



The Raven newsletter from Juneau Audubon Society
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Edited by Gwen Baluss



There is So Much in a Name

By Marsha Squires and Thom Young-Bayer

Audubon. What does this word mean to you? For many, the name “Audubon” encapsulates a long-standing non-profit organization whose work includes the conservation of, and education about, birds. For others not familiar with birds, they may think the word refers to the German high-speed highway, *Autobahn*. For me (MS), I was taught that Audubon – John James Audubon – was a famous landowner, an artist, and ornithologist of the 1800s who lived in my home state of Pennsylvania and brought the beauty and importance of birds to light through his paintings. Obviously, I wasn’t aware of the entire picture.

In recent years, more of us have become knowledgeable of the full history of this famous naturalist. Indeed, John James Audubon was instrumental in sharing the natural history of birds and their niche in the environment, yet he was also a white man of his time who benefited from and owned slaves. His disregard for Native Americans is also well documented, including grave robbing and desecration of remains. These statements are now indisputable, historical facts (See <https://www.audubon.org/news/the-myth-john-james-audubon>).

With the revelation of this history, the National Audubon Society took a year to poll, review, evaluate, and decide its future of continued marketing and branding, using the name Audubon. In March of 2023, National Audubon Society chose to hold on to tradition and its name.

Name—cont.

With this decision, arises a new challenge for the Juneau Audubon Society. As J. Drew Lanham said in the Spring 2021 edition of Audubon Magazine:

“The organizations bearing Audubon’s name must press forward in this new light and decide who and what they want to be.”

(<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/spring-2021/what-do-we-do-about-john-james-audubon>)

One measure of an organization is its ability to adapt to the evolving needs of its community. As the Juneau local chapter reflects on this newfound history, we are faced with a decision regarding how best to fulfill the needs of the diverse people and wildlife of Southeast Alaska while remaining true to the mission of our organization.

As a board, we have decided to acknowledge the history behind the name Audubon and reevaluate our programs and practices, so that we may move forward together and continue to work to protect and appreciate the wildlife of Southeast Alaska. We have agreed that it is incumbent upon us to better embody and promote our values of diversity, inclusivity, and equality as fundamental components of environmental conservation.

We are currently discussing options to address the name of our organization as a first step and look forward to the many ways in which this period of reflection on our history will help us to grow and improve our organization for current and future generations.

We hope our chapter members and the community will continue to support our efforts in education, conservation, and birding in Southeast Alaska. As always, we continue to be committed to our community - its land, its wildlife, and its people, and our mission to conserve the natural ecosystems of Southeast Alaska— focusing on birds and other wildlife, for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.



John James Audubon's rendering of Common Raven.

Coming to terms with “Audubon”: Questions and Next Steps

1. *Did the board decide to change the name?* The news from National Audubon was received in March. Our chapter discussed the topic at our last fiscal year board meeting in April. We have not officially voted to change the name. We will begin engaging in further discussion in September when our new cycle begins.

2. *How will membership be part of that discussion?* We ask members who are interested in sharing their opinion to write to us a one-paragraph statement at info@juneau-audubon-society.org.

3. *Timeline and communications:* We will continue to inform our membership of decisions regarding the name change through our quarterly newsletter and monthly membership meetings which begin in October.

In the Field, Spring 2023 Bird Walks and Cruises

By Marsha Squires

Summer solstice has come and gone, and so has our field trip season. We shared our knowledge and passion for birds with approximately 150 birders on eight Saturday morning bird walks and another 225 joined us on our annual fundraising cruises to Berners Bay.

With the start of the season at Fish Creek Delta in April, waterfowl were abundant in the waterways and ponds, with a few other early spring migrants flitting about the forest edge. Highlights were Horned Grebe, Northern Pintail, and Gadwall. The following week, the Outer Point Trail continued to introduce birders to more spring migrants with 36 species, including a Hairy Woodpecker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and a handful of Yellow-rumped Warblers.

The World Migratory Bird Day celebration in early May at the Juneau Community Garden offered a mixture of birding events: an early morning bird banding demonstration by Gwen Baluss, (US Forest Service), family-centered bird activities and a walk. The finale was Native bird lore from guest storytellers, Victoria Johnson and Tommy Jim (Goldbelt Heritage Foundation).

