

# The Flyway

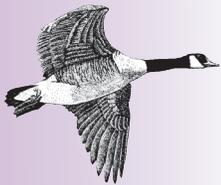
Winter 2011



Quarterly newsletter of Nisqually and Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuges

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## Save the Date!

**The 2012  
Grays Harbor  
Shorebird  
Festival will  
be held  
May 4-6  
in Hoquiam.**



## Nisqually Aquatic Reserve Designated

In early September, State Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark designated Nisqually Aquatic Reserve. The Reserve encompasses almost 15,000 acres of land and water from the northern boundary of Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge across the reach.

It includes all state-owned aquatic lands surrounding Anderson, Ketron, and Eagle islands to the shores of McNeil Island. This marine habitat area is presently home to a variety of threat-

ened and endangered species; not only a variety of fish species, but also marine mammals and sea birds. The goals described in the draft management plan for the Reserve compliment the resource management objectives of the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge to include deep-water marine areas.

Specifically, the management plan describes the following five goals:

1. Preserve, restore and enhance aquatic nearshore areas including intertidal and subtidal ecosystems with a special emphasis on native habitats for forage fish, salmonids, and marine birds.
2. Protect and restore the functions and natural processes of nearshore ecosystems in support of the natural resources of the reserve.

3. Promote stewardship of riparian and aquatic habitats and species by supporting and providing opportunities for outdoor education, scientific research including citizen science and interpretive studies.

4. Support traditional recreational (e.g.,

boating, water skiing, fishing), commercial (e.g., marinas), and cultural uses in the aquatic reserve and promote responsible management of these uses in a manner consistent with the other

goals and objectives for the reserve.

5. Support the recovery and protection efforts for federal and state threatened and endangered species, species of special concern and their habitats.

The new designation will not limit or alter public use of the Reach, but it will allow the state to better manage the area in regard to commercial proposals for development by emphasizing scientific research and conservation. The new designation may, therefore, effect several recent proposals including commercial fish pens, shellfish farming, commercial docks and the disposal of dredge material, to name just a few. The plan also calls for environmental restoration and for enhancement of educational activities at the Nisqually Reach Nature Center, Anderson Island parks, Tolmie State Park and Solo Point at Joint Base Lewis-McCord.



# Snowy Owl Irruption

Since November 30<sup>th</sup>, the Refuge has been graced by the presence of at least one Snowy Owl. It is likely that more will follow and that they will be seen somewhat regularly throughout the winter due to a rare, somewhat cyclical event called an irruption. An irruption is the periodic movement of numbers of birds into unusual ranges for a season. A number of species exhibit irruptive behavior. The Snowy Owl is a case in point, irrupting south from northern latitudes every five to fifteen years. The last irruption event (and consequently the last time Snowy Owls were seen at the Refuge) was in the winter of 2005/2006. Nobody is completely certain about the factors that influence an irruption, but it is almost certainly linked, at least in part, to fluctuations in the lemming population. A single Snowy Owl eats 3 to 5 lemmings per day, a total of up to 1,600 per year, so the movements of Snowy owls naturally depend on this food source. But for irruptive move-

ments to occur on a continent wide basis, other factors, such as weather, may also be influential, though a clear relationship has never been determined.

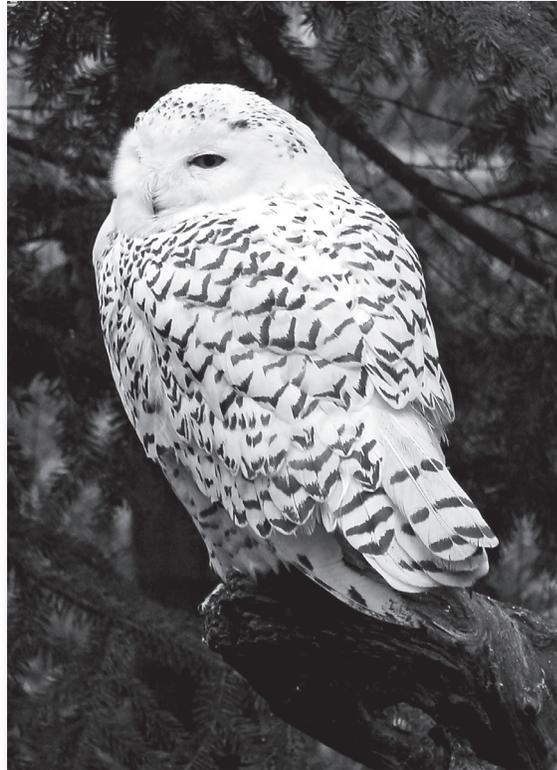


Photo by Bryan Peterson

These owls typically breed only at the far northern fringe of the continent, truly in the Arctic. Because of their icy home territory they are distinctively bright white (younger birds have black barring which diminish as they age). They are also the heaviest of all North American Owls. During winter months, they range across Canada and into New England, New York and the Northern Plains, but for those of us in the Pacific Northwest seeing a Snowy Owl is a rare treat. At the Refuge these owls are typically seen in the new restoration area and beyond, in the tidal flats where there are few trees. They may remain resting on the ground for hours at a time, regarding the world with sleepy yellow eyes, comfortable with exposure perhaps because they are so accustomed to the treeless habitat of the tundra.

