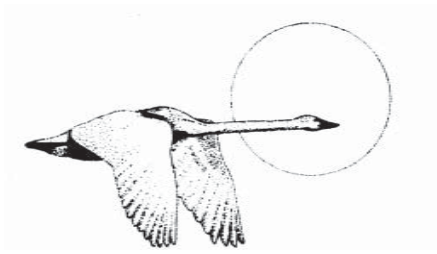
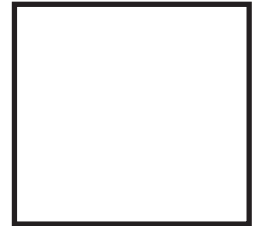


**San Juan Islands Audubon Society**  
>P.O. Box 595, Eastsound, WA 98245<  
May 2002



**Audubon Spring Boat Trip**  
**Mother's Day** (pg. 3 for details)

**SJI Audubon now On'line**  
<<http://sjaudubon.org/>>

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Education	Rebecca J. Wolfe, P.O. Box 336, Shaw Island, WA 98286	468-4144

**Audubon Legislative Hot Line — Olympia** (206) 547-9017

Send all correspondence for the Newsletter to: SJI Audubon, P.O. Box 595, Eastsound, WA 98245  
or e-mail to <[dridgin@rockisland.com](mailto:dridgin@rockisland.com)>

**Membership in the San Juan Islands Audubon Society** is \$15/year and includes a **The Trumpeter**.  
Send your check to **Bob Myhr, 177 Caldwell Dr., Lopez, WA 98261**

**Membership in the National Audubon Society** includes the national magazine and membership in the San Juan Islands Chapter. Membership includes subscription to The Trumpeter newsletter (5 issues per year).

**Renewing members**, please use the form sent by the National Audubon Society. If you have moved from another chapter please inform the National Audubon Membership Data Center to change your affiliation to the San Juans chapter.

New members, please send your check to:  
National Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 51001  
Boulder, CO 80322-1001



**Include this code with  
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National Audubon Society dues:

Basic \$35       New Member \$20



# San Juan Islands Audubon *The Trumpeter*

May 2002

San Juan Islands Audubon Society

P.O. Box 595, Eastsound, WA 98245

## Trumpeter and SJI Audubon Now On-line

The *San Juan Islands Audubon Society* and its newsletter *The Trumpeter* can now be found on-line at: <http://sjiudubon.org/>. The site is in its infancy and will be going through many changes over time. The site belongs to the organization so any input would be appreciated. As with *The Trumpeter*, submissions of articles, letters, stories, photos, field sketches and anything related to Audubon should be sent to the editor. The 'Sightings' section of the web site is updated frequently so please submit anything of interest. SJI Audubon occasionally has special events in addition to the regularly scheduled bird walks and these will be posted as they become known. The website will be a way for those who live in other places to keep in touch without area.

### February Birdwalk - San Juan Island

The San Juan Island field trip in February started with gray skies, at least it was not snowing. Our first stop was Felicitations for a cup of coffee and a sweet treat. On San Juan Rd. we saw 4 Trumpeter Swans with a juvenile, Mallards, one Northern Shoveler, and two American Wigeons. Back into the cars to check out a pond near Douglas Rd. where we saw six Green-wing Teal, Northern Shoveler about four American Wigeons.

At the corner of Douglas Rd. Bailer Rd. we saw a Bald Eagle, and lots of Redwing and Brewers Blackbirds, Robins and Crows. Further down the road there was a Kestrel, a flock of Canada Geese and a few sparrow species.

At the pond along Wold Rd. we saw various ducks most of which were American Wigeons. When the rain began to fall, we backtracked to False Bay Rd. to check the bay. The rain didn't bother an

Oystercatcher, Sanderlings, Pintails, and various Gulls as they went on their merry way. The rain stopped, and we decided to go to American Camp with a stop at Panorama Pond. There we saw Mallards, Buffleheads and Lesser Scaup. On the other side of the road the forest was alive with Song Sparrows, Juncos, Red-Wing Blackbirds, Spotted Towhee, two Brown Creepers, Golden-crowned Kinglets and two Varied Thrush.

At Redoubt Overlook the wind was cold and we were damp from the rain so we decided to head for the ferry. A few Northern Flickers and Western Meadowlarks bid us good-bye. The eight of us had a good time seeing 39 species and we still had time for another stop at Felicitations to enjoy more treats.

