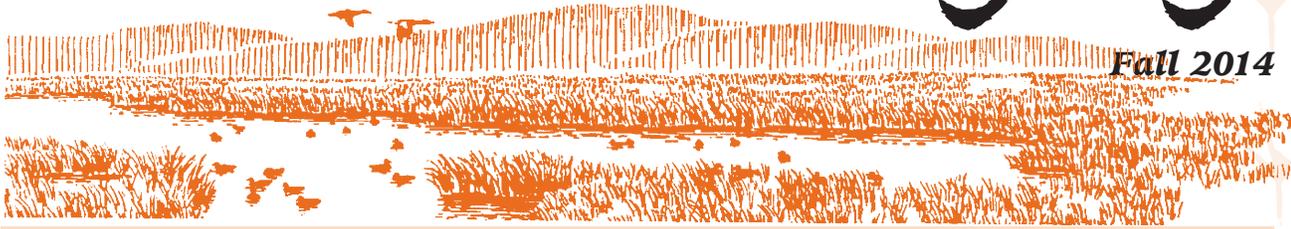


# The Flyway

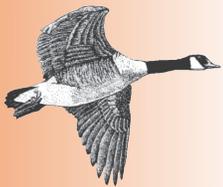
Fall 2014



Quarterly newsletter of Nisqually and Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuges

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## Save the Dates!

**The 2015 Grays Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival will be held May 1-3 in Hoquiam.**

## A Most Vegetarian Duck

Come to the Refuge in the Fall, and you are likely to find many birders excited about the arrival of waterfowl that will stay here through the winter. In flocks of their own, the birders pan across the wetlands with their binoculars, looking for anything new or remarkable. For them, witnessing the arrival of the season's first birds is an experience akin to opening presents on a holiday. But for all the anticipation and excitement, building up through the desolate late summer, once an arriving species has been sighted and as it becomes more abundant, most birders will naturally begin to pass it over as something mundane.

The American Wigeon is a case in point. If birders are spending a long while staring and continuing to stare at a large flock of American Wigeon, don't be fooled: these birders typically aren't being swept away by their deep love for this most common fall resident of the Refuge. They will be looking, instead, for the one with the red head: that elusive Eurasian Wigeon. The veritable ocean of American Wigeon consequently becomes something mundane, something to sort through while looking for something else—anything else. Their significance may be overlooked.

Wigeon are among a category of ducks referred to as dabblers, here in the thousands in late fall and through the

winter. That American Wigeon have made the Nisqually delta their home in such abundant numbers has had an enormous impact on the way the Refuge is managed. To the average visitor walking around the Refuge during the winter months, after the rains have set in, the Refuge may all look the same. There's water: Lots of water! But to birds, it doesn't look the same at all.

The pond behind the visitor center is there throughout the year, a permanent feature, and is therefore full of edible organisms: fish, salamanders, frogs and invertebrates. It attracts ducks and other types of birds that dive and swim after fish. It is, to birds, a steak house.

In contrast, the American Wigeon, and all the dabbling ducks, primarily crave vegetable matter. They are attracted to wetlands where tender shoots of grass have been recently submerged. It is for this reason Refuge staff mow the dead grass at the end of summer, encouraging new grass to grow; the old grass is mostly useless as a food source, but the young grass is just what dabbling ducks are looking for. When the Refuge instituted the massive delta restoration project, a new dike was built to deliberately maintain a portion of the delta's seasonal freshwater wetlands that are so important to dabbling ducks. And there is no dabbling duck native to



*Continued on page 3*

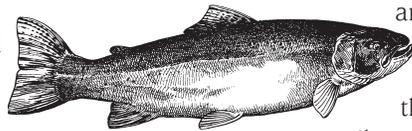
# On the Wing

By Glynnis Nakai

With fall around the corner we reflect back on the sunny, summer months! The celebration to name the Norm Dicks Visitor Center on June 6 was a success and the Congressman was surprised to see old friends from Washington D.C. and to see the new signs referencing the new name. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell said we “did the Service proud” with a flawless event and was impressed with the representation by the Refuge Volunteers! The Fish and Wildlife Service’s Director, Dan Ashe, sent his thanks and wrote, “The pride reflected from Norm Dicks and his family was magnified by the care and respect with which your team handled the entire day. Outstanding work”! Thank you for your support and representing Nisqually NWR at this high profile event! We are so proud of our Volunteers!



