

# 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 40, Number 6

Juneau Audubon Society

February 2014

## Juneau Audubon Society

**FEBRUARY MEETING: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13,  
THUNDER MOUNTAIN HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARY AT 7:00 p.m.**

Riley Woodford – Information Officer Division of Wildlife Conservation, will present: **Marine Mammals of SE Alaska , what we have, how to identify all of them, what’s interesting about them, and status, fun facts & more..**



## **President's Notes by Brenda Wright**

**Two Questions for Members:** Are you willing to have special notices of events and conservation concerns emailed to you as “Audubon Alerts”? If so, will you give us permission to use your e-mail in a special list just for “Audubon Alerts”?

The Juneau Audubon board has taken the position that we may not use any member's email for any other purpose than sending the monthly newsletter the Raven. However, emails are a good tool used judiciously. In the past, our membership form has asked whether you wished to receive the newsletter by email or paper form. We now have over 100 people on the email list and nearly 300 that receive paper newsletters.

So once again I am asking you:

- 1) Would like to save a Tree and go paperless?
- 2) May we put you on a special email list for “Audubon Alerts”?

We could reinforce our upcoming fund raising events. Reach out for volunteers and promote local conservation concerns. Please respond to [membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org) if you want paperless, and/or Alerts.

**Local events:** Don't miss an opportunity to attend a great bird meeting. The **Pacific Seabird group** will have its annual meeting in Juneau this year February 19-22 at Centennial Hall. Seabird specialists from around the world will present scientific papers on various topics, including Arctic Seabirds. There are no events for the general public scheduled, but daily registrations are available for those interested in seeing some talks. Conference field trips will all be regularly scheduled AMHS trips. More info at:

<http://www.pacificseabirdgroup.org/index.php?f=meeting&t=Annual%20Meeting&s=1.#MS>

**Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival:** Save the date: **May 8-11, 2014**, and feel free to contact us if you need help planning your birding vacation to the Kachemak Bay in Homer, Alaska!

**Stikine River Birding Festival, April 24-26, 2014**

<http://www.wrangell.com/birdingfestival/stikine-river-birding-festival-april-24-26-2014>

**Cordova Shorebird Festival dates are May 8, 9, 10, 11, 2014**

<http://cordovachamber.com/community/festivals-and-events/shorebird-festival>

**Great Backyard Bird Count February 14-17, 2014:** The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a great way for people of all ages and backgrounds to connect with nature and make a difference for birds. It's free and easy. To learn more about how to join the count visit [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.

**GBBC checklists can be accepted from anywhere in the world!** Everyone is welcome--from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period. They enter these numbers on the GBBC website. <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

## REPORT YOUR BIRD SIGHTINGS YEAR-ROUND

The Great Backyard Bird Count ends after four days, but your own bird counts don't have to. Keep counting for the birds by reporting observations year-round to eBird! [www.ebird.com](http://www.ebird.com)

Like the GBBC, eBird is an online program that gathers bird observations into a database. But with eBird, the counting keeps going. eBird lets you and your family keep detailed lists of your own sightings, create an individualized menu of your favorite birding spots, and much more.

## Juneau Christmas Bird Count Results By Mark Schwan

January 4, 2014

We were very fortunate with the weather, after postponing on the 14th of December due to horrible conditions. We had mild temperatures, in the mid 30s, little wind, and no precipitation until late in the afternoon. There was some fog to deal with but it didn't have any significant impacts. Forty four people participated in the field and four additional people reported in from homes watching feeders and areas adjacent to their property. This was a nice turn out of volunteers for us.

Our species list for count day stands at 69, a count day total which is about average for us. Our total birds counted on count day was 10,784, (major contributors were, as usual, **Canada Goose**, **Glaucous-winged Gull**, and **Mallard**) which is just a bit above average. We had no real shockers or any new species for our cumulative local CBC list. We had new, high or record counts for two species, **Canada Goose** and **Chestnut-backed Chickadee**. Our **Canada Goose** count was 2,140, and doubled our previous high count. We were concerned there could have been some double-counting of birds due to movements of flocks during the day to different



Female Ann's Hummingbirds

Patty Rose

areas, but we seem to think that this was not a problem. This is the first time we have held a count after hunting season ended; perhaps with hunting season over for the last few days, more birds returned to the wetlands. We don't know. The 191 **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** dramatically surpassed our previous high of 152. Scoter counts continued to be down, and our jay count of 16 has only been lower on four of our previous forty counts, all many years ago.

