

# 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's **Celebrate Nature** Lecture Series 2005-2006



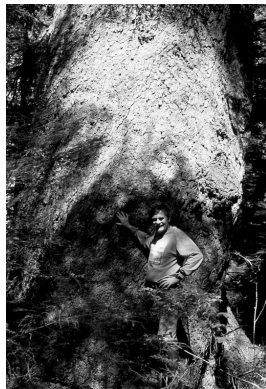
**Friday November 4th**

**David Hancock - Bald Eagles of the Pacific Northwest,**

This is an **Evening at Egan** lecture, sponsored by UAS.

Egan Auditorium 7:00 PM. (note the day and time!)

Join noted ornithologist, conservationist, and writer, David Hancock, as he shares over 50 years of experience observing and studying the bald eagle of the Pacific Northwest. David Hancock has published numerous scientific articles, and scores of books on birds, but eagles are his specialty. He is an excellent photographer and travels widely from his home in British Columbia giving invited lectures. This is a program you'll not want to miss!



**Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup>**

**John Schoen - Treasures of the Tongass**

UAS Egan Auditorium, 7:30-8:30 PM

Have you ever wondered where to go to find the biggest trees, the best salmon streams, the most bears, or the most murrelets in Southeast Alaska? Join Dr. John Schoen, senior Scientist with Audubon Alaska, as he describes innovative research by Audubon, the Nature Conservancy, and other cooperators to find and photograph the watersheds of highest ecological value in southeast Alaska. You'll want to see and save these special places.



**Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Jamie Womble & Kevin White - Going to Gondwanaland**

UAS Egan Auditorium, 7:30-8:30 PM

The southern super-continent known as Gondwanaland included most of the landmasses which make up today's continents of the southern hemisphere. Jamie Womble and Kevin White have visited a variety of exotic places in the southern Hemisphere, including the Andean Altiplano, Patagonia, New Zealand, and KwaZulu Natal. Come see slides and hear stories of their adventures in these faraway, exotic locales.

## **Catamaran Boat Trip to Haines for Eagle Festival: Sandy Harbanuk**

The Bald Eagle Festival is Nov. 9 - 13, Wednesday to Sunday. The day trip via catamaran is on the Saturday, November 12. It departs Auke Bay at 7:30am (boards at 7am) and gets to Haines around 10am - if there are whales or sea lions sighted along the route they stop to get a better look, so the arrival time isn't exact.

Upon arrival in Haines, people can either go straight out to the Bald Eagle Preserve on a bus with a naturalist, or visit the American Bald Eagle Foundation for a morning program with live birds. A second, noonish departure for the Preserve does a bit of touring, again with a naturalist on board, and everyone is at the release site for the release of rehabilitated eagles at 1:30pm - looks like probably 3 eagles this year.

The catamaran boards at 3pm for the return to Juneau. It departs promptly at 3:30pm.

Coffee, tea and hot chocolate are provided for free aboard the catamaran, and there will be snacks for sale to benefit the American Bald Eagle Foundation. There's a nice little market near the Foundation in Haines (3 minute walk), where they do good sandwiches and have homemade pastry and breads (good coffee!). Mountain Market.

The Foundation has hot coffee, tea and hot chocolate, and I think, cider, all day but no food available other than cookies. It's a nice trip no matter the weather, but if it's a sunny day, the scenery is spectacular - sometimes it's sunny there when it isn't here, so there's a good chance.

The cost of the trip is \$80 for adults and \$55 for kids under 10. There's a 10 percent discount for groups of eight or more.

My phone number is 586-2207, and I work from home, so I can be reached day or evening at that number.

**THE 11TH ALASKA BIRD CONFERENCE** will be held from 7-9 February 2006 in Juneau, Alaska.

Call for abstracts and details regarding the conference can be found at [www.abc2006.juneau-audubon-society.org](http://www.abc2006.juneau-audubon-society.org). For more information, please contact Michelle Kissling by phone at 907-780-1168 or by email at [michelle\\_kissling@fws.gov](mailto:michelle_kissling@fws.gov).

