

Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society

March 2022

Whidbey Audubon Society is dedicated to the understanding, appreciation, and protection of birds and other wildlife species and their habitat on Whidbey Island and surrounding waters.

Whidbey Audubon Society Meets Thursday, March 10 Rooted: Connecting to the Earth with Lyanda Lynn Haupt

Lyanda Lynn Haupt is a Seattle-based award-winning author, naturalist, ecophilosopher and speaker, whose writing is at the forefront of the movement to connect people with nature and wilderness in their everyday lives.

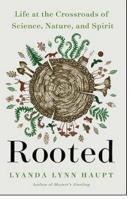
We live in a time when cutting-edge science supports a truth that poets, artists and earth-based cultures across the world have proclaimed over millennia: that life on this planet is radically interconnected. Our bodies, thoughts, minds, and spirits are affected by the whole of nature and they affect this whole in return. In a time of ecological crisis, this talk explores practices for living with meaning on our beloved, imperiled earth.

Lyanda is an Audubon master birder. She has created and directed educational programs for Seattle Audubon, worked in raptor rehabilitation in Vermont and been a seabird researcher for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the remote tropical Pacific. Her writing has appeared in a variety of publications such as *Orion, Discover, Utne, LA Times Literary Supplement, Wild Earth* and others.

Books that she has written include *Mozart's Starling, The Urban Bestiary: Encountering the Everyday Wild, Crow Planet: Essential Wisdom from the Urban Wilderness, Pilgrim on the Great Bird Continent* and *Rare Encounters with Ordinary Birds.* Her highly personal new book, *Rooted: Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature and Spirt,* invites us to live with the earth in ways that are both simple and profound. Lyanda will be signing copies of her book at the Kingfisher Bookstore in Coupeville on the afternoon of March 10 from 1 to 3 p.m. and at the meeting itself.

She lives in Seattle with her husband and daughter and a mixed backyard chicken flock.

Please join us on Thursday, March 10 at 7 p.m., for Whidbey Audubon's monthly meeting. **This is a hybrid meeting,** which means attenders may come in person or participate online via Zoom. Preregistration for in person attendance is required and is a limited to 24 people, who must be vaccinated and boosted to do so. Attendees must wear a mask, and seating will be six feet apart. Household members may sit together.



Lyanda Lynn Haupt, pictured right, will discuss her personal journey connecting



with the earth which inspired her new book, Rooted: Life at the Crossroads of Science, Nature and Spirit.

Front Room, 5603 Bayview Road, Langley. There is an elevator. and rest rooms.

The program is free and open to the public, All Whidbey Audubon members will receive an email with the Zoom link by the early afternoon of March 10. **Anyone wishing to attend in person must preregister** under the events listing on the *Whidbey Audubon website*, just click the red text. Nonmembers must also preregister to attend either online or in person. In person attendance is on a first come, first served basis.

Upcoming Field Trips

Saturday, March 12: FORT CASEY STATE PARK. It's almost Spring so come out for a fun walking birding trip at Fort Casey State Park. This is a good trip for beginner birders. We'll explore the habitat near the lighthouse, then head up the trail (short but steep) through the forest to the picnic area. If there is time,

The meeting is at the Bayview Cash Store, upstairs in the

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President's Column: From the Window Perch



 $oldsymbol{\Lambda}$ spring day. I decided to go out to watch the birds at my feeder. I had just settled down

about 2:30 p.m., glanced up and saw a wing displayed across my suet duo feeder.

I hopped up and discovered a poor, Red-breasted Nuthatch (RBNU) wedged between the bars. He looked pretty surprised. So was I. He was stuck in that position with his wing between the bars. I opened it and tried to see if he could come out. No luck. I didn't want to waste time and studied it quickly before deciding that I needed my husband, Larry, and his friend, Nick, to help me rescue him.

They studied it and we finally decided there was no choice — either the RBNU or my \$40 feeder. You can guess which one won. Larry and Nick maneuvered the feeder around and kept cutting various parts while the RBNU continued pecking me and moving his tiny feet. It probably took about 10 minutes, but it seemed like forever. I held him for



Drawing by Patty Cheek

— Dave Krause

a few moments and hoped he relaxed a little before I let him fly off. Both Larry and Nick and I were thankful that he was able to fly off. It would have been nice to have photos of the event. However, his life was more important.

