



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 2 Mar-Apr 2021

“Volunteer educators and stewards for birds and habitat conservation”

[Editor’s Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person OPAS activities have been postponed or canceled until further notice.]

OPAS Programs for March and April

By Tom Butler

Meetings will be held via Zoom. See insert later in this newsletter for registration information.

March Program

“Penguins In The Coal Mine”, presented by Dr. Ginger Rebstock, Caroline Cappello, and Katie Holt of the University of Washington, **Wednesday, March 17, at 7.00 p.m.**

Meeting held virtually via Zoom. Go to [Events Calendar](#) to register for this interesting program.

Just as canaries served as indicators of mine air quality, certain species of wildlife can alert us to important elements of environmental change. University of Washington research scientist Dr Ginger Rebstock, and PhD candidates Katie Holt and Caroline Cappello, will generously present their current research findings regarding various states of penguin ecology, including how changes in penguin body mass reflect changing oceanic conditions; breeding at Punta Tombo, the world’s largest Magellanic penguin breeding colony; and patterns of oceanic productivity and temperature that help explain penguin foraging and breeding behaviors.

Dr. Ginger Rebstock is a researcher in the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels at the University of Washington. She received her Ph.D. in biological oceanography from Scripps Institution of Oceanography in 2001. Ginger will introduce Magellanic penguins and one of their largest breeding colonies, Punta Tombo, Argentina. Dr. Dee Boersma, founder and director of the Center, has studied penguins at Punta Tombo since 1982, and Ginger has worked there since 2001. Ginger will describe the life history of Magellanic penguins, emphasizing what can only be learned through long-term study.



Dr. Ginger Rebstock



Caroline Cappello

Caroline Cappello is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Biology at the University of Washington. She has studied Magellanic and Galápagos penguins at the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels since 2014. Caroline will present work from her dissertation on the consequences of delayed breeding in

Magellanic penguins at Punta Tombo, Argentina. Chicks are hatching ca. 10 days later than they did in the 1980s, which may lead to a mismatch between chicks and their food source.

Katie Holt is in her third year of graduate study with her advisor, *(Continued on page three)*



Katie Holt

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.

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Interim President's Notes

by Ken Wiersema



As I watch my home weather station show winds gusting to over 40 mph, with a wind chill of 34°, it's hard to imagine that by the next time I compose these notes, we'll be in the midst of a wonderful PNW Spring. I watched an immature Northern Harrier out on the wind this afternoon, soaring over my pasture to find a meal, while I was composing this. --- Lots going on!

First, I want to welcome two new OPAS board members at large:

Dennis Dickson – longtime OPAS member, River Center volunteer, Past President of the River Center Board

Dee Renee Ericks – Retired National Parks Service (NPS), committed to the science of making our community Bird-Safe

Thank you both for joining our OPAS leader team



East Entrance, Dungeness River Audubon Center
Photo by Karl Ziegenbein

Construction is progressing well at the River Center addition. By mid-March the addition will be dried in and the interior rough-in work can continue unhindered. The Jamestown Tribal construction managers, Annette & Pete Nesse, Kirk Nelson, and Karl Ziegenbein, keep the project moving forward.

As you get to Railroad

Bridge Park this spring, take a look from the trail and watch our new building take shape. We will be arranging tours of the project later, at times where entry is safer and will not interfere with the construction. We're aiming to have at least parts of the building useable by this fall, given that COVID-19 conditions allow us in-person meetings again.

Your OPAS Swan team and Conservation Committee has been fully engaged these past 2 months in organizing both the fund raising and the planning for burying the PUD lines at the west end of Kirner Pond. We've had excellent support from the Clallam County PUD, the neighboring property owners, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. We've also had a new member, John Acklen, step forward and volunteer to be our OPAS lead for the project. He brings a career of experience working in the power distribution industry to our midst. Many thanks John! We are coordinating with the PUD and excavating contractor to do the project this summer so that when our over-wintering swans return next November, they will have a safe roosting pond. Please go to our OPAS web page to see the superb work Mary Porter-Solberg has accomplished to set up our Go-FundMe page, to accept your tax-deductible contributions. If you haven't donated yet, please consider it. Thanks.

