



# Audubon Society of Corvallis the **CHAT**

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#10

## Joel Geier

### 2013 Homer Campbell Award Winner

The Homer Campbell Environmental Award, established in 2005, each year recognizes a local individual or organization that has made significant contributions in the areas of environmental stewardship, awareness, and outreach. Contributions worthy of recognition, might include, but are not limited to:



- Promotion of environmentally sustainable practices
- Leadership on local environmental issues
- Classroom education of environmental stewardship
- Habitat restoration or preservation.

Joel not only models all these contributions in his own practices, but also shares his appreciation of the efforts and contributions of others with enthusiastic praise. He epitomizes good environmental leadership by example and encouragement. Known at Corvallis Audubon for compiling monthly field notes for our CHAT newsletter for several years, Joel is more widely known around the state for participation and promotion of Christmas Bird Counts, and more so in helping develop and spread the use of a web-based open birding database, Bird Notes, for Oregon Field Ornithologists (now Oregon Birding Association)—well before Cornell University's eBird. With the identification of Important Bird Areas nationally, Joel was instrumental in compiling Oregon ecoregion birding guides, most notably the Cascades and Willamette Valley Birding Trail guides. Locally he has worked on studies of valley grassland bird species, many in decline, like Western Meadowlark, Streaked Horned Lark, American Pipit, and Grasshopper Sparrow.



Joel extends his knowledge of birds and the habitat di-

rectly through classroom and field trips to refuges for Salem and Corvallis area charter schools, through local, state and northwest birding and nature list-serves, and through public presentations. More than that, he works with E.E. Wilson State Wildlife Management Area, just beyond his front yard. Most notably Luckiamute State Natural Area has no greater advocate and volunteer, where he continues to lead many volunteer habitat restoration work parties.

Joel's working knowledge of habitats helps him locate and work to protect many valley plant communities as well, through developing workable and realistic solutions with the landowner, be they individual or a public entity.

We congratulate Joel for his tireless work on behalf of Willamette Valley birds and habitat restoration, and for their conservation through education and leadership—thank you!

*Jim Fairchild  
ASC President*

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# Oregon Wild Work Party

## Klamath Basin, Labor Day Weekend 2013

Oregon Wild and the Klamath Marsh NWR are seeking vol-



unteers for a one-day work party to removed unneeded barbed wire fences (that are a hazard to wildlife) on Saturday August 31, 2013. Additionally, the refuge is looking for help with other projects such as Black Tern colony counts, mapping beaver sign, woodpecker surveys, etc.

Arrive at the Klamath Marsh Thursday evening for a potluck dinner and slide show (just before Labor Day weekend) and to participate on naturalist-led hikes to little visited waterfalls in roadless areas of Oregon Wild's proposed greater Crater Lake Wilderness Area. Camping, or indoor sleeping space, with kitchen facilities and showers provided for group participants.

Visit Oregon Wild's website after mid-July to register at [www.oregonwild.org](http://www.oregonwild.org) or contact:

Wendell Wood, Wildlands Interpreter, Oregon Wild,  
PO Box 1923, Brookings, OR 97415  
[ww@oregonwild.org](mailto:ww@oregonwild.org)

Request a full itinerary and ask to be placed on the "email reminder list" for when you may sign up to participate later this summer.

*Dave Mellinger*

## Field Trip Schedule

### Local Monthly Second Saturday Field Trips

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of every month at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 777 NW 9th St., Corvallis at 7:30 am. This field trip is geared towards beginning birders and birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area. Contact Bill Proebsting at [proebstw@gmail.com](mailto:proebstw@gmail.com) or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ,

[www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding](http://www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding), the week before the field trip for updates. Weather may alter plans. Watch the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Return to Benton Center by noon.

### Half Day Field Trips

June 8 Bald Hill Park

No Half Day trips in July or August

Sept 14 Resume Saturday half-day trips

*Bill Proebsting*

## Summer Field Trips

### Openings For:

Steens Mountain, August 8-1(1 opening)

Other trips are currently full, but openings may occur.

