

# **THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

## **AN INTRODUCTORY TOUR**

**JULY 15 - 19, 2006**

**LEADERS:**

**BOB SUNDSTROM AND MARSHALL ILIFF**

**COMPILED BY:**

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# **THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST: AN INTRODUCTORY TOUR**

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The middle of July provides a fine seasonal juncture for a wide-ranging look at the natural history of Washington's Olympic Peninsula, the primary geographic focus of our five-day Pacific Northwest Introductory tour. Our tour actually began with a side trip to the upper drainage of Scatter Creek, south of Olympia and near Bob Sundstrom's home. This side venture enabled us to begin the tour with good views of a number of regional specialty birds, some of which are harder to find on the Olympic Peninsula. Four species of woodpeckers were seen in that short period, including Red-breasted Sapsucker and Pileated Woodpecker. MacGillivray's, Wilson's, and Orange-crowned warblers turned up, as did Hutton's Vireo, Western Tanager, and Willow Flycatcher.

Perhaps the star of our first day was the tiny Northern Pygmy-Owl, which sat in several treetops and hooted, posing for long study in the spotting scopes. A stop in Bob and Sally's yard made for a fine garden tour, and offered a chance to study birds at the feeders: colorful Black-headed Grosbeaks and Purple Finches, Spotted Towhees, Western Scrub-Jays, and busy Rufous Hummingbirds. By late morning on July 16, we here headed north along the scenic shoreline of Hood Canal, en route to Sequim. One stop en route turned up a nice scope view of an American Dipper sitting on a stone at a river's edge. A second stop offered a fine walk along a pebble beach on the Strait of Juan de Fuca, with views of several species of alcids feeding near shore: Tufted Puffins, Rhinoceros Auklets, and Pigeon Guillemots.

Sequim sits at the foot of the Olympic Mountains. With three nights there, we were ideally situated to explore the northeast part of the Olympic Peninsula. Near Hurricane Ridge at 5,200 feet in Olympic National Park, we were treated to an excellent show of mountain wildflowers. Stopping at several elevations along the drive to the top, and then taking a level hike along a subalpine ridge, we identified dozens of different wildflowers and other plants, while enjoying the birds and butterflies on hand. There were expanses of pink heather, roadside seeps crowded with rein-orchids and columbine, and meadows dotted with strongly-scented valerian and showy magenta paintbrush. An Olive-sided Flycatcher perched very near the group, and we scoped a Warbling Vireo on its nest as a Hammond's Flycatcher sat nearby. The bird of the day, however, was an adult Golden Eagle, which sat for long scope study in the midst of the epic subalpine scenery. We picnicked with a stunning view of the Olympic Mountains, as deer, chipmunks, and Gray Jays stood a close watch. Later that afternoon we birded along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, finding dozens of post-breeding Harlequin Ducks, scores of harbor seals loafing in the sun, and such birds as Black Turnstone, Heermann's Gull, and Caspian Tern.

The following day, on a drive into the forested mountains south of Sequim, our quest for Sooty Grouse came to a very satisfying conclusion. From the same spot along a mountain road, we watched two very dark hen grouse as they coaxed their chicks across the road, providing at least ten minutes of entertainment and a very good look at this newly demarcated species (formerly part of the Blue Grouse species). Along the same stretch of road, a male Hermit Warbler perched openly in the treetops, another bird we had eagerly looked for. Our final morning took us back east across Puget Sound, toward a midday arrival at the Seattle airport. Birding along

**the way, we found a pair of Marbled Murrelets, our first Common Murre, and a flock of Red-necked Phalaropes flew right across the bow of the cross-sound ferry, providing a fine finish to a memorable five days of camaraderie, natural study, and wonderful meals and scenery.**

## **ITINERARY**

**Day 1, July 15:** The group met at 2:30 at Seatac Airport, and then drove directly south to Tumwater and checked in at the Guesthouse Suites. Shortly after, we were in Tenino, birding at Bob and Sally's house and along the upper reaches of Scatter Creek nearby; dinner in Olympia at Anthony's Homeport in Olympia; night at Guesthouse Suites.

**Day 2, July 16:** After breakfast at the Guesthouse, we returned to Tenino and upper Scatter Creek, adding to the previous day's sightings in the area. By late morning we left Tenino, birded briefly at Rock Prairie (where a rare Clay-colored Sparrow was singing) and then drove north along Hood Canal; lunch at Halfway House Restaurant in Brinnon. Birding stops included the Quilcene hatchery and Diamond Point; dinner at Khu Larb Thai in Sequim. After dinner, drove back roads of Sequim enroute to the motel, our first of three nights at Sequim Bay Lodge.