Dee-Renee Ericks and other volunteers have been documenting bird injuries and deaths resulting from striking windows -- excellent research and commitment toward a safer bird community. We have recently reached out to Peninsula College leaders to work with us to make their campus more bird safe.

Time to renew your annual OPAS membership

Go online at:

[https://
olympicpeninsulaudubon.org/
membership](https://olympicpeninsulaudubon.org/membership)

I also want to note the start of a team in Port Angeles to collaborate with their school district to designate the Big Boy Pond wetlands and forest, adjacent to Stevens Middle School, as a natural learning area. OPAS members Carolyn Wilcox, Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin, and Tom Butler are helping develop this project.

And, today I saw comment by a young sailor who has just returned from 10 months at sea on the USS Nimitz. It reinforces to me why we OPAS folk are committed to doing right for our birds. Homeported in Bremerton, Washington, upon leaving the ship she vowed -- *"I will take a walk in the forest. I want to hear birds chirp. I want to smell flowers."*

And lots more happening! -- Stay engaged! Be safe and well! Get outside! -- Go Birding!

March OPAS Program

(Continued from page one)

Dr. Dee Boersma of the Center for Ecosystem Sentinels. She started working with the lab in 2015 as the lab manager and has spent four field seasons at the Punta Tombo, Argentina, breeding colony. One of her main roles in the lab is helping to maintain the automatic weigh scales that weigh penguins as they enter and exit the colony. She will be discussing a recent heat mortality event that occurred on the hottest day recorded since the study began in 1982.

April Program

"Of puffins and petrels: Conserving seabirds of the Salish Sea and Outer Coast of Washington", presented by Dr. Peter Hodum, Associate Professor in the Biology Department at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA.

Wednesday, April 21, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

Please visit the [Events Calendar](#) page of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society's webpage to register for this informative program.

Although Washington is blessed with a rich community of breeding and wintering seabirds, relatively little is known about the ecology and conservation status of many of the species, particularly the burrow-nesters. This relative lack of knowledge extends to iconic species such as the Tufted Puffin, a species recently listed as Endangered by Washington State. Moving between islands, seascapes, and species of the waters of Washington, Dr. Peter Hodum will share stories about a collaborative research program focused on improving our understanding of the ecology and conservation status of species such as the Tufted Puffin, Rhinoceros Auklet, Cassin's Auklet, and Leach's and Fork-tailed Storm Petrels.



Tufted Puffin
Photo by Dr. Peter Hodum

Dr. Peter Hodum is an associate professor in the Biology Department, and the Environmental Policy and Decision Making Program, at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, WA; as well as the Chile

Program Director for Oikonos Ecosystem Knowledge, a conservation non-profit organization. His research focuses primarily on the conservation and ecology of threatened seabirds and island ecosystems in Chile and Washington State. His work also has a strong focus on community-based conservation, including how communities can be more effectively and authentically involved in conservation.

OPAS Field Trips: A Message from the Field Trip Coordinator



By Marie Grad

As the Covid-19 Pandemic begins to slow, OPAS will be looking at restarting Field Trips. Until then don't let the lack of organized Field Trips keep you from getting out and birding. March and April are a time of transition here on the North Olympic Peninsula. Spring Migration is starting. Soon we will be saying goodbye to winter favorites like Golden-crowned Sparrows, Fox Sparrows and Trumpeter Swans. They will be replaced by Rufous Hummingbirds, White-crowned Sparrows, and flocks of Swallows, just to name a few.

For the next two months you can still see large flocks of wintering waterfowl and shorebirds at Dungeness Landing, Three Crabs and John Wayne Marina. Carrie Blake Park, Railroad Bridge Park, and the Dungeness Recreation Area are good places to look for migrating birds like warblers, hawks, and flycatchers. The next few months are an exciting time for bird-watchers. The weather will be improving, so get out and bird.

