

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

November 2013

**Juneau Audubon Society
November MEETING:
THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 14
Thunder Mountain High
School Library, 7:00 p.m.**



AMY SHERWIN WILL PRESENT ANAN AND THE CELEBRATION OF BEARS

"In all natural wonders of the world nature opens up to reveal a web of interdependencies. Southeast Alaska is one such place and we are blessed having it right at our doorstep. Have you ever wanted to visit the Anan Bear Viewing Area? Here's your chance, Amy Sherwin will do a presentation on Anan and the celebration of Bears in Wrangell. You get to experience nature as it opens up and reveals multiple elements in a single ecosystem. One of the largest salmon runs in Southeast Alaska forms the foundation of a special and busy bear viewing and photography area for both black and brown bears just a few miles south of Wrangell".

President's Notes by Brenda Wright

I hope you are able to attend our public meetings this winter at our new location at Thunder Mountain High School library. Our meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month from October through April. Hope to see you at the public meetings.

November is our month to sell jams and other products at the public market. November is also the month to start Project FeederWatch. We look forward to the Christmas bird count in December and the Great Backyard Bird Count in February. Although it is getting dark earlier and earlier, it is still a great time to go out and observe our winter bird residents. If you see an unusual species or fun or strange behavior, consider sharing it with others through Eaglechat or Juneau Audubon Society's Facebook page. We have a need for volunteers for the board and also for the public market. Please contact me at president@juneau-audubon-society.org if you have suggestions or comments.

Volunteers Needed for the Public Market

Juneau Audubon is going to have a booth at the Public Market November 29 to December 1 this year. We will be selling the famous Mary Lou King jams and jellies, bird photos, books, and more.

We need people to volunteer to help set up and decorate the booth, sell goodies, and take down and pack the remnants on Sunday afternoon. So if you have time to donate 2-3 hours for Audubon, please contact the market coordinator (conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org) or any of the board.

This is one of our most important annual fundraisers to keep on with our work such as evening programs, field trips, local scholarship, and publishing this newsletter.

Project FeederWatch starts November 9th. Project FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. FeederWatchers periodically count the birds they see at their feeders from November through early April and send their counts to Project FeederWatch. FeederWatch data help scientists track broadscale movements of winter bird populations and long-term trends in bird distribution and abundance.

Anyone interested in birds can participate. FeederWatch is conducted by people of all skill levels and backgrounds, including children, families, individuals, classrooms, retired persons, youth groups, nature centers, and bird clubs. Participants watch their feeders as much or as little as they want over two consecutive days as often as every week (less often is fine). They count birds that appear in their count site because of something that they provided (plantings, food, or water).

New participants are sent a [Research Kit](#) with complete instructions for participating. You provide the feeder(s) and seed. In addition, U.S. participants receive a subscription to the Lab of Ornithology's newsletter, *Living Bird News*. Canadian participants, receive Bird Studies Canada's quarterly publication, *BirdWatch Canada*.

There is a \$15 annual participation fee for U.S. residents (\$12 for Cornell Lab members). Canadians can participate by joining Bird Studies Canada for CAN \$35. The participation fee covers materials, staff support, web design, data analysis, and a year-end report (*Winter Bird Highlights*). Project FeederWatch is supported almost entirely by participation fees. Without the support of our participants, this project wouldn't be possible.

Project FeederWatch is operated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada.

From: David Yarnold, President & CEO, National Audubon Society

Subject: A Moment of Convergence – Audubon National Board of Directors Meeting

Over the past 18 months you've heard about several key initiatives at Audubon: our climate science; mobilizing our network for advocacy; and growing our membership. All of those were on full display when the Board of Directors convened in Minneapolis, at the crossroads of Audubon's Upper Mississippi Flyway and at the crossroads of a multitude of bird migration paths.

