

#03-05

21 October, 2003

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society
P.O. Box 502
Sequim, WA 98383

Dear OPAS:

Thank you so much for your continued support of the Olympic Vulture Study. After eleven years, I think we have learned a lot more about our Pacific Northwest turkey vultures. We know of a major migration route over the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and we know a lot about their choice of 'weathers' that they seem to choose for crossing.

One of the major goals of the study has been public education and I think this year we did the best ever – with the help of the *Peninsula Daily News*' lengthy and informative article. On two days, large groups of turkey vultures came directly into the watch site at very low elevations and many non-birders and birders alike got very good looks at these magnificent fliers.

The total for 2003 was 1,196 turkey vultures and very few raptors. It was an unusual year due to the persistent heavy fog over the strait. Normally, the fog dissipates by late morning, but not this year. A raptor banding station on the hills behind me reported that they could see over the fog and generally see the island, but that they saw no groups crossing over the fog. I enclose a daily total list for the count.

I'm also enclosing an updated bird list for the park. This is just for the weeks we are there and is low on land birds since we sit facing the strait. Everything that comes off the strait or wanders down the shoreline is included plus other birds noted while wandering the park (in the fog). Please feel free to copy the park bird list.

Thanks again for support and companionship at the monitoring site.

Best regards,

Diann MacRae, Coordinator