

# 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>

Volume 39, Number 8

Juneau Audubon Society

April 2013

## Juneau Audubon Society

**APRIL MEETING: THURSDAY, APRIL 18, 2013 (*CHANGED TO THIRD THURSDAY TO NOT CONFLICT WITH FOLK FESTIVAL*)**  
**UAS Egan Building, Room 221/222, 7:00 p.m.**

### **Packrafts and Polar Bears: A Trek Across the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge**

Rick Turner talks about his 200-mile trek last year by foot and packraft across the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Starting from Arctic Village at the refuge's southern boundary, and his partner hiked through boreal forest, across miserable miles of tundra tussocks, and over the rugged mountains of the Brooks Range to the North Slope. There they inflated



their tiny rafts to run the rapids of an ice-cold river to the Arctic Ocean, finally ending their journey in the coastal village of Kaktovik.

## SPRING 2013 BIRD WALK SCHEDULE

Date/Time:	Activity:	Leader/s:
April 13 8am-10am	Auke Rec and Point Louisa Meet at the last pull-out before the campground above the main shelter	Linda Nicklin & Amy Courtney
April 20 8am- 10am	Fish Creek Delta Meet at the Parking Lot before Fish Creek Bridge on the North Douglas Highway	Nick Hajdukovich
April 27 8:30am @ Statter Harbor (Auke Bay)	<b>Berner's Bay Cruise</b>	Nick H., Patty R., Bev A., Laurie C., Mary W.
May 4 Two cruises: 8:30am & 1:30pm @ Statter Harbor (Auke Bay)	<b>Berner's Bay Cruises</b>	Brenda W., Amy C., Pat H.
May 11 8am-11am	<b>Bird Banding Demonstration @</b> Juneau Community Garden	Gwen Baluss
May 18 8am-10am	Airport Dike Trail End of Radcliffe Road	Jeff Sauer
May 25 8am-10am	Eagle Beach picnic area 28.7 Mile Glacier Highway	Mark Schwan
June 1 8am-10am	Moose Lake area	Mark Schwan
June 8 8am-10am	Sandy Beach/ Treadwell Trails	Patty Rose
June 15 8am-10am	Brotherhood Bridge Trail	Brenda Wright

### President's Notes by Brenda Wright

Spring is in the air! Varied thrush, Dark-eyed Juncos, Song Sparrows, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, and Pacific Wren cannot be wrong!! Please join us for our Saturday Bird walks this spring. We love having all skill level of birders. We will provide binoculars and scopes to help the beginners learn more about birds. Check out the schedule for walks and see the web page for changes and updates.

#### **Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival:**

The **23rd** Annual Copper River Delta Shorebird Festival, May 2-5, 2013, will continue to include environmental education as well as showing our visitors the beauty and grandeur of Prince William Sound and the Copper River Delta. Our Keynote Speaker this year is Mr. Guido Berguido from the Panama Audubon Society. Other Audubon speakers include Nils Warnock and Melanie Smith from the Alaska Audubon Society.

[http://cordovachamber.com/?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=57&Itemid=44](http://cordovachamber.com/?option=com_content&task=view&id=57&Itemid=44)

## **Yakutat Tern festival May 30-June 2**

Celebrating birds in culture: seminars, kids activities, field-trips, banquet, amazing area

[www.yakutatfestival.org](http://www.yakutatfestival.org)

**The Stikine River Birding Festival** is being held April 25<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> in Wrangell, Alaska. There will be some great events this year. Russian snow goose expert Vasily Baranyuk will give a presentation on the wildlife of Wrangell Island, Russia, Juneau artist Kathy Hocker will teach a sketching workshop on the Stikine River, the Sitka Raptor Center will be in town, and a brand new bird calling contest is sure to get Wrangell singing (or honking or whistling or quacking!). Alaska Airlines is offering a discount code for travel to Wrangell during the Festival: ECMU633. More information can be found on our website:

<http://www.wrangell.com/birdingfestival> Corree Seward Delabrué, District Interpreter, Tongass NF-Wrangell Ranger District 907-874-7563 [csdelabru@fs.fed.us](mailto:csdelabru@fs.fed.us)

### **Updates on birds:**

A new paper by Canadian scientists Pierre Mineau and Mélanie Whiteside identifies pesticide toxicity to birds as an important factor in grassland bird declines. "Pesticide Acute Toxicity is a Better Correlate of U.S. Grassland Bird Declines than Agricultural Intensification" was recently published in the peer-reviewed, open-access online journal *PLOS One*. The study found that acutely toxic pesticides (rather than habitat loss) were the most likely leading cause of the widespread population declines of grassland birds in the United States. Check out the American Bird Conservancy for more info.

### **Birds, Bees, and Aquatic Life Threatened by Gross Underestimate of Toxicity of World's Most**

**Widely Used Pesticide** *New Report Charges EPA Ignored Staff Warnings, Approved Widespread Use of Dangerous Pesticides* <http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/130319.html>

**Hummingbirds at Home to Launch April 10** Audubon's newest Citizen Science program, Hummingbirds at Home, will be launching April 10! This accessible and family-friendly new program seeks to gather data documenting hummingbird migration and feeding habits nationwide. Check out the National Audubon site.

[www.audubon.org/](http://www.audubon.org/)

### **Great Backyard Bird Count high count and species:**

The count was held in February 2013, and birders in Juneau observed 61 species during the count weekend.

**Mallards, Canada Geese, Greater Scaup, Rock Sandpipers, Mew Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull,**

**Northwest Crow, Common Redpoll, and Pine Siskin** were the highest number of individuals counted. We

hope more people will get involved in counting and adding their information to the ebird site. 61 species is a great accomplishment for winter, but not a single woodpecker was counted. It's really fun to add your

birding enjoyment to the citizen science data base. It's fun for us and helpful to the birds we enjoy

watching. Thanks to all the local birders who contribute! The top listers in February were Gus van Vliet,

Patty Rose, David Schmerge, Art Kolter, Merrill Jensen, Amy Clark Courtney, Jeanne Josephson, Brenda

Wright, and Anne Sutton. Check out the web pages and join the crowd! To explore more of the date just

visit the website: [www.birdsource.org/gbbc](http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc) or [www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) Enjoy!

## Juneau Bird Report for March

by Amy Clark Courtney



Spring has officially arrived, and with it have come some of our first migrants! **Killdeer**, **Black Oystercatcher**, **Wilson's Snipe**, **Bonaparte's Gull**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, and **Varied Thrush** have all been reported, while **American Robin** seem to be popping up everywhere!

A **Eurasian Wigeon** was seen this month (likely the same one that has been seen all winter) at the Mendenhall Wetlands on 3/7 (NH), and at the Fish Creek delta on 3/24 (GV, NH). Likewise a **Canvasback** that seems to have been here all winter was also seen on the Mendenhall Wetlands on 3/13 (ACC) and 3/27 (NH). Twin Lakes continues to be the hotspot for **Hooded Merganser**, with two to five observed throughout the second half of March (m. obs. Incl. DS, BW, NH, ACC, TC). A highlight of the month was **White-tailed Ptarmigan** first found on Perseverance Trail by Jeff Sauer on 3/20, and then by Nick Hajdukovich the next day. A rare **Golden Eagle** was also seen on Eagle Beach on 3/22 (GV).

As the spring has been heating up, so has the owl activity! Many common owls have been seen and heard around town, but also heard was a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** on Fritz Cove Rd. on 3/12 (GV), and near River Rd. on 3/17 (DR, ACC). The most exciting owl sighting by far though, was a rare **Western Screech-Owl** first seen and heard on Basin Rd. on 3/1 (NH), and in the same location on 3/23 (GV, ACC).