Submitted by Jerry Kasperak

### 2002 Field Trips

January 19, Sat.	Lopez
February 16, Sat.	San Juan
March 16, Sat.	Orcas
April 21, Sun.	Shaw
May 18, Sat.	Lopez
June 16, Sun	Orcas
July --	No trip
August 17, Sat.	San Juan
September 21 Sat.	Shaw
October 20, Sun.	Lopez
November 16, Sat	San Juan
December 28, Sat.	Christmas Bird Count
-	

For more information contact:

John Sangster, Lopez 468-2962  
Jerry Kasperek, Orcas 376-5524  
Barb Jensen, San Juan 378-3068

Everyone is welcome on all field trips. Most trips are half day and are usually done around noon.

The Island sponsoring the trip should provide transportation, so please help out when a trip is on your island.

### March Bird-Walk

The March Bird-walk on Orcas was canceled due to snow and high winds. It was a great morning to catch up on some sleep for bird and man alike.

## Ask Dennis

Exploring the world of birds with noted ornithologist  
Dennis Paulson.

Q. To list, or not to list: that is the question.

A. The question has several parts. The first has to do with the lists most birders keep--life lists, state lists, year lists, yard lists, and the like. What is the value of these lists? I think they are mostly of value to the individual, but that value is not inconsequential. Every time you enter a bird in a list, you're forging a slightly better connection in your brain. The correct name, how to spell it, and the fact that you saw it at that time or place all are better imprinted in your memory. However, the tick boxes in most birding software give you less return than actually having to write or type the bird's name; the value of many of the time-saving devices we have embraced can be debated.

Another question is whether to keep daily lists of the birds you see. I covered this in an earlier column, and the answer is still the same: it's a great idea, because our lists, especially if expressed in numbers rather than check marks, furnish biodiversity information for future compilers. We know the avian world is changing, and it's of great value to document the changes.

This brings us to the question of whether you should keep lists at all. The answer, of course, is that this is entirely a personal decision. Many people enjoy and study birds without keeping lists. The new Sibley field guide has broken from the tradition of boxes in the index where you can tick off life birds, acknowledging that all serious birders keep their lists elsewhere, or perhaps implying there is something more than the list.

David Sibley has now produced that something in another hefty volume to be released this fall. The Sibley Guide to Bird Life and Behavior has been less hyped than the field guide, but is perhaps of greater significance. It accompanies Kenn Kaufman's *Lives of North American Birds*, both excellent books furnishing information so we can learn about the birds themselves. We should all proceed beyond identification and attempt to understand the lives of the birds we identify. What do they do during their daily and annual cycles? Where do they go when they're not here? What do they eat and what eats them? Should we be concerned about their populations? This need not be a matter of listing, just a matter of observing -- both the new generation of books about them and the birds themselves.

**Dr. Dennis Paulson**, *Director of the Slater Museum of Natural History at the University of Puget Sound*, is author of many publications on birding, including his latest, *Alaska: An Ecotravellers' Wildlife Guide*. He teaches for *Seattle Audubon Society's Master Birder Program*.

*Our thanks to Dr. Paulson and to Earthcare Northwest, the newsletter of the Seattle Audubon Society, for permission to reprint this column.*

*Dennis Paulson writes: "I suppose my first benchmark bird was a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, the first bird I identified with a new bird book my mother gave me for my 12th birthday and the first bird on my life list."*



**Erratum:** The last Trumpeter listed a Black-crowned Night Heron on the Orcas walk. It was a Great-blue Heron. (Thanks Lou and Jerry.)



### Recent Sightings

Bob Myhr and Cass Dahlstrom saw a pair of Golden Eagles at Center and Mud Bay Roads copulating in a large fir tree the weekend of February 23rd. They still don't know where the nest is. The pair is often at the intersection to the east of Center Road and just north of Mud Bay Road. Ginger Ridgway saw a mature Golden Eagle at the Shaw Ferry dock on March 9th.

E-mail recent sightings to the editor at: <dridgin@rockisland.com>



### THE TRUMPETER

The Trumpeter is the newsletter of the San Juan Islands Audubon Society published 4 or 5 times a year. Subscriptions are \$15.00/year. The Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The editor welcomes articles, photographs, illustrations, and letters. Opinions expressed in The Trumpeter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the S.J.I. Audubon Society. Original articles, unless specifically designated, may be reprinted without permission if credit is given to this publication and to a specific author where appropriate.  
Editor: David Ridgway

**In Search of Skagit Rarities**

I'd been reading in the Tweeters email digest about the rare Falcated Teal being seen on the Samish Flats near Edison. So I decided to take the early ferry on my planned March 7th trip to Seattle and spend a half a day taking a look.

