Ptarmigans and Rosy-Finches

by Ryan Merrill

On Saturday, 19 July 2003, several non-birder friends and I went up to Mt. Rainier to hike the Paradise Skyline Trail. Being the birder of the group, I was looking forward to seeing the mountain birds such as American pipit and chipping sparrows, and was hoping to add to my life list by finding a blue grouse or gray-crowned rosy-finch. Early on in the day we ran into Brian Bell’s mountain birding class returning from their hike. They had seen several rosy-finches which was encouraging. Farther up the mountain, Mike and Diane West told me that they had just seen a group of white-tailed ptarmigans! This was extremely exciting news. I had been to Sunrise a couple of times hoping to find them there, but never had any luck. While most of the group stopped for lunch at Panorama Point, a couple of us continued on the trail a little farther to where the ptarmigans were seen.

(Continued on page 4)
WOS Field Trips

October 6th – Bob Morse will present a program on the birds of the Puget Sound area. Bob started bird watching when he was 12 and has birded extensively throughout the United States. He has recorded over 830 different bird species in the U.S., about 84% of the 984 bird species in our country. Living in Olympia, Bob has spent over 40 years studying the birds of the Puget Sound region. According to Bob, “Over 300,000 people in the Puget Sound area watch or feed birds.” He is the author of A Birder’s Guide to Coastal Washington.

November 3rd – Scott Downes will present “Reproductive Ecology of the Sage Thrasher in a Disturbed Shrub-steppe Landscape.” The talk will cover his master’s research on the reproductive ecology of sage thrashers in the Columbia Basin, background information on the shrub-steppe of the Columbia Basin, and how disturbance and exotics affect obligate songbirds, mainly in regard to sage thrashers. Research was a part of Scott’s master’s degree completed last season (2002) and this spring (2003).

Scott received his Bachelor’s degree in the Wildlife Science Group, College of Forest Resources, at the UW. He is currently finishing his master’s of biology at Central Washington University in Ellensburg.

December 1st – Member’s slide night.

Meetings are held the first Monday of each month (except July, August, and September) at the Center for Urban Horticulture on the University of Washington campus, 3501 N.E. 41st Street, Seattle, and are open to all. The social begins at 7:00 pm, and the program starts at 7:30 pm.

The Society

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:

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FROM THE BOARD … Joe Buchanan

By the time this appears in print the results of our most recent election will be official and some of you will have enjoyed (I hope) the annual meeting. As always, the Board is busy conducting the business of running WOS. The behind-the-scenes work done by Board members and staff includes organizing monthly and annual meetings; processing membership dues; editing, organizing and mailing the newsletter; organizing leaders for field trips; handling the financial accounts and merchandise; hosting the monthly member meetings; and participating in the several Board meetings held each year. These are interesting and rewarding opportunities to be involved in our organization. Observant readers will note that each of the candidates in the recent elections ran unopposed for their respective positions. We appreciate that these people stepped forward to serve WOS, and we hope to see continuing participation and perhaps some actual competition in future elections!

The Board is still seeking volunteers to fill the hospitality and merchandise positions. The hospitality position is responsible for refreshments and greeting speakers at the monthly meetings in Seattle. The merchandise position processes orders for publications, t-shirts, and other items year-round and at annual meetings. Like most positions in WOS, neither of these activities requires a great commitment of time. Those interested in volunteering for these or other positions should contact Brian Bell. These positions are important to WOS and the Board takes this opportunity to thank all previous volunteers. For those who are interested, please step forward and help build WOS into an organization that provides even better service to birders and ornithologists in this state!

Vulture’s Roost by Diann MacRae

“Science is nothing more than an organized way of being curious about the things that constitute our world,” so says John W. Fitzpatrick, Director of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Being curious doesn’t mean we must be a professor at a university or write a technical book on some aspect of ornithology for our efforts to be meaningful. It can be as simple as taking a few notes or photos on a recent birding trip and sharing them with others. On a bit more organized level, go to our “Report Your Sightings” column, recently updated, and see what you might add to a special study. Watch crows by the thousands flock to roost at Foster Island; try to find a pinkish ring-billed gull in the hundreds of gulls perusing the tide flats or meadows; watch for “banded” birds – from a variety of songbirds with classic leg bands, to trumpeter swans with neck collars, to northern harriers with patagial tags on their wings. Report these sightings and be a part of those curious about our world. And share those photos at a Members Slide Night so we can all enjoy them!!

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 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.

Tracee Geernaert

Be Informed

WOSNews is published bimonthly by the Washington Ornithological Society 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 for consideration. Contributor guidelines are available.

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Subscribe to the Tweeters email bird discussion list by emailing listproc@u.washington.edu with a message text of sub tweeters your name
Ptarmigans and Rosy-Finches  

(Continued from page 1)

Upon finding the small stream, I began searching the rocks at the bottom of the hill but found nothing. I was hearing a quiet peeping sound that I was ignoring until I finished scanning the rocks. I looked in the direction that the sound was coming from and was startled to see the whole hillside moving. There were six little ptarmigan chicks scrambling about the hillside with a hen sitting motionless in the middle. The whole time that I was looking down below they were sitting right in front of me! I sat down and ate my lunch right on the trail. The babies gathered near the female and burrowed underneath her for a rest. Once done with their short nap they began climbing uphill closer to me. One chick walked within four feet of where I was sitting before retreating down the hill.

I had to rejoin the rest of the group, but about an hour later we passed the same stretch of trail again. The birds were still there, but this time they were pretty ‘far’ down the hill, about thirty feet away. During the hike I also did manage to get a couple brief glimpses of rosy-finches flying over, displaying their translucent wings in the bright sunshine. It was a very memorable day for me and I am glad that so many other people have been able to experience the thrill of finding this very elusive mountain bird.

Photos by the author

The Morning Stroll  

by Murray Hansen

Quietly, softly, their passage marked
By slender grasses touched as if by sliding air
Moving slowly, whispering over one by one
The deliberate procession of downy feathers.

From an elevated isolation comes
The steady inconspicuous ticking
As of a miniscule muffled clock
Guiding innocents to safety.

Note: Murray comments that he and his wife, Betty, had been watching a family of quail at his home off and on – whenever they’ve been lucky enough to have the quail abruptly cross their paths. Just before this was written, “Betty counted at least ten small bodies . . . so I herewith celebrate the event. Murray”

Bird Banding  

(Continued from page 1)

genus of the bird, the correct band size is selected and placed on a leg of the bird. Then begins the detailed exam necessary to complete a MAPS form. Some of the entries include the sex of the bird, age, how it was aged and sexed, fat, body molt, skull features associated with age, feather length, wear, and replacement. It may take from ten to thirty minutes to "process" a bird prior to its release. The MAPS volunteers return to each banding site once every ten-day period throughout the avian breeding season to capture and record this detailed information. Peter Pyle's Identification Guide to North American Birds is the bander's "bible" for determining and interpreting the measurements and observations made while the bird is in the hand.

There are nearly five hundred banding sites in North America. About a dozen of these are in Washington State. Data sheets are sent to the Institute for Bird Populations, a non-profit organization in California, which was founded in 1989. Additional information can be found at http://www.birdpop.org.
Field trip: Whidbey Island  
by Brian Bell

We had a very good day on our WOS trip to Whidbey Island on August 2nd. It started out overcast and cool, but gradually cleared and warmed up. While waiting for the ferry at Mukilteo, we got extremely nice views of very young glaucous-winged gulls - nice white downy heads with dark spots on them. We had one marbled murrelet just west of the ferry dock as the ferry came in. We had a couple of Caspian terns here, and twenty later at Swantown on Whidbey. We had an adult and immature red-tailed hawk along Ewing Road just north of Clinton and several more on the trip home down along the I-5 corridor.

Double-Bluff was pretty quiet, but did turn up a pair of adult bald eagles, six common terns down by the point, and a pod of six dolphins moving north (too distant to identify with certainty but perhaps harbor porpoise as they had all-black dorsal fins and were relatively small-appearing). As we went back out to the highway, the wetlands/lake had good numbers of mallards, northern shoveler, northern pintail, and gadwall. A few cliff swallows were around, although generally barn and violet-green swallows were the only ones present in any quantity. A nice female/immature common yellowthroat showed itself in the marsh as did red-winged blackbirds.

