

# 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 2013

**JANUARY MEETING: THURSDAY, JANUARY 10**  
**UAS Egan Building, Room 221/222, 7:00 p.m.**

## **Lemurs, Rollers, & Vangas: the Birds and Mammals of Madagascar**

Travel halfway around the world to view the mammals and birds of Madagascar. Madagascar is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest island and is known as a biodiversity hotspot. Although off the eastern side of Africa, many animals are more closely related to Asiatic species and many are endemic to this island. Bev Agler spent the month of October touring the island on a natural history/birding trip and saw ~187 of the 220 bird species as well as 25 lemur species and assorted insects, bugs, spiders, and chameleons. She will present images of the trip and the people and talk a little about the major habitat issues affecting this country and its birds.



## **Are Winter Nights Too Long?**

Has time started expanding during the long winter nights? We have a great solution for you- Volunteer for Juneau Audubon Society!

We can find all kinds of fun things to fill a few of those hours that are stretching in front of you. If you have an hour or two, we can use your help with simple tasks like putting labels on our newsletter. We can always use help with our education programs. We want to take new birding skills to young children, why not come along? If you have a bit more time, we sure could use help with the membership or conservation committee.

Sound like too much effort? You'll be surprised and pleased how nice the Juneau Audubon Society members can be. Come join our great volunteers. Contact Brenda at 321-4739 or [membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)

## **President's Inbox By Brenda Wright**

Here are some interesting tidbits that show up in the president's e-mail. Hope some of them are fun for you.

### **International Wildlife Film Festival**

#### ***Films for Chapter Use***

The International Wildlife Film Festival (IWFF), based in Missoula, Montana, is the nation's longest running wildlife film festival and the first juried festival in the country. You can learn more about the history and current events of the IWFF at <http://wildlifefilms.wordpress.com/>.

An extensive selection of IWFF films is available for rent through the IWFF Library, for educational purposes or for a full-fledged fundraising event. Montana CINE (Cultures & Issues of Nature and the Environment) Film Festival documentaries and narrative fictional films are also in the catalogue.

For more details on films available for a one-time use at free events with small groups (\$20/film plus shipping), visit <http://wildlifefilms.wordpress.com/library/>. Free chapter programs such as monthly meetings, school, classroom, or library showings qualify as an education use.

### **Climate Change and Birds at American Bird Conservancy Projects**

This presentation, developed by Davia Palmeri and David Wiedenfeld of American Bird Conservancy (ABC), reviews the likely effects of climate change on birds and system the reserves ABC and partners have been creating to protect key habitats. See [http://youtu.be/tnBiEE\\_n\\_pAc](http://youtu.be/tnBiEE_n_pAc) to view the presentation.

### **Web page dedicated to John J Audubon: [www.johnjaudubon.com](http://www.johnjaudubon.com)**

Our short-term goal is to become all things Audubon, with information about birding festivals, citizen science projects, bird watching, birds and binoculars. There is also an amazing array of information about the life, art and ornithology of John J. Audubon Please spend a few minutes surfing around and let us know what you think: [www.johnjaudubon.com](http://www.johnjaudubon.com)

Brian "Fox" Ellis, Fox Tales International [www.foxtalesint.com](http://www.foxtalesint.com)

***Education and Inspiration through the ancient art of storytelling!***

## **Great Backyard Bird Count Goes Global in 2013**

After 15 years of success in North America, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will open up to the entire world for the first time in 2013. Anyone, from anywhere on earth, can participate by visiting [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org) and reporting the kinds and numbers of birds they see during the 16th annual count, **February 15–18, 2013**.

A joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, with partner Bird Studies Canada, the four-day count typically receives sightings from tens of thousands of people reporting more than 600 bird species in the United States and Canada alone.

Participating is easy. Simply watch birds for at least 15 minutes at the location of your choice on one or more of the count days. Estimate the number of birds you see for each species you can identify. You'll select your location on a map, answer a few questions, enter your tallies, and then submit your data to share your sightings with others around the world.

This event, to be more fully covered in February issue. There will be an opportunity to do a field trip tailored to beginning/intermediate birders - to some known member successful feeders.  
Patricia Wherry, Conservation Chair

### **JUNEAU CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT** By Mark Schwan

The Juneau Christmas Bird Count for 2012 was held on December 15. We again lucked out on the weather, as the prior day was absolutely miserable, but then conditions improved markedly for count day. Leading up to the count, we didn't expect a great diversity of birds, as wintery conditions for some time had pushed many lingering birds to the south.