Speaking of Volunteers, there’s a shift in the wind. A new FWS Friends policy, signed in April 2014, identifies the difference between Service volunteers and volunteers operating concessions and/or nature shops. One of the primary reasons for this distinction is related to ethics in federal government. Service volunteers representing the Fish and Wildlife Service are under the same guidance on ethical behavior as employees: cannot lobby, gamble,



and solicit donations. However, volunteers signed up as a Friends of Nisqually NWR volunteer can perform these activities because they represent a non-profit organization (501c(3)). As a result, there was a need to reorganize our Friends group to follow within the policy guidelines. A Friends Transition team comprised of

Board Members, Refuge staff, and volunteers was established in June with the responsibilities of strategically planning and implementing this change in management and operations of the Friends group and Nature Shop. As a result, we now have two categories of volunteers, those as Service volunteers that can sell Federal passes and others as volunteers performing activities for the Friends group (Nature Shop operations in the visitor center, memberships, treasurer, and administrative duties of managing the Friends volunteer activities).

All volunteers can perform interpretive and educational activities whether in the visitor center or for educational groups. Although it was a rough start, the Transition team has established a different way of doing business for the Friends group and Nature Shop that transfers the administrative and operational function of the Nature Shop and other Friends activities from Refuge staff to the Friends Board and Davy Clark, who, as a “contracted employee” will oversee the Friends volunteers. For the month of September this new organizational structure is being piloted to work out the kinks with full implementation on October 4 when the transition period ends. The Transition team members all played a part; however, special recognition is given to Sheila McCartan and Michael Schramm who were the catalyst to identify and organize the many different tasks that were on their plate all these years so they could be turned over to the Friends Board and volunteers. Without their institutional knowledge and expertise with the visitor and volunteer programs, it would not have been as smooth a transition. I thank the Board and volunteers who have been patient during this process and have really stepped up to the plate to join the team, join the Board, and sign up as Friends volunteers. Nisqually NWR has been an example for other Refuges and Friends groups going through this same transition and much of that is due to the dedication and passion of volunteers support for the Refuge’s needs. I’m proud to be a part of this Refuge where everyone pulls together for a common goal and a “go forth and conquer” attitude!

Enjoy these beautiful days of summer as we transition into Fall colors! My first year at Nisqually NWRC has been a wonderful learning experience and I look forward to another year of adventure! ✈

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Save trees, think green.

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## Additional New Education Center Murals Installed

Every year, the students of Mariah Art School create and install a mural in the entry-way of the Environmental Education Center. This year's spectacular addition features a Bald Eagle hunting near an estuary grassland. And last year's beautiful image was of waterfowl and geese in the freshwater wetland area. Over 20 students

ranging in ages from 6 to 12 contributed to the project. The murals are the two latest installments of six that the Mariah Art School, located in West Olympia, has created and installed since the opening of the Environmental Education Center in 2009. Several more mural installations are anticipated in the coming years. ✧



### Wigeon

*From page 1*

North America that is more completely vegetarian than the American Wigeon. It is the most vegetarian duck. Their continued abundance on the Refuge is a sure sign that our wetlands are perfectly to their liking.

So this season, while meandering about the trails of the Refuge, be sure to pay attention to which bird species are using which habitat, and take a moment to

contemplate that relationship. Diet may seem like a simple thing, but it's ultimately what draws a bird to a particular place. Consequently, creating an ideal, abundant food source is a big part of what the Refuge does. "Rare" or "common," it makes no difference: even the American Wigeon is special enough! ✧

# Refuge Welcomes New Education Coordinator

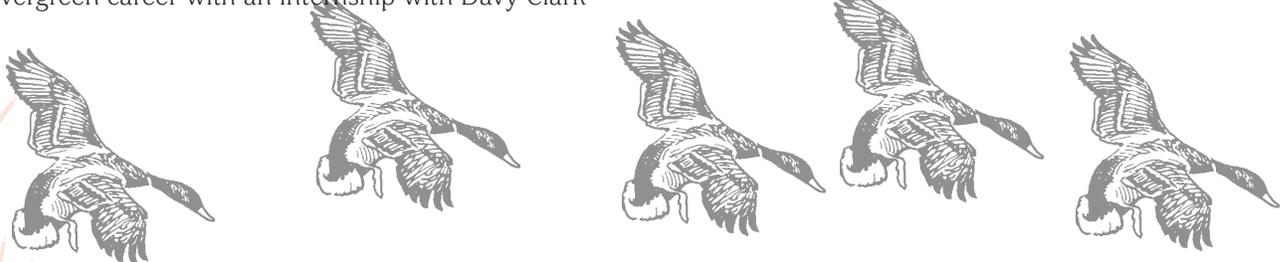
The Refuge staff would like to welcome Danika Didur-Tate, the new Education Coordinator and AmeriCorps intern. Born and raised in coastal Northern California, Danika moved to Washington when she enrolled in The Evergreen State College, where she graduated with a Bachelors of Arts in Education and a Bachelors of Science in Environmental Sciences, creating an Environmental Education degree. She first became involved in Environmental Ed through an internship with Sheila Wilson at the Nisqually River Education Project her second year in college. Those six months were influential for her, revealing a way to combine her passions for the natural world and working with people. After those long months of sifting through benthic macroinvertebrates, tossing salmon carcasses into streams, and restoring native habitats, always with a gaggle of eager youth, she knew she was hooked on Environmental Ed. She ended her Evergreen career with an internship with Davy Clark



