



# Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society

May 2023

*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.*

## Wings over Whidbey Bird Festival – May 18 to 20

The full program of events is coming together for our first-time festival, Wings over Whidbey, May 18 to 20, 2023. It is a free, two-and-a-half-day community birding festival with educational and informational presentations, a photography class, guided birding tours, a bird photo contest for children and youth, and the return of the Bird in the Hand event featuring our bird specimen library. See the updates below and visit the website page frequently

for the Schedule of Events; also on [page 8](#).



### *Bird Walks finalized*

The website now has links to register for the bird walks with information on the guides, locations and times. Go to [Wings over Whidbey Festival](#) to the schedule and click on the registration link provided for each walk. Numbers per walk are limited and will be on a first come, first served basis. Please be sure to print out your confirmation as proof of registration to bring to your walk.

## The Bird in the Hand

On Saturday, May 20 the Whidbey Audubon Society, Bird Specimen Library will join the Wings Over Whidbey Bird Festival to present *The Bird in the Hand*. This is an event where the Bird Specimen Library has an opportunity to put its extensive collection of bird specimens on public display. It is designed for all the very curious birders out there who would like to get a better look at what birds look like up close



This volunteer is showing a male Northern Harrier to visitors to the 2016 Bird in the Hand Event.

### *A few more volunteers are needed*

There are few spots left that give you the opportunity to “micro” volunteer. Remember, we can’t do events like this without you.

We need two people to be at the greeters table at 6:30 for the Friday night presentation by Tom Bancroft.

Birds in the Hand and programs on May 20th at Coupeville High School Commons — we still need two greeters for the 10:45 and 12:45 presentations. We also need help with selling

**Bird in the Hand, see [page 10](#)**

**Bird Festival, see [page 3](#)**

## Flock to the Fun — BIRDATHON 2023

Global Big Day of Birding falls on May 13. this year, while our local teams will be choosing a 24-hour period sometime in the first two weeks, recording all species they observe on Whidbey Island



Photo by Jim Gage

Red Crossbill pair at the feeder.

and surrounding waters. The team that sights the most species will win the prestigious Golden Binoculars Award (announced at our May meeting, depending when all teams have done their Big Day), while the team that raises the most money will earn the Bronze Owl Bank (the BOB will be announced at the September meeting when all data is in).

We are excited to introduce our newest Birdathon team, **No Egrets!**, led by Louie Shellenberger and Patricia Duarte, with Janet Jernigan and Marcia Wesley. At this point we have seven dynamo teams:

**Birdathon 2023, see [page 3](#)**



## President's Column: From the Window Perch

Frances Merriam Bailey — what a lady. I discovered her a month ago and, I must say, she was a courageous woman. Her obsession with birds began in the 1880s due to a friend who was an avid birdwatcher. She learned to watch birds in their natural habitats and to describe their living actions. She became relentless in trying to persuade her friends to quit wearing hats with bird feathers when she was in her last year at Smith College. She was an activist and exemplar.

She wrote *Birds Through an Opera-Glass in 1896* — going outside to observe living birds rather than taking killed birds to study. I found it interesting that Scott Weidensaul has described her book as the first field book on American birds. She worked hard to establish a new Audubon Society chapter in Massachusetts with Fannie Hardy Eckstrom, who earlier had been wearing feathered hats and caused Frances to have a fit. When they formed the Audubon chapter, Fannie had stopped wearing feathered hats.

A *Smithsonian Magazine* article written in 2018 mentioned Florence and her tireless efforts to reverse the popular trend of feathered hats. The article also mentioned Lili Lehmann, a

German opera star, who also urged her fans to stop wearing feathers. Lili would give them autographs only if they promised to stop.

I especially liked an article Frances wrote for *Audubon Magazine* in 1886 after she started the chapter. She wrote about field study and asked students to observe “how the birds look, what they have to say, how they spend their time, what sort of houses they build, and what are their family secrets.”

Frances is not the only conservationist and activist to lead the way to the 1918 Migratory Bird Act, but she certainly was instrumental in helping with it. I am so grateful that Frances helped to save Egrets, Sandhill Cranes, Wood Ducks and others. Go birding and enjoy.



Credit: Alamy. [www.nytimes.com/2019/07/17/obituaries/florence-merriam-bailey-overlooked.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/17/obituaries/florence-merriam-bailey-overlooked.html)

Florence Merriam Bailey, who evolved from an activist for bird habitats to an environmentalist who pioneered modern bird-watching techniques.

