Thanks to an Active Juneau Audubon Society Board

By Marsha Squires

Even though the JAS Board takes a hiatus from monthly meetings May through August, don't think things haven't been happening. Spring 2022 has been full of events and accomplishments in bird education, conservation, and research. Take a look at the list of achievements and where our energy is focused on serving our community and its members:

- Face-to-face guided bird walks returned to the trails
- Two Berners Bay cruises offered more than 170 passengers the beauty of birding with accomplished storytellers and naturalists
- New technology was tried: Eventbrite for walk registrations
- JAS partnered with Annie Kail's Gallery and artist Evon Zerbetz
Thanks to an Active JAS Board Cont.

- A low-tide walk occurred, and one more is scheduled for July 15 (Please register on Eventbrite at bit.ly/jas-eventbrite!)
- A partnership with Alaska State Parks allowed posts of “Caution: Nesting Area” signs in critical habitat on Portland Island
- Research on Tree Swallow nesting continues with close to 65 boxes monitored weekly
- A college intern was hired to support the Arctic Tern research project and other related work
- The Global Big Day and World Migratory Bird Day events spurred a bonanza of birding on eBird and in southeast Alaska
- Several articles regarding birding, events, and citizen science were written and appeared in local media
- KTOO radio spots have happened and are going to continue every Friday through August
- A long-standing partnership with Icy Strait Birding Tours supported JAS to employ a local artist to create two interpretive signs for the Hoonah Harbor. The manufacturing process is beginning.
- A new Instagram account was created and shout-outs to followers have been timely, professional, and eye-catching
- JAS partook in the first meeting regarding the Juneau-Douglas Second Crossing
- And finally, a JAS board retreat is being planned for late August

Thank you to all JAS Board members and volunteers for a successful and full spring season.

JOIN THE BOARD — A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!
We need help! If you would like to be nominated for a position on the JAS Board of Directors, please email your name and position of interest to president@juneau-audubon-society.org.

Gallery Nights Are for the Board
By Lizzie Solger
On May 12, several Juneau Audubon Society board members joined Alaskan illustrator Evon Zerbetz as she debuted 15 new bird portraits at Annie Kaill’s Gallery in downtown Juneau for the exhibit "To Know Birds is to Love Birds." Board members enjoyed discussing the feathered subjects of the portraits with those visiting the exhibit. You can find the linocuts portraits in the new children’s book "Alaska is for the Birds!" This book (found at evonzerbetz.com for $18.99), is illustrated by Zerbertz and features poems by Susan Ewing.

Here’s to the Guided Bird Walks/Events of 2022
By Doreen Prieto
Happy summer, everyone! By the time you read this article, we will have nearly completed our 2022 season of JAS Guided Bird Walks and events. Flush with success, we offered seven bird walks and a low tide walk with an estimated total of 90 participants.

Note: Due to unforeseen circumstances, we did cancel our June 4 Sunny Point Bird Walk with Southeast Alaska Land Trust, but they
Here's to the Guided Bird Walks/Events of 2022 cont.

will be back with us in 2023. Our last event will be on July 15, and we will take a low tide walk at Rainforest Trail with Brenda Wright. I hope we are going to Shaman Island!

Here are some highlights from spring 2022:

— On a glorious April 30, about 20 of us trekked out to Auke Rec. We walked along the beach, down a wooded path, and then out to Point Louisa. I just happened to look into the water, and several of us saw two harbor porpoise. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Southeast population numbers about 17,000 individuals. It is always a gift to see marine mammals so close. Also seen were an estimated 30 Surf and 45 White-winged Scoter, two Black Oystercatchers, a Pigeon Guillemot, five five Marbled Murrelets, and Glaucous-winged, Bonaparte’s and Short-billed Gulls.

— On May 14, a small group met Gwen Baluss of the U.S. Forest Service at the Juneau Community Garden to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day and to observe the banding of three birds — a dark-eyed junco, a Lincoln's sparrow, and a Steller's Jay. The banding included an examination of each bird to potentially determine the age and sex of the bird, and indicators of body condition, such as fat level. Birds who are still carrying fat in the spring are likely continuing their journeys farther north. We learned migratory birds are able to “shut down” part of their brain during long-distance migration, adding a humorous twist to the phrase “autopilot!” The Steller's Jay was originally banded by Gwen on May 11, 2013, as a second-year bird that hatched in 2012. It was recaptured in May 2015, so this individual has survived for 10 years and has been seen in the Juneau Community Garden several times.

— We traversed Eagle Beach on May 28 with our intrepid leader, Rob McDonald, as he simultaneously scanned the beach, answered
our many questions, set up his scope, and gave each of us as much time as we wanted to look. We saw 23 species! A solitary Snow Goose and two Greater White-fronted Geese stood out among the many Canada Geese. The best sight was five Black-bellied Plovers.

