

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.



<http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org>

Volume 30, Number 3

Juneau Audubon Society

November 2003

Monthly Membership Meeting
Thursday, November 13, 7:30 p.m.
Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School Common Room

Bird Connections: Stories of migratory birds in Southeast Alaska Gwen Baluss

Gwen is a wildlife biologist with the Forest Service and specializes in bird surveys on the Juneau Ranger District.

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**Juneau Public Market** has become a holiday tradition for shopping and seeing friends. And one of the first stops for many shoppers is the Juneau Audubon Society booth for the ever popular home-made jams and jellies. The booth also stocks books, ornaments and other nature related items. This year there will be some brand-new items as well. The funds we raise help support the chapter's education and conservation activities. By participating in Public Market we also become a visible and active part of our community.

Public Market opens the day after Thanksgiving in Centennial Hall and continues throughout the weekend. You can help by donating an hour or two of your time to staff the booth (a great way to see your friends!). And it's not too late to make or donate things to sell. Please contact Kathy Weltzin at 789-0288 and let her know how you can participate.

- ❖ If you have empty half pint canning jars you can recycle, or we would also like any blank, card sized envelopes that we could use for the pressed flower note cards to sell in the booth, please call Mary Lou at 789-7540.
- ❖ Sewers, you can help with a new product at the Audubon booth in Juneau Public Market this year. Whether you can provide simple sewing or want to get a little more creative, please call Kathy at 789-0288.

**Thanks** to Peter Metcalfe, Manager of Centennial Hall for the November Public Market, for the very generous gift of the use of half of the Miller Room, we will again this year have craft ideas for kids. Using natural materials, there will be wreath making, rock painting, and creative ideas with cones. Bring your kids and encourage your friends and neighbor's to bring their kids and join in the craft making fun. A one dollar donation for craft materials will be appreciated.

To get all your chapter news on line, send an e-mail to [education@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:education@juneau-audubon-society.org) 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 [raven@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:raven@juneau-audubon-society.org). NOTE: if you are using an e-mail address at your workplace, please insure you are able to receive mail that is not work-related or send us a home e-mail address.

## Notes from the Board:

To everyone who came to the October meeting, I must extend my sincere apology. Due to a misunderstanding, Juneau Audubon did not have a space scheduled. I am sorry for everyone who attempted to attend the meeting. Since we were not able to meet, we will hold our Annual Meeting and election of officers at our November meeting in the common room at DZ middle school.

Juneau Audubon Society will elect officers in conjunction with the public meeting in November. Our by-laws instruct the president to appoint a nominating committee of three members to nominate two or more members for each vacancy. Our officers serve a term of one year, so all officers need to be elected each year. Nominations from the floor at the annual meeting are accepted for all positions.

Our present officers have agreed to serve another term. Our present officers are Brenda Wright, president; Chris Kent, vice-president; Liz Blecker, treasurer; Deanna MacPhail, secretary. Please contact any of the officers or board members if you are interested in serving on the nominating committee, would like to be on the ballot as an officer, or are willing to volunteer for any of our standing committees. Our standing committees include membership, program, field trip, education, conservation, and newsletter.

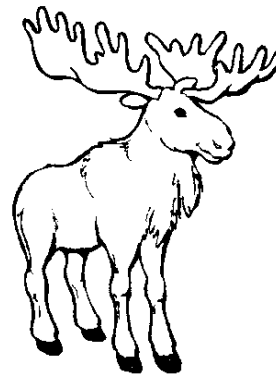
Brenda Wright, president Juneau Audubon Society Chapter

## November Almanac

Moose begin to shed their antlers in November and continue through December.

November is breeding month for porcupines.

The mountain goats mating season peaks in late November and early December. The only time the male is dominant over the female is during the peak of the mating season.



### November Raven Deadline

Please submit articles for the December Raven by November 21 to [raven@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:raven@juneau-audubon-society.org)

For more news about our local chapter check our web site at <http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org>

The web site for National Audubon Society has a wealth of information at <http://www.audubon.org/>.

