

# San Juan Islands Audubon *The Trumpeter*

March 2003

San Juan Islands Audubon Society

P.O. Box 595, Eastsound, WA 98245

## Christmas Bird Count Saturday December 28th

This year's Christmas Bird Count in the San Juan Islands was another successful addition to "the longest running database in ornithology, representing over a century of unbroken data on trends of early-winter bird populations across the Americas." There were 58 participants who counted on 5 islands including San Juan, Lopez, Crane, Shaw and Orcas. The participants traveled a total of 243.5 miles, of which 38.5 miles were on foot, and spent a total of 108 team hours. The total number of species observed was 102 and the total of individual birds was 17,260. The species count for this year was down by 2 while the individual numbers were up by over 1500, indicating no significant change. To view the data for the count go to: <http://birdsource.org/> and click on 'Christmas Bird Count'.



Glaucous-winged Gulls hitch a ride on the Illahee at Shaw Island. These birds know how to travel.

## 2003 Field Trips

January 18, Sat.	Orcas
February 15, Sat.	Lopez
March 15, Sat.	San Juan
April 27, Sun.	Orcas
May 17, Sat.	Shaw
June 21, Sun	San Juan (+SJPT Tour)
July --	No trip
August 16, Sat.	Lopez
September 20, Sat.	San Juan
October 18, Sun.	Shaw
November 15, Sat	Orcas
December 27, Sat.	Christmas Bird Count
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For more information contact:

Bob Myhr, Lopez 468-2258  
Jerry Kasperek, Orcas 376-5524  
Barb Jensen, San Juan 378-3068  
or visit: <http://sjiudubon.org/>

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.

## Special Birding-Travel Issue

Last fall a call for stories about travel that involved birding was put to the readers of *The Trumpeter*. This issue contains the stories *The Trumpeter* received. The stories are from trips to Texas, Chile, South Africa, Thailand and the Russian Far East. This will be an ongoing project so keep sending them to the editor via e-mail please: [dridgin@rockisland.com](mailto:dridgin@rockisland.com)



**May 9 – 11, 2003, Leavenworth, WA**

**Contact:** Karen Haire, (509) 548-4566, <karenhaire@earthlink.net>

**Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest**

Celebrate spring and International Migratory Bird Day! A fabulous event like this requires lots of partners and we have excellent ones. North Central Washington Audubon Society, the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce, Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, U.S. Fish & Wildlife and the Lake Wenatchee and Leavenworth Ranger Districts of the Okanogan and Wenatchee National Forest are working together to create the Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest. This event will feature field trips, a bird-a-thon, workshops and inspiring music. The Leavenworth area is noted for spectacular habitats, ranging from snow-capped mountains to sunny Ponderosa pine forests, attracting a wide variety of birds. You might see Calliope Hummingbirds, White-headed Woodpeckers, Harlequin Ducks, Osprey and MacGillivray's Warblers. While birding is the heart of the weekend, activities will also include geology, wildflowers, river rafting on Icicle Creek and conservation trips to nearby restoration areas. Professionally guided trips and activities range from leisurely strolls to active hikes. Fun for experienced and novice birders of all ages!

An event ought to have a mascot, and the Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest chose the Western Tanager as its "SpokesBird." This yellow, black and red tanager is a Neotropical migratory bird, coming from its wintering grounds as far south as Mexico and Costa Rica. Here in the breeding range, they feed on wasps, ants, scale insects, grasshoppers, wild cherries and elderberries. Their loosely built twig nests (lined with hair and plant down) are found on the outer ends of conifer and aspen limbs. An interesting aside, the Western Tanager was first discovered by the Lewis and Clark 1804-06 expedition, making this bird a wonderful part of our western heritage.

For more about the event visit <<http://www.leavenworthspringbirdfest.com/>>. For information on the area, including lodging and other activities, call the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce at (509) 548-5807.

**Looking for the Birding Travel Section?** You're almost there...pages 4 thru 6 and a quarter. Perhaps next issue should be about Bird Travel (migration, feathers..etc.) this could open a whole new can-o-worms.



