



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 5 September-October, 2019

"Volunteer educators and stewards for birds and habitat conservation"

OPAS Programs for September and October

By Bob Boekelheide

September 18, 2019 OPAS Program

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

"Wildlife of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve." Presented by Bruce Paige.



Bruce Paige & Golden Retriever
Maggie
Photo by Bob Boekelheide

Few people know Alaska's Glacier Bay National Park better than Bruce Paige. Bruce spent 26 years as Chief Park Naturalist at Glacier Bay NP, getting to know the amazing wildlife of this beautiful area. Early in his career, Bruce studied Wildlife Management at Humboldt State University, then worked at Lava Beds NM, Death Valley NP, Everglades NP, and Prince William Forest Park, VA, before moving to Glacier Bay. During the last decade you may

have seen Bruce birding on the roads and trails of Clallam County, accompanied by his golden retriever, Maggie.

Bruce will talk about the similarities and dramatic differences between the wildlife and the ecosystems of Glacier Bay and the Olympic Peninsula. From whales to wolves, from puffins

to shorebirds, Bruce will share stories about the spectacular animals found at the northernmost region of Alaska's Inside Passage.

October 16, 2019 OPAS Program

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

"Birding the Ancient Forests in El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve, Chiapas, Mexico" Presented by Carolyn Wilcox and Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin.

Chiapas, the southernmost state in Mexico, is a birdwatcher's dream. Carolyn Wilcox and Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin traveled to El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve in the highest part of the Sierra Madre de Chiapas in November, 2018. The reserve protects some of the last remaining cloud forest and tropical evergreen rainforest ecosystems on the Pacific coast of Mexico. It is home to 392 bird species including the unicorn-like endangered Horned Guan, along with many North American migrants during winter.



Horned Guan
Photo by Carolyn Wilcox

Carolyn has owned and operated Experience Olympic Nature Tours in Port Angeles, WA, since 2013. Lindsey, who is currently a city councilman in Port Angeles, thought birds were irrelevant for global biogeochemical cycles until he met Carolyn while teaching field science at NatureBridge in 2007. Now their favorite vacations are to wild places with high bird diversity.

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@olyopen.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, (360) 681-4076. The public is welcome.

OPAS Board of Directors

Officers:

President, Judi White, 206-641-1842
Vice-Pres, Bob Boekelheide, 360-808-0196
Treasurer, Wendy Hirota, 360-683-7141
Secretary, Enid Phreaner 360-504-2110

Board-at-Large:

Tom Montgomery, 360-683-8230
Kendra Donelson, 360-683-7793
Bruce Fryxell, 360-797-1564
Allyson Simons, 360-797-4633
Tom Butler, 360-808-4468

Committees:

Bird Sightings/Counts, Bob Boekelheide, 360-808-0196
Conservation Chair, Bob Phreaner, 360-504-2110; Vice-Chair, Pete Walker, 360-683-0194
Education, Ken Wiersema, 360-460-5515
Membership, Audrey Gift, 360-681-2989, agift@olympen.com
Field Trips Co-chairs, John Gatchet, 503-781-5043, and Marie Grad, 360-620-4035
Hospitality, Clare Hatler, 360-582-6451
Newsletter, Rob Hutchison, 253-293-3801 rbrycehut@wavecable.com
Publicity, Sandy Boren, 408-316-9427
Webmaster, Mary Porter-Solberg, 360-477-5229 .
Website Support: Mary Porter-Solberg, Bob Hutchison, and Chris Perry
Social Media Support: Mary Porter-Solberg, and Enid Phreaner

President's Notes

by Judith White



Our OPAS Board met for their annual retreat in July, generating plans for new activities and ways to enhance tried and true favorites. Thanks to our OPAS Officers and Board members for leading us into the new year. Our prior year's goal to recruit new Board members really paid off, with five members new to the retreat this year, including Ally Simons, Tom Butler, Pete Walker, Sandy Boren and John Gatchet. Ally and Tom joined the Board-at-Large this year, John Gatchet will co-chair the Field Trip Committee with Marie Grad, and Bob Phreaner will be joined by Pete Walker as Vice-chair of the Conservation Committee. Among new items, this year we will be developing an improved OPAS website olympicpeninsulaudubon.org (shorter version, olybird.org) under the direction of Mary Porter-Solberg, our webmaster, and the Website Support Team including Rob Hutchison and Chris Perry. The OPAS website has been particularly helpful in adding and updating events between newsletter issues. Please take a look if you have not yet had a chance to check it out. Our Facebook page impact continues to grow: 550 users interacted with OPAS Facebook posts last month, thanks to Mary Porter-Solberg and Enid Phreaner, our Social Media Support team.