Twenty eight field observers found **66 species and 12,183 individual birds on count day, plus an additional ten species were located during the other days of our count week** (see attached table). Our total count of individual birds was above average but this was the case only because of a record smashing number of mallards; many species were seen in low numbers. All the common species that have been seen on the previous 39 counts were found once again. The biggest highlights of the count day included a Snowy Owl on the wetlands found by Nick



*Snowy Owl Nick Hajdukovich Photo*



*Snowy Owl Nick Hajdukovich Photo*

Hajdukovich and Amy Clark Courtney, and the Sooty Grouse found by Julie Coghill near the Treadwell Ditch on Douglas Island. Other highlights included the continued presence of the Swamp Sparrow near Temsco Helicopters, and a terrific variety of waterfowl on the wetlands and the lower Mendenhall River. Again, we had the bird tally and potluck at our house at the end of the day; it was a very nice evening. Thanks to all who participated.

## Juneau CBC Results for 2012

<u>Species</u>	<u>2012 Count</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>2012 Count</u>
Canada Goose	923	Common Murre	2
<b>Trumpeter Swan</b>	<b>3</b>	Marbled Murrelet	25
<b>Tundra Swan</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Eurasian Collared-Dove</b>	<b>1</b>
Gadwall	1	Rock Pigeon	136
<b>Eurasian Wigeon</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Snowy Owl</b>	<b>1</b>
American Wigeon	205	<b>Short-eared Owl</b>	<b>cw</b>
Mallard	<b>4,868</b>	Belted Kingfisher	3
<b>Northern Shoveler</b>	<b>1</b>	Hairy Woodpecker	1
Northern Pintail	cw	Unidentified Woodpeckers	1
Green-winged Teal	34	Northern Shrike	cw
<b>Canvasback</b>	<b>1</b>	Steller's Jay	61
Greater Scaup	173	Black-billed Magpie	43
Lesser Scaup	7	Northwestern Crow	915
Unidentified Scaup	179	Common Raven	325
Harlequin Duck	71	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	130
Surf Scoter	174	Red-breasted Nuthatch	6
White-winged Scoter	114	Pacific Wren	1
Black Scoter	cw	American Dipper	5
Long-tailed Duck	29	Golden-crowned Kinglet	22
Bufflehead	169	American Robin	2
Common Goldeneye	110	Varied Thrush	3
Barrow's Goldeneye	255	European Starling	1
Unidentified Goldeneyes	7	Bohemian Waxwing	5
Hooded Merganser	3	American Tree Sparrow	5
Common Merganser	67	Fox Sparrow	1
Red-breasted Merganser	43	Song Sparrow	20
Unidentified Mergansers	3	<b>Lincoln's Sparrow</b>	<b>cw</b>
<b>Sooty Grouse</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Swamp Sparrow</b>	<b>1</b>
Pacific Loon	cw	White-crowned Sparrow	1
Common Loon	4	Dark-eyed Junco	294
Horned Grebe	16	Snow Bunting	64
Red-necked Grebe	7	Rusty Blackbird	2
Pelagic Cormorant	21	Pine Grosbeak	7
Unidentified Cormorants	5	Red Crossbill	cw
Great Blue Heron	1	White-winged Crossbill	226
Bald Eagle	134	Unidentified Crossbills	40
Northern Goshawk	1	Common Redpoll	280
Killdeer	2	Pine Siskin	143
Black Turnstone	cw		
Rock Sandpiper	28	Count Day Species	66
Dunlin	cw	Total Individuals	12,183
Wilson's Snipe	cw	Additional CW Species	10
Mew Gull	101		
Glaucous-winged Gull	1,371		
Unidentified Gulls	276		



*Black Guillemot* Photo by [Steve Heinl](#)

## KETCHIKAN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT – by Andy Piston

This season we had one of the highest species totals ever for the Ketchikan CBC, with **79 species on count day** (all-time high counts: 83 in 2010, 82 in 2009). We had seven additional count week species, which gave us a **total of 86 species** for the week, which was tied for the second highest total for the Ketchikan count circle. We found a total of 5,913 individual birds during

the count, which is close to the long-term average. The number of participants this year (25) was about average, but the mind-blowing skill, good looks, and dedication of our returning participants continues to result in high species totals and improved overall coverage of the area. Our six highest species totals for the Ketchikan count circle have all come in the last six years.

