



A Washington State Chapter of the National Audubon Society  
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*Black Hills Audubon Society is a volunteer, non-profit organization of more than 1,300 members in Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties whose goals are to promote environmental education and protect our ecosystems for future generations.*

April 11, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Given our present rate of habitat loss in western Washington, predictions of future climate change and species decline, it is imperative every municipality do whatever they can to preserve open spaces that serve as habitat and also function as possible mitigation to climate change. The large tract that is LBA Woods serves in this capacity and should be saved in perpetuity if we truly care about our citizens and our future. Halting the demise of this beautiful wooded area is a gift to all sentient beings and will be commended by generations to come. Black Hills Audubon Society supports efforts to save these parcels from development that, even in the best way, would decimate the ecosystem and all its supports.

A primary goal of Black Hills Audubon Society is the success of regional birds. This means understanding their needs and promoting an environment that insures their success. This means that, birds need places to forage, to roost, to nest and raise young. It also means that there is sufficient space for multiple bird territories to insure genetic diversity among breeding pairs. It also means that there is capacity so that those species that migrate here to breed in the summer or that arrive to overwinter have sufficient food and adequate beyond what is occupied by year-round resident species. In addition, forest birds need sufficient contiguous forest for safety from unnatural predators such as cats and other disturbances to their success.

Another goal of Black Hills Audubon Society is to educate people about bird life and acquaint them to the needs of birds so that we can all conduct our business in ways that favor the survival of birds. Some of the ways to accomplish this goal is to take adults and children on outings with their families or through school presentations to learn about birds and their habitat needs.

The forested parcels that have come to be known as the LBA Woods provide an opportunity to meet these goals in a setting that is unique by its proximity to the urban area, by its size, and its physical structure that supports a diversity of habitats. The forest contains patches of small and large trees with a shrub and herbaceous understory that serve as a reservoir for insects, fruits, dead standing trees and woody debris to provide for its bird population which currently stands at 58 documented species. Students from several close-by schools can easily visit the forest, and because of the LBA ball fields adjacent to the forest, many families beyond the neighborhood can visit the forest in conjunction with a sporting practice or event.

Black Hills Audubon Society fully supports retaining these parcels as a forested open space, and that they become a public park that maintains its wild nature in support of its birds, plants and other wildlife while providing opportunities for Olympia's citizens to enjoy the out of doors close at hand.

Sincerely,

Deb Nickerson - President  
Black Hills Audubon Society