

*Program Meeting*  
**Motus Tracking Wildlife System**  
**Amie MacDonald**  
*virtually see page 6*  
*December 4, 2022 1:30 - 3:30 pm*

September  
October  
2022



# The Sandpiper



*Baltimore Oriole Lia Bocchiaro/Audubon*

## **New legislation will help bring birds back across the Western Hemisphere** *by National Audubon*

“Birds don’t recognize borders so we must work with our neighbors to protect them wherever they fly,” said Marshall Johnson, chief conservation officer, National Audubon Society. “This legislation will provide more places to nest, winter, and rest for the millions of birds across farms and forests in Ohio, through backyards and bays in Maryland, to the mountains of Colombia, and beyond.”

Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) introduced legislation this week to enhance the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act. The NMBCA is an innovative and cost-effective approach to the conservation of the more than 350 neotropical bird species in the U.S. that travel to Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Canada every year, such as the Scarlet Tanager, Purple Martin, and Baltimore Oriole. It supports the conservation of bird habitat as well as research, monitoring, outreach, and education.

As a matching grant program, it catalyzes funding from a range of sources beyond the U.S. government. Since 2000, the U.S. has invested \$80 million which has sparked an additional \$310 million in matching funds from public-private partnerships. These funds have supported 658 projects in 36 Latin American and Caribbean countries, 40 U.S. states and territories, and provinces and territories across Canada.

“There are so many incredible, yet imperiled birds we share across the Western Hemisphere, this legislation will promote shared stewardship of those

birds and the places they need,” said Johnson. “The proposed bill would triple the investment NMBCA can make in on-the-ground habitat protection, restoration, education, and research. It also ensures those funds are leveraged by other governments and partners.”

The Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act (S. 4187) specifically aims to:

More than triple the authorized annual funding for the program from up to \$6.5 million to up to \$25 million by fiscal year 2028.

Increase the available match of federal funds that can result in more, larger proposals and fewer barriers to participation by partners at a time when action is urgently required.

Provide greater capacity to implement the grant program by raising the amount the Fish and Wildlife Service can allocate toward managing it.

“These are the kinds of investments we must make to help recover the 3 billion birds lost on this continent alone since 1970,” added Johnson.

Every spring, millions of birds travel thousands of miles from Latin America and the Caribbean to their breeding grounds in the U.S. and Canada, as far north as the Arctic. As winter approaches, these migratory birds make the long trip back south. Apart from being among the most stunning and awe-inspiring species enjoyed by birdwatchers, these more than 300 species of birds are also economically important for their role in pest control, seed dispersal, pollination for agriculture, and ecotourism. In the U.S., the Fish and Wildlife Service estimates there are 45 million birdwatchers, generating an economic output of \$96 billion.

In recent years, Congressional spending committees and the Biden administration have shown an increased commitment to funding the NMBCA program. To continue to grow the program, fulfill the unmet demand by applicants, and address urgent conservation needs for these species, Audubon urges Congress to take up and advance this legislation swiftly.

## The President's Perch



*By Janet Strong*



## 123rd Annual Christmas Bird Count on New Year's Day 01/01/2023!

Hello, all you members, friends and supporters, the 2022 Christmas Bird Count for the Grays Harbor Area or Circle will be conducted on New Year's Day, 2023 this year. That large circle extends 10 miles north, south and east and west from the tip of the North Bay. There is lots of room for great birding within this zone.

In fact, that large circle around the harbor is divided into smaller circles and teams are formed to cover each of these smaller birding areas. We would like to see more members and friends participate this year and in future ones, too. You don't have to be a serious birder nor highly skilled at identifying them. Your enthusiasm and, perhaps, recording skills are enough. Of course, more eyes spot more birds.

Dianna Moore works hard every year to assign the teams to their areas. She tells me that there are always open spots for additional observers on existing teams or at small circles without any team. So if you would be interested in spending a whole day with teammates finding and recording our birds, please contact Dianna Moore at (360) 590-1395.

More fun occurs at the end of the day when most of the birders gather at Pizza Hut in Aberdeen between 4 and 7 p.m. for pizza and recording the results of the day. You learn about the sightings of everyone.

As Thanksgiving nears, the GHAS board wants to add our thanks for having such loyal members, new members, friends and supporters. All have stuck with us through the changes necessitated by the pandemic over the past three years.

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

## Membership dues for 2023

Your support of Grays Harbor Audubon Society (GHAS) helps to assure that the over 3000 acres of prime wetlands and wildlife habitat are protected for future generations. In addition, your tax-deductible donation helps the chapter provide our informational website, member meetings, and support to like-minded organizations. Your membership renews January 1, 2023. Please send your dues to GHAS PO Box 470 Montesano, Washington 98563. Please join or re-new at the highest level you can afford. See page 8 for a membership form.