— On **June 11**, a sold-out crowd met to join Deb Rudis and Gus van Vliet at Dredge Lake. I joined Deb’s group, and our focus was identifying birds by ear! We heard Orange-Crowned, Townsend’s and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, American Redstarts, and Hermit Thrush. The standout for me was hearing the Northern Waterthrush. No matter if I have seen a bird for the first time or for the 100th time, I am always thrilled to see and hear them. Guess I am hooked!

Do not hesitate to contact me if you have a location suggestion or a hankering to lead a JAS Guided Bird Walk in 2023. Reach me at field-trips@juneau-audubon-society.org. Tell friends and family about our 2023 walks! And thank you for your supporting JAS!

Spring 2022 — Global Big Day Results
By Marsha Squires

Here in Juneau, the grass was wet, the thermometer read 38 degrees, and there wasn’t a bird in the yard when my son and I packed up at 5:30 a.m. for Global Big Day (GBD) adventure. Nevertheless, we had high hopes and giddy attitudes. By 7:30 a.m., we were shedding layers with abandon and had had our eyes on dozens of species. We anticipated a great day of birding ahead!

For us, GBD proved to be a grand opportunity to see numerous shorebirds and ducks, with the Snow and White-Fronted Geese an added treat. We were a bit disappointed not to see or hear an Orange-Crowned Warbler, or encounter a Belted Kingfisher or Wandering Tattler but birding is like fishing at times, right? Can’t catch them all the time.

Yet, around the world on every continent, birds were seen, heard, enjoyed, and counted, making this GBD the best year on record. An astounding 7,673 species were recorded with more than 433 more species than last year. With roughly 10,000 species of birds on our planet, I’d say the effort was outstanding!

In Juneau, **101 species were recorded by 24 participants with 60 checklists** submitted to eBird. See the day’s list at bit.ly/gbd-22.

For GBD purposes, our local Audubon encompasses seven regions (counties) in eBird (Juneau, Sitka, Yakutat, Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon, Prince of Wales-Outer Ketchikan, Ketchikan Gateway, and Wrangell-Petersburg). Keeping this in mind, our sister regions added an additional **27 more species, 12 more participants, and 70 more checklists for the grand total of 128 species, 36 eBird participants, and 130 checklists**.

After a full day of birding, in eight different locations, my son and I sat at the dinner table scarifying our meal and half-heartedly viewing
JAS Tree Swallow Nest Box Project 2022  
By Brenda Wright

Hard to believe this is the eighth year of the Juneau Audubon Society’s Tree Swallow Nest Box Project — and we have quite a few out there. This year — with the help of Boy Scout Troop No. 6 — we successfully put up 42 nest boxes on Southeast Alaska Land Trust (SEAL) lands at both Sunny Point and Mendenhall Peninsula. In addition, JAS president Marsha Squires and her family put up the 10 nest boxes at Fish Creek on the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge. Our other 11 nest boxes are on City and Borough of Juneau (CBJ) parks and recreation areas like Kingfisher Pond.

This was a bit of a colder spring. The birds' first arrival was noted on April 29 at Kingfisher Pond and on May 1 near the mouth of Mendenhall River. The birds got to work building nests pretty quickly and the first egg was laid on May 16. As usual, some nests progress faster than others. So now, at the third week of June, we have a few nests with birds almost ready to fledge and a few still not hatched. We hope this warm weather interspersed with the chillier rainy days helps more bugs to be produced and more healthy chicks. It looks like we will definitely have 200 eggs laid in the 56 boxes with nests.

Spring 2022 — Global Big Day Results cont.

our backyard. We wanted a few more species to cap our total. With mouths full, sharing the tales of the day to our audience of one, we both screamed at the same time “sapsucker!” We jumped up to see a Rufous Hummingbird at the feeder as well.

Both of us have found so much joy in sharing birds with each other that I honestly didn’t want the day to end. Yet, we decided that we really did need to call it a day. Our feet were tired and our hearts were full. We look forward to more days of birding together and participating in future GBD events.

Thanks to all of you who participated and encouraged others to share in this special day of birding, and I welcome others to join in the excitement and joy the next time a GBD event hits the calendar.
Mendenhall Lake Arctic Tern Nesting Update
By Mali Tamome

The Juneau Audubon Society assists the U.S. Forest Service in monitoring the Arctic Tern (Sterna paradisaea) Colonies near Mendenhall Lake. Known for their long migration, Arctic Terns are one of the favorite seasonal residents in Juneau.

Each year a population travels from Antarctica to their rocky breeding ground near Mendenhall Glacier. This year was no exception. A colony of more than 60 individuals established nests on the gravel bar near the Photo Point Trail. Thus far no nests have been observed on the West Glacier Spur Trail. A game camera was recently installed at the West Glacier site to monitor daily activity.

