

The Raven



The mission of Juneau Audubon Society is to conserve the natural ecosystems of Southeast Alaska, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

<http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org>

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Juneau Audubon Society

March 2012

JUNEAU AUDUBON SPECIAL CELEBRATION AND AWARDS EVENING

Please join Juneau Audubon for a special evening of food and celebration.

March 24th 5:30 p.m. DIPAC hatchery (next to Juneau Empire)

We are honoring four past / present board members who will be receiving **National Audubon awards.**

Pot Luck dishes appreciated. We will supply some entrees, veggie trays, cheese trays, fruit, and celebratory cake

***We would also like to extend a thanks to Jeff Sauer. He has made this celebration possible, has been on the board a long time and has also served as president. In addition, when he wasn't busy being president of Audubon he served on the SEACC board.

Honorees are:

Dr. Steve Zimmerman to receive the Great Egret Award. This award is given in recognition of Steve's significant long-term contributions to the chapter, state, and national level of Audubon. He served on the board of Juneau Audubon for eight years, including three years as president. He served on the state Audubon Alaska board for six years, including four years as board chair. And Steve Zimmerman served on the National Audubon Society board for six years. Throughout these years Steve Zimmerman has been an incredibly active and dedicated volunteer, making significant impacts on Juneau conservation and natural history education issues, the very important state-wide Alaska conservation issues, and lastly national issues dealt with by National Audubon. Steve Zimmerman's love and knowledge of birds combined with his dedication and effectiveness have contributed greatly to the Audubon cause.

Mary Lou King to receive the Great Egret Award. To qualify for such an award the person has to have 20 years of service to an Audubon chapter and contributed significant efforts to such chapter. In fact, Mary Lou King has been on the Juneau Audubon board continuously for twenty seven years. And she has made incredible contributions of her time to our chapter. This award is long overdue. And of course Mary Lou is an institution in Juneau, one of those incredible volunteers that Juneau has.

Brenda Wright to receive a Presidential Recognition Award. Brenda has been on the board for eleven years and was president for several years. She is one of our institutional knowledge - go to persons, because she knows the workings of the chapter so well, and has done so much for so many years.

Mark Schwan to receive a Presidential Recognition Award. Mark has been our President for the past three years, ending last fall. He has been on the board for many years and like Brenda is one of our go to people, as to how the chapter works, and to help when something needs to be done. In particular during his three years as president Mark was a "catch all" president, meaning that he could, and did, do nearly everything, whatever needed to be done for the chapter.

Although these are the honorees, this is also a unique celebration of our long-time Audubon chapter, its membership, its past and present board members, and its decades of contributions to Juneau. Please join us and spread the word to members, friends (potential members wanted) and family.

April Program April 12 7:00 p.m.

Alison Elgee will present her program on her travels to Tanzania, East Africa.

Tracks and Signs By Kevin O'Malley

The next Tracks and Signs walk will be March 24th 10-12 at Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge. We will meet in the parking lot at the end of Radcliff Rd. Our goal is to study and discover the interesting relationship between mammals and birds to their environment. Dress for the weather and be prepared to walk off trail. This is a free program. Elders come share your stories and families are welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Berners Bay Cruises

April 21 8:30 am and April 28 at 8:30 am & 1:30pm

4 Hour Cruise

Tickets on Sale at Hearthside Books by last week of March. Adults \$45 Students \$25

Children (under 12) \$10

Wrangell's annual Stikine River Birding Festival April 26-29, 2012

Carol Rushmore, Economic Development Director, City and Borough of Wrangell,
P.O. Box 531 Wrangell, AK 99929, 907-874-2381, ecodev@wrangell.com

Please check out our website at www.wrangell.com

Follow us on Twitter: WrangellCVB or CityofWrangell

Community Based Watershed Management Forum in Juneau on March 7th, 8th, and 9th. By Julia Scott

I would first like to direct you to the Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition (SAWC) website: <http://alaskawatershedcoalition.org>.

From 2009-2010, SAWC conducted a regional needs assessment to find out what some of the main resources and skills community professionals feel they need in order to respond to the critical watershed and community health issues they are dealing with. As a follow up to the regional needs assessment, SAWC is partnering with the National Forest Foundation and the American Water Resource Association to host the **Community Based Watershed Management Forum in Juneau on March 7th, 8th, and 9th.**

The main trainings for this year's forum are:

- 1) Community-Based Land Use and Watershed Planning and Management:
 - a. Watershed and Wetland Plans, Watershed Management Plans, and resources that are available to support the development of these projects
- 2) Developing and carry-out credible restoration projects
- 3) Securing partners and funding to support community-based watershed projects and management.
- 4) Networking, based on feedback from our past trainings.