I don't know how he got there like that. RBNU and chickadees seem to maneuver just fine as I've watched them for years now in that particular bird feeder. Evidently, he was frightened by

Nominations Welcome

ur President and Vice President positions are open for nominations. The terms are two years each, beginning on May 26, 2022. Interested individuals may self-nominate themselves. Nominations will be accepted through our membership meeting on March 10. Please click red type to contact one of our Nominating Committee contacts below to express interest or to find out more about these positions.

Jann Ledbetter **Carlos** Andersen Dave Krause

Whidbey Audubon Society works to protect birds and their habitats on Whidbey Island through activism, projects, education and birding experiences. Our leadership positions of President and Vice President provide opportunities to chart our course and influence our effectiveness in the coming years. Our organization bylaws are available on the Whidbey Audubon Society website. Find the link under the last menu item, About Us.

h, it's February 12 and we have a sort of something and tried to fly off, but he had not taken time to see his departure clearly. I was afraid that he might have damaged his wing. He seemed okay though and I think I saw him at the feeders later. He looked a little ruffled. Me, too.

> After that, I sat and listened to the towhees and finches sing and did a grateful meditation.

I'm thankful for this Red-breasted Nuthatch. Thankful so much that he was still able to fly. Hopeful that he will continue to live a fulfilling life.

- Patty Cheek, President

Would that I were under the cliffs, in the secret-hiding places of the rocks, that Zeus might change me to a winged bird.

— *Sophocles*, Hippolytus, 428 B.C.

Dates to Remember

Please check the *Whidbey Audubon website calendar and events listing page* for more detailed information and how to enter Zoom for some of these upcoming events. There also might be further information elsewhere in this issue.

April is Earth and Ocean Month throughout Whidbey Island. Check out the many events listed § on the *Goosefoot website*.



- 5: Deadline for Scholarship Applications to Island high schools
- 10: Audubon Me≠≠≠eting: Roots: Connection to the Natural World; hybrid at Bayview Cash Store or Zoom at 7 p.m.
- 12: Field Trip: Fort Casey led by Janet Hall
- 16: Birds 'n' Beer: Bring your photos and stories. 5 p.m.
- 17: Deadline for April Shorelines
- 23: Page Peepers: The Bird Way by Jennifer Ackerman, 7 p.m.
- 24: Board Meeting cancelled for Strategic Planning on 31st
- 25-27: Sandhill Crane Festival, Othello, Wash.

APRIL

- 9: Morning Bird Walk at Hoypus Forest at Deception Pass State Park with Patty Cheek at 10 a.m.
- 14: Audubon Meeting: The Aerialists: One Tough Way to Make a Living with Steve and Martha Ellis 7 p.m. Hybrid: online and Zoom
- 20: Birds 'n' Beer, 5 p.m.
- **21: Deadline** for May *Shorelines*
- 23: Morning Bird Walk at Bowman Bay at Deception Pass State Park with Charlotte Ginn at 10 a.m.
- 27: Page Peepers Book Group: Vesper Flights by Helen Macdonald, 7 p.m.
- 28: Board Meeting, 7 p.m.; members welcome

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Oak Harbor Library Display Is Up Through March 15



Photos by Sharon Gauthier

Bird Specimen Library volunteers Sharon Gauthier and Cheryl Bradkin prepare a display of owls and raptors for the Oak Harbor Library. All specimens were predeceased birds preserved under Whidbey Audubon Society's federal and state permits. Specimens are available for use in educational programs and displays such as this.

Specimen Library Chairperson Robin Llewellyn thanks the many volunteers who work steadily to maintain the specimen collection. Tasks range from those who do the actual taxidermy, to those who place the finished specimen in a storage bin. Robin may be contacted at 360-320-5480.

Upcoming Field Trips, from page 1

we will drive to the ferry parking lot and check out what birds are hanging out. Meet at 9 a.m. at the lighthouse parking lot. Drive up the road into the park (1280 Engle Road, Coupeville, 98239) and take a right by the flag pole (do not go down the hill to the fort) and drive to the end of the road to the lighthouse parking lot. You will need a Discover Pass, binocs and bring a scope if you have one. For more information email *Janet Hall* or call 360-969-1340.

