

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 2014

2014 Alaska Bird Conference December 9-11, 2014

Join scientists, researchers, and students as they present their findings on the work in Alaska. The conference is in Centennial hall in Juneau this year. The entire agenda is available on the web page at

http://www.alaskabirdconference.org/Alaska_Bird_Conference/Agenda.html

If you are interested in sharing space in your home for conference attendees, please send an e-mail to 2014AlaskaBirdConference@gmail.com. As a special courtesy to the public, the keynote speaker, Gerrit Vyn, will give a free public lecture. Hope to see you there!

GENERAL MEETING THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 8:00 p.m.

Centennial Hall Ballroom 2

“Capturing the Lives of Beringian Birds” A multimedia tour through the lens of Cornell Lab photographer/cinematographer Gerrit Vyn



Message from the President – Gwen Baluss

Happy solstice everyone! Despite the short cold days, it's going to be an exciting month with the Alaska Bird Conference coming up and Christmas Bird Counts being held around Southeast Alaska. When the going gets tough, the tough go birding

Board of Game Meetings

The Alaska Board of Game will start their next meeting season soon. Some of the proposals would affect wildlife in Southeast Alaska, and Alaskans may weigh in on the proposals. The first comment periods ends Dec. 26. One proposal of particular interest to bird conservation is a call for hunters to report their take of migratory birds, and have that data be stored by ADFG. For more information see:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main>

Christmas Bird Count Sunday, December 14, 2014

The Juneau Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on Sunday, December 14, the first day of the designated count period of December 14 through January 5th. This marks the 115th year of the CBC, with counts planned across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Here in Juneau, this will be our 42nd count. Again, please take note, our count will be on a Sunday this year.

For those that don't recall, two years ago 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 compensates with this loss in revenue by going paperless with the American Birds issue of the Christmas Bird Count and by seeking voluntary donations.

Last year, more than 71,000 people participated in 2,408 counts, with 1,863 counts conducted in the United States. There were 37 counts conducted in Alaska. The big story last year was the huge irruption of Snowy Owls into eastern Canada, the Great Lakes, the Atlantic seaboard, and the southern U.S. There were 1,117 Snowy Owls tallied on 399 different counts. It was the third winter in a row where Snowy Owls were seen in impressive numbers but in each of these count periods, the birds made strong appearances in different regions of the U.S. and southern Canada.

Here in Juneau our count week will begin on December 11, and go through December 17th. On the 14th, we will have our usual two meeting places to stage on the morning of the count. Volunteers should arrive at 8 a.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.

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.



Raven calling photo by Doug Jones

Christmas Bird Counts planned in Southeast Alaska

December 14, 2014–January 5, 2015

Count name	Date	Contact person(s)	Phone number
Craig-Klawock	December 20	Victoria Houser	826-1614
Haines	December 27	Pam Randles	766-3664
Glacier Bay	December 14	Nat Drumheller	697-2166
Juneau	December 14	Mark Schwan Gus van Vliet	789-9841 789-5624
Ketchikan	December 20	Andrew Piston	225-9677
Mitkof Island	No date available	Brad Hunter	518-1438
Sitka	January 4**	Victoria Vosburg	747-7821
Skagway*	December 20	Elaine Furbish	983-2049
Tenakee Springs	No date available	Beret Barnes	736-2226
Wrangell	January 4	Joe Delabrué	874-7523

* Website for more information: sites.google.com/site/skagwaybirdclub

** The pre-count organizational meeting is January 1, 6 p.m., at the Raptor Center.

Public Market November 28-30, 2014



Patricia Wherry, Susan Hickey, Doug Jones, and Deanna MacPhail 11/28/14 minutes before the nagoonberry rush at the Juneau Audubon Society public market booth, photo by Mary McCafferty

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

The Juneau Audubon's booth looked terrific! due to a great many folks' ideas and work.

Design committee: Mary McCafferty (signage and photos); Alexia Kiefer (material, lighting ideas); Brenda Wright (design of bird issues wall); Patricia Wherry (two cents worth, hemming, morning starts).

Patti Rose making twice daily trips for money.

MaryLou and the King Girls + Friends for jellies, floral cards, cedar bark ornament). Jelly by Patricia Wherry.

Donation of book by Flip Nicklin, photos by Josh Peters, photos and cards by Jos Bakker, bird house by Thomas Courtney for a free drawing and Cristina de LaRosa for donating a night at her Mendenhall Glacier B&B as an incentive for new or renewed Audubon membership, and Amy Courtney for design of pamphlet - online bird sites for all birding abilities.

Booth setup and helpers: Brenda Wright, Patricia Wherry, Gwen Baluss, Steve James, Mary McCafferty, Doug Jones, Susan Hickey, Deanna MacPhail, Mary Wilson, Mary Claire Harris, Rosary Lombardo, Amy Sherwin, Shirley Carlson, Liz Blecker, Carol Race, Alexia Kiefer, Josh Peters, Molly McCafferty, Jeff Sauer.



Thank you folks who patronized
the Juneau Audubon booth.

