

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>

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Juneau Audubon Society

October 2004

OCTOBER PROGRAM



Please join us for the first Juneau Audubon 2004 Lecture series, to be held Thursday, October 14, from 7:30-8:30 in the Egan Auditorium on the UAS campus (downstairs, in the new classroom wing).

All six talks in this year's series (monthly, October-April, except December) will be given by notable experts in their fields, with topics covering natural history, adventure travel, outdoor photography, and birding around the globe. You'll be enthralled by the excellent speakers, so come early and get a good seat.

The series kicks off this October 14th with a presentation by Dr. Steve Zimmerman titled:

The Natural History of the Northern Fur Seal in the Pribilof Islands

The remote Pribilof Islands are home for several hundred thousand breeding Northern Fur Seals. In early years, prior to active management, overexploitation drove these seals to very low numbers. How are the seals doing today? Dr. Steve Zimmerman, who managed the fur seal program for 15 years on the Pribilofs, will show slides and offer commentary on the biology, population dynamics, and management activities that have shaped the survival of these fascinating animals in modern times.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Glacier Bay 4th Science Symposium (October 26-28) An exciting three day conference is planned in Glacier Bay. The first keynote address will be: "Multiple viewpoints provide a greater understanding of Glacier Bay ecosystems" by Gary Davis, Chief Scientist, Ocean Programs, NPS. To see the full program go to: <http://www.nps.gov/akso/symposium.htm>

See Page 4 for UAS Juneau programs scheduled for Friday Evenings at Egan

NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Election of Officers/Board news/Avian Web -- by Brenda Wright, Juneau Audubon Society President

Come join us for the first of this year's lecture series, a great talk by Steve Zimmerman on the Pribilof Islands and it is also our annual meeting to elect Juneau Audubon chapter officers. We are electing president, vice-president, treasurer, and secretary. If you are interested in being an officer or helping with any of our standing committees on conservation, membership, newsletter, or public market just call or e-mail any of the officers listed in the newsletter. We also want your help in revising the bylaws from reading "monthly meetings" to "regularly scheduled meetings from September to May."

Birds in winter? What kinds of fun things are happening with birds in southeast in winter? Where do you go to observe birds in winter? Try our public lecture series. In the meantime, if you like keeping lists of the birds you see or enjoy sharing bird stories with your friends, please think of the Raven newsletter too. We are trying to get some news from every community in southeast to share in our newsletter. If you would like to get involved, just e-mail raven@juneau-audubon-society.org or write us at PO Box 21725, Juneau, AK 99802. I know lots of you have digital cameras now, so feel free to send a few photos too. Bill Neumann (Petersburg) shared some astounding pictures of dozens of hummingbirds on a single feeder from his SE AK summer home this year!

For other fun bird activities check out some Internet web sites. Do you like to keep track of the birds you see in your yard or while you are out for a walk? Check out eBird (<http://www.ebird.org/content/>). Just a few simple clicks and you can enter your observations into a national database on birds. By sharing your lists you increase our knowledge of bird populations and migration routes and the bonus is to learn more about your own favorite birds. Ever wonder where our rufous hummingbird spends winter? Opportunity abounds on the Internet for us to participate in studies to increase our knowledge about birds. The Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology (<http://birds.cornell.edu/>) has Project Feeder Watch, The Great Backyard Bird Count, and other projects for you to join. The birds you see out of the kitchen window might just help explain migration timing or how avian diseases spread. Do you think you might go so far as to volunteer in some exotic location or even in the Tongass National Forest or St. Lazaria Island outside Sitka? Look at American Birding conservation programs/volunteer opportunities (<http://americanbirding.org/>).

On a slightly different note, remember the smoky skies this summer? The boreal forest in Alaska and Canada has been burning. Although it is part of the natural cycle for the boreal forest to burn, there is a need for information on its effects on birds. Our Canadian neighbor has a new project to protect and manage birds in the boreal forest called the Boreal Songbird Initiative (www.borealbirds.org). There are at least 298 bird species that have some of their breeding grounds in the boreal forest.

Other sites on the Web that might be of local interest include The Trumpeter Swan society (www.trumpeterswansociety.org/), Copper River Shorebird festival (www.cordovachamber.com), or Stikine Tidal Flats Wildlife viewing area (http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/tongass/recreation/wildlife_viewing/stikineflat.htm). And do not forget to check out our parent organization, National Audubon Society (www.audubon.org/). Your local Juneau Audubon Web page has a local bird checklist, lecture schedules, guided bird walk schedules, and past newsletters (www.juneau-audubon-society.org/).