If you are interested, here are a couple of opportunities you might want to think about:

- 1) Book a room at the Baranof and receive \$7.00 off the regular per diem rate
- 2) Enter to win a scholarship by participating in the Poster Drawing Contest:
 - a. Basically, submit a description of locally based watershed project happening in your community and get your name entered in a drawing for a travel scholarship.

Please register on the website <http://alaskawatershedcoalition.org/>.

Juneau Birding Notes, February, 2012 By Mark Swann

It continued to be rather slow birding around Juneau, especially for land birds. Most of the action was around the marine environment, and feeders, where a few raptors seemed to be lurking. Of course, the big news for the month was the reported **Steller's Sea-Eagle**, seen in downtown Juneau on February 10 (DD). The observer was confident in the identification, yet it was based primarily on the white patches along the leading edge of each wing. It would have been reassuring if other key features of this amazing bird had been noted. All the birders in town have been looking!

The following summary comes from the submissions to eBird for this past month, and therefore this narrative is somewhat redundant to what is available to many already. Waterfowl of interest included two reports of **Eurasian Wigeon**, one bird at Fish Creek on 2/1 (LL, PS), and one bird along the airport dike on 2/22 (MSQ). Paul Suchanek continued to relocate those interesting hybrid ducks, with a **Common X Barrow's Goldeneye hybrid** seen on 2/8 in Fritz Cove and then again (assumed the same bird) from the Outer Point Trail on 2/22. Paul also relocated the **Mallard X Northern Pintail hybrid** at Eagle Beach on 2/11 and 2/25.

The **Western Grebe** continued to be present in the Fish Creek delta-Fritz Cove area, with many observers spotting the bird all month. Lone **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were observed at least five times during the month near active feeders around town (PR, PS, GV). A **Merlin** was a brief visitor to Paul Suchanek's yard in north Douglas (2/19) and Patty Rose spotted another bird hanging around downtown on 2/23. The lone **Eurasian Collared-Dove** that had been so loyal to the residential area near the Spaulding Meadows trailhead was seen early in the month and then disappeared (MS). Doug Jones reported that two birds were frequenting his neighborhood area near the airport.



A **Downy Woodpecker** was seen near Fish Creek on 2/22 (PS) and another along the airport dike on 2/24 (PS). A **Northern Flicker** (red-shafted form) was seen sunning itself on the rocks at the tip of Point Louisa on 2/29 (MS). Gus van Vliet continued to cross paths with the overwintering flock of **Red-winged Blackbirds** in the lower Lemon Creek area (2/12).

Contributors: Dave Douglas, DD; Doug Jones; Laurie Lamm, LL; Patty Rose, PR; Mark Schwan, MS; Marsha Squires, MSQ; Paul Suchanek, PS; Gus van Vliet, GV.

Great Backyard Bird Count for Juneau 2012

Juneau had its regular mix of every type of weather during this year's Great Backyard Bird Count but we still sent in 39 checklists for the February 17-20 event. This year we found 42 species and over 4800 total birds. As usual, the most common birds found were the **Mallard, North West Crow and Glaucous-winged Gulls.**

The greatest number of species reported came from Gustavus with 57. The next highest species count were Homer, Kodiak and Sitka. In the whole state of Alaska we observed 112 species and over 53,000 birds! To check out the data visit www.birdcount.org

Enjoy your birding!
Brenda Wright

February's Mystery Track was the lower mandibles of a Sitka black tailed deer and the typical winter sign would be feeding on woody material. Look for an angled cut with a bit of stringy bark still hanging on the shrub. Deer do not have teeth on their upper palate so they do not make a clean cut when browsing. The snow and lack of high quality food make this a hard time of year for deer.

Here is March's Mystery Track...

This is a very cool tree and with the events happening this month it is an appropriate choice.

Where is this tree?





Flying Squirrel By by Prill(Isleib)Mollick Smoky Mountains, N.C.

Our bird houses are supposed to be for the birds. One afternoon however, we noticed something, not a bird, in one of our bird houses. At first I thought it was a mouse, then seeing the large eyes, realized it was a flying squirrel. It was curious and was watching us as we were watching it. They usually find shelter in old woodpecker holes or natural cavities. Sometimes people have even discovered them living in their walls or attics.



