



THE KINGFISHER

Kitsap Audubon Society

April 2010

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Kitsap Audubon Society meets the 2nd Thursday of each month, September through May, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., on the lower level of the Poulsbo Public Library, 700 NE Lincoln Rd. Meetings are open to the public. There is free parking behind the Library. Enter from the rear.

KAS Program—April 8 2010

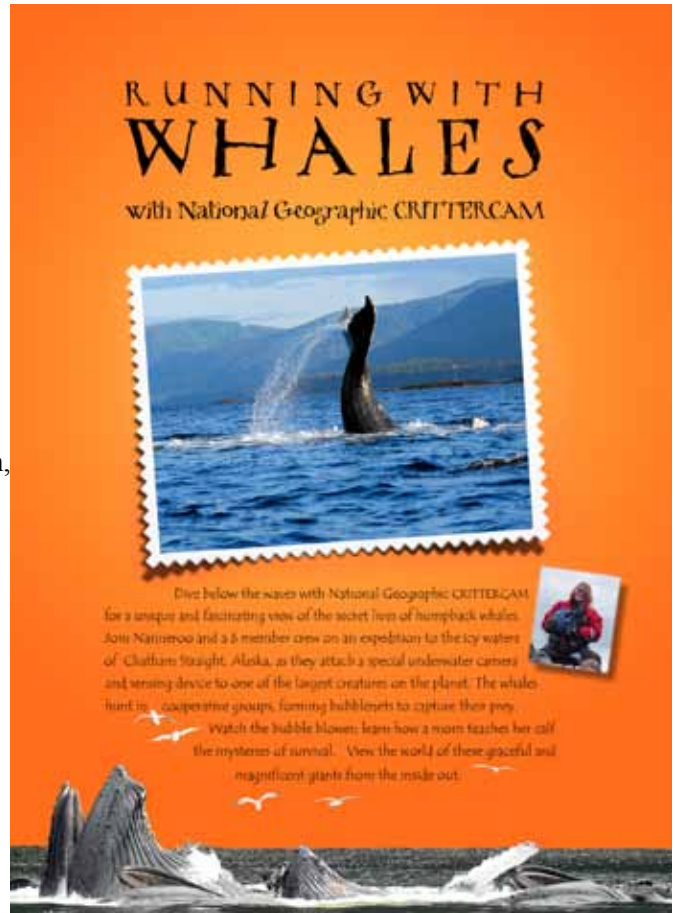
Running With Whales

Dive below the waves with National Geographic CritterCam for a unique and fascinating view of the secret lives of Humpback whales.

In August 2008, Nancy Woodman, National Geographic author/illustrator, joined Greg Marshall, inventor of “CritterCam,” and a small team of researchers on a scientific expedition in Chatham Straight, Alaska. Through the eye of a special underwater camera and sensing device attached to Humpbacks, images of the intimate world of whales below the waves were captured. The whales work as a team in bubble-net activities, each with a specific task, to hunt large numbers of fish.

Having studied the whales for 10 years in both their wintering home (Hawaii) and their feeding ground (Alaska), the scientists have learned more about each whale, the way it communicates, who its “pals” are, and how it works with others. CritterCam has filmed behavior never before seen by humans.

Nan Woodman is an author/artist who writes and illustrates books for National Geographic children’s trade and school book divisions, as well as for a host of other publishers. She has been on numerous scientific expeditions, most recently with Greg Marshall, inventor of CritterCam, studying humpback whales in Chatham Straight, Alaska. Nan is also a consultant for permaculture and sustainable schools projects, as well as chair of the Sierra Club Hood Canal Committee.



Kitsap Audubon Society

President: Judy Willott 206-842-6939,
jdwillott@mac.com

Vice President: Jim Ullrich, 360-692-4869, jim@wbugigharbor.com

Treasurer: Sandra Bullock, 360-394-5635, roadrunner1957@comcast.net,

Secretary: Vacant

Immediate Past Presidents: Sandy & Gene Bullock, roadrunner1957@comcast.net, genebullock@comcast.net

At Large Board of Directors:

Traci Fairbanks, 360-769-9386,
tleafairbank@hotmail.com

John Finkbeiner, 360-895-0374,
finchlegs@wavecable.com

Sharron Ham, 360-779-5458,
shabobham@comcast.net

Byron Kane, 360-297-2716, bk4all@centurytel.net

Diana Sheridan, 206-842-4562,
dianabsheridan@gmail.com

Helen Stone, 206-201-3222,
hellbell@juno.com

Sarah J. Ullman,

sarahullman@yahoo.com

Standing Committee Chairs

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Education: Fay Linger, 360-297-3855;
ernieandfay@centurytel.net