Deception Pass State Park Trips

Whidbey Audubon is also working with Deception Pass State Park in leading bird walks with park staff. These are open to the public and are a nice way to enjoy the birds of the state park. These walks are scheduled for every other Saturday this spring and dates and information can be found on the calendar page of the *Deception Pass Foundation website*.

Our first cooperative adventure was on February 12 at the Cranberry Lake parking lot. We had a small, enthusiastic group of new birders as we viewed various waterfowl in the sound and in the lake. On Saturday February 26, Steve Ellis led the trip at Cornet Bay and Hoypus forest.

Upcoming trips at the Park are:

Saturday, March 12: WEST BEACH at 10 a.m. led by David Parent

Saturday, April 9: HOYPUS FOREST at 10 a.m. led by Patty Cheek; an Earth and Ocean Month event.

Saturday, April 23: BOWMAN BAY at 10 a.m. led by Charlotte Ginn; an Earth and Ocean Month event.

Anyone who has a desire for a place they think would be good to have a field trip or are interested in leading a field trip, is encouraged to contact me at *cginnsixbit@yahoo.com* or 209-352-6534.

— Charlotte Ginn

Field Trip Checklist

- Field trips are free and open to anyone interested in birding or conservation. Bring your friends!
- Beginners are very welcome.
- Carpooling is encouraged and even required for some sites with limited parking.
- Dress for the weather and in layers.
- Very bad weather cancels a trip. Check with the trip leader.
- If you have them, bring binoculars, scope and field guides.
- If you might need them, bring a drink and snack.

We are always looking for new trip leaders and assistants. If you are interested, please contact Charlotte Ginn at *cginnsixbit@yahoo.com*.

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or four Common Redpolls with a flock of 30+ Pine Siskins at Greenbank Farm. The flock was in alders along the forest edge. One of the redpolls may have been a Hoary but unfortunately, I wasn't able to photograph it. – Steve Ellis

February 9: Eared Grebe. Location: Keystone Harbor entrance. — Dave Parent



hoto by Carlos Ande

Short-eared Owl

February 9: Very cooperative Short-eared Owl at Crockett Lake. — Carlos Andersen

Duck of the season: male checking out a favorite nesting box on the large wetland complex at Cultus Bay Road and French Road. There is also a Northern Shrike in the area: not rare but unusual to see. Watch the tree tops along the southern border of the Whidbey Camano Land Trust wetland, visible from Cultus Bay Road with a scope.

— Dyanne Sheldon February 14: Saw my first Rufous Hummingbird of the year at my feeder just now. Location: On Towhee Lane.

— Linda Bainbridge February 16: First Rufus Hummingbird of the year in Coupeville. Location: Below Pennington Loop.

— Sharon Gauthie February 23: Two Band-

February 7: There were three February 10: First Wood tailed Pigeons, the first of miles south west of Clinton the year, arrived this morning Ferry dock. at our feeders. Location: two

— George E Heleker

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PLEASE POST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS to the Whidbey Audubon *Society (WAS) website*, Select the aqua button, "Report a Sighting." You can also submit a photo using the aqua button labeled "Submit Gallery Photos."

Sightings should be on Whidbey Island or relate in some way to Whidbey Audubon. Reports should refer to birds or other wildlife that are not commonly seen here. Alternatively, they may refer to migratory birds that arrive outside their normal seasons.

Reports of especially interesting sightings in nearby areas are welcome. Greater selectivity is needed to keep the email volume reasonable so editors will exercise judgment on whether the rarity, proximity and significance of sightings merit inclusion.

These guidelines reflect the interests of local birders. Please respect the essentially scientific nature of the Sightings feature. Thanks for your cooperation.

There are designated spaces to submit your information, such as what you saw, where you saw it and the date and approximate time. Although we are asking those who post to leave a phone number or email address with your sighting, they will not be included on the actual "Sightings" page. Thank you!

Keep up with "Sightings" on the was website or on our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/WhidbeyAudubonSociety.

