

# 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

December 2013

## Juneau Audubon Society

**DECEMBER MEETING: GROUP SLIDE SHOW, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12,  
THUNDER MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY AT 7:00 p.m.**

Given the Christmas Bird Count will be just two days away from our meeting on December 14; we will briefly go over a few count details. Then we will move on to our group slide show. This is always lots of fun. We ask people to bring about 10 to 20 images to share with the group. These can center on something special you did during this past summer, or something you did many years ago, or whatever you might



Snow Bunting Doug Jones

think the audience would find interesting or fun. There is no theme, just bring some images to share with the group. We will have a laptop computer and LCD projector. People should bring their digital images on a

CD or small media storage device that can be connected to our laptop via a USB port. If someone wants to bring traditional slides, please let Doug Jones or Mark Schwan 789-9841 know ahead of time so we can arrange to bring a slide projector.



Red-breasted Sapsucker Doug Jones

### President's Notes by Brenda Wright

First of all I want to thank everyone who volunteered time and energy to help with the Juneau Audubon Society public market booth! There are many things necessary to make our booth a success. So special thanks to all the board members and volunteers, who helped prepare the jams and jellies, ordered supplies, set-up and took down the public market booth, brought new ideas and products to the booth, and helped to serve our loyal fans of the excellent jams and jellies.

Next of course is the Christmas Bird count to be held on December 14 this year in Juneau. Other dates, times and places are listed on page 3. Hope everyone will be able to come out and join the fun of an intense day of birding.

Discovery Southeast has extended Juneau Audubon a special chance to share in the profits of Richard Carstenson's new book: "Natural History of Juneau Trails: A Watershed Approach". All books ordered through the links on the Juneau Audubon Society web page will donate some money to the chapter. So please take advantage of this offer before January 2014. See more about this book on Page 8.

If you have any items or events you would like posted on our web page or Facebook, please contact [president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:president@juneau-audubon-society.org).

BirdLife International has released the 2013 Red List for Birds. The number of bird species listed as Critically Endangered (the highest risk category of the IUCN Red List of threatened species) has reached an all-time high. Although some species are considered at a lower risk of extinction thanks to conservation efforts, severe declines for others have led to new additions to the Critically Endangered list such as the White-winged Flufftail (a sub-Saharan bird) and the Yellow-breasted Bunting (due to uncontrolled trapping in its wintering grounds in southern China and southeast Asia). According to Dr. Leon Bennun, BirdLife's Director of Science, Policy, and Information, nearly 200 bird species are in real danger of being lost forever unless threats such as habitat loss, agricultural changes, invasive species, and climate change are addressed. Enjoy the holiday season and see you next year!

## The 2013 Juneau Christmas Bird Count



American Tree Sparrow Mark Schwan

The Juneau Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on Saturday, December 14, the first day of the designated count period of December 14 through January 5<sup>th</sup>. This marks the 114<sup>th</sup> year of the CBC, with counts planned across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Here in Juneau, this will be our 41<sup>st</sup> count.

For those that don't recall, last year the Christmas Bird Count became a "free" event, which means the Society no longer requires participation fees. The fees had been viewed as a deterrent to participation and also a complicating factor with regards to assessing participant effort on the counts. The Society will compensate with this loss in revenue by going paperless with the American Birds issue of the Christmas Bird Count and by seeking voluntary donations.

Here in Juneau our count week will begin on December 11, and go through December 17<sup>th</sup>. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, we will have our usual two meeting places to stage on the morning of the count. Volunteers should arrive at 8a.m. People wanting to count in the downtown, Douglas, and north Douglas Island areas should meet at the downtown Foodland IGA grocery coffee bar. Birders wishing to work the Lemon Creek, airport, Mendenhall Valley and Auke Bay areas should meet at the McDonald's restaurant across from the Nugget Mall. Again, please arrive at 8a.m. and be prepared for the weather and bring your binoculars. We will have our area leaders

arranged ahead of time, but we will allocate birders to the different groups at our staging locations on count day. We encourage participation from all levels of birders; the more eyes the better. We have lost some of our veteran birders to warmer climates, so if you haven't participated before, please give it a try.



White-winged Crossbill Mark

Once again there will be a potluck after the count at the home of Mark Schwan and Debi Ballam. This is always a nice event and highlight of the day, as we share stories from the day, eat some good food, and conduct the tally of birds and species seen. For those needing directions to Mark and Debi's house, we will provide a handout on count day. Let's have a great turnout and a terrific count! For more information or if you have any questions, call Mark Schwan, at 789-9841 or Gus van Vliet at 789-5624.

