

# 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 35, Number 2

Juneau Audubon Society

October 2008

## **Juneau Audubon Public Meeting – October 9, 2008 7:00 PM, UAS Egan Room 221/222**

**The first regular Juneau Audubon evening meeting will be a desert/healthy snack potluck. Please bring 10 slides (film or digital) to share with everyone. All bird, wildlife, and travel photographs are encouraged. Local birding or exotic locations are especially requested. Come and enjoy the food and your talented neighbor's stories and photos!**



**ELECTION** -- Juneau Audubon Society will elect officers in conjunction with the public meeting in October. 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.

The election slate for 2008 is Mark Schwan for president, Jeff Sauer for vice-president, Brien Daugherty for treasurer and Patty Rose for secretary. Please contact any of the officers or board members if you 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.

### **November Audubon meeting: Latin American Eco-tourism Medley**

Linda Shaw will show a medley of her best photos from several trips - Ecuador, the Galapagos and Costa Rica. She also has a few movie clips from the Galapagos.

**NOVEMBER PUBLIC MARKET: Ideas and items to sell in the Juneau Audubon booth are needed. Contact: Ellen Anderson, 789-1412, [public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org). Call Mary Lou King, 789-7540 if you have recycled half pint canning jars for the jelly.**

## JUNEAU BIRD OBSERVATIONS by Patty Rose

Juneau's first **Turkey Vulture** was observed and photographed on the Mendenhall River on September 24 (JW as reported to GV). The bird was still around on September 27. Another exciting September highlight was the discovery of single **Red-throated Pipits** on September 16 (MS) and September 17 (RG) on the Mendenhall Wetlands.



*Smith's Longspur*

*Photo by Patty Rose*

chick of the **Bald Eagle** pair that nested near the airport dike trail left the nest and was later seen perched nearby (RG).

In addition to the Turkey Vulture, raptors moving through the area in September included **Osprey** on September 12 near the Juneau-Douglas Bridge (BP), on September 24 on Gold Ridge (MJ), at Brotherhood Park (PS), and on Mt. Juneau (BP), and on September 20 on the Mendenhall Wetlands (GV). **Peregrine Falcons** were observed on the Mendenhall Wetlands on August 31 (PS, BA, MS, RG, PR), September 20 (GV), and September 21 (MJ).



*Buff-breasted Sandpiper*

*Photo by Patty Rose*

A flock of about 150 **Snow Geese** was seen flying high over Gastineau Channel on September 23 (BP). Although this species is regularly seen in the spring, it is seldom seen in the fall in Juneau. On September 12, a **Pied-billed Grebe** was seen on the Mendenhall Wetlands (RG). A juvenile **Sora** was seen at the Pioneers' Home marsh on September 8 (PS). On September 6, a **Northern Hawk Owl** was observed on Blackerby Ridge (GB).

Shorebirds observed during September included a **Wandering Tattler** on September 6 at the Jensen-Olson Arboretum, and possibly the same bird at the Shrine of St. Therese later that day (MJ). On September 8, a single **Upland Sandpiper** was seen on the Mendenhall

Two noteworthy observations occurred in late August, just missing last month's report: A **Smith's Longspur** on August 24 on the Mendenhall Wetlands (LL, PS, BA, GV, PR), and a **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** on August 29 on the Mendenhall Wetlands (RG, PS). On August 23, the

Wetlands (PS). A **Stilt Sandpiper** was present at Fish Creek on September 17 (PS), a late date for this species.

The "Kamchatka" subspecies of Mew Gull reported last month continued to be present during September near the mouth of the Mendenhall River (PS). Two adult **Ring-billed Gulls** were observed in downtown Juneau at the intermediate vessel dock through September 16 (PS). A **Glaucous Gull** was seen at Lawson Creek on September 16 (PR).

A **Common Nighthawk** was seen on September 3 in the Mendenhall Loop Road area (GB). A **Mourning Dove** visited the Capital School Playground in downtown Juneau on September 12 (PR, JS). On September 5, a **Chipping Sparrow** was seen on the Mendenhall Wetlands (RG).

Fall warblers included a **Magnolia Warbler** on the Mendenhall Wetlands on August 27 (RG), a **Blackpoll Warbler** at Sandy Beach on September 3 (PS), and a **Tennessee Warbler** on the Mendenhall Wetlands on September 5 (RG).

Thanks to those who contributed observations.

Contributors: Bev Agler (BA), Gwen Baluss (GB), Richard Gordon (RG), Merrill Jensen (MJ), Laurie Lamm (LL), Beth Peluso (BP), Patty Rose (PR), Jeff Sauer (JS), Mark Schwan (MS), Paul Suchanek (PS), Gus van Vliet (GV), Jodi Wise (JW).

