



HARLEQUIN HAPPENINGS

Newsletter of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS)

www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org (www.olybird.org)

Clallam County, Washington

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Issue 4 July -Aug 2016

*Promoting Birding and Conservation as Community Educators,
Volunteers, and Stewards*

[Editor's Note: There will be no general membership meetings in the months of July and August. Meetings will resume on Wednesday, September 21, 2016, with a potluck dinner. Have a great summer!]

OPAS Field Trips in July & August

by Bob Iddins



Bird Walks

Date: Every Wed. morning; Time: 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.
Meet at the River Center for a lovely walk to see and hear the birds of the Dungeness riparian forest. Information from walks helps us understand the annual cycle of birds in RR Bridge Park.

Purple Martins

Date & Time: Monday, August 1, 2016, 8:30 a.m.
Leader: Ken Wiersema
Meeting place: 3 Crabs, north end of Sequim-Dungeness Way
Cost: Free (Discover Pass required to park here since the acquisition of the property by WDFW)
Features: A walk out on the tide flats (rubber boots might be advisable; although, the minus tide should allow easy access) to view nesting Purple Martins.
Bring: Optics (including scopes if available), snacks, water, and appropriate clothing for all kinds of weather.
Further information: Ken Wiersema, 360-683-4763, wiersema@olympus.net

Neah Bay

Dates & Time: Saturday, August 27, 2016, 9:00 a.m.
Leader: Denny Van Horn
Meeting place: Washburn's Hardware Store on Hwy 112 in Neah Bay
Cost: Field trip is free, however a Makah Nation Recreational Pass (\$10 and good for one calendar year) is required for each vehicle, purchased at Washburn's.
Features: Denny's favorite hot spots. Bring: Optics (including scopes if available), snacks, water, lunch, and appropriate clothing for any variations in the weather.
Further information: Denny Van Horn, 360-406-1584, dennyvanhorn@gmail.com

The Ocean Shores field trip scheduled for August 30 & 31, 2016 has been cancelled!

Summer Events

Puffin Sunset Dinner Cruise

Enjoy a lovely sunset circumnavigation aboard the MV Glacier Spirit of Protection Island, home to Tufted Puffins, Rhinoceros Auklets and others. Where else can you relax and dine in the marine air, watching birds like these float past on the evening tide? Proceeds from this event support educational opportunities at the River Center.

Where: Railroad Bridge Park *Time: 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.*
Cost: \$75 per person; registration required
More information: 360-681-4076 or www.DungenessRiverCenter.org
Date: July 15th or July 16th (Continued on page 3)

Harlequin Happenings is published six times a year. Consider "going green". Receive your newsletter electronically, in living color, by contacting the OPAS Membership Chair, Audrey Gift, at 360-681-2989, or email agift@q.com. The *Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society* meets monthly (except July, August, and December) on the third Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, 2151 Hendrickson Road, Sequim, WA. The public is welcome.

OPAS Board of Directors

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President's Notes

By Ken Wiersema

New and changing OPAS leaders --

Please look over our slate of officers and Board members, who will be our leaders in the '16 -'17 program year. We welcome back Bob Boekelheide and Tom Butler as our Co-VPs, who will continue preparing programs and scheduling speakers for our membership meetings; and our long-tenured Treasurer, Nancy Barger. Both Nancy and I will be stepping down from our offices in June '17, so please consider contributing a bit of your time and skills to OPAS in a leadership role. We'll have some key positions to fill next spring.

We extend a welcome to Enid Phreaner, who will be our new Secretary. We also send a big thank you to Debbie Ritter, who has most ably served as our Secretary for the past 3 years. Debbie has agreed to accept an appointment as a board-member-at-large, and will continue to help us in a new role

Bob Iddins, after some 9 years as our Fieldtrip Chair, is hanging up his binos (while he has a hip replaced). Bob has agreed to become an at-large board member when his recovery from surgery allows. He'll pass the responsibility of organizing and publicizing our great array of field trips to Denny Van Horn. Thanks Denny for accepting this role. Denny has been conferring with the Sequim Gazette staff to seek the return of the "Our Birds" monthly column to the Gazette in the near future. Watch for it!

