meetings. We appreciate your feedback. Send us your comments and especially any suggestions you might have to improve WOS.

Susan Fallat, Membership Chair
FROM THE BOARD By Gene Hunn, Vice President

Your board has been busy these past two months, meeting at the WOS convention in Aberdeen and again for a full day at Ellensburg October 20. We reviewed the budget balance for the convention -- $5,000 in the black! – and noted participants’ comments and criticisms, among them the shortage of chicken dinners at the banquet. We hope this will not happen again.

In Ellensburg, we welcomed three new board members, Ron Friesz, Patricia Lott, and Rob Faucett; Rob is our new treasurer. They are eager to get to work and full of ideas. Patricia has a particular interest in coordinating volunteer efforts, while Rob, as Collections Manager at the Burke Museum, has offered to put the resources of the Burke at our disposal.

Our journal editor, Joe Buchanan, joined us for the morning. He promises that Volume 10 will be ready to print soon. Future volumes will be published electronically, piece by piece, as manuscripts are ready, with a hard copy issue printed and mailed to members whenever sufficient material is available. We trust this will cure the problem of long-delayed publication. Joe eagerly awaits new submissions.

We welcomed Nancy Hertzog as editor of WOSNews. We accepted Ken Knittle’s resignation as field trips co-chair (with Kraig Kemper) and we are eager to locate a volunteer to replace Vivian Gross as hospitality chairperson (members’ meeting refreshment coordinator). Many thanks to Ken and Vivian for their generous service.

We reviewed the work of the Washington Bird Records Committee (WBRC) and have requested that they forward a current official state list so we can print an up-to-date batch of field cards, and that they submit an annual report for publication in the April 2008 issue of WOSNews.

We reviewed the status of the Birdbox, noting that it is little used of late and that it must now either be relocated (Rachel Lawson is retiring) or replaced with 21st century technologies.

Finally, we welcomed the decision of the Young Birders’ Fund Committee (chaired by Denny Granstrand) to dedicate that fund to the memory of Patrick Sullivan. Donations will be most welcome.

WOS Field Trips

Field Trips allow members to explore new places or revisit familiar haunts. Each member may join up to four trips per year (excluding annual conference trips). Non-members may attend as a member’s guest once per year. Questions about field trips should be directed to the trip leader(s). If you would like to lead a field trip, or would like to suggest a location for a field trip, send a note to Kraig Kemper at FieldTrips@wos.org.

Saturday/Sunday, December 1 - 2, 2007

Kraig and Kathy Kemper will lead a trip to the Waterville Plateau in Douglas County for winter specialties. Areas covered will include Bridgeport, Bridgeport Hill Road, Mansfield, Heritage Road, Sims Corner, Bridgeport Bar and Central Ferry Canyon. Additional areas covered may include Scotch Creek WMA, Conconully State Park, lower Cameron Lake Road, the Okanogan River mouth, and Bridgeport State Park in Okanogan County. Target species include Chukar, Gray Partridge, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet Owl, Bohemian Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, Snow Bunting, Gray-crowned Rosy Finch and Common Redpoll. Overnight in Omak.

Limit of eight (8) participants. For details, contact Kraig at (206) 789-9255 or email k_kemper@msn.com.

Saturday, January 26, 2008

Bob Kuntz will lead a trip to the Skagit and Samish Flats in Skagit County. Target birds will be raptors (falcons, hawks, accipiters, eagles, and owls), Snow Geese, Tundra and Trumpeter swans, and winter sparrows. Last year’s highlight was a Long-eared Owl at the Skagit WMA. Bring scope, lunch, and beverages, and dress for the weather. Limit of eight (8) participants.

For details, contact Bob at (360) 854-7320 or email Robert_Kuntz@nps.gov.

Saturday, February 16, 2008

“Ohls by Day 2008” will be led by Mike and MerryLynn Denny, with a limit of 12 participants. Target birds include Barn, Western Screech, Great Horned, Long-eared, and Northern Screech owls, plus winter sparrows (Harris’s, American Tree, and White-throated) as well as Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, Northern Shrike, Merlin, Gray Partridge, and Canyon Wren. Bring lunch and water for an all-day outing along the Snake River. Everyone must be able to walk several miles on foot.

Sign-up starts January 15; for details, contact Mike at (509) 529-0080 or email m.denny@charter.net

Saturday through Monday, February 16 -18

Ruth Sullivan and Stefan Schlick will lead a trip to the Waterville Plateau in Douglas County and additional locations in the Okanogan for winter specialties, as “A Memorial to Honor Patrick.” Target birds include Northern Goshawk, Gyrfalcon, Sage and Sharp-tailed grouse, Long-eared and Northern Saw-whet owl, Pygmy Nuthatch, Bohemian Waxwing, American Tree Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Snow Bunting, and Common Redpoll. Areas covered will include the Conconully area, Havillah, Chesaw, Tonasket, Bridgeport Hill Road, Bridgeport State Park, Leary Junction, the town of Bridgeport, Central Ferry Canyon, and the Bridgeport and Cassimer Bars. Additional sites covered may include surrounding areas at Atkins Lake and the Mansfield area. In the last four years, this same field trip has produced nearly 80 species. Participants should be prepared for winter driving, and dress for winter weather. Overnight in Pateros and Omak. Limit of 10 participants.

For details, contact Ruth at (253) 564-7419 or email godwit513@msn.com.
WOS Programs are free and open to all. They are held the first Monday of each month at the Center for Urban Horticulture on the University of Washington campus, 3501 NE 41st St. in Seattle (directions below). Doors open at 7:00 PM and the program begins at 7:30 PM.

January 7, 2008: Desperate (bird) Housewives — with Michael Donahue
Eviction, untimely death, disappearing offspring -- who needs Desperate Housewives when you've got nesting birds in your yard? Mike Donahue will share what he's learned about nesting behavior from watching the birds nesting in his yard, through slides and video. He'll also share his experiences participating in several "citizen science" programs that collect information on nesting birds.

February 4, 2008: Birds of Washington and Southern Africa — with Dennis Paulson
Dennis Paulson, well-known to WOS members, has a doctorate in zoology from the University of Miami. Dr. Paulson was Director of the Slater Museum of Natural History at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma from 1990 to 2004; he is now retired and writing field guides to dragonflies. Dr. Paulson is the author of numerous papers and books, including Shorebirds of the Pacific Northwest, Dragonflies of Washington, Shorebirds of North America: The Photographic Guide, and Alaska: The Ecotraveller's Wildlife Guide. He has recently discovered the joys of digital photography and will be sharing with us some of his favorite shots taken close to home, as well as those from a recent trip to southern Africa.