Rare birds included a continuing **Western Grebe** in Auke Bay, two **Anna's**

**Hummingbirds** continuing at local feeders, two continuing **White-throated Sparrows** visiting local feeders, and 9 **Red-winged Blackbirds** continuing to visit a feeder near Lemon Creek. Birds that we found which aren't considered rare but many times are missed included **Red-throated Loon, Yellow-billed Loon, Northern Pygmy Owl, and Hairy Woodpecker**. We had six additional count week species: **Rough-legged Hawk** (very rare-maybe only one or two previous winter records and seen on only one previous count), **Sharp-shinned Hawk, Black Turnstone, Great Horned Owl, Short-eared Owl** (rare), and **Fox Sparrow**.

Thanks to all who participated.



Northern Pigmy Owl

Patty Rose

**Juneau Christmas Bird Count Results****January 4, 2014**

| <b>Species Seen</b>      | <b>Count</b> |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Canada Goose             | <b>2,126</b> |
| Gadwall                  | 17           |
| American Wigeon          | 173          |
| Mallard                  | 2702         |
| Northern Pintail         | 16           |
| Green-winged Teal        | 12           |
| Greater Scaup            | 91           |
| Lesser Scaup             | 1            |
| Unidentified Scaup       | 9            |
| Harlequin Duck           | 75           |
| Surf Scoter              | 353          |
| White-winged Scoter      | 101          |
| Unidentified Scoters     | 4            |
| Long-tailed Duck         | 14           |
| Bufflehead               | 117          |
| Common Goldeneye         | 130          |
| Barrow's Goldeneye       | 168          |
| Unidentified Goldeneyes  | 3            |
| Hooded Merganser         | 3            |
| Common Merganser         | 90           |
| Red-breasted Merganser   | 36           |
| Unidentified Mergansers  | 11           |
| Red-throated Loon        | cw           |
| Pacific Loon             | 80           |
| Common Loon              | 7            |
| Yellow-billed Loon       | 1            |
| Horned Grebe             | 10           |
| Red-necked Grebe         | 15           |
| <b>Western Grebe</b>     | <b>1</b>     |
| Pelagic Cormorant        | 20           |
| Unidentified Cormorants  | 2            |
| Great Blue Heron         | 3            |
| Bald Eagle               | 151          |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk       | cw           |
| Northern Goshawk         | 2            |
| <b>Rough-legged Hawk</b> | <b>cw</b>    |
| Killdeer                 | 4            |
| Black Turnstone          | cw           |
| Rock Sandpiper           | 29           |
| Dunlin                   | 275          |
| Wilson's Snipe           | 1            |
| Mew Gull                 | 160          |
| Herring Gull             | 1            |

|                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Glaucous-winged Gull          | 1,619      |
| Unidentified Gulls            | 81         |
| Common Murre                  | 17         |
| Pigeon Guillemot              | 1          |
| Marbled Murrelet              | 115        |
| Rock Pigeon                   | 70         |
| Great Horned Owl              | cw         |
| Northern Pygmy-owl            | 1          |
| <b>Short-eared Owl</b>        | <b>cw</b>  |
| <b>Anna's Hummingbird</b>     | <b>2</b>   |
| Belted Kingfisher             | 5          |
| Hairy Woodpecker              | 1          |
| Northern Shrike               | 1          |
| Steller's Jay                 | 18         |
| Black-billed Magpie           | 31         |
| Northwestern Crow             | 499        |
| Common Raven                  | 385        |
| Chestnut-backed Chickadee     | <b>191</b> |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch         | 2          |
| Brown Creeper                 | 7          |
| Pacific Wren                  | 3          |
| American Dipper               | 3          |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet        | 42         |
| Unidentified Kinglets         | 5          |
| American Robin                | 1          |
| Varied Thrush                 | 1          |
| European Starling             | 22         |
| Bohemian Waxwing              | 1          |
| American Tree Sparrow         | 1          |
| Song Sparrow                  | 17         |
| Fox Sparrow                   | cw         |
| <b>White-throated Sparrow</b> | <b>2</b>   |
| White-crowned Sparrow         | 1          |
| Dark-eyed Junco               | 257        |
| Unidentified Sparrows         | 1          |
| <b>Red-winged Blackbird</b>   | <b>9</b>   |
| Rusty Blackbird               | 1          |
| Pine Grosbeak                 | 19         |
| Red Crossbill                 | 20         |
| White-winged Crossbill        | 2          |
| Unidentified Crossbills       | 55         |
| Pine Siskin                   | 261        |
| <b>Species on Count Day</b>   | <b>69</b>  |
| Total Birds on Count Day      | 10,784     |
| Count Week Birds              | 6          |

## January 2014 Bird Report for Juneau By Amy Courtney

Our January here in Juneau seemed pretty ordinary in the beginning—typical winter storms and such—but the past few weeks have proved to be anything but ordinary, with the temperatures in the mid-forties and almost all of our snow melted. Apparently our winter temperatures decided to migrate to the Lower 48!

