



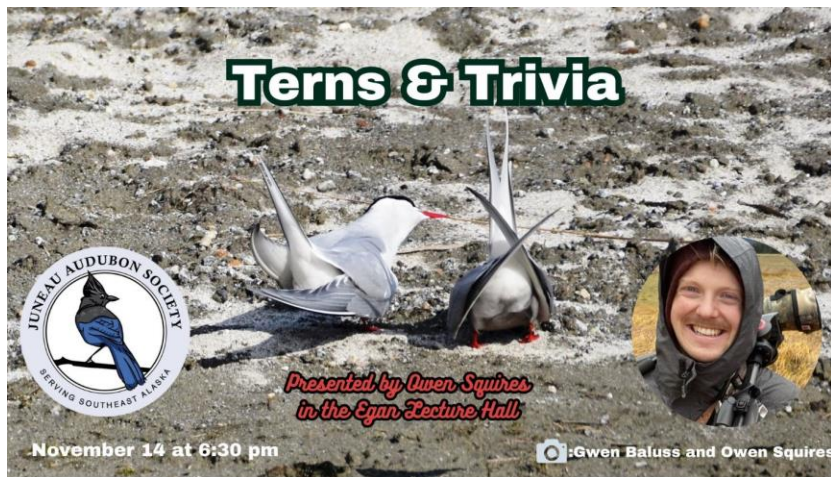
Note from the editor: We were not able to produce a third quarter letter. It was a busy summer!

Fall and Winter Membership Meetings

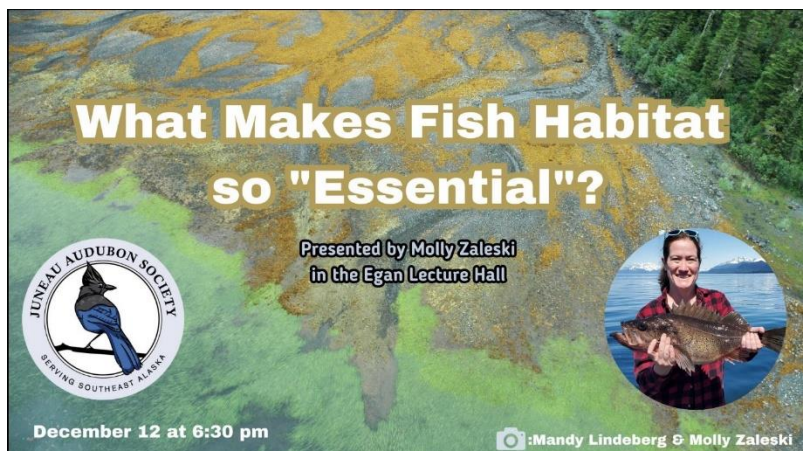
These public programs are free, family friendly-- and interesting. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend!

Unless otherwise announced programs will be the **second Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm, at University of Alaska Southeast, Egan Lecture Hall.**

- Nov. 14: Terns and Trivia with Juneau Audubon Society Intern Owen Squires.



- Dec. 12: What does "Essential Fish Habitat" mean? with Molly Zaleski.
- Jan. 9: TO BE ANNOUNCED. Please check out our website and local news outlets for more information in December.



- Feb. 13: Ebett Calvert-Siddon presents the NOAA 2024 Ecosystem Report with a focus on seabirds
- Mar. 13: TO BE ANNOUNCED. (This program will not be at UAS.)
- Apr.10: Link Olson, Univ. of Alaska Fairbanks, marmot research

Special Bird-Inspired Art Exhibit!

Jan. 4. Reception at Juneau-Douglas City Museum for Artist and former JAS Intern Celia Bower's exhibition "Getting to Know the Birds." It will be up for 2 months.

The New Year Will Bring a New Name

The JAS Board announces this autumn a turning point for our organization. We have voted to adopt a new name. It will start as a "doing business as" arrangement while we do the paperwork that will be needed to make it official. We plan to decide on a new name in 2025 – and we could use your help for ideas.

How and why did this happen? It started over four years ago. After an article in Audubon, we shared the first Raven article exploring the history of the Audubon name (see Vol.47, #1, Sept-Oct 2020 "What's in a Name?") and, after more exploration, a second article (see Volume 49, # 5, Quarter 3, 2023 "There is So Much in a Name").