OPAS Board retreat --

Each summer our Board gets together for a planning retreat and potluck lunch. This year it will be on Friday, Aug 12th. During our retreat we review programs and field trip plans; scope out conservation and advocacy matters we want to work toward; approve a draft budget; examine education and class schedules; and set objectives for the year. This is not a closed meeting, members are encouraged to contact an officer or board member if you have a matter you'd like the board to consider. What are we doing right? What could we do better? What new projects or programs would you like us to consider? We will listen to you!

River Center updates --

- On behalf of OPAS, thanks to Julie Jackson for agreeing to step forward and become the President of the River Center Board. Julie is a long-time OPAS member and a past Harlequin awardee. We pledge to her our continued support for the mission and resourcing of the Center.

- We also send our thanks and appreciation to Hansi Hals as she steps down from being River Center Board President. Unlike most of us, Hansi ably served as president in addition to her more than full time job, and parenting two teenagers Super Woman!

- The Center has contracted with an architect to prepare concept plans for an addition to the Center's main building. More on this work as it progresses.
- The Center has contracted with an architect to prepare concept plans for an addition to the Center's main building. More on this work as it progresses.
- Finally, an offer has been made to a person selected to fill the Center's vacant education coordinator staff position. Name and date of hire will be announced soon.

OPAS Awards for 2016 --

At our June meeting we presented the Harlequin Award to Mary Porter-Solberg. A full article on her contributions to OPAS is in this edition. We also announced that Bob Phreaner had earned our Conservation award. He was needed in Pennsylvania to care for his mother, so was unable to attend the meeting; we'll schedule a proper presentation for him at our September membership meeting.

Summer Time --

Y'all please join us on field trips and summer programs. Check this edition and our website for dates and places. Have a great summer folks ... Good health! Good birding! Good times!

Summer Events

(Continued from page one)

Exploring Dungeness River Ecology

Explore the plants, animals, and geology of our beautiful Olympic Peninsula, and how ecological value is measured, collected, and interpreted. For this session, participants must be able to walk 2.5 miles over uneven terrain.

Where: Dungeness River Audubon Center and Dungeness Valley

Date: August 30th - September 20th

Time: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Cost: \$50 for River Center Members/ \$75, non members; pre-registration necessary



*Exploring the Dungeness River Ecology
Photo by Robert Hutchison*

More information: 360-681-4076, RiverCenter@olympus.net, or www.DungenessRiverCenter.org

8th Annual River Center Rally Finale

Since 2008, the River Center Rally (formerly called Dungeness Spring Fling) has raised over \$150,000 for River Center education programs. This year, with the help of donors and volunteers -- the River Center Rally participants have raised over \$32,900 since April 1, and contributions are still coming in.

Many thanks to the River Center Rally organizers and teams, and to the donors who sponsored them directly and/or online through the Seattle Foundations GiveBlg on May 3-4. Special thanks to our partners: Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society for its \$2,000 gift; and to the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, which donated supplies for the lunches provided by the Lunch Mavens.

2016 Teams

Broom Busters IV: Doug & Gretha Davis and their work parties pulled Scotch Broom in April. Their final session was April 27th along the Olympic Discovery Trail from the Deer Park Rest Area west to Morris Creek. **Sixteen 'Broom Busters' put in a total of 114 hours of dirt, sweat and satisfaction and they raised \$2,594 in the process.** 2016 Broom Busters were: Lee Bowen, Doug & Gretha Davis, Pat Gritman, Elden Housinger, Mary Kelso, Larry Kilmer, Anita Knapp, Vern Klimecky, Susan Nickum, Steve See, Paul Schwabe,

Sandy Shadforth, Doug Smith, Kathe Smith, and Margaret Yates. Gretha adds, "We couldn't have done it without the loan of "Weed Wrenches" from; Clallam County Noxious Weed Program, the Dungeness River Audubon Center, Chris Gutmacher, Cheri Pickett and the Peninsula Trails Coalition, as well as the loan of PTC's safety vests."