— *Patty Cheek, President*

### Whidbey Audubon Society

[www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org](http://www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org) • 509-906-1663 • [contact.us@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org](mailto:contact.us@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org)

P.O. Box 1012, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

A chapter of National Audubon Society and a nonprofit organization EIN #80-0488910

### Board and Cabinet Chairs 2022-2023

#### Executive Committee

President Patty Cheek  
Vice President Linda Griesbach  
Treasurer Sheri Croll  
Secretary Anita Badri

#### Auxiliary Committee

Past-president(s) Sharon Gauthier  
Nominating 2023 Kathy Obersinner  
Sharon Gauthier  
Patricia Duarte  
Internal Audit Stephanie Neis  
Roy Seliber

#### At Large Appointments

Cathi Bower  
Roy Selibert  
Janet Jernigan  
Kathy Obersinner

#### Core Cabinet Chairs and Subcommittees

Support Services Jann Ledbetter  
Membership Management, Jann Ledbetter  
Online Services & Technology Support OPEN  
Special Project Grants and Fundraising OPEN  
History and Records – Anita Badri

Conservation & Science Charlotte Ginn,  
Conservation – Linda Griesbach (temporary chair),  
Salish Sea Guillemot Network – Frances Wood

Salish Sea Guillemot Network – Cathi Bower  
Christmas Bird Count North – Jay Adams,  
Christmas Bird Count South – Govinda Holtby  
Bird Specimen Library – Robin Llewellyn

#### Outreach Susan Prescott

Publicity – Susan Prescott  
Newsletter Editor– Jenny Brown  
Volunteer Recruitment and Management OPEN  
Social Media – Cathi Bower

#### Events Stephanie Neis

Membership Meetings & Programs – Stef Neis  
Field Trips – Charlotte Ginn  
Birding in Neighborhoods South – Cathi Bower  
Birding in Neighborhoods North – Denise Marion  
Nancy Luenn

Page Peepers – Patty Cheek  
Birdathon – Kathy Obersinner  
Birds 'n' Beer – Patty Cheek  
Bird in Hand Festival – Robin Llewellyn  
Wings over Whidbey Festival – Stephanie Neis

#### Education Sharon Gauthier

Online Educational Classes, Patty Cheek  
Public Presentations OPEN  
School Programs OPEN  
Birds of Whidbey Class – Dyanne Sheldon  
Scholarship Program – Ann Sullivan

# Annual Hosted Dinner Membership Meeting and Dessert Potluck

Calling all members to a special hosted dinner and dessert potluck at the Coupeville Recreation Hall for the **2023 Annual Membership Meeting on Thursday, May 11**. Dinner is served at 5:30 p.m. At 6:45 the 2023 Scholarship winners will be introduced. Meet the Birdathon teams, which will be taking pledges. Other recognitions will be presented. Also, the membership will vote for the next two-year term positions of Board Secretary and Treasurer.

Please register on the website so we can order enough food for dinner. Find it via the calendar under “events” or click red for [the event listing page](#). The menu includes: roasted chicken and four side salads with one hearty vegan salad, all, except the macaroni salad, will be gluten free. All you need to bring is a

dessert to share. We need about eight more desserts. Please email [Stef](#), with what you plan to bring and how many it will serve.

We thought it best to plate the desserts ahead of time and need three or four people who can volunteer to do this. We also need some volunteers to set up the chairs and tables and set out food, take down the chairs and tables plus general cleanup. Please email Stef, as soon as possible if you can assist here and for which task.

The business meeting, beginning at 6:45, will be available on Zoom for those who are not able to attend in person. Please register from the website under May 11 events.

— *Stephanie Neis, Events chair*

## Bird Festival, from page 1

raffle tickets from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Please contact me at [programs@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org](mailto:programs@whidbeyaudubonsociety.org) as soon as possible, if you are able to help.

Other than that, everything is coming together for this first-

time festival! We have been fortunate to have great financial community support, please be sure to thank our sponsors when you get a chance.

— *Stephanie Neis*



**Rick Matsen**  
In memory of  
Anne Matsen,  
my best birding partner



## Birdathon 2023, from page 1

- **All for Knot:** Joe Sheldon and Dave Parent
- **The Fledglings:** Kathy Stella and Jenny Brown
- **Wild Women of Whidbey:** Frances Wood, Ann Casey, Linda Bainbridge, Govinda Holtby, Ann Nishimoto, Marilyn Strayer
- **Winging It:** Sarah Schmidt, Janet Hall, Dyanne Sheldon, Libby Hayward, Ann Linnea
- **Shore Thing:** Cathi Bower, Kathy Obersinner, Patty Cheek, Mary Bloom
- **The Coupevillains:** Steve and Martha Ellis, Sandy Shields, Bill Bradkin

Please go to our Birdathon team [webpage](#) to read more about each team, and to make either a pledge per species, or a donation. If you prefer, make a general donation [here](#). Our goal this year is to raise as much we can to support Whidbey Audubon's commitment to protect birds and their habitats through edu-

cation, outreach and research, with the money going into the General Fund or the Scholarship Fund (supporting graduating seniors going on to a four-year college with an environmental focus, our future bird stewards.)

