



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 6 Nov-Dec, 2017

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

OPAS Program for November

by Bob Boekelheide

[Note: There is no chapter meeting in December. Happy Holidays! After November, our next OPAS membership meeting is Wednesday, January 17, 2018]

November 15, 2017 OPAS Program

Dungeness River Audubon Center, 2151 Hendrickson Road, Sequim, WA, at 7 p.m.

"Adventures in Patagonia and South Georgia Island"

Presented by Enid and Bob Phreaner, Secretary and President of OPAS

Enid and Bob Phreaner moved to Sequim from Pennsylvania in 2012, and soon became very active OPAS members. Our chapter is incredibly lucky to have them! The Phreaners are also eager world travelers, journeying many times to tropical and polar destinations around the globe.

Enid and Bob will present stories and photos from their 2015 trip to Patagonia and South Georgia Island, home to krill, penguins, seals, whales, and the legend of Ernest Shackleton. Come learn about their modern voyage to the Great White South and the amazing wildlife they saw along the way.



Enid & Bob Phreaner
and a few friends

Photo by Anonymous Penguin



OPAS Field Trips in November and December

by Denny AMFJ Van Horn

"What is it Lassie, what is it girl? Billy what? Billy fell down the well? No? What is it then? . . . Ohhh he's out on a CBC? Ok, Good girl!" And yes, Virginia, there are CBCs galore coming your way, along with a few other outings as late fall closes and winter comes a tap-tapping at our door -- Neah Bay, Sequim Bay, Dungeness Bay, and several excursions up into the woods. This is an exciting time of year. The resident birds are settling in and a few vagrants might just show themselves. So, come and join us. *(Continued on page three)*

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@olypen.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

Officers:

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Co-Vice-Pres, Bob Boekelheide, 360-681-4867; Marie Grad, 360-620-4035
Treasurer, Barbara Johnson, 360-582-9962
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Nancy Bargar, 360-775-7667
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Committees:

Bird Sightings/Counts, Bob Boekelheide, 360-681-4867
Conservation Co-chairs, Vacant — please volunteer to fill this position
Education, Ken Wiersema, 360-460-5515
Membership, Audrey Gift, 360-681-2989, agift@olympen.com
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President's Notes

By Bob Phreaner



On Saturday, October 14, seven OPAS members represented us at the Audubon Council of Washington (ACOW) meeting located in the beautiful Red Cedar Hall at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center in Blyn. Approximately 80 people attended, representing 18 of 25 Audubon Chapters in Washington. Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Council member Kurt Grinnell thanked us for coming, and Loni Greninger warmly welcomed us in their native language. The setting with the view of Sequim Bay was outstanding and the birding was exceptional.

Our keynote speaker was Commissioner of Public Lands, Hilary Franz, who talked about a wide range of issues affecting the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). She described climate change as DNR's greatest challenge with clear evidence in the poor health of our forests. Other topics included the high cost of fighting yearly wildfires, ocean acidification, choosing the Marbled Murrelet Long-term Conservation Strategy alternative, opposing Atlantic salmon marine net pens, and DNR's policy of not allowing the use of their aquatic lands to transport fossil fuels. Matt Anderson from National Audubon reminded us that birds aren't members of any political party and can be used to highlight climate change. Further presentations included National Audubon's "Plants for Birds" and "Climate Watch" programs.

Prior to the ACOW meeting, an Education Workshop was held on Friday that included a discussion on equity, diversity and inclusion. Calen Randal, 18, an enthusiastic birder, shared his vision of a youth birding program in Washington State. Also on Friday, our Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee (WSACC) met and discussed legislative issues and climate action. OPAS presented a "Resolution to Cease Permitting Atlantic Salmon Aquaculture in Washington's Marine Waters". (Read the separate WSACC article in this newsletter to learn more about that meeting).

On Sunday, ACOW participants enjoyed field trips to the mouth of the Elwha and our local bays and shores, thanks to leaders Bob Boekelheide, Ken Wiersema, Denny Van Horn, Gary Bullock and Marie Grad. In addition, we would especially like to thank Arnold and Deb Schouten for hosting an Audubon WA group on a tour of Dry Creek Waterfowl.