We haven't had too many notable ducks this winter. Patty Rose reported around a dozen **Gadwall** near the North Douglas trailer park on 1/1, 1/04, & 1/11, and closer to downtown Douglas on 1/25. Gus van Vliet saw a full 39 of them at the Sheep Creek delta on 1/30. **Northern Pintail** made a small showing earlier this month, with one at the mouth of the Mendenhall River on 1/04 (BA), and on 1/11 at the North Douglas trailer park (PR). A lone **Lesser Scaup** was spotted on 1/04 off Spruce Point in Auke Bay (GV). On 1/19 Gus van Vliet spotted 5 **Black Scoter** in Auke Bay, and Amy Courtney saw two off Douglas' Outer Point on 1/24.

Loons have made a pretty good showing this month, especially **Pacific Loons**, and there have been scattered reports of **Common Loons** from Auke Bay, North Douglas and Sandy Beach. A lone **Red-throated loon** has also been seen throughout the month in Auke Bay (GV), and one was spotted near False Outer Point in Douglas on 1/19 (AC). Our most exciting report though was a **Yellow-billed Loon** at Sandy Beach that Patty Rose was able to nab for the Christmas Bird Count on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Mark Schwan was also able to find in on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Another very exciting bird was a **Western Grebe** scoped far offshore in Auke Bay on 1/02 (GV) and 1/04 (DR).

Two notable accipiters showed themselves this month, a **Northern Goshawk** that Laurie Lamm saw on the Dike Trail on 1/02, and a female **Rough-legged Hawk** first reported at the wetlands near the Miller-Honsinger Pond at end of December (GV), and seen throughout January by many others. On 1/01 Marsha Squires heard two **Great Horned Owls** calling to each other on the Outer Point Trail on the first of the month, and Patty Rose and Frank Glass were able to find a **Northern Pygmy-owl** in downtown Douglas for the Christmas Bird Count.

At Auke Rec./Pt. Louisa on 1/10 Mark Schwan was fortunate enough to find and photograph a **Northern Flicker** whose red mustache and red neck crescent indicated that it was an intergrade—a cross between a Red-shafted and Yellow-shafted subspecies. Individual **Northern Shrikes** have been spotted at Brotherhood Bridge (GV, BW), Sandy Beach (PR), Auke Bay (GV), and the Miller-Honsinger pond (MS, GV). Many people have reported seeing **European Starlings** in downtown Juneau this winter, with a high count of exactly 45 once (GV). Our only report of **Snow Buntings** this month came from Patty Rose and Bev Agler, who saw seven on the Dike Trail on 1/18. A flock of nine **Red-winged Blackbirds** was seen on 1/04 in the same Creekside Park neighborhood where some were seen last winter (MS), and eleven were reported at the same location on the 31<sup>st</sup> (AC). A few **Rusty Blackbirds** also made an appearance—one on the wetlands near Sunny Point on 1/04 (LL), and two at the Pioneers Home Marsh on 1/10 (AC).

This year we have seen very few finches and other irruptive species that we typically see during the winter, presumably because of good cone crops this year in the North. **Pine Siskin** reports are relatively few and far between-- Auke Bay on 1/11 (GV), and Mendenhall Lake on 1/19 (BW) and 1/21 (LL). **White-winged Crossbills** have been virtually nonexistent, with only two birds found on the Christmas Bird Count by Mark Schwan on the Marriott Trail in Switzer Creek.

**Red Crossbills** have appeared frequently, though in typically low numbers. The only **Red-breasted Nuthatches** reported all winter were two heard in a Montana Creek neighborhood on 1/21 (AC).

Three **White-throated Sparrows** have spent the winter here so far, one white-morph at a feeder in Auke Bay (GV), and two tan-morphs at a feeder in North Douglas (JC). A **White-crowned Sparrow** appeared in the beginning of January at the same Auke Bay feeder, and has been there ever since (GV). Marsha Squires reported a **Fox Sparrow** on the Mendenhall Wetlands west of the river on 1/02, and two **American Tree Sparrows** have been seen—one on Sandy Beach on 1/04 (PR), and the other at an Auke Bay feeder on 1/11 (GV).

Last but not least, our most bizarre and baffling little birds this month must be the **Anna's Hummingbirds** that have managed to survive this winter thus far at feeders around town. At least three individuals have been reported—likely more. Two have been seen at a feeder in Douglas (PR), one in Auke Bay (GV), and another one that may still be around on Backloop (KH).