Hospitality: Milly Bellemere & Bob Schumacher, 360-830-4231,
rbellemere@w-link.net

Refreshments: Rosemary Courtright, 360-830-4405, rosemary@zipcon.com

Membership Recorder: Sara Kane, 360-297-2716, bk4all@centurytel.net

Membership: Jim Ullrich, 360-692-4869, wildbirds2@comcast.net

Programs: Vic Ulsh, 360-479-6900,
vic@bradleyscottinc.com

Publicity: Barbara Wilhite, 360-692-8180, naturesvoice@wavecable.com

Conservation/Christmas Bird

Count: Gene Bullock, 360-394-5635,
genebullock@comcast.net

Purple Martin Project Co-Chairs:

Sandra Pavey, s4sandy@earthlink.net
Paul Carson, 360-779-2612

Scholarships: Sandy Bullock, 360-394-5635, roadrunner1957@comcast.net

Wildlife Sightings: Joan Carson, 360-779-2612, joanpcarson@comcast.net

Kingfisher Editor: Gene Bullock, 360-394-5635, genebullock@comcast.net

Webmaster: Mike Szerlog
360-881-0470, szerlog@comcast.net

Kitsap Birding Hotspots

Gene Bullock, Editor

Most bird watchers dream about travel to exotic destinations to see such fabled birds as the Resplendent Quetzal, Scarlet Macaws or the Andes Condor. But travel is not only expensive, it poses a dilemma for those trying to conserve energy and adopt environmentally sensitive lifestyles. Ecotourism and environmentalism are on uneasy terms.

The good news is that you don't have to hop on a plane, board a cruise ship or drive across the state to find great bird watching locations. We have an abundance of birding hotspots right here on the Kitsap Peninsula – even in the heart of Bremerton, Port Orchard and Poulsbo.

Veteran bird watchers know about these local gems. But the information is not always well shared. Familiarity lulls experienced birders into thinking “everybody knows about this place.” The trouble is, they probably don't.

The Great Washington State Birding Trail

Audubon Chapters across Washington State have been compiling lists of their favorite birding locations. Some of the results are published by Audubon Washington in colorful maps for each region. Niy each map takes in such a large area, only a few sites make the final cut.

Fay Linger and others on the Kitsap Audubon Birding Trail Committee are assembling detailed information on the best birding sites in Kitsap County. Members of the committee can draw from years of experience in leading trips to these areas. The top choices will be submitted for inclusion in the Puget Sound Loop, the seventh and final regional map in the State Birding Trail series.

The Trail Committee is gathering a wealth of information about Kitsap bird watching locations; but we are painfully aware that very few of these sites can be included in a map that covers eight counties and stretches from Tacoma and Mt. Rainier to Everett and from Snoqualmie Pass to Whidbey and the San Juan Islands.

Kitsap Audubon has already published a brochure on *Where to find birds in Kitsap County*. It's available on request and can be downloaded from our website. The brochure was authored by Fay Linger, Nancy Ladenberger and Diana Sheridan. We also draw from a *Guide to Wildlife Viewing in Kitsap County* by Joan Carson and Charlotte Coleburg, published in 1979 by the Washington State Department of Game (now Fish and Wildlife).

Series on Birding Hotspots

What will happen to all the information that can't be included in the Puget Sound Loop Trail Map? We don't want it to languish in the archives. We hope at some point to update and expand our brochure, but it will take a lot of work on the part of a small pool of busy volunteers. Until then, I want to share this information in a series of *Kingfisher* articles featuring favorite birding spots in and around Kitsap County.

It may not be feasible to visit every site using public transportation. But wherever you live in Kitsap County, there are places close to home where, depending on the season, you can enjoy the best of Kitsap birding and introduce family and friends to this wonderful pastime.

Watch for these articles in coming issues of the *Kingfisher*.

President's Message — Judy Willott

I had a very busy Saturday morning recently as I was thinking about what to write in this letter. My day was centered around improving habitat for birds and started with a sunrise boat trip on calm Eagle Harbor.

Local birders have been concerned about how to clean the nest boxes installed on old pilings at Head of the Bay. There are 10 Purple Martin houses of various designs that can mostly be seen from shore but are a bit difficult to get to, requiring either the ability to clamber down a log bulkhead and through tideland mud carrying a ladder, or a boat and high tide.