This year we had a few exceptionally rare birds turn up on the count: a Black Guillemot (1st record from Southeast Alaska), a Palm Warbler (1st ever for an Alaska CBC), and a count week Western Gull (also a 1st for an Alaska CBC). Other birds that are rare in Southeast Alaska, or the Ketchikan area, on this year's count, or during count week, included Brandt's Cormorant, Pied-billed Grebe, Anna's Hummingbird, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, and House Sparrow. We also found some birds that lingered in the Ketchikan area past their typical fall migration departure times, such as Northern Shoveler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Yellow-rumped Warbler.



*Hooded Merganser* by [Jim Lewis](#)

## 2012 GLACIER BAY CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT By Nat Drumheller

The Christmas Bird Count is a North American tradition that has been growing for over one hundred years. Bruce Paige started the Glacier Bay Christmas Bird Count in 1968. Since then, a few years were missed, making the 2012 count our 40<sup>th</sup>.

This year's count took place on Saturday, December 15. Thirty people participated on count day. Twenty-four searched for birds in designated areas on foot, by car, or by boat. Some for a few hours, others from sunrise to sunset. Six people at four homes counted birds at their feeders and yards. In addition, several people reported birds during count week, the three days on either side of count day during which we can add species missed on count day. Jessie Soder and Ellie Sharman took their school classes out to look for birds during count week. There are some talented young birders in this community!

**64 species** were found on count day. Additional birds found during count week brought the **total to 75**. While 64 species on count day is about average for the last 20 years, 75 species is one of the highest count week totals.

Numbers of individual species were good, but there were no unusually high totals. Some good finds on count day included Fox Sparrow, Western Grebe, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Black Oystercatcher, Wilson's Snipe, Lapland Longspur, and American Robin. This was only the second year with a count day Fox Sparrow. The first was in 2005. Snowy Owl, Great Horned Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Merlin, Northern Goshawk, and American Three-toed Woodpecker were some of the birds found during count week.

Thank you to everyone who participated. We surely would be candidates for a "highest per capita participation in the nation" award. A special thanks goes to Greg Streveler. While Bruce Paige conducted the Glacier Bay counts from 1968 to 2007, Greg was also there in 1968. He participated in many of the counts since then and played a key role in this year's count. It has become a tradition for Greg to lead the salt water portion of our count. This large area is the most productive part of the count and requires considerable skill in identifying species.

The Glacier Bay National Park protection rangers once again provided a boat and operator to safely cover the salt water part of the count. Thanks to James Latendresse for operating the boat and to Wendy Bredow for organizing it.

Thank you to Jim Saracco, Lisa Etherington, and Cooper for graciously hosting a dinner after the count.

## WRANGELL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS By Bonnie Demerjian

Fine weather, December-style meant that Wrangell Christmas Bird counters were able to cover much of our marine territory as well as offer good visibility from shore. This year's count was held after the Christmas rush on December 29. Twenty-eight participants enumerated birds by foot, car, boat, and from the comfort of home.

Because the water was calm, boat observers easily located the usual ducks – American Wigeon, Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Harlequin and Common Goldeneyes, as well as nearly 800 Barrow's Goldeneyes. Last year over 1900 Barrow's Goldeneyes were counted. A small number of the less commonly seen Long-tailed Ducks were counted. Other water birds of interest were a Yellow-billed Loon, Horned Grebe and Double-crested Cormorant. The large flock of Western Grebes usually sighted in Zimovia Strait each year was missing on this year's count day.

Gulls observed included mew, herring and Glaucous-winged as well as 73 Glaucous Gulls.

Common in spring but uncommon in winter, a flock of 54 Dunlins was the only shorebird recorded.



Heavy snowfall the day before the count meant that a number of Varied Thrushes and American Robins were frequenting yards, as were Northern Flickers and a Black-billed Magpie.

Notable feeder birds included an American Tree Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow and one Mountain Chickadee. The Dark-eyed Junco was the most frequently seen feeder bird, followed closely by Rock Pigeons. Over 100 European

Starlings, about 1/3 more than last year were counted.