Conservation Matters: OPAS Swan Study Update

By Laura Davis and Liam Antrim

This has been an eventful OPAS swan season of reinforcing partnerships and focusing attention on critical investments in the future. As swan after swan was seen striking the power lines when departing the Kirner Pond roosting site, it was time to work decisively to get the power lines moved underground. We describe the Kirner Pond habitat and lay out the context of these power-line encounters on our olybird.org Community Science webpage. Below we share news from the busy survey season still underway, including positive partnerships with WDFW and our local farming community.



*A drone-mounted camera helps us count the swans at Gierin Marsh in February.
Photo by John Gussman*

Foraging survey – Swans arrived early to our area last autumn and our teams were excited to count 200 swans already by December. Now in the tenth year of OPAS swan-foraging surveys, no year has surpassed this one. This season's average weekly count will be about 180, whereas our average count had ranged from 57 to 94 for 2011–2016 and 128 to 143 swans for 2016–2020. These are mostly Trumpeter Swans. Many of you have seen the juvenile Tundra Swans this season – as well as a lively Sandhill Crane youngster in the mix. The Tundras' Western Population and the Trumpeters' Pacific Coast Population use the same stopover habitats while migrating along the Pacific Flyway. We expect the young Tundras will join up with their own species on their way north.

Roosting survey – Out before daybreak once each month, several teams simultaneously count swans at known roosting sites, record dawn takeoffs and track their direction – all while sharing observations by text message. We compare these data to the daytime surveys. Our group has followed usage at seven sites this season, but with just four roosting surveys per season, it is only a snapshot. Pat-



*We watch the seasonal changes in the wetland habitats west of the Olympic Game Farm, here in November.
Photo by John Gussman*

terns of usage and preferred usage by families are influenced by many factors including water level, forage opportunities, shelter, and disturbances like hunting activities. We can't see back into Gierin Marsh for accurate counts, so John Gussman deploys a drone to capture stills and video. His aerial photography improves the quality of our roosting surveys and increases understanding of the local wetland habitats used by swans.

Mid-winter survey – This year, we spread our wings wide for a mid-January survey extending from Port Townsend to Neah Bay. With a regional five-year Trumpeter Swan survey delayed until next year due to pandemic protocols, the WDFW Wildlife Section Manager and the Northwest Swan Conservation Association asked us to assist with their mid-January survey and broaden our typical reach. Including guest surveyors, our expanded team of 15 volunteers counted 298 swans (238 adults and 60 juveniles), scouting eleven locations from Port Townsend (0), Chimacum (83), Miller Peninsula (5), Sequim-Dungeness (200), Deer Park to Fairchild Airport (0), and Neah Bay (10).

Crop protection – Thanks to our farmers and the continued conservation of local agricultural landscapes, the swans can thrive in the Sequim-Dungeness landscape with a few ponds and brackish marshes, but otherwise scarce freshwater wetland habitat. Late in November, we helped WDFW protect a carrot harvest still underway near Ward Road by placing poles with mylar streamers around the field. A dense -enough matrix of this flagging can deter swans from landing, especially in combination with hazing. While swans are protected from disturbance by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, property owners are advised to use disturbance techniques such as hazing where swans are pests. These encourage the birds to move out of the area and avoid the field in the future. When the carrot harvest was complete, we removed the poles and flagging, and the swans foraged on that field for several weeks running.



Volunteers Pam Maurides, Enid Phreaner and Bob Phreaner tape mylar flagging onto fiberglass poles. These were placed in the carrot field at the end of November and removed a month later.
Photo by Laura Davis

We are grateful for the 26 volunteers, neighbors, friends and relatives that served our efforts this year. A special heartfelt thanks to the folks near Kirner Pond who have assisted with monitoring injured swans and those who are now helping OPAS realize the vision of the swans' safe return to Kirner Pond for generations to come. About 19% of the swans visiting our area this year are first-year birds; we expect these swans, their parents, elder siblings, and the next crop of juveniles will arrive at Kirner Pond next year to a site free of the hazardous overhead power lines.



