

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 32, Number 2

Juneau Audubon Society

October 2005

CELEBRATE NATURE SERIES, OCTOBER 13, 7:30 P.M. Rooms 221 and 220 above Egan auditorium in UAS LIBRARY

CLIMBING MOUNT (MCKINLEY) DENALI

What it takes to climb Denali now compared with 90 years ago. Michael Hekkers used Hudson Stuck's book "The Ascent of Denali," published in 1914 as a guide for his 1999 Muldrow Glacier- Karsten's Ridge climb of Denali. He will show slides and compare some of the hazards, equipment and food from the first climbs with his trip.

NOTES FROM THE BOARD- October 2005

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

Come join us for the first of this year's lecture series and our annual election of 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. There is a new candidate for vice-president this year. Jeff Sauer has agreed to run for office. Our present officers are Brenda Wright, president, vice-president, vacant, Liz Blecker, treasurer, and Steve Lewis, secretary. Any one who is a member of Audubon is eligible, so please come and vote for your choices. Just wanted to be sure and thank our former vice-president-Chris Kent. He has served on the Juneau Audubon Society board for many years in various capacities and he will be missed.

Our Saturday Wild! walks have been popular all summer. We are looking for new ideas and more people to lead walks. Please let us know if you enjoyed any of the outings and would like to lead one next year. I personally especially enjoyed the plant/mosses and dragon flies.

The Juneau board is supporting the Lynn Canal Conservation group in their efforts to reduce the impacts of jet boat tourism on the Bald Eagle Preserve in Haines. There is a concern that jet boat activity may affect the spawning salmon areas that attract so many eagles in the fall. I hope you are all able to travel to Haines this fall to enjoy the yearly spectacle of hundreds of eagle concentrated in a small area.

Check out your local Juneau Audubon Web page for local bird checklists, lecture schedules, guided bird and Saturday Wild! walk schedules, and past newsletters (www.juneau-audubon-society.org/).

Saturday Wild

October 2005

- October 8 Macaulay Salmon Hatchery**
10 a.m., 2697 Channel Dr.
Meet at the hatchery
Leader: Rich Mattson
- October 15 Treadwell Historic Trail (Co-Sponsored by Juneau City Museum)**
10 a.m., Sandy Beach
Meet at picnic shelter at Sandy Beach.
Leader: Jim Geraghty
(walk co-sponsored by Juneau-Douglas City Museum)
- October 22 Wildlife in Art**
10 a.m. & 11 a.m., Alaska State Museum
Meet at museum lobby
Leader: Steve Henrikson
- October 29 Digiscoping & macrophotography**
10 a.m., Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center
Meet at glacier overlook shelter
Leader: Bob Armstrong

Special thanks to all leaders of our October walks.

Saturday Wild is coordinated by Juneau Audubon Society

Join us any Saturday or every Saturday, weather or not, as we explore the wild side of Southeast Alaska. For more information on these free community walks, see <http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org> or e-mail saturdaywild@juneau-audubon-society.org. Programs will also be announced through local news media.

WEDNESDAY DOWNTOWN BIRD WALKS—Beth Peluso

As long as people keep coming, I plan to continue walks at least through Oct., stop by if you're downtown! Rainbow Foods, noon-1:00. We usually leave about 5 after.

Wednesday September 21, 2005 (Report from Eaglechat) Surprisingly good weather for the Wed. walk. We checked out the neighborhood around the Governor's mansion. The robins are in full force still, with the occasional varied thrush. At least one varied thrush singing. We heard starlings singing,

heard a song sparrow singing and saw another, saw several juvie white-crowned sparrows, saw chickadees, heard some juncos, and heard a pine siskin. Also ravens and numerous crows.

Two exciting sightings: a merlin zipped overhead, and I swear I saw an osprey go by! Do they migrate through here ever? It was a large raptor, long wings decidedly not buteo-shaped, white underneath with a noticeable crook on the front of the wings, even when it was flapping instead of gliding. It wasn't a long look, but the little warning bells in my head said not an eagle...