Nine **European Starlings** were observed in Downtown Juneau on 3/9 (GV), and one on 3/31 (DS). During the last few days of the month the Mendenhall Wetlands were graced with the arrival of up to nine migrating **Lapland Longspur** (BW, ACC, MS, GV). Flocks of **Snow Bunting** have also been present on the Wetlands throughout the month (GV, DS, ACC, NH, BW).



The Miller-Honsinger Pond near Temsco has hosted a very rare **Swamp Sparrow** since early November of last year, and was reported this last month on the 7<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> (ACC). Also at that location on those dates were up to six **American Tree Sparrows**. Nick Hajdukovich and Gus van Vliet both saw an additional Tree Sparrow on the Mendenhall Wetlands in early March. The Lemon Creek area has continued to be a hotspot for our rare flock of **Red-winged Blackbirds**, one of which was observed at the Pioneer Home marsh on 3/9 (PR), and four of which were observed there on 3/20 (BW). Another loner was located at Creekside Park on 3/20 (ACC).



Though we have been inundated with Common Redpolls the past few months, two people were fortunate enough to spot a very rare **Hoary Redpoll** in March. Patty Rose found one at her feeder in Douglas on 3/7, and Gus van Vliet saw one on the Airport Dike Trail on 3/24.

Thanks to all those who have reported their observations on eBird and Eaglechat, including the following: Mark Anderson (MA), Amy Clark Courtney (ACC), Thomas Courtney (TC), Nick Hajdukovich (NH), Patty Rose (PR), Deborah Rudis (DR), Jeffrey Sauer (JS), David Schmerge (DS), Mark Schwan (MS), Gus van Vliet (GV), and Brenda Wright (BR).



**Jeff Sauer Photographed** the White-tailed Ptarmigan and tracks in the snow on March 20th up Perseverance Trail. Nick Hajdukovich went up the next day and saw three.



## Haines Bird Report "Marlena Mooring"

A small flock of **White-winged Crossbills** have been busy eating seeds from the spruce cones in front of the house at Lutak the last couple of days. Also spotted a **Winter Wren** and a **Red Breasted Sapsucker**, a flock of fifty **Common Mergansers** and a couple of dozen **Golden Eyes**, some **Buffleheads** and a few seals and river otters.

## Sightings Near the River Trail -- Smoky Mountains, N.C.

By Prill (Isleib) Mollick

From day to day and during spring migration a variety of birds can be seen long the paved river trail in our area. Some recent sightings have been Pied Billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Brown Thrasher, Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Red Crossbill, Red Winged Black Birds, Orange Crowned Warblers, Cedar Waxwings, and Sharp-Shinned Hawks.

There were flocks of Mocking Birds, Baltimore Orioles, Purple Finches and Gold Finches. The Gold Finches have changed into their bright sunny-yellow summer plumage. Buffleheads were seen swimming along near some Canada Geese and a Hooded Merganser was observed catching a large bull frog almost as big as itself.

## From Conservation Chair Gwen Baluss

### Time to take down or move your bird feeders out of reach

Its almost spring! Migrants are moving in and those winter yard birds are moving out. Many of us love to feed birds and they brighten those dreary winter days. However, now might be a good time to transition those friends to natural summer foods. Alaska Department of Fish and Game recommends taking feeders down during the months that bears are out. Hungry bears will lick seeds off the ground even if seed feeders are out of reach. Wily bears will seek the sweetness in hummingbird feeders if they are not placed high enough.

Several bears were observed roaming Juneau in March. Whether you can safely feed at all will depend on your yard layout and the level of persistence of your local bears. Better safe than sorry!

