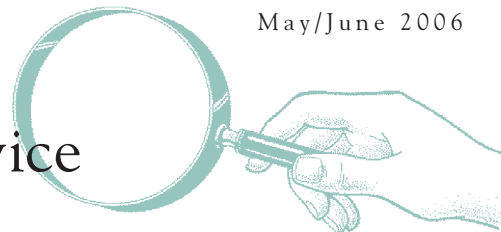


Citizen Science— Science at your Service

by Jerry Joyce, Science Committee Chair



Seattle Audubon believes that sound and meaningful science is of utmost importance when making intelligent decisions regarding the preservation and enhancement of wildlife. In these times of politicized “science,” the importance of independent and critical science is greater than ever, as discussed on page 3. The Destinations page (page 4) shows but one example of the information the science program makes available: resources for finding great birding spots and habitats around the state from the improved web resource, BirdWeb. Seattle Audubon is the only Washington chapter that has a science committee, and we believe we have both a responsibility and an opportunity to conduct and present findings that are both valid and useful.

A great example of what citizen science can do is the presentation of a preliminary analysis of the Neighborhood Bird Project data. Finally, we provide a sneak preview of another great web resource: the soon-to-be-launched Breeding Bird Atlas for our area.

Birdathon 2006 April 22- May 31

Have fun — Go birding — Meet new friends — Travel to special birding spots — Win prizes — Raise funds — Earn rewards — Conserve habitat — Have more fun — Join today! See page 5.

Event

Seattle Audubon Annual Dinner
Saturday, June 24, 2006
Brockey Student Center, 6PM

Keynote speaker, Dr. Michael P. Washburn, will present ideas on how we, as everyday consumers of wood products, can *Transform Forestry, Markets, and Conservation Itself*. Dr. Washburn is Vice President of Brand Management for the US initiative of the International Forest Stewardship Council. The goals of the FSC are to encourage consumers to buy products from responsible sources and use FSC-certified wood in the building industry. You can play a part in this movement to shape global forestry and accelerate the transformation to sustainable forestry. Join us and learn



how. No-host bar at 6PM; dinner served at 7PM.

To reserve your place, return the form on page 3 by Monday, June 19.

Past and present Seattle Audubon volunteers have the opportunity to attend for half price, thanks to a generous bequest.

The Brockey Student Center is at South Seattle Community College, 6000 16th Avenue SW, in West Seattle.

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WEB SITES<http://www.seattleaudubon.org><http://www.birdweb.org>

Earthcare Northwest, the official newsletter of Seattle Audubon, is published monthly except January and August.

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sions will be edited and published at

the editor's discretion.

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Of Note

• **New Volunteer Orientations: Tuesday, May 23 and Tuesday, June 20, 7PM at Seattle Audubon.** Register with Lorraine at 206-523-8243, x12 or lorraineh@seattleaudubon.org.

• **Annual Wenas Campout, May 26-29**— For details, visit the Wenas web site, www.nwlink.com/~cyrus/wenas.html, or call 206-282-9088 or e-mail cyrus@newsdata.com. You could make *this* your Birdathon!

• **Seattle Audubon Summer Nature Camp**—Introduce a child to birds and nature! Send your own kid, or provide a scholarship for another. Check out our programs at www.seattleaudubon.org or call 206-523-4483.

• **Donate your old vehicle** to Seattle Audubon and help support its programs. Please call 206-523-8243, x7, and leave a message.

• **Many thanks** to the growers who made our spring plant sale such a success! They are: **Botanica, Black Dog Nursery, Day Creek Nursery, Langley Fine Gardens, Madrona Nursery, and Tadpole Haven.**

• **Update on Black River Heron colony**—This year will be the first since 1989 that we will not have an annual field trip. Herons Forever and Seattle Audubon are concerned that the new 65-house development being built on the adjacent hillside is already putting extra stress on this colony. However, we sure could use your help monitoring these herons. There are currently about 135 nests, all of them occupied. If you would like to volunteer to help with observations, contact Suzanne Krom, president

of Herons Forever, at 206-933-0222 or info@heronsforever.org.