## **WRANGELL REPORT** By Bonnie Demerjian

The fall migration hasn't brought the unusual birds we've seen in some years past. However, those heralds of spring and fall, the **Sandhill Cranes**, passed over Wrangell the evening of September 23, taking advantage of calm, clear skies and a sliver of moon. They had been resting and feeding on the Stikine River flats since September 17. Another flock, reportedly thousands, flew south over Petersburg on the morning of September 24. More passed over Wrangell that afternoon and we lucky ones who heard their throaty cries ran outside to wish them well along their way. Earl and Mary Benitz, who live year-round on the delta, report that the birds are later than usual this year. They have first arrived anywhere from September 7 – 12 in the previous few years. A couple of birders were treated to a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** training session on August 30. Two juveniles under adult supervision practiced swooping down on a couple of Steller Jays with enthusiasm but no luck.

Large numbers of **Cedar Waxwings** and juvenile **American Robins** are devouring the abundant mountain ash crop around town. **Pine Siskins** never left this summer and are back at local feeders. A single **White-crowned Sparrow** has also been seen at one feeder.

**Wrangell Ranger District wildlife biologist Melissa Cady held a bird identification training course for outfitters and guides this past spring.** The goal of her program was

to help local charter businesspeople sharpen their birding knowledge so that both their general-interest clients and avid birders have more rewarding experiences.

The course consisted of two evenings of classroom lecture and a half-day of field instruction. The first evening focused on bird identification, concentrating on those birds likely to be spotted on the waters around Wrangell and on the Stikine River. They met again to address marketing to birders, wildlife viewing etiquette, locations to target for particular species and general lists of birds expected in various habitats. Melissa scheduled the field portion of the course individually. The course was well attended.

**Funding exists to offer the program in two other communities in the coming year. For more information, contact her at the Wrangell Ranger District Office 907-874-2323 or at [mncady@fs.fed.us](mailto:mncady@fs.fed.us)**

### **SUMMER BIRD SIGHTINGS IN KETCHIKAN -by Teri Goucher**

Autumn has arrived and finally some beautiful weather was enjoyed this September after a much wetter and cooler summer in Southeast Alaska! The more golden light from the now lower sun and clear crisp days this month relieved the somewhat summer starved residents in Ketchikan!

The usual species made their appearances in our area this past summer season along with some interesting visitors.

A very distinctive adult **Franklin's Gull** was seen along the downtown waterfront on the first of June.

A rather late **Pacific Golden-Plover** remained here until around mid-June.

Several **Caspian Terns** were found locally both in June and July.

A very active **Common Nighthawk** was observed feeding north of town on the evening of June 13th.

The small numbers of **Band-tailed Pigeons** returned as usual and an adult with seven juveniles at a feeder 16 miles north of Ketchikan provided strong breeding evidence in our area!

A **Cedar Waxwing** nest with five chicks was discovered on August 5th and the brood successfully fledged about two weeks later!

A single immature **Brown-headed Cowbird** was spotted on July 27th.

A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** remained in a neighborhood for several days around the middle part of June!

Surprising how some bird information is discovered at times! While chatting about birds with Captain Pat Bethel as we prepared for visitor boat tours, I realized he had seen a rather remarkable bird years before at his homestead on the Chickamin River 40 miles NE of Ketchikan! The next day I shared his excellent photograph with Steve Heinel who then passed this information on to other experts, and the story then became a part of unique bird data and history! That **Tricolored Heron** seen late May 23 years ago was the

first record of that species in Alaska, and in fact that species is only very rare along the west coast north of southern California!!

So keep on bird watching and sharing birding stories no matter how old because they may prove to be important and exciting new historical bird data!

**GUSTAVUS SIGHTINGS** By Nat Drumheller. natdrumheller@hotmail.com

**Caspian Terns** were seen regularly through the summer along the town beaches. Juvenile terns, often being fed by adults, were seen through the month of August. The high count for Caspian Terns was sixteen adults and eight juveniles on 8/19. After no reports last winter nor spring of **Peregrine Falcons**, they were seen a few times this summer and regularly in August and September around Gustavus and in Glacier Bay. **Ancient Murrelets** were seen in higher than usual numbers during August in Glacier Bay. One **Stilt Sandpiper** was along the Salmon River in town on 8/25, and two were there on 8/26. Four **Red Knots** were west of town on 8/28. There were only a few sightings of **Cedar Waxwings** this summer with the last being four birds on 8/29. **Red-breasted Nuthatch** numbers increased sharply in late August. Migrating **Sandhill Cranes** were first reported on 9/5 and numbered in the thousands on 9/23 and 9/24. Sally McLaughlin reported an **Upland Sandpiper** in town on 9/4 and 9/5. **Black-billed Magpies** returned in mid September. A **Mourning Dove** was along the beach west of town on 9/18. An **Eastern Kingbird** was in Bartlett Cove on 9/21. This



