



# HARLEQUIN HAPPENINGS

Newsletter of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS)

[www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org](http://www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org) ([www.olybird.org](http://www.olybird.org))

Clallam County, Washington

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

Issue 2 Mar-Apr, 2019

*"Volunteer educators and stewards for birds and habitat conservation"*

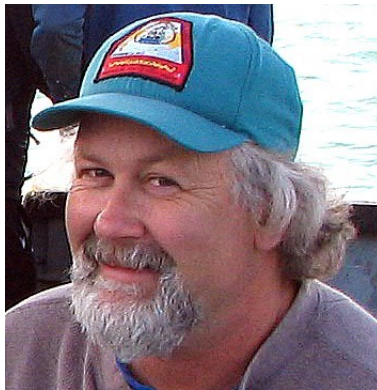
## OPAS Programs for March and April

by Bob Boekelheide & Marie Grad

### March 20, 2019 Program

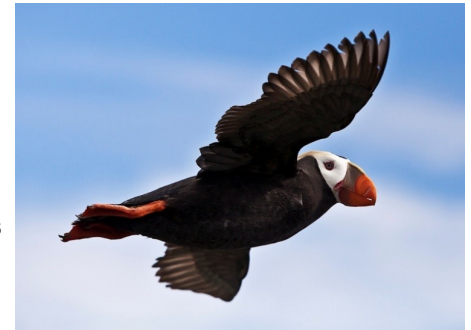
**"The Private Aleutian World of Tufted Puffins"** Presented by John Piatt and Ajay Varma.  
Dungeness River Audubon Center, 2151 Hendrickson Road, Sequim WA at 7 p.m.

Dr. John Piatt, a world expert on puffins, has spent nearly 40 years studying these iconic seabirds in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. His work at the Aleutians focused on the food of puffins, using them as indicators of ocean health. He particularly ponders the question: How have human activities impacted Pacific puffin populations?



Dr. John Piatt

photographer from Washington State. Their presentation combines John's knowledge of seabirds with Ajay's amazing photographs, showing the private lives of puffins along with spectacular landscapes of a world where few of us will ever visit.



Tufted Puffin  
Photo by Ajay Varma

### April 17, 2019 Program

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

**"What do you do when you find two old elephant tusks in your front yard?"** Presented by Clare Manis Hatler

In 1977, Manny Manis unearthed some old tusks while digging with a backhoe in his Happy Valley pasture. What followed is the stuff of Sequim legend. For the next eight years Manny and Clare opened their home to archeologists and the public, showcasing remarkable evidence that humans hunted and lived in the Sequim area 13,800 years ago.



Clare Manis Hatler

Through her involvement with this project, Clare has become a real expert on mastodons. She will tell her story about how the late archeologist Dr Carl Gustafson provided evidence that humans hunted mastodons  
(Continued on page 3)



Ajay Varma

As John says, Tufted Puffins are cool birds, the James Dean of seabirds. Among the isolated volcanic Aleutian chain, Tufted Puffins gather in huge colonies numbering 100's of thousands of birds. In 2012, John traveled to the Aleutians with photographer Ajay Varma, a commercial

*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](mailto: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.

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## President's Notes

by Bob Phreaner



Snowbound. That is how we will remember this February in Clallam County.

Forty-nine intrepid OPAS members dug out of as much as 47 inches to attend the February 20th OPAS meeting, which featured the *Poetry In Motion: Swans of Sequim* video recently produced by John Gussman (check it out on [olybird.org](http://olybird.org) under Breaking News). Our speakers were Ken and Mary Campbell, who pursue their passion for wildlife photography the world over. When we are lucky enough to see their programs, it is one of the highlight of our OPAS calendar. They took us along to the Pantanal of Brazil to see close-up images of Jaguars, Caiman, Tapir, Ocelots, Giant River Otters, Giant Anteaters and hundreds of tropical birds. They told of conservation efforts to curtail the pet trade in parrots that has resulted in the rebound of the Hyacinth Macaw population. We saw Jabiru storks, five species of Kingfishers, many different woodpeckers and herons. A memorable event in a series of interesting programs arranged by our Vice-President (for life) Bob Boekelheide. I want to tell OPAS that Gary Bullock and Bob kept on birding through 20 inches of snow at RR Bridge Park on February 13th to maintain the streak of Wednesday morning walks.