The planning for the ACOW meeting took most of the past year and many hours of work from OPAS leaders Mary Porter-Solberg and Ken Wiersema. Next year's ACOW will be held in the King County region, whose coordinator told us that he will be hard-pressed to match the beauty of the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center in Blyn.

Looking forward, I urge you to support the Dungeness River Audubon Center Fall Fundraiser and beat the Black Friday crowds with a visit to Nature Mart at DRAC on November 17-18. It wouldn't be the winter solstice season without participation in local Christmas Bird Counts at Neah Bay on December 17th, Sequim-Dungeness on Monday, December 18, and Port Angeles on December 30. (See article by Bob Boekelheide in this newsletter for details). Finding our feathered friends on the shortest days of the year lifts your spirits and reminds you that nature is just resting before a Spring filled with birdsong.

Happy Holidays,
Bob and Enid Phreaner

Hear Ye!

Ring in the holidays
Audubon River Center
Nature Mart
November 17-18, 2017

OPAS Field Trips (Continued from page one)

Wednesday 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.

Neah Bay / an OPAS & WOS outing

Date & Time: Saturday, November 11, 8a.m.

Leader: Denny AFMJ Van Horn

Meeting place: Washburn's Mercantile & Grocery parking lot

Features: This is our annual joint field trip with Washington Ornithological Society [WOS]. And this is the time of year for everything and anything to show up in Neah Bay - a place noted for it's fall vagrants and rarities, as well as it's incredible array of local water and land birds. We'll cover habitat from east to west; north to south. Exactly where - that's weather dependent and what the birds are doing. Rain dampens - sunshine promotes! Potentially: Backtrack road, Nancy's place, the waterfront, Boom road, the jetty, Wa'atch river valley, the STP, Hobuck, Tsoo-Yess, the hatchery, Ba'ada loop, and just maybe up Bahokus peak with a look into the Strait. But, we will not trek out to Cape Flattery.

Costs: Field trip is a no-charge; however, a Makah Nation Recreational Permit (\$10) is required for each vehicle while in the Neah Bay area. One can be purchased at Washburn's Market or any commercial outlet in the village.

Bring: In addition to the usual accoutrements, remember, this is *Rain Time* in Neah Bay, so be prepared!

Further Information: Contact Denny Van Horn <dennyvanhorn@gmail.com> / 360 406-1584

Pitship Pocket to Port Williams

Date & Time: Saturday, November 18, 9a.m.

Leader: The Grasshopper [aka Gary Bullock]

Meeting place: South parking lot at John Wayne Marina

Features: Late Fall residents, wanderers, and just maybe "Ohhhh my, look at that!" good birds. One never knows what will be found on this outing - an easy onshore scoping of Sequim Bay and the open waters looking off towards Discovery Bay and Protection Island. Also, there's the land birds hanging out along Schmuck road - always a gift-giver of good birds in late Fall.

Further Information: Contact Gary Bullock <gbullockak@hotmail.com> / 360 797-4556

Carrie Blake Park

Date & Time: Sunday, November 19; 8-10 a.m.

Leader: Cindy Fullwiler

Meeting place: Parking lot near Guy Cole Convention Center

Features: A walk around and through Carrie Blake Park. This outing will be about early winter residents from chickadees to woodpeckers.

Further Information: Contact Cindy Fullwiler <cfullwiler@hotmail.com> / 951 501-9257

Shorebirds [and other feathered dinosaurs]

Date & Time: Friday, Dec 1, 2 p.m.

Leader: A Really Good Birder!

Meeting place: Dungeness Landing at 2 p.m.

Features: This is an early afternoon look-see over Dungeness Landing on an outgoing tide. There should be a vast tide-flat from E to W, and with luck, a plethora of shorebirds to grace scopes and binocs. Also, our wintering waterfowl population should be plentiful along with alcids, loons, grebes, and gulls.

Further information: Contact: Denny AFMJ Van Horn <dennyvanhorn@gmail.com> / 360 406-1584

CBC Warm-Up Sequim-Dungeness

Date: Dec 9

Guru: Bob Boekelheide

Meeting place: 9 a.m. at RR Bridge Park & Noon at Dungeness Landing

Features: This is an out-and-about scouting for the upcoming SD-CBC [Dec 18]. We'll begin at the River Center at RR Bridge Park, and then explore the shores along Dungeness Landing, making sure all feathers are aligned, feeders are prepped, and binoculars are polished. So come join us!