Swans at dawn on Kirner Pond.
Photo by John Gussman

The season is drawing to a close and migration is "in the air". If you are watching when the conditions are right, you just might catch the last flights from the fields, over the bays, and across the Strait. The swan numbers typically dwindle to a handful by the end of March and we'll keep watch for stragglers into early April. Your postings on eBird always help guide us at the season's edges.

If you are interested in watching a roost site or reporting swans outside the Sequim–Dungeness Valley area, please contact us.

Great Backyard Bird Count Results, and Upcoming Clallam County Birdathon

By Bob Boekelheide



Congratulations and a big thank you to all birders who covered Clallam County during the Great Backyard Bird Count, held over President's Day Weekend. Needless to say, Clallam County did great, leading Washington State with a total tally of 141 species.

Clallam captured high counts in Washington for 23 species: Greater White-fronted Goose, Brant, Harlequin Duck, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Western Grebe, Rock Pigeon, Black-bellied Plover, Marbled Godwit, Pigeon Guillemot, Ancient Murrelet, Glaucous-winged Gull, Common Loon, Great Blue Heron, Bald Eagle, American Robin, Varied Thrush, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, and Brewer's Blackbird.

For the entire USA, Clallam had high counts for only two species: Ancient Murrelet and Varied Thrush. And for the entire world, Clallam had high count for only one species: Ancient Murrelet. Wahoo!

The next big tally of birds in Clallam County is the Spring Migratory Bird Count, aka Clallam County Birdathon, held on the second Saturday in May. This year Birdathon falls on Saturday, May 8th. This means that on May 8th you should go birding anywhere in Clallam County (anywhere that's open, that is), counting birds along the way. There will be more details in the next Harlequin Happenings, but right now get out your calendar and write in **BIRDATHON on May 8th**.

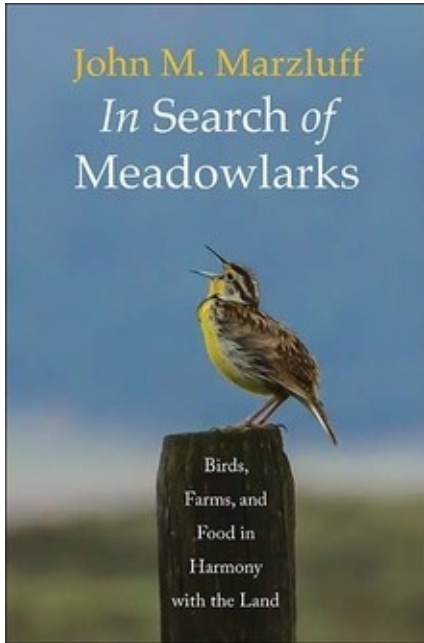
Book Discussion Group

The OPAS Book group will meet —virtually — at 4 p.m. on April 27, 2021. so please plan to participate and offer your thoughts on the relationship between sustainable agriculture and wild birds, as portrayed in John Marzluff's book. Ken Wiersema will moderate the session. Watch for online registration info on our OPAS web site.

April book selection — published in 2020: "In Search of Meadowlarks", by John Marzluff
An ornithologist's personal look at farming practices that find practical solutions for sustainable food production compatible with bird and wildlife conservation.

(Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings



With predictions of a human population of more than nine billion by the middle of this century, and eleven billion by 2100, we stand at a crossroads in our agricultural evolution. In this clear and engaging, yet scientifically rigorous book, wildlife biologist John M. Marzluff takes a personal approach to sustainable agriculture. He travels to farms and ranches across North and Central America, including a Nebraska

corn and soybean farm, California vineyards, cattle ranches in Montana, and small sustainable farms in Costa Rica, to understand the unique challenges and solutions to sustainable food production.

