

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 9

Juneau Audubon Society

May 2014

OUR NEXT REGULAR JUNEAU AUDUBON MEETING WILL BE THE SECOND THURSDAY IN SEPTEMBER

OUR SCHEDULED SUMMER BIRD WALKS:

Date/Time:	Activity/Location:	Tide Info:	Leader/s:
May 10 8am- 10am	Airport Dike Trail and Mendenhall Wetlands Meet at the parking lot at the end of Radcliffe Rd.	Lo 2.9 @ 0455 Hi 13.2 @ 1056	Mark Schwan
May 17 8am- 11am	Bird Banding Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with JAS and the US Forest Service at <u>Juneau Community Garden, Montana Creek Road</u> . All ages and walking ability, especially kids, are welcome.	Visitors will have the opportunity to see songbirds up close and see how biologists band, measure and safely release them. Stop by anytime between 8 and 11.	Gwen Baluss
May 24 8am- 10am	Sandy Beach/Treadwell Trails Meet at the parking lot for Savikko Park in Douglas	Lo 1.0 @ 0429 Hi 14.1 @ 1039	Patty Rose
May 31 8am- 10am	Moose Lake area Meet at the parking lot next to the Mendenhall River bridge on Back Loop. Boots recommended if it is or has been raining.	Hi 17.2 @ 0259 Lo -1.6 @ 0930	Mark Schwan
June 7 8am- 10am	Brotherhood Bridge Meet at the parking lot across the highway from Dan Abel's.	Lo 4.1 @ 0305 Hi 11.8 @ 0903	Jeff Sauer

SATURDAY WILD WALKS

June 15 11am Sunday	9am-	Minus Tide Walk @ South Bridget Cove	South Bridget Cove is unmarked, but at mile 38.5 on Glacier Hwy. Pat will identify the unique sea creatures and flora that will be exposed by the very low tide.	Pat Harris
July 12 8:30am- 11am		Mt. Roberts Nature Walk	Meet at the tram office on South Franklin Street. Linda will explore flowers and other plants and Audubon naturalists and birders will identify birds and other wildlife. If you arrive at 8:30am, the tram tickets can be purchased from JAS for a non-profit rate of \$7 (please bring cash). The walk will likely end around 11am, but you can go back down as early or late as you want.	Linda Nicklin
August 16 12pm	10am-	Jensen-Olsen Arboretum	The Arboretum is located "out the road", just past Mile 23 on Glacier Hwy. Enjoy a tour learning about the history of the Arboretum, what makes it special, and the many plants that are nurtured there.	Merrill Jensen
September 6 10am-12pm		Berries	Eaglecrest Lodge parking lot.	

President's notes by Brenda Wright

Hello and Happy Spring!

Thanks to everyone who helped support the Juneau Audubon Society by joining us on the Berners Bay cruises. I hope you all had as good a time as I did. We use the funds from the cruise to support our year round activities. We are in the midst of our spring bird walks and hope you can join us to learn more about birds-both migrants and year round residents. This summer our Saturday Wild Walks will start with a low tide on June 18 and be followed by a day on Mt Roberts, the arboretum, berries,



Berners Cruise by Doug Jones

mushroom, and who knows what else? This is our last newsletter until September, so keep an eye on the web page, facebook, and community calendar for events.

I hope you will join us again next fall for our “Flights to Adventure” free public lectures every 2nd Thursday October through April. Get out and enjoy and hope to see you on our walks.

The Meaning of Wild

A new short movie celebrating 50 years of the American Wilderness is available on loan from Juneau Audubon Society-321-4739.

June 5-8 2014 Yakutat Tern Festival

The Fourth Annual Yakutat Tern Festival is a celebration of the natural and cultural resources of Yakutat, Alaska. Yakutat hosts one of the largest and southern most known nesting colonies of Aleutian Terns, as well as Arctic Terns and up to 200 other bird species that nest in or migrate through the area. The festival is family friendly and offers activities for birders as well as non-birders, including field trips, seminars, kid’s activities, evening banquets and other programs, bird banding demonstration, and an art exhibit. This year's keynote speaker is Heather Renner, Wildlife Biologist with the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. Our featured artist is filmmaker, writer, photographer, and co-founder of the Lexicon of Sustainability Project (www.lexiconofsustainability.com) Douglas Gayeton. Alaska-based linocut artist Evon Zerbetz will also be conducting youth and adult workshops and displaying her art. Other area activities include sightseeing, hiking, fishing, surfing, canoeing and kayaking, and beach combing. Please see www.yakutatternfestival.org, visit us on Facebook, or call (907) 784-3359 for more information.