Sara Ellen Peterson announced at the annual retreat that she is stepping down from the OPAS Board. We celebrate her almost two decades of service to OPAS on the Board. As Chair of the Publicity Committee, Sara Ellen worked hard to publicize OPAS events. Members have shared their best memories of fabulous banquets with carefully chosen caterers, beautiful table decorations and floral arrangements. Sara Ellen was also one of the Birdfest originators. Please take a moment to thank Sara-Ellen for her dedication to OPAS when you next see her. Sara Ellen has kindly offered to transition her leadership of the Publicity Committee to Sandy Boren over the next several months.

The Annual Dungeness River Festival is coming Friday September 27th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Dungeness River Audubon Center. We'll participate with our partners and local groups, and many schoolchildren will attend. Please consider offering your time to make this fun event a success.

OPAS will lead off the 2019-20 program year on Wednesday September 18th at 7 p.m. with a program by Bruce Paige on Wildlife of Glacier Bay. Looking forward to seeing you there!

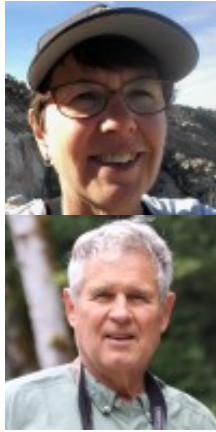
Hear Ye!

**Congratulations Audrey Gift!
For receiving the John &
Amanda Beitzel Award for your
volunteer work and years of
service with the Sequim Free
Clinic.**

OPAS Field Trips in September and October

by Marie Grad and John Gatchet

[**Note:** Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society is instituting a new policy for all field trips with the exception of the Wednesday Bird Walks. We are asking field trip participants to sign a liability release form for the trip. This signed form will be good for future field trips. Visit the OPAS website at <https://olympicpeninsulaudubon.org/> and click on the Field Trips tab, where you can review, download, and print the form in advance.]



Wednesday Bird Walks

Date and Time: Every Wed. morning, 8:30 a.m.

Meeting Place: At the Dungeness River Audubon Center

Features: Easy guided bird walk through Railroad Bridge Park to see birds of the Dungeness River riparian area.

Bring: Binoculars, water, snack and suitable clothing.

Shorebirds

Date and Time: Saturday, Sept. 7, 8:00 a.m.-12 p.m.

Cost: Free

Leader: Bob Boekelheide

Meeting Place: Dungeness Landing Park



Western Sandpiper
Photo by Judith White

Features: Help celebrate World Shorebird Day (Sept.6) with OPAS. It's an incoming tide that morning, so the birding should be excellent. We will be moving to 3 Crabs; then back to Dungeness Landing.

Bring: A scope if you

have one.

Further Information: Contact Bob Boekelheide, bboek@Olympus.net, 360 808-0196

Ocean Shores - FIELD TRIP IS FULL

Dates: Monday and Tuesday September 16 and 17

Cost: Free but participants pay for own lodging and meals

Leader: Judi White

Meeting place & time: 8:00 a.m. Monday in the parking lot of the Point Brown jetty at the south end of Ocean Shores Boulevard. Tuesday's starting time and place will be determined later.

Features: Migrating shorebirds of Grays Harbor and other Pacific Coastal spots. Rarities are always a possibility.

Activity level: Walking on uneven surfaces in dunes and marshes. Driving between birding locations.

Bring: Optics, water, lunch for both days, footwear for walking, especially on beaches, and clothing for any weather changes.

Preregistration (required!) & further Information: Judi White 206 641-1842 drwhitej@gmail.com.

Fall Birding for Beginners and Newcomers

Date and Time: Saturday, September 21, 8:30 a.m.

Cost: Free

Leader: Marie Grad

Meeting Place: Outside Dungeness River Audubon Center

Features: Interested in the birds that you see in your yard or on your walk? Seen something you want to identify? Join local birders for a walk in the Park. All levels welcome.

Bring: Binoculars if you have them; some loaners may be available. We will be walking along the Olympic Discovery Trail up to the Railroad Bridge, so wear comfy shoes.

Further Information: Contact Marie Grad, MIgrad53@gmail.com, 360 620-4035

Point No Point

Date & Time: Thursday, September 26, 8:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Leader: John Gatchet

Meeting Place: Point No Point Lighthouse Parking Lot

Features: Salt water, marsh, and shoreline bird species will be the focus of this field trip. Parasitic Jaeger and Bonaparte's Gull are among the target species. We will visit several birding hotspots in this area. This spot is also known for rare birds



Bonaparte's Gull
Photo by John Gatchet

and so we will be looking for unexpected species as well. There will be some walking on trails and rocky beach areas with uneven ground.

Bring: Binoculars, spotting scope, water and snacks as well as appropriate clothing for the weather.

