



Shorelines

Newsletter of the Whidbey Audubon Society

May 2020

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

Updates from the Whidbey Audubon Society President

Hello, I hope you're healthy and are getting a chance to get out and watch the breeding and nesting behaviors occurring this month. The Island is aflutter!

By now, most of you realize that our May 14 membership meeting is canceled due to concerns for our members' safety during this time of coronavirus. However, May is an important time for our members. It is the time we elect our officers for the next two years. We need you to vote! This year we have two positions that are open, president and vice president. Our nominee for president is Patty Cheek, who many of you know has been our field trip chair. Our nominee for vice president is David Allen who has been admirably serving in that position the past two years. We are excited to have these two very qualified and well-liked volunteers. We need your vote to elect them to office. Please vote by sending an email with **Yes** or **No** in the subject line to vote@whidbeyaudubon.org. For further information on these candidates please refer to other more detailed article in the box to the right on this page of this month's *Shorelines* newsletter.

Our speaker topic this month was to have been on how the data from our ongoing Pigeon Guillemot Research Project is being used. Many of you have helped to gather this data over the past ten years and

WAS President, see page 2

Guillemot Summer Breeding Survey

Although we are living in strange times, we hope to be able to continue with our Pigeon Guillemot Summer Breeding Survey as we have for the past 18 years. The following is our best guess at this time of how we will proceed. We are closely watching National Audubon guidelines and government restrictions.

Training for new and returning volunteers will likely be



Photo by Govinda R. Holtby

Pigeon Guillemots sunning on a rock.

Guillemot Survey, see page 5

Whidbey Audubon Election May 2020

Because our May 2020 meeting is canceled, we must elect officers in a new way. There were no nominations from the floor; here's our slate for officers to be elected for two-year terms:

Patty Cheek, President
David Allen, Vice President

David has already served a two-year term as vice president and is willing to serve another term. (Officers are limited to two two-year terms). He has taken on organization of the Birds of Whidbey Audubon class as part of his duties and will continue that vital job.

Patty Cheek has been a WAS board member for several years and most recently served as Field Trip chair. A very active disaster response volunteer for the American Red Cross, Patty will wear both President of Whidbey Audubon and Red Cross hats going forward.

Sharon Gauthier, our current president, will step down in May at the end of her second term. She will continue to serve the Board as Past President. We are enormously grateful for her years of cheerful and unstinting service. Thank you, Sharon!

Please cast your vote for the slate of Patty Cheek, President and David Allen, Vice President, each for a two year term, by emailing vote@whidbeyaudubon.org by putting **YES** (or **NO**) in the subject line of the email. If you are old school, please cast your ballot by mail to Whidbey Audubon, P.O. Box 1012 Oak Harbor, WA 98277, **postmarked by May 14, 2020**. You *must* be a current member of Whidbey Audubon to vote.

PLEASE take a minute to cast your vote — the organization is depending on you!

WAS President, from page 1

we thought you would be interested. In lieu of a presentation, two of the researchers using our data have sent us information to share. I have included short summaries of their work here.



Emily Buckner

Emily Buckner is a master's student in the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs at the University of Washington. Her research looks at Pigeon Guillemot (PG) foraging behavior and whether there are any noticeable patterns or differences in how individuals forage in the various basins of Puget Sound. I found her work with PG eggshells to discover feeding patterns throughout the Sound to be particularly interesting.

Amanda Warlick is a PHD student in the Quantitative Conservation Lab at the University of Washington. Her work focuses on the development of integrated population models for species with complex life histories, including Pigeon Guillemots. She is working with students to analyze the observed data on Pigeon Guillemot abundance, foraging and chick feeding that Whidbey Audubon Society members have gathered. Through this work she hopes to gain insights about what specifically makes Pigeon Guillemots an indicator species and which environmental variables might be driving population-level changes. This work can inform ecosystem indicators and conservation efforts on multiple spatial scales from islands in



Amanda Warlick

Puget Sound to the greater North Pacific Ocean.

If you would like to learn more about our Pigeon Guillemot Research Project, join the project or just see a wonderful video of these fascinating members of the auk family, with their red feet and "crash" landings, click the red text to visit the [Research Project's website](#).

Other opportunities for armchair birding this month are listed on the [National Audubon Society website](#).

Two examples are:

I Saw a Bird Wednesdays: hosted by Audubon's social media producer, Christine Lin, and chief network officer, David Ringer, *I Saw a Bird* showcases a fun, rollicking chat that is sure to educate and entertain. The first two episodes discussed spring migration and native plants. The show airs every Wednesday at 7 p.m. on Facebook Live and Zoom. For more information, see the "I Saw a Bird" page on the National Audubon website: audubon.org/isawabird.