• **Thank You to**
—**Chris Altwegg, Mike Dermond, and Lloyd Cox** for their hard work with changing out the Seattle Audubon server system and installing several new computers.

—BirdWatch volunteers **Alan Grenon, Cara Ianni, and Adam Sedgley** for chaperoning the BirdWatch trip to Arizona.

—**Alan Humphrey**, for hard work on “Sound to Sage: A Breeding Bird Atlas for King, Kitsap, Kittitas, and Island Counties” (read more on page 4). This web site must be a source of tremendous pride for the **300 volunteers that contributed to this breeding bird atlas over its 20 year lifespan.**

Hal Opperman has been with the project for much of its life and, through this final stage, has afforded crucial support and vital feedback. **Tom Rohrer** developed the functional design and is an active member of the Breeding Bird Atlas advisory committee. Thanks also to web volunteers **Sri Veena Syam Tangirala and Vanarasi Antony Swamy.** —**Linda Anchondo, Ed Freedman, Jane Hedberg, Renee Klein, Michele Leslie, John Lundin, Wren McNally, Tom Riley, Tom Rohrer, Mary Anne Thorbeck, Joeve and Pete Wilkinson, and Richard Youel** for Birdathon assistance.

—**All the hard-working FUN volunteers, both parents and community volunteers**, for their time and priceless commitment to the program during the 2005-2006 school year.

—**All volunteers in positions of leadership** who do so much for advancing our mission.

SEATTLE AUDUBON BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Challenged Science

by Jerry Joyce, Science Chair

Today, more than ever, we need independent science. Because government managers modify the reports of their scientists to fit the agenda of the current administration, because agencies conduct inadequate scientific studies, because pseudoscience is used to justify philosophical positions, and because important studies are skipped when money is used for other purposes, we need independent scientists to challenge the status quo, to expose shoddy work and to conduct studies that no one else will do.

The Seattle Audubon Science Committee pursues these tasks seriously, with members challenging the US Army Corps of Engineers about its justification for the killing of fish-eating birds around dams, and with members reviewing and commenting on reports concerning the status and management of Marbled Murrelets and



Spotted Owls. The Science Committee works to document our state's avian environment by updating the Breeding Bird Atlas and analyzing trends from the Neighborhood Bird Project. The committee consults with government

agencies concerning the restoration of wetlands and addresses the silent crisis concerning Puget Sound seabirds. It advises other sections of Seattle Audubon on the scientific soundness of our positions and even advises on legal actions. It looks at media hyperbole and documents the facts instead of the rumors.


We must take time to look at our world and then use good science to understand what is happening. We need to use science to prove our points and to disprove pseudoscience. We need science to talk about the birds and their environments. We need science to understand our place in the natural world and what we are doing to it. We simply need real science.

Introducing: Shawn Cantrell

by Jane Hedberg, President



Please join me in welcoming Shawn Cantrell, Seattle Audubon's new Executive Director. Shawn has had an impressive career with nonprofit organizations, including several years of professional experience working on conservation issues in the Pacific Northwest. Most recently he was executive director at Washington Citizen Action, and before that he worked for nearly a dozen years with Friends of the Earth on environmental advocacy and education activities. Shawn is well respected for having managed conservation coalitions, and he led the multi-year campaign to get Congressional funding for restoring the Elwha River. Shawn also has managed political campaigns and ballot measures, and has been active on many boards—Progressive Action Network, Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition, NW Energy Coalition, Earth Share of Washington, and others. We are excited about having someone with Shawn's credentials at the helm of our organization.



Seattle Audubon Society
for birds and nature

Annual Dinner Reservation Form

Saturday, June 24, 6PM - South Seattle Community College

Please return this form by Monday, June 19 to Seattle Audubon, 8050 35th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98115, with your check payable to Seattle Audubon. Don't forget to indicate your choice of entrée. Guests reserving together will be seated together. Call 206-523-4483 with questions.

Name(s)	Past/Present Volunteer	Vegetarian* (\$36)	Chicken** (\$36)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Subtotals: _____ + _____

|| We wish to take the 50% volunteer discount: _____ X \$18 = < _____ >

Phone: _____ **Total:** _____

Please seat me with _____ **Total:** _____

Your reservation will be held at the door.