Flocks of Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks have been feeding on mountain ash berries for the past several weeks and small numbers were still around to be counted, as were Common Redpolls and White-winged Crossbills. Around 80 Pine Siskins also made the count.

In all, 3688 birds were counted, down considerably from last year's **5284 individuals**. The **64 species** located was up from last year's 53 species.



## **RAPTOR VISITS TO SMOKY MOUNTAINS, N.C. By Prill (Isleib) Mollick**

With the help of the 'Endangered Species Act' both the Bald Eagle and the Osprey have made a successful come back.

A few days ago a pair of Bald Eagles were perched high in a tree quite near the entrance drive of a local middle school. Students who saw them were elated to see eagles so close since the Bald Eagle was their school mascot.

The Bald Eagle and the Osprey are usually spotted in the higher elevations of the Smoky Mountains. In recent years the Bald Eagle and the Osprey have become more common in this area. They are both visiting migrants during various seasons. Sightings are occasional but are becoming more frequent. It is exciting to see them in this location.

## **BEACHCOMBERS OR BIRDERS WANTED!**

Help make a difference for the environment by collecting data for the Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team (COASST). COASST is a citizen science project dedicated to involving volunteers in the collection of high quality data on the status of coastal beaches, and trends of seabirds. Our goal is to assist government agencies and other organizations in making informed management and conservation decisions, and promote proactive citizen involvement and action. COASST volunteers systematically count and identify bird carcasses that wash ashore along ocean beaches from northern California to Alaska. Volunteers need NO experience with birds, just a commitment to survey a specific beach (about 3/4 mile) each month.

If you are interested in participating, join COASST staff for a full, 6-hour training session. Hear about how COASST started, learn how to use the custom

Beached Birds field guide, and try out your new skills with some actual specimens. There is no charge to attend a training, but plan to provide a \$20 refundable deposit if you would like to take home a COASST volunteer kit complete with a COASST Beached Birds field guide. Training activities take place indoors, and include a break for lunch - please pack your own or plan to buy lunch nearby.

**Upcoming COASST training session: SATURDAY February 2, 2013 Juneau, AK 11:00 am - 5:00 pm Valley Library (1905 Mall Road Set #190)** If you can't attend this event, please check our website at [www.coasst.org](http://www.coasst.org) or call [\(206\) 221-6893](tel:206-221-6893) for additional information on upcoming events and trainings. **To reserve your spot at a training session, please contact [coasst@uw.edu](mailto:coasst@uw.edu) or [206-221-6893](tel:206-221-6893).**

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Liz Mack, COASST Volunteer Coordinator, Box 355020, University of Washington,  
Seattle, WA 98195-5020 ph (206) 221-6893 fx (206) 221-6939



*(From What's Up by Peg Tileston)*

**\*\*February 15** Deadline for comments on the **ALASKA ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY DRAFT PLAN (AKELP)**. Research shows that when children are connected to nature, they do better in school, have fewer behavioral and health problems, and are more engaged in learning. These facts are not the current reality for many Alaskan students. We as parents, educators, professionals and community members have the power to change the future for Alaskan students and our state. The Plan is designed to connect youth with the natural world and the communities within which they live. It is a framework to guide schools (PreK-12) in integrating environmental education, including active outdoor learning, as part of the school curricula with support from community partners and community members. The draft is available online at <http://eed.alaska.gov/tls/akelp/>. The website provides multiple methods for offering comments. For more information, contact Bjorn Wolter at the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development by email at [bjorn.wolter@alaska.gov](mailto:bjorn.wolter@alaska.gov) or call (907) 465-6542.

**\*\*January 10 SITKA** - The **ALASKA BOARD OF GAME** will conduct a one-day meeting beginning at 9am at Harrigan Centennial Hall. The meeting is in addition to the Southeast Region meeting which is scheduled to begin January 11, also at the Harrigan Centennial Hall. No regulatory action will be taken at the January 10 meeting. Agenda topics for the one day meeting include: election of officers; approval of the 2013/2014 Board meeting schedule; informational reports provided by the Department of Fish and Game; a report from the Big Game Commercial Services Board concerning issues of over-lapping jurisdiction with the Board of Game; and a discussion on the moratorium on accepting proposals relating to the Denali wolf buffer zone. The meeting is open to the public but no oral public testimony will be taken. Audio of the meeting is intended to be streamed live [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main). The agenda, a list of reports, and any other meeting documents will be available prior to the meeting at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo). For more information about the meeting, contact Kristy Tibbles at 465-4110.

