



What's coming up?

March 13 (Wednesday) **Movie night at the Goldtown**

Nickelodeon! JAS will be showing *Flyways: The untold journey of migratory shorebirds*. This is a beautiful movie not to be missed, featuring species that stop by our local wetlands as well as wetlands throughout the globe. We will have access to the full version, with footage not seen on the version that will air on PBS Nature. Stay tuned for show times on our website or Facebook page or visit <https://goldtownnick.com>

Movie Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXfo2csq7F4>



Watch the Flyways movie to find out who this youngster is.

April 11 (Thursday) –Evening lecture/program presentation with Link Olson “Much (more) ado about marmots”. 6:30 p.m. at the University of Alaska Southeast, Egan Lecture Hall.

fool



A coast- dwelling hoary marmot near Juneau. Gwen Baluss Photo.

February 16-19. Great Backyard Bird Count. See <https://www.birdcount.org> for more information.

April 27 (Saturday) and May 12 (Sunday – Mother’s Day) Berners Bay Cruises. An annual community favorite! Take an Allan Marine catamaran on a multi-hour cruise and see all manner of marine wildlife in a local Important Bird Area. This is our biggest annual fundraiser, but the pricing is still more affordable than summer whale watch excursions. Check our website at the beginning of April for ticket sales information. Prices will be \$125 adults, \$50 youth with student ID, and \$12 for kids 12 and under.



51st Juneau Christmas Bird Count Summary

Patty Rose

The 51st Juneau Christmas Bird Count took place Saturday, December 16, 2023 (Count Week December 13 - 19). Forty-one volunteers reported 61 species on count day. The number of species on count day was slightly lower than the average over 51 counts of about 64. An additional 13 species were reported during count week, for a total of 74 species. The total number of individual birds counted was 10,477, slightly higher than the average of 9,367.

Observers reported overcast skies and temperatures of 30 to 35 degrees. Winds were out of the East at 10 to 15 mph in most areas. Standing water was partially frozen, and open water was not frozen. Zero to three inches of snow were reported. The weeks leading up to the count were slightly wetter and warmer than average.

Highlights on count day included Northern Shoveler (Gwen Baluss, Bonnie Bennetsen, Scott Vulstek, Kate Vulstek), American Coot (Mark Schwan, Patty Rose), Eurasian Collared-Dove (Bev Agler), Rufous Hummingbird (Doug Woodby, Mary Hausler), and Spotted Towhee (Bev Agler).

Species not found on count day but seen during count week were Eurasian Wigeon (Patty Rose), Ring-necked Duck (Mary McCafferty), Common Loon (Detlef Buettner), Yellow-billed Loon (Mary Hausler), American Goshawk (Scott Fischer), Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk (Mark Schwan, Detlef Buettner), Killdeer (Gus van Vliet), Wilson's Snipe (Gus van Vliet), Hairy Woodpecker (Debbie Maas), Northern Shrike (Steve Gilbertson, Patty Rose, Detlef Buettner), Snow Bunting (Patrick Barry), American Tree Sparrow (Patty Rose, Gus van Vliet, Detlef Buettner), and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (Patty Rose, Gus van Vliet).

Two species--Rufous Hummingbird and Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch--were seen for the first time on the Juneau count. The Rufous Hummingbird has been at a West Juneau feeder since early December and was seen on count day. A search of the Christmas Bird Count records revealed that Rufous Hummingbird has been reported on four previous Alaska counts: Sitka (84th), Ketchikan (89th), Sitka (115th), and Kodiak (123rd). During count week, a flock of 12 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches was found at the Mendenhall Wetlands Airport Dike Trail. This species is sometimes seen

at sea level in Juneau in fall and winter. This is the first time it has been seen on the Juneau count.

New high counts were reported this year for Northern Shoveler (12), Eurasian Collared-Dove (14), and Common Redpoll (342). Twenty-two species have been seen on each of the previous 50 counts and were seen on this count.

The five most numerous species were Glaucous-winged Gull (2,324), Mallard (1,832), Surf Scoter (1,116), Canada Goose (927), and Common Redpoll (342).

Thanks to those who volunteered! Thanks to Gwen Baluss for organizing and hosting the post-count potluck at Auke Village Recreation Area. The CBC is organized by the National Audubon Society. JAS funded the shelter rental.



This stately Spotted Towhee (left) spent much of the winter at Mendenhall Wetlands.



Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (Hepburn's, Pacific coast type) was a welcome semi-rarity during count week. Photos by Patty Rose

Saving Birds from Collisions with Glass

Marsha Squires and Gwen Baluss

Along with habitat destruction and non-native predators, death due to window and building strikes is one of the top three mortality issues birds face around the world. Up to one billion birds die each year in the US alone from hitting windows, notes a study from The Cornell Lab of Ornithology. How can you protect birds from such a fate around your home?