Further Information: Contact John Gatchet, jfgatchet@gmail.com, (503) 781-5043

Fort Flagler State Park

Date and Time: Sunday, October 6, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Cost: The trip is free, but a state park day use pass or a Discover Pass is needed for the state park

Leader: John Gatchet

(Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

OPAS Field Trips (Continued)

Meeting Place: Parking area at the entrance to the park.

Features: Forest, salt water, shoreline and marsh bird species will be the focus of this field trip. This is a large park and we will be visiting all the prime locations in this beautiful area. There will be walking on trails and hiking on uneven cobblestone beaches. Expect 60 bird species as we visit a variety of habitats.



Sanderling at Fort Flagler
Photo by John Gatchet

Bring: Binoculars, spotting scope, water, snacks/lunch as well as appropriate footwear and clothing for the weather.

Further Information: Contact John Gatchet, jfgatchet@gmail.com, (503) 781-5043

Other Events

Puget Sound Seabird Survey (PSSS)

By Jennifer Lang

Conservation Science Coordinator, Seattle Audubon Society



Mew Gull
Photo by Mick Thompson

Are seabirds in the southern Salish Sea increasing or decreasing in numbers? Which species are changing their range? Help us find out. The Puget Sound Seabird Survey (PSSS) is a community and citizen

science project managed by Seattle Audubon that empowers

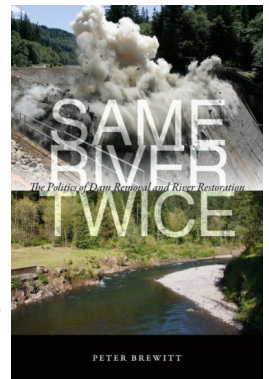
volunteer birdwatchers to gather valuable data on wintering seabird populations across the southern Salish Sea.

You can contribute to this vital seabird science by joining the thirteenth season of this exciting project. We are now recruiting enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers to help us monitor the status of our local wintering seabirds. Training on survey methodology will be provided at a location near you in September and early October. Volunteers should ideally be able to identify Puget Sound's seabird species and be available on the first Saturday of each month, October through April, to conduct a 30-minute survey. But, if determining between Lesser and Greater Scaup is a challenge, we'll team you up with more knowledgeable surveyors. To help us determine your seabird identification skills, visit www.seabirdsurvey.com to take our quick, fun Seabird ID quiz. Learn more, including training locations, at www.seabirdsurvey.org and email Toby Ross, Senior Science Manager tobyross@seattleaudubon.org if you would like more information or to take part.

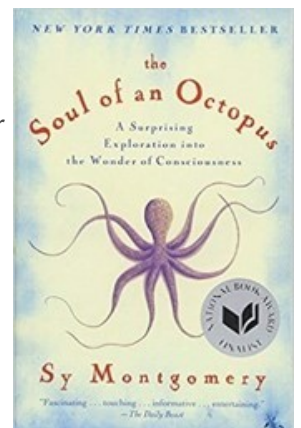
OPAS Book Discussion Group Returns

By Lori Moilanen

The OPAS Book Discussion Group returns after its summer break with a great line-up of titles to take us to the end of the year. Please join us as we resume our regular monthly schedule on Tuesday, September 24, with a discussion of the just-published book *Same River Twice: The Politics of Dam Removal and River Restoration* led by OPAS President Judi White. This book tells the story of three major Northwestern dam removals by examining the politics, people, hopes, and fears associated with the rivers and their communities. Of special interest is that one of the case studies in the book examines the dam removal on the Elwha River. A few copies of this title are available in the Dungeness River Audubon Center store; a portion of the purchase price benefits the educational activities at the Center.

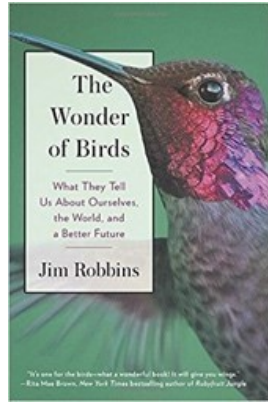


In October, we will join other Clallam County book discussion groups in reading *The Soul of an Octopus: A Surprising Exploration into the Wonder of Consciousness* in preparation for a visit by author Sy Montgomery to the North Olympic Library System (NOLS) in November. NOLS will provide free lending copies of this acclaimed book to the OPAS discussion group as part of their outreach event. The OPAS



book discussion is scheduled for Tuesday, October 29, with Lori Moilanen as discussion leader.

On Tuesday, November 19 (note: third Tuesday), Bruce Fryxell will lead discussion of *The Wonder of Birds: What They Tell Us About Ourselves, the World, and a Better Future* by Jim Robbins. This engaging book highlights qualities unique to birds that demonstrate how invaluable they are to humans both ecologically and spiritually. The author weaves scientific data and historical information into an eloquent explanation of why we must fight to save imperiled bird populations and the places they live for the sake of both the planet and humankind.