We identified two main issues with the word “Audubon” for our work. First, as an enslaver and racist, some felt we should distance ourselves from the individual John James Audubon. Second, younger people, and those who had perhaps not been around birding circles, simply did not associate “Audubon” with birds and their habitat.

Meanwhile, the National Audubon Society, after a year of deliberations, decided to keep the “Audubon” name, but allow local chapters to change their names if desired. This is when we set upon a decision process to keep our name --or not.

The process has been slow and deliberate, and we have made every effort to hear all viewpoints. For board members and friends, it has been difficult at times. We sent surveys, wrote articles, and made announcements at public meetings. We posted notice on social media. We heard from members, and nonmembers. We formed a board subcommittee addressing diversity, equity and inclusion. We have kept the discussions respectful.

There were many thoughtful points for both directions. In the end, the majority of board members felt that a new name could benefit the organization, by being both more descriptive and leaving behind negative associations with the past. Others felt that the conservation tradition attached to “Audubon” was strong, and our time would be better spent working on local habitat issues and taking more practical steps towards promoting diversity. Most JAS board decisions are unanimous. This one was not. We appreciate those who support our work and activities even if they do not agree with the change. While this is not an easy transition, we hope that we can move ahead united by our shared interest in the JAS’s mission 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.

This is a big and exciting turning point for our small chapter, and we can use our (and your) creativity to think of a new, more descriptive name for our group. Do you have ideas? Please send to info@juneau-audubon-society.org

For further reading, please see the web links here:
<https://bit.ly/3UNq1oi>

Board News

Election and Officers

October is election month for JAS. We welcome a new President, Nina Keller. Nina has been acting as Vice President.

Betsy Fischer continues as Treasurer, and new board Member Kailey Pritzl is Secretary.

The Vice President position is vacant.

Many Thanks, Marsha!

Marsha Squires hopefully can enjoy a few moments of much-deserved free time as she has just completed a 3-year tenure as President. Marsha is a tireless source of energy, a great organizer, and does it with cheerfulness and poise. To name just a few of the JAS accomplishments under her watch: an updated website, an update to bylaws and organizational goals, new partnerships with other non-profits, fundraising at the public market ---and still pulling off core activities like field trips. These endeavors were successful despite having a volunteer board that nearly always has vacancies.



Marsha with Meghan Tabacek Executive Director of Trail Mix at "Hike for a Pint, Bird for a Brew" event last summer.

Welcome Kailey

Incoming Secretary Kailey Pritzl has Bachelor's degrees in both Art History and Biology with a minor in French. After finishing her conservation work in the Peruvian Amazon with critically endangered birds, she finished her biology degree at the University of Wisconsin Stevens-Point and moved to Juneau after an exchange semester at UAS. She loves international travel and her favorite sport is soccer. She's very excited to join the board and connect with the SEAK birding community!



*The complete board and contact is listed on the JAS website under "About Us". **Please contact the board president if you have an interest in a vacancy.***

Juneau Douglas North Crossing Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study Process Continues

JAS Board continues to watch closely as alternatives for a potential second bridge joining Juneau mainland and Douglas Island are being considered. Community conservationists have raised concerns over potential impacts to the Mendenhall Wetlands, which Audubon has recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) statewide, nationally, and globally. The wetlands are used all year by a wide variety of birds, but the IBA designation in particular highlighted its importance as a migratory stopover

for congregations of Surfbird, Iceland Gull (Thayer's), Rock Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, and Short-billed Dowitcher.

To read more about the Mendenhall Wetlands please see these articles.

[The Second Crossing and Southeast Alaska's Mendenhall Wetlands Important Bird Area | Audubon Alaska](https://ak.audubon.org/news/second-crossing-and-mendenhall-wetlands)

(<https://ak.audubon.org/news/second-crossing-and-mendenhall-wetlands>) and

[Opinion: The Mendenhall Wetlands — a Juneau treasure | Juneau Empire](https://www.juneauempire.com/opinion/opinion-the-mendenhall-wetlands-a-juneau-treasure) (<https://www.juneauempire.com/opinion/opinion-the-mendenhall-wetlands-a-juneau-treasure>)

While JAS is not taking a stance currently on the merits of a bridge, the board supports a process that uses the best available science to identify the second crossing alternative that has the least negative impact on humans, natural resources, and the habitat values of the Mendenhall Wetlands Complex.