Further Information: Contact Bob Boekelheide <bboek@olympus.net> / 360 808-0196

CBC Sequim-Dungeness

Date & Time: Monday, Dec 18

Leader: Bob Boekelheide

Meeting place: Your meeting place is your specific count area of the CBC.

Features: Find birds, count birds, tally birds throughout the day, and then come to the River Center at dusk and share the post-count jubilation, as well as, good food and good company, as tales are told, species accounts are tallied, and laughter abounds.

Further Information: Contact Bob Boekelheide <bboek@olympus.net> / 360 808-0196

CBC Port Townsend

Date & Time: Saturday, Dec 16

Leader: Dan Waggoner

Meeting place: Your meeting places are your areas of counting.

Further Information: Contact Dan Waggoner <danwags57@gmail.com> (Continued on next page)

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CBC Port Angeles

Date & Time: Saturday, Dec 30

Leader: Barbara Blackie

Meeting place: Your meeting places are your areas of counting.

Further Information: Contact: Barb Blackie
<blackieb@olympen.com> / phone

CBC Neah Bay

Date & Time: Sunday, Dec 17

Leader: Charlie Wright

Meeting place: Contact Charlie for your specific place and location in and on this CBC.

Features: This is the CBC of CBCs. The one that is the furthest west in WA and an adventure unto it's own. A lot of traveling between the Port Townsend and SD-CBCs; but well worth the time and effort.

Further Information: Contact Charlie Wright cwright7@uw.edu or <cwright770@gmail.com>

Wondering? An early morning jaunt up Woods and down Palo Alto roads

Date & Time: Friday, December 22, 9:30 a.m.

Leader: Denny AFMJ Van Horn

Meeting place: The Longhouse in Blyn - S parking area

Features: What's up there this time of year? This will be a curious outing. We'll go from low-land valleys up into the woods, stopping, looking and listening.

Further information: Contact Denny AFMJ Van Horn
<dennyvanhorn@gmail.com> / 360 406-1584

Other Events

Backyard Birder programs for November and December

by Jane Stewart

Backyard Birding is a series of classes hosted by members of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, and is intended for residents of the area who are interested in knowing more about birds seen locally each season of the year, and in learning how to develop good habitats for wild birds. All sessions are at the Dungeness River Audubon Center in Railroad Bridge Park from 10 am until noon. The public is invited to attend any or all of the sessions. **Backyard Birding** can be taken either as individual classes or in a series. The cost of each session is \$5, and is free for anyone under 18. org. After the completion of five sessions, participants will be offered free membership in OPAS for one year.

November Class -- Becoming a Birder

Denny Van Horn will present the November 4 program at the

Dungeness River Audubon Center in Railroad Bridge Park from 10 a.m. until noon. So, you're a birdwatcher! Great. Now take the next step -- become a Birder! Birdwatchers watch birds, but a Birder knows birds! This class introduces you to the basics of birding. You will learn how to look at birds, how to note key field marks, how to describe a bird, and how to take birding notes. You will be shown the "tools of the trade": field guides, on-line resources, and optics. We will explore field-note techniques, and how to draw stick-birds for ID purposes. Denny will also discuss birding ethics -- the do's and don'ts of responsible birding.

Denny Van Horn is an expert and experienced birder, who will provide information to improve your enjoyment and understanding of birds. He will even outline how to record your own "Birding Year". A variety of binoculars, scopes, and field guides will be available for you to try. Reference websites describing species in our area, and ways to keep records will be explained. This is always a fun, engaging, and well-attended program. It is a good place to start, build, refresh, and improve your birding skills.

December Class -- Winter Care & Feeding in the Garden

Christie Lassen of Wild Birds Unlimited will present the December 2 program at the Dungeness River Audubon Center in Railroad Bridge Park from 10 a.m. until noon. This class is third in the series presented by OPAS. Christie's presentation will cover general bird feeding, including types of feeders, and different feeds for attracting specific birds, with an emphasis on our over-wintering species and clean bird feeding. She will include specific ideas for providing continuing winter water supplies, ways to feed the birds - not the rodents, and meeting the needs of the Anna's Hummingbird, which has started staying here throughout the year. She will address specific questions from participants.

