

# The Raven

The mission of Juneau Audubon Society is to conserve the natural ecosystems of Southeast Alaska, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.



Volume 29, Number 2

Juneau Audubon Society

October 2002

## October



## ALMANAC

**Trumpeter & Tundra Swan migrate through Southeast Alaska. Some winter in Petersburg, Yakutat, Cordova**

**Black bear begin to enter dens**



*“If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water.”*

Loren Eiseley  
**The Immense Journey**



**Important meeting - see page 2**

### Monthly Meeting

Thursday, October 10, 7:30 p.m.

Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School Library (2nd floor)

## Changing Views of Brown Bears

**Anne Post**

Anne Post, wildlife biologist at the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and Pack Creek manager, will talk about the bears and other wildlife of Pack Creek, and the unique and important opportunities wildlife viewing areas offer residents and visitors alike.

**“Exterminate Brown Bears”**  
**Daily Alaska Empire**  
**October 21, 1929**

*Brown bears serve no good purpose. They are essentially killers — the bear ought to be exterminated — and the extermination ought to begin at once.*

Our perspective has certainly changed since the publication of this editorial, following the attack and subsequent death of U.S. Forest Service timber cruiser Jack Thayer. But pick up a copy of *Alaska Bear Tales*, and it's clear that bear attacks — however rare or sensationalized — still grab us just as sure as Bart the Bear grabs unsuspecting hikers in popular movies like *The Edge*.

Of course, most of us have bear tales of our own. And while every bit as exciting as *Alaska Bear Tales*, most bear-human encounters are brief, tense and often over before one gets a good look at the other. The Stan Price State Wildlife Sanctuary, located at the mouth of Pack Creek on northeast Admiralty Island, offers a very different kind of experience.

One of several bear viewing areas statewide, Pack Creek has a long history of use. Chosen as a viewing area by the USFS in the 1930s, the immediate drainage was closed to bear hunting in 1935 and extended to include neighboring Swan Cove and Windfall Harbor in 1984. The sanctuary itself, named for longtime homesteader Stan Price, the “bear man of Pack Creek,” was created by the State Legislature in 1990 and is managed cooperatively by the USFS and ADF&G.

Every summer, up to 25 bears take advantage of the estuary and tide flat, feeding on vegetation and spawning salmon. And after nearly 70 years of human presence, Pack Creek bears have grown accustomed or “habituated” to people, which provides us a unique opportunity to watch them feed, fish, and interact with one another while paying very little attention to us.



# Notes from the board

## Juneau Audubon Society Annual Meeting

New officers will be elected at the October 10 monthly meeting, which is also the annual meeting under chapter by-laws. Plan to attend this meeting to take an active role in the leadership of the chapter as well as enjoy the program.

The following members have been nominated for chapter office:

President:	Brenda Wright
Vice-President:	Chris Kent
Treasurer:	Liz Blecker

Members will also vote on changes in by-laws. The proposed changes were published in the September issue of the Raven.

Juneau Audubon Society is also looking for people to chair the Conservation and Field Trip committees. Both of these committees are a vital part of our chapter activities. Please consider assisting in these or any of the committees listed on the back page of the Raven.

### Another way to help your chapter



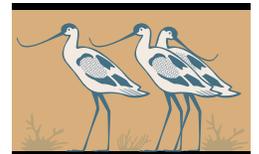
In another month the holiday season will be approaching, and with it, Juneau Public Market. The Audubon booth at Public Market is a major fund-raising activity for the chapter, and an opportunity to be a visible part of our community.

Public Market opens the day after Thanksgiving and continues throughout the weekend. Please consider donating an hour or two of your time to staff the booth or donating things to sell. Please contact Kathy Weltzin at 789-0288 and let her know how you can help.