Ruddy Turnstone. Gwen Baluss photo.

To get the latest news and information, see the PEL web page.

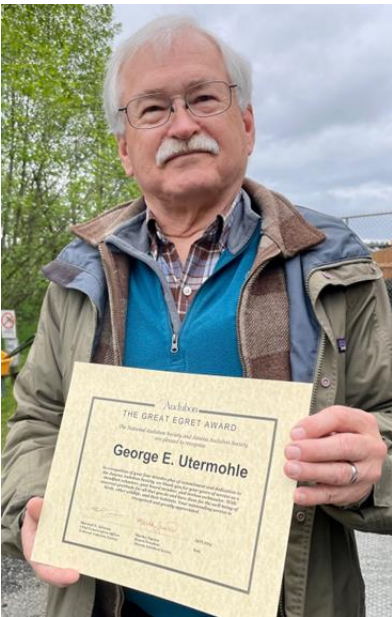
[Southcoast Region Project, Alaska DOT&PF](https://jdnorthcrossing.com)
(<https://jdnorthcrossing.com>)

According to the schedule on this page, the community **can expect finalization of the study this winter, followed by a comment period.** We hope members stay alert, and make their voices heard during this time.

Summer Highlights

Great Egret Award

Former President and long-time webmaster George Utermohle was honored with the prestigious Great Egret Award. A National Audubon award, it is given to individuals who have made significant, long-term contributions to Audubon and to conservation in pursuit of the Audubon mission. The Great Egret Award honors a lifetime of achievement and contribution to Audubon. To be eligible, individuals must have been working for the Audubon mission “in the trenches” for twenty years or more, either as a volunteer or staff member, and must have made significant contributions at one or more levels within the local chapter, center, state, regional or national level. Thank you, George, for the countless volunteer hours given, and keeping the organization outreach and documents organized for decades.



Left, George holding certificate on June 1. Right, Great Egret by John James Audubon.

Successful Partnerships--and Alaska's First Bird-Friendly Certified Coffee

This summer JAS joined Juneau trail improvement non-profit Trail Mix, Inc. in an effort that promoted hiking and birdwatching on local trails “Hike for a pint, bird for a brew”, recognizing that “as trails are important to human’s mental and physical health, habitat is critical to the lives of wildlife”.

Participants heading out on trails checked off “passport posts” featuring birds found in the local areas. And they were eligible for prizes upon earning stamps on their passports.

One such prize was a bag of coffee from a local shop and roaster Coppa—very special coffee, the **first Smithsonian Certified Bird Friendly coffee** roasted in Alaska.

This was a huge milestone for those interested in songbird conservation. JAS has been promoting the purchase of bird friendly coffee for decades, but at first it was difficult to find. Coffee is a huge commodity and involves large quantities of land that is also prime habitat for songbirds. Certain agricultural practices can improve bird habitat as well as the

environment for the people who work there. The strongest certification in this respect is the Smithsonian label. While there are now many online vendors, JAS has is overjoyed to have a local source.

Many thanks to Trail Mix, Inc., Coppa and everyone who contributed time or funds!



A celebratory bird walk with JAS and Trail Mix at Kingfisher Pond.

A Summer with the Swallows

By Noora Parrish

I was grateful for the opportunity to serve as an Juneau Audubon Society intern this summer, focusing on the Tree Swallow Nest Box Project. Tree Swallows are tiny fierce creatures that can perform spectacular feats of aerial acrobatics, hunt all the long Alaskan day to feed hungry chicks, and migrate thousands of miles starting at only a few months old. Males begin arriving in Juneau when it is still cold out and start staking out their territory. As the females arrive, the fighting over certain boxes can be ferocious. When the feathers settled, 64 of the 68 Tree Swallow boxes Audubon volunteers put out in the spring had been claimed.