## Chapter input to National Audubon Strategic Plan

*Elizabeth Gray, Ph.D. Audubon CEO*

National Audubon has begun developing our next strategic plan, and I invite you and your Chapter to be part of its development. Our strategic plan will define the conservation impact Audubon aims to achieve, the main actions we will take, and the organizational culture we are building. I know the direction and decisions taken by Audubon can significantly impact the work of your Chapter, so I need to hear from you. I value your input.

From now through the end of the year, we are reaching out to all Chapters and Ambassadors online as well as holding virtual focus groups and interviews. I invite you to take 15 minutes to share your views <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2569N66?emci=6bcbfe28-605c-ed11-819c-002248258d2f&emdi=3169168e-7b5c-ed11-819c-002248258d2f&ceid=3060054> and to share this invitation with other members of your Chapter. This survey will remain open until November 30, 2022.

In the new year, we will invite your input again with a focus on the activities Audubon will undertake to implement the vision laid out in the strategic plan. Your feedback is very important. I hope you are able to take the survey and help us build a plan that positions Audubon to be an even stronger voice for birds, people, and the planet.

If you have any questions or suggestions about the strategic plan, please email the project team at [sp2023@audubon.org](mailto:sp2023@audubon.org).



*Dunlin group by Tom Rowley*

## **The Festival is coming, the Festival is coming**

My name is Lacey Wright (360) 753-9467 [lacey\\_wright@fws.gov](mailto:lacey_wright@fws.gov) and I am the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Education Coordinator for this upcoming school year! I am very excited to announce that we officially have our classroom lesson and spring field trip calendars in place for this upcoming year and we are sending out the call to our volunteers.

There are many fun opportunities to work with students in Grays Harbor this year whether you prefer in-classroom lessons, field trip interpretation, or tending a booth during the spring shorebird festival!

***In-Classroom Lessons:*** Every month I will be driving out to schools across Grays Harbor county to teach 6 lessons about shorebirds and your potential role could be to come into the classrooms with me, help keep students attention, aid with interpretation of activities such as stations, etc. This year we are visiting 14 different schools, 40 classrooms, and serving over 800 students. Volunteers are integral to this effort in ensuring that we can offer every student a unique and meaningful learning experience.

Volunteer participation in any of our lessons will be appreciated however, during the December "Lesson 2" we could especially use extra assistance. This lesson includes examination of specimens that the students will rotate between and your potential role would be to guide a group of students at one of the specimen stations. Your participation will help students to think critically, engage with the questions in their journals, and understand respectful handling of delicate specimens.

*Two notes about these lessons:* (1. Unless you live in Grays Harbor county, there is significant travel time for each day of lessons, and many days involve us teaching the same lesson several times in one day, once for each classroom. So they do involve more of a time commitment than days at BFJNWR, but the benefit is that you'll be able to impart your knowledge and passion for the environment to dozens of students in just one day! (2. Many of the schools have requested background checks from all visitors to the schools so any necessary documents for this will be provided to you prior to the lesson date.

During December 1st through 15th, I will be looking for volunteer help. Please contact me directly if you can help. My goal is to try to have at least one volunteer for each day of lessons! To sign up, just reply via email with the dates you're interested in. Reminder emails will go out two days before each lesson that will have the schedule for the day and any notes about packing a lunch, etc.

**Field Trip Interpretation:** In the spring we bring every classroom in our program on a field trip out to Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge! This is an amazing experience and is a culmination to all the work the students' do throughout the year during their lessons. If you would be interested in volunteering with the program this year but cannot do indoor activities then this is a perfect option because the entire experience is outside. Your potential role would be to run a station on the trail so that as the chaperone-led groups venture along the boardwalk they are exposed to volunteer interpretation. These trips are pretty far into the future but we will provide the dates so that if you are interested you are free to schedule a few on the calendar!

***Shorebird & Nature Festival:*** At this moment we are planning on hosting in-person programming for the festival this upcoming year! We are hoping to have lots of engaging booths and activities at the fun fair so if you are part of an organization that may want to participate or if you would like to lead a fun activity let me know! The festival is Friday-Sunday May 5th, 6th, and 7th! Woohoo!

Lacey Wright (she/her)  
Education Coordinator  
Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge  
100 Brown Farm Road NE  
Olympia, WA  
Phone: 360-753-9467

## Learn how to ID these 5 confusing streaked sparrows

By Marc Devokaitis

“Sparrows are hard! Identifying any sparrow is something to be proud of,” says Kevin McGowan, author and instructor of the new Sparrow Identification course from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s online Bird Academy. “There is no magic bullet for sparrow identification. You have to be ready to use everything in your bird identification toolkit, and you have to learn it sparrow by sparrow.”

