

# The Corvid Crier

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

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O2 - SPRING 2016

### **OUR MISSION**

The mission of the Eastside Audubon Society is to protect, preserve and enhance natural ecosystems and our communities for the benefit of birds, other wildlife and people.

### **CORVID CRIER CONTENTS**

Robidoux Foundation Grant	pg 1
Program Night	pg 1
Malheur Ntl Wildlife Refuge	pg 2
Bird of the Month	pg 3
Field Trips & Events	pg 4
Program Night (cont.)	pg 5
Thank You, Volunteers	pg 5
Board Report	pg 6
Conservation Report	pg 6
Welcome New Members	pg 6
Education Report	pg 6
Students Gain	pg 7
Emily Dickinson Poetry	pg 7
Volunteers, Report Hours	pg 7
EAS Officers, Chairs, Staff	pg 7

### **CONTACT US**

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P.O. Box 3115 Kirkland, WA 98083

Office Hours: Mon, Tues, Fri. 9:00am - 1:00pm

# Robidoux Foundation Makes Fourth Birdathon Challenge Grant

By Andy McCormick

For the fourth consecutive year The Melody S. Robidoux Foundation Donor Advised Fund at the Community Foundation of Southern Arizona has made a \$15,000 challenge matching grant to Eastside Audubon Society. The foundation is a philanthropic organization created by its namesake Melody Robidoux. Her husband, Mick Thompson, serves on the foundation board and is the EAS chapter photographer and co-chair of the EAS Photography Group. We are grateful to them both for their generosity to our chapter and also for their commitment to the work our chapter is doing. Now it is up to all of us to make this another successful Birdathon. Every year during May, Eastside Audubon members raise funds by birding for pledges, pledging to those who do, and attending special events and birding trips. The Robidoux challenge means a successful Birdathon will multiply the impact of this year's Birdathon fundraising on our conservation and education

programs. In the past three years Eastside Audubon members raised more than the challenge amount, resulting in our Birdathon totals exceeding \$32,000 each year. We hope to do even better this year, and with your help we will. Birdathon fundraising is supporting our major initiative on building Bird-friendly Communities. It's exciting to see this program come to life in support of birds and wild-life. We are grateful for our staff and the Eastside Audubon volunteers who inspired it.

### **Start Thinking Birdathon**

There's a way for everyone in EAS to be part of meeting the Robidoux challenge during Birdathon. Please see *Create Your Own Birdathon* on the EAS website for ideas.

Of course, if you're most comfortable celebrating Birdathon by simply making a direct donation to the chapter, there is no better time than this May. Every contribution of any amount gets us closer to our goal and \$15,000 match. Eastside Audubon thanks you.

## Program Night: Owl vs. Owl

Thursday, April 28 - 7:00pm

By Laura Weisel

Experimental Removal Results and Implications for Managing Barred and Spotted Owls.

The northern spotted owl, federally listed under the Endangered

Species Act in 1990, represents an icon of old-growth forest protection in the Pacific Northwest. However, despite two-plus decades of intensive habitat conservation and preservation, the owl continues to experience (continued on pg 5)

PAGE 1

### **CHAPTER MEETINGS**

Unless otherwise noted, meetings take place at Northlake Unitarian Universalist Church. Use the downstairs entrance on State Street.

## Conservation Committee April 13, 7:00 to 9:00pm

Meets the second Wednesday of every month except July and August. This is an effective group engaged in activism and hands-on conservation projects. Email Peter Marshall at psmarshall@comcast.net for more info.

### Photo Group April 14, 7:00 to 9:00pm

Meets the second Thursday of every month in the church sanctuary. All levels welcome. If you like, bring photos on a flash drive to share. Email Larry Engles engles@ridesoft.com for more info.

## Youth Education Committee April 12, 7:00 to 8:30pm

Meets the second Tuesday of every month except December and August. Open to anyone who likes to share nature with youth. Email education@eastsideaudubon.org for more info.

### Board Meeting April 19, 6:30pm

Interested guests may attend the monthly board meeting. Email Jan McGruder jgmcgruder@gmail.com for more info.

## MATERIAL SUBMISSION FOR THE CORVID CRIER

The deadlines for material submission are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1 for printing in the following month's issue.