Remember to let teams know if you are a Microsoft employee or Boeing employee or retiree, as these businesses will match your donation. All business sponsors will be honored in our newsletter and on our website.

For additional information, go to our [webpage](#) or contact [Kathy Obersinner](#) (red text is hyperlinked, just click).

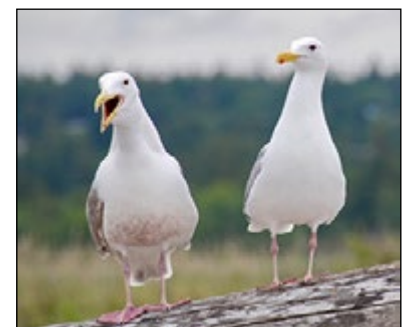


Photo by Jim Gage

The Gulls

# Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings

**March 26:** Several (around 6-8) **Western Meadowlarks** that flew across the road towards Crockett Lake near the entrance east of the viewing platform. — *Carla Corin*

**March 30:** Five **swans** this morning at Deer Lagoon, on the west side between the old pilings and Double Bluff Road. Four **Trumpeter** and one **Tundra**, identified with scope. They may be the same five we saw at Dugualla Bay March 26. — *Libby Hayward*

**March 31:** We saw five **Turkey Vultures** circling and drifting northwestward over Joseph Whidbey State Park as we drove by around 10:30 this morning. — *Carla Corin*

**March 31:** **Ring-necked Ducks**, one male, two females. They arrive every year in March and nest in one of the ponds at the Whidbey Golf Course in Oak Harbor. Usually there are pairs, but this year only one male thus far. Location: Whidbey Golf Course, which is unfortunately private property. But I would check nearby waters as well. — *Vince Hagel*



Photo by Stephanie Neis

## Band-tailed Pigeon

**April 4:** Several **Varied Thrushes** calling in the woods by Venture Out Nursery. I

thought they had all left our area so was pleasantly surprised to hear them. Also a First of the Year (FOY) **Band-tailed Pigeon** in our yard on Aquila in Langley.

— *Stef Neis*

**April 6:** Several **Turkey Vultures** over Whidbey and Fidalgo Islands. I spotted Turkey Vultures while driving State Route 20 from Anacortes to Oak Harbor. This is the usual time to see many vultures making their way to Vancouver Island. — *Vince Hagel*

**April 9:** **Osprey** on nest Location: SR 525 just south of Classic Road. South of Greenbank on cell phone tower.

— *Joe Sheldon*

**April 10:** **Vesper Sparrow** at Pacific Rim Institute. Seen in the large blackberry thicket near the largest shore pine on the east side of the property.

— *Dave Parent*

**April 12:** Leucistic adult **Bald Eagle** at the top of a mature Douglas fir tree. Location: East side of Useless Bay Avenue between Discovery Place and Soundview Drive (Useless Bay Colony neighborhood).

— *Libby Hayward*

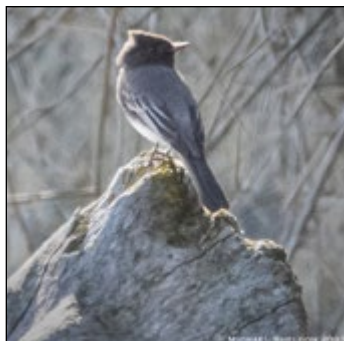


Photo by Michael Sheldon

## Black Phoebe

**April 14:** **Black Phoebe** feeding at Possession Beach. Typical tail drooping and perching

on driftwood and tree branches, flying off and returning.

— *Michael Sheldon*

**April 20:** Eight **American White Pelicans** at Deer Lagoon this morning. Counted with spotting scope.

— *Libby Hayward*



Photo by Stephanie Neis

## Caspian Terns

**April 22:** FOY — three **Caspian Terns** in the middle of Deer Lagoon, then flew out over towards Sunlight Beach area. — *Stef Neis*

**April 22:** **Townsend's Solitaire** flew between roof and ground several times. Location: Zig Zag Lane, Langley.

— *Lee Kanning*

**April 23:** A **Marbled Godwit** was with a flock of 16 **Whimbrels** on the beach at Joseph Whidbey State Park. Also present were five **Sanderlings** and a few **Black Turnstones**. Also, a **Chipping Sparrow** was in Freeland Park, first on a sign and then it flew to a pine.