NATIONAL AUBUDON SOCIETY BOARD MEETING By Steve Zimmerman

The Board of Directors of the National Audubon Society (NAS) held its third and final 2004 meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania during September 17 – 19. There were several items on the agenda, but the item of most interest to local chapters in Alaska, Hawaii and Guam was the report of the Ad Hoc Chapter Committee. This committee was formed by the NAS Board in 2003 to deal with a deterioration in chapter-NAS relations. Comprised of NAS Board members and NAS staff, representatives from Audubon state offices, representatives from a diversity of small and large Audubon chapters, and including a member of the Take Back Audubon (TBA) movement, this large committee is seeking solutions to problems that could affect the relationship between NAS and its chapters. Its charge is to find ways to strengthen the partnership between members, chapters, state offices, staff and NAS to promote effective conservation at local, state, regional and national levels.

Several changes have been suggested in the form of draft recommendations. The draft recommendations will be sent to all chapter presidents in September. During the September – November period, these recommendations will be discussed with chapters and feedback will be requested by December 1. Using this feedback, the committee will finalize its recommendations so that they can be presented to the NAS board at its January, 2005 meeting for approval. Major recommendations include:

Doing away with annual dues share reimbursement to chapters, and replacing it with new sources of chapter funding. The key concept is the creation of a chapter grants program that will be administered by state offices using funds that will initially be provided by NAS. Over time it is hoped that new money can be raised to replenish and expand the pool of funds for chapter grants. Chapters will be able to apply for funding to implement basic programs in their strategic plan, to develop conservation programs, to develop educational outreach programs, to undertake special state projects or partnership projects with state offices, or to develop other capacity building programs. Chapters that do not have state offices will be asked how NAS can best support their work in the absence of a state office.

Developing a new membership policy. The committee reviewed a number of proposals for recognizing the different membership relationships between National members and Chapter members, but did not come to a final conclusion. During the comment period the committee will be seeking input from chapters regarding the following three membership structures: Automatic joint membership, optional shared membership, or separate membership. Details on these structures will be provided to chapters.

Developing collaborative fundraising guidelines. Fundraising must be coordinated so that conflicts regarding who solicits which donor are avoided, and so that donors know the attributes of each entity within Audubon (national, state, center or chapter) that they might wish to contribute to.

Developing partnership projects. Projects to create partnerships between chapters, state offices, centers and the office of NAS Chapter Services will be developed to strengthen common ties within the Audubon family. Opportunities for chapters and state offices to fund raise together for cooperative ventures will be encouraged.

Developing criteria for chapter evaluation and certification. Annual chapter reports, to be reviewed by state offices, will still be the basis for annual recertification of chapters. National Measures of Success are being reviewed by NAS, and may be used to evaluate the success of NAS-chapter partnerships.

Clips from the Conservation Committee:

The Conservation Committee welcomes involvement from all members. Let us know what interests and concerns you in Juneau and around Southeast. Comments? Contact the Chair, Sari Saunders, at conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org or any other committee or Board member.

1. Kensington Gold Project (aka Kensington mine) – You can read the notice of decision (here an approval) regarding the allowable use permit granted by the CBJ Planning Commission for gold mine development and production within the rural mining district at Berners Bay at http://www.juneau.lib.ak.us/plancomm/documents/NOD_MIN04-03.

Another useful source of information on the history of permitting associated with different components of the Kensington Project can be seen on the Alaska Coastal Management Plan website at

<http://www.alaskacoast.sate.ak.us/Projects/kensingt.html>.

Expect a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) on Kensington to be released by Nov. 19.

2. Cape Fox-Berners Bay land swap – The bill that would authorize Cape Fox Native corporation to trade approximately 1700 acres of land near Ketchikan (mostly logged) for approximately 2600 acres in Berners Bay –even larger amounts of land would be swapped by Sealaska Corp.- is currently dead due to lack of quorum for voting in Congress. Watch to see if this is reintroduced (by Sen. Lisa Murkowski). Note that if this waterfront land in Berners Bay were transferred to private ownership from the current federal (i.e., public) ownership within the Tongass National Forest, mining activity (i.e., Kensington Gold Project) would not be subject to the review process required for industrial projects on federal land.