Bird Friendly Fridays: hosted at 2 p.m. Central Time on the Audubon Riverlands Facebook page for entertaining and informative presentations on all things avian. Past topics include Do It Yourself (DIY) window-collision solutions and a how-to session on building a backyard bird sanctuary. Catch up on past presentations on YouTube any time after 5 p.m. Central Time on the day each session airs. For more information, see: riverlands.audubon.org/programs/virtual-bird-friendly-fridays.

Stay well and don't forget to vote for our local Audubon officers!

— Sharon Gauthier, President



Brendan McGarry

New Regional Coordinator for Guillemot Summer Breeding Survey

Whidbey Audubon Society's Guillemot Research Group (GRG), in cooperation with four other Salish Sea Audubon chapters and nature centers (Clallam County, Kitsap/Bainbridge, Vashon/Maury and

South Sound), has selected Brendan McGarry to serve as Pigeon Guillemot Survey Regional Coordinator for 2020. He will help ensure consistency and quality control over our existing community science project, the Pigeon Guillemot Summer Breeding Survey, and educate our broader community about the importance of beach and bluff stewardship. The majority of his effort will be assisting chapters with developing and implementing

new survey sites using our existing data collection protocols and in increasing participation of volunteers in Salish Sea Audubon chapters.

Mr. McGarry resides on Vashon Island and obtained a master's in environmental education at Western Washington University. He has participated in the Puget Sound Seabird Survey as a surveyor and trainer. As a professional field biologist, he has banded birds, run point counts and established new study sites and protocols.

A coordinating team consisting of Salish Sea Guillemot Network members, including GRG Team Leader and Program Coordinator Frances Wood, will be overseeing his work and soliciting input on how to deliver training and improve protocol. Funding is provided by a National Audubon Society Audubon-in-Action Grant, Whidbey Audubon Society's general fund and contributions from participating Salish Sea Audubon chapters.

Birders Flock to See the Mountain Bluebirds!

Sometimes the category of “rare” will fool you. According to the Whidbey Audubon’s field checklist for Whidbey Island bird species, the Mountain Bluebird, *Sialia currucoides*, is indeed a rare species for Whidbey Island — “rare” defined as a bird “rarely seen” or seen at intervals of two to five years. So, what happened this year? Did they show up to provide birders with a break from the “stay at home/shelter in place” rule? A little bit of joy at a solitary time? Were they feeling sorry for us? Probably not, but they have been at the Pacific Rim Institute (PRI) in historic numbers!

Historic records do indeed confirm the “rare status” for the Mountain Bluebird on Whidbey Island. Most of the recent records for the species on Whidbey Island have been at PRI. The first Whidbey Island record that I have been able to verify was made by Steve Ellis at Ala Spit on April 27, 1988. The next verified records were 11-years later by Bob Merrick at PRI on April 1, 1999 and Steve Ellis on December 24, 1999 near Sunnyside Cemetery.

After a gap of 18 years the next observations were at Pacific Rim Institute with sightings on March 14 and 15, 2017 and April 4, 2017. The next year, 2018, birds were present at PRI on six different days between April 15 and May 1 with seven birds present on April 15. In 2019 the following records were made: April 16 at PRI, October 11 at Crockett Lake and October 23 at Crescent Harbor. But 2020 was the banner year for Mountain Bluebirds on Whidbey Island with numerous sightings over nearly a two-week period from March 30 to April 15. An amazing 20 individual birds were seen on April 11. I should also point out that a few sightings have been made on Camano Island at Iverson Point. Another “hot spot” for the species is in the Sequim area.

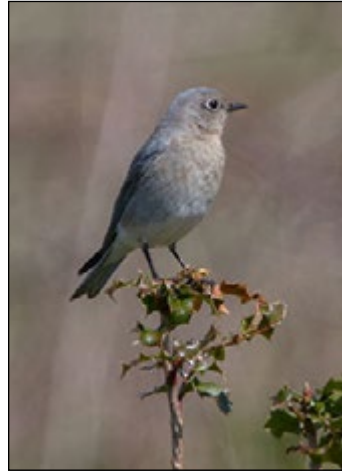
What do we know about Mountain Bluebirds in Washington? Where do they nest in Washington? There are no nesting records

Scholarship Recipients

Your flexible Scholarship Committee adjusted its procedures to the constraints of COVID-19 and selected two accomplished graduating 2020 Whidbey high school seniors to receive a Whidbey Audubon Society Renee Smith Scholarship for Environmental Studies.