Lunch Mavens: Hansi Hals, Annette Nesse, and Ann Sargent provided and served four lunches to Jamestown Tribal

staff and guests and raised \$1,817.50.

(Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

Sand Dollars: Tuttie Peetz raised \$9,160 sanding driftwood.

Spring Strollers: Lyn Muench and her teammates, Shirley Anderson, Bharti Desai, Pam Edens, Clare Hatler, Dave & Julie Jackson, and Cindy Moore, walked and biked a total of 1103 miles and raised \$3,092.

Swift Swallows: Dave & Julie Jackson with the help team mates Marie Grad, Marion Rutledge, Enid Phreaner, and Joanna Jackson identified 257 species and raised \$10,958.

Benefit Concert for the River Center

On Friday, July 29, the Jungible Summer Concert Series is giving a concert to benefit the River Center in the fields of lavender and poppies at Jardin du Soleil Lavender Farm in Sequim, WA. Enjoy a great musical act, as well as delicious food, beer, wine, and cider from Pacific Pantry, and ice cream from Vikings Feast Ice Cream. This community supported event is family friendly, and kids 12 and under are free. Tickets are available at the door, or from Brown Paper Tickets.

Bootleg Sunshine is a fiery-folk-funk group here in the Pacific Northwest; we expect them to be a big draw, as they are a super-danceable and fun up-and-coming band. They will charm you with cinematic instrumental tunes, a few Appalachian melodies, some pastoral lyrics of years yonder, and a dash of sun-dry music from around the world.

Where: Jardin du Soleil Lavender Farm

Date: Friday, July 29, 2016

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$15 Per Person at the door, or buy online from Brown Paper Tickets

More information: 360-681-4076, RCOffice@olympic.net or www.DungenessRiverCenter.org

Harlequin Award for 2016 presented to Mary Porter-Solberg

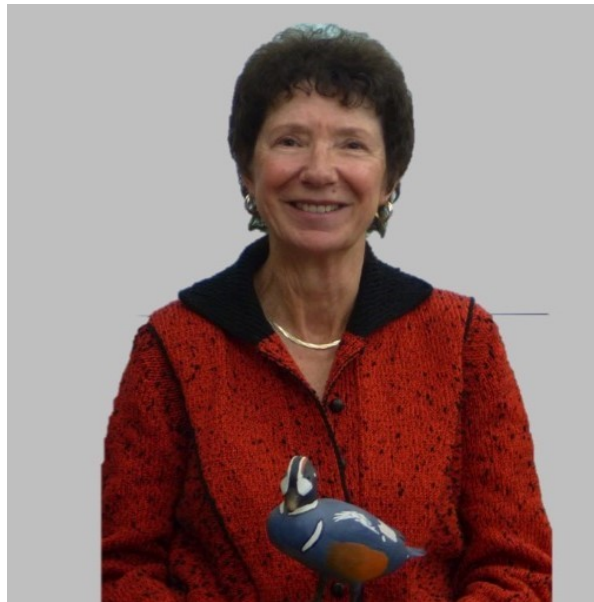
Each year, our past Harlequin Award recipients, who remain active as officers and board members, accept and evaluate

nominations from OPAS members and leaders for an OPAS member worthy of recognition. Nominees are those who have made excellent and valuable contributions to OPAS and our mission over many years.

