

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

January 2009

Juneau Audubon Public Meeting – January 8, 2009 7:00 PM, UAS Egan Room 221/222

GRAND CANYON ADVENTURE

Jeff Sauer, one of our chapter's past presidents and our current vice president, will present a program with images and stories from two recent rafting trips through the Grand Canyon. Jeff and Theresa Svancara were invited to join a group with a private permit on trips. This is one of those once-in-a-lifetime type experiences, but Jeff and Theresa have been fortunate enough to have now done it twice! Jeff will explain how private permits can now be obtained and how trips can be put together. It should be a terrific program.

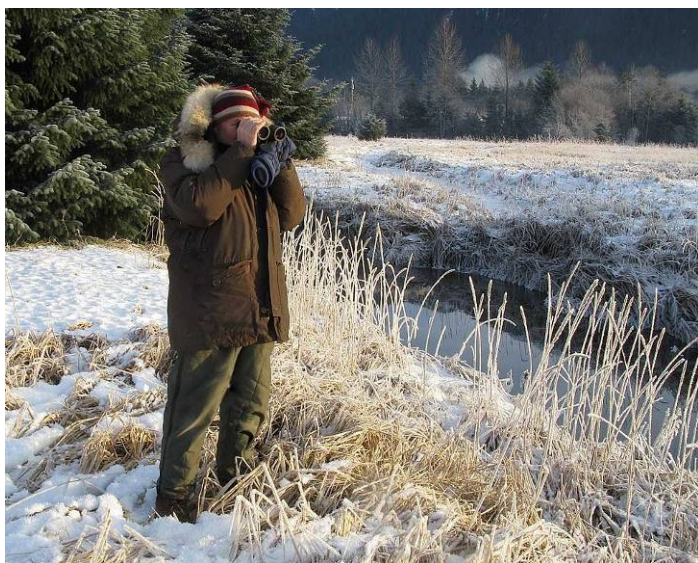


MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT MARK SCHWAN

I asked Mary Lou King, our long-time Raven editor, if I should write some type of “Happy New Year column from the president” for the January issue. She told me to make sure I just didn’t write one of those family Christmas letters or talk about the new birds I saw last year. I told her no worries there . . . but, not being one for profound reflection, what do I say to a general membership after the year we’ve just had; sometimes thinking globally gets so overwhelming that you begin to wonder how acting locally can make any difference, but you shake that feeling off and try in your own way to engage yourself in actions that have the potential to change local outcomes and beyond. Getting more active in the Juneau Audubon chapter is one of the ways I’ve tried to become more involved locally, and a way in which I hope others will do as well.

As we enter the new year, the JAS board is meeting on a regular basis to assure our core activities which we have become known for will continue, such as our monthly newsletter the Raven, monthly public meetings with interesting programs, weekly bird walks later this spring, the Berners Bay cruises in May, helping judge projects at the regional science fair, and more. We have helped fund the upcoming monograph on Ketchikan Birds by Steve Heintz and Andrew Piston and are providing funding to support a bird banding station in Mexico. We just held our Christmas bird count, which has been done every year in Juneau now for more than 32 years. We continue to monitor conservation issues that are of concern and provide comments to the appropriate authorities to help shape the decisions on actions that have the potential to degrade our natural resources. Our vice president is an active member of the SEACC board of directors.

If you are reading this newsletter you are most likely a member of Juneau Audubon and we appreciate your support. If you aren’t a member, please consider joining. Beyond your financial support through your membership dues, consider becoming more active. We are always in need of new energies, ideas, and just plain people power to help our chapter work in the community to carry out our mission and help, in our own small way, to maintain the natural values of our area and help people appreciate more what we have all around us. We really are blessed to live in such a beautiful part of the world. I’ll leave it at that. I sincerely hope that 2009 is a wonderful year for everyone out there, and I wish you the best of health and happiness in the year ahead.



Oh, and good birding too!

