Upcoming Juneau Audubon Society Events:

JAS Monthly Meeting
*Winter bird ID—get ready for the Christmas bird count!*
Dec 13

Juneau Christmas Bird Count
Learn more on pg 5!
Dec 15

JAS Monthly Meeting
Golden Eagle researcher Steve Lewis of USF&WS
Jan 10

Proposal to Expand Mountain Goat Hunting Around Juneau Trails

Gwen Baluss

Mountain goats are some of the most popular animals to view from the Mount Roberts Tramway and Juneau alpine trails. Sometimes a goat is visible even from downtown looking up at Mount Juneau, or from the Mendenhall Valley looking up at Thunder Mountain. Spring visitors to the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center often are treated to groups of goats visible on Mount Bullard.

It wasn’t that long ago that goats became a rare sight around Juneau. In 1984 most of the areas near town were closed to goat hunting, because of very low goat numbers. Residents called for the management of goats to be focused on wildlife viewing opportunities.

Then, there was an initiative to reestablish goats by transplanting some from the Whiting River-Tracy Arm area. The Juneau Audubon Society raised the funds, over $12,000, Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologists volunteered their time, and Temsco helicopters donated trips to help with the move to Mount Juneau.

The success of the project is not exactly known. In the first two years, 6 radio-collared goats stayed (within 5 miles) but 2 others strayed much further (up to 35 miles) from the release point. Certainly, the goat numbers increased over the next few decades, but it is unclear if goats seen around Mount Juneau are mostly decedents of those goats, or different individuals that naturally dispersed in from surrounding zones.

Currently, there is **CONT PG 4**
Many thanks to all our supporters for another great year at the public market. This year Juneau Audubon Society had a special drawing for members. All present members were eligible as well as any new members. We had three jars of nagoonberry jelly as prizes for the drawing. The winners were Peter Froelich, Julie North, and Sue Walker. This drawing raised $270 in dues and renewals. Juneau Audubon Society booth sold all 23 dozen jars of jam/jelly/sauce/pickles. The children’s books and the calendar of local birds by a local photographer were very popular.

Thanks to all of our volunteers: Patricia Wherry, Brenda Wright, Amy Sherwin, Betsy Fischer, Winston Smith, Carol Race, Susan Hickey, Alexia Kiefer, Kari Monagle, Mary Willson, Mary Claire Harris Bev Agler, Hetty Frank, Deb Rudis, Lauree Morton, Lauren Smoker, Kristine Benson, Connie Conlon, Debbi Hart, Molly Hodges, and Jason Colon. We couldn’t do it without you!

GOAT CONTINUED A limited bow hunt around upper Sheep creek and Blackerby ridge, extending back around the ice field. From 2014 to 2017 between 1 and 7 goats were harvested within that area per year, plus at least one illegal rifle kill stated by ADF&G.

A proposal will be considered by the Board of Game this winter to further expand this hunt to include everywhere between the between the south bank of the Mendenhall River and the Mendenhall Glacier and south to the western bank of Taku Inlet and Taku Glacier. The goal of the proposal is to create more road-system based hunting opportunities.

While a limited and managed hunt may not directly significantly affect the local goat population, might it affect goat’s behavior to make them less “watchable”? Might it push them to areas with less quality forage and thus affect their condition as they face the long winter?

Recently there appears to have been a decline in goat numbers locally. The ADF&G comments regarding the hunt proposal from state that in 2014 over 400 goats were counted via aerial survey in the total area described above. In 2018, it was less than 90. Goats could have been taking cover due to warm weather last summer, but it raises a concern by biologists to understand the numbers and potential decline better before increasing the harvest.

One factor could be wolves; trail users have reported increased sightings in the last several years.

If you would like to add to the discussion, BOG accepts comments. Please see the complete proposal book for more information found on ADF&G web here: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main

Or call (907) 465-4110

Written comments should be received two weeks before the Jan. 10 work session (Dec. 27) for the upcoming 2018/2019 meeting season. Email: adfg.bog.comments@alaska.gov (PDF format only) Fax: 907-465-6094 or Mail: ADF&G Boards Support Section ATTN: Board of Game Comments P.O. Box 115526 Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Christmas Bird Count to Take Place December 15

Join Juneau Audubon Society for the Juneau Christmas Bird Count on Saturday, December 15, 2018. Birders of all levels are welcome. The Christmas Bird Count started in 1900 as an alternative to the tradition of shooting birds on Christmas Day. The idea caught on and spread across the Western hemisphere. The 2018 count is the 119th Christmas Bird Count and the 46th Juneau count. The National Audubon Society organizes the data generated by the event.

As usual, Juneau volunteers will meet at 8:00 a.m. on count day at either McDonald’s or Foodland IGA. Those wishing to count in the downtown, Thane, Douglas, and north Douglas areas will meet at the downtown Foodland IGA coffee bar. Those wishing to count in the Lemon Creek, airport, Mendenhall Valley, and Auke Bay areas will meet at the McDonald’s restaurant on Trout Street opposite the Valley Breeze In. We will divide into groups at the staging locations.

Volunteers should bring binoculars and be prepared for the weather and walking conditions. Expect to spend 3 to 5 hours in the field.

The Juneau count week will be Wednesday, December 12 – Tuesday, December 18. For those who want to take the count to the next level, get out and look for birds during count week. Species seen during count week that are not seen on count day will be noted in the final report.

After the count, there will be a potluck at the home of Mark Schwan and Debi Ballam, where the birds and species seen on count day will be tallied. Directions to the potluck will be available on the morning of the count. The potluck is a nonsmoking, pet-free event.

We hope you can participate. If you have questions, please call Patty Rose at (907) 321-3328.