March 3, 2008: The Great Gull Debate! — with Gene Hunn et al
Join the "experts" for a gull identification workshop focused on the rarer, big, usually pink-legged, "species:" Iceland, Glaucous, Slaty-backed, Lesser Black-backed, Great Black-backed, and their more common kin: Thayer's, Herring, Glaucous-winged, and Western, and the various hybrids. Gene Hunn will organize a Power Point, integrating photos on loan from local photographers of individual birds seen in Washington state, with scans of photos from the latest field guides. Everyone is invited to share opinions as to identities, field identification issues, etc. If you have photos of these species you would like to share, please forward jpegs to enhunn323@comcast.net ASAP. Please include date, location, and photographer's name.

April 7, 2008: Osprey Recovery Program — with Larry Rymon
Mr. Rymon will discuss a successful osprey reintroduction program in Pennsylvania, a project that took 30 years. He will also incorporate a 27-minute film, "Return from Forever." This film has been shown widely, including on ESPN.

May 5, 2008: Pterodroma Petrels - Juan Fernandez Islands, Chile — with Jo Smith
The Juan Fernandez Islands are a remote, oceanic archipelago, 670 km offshore from Valparaiso, Chile. The Juan Fernandez Petrel (Pterodroma externa) is one of two endemic seabirds on the archipelago, with the entire global population of one million pairs breeding on Alejandro Selkirk. In this talk, Ms. Smith will describe the foraging ecology of this species and present a photographic essay to highlight this beautiful archipelago and discuss some of the past and present conservation concerns facing the endemic fauna. Ms. Smith is a PhD candidate at the University of Washington, studying the foraging ecology and patterns of habitat use in breeding birds. She has studied seabirds and island ecosystems since 1997, with research spanning from the breeding biology of nesting seabirds to rare or unusual plant communities and the role of introduced species on islands. She currently serves on a recovery team in Canada to conserve seabird populations in the North Pacific.

October 6, 2008: The Status of Western Grebes in Washington — with Dr. Joe Gaydos
The Western Grebe population has declined 95% over the last decade. Dr. Gaydos will discuss what we know about the causes behind this decline, where we need more information, and where we can start with restoration. Dr. Gaydos obtained his veterinary medical degree from the University of Pennsylvania and completed a PhD at the University of Georgia, where he served as wildlife disease diagnostician in the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study program, gaining extensive knowledge and experience in wildlife health. He has recently been hired by the Marine Ecosystem Health Program, which coordinates research projects to assess, restore, and enhance the health of wildlife populations and habitat along the Pacific Coast. From a base of operations in the San Juan Islands, Dr. Gaydos will help the program achieve its mission of restoring ecosystem and wildlife health to the inner coastal waters of Washington and British Columbia, and will serve as a scientific resource available to individuals and organizations seeking vital information on ecosystem and wildlife health issues.

Directions: From I-5, take SR 520 East. Take the Montlake Blvd. NE exit and turn north towards the University of Washington campus. Stay in right lane and go north on Montlake Blvd. over the bridge and past the stadium. The road will curve to the right around the Montlake Fill and merge with NE 45th St. You will quickly approach a five-way intersection. At the intersection, turn right onto Mary Gates Memorial Drive. The Center for Urban Horticulture is two long blocks down on the right. There is plenty of free parking at the facility. We use the main meeting room, the backside of which faces the road. Bus numbers 25, 65, and 75 all stop at NE 45th and Mary Gates Memorial Drive. A map can be found at http://depts.washington.edu/urbhort/html/info/contact.html.


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Volunteer with the Washington Ornithological Society

Any person interested in the recreational, educational, or scientific aspects of field ornithology may become a member and volunteer for WOS. You may be looking for ways to get more involved or to work side-by-side with the top-notch birders that make up the leadership of this statewide organization. If you feel you’ve benefited from a WOS field trip, or from tracking the most recent species sightings in the WOSNews Field Notes, from reading peer-reviewed manuscripts in Washington Birds, or from the opportunity to meet with fellow birders and bird enthusiasts across the state at the WOS Annual Conference, the board welcomes your interest.

From envelope-stuffing to planning a conference, please feel free to get involved to whatever extent is comfortable for you. The June 2008 conference in Walla Walla is coming up soon and we’re sure to have room for folks wanting to pitch in and get involved. Keep your eye on Tweeters and on WOSNews for more information on volunteering with WOS.

Current Opportunities:

**Assistant to the Treasurer.** Help with the upcoming June Annual Conference. This is a new position in our most important event. If you have financial experience and an interest in helping, our treasurer, Rob Faucett, would appreciate hearing from you. Please contact him for more information at: Treasurer@wos.org.

**Hospitality Chair.** Oversees voluntary member sign-up and performs back-up hospitality at first Monday monthly meetings in Seattle, October through June. Please contact VLGross@aol.com for a current position description.

**Pacific Seabird Group Meeting**

The 35th annual meeting of the Pacific Seabird Group (PSG) will be held from 27 February - 2 March, 2008 (Wednesday through Sunday), at the Semiahmoo Resort in Blaine. PSG is a society of professional seabird researchers and managers dedicated to the study and conservation of seabirds. Welcome, WOS members! There will be field trips on Sunday. This year's meeting theme is "Seabirds in Marine Ecosystems," and the plenary speakers are John Croxall and John Piatt. A symposium will be held on local research in Puget Sound, "The Salish Sea Ecosystem: Status and Impacts of Changes on Marine Birds." The conference hotel is located on the shores of Puget Sound at a time when many species of seabirds, waterfowl, and birds of prey abound. For more information, consult the meeting website at www.pacificseabirdgroup.org

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**Colloquial Bird Names: A Matching Quiz.**