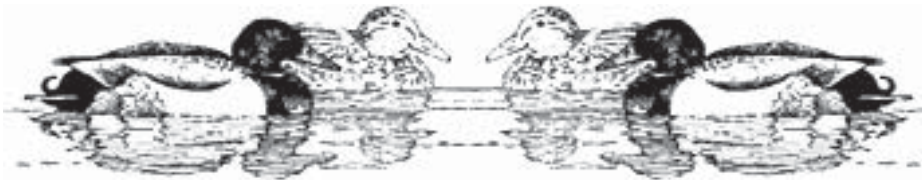
I arrived at the West 90 parking lot about 9:00 a.m., and two cars pulled in immediately after me, occupants leaning out open windows to ask, "Have you seen it? Is it here?" One of them had flown up from Eugene and driven up from Seattle that morning. This was the first time I'd encountered a long distance birder arriving to nab a life list first. For me, it was just convenient to stop by and interesting. As I got out of my car and kitted up with binoculars and scope, and boots, a man arrived from the direction of the dike. When eagerly questioned, he said he had seen "it" on the bay "down in the corner".

As I reached the dike and started scanning the bay, filled with hundreds of widgeons and occasional other ducks, I stopped to appreciate a sunny morning with views of mountains all around. There was no immediate sign of the Falcated Duck, so I turned back toward the fields to watch a Short-eared Owl and a couple of harriers hunting. Then I walked out along the dike about a half-mile to spend hours of intense study of widgeons and alas no rarities.

Finally I had to leave to make my appointment in Seattle, so I returned along the dike to encounter a group of birders with many scopes trained out on the bay. They had spotted "it", but "it" was about a mile away. Could I have a look? Someone graciously allowed me to use his scope and tried to tell me what to look for. "It's got its head down, it's to the right of the line to that building, it has whitish shoulders". I decided I could see the bird he was talking about, but I couldn't tell anything about it. No Falcated Teal for my life list – I have to be able to tell what it is by myself... However, as I walked off the dike toward the parking lot, I noticed a bird in the bushes nearby. A quick look revealed a Common Redpoll, another unusual visitor this winter (although usually appearing in flocks). A lifetime first for me, and I returned to my car delighted with a beautiful morning spent birding and a look at a new bird.

"Tweeters" is found at < <http://www.scn.org/earth/tweeters/index.html> >

The West 90 is a 90-degree bend in the Samish Island Road (see DeLorme Washington Gazetteer) Submitted by Mary Blackstone.



**April Birdwalk - Shaw**

The April 20th Bird-walk on Shaw had twelve participants who enjoyed the good birding weather. Our stops included the Community Center, the old Moody property, Squaw Bay, U. of W. lands and the County Park. Many early transitional species were seen including Savannah Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat and three

Swallow species. Some of the highlights were Greater Yellowlegs, Green-winged Teal, two Horned Grebe in summer plumage and immature males of Surf Scoter and Red-breasted Merganser. A total of 45 species were seen. To view the complete list go to <<http://sjiaudubon.org/>> and click on 'birdwalks'.



**Audubon Spring Boat-trip Sunday May 12th**

San Juan Islands Audubon is planning a Spring Boating Trip on Mother's Day, Sunday May 12th. The trip, through Deer Harbor Charters, will leave from Deer Harbor on Orcas at around 10:30AM and last 3-4 hours. We will cruise the San Juan Islands looking for birds and marine mammals while enjoying the scenery. The cost is \$25 per person (30 passengers maximum). A check will hold your space. For more info call Ginger Ridgway at 376-7057.

**Bill Clark Hawk ID Seminar a Success at Padilla Bay**

Bill Clark, the noted author, researcher and raptor expert gave an advanced hawk ID class in February at the Breazeale Padilla Bay Interpretive Center which sponsored it in conjunction with the Falcon Research Group. The seminar lasted two days with the mornings for lecture and slides; the afternoons were in the field. There was an overview of North American raptors but he focused on local raptors and their IDing problems (i.e. Sharp-shinned Hawk compared to Cooper's hawk and immature Bald Eagles and their age). The field study was very thrilling; one stop we saw a Merlin hunting, a Peregrine in a stand of Poplars and a Cooper's hawk flying over low and close. We had four falcons the first day and the Gyrfalcon on Sunday. Two of Bill's book are *Hawks of North America* and *A Photographic Guide to North Raptors*, both with Brian S. Wheeler.