This year, we recognized Mary Porter Solberg for her many years of conservation and environmental leadership and advocacy in support of OPAS and our community. Mary has contributed her thoroughly researched knowledge of science, and excellent organizational skills to lead & co-lead OPAS's Conservation Committee for over 7 years. She has prepared many papers expressing our position on uses of public lands, restoring habitat, and protecting endangered wildlife. She also organized and managed several local research projects to monitor and count migrating Trumpeter Swans, and is now doing new work to study seabirds. Mary responsibly represents OPAS at regional and statewide meetings, and is respected throughout our State for her calm, thoughtful, consensus building. Her voice and writings form an invaluable part of coalition building among other environmental advocates, and influencing governmental leaders.

For about 6 months of the year, she works from a remote site, in Arizona. While there, she achieves more via Skype, email, and editing our OPAS web site than most of us do remaining here in Clallam County year round.

Mary is superb to work with, a thoughtful, firm, yet amiable and collaborative team player who gets a job done. She receives a well-earned award; one that will also provide our Harlequin Duck a sought-after winter trip to AZ this year. Well done Mary – Many thanks from us all.



*Mary Porter-Solberg
Receives Harlequin Award for 2016*

2016 OPAS Birdathon/ International Migratory Bird Count Results

by Bob Boekelheide



The 2016 OPAS Birdathon/International Migratory Bird Count was a grand success. In total, 60 observers in 43 parties recorded 25,605 birds of 194 species, the second best species total ever for our spring count, next to 202 species tallied in 2012.

Passerine species that set records or near records this year included several we normally consider "late-spring migrants," such as Western Kingbird, Purple Martin, Swainson's Thrush, Yellow Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, and Black-headed Grosbeak. This year two things encouraged high counts for these species. First, it was an "early" spring, with warm weather coming early, both here and throughout their migration route, and second, our count, which almost always occurs on the second Saturday in May, occurred as late as possible, on May 14. So it was a late count date in an early-weather year, if that makes sense, which favors high counts of late migrants.



Black-headed Grosbeak
Photo by Robert Hutchison

Non-passerines with high counts included Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Ruddy Duck, Western Grebe, Sooty Shearwater, Pectoral Sandpiper, Eurasian Collared-Dove, and Anna's Hummingbird. The shovelers, pintails, and Pectoral Sandpipers numbered high because of one location, the flooded fields at Dungeness Greens south of Hogback Road, where they have clustered this spring. Ruddy Ducks have increased both at Diamond Point and Kitchen-Dick Ponds. Western Grebe, a species of concern in the Salish Sea, showed up in surprisingly high numbers in late winter and spring from Port Angeles harbor to the outer coast. Sooty Shearwaters were also high for one reason - Scott Horton went halibut fishing out of La Push on count day. And last, Collared-Doves and Anna's Hummingbirds continue their rapid colonization of the Pacific Northwest, which shows extremely well in our Birdathon data over the years.

As usual, we recorded several unusual species. Most interesting was a Sage Thrasher discovered by Alexander Patia, hanging out with robins on the beach by Lake Crescent Lodge. There are a couple other records of Sage Thrasher for Clallam County, but this was a first for our Birdathon. Michael Barry recorded an impressive list of mountain birds at Hurricane Ridge, particularly an American Three-toed Woodpecker, another first for our Birdathon, and Pine Grosbeak. Denny Van Horn heard a Long-eared Owl near the Makah National Fish Hatchery, later confirmed and record-

ed. Scott Horton saw all the tubenoses on our list during his halibut fishing trip.

One miss from our list is Ring-necked Pheasant. Since WDFW has stopped releasing pheasants at Dungeness Rec Area, it looks like this species may be history on our bird counts. No more non-native exotic chickens!

Overall, an excellent count for Clallam County and its diverse bird communities. Many thanks to all who helped make it possible. We'll do the same thing next year on the second Sat. in May. Please join us!