Awards are made to **Arianna Marshall**, South Whidbey High School and **Joshua Pendleton**, Oak Harbor High School. Thank you to the many generous Whidbey Audubon contributors, who make these wonderful scholarships possible to Whidbey graduates.

— Ann Sullivan, Scholarship Committee



Photos by Albert Rose

Female Mountain Bluebird, left and the male is pictured on the right.

listed for western Washington and the Puget Sound area in the 1997 publication *Breeding Birds of Washington State*. The birds recorded in the third paragraph of this story are thus spring and fall migrants passing through Whidbey Island and occasionally stopping for a few days to feed. But what about the December 24, 1999 record from Steve Ellis? Could that bird have overwintered on Whidbey?

Mountain Bluebirds nest in Washington primarily in subalpine areas in the Cascades (including Mount Rainier and Mount Saint Helens) and to the east. They are frequently seen and nest in the open ponderosa pine and shrub-steppe habitat. It is very unlikely that the birds seen at PRI in 2020 will stay to nest. The last nesting record of a bluebird on Whidbey Island was at PRI for a Western Bluebird in 2005. It is thought that the Western Bluebird, a close relative of the Mountain Bluebird, was a frequent nester on Whidbey Island prior to the conversion by European occupation of the 8,000+ acres of historic prairie habitat including the oak savanna around Oak Harbor — farms, etc. Western Bluebirds continue to be seen occasionally during spring and fall migration including five this year in April, but they have not remained to nest since 2005 when three or four young were fledged.

At this time of individual “stay-at-home/shelter in place” isolation, the trails at PRI are still open to the public at 180 Parker Road, Coupeville. But in addition to social distancing, dogs must be leashed and picked-up after. Walk on trails only. Do not pick any plants or remove other items from the property. At this time, the buildings at PRI are closed to the public. Call the office at 360-678-5586 if you have any questions. PRI staff check messages daily. In addition to the birds of which 115 species have been recorded at PRI, the golden paintbrush and other prairie plants are blooming! Come and enjoy the spectacular sight of a rare blooming prairie on Whidbey Island.

— Joe Sheldon



Arianna “Ari” Marshall

Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings Sightings

April 3: Male **Goldfinch** at niger feeder. Location: Scurlock and High Street.

— *Kath Stetz/David Allen*

April 4: Five **swans**, either **Tundra** or **Trumpeter**, near the pilings in Deer Lagoon.

— *Libby Hayward*

April 4: First **Goldfinch**, male and female, at our feeder this morning. A sure sign of Spring! Also, two **Violet-green Swallows** have been swooping over our field for a couple of weeks and now are making a nest under our dormer roof. Location: end of Log Cabin Road, Clinton.

— *Lynne Jensen*

April 4: **Barn Swallow**. Location: Miller Lake, Maxwelton Valley. First of Season here

— *Cathi Bower*



Photo by Carlos Andersen

Mountain Bluebird

April 7: Male **Mountain Bluebird**. Location: Pacific Rim Institute, about 100 meters southeast of the prairie remnant. — *Joe Sheldon*

Editor's Note: Please read the separate article on *Mountain Bluebirds* on [page 3](#).

April 8: **Osprey** – first of season here, right on schedule! (previous earliest 4/9). Location: Maxwelton Valley.

— *Cathi Bower*

April 9: **Townsend's Solitaire**. Location: Northeast corner, Pacific Rim Institute, on the boundary fence with neighbors.



Photo by Carlos Andersen

Townsend's Solitaire

Confirmation: This the third time I have seen this species in this general location in the past six years.

— *Jay Adams*

April 9: Three **Mountain Bluebirds** at Pacific Rim Institute! Two males and one female. They were foraging on insects, flying from perch to ground and back near the grain silos. They foraged for about 15 minutes before flying across State Route 20 towards Ryan's Place. Got a very good look at them.

— *Robert York*

April 9: **Greater White-fronted Goose**. Six of them circled around the area and landed. Very noisy, honking the entire time. Joined up with two others for a total of eight. Gorgeous. Location: Deer Lagoon.

— *Linda McFarlane*

April 10: **Mountain Bluebird Day** at Pacific Rim Institute! Up to eight males and 12 females were spotted during the day.

— *Joe Sheldon and Robert York at various times*

April 11: **Vesper Sparrow** popped up in the blackberries. Unique facial pattern, white outer tail feathers. Location: end of Van Barr Place, Freeland. — *Dave Parent*

The White Pelicans are Back!

April 13 through 20: Up to

eleven **American White Pelicans** at Deer Lagoon standing between the row of old pilings and Double Bluff Road in breeding plumage. Visible from Deer Lagoon Road also.