John M. Marzluff is Professor of Environmental and Forest Sciences at the University of Washington, and is the author or coauthor of several books, including *In the Company of Crows and Ravens*; *Dog Days, Raven Nights*; and *Welcome to Subirdia*.

A Swift Tale (Continued)

By Ken Wiersema

Our longtime OPAS members and supporters in Port Angeles, Arnold & Debbie Schouten, saw the article in our Nov-Dec Harlequin and asked me for a set of plans for the Vaux Swift chimney we'd installed in September. Since it was a first time build for my Sequim team, I'd worked from some photos of similar boxes used in Oregon and eastern WA. I did not have plans. I asked my grandson, who is an Aeronautics Engineering student at The University of Washington, and a whizz at Auto-cad, to take my photos and produce a set of plans. He did so on his Holiday break, and I sent them to Arnold. Then Dow Lambert and I did a site consult with Arnold and Debbie, and 3 weeks later --- a new Vaux Swift chimney appeared on the Port Angeles landscape. This new one is near where a

Vaux Swift nest was built in a residential chimney last year. So the chances for success are high.

Just wanted to let y'all know that us builders and engineers have a role to play among the ornithologists and birders who make up the larger component of OPAS. Great work Arnold and Debbie! Now, let's hope the Swifts use it this year!

Western Bluebird/ Climate Watch Update

By Joyce Volmut, Coordinator



The Climate Watch Survey took place from January 15-February 15. This was the first survey conducted during the pandemic. It was cancelled throughout all of 2020. Climate Watch guidelines include a five minute stationary watch in which all birds are counted. To date, only the target birds are mapped by the National Audubon Climate Watch Research Team. The goal is to plot wintering habits of this select group to determine how the changing climate might cause a shift in the species wintering behavior.

Fifty five species were reported during the five minute survey. Target Birds in the survey have remained the same since 2019. For our region, these include: the Spotted Towhee, the Western or Mountain Bluebird, the American Goldfinch and Lesser Goldfinch, and the Nuthatch species. Of the target birds reported there were:

- Red Breasted Nuthatch - 11
- Spotted Towhee - 23
- Western Bluebird - 36

These are the most Western Bluebirds reported during the Climate Watch Survey for our region.

Areas of concentration for Western Bluebird continue on the Miller Peninsula, where 9 individuals were reported, and between Port Angeles and Sequim, where 10 were reported. However, many of the reports this year came from areas not reporting in winter: Three Crabs, Heath Rd in Sequim, and in southeast Port Angeles near Peabody Creek.

The next Climate Watch Survey is scheduled in the spring from May 15 - June 15. As always in between surveys, if you see Western Bluebirds, please report them to Joyce Volmut



Photo by
Arnold and Debbie Schouten

(joyce.volmut@gmail.com). Western Bluebirds begin nesting around late March early April, so get your nest boxes ready.

Dungeness Data - The Story of Brant

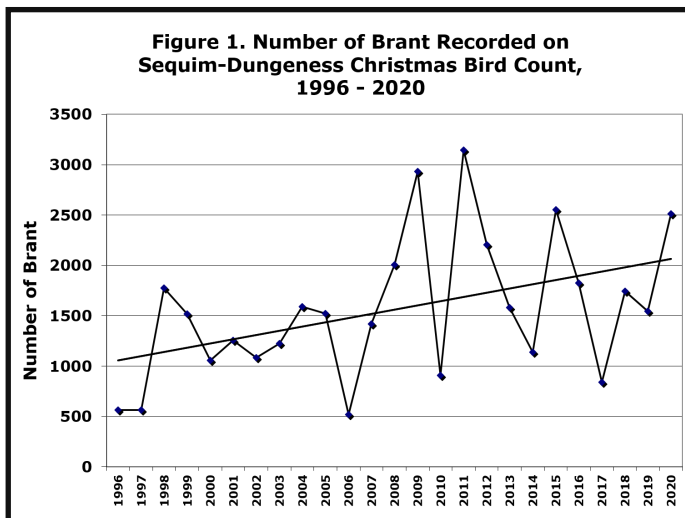
By Bob Boekelheide



(In place of the former Bird Sightings column, Bob is exploring data from OPAS Community-Science Projects. If you are interested in local bird sightings, check out eBird at <https://ebird.org/> explore, then under "Explore Regions" enter Clallam or Jefferson County. Add your own sightings, as well.)