**Day 3, July 17:** After an early breakfast at Gwennie's in Sequim, we made a morning trip up from Pt. Angeles to Hurricane Ridge in Olympic National Park, stopping to bird and look at wildflowers along the 17 mile route to the 5200' summit. Late morning we hike out along a ridge trail from the furthest parking area, then picnicked overlooking a subalpine meadow with the mountain tops in the background. Made several bird and flora stops on the way down the park road. In Pt. Angeles, we birded at Ediz Hook in Port Angeles, before returning to Sequim and dinner at Las Palomas. After dinner, we returned to the hotel, and then some took an optional drive to John Wayne Marina on Sequim Bay; night at Sequim Bay Lodge.

**Day 4, July 18:** Heading south after breakfast in Sequim, we drove the road up Mt. Walker in Olympic National Forest, walked out to the upper viewpoint, then birded back down; lunch at Halfway House Restaurant in Brinnon. After a break at the lodge to await the tide's return, we birded the Sequim-Dungeness waterfront from Jamestown Spit to the mouth of the Dungeness River, before driving to Pt. Angeles for dinner at Café Garden. Our final night at Sequim Bay Lodge!

**Day 5, July 19:** After breakfast in Sequim, we departed for Port Townsend, only to find the ferry far behind schedule due to fog. Continued south to cross Hood Canal, bird at Salsbury County Park on Hood Canal, and then caught the Kingston-Edmonds ferry and birded from the bow. We briefly stopped along Edmonds waterfront before driving on to Seatac by midday, where the tour ended.

## **BIRDLIST**

(sightings in *italics* are of special note, in ***bold italics*** are rare)

### **CORMORANTS:**

Double-crested Cormorant

Pelagic Cormorant – many showing the white flank patches of breeding plumage

### **BITTERN & HERONS:**

Great Blue Heron – seen every day of the tour

### **AMERICAN VULTURES:**

Turkey Vulture – not common here; good view of one sunning with its wings spread

### **GEESE, SWANS & DUCKS:**

Canada Goose

Gadwall – several seen with ducklings

Mallard

Harlequin Duck – perhaps 50 post-breeders along Ediz Hook, among them one male still in nearly full breeding colors

Surf Scoter

Red-breasted Merganser

Ruddy Duck – nesting on a small pond between Sequim and Dungeness

### **EAGLES, HAWKS, FALCONS & ALLIES:**

Osprey – several seen, and a perched Osprey scoped near Hood Canal the last morning

Bald Eagle – superb views of this massive bird of prey

Northern Harrier – at Hurricane Ridge and near Dungeness, where two immatures cavorted

Sharp-shinned Hawk – excellent view of an adult low over Bob's front yard

Cooper's Hawk – several views, including calling immatures near Tenino

Red-tailed Hawk – both dark and light morphs of the Western subspecies

*Golden Eagle* – terrific views of an adult, scoped in detail near Hurricane Ridge

American Kestrel – a few; scarce in the area

### **GALLINACEOUS BIRDS:**

*Sooty Grouse* – after a good bit of looking, we had wonderful studies of two hens with chicks; newly split from

Dusky Grouse, both part of the former Blue Grouse species

California Quail – great views around Sequim, including one running up to the café at breakfast

### **RAILS & COOTS:**

Virginia Rail – heard near Tenino

American Coot

### **PLOVERS, SANDPIPERS & ALLIES:**

Semipalmated Plover – a couple on the Dungeness waterfront, southbound migrants

Killdeer

Black Oystercatcher – nice views of a pair at the marina on Sequim Bay

Black Turnstone – a few early migrants along Ediz Hook; lucky to find this early in summer

Sanderling – a few flew by Diamond Pt.

Western Sandpiper – with Least, the most commonly seen sandpipers

Least Sandpiper

Short-billed Dowitcher – one flew in and landed along Ediz Hook

Long-billed Dowitcher – along the Dungeness waterfront

Red-necked Phalarope – a lucky find, a flock of ten seen on the Kingston-Edmonds ferry crossing

**JAEGERS, GULLS, & TERNS:**

Bonaparte's Gull – a few in breeding plumage at Salsbury County Park and from the ferry  
Heermann's Gull – unmistakable, for a gull  
Mew Gull – one adult flew by the bow of the ferry as we left Kingston  
Ring-billed Gull  
California Gull – hundreds and hundreds along the Sequim to Pt. Angeles waterfront  
Glaucous-winged Gull – the common resident breeder  
Caspian Tern – very distinctive, with raucous calls and bright red bills