Snowy Owls have also been sighted at other locations throughout Washington and south into Oregon. For a real time map of this year's Snowy Owl sightings, go to **google.com** and type in "Snowy Owls in the Upper US and Canada, 2011-12," then click on the **Google Maps** link. ↘

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Save trees, think green

To receive *The Flyway*  
electronically, email  
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## Enter the Federal Junior Duck Stamp contest!

Attention all kids grades K-12! Put your art skills to the test by participating in the Washington State Junior Duck Stamp contest! Art work is judged in four groups (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12) with three 1st place, three 2nd place, three 3rd place, and 16 Honorable Mentions awarded in each group. All winners receive certificates, ribbons, and special Junior Duck Stamp winner pins. Washington Best in Show continues on to the National Junior Duck Stamp Contest, where first through third place winners receive a \$5,000,

\$3,000 and \$2,000 cash prize respectively. The winning design of the national contest is used for the \$5 Junior Duck stamp, sales of which are used to provide funding for K-12 environmental education programs. If interested in entering the contest, check out <http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck/> for details and entry applications. The deadline to enter this year's contest is March 15. Feel free to contact Michael Schramm with any questions at 360-753-9467 or by email at [michael\\_schramm@fws.gov](mailto:michael_schramm@fws.gov). ↘

# Spotlight on Grays Harbor NWR and its New Education Coordinator

Fox Trowbridge is delighted to be the new Grays Harbor NWR education coordinator. The Grays Harbor education coordinator is a unique Americorps position focused on visiting third and fourth grade classes to perform a series of in-class lessons on shorebirds, migration, watersheds and the incredible ecology of this region. She also helps to coordinate the annual Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival.

Having trekked from the East Coast, Fox is settling into the Pacific Northwest for the first time. Originally from Alexandria,

Virginia directly outside Washington D.C., she has spent most of the past five years in the Appalachian mountains of Western North Carolina. Here Fox studied elementary education and organic farming at Warren Wilson College near Asheville,



NC. Most recently she worked for the U.S. Forest Service doing environmental education and coordinating a teacher workshop. She is grateful for this volunteer opportunity and knows that it would not be possible without the commitment of other dedicated, outstanding volunteers. ✂

## Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge Seeking Volunteers

From late April through early May, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds concentrate on the muddy tide flats of Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge in Hoquiam. Grays Harbor Estuary is one of four major staging areas for shorebirds in North America and one of the largest concentrations of shorebirds on the west coast, south of Alaska. Shorebirds gather here in the spring to feed, store up fat reserves, and rest for the non-stop flight to their northern breeding grounds.

Help share this incredible resource while fostering a connection between our youth and nature by volunteering with the Grays Harbor Environmental Education (GHEE) program.

The mission of Grays Harbor NWR education program is to work collaboratively with local schools and the community to teach students the value of our native ecosystems.

field visits for Grays Harbor and neighboring county schools. GHEE volunteers can go into classrooms with the Education Coordinator to assist elementary programs or

come to the refuge in spring to help lead field trips on our boardwalk trail.

Not interested in working with schools? Grays Harbor also needs your support with debris removal, trash pick-up, and trail roving. Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge is a great place to volunteer—especially if you love the out-

doors! If this sounds like the job for you please contact volunteer coordinator Michael Schramm at 360-753-9467 by January 19th! ✂



*Spectators on the Sandpiper Trail at Grays Harbor during the annual Shorebird Festival.*

With your support, GHEE is able to provide a unique combination of successive in-class lessons and

## Richard Crossley selected as Keynote Speaker at 2012 Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival

At this year's Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival, Richard Crossley will present "*Past, Present and Future—My Life of Birding and Lessons Learned From World Travels.*" Past, Present and Future is a story told in a Yorkshire brogue through a camera lens that loves color and art. Richard will share tales and lessons learned while growing up in the wild British birding scene—from travels around the world to living in Cape May. With humor and depth he highlights the thoughts behind the revolutionary 'The Crossley ID



Guide' series. But is changing *how* we look at books and birds enough? "Heck, no!" says Richard. Come listen to his past, perhaps it will change your thoughts on the future! *The Crossley ID Guide* will be for sale during the Festival and Richard Crossley will be available for signing books following his presentation on Friday evening (May 4th). ✎