**Recent Sightings**

Marilyn Ross has been seeing a Merlin this winter with great regularity in a field northeast of Cattle Point on San Juan Island.

Bob Myhr has been seeing the Golden Eagles on Lopez consistently.

The Crescent Beach Oyster Catchers on Orcas have returned after a brief hiatus this winter.

David Castor saw a Peregrine and a Merlin flying parallel to each other near North beach on Orcas and also mentioned that a colleague had seen a Gyrfalcon on Susia perched above a raft of ducks.

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



Yes, that's an American Dipper at Cascade Lake on Orcas. Some knew that by visiting our website:<<http://sjiudubon.org/>>

**GISS puzzle..?**

**THE TRUMPETER**

The Trumpeter is the newsletter of the San Juan Islands Audubon Society published several 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



### February Bird-walk II, Lopez Island

SJIAudubon had a second Lopez Bird-walk on Sunday the 16th in addition to their regularly scheduled walk on the 15th. Some of the members were doing the Hawk Census with the Falcon Research Group on the 15th and didn't want to miss Lopez. There were 10 participants from the Islands and Seattle. It was a great day of birding with no wind, overcast skies and in the low 40s. The birders did a rather elongated walk which didn't end until around

3:30PM. 59 species were seen including 16 species of ducks. They saw a Peregrine Falcon bathing in a field below Center Church, a Golden Eagle at Center and Mud Bay Rd and a Black Scoter hen at Agate Beach. Most of the passerines that were viewed were overwintering birds, some of which were already singing. The first signs of spring were the 4 Turkey Vultures seen near Port Stanley Pond.

### Skagit/Samish Hawk Census, February 15th

The Falcon Research Group of Bow conducted its 14th Annual Hawk Census in the Skagit/Samish Valley area. The Census counts all raptors seen throughout the area in two hour period, 9-11AM. The census is conducted by teams of Hawk enthusiasts and experts, most of whom have taken classes with Bud Anderson through the FRG. Bob Merrick has been organizing the census for several years. This year's raptor count was 730 birds, down due to rain and poor visibility. This year the group had Bill Clark as a special guest speaker. Bill, the author of 'Hawks of North America', gave a talk on 'Identifying Rough-legged Hawks'. If you would like to be a volunteer for next year's Hawk Census, call Bob Merrick in January at: (360) 678-3161 or e-mail him at: <tinekasfam@aol.com>. For more info about the FRG go to <http://frg.org>.

### Special Samsih/Skagit Field Trip

Eight birders from San Juan, Orcas and Lopez Islands took the red-eye to Anacortes and met at the Padilla Bay Interpretive Center on February 8th. The group did a route through the Samish Flats that proved to be quite productive. We were there primarily to view the raptors that overwinter in that area. Our first falcon was a Merlin near the raspberry field at the top of the hill above Darcy Road. We proceeded down Darcy and saw one of the resident American Kestrels. We wound a-

round the back roads seeing many of the 'Big Four': Bald Eagles, Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers and Rough-legged Hawks. In that group we saw a Dark-morphed Rough-legged Hawk and a pair of Red-tailed Hawks copulating (a first for most of us). As we got closer to Samish Bay we began to see Peregrine Falcons, three in all. We were fortunate enough to see the Prairie Falcon on one of it's favorite perches at the 'T' of Bayview/Edison and Samish Island Rd. We took a lunch break for some hot soup at the Chuckanut Cafe in Bow and re-

### Introducing Your Audubon Regional Representative

The Audubon Washington Stewards Board is a volunteer board that is helping to guide the efforts of the National Audubon Society in Washington State. Started several years ago with a small energetic group of people, the Stewards Board is now at full strength. Last year, elected regional representatives were added to the Stewards Board from 5 regions of the state. Representing San Juan Islands Audubon (along with North Cascades Audubon, Skagit Audubon, Pilchuck Audubon and Seattle Audubon) on the Stewards Board is Chuck Lennox.