Holiday Nature Mart

by Shirley Anderson

Plan to shop for unique and hand-crafted gifts at the 11th Annual River Center Holiday Nature Mart, Friday and Saturday, 11/17 and 18, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.. For \$20 you can buy one of only 100 raffle tickets for a bench, made especially for Nature Mart by professional woodworker Tom Butler. You may buy your tickets anytime before the drawing at 4 pm on November 18. You and your family can look forward to wreath making, treats for pets and birds, a bake sale of both sweets and savories, unique ornaments, and a chance to have your photo taken with River Center wildlife while enjoying a cup of hot cider as you browse! If you have hand-crafted items to donate to the sale, please bring them to the River Center between 10 a.m. and noon on Thursday, November 16. If you need to

make other arrangements, please contact either Shirley Anderson (360-681-3950) or Dorothy Shreffler (360-681-2544).

SAVE THE DATE: Olympic Birdfest April 13-15, 2018.

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction, raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: Claudio Vidal will talk about Patagonia & Chile: Birds & Mammals at the End of the Americas. Join our festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 10-12, 2018, and extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 16-17, 2018: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. To learn more and register, visit www.olympicbirdfest.

GET Ready for Christmas Bird Counts

by Bob Boekelheide

The annual Sequim-Dungeness Christmas Bird Count (SDCBC) occurs this year on Monday, Dec. 18. If you are interested in participating, please call Bob Boekelheide at 360-808-0196 or email bboek@olympus.net to sign up.



Other local counts include the Port Townsend CBC on Saturday, Dec. 16; the Neah Bay CBC on Sunday, Dec. 17; and the Port Angeles CBC on Saturday, Dec. 30. The compiler of the Port Townsend CBC is Dan Waggoner (contact danwags57@gmail.com); the compiler of the Neah Bay CBC is Charlie Wright (cwright7@uw.edu); and the compiler of the Port Angeles CBC is Barb Blackie (blackieb@olympen.com).

Each Christmas bird count covers a 15-mile diameter count circle, so we need lots of participants to cover as much of the areas as possible. Even if you can only count your feeder or stroll around your neighborhood for an hour or two (assuming you live in a 15-mile diameter count circle), you can help out. We also have field parties assigned to specific areas of each count circle. If you are an experienced counter, you may be able to help with areas not covered by others. To prepare, please spend time this fall studying the birds of our area, and go on Wednesday morning bird walks at RR Bridge Park and OPAS field trips.

The center of the SDCBC circle is near the intersection of Brown and Port Williams Roads, so it includes Dungeness Spit, Dungeness and Sequim Bays, Protection Island, Diamond Point, and some of the Olympic foothills south of Sequim. The PACBC center is in the Olympic foothills south of Port Angeles, so it includes Port Angeles Harbor, several miles of the Elwha River on the west, Morse Creek on the east, and all the way up to Hurricane Ridge. If you live in either of these circles, and

have a feeder or know where birds lurk in your neighborhood, we need your help!

We will have our annual pre-CBC warm-up field trip on Saturday, Dec. 9, starting at the Dungeness River Audubon Center at 9 a.m. We will view land birds at RR Bridge Park; then travel to Dungeness Bay to observe water birds. Please join us!

Pacific Shorebird Partners and Citizen Scientists

This is an invitation to join the Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey for 2017. This coordinated, multi-partner project, led by Point Blue Conservation Science, will help guide shorebird conservation. You will be part of a team helping to protect shorebirds and wetlands from Canada to South America through monitoring, research, and outreach. We need your help, as a biologist, a land steward, or a citizen scientist to help make this project a success.

We will be firming up dates for each area (Columbia River Estuary, Willapa Bay, and Grays Harbor) and sending out a doodle poll. This year we will conduct a 2-hour survey, which may include multiple survey sites around our local bays and estuaries.

Please contact us if you have availability and are interested, so that we can include you in the doodle poll to select dates. It should be another great year for shorebirds and an excellent opportunity to get outside! If you are not feeling confident in your shorebird ID skills, we can always pair you up with a previous observer. See our poster in this issue for additional information and contacts.

Snow Goose Festival

The 19th Annual Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway Chico, CA., January 24 - 28, 2018.