There are 43 species of New World sparrows commonly found in the United States and Canada (the family, Passerellidae, includes towhees, juncos, and the Lark Bunting). Most birds with “sparrow” in their English name are small and brown. Many have streaked backs; all have conical bills perfect for husking seeds. Bright colors and bold patterns are rare, which is why this group can seem mystifying.



*Song Sparrow by Ryan Schain/Macaulay Library*

This bird lives up to its name. Its distinct song usually starts with several clear notes followed by buzzes, trills, or other complex notes, and it tends to sing frequently in the spring and early summer. Because it’s common in backyards, the Song Sparrow is a great starter species for birders to learn field marks in detail, which can be helpful for comparing and contrasting with other sparrow species.

Compared to other sparrows, the Song Sparrow is medium-sized and long-tailed. The brown streaks on its chest look painted on, and they usually come together in a big splotch in the center. This species also has two triangular brown stripes on either side of its throat, a whitish or grayish eyebrow, and a thin dark line behind the eye.

Be aware that Song Sparrows show a tremendous amount of variation across their range.



*Fox Sparrow by Celine Bellemare/Macaulay Library*

Unlike the Song Sparrow, which breeds across much of the eastern and western U.S., the Fox Sparrow breeds farther north, in the scrubby boreal forest, or in shrubby mountain habitats. Most birders see it on migration or in the winter, when it uses more varied habitats and sometimes shows up beneath bird feeders.

When feeding, the Fox Sparrow uses a “double-scratch” technique, hopping quickly forward and backward to uncover food among ground vegetation and leaf litter.

Like the Song Sparrow, it has streaks on its chest and sides, but the streaks are thicker and blurrier, as if drawn with a kindergartner’s crayon instead of a paintbrush. The Fox Sparrow’s song is a series of clear musical notes and sliding whistles.

Fox Sparrows also vary in appearance across their range, with 5 distinctive-looking forms in North America.



*Savannah Sparrow by Bryan Calk/Macaulay Library*

The Savannah Sparrow is found in various grassy habitats in much of North America.

*continued on Page 5*

### ***Sparrow ID continued from Page 4***

It's about the same size as a Song Sparrow, with a slightly shorter tail that's notched, not rounded. A close look at a Savannah Sparrow's face usually reveals a wash of yellow color in front of the eyes, and sometimes above and behind them as well—but the richness and extent of this marking is highly variable.

When a Savannah Sparrow is flushed, it tends to fly up to a perch and face its pursuer as it lands, distinguishing itself from LeConte's Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow, which tend to dive into the grass head-first.

Its song is thinner and more insectlike than those of the other sparrows in this article, consisting of several short notes followed by a longer, high-pitched buzzy note, and ending with a shorter buzz.



*Lincoln's Sparrow by pierre martin/Macaulay Library.*

If a Song Sparrow's markings are drawn on with a regular paintbrush, a Lincoln's are put on with a fine pencil. Everything is fine, sharp, and crisp. It's a subtly beautiful sparrow if you can get a good look at it. A contrasting buffy color on the chest and on the sides of the throat also set this sparrow apart from the other widespread, streaked sparrows.

Lincoln's Sparrow breeds in boggy areas in boreal forest and mountains. But like many sparrows it uses a variety of habitats on migration and winters across the southern U.S. and the West Coast. It can be hard to see as it is apt to skulk in dense vegetation.

Lincoln's Sparrow has one of the most musical songs of any sparrow, a rich, wrenlike cascade of trills, gurgles, and buzzes.

Find out more about Lincoln's Sparrows in the All About Birds species guide. [https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/song\\_Sparrow/overview](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/song_Sparrow/overview)



*Vesper Sparrow by Ryan Schain/Macaulay Library*

The Vesper Sparrow is found in a variety of grasslands and fields across much of the United States and Canada, as a breeder in the north, and in migration or in winter farther south. As its name suggests, it often sings in the evening twilight (though it sings in the early morning as well). Its distinct song starts with two clear, downslurred notes followed by a series of musical trills and whistles.

Also distinctive is its complete white eyering—no other widespread, streak-breasted sparrow has this facial feature. In flight, look for a long tail with white outer tailfeathers (similar to a junco).

If you are looking in agricultural areas for this species, look for corn. This is one of the few sparrows that uses growing cornfields in the summer (not just the postharvest stubble in the fall).

(Note: This article first appeared in the Cornell Lab, *All About Birds* magazine on October 8, 2019. This is an excerpt of that article. For the full article, see <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/learn-how-to-id-these-5-confusing-streaked-sparrows/>)





*photo by Karl Bardon*

## **Member Program** *Motus Wildlife Tracking System*

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is an international collaborative research network that uses automated radio telemetry to track birds, bats, and insects. This presentation will include an overview of how Motus works, highlights from various research projects that have used Motus, and current and developing initiatives. New research projects, new technological developments, expansion into western North America, and regional collaboration efforts will be included. Ultimately, Motus is about community science – combining our efforts for conservation.