At Bush Point we had a single common loon fly by and also a common murre. Several rhinoceros auklets were diving a ways offshore. A male belted kingfisher kept flying in and attempting to land on a television antenna.

At Crockett Lake the thistles were loaded with American goldfinches and the surrounding conifers had many cedar waxwings. There were good numbers of shorebirds at the lake including both greater and lesser yellowlegs - at one point we had both side by side allowing great views under superb lighting; a nice comparison. Lots of western and least sandpipers, also allowing nice comparisons. One Baird’s sandpiper was present, but a peregrine falcon made a pass before we could really study the Baird's and all the shorebirds flushed. Approximately 25 long-billed dowitchers were doing their best sewing machine imitations. Three northern harriers cruised back and forth, one adult female and two immatures with wing tags (a blue one on a left wing with a solid diamond, and a blue one on a right wing with an open triangle). A cooperative Savannah sparrow popped up at one point and gave us a nice view as it perched on an old hunter’s blind. On the other side of Crockett Lake we had 38 great blue herons feeding on the edges of the lake. Just across the road on the old platform just offshore were about twelve pelagic cormorants and about 25 pigeon guillemots. The rock jetty was loaded with glaucous-winged and Heermann's gulls (Heermann's were also at Double-Bluff and Swantown).

Up at Fort Casey we had an olive-sided flycatcher who sat silently on top of a Douglas-fir, but finally rewarded us with the classic song. The picnic area turned up northern flicker (red-shafted race), spotted towhee, chestnut-backed chickadee, dark-eyed junco, yellow-rumped warbler (juveniles, Audubon's race), golden-crowned kinglet, a hairy woodpecker tapping on an old branch, white-crowned sparrow, Bewick's wren, winter wren (heard), and a brown creeper. At the south end of the picnic area we had impressive looks at a great horned owl sitting silently in a tree.

From the pier at San de Fuca we had looks at common loon, surf and white-winged scoter, and a couple of black turnstones at the end of the pier. Swantown turned up a Pacific loon, a semi-palmated plover, a killdeer, a red-necked grebe, and a red-throated loon.

We stopped at the Stanwood Sewage Ponds on the way home and were rewarded with several species. The most outstanding were incredible views of male ruddy ducks in breeding plumage and displaying with bright ruddy sides and brilliant blue bills - the females seemed distinctly unimpressed. The ponds also had mallards, gadwall, hooded mergansers, a surprising greater scaup, a Brewer's blackbird, and a ring-billed gull.

At various times and places we saw American crow, rock dove, double-crested cormorant, red-breasted nuthatch, American robin, house sparrow, house finch, song sparrow, Canada goose, mourning dove, California gull, and turkey vulture.

It was a great trip and we saw a total of 73 species for a most enjoyable day. The best feature of the trip was the great views we had of many of the birds.
Book and Publication Reviews

RETROREVIEW: Jewett et al. turns 50
by Ian Paulsen


I managed to track down four reviews of the book:


I found three major criticisms of the book by the reviewers:

The length of time it took to write the book. Taylor and Shaw began working on the book as early as 1917! They worked on the book for about a decade until the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reassigned them to other duties. The book stayed in the Service’s files until Jewett and Aldrich were brought in to work on the book in the 1940s. This gap in time led to the second major problem with the book:

Outdated bibliography. Most of the entries in the bibliography were from the 1920s or earlier. Only a very few were after the mid-1940s making the book already somewhat dated before it was even published!

The subspecies nomenclature. Aldrich was responsible for the nomenclature of the subspecies used in the book. Apparently Aldrich had some interesting views on subspecies nomenclature. To quote from Miller’s review in the Auk: “But persons using this volume should be aware that Aldrich has in effect functioned as a one-man committee on nomenclature.” I believe Aldrich was trying to anticipate the changes to avian nomenclature due out in the 1957 edition of the A.O.U. Checklist. This might have thrown off the reviewers as to what Aldrich was trying to do. One minor point that Findley’s review noted: “the cover jacket drawings are poor and add little to the attractiveness of the book.” I’ve noticed this too. The drawing of the Bullock’s Oriole looks more like a wagtail to me! These criticisms aside, the reviewers liked the book with the caveat that the book could be used as a jumping off point for future research on Washington state’s avifauna.

I also found some points of interest to the bird book collector. According to U.W. Press’s records, 5,000 copies of the book were originally published. The following number of books were bound in the succeeding years: hardbound – 1953, 1000; 1957, 2000; 1961, 500; 1964, 500.; paperbound – 1968, 1000.

The hardbound book sold originally for $8.00. Now you’re lucky to find a copy for under $40.00. The paperbound version sold for $4.95 and is hard to find on the used book market. There are three things to check to see if you have an early binding of the hardbound edition:

- The early bindings are a uniform off-white color. Later bindings are bicolored white and red.
- On the title page, early bindings show incorrectly the middle initial of Stanley Jewett as A. instead of G. This is corrected in later bindings.
- On the life zone map, the legend on the map in early bindings, the keys for “Arid Transition (timbered)” and “Arid Transition (timberless)” are reversed; again, these are corrected in later bindings. The reason I say bindings instead of printings is that it appears that the text was printed up only in 1953 and then bound up in later years. The paperbound version lacks the corrections.

I would like to thank Denise Clark of U.W. Press for her help while researching this article.

[Editor’s note: the new *Birds of Washington* will hopefully be out in late 2004, probably 2005. It will be dealing essentially with status and distribution today, updating from Jewett *et al.*, and discussing reasons for changes, pointing out new information regarding trends over time, impacts of human activities on birds, etc. It will deal with biology and behavior only if these appear to differ in Washington or where our information can add to the very good references now available, from Jewett *et al.* to Paulson, to Campbell *et al.* (B. C.), and the BNA accounts.]
Blaine, Birch Bay, and Semiahmoo
A Winter Birder’s Delight by Joe Meche

Whatcom County contains a wide range of habitat types that host a remarkable variety of bird species. From tidewater and the western lowlands to the alpine habitats of the North Cascades, Whatcom County offers birding for all seasons. Although birding is good throughout the year, late fall through spring is the prime time for birding. The numbers of birds that winter in the marine habitats just south of the Canadian border can be mind-boggling, even for seasoned birders.

In the large estuarine environments of Drayton Harbor, Semiahmoo Bay, and Birch Bay can be found some of the largest concentrations of birds on the Pacific Coast. This largely pristine natural area provides food and shelter for a variety of species throughout the winter months and during migration. The area of Drayton Harbor and Semiahmoo Bay has been designated as one of 53 Important Bird Areas in the state. This area also anchors the first loop of the Great Washington State Birding Trail, Audubon Washington's first entry into the nationwide effort to promote birdwatching and conservation of areas that are essential to healthy bird populations. Marine Park in Blaine is a shining example of what can be done locally to ensure that birds have ample sites for resting and feeding during the long winter months, prior to returning to their breeding grounds in spring.

To get there: Drive north on Interstate 5, to the last exit before the international border, at Blaine. Go under the freeway and west across the railroad tracks to begin your tour at the bird- and birder-friendly Marine Park. There is always ample parking on both sides of Marine Drive and, along the trail in Marine Park, there are four covered shelters that overlook the extensive tidal flats of Semiahmoo Bay. Large numbers of shorebirds gather here and rarities such as Hudsonian and bar-tailed godwits have been observed along with marbled godwits, whimbrels, and long-billed curlews. black-bellied plovers, dunlin, and black turnstones are regulars along with a variety of other peeps. Large flocks of Caspian and common terns have been observed along with Bonaparte’s, glaucous-winged, ring-billed, and mew gulls. Keep an eye out for the peregrine falcons that frequent the area.