Window Strikes by Amy Sherwin

Whether or not you watch birds, you think you have most of Southeast Alaska's birds at your feeder. For the past month there have been a variety of birds relying on the wealth of bird seed you've put out and you've noticed that one skinny dark-eyed junco finally starts to gain weight. It's a perfect and welcomed setting until that junco unexpectedly hits your window and perches in shock on the deck or flies off later to die elsewhere, succumbing to its fatal injuries. You're pretty sure this hasn't happened before, consider yourself lucky, or maybe you haven't been around to see it. Regardless, the odds are that sooner or later your windows will kill a bird.

In fact, millions of birds die every year flying into windows whether it's during their spring and fall migrations, when young birds fly for the first time, or when they leave their territories to find life-sustaining food. They hit windows simply because they can't tell reflections from the trees, plants, and sky. You want to observe birds and you enjoy having them around, but you don't want to obscure that beautiful view out your window. Here's your solution!! **Check to see which windows are most reflective** and are closest to areas where you see the most bird activity. Remember to check the small windows too because many birds fly into small spaces like tree cavities and in between branches. Next, **apply visible, patterned markings to the outside of windows** in a way requiring minimal glass coverage. Birds will avoid windows with vertical stripes spaced 4" apart or horizontal stripes spaced 2" apart. These stripes should be about 1/4" wide with light colors because they are the most visible. Some examples of products to prevent birds from crashing into your windows and where to find them include:

- **Tempera Paint** – it's long-lasting, non toxic, and easily removable

www.amazon.com, www.joann.com

- **Opaque Tape** – you can create patterns

www.abcbirdtape.org (American Bird Conservancy tape transmits light and is made to last outdoors).

- **Interior Window Films** – they can be applied to the outside of windows and come in many colors and styles

(External window films don't have patterns and will not deter birds).

www.thesunshieldpros.us/WindowFilm/decorative_film.html

- **Netting, Screen, Other Materials** – a good choice without altering window glass (Remember to put the netting or screen several inches in front of the windows so birds don't hit the glass after hitting the material).

www.birdscreen.com, www.birdsavers.com, www.birdbgone.com, www.nixalite.com, or www.birdmaster.com

- **Prefabricated Decals** – it's decorative, classy, and eye-inviting

(Birds see decals shaped like raptors as obstacles, not as predators).

www.windowdressingetc.com, www.windowalert.com, www.duncraft.com, www.dickblick.com

After the junco hit your window, you decided to add material to prevent further strikes. Since then, there haven't been any birds meeting their demise with your window and your mind is more at ease. You've come to love watching the birds and their abundant activity. Not only that, you've saved a bird's life without compromising the view out the window and that, you realize, feels pretty good!!

Annual report available on line:

http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/annualreport/ABC_Annual_Report_2013.pdf

Christmas Gift Suggestion

Here is an idea for a unique Christmas gift for a beginning birder friend or relative - adult or teen. Sign them up for a Juneau Audubon sponsored *Beginner Birding* course to be offered through Community Schools in 2015.

The course lasts 5 weeks, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Thursdays. One course set will be held in town at Harborview Elementary starting the end of January. In March, a second course set will start in the valley. Material covered: “Birdness” and identification clues to recognizing local birds: residents, winter migrants, and summer migrants.

This is the third year this course has been offered by the education chair, Patricia Wherry. WE HAVE FUN. The Community School’s Winter 2015 flier will be in the mail in January with specifics and sign up information.

Juneau November Bird Report, By eBird

Special sightings this month included a rustic bunting on 11/6 (GVV) and a Western meadowlark on 11/15 (LL). A black-legged kittiwake was seen 11/9 (GVV), also California and Bonaparte’s gull, plus northern pintail, red-breasted sapsucker, American pipit, and merlin all on 11/9 (PR). Both a yellow-rumped warbler (PR) and Wilson’s snipe (GVV) seen on 11/11. A long-eared owl was noted on 11/14 (BB). A single Lincoln’s sparrow (PR) was noted on 11/15 and a killdeer (GVV) on 11/16. A northern flicker and black scoter were found on 11/17 (GVV). A late Townsend’s solitaire was seen (PR) on 11/18. Pacific loons and surf and white winged scoter were abundant at Point Louisa on 11/20 (BW). A ring-necked duck, tundra swan, and ruby-crowned kinglet were reported 11/23 (GVV). A varied thrush was seen on 11/25 and a white crowned sparrow on 11/27 (GVV). Wilson’s warbler was seen 11/18 (BA). Anna’s hummingbirds have continued visiting feeder in Dredge Lake and Douglas areas (DM). A single fox sparrow and a red-necked grebe were seen on 11/29 (GVV). There are still a few migrant holdouts as an American robin and hermit thrush were seen on 11/29 (GVV). It is also nice to see so many of our winter ducks and geese around town. Thanks to everyone who uses eBird to report sightings. (BA-Bev Agler, BB-Brad Benter, BW-Brenda Wright, DM-Deanna MacPhail, GVV-Gus van Vliet, LL-Laurie Lamm, PR-Patty Rose)



Photographs of Rustic bunting by Bob Armstrong (left) and Patty Rose (right).