This action-packed 5-day event celebrates the remarkable journey of millions of waterfowl and raptors along the Pacific Flyway that visit the Northern Sacramento Valley. Over 70 field trips and workshops are sure to appeal to a wide variety of interests. Our workshops offer something for everyone! Free nature activities are offered for youth, as well as armchair adventures for all.

Special Guest & Keynote Speaker: Jon L. Dunn, chief consultant and author of all seven editions of the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, and a birding tour leader for over 30 years. For further information, see our poster in this newsletter issue.

Nancy Bargar Receives 2017 Harlequin Award

Nancy Bargar presented Harlequin Award for 2017

By Ken Wiersema

Each year, past Harlequin awardees who remain active in OPAS, accept nominations and review the many years of contributions that our members have accomplished. They make a recommendation to our Board for the recognition of a deserving member. This award was established in 1982 to recognize and thank one of our members for their time, talent, and dedication to OPAS.



Nancy Bargar receives Harlequin Award from OPAS President Ken Wiersema

At our September meeting, Nancy Bargar was presented the Award for her lengthy and dedicated service to OPAS and to our partnership with the Dungeness River Audubon Center. She has just left a 7 year tenure as our Treasurer, during which she employed her skills and accounting experience to reorganize our books and align them with software that accurately generated reports the Board needs to budget and direct OPAS expenditure of funds. She dug into a new Salesforce database software system, and learned to apply Salesforce data to track our membership files and support the needs of our membership chair. She ably and responsively prepared the financial data needed for an array of reports required to maintain our status as an active Chapter of the National Audubon Society, and current registration as a non-profit organization for Federal and State governments.

Nancy has also served on the Audubon Center's investment committee, and as one of OPAS's representatives on their

board. For many years, she kept the books and managed the funds for the Olympic Peninsula Bird Festival, until the management was turned over to the Audubon Center.

She provided reliable, responsible, and accurate data, as well as management recommendations to our Board with pleasant good humor, though at times the Board's conservation discussions may have stretched her interest span. Her largely behind-the-scenes work allowed other OPAS leaders to move forward with bird-related and conservation activities, and to keep our programs fresh and strong.

We often present this award to those in more visible leadership positions, but it's fitting to also recognize Nancy's stellar work done mostly out of sight. Our heartfelt thanks to her. Well done and well deserved.

WSACC Meeting Report

by Mary Porter-Solberg



The Washington State Audubon Conservation Committee (WSACC) met October 13 in the Red Cedar Hall at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center in Blyn. Gail Gatton, Executive Director of Audubon Washington, began the meeting by sharing Audubon WA priorities in the 2018 Washington State legislative session that will include securing funding in support of science and mapping needs in Willapa Bay. In addition, Audubon WA will advocate for carbon pricing legislation. One of the challenges in this short, 60-day legislative session is the need to pass a Capital Budget that requires a 60% majority vote in both houses of the legislature.

Matt Anderson, Vice President of Climate at the National Audubon Society, acknowledged that the decision of Washington State Audubon Chapters to support I-732, putting a price on carbon, provided a model for the Audubon network even though the initiative failed. Audubon Washington is in talks with potential partners to make sure there will be opportunities for climate action in the 2018 legislature and/or on the ballot. Matt reminded us that 1.2 million Audubon members are the voice for change. We can make a difference if we are contacting our decision makers before and after they vote.

Bob Phreaner, OPAS President, presented our Resolution to Cease Permitting Atlantic Salmon Aquaculture in Washington's Marine Waters. Birds and native fish rely on a healthy marine food web that now suffers from the antibiotic drugs, inadequately maintained net pens, lack of comprehensive regulations, and harvesting methods used in industrial Atlantic salmon production. We ask that Washington State Chapters urge their elected officials to introduce and pass legislation to

cease issuing permits for Atlantic salmon marine net pen aquaculture in Washington State, and that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) cease to renew or extend existing aquatic leases for Atlantic salmon net pen aquaculture. All chapters in attendance agreed to pass the resolution. Read the entire resolution on our Conservation News page of our website. <http://olympicpeninsulaaudubon.org/conservation/conservation-news/>

Megan Friesen, the new Conservation Manager at Seattle Audubon, reported that the Board of Natural Resources (BNR) plans to announce their preferred alternative for the Marbled Murrelet Long-Term Conservation Strategy at the BNR meeting on November 7.