Juneau CBC Results, 12/20/2008

<u>Species</u>	<u>Count</u>		Unidentified Gulls	408
Canada Goose	679	Common Murre		6
Gadwall	45	Pigeon Guillemot		2
Eurasian Wigeon	1	Marbled Murrelet		58
American Wigeon	357	Rock Pigeon		62
Mallard	2,869	Northern Pygmy-Owl		cw
Northern Pintail	1	Anna's Hummingbird		1
Green-winged Teal	37	Belted Kingfisher		6
Canvasback	1	Downy Woodpecker		2
Greater Scaup	61	Hairy Woodpecker		3
Lesser Scaup	cw	American Three-toed Woodpecker		1
Unidentified Scaup	11	Northern Flicker		1
Harlequin Duck	87	Northern Shrike		4
Surf Scoter	1,352	Steller's Jay		37
White-winged Scoter	31	Black-billed Magpie		51
Black Scoter	2	Northwestern Crow		591
Unidentified Scoters	29	Common Raven		455
Long-tailed Duck	41	Chestnut-backed Chickadee		114
Bufflehead	120	Red-breasted Nuthatch		2
Common Goldeneye	159	Brown Creeper		2
Barrow's Goldeneye	149	Winter Wren		6
Common X Barrow's hybrid	1	American Dipper		11
Unidentified Goldeneyes	14	Golden-crowned Kinglet		22
Hooded Merganser	4	Hermit Thrush		cw
Common Merganser	19	American Robin		2
Red-breasted Merganser	79	Varied Thrush		1
Unidentified Mergansers	1	European Starling		1
Red-throated Loon	1	Bohemian Waxwing		cw
Pacific Loon	11	American Tree Sparrow		2
Common Loon	13	Fox Sparrow		cw
Unidentified Loons	5	Song Sparrow		18
Horned Grebe	31	Lincoln's Sparrow		2
Red-necked Grebe	5	White-throated Sparrow		1
Pelagic Cormorant	11	White-crowned Sparrow		cw
Unidentified Cormorants	1	Golden-crowned Sparrow		3
Great Blue Heron	7	Unidentified Sparrows		1
Bald Eagle	185	Dark-eyed Junco		278
Sharp-shinned Hawk	cw	Red Crossbill		9
Northern Goshawk	1	White-winged Crossbill		95
Killdeer	3	Unidentified Crossbills		55
Dunlin	8	Common Redpoll		1
Unidentified Sandpipers	1	Pine Siskin		317
Wilson's Snipe	5			
Mew Gull	32	TOTAL SPECIES; count day		70
Herring Gull	4	TOTAL INDIVIDUALS		9,795
Thayer's Gull	2	7 cw species		
Glaucous-winged Gull	689			

Juneau's Christmas Bird Count Overview -- Prepared by Mark Schwan

Given the protracted cold spell leading up to our count and temperatures ranging anywhere from zero to 15 above on the day of the count, trying to get the count in as early as we could during count period made no difference in capturing protracted fall conditions and hopefully more lingering birds. It was winter, even if we were slightly ahead of the solstice. Nevertheless, our overall species total and individual bird count total were about average and therefore pretty respectable given the conditions handed to us.

Forty-one birders, a good turnout, participated, along with several feeder watchers, and we had a crowd and a fun evening at the potluck/bird tally at the end of the day. We found 70 species of birds during the day and counted slightly less than 10,000 birds (see table for specifics). Several common species were relatively scarce, such as Common Merganser, White-winged Scoter, and Mew Gull, and we were way below average for Glaucous-winged Gull. We had a new low count for Barrow's Goldeneye. Our only new record high count was for Gadwall. There were no shocker species found on count day, and no species new to our cumulative CBC list, however, there were a few unusual species present, such as Canvasback, Eurasian Wigeon, Northern Flicker, Lincoln's Sparrow, and White-throated Sparrow. Moreover, a Barrow's X Common Goldeneye hybrid was located on count day. This bird was first seen in our area last year, and had been found again earlier this fall. Although through the fall we had an almost unprecedented number of lingering warblers, they were long gone from Juneau for our count.