Put yourself on waiting lists for:

Summer Lake, June 28-30

Wallowas, July 11-14

Bandon, September 6-8

*Fred Ramsey*

## Bicycle Birding 2013

**Note:** We will be meeting at a different location for every trip.

Trips are free. Bring a bicycle helmet, water and binoculars. We ride slowly, listen for birds and stop frequently. Trip lengths are less than 10 miles. For more information, contact Don Boucher, 541-753-7689, [bouchdon@peak.org](mailto:bouchdon@peak.org)

**All trips are on the 4th Sunday of each month, until Sept., 9am - Noon**

### Sunday, June 23: Willamette Park/Kendall Natural Area—Corvallis

Meet at the Crystal Lake Sports Fields/boat landing parking area at 1199 SE Fischer Ln. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/GgJMy>)

### Sunday, July 28: Sunset Park in Corvallis to Philomath and back

Meet at Sunset Park, SW 45th St. & Country Club Dr. in Corvallis. Includes a short walk down the Sunset Park wetland boardwalk. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/GUfbH>).

### Sunday, Aug. 25: Albany Bike Trails—Meet at Monteith Park in downtown Albany

There's a parking area at the corner of Water Ave. and Washington St. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/b9CXN>)

### Sunday, Sept. 22: Benton County Fairgrounds, Bald Hill Park and Campus Way Covered Bridge—Corvallis

Meet at the Benton County Fairgrounds near the intersection of 53rd St. and Reservoir Ave. (map: <http://goo.gl/maps/a6nbj>)

*Don Boucher*

## President's Corner Sustainability in Wind Power

The Obama Administration has eagerly embraced the development and expansion of new forms of energy development: wave, wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass. It's no wonder—in the face of increasing human populations, even with reduced per-capita consumption, energy demand for production of food, water, shelter and clothing appears unsustainable. A choice away from CO2-emitting petrochemical sources seems obvious. And Oregonians have increasingly pressed for blocking coal export train shipments from our ports. Natural gas export facility development now follows. Whether consumed here or abroad, the effects of petrochemical use are truly global.

But wind power proponents should take a critical look at some biological costs of wind power. This week the US Fish & Wildlife Service granted a California Condor incidental take permit for a new wind project in southern California (see L.A. Times: <http://tinyurl.com/p7csnlc>, while the species is still endangered, still poisoned by lead bullets, and not even successfully reproducing in the wild throughout much of its range. The considerable price of holding this species back from extinction must now also be factored in to the cost of our alternative wind power.

Similarly, numerous Golden Eagle deaths, including more than 50 in Wyoming alone since 2009 (see Washington Post: <http://tinyurl.com/olnc7pg> without prosecution, is only one indicator that wind power needs broader and deeper scrutiny in when and where it is developed, and ongoing evaluation of wind farm impact. Yet the Administration now favors exempting wind farms for the 30-year typical wind turbine lifespan.

Wind turbine site location is crucial both for optimizing generation capacity and minimizing biological impact. Evaluation and adjustment--and even removal of these placements--must also be part of making wind power more sustainable.

*Jim Fairchild*

## Hesthavn Work Parties

July 20, 9 am  
Aug 24, 9 am  
Sept 14, 9 am

*Raymond Drapek*

## Hesthavn Education News

Summer camps are new this year at Hesthavn! If you have school-age children or know someone who does, these camps are bound to be great fun and a wonderful learning experience for your little ones! Experts in both primary education and natural sciences teach the Summer Camps.

**Price:** \$180.00 per child per week

**Email:** [hesthavneducation@gmail.com](mailto:hesthavneducation@gmail.com) for more info, registration forms, and questions.

**When:** 9-3 p.m. Monday - Friday before/after care is available upon request.

**Where:** Hesthavn Nature Center - 8590 Oak Creek Drive

**Art in Nature: August 5-9; K-3rd grade:** Explore patterns and design in nature- create artwork, build natural sculptures, and learn to draw!

**Eco-explorers: August 19-23; K-3rd grade:** Learn about habitats of Oregon as you visit, explore and study a different habitat each day! Meet animals! Explore creeks! Experience what it's like to be a snake in the grass! Play predator/prey games!