Late winter is a critical time during the annual cycles of many birds. After surviving difficult conditions through a long winter, at some point birds must transition over to their need to prepare for the next nesting season. As winter turns to spring, they must fatten up for migration and undergo physiological changes that kick-start their bodies for reproduction.

It turns out that March and April are the peak time of year when we see Brant in coastal waters along the Strait of Juan de Fuca. We of course have Brant here throughout the winter, such as those we tally on the Sequim-Dungeness Christmas Bird Count (Figure 1), but their numbers swell in March and April as more arrive from wintering areas further south.



Picture the annual cycle of Brant in western North America. The great majority of the West Coast population nests at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in western Alaska, along with some on the North Slope of Alaska and even a few that nest way up in the Canadian Archipelago as far as

Prince Patrick Island. Prince Patrick Island is way up there. After their chicks leave the nest and grow stronger, adult Brant undergo a complete molt, in which they become flightless for a few weeks as they drop their old flight feathers and grow new ones. After molting, nearly all the West Coast Brant fly to a place called Izembek Lagoon near the tip of the Alaskan Peninsula, where they eat like mad and prepare for migration to their wintering areas.

The fall migration of Brant is truly incredible. More than half of the Alaskan population flies non-stop from the Alaskan Peninsula to winter in Baja California, at places like San Ignacio Lagoon. Brant have been reported covering this 3000-mi distance in as little as 55-60 hours, which means they fly an average of about 50 to 60 mph straight for almost three days. But some Brant do not fly all the way to Mexico. Some fly shorter distances to other locations on the West Coast, to places like Humboldt Bay and here in the Salish Sea. Apparently there is a trend for some Brant not to leave Alaska at all, instead remaining at Izembek Lagoon all winter.

After surviving the winter, most Brant make shorter flights during spring migration instead of one long one, stopping several times along the Pacific Coast on their way north. One of those sites is right here at Dungeness Bay, where the sound of their chatty voices increases in late winter. They voraciously feed at these locations, trying to keep their bodies in good shape for the upcoming nesting season.

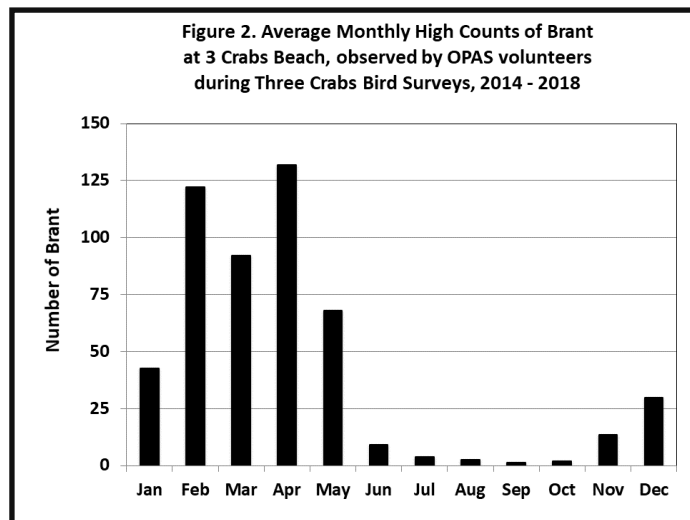
Like other geese, Brant are largely vegetarians. What makes Brant stand apart from the other geese, however, is their reliance on particular species of marine plants and algae for much of the year. Their principal food in non-breeding habitats is eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), along with sea lettuce (*Ulva*) and other algae. Maybe not coincidentally, their spring migration through the Salish Sea also coincides with the late-winter herring spawn, when herring attach their sticky eggs all over blades of eelgrass, algae, and other substrates. This means that Brant feeding at herring spawns might ingest a double dose not only of eelgrass but also of high-protein herring eggs.