3. Yankee Cove – Yankee Cove Development Co. has requested permits to dredge, discharge material, and build structures within Yankee Cove for the purposes of creating a year-round moorage facility. You can view the permit application to the Army Corps of Engineers at http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/PN_Scanned/September/POA-1986-106-O.pdf
The facility would include a 20'x80' dock connected to the seawall by aluminum gangway. Comments are due at the Corps office on Oct. 9.

EVENING AT EGAN, UAS JUNEAU

October 15

Southeast Alaska Prehistory:
Integration of Oral Tradition & Science
Rosita Worl, Asst. Prof. of Anthropology

October 22

Merging Fiction and Fact in 21st Century Drama
PJ Paparelli, Artistic Director for Perversance
Theatre

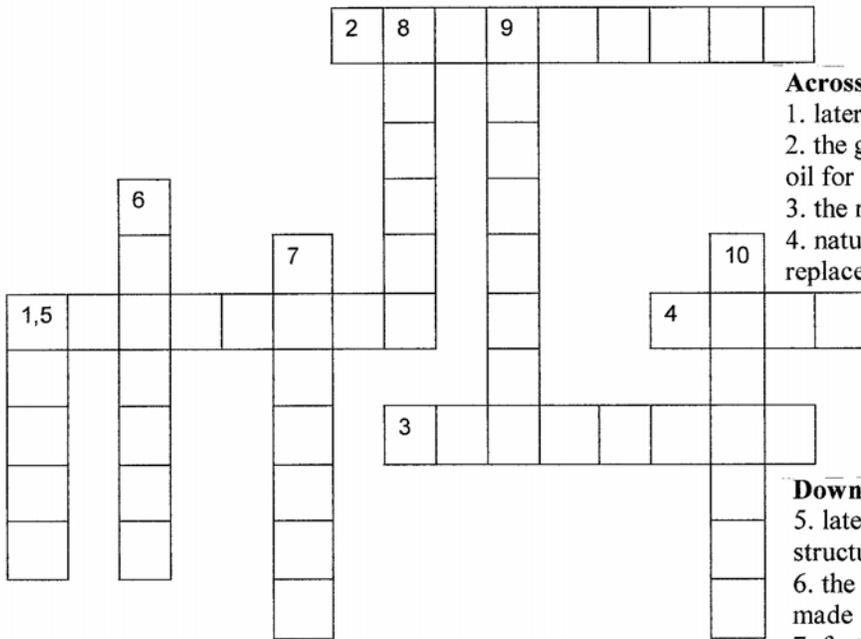
October 29

Overview of Glacier Bay Ecosystems
Featuring panelists from the Glacier Bay Science
Symposium
including Dr. Alexander Milner, Dr. James Bodkin, & Dr.
Ross Powell

November 5

Bats: Studying Noises in the Night
Matthew Heavner, Asst. Prof. of Physics

Birdlife Crossword - Feathers



Across

1. lateral branches off the barbs of a feather
2. the gland at the base of the tail that provides oil for cleaning and maintaining feathers
3. the major source of color in birds' feathers
4. natural process in which birds periodically replace their feathers

Down

5. lateral branches off the central support structure of a feather
6. the inert substance out of which feathers are made
7. feather coat
8. the central support structure of a feather
9. what birds are doing when they are applying oil to their feathers
10. another name for body feathers

SITKA REPORT By Kathleen Everest

Here Come the Clowns – to Sitka

What birds are also called “sea mice,” “squeakers,” “rock ducks,” “lords and ladies,” “ladybirds,” “white-eyed divers,” “painted ducks,” and “totem-pole ducks?” Only small, court-jester Harlequin Ducks with oddly painted faces and feather costumes could have so many stage names! On September 26th, Marge Ward reported she has seen three batches with about 100 ducks per batch on different days in two different areas. Marge also noted these Harlequins may be early in Sitka this year, and their numbers are finally increasing after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989.

Feather-Weather-Forecast in Sitka

On a gray day September 27th, Marge spotted a lone, gray Wandering Tattler and noted this sandpiper is in town later than usual. But, is winter coming soon since Marge also saw the first Varied Thrush early this year on September 28th, down from the mountains looking for an easy meal? This “Alaska Robin” likes fruit such as apples so make some available.