**From: Paul Suchanek <[paulms@gci.net](mailto:paulms@gci.net) -- Eaglechat@yahoogroups.com**

**Subject: Fish Creek revisited**

This AM, I went back out to Fish Creek and the pied-billed grebe was still there as well as the slaty-backed gull (which was on a sandbar on the Mendenhall Wetlands side of the channel). In a classic case of hiding in plain sight, I first heard a single killdeer but upon carefully searching the slough area at the mouth of Fish Creek found that there were at least 14 in the flock.

# Saturday Wild



November 2005

**November 5**

**Juneau's own Valley of the Eagles**

10 a.m., Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center  
Meet at glacier overlook shelter  
Leader: Mike Jacobson

**November 12**

**Alaska Bald Eagle Festival, Haines**

Catamaran charter departs Don D. Statter Harbor near Auke Bay harbormaster's office at 7:30 a.m.; return sailing departs Haines 3:30 p.m.  
*Cruise sponsored by American Bald Eagle Foundation. Tickets available at Hearthside Books & Wee Fishie Shoppe.*  
*Adults, \$80; children under 10, \$55.*

**November 19**

**Who lies beneath, who sings above**

Historic gravesites, plus a popular winter birding spot  
Co-sponsored by Juneau-Douglas City Museum  
10 a.m., Evergreen Cemetery  
Meet at Glacier Avenue entrance.  
Leaders: Marie Darlin & Beth Peluso

**November 26**

**Juneau Public Market**

Centennial Hall  
Visit the Audubon booth in the main ballroom; bring your children to the holiday crafts workshop.  
*Public Market is open Nov. 25-27.*

**Saturday Wild is coordinated by Juneau Audubon Society**

Join us any Saturday or every Saturday, 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 <mailto:saturdaywild@juneau-audubon-society.org>. Programs will also be announced through local news media.

*Special thanks to all leaders of our November walks.*

## **BOARD NEWS** by Brenda Wright, Juneau Audubon Society president

November!

This month we prepare our goodies for the public market, one of our two major fundraisers for the year. Time to make jam, create some crafts, and volunteer to help at our booth. It's a fun way to see many of your friends and help support Juneau Audubon during Thanksgiving Day weekend- November 25-27. If you can volunteer to help, please contact any board member or Ellen Anderson, booth coordinator, at 789-1412.

It is also time for the Thanksgiving Day bird count. This is not about the cooked one in the oven. This is a simple bird count that only lasts for one hour and is confined to a circle of only 15 feet! This is the kind of bird count I do as I sit by my window and visit with friends and family. It is organized by Humboldt State University and the information is collected from all western states. You can pick any one hour period on Thanksgiving Day. Give it a try, it is simple and easy. The form is available at the public lecture and on the Juneau web page.

The Juneau Audubon Society board welcomes your comments and suggestions. We are proud to be sponsoring the Alaska Bird Conference here in Juneau in February. We'd love to hear from you on education, conservation, or public events. Please feel free to offer opinions to any of the board members. Hope to see you at the public lecture series=Celebrate Nature. More information is available on our Juneau Audubon web page ([www.juneau-audubon-society.org](http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org))

**THANKSGIVING BIRD COUNT** Dr. John G. Hewston, Natural Resources Building, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521, (707) 822-5288

The annual Thanksgiving Bird Count is rapidly approaching and will take place November 25<sup>th</sup>. I am trying to increase the number of bird counters taking part and to off-set the number dropping out each year. Of the various methods I have tried, the most productive has been through newsletter editors, columnists and others who can spread the word. This year I have asked my friend and fellow birder to contact you via the internet in the hopes of spreading the word even further. Last year we finally broke that 500 barrier and received 570 counts.

Thanksgiving Bird Counts are to take place on Thanksgiving Day, and to last for only one hour! The counter chooses the time that best fits his/her schedule. Some folks have called it a welcome break from the holiday activities. The count is to be made in a 15-foot diameter circle, the location of which also is determined by the participant. Such count circles are usually located around whatever attracts birds....feeders, bird baths, cover, etc. Most participants select a count area visible from a comfortable spot near a window. This is one winter count which can be made in comfort regardless of the weather. However, some counters do go outdoors and make their counts in favorite bird areas or on water areas. The same count circles should be used each year.