1. Whiskey Jack  A. Greater Yellowlegs
2. Fly-up-the-creek  B. Common Merganser
3. Crow Woodpecker  C. American Wigeon
4. Cherry Bird  D. Gray Jay
5. Mud Martin  E. Short-billed Dowitcher
6. Baldpate  F. Lesser Yellowlegs
7. Bog-pumper  G. Cliff Swallow
8. Little Blue Darter  H. Cooper’s Hawk
9. Mudhen  I. Sharp-shinned Hawk
10. Goosander  J. Snow Bunting
11. Honker  K. Cedar Waxwing
12. Big Blue Darter  L. American Coot
13. Sea Swallow  M. Common Tern
14. Snowflake  N. Lewis' Woodpecker
15. Tell-Tale  O. Green Heron
16. Yellowshanks  P. American Bittern
17. Brownback  Q. Canada Goose

Answers on page 10

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Three pelagic trips were taken from Westport to the edge of Gray’s Canyon on September 15, 16, and 17, 2007 … The mixture of birds and mammals were similar over the three-day period, but the Saturday trip viewed considerably greater numbers of birds (presumably due to the abundant presence of herring swarming about the boat from harbor to at least a distance of 15+ miles from shore). Saturday had one more mammal species. Consistent with the availability of finned prey on Saturday, species usually only seen near shore were encountered in significant numbers to at least 15 miles at sea.

A select list of typically pelagic avian species viewed on all three trips included Black-footed Albatross, Northern Fulmar, Pink-footed/Flesh-footed/Bullar’s/and Sooty Shearwaters, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Red-necked Phalarepe, Pomarine/Parasitic/and Long-tailed Jaegers, South Polar Skua, Sabine’s Gull, and Cassin’s and Rhinoceros Auklets. Single Tufted Puffins were found on Saturday and Sunday. A single Short-tailed Shearwater found Sunday by Gene Hunn sat placidly within “yardstick” distance of a Sooty Shearwater offering great opportunities to compare head/neck/bill characteristics between these look-a-like species.

Unusual passerines gracing the deck and/or wake of the Monte Carlo on Saturday included single Townsend’s and Yellow Warblers and a Western Wood PecWee. Other, more typically near-shore avian species seen in good numbers on all days included Red-throated, Pacific, and Common Loons, Brown Pelican, Double-crested, Brandt’s and Pelagic Cormorants, Surf, White-winged, and Black Scoters, Wandering Tattler, Black Turnstone, California, “Olympic”, and Heerman’s Gulls, and Common Murre. Other single sightings included Black-legged Kittiwake, Harlequin Duck, and Peregrine Falcon.

Six-to-seven mammal species were encountered on all three days, included the following with conservative summed totals in parenthesis: Humpbacked (10) and Gray (1), Whales, Orca (4), Risso’s Dolphin (48), Harbor(43) and Dall’s(24) Porpoises, Harbor(30), and Elephant(1) Seals, Steller’s Sea Lion(3), and Northern Fur Seal(1).

Land-based trips ran from Friday to Monday. Participants met at 6:30 AM at the Aberdeen Wal-Mart parking lot. Some especially surprising species included Bobolink at the Ocean Shores’ Game Range, Western Bluebird on the Wynoochee Valley trips, Black Swift at Bottle Beach, juvenile Northern Mockingbird at Tokeland, Glaucous Gull at Westport Jetty, Franklin’s Gull on Ocean Shores North trip, Eurasian Collared-Dove at Moclips, and Sandhill Cranes reported in multiple locations. About the only possible species that were missed were Cackling Goose and Eurasian Wigeon.

Other outstanding species that had been previously reported before the conference and spotted again included: Redhead, American and Pacific Golden plover, Snowy Plover, Bar-tailed Godwit, Baird’s Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Buff-breasted Sandpiper (in numbers!), Ruff, and Lapland Longspur. A grand total of 32 different sandpiper species were seen on field trips. Many participants left this conference with happy memories of life birds. A complete listing of species from the conference can be found at www.wos.org.

Probably the most abundant species at the coastal locations was Brown Pelican, with single location estimates topping 2,000 birds! The Saturday Ocean Shores South Trip had a huge stream of Sooty Shearwaters that were strictly following the coastline at Point Brown Jetty for probably the single most birds seen in one place. Estimated numbers were well over the 2,000+ pelican mark.

Only two owling trips were offered due to limited opportunities at this time of year. They were both held on Friday night. The Quinalt Ridge Road trip led by Patrick Sullivan and Ken Knittle heard Northern Pygmy Owl and an unidentifiable call by another owl species. The Elma/Montesano trip led by Tim O’Brien and Kraig Kemper came up with a Barn Owl.

Black bears were spotted on the beach at Point Grenville on both Friday and Saturday. Friday’s group saw a female black bear, an older cub, and a male spotted together in an area below the bluff. Monday’s trip to Midway beach spotted bear tracks on the beach. Other land mammal highlights included Douglas squirrel, raccoon, black-tailed deer, river otter, and long-tailed weasel.

Chehalis River Valley Field Trip (Sept. 14): 67 species with 9 participants. Highlights included: Sandhill Cranes at 2 locations…Sooty Grouse…2 CHIPPING SPARROWS along Blockhouse Rd. near Oakville.

Owling along Quinalt Ridge Rd: 7 participants with 1 owl species. 1 Northern Pygmy Owl (heard only by a few observers).

Grayland to Raymond Field Trip (Sept. 15): 96 species with 12 participants. Warrenton-Cannery Rd, and vicinity: 20 SANDHILL CRANES. Midway Beach Rd: 20 Snowy Plovers, 2 Baird’s Sandpipers, 3 Pectoral Sandpipers, 9 BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS (our best and closest views of this species during the conference), 1 Lapland Longspur (a life bird for several participants even if views of this elusive bird were very limited). Tokeland and vicinity: 1 NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (this elusive bird was spotted by Louise Rutter, then located by the rest of our group in a brush area north of the Tokeland Marina).

Author’s note: This bird was an immature Northern Mockingbird, a different bird than the already out-of-place Northern Mockingbird that has taken up residence near the Grayland Beachcomber Market. Any Northern Mockingbird in Washington State is notable.

Grays Harbor South Bay and Westport Field Trip (Sept. 16): 70 species with 14 participants. Westport Marina and vicinity, 1 2nd cycle GLAUCOUS GULL (previously reported by Tim O’Brien), 1 Black-legged Kittiwake (a nice bird that offered good views as it flew close to shore near the Westport Marina)...Bottle Beach, 1 AM GOLDEN PLOVER (superb scope views of this bird, as it foraged with Black-bellied Plovers), 1 RUFF (brief views of this bird, as it first flew in from the north with a flock of 10 Semipalmated Plovers, then dropped alone into a canal before flying off again to an unknown location), 1 BLACK SWIFT, 3 PURPLE MARTINS.