From Marine Park, explore the Blaine waterfront on foot. There are restrooms and restaurants available when you need them. The visitor information center is well-equipped with birding maps and checklists for the birds in the area from Blaine and Semiahmoo to Birch Bay. The Blaine-Birch Bay Birding Committee is putting together a new birding brochure, as well.

At the end of Marine Drive, the new public pier affords scooping opportunities of the northern reaches of Drayton Harbor and the Semiahmoo Spit. The deep-water channel between the spit and White Rock, BC, attracts incredible numbers of loons and other diving birds in winter and early spring. In 27 years of birding in the area, last year’s numbers exceeded anything I’ve seen. When the schools of herring move in and out of Drayton Harbor through the narrow channel, the activity can be frenetic. In late February and early March, 20-30,000 birds were on the water, on both sides of the spit. Among the species observed were in excess of 1,500 loons of three species, three scoter species, gulls, cormorants, and as many as 300 red-breasted mergansers. Northern pintails and other ducks gathered by the thousands in the protected inner waters of Drayton Harbor for two weeks of incredible feeding activity. On March 7, there were 2,000 brant feeding on the eelgrass beds as the tide went out. The inaugural Washington Brant Festival was held at the Semiahmoo Resort in April to celebrate this little-known sea goose, and to educate the public about the need for protection of the essential habitat necessary for the health of the brant and many other species. The city of Blaine is looking forward to an even better festival next year in mid-April.

After birding at Marine Park and the Blaine Harbor, drive around the perimeter of Drayton Harbor to the Semiahmoo Spit, and check the estuaries of Dakota and California Creeks along the way. There are many pullouts along the drive that provide opportunities for shorebirds, numerous great blue herons, and bald eagles. From the county park to the resort, large numbers of birds are visible on both sides of the spit. After Semiahmoo, follow the road south to the expanse of Birch Bay. On the southern boundary, at Birch Bay State Park, usually in mid-April, you can observe the annual spectacle of thousands of scoters, harlequin ducks, cormorants, and gulls feeding on the herring spawn. Large numbers of brant also join in this feeding frenzy.

Make plans now to drive up to northern Whatcom County during the fall and winter to enjoy some of Washington state’s finest birding.
Compiled by Tom Aversa
“Washington Field Notes” are distilled from reports sent to Tom Aversa, 305NW 75th St, Seattle WA. 98117 (tomaversa@zoo.org), and to a lesser extent from birding hotlines and listserves. For corrections or information contact the compiler at tom.aversa@zoo.org.

Washington Field Notes
December 2002 – February 2003

Red-throated Loon Rare in e WA. 1 below Wanapum Dam Kittitas from 1/5 (SDo) to at least 2/15 (RSh).

Pacific Loon Uncommon in e WA. 1 at Potholes Grant on 12/8 (SM), 1 below Wanapum Dam Kittitas on 12/8 (SDo) until at least 1/11 (RFI), 1 east of John Day Dam Klickitat on 12/28 (SJ), 1 at Richland Benton on 1/7 (BW), 1 near Brewster Okanogan on 2/15 (PS,RS), and 1 at Beeche Douglas on 2/25 (DBe).

Yellow-billed Loon Uncommon in WA. 1 below Wanapum Dam Kittitas remaining from November throughout the period (fide TAv), 1 at Clarkston Asotin on 12/2 (LaL), 1 at Westport Grays Harbor on 12/14 (BT,SMi), 1 at Protection Island Jefferson on 12/16 (BL,CWri), 1 “albino” near Dash Point SP King on 12/30 (HJF) at least to 1/5 (BRi), and 1 reported at Point Roberts Whidbey on 1/5 (IM).

Red-necked Grebe Uncommon in e WA. 1 at Vantage Kittitas on 12/7 (SM), 2 at Potholes Grant on 1/9 (RFI), and 4 reported south of Orondo Douglas on 2/15 (PS,RS).

Eared Grebe Reports included 3 at Des Moines King on 12/2 (CWr,CSc), 7 at Bainbridge Island Kitting on 12/7 (DoW), 1 west of Lyle Klickitat on 12/19 (SJ), 26 at Soap Lake Grant on 1/7 (RoF), 1 at White Salmon Klickitat on 1/10 (SJ), 43 at Utsalady Bay Island on 1/10 (SM), 6 at Mystery Bay SP Jefferson on 1/25 (DoW), 1 at Pateros Okanogan on 2/15 (PS,RS), 1 at Paterson Slough Benton on 2/23 (BLa,NaLa), and 8 at Vashon Island King on 2/12 (fide ESw).

Western Grebe Reports from e WA included 12 at Port Kelly Wallo Walla on 12/24 (MD), 4 at Potholes Grant on 1/24 (DSe), and 2 at Vantage Kittitas on 2/15 (SDo).

Clark’s Grebe Uncommon in w WA in winter. 1 at Fox Island Pierce on 12/21 (BL), and 2 at Stevenson Skamania on 2/10 (WC).

Western X Clark’s Grebe Uncommon in WA. 1 at Bay Center Pacific on 12/21 (SM).

Northern Fulmar Reports from shore included 1 at Midway Beach Pacific on 12/1 (PS,RS), 1 at Westport Grays Harbor on 12/14 (BT,SM), and 2 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/17 (WhD).

Pink-footed Shearwater Rarely reported in winter in WA. 25 on Westport Pelagic Grays Harbor on 2/8 (MDo,BT).

Flesh-footed Shearwater Rare in winter in WA. 1 on Westport Pelagic Grays Harbor on 2/8 (MDo,BT).

Sooty Shearwater Uncommon in winter in WA. 84 on Westport Pelagic Grays Harbor on 2/8 (MDo,BT).

Short-tailed Shearwater Reports thought to be this species from shore included 22 at Dungeness Spit Clallam on 12/16 (BW,BjGrAc), and 10 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/20 (MD).

Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel Rarely reported in WA in winter. 2 on Westport Pelagic Grays Harbor on 2/8 (BT).

American White Pelican Reports included 12 at Warapamus Grant on 12/10 with 1 there on 1/10 and 1 at Potholes Grant on 1/10 (RH), and 1 at Wahluke Slope WMA Franklin on 1/25.

Green Heron Uncommon in w WA in winter. 2 at Tulwila King on 12/28 (CWr), 1 at Union Bay King on 12/28 (fide EH), 1 at Marymoor Park King from 1/4 to the end of the period (MiH), and 1 at Payalilap Pigeon on 2/5 (CVW).

Black-crowned Night-Heron Uncommon in w WA. 3 at Warm Beach Snomish on 12/28 (SM), and 1 at Fir Island Skagit on 1/26 (SA).

Turkey Vulture Rare in WA in winter. 1 reported near Sequim Clallam on 1/13 (fide SM).

Tundra Swan Reports from e WA included 10 at Palmer Lake Okanogan on 12/26 (KKe), 25 at Bingen Klickitat on 12/29 (SJ), 8 at Richland Benton on 1/4 (BLa), 1 at McNary NWR Walla Walla on 1/9 (NaLa), 62 at Columbia NWR Adams Grant on 1/10 (RH), and 19 at Big Flat HMU Franklin on 2/25 (DR). High count for w WA: 745 near Conway Skagit on 2/17 (SM).

Trumpeter Swan Reports included 1 at Frenchman Hills Road Adams on 12/8, 550 at Stillaguamish Flats Snomish on 12/15 (SM), 77 at Brady Loop Road Grays Harbor on 12/23 (DC), 1 at Bingen Klickitat on 1/5 through the end of the period (SJ), 8 near Sequim Clallam on 1/10 (BN) to at least 1/30 (TAv,SGe), 2 north of Chinook Pacific on 1/18 (JSR), 10 at Monroe Snomish on 2/10 (MiH), 28 at Croaker Lake Jefferson on 2/16 (RR), and 9 north of Raymond Pacific on 2/20 (TAv).

Mute Swan Rarely reported. 1 near Port Townsend Jefferson from 12/16 (CWr) through the end of the period (fide BN).