The count circle can be considered a cylinder, since birds passing through or over the area can be counted (as long as they pass through the upward circle/cylinder). Do not count those flocks of geese or the soaring hawks, eagles and gulls seen way up there. Limit the height to where you can be sure they went through the circle. Count individual birds only once! Some may pay repeated visits during the

count hour, so don't count them every time. Fifteen visits by the same bird is only one bird. To count flocks of birds, make a count each time and use only the highest count made for your actual tally.

(ED. Note: The tally form to use to record each count has been posted on the Juneau website. (<http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org/Birds/Thanksgiving%20Bd%20Cnt/Thanksgiving%20Bird%20Count%20Form.doc>)

Last year 553 participants turned in 570 count reports and tallied 168 species in the eleven Western States, plus Alaska. The most numerous species were: House Sparrow (3,829), House Finch (3,027), Dark-eyed Junco (2,634), Mourning Dove (1,206), California Quail (968), Black-capped Chickadee (812), American Goldfinch (801), White-crowned Sparrow (724), Steller's Jay (546), and Starling (521). The Pine Siskin dropped from third place in 2001 to 16<sup>th</sup> in 2002 and on down to 20<sup>th</sup> in 2003. Counters should send in reports even if no birds were seen during the count hour.

This count is not as well known as is the annual Christmas Count or Breeding Bird Survey, but was begun in 1966 by Dr. Ernest Edwards and the Lynchburg Bird Club in Virginia. It slowly spread across the nation. I took over coordinating and compiling the count in 1992 for the Western States, Alaska and Hawaii. Thanks for any help you can provide.

## **PRELIMINARY 2005 TRUMPETER SWAN COUNTS**

Preliminary results from the 2005 Trumpeter Swan census, announced at the Trumpeter Swan Conference in Council Bluffs, Iowa, indicate there may be as many as 35,000 Trumpeter Swans with as many as 70% nesting in Alaska.

## **GOLFING WITH OWLS By Bonnie Demerjian, Wrangell**

My birding partner and I have been scouting our owling route, a part of the Southeast Alaska Owl Network survey, since January. So far, we've not heard or seen a single owl. Perhaps we should be netting them instead. A 40-foot-high net surrounds the driving range at Wrangell's Muskeg Meadows golf course. This summer a Northern pygmy owl found its way into it. Golf course employee Glenn Landmesser was patrolling the perimeter of the net picking up golf balls early one August morning when her dog spotted the owl snared in the net's mesh. After containing her puppy, Glenn carefully clipped the tightly wound mesh from around the bird's neck and wings, then placed it in a quiet room to recover. That gave arriving golfers a rare chance to view this diminutive owl close up. A few hours later, the bird began trying its wings and it was released.

Muskeg Meadows has proved to be a surprising birding spot since its construction in the 1990s. It boasts a variety of habitats: old and second growth forest, clearcut, beach, ponds, streams, wetlands and, of course, muskeg. A large number of standing dead trees make it a hot spot for woodpeckers. This past summer a pair of Bald eagles raised their family in sight of one fairway. A pond attracts Mallards, teal, American wigeons and Great blue herons as well as several kinds of warblers, swallows, sparrows and even an occasional Red-winged blackbird, while beach only a few hundred feet away attracts saltwater ducks and shorebirds. The expanse of green attracts raptors as well. One memorable day not long ago I spotted an immature Northern goshawk, a Sharp-shinned hawk and a Northern harrier all in an hour's walk. The golf course's proximity to the Stikine River delta puts it in the path of migrating Sandhill cranes and Snow geese.

Wrangell birders usually rise earlier than golfers so sharing the course isn't generally difficult. Birders may even have attracted some new converts here. As a matter of fact, a bird is featured on the sign announcing entrance to the golf course: a raven with a golf ball in its beak – not an uncommon sight. Birds and golf can coexist very well and do at Muskeg Meadows.

## **GUSTAVUS BIRD REPORT October 3 - 24, 2005** By Nat Drumheller

Following are the highlights for the three week period.

It continued to be an amazing season for **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers**. They were observed in the upper beach grasses around town on at least nine dates during this report period with **seven** counted in one flock east of the Salmon River on 10/17, while three more were seen west of the river on that same day. Their prolonged presence provided an opportunity to become, at least a little bit, familiar with their vocalizations and plumage patterns.