**AUKS:**

Common Murre – Marshall found one in scope range under the Hood Canal Bridge  
Pigeon Guillemot – many fine views, including flashy red feet  
*Marbled Murrelet* – seen best on Hood Canal from Salsbury Pt. the final morning  
Rhinoceros Auklet – some with their massive bills full of silvery fish, to feed their young  
*Tufted Puffin* – two at Diamond Pt. were in good scope range and much appreciated

**PIGEONS & DOVES:**

Rock Pigeon  
Band-tailed Pigeon – the best view was of one walking on the road up Mt. Walker  
Mourning Dove

**OWLS:**

*Northern Pygmy-Owl* – one of the avian highlights of the tour, tooting and posing at length for scope views the first afternoon along upper Scatter Creek

**SWIFTS:**

Vaux's Swift – swiftly flying over

**HUMMINGBIRDS:**

Rufous Hummingbird – mostly immatures, seen best in Bob and Sally's front yard

**KINGFISHERS:**

Belted Kingfisher

**WOODPECKERS & ALLIES:**

Red-breasted Sapsucker – several scoped for minutes along upper Scatter Creek  
Downy Woodpecker – in the same area as the sapsuckers  
Northern Flicker – of the “red-shafted” form  
Pileated Woodpecker – a family group worked in the roadside trees north of Tenino

**FLYCATCHERS & ALLIES:**

Olive-sided Flycatcher – an amazingly close view of one on the Hurricane Ridge trail walk  
Willow Flycatcher – seen very well near Tenino and behind the Sequim Bay Lodge  
Hammond's Flycatcher – a very cooperative bird along the upper part of the Hurricane Ridge road  
Pacific-slope Flycatcher – heard calling widely, and seen briefly

**VIREOS:**

Hutton's Vireo – a close view of this tiny, chunky vireo near Tenino  
Warbling Vireo – on a nest along the upper part of the Hurricane Ridge road

**JAYS, MAGPIES & CROWS:**

Gray Jay – near Tenino and at Hurricane Ridge, where they helped out around the picnic tables  
Steller's Jay

Western Scrub-Jay – only in the vicinity of Bob's house  
American Crow  
Northwestern Crow  
Common Raven

**SWALLOWS & MARTINS:**

*Purple Martin* – three at the marina on Sequim Bay, on the after dinner outing  
Tree Swallow  
Violet-green Swallow – nesting at Bob's house; seen widely, daily  
Northern Rough-winged Swallow  
Cliff Swallow  
Barn Swallow

**TITMICE through CREEPERS:**

Black-capped Chickadee  
Chestnut-backed Chickadee – great views of this Pacific coastal species  
Bushtit  
Red-breasted Nuthatch – twisting and calling in the treetops  
Brown Creeper – mostly heard

**WRENS & DIPPERS:**

Winter Wren – a very nice view along Strawn Lane near Tenino  
Marsh Wren  
American Dipper – scoped on the Quilcene River

**OLD WORLD WARBLERS:**

Golden-crowned Kinglet – flashing its crown and coming very close

**THRUSHES & ALLIES:**

Swainson's Thrush – its beautiful song was heard daily  
Hermit Thrush – singing and perching in the open near Hurricane Ridge  
American Robin  
Varied Thrush – alas, only its eerie song was heard; very shy in mid-summer

**STARLINGS & ALLIES:**

European Starling

**WAXWINGS:**

Cedar Waxwing – many wonderful looks at this lovely bird

**WOOD WARBLERS**

Orange-crowned Warbler  
Yellow-rumped Warbler – of the Audubon's form, near Hurricane Ridge  
Townsend's Warbler – an immature on the ridge walk  
Hermit Warbler – a male perched in a tree top on Mt. Walker  
MacGillivray's Warbler – flitting and skulking near Tenino  
Common Yellowthroat – amazingly, perched on a utility wire for a good view  
Wilson's Warbler

**TANAGERS:**

Western Tanager – good views near Tenino and behind Sequim Bay Lodge

**SPARROWS & ALLIES:**

Spotted Towhee  
Chipping Sparrow – a bit unusual, seen near Hurricane Ridge  
*Clay-colored Sparrow* – a vagrant; a male that had been singing near Tenino since late May  
Savannah Sparrow  
Song Sparrow  
White-crowned Sparrow  
Dark-eyed Junco – of the hooded “Oregon” form

**GROSBEAKS & BUNTINGS:**

Black-headed Grosbeak – fine views, especially at Bob and Sally’s bird feeders

**BLACKBIRDS & ALLIES:**

Red-winged Blackbird  
Western Meadowlark  
Brewer's Blackbird  
Brown-headed Cowbird