**\*\*Internships available with ALASKA YOUTH FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION.** AYEА is a youth leadership and civic engagement program for high school students from across Alaska to build skills and take action on issues they care about. We host youth leadership summits focused on project planning, community organizing, and political action, and we support youth-led projects throughout the school year. We are currently looking for volunteer interns to lead a variety of projects in 2013. Gain mad skillz in community organizing, navigating the political system, event planning, communication, and/or fundraising. AYEА staff are super cool and it will probably be the best internship EVER. For more information, go to <http://ayea.org/internship-positions-available/>. Rolling deadline. Open until filled. Contact person is Megan McBride at (907) 830-3022 or email [mcbridem@ayea.org](mailto:mcbridem@ayea.org).

**COMMENT DEADLINE NEARS ON BACK LOOP PATH PROJECT JUNEAU**  
Comments are due January 11 on the proposed Back Loop Shared Use Path Rehabilitation near Juneau. The shared use path located along Back Loop Road in the Mendenhall Valley has a damaged and deteriorated paved surface and does not comply with the requirements of the

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The proposed project would widen and resurface a one-mile section of the path between Mendenhall Loop Road and the Mendenhall River Community School.

The state Department of Transportation and Public Facilities proposes to use federal funds to remove and replace the existing asphalt surface; improve the structural cross section and vertical grades to meet ADA standards; and widen the path from 8 feet to 10 feet. Associated activities would include: improving drainage by grading the path and constructing ditches; relocating roadway signs, side street stop signs and fire hydrants affected by the widening; installing safety fence along sections of path with steep or hazardous slopes below; constructing an ADA accessible bus shelter near Mint Way or Glendale Street; installing a root barrier in areas affected by tree root growth; trimming vegetation in existing ROW to improve sight distance, and re-striping cross street crosswalks and stop bars. Construction is projected for 2013.

For more information or to submit comments, contact Hilary Lindh, environmental analyst, at 907/465-6564, Fax 907/465-3506 or email [Hilary.lindh@alaska.gov](mailto:Hilary.lindh@alaska.gov).

*(From What's Up by Peg Tileston)*

The logo consists of the words "Pick.", "Click.", and "Give." stacked vertically in a white, sans-serif font on a solid olive-green rectangular background.

When you apply for your 2013 Permanent Fund Dividend, you will have the opportunity to give to the Juneau Audubon Society for **scholarships, educational programs, field trips, and other activities**. Last year our first scholarship was given to a graduating Juneau High School student who was heading off to college this year. The PFD Charitable Contributions Program began a few years ago, but this coming year will be our first time to participate. It provides a safe, secure and easy way to make a donation, and is available to all Alaskans who file online. When you go online to apply for your dividend, you will see the option called **“The Gift of Giving.” Click on Juneau Audubon Society. Chose the amount you would like to donate.** You can find more information about the program, including frequently asked questions at <http://www.forakergroup.org/pfd>. Or you may call 888-785-GIFT (4438).

## WEB OPPORTUNITIES

\*\*\* Bob Armstrong's wonderful bird and other wildlife photographs that are free to use for educational and conservation purposes – [www.naturebob.com](http://www.naturebob.com)

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### *SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS SEASONALLY*

Sub-regional Compilers: Steven C. Heinl, 2603 4th Avenue, Ketchikan, AK 99901

Andrew W. Piston, P. O. Box 1116, Ward Cove, AK 99928

This publication has wonderful bird photos and information. If you want to be put on Steve Heinl's mailing list to receive this summary and to contribute observations, you can contact him at: [steve.heinl@alaska.gov](mailto:steve.heinl@alaska.gov)

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If you are interested in additional information, subscribe to North American Birds, here is a link to see more information: <http://www.aba.org/nab> < <http://www.aba.org/nab> > . The seasonal reports cover all of North America and give excellent overviews of unusual numbers of particular species (high or low), early or late dates of occurrence, changes in status, and rare finds for each region.

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There is also an extensive list of all bird sightings entered in eBird ([www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org) < <http://www.ebird.org> > )

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Opting out of extra mailings will not stop magazine subscription.

**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 C2ZA510Z A51

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**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 newsletter *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 request this option email: [membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)