— *Steve Ellis*

**April 25:** Rare for Western



Photo by Carlos Andersen

## Lark Sparrow

Washington, a **Lark Sparrow**. Location: Pacific Rim Institute (PRI), Coupeville, in the propagation beds as you enter north of the main house.

— *Carlos Andersen*



Photo by Steve Platz

## Townsend's Solitaire

**April 25:** This afternoon I noticed a **Townsend's Solitaire** with a distressed eye. It held its mouth open continuously, but also seemed to fly easily from perch to perch along the beach at Ledgewood. — *Steve Platz*

**April 25:** **Lark Sparrow** at Pacific Rim Institute, near the entrance. Thank you to Sarah and Bill for alerting us! We also saw three **Mountain Bluebirds** in the brushy field south(?) of the little white buildings.

— *Carla Corin*



Photo by Linda Griesbach

## Female Mountain Bluebird

**April 25:** Female **Mountain Bluebird** seen at Pacific Rim Institute. (Two or three more seen a little later, fleetingly.)

— *Linda Griesbach*

**April 25:** Five **Adult Purple Martins** flew, calling and playing, from West Canal to East Canal on Lagoon Point.

— *Mary Hollen*

**More Sightings, see page 5**

## Conservation Column: Weeds Wrangled/Habitat Improved

Members from South Whidbey High School's Interact Club (a service club sponsored by Rotary International) honored Earth Day by pulling young Scot's broom (also known as Scotch Broom) plants on the Deer Lagoon dike on April 22. Interact members Spenser, Jake, Luke, and Joey were joined by their adult mentor Gwen, along with Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) Weed Wranglers Gordy and Linda Griesbach, and pitched in to help with the Scot's broom eradication efforts at the lagoon. The young, energetic and enthusiastic helpers pulled several thousands of young plants in a short period of time. Removing these plants means thousands (if not tens of thousands) of Scot's broom seeds will NOT be sprouting on the dike in the future. A BIG "Thank You" and "job well done" to the members of the Interact Club who put *Service Above Self* and contributed to improving the habitat at Deer Lagoon!

WAS weeders also wrangled Scot's broom on March 17 and April 17 along with some blackberries which were encroaching



Photo submitted by Linda Griesbach

Members of South Whidbey High School's Interact Club conquer Scot's broom at Deer Lagoon,

on some of the new native plants. The Wranglers were joined on April 17 by two members of the county's Noxious Weed Board. The natives — tall Oregon grape, red flowering currant, Nootka rose, and snowberry — were installed on the low (west) dike at Deer Lagoon in February, 2022. A census of the new plants was taken in April 2023, and it appears the majority of the plants have made it through their first winter and are putting on new growth!

Great progress has been made in reducing the Scot's broom population at the lagoon. Diligence is the key to ensuring the new plants have an opportunity to thrive. Scot's broom numbers will continue to be monitored, and don't forget—tansy ragwort and thistle seasons are just around the corner! The Wranglers will be on the look out for these invasive, noxious weeds as well. If you would like to be part of the team to help tamp down these undesirables, let Linda Griesbach know. She'll keep you informed of all upcoming weeding projects.

— Linda Griesbach, *Interim Conservation Chair*

## Conservation Matters

### Our Shores

Many of us spend time enjoying Whidbey's beautiful beaches and shores. With around 200 miles of shoreline, there is plenty to explore and appreciate. Keeping all of Washington's shores healthy is important for people who enjoy them or make a living from them, as well as to the birds, wildlife, invertebrates and plant species that rely on them. As you spend time on or near Whidbey's shoreline, you can provide valuable information to agencies and organizations which can use that information to track changes occurring on our shores. **MyCoast: Washington** is a project of the Washington Department of Natural Resources in collaboration with Sea Grant Washington, Northwest Straits

Initiative, the United States Geological Survey, and others. Participants submit photos of things like abandoned vessels, creosote logs, large marine debris, evidence of storm surge or king tides, or perhaps beach change over time. These data are collected and made available to agencies which are concerned with shoreline stewardship and are of great use to them. To date, more than 10,000 photographs have been submitted.

You can submit photos using the MyCoast app on your phone, or you can submit them from your computer via their [website](#). Check out MyCoast: Washington for more information and to view some of the previously submitted photos.

### Recycling Update

Alkaline batteries (e.g., AAs, Ds, 9Vs, etc.) are *no longer* accepted for recycling at any of the county's recycle parks (Bayview, Coupeville, North Whidbey). There is good news, however. Alkaline batteries *are* accepted for recycling at the Freeland recycling center at 20014 SR 525. The county recycle parks **do** accept lithium ion, rechargeable and button batteries. So save up those old alkaline batteries and drop them off in Freeland when you're in the neighborhood. Don't forget, you can also drop off your unwanted Styrofoam at the same time.