**FINCHES:**

Purple Finch – very colorful males  
House Finch  
Red Crossbill – calling and flying by overhead  
Pine Siskin – a few in flight; scarce this year  
American Goldfinch

**OLD WORLD SPARROWS:**

House Sparrow

**MAMMALS, HERPS & OTHER CRITTERS:**

Long-tailed Weasel – seen from Marshall’s van being scolded by small birds  
River Otter – a family group of four near the Dungeness oyster farm  
Raccoon – at John Wayne Marina and along the road  
Elk – one cow Elk between Sequim and Dungeness  
Black-tailed Deer  
Eastern Cottontail  
Snowshoe Hare  
Olympic Marmot – scoped from the hiking trail at Hurricane Ridge  
Townsend’s Chipmunk – seen at Bob and Sally’s and at Hurricane Ridge  
Douglas’s Squirrel  
Harbor Seal – ubiquitous along the marine edge  
Harbor Porpoise – seen briefly off Diamond Pt.

**BUTTERFLIES (identified by Marshall and Jeff)**

Phoebus/Mountain Parnassian  
Tiger Swallowtail  
Pale Swallowtail  
Anise Swallowtail  
Western White  
Mustard White  
Cabbage White  
Sara’s Orangetip

Western Sulphur  
Greenish Blue  
Arctic Blue  
Arctic/Meadow Fritillary  
Field Crescent  
Variable Crescent  
Edith's Checkerspot  
Lorquin's Admiral  
Vidler's Alpine

#### **DRAGONFLIES**

Black Petaltail  
Eight-spotted Skimmer

#### **OTHER INVERTEBRATES:**

Banana Slug

#### **SELECTED WILDFLOWERS AND OTHER PLANTS**

(seen along Hurricane Ridge road, Mt. Walker Rd., and other sites)

#### **LILY FAMILY**

Avalanche Lily (*Erythronium montanum*) - white  
Columbia Lily (*Lilium columbianum*) - orange  
Scalloped Onion (*Allium crenulatum*) – white/pink/purple  
Nodding Onion (*Allium cernuum*) - pink  
Green False Hellebore (*Veratrum viride*) - greenish  
Western Trillium (*Trillium ovatum*) – white/pink

#### **ORCHID FAMILY**

Giant Rattlesnake-Plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*) - white  
White Bog Orchid (*Plananthera dilatata*) - white  
Slender Bog/Rein Orchid (*Plananthera stricta*) – greenish white

#### **SAXIFRAGE FAMILY**

Spotted Saxifrage (*Saxifraga bronchialis*) - white  
Trefoil Foamflower (*Tiarella trifoliata*) – white  
Fringecup (*Tellima grandiflora*) - white

#### **BUTTERCUP FAMILY**

Sitka Columbine (*Aquilegia formosa*) - red  
Western Buttercup (*Ranunculus occidentalis*) - yellow  
Rockslide Larkspur (*Delphinium glareosum*) - purple

#### **ROSE FAMILY**

Nootka Rose (*Rosa nutkana*) - pink  
Fan-leaf Cinquefoil (*Potentilla flabelligolia*) - yellow  
Western Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflora*) - white  
Ocean-spray (*Holodiscus discolor*) – creamy white  
Goatsbeard (*Aruncus dioicus*) – creamy white  
Dwarf Bramble (*Rubus lasiococcus*) - white

Douglas' Spirea (*Spirea douglasii*) - pink  
Mountain Spirea (*Spirea densiflora*) - pink  
Woods Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) - white

#### **PEA FAMILY**

Broad-leaf Lupine (*Lupinus latifolius*) - blue  
Arctic Lupine (*Lupinus arcticus subalpinus*) - blue  
Western Hedysarum (*Hedysarum occidentale*) – red/purple  
Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) – yellow

#### **VIOLET FAMILY**

Flett's Violet (*Viola flettii*) – purple

#### **EVENING PRIMROSE FAMILY**

Common Evening Primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) - yellow  
Fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*) - pink  
Smooth Willow-herb (*Epilobium glaberrimum*) – pink/red

#### **PARSLEY FAMILY**

Martindale's Lomatium (*Lomatium martindalei*) - yellow  
Cow-parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*) – white  
Barestem Desert Parsley (*Lomatium nudicaule*) - yellow

#### **WATERLEAF FAMILY**

Fendler's Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum fendleri*) - white  
Narrow-sepaled Phacelia (*Phacelia leptosepala*) - white  
Silky Phacelia (*Phacelia sericea*) - purple