Chuck is the former Conservation Chair of Seattle Audubon and former chair of the Endangered Species Coalition of Washington. He was active in getting the State Audubon Conservation Committee initially organized in the early 1990's. He is a former President of Arctic Audubon Society in Fairbanks, Alaska where the Christmas Bird Count is done in subzero temperatures with minimal light!

Professionally, Chuck is self-employed as an interpretive and education consultant. He has a background in environmental education and interpretation through the National Park Service, Woodland Park Zoo and the King County regional park system

Please feel free to contact Chuck with any of your ideas or concerns for state-wide leadership through your board members or directly at 206-720-4928 or e-mail at <chuck.lennox@juno.com>.

grouped for a short afternoon of birding until it was time for the ferry ride home. Dunlin, Black-bellied Plovers, Trumpeter Swans, Mallards, Pintailed Ducks, American Wigeon and Song Sparrows were among the other species seen.

## Birding Travel Section

### Texas Bird Trip, By Linda Hudson

We decided to spend our Christmas Holidays birding in Texas last year so we organized our trip using the Great Texas Birding Trail maps. There are three maps and they cover the Texas coastal areas and the areas along the Rio Grande, as well. The maps are beautiful to look at and pretty easy to use. On one side is a large map of each area with colored number symbols representing good birding areas. On the other side of the map, are the corresponding listings matched to the numbers. The listings describe, sometimes in great detail, the stops and the birds that may be present and what time of the year you can expect to see them. Using these maps we traveled along the Texas Gulf Coast and then inland along the Rio Grande as far as Laredo.

Some of our highlights included several National Wildlife refuges, such as Aransas NWR where we saw over 1,000 American Avocets just off shore, but unfortunately, none of the extremely rare Whooping Cranes. They are extremely protected and we could have taken a supervised cruise past the island where they nest, but our timing wasn't right to do this.

Another amazing NWR was Laguna Atascosa, where we saw many beautiful lime green and navy blue Green Jays, Ladder-backed Woodpeckers and a Black-shoul-

dered Kite. Extra treats included seeing a Bobcat, 7 Javelinas, kind of a wild pig-like creature, from the photo-blind and amazingly, a Praying Mantis which perched on the end of our picnic table during lunch!

At Santa Ana NWR, we experienced a trip highlight when we saw 4 spectacularly colored, black and orange, Altamira Orioles flitting around the trees above us.

Bentsen State Park, along the Rio Grande, featured feeding stations set up in the RV/camping area. Here we saw numerous Chachalacas, rare Clay-colored Robins, Golden-fronted and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, Black-tufted and regular Titmice, Great Kiskadees, Black and White Warblers and more Altamira Orioles.

At Christmas, we stopped for four days on South Padre Island. Though the island is overdeveloped with unsightly condos and a six lane highway running smack thru the middle of it, we found a birding friendly B&B and managed to bird with great results at several amazing spots. On South Padre, we saw Yellow-rumped Warblers, a Common Yellowthroat, a white-phase Reddish

Egret, lots of Black-crowned Herons, Little Blue and Tricolored Herons, Black Skimmers and Roseate Spoonbills. We saw many of these birds on a birding cruise with local naturalists, George and Scarlet Colley, when we saw 46 species in two hours.

I am compiling our complete Texas bird list and can be reached at <hudsons@gte.net>. I will e-mail the bird list when it's ready to anyone who is interested. The Texas birding maps are available thru Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, I will send the address through e-mail to any who need it. George and Scarlet Colley's Padre Island Cruises can be found at <http://fin2feather.com/>.



### South Africa Offers Designer Starlings and Many Other Wondrous Birds, by Mary Blackstone

This past November in three weeks in South Africa I added 150 life birds to my list. From Port Elizabeth on the south coast to Cape Town, we visited bush, coastal, desert and vineyard habitats before arriving in the "fynbos" (low shrubs, heathers, proteas, and many flowers) common to the area around Cape Town. Later we flew to Kruger National Park, in the northern part of the country. I found it a lifetime experience in birding.