Many, Many Thanks to the following 2007 Birdathon

Counters: John Gatchet, Susan Savage, Robert Blush, Kathy, Rick, & Otis Bush, Bob Boekelheide, Mark Salvadale, Barb & Norrie Johnson, Gary Bullock, Dave & Julie Jackson, Enid & Bob Phreaner, Millie Marzec, Mike Crim, Judy & Mike Bromell, Shirley Anderson, Larry & Barbara Rymon, Carol Von Borstel, Kendra Donelson, John & Diana Anderson, Dan Stahler, Stacey Fradkin, Michael Barry, Jim & Audrey Gift, Lisa Schmidt, Janet Lamont, Alexander Patia, Joe Zofrea, Carolyn Wilcox, Judy Mullally, Nancy & Bill Shaw, Eric Guzman, Sue Nattinger, Denny Van Horn, Ryan & Evie Merrill, Scott Horton, Ace Trask, B.J. Morford, Sharman Richardson, Landstrom, Pearl Bare, Bill Havert, Karen Herman, Wallace Teal, Penny Hansen, + 6 unnamed others.

Not much room for other bird sightings, but American White Pelicans made a big splash in June, even showing up in the Sequim Gazette (thank you, Cindy Fullwiler for the lovely photo!). Brad Waggoner spotted one White Pelican near Neah Bay on 5/2, then Brad and Ryan Merrill spotted 93 at Neah Bay on 6/12. The pelicans apparently flew east to Dungeness Bay, where Cindy Fullwiler counted a high of 74 on 6/13, then continued on to Sequim Bay, Discovery Bay, then Puget Sound. Speculation is these birds may have come from nesting areas in eastern Oregon. An early Brown Pelican showed up at Neah Bay on 5/15, seen by Denny Van Horn, and timed to be a count week bird for Birdathon. (Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

Time to go to the mountains! Mandy Holmgren reported a Rock Wren at Deer Park on 6/22, and Jennifer Standish found a Mountain Bluebird at Hurricane Ridge on 6/18. Another mountain sighting was a Lazuli Bunting at Hurricane Hill, seen by Tim Ludwick on 6/1. Not in the mountains, but a Dickcissel appeared at Jon Scordino's bird feeder in the Waatch Valley on 5/26, perhaps the third record for Clallam County and far from its home on the Great Plains.



American White Pelican
Photo by Cindy Fullwiler

Time to look for shorebirds! Mike Crim found a quick American Avocet at 3 Crabs on 5/27, along with 5 possible Willets.

Five Pacific Golden-Plovers appeared at Sand Point on 5/11, reported by Logan Searl. Pectoral Sandpiper, normally a rare bird in spring, made an unprecedented showing not only here but throughout the Pacific Northwest this May. The flooded ponds at Dungeness Greens were their local hot spot, with a peak of 33 spotted there on May 11, and likely several more.

The Earth has turned its solstice corner and fall migration has already begun, with post-breeding yellowlegs and sandpipers showing up at Dungeness Bay. The nesting season is winding down and all those

young birds are wandering your way. Please go birding and let us know what you find, at bboek@olympus.net. Thank you for your observations.

Summer Reading and study Fun --- 😎

Many important elected offices will be on the ballot this Nov. Take the time and effort to filter through the headlines and blaring TV & Internet diatribes. Understand the candidates' positions on issues and the impact of ballot measures that will influence our birds, their habitat, their food sources, and our environment. In the course of the summer, our Conservation Committee will offer evaluations and recommendations on an array of matters including: permits for relocating fin fish aquaculture pens from Port Angeles Harbor to a site north of Morse Creek's mouth, Clallam County's Trust Lands Committee's deliberations and recommendations, facilities needed to increase transportation of fossil fuels by water and railroad, the I-732 ballot measure to establish a tax on carbon emitters, USFWS rule revisions on the loss of Eagles and other birds and bats due to wind energy development and siting, plus others!

Evaluate as candidates develop and express positions on these matters, and come to a decision on how and where you want to stand.

Watch our OPAS web site this summer and see our September newsletter for our assessments.

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