#### **PHLOX FAMILY**

Spreading Phlox (*Phlox diffusa*) - white  
Showy Jacob's-ladder (*Polemonium pulcherrimum*) – blue

#### **BORAGE FAMILY**

Blueweed (*Echium vulgare*) – blue  
Tall Bluebells (*Mertensia paniculata*) – blue

#### **MINT FAMILY**

Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) - purple

#### **FIGWORT FAMILY**

Elephant's Head (*Pedicularis groenlandica*) – pink  
Sickle-top Lousewort (*Pedicularis racemosa*) – white/pink  
Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*) – white/pink/purple  
Scarlet/Common Red Paintbrush (*Castilleja miniata*) – red (variable)  
Harsh Paintbrush (*Castilleja hispida*) – red (variable)  
Magenta Paintbrush (*Castilleja parviflora*) – pinkish purple  
Large Mountain Monkeyflower (*Mimulus tilingi*) – yellow  
Broad-leaved Penstemon (*Penstemon ovatus*) - blue  
Cusick's Speedwell (*Veronica cusickii*) – blue  
Mountain Owl-clover (*Orthocarpus imbricatus*) – pink/purple

### **PRIMROSE FAMILY**

American Starflower (*Trientalis borealis*) - white

Smooth Douglasia (*Douglasia laevigata*) – red

### **PURSLANE FAMILY**

Siberian Springbeauty (*Claytonia sibirica*) – pink/white

### **MADDER FAMILY**

Fragrant Bedstraw (*Galium triflorum*)

### **STONECROP FAMILY**

Broad-leaved Sedum (*Sedum spathulifolium*) - yellow

### **MUSTARD FAMILY**

Western Wallflower (*Erysimum capitatum*) - yellow

### **PINK FAMILY**

Thread-leaf Sandwort (*Arenaria capillaris*) - white

Bladder Campion/Catchfly (*Silene vulgaris*) – white

### **HEATH FAMILY**

Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) – white/pink

Red Mountain Heather (*Phyllodoce empetrifomis*) - red

Pinedrops (*Pterospora andromedea*) – yellow

### **WINTERGREEN FAMILY**

Sidebells (*Orthilia secunda*) – white/yellow-green

Common Pink Pyrola (*Pyrola asarifolia*) – pink/purple

Little Pipsissewa (*Chimaphila menziesii*) – white

### **SUNFLOWER FAMILY**

Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) - white

Pearly-everlasting (*Alphalis margaritacea*) - white

Woolly Pussytoes (*Antennaria lanata*) - white

Wandering Fleabane (*Erigeron peregrinus*) – white/pink/purple

Woolly Sunflower (*Eriophyllum lanatum*) - yellow

Alpine Aster (*Aster alpigenus*) - purple

Olympic Mountain Aster (*Aster paucicapitatus*) – white

Northern Wormwood (*Artemisia campestris*) – white/green

Silverback Luina (*Luina hypoleuca*) – white/cream

Ox-eye-daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) - white

Orange Hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*) - orange

Cat's Ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) - yellow

Nipplewort (*Lansana communis*) - yellow

Indian (or Edible) Thistle (*Cirsium edule*) - red

Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) – pink/purple

Puget Sound or Pacific Gumplant (*Grindelia integrifolia*) – yellow

Heartleaf Arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*) – yellow

Rayless Arnica (*Arnica parryi*) - yellow

Trail Plant (*Adenocaulon bicolor*) – white

Orange Agoseris (*Agoseris aurantiaca*) – orange

Canada Goldenrod (*Solidago multiradiata*) – yellow

**BARBERRY FAMILY**

Vanilla-leaf (*Achlys triphylla*) – white

**BUCKWHEAT FAMILY**

American Bistort (*Polygonum bistortoides*) - white

**VALERIAN FAMILY**

Sitka Valerian (*Valeriana sitchensis*) – white/pink

**HONEYSUCKLE FAMILY**

Orange Honeysuckle (*Lonicera ciliosa*) - orange

Twinflower (*Linnaea borealis*) - pink

**SELECTED SHRUBS**

Sitka Mountain Ash (*Sorbus sitchensis*) – white/cream

Pacific Rhododendron (*Rhododendron macrophyllum*) - pink

White-flowered Rhododendron (*Rhododendron albiflorum*) - white

Red Elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa pubens*) – white flower/red berry

Blue Elderberry – (*Sambucus caerulea*) – white flower/blue berry

Red Huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*) – pink flower/red berry

Evergreen Huckleberry (*Vaccinium ovatum*) – white flower

Kinnikinnick (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*) – pink flower/red berry

Hairy Manzanita (*Arctostaphylos columbiana*) – pinkish flower/blackish berry