Email material to newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org with "Corvid Crier Quarterly" in the subject heading.



White-faced Ibis. Photo by Tim Boyer

## Malheur National Wildlife Refuge

By Carolyn Forsyth

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1908 by Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt established the refuge when he witnessed the impact that hunting was having on the migratory bird populations. The refuge is home to hundreds of birds year round but the true value of this refuge is the haven it provides to migratory birds as they pass through the Pacific Flyway. Every year tens of thousands of shorebirds and hundreds of thousands of waterfowl will pass through the nearly 300 square mile refuge on their way North and South each spring and fall.

Malheur was recently the subject of national news when a group of militants invaded the refuge and proceeded to occupy the land for 41 days. When the group surrendered on February 11th, federal officials were able to enter the refuge and assess the damage. In addition to damage to the historic artifacts held in the visitor centers, firearms and explosives were found in various buildings. The staff of the refuge worries that the damage done by the militants could affect the upcoming migration of Tundra swans and Sandhill Cranes: these birds use Malheur as a rest stop for foraging during their migrations. The refuge represents irreplaceable foraging and nesting ground for many migratory birds.

In late January the Oregon State Board committed six million dollars over the next six years to improve Malheur and other wetlands in Oregon State. The militant occupation cleanup has already cost the state over three million dollars and the cost only continues to grow. During the occupation, there was an outpouring of aid from the community and many Audubon and conservationist groups focused their efforts on Malheur. The occupation led to the membership of Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge membership to rise from 170 members to over 700. Once the refuge is declared safe, research groups and staff will be able to return to Malheur and continue their study of the birds that reside there. Malheur is a place of extreme beauty and frequented by hundreds of bird enthusiasts and photographers every year.



## Bird of the Month | Say's Phoebe (Sayornis saya)



Say's Phoebe. Photo by Tim Boyer

Length: 7.5 inches Wingspan: 13 inches

Weight: 0.74 ounces (21 grams)

AOU Alpha Code: SAPH

### By Andy McCormick

Say's Phoebe is an early migrant often arriving in Washington in late March, before any other flycatcher. It is a bird of open, dry, western country and can be seen perched on wires, boulders and fences, or simply low vegetation. Aerial hawking from a low perch is its preferred foraging method. In short, quick flight it sallies out for bees, wasps, flies and other insects in flight. If there are not enough flying insects in the area, it will forage on the ground for smaller insects.

### **Dark Above, Tawny Below**

It is similar in shape and behavior to the other two phoebes in the genus Sayornis, the Black Phoebe (S. nigricans) and Eastern Phoebe (S. phoebe). However, it is a bit larger. Its head is dark grayish brown, particularly around the eves and lores. Its throat and chest are gray, and the belly and undertail coverts have been described as ranging in color from pale

rufous (Sibley), to apricot (Bell), to salmon (Dunne), to tawny-cinnamon (Alderfer). Perhaps the most distinguishing physical feature of this bird is its long black tail which flairs as it pumps (Dunne), and during its foraging flights.

The genus and species names Savornis sava honor Thomas Sav (1787-1834), the Father of American Entomology, and a versatile naturalist who found 11 new (to Europeans) species of birds on a Rocky Mountain expedition along the Platte and Arkansas Rivers in 1819-20. One of the new species was Say's Phoebe named by his friend Charles Bonaparte (Mearns and Mearns).

### Special Adaptations to Dry, **Open Country**

Say's Phoebe has adapted to its favored habitat of dry, semi-open terrain in farmlands, prairies, and scrubland in its relationship to water. It does not drink water directly. Its insect diet provides sufficient water. Fluids are also preserved as indigestible parts of insects are formed into a pellet which is ejected from its mouth (Schukman and Wolf). The bird is seldom seen to defecate. Nesting in hotter climates is a challenge. Say's Phoebe likes to have a "roof" over its nest and will construct a flat, open cup made of grass, weeds, moss and spider webs usually in a crevice or cavity, under eaves of older buildings, under bridges, and sometimes in a tree.

Usually four white eggs are deposited and the female incubates them for about two weeks. Both parents feed the nestlings a diet of insects, and first flight occurs in about another two weeks (Kaufman). Say's Phoebes often have two broods per year and their population numbers are considered stable.

