



# Island Wings

- to enjoy, learn about, & preserve the diverse natural habitats of these islands & beyond

Volume 17 Number 1

July/ August 2006

## Program

### Bird Photographer Paul Bannick on NW Owls and Woodpeckers

Thursday, July 20, 7 pm, Land Trust Building

Photographer Paul Bannick will share images captured while snowshoeing, kayaking, and hiking, throughout the Pacific Northwest. His Vashon program will focus on the NW's rich diversity of owls and woodpeckers. Due to our habitat diversity, 15 of the 19 owls and 13 of 22 woodpeckers of North America live in the NW.

Islander Mike Feinstein, recently attending a Bannick slideshow, offers this invitation: "Rarely does one come



Great Grey Photo by Paul Bannick

across a perfect mating of a passion and a skill, but such is the case with Paul Bannick and birds. His photographs are simply extraordinary, thoroughly accomplished and at the same time so obviously dependent on a mastery of avian behavior and habits. This is a real treat for Vashon."

Before concentrating on photography, and after graduating from the UW, Bannick was an original employee of Aldus, and then worked for Adobe Systems and Microsoft. Today, along with photography, he engages in non-profit work and currently serves as the Director of Development for Conservation Northwest [www.conservationnw.org]. He is a principal with Seattle Audubon's radio series *BirdNote*.

### Thank You to Program Chair Brenda Sestrap

The Island Audubon Society thanks retiring Program Chair Brenda Sestrap for her successful production of the six-times-yearly programs over the last two years. Her booking, publicizing, and staging the programs culminated in the recent John Marzluff corvid presentation, which had the highest turnout for an Island Audubon program. In addition, her service as a board member was generous and much appreciated.

## Island Audubon Annual Meeting (Preceding Photo Program) 7pm, Thursday, July 20 Land Trust Bldg.

\*\*\*SEE BOARD BALLOT INSIDE

### THREAT TO VASHON MARINE PILINGS

Are Vashon-Maury Islands' marine pilings slated for removal? As part of the Puget Sound Initiative, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has received funds to expand its creosote removal project in Puget Sound, slated for completion by June 2007. In the present funding, no money is included for replacing bird-boxed pilings.

DNR and other agencies are working with local stakeholders to identify, inventory, and prioritize sites for removal efforts.

Has the Island and the larger birding community been consulted? Locally, Island pilings are a valued part of the seascape: zoos for low-tide beachwalkers and divers, photographers' images, and in-situ guidebook to Mosquito Fleet, logging, and community history. The challenge is weighing the extent of environmental damage against present use of the derelict pilings by wildlife and humans.

DNR'S Philip Bloch explains that the state "has begun efforts to identify places where creosoted pilings could be removed as part of an effort to prevent creosote from entering the environment... We recognize that many pilings, particularly isolated pilings that may no longer be used for maritime purposes, have become habitats for wildlife for both roosting and in the case of purple martins, nesting. I'm not sure if any specific plans to remove pilings on Vashon or Maury Islands have gone past the speculative stage at this point..."

*Continued on Inside Back Page plus contact and research information.*

## Audubon Scholarship Awarded

By Sue Trevathan

Shaylon Stolk was awarded Audubon's \$500 scholarship because of her volunteer commitment to our chapter over many years. Shaylon helped teach the 4<sup>th</sup> grade birding program.



**Shaylon Stolk with Sue Trevathan**  
Photo by John Sage/FinchHaven

She created a fine Powerpoint presentation of birds of Vashon and KVI for use in the fourth grade program as well as other venues. She served as ambassador for Audubon at the high school, and assisted with the Science Fair at McMurray. She also staffed the

Strawberry Festival booths, and inventoried, cleaned and repaired bird boxes. Shay's scholarship will go to her studies in environmental sciences at Amherst College.