* Portobello mushroom bourguignonne. ** Herbed roasted chicken breast with sauce chasseur. Dessert is white chocolate cheesecake with raspberry sauce.

SEATTLE AUDUBON MISSION STATEMENT

Seattle Audubon cultivates and leads a community that values and protects birds and the natural environment.

Seattle Audubon is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Invest in the Future—Make a Bequest to Seattle Audubon

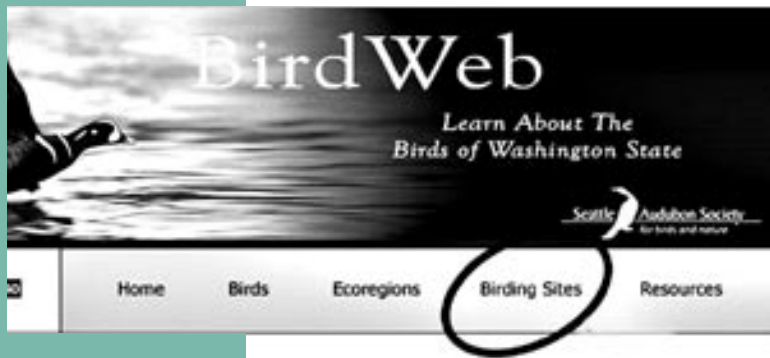
Shawn Cantrell
206-523-8243, x15
shawnc@seattleaudubon.org



SEATTLE AUDUBON CENTER and NATURE SHOP
Hours: Mon-Sat 10AM to 5PM
8050 35th Ave. NE
Seattle WA 98115
206-523-4483

Destinations: Birding Sites all over Washington, Thanks to BirdWeb.org!

Got an afternoon off and want a quick recommendation for places to go birding in your area? Planning a family road trip across the state and want to stop somewhere along the way? The improved BirdWeb can be your on-line resource to the many exciting birding sites of Washington State.



Improving upon an extensive resource for the birds of Washington, BirdWeb was relaunched in late 2005 to include descriptions of the varied ecoregions of our state, including birding sites that showcase these habitats and the birds they harbor. Forty avid birders from across the state offered their extensive experience to write accounts of the habitat and birds for each birding site, totaling 70 in all. From the shorelines of Cape Disappointment in the southwest corner of the state to the boreal forest of the northeast, BirdWeb has you covered.

Visit www.birdweb.org, click “Birding Sites,” and select the ecoregion you’d like to visit. Come find the details you need for your next birding trip, and be careful: you might learn something, too!

Thank you to the 40 volunteer authors who contributed to this feature, and to the Science Committee for their overall vision and coordination.

Sound to Sage: Another Product of Citizen Science



Citizen science is the driving force behind Seattle Audubon’s newest web site: “Sound to Sage: Breeding Bird Atlas of Island, King, Kitsap, and Kittitas Counties, Washington.” Named to capture the geographic breadth of the project, Sound to Sage marks the culmination of nearly 20 years of effort by over 300 volunteers. Thousands of field cards were compiled to create stacks of colorful maps that display the breeding status of 213 species in the four-county,

5000-square-mile area—a region the size of Connecticut—stretching from the Strait of Juan de Fuca across the Cascade Range to shrub-steppe habitats along the Columbia River. And just like its sibling BirdWeb (www.birdweb.org), Sound to Sage offers enough information to satisfy the insatiable scientist, while still being accessible to birders of all levels.

The amount of time dedicated to field surveying and coordination of this project and the on-line publication exemplify Seattle Audubon’s dedication to producing solid scientific work, making information and analysis available to inquiring minds. Please visit www.soundtosage.org, and tell us what you think!

It's Time to Join the Birdathon Flock!

Participate in Birdathon 2006 and help Seattle Audubon protect bird habitat.

Three Good Reasons to Birdathon

- Almost one third of Washington State's birds are in decline.
- The biggest threat to these birds is the loss of habitat.
- Birdathon funds support the conservation programs that protect these birds and their habitats.

Four Great Ways to Birdathon

- Pay for a Field Trip or Event.