LATE SUMMER NOTES FROM KETCHIKAN

As an exceptional warm summer transforms to invigorating and colorful Autumn, watch for feathered visitors passing through returning to winter havens south. Amidst the bustle of tourist traffic near the tunnel, a fork-tailed storm-petrel walked across the dock and flew out across the channel, a rare sight!! A few juvenile Franklin's gulls have been seen several times along the waterfront in past weeks. An amazing 57 Lapland longspurs, along with pectoral sandpipers, long-billed dowitchers and an osprey were reported at the airport recently. The road that runs the perimeter of the runway is usually very productive for birds with more open area than found on Revillagigedo island.

The new 3rd Avenue bypass road above town opened with sweeping views of the channel and promises good vantage points to greet returning migrant waterfowl next spring!

Do get out and enjoy the glorious Autumn days to delight in the surprising vibrantly colored muskegs and alpine slopes before winter arrives!

Submitted by: Teri Goucher
Ketchikan, Alaska 907-225-5974

Haines Report—More Than Just Eagles Submitted by Georgia Giacobbe

I must admit up front that I am a novice bird watcher in Alaska as I just moved here approximately 1 ½ years ago. But in that short time, I have observed that the Chilkat Valley is more than just the Valley of the Eagles. During my summer stay at Chilkat Lake, I observed 11 common loons in a cove one rainy morning, an unusual sighting for me to see that many loons gathered in one spot. And yes, the eagles are now gathering on the Chilkat River. Approximately 100+ have been observed gathering as of September 18 on the McClellan Flats along with the competitive gulls and ravens. As of that date, they had not gathered farther up the river yet.

Answers to Feathers Crossword

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. barbules | 6. keratin |
| 2. uropygial | 7. plumage |
| 3. pigments | 8. rachis |
| 4. molt | 9. preening |
| 5. barbs | 10. contour |

Mary Lou King

Author, educator, conservationist, spruce root creations, and weaver.

In the mid 1960's, an educational field trip program at the Auke Bay elementary school known as Seaweek was expanded to all public grade schools in Juneau. Seaweek was a series of field trips to rich intertidal beaches. Students examined insects, small fish, birds, plants--anything and everything. The scientific community of Juneau is larger than average due to government offices and as Seaweek expanded so did the pool of volunteers to interact with the students. Mary Lou was a major motivating force in expanding Seaweek to all public elementary school students. She also helped to modify and upgrade the teacher's guides and student activity packages. Along with greater involvement with public schools came recognition of a need for more public beach access as close as possible to saltwater beaches near town. Taku Conservation Society volunteers, led by Mary Lou, identified existing public access routes and then improved or built new trails to the beach. Because the new trails were not included in any Juneau trail guides, Mary Lou wrote "90 Short Walks Around Juneau". It is a favorite of visitors and locals. Not only does it have maps but also comments on trail difficulty and best times to travel or enjoy. Mary Lou donates the profits from this book to Taku Conservation Society and Trail Mix.

In the last decade, a fish trap was discovered near the mouth of Montana Creek as it joins the Mendenhall River. It was probably 900 (?) years old. Mary Lou likes to do spruce root baskets, hats, and other challenging projects. She decided to make a replica of the fish trap in natural materials. Her replica is over 4' long and is a work of art! She gave it to the River Bend elementary school since the original had been found nearby. It is on permanent display in the River Bend School library.

She frequently writes articles for the Juneau Empire, not only for Audubon-intertidal or alpine plants- but also for Trail Mix and others. She is our best group leader for plant and berry walks sponsored by Juneau Audubon. Mary Lou is very talented in many ways unknown to me, but in every way she supports learning and growing.

Brenda Wright

Mary Lou is a doer. Most of us procrastinate or wait until we have all the facts before acting. But not Mary Lou, she just does it. She would make statements like "I don't know anything about writing a trail guide or putting out an Audubon newsletter but I'm gonna do it. Sometimes I would hear her say something like "Well no one else will teach these kids about birds so I might as well do it!" Educational material appears in schools, access to neat places gets established, and a very controversial report on the Mendenhall Wetlands gets published, all because she just does it.

Bob Armstrong

Ed Note: This was not the Editor's idea, but thanks for the nice words Brenda and Bob

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

Name _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip Code _____
Telephone number _____

_____ 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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