These herring spawns are a big deal. I've been lucky to witness several herring spawns in California, Washington and British Columbia, where birds and marine mammals gather by the thousands to gobble up scrumptious herring roe and the fish themselves. One of the last great herring spawns in the Salish Sea occurs on the east side
(Continued on next page)

Harlequin Happenings

of Vancouver Island in the Strait of Georgia, ranging between Comox and Nanaimo. Right there in the thick of the feeding flocks are Brant, scouring the beaches and sandbars picking up eelgrass and attached herring eggs. The Canadians even have a Brant Festival at Parksville around this time, to celebrate their spring arrival. There used to be sizeable herring spawns in Dungeness, Sequim, and Discovery Bays, but according to the WDFW they are now tiny compared to their former selves.

As part of the Three Crabs Restoration Project, between 2014 and 2018 OPAS volunteers counted Brant and other birds three times each month within a specific area at Three Crabs beach. Figure 2 shows the annual cycle of Brant tallied on these surveys, based on the average high counts of Brant for each calendar month. You can see that our highest counts occurred from February to April, timed



to the window when Brant are migrating north to nesting areas. Most of the eelgrass that Brant eat at Three Crabs beach is already broken off from where it grows on the bottom of the bay, then it washes ashore in windrows on the beach. This gives the Brant a concentrated food source in shallow water right by the shore.

Here on the north Olympic Peninsula people typically see Brant feeding right on shore at places like Three Crabs, Jamestown, and Ediz Hook, but in reality Brant often feed quite a ways offshore on floating eelgrass and algae. As the tides move back and forth in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, tidal fronts and convergences concentrate floating mats of algae and eelgrass, providing feeding opportunities for Brant sometimes miles offshore. Since 2016, OPAS has cooperated with WA Dept. of Natural Resources and Port Townsend Marine Science Center to conduct monthly bird and mammal surveys in the Protection Island Aquatic Re-

serve, a 96 sq-km body of water surrounding Protection Island.

Figure 3 shows the annual cycle of Brant in the PI Aquatic Reserve, based on their densities recorded during these cruises. Once again, the highest densities of Brant in the PI Aquatic Reserve occur in March and April, the exact time that Brant migrate north. On these surveys we sometimes see long lines of Brant feeding up to 10 miles offshore, gobbling up eelgrass floating at the surface.

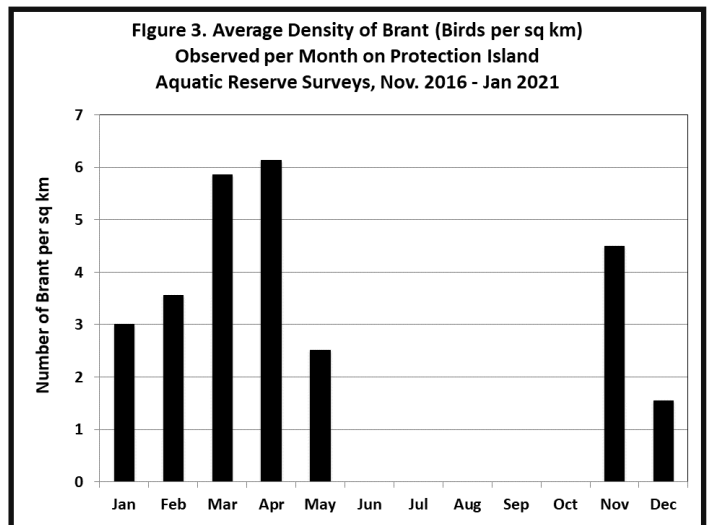


Figure 3 also shows an interesting pattern of higher densities offshore in November, then a drop in densities during December and January. Is this real? Researchers found a similar pattern at Padilla Bay, near Anacortes, WA, where they suggested that some Brant arriving in November used Padilla Bay to refuel, then continued migrating further south for December through February. This may also occur at Dungeness, although curiously the same pattern did not appear with the data from Three Crabs. Why not? It may be because daytime tides are so high throughout November and December that Brant are less likely to be onshore at Three Crabs beach in those months.