Flying Squirrels are not often seen because they're usually active after dark and retire at dawn. Southern flying squirrels have grey brown fur on top and are a creamy white color underneath. They have large dark eyes. They feed on fruit and nuts from trees. They store food, especially acorns, for winter. They like sunflower seeds and will frequent bird feeders.

They don't have powered flight like birds, instead they glide between trees. The direction and speed in the air can be changed by their arm and leg positions. They have a furry parachute-like flap of skin stretching from wrist to ankle. A fluffy flattened tail stabilizes it in flight and acts as an air brake before landing on a tree trunk. Flying squirrels can be identified by their high-pitched, excited sounding "cheeps" often heard during a few hours after sunset. Their calls help keep track of one another. They also have a very loud, sharp "tseep" call to sound out warnings.

One evening after dark while walking the dog, I noticed the cat watching something in the trees. I aimed the flashlight up toward the branches and I observed a flying squirrel walking across the branches. Domestic house cats can be dangerous to these animals. Although graceful in flight, they are particularly vulnerable on the ground.



It's in the Air

The Environmental Protection Agency is poised to take a bite out of carbon pollution through proposed standards for new coal-fired power plants. With the unlovely name of New Source Performance Standards (NSPS), this draft rule is nevertheless our next best shot at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and slowing climate change.

Leading scientists warn that climate change poses a grave threat to the world's biodiversity. With legislative climate solutions mired in bipartisan gridlock in Congress, this new draft standard

offers a way to make progress on one of the biggest polluters of carbon pollution ? coal-fired power plants. If this rule goes well, dirty, older plants are next in line for pollution reductions.

Getting comments in to EPA to support this standard is a top priority for Audubon. **You can help by sending in the postcard you'll find in the March/April of Audubon Magazine.** Look for the snowy owl, one of many birds whose habitat is being impacted by our warming climate. Let's get an avalanche of support into EPA to reduce carbon pollution!

Connie Mahan, Audubon Policy Office, Director, Grassroots Outreach
1150 Connecticut Avenue NW #600, Washington, DC 20036, [Note new direct dial # 202-600-7967](tel:202-600-7967)
<http://www.audubonaction.org>

Tongass Conservation Briefs By Gwen Baylus, Conservation Chair

The Juneau Access Project is to be considered yet again. The Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT) plans to write another impact statement with alternatives that include: extending the Juneau Road, building a highway up Lynn Canal, and various options aimed at improving current ferry service. Juneau Audubon Society let DOT know that we will oppose new road construction, due to impacts on bird and other wildlife habitat, especially Berners Bay Important Bird Area. We also asked for ferries that were fuel efficient, and that impacts to marine birds should be considered in the new marine highway options.

Several new projects of were released in the Forest Service's Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA's) recently. They include the expansion of Greens Creek mine tailings pile on Admiralty Island, restoration and timber harvest on Chichagof Island near Kennel Creek, and much more. You can learn more about what's going on in your big backyard on the SOPA website.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/sopa/forest-level.php?111005>

Put this in your pipe (but don't smoke it)!

It's tough being a bird lover. Sure, to outsiders it seems like such a peaceful pastime. In Latin America the word for bird watching "pajareando" means something like "goofing off" (only a little more offensive in Mexico!) Say "bird watching" and most people probably think of peaceful scenes: elders looking out at finch feeders, or an immaculately dressed group of tourists in safari gear ogling a tropical bird. But we know better. Every time you turn around another species is declining, some habitat disappears, and hazards are everywhere. Our beloved birds are stalked by cats, poisoned by pesticides, flying into cell-phone towers... the list goes on.

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news. Another hazard has been discovered: open *pipes*. Who knew? Turns out that un-covered tubes attract the curiosity of cavity-nesting species. The bird enters and then finds the pipe too narrow to open his wings. Unlike a tree cavity that varies in width and has rough surfaces for crawling out, the pipe is a deadly trap. According to recent studies in California and Nevada, surveys of open pipes placed upright for mining claims and other uses, yielded alarming numbers of dead birds, especially cavity nesters. They also functioned as pitfalls for small mammals. In California, 45 species were documented deceased in pipes ranging from 1.5 to 10 inches in diameter. Inspections in Nevada of 1,177 pipes in 2208 and 2009 revealed 957 dead birds. While no studies have been published locally, hole-seekers

like Red-breasted Nuthatch and Chestnut-backed Chickadee could be at risk. (Anybody need a great science fair project?!).