*Donations to the scholarship fund can be made to Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society, PO Box 838, Vashon WA 98070.*

## In Memoriam

Mark McCann, chapter founder and past Island Conservation Chair, died recently in Tacoma. Rayna Holtz recalls, that "he led Island native plant field trips, toting his Hitchcock and his knowledge from the Native Plant Society. Rayna adds, "It was Mark's devotion to the chapter and concern about its dissolving that spurred me and Jay to join in its revitalization. Mark kept coming to the library and pestering me about the chapter's decline and finally the 'last meeting' of the board." He moved to Tacoma to attend college and revisited the Island for birding field trips. Rayna comments, "Mark was only 55, I think. A good man." **Donations in Mark's memory to local Audubon chapters was suggested in obituaries in the *Beachcomber* and the *Olympian*.**

### VMIAS Board

#### Officers

President	Ed Swan	463-7976
Vice President	Sue Trevathan	463-1484
Secretary	Ellen Kritzman	567-4837
Treasurer	Lindsay Hofman	463-5356

#### Chairs

Conservation	Michelle Ramsden	463-1312
Education	Sue Trevathan	463-1484
	Kathryn True	567-5389
Field Trips	Sherry Bottoms	463-1312
Island Wings	Barbara Chasan	463-2571
	Ann Spiers	463-9858
Membership	Ron Simons	463-3627
Programs	Brenda Sestrup	463-3510
Publicity	Jean Aspinall	463-3178
	Basha Brownstein	463-4135
Welcome	Joy Nelsen	463-2593

## Audubon Merchandise at Festival

Vashon Audubon always has a booth at the Strawberry Festival, where we encourage membership in Audubon and sell merchandise to make money for our chapter. Most of the items sold are T-shirts and books. This year we are closing out some of our T-shirt stock (including the Ts and sweats with the Western Grebe) at just \$10 each. We also have a few bird feeders at half-price. Don't miss out on these bargains.

**I am also interested in new items to sell at our booth. Possibilities are bird houses, bee boxes, and hand-crafted items (but no jewelry). If anyone has something to sell on consignment, and the items are compatible with our other merchandise, please call me, Pat Dawdy, at 463-3980.**

### VOLUNTEER BOX *Opportunities to Serve*

#### Booth Staff

Saturday & Sunday, July 8 & 9, 10am-6pm,  
Strawberry Festival.

Vashon Audubon's booth, 2-hr shifts. Encourage membership and sell merchandise to make money for our chapter.

Pam Dawdy: 463-3980.

#### Merchandise

By Saturday, July 8 for Strawberry Festival.

New items to sell at our booth, on consignment. Need to be compatible with our other merchandise.

Pam Dawdy: 463-3980.

#### Parade Organizer

For Strawberry Festival

Is anyone interested in putting together a parade unit for the Festival?

Call Ed Swan: 463-7976

#### Program Hospitality Host

ASAP

A friendly someone to organize and be in charge of the goodie table at our Program meetings. Job is to procure snacks (chapter will pay), make coffee and tea, set up for the meetings, and attend. 6 meetings a year.

Call Ed Swan: 463-7976.

#### WSU Extension Watershed Stewardship Training

Applications due August 4.

Over 70 hours of classroom and field training, then 60 hours on a stewardship project of your choice.

Classes Fridays 9am-4pm 9/8 thru 11/3 in Renton with 3 Saturday field trips. Fee \$75.

Tara Zimmerman: 206-205-3203 or

tara.zimmerman@metrokc.gov.

**[www.vashonaudubon.org](http://www.vashonaudubon.org)**

## Be a Member! Support your local Audubon Chapter! but first read the small print of membership

You can send a membership check to the Vashon-Maury chapter, send a check to Audubon's national headquarters, send one to another chapter, send one to the state Audubon office, or any combination of the above. You can't tell the options without a scorecard. This may help you distinguish among them:

- *Send a \$15 first-time or renewal local membership check to the Vashon-Maury Island chapter* All of the money stays on Vashon, where it pays for local programs. None of the money goes to national or state programs. You receive this chapter's newsletter, *Island Wings*. You do not receive *Audubon*. [contact: Ron Simons, 463-3627, or [www.vashonaudubon.org](http://www.vashonaudubon.org)]
- *Send a \$20 first-time national membership check to the Vashon-Maury Island chapter or directly to national* You will be both a national and a local member. The money goes to New York, but national sends it all back to the chapter. When you renew, national will send back a percentage based on the number of national members who lived on Vashon in 2001. [contact: (212) 979-3000 or [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)]
- *Send a \$20 national renewal membership check to the Vashon-Maury Island chapter or directly to national* You will be both a national and a local member. The money goes to New York. Some is used for national lobbying and educational efforts. A percentage comes back to the local chapter. [contact: (212) 979-3000 or [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)]
- *Send a \$20 donation to state* The state office, Audubon Washington, is technically a field office of the National Audubon Society. It gives Audubon a lobbying voice in Olympia. There are no state-level members. You will be both a national and a local member. (National encourages the state office to be self-supporting, so it does its own fund raising. Some chapters and individuals donate money to the state office. National gives it some support.) [contact: (206) 652-2444 or [wa.audubon.org](http://wa.audubon.org)]
- *Send membership checks to two or more chapters* You can belong to more than one chapter, and you may choose to support the legal or other work of a chapter outside Vashon. [chapter contact information on the national website.]

### Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society      *New Member Application*

Membership in National Audubon Society *includes* membership in Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society (VMIAS). You will receive *Audubon* magazine from National Audubon and *Island Wings* from VMIAS along with all other local membership benefits. A **local-only** membership is also available. (See details below.) To avoid delays in processing, please choose one of the categories listed and make your check out as indicated.

\$20.00 introductory membership in National Audubon Society *and* Vashon-Maury Island Chapter (individual or family). Please make your check payable to **National Audubon Society** for this category.

\$15.00 **local-only** membership in Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society (individual or family). You will receive bimonthly issues of *Island Wings* and all other local membership benefits. *Audubon* magazine is *not* included. Please make your check payable to **Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society** to join in this category.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and your check to: Membership Chair, Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society P.O. Box 838 Vashon Island, WA 98070

## July-August 2006

Saturday, July 1, 2006, 9:30am -dark -- Park'n'Ride next to Country Store.

**Vashon Maury Island Annual Butterfly Count** -- Rayna Holtz 463-3153.

Join knowledgeable butterflyers to count butterflies in all Island habitats. Bring snack, drinks, lunch, camera.

**Last call for reservations!** Field Trip, September 30, \$110/person, 3 spaces left.

**WESTPORT SEABIRDS PELAGIC TRIP** -- Sherry Bottoms, 463-1312.

A chance to see 10 new species; details at [www.vashonaudubon.org](http://www.vashonaudubon.org).

Saturday, July 8, 8-10am -- Park 'n' Ride next to Country Store -- Monthly Second Saturday.

**ISLAND AUDUBON FIELD TRIP** -- Notice meeting location change because of Strawberry Festival. Bring binoculars/scope if you have them! Sherry Bottoms, 463-1312.

Saturday and Sunday, July 8 and 9 -- All Day in Town.

**STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL** -- Volunteer at the Audubon booth, or stop by and visit. *Great T-shirt sale!* \$10 each for Grebe Ts and sweats. Usually our booth is in the Vashon Library parking lot, near the street. Pam Dawdy, 463-3980.

Thursday, July 20, 7pm -- Land Trust Building.

**VASHON AUDUBON PROGRAM, ANNUAL MEETING, & ELECTION** -- *Owls and Woodpeckers of the PNW, Photographer and Naturalist Paul Bannick.*

A short business meeting will precede the program.

Thursday, August 3, 7 pm -- First Thursday every even-numbered month.

**VMIAS BOARD MEETING** -- Phone Ed Swan for confirmation, 463-7976.

Saturday, August 12, 8-10am -- Ober Park 'n' Ride -- Monthly Second Saturday.

**ISLAND AUDUBON FIELD TRIP** -- Bring binoculars/scope if you have them! Sherry Bottoms, 463-1312.

Vashon-Maury Island Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 838  
Vashon Island, WA, 98070

## Butterfly Count

July 1, Saturday, 9:30am to dark .



\*\*\*\*\**Out on the Island*

Meet at Park'n'Ride across from Sound Foods.

Bring snacks/lunch/fluids.

\*\*\*\*\**Backyard Counts Needed*

For information Phone Rayna Holtz at 463-3153

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## SWAN'S NOTABLE SIGHTINGS

*It's a pleasure to lift a few items from Ed Swan's bird-sightings e-mail. The island has had some remarkable visitors over the past two months.*

May 20: Yesterday, Steve Caldwell reported the sighting of a **Western Kingbird** on a fence line across the street from the Maury Island Regional Park [the fourth record for Vashon-Maury]. June 14: The Western Kingbird was using the breeze to fly like a swallow and catch bugs over the pond and meadow at KVI Beach. It then was successfully nabbing airborne bugs from the fence of the radio tower. Bent and Marie Blichfeldt saw a W. Kingbird on Maury Island at about the same time as Steve's sighting in that area. Possibly all three sightings are the same bird.