BIN South Delights in Birds and Birders at Deer Lagoon

February 10: Thursday morning conditions were favorable at the beach, and between the shore and the lagoon sides, we saw and/or heard at least 39 species, including scoters, loons, mergansers, most kinds of ducks you can imagine, and of course, gulls, Eagles and murmurating shorebirds. There is nothing like hanging in a gathering of birding peeps, puzzling out sightings and sharing with new participants. This time an enthusiastic youngster joined us. Hopefully he wasn't too overwhelmed by us and all of the information flying his way!

Hours later, some of us were having the hardest time dragging ourselves away from the dike and were rewarded with a Great Horned Owl tucked into the trees east of the dike, and tolerating the mobbing by crows and robins (who had alerted us to its presence). We also got a good look at a Merlin perched, before it took off hunting.

If you thought **Short-billed Gulls** were adorable, you should have seen them sitting on a sand spit with Bonaparte's Gulls, who are even smaller. (The size of a gull is in proportion to its relative attractiveness?)

The reported Snow Geese evaded us for now, but apparently they have been sighted lately in the llama field.

— Cathi Bower

Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) South meets every other Thursday morning. Time varies with the season. *Email Cathi*.

Birding in Neighborhood's Fantastic Finds on Dugualla Bay

though it was a bit high in the beginning for any shorebirds, a small flock of **Yellowlegs** showed up when we were leaving. We saw the expected birds including Mallards, Northern Pintails, Scaup, Hooded Mergansers, Great Blue Herons and a Northern Harrier. There were large numbers of Green-winged

February 9: The weather cooperated and so did the tides. Al- Teal, which was a bit unexpected. While oohing and aahing over the Teal, a small fluff ball on the power line caught our attention. It was a beautiful male Kestrel looking for brunch. First try was unsuccessful, then it disappeared from view. Hope

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Bird of the Month: Cinnamon Teal (Anas cyanoptera)

There is very good news about the Cinnamon Teal dabbling ducks and their conservation status; they have a large area and are not endangered. Unique among the dabbling ducks, they have nesting sites in South America! They breed in western North America from southern British Columbia and Montana south to Texas. They can be found in freshwater marshes and ponds. They favor fresh or alkaline shallow lakes, but not in our coastal salt marshes.

A close relative of the Blue-winged Teal (and sometimes hybridizing with it), the Cinnamon has a slightly larger bill, better developed for straining food items out of the water. It usually forages in shallow water, swimming forward with head partly submerged, straining food from water. One feeding bird may follow another, taking advantage of food stirred up by paddling actions of the first bird. Occasionally they feed on land near water.

Other facts about this beautiful duck: 1) They migrate usually by day. They are not so much a long-distance migrant as the Blue-winged Teal; 2) They have a soft quack with various chattering and clucking noises; 3) Cinnamons eat mainly the seeds of smartweeds, sedges, grasses and pondweeds. Insects, snails, and small crustaceans round out their diet.

Love and lust: The males and females both have large, tealcolored spots on the wings. The males have red eyes. Several males may court one female, making ritualized mock feeding and preening movements. Short display flights may develop into pursuit flights, with males chasing one female. The nest site, usually close to the water among good cover of sedges, weeds, salt grass, is generally well concealed. The female selects the nest site and builds the nest which is actually a shallow depression

BIN North, from page 4

it got something tasty.

Walking over to the pond side we began our search for Canvasback Ducks. We saw **Swans** at the far side, along with **Ring-necked Ducks, Red-winged Blackbirds**, and more **Teal**. Scopes out for a closer look and there they were! The **Canvasbacks** of Dugualla Bay. Wouldn't be winter birding without them. On closer look, we spotted the similar looking **Redhead**. The head and bill shape are different, and the Redhead has a blue-gray bill with a black tip while the Canvasback has a dark bill.

Another surprise was hearing a symphony of bird song from a group of six **Meadowlarks**! To end the morning, the tapping of a **Downy Woodpecker** in a leafless shrub bid us farewell. In all, 29 species were seen on this winter morning.

— Marcia Lazoff

Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) North meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m. Contact Marcia to be added to the email list: *mlazoff@comcast.net*.



Photo byTom Koerner/USFWS

Cinnamon Teal

in the ground made softer with dead grass and weeds and lined with down.