May 13 -16

ANCHORAGE - FISHERIES BYCATCH: GLOBAL ISSUES and CREATIVE SOLUTIONS is the theme for the **29TH WAKEFIELD FISHERIES SYMPOSIUM** will be held at the Hilton Hotel. The symposium will bring together fishery and social scientists, managers, fishermen, and other stakeholders from around the world to report on creative approaches to solving fishery by-catch issues. Keynotes, invited talks, and oral and poster contributions will be presented on new technologies,

advancements toward full accounting of fishing mortality into harvest control rules, approaches to industry-derived solutions, incentive programs, new regulatory solutions, and studies on social and economic implications related to by-catch issues. For more detailed information, including symposium background and goals, sessions, location, steering committee, sponsors, and more, please visit the symposium information page at <http://seagrant.uaf.edu/conferences/2014/wakefield-bycatch/info.php>.

May 15 - 18

SOLDOTNA - KENAI PENINSULA BIRDING FESTIVAL will have a variety of feathered fun for all ages and abilities, including Kenai River Guided Floats, hot spot tours, children's program, birding walks, birding workshops, social events and more. For updates, go to the festival's public Facebook account or www.kenaibirdfest.com.

Get Fascinated by Feathers With New All About Bird Biology Site

Feathers are amazing: they're light, aerodynamic, beautifully patterned, colorful, waterproof, and warm. To help curious minds of all ages learn about these impressive structures, Cornell Lab just launched an in-depth, immersive website. It's the first stage of our new All About Bird Biology project, with more to come. Try out [All About Feathers](http://biology.allaboutbirds.org/?utm_source=Cornell+Lab+eNews&utm_campaign=7dd922b88f-Cornell+Lab+eNews+2014+4+08&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_47588b5758-7dd922b88f-277564893), (http://biology.allaboutbirds.org/?utm_source=Cornell+Lab+eNews&utm_campaign=7dd922b88f-Cornell+Lab+eNews+2014+4+08&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_47588b5758-7dd922b88f-277564893)

JUNEAU BIRD WATCH By Amy Clark Courtney

Our spring migration is in full swing here in Juneau, and many of our summer residents have arrived to establish their territories. Though our **Canada Goose** counts waned as the month progressed, others have appeared to represent the family. Up to eighteen **Greater White-fronted Geese** have been seen in the past two weeks at the Mendenhall Wetlands, Auke Bay, and Eagle Beach (m. obs.). Scattered small numbers of **Snow Geese** (plus a group of 20) have been reported for about three weeks at roughly the same locations (m. obs.). Two **Brant** were spotted at Eagle Beach on 4/12 and 4/13 by Amy Courtney and Gus van Vliet, respectively. On 4/15, Owen Squires found two **Cackling Geese** at Eagle Beach, and Marsha Squires found three on the Boy Scout camp side. A very small number of **Trumpeter Swans** were seen this month: two at Miller-Honsinger Pond on 4/7 (AC), and one flying over Gastineau Channel on 4/22 (PR). At least 24 **Arctic Terns** have returned to breed, and the first ones this spring were reported on 4/26.



Bob Armstrong

Huge numbers of scoters have arrived to clog our waterways; the majority being **Surf Scoters**, but also a substantial number of **White-winged Scoters**. Two reports of **Black Scoters** were of three at Sandy Beach on 4/14 (PR), and two at Sheep Creek Delta on 4/20 (GV). Small numbers of **Pacific Loons** have been spotted throughout the

month, and on 4/29 a **Red-throated Loon** was heard flying over the Airport Dike Trail (GV), and a **Common Loon** was seen in Auke Bay (SR). On 4/19, a male **Canvasback** was found on the west side of the Mendenhall Wetlands, and on 4/25, one male **Eurasian Wigeon**, our first since June of last year, was spotted in the same area (both GV). Patty Rose found the first **Ring-necked Duck** of the season at the Pioneer's Home marsh on 4/6.