The OPAS Book Discussion Group meets from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. at the Dungeness River Audubon Center (DRAC) on the fourth Tuesday of the month unless otherwise noted. Links to the currently scheduled titles, book summaries, and discussion questions are posted at olympicaudubonsociety.org, under the Book Group tab. For more information contact lori_moilanen@wavecable.com.

Conservation Matters

The Dungeness River Supports Western Hemisphere Shorebirds

by Judith White



Tens of thousands of birds from across the Western Hemisphere use the mudflats at the mouth of the Dungeness River as a critical resting and feeding stop during migration. Dungeness Bay is so noteworthy that it has received the designation, “Important Bird Area”, identifying it as a significant habitat for the conservation of bird populations. The Dungeness River Audubon Center, Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, and other donors erected an ADA-accessible observation deck overlooking this Important Bird Area, located at Dungeness Landing County Park.

Over 40 species of shorebirds have been recorded in and around Dungeness Bay, yet only four of these regularly nest in Clallam County: Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Wilson’s Snipe, and Black Oystercatcher. Some of the most abundant migrant species -- Black-bellied Plover, Dunlin, and Sanderling -- also remain in Dungeness Bay through the winter. These three species are cosmopolitan, nesting in high Arctic tundra around the entire northern Hemisphere then migrating to spend the winter on coastlines throughout the world. Some of their North

American populations winter in coastal areas from British Columbia to South America, including our own Dungeness Bay. Studies with Sanderlings have shown that some fly to the exact same sites year after year, both for nesting and for winter.

Who are the other epic travelers who gather on the Dungeness River mouth mudflats? The most abundant migrants are Least and Western Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plovers, and Short-billed Dowitcher. Of these, Least Sandpipers have the broadest and southernmost breeding distribution, nesting in subarctic tundra and boreal forest across Alaska and Canada. They weigh less than an ounce, yet likely have astounding 2000-mile NON-STOP transoceanic migrations. Western Sandpipers have a restricted breeding range using coastal tundra in Western Alaska and Siberia, then migrate after nesting along the Pacific Coast all the way to Peru. Semipalmated Plovers nest in the subarctic and winter in widespread coastal areas, including Central America. The Short-billed Dowitcher subspecies seen in Dungeness Bay nests in Alaska and winters on the Pacific Coast all the way to South America.



Short-billed Dowitcher
Photo by Judith White

Less abundant migrants are no less epic in their travels. Whimbrels, Marbled Godwits, Ruddy and Black Turnstones, Red Knots, Baird’s Sandpipers, Pectoral Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Spotted Sandpipers, and Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs all fly from northern or inland breeding areas on their way to widespread sites along the Pacific Coast, some as far as Tierra del Fuego. The



Baird's Sandpiper
Photo by Judith White

long-distance champions of these species are Baird’s Sandpiper and Red Knot. After departing their high-arctic breeding grounds, Baird’s Sandpipers travel all the way to

the southern tip of South America. Some complete the entire 9000 mile one-way journey in as few as 5 weeks. Red Knots also fly extraordinary long distances, sometimes flying six to eight days without stopping to rest or feed. Like many shorebirds, adult Red Knots depart the breeding grounds before the young birds, (Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

leaving the juveniles to grow and mature before they migrate. The young birds then migrate unaccompanied by adults along a route they have never traveled to a destination they have never seen.

These astounding feats of migration offer important scientific information on lightweight energy storage and conversion, along with astonishing innate navigation skills. Advances in monitoring migrating birds using GPS and satellite transmitters have added greatly to our knowledge. In 2018, the United States joined partner countries like Japan, Mexico, and Russia to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which protected migrating shorebirds across international boundaries and made it unlawful to kill, hunt, sell, or possess nests, eggs, or feathers without a permit. Still, the greatest threat facing long-distance migrating shorebirds lies in disturbance and habitat loss at mid-migration stopover sites like the Dungeness River mouth mudflats, their crucial refueling stations.

What's so special about the Dungeness River mouth mudflats? As it descends from the Olympic Mountains, the Dungeness River accumulates rich nutrients from the soil and forest. Flowing into Dungeness Bay, it creates an estuary, where fresh water from land meets and mixes with salt water from the ocean. Estuaries transport and trap nutrients and sediment, providing critical habitat for birds, fish, amphibians, insects, and other wildlife. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) calls estuaries "important natural places to the economy and the environment".

Dungeness Bay is one of the premier estuaries in the Pacific Northwest. The "Important Bird Area" includes intertidal and subtidal waters of Dungeness Bay, Dungeness Spit, the Dungeness River Estuary, and adjacent wetlands. Dungeness Spit and adjacent intertidal areas also lie within the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge. Its sandflats and mudflats provide extensive feeding areas for many bird species, which includes some of the largest eelgrass beds in the Northwest.