### Website references

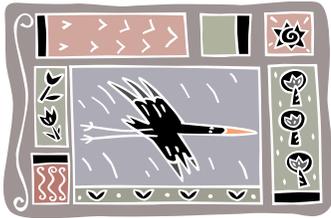
- <http://www.audubon.org>
- <http://www.anchorageaudubon.org/>
- <http://www.epa.gov>
- <http://www.state.ak.us>
- <http://info.dec.state.ak.us/ciimms/>
- <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/enri/bmap/index.html>
- <http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/Reg/Default.htm>
- <http://www.noaa.gov>
- <http://www.state.ak.us/adfg/wildlife/wildmain.htm>
- <http://agdc.usgs.gov/data/>
- <http://www.earth911.org>

*Birds probably use a combination of stars, the earth's magnetic fields and visual landmarks for orientation during migration. Many birds are able to return to the exact same territory year after year.*



### November Raven Deadline

Please submit articles for the November issue no later than October 25 to [upclose@alaska.net](mailto:upclose@alaska.net)



## Winter Wren Steve Heint, Ketchikan

### My favorite bird

*This article is based on an interview with one of the many experienced birders in Juneau Audubon Society. If you'd like to be interviewed about one of your favorite birds, please contact Marge Hermans at [marjorie.hermans@acsalaska.net](mailto:marjorie.hermans@acsalaska.net)*

The winter wren is one of my favorite birds because of its song. It has such a tremendous song for such a small bird. It's like a series of bubbling, tinkling trills. It lasts for at least 10 seconds, and it's very loud for the size of the bird, which is typical of wrens.

In Ketchikan the winter wren is one of the first birds to start singing in the spring. We begin hearing it at the end of February. It's one of the first signs of spring.

I also like winter wrens because they have a lot of character. They cock their tails up and flip them around—a habit that allows them to express themselves, at least to a human observer.

They're secretive in a way. They like to be in the underbrush. But they're also very curious. When you come by, they will come over and check you out—perhaps as close as five feet away. And if you *shish!*, they'll come quite readily. They might pop up out of a pile of logs, look around, chatter, cock their tail up, and if they're agitated, flip their tail around.

What you see is a tiny, dark brown bird that doesn't really have any visible markings. Its tail is so short the bird looks like a little round ball. It will bob around, flit over log piles, maybe land on the ground, then disappear through the undergrowth, almost like a little mouse.

The wren's call is really distinctive, too. It's a double note: *chip-chip, chip-chip*. That's how you usually know a winter wren is there, even when you might not see it.

Winter wrens are found from sea level to timberline. They are most common in the undergrowth of mature forests—“in the deep, dark woods,” you might say—but I've also seen them in five-year-old clearcuts among tall ferns and salmonberry and slash. In winter they might occur anywhere—at the beach, or in residential areas. I've even found them inside old cabins where they come in through openings looking for insects, and maybe spiders.

Once when I was hiking up Deer Mountain near Ketchikan in July, I stumbled across a pair of winter wrens with young that must have just fledged. The adults were very agitated, flitting around and calling. Meanwhile the young ones were balancing awkwardly on branches, making clumsy little hops. They still had fluffy, long, grayish down on the tops of their heads. Moving around the way they were, they looked pretty comical.

I also saw winter wrens when I was working in the Aleutians. Like other resident songbirds there, they were considerably larger than birds of the same species here in mainland Alaska. They were big and pale, and their bills were noticeably longer.

For years it was difficult to see them. They stayed high up on the ridges. We might just hear them singing, and maybe see a silhouette. But in 2000, after the Fish and Wildlife Service had been removing foxes from the island, the numbers of many other birds had increased, and we saw winter wrens clear down on the beach. They acted just like the winter wrens here in Southeast.

Winter wrens are such great songsters, and they have such character, how could you not like them?



# EAGLECHAT

*To share sightings and chat about all things bird-related with 60+ like-minded local members, log onto <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Eaglechat> or e-mail Nina Mollett at [ninam@alaska.net](mailto:ninam@alaska.net) to get signed up.*

**Date: September 18**

**Subject: Cranes**

There were about 250 on the Mendenhall Wetlands last night. I counted 244 from the deck of my house but I probably missed some because there were obstructions blocking my view in a couple of areas.

**Date: September 18**

**Subject: Phalaropes**

Saw a flock of about 25 phalaropes, about a week ago, in Gastineau Channel just south east of Bullion Creek. I've been used to seeing them in lower Chatham Strait but not this close in to the mainland.

Two corvid observations from last summer: While at the NOAA facility in Sand Point in Washington in early August I saw a crow with a mouse in its beak. Then a short while later saw a raven with the same in Juneau near the slide area in Thane. I'd never noticed this type of behavior before.

**Date: September 18**

**Subject: Raven**

Report from Ketchikan Sept. 17. A flying raven knocked a pigeon to the ground, cornered it and repeatedly attacked/pecked at it. Finally pulled its head off and ate the bird! yikes!