OK. Here's the *good news*. It's pretty easy to make your house and workplace safe in this respect. Just remove the pipe-- or plug the end. If air needs to move through, you can use foam or make a screen cover connected with a C-clamp. Otherwise almost any type of cover will do. So, in the spring doldrums before our migrants arrive, take a little of time to tend to those sign-posts, gutters, garden frames and the like, and check another good deed off your life list.

For more information and gory pictures see: <http://ca.audubon.org/workinglands-pipes.php>
<http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/111122.html>
(Funny) website sells vent covers and reminds us that squirrels are not good in plumbing
<http://savepipey.net/>



Eagle Feather Collection Permits

Did you know you can collect eagle feathers for Juneau Audubon? Actually, we have a permit from US Fish & Wildlife Service to pick up naturally shed eagle feathers. The feathers are sent to the National Eagle Repository in Colorado and distributed from there. Anyone may request eagle feathers, but there is a law stating that native Americans get priority in their requests. Next in priority is education and research, and then the general public. Each request is allotted 6 feathers. The program is designed to reduce poaching of eagles.

Alaska is the home for the majority of bald eagles in the US, but we are not number one in donations to the National Repository. Eagles are protected under several different laws and so you may not keep eagle feathers for yourself but you could help us send more to people who would like to have them. The repository usually has a three year waiting list for feathers.

In 2011 members of Juneau Audubon Society collected 1,111 bald eagle feathers and shipped them to the National Eagle Repository in Colorado. Thanks for your help!
So if you would like to help out by collecting eagle feathers, please contact Brenda Wright at 321-4739 or membership@juneau-audubon-society.org for a permit.

Richard Carstensen has written this small booklet “Common Tracks”. It is being published jointly by Alaska Fish and Game Department and Juneau Audubon Society. Copies of this handy little booklet will soon be available from Fish and Game.



OTHER WEB OPPORTUNITIES

***New Bob Armstrong's wonderful bird and other wildlife photographs that are free to use for educational and conservation purposes – www.naturebob.com

SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS SEASONALLY

Sub-regional Compilers: Steven C. Heintz, 2603 4th Avenue, Ketchikan, AK 99901

Andrew W. Piston, P. O. Box 1116, Ward Cove, AK 99928

This publication has wonderful bird photos and information. If you want to be put on Steve Heintz's mailing list to receive this summary and to contribute observations, you can contact him at: steve.heintz@alaska.gov

If you are interested in additional information, subscribe to North American Birds, here is a link to see more information: <http://www.aba.org/nab> < <http://www.aba.org/nab> > . The seasonal reports cover all of North America and give excellent overviews of unusual numbers of particular species (high or low), early or late dates of occurrence, changes in status, and rare finds for each region.

There is also an extensive list of all bird sightings entered in eBird (www.ebird.org < <http://www.ebird.org/> >)

Juneau Audubon Society Officers, Committee Chairs, Events Coordinators

President: Julie Coghill

Vice-President: Jeff Sauer,

Secretary: Julie Koehler,

Treasurer: Patty Rose,

Programs: Jeff Sauer

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National Audubon Society Membership Application

For first time members or renewals to the National Audubon Society, please mail this form to:
National Audubon Society, PO Box 422246, Palm Coast, FL 32142-6714

You will receive the National Audubon Magazine plus Juneau Chapter newsletter *The Raven*.
\$20 (1-year introductory rate) ___ \$15 (1-year student/senior rate) ___ \$30 Basic renewal ___

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip Code _____
Telephone number _____

___ My check for \$ ___ is enclosed ___ Please bill me C2ZA510Z A51

Local Audubon Society Membership Application

If you prefer to support Juneau Audubon Society only, please complete the form above and send
\$10 (1-year membership) to: Juneau Audubon Society, Membership Chair, PO Box 21725,
Juneau, AK 99802. You will receive the Juneau Chapter newsletter *The Raven*.

*****Please consider getting *The Raven* by e-mail instead of snail mail to save paper, time,
money and view photos in color.**

To request this option email: membership@juneau-audubon-society.org

Nonprofit Org. US Postage Paid Juneau, AK 99802 Permit No. 153	Address Service Requested	Juneau Audubon Society PO Box 21725 Juneau, AK 99802
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