For more information about common birds of our area, come to the Wednesday Morning Bird Walks at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, starting at 8:30 every Wednesday. The Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society also provides Backyard Birding classes at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, along with a variety of field trips to local birding sites. View the website www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org for more information on shorebirds and upcoming field trips.

Neah Bay Field Trip Report

By John Gatchet



On August 25th, a group of 13 birders enjoyed excellent birding at Neah Bay. Even before the trip began, Judi White found a Willet at the Village Creek in town. Everyone enjoyed this rare species when we birded the waterfront. We were treated to other shorebirds along the shoreline including Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Western and Least Sandpiper, and Greater Yellowlegs.



Willet with crab
Photo by Judi White

A variety of birds were seen on the water including Common Merganser, White-winged and Surf Scoter, Common, Red-throated and Pacific Loon, Pied-billed, Horned, and Red-necked Grebe. Nine Brown Pelicans flew into the bay and several continued catching fish successfully throughout the day. They were accompanied by Heermann's Gull whenever they landed.

Cape Flattery was our second stop and we spent several hours in the area. The highlight at the cape was an aerial show generated by 32 Black Swifts. At the platform they often

Wild Birds Unlimited

Bring this add in for \$5.00 off any purchase over \$25.00!

THE FRESHEST SEED AVAILABLE
BIRD FEEDERS
NATURE GIFTS

YOUR BACKYARD BIRDFEEDING SPECIALIST!
275953 Hwy 101, Gardiner WA 98382 PH: 360 797-7100
Open: 10AM to 6PM Mon. to Fri., 9AM to 6PM Sat. & Sun.

flew low overhead, around us and below us as they swooped downward toward the water. Three Vaux's Swifts were spotted among the Black Swifts when we first encountered them. Black Oystercatchers were seen and heard. Five hundred Sooty Shearwaters and 2 Northern Fulmars glided low over the ocean waves. Alan Wesphal first sighted the shearwaters.

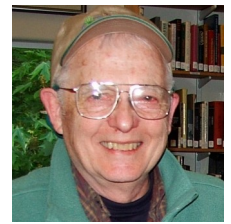


Barred Owl
Photo by Judi White

We ended the trip at Bahokus Peak finding 11 Bald Eagles, 1 Red-tailed Hawk 2 Black Swifts and 1 Tree Swallow among the numerous Barn Swallows. The view was spectacular from the peak. On the way out of town, several people spotted a Barred Owl. Species total for the day was 65.

Education Notes

by Ken Wiersema



Backyard Birder series for 2019-20

The Backyard Birder Series will be starting on October 5th with new offerings of local birding subjects. We have some new instructors and an array of exciting topics for those who are new to the Olympic Peninsula, or might have moved into a different birding habitat, or want to refresh and expand their birding knowledge.

Our first program will be led by two birding veterans, who will offer their views on the basic skills of birding, some ID tips, discussion of birding optics, the pros and cons of field guides, information on the e-bird system, mobile birding apps --- and much more. So join us for the launch of our new program year on October 5th..

The schedule on the next page is firm through February. After that, the subjects and presenters may be changed as the year goes along. If you have questions, or want a specific birding subject presented, please let me know (Ken Wiersema, 360-460-5515), and we'll make an effort to fit it into a class.

New Student on OPAS team

This year, Aiden Braaten, a junior at Sequim HS, will be assisting with several of our Backyard Birding classes. **Welcome Aiden!** He'll also be participating in other OPAS and Board activities.



Aiden Braaten

Focus On Series

OPAS will be partnering again this year with the Dungeness River Audubon Center staff to present a series of Saturday morning programs that offer an in-depth view on the array of fauna and flora that we live with on the Olympic Peninsula. Watch for more details on the OPAS and River Center web sites and in future newsletters.

(Continued on next page)

Backyard Birder Series Calendar

Month	Date	Subject	Presenter[s]
Oct	5	Birding basics & tools of being a birder	Bob Iddins & Ken Wiersema
Nov	2	Landscaping your property for birds with native plants	Joe Holtrop, Clallam Conservation Dist.
Dec	7	Winter bird feeding and watering. New bird feeding accessories	Christie Lassen, Co-Owner Wild Birds Unlimited in Gardiner
Jan, 2020	4	Birdscaping -- Inviting Birds to your yard	Carolyn Wilcox
Feb	1	Bird nesting and GBBC; e-Bird primer	Bob Boekelheide & Ken Wiersema
Mar	7	Birds: The inside story. Bird anatomy & biology	Shirley Anderson & Ken Wiersema
Apr	4	Migration – why they do it, where they go, how they navigate.	Tomás Setubal
May	2	Spring Sounds -- local recording and video of Spring singers	Dow Lambert & Ken Wiersema
June	6	Out of the Nest – the fledging and vulnerability of new bird lives	Ken Wiersema
July	4	Gulls and Local Shorebirds (Likely moved to July 11)	Bob Boekelheide

Education Notes (Continued)

Up-coming programs in the Focus-On Series will include the following:

- October 19** **Weasels, Otters, and Fishers.**
- November 16** **Swans and Geese.**
- December 21** **Coyotes.**
- January 18** **Puffins, Auklets, and Murres.**
- February 15** **Wildflowers.**

Learn by the Light of the Moon Series final for 2019

September 14th at 7 p.m. in the outdoor amphitheater at the Dungeness River Audubon Center.