Just can't gather pledges? Support Birdathon by paying for a field trip or event. See the Birdathon web page at www.seattleaudubon.org for details, then call the Nature Shop at 206-523-4483 to sign up.

- Count Birds and Collect Pledges.

Count as many bird species as you can in a 24-hour period between now and May 31. Collect pledges for your efforts, and earn incentive awards. Pledges can be paid on-line. Remember, funds must be submitted by Friday, June 2.

Raise \$30 and get a new or renewed membership.

Raise \$75 and get a Birdathon 2006 t-shirt.

Raises \$150 and get a beautiful feather print. (\$600 gets you four different prints!)

- Be a Sponsor.

Want to support the cause, but have no time to go birding, or just can't ask for pledges? Consider supporting any Birdathoner, Seattle Audubon staff member, member of the board of directors, or your favorite field trip leader.

Or consider a pledge to your favorite Master Birder Class. Master Birder classes are competing in the Master Birder Challenge.

Support the Big Day winners—Pledge in support of that as-yet-undetermined team for its dedication to *out-bird* the other teams.

Or simply make a donation to Birdathon. For more details, see the April issue of *Earthcare*, visit the Birdathon section of www.seattleaudubon.org, or call the Nature Shop 206-523-4483.

- Become a Corporate Partner.

We extend Birdathon partnership opportunities to select business friends who share our commitment to a healthy environment. To find out more, call Monya Noelke 206-523-8243, x37.



Birdathon Field Trips & Events

Call 206-523-4483 to sign up. See April issue for details, meeting places, etc. You may pay for a trip or event, or gather pledges and vie for awards.

Friday, May 5, 5:30AM

King County Big Day, \$25
Marymoor Park mansion

Saturday, May 6

King County Big Day, \$25
4AM, Seward Park Ctr *or*
6AM, Marymoor dog run lot
10AM, Toddler Birdathon,
Meadowbrook, \$15
8:30AM, Family Birdathon,
Discovery Park, \$30

Sunday, May 7, 6:30AM

Kittitas County/Potholes, \$25

Tuesday, May 9, 7:00AM

Discovery Park, \$15

Tuesday, May 9, 6:00AM

Reifel Refuge, BC, \$25

Saturday, May 13, 6:00AM

Umtanum Creek Rec. Area, \$25

Wednesday, May 17, 7:30AM

Dry Creek Waterfowl, \$25

Thursday, May 18, 7:00AM

Camp Long for Beginners, \$15

Saturday, May 20

5:30AM, Robinson Canyon, \$25

8AM, Accessible Birding:

Carkeek Park, \$15

9-11AM, Paul Bannick workshop,
Discovery Park, \$75

Win Fabulous Prizes in Birdathon 2006!

See details on our web site.

Flings!

- 3-4 days in an ocean-view cabin at Pacific Beach during fall migration
- Lunch and an afternoon of journaling with author Frances Wood on Whidbey Island
- *Butterflies and Birdsong* trip with Idie Ulsh and Richard Youel

- Weekend get-a-way at a Methow Valley log cabin
- Private tour and tasting for 4 at Chateau Ste. Michelle
- San Juan Island field trip for four with Barb Jensen
- Week of Seattle Audubon Nature Camp for 5- to 12-year-olds
- Gift certificate for North Cascades Institute courses

Things

- Exquisitely framed "Ruby-crowned Wrens" print by John James Audubon, from the coveted Amsterdam Edition of *Birds of America*
- birdPod, a revolution in bird songs for your iPod
- Kayak rentals
- Native garden design
- Bird feeders, bird houses, birdbath, binoculars, books, baskets

Peruvian Shade Coffee Trip —Join Us!

Seattle Audubon is working with Wild-land Adventures to develop a trip for members and the public to Peru, to explore the world of shade coffee as well as



Peruvian birds and culture. This trip will include visits to shade coffee plantations in the Quillabamba region, jaunts to Machu Picchu and world famous birding sites, and a day or two at an extraordinary coffee harvest celebration.

Join us to search for the Blackish Rail, Rufous-sided Crake, Ash-breasted Tityrant, howler and spider monkeys, and much, much more.