### A Wide-ranging Bird

Say's Phoebe has an extensive range in Western North America from Central Mexico to the Alaskan tundra at the foot of the Brooks Range. Northern nesters migrate south in fall and overlap with year-round resident birds in the Southwestern United States and Mexico

Say's Phoebe calls are soft, low whistles usually alternating pidiweew, pidireep, pidiweew, pidireep... You can watch two Say's Phoebe's in short flights, fanning and dipping their tails and singing in a video at the Macaulay Library: macaulaylibrary.org/ video/482538. References available upon request from amccormick@ eastsideaudubon.org.

### PLACE YOUR BUSINESS AD HERE AND REACH OVER

1,300 **EAS MEMBERS** 

To inquire about placing an ad in The Corvid Crier, please contact: newsletter@eastsideaudubon.org.

### FIELD TRIP DETAILS

Children 8 years and older are welcome on all trips; 17 years and younger must have an adult companion.

FRS Radio owners, please consider bringing your radio on trips.

Find reports of the last month's field trips at www.eastsideaudubon.org/birding/field-trips.

Some trips may require a Discover Pass, which is \$10 daily or \$30 annually. It can be purchased online at discoverpass.wa.gov or at a sporting goods store.

Email general questions to Becky Serabrini at fieldtrip@eastsideaudubon.org

### FIELD TRIP MEETING PLACES

Kingsgate Park & Ride 13001 116th Way NE, Kingsgate Meet in the southeast corner.

Wilburton Park & Ride 720 114th Ave. SE, Bellevue I-405, Exit 12

Newport Hills Park & Ride 5115 113th Place SE, Bellevue I-405, Exit 9

**South Kirkland Park & Ride** 10610 NE 38th Place, Kirkland

#### **Tibbetts Lot**

1675 Newport Way NW, Issaquah Meet across the street from the large parking garage at the west end.

### MONTHLY WORK PARTY AT MARYMOOR PARK

The habitat restoration work party meets the first Saturday of every month from 9:00am to noon. Meet at the kiosk of the Audubon BirdLoop at Marymoor Park, Lot G. Parking pass provided. Bring water, snack, gloves, a shovel and/or a rake. Call the EAS office 425-576-8805 for more info.

## **Upcoming Field Trips & Events**

Please be sure to **visit eastsideaudubon.org for complete information** on these field trips and any recent additions. The website will have more detailed descriptions of each trip, the meet-up location, and cost.

Juanita Bay Park Interpretive Tour • Sun, Apr 3 - 1:00pm to 2:00pm Eastside Park Rangers lead this easy, one-hour walk on the first Sunday of every month. No registration required. EAS office 425-576-8805.

Juanita Bay Park Bird Walk • Tues, Apr 19 - 9:00am to 12:00pm A relaxed walk in the park. Meets the third Tuesday of each month. No registration required. Mary Francis Mathis 425-803-3026.

**Lake Sammamish State Park • Wed, Apr 20 - 6:00am to 11:00am** *NEW START TIME*. This urban park offers a wide assortment of birds due to its varied ecosystems. No registration required. Co-led by Sharon Aagaard 425-891-3460 and Stan Wood.

## Scatter Creek Wildlife Area and Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge Sat, Apr 23 - 7:00am to early evening

We will drive to Scatter Creek Wildlife Area, a protected area of South Sound prairies south of Olympia to look for land birds then we will drive to Aberdeen to the Grays Harbor NW to enjoy the shorebird migration. To register email trip leader Andy McCormick at amccormick@eastside-audubon.org.

Birding Hot Spots of King County • Mon, Apr 25 - 9:00am to 12:00pm Monthly field trip on the fourth Monday of the month to wherever the birds are. No registration required. Rusty Hazzard 425-652-1006.

### **Beginning Birding Class**

No experience necessary! Two classes in a relaxed, informal setting and two field trips. Breeding birds of Washington will be emphasized. The basics of bird identification, birding etiquette and ethics, equipment selection, field guides and local birding areas will also be covered. Class led by Mike West. To register contact EAS office 425-576-8805.