Greater White-fronted Goose Uncommon in WA in winter. Reports included 1 at Fir Island Skagit on 12/8 (GAI), and on 12/20 (HA,Tha), 1 at Nisqually NWR Thurston on 12/15 (BS), 4 near Raymond Pacific on 12/21 (MD), 2 at Tokeland Pacific on 12/21 (SM), 1 at Foulweather Bluff Kitsap on 1/5 (DoW), 1 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 2/19 (LRj), 65 at McNary NWR Walla Walla on 2/21 (MD) with 100 there on 2/24 (BLa,NaLa), and 31 at Columbia NWR Grant on 2/27 (RH).

Greater White-fronted X Canada Goose Rarely reported. 2 at Moses Lake Grant on 12/21 (DSc).

BEAN GOOSE Rare in WA. 1 at Hoquiam Grays Harbor on 12/7 (PS,RS), to at least 12/17 (CWr).

Snow Goose Reports away from nw WA wintering grounds included 3 at Hoquiam Grays Harbor on 12/7 (PS,RS), 4 near South Bend Pacific on 12/25 (AK,DoW) to at least 2/20 (TAv), 1371 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 1/18 (LRi) with 1 there on 2/23 (JWa) 1 at Warden Grant on 2/15 (RH), 370 at White Island Benton on 2/20 (MeJ), and 1 at McNary NWR Walla Walla on 2/23 (BLa,NaLa).

Ancient Murrelets off the fishing pier at Edmonds, Snohomish, December 2002. Photo by Brian Bell.
“Blue” Goose Rare in WA. 1 at Fir Island Skagit on 12/15 (SM) and on 12/20 (HA,THa), and 2 near Stanwood Snohomish on 12/15 (SM) and on 1/4 (JoM) with 3 there on 1/22 (TAv).

Ross’s Goose Rare but increasing. 1 near Bridgeport Okanogan/Douglas from 12/8 (Msp) to at least 2/18 (BWg), and 1 at Steigerwald Lake NWR Clark on 12/12 (WC).

Brant Rare in e WA. 1 immature along the Columbia from Wenatchee to Oroondo Chelan/Douglas throughout the period (DBe, CWr). Unusual locations in w WA. 1 immature west of South Bend Pacific on 12/23 (AK,MDo), and 1 near Battle Ground Clark on 1/24 (LRi). High counts included 400 at Oak Bay CP Jefferson on 2/8 (fide BN) and 2000 reported at Jamestown Clallam on 2/22 (fide BoB).

“Common” Teal Uncommon in WA. 1 at Camano Island Island on 1/18 (DoW), 2 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 1/23 and on 2/13 (TAv), and 1 at Sunset Beach Island on 2/17 (SM).

“Common” X Green-winged Teal Uncommon in WA. 1 at Crockett Lake Island on 2/17, 1 at Fidalgo Bay Skagit on 2/17, and 2 at Samish Flats Skagit on 2/17 (SM).

Mallard High count: 40,000 at Basin City Franklin on 1/10 (RH).

Mallard X Gadwall Rarely reported. 1 male thought to be this hybrid at Nisqually NWR Thurston on 2/5 (CWr).

Mallard X Northern Pintail Rarely reported. 1 male at Everett STP Snohomish on 12/26 (SM,RS).

Northern Pintail X Gadwall Rarely reported 1 male thought to be this hybrid at Centralia Lewis on 2/12 (JPa,SN).

Cinnamon Teal Uncommon in winter. 1 male at Adelma Beach Jefferson on 12/14 (BN, BoB), and 3 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 2/5 (LRi) and on 2/13 (TAv).

Northern Shoveler High count: 1050 at Moses Lake Grant on 1/10 (RH).

Eurasian Wigeon Uncommon in e WA. 1 at Richland Benton from 12/5 to 2/12 (BW), 1 at Kennewick Benton from 12/9 (fide BLA) to 2/24 (DR), 1 at Pateros Okanogan on 1/14 (RH), 1 at Two Rivers CP Benton from 1/24 to 2/5 (DR), 1 at Lake Lenore Grant on 2/10 (PS,RS), 1 south of Ellensburg Kittitas on 2/18 (MHi), and 1 at McNary NWR Walla Walla on 2/21 (MD). High count for w WA: 17 at Blackmans Lake Snohomish on 12/26 (SM).

American Wigeon High counts included 2300 at Walla Walla RD Walla Walla on 2/21 (MD), and 5600 at Sequim Bay Clallam on 12/29 (EKr).

Redhead Uncommon in w WA. 1 at Elma Grays Harbor on 12/1 (PS,RS) and on 12/31 (CWr), 7 at Union Bay King on 12/9 (AK) with 1 there on 2/24 (KAo), 1 male near Magnuson Park King on 12/15 (JB), 6 west of Spring Creek Fish Hatchery Skamania on 12/26 (KGl), 2 at Sequim Bay Clallam on 12/29 (EkKr), 4 at Angle Lake King on 12/29 (CSe), 1 at Drano Lake Skamania on 1/7 (Sf), and 2 at Lake Erie Skagit on 2/23 (fide JWe).

Lesser Scap High count: 785 at McNary NWR Walla Walla on 2/12 (MJo).

Long-tailed Duck Uncommon in e WA. 3 at Vantage Kittitas on 12/1 (MM) with 1 there on 1/5 (SDo), 1 at Fish Lake Chelan on 12/15 (MTh) and on 12/18, 2 at Bridgeport Bar Douglas on 12/11 (DBe) and on 2/17 (CWr).

Surf Scoter Rare in e WA in winter. 4 at Confluence SP Chelan on 12/9 (DBe).

White-winged Scoter Rare in e WA in winter. 5 reported at Confluence SP Chelan on 12/9 (DBe), and 1 male at Vantage Kittitas on 12/26 (SDo) and on 1/3 (PS,RS).

Common Goldeneye High count for w WA: 300 at Fidalgo Bay Skagit on 2/17 (SM).

Osprey Rare in winter. 1 at Moses Lake Grant on 12/1 (DSc), 1 at Kennewick Benton on 12/7 (fide BLA) found dead on 1/4 (ML), 1 at Ellensburg Kittitas on 12/14 (SDo), and 1 near Snohomish Snohomish on 12/15 (BP).

White-tailed Kite Reports included 1 at Ocosta Grays Harbor on 12/1 (PS,RS), 2 at Julia Butler Hansen NWR Wshakiakum on 12/1 (LCa) with 4 there on 2/15 (RkO), 5 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 12/20 with 1 there on 2/26 (JMc), 4 west of South Bend Pacific on 12/21 (PWc) with 5 on 12/23 (AK,MDo), and 7 there on 1/15 (TAv), 1 at Satsop Grays Harbor on 12/28 and on 1/1 (BT), 1 at Steigerwald Lake NWR Clark: from 1/5 to at least 2/7 (WC), 2 at Elma Grays Harbor on 1/10 (TO), and 1 at Cosmopolis Grays Harbor on 2/8 (SM, BT).

Bald Eagle High counts included 98 from Rockport to Marshall Mount Skagit on 12/11 (LM), 109 at Northrup Canyon Grant on 2/1 (RH), and 26 c Woodland County on 2/23 (JWe).

Northern Goshawk Locally uncommon. 1 adult at Rattlesnake Mountain Benton on 1/19 (BLA, NLi), 1 immature at Richland Benton on 1/25 (DR).

Red-shouldered Hawk Rare but increasing in WA. 1 immature at Julia Butler Hansen NWR Wshakiakum from 12/1 (LCa) to at least 2/15 (RkO), 1 remaining from November at Skagit WMF Skagit on 12/3 (CWr) and 2 at 2/5 (KEe), 3 immatures at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 12/20 with 2 on 1/13 (JE) and 1 there on 2/13 (TAv), 1 immature at Westport Grays Harbor on 12/26 (BS, TSh), 1 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 1/11 (BWg, GG), and 2 including an adult at Vancouver Lake Clark on 1/23 (TAv).

Red-tailed Hawk Reports included 1 “albino” near Preston King on 2/18 (MH).