Birds see reflections of habitat on glass windows and try to fly through. If the reflection is limited or obscured, birds are likely to change flight path away from the glass, or at least slow down, making the hit less impactful. This can make all the difference in bird survivorship.

How to spot a dangerous window?

Any glass can be dangerous to a bird, but some are worse than others. Surprisingly, a ground level window can be just as or even more hazardous than a high rise. Any window where bird strikes have been seen should be considered a problem window. Since most bird mortalities are not observed--predators tend to find dead birds right away-- it's a safe assumption that if there was one strike, there will be more. Windows found near bird habitat, especially those that reflect vegetation, are concerning. When glass is placed in buildings such that it appears to make a through pathway (e.g. a corner where both sides are glass), it is especially hazardous.

How to make windows safer?

Anything that makes glass more visible can help. Ideally the material forms a grid on the whole glass of at least 4 x 4 inches, but 2 x 2 is best. It should be visible at least 10 feet away. Treatments are more effective placed on the outside. Attractive, commercially made products are available, but DIY deterrents can work too. It could be as simple as hanging some rope or garden lattice.

For more information and DIY ideas see

<https://abcbirds.org/solutions/prevent-home-collisions>

or <https://pa.audubon.org/conservation/protecting-birds-striking-glass-windows> .

What doesn't work? Hawk silhouettes are only effective for the spot they cover. Studies have shown that the birds are not 'fooled' by the decal and may strike another section of the window. Shiny, moving ribbons such as the bird-scarers used in some agricultural settings may be helpful---there is anecdotal support. However, more scientific study is needed, and such devices may be more visually intrusive than small decals.

What we do, and what you can do. Treating glass, especially large windows, is a challenge. But even if it's not practical to cover a whole picture window, keep in mind that glass in sheds, garages, and outbuildings can kill birds too. A low-cost DIY treatment in such places can save birds with very little expense and sacrifice of views. At the very least shutting shades or thermal curtains during hours when nobody is looking out the windows can help, as well as save energy.

JAS has been working on public awareness of this issue. At the recent Juneau Public Market, the JAS booth offered four different options to deter birds from hitting windows: Feather Friendly tape, decorative decals, bead strands, and garden netting.

JAS partnered with University of Alaska Southeast to install an example of one treatment option in an area where employees had noted window strikes. Feather Friendly decals can now be seen near the Egan Library entrance. JAS volunteers also helped with the US Forest Service window treatments at local cabins. While the amount of glass in our communities seems endless, every treated window can be an educational tool to spur more action.

Maybe
someday,
bare "killer"
glass will be
a rare sight
and birds will
benefit.



*A Little safer
now: UAS
Egan Library.*



*Left: a placard at UAS explains the bird deterrent.
Right: JAS Intern Mali Tamone at work at Eagle Glacier Cabin.*



Kari and friends.

New JAS Education Chair!

We are so pleased to have roped local birder and photographer Kari Monagle in to joining the board. This from Kari:

"I moved to Juneau in first grade, and it has been my home since then. I received my degree in secondary education with a science and PE endorsement from Whitworth College in Spokane. After college, I returned home, married the guy I had a crush on in high

school, and started a family. I knew I wanted to teach in Juneau and eventually got my dream job teaching biology and a variety of medical related classes at JDHS.

Once I retired, I spent much of my time on the trails with my camera and birds became one of the subjects I photographed the most. I didn't know a lot of them when I started out, but I have gotten better at identifying them. When I was asked in the fall to consider becoming a board member I went to a meeting and heard the education position was open, so I decided to say 'yes'. Nature speaks so much to me, and I hope I can help others to stop and take a look around and enjoy the incredible place we call home."

The Imperiled Goshawk of Southeast Alaska

Winston Smith



A fledgling goshawk keeps a keen eye out as it learns to hunt. Photo Gwen Baluss.

The Queen Charlotte Goshawk (QCG) is a recognized subspecies of the Northern Goshawk*. The QCG is smaller and darker than the continental form, with discernible genetic differences. Within this small coastal group, the most genetically unique are those individuals breeding on the Queen Charlotte Islands (Haida Gwaii). In a 2007 status review, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service defined the QCG

range as the mainland and islands of Southeast Alaska south of the international border between Mount Fairweather and Mount Foster, and Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands in British Columbia, but not the British Columbia mainland. It is often referred to as an endemic subspecies because it only occurs in this restricted area.

The QCG received special consideration as a “Sensitive species” in the 1997 Tongass National Forest Plan because of concerns over the viability of the endemic subspecies and the plan’s commitment to maintain sustainable, widely distributed native wildlife across the Forest.