On Saturday, February 23, Ken Wiersema presented his 18th annual Nest Box Building class for fifteen participants at the Audubon River Center. He was assisted by a cast of experienced nest box crafters including Gary Bullock, Diane Luoma, Dan Stahler, and myself, with Dennis Dickson maintaining order (in the court). Everyone went home with a new nest box ready to welcome returning swallows.

Looking forward to Spring, in Clallam County that means the Olympic Birdfest, (April 9-16), see [olympicbirdfest.org](http://olympicbirdfest.org) for information on field trips and new events. Professor John Marzluff is our Birdfest banquet speaker. His recent *Welcome to Subirdia: Sharing Our Neighborhoods with Wrens, Robins, Woodpeckers and Other Wildlife* is Ken Wiersema's book-of-the-month selection for the OPAS Book Club, which will meet on March 26th at the Audubon River Center. As I read this book, I was surprised by the biological diversity of our sprawling cities, and motivated to support our OPAS mission of being stewards for birds and the habitat we share in Clallam County. Speaking of stewardship, Monday, April 22, marks the 48th Earth Day, and the theme is "Protect Our Species".

## Hear Ye!

**Birdfest 2019 cometh!**  
**Register now at**  
**[www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org)**

## OPAS Programs for March and April

(Continued from page one)

and other animals at the site, rewriting the history of humans in the Americas. Clare will also describe a new research collection at the Washington State History Museum that preserves items from the Manis Mastodon site for future study by research scientists.

## OPAS Field Trips in March and April

by Judith White

### Wednesday Bird Walks

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

*Meeting Place:* Outside the Dungeness River Audubon Center

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

### John Wayne Marina

*Date and Time:* Sunday, March 17, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

*Leader:* John Gatchet

*Cost:* Free

*Meeting Place:* Southeast parking lot (where the creek flows into Sequim Bay)

*Features:* Shorebirds, waterfowl, gulls, and land birds are all found in this location where 182 bird species have been recorded. There will be minimal walking on level surfaces as we explore this small area. Restrooms are available.

*Bring:* Optics (scope if you have one), appropriate clothing, and comfortable footwear.

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

### Beginners and Newcomers Bird Walk - Spring Season

*Date and Time:* Saturday, March 23, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

*Leader:* Stacey Fradkin

*Cost:* Free

*Meeting Place:* Dungeness River Audubon Center at Railroad Bridge Park.

*Features:* Introduction to birds arriving in the area and commonly found in spring at feeders in Sequim, bird feeding tips, opportunity to discuss other places in Sequim to see birds. Trail is paved and appropriate for those with limited mobility.

*Bring:* Binoculars if you have them; some may be available to borrow.

*Further Information:* Contact Stacey Fradkin, fstacey@msn.com

### Birdathon Warm-up Field Trip

*Date and Time:* Saturday, May 4 at 8:30 a.m.

*Leader:* Bob Boekelheide

*Meeting Place:* Railroad Bridge Park at 8:30 a.m.; Dungeness Landing Park at 11 a.m.

*Features:* Prepare for Birdathon with a warm-up field trip, starting at Railroad Bridge Park at 8:30 a.m. for songbirds, followed by Dungeness Landing Park, meeting at 11 a.m. for waterbirds. There's an incoming tide through late morning and afternoon that will hopefully bring shorebirds into view. Bring scopes if you have them. Railroad Bridge Park has a paved accessible trail for walking. Dungeness Landing Park has a covered viewing platform, rest rooms, and paved parking lot (minimal walking may be involved on uneven surfaces adjacent to the parking lot).

*Further information:* Contact Bob Boekelheide <bboek@Olympus.net> 360 808-0196.

## Other Events

### SAVE THE DATE: Olympic Birdfest, April 12-14, 2019.

Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction, raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: John Marzluff, professor of wildlife science at the University of Washington and author. Join our festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 9-11, 2019 or extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 14-16, 2019: three days exploring northwest coastal Washington. To learn more and register, visit [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org).

Olympic Peninsula April 12-14, 2019  
**BirdFest**  
 Come bird with us!