If you're interested in learning more about this trip, please contact Alex Morgan at 206-985-6581 or alexm@seattleaudubon.org.

What's Coming to your Community?

by Matt Mega, *Urban Habitat Director*,
and Dan Stonington, *Community Protection Coalition*

Measure 37, the extreme land use law passed in Oregon, continues to set a scary precedent—a precedent that the Washington State Farm Bureau would like to see established in our state via Initiative I-933.

Now that the Oregon Supreme Court has overturned a lower court's ruling and said that Measure 37 is constitutional, people across the state are learning how harmful the measure really is for communities. Bryan and Renee Ross have owned their rural property in Clackamas County for 13 years. But now, under Measure 37, the county commission has approved a gravel mine right next to their home. As Bryan and Renee explained in a recent letter to the editor, "This gravel mine could very likely ruin our property value ... This measure has given our neighbors special rights and taken away our rights."

Oregonians can also expect more claims like the one filed recently in Yamhill County that allows an 850-acre, 850-home development on forestland. The developer is demanding a payment of \$10 - \$35 million from the county to discontinue the project.

Measure I-933, Washington State's companion version of Measure 37, would also allow uncontrolled development throughout the state, rolling back decades of citizen efforts to plan appropriate growth for their communities. I-933 would result in a total collapse of the land-use guidance in the state, leaving small private land-owners vulnerable to unscrupulous developers seeking monetary gain. Citizens would have no recourse to these development proposals, and many small communities would be forced to accommodate inappropriate and sometimes dangerous developments. I-933 would take land-use planning away from the citizens and put it in the hands of individual developers.

For more information visit www.protectcommunities.org.

Science at your Service—Science in our Environment

by Jerry Joyce, *Science Committee Chair*

The Seattle Audubon Science Committee's volunteers and staff are always seeking ways to serve Seattle Audubon, the local birding and scientific community, and the environment itself, through studies and consultations that bring the power of information to all. To accomplish this, members and associates of the committee work in three integrated areas: providing sound scientific information to the public, conducting original research, and consulting on issues and questions.

This year the Science Committee, along with its many associates, published a new version of BirdWeb—the on-line guide to the birds of Washington State and their environments. This site continues to evolve, with the ongoing addition and upgrading of bird sounds and photographs. We're also publishing another great web resource, the Breeding Bird Atlas—see page 4. Still in development is an on-line journal intended to provide local and regional scientific information relevant to birds and nature. We are working to clarify and publish facts as opposed to media rumors, with members monitoring issues such as bird flu and West Nile virus, and providing fact sheets on the Seattle Audubon web site, at www.seattleaudubon.org/science.cfm.

Since many birders love to record just about everything, and scientists love to conduct research, bird surveys and their analyses seem like perfect subjects for the Science Committee. As you'll see in this issue, the committee has been coordinating the Neighborhood Bird Project—a scientifically designed study of the birds in our parks—and members are now applying sophisticated analysis methods to tease out trends in the health and status

of these urban birds. The committee is also instrumental in conducting, advising, and analyzing independent research programs such as the Puget Sound Seabird and Sea Duck studies, Field Trip Data Collection/Mapping program, and the Christmas Bird Count.

Another mission of the Science Committee is to consult with and advise other parts of Seattle Audubon, Audubon Washington, other Audubon chapters, and environmental and government groups. We work with others on preventing oil spills; limiting the introduction of invasive species; reviewing proposed legal actions for scientific soundness; commenting on reports and proposals that government agencies may try to slide past the public; and evaluating impacts on wetlands, forests, and natural areas. We attend a remarkable number of hearings, meetings, and conferences. And we also serve as translators of scientific jargon and as responders to simple questions.

Although mathematical modeling might be needed in an investigation as to whether birds in our parks are affected by the El Niño weather event, science doesn't always need to be so complicated. Did you hear the rumor that suet feeders cause beak deformities? Science Committee members searched the literature and found no evidence to support that idea. It's probable that some birds with already deformed beaks sometimes feed at suet feeders. Is standard-dilution hummingbird nectar poisonous to hummingbirds? More research found this not to be so, unless the feeder is not cleaned regularly and old nectar left standing. Science—complex or simple—can serve us all. The Science Committee continues its independent work to make sure that real science is available to serve us, as well as working for birds and nature.