Juneau birders found an additional seven species during the official count week but which were not seen on our count day. These species are identified in the table with a "cw" in the count column. Thanks to all the volunteers for donating their day to the count effort and to those who birded during the count week. Finally, thanks to everyone for contributing all the great food for the potluck.

December Birds in Sitka by Matt Goff

There have been some late sightings of summer birds this December. On the first a **Hermit Thrush**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, and **Yellow-rumped Warbler** seemed to be hanging together loosely. Another Hermit Thrush was spotted on the 26th. An unusual abundance of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** appeared this fall, and their distinctive calls can still be heard around town as winter sets in. Generally considered Rare in winter, **Fox Sparrows** seem to be present in higher numbers than is typical for this time of year. An all time high count of 7 **American Coots** was present on Swan Lake through late November and into December, but they have now left with the freezing of the lake. Cold weather also brought down the **Red-breasted Sapsuckers**, and several have been seen since the middle of the month. **Hairy Woodpeckers** have also been seen at Totem Park and up Indian River Valley. On the water, a juvenile **Yellow-billed Loon** has frequenting the channel, with several people reporting it during the month.

The Sitka CBC will be held on Sunday, 4 January this year, with a pre-count meeting at the Raptor Center on Friday, 2 January.

KETCHIKAN'S CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS-by Teri Goucher

December 20th was a beautiful clear sunny day here with the temperature ranging from about 18 to 24 degrees. The 24 participants of this years CBC were all somewhat acclimatized as our weather was clear and well below freezing for the previous two weeks! This weather provided us with a bit longer observing conditions and a mid-day low tide contributed to an excellent birding day!

Ketchikan birders had a grand total and new record of 75 species on count day and 79 species were found during the count week. Nearly 5300 individual birds were observed which about our average for the past ten years.

The count week species included were **Pigeon Guillemot, American Coot, Red Crossbill, and Purple Finch!**

Our numbers were low this year for loons, grebes and **Double-crested Cormorants** however.

The usual good numbers of waterfowl was enjoyed with many bay ducks around and lots of **Canada Geese** and **Mallards**. We also had **Green-winged Teal, Gadwall** and the most ever **American Wigeon**. An all time high record of twelve **Trumpeter Swans** were seen on nearby Gravina island.

There were 6 **Killdeer** discovered and a new high count for **Rock Sandpipers** and **Black Turnstones** was made. Seems to be alot of **Wilson's Snipe** around as well as I saw one today in a snowy ditch.

Nine species of sparrows are in our area with new high count numbers for **Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Golden-crowned Sparrow!** There were also **White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, American Tree Sparrow** and even a **Swamp Sparrow** observed. Ketchikan recorded the first ever '**Red**' **Fox Sparrow** this year as well.

The cold weather definitely forced some species to lower elevations and we did have more than usual woodpeckers spotted. Several **Downy Woodpeckers** and **Hairy Woodpeckers** were found along with the **Northern Flickers** usually observed. Some years it's a struggle to tally even a single sapsucker for the entire count week, but this year there were 15 **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** found, doubling our previous record!

The quiet frozen forest was also haven to a record number of **Brown Creepers** and **Golden-crowned Kinglets** seemed to be everywhere and even **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** made our list!

A very rare winter appearance by a **Merlin** was enjoyed by one group and that was only the second sighting of that species on count day ever in our area!

We had a final total of 469 **Dark-eyed Juncos** including 10 Slate-colored form...exactly the same numbers as last year's results. That's surely a funny fluke although area birders are consistent and dedicated to our favorite hobby.

Autumn ended on our count day and Winter has come on strong throughout most of Southeast Alaska and even here in Ketchikan we have about 2 feet of snow at sea level now and probably will until we ring in the new year, so make sure to keep your feeders full!!!!

Dear Great Backyard Bird Count Participant:

Save the Dates: GBBC is Coming!