— *Libby Hayward*



Photo by Libby Hayward

American Pelicans at Deer Lake.

April 15: Male and female **Wood Ducks** (Mr. in fine breeding plumage) on Lone Lake. I'm not sure if this is considered an unusual sighting or not, but I've never seen Wood Ducks on Lone Lake before. — *Linda Griesbach*

April 16: **Townsend's Soli-**

Sightings, see [page 5](#)

taire. Two birds in the prairie remnant section. Location: Pacific Rim Institute (PRI), Coupeville. — *Jay Adams*

April 16: **Western Purple Martin** adult male Location: Steelhead Drive and Salmon Street, Greenbank.

— *Mary Hollen*

Editor's Note: Please read the separate article on *Purple Martins* on [page 7](#).

April 16: Single **Willet**. Grayish above with barring below. Grayish blue legs, white eye ring. Location: Penn Cove, Grassers Lagoon.

— *Carlos Andersen*



Photo by Carlos Andersen

Willet

PLEASE POST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS to the *Whidbey Audubon Society (WAS) website*.

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, on your mobile device at www.m.whidbeyaudubon.org or on the *Whidbey Audubon Society Facebook page*.

Sightings, from page 4

April 19: A pair of **Townsend's Solitaires**, listed as rare on field checklist for Whidbey Island bird species. Sitting in a maple tree, going down to ground and back up to tree, repeatedly. Location: At home, west of house, Zig Zag Lane. — *Lee Kanning*

April 20: **Long-billed Curlew** in mudflats at Deer Lagoon. Location: Deer Lagoon between dikes.

— *Carlos Andersen*

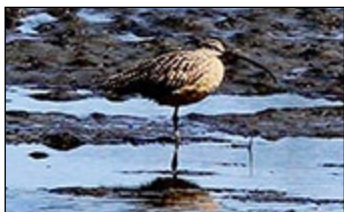


Photo by Carlos Andersen

Long-billed Curlew

April 20: A **Townsend's Solitaire** visited our backyard birdbath for a drink. It departed too quickly for us to nab a photo. Robin-sized gray bird with longish tail and prominent white eye ring. As it flew off, it flashed white outer tail-feathers. Location: Rhodena Drive, Coupeville.

— *Sarah Schmidt*



Photo by Cathi Bower

Leucistic Robin

April 21: **Leucistic Robin** foraging with a flock of Robins. Location: Maxwellton Valley

Confirmation: While I was trying to get a photo from a ways off, a **Cooper's Hawk**

came through and alarmed the whole Robin flock, at which point, this bird flew up into a branch over my head, and then it was almost too close for a photo. — *Cathi Bower*

April 21: **Long-billed Curlew**, continuing at Deer Lagoon. Spotted three this morning around low tide scattered in different parts of the mud flats. — *Mike Sheldon*

April 21: Twenty-four **Whimbrels** feeding on the rocky shore at various times over last weekend. Whimbrels are regularly seen at this time, staying for approximately three weeks. Not rare but a good gathering. Location: Along the north shore of Penn Cove usually just west of Monroe Landing.

— *Chris Hurley*

April 23: I saw a **Peregrine Falcon** perched in a tree at the east end of Dugualla Bay this morning. It flew away when an immature **Bald Eagle** flew nearby (and before I could get a good picture). There were also two **Greater White-fronted Geese** at the west end. In addition, I've been seeing the two **Osprey** that nest on the big platform out in the bay for about a week or so.

— *Mary Jo Adams*

April 24: Two **Turkey Vultures** were standing in a field, one of which was attacked by a belligerent **Canada Goose**. Location: the ponds along Hastie Lake Road east of Zylstra Road. — *Steve Ellis*

April 25: Had two **Band-tailed Pigeons** visit the ground feeder today. First time seeing them on the island. Very large birds, noted collar and bright yellow bill with black tip. Birds were very

aloof and seemed attracted to the **Mourning Dove** feeding flock. Location: Pennington Loop, Coupeville.

— *Patrick Kline*

April 25: **Western Kingbird**,

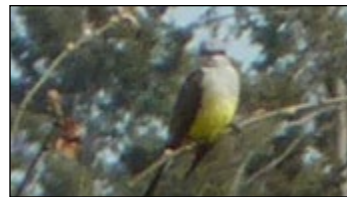


Photo by Joe Sheldon

Western Kingbird

first seen by Jay Adams a few minutes earlier. Seen in the Garry Oak savanna area on the north side of PRI.

— *Joe Sheldon*

April 25: First sighting of the year of **Wilson's Warbler**. Location: Settlers Lane, Freeland.