Let me tell you about those designer starlings. The Cape Glossy Starling is a stunning brilliant blue-green, sporting a bright yellow eye. Fellow starlings include the Plum-Coloured Starling in velvety deep purple-red with a white belly; Burchell's Glossy Starling with deep purple-blue color, a black eye-patch and a long tail; and the Red-winged Starling, a large black bird with red-brown flight feathers. I did see a European Starling as well, looking quite drab in comparison to his southern cousins.

Incidentally, I recommend Newman's Birds of Southern Africa as a guide. It's available

from Amazon.com in paperback for about \$20 or so.

A 12-hour one-day guided birding trip near Knysna, on the southern coast's Garden Route, was a highlight of the trip. Pat and Mick of African Bird Safaris picked us up at our hotel at 6:30 in the morning. My two friends and I were the only customers on this tour, which included a van, two hearty and delicious meals, and two remarkably knowledgeable, enthusiastic and friendly guides. We saw 90 species that day in forests, on the coast, along a river, and on a high grassy bluff area. Pat called in a Narina Trogon and we saw a Knysna Lorie; we saw little birds skulking along under bushes until Mick whistled them out; we saw a Stanley's Bustard on a high grassy field; we heard the beautiful meadow-lark-like song of the Grassbird. You can find Mick and Pat's website at: <http://www.asunysa.co.za/>.

The rest of the trip offered great variety,

if not all in one day. There were lots of eagles and other raptors; a small turquoise and white bug-eating Woodland Kingfisher; 5-foot tall Saddle-Bill Storks; Weavers with their colonies of woven basket nests; the chicken-sized Black-Bellied Korhan of the bush country, whose display flight looks like someone tossed a dead turkey out of an airplane until he spreads his wings with a flourish right before he hits the ground.. I even saw a small colony of African Penguins south of Cape Town on the Cape of Good Hope.

Go look for yourself, if you get the chance. It's an unparalleled opportunity for birding. And then there are the elephants, lions, aardvarks, leopards, giraffe, warthogs...., zebra....



## Birding Travel Section

### Birding in Chile, by Bob Myhr

In late fall 2002 Joyce and I went on a great birding trip to Chile. Fellow Lopez Islanders Oakley and Joe Goodner joined us on the Field Guides tour led by Alvaro Jaramillo and Megan Crewe. And while in Chile we ran into Lopezians Gayle and Jay Lynch who were on a different Chilean birding trip at the same time!

We saw 276 bird species of the 292 spotted by our expert guides during the venture that spanned from the northern rainless Atacama desert to central valleys and mid-south woodlands to the windblown shores of Tierra del Fuego. Just a few of the highlights for me were as follows:

- Chilean Flamingos at 15,000 feet in the altiplano at the Bolivian/Peruvian border and this same species again at Isla Grande in Tierra del Fuego!
- The rare Rufous-throated Tamarugo Conebill along the small streams in the valleys below the Atacama desert.
- Huge Andean Condors soaring, perched, and a semi-tame 20 year

old. "Pancho," in captivity that "danced" to the noise of revved-up engine of a Toyota pick-up truck at a remote rest stop in the far south.

- Beautiful Magellanic woodpeckers with their heads entirely fluffy scarlet—seen both in the mid- and far-south. They are a counterpart to our Pileated Woodpeckers in the San Juans.

- We spend a good bit of time finding the unusual Magellanic Plover, walks like dove with red legs and eyes, not your usual plover.

- On our pelagic trip off of Valparaiso, the Shy "Chatham Island" Albatross was a rarity along with Antarctic Giant (southern), Hall's Giant (northern), Cape, DeFilippi's, White-chinned, and Westland Petrels, and several other species; penguins, shearwaters, and more; an amazing number of seabirds seemingly appearing from nowhere when "chum" was cast overboard.