“Harlan’s” Hawk Reports included 1 light morph adult at Wenatchee Chelan throughout the period (DBe), 1 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 12/20 and on 1/3 (JE), 4 at Samish Flats Skagit on 1/7 (MEe), 1 light morph adult at Fir Island Skagit on 2/15 (BCi), and 1 intergrade at Moses Okanogan on 2/16 (CWr).

Ferruginous Hawk Early reports included 1 at Smith Canyon Franklin on 2/5 (DR), and 1 at Byrnes Road Walla Walla on 2/21 (MD).

Rough-legged Hawk High count: 14 on the Waterville Plateau Douglas on 2/6 (DBc).

Golden Eagle Uncommon in w WA. 1 immature north of Quilcene Jefferson on 1/7 (RR), and 1 reported at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 1/2 (JE).

Merlin Reports from e WA included 1 at Othello Adams from 12/1 to at least 1/11 (RF), 1 at Bingon Klickitat from 12/3 to at least 1/30 (Sf), 1 at Richland Benton on 12/9 (fide BLA), 2 at...
Leadbetter Point

**Black-bellied Plover**

2/10 (fide RH).

**Black Oystercatcher**

400 at Woodland winter. 1 at Hoquiam

**Semipalmated Plover**

Unc common in WA in winter. 1 at Richland Benton on 12/15 (BLa,NLa), 1 at Yakima RD Benton on 1/20 (NLa), and 1 at Convoy Lake NWR Klickitat on 2/18 (KGi).

**Peregrine Falcon**

Unc in WA. 1 at Orthello Adams on 12/14 (GFi) and on 2/18 (RH), 1 at Richland Benton on 12/15 (BLa,NLa), 1 at Yakima RD Benton on 1/20 (NLa), and 1 at Convoy Lake NWR Klickitat on 2/18 (KGi).

**Gyr Falcon**

Unc in WA. 1 on the Waterville Plateau from Manfield to Atkins Lake Douglas from 12/16 (RSi) to 2/22 (DSc), 1 at Rattlesnake Mountain Benton on 1/11 (BW) and on 1/18 (DR), 1 adult at Snoboshim Snoboshim from 1/13 (JoK) to at least 2/6 (TAv), and 1 juvenile reported at Long Beach Pacific on 2/7 (DD).

**Prairie Falcon**

Unc in w WA. 1 adult at Samish Flats Skagit on 12/5 (TAv) with 2 adults on 1/7 (MM) and 1 there on 2/17 (SM), 1 near Sequim Clallam on 12/11 (RR) and on 12/14 (SMc,PMc), 1 at Ocean City Grays Harbor on 12/17 (DMo,DVa).

**Gray Partridge**

Reports included 8 at Oroville-Toroda Creek Road Okanogan on 12/24 (KeK), 4 at Nine Mile Canyon Walla Walla on 1/15 (NLa), 8 at Rattlesnake Mountain Benton on 1/25 (BW), and 2 at Sagebrush Flats Rd Grant on 2/25 (MM).

**Sage Grouse**

Unc and local in WA. 2 at Leahy Junction Douglas on 2/8 with 15 there on 2/16 (PS,RS).

**Sharp-tailed Grouse**

Unc and local in WA. 10 at Bridgeport Hill Rd Douglas on 1/19 (ARo), and on 2/8 (PS,RS), and 6 at Beezley Hills Grant on 2/26 (MM).

**Mountain Quail**

Unc and local in WA. 2 at Port Orchard Kitsap on 12/28 (fide ESw).

**Sora**

Rare in WA in winter. 1 reported at Toppenish NWR Yakima on 12/15 (KT), 2 at McChord AFB Pierce on 12/21 and on 12/25 (SAg).

**American Coot**

High count: 28,500 from Wanapum to Vantage Kittitas/Grant on 12/10 (RH).

**Sandhill Crane**

High counts for w WA included 533 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 1/18 (LBr), and 400 at Woodland Courtright on 2/23 (JW). Early migrant report for e WA: 3 at Orthello Adams on 2/10 (fide RH).

**Black-bellied Plover**

High count: 450 at Leadbetter Point Pacific on 1/15 (TAv).

**Snowy Plover**

Unc and local in WA. 31 at Midway Beach Pacific on 12/21 (SM), and 8 at Leadbetter Point Pacific on 1/15 (TAv).

**Semipalmated Plover**

Unc in WA in winter. 1 at Hoquiam Grays Harbor on 12/20 (CWr), 8 at Midway Beach Pacific on 1/12 (GG), and 11 at Aberdeen Grays Harbor on 2/20 (TAv).

**Black Oystercatcher**

High counts included 20 near Anacortes Skagit on 12/22 (HA,THa), and 10 at Salt Creek CP Clallam on 2/24 (BN).

**Greater Yellowlegs**

Unc in WA in winter. 4 at Yakima RD Benton on 12/9 (BW) with 3 there on 2/16 (JdJ,AD), 1 at Bennington Lake Walla Walla on 1/1 (MD), and 2 near Moses Lake Grant on 2/10 (DSc). High count for w WA: 18 at Ocosta Grays Harbor on 12/21 (MD).

**Lesser Yellowlegs**

Rare in WA in winter. 1 reported at Bayview Center Pacific on 12/21 (PWe).

**Spotted Sandpiper**

Unc in WA in winter. 1 near Monroe Snoboshim on 12/4 (RbS) and on 2/10 (MH), 2 at Raymond Grant on 12/21 (SM), and 3 reported at Tacoma Pierce on 1/29 (CWr).

**Rock Sandpiper**

Unc and local in WA. 13 at Westport Grays Harbor on 12/14 (BT,SM), 16 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/20 (CWr) with 2 there on 1/12 (GG) and on 2/20 (TAv), and 1 at Penn Cove Island on 1/2 (NB) and on 2/20 (TAv). 1 Phalibo race individual photographed at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/20 (CWr).

**Duinlin**

Reports from e WA included 30 at Moses Lake Grant on 12/21 with 22 there on 2/23 (DSc), 18 at Yakima RD Benton on 1/16 (NLa), 19 at Saddle Mountain NWR Grant on 12/15 (fide BL), 46 at Walla Walla RD Walla Walla on 2/21, with 120 there on 2/28 (MD).

High counts for w WA included 12,000 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/20 (MD), and 18,000 at Leadbetter Point Pacific on 1/15 (TAv).

**RUFF**

Rare in WA. 1 at Satsop Grays Harbor on 12/28 (BFi), to at least 1/4 (GW).

**Common Snipe**

High count: 50 at Hockinson Clark on 2/17 (JoA).

**Red Phalarope**

Reports of unusually high numbers included 1 away from water at Pioneer Clark on 12/11 (ShH), 43 at Dungeness Clallam on 12/13 (BoB), 2 at Boston Harbor Thurston on 12/13, and on 1/5 (BS), 15 at Westport Grays Harbor on 12/14 (BT,SM), 3 at Blyn Clallam on 12/16 (BN,PCo), 579 at the Sequim CBC Clallam Jefferson on 12/16 (fide BoB), 150 at North Beach CP Jefferson on 12/16, 50 at Point Wilson Jefferson on 12/16, 100 at Hoquiam Grays Harbor on 12/17 (CWr), 11 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/21 (MD) with 3 there on 12/23 (AK), 1 at Point Defiance Pierce on 12/21 (Bl,CWr), 2 on Bainbridge Island Kitsap on 12/26 with 1 there on 1/10 (BWg), 1 at Brady Loop Road Grays Harbor on 12/28 (fide BF), 1 near Keystone Island on 1/2 (NB), 2 at Point No Point Kitsap on 1/5 (DoW), and 8 off Anderson Island Pierce on 1/5 (EJK).

**Pomarine Jaeger**

Rarely reported in winter. 2 on Westport Pelagic Grays Harbor on 12/28 (MD,BoT).

**Bonaparte’s Gull**

Rare in e WA in winter. 41 at Moses Lake Grant on 12/21 with 1 there on 2/23 (DSc). High counts in w WA included 4219 at the Tacoma CBC Pierce on 12/21 (CWr), and 1200 at Point No Point Kitsap on 2/22 (V).n.