**Christmas Bird Counts planned in Southeast Alaska  
December 14, 2013 – January 5, 2014**

Count name	Date	Contact person(s)	Phone number
Chilkat	December 28	Pam Randles	766-3542 766-3664
Craig-Klawock	December 21	Victoria Houser	826-1614
Haines	December 28	Pam Randles	766-3542 766-3664
Glacier Bay	December 14	Nat Drumheller	697-2166
Juneau	December 14	Mark Schwan Gus van Vliet	789-9841 789-5624
Ketchikan	December 14	Andrew Piston	225-9677
Mitkof Island	December 14	Brad Hunter	518-1438
Sitka	January 4	Victoria Vosburg Jennifer Cedarleaf	738-8661 738-0181
Skagway*	December 14	Elaine Furbish	983-2049
Tenakee Springs	Not available	Beret Barnes	736-2226
Wrangell	January 4	Joe Delabruce Bonnie Demerjian	874-7523 874-3665

\* Website for more information: [sites.google.com/site/skagwaybirdclub](http://sites.google.com/site/skagwaybirdclub)

## **Olympic BirdFest 2014** April 4-6, 2014, Sequim, WA

Visit the rain shadow of the *Olympic Peninsula* to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest—Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, dippers, Black Oystercatchers, Long-tailed Ducks, and more. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, silent auction, and a gala banquet. Our featured speaker is Noah Strycker: “Bird World: the fascinating parallels between bird and human behavior”. The festival with the most spectacular setting!

Immediately following BirdFest, join us for a three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2014.

Website address: [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org)

E-mail address: [opas.birdfest.info@gmail.com](mailto:opas.birdfest.info@gmail.com)

Contact name: Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, 360-681-4076

## **Wrangell, Alaska** Submitted by **Bonnie Demerjian**



Winter water birds have been scarce so far. Small numbers of **Common Mergansers**, **Harlequin Ducks**, and a pair of **Long-tailed Ducks** have been reported but the usual rafts of **Barrow’s Goldeneyes** and **Surf Scoters** are yet to be seen. A lone juvenile **Trumpeter Swan**, however, showed up on the 23<sup>rd</sup> on the old Little League field, perhaps wondering where the rest of the team had gone. We hope they get back together soon.

A female **Western Tanager** unexpectedly brightened up an afternoon’s walk. Another burst of yellow in the form of a late **Yellow-rumped Warbler** appeared mid-month in a local lawn.

It has been a few years since **Northern Crows** with deformed bill have been seen but one showed up this month. A flock of around 50 crows fly into town each morning from their roost somewhere in the suburbs and each morning they select a lawn on which to browse for grubs. Their cousins, **Common Ravens**, spent much of the summer before last plowing up the greens at Muskeg Meadows Golf Course avidly in search of the larvae of horseflies or crane flies. This spring, to stop their destruction, the course was seeded with nematodes intended to attack the larvae. An official at the course explained that the nematodes arrived in a sponge and were activated by soaking the sponge in water. This was then sprayed on the grass. He believes there was some improvement this summer since there were fewer ravens ravenging the greens.

Wrangell's Christmas Bird Count will take place on January 4<sup>th</sup>. So far, seventeen participants have volunteered. We are hoping for calm weather so boats can get out and cover the shoreline on Wrangell and neighboring islands.

### **Bird Walk Sightings By Prill (Isleib) Mollick, Smoky Mountains, N.C.**

Local bird walks along the river trail this year, have had sightings of 125 different bird species. Among them were four that are Rare in this area, with one or two sightings every few years were the **American Black Duck, Northern Harrier, Golden-Winged Warbler** and a **Double-Crested Cormorant**.

There were four that are seen occasionally but not seen every year, were the **Bald Eagle, the Osprey, the Merlin, and the Pine Warbler**.

Birds seen that are Uncommon with only a few sightings each year were the **Great Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Red-breasted Merganser, White-fronted Goose, Horned Grebe, Osprey, and the Willow Flycatcher**.

Others seen that are Uncommon in this area were the **Cliff Swallow, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Marsh Wren, Cape May Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Vesper Sparrow, and the Bobolink**.

