

*Membership Meeting
Fishers & Martens*

*October 2nd 1:30 - 3:00pm
Events on Emerson
212 4th Street, Hoquiam*

September October 2016



The Sandpiper



Fisher



American Marten

Fishers and Martens weasels of the trees

Fishers are a medium-sized mammal, comparable in size to the domestic cat, and the largest species in the marten genus. Their bodies are long, thin, and low to the ground. The sexes have similar physical features but they are sexually dimorphic in size, with the male being much larger than the female.

Names derived from aboriginal languages include pekan, pequam, wejack, and woolang. It is also called a fisher cat, although it is not a feline.

The American marten or American pine marten (*Martes americana*) is a North American member of the family Mustelidae, sometimes referred to as the pine marten. The name "pine marten" is derived from the common but distinct Eurasian species of *Martes*. It differs from the fisher (*Martes pennanti*) in that it is smaller in size and lighter in color.

Fishers were not found in Washington State after the 1930's, probably due to the fur market and logging practices.

Starting in 2008, ninety fishers were reintroduced over three years to Olympic National Park and surrounding national forest lands. The fisher population has since been confirmed to be reproducing successfully and dispersing across the Olympic Peninsula. Over 100 fishers are believed to reside on the Olympic Peninsula as of 2016.

Starting in 2015, fisher reintroduction began on

Federal lands in Gifford Pinchot National Forest and in Mount Rainier National Park., and releases are planned to follow in the North Cascades in North Cascades National Park Service Complex and in Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

The October 2nd Membership Meeting will feature Betsy Howell of the US Forest Service who will present an illustrated program on martens and fishers of the Olympic National Forest.

The meeting will be held at Event On Emerson, 212 4th Street in Hoquiam. The building is an old church which has been converted to an event center by Steven Puvogel and provides a delightful venue for a variety of occasions.

How a Bird Feeder Revived My Marriage - Modern Love *by Tista Sen*

My husband was no longer the man I had married. He had become grumpy and short-tempered, acting as if life had dealt him a bad hand.

He works in publishing, an industry that has its own share of problems. A self-made man, he worries that our sons have been handed too much. Our marriage was facing the familiar strains of midlife. All of this was getting him down.

Until he installed the bird feeder.

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The President's Perch



By Arnie Martin

We are finally reaching the end of our struggles with the Crude by Rail terminals ... or ... we are about to continue our legal struggles with the Crude by Rail terminal proponents. Which will it be? The answer will be forthcoming in October, following the issuance of the Westway Terminal Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on September 30th. The responsible officer (the Hoquiam City Manager) has to wait 7 days before issuing a decision on whether or not to issue a permit for the project.

Here are the possibilities: (1) the FEIS will recommend issuing a Substantial Shoreline Development Permit (SSDP) to Westway; (2) issuing a SSDP with mitigations of the problems noted in the Draft EIS; or (3) state that there are too many problems that cannot be mitigated, therefore no SSDP can be issued.

If the FEIS states that no mitigations can correct the problems in the Draft EIS, then our problems are over, except perhaps counter-claims in the form of a Supplemental FEIS from the project proponents.

If the FEIS finds there are no problems that need to be mitigated, or that there are adequate mitigations to solve the problems noted, then we (Grays Harbor Audubon Society) will need to join with the Quinault Indian Nation, the Friends of Grays Harbor, and the Sierra Club in a challenge in the Shoreline Hearings Board to issuance of an SSDP. We hope this will be a repetition of the successful challenge to the SSDP issued when the Hoquiam and the Department of Ecology issued a Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance without requiring an Environmental Impact Statement.

We believe the FEIS will show less severe disturbances of the Quinault Treaty fishing rights as there are no firm plans for the other two Crude by Rail terminals, however we believe that any disturbance of the fishing rights of the QIN are enough to reject the Westway terminal.

As I have nearly interminably already written, the main objections to the terminal are: (1) the potential crude oil spills from the trains travelling along the railroad tracks which parallel much of

the Chehalis river, and (2) the possibility of having massive oils spills caused by a Cascadia Subduction Earthquake as the huge crude oil storage tanks are to be built at less than 20 feet above sea level and supported on 120 feet of dredge spoils.

The chances of having a large spill from the derailment of a unit train of Crude Tanker cars is very high, and nearly certain due to the original construction of the Puget Sound and Pacific RR more than 100 years ago, built over the unstable soils of the Chehalis River surge plain. Regardless of the spill response plans of the Department of Ecology, no response can be quick enough to stop a spill from polluting the dozens of miles where the tracks parallel the river. This means there will be crude oil, or diluted crude oil reaching the Chehalis estuary (Grays Harbor) and the extreme tidal flows which cannot be successfully boomed to contain oil spills. All this would result in the tidal flows carrying crude oil into the Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge.