- I liked the identification challenge of variety of ground tyrants throughout the 3,000 mile long country, with my favorites being the Ocher-naped

Ground Tyrant with its yellow-cream spot on the top of its head and Chocolate-vented Tyrant with flashy black, reddish, and wings.

- We heard, but never could manage to see, the extremely secretive Austral Rail that few have ever seen, but we did see the beautiful diaphanous yellow-winged Canary-winged Finch (a.k.a. Black-throated Finch).

I could go on, for we saw tinamous, penguins, 24 species of swans and ducks, raptors, rails, gulls, doves, owls, hummingbirds, tapaculos, finches, meadowlarks, and more. Wild animals included Guanaco, Vicuna, Viscachas (like strange marmots), and Darwin's Big-eared Mouse. In addition to the wildlife, we saw spectacular snow-capped volcanoes throughout the length of the country and the famous and dramatic Torres de Paine mountains in the extreme southern fjords. And, of course, we enjoyed the Chilean cuisine and fabulous wine. All in all, a great birding experience.

### Birding in Thailand, by Lou Falb

Once you get past the 19 hour plane flight and away from the nightmare of congestion and pollution around Bangkok, you will find a country of peaceful, friendly people with many fine parks protecting unspoiled tropical forests. I saw about 350 species new to me. Here is a small sampling of some of the more colorful: Scarlet Minivet, Emerald Dove, Blue-bearded Bee-eater, Golden-bellied Leaf-bird, Purple Honeyeater and Greater Flameback. You soon become familiar with such exotic names as Drongos, Bulbuls, Babblers, Broadbills, Fulvettas, Prinias and Yuhinas. Many compound names are surprising. We saw Hawk Cuckoos, Cuckoo Doves, Cuckoo-shrikes, Flycatcher-shrikes and Magpie Robins.

The most impressive bird for me was the Great Hornbill, a 4-foot monster that made a loud swooshing sound as it flew past. A close second was the Great Slaty Woodpecker, the largest in the world at 51cm.

Some familiar groups are not what you expect. In Thailand warblers are mostly drab little birds as hard as Epidonax flycatchers to identify, while many flycatchers are colorful but hide in the brush rather than sitting up like ours do. Many beautiful butterflies vied with the birds for my attention. I was able to identify about 30 kinds. The mammals were good too. We saw gibbons, leopards, wild elephants and barking deer. A real spectacle was an estimated one million Wrinkled-lipped Bats streaming out of their caves and across the sky at dusk.

Most of the birding tours go in January or February when the weather is dry, the temperature is pleasant except in the lowlands and mosquitoes are no problem. A new book, 'Birds of Thailand' by Robson is excellent. More information is on the internet. For bird pictures go to <<http://www.orientalbirdclub.org/>>, for butterflies see <<http://thaibugs.com/>> and a typical itinerary is at <<http://www.fieldguides.com/>>.

### Birding Travel Section (cont. 1/4 down pg.)

#### **Sea of Okhotsk, by David Ridgway**

In May last year, Ginger and David Ridgway were able to take an Expedition Cruise with Zegram of Seattle: <http://zeco.com/>. The expedition they chose was a first for Zegram. It went to the Sea of Okhotsk in the Russian Far East and the Kamchatka Peninsula. The expedition started on Hokkaido in Japan, then to Sakhalin Island and proceeded northeast to the Sea of Okhotsk. The expedition brought the first group of western tourists to that area since the Russian Revolution. On board were several fine naturalists including Conrad Field and Dale Chorman, both from Homer Alaska. Leading the birders on board was Peter Harrison, the author of 'Seabirds' (the bible of seabirds) and a local expert from Hokkaido (via Great Britain) named Mark Brazil. Peter is an energetic leader with quite a sense of humor. His birding and life stories were very compelling as well as entertaining and he often had all in stitches. Recap for the day would include stories about 'twitching', NIMI's (the 'not even mildly interested') and the difference between US and British birders as well as tales of his world wide search for birds (especially seabirds). During the 15 days of the trip 145 species of birds and 15 species of mammals were seen. Some of the more spectacular bird species seen were Spectacled Guillemot, Steller's Sea Eagle, 4 species of Auklet, several Falcated Ducks, Smew, Garganey, 3 species of Jaeger, 10 species of Warbler including Middendorf's and Lanceolated, Japanese Robin, Eurasian Sky-lark, displaying Latham's Snipe, Willow Ptarmigan, Great Spotted and Black Woodpeckers and many other's. The birders had fun watching Mark and Peter talk about species with their Russian ornithologist guide using Latin as the common language. It was a very memorable trip.