- Classroom: Wed and Thurs, Apr 13 & 14 7:00pm to 9:00pm EAS Office: 308 Fourth Avenue South, Kirkland
- Half Day Field Trip: Sat and Sun, Apr 16 & 17
   Time and location to be determined

### Plant Walks: Learn to Identify Native Plants

Native plants increase the diversity of wildlife in our parks and neighborhoods, and can help suppress invasive species. Learn more by joining the 2016 Plant Walks. Trips are led by Jan Johnson, a Washington Native Plant Society Master Native Plant Steward, and also a volunteer ranger at Jaunita Bay Park. All walks start at the entry kiosk of the park.

- Edith Moulton Park: Sundays, Apr 10 and May 8 1:00pm 13438 108th Avenue NE: kiosk at 108th Avenue NE
- Juanita Bay Park: Saturdays, Apr 16, May 7, and June 11 1:00pm 2201 Market Street; kiosk by parking lot west of Market Street

### Program Night: Owl vs. Owl

(continued from pg 1) population declines throughout its range. Recent evidence suggests that focusing on habitat alone may not be enough to recover the spotted owl. A new threat has emerged in the form of an invasive, but closely related competitor: the barred owl. Please join the Eastside Audubon

Society as Dr. Lowell Diller discusses the controversial past and present conservation efforts surrounding the recovery of the northern spotted owl. As the former senior biologist for Green Diamond Resource Company, Dr. Diller has dedicated nearly 25 years to the research and conservation of the

owl and currently serves as an adjunct professor and research associate at Humboldt State University in coastal northern California. His most recent research efforts are focused on developing a management strategy that will allow spotted owls to persist in the face of the ever increasing threat from barred owls.

### Thank You, Volunteers!

By Mel Clark

The year is off to a busy start with a lot of planning, field trips and of plenty of EAS events. Naturally. none of these would have been possible without the indispensable support of our dedicated volunteers.

We want to say a huge thank-you to all our field trip leaders for the great work for all our members: Jim Rettig, Tim and Jan McGruder, Becky Serabrini, Rusty Hazzard, Sharon Aagaard, Stan Wood, Mary Frances Mathis, Margie Huff, Andy McCormick and Hugh Jennings.

The Youth Education Committee has been busy as always, and we want to thank Jill Keeney, Diane Crestanello, Tora Roksvog, Leslee Shepler, Margie Huff, Margaret Lie, Candy Allen, and Mary Britton-Simmons for being important in the lives of children and teaching them about birds and the environment.

Warm thanks to everybody involved with the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner: Doyne Alward, Jim and Nancy Roberts, Terri Wear, Mary and Geary Britton-Simmons, Becky Serabrini, Margie Huff. Nancy Weisel, Marlene Meyer, Tim and Jan McGruder, Leslie Waters, Hugh and Bey Jennings. and Pete Marshall. Jill Keeney, Diane Crestanello, and Margaret were on the planning committee for this event as well.

A new group of volunteers who are putting up flyers and posters

advertising EAS events is being led by Marlene Meyer. We appreciate this effort by all, and are looking to grow the team. If you can help out 1-2 times a month, even if you can only put up one poster at your local coffee shop, please let the office know and we will add you to the team! "...we are grateful

for the energy,

and dedication

to your role..."

enthusiasm,

you bring

The Marymoor Park BirdLoop is kept in shape for visitors, rain or shine! Dozens of people have rooted out weeds and planted trees. Thank you to Glenn Eades and Tim

McGruder for their leadership, and all those who helped out: Yazan Al-Alul, Andrea Dang, Collin Dang, Margaret Elsworth, Owen Ellsworth, Susan Heuer, Bruce Lieberman, Marlene Meyer, Gail Miller, Kathryn Morts, Sherrie Morts, Judy Rams, Jerry Rettig, Jim Rettig, Nancy Roberts, Jim Roberts, Catherine Tari, Leslie Waters, Nancy Weisel, and Krysta Yousoufian.