— Linda Griesbach, *Conservation Chair*

### More Sightings, from [page 4](#)

**April 27: Townsend's Solitaire** by remnant prairie at PRI. Also present in the same area were a pair of **Crossbills**.

— *Stef Neis*

sand several times. Also present were **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** and the usual complement of seabirds.

— *Steve Elliot*

**April 27: A Townsend's Solitaire** was on the driftwood at Fort Ebey State Park. It flew down to feed in the wrack and

**POST YOUR SIGHTINGS** on the Whidbey Audubon Society website, under "Birds" then "[Sightings and Photo Gallery.](#)"

## BIN South Having Fun at Deer Lagoon

**April 6:** A fun morning was definitely had by all. As one of us noted, “If you don’t want to have fun, then don’t come out to Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN)”! We didn’t even need the shelter that much, didn’t see too many **House Sparrows** or **Starlings**, and there were donuts.

We contentedly observed at least 25 different species from the bluff there at the Freeland Park. We even heard the **Loon** call, which was the icing on the donut delight.

I added another 10 species out at Deer Lagoon, where the unattended dog poo responsibility was relatively light — much better than last year. I believe we may have Libby to thank for that, or our silly dog poo fairy sign. Or both. Also be sure to check out the newly installed Sensitive Bird Habitat sign at the Deer Lagoon dike trailhead. You will see several of these signs coming soon to parks and waysides near you — thanks to your local Audubon.

**April 20:** I shouldn’t be surprised by the troopers who show up during some of these less-than-comfortable conditions to bird in neighborhoods. Together they are an inspiration, without whom we would have never stayed long enough to watch a **Bushtit** and a **Brown Creeper**, or trekked all the way out to see a thousand **Brants** on the water, or stopped to find a **Eurasian Wigeon**, who was himself worth the price of admission (there weren’t even the requisite 400 American Wigeons per that one).

As always, the sky may not be our limit, but food and bathrooms are.

Some weeks, we might not see a single shorebird, but on this Thursday, **Whimbrels** came along, and we also spotted **Greater Yellowlegs**, beautifully colored-up **Black-bellied Plovers**, and (probably) **Dunlin**. Those were *waaaay* out on the sand this side of the many **Eagles** standing around out there. One of the Eagles was leucistic — likely the same one we’ve noticed before at Sunlight.

Scoping way over to the East Dike, the **herons** can be spied on their rookery nests.

We spent that leisurely morning observing at least 46 species, including ... drum roll ... **Pelicans!** Yay! Nine of them. They may have been around for a week or so before.

This is their 10th year at Deer Lagoon (some first reported in 2012), and since 2018, arriving mostly during the middle of April, and for a few years before that in May or June. In the past, they have stayed all season, their numbers peaking midsummer at 200 to 300 birds, then dwindling through fall until the last one or two leave as late as October or November.

— Cathi Bower *Bird early – bird often*

**Birding in Neighborhoods South** meets every other Thursday morning. Contact [Cathi](#) for details by clicking the red to email her.

## BIN North Visits Swan Lake and West Beach

**April 12:** What a great morning we had last Wednesday at Swan Lake and West Beach. The day was sunny, breezy (as opposed to windy) and warmish (as in not freezing.) We were able to identify 37 species on the sea and shore, on the lake, and in the thickets and fields along the path. We were all cheered by the **Violet-green Sparrows** among the **Barn Swallows** telling us spring is on the way. We also saw a **Turkey Vulture** circling high above, and three pair of **Bald Eagles**, one pair of which appeared to be in *flagrante delicto*. Other sightings included

an **Osprey**, **Horned Grebe** and **Gadwall**. Cathi Bower and Gideon Seraphine were delighted to find a flock of 34 **Whimbrel** foraging in the rocks at the West Beach Shore and Joseph Whidbey State Park.

— Denise Marion

**Birding in Neighborhood North** (BIN North) meets the second Wednesday of the month at 9 a.m. Contact [Denise Marion](#) by email or call 501-655-3130 or email [Nancy Luenn](#).

## Upcoming Field Trips

Field trips at Deception Pass have been very popular with many braving the rains and cold. Future trips at Deception Pass: All trips are 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. Be sure you bring your Discover Pass.

**Saturday, May 6: ROSARIO BEACH FIELD TRIP** has been CANCELLED

**Saturday, May 20: HOYPUS POINT** with Jay Adams

**Friday and Saturday, May 19 and 20: WINGS OVER WHIDBEY FESTIVAL.** Many field trips are scheduled during the festival. Most trips require registration. Check the [website](#) for times and locations and also see [page 8](#).