- ▣ San Juan Island Cruise
- ▣ Neah Bay Birding Excursion
- ▣ Guided Birding Trips
- ▣ Bird Art Classes
- ▣ Photography Workshop
- ▣ NAS Photography Exhibit
- ▣ Auction & Raffle
- ▣ Gala Banquet with Speaker: John Marzluff

Located in Sequim, WA  
 For more information:  
[www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org)  
[info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org)  
 or 360-681-4076

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society | JAMESTOWN SKALLAM TRIBE | KAWAHELLI GRILL | DUNGENESS RIVER Audubon CENTER at Railroad Bridge Park | First Federal | FUNDRAISER



## Harlequin Happenings

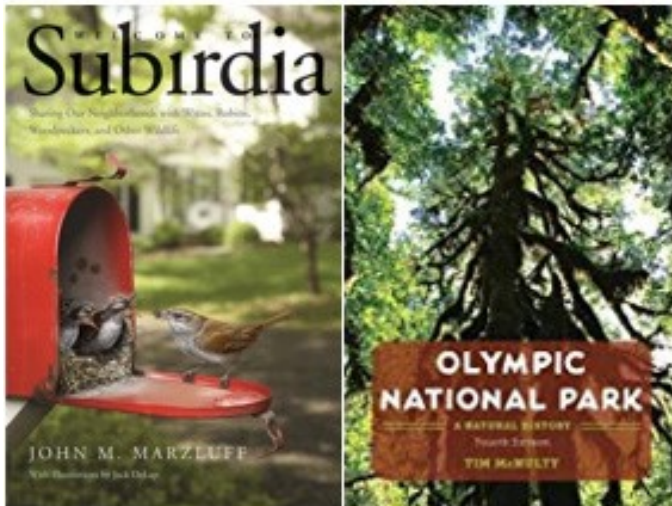
### OPAS Book Discussion Group

Our monthly book discussion group meets from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. at the Dungeness River Audubon Center (DRAC). Links to the currently scheduled titles, book summaries, and discussion questions will be posted at [olympicaudubonsociety.org](http://olympicaudubonsociety.org), under Events > Book Group.

Upcoming book selections include:

**March 26, *Welcome to Subirdia***, Come join discussion leader Ken Wiersema for a discussion of this fascinating book by 2019 Olympic Peninsula BirdFest Keynote Speaker John Marzluff. Dr. Marzluff's BirdFest keynote speech is titled "Subirdia", so this is a great opportunity to preview the topic and perhaps frame some questions for the speaker. *Welcome to Subirdia* presents a surprising discovery: the suburbs of many large cities support incredible biological diversity. Populations and communities of a great variety of birds, as well as other creatures, are adapting to the conditions of our increasingly developed world. In this book, John Marzluff reveals how our own actions affect the birds and animals that live in our cities and towns, and he provides ten specific strategies everyone can use to make human environments friendlier for wildlife.

**April 23, *Olympic National Park: A Natural History***, Tim McNulty, 2018, 352 pp. Discussion Facilitator: Tim McNulty (author).



### Birds and Beverages

An informal gathering of birders of all abilities. If you want to meet new OPAS members and interested area residents, you're invited to share your favorite spots, share bird photography tips, discuss research you may be working on - the sky's the limit. Birds and Beverages is low key and it's fun. Gather at Wind Rose Cellars, 143 W. Washington St. in Sequim at 4 p.m.

on the second Tuesday of each month (March 12 and April 9). Beer, wine, non-alcoholic beverages, and snacks are available for purchase.

## Conservation Matters: OPAS Swan Study Update

by Laura Davis and Liam Antrim

By the end of March, the Dungeness Delta will be bidding farewell to the last of our winter-resident Trumpeter Swans, and so we reflect here on the study year in progress.

Drawn by the swans' magnificence and grace, in the context of beautiful agricultural habitats, wetlands, geese, and other birds, volunteers have generously committed their time to this OPAS community-science project. We were fortunate to have a dedicated group of 24 trained and experienced volunteers returning this year; half in their second season and several in their eighth. Counting Trumpeters and also watching for their smaller relatives, the Tundra Swans, we survey extensively from Three Crabs south to Happy Valley, from Port Williams to Agnew. Every week from November through March, two teams count simultaneously at midday – one west of the Dungeness River and one east.