— *Lou Ann Shellenberger*

April 26: First sighting of the year of a **Wilson's Warbler**. Location: Parker Road, Coupeville. — *Steve Ellis*

April 26: First **Black-headed Grosbeak** of the year. Location: At my suet feeder, Wilkinson Road between Clinton and Langley.

— *Frances Wood*

April 27: Five **swifts** flew swiftly over our house. Unfortunately, they were too swift for me to determine if they were **Vaux's or Black** swifts. Both are rare for Whidbey in spring. We've seen both in the area in the past. Location:

— *Jay Adams*

April 29: Male **Western Tanager** close enough to identify easily. He sat in a tree about ten feet up, then flew across the street in front of me. Location: at the corner of Goodell and Goss Ridge Roads.

— *Susan Bennett*

Barque and West Beach, Oak Harbor. — *Carla Corin*

April 29: **Chipping Sparrow**



Photo by Michael Sheldon

Chipping Sparrow

row. A single bird was photographed by Michael Sheldon yesterday. Ruth Richards and I re-found "his" bird with a second CHSP this morning. Chipping Sparrow is marked rare on Whidbey by both was and Washington Ornithological Society. Nonetheless, this species has been present in this location for what seems to me at least the past four or five seasons. Location: PRI, Parker Road, Coupeville. More specifically, the birds were seen both days along the back (east) side of the enclosure that contains the PRI greenhouse.

Guillemot Survey, from page 1

conducted via online videos. New social distancing practices will be established. We intend to start the beach surveys the week of June 7.

Anyone interested in joining this survey should check out the *Guillemot Research Group website*. Also, please contact Frances Wood wood@whidbey.com if you would like to become involved. More specific information will be available by mid-May.

Birding in Neighborhoods South Continues to Home Bird

April 9: BAH! Homebird! This is fun for me, too. Not only do we get to do something a little different, I still have to puzzle out some of the submissions — I mean that in a good way. In addition to the birds, we have **marine mammals** galore — a huge pile of **sea lions** on Holmes Harbor I'm told, and down in Maxwelton Valley, an **otter** was bothering the ducks on Miller Lake this time.

Throughout the south and central Island, for a few hours in the morning, we managed to collectively observe at least 78 species. This is from over a dozen observers and locations, and does include the Pacific Rim Institute report, so Bluebirds have been added to our BINS checklist. Perhaps one day we will see them at Greenbank or in the Maxwelton Valley besides.

The Whidbey Audubon Birdathon fundraiser has been cancelled for 2020, but a Virtual Birdathon may be in order for that first week of May.

Stay well everyone.

April 16: What a day! My greatest desire for the *Birds of Whidbey Checklist* has been that someday it would not only include all of our 245 Whidbey birds, but also be in taxonomic order, and so it is. [Find the checklist on the [Whidbey Audubon Society website](#).]

The **Townsend's Solitaire** got on the list in the nick of time — one was observed yesterday morning in Langley. Also, we've received many delightful descriptions of nest building, bird interactions, First-of-Year arrival and other pleasant surprises.

Our Thursday morning total is 102 species from over a dozen locations, which does include Deer Lagoon, and its 25 additional species. What a habitat we all represent! Nearly everyone who reported had at least one unique bird at their place.

Plus, our southend **Ospreys** have arrived. Right on schedule.

So much fun to look forward to our virtual birding on Thursdays, and we could not have asked for better weather, under these circumstances. Such interesting stories of new arrivals, surprising appearances and interactions, including predation, are keeping us engaged and paying attention.

If you think you may not have anything particularly unique to do on a Thursday morning, you might be pleased to know that with every habitat and location all over the southend of the Island, you each add another particular observation — from Carlos' **Willet** at Grasser's and Kathy's **Turkey Vulture** at Ebey's, down to George's **Lincoln's Sparrow** and Frances's **Common Mergansers**, over to Linda's **Wigeons** and so on.

I'm even going to crow about my five-woodpecker morning! Cannot say when the last time that happened, to have observed all of our local woodpeckers in one day here (**Downy, Pileateds, Northern Flickers, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Hairy**) — the first four before 8 a.m. and a Hairy finally showed up just before noon.

From our diverse habitats at home and a couple of parks,

together we observed 82 species, some of which were swiped off of eBird lists, from friends who didn't even know they were playing.

Then there were some later reports — like afternoon **Fox Sparrows, Oystercatchers** coming in at the outgoing tides and the Lagoon Point **Purple Martins** arriving that evening. We do have to draw the line somewhere, because who birds 24/7, anyway? (Rhetorical — don't answer).