#### **Shaping the Future of Coastal Bird Refuges, By Tim Cullinan,**

Ninety-five years ago the federal government set aside more than 800 islands, reefs, and rocks along a 100-mile stretch of the Olympic coast as a sanctuary for nesting marine birds. Today this sanctuary is known as the Washington Islands Wilderness. It comprises three separate National Wildlife Refuges, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. From north to south these are Flattery Rocks, Quillayute Needles, and Copalis National Wildlife Refuges.

The Washington Islands Wilderness is truly a national treasure. It contains rugged islands and sea stacks set in the most pristine waters on the west coast. More than 150,000 marine birds nest here, including species seldom seen from shore, such as Leach's Storm-petrel, Fork-tailed Storm-petrel, and Cassin's Auklet. The islands are also a stronghold for Common Murres, Western Gulls, Pelagic Cormorants, and Peregrine Falcons. During fall migration, the bird population can swell to over one million.

Over the millennia, the birds have thrived in the harsh conditions of the north Olympic coast, enduring storms, unpredictable food supplies, and predators. In the last half-century, they've also had to cope with oil spills, boat traffic, and until recently, simulated bombing by U.S. Navy jets. Through it all, the bird populations have managed to survive, but their future depends on our commitment to sound stewardship and proper management.

In the next year, Audubon members will have an opportunity to influence the future of the birds in the Washington Islands Wilderness. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is currently developing a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the three refuges. A CCP is a long-range plan that will guide the management of the refuges and address the need to protect wildlife and habitat over the next 15 years.

Early next year, the FWS will release a draft of its CCP for the three refuges. The refuge managers will invite the public to submit comments on the plan's contents, and advise them how to best meet the need to protect the birds. Some of the issues that will need to be addressed include:

- How to prevent disturbance to nesting birds, e.g. restricting use of watercraft and aircraft, Oil spills
- Enhancing public awareness of the refuge's wildlife values
- Impacts of fishing and boat traffic
- Impacts of nature tourism (including bird watching)
- Water quality and impacts of marine debris (such as abandoned fishing nets)

The Audubon Washington office in Olympia will continue to monitor the progress of the CCP, and will notify members when it is available for public review and comment. We hope that you will take an interest in this issue, and get involved in shaping the future of the birds nesting along Washington's wilderness coast.

For more information, please contact Tim Cullinan at [cullinant@olympus.net](mailto:cullinant@olympus.net) or 683-6257.

**The Washington Ornithological Society** would like all interested birders to help with any of these sightings.

### Sighting Requests by Location

**Birds of Skagit County** – Howard Armstrong, Gary Bletsch, Bob Kuntz and Jan and Keith Wiggers continue to collect information about the birds of Skagit County. Local birders and many people from other areas of the state have contributed interesting and valuable information. Please send your reports/records to either: Bob Kuntz, North Cascades National Park, 2105 Hwy 20, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284. (360) 856-5700, ext. 368. <robert\_kuntz@nps.gov>, or Keith Wiggers, 902 District Line Rd, Burlington, WA 98233. (360) 757-0772. <kwiggers@fidalgo.net>.