Finally, our office volunteers, you are an amazing group that does so much to keep everything running – thank you Hugh Jennings, Bev Jennings, Helen LaBouy, Jill Keeney, Pat Vernie, Wendy Fawcett, and Leslie Waters -Mel couldn't do her job without you. Many hands made for light work, and we appreciate the help of Claudia Welch, Karen Wear,

Nancy Weisel, and Margaret Lie, at mail parties putting out the Annual Volunteer Statement

If we've missed anyone – thank you! You know who you are and by your own generous commitment, you set a wonderful example and demonstrate the power of individuals

> to effect significant change into our communities. We greatly appreciate your time, generosity and leadership and we know that you are our most passionate promoters. We do request that you please continue to

submit your volunteer hours by emailing the same to volunteertime@eastsideaudubon.org whenever you get a chance. You can find a volunteer time sheet on our website to help you track everything you do for our chapter.

We cannot thank you enough for your invaluable contributions as a volunteer. Our goals require sincere and committed volunteers and we are grateful for the energy, enthusiasm, and dedication you bring to your role as an Eastside Audubon volunteer. Would you like to volunteer for EAS? Check out the website for current needs.

### **WANT TO RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL?**

Contact the office at 425-576-8805 or office@eastsideaudubon.org.

### **Board Report**

By Jan McGruder

At the February Board meeting we spent some time gearing up for the 2016 season. We're planning on three birding classes this year on various subjects, some upgrades to the website, more community outreach events every month, and new ways to reach Eastsiders with

our message. What is that, you ask? EAS has joined Meetup and already we have 32 members to that site. I'm fascinated to see the growth of that medium and how useful it will be to EAS. Stay tuned.

We've also been contacted by King County's Wastewater Treatment Division about three projects

coming up this year. They will be working in Mercer Slough and the East Channel, Marymoor/Sammamish River and the Lake Hills Greenbelt. Though the date isn't yet secured, we've asked King County to come by later this spring and talk about it on a Program Night.

## **Conservation Report: Two Local Infrastruture Projects**

By Pete Marshall

The Conservation Committee in February began reviewing two projects with possible impacts on bird habitat. One of these is the City of Kirkland's proposal to include funding for a transit link alongside the new Cross Kirkland Trail between Totem Lake and the South Kirkland Park-and-Ride. Sound Transit is putting together a list of projects to include in a region-wide ballot measure for a third phase of light rail funding, also known as ST3. If the project

is actually included in the funding package and voters approve it in the November, 2016 election, it would allow the agency to study the need for such a new public transit link along the trail corridor. The Conservation Committee has reviewed some of the background documents and is drafting a letter expressing Eastside Audubon's concerns about the environmental impacts of such a proposal.

A second project, also within a lengthy corridor in East King County, is the Energize Eastside project proposed by Puget Sound Energy. PSE published a long-awaited Phase 1 Draft Environmental Statement on the project in February, with a March 14 deadline for public comments. The Conservation Committee is preparing a letter for Eastside Audubon to express concern about some alternatives, and to clarify the description of some of the alternatives. As of late February the committee is still working on the language of a letter that will go back to the board for its approval before the deadline.

### **Warm Welcome to Our New Members**

From November 1 to January 31, 2015 we added a total of 141 members. 116 of those new members joined National Audubon and were assigned to our chapter based on their zip code.

The new EAS members are: Bobbie Alicen, Ann Baker, Susan Bernstein, Heidi Burkhart, Bethany Faulkner, Cheryl Franco, Daniel Gabel, Robert Glenwood, Helga Griesbeck, Norma Hobbs, Natasha Kacoroski, Cara McKenzie, Lonny McMichael, Celeste Methot, Judith Milner, Michael Neill, Rayma Norton, Jean Pass, Debra Prentice, Linda Ritter, Randall Rothe, Joe and Sue VanWassenhove, Cheryl Wagner, Les Williams, and Patricia Yadock-Hayes.

Welcome to Eastside Audubon! We hope to see you at a Program Night, on a field trip, or at one of our community events. ■

### **Youth Education Report**

By Mary Britton-Simmons

As an extension of Heron Watch, Snapdoodle Toys in Kenmore hosted members of the Youth Education Committee for a presentation on birds on March 5. Children found the ostrich egg extraordinary, marveled at the tiny egg of a Rufous Hummingbird and carefully held the egg of a Great Blue Heron. Leslee Shepler guided them through the intricacies of feathers before they used magnifying glasses to examine some for themselves

Next they learned about flight and with arms extended, tried to "fly." In ten seconds, could they overtake the wing beats of a crow? Of a Rock Dove? Needless to say, hummingbirds were the stars of the contest with no one even coming close! The room grew quiet when we played the calls of birds like the Rufous Hummingbird and the Great Blue Heron.