Note that the above spill scenario does not involve exploding tank cars, just leaks which would result from derailment. If the derailment's spill did not reach the river, it would still reach the shallow aquifers which water the farmlands that exist along the PSAP route. Sounds like there is no winning scenario in the event of a derailment, doesn't it? Perhaps we should remember the multiple derailments of soybean trains during past 3 years. Don't forget, crude oil sloshes in the tank cars far more than soybeans shift in bottom-hopper grain cars, making future derailments more likely.

We can only hope the Department of Ecology has paid some attention to the myriad comments which were submitted following the issuance of the Draft EIS. Comments similar to these were submitted, and we fervently hope they were incorporated into the FEIS. If the FEIS reviewers see such non-mitigatable likely scenarios they will recommend that the terminals should not be built in a location where these rail route and storage tank conditions exist.

If you are tired of reading these non-wildlife President's Perches, think how tired of writing them I am. Thanks for your patience; perhaps the end of them is approaching.



Feeder continued from page 1

“But that’s so messy,” I said. In Mumbai, India, where we live, apartments are tiny. And while we have a little veranda with a few green plants, we do not have birds, and I did not see the point of putting up a bird feeder on our small open space to feed nonexistent creatures.

To try to feed birds in a city that’s rife with starvation and poverty also seemed too privileged and romantic a notion, something only rich people did in the Western world. Not here. Not in Mumbai.

“We live in India,” I reminded him.

“Birds belong to the world,” he replied. And that was that.

So up it went, an ugly contraption he bought on Amazon and had shipped to us. It was transparent, cylindrical and odd-looking. Grain was dutifully filled, and I watched skeptically as it stood solitary and defiant on our veranda in the muggy monsoon weather in a city where I neither saw birds fly nor come to roost.

Our lives were busy with the inevitable commotion that forms the basis of any marriage today. We worked hard. We spoke less. We watched too much television. We spent many evenings answering emails and responding to texts. Our sons were grown-up and had their own lives. We had ours.

One lonely morning in a long succession of lonely mornings, I caught my husband’s eye over the newspaper. He was signaling to me in that grotesque, animated fashion adults use to convey something unspoken through improvised sign language, pointing to our little veranda.

I turned. And there it was: a bright green parrot with a red beak perched on the ledge of the bird feeder. The parrot cocked his head. We cocked ours. The parrot studied us. We studied him. And then he settled down and dug right in.

I glanced at my husband. He beamed in response. He looked as if he had just given birth.

And soon our mornings became a bit more than the rush to catch the bus. There was anticipation to our workday until our winged visitors would arrive. One morning, a cocky sparrow came to us. “Did you know they are almost extinct in this city?” my husband whispered.

We waited to see which feathered friend would drop in next. Who would be vying for top spot? Who would win the day?

“So you think it’s too tiny, the entrance?” my husband asked me one evening.

I looked at the doorway to our apartment, puzzled, only to realize that he meant the entrance to the bird feeder. “Well, they have tiny beaks,” I muttered.

“They don’t need a granary.”

He looked contemplative, as if he were seriously considering my response. “But it helps when you have a wider plate on the dining table, doesn’t it?” he said.

“That’s a little sunbird!” I exclaimed with disbelief. “In Mumbai!”

And suddenly the grumpy man’s face lit up, his stress lines disappearing. Could this be a new him? He would measure the level of the grain with great care and fill the feeder.

“Oh, no,” he would exclaim with dismay. “They did not eat today.” But he was not referring to our sons, whom we seldom saw, or to any human beings. He meant the birds. Everything was about his feathered friends.

Soon there was a sprightly quality to his mornings. Our mornings. In the busy monotony of our lives, we were parents once again. Except this time he was the mother.

Our mornings became the hours I most looked forward to. We exchanged far more than a glance. It was like the intrepid excitement of opening our doors to strangers or new friends and having a meal ready. Will they come? Will the food be enough? Will they enjoy their dinner and come back for more?

One evening, I came home to find my husband sitting with little bowls of different grains of different textures. “This food is very good for the birds,” he said as the grains slipped through his fingers. “It’s good for their digestion.”