Ocean Shores South Field Trip (Sept. 17): 80 species with 13 participants. Oyhut Wildlife Area (including access from Tonquin Ave)...3 AM. GOLDEN PLOVERS with 7 PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVERS (this flock offered great, close views and comparisons between both species), 2 BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPERS. Ocean Shores STP 2 BLUE-WINGED TEAL.
The social gatherings of birders were held on Friday and Saturday nights. These included speakers and opportunities to learn something new. Friday night at the Elks Lodge next to the Nordic Inn, Michael Donahue spoke on “Shearwaters, Storm-petrels, and Skuas: Birding in Washington Waters.” Michael helped folks apply some of what they learned by being a spotter on the subsequent Saturday and Sunday pelagic trips.

On Saturday, at the interestingly appointed Armory museum, also known as the Aberdeen Museum of History, three events were held. The WOS Board held their annual meeting. All WOS members were invited and a few non-board WOS members joined in. At 5:30 PM, the no-host social began with the banquet dinner starting at about 6:30 PM. Randy Hill, current WOS President, awarded Certificates of Recognition to four individuals for their contributions to WOS: Jack Stephens, board member, for all the legwork he did for this conference; Joyce Meyer, treasurer, for her “organization of our organization;” Diann MacRae, for her length of service as WOS News editor; and Brian Bell for nearly a decade on the board -- he held secretary, vice president, and president positions in consecutive three-year terms for WOS.

The grand finale for Saturday was a wonderful presentation by Dennis Paulson, our keynote speaker, primarily focused on the shorebirds of Washington State, although he did touch upon the overall decline of Red Knots. He discussed the times of year we could see different shorebird species and what plumages or age classes we might observe. This seemed to set the stage for the high species count of 32 different shorebirds that were actually found at the conference.

A conference cannot even begin to occur without a lot of help from people who gave willingly of their time and made this happen. The people who volunteered to lead field trips deserve special recognition and our hats are off to them. A huge thank you needs to go out to Ken Knittle and Kraig Kemper, as well as a big thank you to Bill Tweit, who organized the spotters for the pelagics. The complete list of field trip leaders and pelagic spotters are as follows: Kathy Andrich, Matt Bartels, Wilson Cady, Jim Danzenbaker, Michael Donahue, Scott Downes, Matt Dufort, Michael Hobbs, Gene Hunn, Bruce Labar, Kraig Kemper, Ken Knittle, Ryan Merrill, Scott Mills, Scott Morrison, Bob Morse, Tim O’Brien, Bill Shelmerdine, Gina Sheridan, Patrick Sullivan, Ruth Sullivan, Bill Tweit, and Charlie Wright. Thank you all.

Michael Hobbs was ready to pass the registration baton and Cindy McCormack took on the big task this year for the first time. Thank you, Cindy, and thank you, Michael, for your past years of service. Cindy also compiled the post-conference complete species list. Jack Stephens did a major amount of legwork for the conference, and Joyce Meyer helped greatly to ensure all the small conference details were covered. Thank you, Jack and Joyce. The A for effort recognition goes to Gene Hunn, who wanted to lead a green field trip but it was not included in the schedule in time, so Gene went anyway. Now that is birding spirit!

To all who participated and volunteered, thank you for a successful 2007 WOS Conference. Washington State is truly blessed by Grays Harbor and the surrounding coast, such a wonderful place to go birding.
Bear on WOS Field Trip By Bill Byers

We were on the field trip that visited Point Grenville, on the Quinault Indian Reservation, on Saturday, September 15, 2007, as part of the WOS annual meeting at Aberdeen. The previous day, the group had seen bears on another nearby beach. This time, we were led by Bob Morse and Scott Downes. The point is a bluff that is about 100 feet above the surf, a steep drop-off separating the bluff from the beach. We no sooner got out of our cars and went to look at the surf below than someone spotted the bear. It was sauntering along the beach, apparently oblivious to the humans watching it from above. I just had time to get my scope on it and snap a couple pictures before it moved around the corner. Mike Mail, the Quinault man who was our guide while we visited Point Grenville, said the bears were very common on that part of the coast.

Near right: Mountain Bluebird, Naches Pass, King, August 9, 2007. Photo by Marv Breece.


Below: White-winged Scoter, Midway Beach, Pacific during the WOS Conference, September 15, 2007. Photo by Eugene Hunn.


Right: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Shoreline, King, April 25, 2007. Photo by Ollie Oliver.

Far right: This Yellow Warbler landed on the boat during the WOS Conference pelagic trip, September 15, 2007, at least twenty-five miles out to sea off Westport, Grays Harbor. The warbler even perched on people’s heads. Photo by Ryan Merrill.

WINDFALL PROFITS

By Stewart Wechsler

Last December when we had the record-breaking windstorm, I heard the media and numerous people bemoaning the loss of so many trees in the parks. While there were indeed some irreplaceable older trees that fell, for the most part, the individual trees that fell were not remarkable. It is true that we lost many standing trees, but we gained a good amount of “downed woody debris.”

Those fallen trees and branches create an environment of cover for salamanders and snakes, beetles and spiders. This dead organic matter on the ground is one of the most critical elements of habitat for a high percentage of species. The rotting fallen leaves, branches, and logs, as well as the fungi they support, provide a natural substrate for a diversity of plants, which in turn supports a diversity of animals. Winter provide a natural substrate for a diversity of plants, branches, and logs, as well as the fungi they support, percentage of species. The rotting fallen leaves, branches, and logs, as well as the fungi they support, provide a natural substrate for a diversity of plants, which in turn supports a diversity of animals. Winter

Spots the nets where the birds are beginning to appear. The excitement builds as the kids around me start to comment on the birds they see. I remind them to stay quiet and let the birds know they are welcome here. The silence that follows is a testament to the value of nature conservation.