**Feathered Friends: August 12-16; 3-6th grade:** Learn all about birds and their adaptations, go birding, and explore with bird feathers, bones, wings and mounted birds. Practice your identification skills, study bird behavior and learn to ID with songs!

**Survival School: August 26-30; 3-6th grade:** Learn the basics of fire building, shelter building, edible wild plants, and other survival skills. Learn what to do if you come across a predator in the wild and the number one rule for surviving if you are lost.

*Michelle Shula*

## DeFazio Forest Plan

### Is a Bad Idea

#### Wyden's Little Better

The whole reason people are fighting for control of the O & C properties now is because some western Oregon counties have not been paying their taxes, like the rest of us. Sure it would be great to have lots of money pouring in from an outside source, but public land management and timber harvests should be determined from an objective point of view, not from the view that we need to raid the piggy bank. We have been subsidizing these counties by allowing them to pay zero or low property taxes, and they have relied on timber revenue to pay for schools and other public services.

Instead of fixing the tax problem, DeFazio wants to dedicate portions of our public land to continue subsidizing those who pay little or no taxes, the wrong way to attack the problem in my view. DeFazio's plan suggests equality by saying that half the property in question will be set aside for conservation purposes, but those lands are already protected by the Northwest Forest Plan.

Serious forest degradation is a foregone result of this plan, and the Spotted Owl, Marbled Murrelet, and salmon habitat will lose under this proposal. Boards would be established to manage the land, but the proposed composition seems weighted: "The timber trust land board the bill would establish would be controlled by members of the timber industry and the counties, with only one member of the public on the seven-member board. This unbalanced board epitomizes the timber dominance of the DeFazio bill," says Michael Blumm of the Lewis & Clark Law School.

Senator Ron Wyden is trying to put forth an improved bill, and one positive aspect we can see is keeping these lands under federal control and subject to federal laws. Still, the basic idea of splitting these lands in half for management, when they are already arranged in a "checkerboard" pattern across western Oregon, will have negative effects. Think habitat fragmentation, bad for wildlife, especially the Spotted Owl and Marbled Murrelet.

We need to find a fix for the problem, but we need to find an equitable and responsible way. As Blumm says, "The path to sustainable forestry and sustainable county revenues cannot include this effort to turn the clock back to an era in which we ignored the water quality and species effects of industrial timber harvesting. Instead, whatever timber is harvested must be consistent with water quality standards and the habitat necessary to sustain healthy species, including cold water fish like salmon." Unfortunately, the plans before us have given little consideration to scientific data, and information we have about what impacts we can expect.

*Will Wright*

## Atop the Nestbox



From summer to spring weather, how confused the birds must be! It will be interesting to see how the nesting season plays out. For those of you with bluebirds nesting on your property, be sure to leave any winterizing accessories on the nest boxes until temperatures reach the 80's.

When hotter weather arrives (above 92° F), typically around early July, please be sure to provide some shade to prevent heat-related nestling deaths. Details can be found on our web page, or you can call me at 541-258-6625 or Rita at 541-752-6457 with questions or problems.

We appreciate the information we have received when banded birds have been seen. Please continue to help us collect these data so we can reach meaningful conclusions in our longevity study. Happy summer birding!

*Raylene Gordin*

## Birdathon Wrap Up

The 13th Annual Birdathon was successful as always, with nine teams participating. Together we covered Corvallis and surrounding areas, the coast and the Klamath Basin and raised about \$2800. These funds go directly to Hesthavn Nature Center, and will be used for routine maintenance, as well as future larger projects, such as roof replacement.

We again this year had group pledges specifically for motorless Birdathoners, from Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank and Joel Geier. Bill Proebsting, Susan Atkisson, Ann and Doug Brodie, Joel and Wil Geier all responded to this challenge! Bill takes the prize for most motorless birds seen, at 114 species over a two-day bike ride, including Finley, EE Wilson and many parts between. However, Joel and Wil were close behind with 104 species seen, all on foot. They even spent the night at Luckiamute State Natural Area. Way to go, motorless 'thoners!

We also had group sponsors for all the teams, with Elsie Eltzroth continuing the family tradition, and Ken Hilton of Wild Birds Unlimited again contributing to everyone. Thanks very much, Ken and Elsie!