The next [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) takes place **February 13-16, 2009**. The [National Audubon Society](#) and the [Cornell Lab of Ornithology](#) are calling on everyone to “Count for Fun, Count for the Future!” Participants did just that in record numbers for the 2008 count, submitting more than 85,000 checklists and identifying 635 species. **Let’s break some more records this year!**

GBBC Ambassadors Needed

As always, we rely on volunteer ambassadors to help spread the word about the GBBC and engage more people in their communities. Your contribution could be as simple as hanging up a few flyers or as ambitious as pitching the event on local radio and TV stations. You can use the new [GBBC news release](#) posted on the web site. You’ll also find an updated version of the [slide show](#) for use in GBBC workshops and other events.

For more ideas on how to promote the GBBC, check out [Get Involved](#) on the GBBC website. You can fill out the online ambassador sign-up form and specify the kinds of activities you’d like to do.

Project FeederWatch Season Begins

The 2008-09 season of [Project FeederWatch](#) began **this Saturday, November 8**. You can sign up at any time. FeederWatchers keep track of their birds through the winter and report their tallies each week.

Watching birds benefits science, but it can also be a healthy part of your routine. Hundreds of studies have verified that time spent watching nature can reduce stress. So why not slow down and watch the birds?

Visit the [PFW web site](#) to learn more and to sign up. New participants receive a kit with a handbook, a bird-identification poster, calendar, and instruction booklet. There is a \$15 fee (\$12 for Lab members.) If you live in Canada, please visit our partner, [Bird Studies Canada](#), or call (888) 448-2473.

Take the Healthy Yard Pledge!

While you’re getting ready to feed and count birds this winter, make sure you’re maintaining healthy bird habitat in your yard by taking the Audubon [Healthy Yard Pledge](#).

The Healthy Yard Pledge is part of [Audubon At Home](#), which focuses on managing backyards and other natural areas to help birds and other wildlife. Visit the website to learn about 16 key elements that make up a healthy backyard habitat—how many can be found in your yard?

To learn more about the Audubon at Home program and take the Healthy Yard Pledge, visit <http://audubonathome.org/pledge>.

Thank you for all you do to help the birds!

Janis Dickinson, Director of Citizen Science, Cornell Lab of Ornithology
Rob Fergus, Senior Scientist, National Audubon Society

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

To see volunteer opportunities with the U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE IN ALASKA, go to <http://alaska.fws.gov/volunteer/needs.htm>. For additional information contact: Kevin Painter FWS Volunteer Coordinator, at (907) 786-3389, Fax (907) 786-3976, or email kevinPainter@fws.gov.

For other DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, go to <http://www.volunteer.gov/gov/resultsZ.cfm?states=AK>.

To see volunteer opportunities with the DIVISION of PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION, go to <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/vip/vvi.htm>.

CORPS OF ENGINEERS PERMIT APPLICATIONS

To see the full permit go to: <http://www.poa.usace.army.mil/reg/PNNew.htm> and then to Public Notices on the left

Juneau

Auke Lake POA-2006-181 M1

Applicant: City and Borough of Juneau

Location: Wayside just south of Fritz Cove Road

Purpose: Construct a boat launch ramp facility with staging, maneuvering and parking space.

Proposed Work: 1230 cubic yards shot rock and rip rap, concrete ramp planks.

For more information: View the full application on the web site above or call Dick Somerville 586-2093

Haines

Letnikof Cove POA-2008-1553

Applicant: Haines Borough

Purpose: Construct seasonal timber boarding float to improve access and public safety

Proposed Work: Install five 12" in diameter steel piles and 18 concrete planks with pressure treated timber for 8' x 231' boarding float.

Additional Information: View the full application on the web site above or call Dick Somerville 907-586-2093

National Audubon Society Membership Application

For first time members or renewals to the National Audubon Society, please mail this form to:
National Audubon Society, PO Box 422246, Palm Coast, FL 32142-6714

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 _____.**

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