Starting In the spring, the project leader, intrepid volunteer Brenda Wright, and I monitored the progress of nests as they grew from a few pieces of straw to a thick layer of dried plants with a cup formed by the mother's body. I was concerned that some were thick with feathers while others, perhaps belonging to less experienced or aggressive parents, looked quite bare. Even as they laid, the busy parents continued to add downy eagle and duck feathers to their nests, and all were well-feathered by hatching time. After a long cold spell in the spring-- when I wondered if the insects would proliferate in time for the hatchlings—the swarms emerged. I've never been so happy for biting pests to arrive in force!

I read that only twenty percent of Tree Swallows survive their first year, but the project's swallows, mostly nesting in boxes on Southeast Alaska Land Trust property, have had excellent reproductive success. In Alaska there are not as many predators as found in the lower 48, but bears took a toll this year, biting apart five boxes and eating chicks. For most of the season, our twice-weekly nest checks went smoothly as we watched helpless pink chicks rapidly grow into beautiful, feathered fledglings. Often fledglings seem to suddenly disappear, but in early July I was able to watch a dozen chubby chicks in the trees at Kingfisher Pond, begging and fluttering about as their parents tirelessly brought them beak-fulls of insects. Tree Swallows are fed by their parents for about three days after fledging. Next the young join into flocks where they will perfect their flying and hunting skills before fall migration.

Despite understanding intellectually how precarious survival is for songbirds, I was shocked when a box I opened at Twin Lakes contained six perfectly still 11-day old chicks, beaks pointed up as if awaiting a feeding. Brenda explained that when one parent dies, its mate can't keep up with the brood's high caloric demands by itself. In mid-July, just as the last of the chicks were preparing to fledge, an ill-timed storm brought record rainfall and unrelenting winds that made it impossible for some of the parents to feed their nestlings. The last six nests to hatch failed, excepting one at Fish Creek that only had two chicks. After the storm, I observed a large flock of Tree Swallows at Sunny Point flying low and hoped that most of the 296 fledglings we counted this year will return to Alaska next year.

With Tree Swallows' population in decline, and their natural nesting habitat of hollows in old trees near clean water dwindling, this project may boost the local population and contribute to our understanding of this species in our region.

On our walks on the wetlands, Brenda's stories about Alaska's conservationists gave me an appreciation of all the hard work and generosity that has gone into preserving Juneau's unique wildlife habitats.

I look forward to staying involved with the Audubon community as they work to conserve and restore natural ecosystems for future generations of birds and the people who watch them.



Tree Swallow on nest box. Photo courtesy Ashley Murphy.

Missing from the Flock

It is with sadness that we report the loss of several long-time JAS supporters this year. We featured two in the last edition, George Reifenstein and Mike (Jake) Jacobson. All these friends had a big impact on the local natural history community and will be sorely missed. We encourage you to check out the links to their life notes, even if you did not know them – their stories are all very Alaskan, and incredibly inspiring.

James “Jim” King

Jim King was known to us as the husband of JAS founder, Mary Lou King. But outside of that, he was an “ornithological icon”. This summary was provided by local raptor biologist, Steve Lewis, for the statewide bird conservation group, Boreal Partners in Flight.

Over the weekend, Jim King, one of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's conservation champions, passed away in Juneau at age 96. In case you don't know who Jim was, here are a few details of his career (provided by Julian Fischer). Jim King was an airplane pilot and biologist and conducted work statewide, starting before Alaska statehood. Jim was selected as Refuge Manager of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge in the early 1960s and then moved on to Juneau as Supervisor of Waterfowl Investigations, a program that ultimately morphed into the Waterfowl Branch of FWS' Migratory Bird Management. Jim flew the Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey in Alaska and the Canadian Yukon starting in the early 1960s, then trained his successor, Bruce Conant, to take over the role (see photo of Jim mentoring Bruce on the art of eating on the wing). Jim's vision was to identify and protect habitat across the state and beyond. His legendary duck roundups in Yukon Flats (over 22,000 ducks banded in three years) revealed the breadth of migratory pathways previously unknown. This banding work along with his waterfowl surveys of Yukon Flats was instrumental in Secretary of Interior Udall's decision to oppose the proposal to dam the Yukon River at Rampart that would have flooded an area the size of Lake Erie and destroy the area now protected as Yukon Flats NWR. Jim's early surveys on the North Slope identified the Teshekpuk Lake region as a critical molting ground for four species of geese nesting in Canada,