Following our meeting, Lynda Mapes, author and environment reporter for the Seattle Times, provided an entertaining slide show from her book, *Elwha: A River Reborn*. She has personally explored and reported on the Elwha River dam removal and continues to observe the river's renewal and recovery.

Bird Sightings

by Bob Boekelheide & Denny Van Horn

The weather prognosticators say La Nina is brewing in the Pacific Ocean, which usually means a cooler, wetter winter in the Pacific Northwest, along with earlier and stronger upwelling in the California Current System next year. But this may not be a particularly strong La Nina, so who knows? We do know that September and October brought beautiful fall weather to the Olympic Peninsula, other than a series of wet Pacific storms between Oct 18-22 that washed out a few birding trips.

If you want to see lots of Cackling Geese, now is the time. The first fall Cackler flocks appeared over eastern Clallam County in mid-September, with hundreds flying overhead through October. Several thousand are now hanging out in the harvested corn fields by Schmuck and Port Williams Rds, where Bruce Paige recorded the peak number of an amazing 6000 Cacklers on 10/28. It has also been a good year for Snow Geese, with the first one spotted on 9/23 by Ronald Auler at Jamestown, then a flock of 18-25 hanging around Dungeness through October, and a high count of 32 seen by John Gatchet at Gardiner on 10/10.



Lee Bowen won the coveted First Swan of the Fall Award, spotting 12 swans flying by Sunland on 10/26 while he played pickleball. What a multi-talented man! The next day Lee and several others reported a flock of two adult and two juvenile Trumpeter Swans swimming off 3 Crabs. Soon swans will join their goose friends eating old corn.



Trumpeter Swans
Photo by Robert Hutchison

In duck news, Jennifer Standish and friends reported 2 late Cinnamon Teal at Kitchen-Dick Ponds on 9/30. A couple Canvasbacks showed up this fall, one at Kirner Pond, first seen 10/10 by Paulette Ache, and one at the Elwha River mouth on 10/15, seen by our Audubon field trip.

Yellow-billed Loons have returned for the winter (maybe never left?). The Protection Island Aquatic Reserve survey on 10/23 located 4 of these beautiful loons north of Protection Island. The same day, Bruce LaBar and others recorded a mass flight of Pacific Loons past Cape Flattery into the Strait of Juan de Fuca, estimating over 1000 loons passing in about an hour.

Lucky Ryan Merrill participated in WDFW pelagic surveys off our coast in September, seeing a lovely variety of seabirds. On 9/15, in deep water WSW of La Push, Ryan found over 200 Buller's Shearwaters and two Scripp's Murrelets, formerly known as Craver's Murrelet. On 9/16, he recorded 2 Flesh-footed Shearwaters WNW of La Push, along with many other species.

It was a good fall for Northern Goshawks. In the Olympics, K.R. Eckert spotted 2 soaring over Hurricane Ridge Rd on 9/13; then Levi Grudzinski found one flying over Royal
(Continued on next page)

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Creek on 9/15. Bruce Paige spotted another goshawk circling low over the Obstruction Point Rd on 9/27. Goshawks also appeared in the lowlands, with one reported by John Gatchet at Gardiner on 10/19 and one soaring near Bahokus Peak seen by MObs (many observers) on 10/23.

Neah Bay vicinity was good for Golden Eagles this fall, with one seen by Bruce Paige at Hobuck Beach on 10/10 and one seen by Will Brooks at the Waatch Valley on 10/15. In the Olympics, Alexander Patia found a Golden Eagle soaring over Badger Valley on 9/10. Perhaps most interesting, Sue Nattinger saw one flying over Wasankari Rd west of Port Angeles on 10/11.

A Harlan's-type Red-tailed Hawk has been hanging out in the Waatch Valley, first reported by Will Brooks on 10/15. Harlan's Hawk is a very dark subspecies of Red-tailed, nesting in Alaska and usually migrating east of the Rocky Mountains to winter in the southern Plains. Also off-track is an immature Red-shouldered Hawk near 3 Crabs first spotted by Denny Van Horn on 9/29, then seen by MObs through most of October. It might still be there.