### **Observation of Hummingbirds** By Margaret Pugh, Juneau

I just read Beth Peluso's article on hummingbirds in the Empire. As one who is not a birder, but loves my backyard birds, the article made several things fall into place for me. In my backyard I have a hedge of some type of viburnum (I think it is viburnum anyway). The hedge was in place when we moved into the house 35 years ago. All kinds of birds love its pink flowers as well as the little snowballs that replace the flowers in winter. Through the years I have had summer hummingbirds visit the hedge and my feeder-but not consistently- they seemed to prefer my neighbor's yard. Some years I wouldn't see any hummingbirds in my yard at all.

Three years ago in October I noticed I had 2 hummingbirds feeding on the hedge. They seemed to disappear in November. Then, two years ago in October I was excited, if a bit baffled, because I had two families of hummingbirds in the hedge. My grand-daughter wanted to look for the nests, but I said no-don't want to disturb them. They were friendly active and preferred the hedge to the feeder- which was good, because the feeder was apt to freeze. We enjoyed watching the little ones as they flitted around with their parents. They were with us until well into November. The year after and again this year, I believe they have nested in the hedge. John and I have just returned from a 4 week trip, so I wasn't here for the time frame---but I saw two of them in October right before we left on the trip.

I had assumed that these were all Rufous. My girlfriend who lives way out the road and gets many, many Rufous thru the summer and I decided that the birds moved into town for the fall! She was excited one evening in early October when she came to visit and saw several of the birds. I had noted in The Raven that we should watch for Anna's and now Beth's article---I know they are Anna's! When we had the families two years ago, my son suggested something was up with fledglings in October and I thought I could see they were marked like Anna's--but I have vision difficulties with glare and that hinders my ability to identify fleeting colors of birds with certainty--thus, I don't always trust what I think I see--so I just enjoy my birds and am happy with that.

### **Report from Gov't of Canada Echoes U.S. Finding: Outdoor Cats are Leading Human-Caused Source of Bird Mortality**

A [new study](#) from the government of Canada that looked at more than 25 human-caused sources of bird mortality has found that domestic cats, both feral and owned, are the leading lethal threat to birds in the country. The study found that the median estimate of cat-caused mortality—almost 200 million bird deaths per year—was about six times greater than the next leading mortality estimate of about 32 million attributed to car collisions. The third-leading cause was collisions with buildings or homes, with a rate of about 22 million bird deaths per year. For more see <http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/releases/131001.html>.

**45 AMERICORPS POSITIONS OPEN FOR 2014 for the RURAL ALASKA COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC. (RURAL CAP)** for full-time, one-year service positions based in rural Alaska, to start in January, 2014. AmeriCorps Members serve community needs while benefitting from training, a monthly living allowance of approximately \$1,200, and an education award of \$5,550 following their year of service. For more information, go to [http://ruralcap.com/?page\\_id=1540](http://ruralcap.com/?page_id=1540).

### **From November 27, 2013 What's Up**

**December 19** Deadline for submissions to the **KEEP THE SEA FREE OF DEBRIS STUDENT ART CONTEST**. The NOAA Marine Debris Program annual art context is for grades K-8. In this contest, students nationwide submit artwork that illustrates the issue of marine debris from their perspective. The winners of the art contest will be featured in the 2015 Marine Debris Program Calendar, which is distributed nationwide to help raise awareness of the issue of marine debris and the ability of people to make a difference in solving the problem. This year, the NOAA MDP is asking for art that focuses on: How marine debris effects the ocean

environment and/or How students can help be part of the solution to marine debris. For more information on the context, including a flyer and entry form, go to <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/outreach/artcontest.html> or contact Peter Murphy at 206.526.4661 or email [peter.murphy@noaa.gov](mailto:peter.murphy@noaa.gov) or Asthma Mahdi at 301.713.2989 or email [Asma.Mahdi@noaa.gov](mailto:Asma.Mahdi@noaa.gov).

**December 10 KETCHIKAN** - Deadline for applications to serve on the **KETCHIKAN STATE PARKS CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD**. The role of the board is to advise the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation on matters effecting state parks in the Ketchikan area. Alaska State Parks manages the following sites in the Ketchikan area: Settlers Cove State Recreation Site; Totem Bight State Historical Site; Refuge Cove State Recreation Site; Grindall Island State Marine Park & public use cabin; Black Sands Beach/Blank Islands, Grant Island/Joe Island, and Betton Island State Marine Parks. The park advisory board helps park managers understand what the community priorities are in these popular destination parks. The board meets on a monthly basis from September through May. Members are expected to occasionally serve on board-appointed committees in addition to attending the monthly board meetings. Board members serve for three years and terms are staggered so that seats open each year. To apply for a position on the nine-member board, use the form at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/misc/advisboardapp.pdf>. Applicants will be considered for the term beginning Jan. 1. For more information, contact the Ketchikan District state park office at 907-247-8574. (11/25/2013)