Subject: **“Bioluminescence: who needs the light of the moon when you can make your own!”** Speaker - Neil Harrington, Environmental Biologist, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. Neil is an experienced recreational diver and underwater photographer; expect a great talk.

Annual River Festival -- Friday September 27th.

Great event for every age. Many exhibits and displays from environmental groups around our region. Mark your calendar and plan to attend. And come by the River Center where OPAS folks will be presenting bird exhibits.

Bird Sightings

By Bob Boekelheide



It was another beautiful summer on the north Olympic Peninsula. We had the most pleasant July and August in all of North America, with few days reaching above 75 degrees F. It's not good for tomatoes, but it's really great for air conditioning bills. Despite the cool temperatures, local rivers and creeks still suffered from low stream flows, a holdover from low snowpack last winter and spring. Scattered rainstorms in July and August may have helped forests from drying out too much, so we escaped with fewer forest fires and no horrible smoke like last summer. Local nesting birds appeared to have done reasonably well, but, as is typical during the dry days of August, songbirds dispersed widely in pursuit of food. Poof - they're gone!

The migration floodgates opened wide on clear nights in late August, particularly for insectivorous birds heading to the tropics for the winter. They'll really take off in September, so if you have a chance get out right now and find flocks of warblers, vireos, tanagers, flycatchers, thrushes, and other Neotropical migrants. For many species, this is your last chance to see them until next spring.

Greater White-fronted Geese are already heading south along the outer coast, including 45 seen on 8/18 off Cape

Alava by Liam Waters, Jonathan Eckerson, and Evan Lipton. Among other waterfowl, one lone male Black Scoter apparently remained behind this summer in the offshore waters near the base of Dungeness Spit, first seen by Jeffrey Roth on 7/28, then by the OPAS field trip on 8/9, then by Bob Boekelheide on 8/25. At least a couple female-type Red-breasted Mergansers also stayed for the summer, seen in Dungeness Bay between 7/5 and 8/10. Red-breasted Mergansers become flightless during wing molt in summer, so the one seen flying by the Protection Island Aquatic Reserve survey on 8/20 apparently had already finished its molt.

Sue Nattinger found 2 Northern Bobwhites on 8/21 at their accustomed spot at Wasankari Road, where Judi White found one the next day. As Sue wrote about these birds, they are "continuing from accidental release," in reference to their escape during last February's snowstorm. An even more bizarre chicken story was one Chukar seen by Carol Strohmeier on 7/9 in her yard in east Port Angeles. Who is raising and releasing Chukars?

A post-breeding adult Pacific Golden-Plover in heavy molt appeared with Black-bellieds at Dungeness Bay, first seen by Bob Boekelheide on 8/8, then by several others all the way to the end of August. On 8/11, Carolyn Wilcox and Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin spotted another molting adult Pacific G-P at Ediz Hook, where it was seen by several others as well. Then, on 8/26 and also at Ediz Hook, Carolyn and Lindsey found not only the adult Pacific G-P, but also a juvenile accompanying it. That same day Bob Boekelheide found at least one and possibly two juvenile Pacific G-Ps at Dungeness Bay. This makes five and possibly more Pacific G-Ps visiting our area in the last month.



Wandering Tattler
Photo by John Gatchet

In other shorebird news, John Gatchet spotted two wonderful Wandering Tattlers at Gardiner Beach on 8/18, where they fed for awhile on the rocks before they flew toward Diamond Point. John says the tattlers are species number 200 for his Gardiner yard list. Congratulations, John! He also has the high count of Baird's Sandpipers for this summer, with 6 at 3 Crabs on 7/16 & 7/18. John spotted a Wilson's Phalarope at the Diamond Point lagoon on 8/11, apparently the first for Clallam for the year. There were at least 225 Red-necked Phalaropes seen by the Protection Island Aquatic Reserve survey in the Strait of Juan de Fuca on 8/20. Bob Boekelheide spotted an adult Red Knot in fancy breeding plumage at Dungeness Bay on 7/11, where another (possibly the same) occurred on 7/19. Bob then found four juvenile Red Knots at 3 Crabs on 8/17. Don and Joanne Normandin discovered a juvenile Willet at Neah Bay on 8/19, right where the OPAS field trip led by John Gatchet also found one on 8/25. It was a good summer for Semipalmated Sandpipers. The high count was 15 observed by Bob Boekelheide on the 3 Crabs mudflat on 7/6, but single birds hung around the mouth of Meadowbrook Creek between 7/2-7/13 and 8/7-8/23. The forlorn Hudsonian Godwit with its broken right leg, first discovered in Dungeness Bay on 6/24, was last seen there on 7/12.