No one has to worry that just because the Whidbey Audubon 2020 Spring Birdathon is officially canceled, it means that our little weekly fun here will be turning into some kind of contest. Even the most competitive among us wouldn't do that to you.

However, Global Big Day is coming up on May 9 and I may just be moved to do my own personal Birdathon one day during the first week of the month. Check out Global Big Day by clicking on the picture below.



Aren't the overlapping seasons remarkable, in spite of whatever it is we're experiencing, how the plants do their spring thing and the birds come and go. Who's arrived? Who's still here? Who's moved on now? Cue Joni Mitchell — ...and the seasons they go round....

We'll do a couple more *Birding at Home* (BAH) BINS this month.

With the weather change, Thursday this week might be pretty interesting.

April 23: It's baby season! So many hatchlings already. And so much nest-building on-going. When a **chickadee** was flying around my head and landing by me with an expectant look on its face, I realized they were completely out of dog fur. Did you know that you can join yet another listing site, NestWatch, through the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#), and submit nesting observations? Our rainy day may have had us off to a slow start this morning, but it's turned into a rewarding "outing." It's particularly convenient to be able to duck right back inside for another cup o'.

Between all of us up and down the Island, we saw and/or heard at least 79 species. I just about happily included Dugualla Bay

Birding from Home with Birding in Neighborhoods North

April 8: Eight northend birders participated in our Birding from Home non-outing. We observed birds on lakes, bays, fields and forests, feeders, yards and roads. From our total of 52 species seen or heard, the most common sighting was the **Rufous Hummingbird** followed closely by the **American Robin**. We saw **Downy, Hairy** and **Pileated Woodpeckers**, but interestingly, no Flickers that day. **Sparrows** were also spotted and included **House, Song, White-crowned, Golden-crowned** and **Fox**. Both **Eurasian-collared** and **Mourning Doves** were out and about, as were **Varied Thrushes** and a **Hermit Thrush**.

The **Swallows** are back and several of us saw **Tree** or **Violet-greens**. I was interested in the number of **Turkey Vultures** that have been seen swirling around overhead. Must be a lot of

BIN South, from page 6

and then realized how far north that is — again, need to draw the line somewhere. (MJ would have added another dozen plus).

— *Cathi Bower, Bird early, bird often*

Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) South continues to do solitary birding and then combining results, usually on Thursday. Contact Cathi at whidbird@whidbey.com to join the fun.

dead things out there to feed on this year. Our favorite **Pigeon Guillemots** were also observed by one of our group as well as **Barrow's Goldeneyes, Red-breasted Mergansers, Northern Harriers** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** were seen near Crockett Lake. Several of us saw **Orange-crowned Warblers** and swarms of little **Bushtits**.

Although we couldn't be together and share our sightings with other excited birders, "the list" still brought us together for a few minutes to marvel at how nature continues its cycle, even when we seem to be stuck. Hopefully we will see each other in May.

— *Marcia Lazoff*

If you want to know more about **Birding in Neighborhoods (BIN) North** and its future plans, contact Marcia at mlazoff@comcast.net.

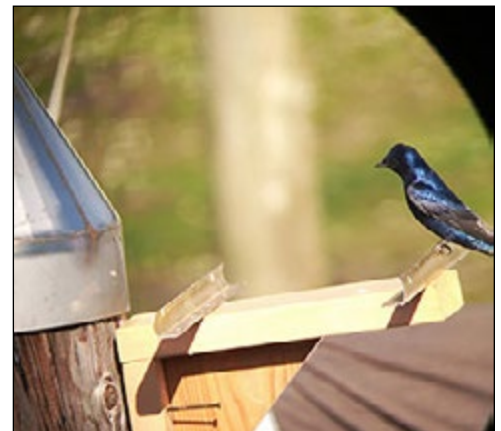
Purple Martins Are Back!

In the midst of our human crisis, the Purple Martins press on! They have returned to Whidbey Island as evidenced by my observation at Lagoon Point and Jay Adams' observation at Crockett Lake. All appears to be well with the nonhuman world.

The Lagoon Point cadre of Purple Martin landlords is also pressing on. Plans at this point include opening new Gary Hammer boxes toward the end of April, others even as late as the end of May. Last year's most prolific landlord Bert Pack did not open his piling cavity, gourds or condo until the end of May and was able to avoid the starling and house sparrow (HOSP) predation that I had. I started up in mid-April and my birds really struggled.