Why study these swans? Mortality due to lead poisoning sparked the study in 2011. We watch for sick, injured or dead swans for rescue or necropsy. Currently, the largest local hazard is collision with live power lines. Ongoing concerns also include the swans finding suitable habitat for their foraging activities without causing significant economic damage to our working landscapes. Problems are reported and data submitted to the state's Priority Habitat and Species database and shared with Martha Jordan of the Northwest Swan Conservation Association (425-787-0258) and Shelly Ament, our local Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife agent.

This year, we took on two additional areas of study: 1) where are the swans roosting at night? and 2) where are the swans at risk from power lines?

**Roosting.** The swans move from field to field during the day, and then fly to separate locations suitable for night-time use – typically open water. Arriving after sunset, they leave for forage locations soon after sunrise. For our roosting surveys, a small but determined group of volunteers worked in the challenging light conditions and blustery weather of December and January dusk and dawn. We found the swans using Roberta's Pond, Kirner Pond, wetlands at Graysmarsh, and a pond west of the Olympic Game Farm. One late January afternoon, Laura nearly rolled away like a tumbleweed in the 48 mph gusts, as she tried to focus on the poorly illuminated swans landing on

the murky surroundings at Roberta's Pond. The next morning, the team found a dead swan off Clark Road – apparently having collided with power lines as it flew toward a night roost.

**Power lines.** Over the past six years, swan casualties from wire strikes in our area have mostly occurred in low visibility conditions like winter fog. For well over a month this winter, Bob Phreaner studied the swans' success in clearing the power lines near Kirner Pond by counting and filming birds most mornings at dawn. Apart from one collision without injury, the new reflectors seem to help prevent collisions.



Flappers on power lines at Kirner Pond help the swans avoid collisions.  
Photo by Bob Phreaner

**Habitat.** While it's a challenge to find all the night-roosting spots used by the swans, the task is easier in the light of day; however, questions still remain. Week by week, where do we find them? Do they prefer a harvested corn field, pasture, a carrot field or winter crop? Does swan distribution in our area shift as the available forage changes over the winter, and is this forage also important to others? You may know that Trumpeter swans love carrots and gulp them whole straight from the field. Nash's Organic Produce has shifted its carrot harvest practices, and to minimize crop loss pulls them all in the fall when the swans show up. Seed crops on Schmuck Road have required additional fencing and reflectors to deter the swans' use. This February, a new challenge arose that clearly demonstrated the potential impacts of habitat loss – in this case, a temporary one. During our week of snow, Dungeness Valley swans largely abandoned pasture locations covered by snow and descended on a few acres of winter plantings, picking brassica plants down to the nub and causing tens of thousands of dollars of crop damage, with slim hopes of recovery. From initial research, it seems that compensation to farmers is available for damage

from elk, deer or wolves, and from natural disasters – but not from migratory waterfowl.

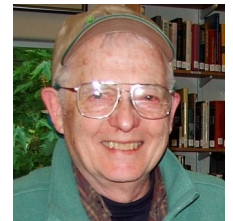
With one February survey and the month of March remaining, we have been seeing about 164 swans per week, however numbers often peak in late February and early March. Although our weekly counts are not reported online, eBird is a good website for following their migration north. Ahead lies data analysis, then sharing further the patterns meaningful for habitat protection in the context of complementary and competing human uses.

Finally, if you haven't seen John Gussman's recent video showcasing the wondrous beauty of our local swans near Schmuck Road, please follow link: [vimeo.com/312860698](https://vimeo.com/312860698). Truly magnificent.

## Education Notes

### Mar- Apr 2019

By Ken Wiersema



Hectic winter! Several events for February were postponed and rescheduled due to weather and the eradication of the beetles at the Center. So there has been some schedule compression. Always check our OPAS website or Facebook page for last minute rescheduling. Jenna's Raccoon program has been rescheduled twice. Join her for a "Focus on" program on Mar 16<sup>th</sup>! See the poster at the end of this newsletter.