**Date: September 18**

**Subject: Cranes!**

About 250 cranes are near the mouth of the Mendenhall. Indeed, at least that many! I was out on the dike trail between 10-noon and saw a very large flock standing near the slough that runs just north of the dredge islands. They flew in a large flock when a hunter walked near but settled back down on the flats a couple hundred yards east. Movement was along the channel and the river.

**Date: September 20**

**Subject: Re: Cranes!**

...and maybe it was that 250 that I saw migrating yesterday! I looked out the window of my office and saw long long v's of cranes, flying over Mt. Juneau, still relatively low so I wondered if they'd just lifted off ....I thought migrating birds, once they got going, would be flying much higher??

It was really cool! Took looking through binoculars to confirm the long necks, long legs, that they were cranes. Probably watched them pass by for a good 10 min.??

**Date: September 20**

**Subject: Brotherhood Bridge trail**

Although you might think that any sensible warbler would be somewhere south of Oregon by now, this afternoon in the light rain there were small mixed flocks of Orange-crowned, Wilson's & a number of Yellow-rumped Warblers, along with many Ruby-crowned Kinglets and Chestnut-backed Chickadees feeding in the alders & willows. Also had nice looks at a busy Brown Creeper cleaning up those pesky bugs on a spruce trunk.

**For more about sandhill cranes,  
see page 7.**



# Department of Interior Recognizes Jim King

## **Distinguished Service Award**

**J**im King received the Department of the Interior's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Award, in a September ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Interior Secretary Gail Norton presented the award to three U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service employees and three partners-in-mission for exceptional support of the Department's mission. Her statement said "they have earned the Distinguished Service Award and the gratitude of all of us who have benefited from their hard work to ensure both the current and future generations enjoy our wild creatures and wild places."

The Distinguished Service Award is granted for outstanding contributions to science, outstanding skill or ability in the performance of duty, outstanding contribution made during an eminent career in the Department, or any other exceptional contribution to the public service. Norton pointed out that King more than meets all of these qualifications.

Jim King has spent the last 50 years championing conservation in Alaska.

He began his career with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as a U.S. Game Enforcement Agent, then became the first Refuge Manager of the Clarence Rhode National Wildlife Refuge (now Yukon Delta NWR), and later served as supervisor for Waterfowl Investigations in Juneau, a position he held for 20 years.

He has logged more than 6,000 hours of safe flying, conducting low-level wildlife surveys and inventories throughout the state. He developed a plot-sampling scheme to measure bald eagle populations in Southeast Alaska, which is still used. He designed and conducted the first range-wide census of trumpeter swans in 1968, eventually leading to the removal of the species from the threatened wildlife list.

He received two Superior Performance Awards for his work in helping identify and delineate what today is 76 million acres of National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska, and received the Meritorious Service Award for his many contributions to wildlife conservation.

Even after "retiring" in 1983 with 30 years of service, he returned to the Juneau office as an intermittent rehired annuitant and still serves in that capacity. He remains active in numerous surveys, using his expertise and experience to mentor new USFWS pilots on the safe and efficient flying of wildlife surveys. He originated and successfully promoted the idea of a Safe Pilot Award for Service pilots in 1987.

Jim is also one of the longest standing members of the Citizens Oil Spill Advisory Committee that was formed after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989. He remains active in many national conservation organizations, including the Trumpeter Swan Society, where he served as president. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Bald Eagle Research Institute in Juneau. He and his wife, Mary Lou, received the Chevron Conservation Award in 1989 for their long-standing conservation work in Alaska.

He has produced more than 60 scientific publications and popular articles on Alaska.

Alaska Regional Director Dave Allen said, "Jim exemplifies the spirit of the Service's mission, and we greatly appreciate his many contributions. We thank him for his dedication, foresight, and inspiration to others in the wildlife conservation community."

# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Permits

The Juneau Chapter of the Audubon Society publishes these permit notices as a service to its members and encourages participation in the public review process. For more information on individual permits or comments call 1-800-478-2712 (Anchorage permits office). For possible permit violations in Southeast Alaska, call the Juneau office at 790-4490. Send your comments to: Regulatory Branch (1145b), P.O. Box 898, Anchorage, AK 99506-0898.