We were invited on a boat ride on an early morning high tide. Don and I were lucky to ride along with Kirk and Lee Robinson who volunteered as nest box clean-up crew this year. In no time the boxes were opened, the contents bagged for disposal, and closed up again, ready for the return of the martins. Kudos to Lee and Kirk for planning and carrying out this chore.

Then it was my turn to do a little work at the ivy pull in Gideon Park. This little park in west Winslow is under the watchful eyes of neighbors all around, although the BI Metro Park District does the heavy lifting of mowing and trash pick up. Over the years the wooded part of the park has gradually seen English Ivy take over and holly trees have seeded amongst the natives.

We started with a lesson on how ivy takes over woodlands, taught by Jeanette Franks of the "Weed Warriors." We neighbors are working on a two-year project to remove all the ivy and holly. We will eventually replant with native shrubs and groundcovers. Ivy is very tough stuff! Once pulled, the remains need to be covered with very thick mulch and any little sprouts removed. On this weed pull day, we had all ages of folk pulling, cutting and piling the stuff for the park district staff to haul. I think we must have removed about three truckloads.



We know that Northern Flickers nest in one of the trees. We hear a Barred Owl and see deer. Last winter a coyote stopped by. Mr. Ring-necked Pheasant comes by each spring. We hope we will be successful over the long run in ridding this little neighborhood park of ivy and making it more bird friendly.

I write this as the 40th anniversary of Earth Day comes along April 22. Why not get busy in your community to restore or protect habitat for birds and other wildlife. Together we can do it!

EcoFest—Earth Day Festival

Saturday, April 24 2010, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Stillwaters Environmental Center

Visit the Kitsap Audubon booth and more than 40 other exhibitors at EcoFest, the most exciting way to celebrate Earth Day in Kitsap County! EcoFest is a community celebration, with a huge selection of exhibitors and displays to delight you with all kinds of enviro-education and eco-friendly products, from electric scooters to bamboo floors! There is great music, food, and entertainment all day. We welcome Earth friendly education or vendor booths, please contact Stillwaters if you interested in participating.

Contact Naomi Maasberg, 360-297-1226
info@stillwatersenvironmentalcenter.org
www.stillwatersenvironmentalcenter.org



Mike Pratt of West Sound Wildlife Shelter at EcoFest with Orion, the Great Horned Owl.

Climate Change Threatens Hundreds of Bird Species

Climate change threatens to further imperil hundreds of species of migratory birds, already under stress from habitat loss, invasive species and other environmental threats, a new report released today by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar concludes.

The State of the Birds: 2010 Report on Climate Change, follows a comprehensive report released a year ago showing that nearly a third of the nation's 800 bird species are endangered, threatened or in significant decline.

"For well over a century, migratory birds have faced stresses such as commercial hunting, loss of forests, the use of DDT and other pesticides, a loss of wetlands and other key habitat, the introduction of invasive species, and other impacts of human development," Salazar said. "Now they are facing a new threat--climate change--that could dramatically alter their habitat and food supply and push many species towards extinction."

The report, a collaboration of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and experts from the nation's leading conservation organizations, shows that climate changes will have an increasingly disruptive effect on bird species in all habitats, with oceanic and Hawaiian birds in greatest peril.

In releasing the report, Salazar cited the unprecedented efforts by the Obama Administration and the Department of the Interior to address climate change.

Last week in Anchorage, Alaska, for example, the Interior Department opened the first of eight new regional Climate Science Centers that will engage scientists from all of Interior's Bureaus and partners to research climate change impacts, work with land, natural, and cultural resource managers to design adaptation strategies, and engage the public

through education initiatives.

The Climate Science Centers will help support a network of new "**Landscape Conservation Cooperatives**" that will engage federal agencies, tribal, state, and local governmental and non-governmental partners, and the public in crafting practical, landscape-level strategies for managing climate change impacts on land, natural, and cultural resources within the eight regions.

"Just as they did in 1962 when Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, our migratory birds are sending us a message about the health of our planet," Salazar said. "That is why--for the first time ever--the Department of the Interior has deployed a coordinated strategy to plan for and respond to the impacts of climate change on the resources we manage."