In mid-May photographers were delighted with our new photo-focused bird walk on the EVAR - Airport Dike Trail. The same territory was covered the following Saturday- without cameras, and the sights and sounds of the Warbling Vireo, numerous swallow species, and Canada Goose



Beautiful view and lively narrative from Laurie Craig on Berners Bay Cruise.

filled the area. The pond was decorated with a Redhead, Northern Shoveler, and American Wigeon.

The Dredge Lakes area and Eagle Beach walks had to work with growing foliage and quieter habitats as birds either had continued on their migration route, or hunkered down to nest. Several birds were seen searching for food, and gulls were on the shores by the hundreds.

Partnering with Southeast Alaska Land Trust, two numerous groups visited the Sunny Point area, June 24, to learn more about our Tree Swallow Nest Monitoring Project and the need to conserve the delicate and important habitat of the area.

Our Berners Bay cruises received positive feedback, as always, and proved to be successful and enjoyable for all. Bird and other wildlife sightings, scientific information, door prizes, and storytelling kept each sailing interesting and rewarding. We appreciate Allan Marine for hosting this wonderful community event.

Gunalcheesh, thank you, to all who walked or cruised with us and delighted in the beauty of birds this season. We hope you will join us this fall when we begin our Monthly Membership (evening educational) Programs in October. Also, a BIG round of applause to those who volunteered their time and expertise to make the field trip season an opportunity to learn, wonder, and appreciate the incredible world of birds.





Board Members on the Move, Farewell and Thank You

Tireless Communications Chair Lauren Cusimano has moved on to Anchorage where she will be working for Audubon Alaska. Lauren brought a wonderful enthusiasm for birding and seeing the temperate rainforest from a fresh perspective. She spent countless hours on JAS board activities despite her busy day job with Southeast Alaska Conservation Council. We particularly appreciated her work on our land acknowledgement text, bylaws revision, and working on our

Lauren Cusimano and her big smile.

communications planning. We will miss her journalism and organizational skills- and her smile- acutely. Look for her hand in Audubon Alaska's communications.

While still relatively new to Juneau, Doreen Prieto jumped with both feet into her new role as Field Trips organizer, as continuing Covid-19 restrictions made the job especially challenging. We particularly appreciate Doreen's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and her boundless enthusiasm for bird-watching. Her energy has no doubt brought some new faces into our 'flock' of birdwatchers. Say "Hello" to Doreen on the trail or working at the Juneau Community Garden.



Doreen Prieto bird-watching.

2023 JAS Intern

Over the summer, JAS continued its successful Bird Studies and Conservation Internship. Alaskan and UAS graduate Celia Bower was an integral part of wildlife monitoring projects and provided help with outreach and education.

Celia stayed busy checking 61 swallow nest boxes twice weekly, braving field challenges such as head-high grass. She enjoyed the bird-watching at the swallow sites, including a surprise visit by Sandhill Cranes.

She contributed to the US Forest Service Arctic Tern nest watch, making many hikes to the rocky nesting area north of Mendenhall Lake. A less welcome surprise was a testy black bear near the seabird colonies.

After these activities, she still was able to keep the hummingbird feeders at Juneau Community Garden nice and clean and help with the occasional banding day there.

She is also a talented artist, and we look forward to seeing bird-inspired art started during her internship.