So as the leaves fall and the winter winds blow down more trees, instead of mourning their loss or rushing to clean them up, think about the bugs, salamanders, and snakes that are finding cover under the leaves and logs. When the once-green plants lose their color and remain as skeleton-like stalks over the winter, think about the insects sheltering inside the hollow dead stalks and the spiders that use those stalks as end-posts for their mist-net like webs covered with morning dew, and all of the birds that depend on those bugs and that may even enjoy an occasional salamander or snake snack.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

More than 50,000 observers participate each year in these all-day censuses of early-winter bird populations. The results of their efforts are compiled into the longest running database in ornithology, representing over a century of unbroken data on trends of early-winter bird populations across the Americas. Simply put, the Christmas Bird Count, or "CBC", is citizen science in action.

Christmas Bird Counts are done in established counting circles. These are 15-mile diameter circles (one covers most of Seattle, and there are over 50 that are at least partially in Washington state). Counting is done only within a circle.

Typically what you do is contact the count coordinator ahead of time for instructions. On the day of that circle's count, groups of birders will meet at various locations, and from those locations, smaller groups will go out to count a particular small area. (There are 47 square miles in one of those circles, so they are far too big for any one group to cover thoroughly). Because each sub-area is covered by a small group (3-4 people, typically) working together, you don't need to be a top-notch birder to help out. Eyes, ears, and pencils are needed. At the end of the day, each group sends its counts to be tabulated. There's usually a potluck where everyone can share stories about the day.

Presented here is a listing of Washington CBCs. This list is also available at http://www.wos.org/WACBCs.htm, and the website will have updates, as well as additional information about each count.

BELLINGHAM—Sunday, December 16
Joe Meche, Joemeche@aol.com or 360-739-5383

BRIDGEPORT—Saturday, December 15
Meredith Spencer, merdave@homenetnw.net or 509-686-7551

CAMAS PRAIRIE-TROUT LAKE—Saturday, December 15
Stuart Johnston, johnstonstuartf@hotmail.com or 509-493-3363 (6 - 10 p.m.)

CHELAN—Friday, December 28
Steve Easley, seasley@wenval.com or 509-682-2318

CLE ELUM—Wednesday, December 19
Michael Hobbs, BirdMarymoor@verizon.net or 425-869-2370 (H) or 425-318-2105 (C)

COLUMBIA HILLS-KLICKITAT VALLEY (WA/OR)—Saturday, December 29
Stuart Johnston, johnstonstuartf@hotmail.com or 509-493-3363 (6 - 10 p.m.)

COLVILLE—Saturday, December 22
Barbara Harding, Barbara_Harding@fws.gov or 509-684-8384

COWLITZ-COLUMBIA (WA/OR)—Monday, January 1
Bob Reistroffer, BReistrof@aol.com or 360-636-5125

EAST LAKE WASHINGTON—Saturday, December 15
Brian H. Bell, bellasoc@isomedia.com or 425-485-8058

EDMONDS—Saturday, December 29
Sally van Niel, 425-778-7568

ELLENSBURG—Saturday, December 15
Meredith Spencer, merdave@homenetnw.net or 509-686-7551

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COWLITZ-COLUMBIA (WA/OR)—Monday, January 1
Bob Reistroffer, BReistrof@aol.com or 360-636-5125

EVERETT—Saturday, December 15
Scott Atkinson, scottratkinson@hotmail.com or Mary Teesdale, meteesdale@hotmail.com or 360-734-2561

GRAND COULEE—Saturday, December 22
David St. George, hartashkip@yahoo.com or 509-667-7472

GRAYS HARBOR—Saturday, December 29
Dianna Moore, dlmoor2@coastaccess.com or (360) 289-5048 or Tim O’Brien, kertim7179@yahoo.com or (360) 482-6129

HOOD RIVER / BINGEN (WA/OR)—Sunday, December 30
Catherine Flick, stewart@gorge.net or 509-493-1195

KENT-AUBURN—Sunday, December 30
Nancy Streifert, nancy_streifert@hotmail.com or (253) 852-8394

KITSAP—Saturday, December 15
Gene Bullock, bullockg@earthlink.net or 360-394-5635

KENT/AUBURN—Sunday, December 30
Nancy Streifert, nancy_streifert@hotmail.com or (253) 852-8394

LEADVAN—Thursday, December 20
Karen Haire, karenhaire@nwi.net or 509-548-4566

LEAVENWORTH—Saturday, December 29
Barb Blackie, blackieb@olypen.com, or 360-477-8028

LEWISTON/CLARKSTON (ID/WA)—Saturday, December 29
Terry Gray, elgtrlg@moscow.com, or 208-882-1585

LYLE WA/OR—Sunday, December 16
Bob Hansen, bobhansen@gorge.net or 509-637-2736

MOSCOU/PULLMAN (ID/WA)—Saturday, December 22
WA - Tom Weber, tweber@wsu.edu or (509) 334-3817
ID - Dave Holick, daveholick@moscow.com or 208-882-5556

MOSES LAKE—Saturday, December 15
Doug Schonevald, dschone8@donobi.net or (509) 766-0056

NORTH CASCADES (Newhalem)—Saturday, December 15
Bob Kuntz, robert_kuntz@nps.gov or 360-856-5700x368 (work)

OLYMPIA—Sunday, December 16
George Walter, gwalter@nwific.org or 360-459-8220 (H) or 360-438-8687 (W)

OMAK/OKANOGAN—Saturday, January 5
Gordon Kent, gogo6116@yahoo.com or 509-422-6116

PADDILLA BAY—Saturday, December 29
Bob Berry, daberrybest@verizon.net or 360-299-8443

PEND OREILLE—Saturday, December 22
John Stuart, ninebark@povn.com or 509-447-2644

PORTLAND (OR/WA)—Saturday, January 5
Wink Gross, winkg@hevanet.com or (503) 226-3842

PORT ANGELES—Saturday, December 29
Barb Blackie, blackieb@olypen.com, or 360-477-8028

PORT ANGELES - VICTORIA FERRY—
Sunday, December 16
Scott Atkinson, scottratkinson@hotmail.com or 206-406-2306 (cell)

SAN JUAN FERRY (Anacortes to Sidney B.C.)—
Saturday, December 15
Clayton Snider, 360-738-2232, or Joe Meche, joemeche@aol.com or 360-738-0641 or 360-739-5383

SAN JUAN ISLANDS—Saturday, December 15
Barb Jensen, ninebark@povn.com or 509-447-2644

SEATTLE—Saturday, December 29
Seattle Audubon Society, adams@seattleaudubon.org or 206-523-8243 ext.80