— Charlotte Ginn [cginnsixbit@yahoo.com](mailto:cginnsixbit@yahoo.com)

## Welcome New and Renewing Members

As more and more people are opting out of having their name and membership level published in *Shorelines*, we have decided to eliminate those details for all members going forward. Starting this month, we will publish a summary of membership activity instead.

- New Members: 7
- Renewing Members: 14
- Total Membership: 562

## Bird of the Month: Olive-sided Flycatcher

Welcome May, peak month for the return of our neotropical migrants to their summer homes. If you're like me, each day holds the potential for a first-of-the-year sight or sound of these long-distance travelers. Whose arrival do you anticipate most eagerly? One of the colorful warblers? A beautiful singer, perhaps Swainson's Thrush or Black-headed Grosbeak? Western Tanager that arrives like a splash of sunshine, wearing hues of daffodil and tulip?

One of my (many) favorites is Olive-sided Flycatcher, *Contopus cooperi*.

They're not colorful and you'll have to lift your eyes to the tree-tops to see them. The song is his most distinctive feature, a loud and penetrating three-note whistle, whip *WEEDEER*, popularly transcribed as quick, *THREE BEERS!* When you hear one, look for a silhouette on a high, exposed perch. The male usually sings from an open perch in the highest parts of a tree or snag, often the tallest in the area. He'll use one to three regular song perches within his territory, and he is often the first bird heard in the morning and one of the last at night. The female also sings occasionally but is more quiet and inconspicuous.

The call of Olive-sided Flycatcher is also distinctive, three quick, evenly spaced notes, *pip-pip-pip*, repeated.

Olive-sided Flycatcher is the largest of the pewees and the biggest flycatcher nesting on Whidbey Island, having a large head with a peak at back. The bird is dark grayish-olive above and below with a white stripe from chin through belly, giving the appearance of an unbuttoned vest. It has a large bill with a pale lower mandible. Males and females look identical.

Flycatchers are birds that primarily feed on insects taken on the wing. Olive-sided Flycatcher preys particularly on *hymenoptera*s — bees, wasps and flying ants. Other insects captured in flight include dragonflies, grasshoppers, beetles, moths and flies. This species is an aerial sallying specialist: they will watch from a high perch in edge or open-canopy situations with maximum light, fly out to chase and snatch flying insects, and returning to the same perch, earning the nickname *Yo-Yo flight*.

Olive-sided Flycatcher breeds mostly in the boreal forest and western coniferous forests, building a cup nest in a high conifer located on a horizontal branch far from the trunk. I once watched a pair delivering food to an active nest in the old campground at South Whidbey State Park. Nests are also documented in some deciduous trees.

Of all the flycatcher species that breed in North America, Olive-sided has the longest migration, wintering in mountain forests of

Panama and the northern Andes. Some migrate between central Alaska and Bolivia, 7,000 miles.

Olive-sided Flycatcher has had significant population declines in the past 30 years throughout its range, earning it a place on the Watch List. Declines may be due to loss of wintering habitat. Also this species takes advantage of high insect numbers and good foraging conditions in recently burned forests and may be adversely impacted by fire suppression and salvage logging. Because they are specialized to feed on insects in flight, extreme weather (wind, rain, snow, cold temperatures) that depresses activity of flying insects can affect survival.

So keep your ears open for the loud and penetrating three-note whistle of this prodigious singer. The first note is shorter, softer and lower in pitch than the other two, which are more strongly accented. Often from a distance only the last two notes are audible. In addition to whip *WEEDEER* and quick, *THREE BEERS*, other mnemonics for the song include come *right here*; look, *three deer*; *it's me here*; and *I say there!* Open JMerlin or another bird app on your phone or online, familiarize yourself with the resounding song and loud call notes of the Olive-sided Flycatcher, then listen for the return of this far-traveling "peregrine of the flycatchers," and decide what you hear it saying!

— Sarah Schmidt

(Sources: The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Birds of the World and All About Birds; Steve and Martha Ellis's Birds of Whidbey course curriculum.)



## Dates to Remember

Please check the Whidbey Audubon Society [Events Calendar](#) and [Listings](#) on its website 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.