**Pacific Golden-Plovers** were seen on the beaches throughout the period. **Sixty** were counted west of town at the mouth of Dude Creek on 10/3 with a late **Semipalmated Plover**. This flock appeared to linger, being observed with the Semipalmated Plover in the same area through 10/18. The number of Pacific Golden-Plovers dropped gradually through the three weeks with only five observed on 10/24.

**Black-bellied Plovers** were seen in small numbers on the beaches throughout the period.

A **White-rumped Sandpiper** was observed at the beach near the mouth of the Salmon River on 10/15 after a cold, clear night with north winds.

Small numbers of **Western Sandpipers** were observed later than normal with two as late as 10/9.

**Dunlins**, **Sanderlings**, and **Rock Sandpipers**, three species known to spend the winter on Gustavus beaches, began to increase in numbers with high counts to date of about 30 Dunlins, one hundred Rock Sandpipers, and over two hundred Sanderlings.

A variety of owls were seen including a **Northern Pygmy-Owl**, a **Northern Hawk Owl**, and single **Short-eared Owls** on at least two dates. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was heard on four nights.

**Northern Goshawks** were seen on numerous dates. Light-colored **Rough-legged Hawks** were seen on two dates. A juvenile gray **Gyrfalcon** was pursued and harassed by a Peregrine Falcon as it flew east along the upper beach on 10/16. An adult **Golden Eagle** was circling over the upper beach and flying east on 10/20.

**Steller's Jays** continued to be abundant in Gustavus. Residents with bird feeders lamented that birds normally common at their feeders were either absent or few while jays remained numerous.

Late this month, **Trumpeter Swans** and **Snow Buntings** made their first appearances of the season, and **Northern Shrikes** became more common.

Thanks to Bruce Paige and Phoebe Vanselow for sharing observations.

## **KETCHIKAN'S BIRDS OF OCTOBER-By Teri Goucher**

This month had several storms that brought an astonishing variety of birds to our island!

Local birders were well rewarded as were Joe & Mary Staab who visited here a few days from Seward for birding.

Seasonally the hillside neighborhood in town has a great selection of colorful shrubs, bountiful fruit trees, berry laden mountain ash, and well stocked feeders.

Amongst the many flocks of Robins, Starlings and Cedar Waxwings, there were some unusual birds enjoying the fall feast. Several sightings of a Black-headed Grosbeak and up to three Rose-breasted Grosbeaks occurred throughout the month with two at a time being seen. The Black-headed Grosbeak has one other record locally and the Rose-breasted Grosbeak has made an appearance in the state only five other times!

Our latest date for a Vaux's Swift to soar by happened on the 4<sup>th</sup>. There were several Mourning Doves around and a beautifully glossy male Brewer's Blackbird remained in this neighborhood quite a few days. One feeder hosted a Mourning Dove, a Brown-headed Cowbird and a Rose-breasted Grosbeak together at the same time!

South of town, coastal Mountain Point is an open grassy area broken up by shrubs and young alders has proven to produce excellent birds and October was no exception. Two Rusty Blackbirds were found on Alaska Day and on the 19<sup>th</sup>, an immature Nashville Warbler was spotted. There are only 3 records of this warbler, mostly from the South Central region of our state.

A Kestral was spotted very early in the month, several Sharp-shinned Hawks, and reports of at least 5 Northern Pygmy-Owls were seen or heard around the island.

Several Yellow-rumped Warblers remain along with a few Orange-crowned Warblers and Yellow Warblers.

Sparrow's numbers are still strong as Song and Fox Sparrows are commonly found. A few Savannah, Lincoln, White-crowned, Golden-crowned, and White-throated Sparrow are still frequently seen.