SEQUIM-DUNGENESS—Sunday, December 30
Terry Gray, clgtlg@moscow.com or 208-882-1585

SPOKANE—Saturday, December 29
Alan McCoy, ahm@webband.com or 509-448-3123 evenings or 509-448-8861 workdays 9-6

TACOMA—Saturday, December 15
Faye McAdams Hands, zest4parus@hotmail.com or 253-942-9233

TOPPENISH NWR—Sunday, December 16
Andy Stepniewski, steppie@nwinfo.net or 509-877-6639

VASHON ISLAND—December 30
Sue Trevathan, sue.trevathan@centurytel.net or 206-463-1484

WAHKIAKUM (WA/OR)—Friday, December 28
Andrew Emlen, aceasp@pacifier.com or 360-795-8009

WALLA WALLA—Saturday, December 15
Mike Denny, m.denny@charter.net or 509-529-0080

WENATCHEE—Sunday, December 30
Dan Stephens, dstephens@wvc.edu or 509-682-6752 (w)

WHITE ROCK AND SURREY (B.C./WA)—
Sunday, December 30
Viveka Ohman, ohmanv@hotmail.com or (604) 531-3401

YAKIMA VALLEY—Saturday, December 15
Denny Granstrand, dgranstrand@charter.net or 509-453-2500
After winding up a successful WOS Conference in Aberdeen last month, the entire birding community was stunned by the tragic announcement that Patrick Sullivan had passed from our world. What transpired afterwards was an unprecedented flood of personal recollections, tributes, and expressions of sorrow and friendship on the Tweeters listerv.

Early on, Patrick demonstrated a keen birding ability while enrolled in Bob Ramsey's Naturalist Program at the Snake Lake Nature Center and subsequent birding class that he took with his mother Ruth. As he grew and evolved, Patrick made significant contributions to the Tahoma Audubon Society, and developed a substantial amount of field expertise that greatly benefited the Washington Ornithology Society.

Within his all too abbreviated lifespan of 35 years, Patrick had been out in the field and sharing birds with us for over two thirds of his life. Birders of our region already miss Patrick's frequent and excellent trip summaries, as well as his indefatigable zeal in the discovery and sharing of rare birds. Many people in the birding community of the Northwest -- and many others from around the continent as well -- have personally benefited from Patrick's and Ruth's discoveries and careful tracking of rarities.

Patrick never tired of identifying any new bird that happened upon the scene. While everyone else would be scoping a Barrow's Goldeneye on a river, he would not fail to detect and mention a Horned Lark flying overhead, or a Red Crossbill calling from a distant woodlot.

I have had the distinct privilege to have birded with the Sullivans both on WOS field trips and during chance encounters at various birding spots, and loved every moment of sharing information with them, viewing great birds together, or simply watching Patrick doing what he did best. Whether we were scoping a Gyrfalcon on the frozen Waterville Plateau, searching for migrants along the nettle-lined trails in Washtucna, or simply sharing stories on a coastal beach, it was always a pleasure to see Patrick's smile and hear his soft-spoken voice.

At this point, I wish to share other voices from our community.

Diane Yorgason-Quinn succinctly posted: “How many rare birds will pass this state unnoticed now? An Eye on the Sky has been put out, and we're all going to miss some rare birds now as well as their spotter.”

Describing a typical experience on a WOS field trip in Ocean Shores, Patricia Lott recalled: “Ever the conscientious birder, Patrick pulled back before the plovers were too disturbed and they continued to feed as he led us off to try to relocate the Buff-breasted Sandpipers that we'd seen earlier for better views. He was amazing as always that day, identifying birds by ear, silhouette, and flight pattern, when I hadn't even heard them zipping by. Certainly, every bird that was in the area was identified by Patrick.”

Kathy Andrich related the following: “One thing amazed me birding with Patrick and that was his ability to find and/or notice every single bird in range. This quality helped him find more rarities, plus the ability to notice small details like the call of the Temminck's Stint. The other that stands out that many others have mentioned is his willingness to share every bird. He would contort himself into some amazing positions, being a tall guy, to make sure the scope was set low enough so the shortest member of a field trip could get a good look at the bird. At the end of our trip on Sunday, he climbed into the car of fellow participants to help them with some birding information they were seeking.”

Commenting on the extraordinary birding skills that Patrick possessed, Ted Kenefick related it in this way: “There appeared to be a magic ability Patrick had to find great birds, but this happened because of outstanding preparation and intense and tireless field observation. It always struck me that while a group of us would be chatting, Patrick was constantly raising his glasses to check another bird and seemed to find great pleasure in calling out each species, no matter how common. He found all these great birds because quite simply, he was an outstanding field observer.
Scott Atkinson summed up Patrick's ability in this way: “Patrick clearly made his mark in our local birding community, overcoming the initial skepticism shown to younger birders reporting rarities from outside the castle walls, as it were. Like many of us, he passed through the gauntlet over the years. Apart from the skills he honed, he and Ruth just seemed to overcome the doubts with sheer intensity and field effort -- especially marked by Ruth's photos and the many confirmed sightings -- like no one else I can think of in the community. The unshakable enthusiasm for the endeavor that he had was most memorable.”

Connie Sidles contributed this observation: "We have a birding community in our state that is the envy of other regions. We have an ethic in our state that says, "When you see a bird, share." It is joy to share. We often take community for granted, especially when we live in one as gracious and generous as ours. But community does not come about by accident. It is created by the people who are in it. It can be strong, and kind. It can nurture the young and care for the old. It can also be the opposite. That ours is so generous is due in large part to Patrick and Ruth. I always got the feeling from both of them that the reason they were so very happy to find a rare bird was so that they could give it to the rest of us. Great gifts they gave."

Patrick's mother Ruth shared this: "He was a hero who kept me going to survive at a time when I had a big problem to overcome. When Patrick was 10 years old, he introduced me to looking for birds. From then, things got better and better, and I start living a normal and happy life. The years with Patrick were "THE BEST IN ALL MY LIFE." Patrick was an angel sent by a higher power to me."

Doug Schonewald wrote "I do believe in the after-life, and it is fitting that Patrick will beat me to Carolina Parakeet, Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Labrador Duck, Passenger Pigeon, Great Auk, Bachman's Warbler, and Eskimo Curlew. I wish him well. And, should I see a tall fellow with a scope over his shoulder trudging through the sands of Midway Beach, Damon Point, or Oyhut Game Range in that wonderful sea-fog, I will look twice. And, if he disappears in a waft of fog, I will know that I have company and will take solace in that."