The colony appears to be mostly free of predation, though a mink and a Raven have been seen near the nesting sites. The adults appear to be leaving the nests unattended more than usual. The cause for this is still unknown. No eggs have hatched so far. However, one gull nest near the colony has been successful with two healthy-looking chicks hatched last week.

Currently, the Terns can be easily spotted (and heard!) from Photo Point Trail and from the unpaved Nugget Falls Trail. This year a webcam overlooking two nests on the gravel bar has been made public at player.audiovideoweb.com/stream1138. We hope to see eggs hatching soon and that good nutrition remains abundant and easily accessible to the parents.

JAS Board Member Spotlight
By Lauren Cusimano

As a newish board member with JAS, I compile and edit The Raven newsletter — a complete honor. It’s a dream to assemble articles and photos from JAS board members and send our booklet out to members. I hope you’ve been enjoying it! I also assist with social media management, mostly in running the Instagram account (follow us at @juneau.audubon.society!), while my background is in journalism, my personal interest is in conservation. Last year, I was hired as the Communications Lead for SEACC and was living in Juneau by August. There I create messaging on behalf of irreplaceable old-growth trees and waterways and work to help amplify the voices of the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples as the stewards of Southeast Alaska.
But back in Arizona, I volunteered with Audubon Southwest. My favorite job was feeding some tented Burrowing Owls mice every. I’d bike in 100-plus degree weather, fast so the frozen mice wouldn’t melt too much, to push in their Sunday supper in an effort to acclimate them back into the open after injuries.

Juneau has proven to be an exceptional birding town. Bald Eagles are not old news to me yet, and I’ll never forget the first time I spotted a perfectly round golden-crowned kinglet at Kingfisher Pond. What a place. I also “get” to survey beaches for beached birds on behalf of COASST with for the University of Washington. My area is Spaulding Beach. So if you see a gal weirdly counting her paces in XtraTufs just off Statter Harbor, give me a wave!

Surf Scoters, Black Oystercatchers, and Bonaparte’s and Glaucous-winged Gulls were spotted, along with some much-anticipated humpback whales and many sea lions that had hauled out on Benjamin Island to get some of that sun.

Suzie Teerlink, Ph.D., marine mammal specialist from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Laurie Craig, artist and storyteller extraordinaire, and professor emerita and Tlingit author Ernestine Saankaláxt Hayes joined us. All three contributed to our knowledge of the waters. We returned to Auke Bay through Saginaw Channel where we all parted ways, happy, a little sunburned, and looking forward to our 2023 voyages back to Berners Bay.

**JAS Has Two Open Board Positions!**

**Programs Director:** The objective of this position is to make all plans and arrangements for the regular and special meetings of the Society, and promote interest and appreciation of the Society. Examples of this can include making plans and arrangements while finding guest speakers for our monthly JAS programs from September through April to promote an interest in birds, as well as bird conservation and research.

**Conservation Chair:** The objective of this position is to keep informed on local, state, and national government policies and actions affecting the natural environment and the conservation of natural resources, advise the Board and assist in carrying out the policies of the Society. Further, this committee shall endeavor to coordinate the Chapter's actions with the policies and activities of the National Audubon Society and to keep the National Audubon Society informed of the Chapter's activities. Examples of this can include writing letters on proposed land issues, attending community meetings, and organizing with partners in restoration work.

Interested? Email us at president@juneau-audubon-society.org.
You’re Invited! Attend Our August Audubon Potluck
By Deborah Hart
The Juneau Audubon Society Board of Directors will hold a two-day retreat and membership potluck barbecue on August 26 and 27.

On the first day — Friday, August 26 — Board members will meet at Sandy Beach to explore the surrounding trails looking for birds while also getting a chance to visit with each other. During the height of the pandemic, the Board has met virtually, so this will be the first time we gathered in person for some time!

From 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. you’re welcome to Savikko #2 (Log Cabin) at Sandy Beach for a potluck-style membership barbecue. Members and folks interested in learning more about JAS are welcome to join us! Board members will share a brief overview of recent activities and some ideas that they will discuss for the coming year. We are hoping many of our members will join us for the picnic so we can learn what types of activities you’d like to see JAS work toward.

The next day — Saturday, August 27 — the Board will meet for a full day of visioning and setting goals for the next few years. If you have any questions about the retreat or membership potluck barbecue, please reach out to JAS’s acting vice president Deborah Hart at hartdebbi@gmail.com or at 907-723-0258.

JAS membership — need to join or renew?
Joining or renewing membership with the National Audubon Society using an address in Southeast Alaska will include automatic JAS membership. Visit action.audubon.org/renew/membership to do so. Or for local-only JAS membership, print or copy and mail in this section of the page with a check for at least $10 made to Juneau Audubon Society for annual dues.

Name(s): ___________________________________________
Mailing address: ____________________________________
Email: _____________________________________________
Phone: _____________________________________________
Date: ______________________________________________
Amount enclosed: ____________________________

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