May 27: [Four **Brown Pelicans** were seen at Low Tide Festival. Pelicans are almost annual, but usually seen one at a time and in the fall.] Shelly Douglas saw them from the lighthouse today. I checked it out and they were still there at 7pm.

May 28: Bob Hawkins found three pelicans this morning off his place on the south end of Dockton. These birds are likely three of the four Pt. Robinson pelicans of yesterday but might be a totally different set. Fourteen were noted by Bremerton the other day.

June 5: Sherry Bottoms reported a **Lazuli Bunting** at her feeder yesterday. I stopped by around 11:30-12:30 today and ... found it singing from several perches, mostly from the tops of some doug fir trees in a meadow. It has been seen by others for some period of days to a week or so.

June 6: Last night Sue Trevathan heard another Lazuli Bunting behind Vashon Market. I think it is likely that this is another bird....

June 7: Joy Nelson reports another Lazuli Bunting at her place this afternoon, seen through her scope. [Lazuli Buntings are annual but usually only one to two sightings.]

June 14: A big surprise, a **Pacific Loon** in breeding plumage here in June. That's almost a month later than previous records. It must not be heading for the breeding grounds this year. A **Common Loon** or two usually hang out in Tramp Harbor over the summer, but this is the first Pacific I have heard of doing so.

## Adopt-A-Road Clean-Up Work Crew

by Ellen Kritzman

Weather was kind to us, and we didn't have wet ditches to wade through. Also we had 11 adults and one child, an excellent number of bodies to do the job efficiently in teams of three, working from both ends to cover the 2-mile stretch. We gathered up approximately 2 bags of recyclable bottles and cans, and 6 bags of garbage. I would like to thank the following people who participated with me: Sue Trevathan, her father Earl, and daughter Piper Bazemore, Jay and Rayna Holtz, Laura Bienen, Katherine True and Alexis, Richard Rogers, Yvonne Kuperberg, and Pete Murray.

## BIRDER'S BEST YOGA STANCE

Hatha Yoga Instructor Amy Huggins advises birder Dana Hofman how to assume a spine-friendly stance when using a scope. At the Island's Audubon March program *Yoga for Birders*, Huggins lead the evening's participants through three areas in which yoga practices can aid birders in having a more comfortable, less strenuous, and more enjoyable and instructive birding experience. These demonstrations covered stances tailored to support and align the back while using a scope and binoculars, a six-step stretching sequence, and pre-trip preparation through meditation. **The photo illustrates a neutral spine stance for using a scope. On field trips, scopes are set up for**



**group viewing, many times too low for some folks. Whether the scope is too low or just right, Huggins suggests placing one foot under the tripod, the other foot behind, and then bending the knees.**

*Editors' Comment:*

*This program is a candidate for another presentation to provide this practical advice to more birders.*

## Marine Pilings cont. from page 1

DNR's Monica Durkin comments on contamination, "For example Maury island has one of the largest pacific herring spawning populations in the South Puget Sound. Studies have shown that creosote treated wood is lethal to herring eggs that are deposited on the piling surface. These herring are important food for salmonids and birds such as the Western Grebe. The Western Grebe are a candidate species on the State Endangered Species list."

Bloch suggests questions about agency plans and Purple Martin's habitat be directed to him or Durkin.

### Resources:

\*\*Philip Bloch, Aquatic Resources Division, WA DNR, 360.902.1718, philip.bloch@wadnr.gov.

\*\*Monica Durkin Resource Specialist, WA DNR, South Puget Sound Region, 360.825.1631 ext. 2006, monica.durkin@wadnr.gov.

\*\*If you want science cited to support removal, see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/ahg/overwatr.htm>.

\*\*To receive pertinent emails on this topic, email a request for forwarding to *Wings* editor's email [spiers@eskimo.com](mailto:spiers@eskimo.com).