In western North America, the breeding home ranges of northern goshawks often are represented as a hierarchical sequence of 3 areas, all of which need to be considered in land-use planning and conservation: 1) nest area; 2) post-fledging area; and 3) the adult pair’s foraging area. In Southeast Alaska, female breeding home ranges

average about 8 square miles, with the post-fledging areas averaging a radius of 1750 yds. Post fledging areas surround active nest trees and represent the core-use area of an adult female and of young goshawks after fledging, but before dispersing as independent adults. Research in Southeast Alaska determined that nests were invariably in medium- or high-volume old-growth forests. Published findings of recent research in British Columbia and other parts of its western range revealed the desired condition of a post-fledging area is habitat composition similar to the nest area. Also, because of temperate rainforest ecological communities and corresponding availability of goshawk preferred prey (such as grouse and red squirrel), feeding areas are mostly old-growth forest, with interspersed wetlands. Thus, QCG breeding territories require expansive, contiguous landscapes of mostly larger old-growth trees. Clearcut logging has produced areas not readily used by goshawks for nesting or post-fledging areas because the dense young tree stands support less goshawk prey, and that prey may be difficult for goshawks to catch among small, closely packed trees.

In 2013, I published a scientific article peer-reviewed by 3 Northern Goshawk experts, which examined the breeding habitat available to the Northern Goshawk across the Tongass National Forest following implementation of the 1997 Forest Plan. With the help of the Forest Service GIS lab in Sitka, I conducted a spatially explicit analysis of 136 nests and determined that only about 50% of the required breeding habitat was available across managed and unmanaged landscapes, and of that, only about 50% was not available for active timber management.

Formally described as a metapopulation (group of physically disconnected subpopulations) in 2012, the QCG distribution includes Prince of Wales and barrier islands (POW). In 2012, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service federally listed all areas within its range with known nests as threatened subpopulations-- except Prince of Wales Island. Justification for excluding POW remains unclear, especially given that protection of all subpopulations of a threatened metapopulation is considered essential to maintain a population. Moreover, a recent review of Forest Service survey data reveals little evidence of active goshawk nests (1 possible and 3 active) within the Craig and Thorne Bay Ranger Districts (POW) since 2010, of which only 1 active nest has been recorded since 2017.

The Forest Service is shifting its timber management program away from old growth to second growth as the Tongass begins a process of revising the existing forest plan. To restore goshawk-breeding habitat, the Tongass timber management paradigm also requires consideration and modification. Extensive clearcut logging of second-growth stands will simply maintain those landscapes as unsuitable for goshawks across the Tongass. Thinning young growth stands will accelerate succession toward mature forest structure. Limiting the size and number of clearcuts within landscapes will produce a variety of habitats that will increase the diversity of ecological communities and the availability of prey, all of which will ultimately produce more suitable foraging habitat.

*A recent taxonomic update by the American Ornithological Society re-named the goshawks found in North America from Northern Goshawk to “American Goshawk”. The former name is used here for consistency with earlier planning efforts.

Tongass National Forest Embarks on New Plan Creation

How will the region’s forests be managed in the next decades? Find out more, and how citizens and organizations can be involved. An introductory webinar will take place on March 6, 2024. “Revision 101 and How to be Engaged during this Process”. See Project website or scan code above in phone:



<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/tongass/landmanagement/planning/?cid=fseprd1105492>

Juneau Audubon Society acknowledges the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian peoples of Southeast Alaska who have been the caretakers of this land since time immemorial. We at JAS are grateful to bird and hold events, field trips, and presentations on the ancestral and traditional lands of Indigenous peoples in the Áak'w Kwáan and adjacent T'aakú Kwáan territories and throughout Lingít Aaní.

Juneau Audubon Society Membership Form

Joining or renewing with the National Audubon Society (NAS) using an address in Southeast Alaska will include automatic local JAS membership. This is best done online at the NAS website.

Or, for local-only JAS membership, print or copy and mail in this section of the page with a check for at least \$10 made to Juneau Audubon Society for annual dues.

Name(s):

Mailing address:

Email: (providing an email saves paper and trees!)

Phone:

Date:

Amount enclosed:

Members receive *The Raven* Newsletter. Unless you indicate that you require a printed copy, it will be sent via email.

Receive too much mail from the National Audubon Society? Ask to be taken off the mass mailing list by emailing Customer Service at audubon@emailcustomerservice.com (Opting out of extra mailings will not stop Audubon Magazine subscription.)

JAS does not send members any offers, junk mail, or share membership information with anyone.

Thanks for joining our team!



The Raven newsletter is a publication of the Juneau Audubon Society.

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