**Even if the comment date has passed, you can still send your comments to the Division of Governmental Coordination. The State review period on 404 permits usually ends after the COE comment period closes (as a general rule you can add four days to the comment period). It is important that your concerns reference the Coastal Zone Management program (Section 307 (c)(3) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972) and the State Coastal management program (Alaska Statute Title 46). You may also comment on the State's Water Quality Certification (Section 401 of the Clean Water Act). Consistency guidelines for the Alaska Coastal Management Program (ACMP) on natural resources and habitats can be found in 6 AAC 80.040 to 6 AAC 80.120 and Water Quality standards can be found in 18 AAC 70. Please contact the Division of Governmental Coordination or the Department of Environmental Conservation for more information about applicable laws and project comment deadlines.**

Division of Governmental Coordination  
P.O. Box 110030  
Juneau, AK 99811-0300  
(907) 465-3562

Department of Environmental Conservation  
410 Willoughby Ave.  
Juneau, AK 99801-1795  
(907) 465-5260

For additional information on regulations and guidelines for fill and dredge activity in marine waters and wetlands see the following: Section 10 of Rivers and Harbors Act 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403) - Placement of structures in waters of the United States; Section 404 and 404 (b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230) - Discharge of fill or dredged material into the waters of the United States; Section 103 Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (33 U.S.C. 1413) - Transport of dredge material for the purpose of dumping in marine waters. If you need help on commenting or technical assistance, you can call Chris Kent at 463-3494.

**Sitka — Sitka Harbor 176**, (Reference Number 2-2002-0671 Applicant: Gus Adams, Baranof Island Housing Authority. Location: Across from Katlian Avenue near the ANB Hall. Proposal: The applicant proposes to discharge 850 cubic yards of shot rock and 500 cubic yards of larger rock for riprap onto 0.1 acres of the intertidal zone below High tide line. Purpose: To fill tidelands to match property lines. Mitigation: None. Comments due October 15, 2002

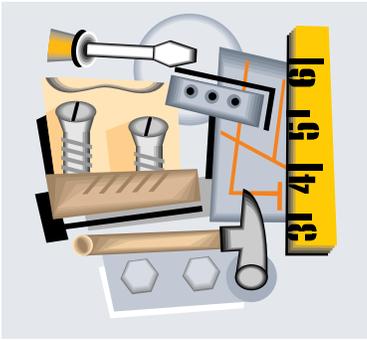
**Ketchikan — Lincoln Channel 0003**, (Reference Number 1-2001-0304) Applicant: David Hashagen. Location: Approximately 52 miles southeast of Ketchikan, on the east side of Lincoln Channel adjacent to Sitklan Islands. Proposal: The applicant proposes to continue to use a 20-foot by 60-foot log float with a plywood deck. The float will be secured with two 500 pound anchors at the -60' level. Purpose: To provide safe moorage for a fishing boat and as a platform for storing gear. Mitigation: None. Comments due October 3, 2002

**Ketchikan — Herring Bay 3**, (Reference Number 2-2002-0768) Applicant: Ron Fitzgerald. Location: Milepost 8, on South Tongass Highway. Proposal: The applicant proposes to construct a dock float and relocate an existing boat launching ramp impacting 0.91 acres of intertidal habitat. Purpose: The original comment period was to end on September 16, 2002. The comment period was extended. Comments due October 1, 2002.

\*\* These projects, in our opinion, have the potential to impact areas of public interest. If you have site specific information that would help agencies in determining impacts and what if any mitigation is needed, please contact the agencies listed above.



# A toolkit for activists



**How to create an effective and persuasive message and identify the best audience for your message.**

**Techniques for attracting and managing volunteers and building public support for your issue.**

**Guidelines for effective lobbying of elected officials and testifying at public hearings (including tips on public speaking).**

**Best practices for getting your message to the media, including choosing a spokesperson, writing press releases, pitching stories to reporters, and when to hold a press conference.**

Seattle Audubon Society's "Activist Toolkit: A Citizen's Guide to Protecting the Environment" is available free on line. The toolkit is designed to assist citizen activists in their work on behalf of the environment, and describes the basic elements of grassroots advocacy from detailed tips on public speaking to practical guidelines on lobbying.. To download the entire Toolkit or just parts of it, go to <http://www.seattleaudubon.org/conservation/toolkit.html>

## More about sandhill cranes

Those showy cranes creating a recent stir in Eaglechat are migrating to winter homes in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California and Mexico.