Our presenter, Amie MacDonald is a biologist with Birds Canada. She studies shorebird ecology and is working to expand the Motus Wildlife Tracking System in Western Canada. Amie has studied Dunlin in the Fraser Estuary, Red Knots on the James Bay coast, and Semipalmated Sandpipers in the Bay of Fundy. Amie loves being in the field and she's interested in migration, population ecology, and conservation.

Join us December 4, 2022 at 1:30 to 3:30 PM via Zoom at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82118695964?pwd=dDVqOXFlbUJrakxLWXhLNTQQL1o vUT09>

## **Recognizing our supporters**

The Grays Harbor Audubon Society has been serving the needs of birds, wildlife and their watchers for over 30 years. We couldn't have done it without you, our supporters. So, every once in a while, we'd like to recognize by name those who care about water quality and quantity, wildlife habitat and the health and welfare of the birds. Please let us know if we should NOT use your name as a supporter in the future. Simply, provide your email address to

*ldotorg@olearycreek.com*



*photo by Ben Jiang*

## **What's on your mind?**

We would love to know about you and what you think is important about our Chapter, and what you think should be our focus. Perhaps you have an idea about where we should direct our educational efforts, in schools, colleges, other clubs? What other things would be of interest? The New Year will be a challenge for all of us, as we timidly emerge from the shade of COVID, and reach out into the community. Your thoughts can help us make that transition more beneficial.

Contact us via email to any of the Board found on Page7 or at PO Box 470 Montesano, WA 98563.

## GHAS Board of Directors

Jude Armstrong	589-9790	<i>judearms@comcast.net</i>
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## Chapter Officers

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Treasurer	Cecelia Boulais 273-9280 <i>caboulais@gmail.com</i>
Secretary	Linda Orgel 500-7228 <i>ldotorg@olearycreek.com</i>

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Education	<i>Vacant</i>
Field Trip Coordinator	Mary O'Neil 533-9833 <i>deed2et2et@yahoo.com</i>
Habitat	<i>Vacant</i>
Hospitality	Linda Orgel 500-7228 <i>ldotorg@olearycreek.com</i>
Membership	Linda Orgel 500-7228 <i>ldotorg@olearycreek.com</i>
Newsletter	R.D. Grunbaum, 648-2476 <i>rd@olearycreek.com</i>
Program Committee	Janet Strong, 495-3950 <i>janet.strong4@gmail.com</i>
Publicity Committee	Janet Strong, 495-3950 <i>janet.strong4@gmail.com</i>
Webmaster	Mary Lou Gregory 533-4897 <i>kuaygal@gmail.com</i>

### **GHAS Mission**

The mission of the Grays Harbor Audubon Society is to seek a sustainable balance between human activity and the needs of the environment, and to promote enjoyment of birds and the natural world

## Other Audubon Contacts

GHAS voice mail	(360) 289-5048
National Audubon	(212) 979-3000
GHAS Website	<a href="http://ghas.org">http://ghas.org</a>

**\*\*all area codes 360, unless otherwise noted\*\***

### **Follow us on FaceBook**

<https://www.facebook.com/graysharborbirding>

or

### **Follow us on our website**

<http://ghas.org>

*Please Fill Out and Mail Back*

**ANNUAL GRAYS HARBOR AUDUBON  
CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

If you would like to join Grays Harbor Audubon Society (GHAS), please fill out the form below, **make your check payable to Grays Harbor Audubon Society** and return it with your check to:

**Grays Harbor Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 470  
Montesano, WA 98563**

Chapter Memberships include a subscription to *The Sandpiper* newsletter. All Chapter Memberships above the Sandpiper category provide financial support to our Chapter. The Grays Harbor Audubon Society is totally self-supporting. Please note that the Sandpiper Newsletter is sent via email, so please include your email address on this form or send it to Linda Orgel at [Ldotorg@olearycreek.com](mailto:Ldotorg@olearycreek.com)

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State/Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

- |                          |           |          |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sandpiper | \$ 15.00 |
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- I am renewing my membership  
 I am a new member

- Please do NOT publish my name in the newsletter in the list of GHAS members

To join National Audubon or renew your National Audubon Membership, call 1-800-274-4201.

### ***News & Editorial***

send materials to  
P.O. Box 1044  
Westport, 98595-1044  
or email to  
rd@olearycreek.com

Copy deadline 10th of  
month preceding  
membership meeting

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### ***Program Meeting***

***Motus Wildlife Tracking System  
Amie MacDonald***

*virtually via Zoom. See Membership article*

***<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82118695964?pwd=dDVqOXFlbUJrakxLWXhLNTRQL1ovUT09>***

## **The Sandpiper**

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