**Heermann’s Gull**

Rare in WA in winter. 2 at Port Angeles Clallum on 12/5 (BN).

**Mew Gull**

Unc in e WA. 1 at Wenatchee Chelan on 12/8 (DBe), 2 above John Day Dam Klickitat on 12/25 (SJ), and 1 at Walla Walla RD Walla Walla on 2/28 (MD).

**Ring-billed Gull**

High count: 2000 feeding on midge hatch at Fir Island Skagit on 1/1 (KLI).

**Herring Gull**

High counts included 35 at Clarkston Astoria on 1/3 (CSw), and 120 at Walla Walla RD Walla Walla on 2/21 (MD).

**Thayer’s Gull**

Unc in e WA. 2 at Banks Lake Grant on 2/8 (DGr,AS) with 1 there on 2/24 (MM). High count for w WA: 130 at Tacoma Pierce on 1/10 (SM).
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. Rare in WA. 1 adult at Walla Walla RD Walla Walla from 2/21 to the end of the period. (MD, BLa).

Western Gull Rare in WA. 1 adult at Clarkston J. Austin from 1/3 to at least 2/25 (CSw), and 1 adult at Bateman Island Benton on 1/18 (BW).

Glaucous Gull Uncommon in WA. 1 at Richland Benton on 12/9 (BW), 1 at Wallula WAlla Walla on 12/28 (MD), 1 at Bateman Island Benton on 1/2 (NLa, RFl), 1 at Banks Lake Grant on 1/14 (RH) and on 2/8 (DGr, AS), 1 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 2/20 (TVa), 1 adult at Walla Walla RD Walla Walla on 2/21 (MD), and 1 at Moses Lake Grant on 2/23 (DSc).


Sabine’s Gull Rare in WA in winter. 1 winter plumaged adult reported at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 12/17 (WHd).

Common Murre High counts included 312 at Point No Point 12/21 (CWr), and 9126 on Westport Pelagic High count: 668 on Black-legged Kittiwake on 2/8 (BT).

Long-eared Owl Uncommon in WA. 1 at Fir Island Skagit on 12/6 with 2 there on 12/20 (JiG), 1 reported calling at Diamond Point Clallam on 12/16 (PS, RS), and 1 near Kent King on 12/20 (Bl). Short-eared Owl Reports included 6 at Leque Island Snubonish on 12/5 (TVa) with 10 on 2/7 (Bl), and 3 there on 2/27 (TAv, SGe), 1 at Moses Lake Grant on 12/7 (DSc), near Sequim Clallam on 12/15 (fide BN), and on 1/18 (RR), 1 at Steigerwald Lake NWR Clark on 1/19 (WC), and 10 at Vancouver Lowlands Clark on 1/23 (JiG).

Great Gray Owl Rare in WA in winter. 1 winter. 1 at Lake Lenore Grant on 12/9 (fide TVa), 1 at Toppenish NWR Yakima on 12/15 (KT), and 1 at Tulelake STP Klickitat on 12/24 (SJ). Reports of early migrants included 2 at Vantage Kittitas on 2/15 (SDo), 1 at Pullman Spokane on 2/20 (KCa), and 3 at Columbia NWR Adams Grant on 2/27 (RH).

Loggerhead Shrike Uncommon in WA in winter. 1 at Wallula HMU Walla Walla on 1/5 (MD), and 1 at Rattlesnake Mountain Benton on 1/25 with 2 there on 2/28 (BW).

Gray Jay Uncommon at lower elevations. 1 at McLane Creek Thurston on 12/1 and 2/17 (DC), and 7 at Big Creek Campground Mason elevation 980' on 2/26 (JPa).

Steller’s Jay Locally uncommon. 3 at Crow Butte SP Benton on 1/20 (DR).

Blue Jay Uncommon in WA. 1 south of Othello Adams throughout the period (RH), 1 at Bridgeport Douglas 12/7 (MSP) to at least 2/26 (DJo), 1 at Twisp Okanogan on 12/23 (KKe), and 1 at Riverside SP Spokane on 12/29 (WH) to at least 1/6 (JL).

Western Scrub-Jay Locally rare. 1 reported at Clinton Island on 1/2 (fide TVa).

Common Raven Locally uncommon. 1 at Lake Sammamish SP King on 2/25 (CHA).

Horned Lark High count for w WA: 17 at Midway Beach Pacific on 12/26 (BSTh).

Tree Swallow Uncommon in winter. 1 reported at Elma Grays Harbor on 12/29 (PS, RS), 6 at Fir Island Skagit from 1/20 to 1/23 (JG), 6 at Nisqually NWR Thurston on 2/5 (CWn), and 20 at Beaver Lake Skagit on 2/16 (GB).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow Rare in winter. 1 reported at Edmonds Snubonish at 1/10 (TP).

Barn Swallow Rare and unprecedented in e WA in winter. 2 below Wanapum Dam Kittitas on 1/20 (JL, WH), 3 at Bingen Kittitas on 1/30 with 4 there on 2/19 (SJ), 5 at Confluence SP Chelan 2/7.
on 2/2 (BSG) with 6 there on 2/4 (BT), 2 at Bridgeport Bar Douglas on 2/15, and 3 at Blue Lake Grant on 2/23 (PS,RS). Uncommon in WA in winter. Reports of even higher numbers than last year’s unprecedented occurrence included 1 at Olympia Thurston on 12/8 (BT), 1 at Redmond King on 12/9 (KKe), 1 at Carthamet Walla Walla on 12/8 (MPa), 2 near Stanwood Snohomish on 1/4 (JoM) with 7 there on 1/22 (TAv), 1 near Sequim Clallam on 1/10 (jum) with 2 there on 1/30 (TAv,SGC), 4 at Woodinville King on 1/10 (IWe), 1 at Ridgefield NWR Clark on 1/11 (SM) with 30 there on 1/18 (PS,RS), 1 at Edmonds Snohomish on 1/12 with 13 there on 1/13 (DD), 1 at Waldron Island San Juan on 1/13 (TsC), 4 near Lummi Flats Whatcom on 1/12 (CB) with 2 there on 2/3 (WW), 5 at Fir Island Skagit on 1/13 (IgC), with 14 on 1/22 (TAv) 12 there on 2/8 (GB) and 3 remaining on 2/27 (TAv), 5 at Samish Flats Skagit on 1/13 (jHj) with 4 there on 2/25 (BWr), 3 at Nesqually NWR Thurston on 1/16 (CSc) with 43 on 2/3 (Cwr) and 12 there on 2/12 (fide RL), 12 at Cattle Point San Juan on 1/20 with 6 there on 1/25 (JB), 6 at Juanita Bay King on 1/26 (JoM), 31 at Neah Bay Clallam on 2/2 (NB), 6 at Monroe Snohomish on 2/6 (Cwr) with 2 remaining on 2/24 (DD,SP), 1 at Alderwood Pierce on 2/7 (Cwr), and 10 at Beaver Lake Skagit on 2/16 (GB).

Mountain Chickadee Locally uncommon. 1 at Wenatchee Chelan on 1/6 and on 2/13 (DS), and 2 at Bridgeport Douglas on 2/16 (PS,RS).

Rock Wren Uncommon in WA in winter. 1 at Crow Butte SP Benton on 12/15 and on 1/26 (BLA,NA), 1 at Bridgeport SP Douglas on 12/22 with 2 there on 1/24 (KKe), 8 near Vantage Kittitas on 1/2 (BT) with 3 there on 2/15 (SDo), and 2 at ALES Benton on 2/28 (BLA,NA).

House Wren Rare in WA in winter. 1 reported at Theler Wetland Mason on 1/12 (MAB).

Winter Wren Reports from e WA included 1 at Wahluke Slope WMA Franklin on 12/7 (RFLSM), 1 at Frenchman Hills Road Grant on 12/8 (SM), 1 at Crow Butte SP Benton on 12/15, 1 singing at Whitcomb Island Benton on 1/26 (BLA,NA), 2 at Richland Benton on 1/30 (NA), and 5 at Conboy Lake NWR Kittitas on 2/18 (KGI).