Come March, they'll gather some 550,000 strong at Nebraska's Platte River to feed on waste corn in surrounding fields and to wait for favorable weather before migrating back north. Cranes eat roots, seeds, berries, lemmings, earthworms, insects, small birds.

Long legged and long-necked, cranes are among the world's tallest birds. At a distance, a flock could be mistaken for geese if their long legs and very long necks were not obvious.

Sandhill cranes have a wing span of six to seven feet and are 34 to 48 inches long. They're mostly gray; adults have a bold red crown. They are known for trumpet-like notes reminiscent of French horn sounds.

In flight their neck is extended straight, and their wings jerk upward with each beat.



The Great Blue Heron is similar in size to the Sandhill Crane, but the heron has a more slender body. In flight, the heron carries its neck doubled back, with its head against its shoulders, not straight out like the crane. Heron are usually solitary; cranes are often in pairs or flocks.

For more information on cranes, and a chance to hear their call, check out the website for the International Crane Foundation of Baraboo, WI, at <http://www.savingcranes.org/>

To help save paper and chapter money, send an e-mail to [kingfarm@ptialaska.net](mailto:kingfarm@ptialaska.net) to request the Raven in either rich text (read by most word processing programs) or Adobe Acrobat. If you have Acrobat Reader, you can receive the Raven in a format that looks just like the print version but with occasional touches of color. Rich text versions will not contain graphics. To change your newsletter from rich text to Adobe Acrobat, contact [upclose@alaska.net](mailto:upclose@alaska.net).

Juneau Audubon Society has members in Coffman Cove, Craig, Funter Bay, Gustavus, Haines, Hydaburg, Juneau, Ketchikan, Pelican, Petersburg, Sitka, Skagway, Tenakee Springs, Thorne Bay, Ward Cove, Wrangell

Every membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect birds, wildlife and natural habitats. As a member, you will become an important part of our chapter and receive a host of benefits including:

- A one-year subscription (9 issues) of our chapter newsletter, *The Raven*
- Automatic membership in National Audubon Society and a one-year subscription to the award-winning Audubon magazine.

## Audubon Society Membership Application

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20 (1-year introductory rate) \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 (1-year student/senior rate)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Please bill me

Mail to: National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center, P.O. Box 51001,  
Boulder, CO 80322-1001

**A51**  
**7XCH**

*If you prefer to just support Juneau Audubon Society, fill out the form above and send with \$10 to:  
Juneau Audubon Society, P.O. Box 021725, Juneau, AK 99802, Attn.: membership*

## Officers, Committee Chairs, Events Coordinators

<b>President:</b>	Steve Zimmerman, 586-2597, <a href="mailto:stevezimmerman@gci.net">stevezimmerman@gci.net</a>
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Brenda Wright, 789-4656, <a href="mailto:jnoel@gci.net">jnoel@gci.net</a>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Deanna MacPhail, 789-0651, <a href="mailto:bandmac@gci.net">bandmac@gci.net</a>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	George Utermohl, 586-3849, <a href="mailto:norwaypt@gci.net">norwaypt@gci.net</a>
<b>Programs:</b>	Matt Kirchhoff, 586-5816, <a href="mailto:kirchhoff@gci.net">kirchhoff@gci.net</a>
<b>Membership:</b>	Amy Skilbred, 780-4649, <a href="mailto:skilbred@aol.com">skilbred@aol.com</a>
<b>Education:</b>	Mary Lou King, 789-7540, <a href="mailto:kingfarm@ptialaska.net">kingfarm@ptialaska.net</a>
<b>Publicity:</b>	Deborah Rudis, 789-4260, <a href="mailto:akwildlife@gci.net">akwildlife@gci.net</a>
<b>Conservation:</b>	Chris Kent, 463-3494, <a href="mailto:ckent@alaska.net">ckent@alaska.net</a>
<b>Field Trips:</b>	Bonnie Toleman, 789-1633, <a href="mailto:btoleman@alaska.net">btoleman@alaska.net</a>
<b>Raven Editor:</b>	Judy Shuler, 789-9544, <a href="mailto:upclose@alaska.net">upclose@alaska.net</a>
<b>Public Market Coordinator:</b>	Kathleen Weltzin, 789-0288

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