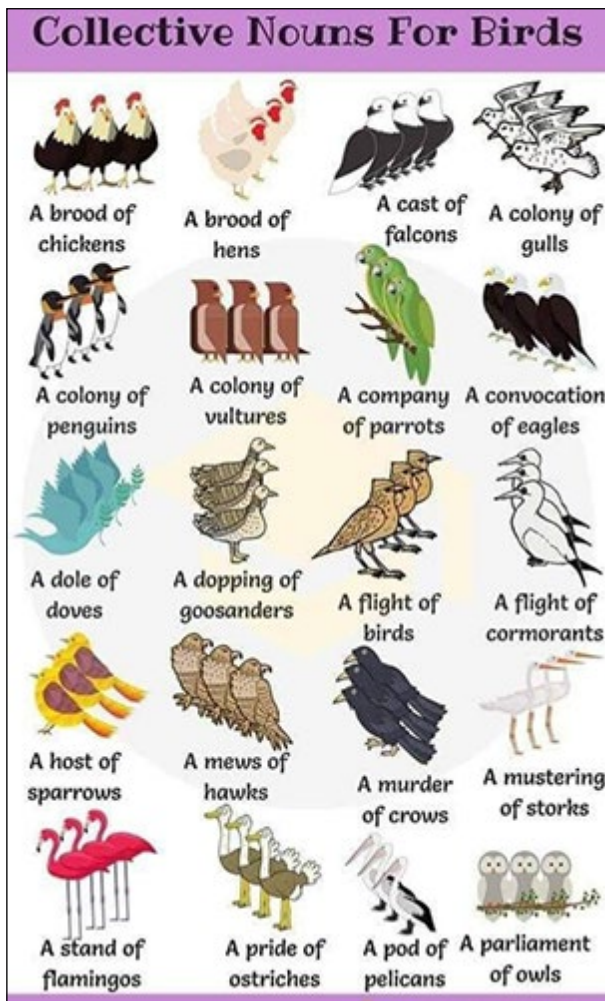
The Crockett Lake boxes are open all the time, but their remote location from human activity means that they are unlikely to be taken by House Sparrows or Starlings.

The pictured bird is perched on a new, more stable support for my mailbox nest, built by Bob Vierra and featured in earlier *Shorelines* and in the "Purple Martin Fact Sheet" on the Whidbey Audubon website



at www.whidbeyaudubon.org/purplemartins.pdf. I am looking forward to mounting the box, but I think I will possibly wait until next month.

— *Mary Hollen*



Bird Brain Fun and Games

These cartoons have been shared widely on social media sites. National Audubon posted BirdyBingo via Twitter.



Screamed BIRD at a leaf	Added a species to my life list	Used binoculars from my window	Failed at digiscoping	IDed a raptor
Accidentally spied on my neighbor	Played soothing bird song videos	"Saw" an Ivory-Billed Woodpecker	Planted a native plant	Saw a borb [fat bird]
Dreamed about birding vacations	Googled bird facts	FREE	Played Wingspan	Failed to ID a bird
Saw a floof [fluffed feathers as in cold weather]	Appreciated Starlings	Saw a basic bird	Considered a bird tattoo	Netflix and Birds
Made a birdy cocktail	Downloaded bird apps	Played Birdopoly	Made bird art	Exposed your inner bird nerd to friends



KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!

COVID	CORVID
1 - FEVER	1 - FEATHER
2 - COUGH	2 - CAW
3 - SHORTNESS OF BREATH	3 - SHINY THINGS

WHICH QUARANTINE BIRD ARE YOU?

- LOUDEST**: Starts fights at 5 AM, Every hand for necessities, won't be best paper.
- COQUET**: Calling talk back, flirts with neighbors, usually speaking with a nasal tone, won't keep neighbors.
- SEAGULLS**: Still going to the beach, flirts with people, still social distancing, on the water, don't swim, don't drink.
- KOONASUBA**: Making independent decisions, "Amusing" people, usually eating in front.
- MAGNIE**: Gets in your 15m bubble, Commanding kids at home, still takes baths.
- BONCK BIRD**: Starts a meme, situation plays, Prepper - thinking about building a bunker.
- FANCY WREN**: Gets out of his every day, Still does make-up, Day-drinker.
- POWERFUL OWL**: Excellent social isolator, Has me, within 15m, Lip hasn't changed at all.



tag your friends:



@audubonsociety

What to Watch while You're Staying at Home

When I was 14, I spotted a peregrine falcon eating a pigeon on my windowsill in the Bronx. I never looked back. I'm Jason Ward, and this is Birds of North America.

If you haven't yet discovered it, I highly recommend *Birds of North America with Jason Ward*, a video series hosted on YouTube channel [Topic.com](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC6p31111111111111111111). There are currently 21 episodes, ranging in length from six to nine minutes. The producers skillfully focus your eye on the bird in a video scene by circling it in a paler background.