Our paucity of birds of prey this past season has been sufficiently relieved by a number of species this month. Our **Bald Eagle** count has risen, of course, as they gather for various spawning fish, but there have also been three or four **Northern Harriers** haunting the Mendenhall Wetlands and at least two at Eagle Beach. At least two different **Red-tailed Hawks** have been spotted at various places on the Mendenhall Wetlands, on 4/22 (BA), a dark-morph Harlan's on 4/18 (GV), and a light-morph Western (*calurus*) on 4/23 (AK). An adult *alascensis* subspecies was also spotted in the Eagle Beach area on 4/13 (GV). To cap off our winter **Rough-legged Hawk** sightings, one individual was seen on the Wetlands on 4/17 (GV). **American Kestrels** and **Merlin** have been spotted around the Mendenhall Wetlands and at Eagle Beach this month (m. obs.). At least two **Short-eared Owls** have been hanging out on the Mendenhall Wetlands for the last half of April (m. obs.). This seems to have been an active spring for **Barred Owls**, since David Schmerge heard one at Lake Creek Trail in the Valley on 4/6; on 4/15, Gwen Baluss heard one from Wren Drive in the Valley, and again on 4/19 she heard a **Western Screech-owl** and a Barred Owl nearby on the Montana Creek Trail. Gus van Vliet heard a **Northern Pygmy-owl** at the 35-Mile muskeg on 4/22.

Many shorebirds have made a showing this month, with reports of **Black Oystercatchers, Black-bellied Plovers, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, one Lesser Yellowlegs, Black Turnstones, Surfbirds, Dunlin, Rock Sandpipers, Least and Western Sandpipers, Short-Dowitchers, Wilson's Snipe, and even a Baird's Sandpiper** on the Mendenhall Wetlands on 4/26 (GV).

Our several **Anna's Hummingbirds** have since this winter, and seem to be establishing breeding territories! Our first **Rufous Hummingbird** was on 4/10 (GV), though the majority of them seem to have longer to arrive. Other "first of year" species reported



Bob Armstrong

billed

continued

reported
taken
this

month are **Horned Larks; Lapland Longspurs; American Pipits; Tree and Violet-green Swallows; Hermit and Varied Thrushes; loads of American Robins, of course; Yellow-rumped, Orange-crowned and Townsend's Warblers; and Song, Fox, Golden-crowned, White-crowned, Savannah and Lincoln's Sparrows.** A white-morph **White-throated Sparrow** is still at a feeder in Auke Bay after overwintering (GV). Scattered **Red-winged Blackbirds** have been sighted around town, and the group of **Rusty Blackbirds** that overwintered in the Duck Creek area seems to be sticking around! A lone report for this month of three **European Starlings** at Sandy Beach on 4/14 (PR) is surprising given their strong showing in recent months.

Our scarcity of finches this winter continues, though small groups of **Red Crossbills** and **Pine Siskins** haven't been hard to find this past month. A single bird, seen flying overhead at the 35-Mile muskeg, represents the only report for **Common Redpolls** in Juneau this year!

Thanks to those who submitted their observations to Eaglechat: Bev Agler (BA), Gwen Baluss (GB), Amy Courtney (AC), Alexia Kiefer (AK), Scott Ranger (SR), Patty Rose (PR), David Schmerge (DS), Marsha Squires (MS), Owen Squires (OS), Gus van Vliet (GV).



Fish Creek bird walk by Brenda Wright

Nest Box Construction

We want to help replace the swallow nest boxes around town. Juneau Audubon will provide the wood & supplies. You provide the scouts or any other youth group. Please contact Brenda 321-4739

WHAT IS NESTWATCH?

NestWatch is a nationwide monitoring program designed to track status and trends in the reproductive biology of birds, including when nesting occurs, number of eggs laid, how many eggs hatch, and how many hatchlings survive. Our database is intended to be used to study the current condition of breeding bird populations and how they may be changing over time as a

result of climate change, habitat degradation and loss, expansion of urban areas, and the introduction of non-native plants and animals.**HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

Participating in NestWatch is easy and just about anyone can do it, although children should always be accompanied by an adult when observing bird nests. Simply follow the directions on our website to **become a certified NestWatcher** (<http://nestwatch.org/about/overview/>), find a bird nest using **our helpful tips**, visit the nest every 3-4 days and record what you see, and then **report this information** on our website. Your observations will be added to those of thousands of other NestWatchers in a continually growing database used by researchers to understand and study birds. Simply put, without your help it would be impossible to gather enough information to accurately monitor nesting birds across the country. And while you are contributing extremely valuable information to science, you will learn firsthand about birds and create a lifelong bond with the natural world.