Thanks to all who have contributed their sightings via eBird and Eaglechat including the following: Bev Agler (BA), Julie Coghill (JC), Amy Courtney (AC), Karla Hart (KH), Laurie Lamm (LL), Patty Rose (PR), Deb Rudis (DR), Mark Schwan (MS), Gus van Vliet (GV), Brenda Wright (BW)

### **Winter Hummingbirds** By Prill (Isleib) Mollick, Smoky Mountains, N.C.

In the Carolinas, birders are encouraged to keep hummingbird feeders up in winter. The idea that hummingbirds are present in North Carolina during wintertime seems a little strange. I usually take my hummingbird feeders down by late September early October. Migration south usually begins in late summer. Birds from farther north may come through North Carolina into October. It seems that keeping feeders up does not keep them from migrating but would rather be a life saver for those that pass through.

In recent years there have been infrequent and verified reports of hummingbirds in midwinter. Hummingbirds were created with the ability to survive extreme conditions by a deep sleep that lowers its metabolism called torpor. Even in sleep there is an energy demand needed for survival.

The Carolinas have had reports of eleven different vagrant hummingbird species. They have often showed up in winter long after the Ruby-Throats have left for the warmth of Mexico or Central America. The Ruby-Throat is the only hummingbird that breeds in North Carolina. The Rufous hummingbird has been seen more frequently during winter months and is not as rare as once thought.

### **Wrangell Christmas Bird Count** By Bonnie Demerjian

Wrangell's Christmas Bird counters enjoyed ideal weather on count day, January 4. While all participants appreciated the mild temperature and calm winds, our boat counters benefited the most. Two teams covered almost all of our water routes and flat seas ensured that they were able to find a heartening number of water and shorebirds. There were no rarities on the water.

**Barrow's Goldeneyes** topped the numbers at 1340, followed by smaller numbers of **Mallards**, **Harlequin Ducks**, and **Long-tailed Ducks**. Three species of **grebes** - **Western**, **Horned** and **Red-necked** - were reported. The large flock of **Western Grebes** often appearing on the

Christmas Bird Count was absent this year. Three species of **mergansers** also made the count. **Mew Gulls** and **Glaucous-winged** were the most abundant gulls. **Marbled Murrelets** that have been scarce during the previous two years numbered 767 this year.

Land counters had no surprising finds this season. **European Starling** numbers have been creeping up from 30 in 2011 to 102 this year. At this time they seem to be concentrated in downtown Wrangell. The number of **Bald Eagles** has remained steady at around 59. **Steller's Jays** have been absent from local feeders all season and none were reported on the bird count. **Pine Siskins** showed up in small numbers but the **Dark-eyed Junco**, Oregon color phase, topped the feeder numbers. Added to that were an unusually high number of slate colored juncos, 35.

In all, 57 species of birds was reported for this year's count. Nineteen participants helped with the Christmas Bird Count this year including two young people, Jing and Sophie O'Brien, who have been helping to report for the past four years.



**Editor's Note:** I did not see any young Steller's Jays around my yard last summer and we usually have a family or two and there has been only an occasional one this winter coming to the feeders. Could the cold spring have something to do with fewer numbers since they seem to nest early?

## 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)

\*\*\*\*\*



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

Sub-regional Compilers: Steven C. Heintz, 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 Heintz's mailing list to receive this summary and to contribute observations, you can contact him at: [steve.heintz@alaska.gov](mailto:steve.heintz@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) < <http://www.ebird.org/> > )

## PICK, CLICK, GIVE

As you fill out your application for the Alaska Permanent Fund, please consider making a donation to Juneau Audubon Society. The funds we receive help to pay for all our free events all year. Thanks for your help.

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

President: Brenda Wright 789-4656

[president@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:president@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Vice-President: Josh Peters

[vice-president@juneau-audubon-ociety.org](mailto:vice-president@juneau-audubon-ociety.org)

Secretary: Bev Agler

[secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Treasurer: Patty Rose

[treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Programs: Doug Jones

[programs@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:programs@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Membership: Jane Ginter

[membership@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Education: Patricia Wherry

[education@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:education@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Conservation: Gwen Baluss

[conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Field Trips: Amy Clark Courtney

[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)

At-large:

[at-large\\_a@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:at-large_a@juneau-audubon-society.org)

At-large:

[at-large\\_b@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:at-large_b@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Public Market:

[public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org)

Web Master: George Utermohle

[webmaster@juneau-audubon-society.org](mailto:webmaster@juneau-audubon-society.org)

### 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\_\_\_\_\_

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](mailto:membership@juneau-audubon-society.org)