# Welcoming the May Low Tide

by Rayna Holtz

Point Robinson at a very low tide reveals a sandbar extending eastward, and Saturday morning, May 27, there were several hundred men, women and children all over it, hunting for clues to the mysteries of its saltwater residents. Six beach naturalists offered guidance, and two high school girls, Shay Stolk and Moria Robinson, made forays to the beach to retrieve living specimens for the touch tanks at People for Puget Sound's booth. Its three tanks held microcosms of the fecund beach, with waving seaweeds, anemones, hermit crabs, a large red rock crab, and other beach creatures.

**All over the Point people asked, "Have you seen that amazing moon snail?" And there in one touch tank was the white balloon whorl of snail shell, engulfed by the lush translucent flesh of the living snail which glowed like an underwater moon three times the size of the shell and ended with a delicate gelatinous head crowned by two sensitive antennae waving in puzzlement.** The preserved intact exoskeletons of over a dozen bizarre and unusual crabs of Puget Sound were displayed nearby by the Washington Scuba Alliance, together with many kinds of shells.

Meanwhile, Darsie Beck and a dozen students were nestled in a booth with sketch pads, pencils, brushes, and paints, learning to look with the eyes of a nature journalist. He showed them his journal, filled with hundreds of one-page entries. As the tide moved, the beach artists roved and sketched, and brought their notebooks back to the tent to paint.

**At noon a group followed David Frank and Helen Meeker down the beach toward Pat Collier's house, half a mile south. David pointed out the traces of the shoreline's geologic past and the steep bluffs that produce slides every winter, while Helen identified the plants clinging to the bluffs and springing from the sand. Pat, whose ancient bulkhead was removed several years ago and is being replaced by driftwood and native plants, showed the group the results of these efforts, modified by winds and tides.**

The most stunning surprise was the appearance of four Brown Pelicans, rarely in Puget Sound though regularly present on the outer coast. The pelicans dove, swam, and preened in the waters just south of the Point. In the bluffs, Northern Rough-winged Swallows zoomed in and out of the nest holes, bringing food to their chicks. Offshore, Pigeon Guillemots floated, also hunting food for young hidden in the bluff's nest holes. Likewise, bluff-nesting Belted Kingfisher rattled the crowd.

**Other of the day's birds: Mallards, White-winged Scoter, Glaucous-winged Gulls, Pileated/Downy Woodpeckers, Bald Eagle, Caspian Tern, Robin, Swainson's Thrush, Song and White-crowned Sparrows, Wilson's and Orange-crowned Warblers, Spotted Towhee, Crow, Barn and Violet-green Swallows, Brown Creeper, Bushtit, Warbling and Hutton's Vireos, Pacific Slope Flycatcher, and Rufous Hummingbird.**

# Blue Heron Graces Festival

by Ann Spiers

The tribal canoe had the outline of a saltwater craft: high front prow, deep sides, sleek lines, crewed by many pullers. At the Low Tide Festival, Islanders hustled down to the shore, knowing that a welcoming was required.

The canoe, the *Blue Heron*, traveled at four knots and took 45 minutes to cross over from the mainland to Point Robinson--"just enough to work up a sweat," remarked a crew member.



Having watched NW local tribes greet arriving canoes at regional Native American gatherings, Islanders knew to call out, listen to their response, and then finally welcome the canoe visitors to land.

After the canoe circled south and back, the Skipper, Snohomish Michael Evans, stood, raised his voice to call out to us in English and native tongue. Finally and clearly, he asked permission to land.

Islander Leslie Creed, mentored in storytelling by famed Makah storyteller Helen Peterson, recalls her Low Tide Festival experience. Looking out at the beached canoe, Leslie left the tent, her assigned venue for her part in the day's program. She saw four pelicans diving and cavorting (four is an auspicious number in NW Indian myths), and decided to tell her story next to the canoe, in the bowl of the beach, and fortuitously at the exact low tide time.

The tribal pullers gathered around her, and she told a low-tide story, taught to her from oral tradition by Helen Peterson and from Ella Clark's *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest*.

Leslie, after many experiences in potlatch gatherings during her storytelling apprenticeship, wanted to extend hospitality to the visitors. Luckily, Thriftway donated bottled water which she formally offered as a gift to each of the crew.

Next year for the Festival, she suggests that we be hosts more fully: compose a Vashon Welcome Song, have gifts, and a picnic. She foretells: "This is the beginning. All the signs are there."