Marsh Wren High count: 56 at Spencer Island Snohomish on 2/23 (SM).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet High count for e WA: 4 near Moses Lake Grant on 1/5 (DSc).

Western Bluebird Uncommon in WA in winter. 26 at Horsethief Butte Kittitas on 12/7 (fide SJ), 1 male at Brady Loop Road Grays Harbor on 12/16 (AKj), 7 at Moses Lake Grant on 1/5 with 9 there on 1/18 (DSc), 1 north of Touched Walla Walla on 1/5 (JR), 23 south of Dixie Walla Walla on 2/8 (SR).

Mountain Bluebird Uncommon in WA in winter. 2 males at Ellensburg Kittitas on 2/17 (MHi), and 1 at Rattlesnake Mountain Benton on 2/28 (BLA,NA).

Townsend’s Solitary Uncommon in WA in winter. 2 at John Day Dam Klickitat on 12/25 (SJ), 3 at Chopa Park Road Okanogan on 12/25 (KKe), 1 at Rooks Park Walla Walla on 1/1 (MD), 1 at Conboy Lake NWR Kittitas on 1/7 (KGI), 1 south of Port Townsend Jefferson on 1/8 (PCo), and 1 at Vantage Clark on 1/9 (RK).

Hermit Thrush High counts included 31 at Wahluke Slope WMA Franklin on 12/7 (SM), and 9 at Leadbetter Point Pacific on 1/15 (TAv).

Varied Thrush High count for e WA: 30 at Wenatchee Chelan on 2/13 (DS). Northern Mockingbird Uncommon in WA.

Hermit Warbler Rare in WA in winter. 1 thought to be a first year female at Lake Sammamish SP King on 2/25 (CHA).

Townsend’s Warbler Rare in e WA in winter. 1 reported at Wenatchee Chelan on 2/27 (fide SM).

Palm Warbler Uncommon in WA. 1 at Ocean Shores Grays Harbor on 1/12 and on 1/19 (PS,RS), and 1 reported at Ridgefield Clark on 2/12 (KK).

Common Yellowthroat Rare in WA in winter. 1 female reported at Spencer Island Snohomish on 2/1 (SA), and 2 males reported at Sammamish King on 2/2 (LDA).

Western Tanager Rare in WA in winter. 1 at West Seattle King from 12/20 to 1/25 (LyD), 1 at another Seattle location King on 12/28 (fide EH).

American Tree Sparrow Reports from e WA included 2 at Corfu Grant on 12/1 with 4 there on 2/26 (RH), 10 at Colville Steens on 1/5 (WCo) with 20 there on 2/17 (MHo), 14 at Columbia NWR Grant on 1/8 (RFl), 10 at Española Spokane on 1/21 and on 1/29 (JA), 7 at Lind Coulee Grant on 1/24 (DSc), 7 at Wahluke Slope WMA Franklin on 1/25 with 1 there on 2/24 (RFl), 2 west of Chesaw Okanogan on 1/25 (KKe), 6 at Steamboat Rock SP Grant on 2/1 (RH) with 1 there on 2/8 (DGR,AS), 12 at Bridgeport Bar Douglas on 2/15 (PS,RS) with 4 there on 2/25 (DBe), 15 at Waterville Plateau Douglas on 2/15 (RH) with 10 there on 2/27 (DJo), 1 at Toppenish NWR Yakima on 2/17 (KT), and 1 at Beezley Hills Grant on 2/26 (MMi).

Chipping Sparrow Rare in WA in winter. 1 reported at Foothills Spokane on 12/29 (RD).

Sage Sparrow Early reports included 15 at Old Vantage Highway Kittitas on 2/15 (SDo), and 1 at Ephrata Grant on 2/26 (MMi).

Savannah Sparrow Uncommon in e WA in winter. 19 reported on the Tri-Cities CBC Benton/Franklin on 1/4 (fide BLA).

Fox Sparrow Reports from e WA included 1 Sooty type at Leavenworth Chelan throughout the period (fide DS), 1 Slate-colored type at Bingen Klickitat through the period (SJ), 1 of each type at Confluence SU Chelan on 12/26 (DBe), 3 at Lower Trout Lake Valley Klickitat on 12/27 (KGI), 2 at Kennewick Benton on 1/4 (fide BLA), 1 at Wallula HMU Walla Walla on 1/9 (MD), 1 at Whitcomb Island Benton on 1/26 (BLA,NA), 1 Slate-colored type at Crescent Bar Grant on 2/4 (BT), 2 at Big Flat HMU Franklin on 2/8 (BLA,NA), and 1 Sooty type at Snowden Klickitat on 2/28 (SJ).

Lincoln’s Sparrow Uncommon in e WA in winter. 1 at Big Flat HMU Franklin on 2/8.

Rusty Blackbird, Norman Rd., Stanwood, Snohomish, January 2003. Photo by Ollie Oliver
Wahluke Slope WMA Franklin on 12/7 (SM), 2 at Lower Trout Lake Valley Klickitat on 12/14 (KGl), 1 at Moses Lake Grant on 12/21, 1 at Lind Coulee Grant on 1/1 (DSc), 2 at Monroe Snowbunting on 1/1 (SM) and on 2/27 (TAv), 1 at Skagit WMA Skagit on 12/26 (SA), 2 at Brandy Loop Road Grays Harbor on 2/5 (TAv), and 1 at Bayview Skagit on 2/17 (SM).

Lapland Longspur Uncommon in WA. 2 at Midway Pacific on 12/26 (BS), 7 at Buckeye Road Douglas on 2/8 (MD), 12 near Atkins Lake Douglas on 2/15 (RSh) with 10 there on 2/18 (JAJW), and 7 west of Leахton Duplessis on 2/16 (PS,RS). Snow Bunting Reports from e WA included 75 at Waterville Plateau Douglas on 12/21 (KKe) with 3000 there 2/8 (DG,AS) and 4000 there on 2/26 (DBe), and 1500 south of Grand Coulee with 3000 there on 2/8 (DGr,AS) and 4000 there on 2/16 (PS,RS). Common Grackle Introduced species seldom reported. 1 south of Sedro Woolley Skagit on 12/8 (fide KW).

**Classes**

**Seattle Audubon bird classes that may be of interest to WOS; many are taught by WOS members. All classes held at the UW Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 NE 41st Street, Seattle, unless otherwise noted. Call 206-523-4483 to register.**

**Common Ravens in North America** with Bill Webb, Ph.D. candidate, University of Washington

The Common Raven (Corvus corax) is not only the world’s largest songbird but likely the smartest as well. This class presents a wonderful opportunity to learn about the natural history of ravens and will consist of a comprehensive two-hour lecture here in Seattle. An optional field trip is offered which will provide an introduction to the latest research occurring at the University of Washington’s Olympic Natural Resources Center in Forks, WA. This optional field excursion, in rental vans, will allow us to observe ravens in the field, and to learn how UW researchers trap and electronically track them, trying not to get out-witted!

Class: Thursday, October 2, 7:00-9:00 PM
Location: CUH, Douglas Classroom
Cost: $20 members, $35 nonmembers
Limit: 40

Optional field trip: Saturday October 4th OR Sunday, October 5th, 11:00AM – 4:00PM. There may be only one field trip day depending upon the number of participants.

Location: University of Washington Olympic Natural Resources Center, Forks, WA.
Cost: $35 members $50 non-members.
Limit: 14 participants per field trip. Participants may choose to register for either one or both trips. Each class/field trip is priced separately.

**Ornithology for the Birder Series Anatomy of Birds with Kathleen Hunt, PhD.**

Have you ever wondered what birds look like on the inside? Want to know how mammal and avian species differ in their internal and external anatomy? Come and find out all about this fascinating subject as we explore bird anatomy through the use of drawings, bird skins, wings, and even an actual bird dissection. You will certainly leave this class with a more intimate understanding of birds!