The board heard reports from all across the network but what they all had in common was a foundation in our strategic plan -- but supercharged with new data. Audubon has taken giant leaps forward in utilizing and leveraging data across all areas of the network to drive decision making and make informed choices when it comes to tough conservation choices. More and better data has become a common denominator across Audubon.

We are putting the most powerful mapping and data visualization tools into the hands of conservation leaders from every corner of the Audubon network as well as our international partners. When we shared this with the Board, my favorite slide shows how five chapters have used GIS maps to influence significant habitat decisions in their communities.

This software has incredible transformational potential – and deploying it so broadly is something no other conservation organization has done. At the Audubon Convention in July, an additional 75 chapter leaders were trained on the esri software and we will be rolling it out to every chapter that wants it. And I know that many of you already know or use GIS technology because so many of Audubon's leaders come from conservation and science backgrounds.

We are using data to analyze our membership and understand our supporters. And, we are using data for policy action. A \$100,000 grant from the Skoll Foundation will let us learn from our members what moves them to action; information we will share with the entire conservation community.

Next year we will be releasing a groundbreaking new study on the effect of climate change on birds. This is going to be a game changer – and an opportunity to rally grassroots support from coast to coast.

Several documents have been posted to <http://bit.ly/H8aFTB> that will give you a broader picture of recent accomplishments across the network: a timeline of recent achievements, the October 2013 President's Report, and a packet of media clips featuring Audubon in the news.

New Website for Students and Teachers

Audubon Adventures recently launched AudubonAdventures.org, featuring student pages: hummingbirds, raptors, and seabirds; puzzles and quizzes; videos; links to Audubon's "Online Guide to North American Birds"; and other resources. For teachers, the site offers field activities for classes, links to Audubon Chapters and Centers, assessment questions and answers, and correlations to Common Core standards. By moving part of the Audubon Adventures experience to the Web, the classroom kit instantly becomes more environmentally-friendly, reducing the program's paper consumption by 50%. The fall season has just begun and there's plenty of time to register your local schools. To learn more, contact Elaine O'Sullivan, Program Director, or Bonnie Godfrey, Program Assistant, by Audubon_adventures@audubon.org or by phone at 7800-340-6546.



PICK CLICK & GIVE

Juneau Audubon entered the PFD's Pick Click and Give program last year as a fund raising attempt. Twenty-two people donated some portion of their 2013 PFD to Juneau Audubon. We heartily thank those folks. The program's annual application fee is \$250. Our total donations from 2013 PFD, Pick Click & Give program were \$1225. Consider on your 2014 PFD application making a donation through Pick Click & Give. THANK YOU to the 2013 donators.

Ordinary yet Extraordinary: Juncos By Gwen Baluss

We all know songbirds can be scarce around Southeast AK in fall. But as the bears start denning we can put out a few seeds and maybe attract one of our coolest local species – the Dark-eyed Junco. Sure, they are one of the famous "little brown jobs" but if you start watching juncos you are likely to get hooked. I like them because many can be individually identified by subtle color differences. As easy targets for researchers, there are lots of studies about them. One topic is the mechanism behind the different color types that breed in different regions of North America. This is "evolution in action" as these populations diverge and reconnect.



For example, you might notice that in the summer the black hooded, buffy sided Oregon types will dominate in the yard. But by fall there are likely to be a few of the grayer Slate-colored types, and many that are actually mix of the two. These are probably “hybrids” who grew up on the line in the range map, which would be the boundary range area between the coastal AK and BC and interior Yukon and BC, that move over to a more mild climate in winter. Likewise there is some evidence that some of our summer birds in turn move farther south down the coast. Interior birds are a bit larger, and have longer wings, probably because they need to fly farther in the winter.

To learn more about amazing juncos, or interest young people in learning about science through bird watching, see this brand new web page and flashy movie trailer here:

<http://juncoproject.org/>

Sitka has a community-wide effort to track banded juncos in winter.

(<http://sitkawild.org/2012/11/have-you-seen-this-bird/>) So far, we learned that most of the birds caught in November stayed within a mile radius all winter, but vanished in late spring. Some returned to the same locations in September, demonstrating fidelity to a non-breeding site.