at the Education Center, which turned into a ten and a half month stint as our Education Coordinator. Taking inspiration from her personal hero, Carl Sagan, she hopes to spend her time here not only promoting a deeper appreciation of the natural world, but also advocating for a deeper scientific understanding as well, for a more scientifically literate community.

In her spare time, Danika is an avid reader and nature enthusiast, and is especially excited to further develop her birding skills, with the help of the many accomplished ornithologists who frequent these trails. She enjoys trying new foods and traveling to new places. In her third year at Evergreen, she travelled abroad to Nepal, backpacking through the Kanchenjunga Conservation Area for

30 days. She is thrilled to be a part of such a unique and dedicated collection of people, and can't believe her luck at being able to call this gorgeous refuge her "office." ✨



# Summer Lecture Series Inspires!

Over 800 people attend the lectures during the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Lecture Series. Thanks to Friends of Nisqually NWR for their financial support of the lectures and to the speakers who so graciously gave of their time and expertise so that we could all learn. The lectures would not be possible without the help of a dedicated group of Refuge volunteers including Art Pavey, Jan Kramer, Nancy Wells, Barb Peterson, Vic Vikan, Nyla Noah, Sue Stone, Jean Phillips, Jim and Cherry Ped-

rick, Jerry Broadus, Tom and Barb Cook, Donna Snow, Hank Henry, Diane Claussen, Clarice McCartan, and Cheri Greenwood. Thank you all for your help! ✨



*Tom and Barb Cook host Dr. Dristin Laidre of the Polar Science Center, University of Washington, who spoke about Sea Ice Loss and Arctic Marine Mammals in Greenland.*

# New and Renewing Friends Membership Summer/Fall 2014

## Senior/Student (\$15)

Joseph M. Alexanian  
Archie Blakely  
Anne Hankins  
Beverley & William Lund  
D. R. Matsumoto  
Ada Moser  
Marcia Rutan  
Elaine Schmidt  
Phyllis J. Standefer  
Bert & Sandy Stevens

## Individual (\$25)

Nicole de Recat  
Rhona Diehl  
Shirley Elliott  
Jean Gillmer  
Mary Russell  
Ruth M. Stone  
Susan Stone  
Jace Swartwout

## Family (\$50)

Jim Bamberger  
Robert & Ruth Brigden  
George & Sandra Bush  
Michael Clark  
Nancy Eastham  
Bill Funton  
Mary Gleb  
Carol Wray & Ralph Kendall  
Kathryn Hamilton Wang  
Steve Wang



## Supporting (\$100)

Doug & Lillian Ryan  
Barbara Young

## Patron (\$500)

Charles Wilkinson & Melanie Ito

### Friends of Nisqually NWR

is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 1998 to promote conservation of the natural and cultural resources and fund educational 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 Tideflats.**

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

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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 Field Trip Orientation Workshops 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 November 8th 9am-1pm**

**Saturday January 10th 9am-1pm**

**Saturday February 21st 9am-1pm**

**Wednesday March 11th 4pm-8pm**

\*\*\* Only teachers who have participated in a field trip orientation workshop within the past three years are able to schedule a class for their field trip between May 15 and the end of the school year. Teachers who have attended a workshop since 2011 and scheduled a field

trip within the past two years may continue to schedule field trips between May 15th and the end of the school year without re-taking the workshop. \*\*\*

**Location:** Education Center at Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (From I-5 Take Exit 114 and follow signs)

Clock hours are available for a fee, approved by ESD113.

**To Register:** Download the registration form from our website [fws.gov/Nisqually](http://fws.gov/Nisqually)

Under the Visit tab select "For Educators" and then Teacher Training.

**For more information:**

Davy Clark  
Education Specialist  
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge  
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Phone: (360) 753-9467  
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