Key findings from the "State of the Birds" climate change report include:

- Oceanic birds are among the most vulnerable species because they don't raise many young each year; they face challenges from a rapidly changing marine ecosystem; and they nest on islands that may be flooded as sea levels rise. All 67 oceanic bird species, such as petrels and albatrosses, are among the most vulnerable birds on Earth to climate change.
- Hawaiian birds such as endangered species Puaiohi and 'Akiapōlā'au already face multiple threats and are increasingly challenged by mosquito-borne diseases and invasive species as climate change alters their native habitats.
- Birds in coastal, arctic/alpine, and grassland habitats, as well as those on Caribbean and other Pacific islands show intermediate levels of vulnerability; most birds in arid lands, wetlands, and forests show relatively

low vulnerability to climate change.

- For bird species that are already of conservation concern such as the golden-cheeked warbler, whooping crane, and spectacled eider, the added vulnerability to climate change may hasten declines or prevent recovery.
- The report identified common bird species such as the American oystercatcher, common nighthawk, and northern pintail that are likely to become species of conservation concern as a result of climate change.

"Birds are excellent indicators of the health of our environment, and right now they are telling us an important story about climate change," said Dr. Kenneth Rosenberg, director of Conservation Science at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. "Many species of conservation concern will face heightened threats, giving us an increased sense of urgency to protect and conserve vital bird habitat."

"All of the effective bird conservation efforts already taking place to protect rare species, conserve habitats, and remove threats need to be continued and expanded," said David Mehlman of The Nature Conservancy.

"The dangers to these birds reflect risks to everything we value: our health, our finances, our quality of life and the stability of our natural world," said Audubon's Glenn Olson.

The report is part of a collaborative effort between federal and state wildlife agencies, the American Bird Conservancy, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Klamath Bird Observatory, National Audubon Society, The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Birds and Windows

Mike Pratt, Director of Wildlife Services
West Sound Wildlife Shelter

We've all had it happen. Birds-- either thinking that our windows are open flying space or seeing their own reflections and going on the offensive-- will crash headfirst into plate glass windows. Sometimes the birds perish. Sometimes they're lucky and fly off right away. But other times, the birds are stunned and fall helpless onto the ground or deck.

West Sound Wildlife Shelter gets dozens of calls every year from people who've found stunned birds and aren't sure what to do.

The good news is that there are steps you can take! By following these simple procedures, you can save a stunned bird from being eaten by predators while it's recovering. Please note that if you follow these steps and the bird does not revive, it's important that you call us (206.855.9057 x1).

First, find a box with a lid that has holes in a top. In the bottom of the box, place a dry washcloth or dish towel (something to keep the bird's feet from sliding around). Take the box outside and locate the bird. Then, using a hand towel or pillowcase, pick it up gently and put it in the box. The greatest danger to a stunned bird is its vulnerability -- an immobilized bird is easy prey for cats and wild predators. Take the box inside and

place it somewhere dark, quiet, and warm, such as a bathroom or closet. Darkness will help the bird calm down, lower its heart rate, and help it recover more quickly.

In an hour or two, check on the bird. Take the box outside and open it up. Be sure not to open the box inside, since the bird may fly right out. If the bird flies away when you open the box, it's recovered and ready to return to the wild. Congratulations! You can be pleased with the knowledge that you helped a bird recover from this traumatic incident. If the bird doesn't fly or appear healthy, please call us at 206.855.9057 x1.

How to Avoid Window Strikes

You can keep birds away from your windows by hanging wind chimes or wind socks near the glass. The noise and fluttering motion will deter the birds from coming near that part of your house.

Window decals can also alert birds to the presence of solid glass. Whispering Pines Window Decals are available for sale on our website (a pack of eight decals is \$9). The decals come in a variety of themes, including birds, butterflies, chickadees and colorful holiday decorations.



*Evening Grosbeak, Steller's Jay, and Window Decals.
Photos Courtesy Robin Purcell*

Call To the Wild Dinner and Auction

Benefit for West Sound Wildlife Shelter.

Saturday, April 24, 2010, 5 - 9:30 p.m. at Kiana Lodge

The sixth annual Call to the Wild Dinner and Auction is the major fundraiser of the year for West Sound Wildlife Shelter. The auction will include fabulous items, certificates to local businesses, wildlife-themed trips

and much more!

The proceeds of this auction provide much of the annual funding needed to operate the West Sound Wildlife Shelter. Money raised at the auction allows us to save the lives of patients like the red-tailed hawk who was hit by a car or the rabbit that was mauled by a dog.

We need your support more than ever! Tickets are \$75 per

person or \$600 for a table of eight. You can purchase tickets and learn all the details online at www.WestSoundWildlife.org or by calling 206-855-9057.

