

# 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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November 2014

## **GENERAL MEETING THURSDAY NOVEMBER 13, 7:00 p.m., EGAN ROOM, CENTENNIAL HALL**

### **Keith Pahlke will share stories about Laguna Blanc Nature Reserve in Paraguay**



Have you ever thought about volunteering on a wildlife research project in an exotic location? Keith Pahlke will share stories from his month working at the Laguna Blanca Nature Reserve in Paraguay. While Keith spent most of his time chasing fish and reptiles, including piranha and anaconda, he also



see some pretty cool birds like the **White-winged Nightjar**. He hopes to go back in March to continue the research he started last April. Maybe you can go with him.

## **SCHEDULE FOR JUNEAU AUDUBON PROGRAMS**

**November 13, 2014 A Month in Paraguay - Volunteering at the Laguna Blanca Nature Reserve. Working with an amazing diversity of reptiles, fish, insects, and birds. Keith Pahlke**

**December 11, 2014 Centennial Hall start at 8pm and the speaker is Gerrit Vyn from the Bird Conference**

**January 8, 2015 - Gambling on Gambell; Birding in Gambell, Alaska - Mark Schwan**

**February 12, 2015 - Dr. Sanjay Pyare - Arctic Tern Tracking**

**March 12, 2015 - Nature Clips - Bob Armstrong and Doug Jones**

**April meeting = festivals around SE and AK presented by people who attended in the past**

## **President's Message** By Gwen Baluss

Thanks to all for electing me last month. As I start forming next year's "to do" list I find myself reflecting on why did I agree to take on another volunteer job? And why Audubon? The former is difficult to answer, but the latter isn't. JAS is a great organization. There are numerous charitable organizations in Alaska (over 7000 according to 2011 report!) but JAS fills a unique role locally in organizing outdoor field trips, providing resources connecting local birders to regional information, plus encouraging conservation and citizen science. We have broad support with over 400 members. Although admittedly overwhelmed, I'm looking forward to a great year, feel lucky to be working with an energetic board, and to be following the excellent leadership provided by our recent past presidents: Brenda Wright, Julie Coghill, Mark Schwan and Jeff Sauer. For those of you who don't know me yet, I've been on the board as secretary, field trip coordinator and conservation chair. If you use Juneau trails I'm probably the birder you saw jumping out of the bushes or pedaling off on a poorly repaired bicycle, occasionally spotting birds and insects.

## **Juneau Public Market**

This year's market will be at Centennial Hall on November 28, 29, and 30. Come out to do some local holiday shopping and be sure to check out our booth number P6. As usual, we'll be selling fabulous jams and more. However, this year we plan to update our presentation in order to provide more birding and conservation information. Also, we are seeking VOLUNTEERS to help out for a few hours. This is an easy and fun way to interact with your community and help our organization with its mission at once. The market will be open to the public: noon to 7:00 p.m. Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. For volunteering info please email for map and more info on the market: Mary, 209-4842 or [mjmccafferty@yahoo.com](mailto:mjmccafferty@yahoo.com) JAS Booth at the Juneau Public Market 2014. For additional info. see <http://www.alaskafairsandfestivals.com/426517-juneau-public-market-juneau-alaska-november-2014.html#.VFJ5dsJ0zIU>

**16<sup>TH</sup> ALASKA BIRD CONFERENCE:** Come join us at the 16th Alaska Bird Conference in Juneau December 9-12 at Centennial Hall. There will be meetings of the Boreal Partners in Flight and Alaska Raptor Group on December 9. Scientific papers will be presented on December 10 and 11. Look at the web page soon for a complete schedule of presentations. There will also be a special poster session on the evening of December 10 and a banquet on December 11. The guest speaker, Gerrit Vyn, has agreed to speak for the general public for free on his film and photography of the birds that travel from Alaska to Asia and beyond at 8pm December 11. Registration for the science program is available on the web [http://www.alaskabirdconference.org/Alaska\\_Bird\\_Conference/Home.html](http://www.alaskabirdconference.org/Alaska_Bird_Conference/Home.html)

**November 10 – 16: HAINES - The 20TH ANNUAL ALASKA BALD EAGLE FESTIVAL** will be held in the Valley where over 3000 Bald Eagles gather in the early fall and winter. Explore this river valley and come face to beak with this majestic bird as you venture into the winter wonderland of Haines. For more information, go to <http://www.baldeagles.org/festival>

## **Amy Sherwin, New At-Large Juneau Audubon Board Member**

My name is Amy Sherwin and this is my first year serving on the Juneau Audubon board. I'm a member at large hoping to bring new ideas and helping encourage the public to understand the crucial link birds play in our ecosystem as well as being environmental sentinels. I have been living in Juneau since 2002 and it has been friends who have opened my eyes to the avian richness Juneau has to offer their ties to the rest of the world. I first started observing birds and their behaviors and patterns in 2007 while employed with the Forest Service at the Mendenhall Glacier. At the glacier, I started keeping a list of the birds I saw and pointing out to visitors these small acrobats flying among the trees. I started helping record the population of Arctic terns nesting at the visitor center and have been amazed at the obstacles they have overcome in their tremendous migration and the small achievements they have made while nesting. Friends have also expanded my knowledge and enjoyment of birds outside the visitor center through bird walks in varying habitats. I have since spurred family members on the east coast to do the same. I owe my fascination, knowledge, and conservation initiatives of birds to friends, many of those having served on the Audubon board. I'm hoping as a member at large I can open the eyes of the public as they have done for me.