Meeting the next generation of bird conservationists

As a non-mom, with little other experience working with youngsters, it would be easy for me to make assumptions about “kids today.” I would expect them to have trouble engaging with nature because they are so often interacting with little screens and devices. But as I find out each time I enter a school, youth are still quite keen to learn about nature and science; in fact I believe they are many times more educated about the environment than we gen-Xers were as students. The first thing I’ve noticed in Southeast AK schools is how colorful and inviting they seem in comparison to the cinder block and cold gray tones that I recall. Second, is there are some great teachers that have their students interacting with professionals in the community. This

observation was reinforced recently as I spend a few days in Sitka fitting juncos, chickadees and song sparrows with color bands; most were on or near school grounds and many classes were able to see the process. Now youngsters (and hopefully their teachers and parents) are set to look for and record these bands, and help further our understanding of local birds' winter ecology. Having the complete attention of an entire room of middle school students is a rare privilege – and it proves that few things are as captivating to us as animals, especially a live, wild, bird.

Sitka Winter Songbird Dispersal Study

We need help tracking Sitka's winter birds.

If you see a color-banded junco, song sparrow or chickadee please try to get as much information you can: species, date, place, and the color combination expressed as 1) Left Leg top band 2) Left leg bottom band color 3) Right leg top band color, 4) Right leg bottom band color. Keep in mind that all birds should have one numbered aluminum band. The Sitka project uses combinations of white, light blue, yellow, red, black and green. Over 200 Oregon juncos have been banded since fall 2012. We believe most are staying within Sitka until spring, and then migrating elsewhere, probably other parts of SE AK. Photos (of any quality) are especially helpful.

Sitka area reports can be entered online here:

http://wiki.seaknature.org/Special:FormEdit/SBBP_observation?namespace=Observation (be sure to put your contact info in the comments), or call Sitka Conservation Society. 907-747-7509

If you see a color band elsewhere in Southeast Alaska, please contact gbaluss@gmail.com

For any bird band for which you can obtain the band number or color markings, make reports to the Bird Banding Laboratory. <https://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/bblretrv/index.cfm>



This handsome Junco's combination is WWLA "Left leg white over white, right leg light blue over aluminum".

Web Notes and Information

Great Backyard Bird Count

Do you participate in the **Great Backyard Bird Count** (<http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>)? This free annual four-day event engages birdwatchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are. The next Great Backyard Bird Count takes place February 13-16, 2015. In the meantime, check out the most recent issue of the **GBBC eNewsletter** (<http://us2.campaign-archive1.com/?u=b35ddb671faf4a16c0ce32406&id=c90f071f67&e=30a969a8b8>) for information and resources, and news from related Citizen Science programs!

GIS resources:

As part of the National Audubon Society, we have the opportunity to use its GIS resources.

Connor Bailey is the Enterprise GIS Support Specialist for the Pacific and the Central Flyways. What does that mean you may ask? She does all things GIS all the time! She wanted us to know about GIS resources available free to all Audubon Chapter Members. We can not only help with the technical elements of GIS but also on ideas how best to use it for your chapter. This is a sample of what is available:

Chapter GIS resource page:

<http://chapterservices.audubon.org/chapter-leader-guide/mapping-tools>

Here you will find very useful webinar trainings and documents on the very basics of using ArcGIS Online all the way up to more advanced topics such as storymaps or collecting data in the field. You can also find a link to sign up additional Audubon members from your Chapter with Free ArcGIS Online Accounts from this page. They are free and available to all Audubon Members! Or click here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-j98Y3k64DKLUu84B5URxiZAKoOZMMmTt7PByJyJ2wk/viewform)

[j98Y3k64DKLUu84B5URxiZAKoOZMMmTt7PByJyJ2wk/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1-j98Y3k64DKLUu84B5URxiZAKoOZMMmTt7PByJyJ2wk/viewform)

Holiday Gift Ideas

Give a holiday gift to some one special and protect birds. Check out the National Audubon Society webpage for information on how your gift can support vital work to save the wildlife and wild places you care about. Adopt a bird today!

https://secure.audubon.org/site/SPageNavigator/2014_Adoption_Catalog_Homepage.html;jsessionid=C6271AAD1756DFDF2B6A76927384291B.app337a?s_src=2014GC_Email_Email5&s_subsrc=Link3&utm_source=fundraising&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2014-12-01_GCemail5

Cornell Lab of Ornithology: Ever been stumped about what to get the bird and nature lovers on your list? Here are six holiday gift suggestions from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Not only are they fun, creative and beautiful, but a portion of the proceeds from each purchase benefits the Lab. To learn more about these and lots of other “birdy” gifts visit www.birds.cornell.edu/BirdGifts

Eagle Feather Collectors

Hello all you eagle feather collector permit holders. Our annual report is due in January 2015. If you have collected any feathers during 2014, now is the time to call Brenda at 789-4656 and have them counted and sent to the National Eagle Repository. Thank you!

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. 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

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.

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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