Russia, the Yukon Delta, and the Arctic Coastal Plain, a discovery that led to special conservation designation status within the NPR-A. Jim authored and coauthored dozens of published papers and chapters of books and went on to publish his own book, "Attending Alaska's Birds." While Jim retired from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1983, he remained active with Migratory Bird Management as an aerial observer through the early 2000s and as an advocate for protecting wild places. Jim was awarded the Distinguished Service Award in 2002 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Jim lived in Juneau, and I have fond memories of him stopping by the USFWS office (or running into him around our small city) and chatting about biology, eagles, swans, and the Service. He was a very kind soul that cared deeply and passionately to the end about Alaska, its wildlife and landscapes."

Additionally, Jim was one of the founders of the Pacific Seabird Group, in 1973. This organization is still active and continues to work on waterbirds conservation.

Legacy notes:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/juneauempire/name/james-king-vi-obituary?id=54919756>



Jim King (right) & Bruce Conant on N754 wing

Pam Randles

Mention anything about birds around Haines in the last couple decades, and no doubt Pam Randles name has come up. Any visiting birder in Haines benefits from her work. She started birding groups there, contributed countless observations, mentored local observers, and worked on birding trails with the Takshanuk Watershed Council.

Legacy notes: <https://www.chilkatvalleynews.com/2024/01/19/pam-randles-remembered-for-humor-intelligence-dies-at-79/les>

William “Bill” Heard

Neighbors in Auke Bay knew Bill as a kind soul and an avid hummingbird feeder; a person who had traveled widely on birding trips. But in his ‘day job’ he was a prominent Fisheries scientist, a Federal researcher for over 50 years working locally for NOAA , with a technical reach throughout the entire pacific.

Legacy notes:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/juneauempire/name/william-heard-obituary?id=55312178>

William “Randy” Jaenicke

Forest Service Employees in Juneau offered this remembrance of their co-worker Randy.

Born and raised in Juneau, Randy was known for his sense of humor, friendliness, and willingness to help others. He was a man of faith and a poet. He had a passion for and knowledge of birds that he enjoyed sharing with others. He brought joy and laughter to our workplace and made a positive impact on everyone who had the pleasure of working with him. Randy will be missed and leave a profound void within our Alaska Team and community.

Juneau Audubon Society Membership Form

- Print and use this page or join/renew through our website: www.juneauaudubon.org.
- Alternatively, join the National Audubon Society online at <https://www.audubon.org/membership> which includes automatic membership in JAS for zip codes anywhere within Southeast Alaska.

Name: _____

Address:

Phone#(s): _____

Email: _____

- New or renewing JAS Chapter Membership fee: **\$10**
- Please make check payable to: Juneau Audubon Society, PO Box 12575, Juneau, AK 99801

We are phasing out paper copies of *The Raven*. Please provide an email so we can send it and other news updates electronically!

- Note that JAS does not send members any commercial mail or share our membership contacts with anyone.
- Please contact membership@juneau-audubon-society.org for questions about membership.
- Interested in volunteering? Contact info@juneau-audubon-society.org.

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 K'wáan and adjacent T'aakú K'wáan territories and throughout Lingít Aaní.

Christmas Bird Count

The 2024 Juneau Christmas Bird Count will take place on **Saturday, December 14**. The CBC is a national citizen science event sponsored by the National Audubon Society. This year's count is the 125th national count and 52nd Juneau count. To learn more about the CBC, visit the National Audubon Society website at

<https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count>

An organizational email message will go out to past volunteers in November. If you are an experienced birdwatcher and would like to participate as a field volunteer or feeder watcher, or if you have questions, please contact Patty Rose at p_rose_raven@yahoo.com

Look for JAS at the Juneau Public Market

"Alaska's premier holiday gift show" will be at Centennial Hall and the adjacent Juneau Arts & Culture Center (JACC). Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 1, 2024; 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Fri.; and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sat. and Sun.

Admission (\$10) is collected at Centennial Hall with over 120 vendors: it's free at the JACC, with nearly 40 vendors. See for more details at <https://www.juneaupublicmarket.com>



Happy Holidays!

This edition of The Raven edited by Gwen Baluss. Contact:
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