The Sibley Guide has a good overview of most junco types.

The Blue Jay By Prill (Isleib) Mollick Smoky Mountains, NC

Blue Jay's are easily identified by their perky crest and various blue shades, with black and white above and white or light gray underside. It is a large song bird that is smaller than crows.



Their characteristics and actions are similar to the Steller's Jay. During my earliest visit to Juneau was when I first saw a Steller's Jay, I was driving out the North Douglas Road across the channel from Juneau, I noticed one flying across the road, I recognized it immediately and saw how dark the coloring is compared to the Blue Jay.



The Blue Jay seems most impolite at bird feeders because it chases smaller birds and stuffs seeds in its throat pouch to stash it somewhere else. When eating it holds a seed, nut, or acorn with its feet and pecks it open.

Blue Jays make a variety of calls, some carry for long distances. Most calls are made when perched in trees. Their alarm cries or calls often sound like scolding or screaming at other birds and saying “Thief, Thief”. They sometimes imitate the call of the Red-shouldered Hawk. Other sounds are like trilled or warbling whistles.

When observing birds in nature one may notice actions and hear sounds that bird books or journals don't mention. Years ago in summer during nesting season, I observed a Blue Jay that was agitated by the presence of a big old fluffy cat. The Blue Jay sat high above it in a tree and made the oddest high pitched squeaking, humming, and garbling sounds. (The cat ignored it and slinked away.)

Wrangell October Raven Report Submitted by Bonnie Demerjian

It's been a hawkish month in Wrangell. Early in the month an **American Kestrel** was spotted on the hunt at Muskeg Meadows golf course. A **Merlin** attacked Winston Davies while he was hunting on the Stikine River. He speculates that his movements in his camo hunting coat fooled the bird into thinking he was fair game. Another duck hunter also spotted a merlin on the river flats. Davies says he has observed more hawk activity on the river this year than usual, including an **Osprey** in late September. A Northern harrier and a sharp-shinned hawk were also reported in October.



A number of Wrangell observers have seen juvenile **Northern Goshawks** this month. Fortunately, none of them were dead birds from window collisions, as happened several years ago. The bird pictured was apparently attracted to rabbits wandering loose in the observer's yard and stayed around the yard for several days. The hawk never did catch a rabbit, apparently so speedy that even a marauding mink couldn't nab one. Several undocumented **Golden Eagles** have been

reported from the Stikine River and Anan Creek Bear Observatory. Golden Eagles are common on the upper Stikine River but since no photographs accompanied these sightings, the assumption is that they are juvenile **Bald Eagles** until proven otherwise.

A few **Western Grebes** have been seen in front of town. Normally, there is a large (several hundred birds) flock that spends the winter nearby but there has been no sighting of them yet.

We saw the last of the southern-bound migrants this month. Small numbers of **Golden-** and **White-crowned** and **Savannah Sparrows** passed through. There were also a few late warblers including **Yellow** and **Orange-crowned Sparrows** acting more like flycatchers one day on the beach, soaring straight up, and then diving back to the ground. A small flock of **American Pipits** fueled for several days up on the golf course in early October before departing. Now that we are truly into autumn, we'll have time to become more thoroughly acquainted with our steadfast resident birds.

WEB OPPORTUNITIES

*** Bob Armstrong's wonderful bird and other wildlife photographs that are free to use for educational and conservation purposes – www.naturebob.com



SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS SEASONALLY

Sub-regional Compilers: Steven C. Heinel, 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 Heinel's mailing list to receive this summary and to contribute observations, you can contact him at: steve.heinel@alaska.gov

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.

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

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audubon@emailcustomerservice.com or call 1-800-272-4201

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*. \$35 Basic renewal___

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip Code_____

Telephone number_____

___My check for \$_____ is enclosed___ Please bill me C3ZA510Z A51

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