Field Trip Guidelines

John Finkbeiner, Field Trip Chair
360-895-0374
finchlegs@wavecable.com

1. Trips are limited to 12 participants unless otherwise specified.
2. Children 12 and under are welcome only on designated family trips or with permission of the leader.
3. Call as soon as possible to reserve a spot and get details.
4. If the weather is questionable, or if you must cancel, call the leader the morning of the trip.
5. Dress for the weather. Please refrain from wearing white or bright colored clothing.
6. Bring binoculars, cash for ride-sharing (see below), and bring a lunch for all day trips.

Field Trip Carpooling is encouraged to reduce costs and limit the parking space required. Passengers are asked to share any expenses with the driver. A contribution to the driver of \$5 for shorter trips and \$10 for overnight trips is suggested, with any ferry fares, parking fees, etc. divided equally between the driver and passengers.

Bird Festivals

Olympic BirdFest, April 9-11, in Sequim. followed by
San Juan Islands Birding Cruise,
April 11 – 13. 360-681-4076;
olympicbirdfest.org

Gray's Harbor Shorebird Festival,
April 30 – May 2 in Hoquiam. 800-
303-8498; shorebirdfestival.com

Leavenworth Spring Bird Fest, May
12-16 in Leavenworth. 509-548-
5807; leavenworthspringbirdfest.com

Wild Wings Bird Festival, Sun.
June 6 at Island wood, Bainbridge
Island. Keynote speaker: David
Sibley. Contact 206-855-4384 or
christinad@islandwood.org

Field Trips/Events

Sequim area birding, April 17. Leaders: Gene and Sandy Bullock. To reserve a spot, call 360-394-5635 or email genebullock@comcast.net). This popular birding area includes John Wayne Marina, Marlen Nelson Park, 3-Crabs Restaurant area, Railroad Bridge Park and the Dungeness River Audubon Center. We will meet at Salsbury County Park, just north of the Hood Canal Bridge (Kitsap side) at 8:00 a.m. to form carpools. Bring a bag lunch and drinks. We will eat lunch at Railroad Bridge Park.

Family Birding, Theler Wetlands, Saturday, May 22, Leader John Finkbeiner (360-895-0374). We encourage families to bring younger children from the 3rd grade and above. Meet at the Theler Wetlands Nature Center (just south of Belfair) in Mason County. Just off Highway 3 at the 2nd red lights. Meet at 8:30 AM.

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, Thursday, June 3rd, Leader John Finkbeiner (360-895-0374). This is one of the region's premier birding areas. We will be between the winter residents, migrating waterfowl and summer residents, so anything is possible. Level walking along dikes, boardwalks and roads. A long morning walk, so bring a snack. For those who wish to join us, we usually lunch at a restaurant across the road in the early afternoon. Meet 8:30 AM at the Interpretive Center. Nisqually NWR (fee or Golden Eagle Pass required).

Field Trip Report

Padilla Bay, March 6 with Hans and Dawn Hansen. Beautiful sunny weather marked this year's trip to Fir Island, the Skagit area and Padilla Bay. We were also rewarded with skeins of Snow Geese in the air and thousands resting on the ground. The sight and sound when hundreds at a time lifted into the air was spectacular. Trumpeter Swans were seen in the hundreds, not as tightly packed. Off Samish Ave. we counted 50 Great Blue Herons standing in the shallows near the heron rookery. Another highlight included good views of several Rough-legged Hawks. In all, 50 species were noted. In the Fir Island area we saw the new DNR trail configuration after dike changes. The trip was capped with stops in Bow at the Rhododendron Café and the Rutabaga Farm Creamery.



Introductory bird walk led by Fay Linger at the Poulsbo waterfront was well attended. Here Fay talks about some of the field guides available for beginning birders.

Wildlife Sightings—Joan Carson

Wildlife Sightings by Joan Carson (joanpcarson@comcast.net or P.O. Box 532, Poulsbo, 98370.)

At the tail-end of winter (officially speaking) reports of returning rufous hummingbirds and tree swallows had started. Looking forward to many more in the days ahead.