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

# My favorite bird

## My Favorite Bird - Storm-petrels - Deb Rudis, Juneau

### *From an interview with Marge Hermans*

My favorite bird is storm-petrels. They are one of the most common marine birds in Southeast Alaska, but they're mainly pelagic, so unless you're offshore on the water, you don't see them.

Only two species of storm-petrels are found in the North Pacific--fork-tailed and Leach's. One of the best places to see them is off St. Lazaria Island, part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge about 15 miles from Sitka.

Storm-petrels are small birds. Their bodies are about 7 inches long, and their wingspan is about 14 inches. I've rarely seen them during the day, but they have a beautiful pearly gray underside. They're a very handsome little bird.

Storm-petrels nest on St. Lazaria in burrows that they dig themselves using their feet, which are webbed like a duck's, and their bill, which has a hook on it. They're also nocturnal. At night they fly offshore, departing and returning after dark and calling constantly, bringing food for their chicks. (Each pair has only one chick.)

Storm-petrels have a very distinctive feeding behavior. They hover and dip for food, pattering on the water when they're feeding. They have a very highly developed sense of smell, and are able to find food on the water's surface. They often feed where there's waste material on the water, like fish oil, or small fish and zooplankton that come up to the surface at night: then they bring the food back to the chick and regurgitate it.

Studies involving contaminant analysis of eggs have shown these birds pick up contaminants more than inland feeders. There are not huge concentrations, but it's interesting that things like pesticides and organic chemicals are there. Perhaps they're carried in particulate matter in the air, and picked up by the zooplankton the birds feed on. Even though there is data going back to the 1970s, the values have not decreased since then.

Population estimates for both species of storm-petrels on St. Lazaria are 270,000. If you walk on the island, there are burrows everywhere, so there's hardly a place you can put your foot. *[Ed. note: Visitors are discouraged from going ashore since this is an ongoing research area, and foot traffic could cause burrows to collapse.]* The burrows are very long. Sometimes when you put your hand in them you can't stretch your arm to the back. They also twist and turn a lot--probably to protect against predators. It's amazing to think how many centuries these birds have nested there. You can see that from the thick accumulation of organic material on the islands.

I did some field work on St. Lazaria one time, and my co-worker and I camped in a tent. About 11 p.m. (This was in June) the storm-petrels suddenly started flying. Seeing them is like watching thousands of bats flying around: they have a very stiff wing flap pattern. We could hear them calling in these funny-pitched, little laughing squeaky voices, and suddenly they were all banging into the walls of the tent. I suppose they weren't used to having this strange object around within their flight pattern.

The chicks are little gray fluff balls, usually fat because they are well-fed. They usually fledge by late September and are able to fly out to sea.

*If you'd like us to feature one of your favorite birds, please contact Marge Hermans at [marjorie.hermans@acsalaska.net](mailto:marjorie.hermans@acsalaska.net) to set up an interview.*

Every membership supports Audubon's vital efforts to protect birds, wildlife and natural habitats. As a national member, you will become an important part of our chapter and receive the Audubon magazine and our Raven newsletter.

**National Audubon Society Membership Application**  
**For first time members or renewals to the National Audubon Society please mail this form to:**  
**National Audubon Society**  
**Membership Data Center**  
**PO Box 51001**  
**Boulder, CO 80322-1001**

\$20 (1-year introductory rate)     \$15 (1-year student/senior rate)     \$30 Basic renewal

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

If you prefer to support Juneau Audubon Society only, send the completed form and \$10 to Membership Chair, PO Box 21725, Juneau, AK 99802  
 \$10 (1 year Juneau Audubon Society Chapter dues) You will receive 9 months of the Juneau Audubon Society newsletter the Raven.  
Please let us know if you prefer electronic \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail  
or paper copy \_\_\_\_\_

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Officers, Committee Chairs, Events Coordinators

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