I watched the sifting grains, thinking: What’s next? He spent many a Sunday on the internet researching birds, bird food and eating patterns. When do they feed? How much? Why so little?

Our conversations often began with a bird fact. A male songbird sings 2,000 times a day, for example. A pigeon’s feathers outweigh its bones.

At night, my husband took stock of his day by keeping track of how many birds had visited and for how long.

One very windy Sunday, as we both gazed out from our little veranda, he seemed pensive. “Is it your job?” I asked anxiously, eager to help.

“No,” he said, glaring at me for being so hopelessly insensitive. “There hasn’t been a bird visit in the last 24 hours. I’ve been watching.”

“Perhaps it needs a GPS tracker,” I said jokingly. I mean, they were just birds. I was the wife.

That evening, I found that he had moved the bird feeder to another location.

“It’s easier for them to find it,” he said. “They need to be comfortable. After all, they come to eat.”

Can you be jealous of birds? They commanded

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his attention more than I did. I began glaring at the pigeons and muttering cuss words at the noisy crow. "You are upstaging me," I muttered to the cooing dove.

Sea gulls gave me the eye, and I was suspicious of the eagle that swooped too low. I felt like Cruella de Vil from Disney's "101 Dalmatians," devious plotter and coldhearted criminal. I was coming in the way of their happiness. And his.

As I cleaned up after dinner one evening, I thought of the food on our table, feeling grateful for all we have in a country where malnourishment is rampant. "Finish what's in front of you," I used to snap at my sons. "And no, you have to eat what's at home, not order a pizza again."

One morning while my husband was away, I sat in my little nook nursing a coffee. My father had been hospitalized, and I was inundated with work and a pressing deadline. The hopelessness of life kept creeping up on me. I wiped my tears in anger and gazed at the bird feeder, which was now an out-of-focus blur.

Someone cocked his head around the feeder. It was my friend the parrot. Or rather, my husband's friend.

Well, tough luck, pal, I thought. There's just me to contend with today.

He stared at me. I stared back. We seemed to be playing a silly game of who blinks first. I moved closer, but he didn't budge.

He continued eating in little bites from the bird feeder as I inched closer. And just when I could see him up close in his magnificent finery, he looked at me sideways and a little crossly. Keep your distance, he threatened.

And for once I listened. I watched the bird eat and fill his tummy. I imagined his pleasure. I shared in his contentment. If he were able to roll onto his back and rub his belly, he would have.

It was such a simple joy. Such a simple kindness. I smiled as fresh tears threatened to spill again.

That night, I snuggled close to my once-grumpy man and held his hand tight.

"Is everything all right?" he asked.

"Yes," I whispered. "I shared a meal with your friend today."

These days, my husband smiles more and grumbles less. He now looks at the trees in the neighborhood and talks about how important they are.

"For the birds, you mean?"

"For us," he says quietly.

And perhaps that's it. You reach a stage in life when you yearn to do something new. You yearn to do something good. To give back. To find yourself. To rediscover love. In order to live better.

Some nurture a hobby. Others donate to charity. A few travel the world or volunteer to teach. The wealthy may take themselves out for elaborate meals or on a trip to an exotic city, where they can dance in the rain or go bungee-jumping or learn to speak Mandarin.

My husband did none of those things. He visited none of those places. Didn't tick off items on his bucket list.

But he found himself anyway. And in doing so, he found us. All he did was go online and order an ugly bird feeder. And it has made all the difference.

Tista Sen lives in Mumbai, India, where she works as national creative director at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. To contact Modern Love, email modernlove@nytimes.com.



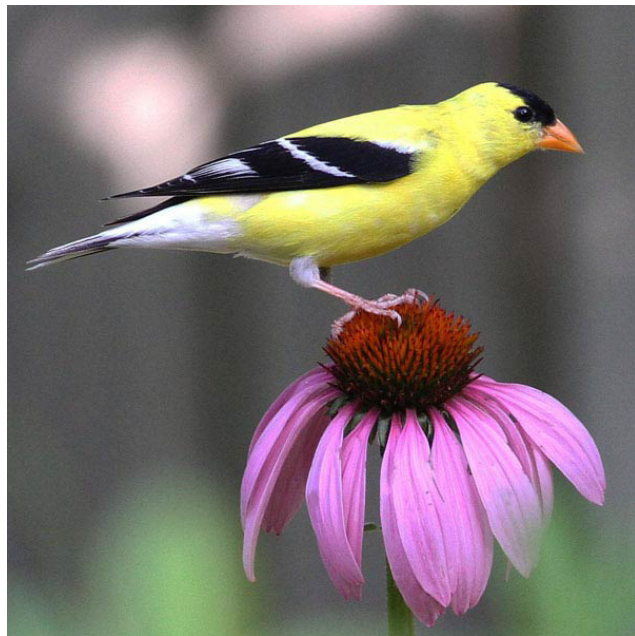
Want to bring more birds to your home?