It's not uncommon to see Brant with leg bands in Dungeness Bay. During OPAS's Three Crabs study we found several banded Brant that we reported to the USGS Bird Banding Lab (see attached certificate). The banding reports revealed that researchers banded these Brant at two primary locations, either at the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta in western Alaska, or at the mouth of the Colville River on the North Slope. It's mind-boggling to imagine the vast territory covered by these Brant as they migrate back and forth to and from Alaska.



Brant with leg bands
 Photo by Bob Boekelheide

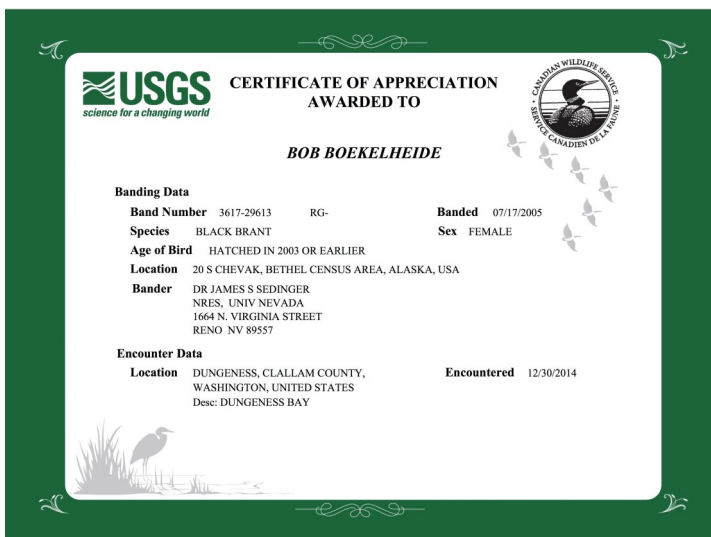
Like swans and other geese, nesting pairs of Brant typically stay together all year, and young Brant remain with their parents through their first winter. Adults are extremely faithful not only to their mates, but also to both nesting and wintering areas, returning year after year to the same locations. In addition, Brant are quite long-lived -- the oldest Brant on record was at least 29 years old, although it is likely that very few reach this old age. Consequently, the Brant you see feeding at Three Crabs beach have probably been there before and will return again next year. If you see a banded Brant, try to read the bands and report the information to the Bird Banding Lab.

world population of Brant is probably less than the human population of Seattle, WA. When you see big flocks of Brant it might seem like there are a lot of them, but there really aren't that many. This makes it even more important to give these birds lots of space while they're feeding on beaches, keeping your dogs on leash and minimizing disturbance.



Brant feeding at Three Crabs
 Photo by Bob Boekelheide

Many of the interesting facts about Brant contained in this story came from *Birds of the World*, an on-line resource available through Cornell Lab of Ornithology. I highly recommend that all bird aficionados subscribe to *Birds of the World*, both for the information and to support the Lab of Ornithology.



How many Brant are there in the world? Researchers believe the entire Pacific Coast population is likely less than 200,000 birds. The population on the Atlantic side of North America may also peak out at about 200,000. The European population is probably about the same size. This means the entire

Interested in attending an OPAS virtual event?

All events can be found on the [OPAS website](#) under Events, Event Calendar. Click on the event you're interested in attending, and a Register button will appear. That's easy! A registration message will be sent to you, with information on how to log in to Zoom for the event. It's a good idea to register at least a day before the event.

If you are not sure how to use Zoom or are uncomfortable with how to get started, please contact us (president@olympicpeninsulaudubon.org). We can walk you through the steps and send you a practice invite, where we can work out the "kinks" before the meeting. This is a good opportunity to learn about Zoom in a friendly environment; we are here to help you fly into the modern communication era.

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)

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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 _____