To close out our tribute to Patrick, I will leave you with Marv Breece's fine sentiments: "He saw and heard birds that others didn't. This was partly a result of his natural gift, and partly due to the enormous effort he put into his hobby. Rare birds do not slap you on the behind; they must be earned."

Were I to list the fantastic birds I have enjoyed through the efforts of Ruth and Patrick Sullivan, the list would be a long one. Others have mentioned the Temminck's Stint at the Ocean Shores STP. It was almost as much fun watching Patrick share this incredible find with many other birders as it was watching the bird itself. As a fitting tribute and by popular request, the WOS board has officially changed name of the "Young Birders' Fund" to the "Patrick Sullivan Young Birders' Fund."

Below: Temminck’s Stint photo by Ruth Sullivan.

Patrick Sullivan Young Birders' Fund
By Randy Hill, WOS President

With the approval of the committee overseeing its management and the Board of the Washington Ornithological Society, the year-old Young Birders' Fund has been re-named the Patrick Sullivan Young Birders' Fund. Established and supported by Andy Stepniewski's generous contribution of royalties from sales of A Birder's Guide to Washington, this fund supports scholarships to young birders in Washington. Patrick epitomized the development of a young birder utilizing knowledge and skills from camps and classes to become a role model of learning and giving back to the birding community. Leading field trips and writing detailed trip reports were some examples of his helping others find birds across the state. Financial contributions to the Patrick Sullivan Young Birders' Fund can go directly to the Washington Ornithological Society at PO Box 31783, Seattle WA 98103.
Wild Birding—continued from page 1

Crossbills, Northern Pygmy-Owls, and Barred Owls come to mind. Migrations of birds which must avoid the coldest of weather in the Arctic, but have the ability to withstand lower 48 temperatures have us chasing Snowy Owls, Yellow-billed and Arctic loons, American Tree Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Lapland Longspur, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, and Gyrfalcon. Any of the above-mentioned species are desired winter target birds and there are dozens more available.

Let’s define cold. For the sake of this article, I would consider “cold” weather anything less than 32 degrees Fahrenheit, or, if you prefer, 0 degrees Celsius. In addition, I would consider anything under 40 degrees Fahrenheit with wind or rain to be “cold.” Snow on the ground is cold, and ice on the lakes is definitely cold. Obviously, the west side does not approach the days below freezing that are experienced on the east side, but they certainly have their share of days below 40 degrees with rain and wind.

So it’s cold outside and you want to go birding; what is the plan? It is really pretty simple.

On the east side, head for places like the Douglas Plateau and try for the winter specialties found there. First thing in the morning, head to several of the draws that harbor Sharp-tailed Grouse, which are found in water birch groves, eating buds in the early morning. Several of these are available on the plateau and across the river in Okanogan County. After chasing Sharp-tailed Grouse, stop at the Bridgeport Bar, where many winter species can be found. Several WOS field trips are scheduled here during the winter and I highly recommend them. After Bridgeport Bar, go up on the plateau, where it is normal to locate Snow Bunting and Snowy Owl. Bonus birds are Lapland Longspur and Gyrfalcon, sometimes found here in winter. Small groves of brush and trees offer Long-eared Owls and American Tree Sparrows. Another bonus is that the snow makes seeing birds much easier and desired species like Gray Partridge are easier to locate. Later in the winter, Greater Sage-Grouse are found at several locations. While I am partial to Grant County, nowhere in Washington can you find better winter birding than the afore-mentioned area, but other spots to check include the lakes of Grant County, the Columbia River, and the Walla Walla area.

On the west side, things are a little muddier. If I had my druthers (is that really a word?) I would bird the Skagit area, including the game range and flats, then head across Whidbey Island, birding the Sound for winter alcids and the thickets for wintering sparrows. However, an invitation to go to the outer coast would most likely receive an affirmative response as well. In addition to winter alcids, there are also those winter migrants that are available. Ocean Shores is renowned for Snowy Owls, Lapland Longspurs, and other winter specialties. In addition, there are always those wintering shorebirds.

Cold weather birding can be difficult for us humans; no other normal weather pattern presents more dangers to birders than cold weather. Hypothermia, frostbite, and even death are possibilities for the unprepared birder. For the birder, the key to cold weather safety and comfort is wearing layers of the proper clothing and being prepared for any eventuality. For cold weather birding, wear clothing in layers. Yes, you’ve heard this a million times, but it is still true. Fleece is wonderful; I like it a lot and wear it as underwear and outerwear in winter. Wool is hard to beat because it retains its insulation value when wet. A wool pullover sweater is a staple of my winter wardrobe. A good coat is a must and one of the newer types that are called Quad-parkas is the best. This type of coat is designed as a layering garment and inner layers can be added or removed as conditions warrant. A hat is an absolute necessity, and not a baseball style cap. A large amount of heat is lost through the head and a warm, insulated hat is a must; wool is best, but other fabrics such as fleece are also good.

Rain-gear is a must. Buy the best you can afford and make sure it is one of the newer windbreaker types. Bibs are better than pants, but either will work if they can be secured in such a way so no gaps occur between the tops and bottoms. These garments not only shed water, but also block even the toughest wind. Make sure the cuffs have an elastic inner cuff (stops the water from running into your armpits when using binoculars) and legs have tie-downs, snaps, or Velcro closures. When wading in deep snow, add gaiters to your repertoire and you are set.

In addition to the proper clothing, you need to properly stock your vehicle with gear that will keep you warm should you break down in a remote location or be trapped by snow. First know that capability of your vehicle; two-wheel drives and back roads are a recipe for disaster. Get real snow tires! Get stuck with those all-season radials and you will see why we put high traction tires on our vehicles on the east side. Chains are a great invention and only useless when you don’t have any. In the trunk, carry traction mats, a roadside emergency kit, and several blankets or sleeping bags. Flares that you shoot in the air are not just for boats; buy a small kit and carry it. If you should go off the road, any or all of these things could save your life. Inside that car, carry some extra water (dehydration is as much a problem in the cold as in the heat), food, and extra clothing. The extra clothing may come in handy should you get wet, but what keeps you warm when you are active may not be enough when you are stuck in one place. Carry a good map and make sure you have a cell phone charger for your car. Calling for help is a good thing to be able to do and knowing where you are is very helpful to rescuers.