Baby ducks: The brown female lays nine to 12 eggs which are whitish to very pale bluff. Only the female incubates for 21 to 25 days. The female leads the young to the water where they have to find their own food. The young are capable of flight seven weeks after hatching. The male is sometimes seen accompanying the female and her brood, unlike many duck species. If danger threatens the young, the adult female may put on a broken-wing act as a distraction display. Unlike most duck species, the male may not abandon his mate until near the time the eggs hatch.

— Judy Kaplan

Field Trip Report: Winter Birds of Skagit

What a marvelous day we had on the "Great White Bird" field trip on February 12! Great weather, a good turnout of nearly 20 participants and a wonderful show of birds. Because of the number of participants, two sub-groups were formed with Jay Adams and Ruth Richards leading one and Dave Parent and Joe Sheldon leading the other. Cell phone contact was frequent between the groups. A total of 79 species (one still is in discussion) were recorded.

Highlights for the trip were **Redheads**, **Canvasbacks**, and **Western Meadowlarks** (Dugualla Bay), three species of **loons** (West Beach at Deception Pass), and on Samish/Skagit Flats and Fir Island -- large congregations of **Snow Geese** (10,000+) with close-up views, both species of **swan**, **Prairie Falcon**, and both **Black Phoebe** and a possible juvenile **Northern Goshawk** at Wiley Slough (Fir Island). The last is still being discussed and photographs analyzed by "experts." Thanks.

— Joe Sheldon, Field Trip Coleader

What's Motus?

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System, an international collaborative network, uses automated radio telemetry to track wildlife, especially migratory birds.

Many migratory bird species are in trouble with their numbers decreasing rapidly. Conservationists wanting to protect these species need to be able to understand the complete migratory cycle of each species, including stopover sites, length of feeding, main and minor routes, etc. to better protect these species into the future. In the past it has been difficult for researchers to track birds to determine their routes and stopover locations. Radar has allowed researchers to see large flocks of migrants, but not identify the species within them. Banding allows for capturerecapture limited data and most geolocation devices are limited.

An international collaboration which allows the tracking of individual birds (and bats and large insects) has been developed by Motus Wildlife Tracking System. Researchers fit small lightweight radio-transmitters on individual birds and their signal is detected by receivers scattered across the landscape. Each of these tags has a unique signature that can be used to determine where they go, how fast they transit between areas, how long they stay in an area and other aspects of their behavior. The data from these receivers is then centralized at the Birds Canada National Data Centre where it is disseminated to all researchers and organizations in the network.

At its core Motus is community science. Receiving stations for the radio-transmitters are put up and maintained by researchers, organizations, nonprofits, governments and individuals. There are 1,285 Motus receiving stations in thirty-one countries on



Motus receiver station at sunset.

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four continents. In the US most stations to date are on the eastern portion of the country. There is a current effort by some Audubon chapters and other agencies to develop a network of receivers in the



Photo by Peter Paton, motus.org

Piping Plover fitted with a small lightweight radio-transmitter.

Puget Sound region. The Motus network would be interested in having a receiver on Whidbey Island. To learn more, do a web search for *Motus Wildlife Tracking System* or click the red text. Then if you are interested in helping pursue a Motus tower on Whidbey Island, please contact *Sharon Gauthier*.

Welcome New and Renewing Members

New Members:

Paul McElwain Denny Ryan Linda Morris Carolyn Buck Greg Denton & Jani Lillias Bever Nancy Corrigan Gaea Van Breda

Greg Denton & Janice Dilworth, Pigeon Guillemot John Burchard, Spotted Towhee

Renewing Members:

Erika Sweger Richard & Liz Berg Debra & Michael Turnbull Anthony & Alice Tobias Cathleen Queeno-Wall Christine Kelly Jeri Gregory Joseph K. Sheldon Lee Chavez Lloyd Kiff Lori Holt Verleen Boyer Peter Bunin James Dwight Anne Proffitt Charles Pettis Marcia Sill Judith Ray Gordon Suzie Wood

Michael Seraphinoff & Susan Prescott Amy & Chris Gulick, Red-Tailed Hawk Matt & Govinda Holtby, Pigeon Guillemot Patty & Larry Cheek, Pigeon Guillemot Teresa Rodriguez & FJ Lepla, Pigeon Guillemot Ellen Nelson, Spotted Towhee Libby & Chip Hayward, Spotted Towhee Mary Bloom, Spotted Towhee Val & Joe Hillers,Spotted Towhee Marcia Davidson, Spotted Towhee

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Don't Spring Into Garden Cleanup Too Soon!