### Backyard birding programs offered – at the Dungeness River Audubon Center at 10 a.m.

**March 2<sup>d</sup>** -- The sixth in the 2018-2019 series will be **Birds: The Inside Story -Bird Anatomy and Biology** - presented by Shirley Anderson and Ken Wiersema. This seminar features the physical composition and biology of birds -- how they eat, digest, breathe, sing, reproduce, and fly. You'll learn from displays of bird skeletons, bones, feathers, and feet along with new graphic illustrations and recorded sounds. Join us to increase your understanding and enjoyment of our local feathered friends!

**April 6<sup>th</sup>** – The seventh in the series will be **Migration** presented by Tomás Setubal, aquatic ecologist for Olympic National Park. Tomás will lead a discussion on the incredible phenomenon of migration and the mechanisms that govern the mass movement of avian species worldwide. He will emphasize the bird species seen in Clallam County, which provides an important component of the Pacific Flyway's migration route. He will discuss the arrivals and departures of key species, *(Continued on next page)*

## Harlequin Happenings

why our varied habitats are important, and why migration is inherent to the health and sustainability of bird populations.

Tomás was born on the bountiful tidelands of Puget Sound, and lived his early years in Brazil. He later returned to the United States, specifically Virginia, where he took up birding. At college in Wisconsin, he focused his undergraduate studies in the field of ornithology. During his professional career, he has worked as a field biologist on numerous ornithology projects in Ecuador, Brazil, California, and Washington State. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from a local expert about the fascinating phenomenon of bird migration.

### Jamestown S'Klallam Speaker Series (new for 2019)

*Where:* Dungeness River Audubon Center.

*When:* Programs start at 5:30 p.m.

*Cost:* Free; preregistration not required.

*Features:* Dungeness River Audubon Center and OPAS are proud partners with The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. Known as 'the Strong People' the S'Klallams created a rich culture of art, spirituality, traditional knowledge, and self-reliance that continues today. In honor of Jamestown S'Klallam Recognition Day on February 11th, we dedicated the month of February to learning about the people who have lived and prospered on the Olympic Peninsula for more than 10,000 years. S'Klallam's rich culture is interdependent with the abundant natural resources of the Northwest Coast -- a predominate resource being the Western Red Cedar tree. This series takes a deeper look at the Tribe's deep connection with "The Tree of Life." [Note: 2 of these Feb programs were rescheduled into March due to the beetle eradication, and weather.]

**Friday, March 1st:** "Western Red Cedar: Importance to Salmon", presented by Robert Knapp, Environmental Planning Program Manager (rescheduled from Feb 1<sup>st</sup>).

**Friday, March 8th:** "Historical Relationships Between S'Klallam People and Cedar", presented by David Brownell, Cultural Resources Specialist (rescheduled from Feb 15<sup>th</sup>).

### Flowers of the Olympic Peninsula

*Where:* Meet at Dungeness River Audubon Center at 9 a.m. and (strive to) return by 3 p.m.

*When:* Sign up for either the Tuesday or Wednesday class.

*Leader:* John Bridge

*Features:* Always popular Spring events, join John Bridge on a search for wild treasures. Take a look at flowers from low elevation riparian forests, up into the alpine.

*More information:* Email or call: Jenna Ziogas

<rceducation@olympus.net> or phone (360) 681- 4076 for

info and signups.

*Schedule of classes:*

>April 16th or 17th - Dungeness Forks and Graywolf River Outlook

>May 14th or 15th - Fish Hatchery and Graywolf River Outlook

>June 11th or 12th - Deer Park

>July 9th or 10th - Eagle Point

## Bird Sightings

by Bob Boekelheide



Are you tired of snow yet? February storms really smacked the Pacific Coast, with record snowfall in many areas. Cold air rushed down the Fraser River on Super Bowl Sunday like blitzing defensive ends, pushing aside the offensive line and gang-tackling the poor quarterback, namely Clallam County. The biggest dump on Feb 8-9 dropped one to three feet of snow throughout the north Olympic lowlands and much more in the foothills and mountains. Latest to be hit are Oregon and Northern California with huge snowstorms and flooded rivers. Unseasonably cold air continues well into March, with air temperatures 10 degrees or more below average.