### Do you have a busy hummingbird feeder in your yard?

Hummingbird researcher Fred Bassett from Alabama will be here to visit sites in Alaska this summer to band Rufous Hummingbirds. He is interested in finding links between the Alaska summer populations and those wintering in the gulf states. In 2010, a hummingbird banded in Florida was recaptured in Chenega Bay, AK. You can help with this effort by offering your yard to Fred for a short visit to catch and safely release birds. The approximate dates will be June 2-4, 2013 Ketchikan; June 5-6, Sitka; and June 7-8, Juneau. For more information, please contact Fred at [FHound@aol.com](mailto:FHound@aol.com) Ph. (334) 868-9658 and visit his website <http://hummingbirdresearch.net/>



Bob Armstrong

**From What's Up 4/13**

**\*\*March 31 (EXTENDED to JUNE 30)**

Deadline for comments on the **2008 TONGASS LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (TLMP)** that currently guides land management decision-making on the Tongass National Forest. Right now the Forest Service is reviewing the Plan's effectiveness to determine what "clarifications or adjustments" are needed. To see the Plan, go to <http://seacc.org/healthy-forests/tongass-land-management-plan-tlmp-1/tongass-land-management-plan-tlmp>.

**\*\*April 12**

**JUNEAU** - Public Hearing will be held from 6 to 8pm in the Centennial Hall, Hammond Room take comment on the proposal by ADEC to **ISSUE AN ALASKA POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (APDES) PERMIT** for the GREENS CREEK MINE for discharge locations: Hawk Inlet, Greens Creek, Zinc Creek, and wetlands with mixing zone proposed in essential fish habitat. Permit documents are available at ADEC Wastewater Discharge Authorization website under the Public Notice section. For more information or to submit comments, contact Tim Pilon at 907-451-2136, Fax (907) 451-2187, or email [tim.pilon@alaska.gov](mailto:tim.pilon@alaska.gov).

**April 18 JUNEAU - CHANGE ON YOUR DOORSTEP is a YOUTH AND EDUCATORS MINI SUMMIT will be held in Centennial Hall Enjoy a special keynote, see youth presentations and gather educational resources. No registration required. For more information, contact Faith Duncan at 907-228-6278.**

**\*\*April 16** Deadline for applications for the AK Dept of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development's **2013 SOUTHEAST ALASKA CHINOOK SALMON MITIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT** which help mitigate economic impacts to Southeast Alaska fisheries interests from the reduction in the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon harvest.

Application packets are available online at



*Where Has Spring Gone?*

<http://www.commerce.state.ak.us/dca/grt/csmigrants.htm>. For more information, contact If you would like an application packet sent to you, please contact Jolene Julian at 907.465.4758 or [jolene.julian@alaska.gov](mailto:jolene.julian@alaska.gov).

## Science Fair Winners 2013

Juneau Audubon is pleased to participate in the Southeast Alaska Regional Science Fair by providing special prizes to some student projects. This year was especially challenging for judging because there were over 150 projects in the science fair.