### MAY

#### Early May: Birdathon

**11: Monthly Meeting:** Dinner, Awards, Elections. 5:30-8 p.m. Coupeville Recreation Hall

**13: Global Big Day of Birding**

**13: Penn Cove Water Festival,** visit our display in Coupeville

**17: Birds 'n' Beer Get-Together,** 5-6 p.m.

**18-20: Wings over Whidbey Festival.** See activities on website and see page 8

**18: Shorelines, deadline** for the June issue.

**20: Field Trip: Deception Pass State Park: Hoypus Point,** 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

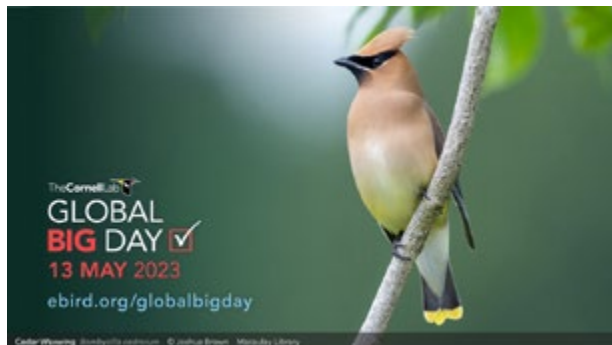
**24: Page Peepers.** 7 to 8 p.m. ZOOM

**25: Board Meeting.** 6 to 8 p.m. Freeland Library. Members Welcome.

### JUNE

**8: Monthly Meeting: Birdathon winner announcement.** Coupeville Recreation Hall 7 p.m.

**JULY and AUGUST:** No programs or *Shorelines*



Click image for link

# Wings over Whidbey Bird Festival

Join us for our first-time festival, Wings over Whidbey, May 18 to 20, 2023. It is a two-and-a-half-day community birding festival with educational and informational presentations, a photography class, guided birding tours, a bird photo contest for children and youth, and the return of the Bird in the Hand

event featuring our bird specimen library. All events are free! Some program events are both in person and online. Please visit the Wings over Whidbey website page for registration links, [www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org/wings-over-whidbey-festival](http://www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org/wings-over-whidbey-festival).

## Schedule of Events

**THURSDAY, MAY 18 at 7 p.m.**

***The Secrets of Bird Flight*** with keynote speaker Peter Cavanagh; hybrid (Zoom and live) presentation; Coupeville Recreation Hall. [Register online](#) for the program (in person capacity is 120).

Cavanagh has been working on a new book manuscript on bird flight, which will go to the publishers this month. He will also illuminate the mechanics of bird flight.

**FRIDAY, MAY 19: Four guided bird walks.**

**Please register.** Recommend you bring your own binoculars. Each trip is limited to 10 individuals.

**8:30 to 10:30 a.m. South Whidbey State Park** with Patty Cheek. Discover Pass required to park in the lot. [Register.](#)

**9 to 11 a.m. Fort Ebey State Park** with Steve Ellis. Meet at Partridge Point at the end of Libbey Road to carpool into Fort Ebey State Park from there. All vehicles entering the park will need a Discover Pass. [Register.](#)

**8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Pacific Rim Institute** with Sarah Schmidt. Meet at 180 Parker Road, Coupeville. There is ample parking, enter the driveway past the house into the lot. [Register.](#)

**9 to 10 a.m. Deer Lagoon** with Carlos Andersen, park on Deer Lagoon Road and meet at trailhead. Parking is limited, please respect people's property and driveways. [Register.](#)

**4 to 6 p.m. Diving into Bird Photography** with Bill Ray, live only, register to reserve your place. See where to find birds in Washington, on Whidbey or even in your own back yard. Learn ways you can behave that will ethically encourage birds get close enough to photograph while living their normal lives. Coupeville Recreation Hall. Please [register online.](#)

**Youth Photography Contest Awards.** Bill Ray will judge the photographs.

**7 to 8:30 p.m. The Joy of Spring and Summer Birds** with Tom Bancroft; a hybrid (Zoom and live) presentation. It will explore birds that are in Washington during the spring



and summer. We will look at common ones, hard-to-identify ones, and some rare or more difficult-to-discover ones. Coupeville Recreation Hall. [Please register online.](#)

**SATURDAY, MAY 20: Four guided bird walks.** **Please register.** Recommend you bring your own binoculars. Each trip is limited to 10 individuals, except Hoypus.

**7 to 8:30 a.m. Price Sculpture Park** with Dyanne Sheldon, Coupeville. Upland forest birds. Plus, the chance to see some really cool *in situ* outdoor art works. [Register.](#)

**8 to 10 a.m. Greenbank Farm Forest Trail** with Nathan Pieplow. This is a great trail to home in on your listening skills with an expert in bird calls. [Register.](#)

**9 to 10:30 a.m. Deer Lagoon** with Carlos Andersen. Parking is limited, please respect people's property and driveways. [Register.](#)

**10 a.m. to Noon Hoypus trails** with Jay Adams and Deception Pass AmeriCorps interpretive staff. Discover Pass is required. No preregistration required.

