



# December Events

## **Guided Nature Walk**

**Sat. & Sun. - 11am**

*(times may vary: check date)*

Saturday  
**12/16**

**Craig Romano**  
*Guidebook author*

**Hiking in the Bellingham, Mount Vernon and Anacortes Areas (11am talk, 1pm nature walk)**

Discover your wild backyard! Come take a slideshow trail tour around Bellingham, Western Whatcom County, the Skagit Valley, and Fidalgo Island with award winning guidebook author Craig Romano. Urban Trails: Bellingham focuses on the trails, parks, and preserves within the urban and suburban areas around Anacortes, Bellingham, and Mount Vernon. You'll find trails to beaches, old growth forests, lakeshores, wildlife-rich wetlands, rolling hills, scenic vistas, meadows, historic sites, and vibrant communities. Trails perfect for easy or all-day hikes, short or long runs, and refreshing walks. And trails throughout the Chuckanut Mountains recreation area.

Sunday  
**12/17**

**Richard Brocksmith**  
*Executive Director of the Skagit Watershed Council*

**Salmon and Trout of the Skagit River: Distribution, Abundance Trends, and Habitat Recovery**

Less than 100 years ago, millions of salmon and trout returned to the Skagit and Samish Rivers every year to spawn. Today these once-mighty salmon runs are greatly diminished and face an uncertain future. Although we've made measurable progress towards protecting and restoring salmon habitat, there is still much to do to restore these magnificent creatures and the benefits they provide.

**Open Tuesday, December 26 – 31!**

Friday  
**12/29**

**Brandon Helmstetter**  
*Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie NF climbing ranger*

**Mount Baker Mountain Goats: a Climbing Ranger's Perspective**

Brandon and his partner, Leif Whittaker, are USFS summer climbing rangers for Mt. Baker, helping keep the mountain clean, safe, and fun. While in the high country, Brandon has had many opportunities to observe mountain goats up close and personal, and has come to admire these fascinating creatures, who are the ultimate mountaineers.

Saturday  
**12/30**

**Amos Almy**  
*Rockport State Park Interpretive Specialist*

**How Old Growth Brings New Life: The Story of the Forests**

Learn about the beautiful old growth forests in our area and how old-growth trees contribute to the health of forest life and communities in the Skagit Valley and North Cascades.

Sunday  
**12/31**

**Steve Glenn**  
*Instructor, Skagit Valley College Environmental Conservation*

**Winter Birds of the Upper Skagit Region**  
**(11am nature walk, 1pm presentation)**

Besides migratory Bald Eagles feeding on spawned-out salmon, the Upper Skagit River in winter includes a variety of other interesting birds. Through sight and sound, learn how to identify some of the more common bird species, including Goldeneye, Common Merganser, American Dipper, Winter Wren, Steller's Jay, Varied Thrush, Pileated and other woodpeckers, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and Red-breasted Nuthatch.



# January Events

## **Guided Nature Walk**

**Sat. & Sun. - 11am**

*(times may vary: check date)*

Saturday  
1/6

**Sue Madsen**

*Restoration Ecologist, Skagit  
Fisheries Enhancement Group*

**Salmon Habitat Restoration Projects in Howard Miller Steelhead Park**

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group has been working with the Skagit County Parks Department since 2006 to improve habitat at Howard Miller Steelhead Park. They have re-routed a small tributary back into its historic channel, restoring more than ¾ mile of stream, and have created 12 acres of wetland habitat. This has improved fish access and water quality within the slough. Removal of invasive plant species and replanting of riparian areas along the new channel are further improving habitat conditions.

Sunday  
1/7

**John Scurlock**

*Aerial photographer and author*

**Mountains & Glaciers: Aerial Photography Across Western North America**

John Scurlock's love of flying led him to build his own airplane, which allowed him to explore the Cascades in a way few people can. He will share his amazing photography of glaciers and mountains and tell the stories behind the images.

Saturday  
1/13

**Jenna Friebel**

*WDFW Hydrologist and Project  
Manager*

**Salmon Recovery Efforts in the Skagit River Delta: Recent Successes and Next Steps**

The Skagit River watershed is very important for Puget Sound chinook salmon recovery! The recently completed Skagit River delta habitat restoration project provides benefits to chinook salmon and teaches us about challenges associated with implementing large-scale restoration projects. Meeting recovery goals for the Skagit River and delta is an ongoing process, and WDFW is working with the local community through the *Farm, Fish, and Flood* initiative to advance recovery efforts.

Sunday  
1/14

**Jennifer Sevigny**

*Wildlife biologist, Stillaguamish  
Tribe*

**North Cascades Elk Herd: Monitoring and Management**

Learn about the herd's history and the Tribal perspective on how to manage and protect the North Cascades elk herd, including data collection approaches and preliminary results.

Saturday  
1/20

**Pete Haase**

*Coordinator of Skagit Citizen  
Forage Fish Survey Team*

**Forage Fish Around Skagit County**

What *ARE* forage fish? Come and find out, and learn how forage fish play a vital role in our local ecosystem.

Sunday  
1/21

**Mike Larrabee**

*North Cascades National Park  
Complex Physical Scientist*

**Glaciers of the North Cascades**

About one-third of all the glaciers in the lower 48 states are in the North Cascades National Park. These 312 glaciers are a critical part of the ecosystem: they influence soil development, vegetation distribution, flooding, and are dramatic indicators of climate change. They are also central to our region's hydroelectric industry and efforts to sustain endangered salmon and trout. Perhaps most importantly, glaciers provide cold, fresh water during droughts, periods of low streamflow and high stream temperatures.

Saturday  
1/27

**Terri Wild**

*Native plants botanist*

**Native Plants of the Upper Skagit  
(11am presentation, 12pm nature walk)**

Explore the winter plant life of the Upper Skagit. Learn the edible and medicinal properties of native and naturalized flora. We will share tea and talk before taking a leisurely walk through the winter wonderland.

Sunday  
1/28

**Chris Brewer,  
Ken Salzman**

*North Cascades Audubon Society*

**Winter Birds of Skagit County  
(11am nature walk, 1pm presentation)**

Who's that bird that just flew in? Join the North Cascades Audubon Society to discover why many birds migrate to our area for winter or stay here year-round. We'll look at bald eagles, hawks, owls and backyard songbirds you can expect to see this season. Local bird photographer Ken Salzman provides amazing images.