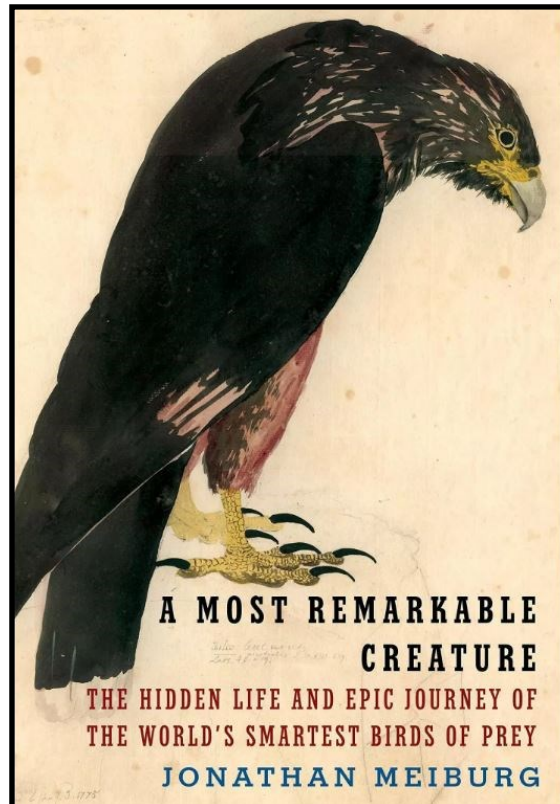
Celia Bower ready to observe Arctic Terns.

Recommended Reading: Caracaras

By Brenda Wright

Recently a friend recommended reading this book about caracaras. I had never seen one myself, but luckily got to see one in since then in Florida at a state wildlife park. It is an interesting looking bird and is in the falcon family. The head and beak have multi-colors and bright white patches to help identify them. They are unusual in the way they hunt. They mostly use their very long legs to walk around looking for their prey. Their habitat is varied from islands, forests & high elevations. Most are found in South America up through Mexico, but there is a small number found in Florida. I saw a rare bird alert for Seattle where a juvenile caracara was found!

The book is called “A most remarkable creature : the hidden life and epic journey of the world’s smartest birds of prey” by Jonathan Meiburg (Knopf, 384 pages). I truly enjoyed the writer’s style with personal antidotes and a lot of history explored. The author traveled extensively all over the bird’s range. He met his first caracara in the Falklands and then set out to find more of these birds and hear stories about them. Part of the challenge was knowing Darwin had seen these birds on small islands around the southern tip of South America. This book explores many places and includes stories about captive birds that completely captivated their owners with their intelligence. “Most Remarkable Creature” is a hybrid of science writing, travelogue, and biography.



Election!

Members, please join us for the annual election of officers and the first public meeting/program of the 2023 season at **7 p.m. on October 12, 2023, at the University of Alaska Southeast, Egan Lecture Hall Rm 112.**

Candidates for office:

President: Marsha Squires

Vice President: Nina Keller

Treasurer: Betsy Fischer

Secretary: Thomas Young-Bayer

Nominations are accepted from the floor at the public meeting.

Lecture Following Elections: **“Plight of the penguins. A changing population demographic for the penguins of the Antarctic peninsula “ by Tyler Stern**



Yellow-rumped Warbler visits tap wells made by Red-breasted Sapsucker at Ju-neau Community Garden on May 6, 2023, World Migratory Bird Day. Photo by Gwen Baluss.

JAS membership — need to join or renew?

Joining or renewing membership with the National Audubon Society using an address in Southeast Alaska will include automatic JAS membership. Visit action.audubon.org/renew/membership to do so.

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: _____

Phone: _____

Date: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Notes:

Members receive a one-year subscription to The Raven. 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 our membership addresses with anyone.

Thanks for joining our team!



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.

About Us

Since 1977, Juneau Audubon Society has focused on birding, education, and conservation in the communities and surrounding areas of Southeast Alaska. With the support of volunteers and partners, we connect individuals and groups of all ages and backgrounds to the beauty of nature and birds.

Our mission is to conserve the natural ecosystems of Southeast Alaska, focusing on birds, and other wildlife and their habitats, for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations.

Our work includes teaching and learning, maintaining and restoring habitats, protecting avian and other wildlife species, and offering volunteer opportunities to engage the people of Southeast Alaska's communities.

Board of Directors

The Juneau Audubon Society functions with an all-volunteer board of 12 individuals. Four executive officers and eight board members. There are six established committee chairs outlined in our Bylaws: Communication, Conservation, Education, Field Trips, Membership, and Programs.

Thank you for connecting with us!

For general inquiries or if you are interested in joining the board:

info@juneau-audubon-society.org

- Marsha Squires, President
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- Nina Keller, Vice President
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- Betsy Fischer, Treasurer
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- Thomas Young-Bayer, Secretary
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