A birding group from Atlanta, GA, led by Vinod Babu, spotted a juvenile Solitary Sandpiper feeding in the Dungeness River at RR Bridge Park on 8/7, where the Wednesday morning bird walk found it the next day. Tom and Connie Unsicker found another Solitary Sandpiper at Pitship Pocket Estuary on 8/14.

Alethea Leddy, a naturalist on whale-watching trips out of Port Angeles, photographed an adult Long-tailed Jaeger flying by their boat on 8/8. This El Nino year has been good for Brown Pelicans, not only on the outer coast near La Push, but also inside the Salish Sea. The Brown Pelican high count for Clallam County this summer was 110, seen at Second Beach on 8/4 by Daniel Horton. Cindy Fullwiler spotted 24 Brown Pelicans flying across Dungeness Bay on 7/16, then Ken and Mary Campbell spotted 2 pelicans off Ediz Hook on 7/28. American White Pelicans lurked at Whidbey Island through the summer, but few strayed further west. Eric Crocket spotted one white pelican at Port Townsend on 8/3.

A Green Heron visited Charlotte Watts on 8/8-9 at her Chicken Coop Hollow pond east of Sequim, the first Green Heron she has seen there. This is the time of year when Green Herons show up around the north Olympic Peninsula, likely post-breeding wanderings, so look for them.

(Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

This is also the time of year for Golden Eagle and Northern Goshawk sightings at Hurricane Ridge. There were at least seven eBird reports of Golden Eagles, ranging from 7/13 by John Gatchet and Bob Bagwell, to 8/20 by Dave Manson. The goshawk reports ranged from 8/3 by Katie Sorenson and Peter Olsoy at Deer Park, to single birds seen on 8/20 by Dave Manson and John Gatchet. In the lowlands, Cindy Fullwiler had the high count of 4 American Kestrels all together on 7/16, likely including fledglings from a local nest.

A single Osprey appeared at 3 Crabs on 7/9, first seen by Bob Boekelheide; then recorded by many people over several weeks. The Osprey occasionally landed on the Purple Martin nest pilings, causing the martins to dive bomb the Osprey to protect their nests. The Osprey often fished very close to shore, mostly catching flatfish and

munching them on nearby pilings. The Osprey sometimes mysteriously flew inland, seen carrying fish over the town of Dungeness and on 7/29 carrying a big stick towards the Schoolhouse Bridge. Then, even more mysterious, two Ospreys appeared together on 8/6 and 8/7, along with an even more mysterious count of 3 Ospreys by Susan Talburt on 8/6. On 8/5 another



*Osprey (Bombed by Purple Martin)
Photo by Bob Boekelheide*

Osprey appeared at Gardiner Beach, seen by Vinod Babu and his birding group. So what gives? Are all these Ospreys migrants, just showing up here on their way south? Might Ospreys return as a nesting species to the area? Ospreys nested in Sequim Bay as recently as 2006, then their nest blew down and eagles chased them away. It

would be remarkable if Ospreys could tolerate all the Bald Eagles around Dungeness Bay.

It's been a good year for Red-naped Sapsuckers. Vinod Babu and his Atlanta birding group discovered another Red-naped Sapsucker at Anderson Lake on 8/5. We have two reports of American Three-toed Woodpeckers. First, John Gatchet and Bob Bagwell found two Three-toeds together at Hurricane Ridge on 7/13, including at least one juvenile. Second, also on 7/13, Eli Gross discovered a male Three-toed in the subalpine forest above Deer Lake. Curiously, there were two reports of intergrade Northern Flickers about the same time, one on 7/10 in Forks by Kristen Johanson, and one on 7/12 at Hurricane Ridge by Carolyn Wilcox. In both cases, they assumed the birds were intergrades because they had red markings on their napes. One caution: local nesting Red-shafted Flickers may show red in their napes, so just having a red nape is not a sure sign it is an intergrade.

Michael Barry wins the coveted Vireo Award this summer. On 7/12 Michael found the only Red-eyed Vireo of the



*Clark's Nutcracker
Photo by Bob Boekelheide*

year for the north Olympic Peninsula, at Pysht. Then on 8/23 he found no less than 4 Cassin's Vireos while walking on DNR land at Lost Mountain.