Fall shorebirds are always exciting, and this year didn't disappoint. Michael Barry found a beautiful Snowy Plover at Dungeness Spit on 10/22, the best place in eastern Clallam County for a Snowy. Sharp-eyed Gary Bullock spotted a juvenile Sharp-tailed Sandpiper near Roberta's Pond on 10/20, and Jennifer Standish found a juvenile Ruff while on the OPAS field trip to Dungeness Landing Park on 9/30. A Willet is back at Dungeness Bay, first seen by Trina Beyard on another OPAS-led trip on 10/15, which makes the third fall/winter in a row for Willets in Dungeness Bay. Michael Barry found a high count of Surfbirds, with 16 on the coastal rocks outside Neah Bay harbor on 10/9.

It was an impressive fall for both American and Pacific Golden-Plovers. Were there really more than usual, or did people just notice them more? They are difficult to tell apart without looking very closely. Regardless, several individuals of both species showed up at both Dungeness Bay and Neah Bay between mid-September and mid-October (see eBird.org accounts for dates and locations). An impressive passage of Wilson's Snipes occurred at 3 Crabs in mid to late October. The high count goes to Alexander Patia who counted 24 snipes at Roberta's Pond on 10/27.

Even more impressive is the thousands of California Gulls and Heermann's Gulls that passed through Clallam County during summer and early fall. High count of California Gulls in Dungeness Bay was 4500 on 9/15. At the other end of

the abundance spectrum, Chris Rurik picked out the one Iceland Gull that wasn't a Thayer's Gull at Neah Bay on 9/28, then Will Brooks described a nice 3rd-cycle Slaty-backed Gull at Hobuck Beach on 10/16, and Bruce LaBar found a striking 1st-cycle Glaucous Gull at Neah Bay on 10/23.

Ancient Murrelets likely nest somewhere on the Clallam coastline, but no one knows where. The last known nest was on Carroll Island in 1924. Following other sightings at sea this summer, Jason Vassallo and Will Brooks spotted 5 Ancients from the base of the Waadah Island jetty in Neah Bay on 9/10. By late October wintering Ancients are beginning to show up in the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca.



Rufous Hummingbird
Photo by Robert Hutchison

Late Rufous Hummingbirds appeared on 9/15 in Port Angeles at Judy Mullally's feeder, and the same day at La Push, where Ryan Merrill spotted a female-type. Bob Id-dins watched an even later male Rufous at his feeder in Sequim on 10/1. Deb Shiell reports a striking Yellow-shafted Flicker at her mother Dee's house at Monterra on 10/21, saying it had super-bright yellow tail and wings.

Neah Bay and surroundings have become the Northwest Mecca for rarities, the place to look for vagrant birds. This fall is no exception, with birders flocking there to find the latest and greatest wayward birds. As the number of birders increases, so, too, does the number of rare birds. Coincidence? Neah Bay really is a magical place for birds, not only for vagrants but also for large numbers of western migrants as well.

As many as 3 to 4 Tropical Kingbirds showed up in Neah Bay this fall, perhaps more, ranging in dates between 9/28 and 10/29, seen by MObs. At least one ranged in Neah Bay itself, one hung out in the Waatch Valley, and the last one, seen by Jordan Gunn on 10/27, hung out at Hobuck Beach. Will Brooks and Jason Vassallo recorded a nice Black Phoebe at Neah Bay on 9/9, a species seen more and more in Washington State. A very late and off-course flycatcher was a Say's Phoebe spotted by Michael Barry at Hurricane Hill on 10/15, later refound by Scott Gremel west of Hurricane Hill.

Speaking of species increasing in WA, California Scrub-Jays continue to be seen in Carlsborg and Dungeness. The first ones hung out near Old Olympic Highway and Carlsborg Rds, and the second ones are right in the town of Dungeness. Sure wish we knew if they nested this year, but it's probably just a matter of time before they're regulars in our area. Adrienne Akmajian also had a scrub-jay come to her feeder in Neah Bay on 9/30.

Gray Jays appeared in the lowlands this fall. Lyn Muench followed 4 Gray Jays at her property off Blue Mountain Road on 10/3, eating voraciously from her suet feeder. Patti Gotz reported 4 Gray Jays at her home west of Port Angeles on 10/14. But most unusual was a sea-level Gray Jay perched in a tree at Helen's Pond on 10/1, seen by 3 Crabs bird monitors. Scott Gremel found a Clark's Nutcracker traveling with Gray Jays at Hurricane Hill on 10/15.