*Eastern Kingbird*

By Emily Mount



*Red-throated Pipits* By Nat Drumheller



was the fourth local record for Eastern Kingbird, with the third coming from earlier this summer on 7/29. Single **Rusty Blackbirds** were seen on 9/24 and 9/25. Two **Red-throated Pipits** were along the beach west of town on 9/24, and at least one was still

there on 9/25. These are the first local records for Red-throated Pipit. Single **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers** were with Pectoral Sandpipers in beach grasses on 9/24 and 9/27. Last and least, a pink Pine Siskin was at a local feeder on 9/26 and 9/27. This bird showed no obvious non-siskin features, other than that many of its feathers were tinged pink. It has been suggested that it might be a siskin/redpoll hybrid.

Thanks to Bruce Paige for sharing observations and records information.

### **PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENT FOR JUNEAU AUDUBON SOCIETY**

Juneau Audubon Society is considering a bylaw change that simply appoints non-officer members to our board, not to specific "positions." The responsibilities of individual board members can then be assigned, or shared, just like other boards that assign their members to committees that suit their interests and time.

If there were room for "unassigned" new board members, then new board members could learn the ropes and help with a variety of activities until they were familiar and established with the organization. It's unfair to expect a brand new board member to assume the full-time duties of membership, programs, newsletter, etc., having had zero experience.

The Juneau Audubon Society board brings this suggested change to the bylaws of Article VI, Section 1.

Current language:           ARTICLE VI - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. The control and conduct of business of the Society shall be vested in its Board of Directors. The Board shall determine the policies of the Society. **The Board shall consist of the four elected officers plus the chairpersons of the standing committees.** Standing Committee Chairpersons shall be selected by the full Board of Directors, initially half serving for one-year terms and half serving for terms of two years. All subsequent standing committee chairpersons and appointments shall be for two-year terms, and no member of the Board may be appointed for more than three consecutive terms.

Proposed change:

***The board will consist of four elected officers and up to eight appointed persons to fill the needs of the existing committees and to conduct all the business of the chapter. Board members will allocate and assign responsibilities among themselves as they consider appropriate.***

Please contact any board member with suggestions and opinions.

**\*\*\*Please consider getting *The Raven* by e-mail instead of snail mail to save paper, time, money and view photos in color. To choose this option contact:**  
Brien Daugherty, [membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)

## Helping birds avoid window collisions

Birds of many types have been killed by flying into glass windows and doors. In fact, according to the Audubon Society, recent evidence shows that collisions with glass may be a major source of avian mortality that's widely overlooked. Experts believe that over 100 million birds die each year in collisions with buildings and skyscrapers in the United States and Canada alone.

Although there are several variables which account for bird strikes, the primary cause is reflection. Birds become confused or startled and rush to cover or open sky; unfortunately they often mistake a reflection for the real thing. Here are some ways to reduce bird strike occurrences in homes and small buildings:

Reduce window reflection, Using window film on the outside of windows that makes glass appear opaque from the exterior, but remains transparent from the interior (this material and hawk silhouettes are being ordered and will be offered for sale in the November Public Market, Place a hawk silhouette in your window, Tack up a temporary cover, Place sun ornament, crystal or other objects in your window, Locate bird feeders either very close, or further away from windows, Block 'through-house' line of sight to the outdoors

### **Juneau Audubon Society Officers, Committee Chairs, Events Coordinators**

**President:** Jeff Sauer, [president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:president@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Vice-President:** Mark Schwan, [vice-president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:vice-president@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Secretary:** Patty Rose, [secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Treasurer:** Matt Kirchhoff, [treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Programs:** Brenda Wright, 789-4656, [programs@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:programs@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Membership:** Brien Daugherty, [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)  
**Conservation:** Meg Cartwright, 364-2258 [conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org)  
**Field Trips:** Anastasia Lynch, [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)

### 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. You will receive the *National Audubon Magazine* plus Juneau Chapter newsletter *The Raven*.

**\$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  
**A51 7XCH**

---

### Local Audubon Society Membership Application

If you prefer to support Juneau Audubon Society only, please complete the form above and send \$10 (*1-year membership*) to: Juneau Audubon Society, Membership Chair, PO Box 21725, Juneau, AK 99802. You will receive the Juneau Chapter news letter *The Raven*.

**\*\*\*Please consider getting *The Raven* by e-mail instead of snail mail to save paper, time, money and view photos in color. To choose this option, write your email address here \_\_\_\_\_.**

Nonprofit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Juneau, AK 99802  
Permit No. 153

JUNEAU AUDUBON SOCIETY  
PO BOX 021725  
JUNEAU, AK 99802