Spring is here. A time when warmer weather naturally turns a winter-weary homeowner's thoughts towards tackling outdoor chores. The first warm weather of the season may coax us out into the yard, but pollinators in your garden aren't ready to take a chance on the first warm day. Chrysalides still cling to last season's dried standing plant material. While you may begin to

PLEASE RESIST the urge to clean up your gardens until after temperatures are constantly above 50 degrees! Many butterflies, bees and other pollinators are currently overwintering in the dead leaves and hollowed out stems of last year's plants. If you clean out your garden now, you will literally be throwing away this year's butterflies, bees and other beneficial pollinators.

Stephanie Neis found this meme on Facebook, but with no source. Stephanie and the *Shorelines* editors spent some time searching and found several similar references to backup this advice.

see bumble bees and ground-nesting bees emerge as flowering trees and shrubs burst into bloom, they still need cover during chilly nights and when "April brings the sweet spring showers, on and on for hours and hours." While mining bees, mason bees, carpenter bees, and bumble bees may be out and about by early April, other species such as sweat bees are still hiding out, waiting for the warmer days that arrive in May. Meanwhile, last year's leaf litter is still providing protection for both plants and invertebrates against late-season frosts.

— Justin Wheeler on 4. April 2017, Xerces Society: xerces.org/blog/dont-spring-into-garden-cleanup-too-soon

The *Oregon State University Extension Service* also has excellent tips along the same lines.

Caring for Our Common Home

This is the theme for this year's Island-wide Earth and Ocean Month Celebration in April 2022. Whidbey Audubon Society is participating with two field trips and its regular monthly program presented by Steve and Martha Ellis. Tune in for events at on the *Earth and Ocean Month website* hosted by Goosefoot. Submissions may be sent to *Sami Postma*.

WHIDBEY AUDUBON SOCIETY - MEMBERSHIP

Please make your check payable to: WHIDBEY AUDUBON SOCIETY Mail to: Jann Ledbetter, 1112 Maple Place, Coupeville WA 98239 Or pay online: www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org/membership

Name	Shorelines Recognition? □Yes □No
Address	

Phone ____

Email _____(Our newsletters will be emailed to you.)

□ Check here to receive your *Shorelines* by mail. Please add an additional **\$10.00** to defray mailing costs.

Select Category of Annual Membership:

Individual Membership \$20Household Membership \$30Spotted Towhee \$50

Pigeon Guillemot \$75Red-tailed Hawk \$100Osprey \$250

□ \$1000 Lifetime Membership

\$_____ Additional Donation to be used for Scholarships

SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY MEMBERSHIP for first year National Members only. Receive a joint membership in National and Whidbey Audubon for one year for only \$35. Make check payable to National Audubon.

The Whidbey Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible. It is Whidbey Audubon policy to never share our membership and subscription information with other groups.

Whidbey Audubon Society

Whidbey Audubon programs are 7 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month except December, July and August

Meetings may be conducted virtually using ZOOM and hybrid at Bayview Cash Store in March; in Coupeville in April, May and June

Whidbey Audubon Board and Committee Chairs 2021–2022

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President	. Patty Cheek
Immediate Past President	Sharon Gauthier
Vice President	. Dave Allen
Secretary	. Anita Baldri
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Programs	. Stef Neis
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Birdathon	. Kathy Obersinner
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Specimen Library	. Robin Llewellyn
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Hybrid Meeting Thursday, March 10

Bayview Cash Store & Online 5603 Bayview Road, Langley

PREREGISTER to attend in person whidbeyaudubonsociety.org

7 p.m. socialize and brief meeting to call for nominations for President and Vice President.

7:30 program begins.

Rooted: Connecting to the Earth

with Lyanda Lynn Haupt