Kaiyote Snow, while walking the Olympic Discovery Trail near the base of Ediz Hook on 10/6, spotted one little chickadee feeding in the shore pines. Knowing it was a strange place for a chickadee, Kaiyote looked closer and discovered it was a Mountain Chickadee, far afield from their usual haunts in the Cascades. It's been many years since a Mountain Chickadee appeared on the Olympic Peninsula, but they occasionally have irruption years so look for more. Another far afield bird was a Rock Wren at La Push on 9/27, seen by Scott Barnes.

At least two, maybe three Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers popped up in Neah Bay this fall, the place to see gnatcatchers in Clallam County. First Scott Barnes and Linda Mack located one on the west side of Neah Bay on 9/28 that remained for a few days, then another showed up on the east side of town on 10/15, seen by Scott and Sierra Downes. Michael Barry found another near Hobuck Beach on 10/24, where it also remained for a few days.

A lovely Mountain Bluebird appeared at Dungeness Spit on 9/23, photographed by Ron Auler, then another showed up

on the west side of Hurricane Hill on 10/15, photographed by Scott Gremel. Very late Swainson Thrushes appeared at Neah Bay, one on 9/30 seen by MObs, and one on 10/8 seen by Charlie Wright.

Fall trips to the Olympics might turn up Pine Grosbeaks. Michael Barry and Scott Gremel found 3 at Hurricane Hill on 10/15, then Scott found one more at the Switchback Trail on 10/23. The most wayward finch may be Charlie Wright's report of a heard-only White-winged Crossbill at Neah Bay on 10/7. The first Common Redpoll in quite a while appeared at Neah Bay on 10/29, seen by Scott Downes.

The most interesting Clay-colored Sparrow report is one found on 10/19 by Randy Hill and Stefan Schlick on Schmuck Rd near the Sequim sewage treatment plant, where it was feeding in the road with other sparrows. Two reports of Clay-colored Sparrows came from Neah Bay, one on 9/6 by Ryan Merrill and one on 10/7 by Brad Waggoner. Swamp Sparrows have reappeared for the winter at Neah Bay, starting with one at Hobuck Beach on 10/14 seen by MObs. One lonely Lark Sparrow appeared in the Waatch Valley on 9/30, spotted by Scott Barnes and Linda Mack.



White-throated Sparrow
Photo by Robert Hutchison

A Harris's Sparrow visited Scott Gremel's feeders in Port Angeles on 10/9 and again on 10/15, where we hope it will stick around for the CBC. White-throated Sparrows have also appeared on cue, with one found by Marie Grad at the lower Dungeness River dike trail on 9/27, one in Bob Hutchison's backyard in Sequim on 10/16, and one at RR Bridge Park starting on 10/18.

(Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

Interesting icterids include a wayward Bobolink at 3 Crabs on 9/17, seen by Eric Guzman and Levi Grudzinski. Alexander Patia and Sierra Hemmig spotted a lovely Orchard Oriole at Tsoo-Yess Beach on 9/24, and Brad Waggoner found a very late Bullock's Oriole at Neah Bay on 10/23.



Townsend's Warbler
Photo by Robert Hutchison

The wayward warbler parade this fall at Neah Bay was quite astounding, mixing late western warblers with lovely eastern warblers. The numerous records included Northern Waterthrush (9/9 Jason Vassallo & Will Brooks); Tennessee Warbler (9/25 Alexander Patia, & 10/4 John Gatchet); Nashville Warbler (10/7 Brad Waggoner); Yellow Warbler (10/7 MObs, 10/16 Will Brooks); Chestnut-sided Warbler (9/23 Ryan Merrill); and Palm Warbler (9/23-10/23, MObs). Not at Neah Bay, Bob Hutchison photographed a lovely Townsend's Warbler in his back yard in Sequim on 10/1.

Late Black-throated Gray Warblers appeared at Salt Creek County Park on 10/11, seen by Caitlin Best, along with one in Sekiu on 10/14 seen by Brad Waggoner, and one in Neah Bay on 10/14 seen by Will Brooks.

The Christmas Bird Counts are coming up, so now is the time to be out birding, staking out unusual species. If you see something interesting, please call Bob at 360-808-0196 or email bboek@olympus.net. Thanks very much for your sightings.

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