Considering the relatively limited amount of time spent birding in the field, Ketchikan was lucky to discover such a great variety of birds this October

## **SKAGWAY BIRD REPORT -- By Meg Hahr ([meg\\_hahr@hotmail.com](mailto:meg_hahr@hotmail.com))**

With the typical wet and windy fall weather we've been experiencing in Skagway, good birding opportunities have been fleeting. The Skagway Bird Club held its first meeting since the spring on October 12<sup>th</sup>. Club members reported seeing the not-so-common Common Snipe in several back yards downtown. A grebe carcass was discovered at Upper Dewey Lake and the observer speculated that it may have been carried and consumed there by an eagle. Coincidentally, the crows headed south along with summer seasonals and the last cruise ship at the end of September. Black-billed Magpies have returned to Skagway for the winter, and Steller's Jays have become more abundant and emboldened as well. A lone Rock Dove was spotted building a nest on a window ledge at the Skagway School. Hairy Woodpeckers, American Robins, Slate-colored Juncoes, and a solitary Fox Sparrow have been frequenting feeders in town. Along forested roads and trails, Chestnut Backed Chickadees, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Varied Thrushes, Three-toed Woodpeckers, and Common Ravens have been spotted. A northern Hawk Owl was seen perched in a tree along the Klondike Highway on 10/8. American Dippers have moved down from the mountains and taken up residence along lower Pullen Creek.

Northern Harriers have been observed on their southward migration. Bald Eagles, Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes, Belted Kingfishers, Common Mergansers, and Mew and Glaucus-winged Gulls remain active throughout the upper Taiya Inlet. One Red-tailed Hawk and a Long-billed Dowitcher were seen in Dyea near the Taiya River. On 10/20 a Rock Sandpiper was seen and photographed near the mouth of the Skagway River.

Thanks to the following individuals for sharing their observations: Andrew Cremata, Joanne and Andrew Beierly, Mike Konsler, Jeremy Simmons, Gary and Janilyn Heger, Michael Yee, Jessica Medlin, Charlotte Jewell, John McDermott, Gary Brummett, Debbie Sanders, Deb Boetcher, and Elaine Furbish.

**HAINES REPORT: Georgia Giacobbe** [dngeorgia@skycasters.net](mailto:dngeorgia@skycasters.net)

The summer tourist season may be over for Haines, but the valley is welcoming the fall and winter visitors of the feathered kind. The tourists are no longer lining the roadway along the Chilkoot River in order to spot bear. But for the birding enthusiast, there remains throngs of gulls, terns, and ducks of several varieties. On one drive on October 16, this writer spotted Herring, Mew, and Thayer Gulls scattered among the diving ducks of several varieties. An occasional Marbled Murrelet swam among the smaller rocks. While traveling along Haines Highway toward the border, a resident around 26-Mile has noted several Trumpeter Swans with cygnets at 5-mile, a few Spruce Grouse along the road, and possibly a Red-tailed Hawk. And of course the Bald Eagles are gathering. The late September and early October chum salmon run encouraged an early gathering of the eagles at the Klehini River. Now the eagles have arrived in time in numbers on the Chilkat, especially at the first pullout on the Council Grounds. Some 50 eagles can be seen taking off at once when something startles them.

So the eagles are cooperating in numbers for the upcoming Bald Eagle Festival. The festival is not entirely about eagles, but the other birds and wildlife in the valley are included as well. This year, in addition to the usual photography workshops and slide presentations, the festival photographer of the year is Glenn Browning, who will be teaching a 35 mm photography class and conduct a taxidermy demonstration during the festival. Taxidermy is his specialty and is a unique addition to the other scheduled events. The Bald Eagle Festival is scheduled for November 9-13 and additional information can be found at [www.baldeaglefestival.org](http://www.baldeaglefestival.org).

**Clips from the Conservation Committee:**

The Conservation Committee welcomes involvement from all members. We are always keen to have new members who would like to follow an issue in the community and help keep other JAS members informed. If you have comments or would like to become involved, please contact the chair, Sari Saunders, at [conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org), or any other committee or Board member.

**1. Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) on proposed amendments to the Alaska Coastal Management Plan** – NOAA has now released its DSEIS on amendments proposed by the state of AK to the ACMP. This is an examination of legislation and regulations, adopted by the State of AK between 2003 and 2005, that made revisions to the federally-approved Coastal Management Plan (because it's currently federally approved the State can acquire federal funding for implementation of the ACMP and the State can use the current policies for consistency with Federal policies). The State hoped, among other things, that the amendments would limit duplication of permit reviews and thus improve timing of review. The changes have also limited local involvement and made the program management primarily a state responsibility. There are a number of revisions to state standards, which alter certain definitions



of areas of applicability of the ACMP, e.g., “coastal habitat” would no longer include wetlands and intertidal zones, but would now have to contain a measurable quantity or percentage of seawater.