A Bronx native and passionate bird lover, Jason Ward brings all-too-rare diversity to the birding world. I first stumbled cross episode #9 – "Warbler Migration in Central Park," got hooked and watched the rest of the series. Episodes explore being a birder of color, feminist birding, young birders and many other topics. Ward's very apt 21st century metaphors make me smile: The Rose-breasted Grosbeak *sounds like a basketball shoe squeaking on the hardwood*, and the Northern Cardinal sounds *like he's shooting lasers*.

Take a few minutes to go birding with Jason Ward far from Whidbey Island. You won't regret it.

— Sarah Schmidt

Welcome New and Renewing Members

New:

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| Rob Sweeton | Dorian McGlannan |
| William Hanika | Beth Shepherd |
| Janet Jernigan | Maria & Roy Seliber |
| Randy & Evy Morris | Claire Stern |
| Linnea & Michael Hess | |
| Jeanie & Paul McElwain, Spotted Towhee | |

Renewing:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Raven Jirikovic & Segoe Jackson | Bob & Dorothy Kulwin |
| Todd & Chris Peterson | Sheryl Norris |
| Alice Lindahl, Scholarship | Kathy Stella, Scholarship |
| Barbara Paul | Jo Prussia, Scholarship |
| Christine Kelly | Claudia George, Spotted Towhee |
| Linda McFarlane | Jann Ledbetter, Red-Tailed Hawk |
| Louie (Lou Ann) Shellenberger | Judy Tomassene, Spotted Towhee |
| Barbara Fournier | |
| Joel Beerman & Anne Lawson-Beerman | |
| George & Lynne Jensen, Scholarship | |
| Paul & Stephanie Neis, Spotted Towhee | |
| Leigh & Laverne Power, Pigeon Guillemot | |
| Deb & Tony Schiro, Spotted Towhee | |
| Christina Baldwin & Ann Linnea, Spotted Towhee | |
| Nicole Luce & Janet Hall, Red-Tailed Hawk & Scholarship | |

Whidbey Audubon Society Membership

Please make your check payable to WHIDBEY AUDUBON SOCIETY (WAS)
Mail to: Jann Ledbetter, 1112 Maple Place, Coupeville WA 98239

Name _____ **Y20**

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____ (Your issues will be emailed to you.)

_____ Check here to receive your *Shorelines* by mail. Please add an additional **\$5.00** to defray mailing costs.

SELECT a Category of Membership

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| _____ Individual Annual Membership \$20 | _____ Pigeon Guillemot \$75 |
| _____ Household Annual Membership \$30 | _____ Red-tailed Hawk \$100 |
| _____ Spotted Towhee \$50 | _____ Osprey \$ _____ |
| \$ _____ Additional Donation to be used for Scholarships | |

All memberships include 9 issues of *Shorelines* annually, a WAS window decal, discounts and early registration in our educational classes.

- _____ **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
September, October and April, May and June meet in Coupeville Recreation Hall, April & May 2020 CANCELED
November, January, February and March meet in Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Freeland, March 2020 CANCELED

Whidbey Audubon Board and Committee Chairs 2019-2020

President	Sharon Gauthier
Immediate Past President	Jay Adams
Vice President.....	Dave Allen
Secretary	Cathy Queeno-Wall
Treasurer.....	Sheri Croll
Programs	OPEN
Membership Chair.....	Jann Ledbetter
Newsletter Editor.....	Jenny Brown
Conservation Chair.....	Kim Shepard
Education Chair.....	Nan Maysen
Field Trip Chair	Patty Cheek
Publicity Chair	Susan Prescott
Webmaster	Rob Craig
Board Member-at-Large.....	Cathi Bower
Board Member-at-Large.....	Joe Sheldon
Board Member-at-Large.....	Dave Krause
Board Member-at-Large.....	Kathy Obersinner
Christmas Bird Count North Chair	Jay Adams
Christmas Bird Count South Chair.....	Govinda Holtby
Birdathon	Kathy Obersinner
Scholarship Committee.....	Ann Sullivan
Hospitality Chair	OPEN
Newsletter Mailing.....	Marcia Lazoff
Specimen Library	Robin Llewellyn

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Please Vote by May 14

See details on page 1

Cancellations

No May or June General Meetings

No collection of specimens for the Specimen Library

2020 Birdathon canceled

The Bird in the Hand postponed until September 2021

Field Trips canceled until further notice.

Stay Safe and Enjoy Spring Birding!

Illustration: Golden-crowned Kinglet watercolor by Craig Johnson ©

Whidbey Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1012
Oak Harbor, WA 98277