By growing native plants, you provide the food and shelter birds need. To make your space bird-friendly and beautiful, check out Audubon's native plant resources to find the best plants for your area. Search by the birds you most want to attract and we'll give you a personalized plant list and local resources so you can get started right away.

The sooner you plant, the sooner the birds will come!

Find Your Plants

http://www.audubon.org/native-plants?ms=digital-email-ea-plants-20160919_native_plants_launch&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20160919_native_plant_launch&sourceId=141543



Purple Coneflower and American Goldfinch
photo by Will Stuart



California Gnatcatcher. Photo by Robert Hamilton

Victory! Endangered Species Act protects upheld for California Gnatcatcher

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced it will maintain Endangered Species Act protections for the Coastal California Gnatcatcher, rejecting an attempt by developers to remove federal protections from this threatened species.

Southern California developers petitioned to remove the gnatcatcher from the Endangered Species list, claiming that these birds are not a genetically unique subspecies, and therefore unable to receive protection under the Endangered Species Act. Audubon maintained that this claim was based on deeply flawed science and that protections must continue, and the Fish and Wildlife Service agreed that the petition was not supported by the science.

Coastal California Gnatcatcher populations have declined dramatically as their sage scrub habitat has disappeared, primarily due to development and wildfires. The subspecies was added to the Endangered Species list in 1993. This attempt to delist the gnatcatcher is the second by the Pacific Legal Foundation, which represented the developers in the effort.

By upholding its designation as a threatened species, this decision helps protect its increasingly rare habitat from further damage, which also benefits the numerous other species that depend on it and the area's residents and visitors that can continue to enjoy this unique and endangered environment.



Upcoming Field Trip Diary *go birding with Judith Taylor*

Field trips restarted for the fall season with a visit to Ocean Shores on August 23rd. Alas, it was a cold day, especially along the ocean beaches and at the jetty. However, the sun was out during our birding at Damon Point, where we had nice close-up views of Red-throated Loons and marvelous looks at a Harbor Porpoise that was feeding out in the bay with loons and scoters. On the beach near the jetty we were reminded of how vulnerable seabirds are to ocean changes/health when we found three Rhinoceros Auklet carcasses close together on the beach.

The Westport outing on September 15th provided much evidence that fall is just about here. There were flocks of Brewer's Blackbirds and European Starlings around the observation tower; and at Bottle Beach we observed a large flock of Steller's Jays. Several of the jays landed in nearby trees, giving us all a chance to admire their vibrant blue and black plumage. Many resting Marbled Godwits were seen from Float 21 at Westhaven Marina, as were good numbers of the distinctive Heermann's Gulls, Pelagic Cormorants, stately Great Blue Herons, a few adult Brown Pelicans and many Western-Glaucous-winged (hybrid) Gulls. Two delightful Kingfishers were active at the north end of the marina.

We were amazed to find most of the Brown Pelicans feeding out in South Bay. We watched this spectacle from a small cove along the shore of South Bay (on the south side of Coast Guard spit). Hundreds of Brown Pelicans were diving and floating about while many, many more streamed in from the nearby marina and from the north (Damon Point spit area).

Next field trip will be in late October.

Contact Judy (10ksandpipers@gmail.com; 360-591-2463) if you have any questions.



Pictured here are Heermann's Gulls in non-breeding plumage (speckled head as opposed to all white head of adult in breeding plumage and dark sooty brown of immature). This is one of the easiest gulls to identify, given it's nearly all dark plumage and bright red bill. They breed off the west coast of Mexico and disperse during the summer, arriving in our coastal areas starting in mid-June and becoming a commonly seen gull here July through September.



Red-throated Loons are the smallest of all the loon species, easily distinguished by their slender slightly-upturned bill and, when in breeding plumage, by the dark red throat patch. In fall they are common along the coast from late August into October. During the stormy winter months these slender loons are more common in the Puget Trough.

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

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News & Editorial

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Membership Meeting

Fishers and Martens

October 2, 2016

1:30 - 3:00pm

at

Events On Emerson

212 4th Street, Hoquiam

THIS IS A NEW LOCATION

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The Sandpiper

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