Seattle Audubon Science Committee

Many thanks to all of these volunteers who give so generously their time and talent!

Alice Arnold
Tom Aversa
Brian Bell
Helle Bielefeldt-Ohmann
Herb Curl
Samir Deeb
Martha Groom
Todd Hass
Gene Hunn
Jerry Joyce
Ilon Logan
Kristin Marshall
Amalia S. Meier
Don Norman
Hal Opperman
Eric Ward
Cheryl Wotus
Adam Sedgley (*Science Program Associate*)

The Neighborhood Bird Project at Magnuson Park

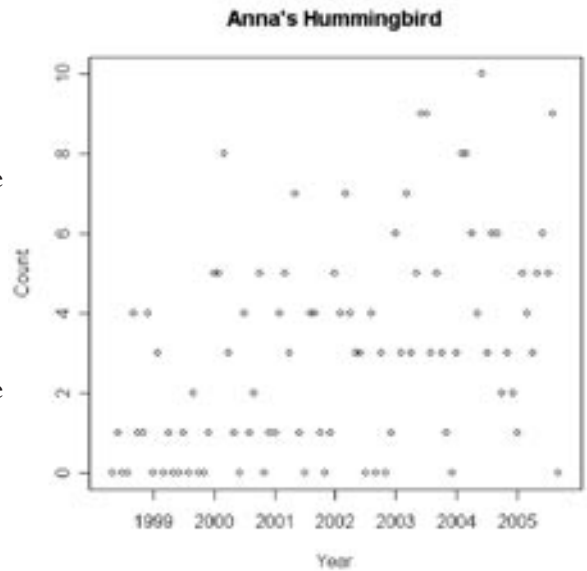
by Alice Arnold, Kristin Marshall, Eric Ward, and Herb Curl

Early in the morning on the second Saturday of every month, a small group of Seattle Audubon volunteers gathers in a parking lot at Magnuson Park, binoculars in hand. Under the leadership of Jan Bragg, the group forms itself into four teams to survey the birds in the park. On other mornings, similar groups gather to survey birds in Lake Forest Park, the Washington Park Arboretum, and Seward, Discovery, Carkeek, and Genesee Parks. All of these volunteers are part of the Neighborhood Bird Project, an effort coordinated by Herb Curl of the Science Committee. The count at Magnuson is one of the longest running; Jan and eight other volunteers recently celebrated ten years of surveying birds in the park.

The monthly bird surveys follow a specific protocol along designated routes. Volunteers stop at set stations along each route and record the number of birds of each species seen or heard within a 50-meter radius during a 5-minute period. At Magnuson Park, there are four loops, with five to eight stations per loop. The current protocol was established in May 1998, and has provided

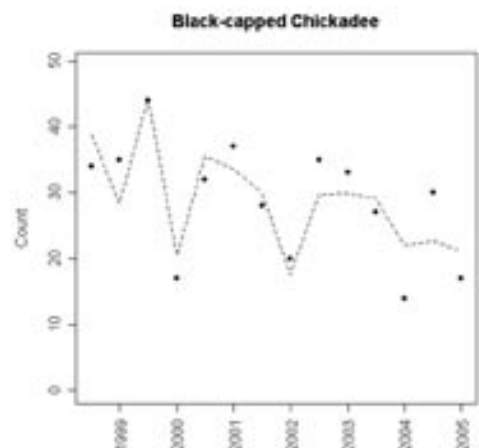
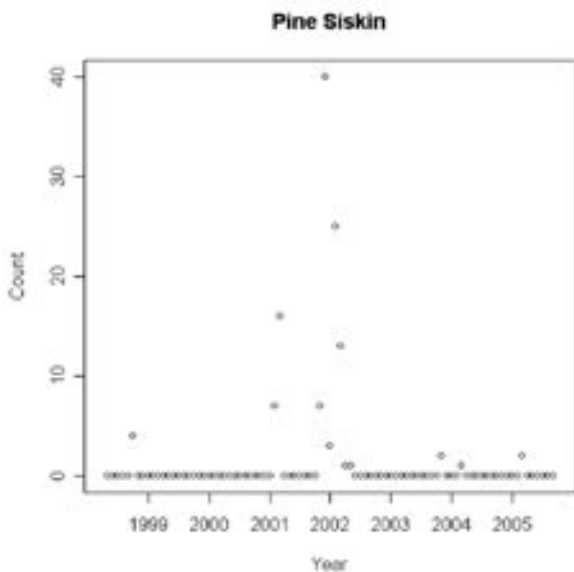
over seven years of consistent data collection in the park.