Class: Monday, October 27th and Wednesday, October 22nd, 7:00-9:00 PM
Location: CUH, Douglas Classroom
Cost: $40 members, $55 nonmembers
Limit: 15

**Exploring the Birds of Seattle Series Birds of Your Neighborhood Parks with Robin Lewis**

Do you enjoy our fine feathered friends but want to learn more about them? Come to this two-hour lecture and get some tips for observing and identifying the common and interesting birds of our area. We’ll follow the lecture portion with a Saturday morning field trip to one or two West Seattle parks to see what birds we can find right here in our own neighborhood!

Class: Thursday, October 16, 6:45-8:45 PM
Location: Game Room, Southwest Community Center, 2801 SW Thistle, West Seattle
Field Trip: Saturday, October 18, 8:00 AM-12:00 Noon.
Location will be announced at the class.
Cost: Donation Requested

**Waterbirds of the Northwest** with Brian Bell, SAS Master Birder

Do you want to improve your birding skills in both locating and identifying the waterbirds we see every fall and winter? Then this course is for you! We will learn about loons, grebes, cormorants, geese, ducks, alcids, as well as other species that utilize the Puget Sound and our waterways as their wintering grounds. The course will consist of four classroom sessions using slides and recordings to help you learn the identifying characteristics and vocalizations of these interesting birds. The classroom sessions will be followed by one full-day field trip.

Class: Monday, October 27; Friday, October 31; Tuesday, November 4; and Friday, November 7 from 7:00-9:00 PM
Field trips: Saturday, November 8 or Friday, November 14, 2003. (Participants must select one field trip when registering for class.)
Location: CUH, Douglas Classroom
Cost: $140.00 members, $155.00 nonmembers for lecture/field trip; $100.00 lecture only.
Limit of 25 spaces for lecture/field trip; 5 additional participants for lecture only.

**Winter Gulls of the Puget Sound** with Michael Donahue

East Lake Washington Audubon class. Call (425) 576-8805 by October 21 to reserve your spot.

Gulls are one of the most challenging groups of birds to identify. Nine species of gulls spend the winter in the Puget Sound region. Rather than thinking of this as a nightmare, think of it as a great opportunity to practice your gull identification skills! It is possible to identify those Thayer’s gulls!

This class will be an in-depth look at the identification of gulls wintering in our region. Three sessions in the classroom will focus on identification basics, plumage sequence, and will detail identification of adult and immature plumages of all nine species that winter in the region.

There will be a half day (8:00 AM to 1 PM) field trip to visit several local gull hotspots on Lake Washington.

Classes: Tuesdays, Oct. 28, Nov. 4 and 18, 7:00-9:00 PM
Location: Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church, Kirkland
Field Trip: Saturday or Sunday, November 15 or 16. Instructor will lead field trip both days; participants will sign up for one of these days at the first class. Note: if class enrollment is under 14, the field trip will be on Saturday, November 15.
Cost: Class w/field trip: ELWAS member-$80/Non-member-$100; Class only: ELWAS member-$70/Non-member-$90
Limit: 40 for class [or however many the room can hold], 26 class + field trip

**The Wild Lives of Birds** with Vicki King and Robin Lewis

What bird travels thousands of miles to spend the summer in West Seattle? What bird can find a meal in total darkness? What bird eats its own feathers? To find out the answers to these questions and much more, join us for an evening program for the young and young-at-heart. Come learn about the astonishing abilities of these fascinating creatures, and get a close-up look at feathers, nests, and other fun stuff!

Class: Thursday, November 13, 6:45-8:45 PM
Location: Game Room, Southwest Community Center, 2801 SW Thistle, West Seattle
Cost: Donation Requested

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WOSNews 87: October / November 2003
Report Your Sightings

**American crows: 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. 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. Report to: John Withey, jwithey@u.washington.edu, phone: 206-543-2764.

**Cooper's hawks:** Color bands have been placed on over 700 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. Four birds have been reported from Washington, to date. Report all sightings to Andy Stewart, BC Conservation Data Centre, Victoria, B.C. (250) 387-9780, or e-mail to: andy.stewart@gems6.gov.bc.ca.

**Merlins:** Detailed year-round observations are needed for scientific research on the merlin in Washington. Sightings should include exact location/map, date/time, description of bird(s) and behavior. Send to David Drummond, Coastal Forest Merlin Project, P.O. Box 4123, Bellingham, WA 98227, (360) 671-3804 or e-mail to: merlinology@hotmail.com.

**Northern harrier:** 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 if 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. jgbett@comcast.net.

**Ring-billed Gulls:** A small percentage of ring-billed gulls in the Pacific Northwest show a pink tint. I would like observations of such individuals, especially any records prior to 1998. Date, location, number of pink birds, and the percentage of pink birds in the flock are needed. Details on age, plumage, and diet items will be appreciated. Lisa Hardy, 2153 B Old River Road, Kingston ID 83839, or basalt@earthlink.net

**Songbird survey:** We have color-marked ~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 would like observations of fall migrating turkey vultures from British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Date, location, and number of birds is needed. If possible, report weather, time, and any aspect of behavior to: Diann MacRae, 22622 – 53rd Avenue S.E., Bothell WA 98021, or to: tvulture@vei.net.

**Trumpeter Swans:** The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes’ Wildlife Management Program requests information on marked migrant and wintering trumpeter swan observations. Swans are marked with red neck collars and red leg bands with T00-099 codes. Please report date, location, number of birds, and contact information to Dale Becker, CSKT Wildlife Management Program, POB 278, Pablo, MT. 59855 or daleb@cskt.org or (406)883-2886.


To practitioners of nature tourism planning: A new resource is now available to assist local communities and planners in assessing and planning for community-based nature tourism projects at various scales and levels. The site offers guidelines and checklists to help work through planning a specific wildlife viewing site in a given area or to plan for a regional networked set of tourism sites.

The website’s focus is Washington State, but numerous links offer information and guidance to situations and applications beyond the boundaries of Washington. We want this tool to be useful to the various publics that are considering undertaking or are involved in a nature tourism project and we look forward to hearing from them and you as to what is helpful or missing from this site. Take a look and give us your feedback and please send the sites to your friends.

Submitted by: Chuck Gibilisco, Watchable Wildlife, WDF&G

RARE BIRD ALERTS

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<tr>
<th>WOS BirdBox</th>
<th>(206) 281-9172</th>
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<td>Tri Cities Area</td>
<td>(509) 627-2473</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE Wash/N Idaho</td>
<td>(208) 882-6195</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Idaho</td>
<td>(208) 236-3337</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>(503) 292-0661</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vancouver, B.C.</td>
<td>(604) 737-3074</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victoria, B.C.</td>
<td>(250) 592-3381</td>
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<td>Okanagan, B.C.</td>
<td>(250) 491-7738</td>
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Field Notes & Washington Field Notes
SUMMER DEADLINE: DECEMBER 15
(August — November sightings)

Send bird sightings to:

Tom Aversa
305 NW 75th St
Seattle WA 98103
FieldNotes@wos.org

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 Phil Mattocks, 5421 Hanson Rd., Ellensburg WA 98926.

Please submit detailed descriptions and drawings or photographs, if possible, of unusual birds.

BAND RECOVERIES (“Avise” leg bands) should be reported. Include the band number, along with how, when, and where the band was recovered, preferably with reference to the nearest town. Persons who report bands receive a Certificate of Appreciation telling when, where, and by whom the bird was banded, so be sure to include your full name and address with all reports.

Report to:

Bird Banding Laboratory
12100 Beech Forest Road, Suite 4037
Laurel MD 20708
Phone: (800) 327-BAND
E-mail bandreports@patuxent.nbs.gov
http://www.pwrc.nbs.gov/bbl
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:
- **WASHINGTON BIRDS** — annual journal
- **WOSNews** — bimonthly newsletter
- Monthly field trips
- Affordable annual conferences

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

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Make check payable to Washington Ornithological Society.

Send form and payment to:

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

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- [ ] ___ E-mail: ____________

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Place an x beside any item you don’t want to appear in the WOS directory.

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

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