To learn more about Richard Crossley go to [www.crossleybirds.com](http://www.crossleybirds.com)

## Enter the 2012 Grays Harbor Shorebird Festival Poster Contest!

The theme for the 2012 poster contest is *Local Shorebirds*. The poster contest is open to any student, grades 1-6 in Grays Harbor County. Entries can be created using any medium with an unmated/framed size of 12" x 18". Artwork will be judged based on accuracy, originality and artistic skill. Prizes will be awarded to first, second, third, fourth, and fifth place winners in each grade. The deadline for this year's contest is Friday, April 13th. You can mail entries to Shorebird Poster Contest, C/o Port of Gray's Harbor, PO Box 660, Aberdeen, WA 98520 or hand deliver them to Port of Grays Harbor, 111 South Wooding St., Aberdeen, WA 98520. First place winning

artwork will be used in publicity for the 2012 Shorebird Festival. For questions or entry forms,

please contact Fox Trowbridge, Education and Outreach Coordinator for Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge at (360)753-9467 or [fox\\_trowbridge@fws.gov](mailto:fox_trowbridge@fws.gov). ✎



Cosmopolis Elementary School 6th grader Joa Yun's watercolor of a Long-billed Dowitcher entitled "The View of Sunrise" won Best in Show at the 2011 festival.

# New and Renewing Friends Membership

Fall 2011

## Senior/Student (\$15)

Shirlene Anderson  
Karen Drum  
Shirley Elliott  
Helen Engle  
Carol Horner  
Melody Mayer  
Jo Peters  
John Reinke

## Individual (\$25)

Robert Godwin  
Marjorie Hudson  
Paula Olson  
Anna E Sumner  
Kelley Ward

## Family (\$50)

Larry and Peggy Erickson  
Dwight and Leta Faust  
Kristin Knopf and Brian Hanners  
Victoria Lincoln  
Thomas G. and Barbara E. Malone

## Supporting (\$100)

Ken and Nell Batker  
Shelley Carr  
Karen Pauler



Marian Shinobu  
Michael and Kristin Stewart  
Jean Takekawa  
Elizabeth Hansen

## Partner (\$250)

Fred and Margaret Hellberg

### Friends of Nisqually NWR

is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization established in 1998 to promote conservation of the natural and cultural resources and fund education and outreach programs at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

# Join Friends Of Nisqually NWRC!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

- Please send information on making Friends of Nisqually NWRC a beneficiary of my estate.
- Check here to receive an electronic version of *The Flyway* newsletter by email.

### Individual/Family Memberships

- \$15 Student/Senior
- \$25 Individual
- \$50 Family
- \$100 Supporting
- \$250 Partner
- \$500 Patron
- \$1000 Benefactor

### Corporate/Business Memberships

- \$250 Business Sponsor
- \$500 Community Partner
- \$1000 Sustaining Business
- \$2500 Corporate Patron
- \$5000+ Corporate Benefactor

Please make checks payable to: Friends of Nisqually NWRC, 100 Brown Farm Rd, Olympia, WA 98516

Your tax deductible contribution will help preserve the unique habitats, fish, and wildlife of the Nisqually Delta and the Grays Harbor Tidelats.

OFFICE USE Rec'd \_\_\_\_\_ Mo \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renew \_\_\_\_\_ Ent \_\_\_\_\_ Mld \_\_\_\_\_

**Friends of Nisqually  
National Wildlife Refuges**

100 Brown Farm Rd.  
Olympia WA 98516

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage  
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Olympia WA  
Permit #206

**Return Service Requested**

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*"...conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people..."*

## **Planning a Field Trip to Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge?**

Attend one of our free teacher trainings to get all the tools you need to confidently guide your students on a meaningful outdoor learning experience. You will be introduced to our hands on indoor activities in our education center, hike the Twin Barns Loop Trail and learn about one of the largest restoration projects in the Puget Sound! Refreshments will be provided.

**Workshop dates:**

**Saturday, January 28,**  
9am-1pm

**Saturday, February 25,**  
9am-1pm

**Saturday, March 10,** 9am-1pm

**Wednesday, April 4,** 4-8pm

\*\*\*Each year, from May 15th to June 15th only teachers who have participated in a workshop within the past 2 years are able to schedule a class for their field trip.\*\*\*

**Location:** Education Center at the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (Exit 114 off I-5)



*Davy Clark in action!*

Clock hours are available for a \$13 fee, approved by ESD113

**To register:** Download the form at <http://www.fws.gov/nisqually/education.htm> and fax or mail to the refuge. Please register at least two weeks in advance. ✎

**For more information:** Davy Clark, Education Coordinator,

Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge,  
[davy\\_clark@fws.gov](mailto:davy_clark@fws.gov), Phone: (360) 753-9467  
Fax: (360) 534-9302