NOAA review partly involves determining whether the amendments affect the ACMPs status as a federally-approvable program. NOAA evaluates the impacts of three alternatives: Approve Alaska’s request, Take no action, and deny Alaska’s request in terms of the physical environment and socio-economic considerations. In short, the preferred alternative, based on NOAA’s analysis is Alternative 1, to approve the request of AK to incorporate the legislative revisions and regulations as amendments to the ACMP.

I have a copy of the DSEIS on cd, if you would like to see it. All materials are also available on the web at <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/pcd/up.html>

Public hearings will be held in Juneau on Oct. 31. Please do forward any comments you have to me, should you like to participate in responses to the DSEIS submitted by JAS. If you would like to submit personal comments, these must be sent by November 7, 2005 to Helen Bass, Coastal Programs Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management, NOS/NOSS, SSMC4 N/ORM3 Rm. 11207, 1305 East-west Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20904 OR via email to [Helen.Bass@noaa.gov](mailto:Helen.Bass@noaa.gov)

**2. ACMP review of Falk Tour Dock in Auke Bay** – The DNR has posted a public notice re: a dock project within Auke Bay that is currently being reviewed for consistency with the ACMP (see above!). The project involves construction and installation of a 400 foot x 12 foot concrete float to be anchored with steel piles to provide additional moorage facilities for our boats within Statter Harbor. There are also existing gangways and connecting docks that will be removed and replaced, and there is associated upland development to make a staging area for bus passengers. To examine this notice more carefully, go to <http://notes4.state.ak.us/pn/pubnotic.nsf/?Open> and then search within “category” then “public notices” and then look for Juneau notices (they are alphabetical). Comments must be in writing and be submitted by 5 p.m. Nov. 22, 2005 to Office of Project Management and Permitting, 302 Gold St., Suite 202, Juneau, AK 99801 Attn: Ben White, ACMP Specialist. For information on current, enforceable policies of the ACMP, see their website at <http://www.alaskacoast.state.ak.us/>.

**3. ACMP consistency review notices** – in general, it is always worth checking the public notices posted on the ACMP site (see above). For example, in addition to the notice above regarding the dock, there are 2 current public notices up for comment within the Juneau area. These include a request to modify the site and nature of aquatic farm operations within Bridget Cove (see Manning Aqua Farm Amendment using process outlined above) and a request to construct a private floating dock (see Windham Bay Holdings Float).

**4. Pesticide spraying and other issues** – as always, I suggest you check SEACC’s website periodically ([www.seacc.org](http://www.seacc.org)) to keep up to date on other issues in our area. One event of current interest involves the spraying (aerial, by helicopter) on managed forest land of pesticides to reduce competition by salmonberry and alder. The permit in question is being requested by Klukwan, Inc. for lands on Long Island, near Prince of Wales. Comments are due at the DEC by Oct. 31, 2005. They can be emailed to Sandra Woods [swoods@dec.state.ak.us](mailto:swoods@dec.state.ak.us)

## 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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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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### Officers, Committee Chairs, Events Coordinators

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**Vice-President:** Jeff Sauer, [vice-president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:vice-president@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
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**Treasurer:** Liz Blecker, 586-4210, [treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Programs:** Matt Kirchhoff, 586-5816, [programs@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:programs@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Membership:** Donna Carroll, [membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Education:** Beth Peluso, [education@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:education@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Publicity:** Vacant, [publicity@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:publicity@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Conservation:** Sari Saunders, [conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Field Trips:** Steve Zimmerman, 586-2597, [field-trips@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:field-trips@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Raven Editor:** Mary Lou King, 789-7540, [raven@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:raven@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Public Market** Ellen Anderson, 789-1412, [public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Web Master:** George Utermohl, [webmaster@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:webmaster@juneau-audubon-society.org)

**JUNEAU AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
**PO BOX 021725**  
**JUNEAU, AK 99802**

Nonprofit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
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Juneau, AK 99802