Feb. 21, Kathy Swartz birding at Theler Wetlands in Belfair, reported the following: 2 doz. Canada geese; 15 golden-crowned sparrows; 1 Cooper's hawk, 2 pair common mergansers; a pair of red crossbills; 10 red-winged blackbirds (m.); 1 belted kingfisher; 1 great blue heron; 1 song sparrow; 8 killdeer; 10 black-capped chickadees. Feb. 21, Jamie Acker, B.I., Banding Northern saw-whet owls on the Island. Birds banded, seen or heard totaled 7 Northern saw-whets and 6 barred owls. He also saw 3 deer and 2 raccoons. Feb. 23-27, Rosemary Courtright, Seabeck area, 3 miles up Stavis Canyon, reported the following regulars. Steller's jays, varied thrush, Northern flicker, spotted towhee, red-breasted nuthatch, dark-eyed junco, chestnut-backed chickadees and mourning doves. Feb. 27, Vicki Grant, Miller Bay Road, a

red-tailed hawk (juv.) Visited their yard several times. Feb. 28, Doug Hudson, Silverdale area, a coyote ambling across the new Waaga Way intersection in broad daylight. Also reported he has both hairy and downy woodpeckers visiting his yard. The downies are resident and the hairy visits occasionally. Feb. 28, the mallard ducks that frequent our pond returned 9 days earlier than last year. As of Mar. 12, the female has started her nesting activity and only comes long enough to eat. The male's visits have become fewer and far between.

Mar. 1, Gene Fullerton, in Poulsbo reported a robin flock eating the holly berries in his yard and that a partial albino robin was in the flock. Brought photo of the bird. They were there a few days, until the berries were gone. Mar. 3, Stacey Tobin, Jefferson Beach, Kingston, first rufous hummingbird (m.). Has been feeding the Anna's all winter. Mar. 6, Marion Telles, Meridith Heights, Bremerton, first returning rufous hummingbird, same date as last year. Mar. 6, Carson yard, Poulsbo, first returning rufous hummingbird (m) same date as last year. Female Anna's still here. Mar. 7, Doug Coleman, Bremerton, saw just one solitary tree swallow while birding at Theler

Wetlands in Belfair. Mar. 8, Kathy Dobson, Poulsbo, had the robin flock with the partial albino robin in it. They were eating holly berries and stayed two days until the berries were gone. Mar. 10, Carson yard, Poulsbo, 1 golden-crowned kinglet in bird bath. A pair of pine siskins have moved in. The fox sparrow and 3 Townsend's warblers are still around as of Mar. 15. Mar. 11, Kathy Swartz, Port Orchard, sent some great photos of Northern shovellers (m&f) and a Northern flicker. Also on Mar. 13, she sent photos of a snow goose that looked like it was an intermediate bird between the white and dark morphs. Photos were taken in Manchester on Beach Drive near the fenced off government land. Bird was with Canada geese. On Mar. 14, John Colby of Brownsville brought photos taken between Jan. 15 and Feb. 16 that showed a partial albino white-winged scoter with a flock of "normal" white-wings.) He would like to know if anyone else has observed this flock and the partial albino. They moved on in mid-February and he hasn't seen them since.

Looking forward to more spring reports. Deadline for Sightings for the May newsletter will be April 14.



*Left: Rufous Hummingbird in the rain, photographed by Kathy Swartz.
Right: Mountain Quail photographed in her yard by Rosemary Courtright.*



Kitsap Audubon Society
P.O. Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370

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The KINGFISHER is the newsletter of Kitsap Audubon Society P.O. Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370. It is published eight times a year, September to May. Submissions from readers are welcome. We reserve the right to edit for space, grammar or legal reasons. Email text or photographs to genebullock@comcast.net or mail them to Gene Bullock, Kingfisher Editor, 1968 NE Lind Ct., Poulsbo WA 98370. Our deadline is the 15th of the preceding month.

To receive your KINGFISHER via email, and save us the cost of printing and mailing, send request to genebullock@comcast.net.

The mission of the Kitsap Audubon Society is to preserve the natural world through education, environmental study and habitat protection, and to promote awareness and enjoyment of local and regional natural areas.

Kitsap Audubon Society – Membership Application

Please make checks payable to Kitsap Audubon Society and mail to KAS, PO Box 961, Poulsbo, WA 98370

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check type of Membership (All include 8 issues of the KINGFISHER newsletter annually):

- Kitsap Audubon Society Chapter *Individual Membership* (\$15 per year)
- KAS Chapter *Family Membership* (\$25 per year)
- Contributing KAS Member* (\$50 per year)
- Sustaining KAS Member* (\$75 per year)
- Supporting KAS Member* (\$100 per year)
- Check here if you wish to receive KINGFISHER by email.

Email address: _____

Visit our website at www.kitsapaudubon.org



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