### Sighting Requests by Species

**Cooper's Hawks:** Color bands have been placed on over 700 nestling Cooper's hawks in Victoria, British Columbia since 1996. This is part of a long-term study on its urban-nesting ecology. Each color band is uniquely coded with 2 vertical, alphanumeric characters and is placed on the left leg; black bands are on males, red bands on females. Please note band code and color, date, time, and location. Four birds have been reported from Washington, to date. Report all sightings to Andy Stewart, BC Conservation Data Centre, Victoria, B.C. (250) 387-9780, or e-mail to: <andy.stewart@gems6.gov.bc.ca>.

**Merlins:** Detailed year-round observations are needed for scientific research on the merlin in Washington. Sightings should include exact location/map, date/time, description of bird(s) and behavior. Send to David Drummond, Coastal Forest Merlin Project, P.O. Box 4123, Bellingham, WA 98227, (360) 671-3804 or e-mail to: <merlinology@hotmail.com>.

**Mute Swans:** All encounters. Provide date seen, number of swans, adult or juvenile, location, habitat type, and whether they were in the company of other swans or geese. Report to: Martha Jordan, Washington Swan Working Group, 914 164th St SE, #272, Mill Creek WA 98028 or e-mail to <martha@swansociety.org>.

**Northern Harrier:** Patagial markers have been placed on some northern harriers as part of a long-term study of populations on Whidbey Island and in the Kent Valley. One of the study objectives is to learn more about post-nesting dispersal or migration. Please note the color of the tag (yellow, blue, green, or white), which wing it is on, the letter or number printed (in black) on the tag, and if there is a black circle around the letter or number. Note the date and time and the exact location. Report to Jack Bettsworth, 256912th Ave W, Seattle WA 98119, (206) 285-5276. <jgbett@attbi.com>.

**Purple Martins:** Banding continues this year of western purple martins in the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia, although any observations of martins west of the Rocky Mountains would be appreciated. What to look for: site location, date and time, look for bands and note the sequence of which color on which leg, whether any color band is coded, and read the band, if possible (binos or scope). Report sightings and any banded birds to Stan Kostka at <lynnandstan@earthlink.net>.

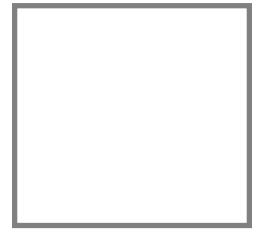
**Horned and Red-necked Grebes:** Marked in the Northwest Territories with unique combinations of color bands. Horned grebes were banded with red, yellow, green, and blue. Red-necked grebes with more obscure colors – burgundy, orange, white (off-white), and light blue. Report to Bonnie Stout, <bestout@sfu.ca>.

**Songbird survey:** We have colormarked 500 crows as well as many other songbirds in the area and would appreciate any sightings of those. Be on the lookout for banded robins, Wilson's warblers, Swainson's thrushes, song sparrows, spotted towhees, and Oregon juncos. Please report any sightings to Dr. John Marzluff, <corvid@u.washington.edu>.

**Turkey vultures:** Migrating and overwintering turkey vultures are being tracked by the Olympic Vulture Study. Report weather, time, number of birds, and anything else of interest to: Diann MacRae, 22622 – 53rd Avenue S.E., Bothell WA 98021, or to: <tvulture@vei.net>.

**Western Bluebirds in western Washington:** Please report any sightings of western bluebirds in western Washington, especially away from known breeding sites, to Michael Hobbs, 13506 NE 66th St, Kirkland, WA 98033 or to <hummer@isomedia.com>. Sightings from previous years also welcome.

**San Juan Islands Audubon Society**  
P.O. Box 595, Eastsound, WA 98245  
March 2003



**Special Birding Travel Issue**  
see pgs. 4-6

**SJI Audubon now On-line**  
<<http://sjiaudubon.org/>>

### Officers and Committees

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**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)> (preferred method)

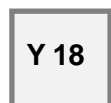
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**Membership in the *San Juan Islands Audubon Society*** is \$15/year and includes a subscription to The *Trumpeter*  
Send your check to **Bob Myhr, 177 Caldwell Dr., Lopez, WA 98261**

**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.

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