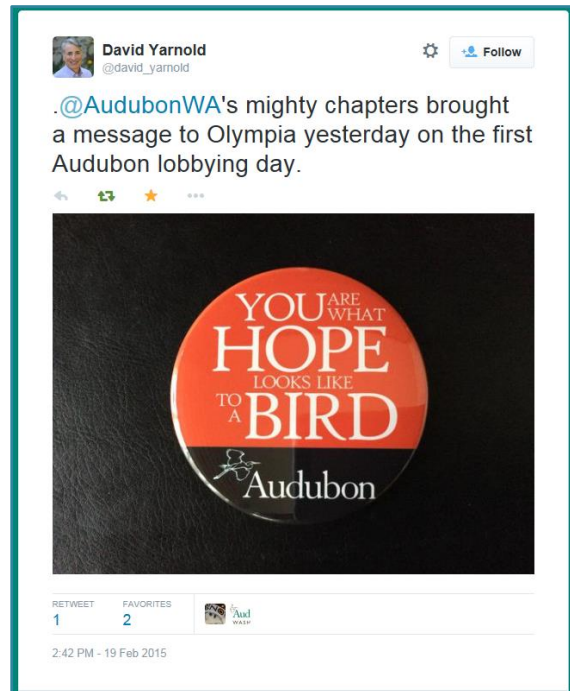


## Audubon Advocacy Day 2015

- **Seventy-five Audubon activists** representing 13 (of 25) chapters, from 27 (of 49) legislative districts congregated in Olympia on February 18 to meet with our legislators and ask for their support of better management of forage fish (HB 1152 / SB 5166), safe transportation of oil throughout our state lands and coastal communities (HB 1449 / SB 5087), and action to save our birds from the effects of climate change (HB 1314 / SB 5283).
- We met with **over 80 legislators**, with the first meetings at 9:15 am and the last ones at 4:30 pm.
- David Yarnold, CEO & President of National Audubon, was there to start off the day with inspirational stories about the power of Audubon's network and take some legislative meetings with Audubon activists. He spoke with Senator James Hargrove about the importance of Grays Harbor for migrating shorebirds, thanked Senator Christine Rolfes for introducing the forage fish bill, and brought birds to the climate conversation with Senator Andy Hill.
- We created large buttons for everyone to wear, so we could recognize one another and so it was clear to people what we were about: Hope and Birds! The buttons served as conversations starter on the hill all day. One of the security guards even went so far as to imitate a crow cawing when he realized what our buttons said! David Yarnold later tweeted about us and the buttons.
- We had workshops on all of our priority topics so that our activists felt knowledgeable about the issues. A huge shout out to [Rein Attemann](#) from WEC, [Alex Epstein](#) from Climate Solutions, [Bruce Wishart](#) (lobbyist for Sound Action) and our own Chris Parsons (WSACC) for leading these sessions.
- Forage fish were the surprise hit of the day! While many legislators were familiar with the safe oil transportation bill and the carbon pollution accountability bill – and we weren't the first organization to come and talk to them about those – few were aware of the forage fish management bill. We were able to shine a spotlight on the wee fishes and bring attention to the important role they play in the marine ecosystem. Check out the [editorial about forage fish](#) from yesterday's Everett Herald.
- Our recent scholarship winner, Courtney Straight, attended her first ever lobby day. As we were chatting at the end of the day, she was excited and passionate about her meetings that had taken place. "I've always been one of those people who click on the 'Take Action' links that I receive in emails from Audubon and other conservation organizations. But now, after seeing the power of an individual speaking up, I am going to write my own emails and send my own stories about why something is important to me."



- [Kathleen Saul](#), a professor at The Evergreen State College, brought 3 students from one of her classes to provide them real-life experience in the legislative process. After she got home yesterday, she sent the following email: “Thank you for pulling together a fabulous day! I was impressed by the passion of the Audubon folks and their genuine welcoming attitude toward all of us. It was a perfect introduction for my students to the advocacy process--to what really goes on in getting bills passed and policy made. Although I had participated in Lobby Days in the past, I don't recall coming away feeling quite so energized.”
- Coincidentally, the Forage Fish bill had a hearing in House Appropriations. Audubon activists signed in to show support for the bill and packed the room. Trina Bayard gave eloquent testimony!
- Helen Engle was recognized for it being her birthday. Her response: “There is nowhere else I would rather be than with my Audubon people.”
- Thanks to Audubon Washington board members Todd Burley, Cathie Conolly, Allen Gibbs, Desiree Hoskins, Cathy Jaramillo, Judy Willott for being an active part of our first Advocacy Day. Todd and I had fun taking selfies inside the Capitol!
- Thanks to all the staff for helping to make our first Advocacy Day so successful. In particular, to Jen Syrowitz who organized a flawless day and helped galvanize our Audubon members in such a positive manner.