DOWNTOWN JUNEAU GEOLOGY— SATURDAY WILD Walk, September 24, 2005 By Virginia Harris

Approximately 12 of us joined the geology trip lead by Chris DeWitt, Supervisor of the Mineral Information Center, Bureau of Land Management in Douglas.

We had to do a little work at the start to get everyone in the right place heading the right direction, though. Chris had to hustle to Heritage on Franklin from his start at the uptown coffee shop. Brenda, our favorite JAS president, joined us later after a start at Rainbow Foods.

Once together in the coffee shop, Chris provided handouts and a quick introduction to Southeast geology, including an overview of the accretional and tectonic history of the area. He related this to our local geology—Gastineau Channel, Douglas Island, downtown Juneau, and the geology that created the local gold deposits.

After our inside orientation, we headed uptown taking advantage of what we could learn from outcrops, surrounding topography, building material, and gravel in parking lots and rock in drainage areas. A photographer and writer from the Juneau Empire were part of the group and there were good conversations throughout the walk.

I found it interesting to learn that gold occurred inside pyrite, “fools gold”, at the Treadwell mine. I appreciated being shown that there is a difference in the topography between Douglas Island and mainland side of Gastineau Channel. The faults of the accreted material of the mainland are steeper than the faults of the Douglas Island rock. We learned about past fault activity along Gastineau Channel and how glaciers followed these areas of relatively weak rock. Chris provided background to recent local information about asbestos at the city-owned Stablers Quarry, Auke Bay.

Chris is interested in doing more geology field trips and we look forward to joining him again. Thank you Chris and for your interest and thank you for taking the time to share your knowledge and enthusiasm with us. And, thank you walkers for all the good questions and conversations throughout the trip.

OBSERVATIONS FROM MATT BROOKS

Just wanted to let you know that the Forest Service kayak rangers had at least two sightings of Tufted Puffins in Tracy Arm over the summer. I'm not sure of dates, however. Rich Gordon also saw one down there a few weeks ago, but his was a juvenile. Plus the one Mark Schwan and I saw last summer....Intriguing....

SEPTEMBER NOTES FROM KETCHIKAN- By Teri Goucher

There were unfortunately not many interesting sightings to report this month. Perhaps some unusual birds may have slipped by our local birders!

There were a couple of Mourning Doves seen mid-month, one on each end of our road system. Although rare in S.E. Alaska; individuals of this species have occurred nearly every year here mostly between late August until the beginning of October. A maximum of three were seen 9-19-98.

A juvenile Sharp-shinned Hawk was spotted north of town and is most commonly seen this time of year. Red-breasted nuthatch is another species most common in the fall. Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels may show up during our autumn storms.

American Robins are fairly common in September but are mostly gone by early October with a very few wintering in our area!

Fall is still a great time to spot unusual birds migrating though S.E. Alaska; so do keep looking!!

Gustavus Bird Report August 29-October 2, 2005

It was an exciting month to be out birding on the Gustavus beaches. The weather was a mix of everything except cold. The temperature never dropped below thirty-five degrees until October 2, when it dipped below freezing.

Some birds were fairly common during the month. **Sandhill Cranes** were a familiar sound and sight as they passed through the area in the thousands. The high-pitched voices of the juveniles could be heard among the noisy adults. **Steller's Jays** dominated the local bird feeding scene with over a dozen jays at some feeders. A few people took down their feeders out of frustration. Hawks and falcons were abundant. It was not uncommon to see two or three species at a time hunting over the beach grasslands. **Northern Harriers, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Merlins, and Peregrine Falcons** were regulars. There were several **American Kestrel** sightings, and at least one **Northern Shrike** was observed.