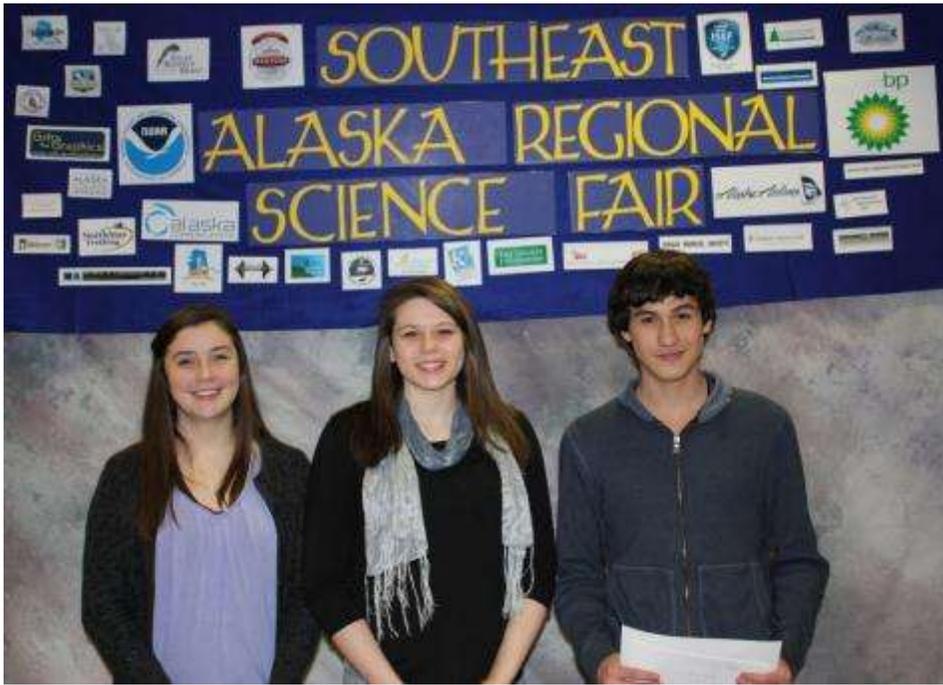
We did not have any easy choices of projects to judge as no student had included birds in their projects. We are happy to announce the winners this year are Cristina Arehart with How Soil or Bedrock Substrate and Distance from the Mendenhall Glacier Affect Revegetation; Anton Rieselbach with How Proximity to the Landfill Affects Amount of Contamination in the Juneau Wetlands; and Morgan Rivest with Assessment of Marine Pollution Levels. Congratulations to all the students.

Thanks to Doug Jones and Brenda Wright for doing the judging and Patricia Wherry for presenting the awards.

I just wanted to thank you for your support of the Audubon Society of Juneau award at the 2013 Southeast Alaska Regional Science Fair. Attached is a photograph of the winning student(s), selected to be.

Thank you again. The Fair and the students appreciate your continued support.

Lawrence Schaufler, Fair Director, SE AK Regional Science Fair



## WEB OPPORTUNITIES

\*\*\* Bob Armstrong's wonderful bird and other wildlife photographs that are free to use for educational and conservation purposes – [www.naturebob.com](http://www.naturebob.com)

\*\*\*\*\*



### *SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS SEASONALLY*

Sub-regional Compilers: Steven C. Heinel, 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 Heinel's mailing list to receive this summary and to contribute observations, you can contact him at: [steve.heinel@alaska.gov](mailto:steve.heinel@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) < <http://www.ebird.org> > )

### Juneau Audubon Society Officers, Committee Chairs, Events Coordinators

President: Brenda Wright 789-4656

[president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:president@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Vice-President: Josh Peters

[vice-president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:vice-president@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Secretary: Bev Agler

[secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Treasurer: Patty Rose

[treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Programs: Doug Jones

[programs@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:programs@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Membership:

[membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Education: Patricia Wherry

[education@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:education@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Conservation: Gwen Baluss

[conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Field Trips: Amy Clark Courtney

[field-trips@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:field-trips@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Raven Editor: Mary Lou King, 789-7540

[raven@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:raven@juneau-audubon-society.org)

At-large: Linda Nicklin

[at-large\\_a@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:at-large_a@juneau-audubon-society.org)

At-large: Jeff Sauer

[at-large\\_b@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:at-large_b@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Public Market:

[public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Web Master: George Utermohle

[webmaster@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:webmaster@juneau-audubon-society.org)

**Too much paper mail from the National Audubon Society?**

**You can ask to be taken off the mass mailing list: Email Customer Service**

**[audubon@emailcustomerservice.com](mailto:audubon@emailcustomerservice.com) or call 1-800-272-4201**

**Opting out of extra mailings will not stop magazine subscription.**

**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*. \$35 Basic renewal \_\_\_**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/State/Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone number** \_\_\_\_\_

**\_\_\_ My check for \$ \_\_\_ is enclosed \_\_\_ Please bill me C3ZA510Z 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](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)**