### Juneau Bird Report for October Compiled by Amy Courtney

Our October weather has been typically inclement here in Juneau, but we did have a few sunny days scattered throughout that lent themselves to the leisurely, rain gear-less enjoyment of birds that we Southeasters so appreciate.

The only duck species of note this month were **Canvasbacks**. On Twin Lakes a female was present with flocks of Ring-necked Ducks and Scaup from 10/5 till 10/17 (LL, m. obs); and on 10/28, two were reported on Miller-Honsinger Pond near Temsco (NH). On 10/17, John Church spotted a **Western Grebe** in the Douglas harbor. This rare bird was seen diving in the harbor by many people over the next two days. On 10/17, Laurie Lamm reported a Western Grebe, possibly the same individual, off Pt. Louisa near the Auke Recreational Area. An immature **Double-crested Cormorant** was present in Auke Bay from the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> (GV), and on the 19<sup>th</sup>, one was spotted near Gold Creek Delta downtown (BA), though it may have been the same one.



Western Grebe Deanna MacPhail

A first-cycle **Ring-billed Gull** was reported from the Taku Smokeries Dock downtown on 10/19 (MS), and again on 10/21 (GV). Concurrently, three first-cycle **Glaucous Gulls** where **Whimbrel** should be well south of here, one was spotted on the shore of Auke Bay (GV), yielding one of the latest records for Alaska. There was also a juvenile **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** on the Mendenhall Wetlands on 10/4 (MS, BA).

A **Great Horned Owl** reported on the Mendenhall Wetlands on 10/4 by Laurie Lamm is likely a continuing individual first found in the area in early September. David Schmerge found a

**Northern Pygmy-owl** on the Auke Nu (John Muir) Trail on 10/29. An elusive **Townsend's Solitaire** was spotted at Crow Hill in Douglas by Marsha Squires on 10/26. Gus van Vliet has had at least three different Anna's Hummingbirds at his feeder near Auke Bay this month-- an adult male, an immature male, and an adult female. At a feeder on River Rd., Deanna MacPhail had both an immature male and an adult male.

These last three birds stand out as the highlights of the month. On the 6<sup>th</sup>, Amy Courtney spotted a **Black-and-white Warbler** foraging in spruce trees near the Juneau Pioneer Home. It was re-found and photographed later that day by others (BA, MS, GV, AK), but seems to have moved on after that. This was the 7<sup>th</sup> Alaska record for this species. On the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup>,



Clay-colored Sparrow  
Deanna MacPhail

Gus van Vliet saw an unusual sparrow at in his yard on Auke Bay, which, by the light of the next day, turned out to be a **Clay-colored Sparrow**! But a double surprise for him that morning was a **Rustic Bunting**, a very rare Eurasian vagrant. Both birds were subsequently seen and photographed by many individuals. The Clay-colored Sparrow was present till the 26<sup>th</sup>, and is one of only a handful of records for Alaska, two of which were in Juneau in 1994 and 2006. The Rustic Bunting, continuing as of the 31<sup>st</sup>, represents only a 4<sup>th</sup> Southeast record, two of which were from Juneau in 2006.

Thanks to the following people for contributing their sightings to eBird and Eaglechat: Bev Agler (BA), John Church, Amy Courtney, Nick Hajdukovich (NH), Alexia Kiefer (AK), Laurie Lamm (LL), Deanna MacPhail (DMP), David Schmerge, Mark Schwan (MS), Marsha Squires, Gus van Vliet (GV).

**HAWK MIGRATION:** During the Hawk Migration Association of North America's first annual [International Hawk Migration Week](http://www.hmana.org/over-1-million-hawks-counted-during-ihmw/) (<http://www.hmana.org/over-1-million-hawks-counted-during-ihmw/>), more than 1.2 million migrating hawks, eagles, and vultures were tallied at 100 sites throughout Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. In total, 29 raptor species were counted. The vast majority of birds counted were Broad-winged Hawks, since the count took place at the peak of their migration. Observers at watch sites in Veracruz, Mexico tallied the highest numbers of birds.

**FEEDER WATCH:** Join a popular citizen science by watching the birds at your feeders. Data collection begins on November 8. Check out the web page for more information and how to start <http://feederwatch.org/>. Data is especially scarce for Southeast Alaska, so please consider adding to our knowledge about our winter bird populations.

## 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. 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](mailto:steve.heinel@alaska.gov)**

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**For more bird information, subscribe to North American Birds, here is a link to see more information: <http://www.aba.org/nab>< <http://www.aba.org/nab>> .**

**Birds in a Digital World**

APP: · **Merlin Bird ID:** An incredibly easy-to-use app designed for beginners. Takes you step-by-step through the process of identifying the bird you are looking at, and gives you results specific to your geographic location and time of year! Developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. **Available for:** iOS and Android

website: **eBird:** A trove of world-wide bird sightings mapped out using Google Earth, this expansive resource shows citizen science at its finest. Any person can access reports of virtually any species from an hour ago to fifty years ago. An easy way to peruse recent local sightings, it also shows bar charts of when you're likely to see a given species in your area. You can also use it to keep track of your own sightings! **Web address:** [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**

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**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\_\_\_**

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**\_\_\_ My check for \$ \_\_\_ is enclosed \_\_\_ Please bill me C3ZA510Z A51**

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**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.**

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