Ironically, January weather was just the opposite -- warm and mild. In Sequim, high temperatures reached 50 degrees or higher on 10 days in January, and no high temperatures in January were below 43 degrees. In contrast, 12 days in February never warmed above the 30s, and the coldest day, 2/4, only reached a high of 28 degrees. And that's just in Sequim. If you live in the foothills or in the frost pockets west of Port Angeles, it's not over yet. We will remember this February for a long time.

How do birds handle the cold weather? Migrant species currently making their way north through storm-ravaged California and Oregon may be in big trouble. Undoubtedly some don't make it, but birds are remarkably resilient as long as they can find food. Flocks of small forest birds at RR Bridge Park have been relatively small this winter, particularly kinglet flocks, whether it's cold or not.

Despite the weather, early nesting species like Anna's Hummingbirds are displaying on territories like usual; some may already be incubating eggs. Established Bald Eagle pairs with well-built nests look like they will start laying eggs any day. If you live near an eagle's nest or regularly see one, please keep track of major events at the nest this year, such as when



the female first sits in the nest, when the chick(s) is visible in the nest, and when the chick(s) leaves the nest.

Despite the snow, some birds with "snow" in their names did not visit this winter, as far as we know. The last big Snowy Owl invasion was in 2011 and 2012, so we are overdue for their next irruption. As Michael Barry points out, Snowy Owl populations world-wide appear to be much lower than we thought, although it's very difficult to census this nomadic lemming specialist. Snow Buntings similarly did not show up this winter.

One other "snow" bird, Snow Goose, has shown up throughout western WA in good numbers this winter. Following Snow Goose sightings here in December, a mysterious flock of 7 juvenile Snow Geese has been wandering around Port Angeles and Dungeness through January and February. Alan Selig recorded 7 on the west side of PA on 1/1, then Iris Winslow found them at Civic Field on 1/6, Missy Baker recorded them at Port Angeles High School on 1/7, and Roger Hoffman found them at Lincoln Park on 1/10. Then, in February Bob Phreaner and John Gatchet spotted 7 juveniles in west Dungeness on 2/17 and Bob Boekelheide spotted 7 juveniles swimming in Dungeness Bay on 2/23 and 2/25. Are they all the same birds? Maybe so. Where will they go next?

In other waterfowl news, a flashy male Cinnamon Teal is hanging out in the Towne Rd marsh, first seen by Bob Boekelheide on 1/7, then by Bruce Paige on 1/22, then again by Bob on 2/17.



*Willet & Marbled Godwit*  
Photo by Dow Lambert

The wintering Willet remains in Dungeness Bay, the fourth winter in a row that one wintering Willet has remained in Dungeness Bay. Same bird? Maybe so. Four Marbled

Godwits hung out with the Willet through January, but there have been no sightings of godwits in February. There were two sightings of Spotted Sandpipers, one seen by Laurie S at the Elwha River on 1/21 and one seen by Bruce Paige at the north beach of Miller Peninsula on 1/27. Bruce also spotted the only local Glaucous Gull of the period, at Port Williams on 2/18.

On 1/27 Kevin Metcalf reported an Arctic Loon at Neah Bay, in the area where Michael Barry first found one in December. Was it the same bird? Maybe so. At least one Yellow-billed Loon continued in Port Angeles harbor after the PACBC, last seen 1/1 by Bob & Leslie Bagwell. Sierra and Scott Downes reported another YB Loon at Port Williams on 1/21, seen there again by Richard Holcomb and Karen Wosilait on 1/25.



*Yellow-billed Loon*  
Photo by Bob Boekelheide

During the OPAS field trip led by Judy Mullally to Ediz Hook on 1/26, we spotted a Common Murre in the harbor with a bright yellow bill instead of the normal dark bill. The bird really stuck out, looking like it had a little yellow banana stuck out of its face. Its plumage otherwise looked normal, except possibly a little lighter than usual. There is a similar report of a yellow-billed murre at a nesting colony in Norway in 2008.

Very soon migrant Turkey Vultures will return to the Pacific Northwest, but apparently one never left. Doug Schmidt spotted a TV flying low over the Pysht River on 1/13, then Gloria, Aaron, and Stan Beerman spotted another sitting in a tree outside Clallam Bay on 1/20. Same bird? Maybe so. Susan Savage reported 2 Swainson's Hawks at the  
*(Continued on next page)*

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Dungeness Rec Area on 1/7, but winter Swainson's Hawk records are very tough to prove, since most of them are in South America right now. We need a photo! The gray-phase immature Gyrfalcon first discovered on the Sequim-Dungeness CBC continues to be seen in the area.