Finally under Margie Huff's guidance, the children drew feathers on bookmarks to take home—a memory of the wonder of birds. Thanks to Hugh Jennings and his volunteers, the morning ended with the families looking through scopes at the amazing Great Blue Herons on their nests—a sight that parents and children will not soon forget.

### **Students Gain When Eastside Audubon Gives**

By Mary Britton-Simmons

Children learn about the natural world as a result of teacher grants. Annually the Youth Education Committee awards \$450 to teachers from two low-income schools in the EAS service area. For the 2015-2016 school year, funds were given to Lily Martin, Evangelia Pothitou-West and Cheyen Herseth, fourth grade teachers from Lake Hills Elementary in Bellevue. In an email, Lily noted that they are purchasing "an Amazon shopping cart full of naturalist non-fiction books" to be shared among the three

classes. Titles include National Geographic Reads: *Frogs* by Elizabeth Carney, *Tracks, Scats* and Signs by Leslie Dendy and One Day in the Tropical Rain Forest by Jean Craighead George. And the list goes on and on!

The second grant went to Dawn Frearson, Grades 6-8 Science Content Specialist at Twin Falls Middle School in North Bend. With the funds, Dawn plans to buy a time-lapse camera for a pond study that the middle school students are doing. In addition, the money will pay for a storage pouch plus lumber and supplies to build a waterproof housing unit. Dawn promises to send photos and "any interesting finds" once the camera is up and running.

Needless to say, the teachers are thrilled with the awards and very grateful to the members of Eastside Audubon for their generous support. ■

## Looking at Life Through Birds: Hope and Patience

### "Hope" is the Thing with Feathers by Emily Dickinson

"Hope" is the thing with feathers That perches in the soul, And sings the tune without the words And never stops at all,

And sweetest in the gale is heard; And sore must be the storm That could abash the little bird That kept so many warm.

I've heard it in the chillest land, And on the strangest sea, Yet never in extremity, It asked a crumb of me.

## Volunteers, Please Report Your Hours

Volunteeers, please report your hours one of two ways:

- Send an email with your hours to volunteer-time@lists.eastside-audubon.org.
- Call the office 425-576-8805 and ask the receptionist to report your hours.

## EAS Officers, Committee Chairs, Staff

#### **Executive Officers**

President Jan McGruder president@eastsideaudubon.org
Vice President OPEN
Secretary Lori Danielson Idanielson@eastsideaudubon.org
Treasurer Nancy Hubly treasurer@eastsideaudubon.org
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### **Board Members and Committee Chairs**

Birding Tricia Kishel tkishel@eastsideaudubon.org **OPEN** Communication Comm. Outreach **OPEN** Conservation Pete Marshall psmarshall@comcast.net **OPEN** Education Diane Crestanello Youth Education crestanello@comast.net Financial Devel. **OPEN** Membership Antonio Montanaña amontanana@hotmail.com Volunteers **OPEN** At Lrg Board Mbr Marlene Meyer mmeyer@eastsideaudubon.org At Lrg Board Mbr Margaret Lie margaretlie12@gmail.com

### **Other Committee Chairs**

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laura.weisel@gmail.com

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Program Coor. Callie Hall callieh@eastsideaudubon.org

Laura Weisel

Tyler Hartie



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Club memberships help support our camp scholarship fund for low income children, our college scholarship		<ul> <li>My employer matches contributions. I am sending/ will send matching information to you.</li> </ul>	
□ \$25 Individual □ \$40 Family □ \$100 Goldfinch Club	rs, and habitat conservation.   \$250 Heron Club  \$500 Osprey Club  \$1,000 Eagle Club	Sign-up To Receive Informational Emails  ☐ Announcements ☐ Conservation updates and action alerts ☐ Volunteer opportunities	
Payment Options  ☐ Enclosed is my check payable to Eastside Audubon  ☐ My payment has been submitted through PayPal  ☐ Please charge myMasterCardVisa  Number Exp Date  Signature Date		endowment fund. 100% of your contribution will go to fund the EAS programs.	
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