**December 13 SITKA** - Comments are due on the proposal to issue an initial **AIR QUALITY CONTROL OPERATING PERMIT FOR THE JARVIS STREET DIESEL PLANT**, an electric utility managed by CBS. The plant provides standby, maintenance, and emergency generation capacity to residential, commercial, and public customers in Sitka. The potential annual emissions of regulated air pollutants at the source will not exceed: 249.9 tons of Nitrogen Oxides, 57.3 tons of Carbon Monoxide, 7.2 tons of Particulate Matter, 2.1 tons of Sulfur Dioxide, and 21.6 tons of Volatile Organic Compounds. The total annual emissions of regulated criteria air pollutants are 329 tons. The potential annual emissions for Greenhouse Gases are estimated at 98,650 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions. Copies of the draft Operating Permit and Statement of Basis are available at <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/air/ap/calendar.htm>. For more information or to submit comments, contact Kwame Agyei at (907)465-5124, Fax (907) 465-5129 or email [kwame.agyei@alaska.gov](mailto:kwame.agyei@alaska.gov).

### **Bird Community Resources from AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY**

Keep Birds in the Picture” Facebook Community: lease check out, like, share, and post in our **\*new\*** Facebook community, called “Keep Birds in the Picture.” <https://www.facebook.com/KeepBirdsInThePicture>. Anyone with a Facebook account can share their stories and/or photos about their life experiences with birds. Check it out and tell your story!

## HIRING

**CONSERVATION SPECIALIST** for **SOUTHEAST ALASKA LAND TRUST (SEAL)** to be responsible for land acquisition, management of SEAL Trust’s In-Lieu Fee Mitigation Program and a Coastal Impact Assistance Program Grant (CIAP), outreach to individuals and organizations; and, organization support. This position will be filled as either one full-time position or two part-time positions, depending on the qualifications and interests of applicants. The position is located in Juneau and offers competitive salary and benefits. For a full job description and more information about SEAL Trust, go to [www.southeastalaskalandtrust.org](http://www.southeastalaskalandtrust.org). Application **Deadline: December 15.**

Natural History of Juneau Trails: A Watershed Approach  
By Richard Carstensen

**A treat for any outdoor enthusiast. Buy it now to support Audubon and Discovery Southeast!**

Available in time for the holidays, Richard Carstensen’s gorgeous new book explores the natural history of the Juneau trail system. It makes a great gift, and for only a limited time your purchase will directly support Discovery Southeast and Audubon. Purchase it at [DiscoverySoutheast.org/publications](http://DiscoverySoutheast.org/publications).

If you or someone on your gift list enjoys Juneau’s outdoors, this book is for you. It is an all-you-can-eat information buffet for the hiker, hunter, or any student of the outdoors.

Richard’s insightful text, full color maps, and dozens of recent and historic photographs explain the landforms, water

features, and natural environments Juneau residents navigate every day. Dive in for a whole new understanding of the areas you love to explore, with one of Southeast Alaska’s foremost naturalists.



“From the moon, the CBJ looks pretty little. But in the planetary picture, it also emerges as an incomparably privileged place: of clean water, towering mountains, charismatic megafauna, and perhaps most exceptionally, a lot of healthy, wild land—Juneau stands out” Richard writes. “Wildlands are accessed by more than 150 miles of trails serving all tastes, incomes and physical abilities, from paved, wheelchair-accessible promenades to dizzying alpine scrambles. This little book is a salute to the jewels of our backyard watersheds.”

*Natural History of Juneau Trails* will be available in stores in 2014, but is available now for a limited time as a fundraiser directly from [DiscoverySoutheast.org/publications](http://DiscoverySoutheast.org/publications). The price is \$24.00. **Use the code “Audubon” and profits will be split between Audubon and Discovery Southeast.**



## 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/> > )

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

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### Too much paper mail from the National Audubon Society?

You can ask to be taken off the mass mailing list: Email Customer Service

[audubon@emailcustomerservice.com](mailto: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\_\_\_\_\_

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Telephone number\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ My check for \$ \_\_\_ is enclosed \_\_\_ Please bill me C3ZA510Z 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)