Watching “Our” Migrant Songbirds in Winter Gwen Baluss

Sitting in a the central plaza of a town in southern Costa Rica I spot a Tropical mockingbird, a Common tody-flycatcher, and peeking out from behind a palm tree, a Yellow warbler. Probably most of the taxi drivers lining up nearby have no idea that there they are sharing the town square with at least two migrants from the far north – the warbler and me. In a nearby reserve I saw Swainson’s thrush in a steamy ant-trailed jungle, skulking under manakin leks. Everywhere in the highlands, I find Wilson’s warblers. Despite their small size and delicate demeanor Wilson’s seem to be impervious to rain and cold, and don’t take a break from the weather even in winter.

For years, I’ve gone birding from Mexico to Ecuador and various points in between.

While there is always a target tropical species to see, I keep an eye out for the familiar birds. New technologies are shedding light on the mysteries of migration routes and linking subspecies from certain breeding areas to their particular winter destination.

But there is still much to be learned by old fashioned observation. I’ve had the privilege to visit banding stations in Nicaragua, Mexico and Costa Rica. Most operate about once a month throughout the winter in a consistent location. All had multiple examples of migrant birds that were so faithful to their winter range that they were netted in the same place many years in a row--and sometimes multiple times in a season. Overall territory may be quite small. Phenomena such as partitioning by age and sex can also be observed by banding. For example, Ruby-crowned kinglets, captured near alders in Mexican highlands, showed that about most of the birds captured were male. In another location the flock would be almost all female.

Simply by birding I've gained a little insight into the habits and habitat of some of our migrants. I repeatedly visited the same wooded property, for example, in Mexico over a period of two months one winter and noticed what likely was the same Wilson's warbler habitually flying around the same group of bushes. Some species seem to be set in their ways in terms of foraging behavior as well. Townsend's warblers, who are usually found in conifer forest in the north, gravitate towards pines and cypresses in the south. And since this type of habitat can be quite patchy, they are generally fairly dispersed. Other species have a different plan. Tennessee warblers, a bird I associate in the north with gleaning insects from willows around sedge marshes, may form enormous flocks of thousands with other warbler species and move widely between stands of blooming trees, especially legumes, a lifestyle not even imaginable in the north.



1 Left, Swainson's thrush, Alexander Skutch Reserve, Costa Rica.

2 Right, Yellow warbler hides in ornamental palm, San Isidro General, Costa Rica.

SUMMARY OF SOUTHEAST

ALASKA BIRD OBSERVATIONS:

Winter: December 2013–February 2014

Sub-regional Compilers:

Steven C. Heinl, 2603 4th Avenue, Ketchikan, AK 99901

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

This report can be seen on: <http://www.juneau-audubon-society.org/SE%20AK%20Birding.html>. It summarizes bird sightings from Southeast Alaska for the winter season, December 2013–February 2014, and is intended to provide interesting observations for inclusion in an Alaska-wide column written by Thede Tobish for the journal *North American Birds* (published by the American Birding Association <http://www.aba.org/nab>). Generally we report on sightings of birds that are out of range or out of season or occur regularly in small numbers, noteworthy breeding records, unusually large or small numbers of a particular species, unusual migration dates, etc., and so on, and so forth. The JAS web site has included the SE bird reports since 2008.

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. 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

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/> >)

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 |
| Vice-President: Josh Peters | vice-president@juneau-audubon-ociety.org |
| Secretary: Bev Agler | secretary@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Treasurer: Patty Rose | treasurer@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Programs: Doug Jones | programs@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Membership: Jane Ginter | membership@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Education: Patricia Wherry | education@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Conservation: Gwen Baluss | conservation@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Field Trips: Amy Clark Courtney | field-trips@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Raven Editor: Mary Lou King, 789-7540 | raven@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| At-large: | at-large_a@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| At-large: | at-large_b@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Public Market: | public-market@juneau-audubon-society.org |
| Web Master: George Utermohle | 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 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

Address Service Requested

Juneau Audubon Society
PO Box 021725
Juneau, AK 99802

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage Paid
Juneau, AK 99802
Permit No. 153