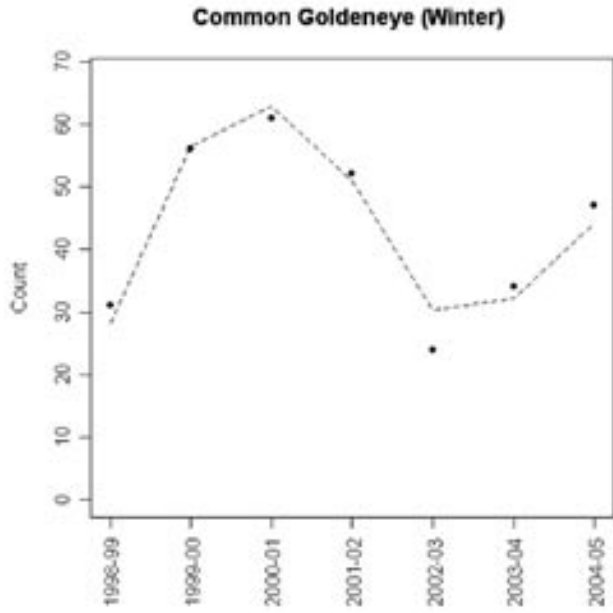
Members of the Science Committee are currently analyzing the data collected at Magnuson Park. Some interesting patterns were revealed when we plotted the counts



of birds seen of each species over time. In the plot of Pine Siskins, for example, the counts were very low except in 2001-2002, when large numbers were seen, a pattern indicative of an irruptive species. (An irruptive species is one that occurs infrequently, but turns up in large numbers when it does occur). The plot of Anna's Hummingbirds shows a lot of variability in numbers, but we have seen increasing counts since 2000. When we conducted a statistical analysis of these data, we found that the rate of increase was approximately 15% per year.

We also used analytical tools of statistical modeling to look for the effects of season, year, and weather patterns on





Common Goldeneyes seen over time were greatly influenced by environmental variables such as temperature and precipitation, with lowest counts observed during the 2002-03 El Niño.

In addition to explorations of individual species, the data collected allow for an examination of the number of different species seen over time. To date, there has been no significant decline in species diversity over time. Many changes are planned for Magnuson Park—some controversial—and volunteers will continue to collect data, allowing for future analyses assessing the impact of the changes in the park, both on species diversity and individual species.

the counts. Using weather records from NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, we constructed models of the expected counts over time based on these factors, and compared the results from our models with actual data from our counts. The plot of Black-capped Chickadees includes a dot representing the sum of the counts observed during the spring months of March, April, and May, alternating with the sum of the counts during the fall months of September, October, and November. The dotted line shows the counts predicted from a model that includes year, season, and wind speed. The model showed that the counts were decreasing by about 14% per year. The Common Goldeneye is seen on Lake Washington in winter, and one of the loops in Magnuson Park follows the waterfront in order to count birds on the lake, within 90 meters of the shore. The numbers of



Neighborhood Bird Project Volunteers at Magnuson Park, March, 2006

Back row: Herb Curl, Barbara Blair, Jeffrey Nystuen, Mary Ann Soltesz; Front row: Etta Cosey, Alice Arnold, Eric Wagner, Jan Bragg, Pam Cahn, Donna Schaeffer. (Other volunteers not seen here are: Katie Barndt, Eileen Bryant, Georgia Conti, Helen Crawford, Mike Dermond, Charlie Kahle, Ron Leamon, Helen Murphy, Barbara Retzlaff, Marilyn Sandall, Cynthia Wilson, and Ann Zavitkovsky)