Enjoy winter and the birthing that it offers. It is a special time of year when some of the most wonderful birds are found. If you are properly prepared, your adventure will be rewarding and pleasant.
Surveys and Studies
All sightings and reports are welcome.

ACCIPITERS: Winter site fidelity study.
Cooper's Hawks: Blue VID bands (note right or left leg and engraved number and letter on VID band).
Sharp-shinned Hawks: Either one or two color (only) bands on the same leg (note right or left leg and top/bottom color if two bands). Other leg has standard aluminum band. Note date, time, and location. Report to Jack Bettesworth, 2569-12th Ave. W, Seattle, WA 98119, (206) 285-5276, jgbett@comcast.net.

AMERICAN CROWS: Wanted Dead or Alive.
We still want your observations of color-banded crows. If possible, please record the color and location (top/bottom left leg, top/bottom right leg) of bands. Recently banded crows now have TWO colors AND a metal (Fish & Wildlife) band on one leg, and two colors on the other. In addition, as part of our West Nile Virus monitoring efforts in the Puget Sound area, we would like to know about any dead crows you observe. If they appear freshly dead, your county health agency may also want to test them for the virus. Please report any sightings to Dr. John Marzluff, corvid@u.washington.edu.

COOPER'S HAWKS
Color bands have been placed on over 1,200 nestling Cooper's Hawks in Victoria, British Columbia, since 1996. This is part of a long-term study on its urban-nesting ecology. Each color band is uniquely coded with two vertical, alphanumeric characters and is placed on the left leg; black bands are on males, red bands on females. Please note band code and color, date, time, and location. To date, >12 different marked hawks have been reported from Washington. Report all sightings to Andy Stewart, BC Conservation Data Centre, Victoria, B.C. (250) 387-9780, or andy.stewart@gov.bc.ca.

MERLINS
The Merlin Falcon Foundation (a 501(c)3 organization), invites you to participate in a regional citizen scientist investigation of the little-known Coastal Forest Merlin. Please visit our evolving website at www.merlinfoleafoundation.org and help our national educational programs on behalf of Merlin. We gratefully acknowledge your year-round Merlin observations. Thank you for becoming a Merlin Steward and "Helping to Keep 'em Wild!"

NORTHERN HARRIERS
Patagial markers have been placed on Northern Harriers as part of a long-term study of populations on Whidbey Island and in the Kent Valley. Please note the color of the tag (yellow, blue, green, or white), which wing it is on, the letter or number printed (in black) on the tag, and whether or not there is a black circle around the letter or number. Note date, time, and exact location. Report to Jack Bettesworth, 2569 - 12th Ave W, Seattle WA 98119, (206) 285-5276, or jgbett@comcast.net.

BURROWING OWLS
Year-round sightings of banded Burrowing Owls in the Columbia Basin of eastern WA. Owls banded during 2000-2004 will have a larger colored band on either the left or right leg, in addition to a smaller aluminum band. Owls banded as adults received a BLUE, GREEN, or RED band (males left leg, females right leg) while unsexed juveniles received a PURPLE or ORANGE band (left leg). All banded owls are now adults. The codes are unique, with two numbers and/or letters, next to or above and below each other, and with or without a horizontal or vertical bar separating. If you see a banded owl and can read even a portion of the code or determine color, please note the date and location, which leg, and report it to Randy Hill at work at (509) 488-2668 ext. 14, home (509) 488-9418, or by e-mail at randy_hill@fws.gov.

SONGBIRD SURVEY
We have color-marked more than 500 crows, as well as many other songbirds in the area and would appreciate any sightings of these. Be on the lookout for banded robins, Wilson's Warblers, Swainson's Thrushes, Song Sparrows, Spotted Towhees, Oregon Juncos, Winter and Bewick's wrens, and Pacific-slope Flycatchers. If possible, please record the color and location (top/bottom left leg, top/bottom right leg) of bands. Please report any sightings to Dr. John Marzluff, corvid@u.washington.edu.

TURKEY VULTURES
The Olympic Vulture Study is working on two concurrent studies: the fall migration at Salt Creek, and the demographics of our Pacific Northwest vultures. Any sightings from British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho will be welcomed. As always, date, location, and number of birds is needed. If possible, report weather, time, and any aspect of behavior. Please send to Diann MacRae, 22622 - 53rd Avenue SE, Bothell, WA 98021, or to tvulture@vei.net.

WASHINGTON REVIEW SPECIES
Reports of review species (see Washington Birds 5:1-6 or the WOS Field Card) may be sent to the “Washington Field Notes” compiler or directly to the Washington Bird Records Committee, c/o WOS, P.O. Box 31783, Seattle, WA 98103.

RARE BIRD ALERTS
Send bird sightings to:
Tom Aversa
305 NW 75th St
Seattle WA 98117
FieldNotes@wos.org
WASHINGTON Ornithological Society

Make check payable to Washington Ornithological Society. Send form and payment to:

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
City/State/Zip: _________________________
Telephone: ____________________________ Work: ____________________________
E-mail: ________________________________

WOS News — newsletter — Most issues available

Individual Membership ($20)                .
Family Membership ($25)                .
Donation to the Patrick Sullivan Young Birders Fund:                      .


NOTE: WOS does not sell or loan its membership list.

The Washington Ornithological Society was chartered in 1988 to increase knowledge of the birds of Washington and to enhance communication among all persons interested in those birds. WOS is a non-profit organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. Memberships extend one year from the month joined. Benefits include:

• WOS News — bimonthly newsletter
• Monthly field trips
• Affordable annual conferences
• Washington Birds — scholarly journal

The Washington Ornithological Society is the premier organization for Washington's active birders.

WOS MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL FORM

Make check payable to Washington Ornithological Society. Send form and payment to:

Washington Ornithological Society Membership, P.O. Box 31783, Seattle 98103

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
City/State/Zip: _________________________
Telephone: ____________________________ Work: ____________________________
E-mail: ________________________________

Place an X in the box beside any item you do not want to appear in the WOS directory.

Individual Membership ($25)                . Family Membership ($30)                .
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WOS NEWS

December 2007 / January 2008

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