The mountains are calling and I must go birding. Arjun Subramanian found 2 Clark's Nutcrackers along the Mount Townsend trail on 7/14. Kurtis Messingale reported

a family group of 5 nutcrackers near Marmot Pass on 8/20. John O'Brien found 3 Mountain Bluebirds along the Obstruction Point Road on 8/2. Could they possibly be nesting there? Nearby on the Obstruction Point Road, John Gatchet heard a Rock Wren singing on 7/13. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were singing all over the place -- on 7/2 at Moose Lake, found by Nicole Koeltzow and Suria Lejau, on 7/13 between Deer Lake and High Divide, seen by Eli Gross, and on 7/14 at Hurricane Ridge, seen by Cathy Reader. George Lynch, while staying at Lake Cres-



Lazuli Bunting
Photo by Bob Boekelheide

cent Lodge on 8/9-10, reports daily Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Obstruction Point Road was the place for Pine Grosbeaks, with 4 seen on 7/12 by Pete Walker and Judy White, and 2 on 8/20 seen by John Gatchet.

In the foothills, Bob Boekelheide discovered a striking male Lazuli Bunting on 7/4 singing in a regrowing clearcut south of the Dungeness Fish Hatchery. The bird remained for at least one day. Sue Nattinger reported a Palm Warbler singing at Onella Road on 7/15, a very strange place for a Palm Warbler in July.

At RR Bridge Park, there was a report of a Nashville Warbler on 8/4 and a Yellow-breasted Chat on 8/23. Unfortunately, neither report was very complete, leaving many questions about the birds' identities. The Wednesday morning bird walk at RR Bridge Park discovered a Hermit Warbler on 8/21 traveling with a flock of other birds. The warbler had the bright yellow face of a Hermit along with a white breast with no streaking, all good Hermit field

marks. But to complicate the issue, pure Hermits are much less likely on the north Olympic Peninsula than Her-



California Scrub Jay
Photo by Marie Grad

mit X Townsend Warbler hybrids. Even though the bird on 8/21 showed no hybrid field marks, could it possibly be a pure Hermit? There's no doubt about the California Scrub-Jay hanging out at RR Bridge Park this summer, usually by the Olympic Discovery Trail near Runnion Rd.

Summer is winding down and fall migration is here. During September you must be vigilant, watching closely for migrants. When you see something good, email Bob Boekelheide at bboek@olympus.net. Thank you very much for your sightings!

Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Present

20th Anniversary

BIRDFEST & BLUEGRASS
RIDGEFIELD WA

OCT 5 2019
SOME EVENTS & 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION ON OCT 4

RIDGEFIELD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE & DOWNTOWN RIDGEFIELD WA

Join us for a wonder-filled weekend exploring nature, wildlife and Chinookan culture!

Most events are FREE!

SANDHILL CRANE TOURS
Not regularly open to the public

AUDUBON WILD BIRDS OF PREY!

NATURALIST-LED HIKES
Birding, ethnobotany, geology, night hike, spotting scope & more

CHINOOKAN CULTURAL ACTIVITIES
at the Cathlapotle Plankhouse

KAYAK & BIG CANOE TOURS

BIRDERS' MARKETPLACE
Nature-inspired arts & crafts for sale

HANDS ON WORKSHOPS
Bird language, photography, watercolor, & kids activities

BLUEGRASS CONCERT
And Picker's Festival on Saturday!

WWW.RIDGEFIELDFRIENDS.ORG

Focus On Weasels, Otters, and their cousins local *Mustelids*



Presented by Ken Wiersema

Stealthy, carnivorous, playful, solitary hunters of our forests, coasts, and backyards. Come and better understand their lifestyle.



**Saturday, October 19th
10 a.m. - Noon
\$10 (\$5 Members)**

**For more info 360-681-4076
rceducation@olympus.net
www.dungenessrivercenter.org**

Harlequin Happenings

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society
P.O. Box 502
Sequim, WA 98382-0502



Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society

P.O. Box 502
Sequim, WA 98382-0502

NAS Code Y08

Date: _____

Local OPAS Membership, includes subscription to the *Harlequin Happenings* bi-monthly newsletter and other programs and birding trips. For more information see our website at <http://www.olybird.org>. To join, complete application below and **mail to address above**.

___ Annual Membership (\$20.00) ___ 3 Year Membership (\$50.00, saves \$10.00)
___ 6 Year Membership (\$90.00, saves \$30) ___ Lifetime Membership (\$250.00)

Name _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Street _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Email _____

Harlequin Happenings Newsletter: You will receive an e-mail notice when posted in full color on our website. If you wish a black and white printed copy instead, check box here: Send printed copy

Payment Options:

1. **Credit Card** Master Card or Visa Payment

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date _____

Authorized Signature _____ Amount Paid \$ _____

Three digit Security Code from back of card _____

2. **For Checks:** Make payable to OPAS and mail with this form to address above

OPAS is an Internal Revenue Service Section 501(c)(3) organization (membership gifts are tax deductible)

For OFFICE USE ONLY Process Date _____ Record ID _____ Forms Note ID _____