Judi White found a California Scrub-Jay on 12/30 sitting in a tree near Carlsborg Road and Jake Way, the same area where scrub-jays have been seen over the last three years. Scrub-jays continue to increase up the I5 corridor, so expect more here as well.

The curious case of winter Barn Swallows continued this year. On 1/26, Bob Boekelheide spotted one Barn Swallow flying over the west side of the Dungeness River delta, showing its long forked tail and dark back. Just two days later on 1/28, Bruce Paige found five Barn Swallows foraging over a pond by the Elwha River mouth. As I write this there are still no local sightings of either Violet-green or Tree Swallows, although they have been reported elsewhere in western WA. Perhaps you can win the coveted First Swallow Award!

Speaking of first arrivals, Rufous Hummingbirds will return this month, once again challenging Anna's Hummingbirds at your feeders. Who will win the coveted First Rufous Award? Likewise, Band-tailed Pigeons are winging their way north. Who will win the coveted First Band-tailed Pigeon award? Will the cold weather slow them in their tracks? Please send me your first sightings.

Winter is the time of year that twitterpated American Dippers set up nest sites. The Wednesday morning bird walk at RR Bridge Park watched some serious Dipper-love, as a



*Swamp Sparrow*  
Photo by Bob Boekelheide

pair sang, chortled, and chased each other up and down the river. Patti Gotz also had Dippers visiting her home west of Port Angeles in early January, saying "they're fun to watch."

The best sparrow news this month is the American Tree Sparrow staying for the winter at Sue Nattinger and Coleman Byrnes' feeder in Joyce. It first appeared around Christmas and last reported by Sue on 2/18. The rush of Swamp Sparrows in December has slowed down, with only one reported by Cara Borre at Neah Bay on 2/16.



*Palm Warbler*  
Photo by Bob Boekelheide

The impressive fall rush of Palm Warblers in Clallam continued through January. The PACBC on 12/19 unfortunately missed the Palm Warblers at Ediz Hook, but Scott Gremel found one there on 1/6. A Palm Warbler visited John Gatchet's neighborhood in Gardiner for several days in mid-January, seen by several people. At least two Palm Warblers remained around 3 Crabs in mid-January, seen between 1/14-18 by several people. Lastly, three Palm Warblers popped up at the West End on 1/20, two at Hobuck Beach reported by Gloria Beerman, and one at Ba'adah Village reported by Scott and Sierra Downes. John Gatchet also reported a very unusual winter Nashville Warbler on 1/9 at Francis Street Park in Port Angeles.

Lastly, Bob Bagwell reported an out-of-season Yellow-headed Blackbird perched on the power lines at Helen's Pond on 1/12, last in line with other blackbirds.

Spring is sprung (well, almost). Be on the lookout for early first arrivals, particularly Turkey Vultures, Rufous Hummers, Band-tailed Pigeons, and swallows. Hopefully warmer weather is right around the corner and spring arrivals



are on their way. Please call Bob Boekelheide at 360-808-0196 or email at [bboek@olympus.net](mailto:bboek@olympus.net) if a different bird comes to visit.

## PACBC Report

By Barb Blackie

Barb Blackie, compiler of the Port Angeles Christmas Bird Count, reports that 43 stalwart counters tallied 108 bird species on 12/29/18, along with four more count-week species. The low species count was mostly due to heavy rain and blustery winds much of the day. The government shut-down didn't help either, preventing any tallies inside Olympic National Park. One new species for the count included a Yellow-billed Loon at Ediz Hook. A remarkable 96 Wood Ducks mostly flocked at Arnold and Debbie Schouten's ponds on the west side of P.A. The species with the highest overall count was Common Murre, and the most abundant bird on land was Pine Siskin, followed by Dark-eyed Junco. Let's hope for better weather next year!

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Photo Credit: Ken & Mary Campbell

Saturday, March 16th  
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# Harlequin Happenings

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 502  
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## Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society

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