Of the more unusual birds seen over the period, many were shorebirds. **American Golden-Plovers** and **Pacific Golden-Plovers** continued to be seen in good numbers through the middle of the month with a high count of thirty-two in an evenly mixed flock of American and Pacific on 9/8. A single Pacific Golden-Plover was seen as late as 10/2, the day of this writing. After the area's first fall record in August, five **Red Knots** were seen with twenty golden-plovers on 9/2. **Baird's Sandpipers** were observed early in the month on three dates. **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** were seen on 9/1, 9/3, 10/1, and 10/2. These were always with or near Pectoral Sandpipers. After an initial sighting on 8/24, **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** continued to be seen on Gustavus beaches with almost daily sightings of one or two birds from 9/1 through 9/7.

There were a few interesting sightings that were not shorebirds. A **Common Nighthawk** was seen over the golf course on 9/1. There were six **Horned Larks** near the beach on 9/7 and twelve on 9/16. Two **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen feeding on dead salmon near the boat harbor on 9/15. An inland form of **Fox Sparrow** was frequenting a local feeder for the later part of the month. A juvenile **Golden Eagle** was circling near town on 10/2.

Thanks to Bruce Paige and Phoebe Vanselow for sharing their observations. By Nat Drumheller, natdrumheller@hotmail.com

Petersburg Report By Don Cornelius

We're having bird feeder problems this fall. But, not the usual variety. Birds are hogging the food from the squirrels.

With the paucity of wildlife around urban Petersburg, we've welcomed a couple of red squirrels that honed in on our bird feeder. Unlike squirrels I've known in other areas, these guys don't take over, however. Rather they come in for short periods, entertain us, and then they're gone. Everybody had the chance to eat at our diner.

That day has vanished. It started when a friend told us stories about the fun he had putting peanuts out for his resident squirrel -- a squirrel that departed or died when his neighbor cut down the trees on the adjacent lot. However, after several years of squirrel stories we decided to dip into our bank account and buy some all-too-expensive peanuts.

The squirrels enjoyed them for several days until the bird hogs arrived. It started when two Steller's jays found the peanuts. True to their instincts, the jays filled their jowls with peanuts and headed to neighboring yards to stash their treasure before returning for another beakful.

They're so cheeky that they'll even take peanuts off a hat sitting on my wife's head. One is so spoiled it took off with a small peanut, decided it wouldn't do, so flew back, returned the small peanut, and selected a larger one.

However, two jays have now morphed into about four times that many on some occasions. We gave up on the peanuts except for occasional treats and now we can't keep sunflower seeds on the feeder -- the other food item favored by the squirrels. Our feeder is currently nonstop jay action from dawn to dusk. While we still enjoy the constant flashes of blue feathers out our window, we miss the squirrels.

The only thing that clears the feeder off faster than the jays is the deer, but that's another story.

My next project is to design a bird-proof squirrel feeder and install it out of the deer's reach.

From: Audubon Newswire - "News on Audubon Happenings" Volume 3, # 16

Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon Launch New Version of eBird

Ithaca, NY, September 16, 2005 - The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon announce the release of eBird 2.0, an updated version of the powerful Internet-based program currently used by thousands of birders. eBird is a free, user-friendly way for birders across North America to record, archive, and share their observations at any hour of the day. It is also an important tool for conservation, providing researchers with a comprehensive picture of the abundance and distribution of birds. The data come to life via eBird's colorful new interactive maps. In addition to a completely new look and feel, eBird 2.0 has a streamlined data entry process and a suite of new output tools geared toward the interests of today's birders. On customized "My eBird" pages users can now view their life, state and county lists - all generated automatically as individual reports are entered. Begun in 2002, eBird is growing and changing as it builds a strong base of dedicated observers. eBird already supplies data to researchers across the country, and new ways to extract and interpret information will increase its value as a tool for bird conservation. In the coming years, eBird may have a role to play farther south in gathering information in the Caribbean, Central and South America. To view eBird 2.0, go to www.ebird.org <<http://www.ebird.org>>.

VOLUNTEER HELP, ITEMS TO SELL, AND RECYCLED ½ PINT CANNING JARS will all be needed for the November 25-27 Audubon booth in

Centennial Hall. Call: Ellen Anderson, 789-1412 or Mary Lou King, 789-7540 if you would like to donate or help.

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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