**8 to 11 a.m. Pacific Rim Institute Prairie Walks.** Select from one of three morning times to learn about PRI's environmental stewardship while walking the prairies. Limited to 12 people per walk. [Register here.](#)

**10 a.m. to 2 p.m. BIRD IN THE HAND EVENT** and affiliate booths, at Coupeville High School and Commons. Explore this free family educational event to showcase a large number of bird specimens from our extensive state and federally permitted bird specimen collection.

**11 a.m. to noon. Puget Sound Energy's Bird Protection Program — Eagles, Swans and Ospreys** with Haley Olson, Senior Resource Scientist; live only at the Coupeville High School Auditorium. Limited to 40 people. [Register.](#)

**1 to 2:30 p.m. The Language of Birds** and book signing with Nathan Pieplow; live only at Coupeville High School Auditorium. Go here for more information and to register for the program. Limited to 40 people. [Register.](#)

**2:30 to 4 p.m. Bird Banding – An Important Tool for Supporting Avian Conservation** by Puget Sound Bird Observatory at Coupeville High School Auditorium; live only. Limited to 40 people. [Register.](#)



# Introducing the Salish Sea Guillemot Network 2023 Program Coordinator!

Pigeon Guillemot Breeding Survey season is just around the corner, and as Whidbey Audubon also financially supports this coordinator position, we wanted to share with everyone our good fortune to have Shannon Boldt leading the team this summer!



Shannon Boldt is the new coordinator of the Salish Sea Guillemot Survey.

Shannon is a native Washingtonian who finds her happy place both “playing” with science and outdoors, immersed in the natural world. The more hands on she can be, the better! She holds a bachelor’s in science degree in biology and a master’s in environmental policy and management, with a concentration in fish and wildlife management. Having grown up in the Puget Sound region, she has always felt deeply connected and drawn to the marine environment, in particular, wildlife and birds. She is driven by this connection, her constant curiosity, and eagerness to learn about and care for the world around her.

Shannon is an avid walker and amateur wildlife photographer. She loves to travel, boat, hike, and eat good food...and she absolutely *ADORES* Pigeon Guillemots (PIGU). She is very excited to take on this new role as the Salish Sea Guillemot Network (SSGN) PIGU Breeding Survey’s Program Coordinator and to help see us through another successful season with her positive energy and support.

We’re excited, too!

— *The SSGN team*

## 2023 Survey Training Begins in May

The Salish Sea Guillemot Network is a community science project dedicated to the research, education, and protection of the Pigeon Guillemot in the Salish Sea. Participants monitor Pigeon Guillemot breeding colonies across the region to better understand their population dynamics and role in healthy coastal ecosystems.

To learn more visit this website: [www.pigeonguillemot.org](http://www.pigeonguillemot.org).

## 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](http://www.whidbeyaudubonsociety.org/membership)

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletters will be **emailed** to you —OR—  **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 \$20
- Household Membership \$30
- Spotted Towhee \$50
- Pigeon Guillemot \$75
- Red-tailed Hawk \$100
- Osprey \$250
- Lifetime Membership \$1,000
- Additional donation 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.*

Bird in the Hand, from page 1



Steve Ellis will serve as the "Answer Man" again.



A variety of Woodpecker species on display

and personal. For most of us it is very challenging to get a good look at live birds as they are constantly moving. How nice it is to finally see a large number of the birds found on Whidbey Island and surrounding waters right in front of you. At the Bird in the Hand Event it is possible to see the spots on a towhee, the specialized digging feet on a kingfisher or an owl ear. Each specimen tells a fascinating story that can be enjoyed by every member of the family.

The specimens are donated by people who find unfortunate

dead birds who have hit a window or met other untimely deaths. The deceased birds are handled with disposable gloves, wrapped in newspaper and put in a ziplock bag with the name of the person who found it, species of bird if known, the date found, the area it was found and then put in the freezer. Robin Llewellyn can then be contacted to pick up the specimen at [soaringridge@broadstripe.net](mailto:soaringridge@broadstripe.net).

The specimens are taken to be prepared by a taxidermist and his volunteer team of *preppers*, and then placed in specially designed educational bins to be used for a number of local educational purposes. The birds are the property of the American citizens and managed by both the State and Federal governments. Each entity requires that Whidbey Audubon Society maintain current permits in order to use the specimens.

Be sure to come by on Saturday between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. to get an up-close look at some of our avian creatures. The location is the Coupeville High School Commons.

— Robin Llewellyn

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**Membership  
Dinner, Awards  
and Elections**

**Thursday, May 11 at 5:30 p.m.**

**Coupeville Recreation Hall**

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**Birdathon Pledges  
Due Now**

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**Wings over  
Whidbey Bird  
Festival**

**May 18 to 20**

*Free activities! Register now*