The other five teams this year were Dodie Wilson and Mary Van Brocklin, Jamie Simmons and Hendrik Herlyn and Oscar Harper, Jim Philipson, the ASC Klamath Falls field trip, led by Fred Ramsey (aka Klamath Fools), and Karan and Jim Fairchild.

And finally, of course, we heartily thank everyone who

sponsored a team. Hesthavn is a thriving nature center and native plant and wildlife sanctuary largely because of your generosity!

*Karan Fairchild*

*2013 Birdathon Coordinator*

## Field Notes

4/26/13-5/23/13

The general area covered by the field notes is a rough circle centered on Corvallis, extending just past Lebanon, Monroe/Harrisburg, Marys Peak and the nearby Coast Range, and Monmouth/Dallas.

The first half of the period was marked by abnormally dry and warm weather, followed by an extended cool and unsettled period with ample rain. Good numbers of shorebirds migrated through while waterfowl numbers dwindled. Neotropical songbirds continued to arrive, brightening grasslands and forests alike with color and song.

Location abbreviations: Ankeny = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge, EEW = E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Finley = William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, LSNA = Luckiamute State Natural Area, Philomath STP = Philomath sewage treatment ponds, Stewart Lake = pond on Hewlett-Packard campus in Corvallis, TWG/SP = Talking Water Gardens/Simpson Park in Albany

Observer abbreviations: Bob Altman (BA), Don Boucher (DB), Howard Bruner (HB), Randy Campbell (RCa), Bev Clark (BC), Jim Fairchild (JFa), Jeff Fleischer (JFl), Mary Garrard (MG), Joel Geier (JG), Wil Geier (WG), Bob Gentry (BG), Roy Gerig (RG), Jeff Harding (JHa), Oscar Harper (OH), Hendrik Herlyn (HH), Carol Hiler (CH), Tim Johnson (TJ), Jim Kopitzke (JK), Janet Lamberson (JL), Phil Lamberson (PL), Jim Leonard (JLe), Judy List (JL), Lisa Millbank (LM), Molly Monroe (MM), Randy Moore (RM), Mark Nikas (MN), Jim Philipson (JP), Bill Proebsting (BP), Madeline Rae (MdR), Max Rae (MxR), Gordon Reistad (GR), Paul Rentz (PR), Doug Robinson (DR), Tim Shelmerdine (TS), John Shewey (JSh), Jamie Simmons (JS), Will Wright (WW)

While large flocks of **Greater White-fronted Geese** continued to pass over our area on their northbound migration at the beginning of the period, their numbers dropped sharply thereafter, with a sighting at Ankeny 5/20 being the latest (TJ). A late "**Dusky**" **Canada Goose** was also at Ankeny 5/19 (TJ). **Cackling Geese** were hard to come by after the middle of the period. Brand-new **Wood Duck** ducklings were swimming with their mother in Dunawi Cr in SW Corvallis 5/19 (LM, DB), and **Mallard** ducklings were abundant. **Gadwall** and **American Wigeon** were sighted at Ankeny 5/19 (TJ), the latest report of these ducks this period. A few **Blue-winged Teal** showed up; 1 was at Philomath STP 5/9 (WW), 2 at Ankeny 5/13 (JK), and 1 at EEW 5/22 (JG). A single **Redhead** turned up at Philomath STP 5/9 (WW), and 2 were in a lake E of Albany 5/11 (JFl). **Northern Shovelers** continued at Ankeny 5/19 (MxR, MdR, TJ), and there were also some late **Northern Pintails** and **Ring-necked Ducks** (TJ). **Cinnamon Teal** were reported regularly from marshes and sewage ponds.

**Lesser Scaup** were last seen at Stewart Lake 5/2 (JS). A pair of **Hooded Mergansers** were at Jackson-Frazier Wetland 5/8 (LM, DB), hopefully sticking around to breed there.

A **Ruffed Grouse** was at Marys Peak 5/4 (JSh), and a **Sooty Grouse** was calling at Dunn Forest 4/28 (JG). **Mountain Quail** continued to call frequently; 2 were heard at Dunn Forest 4/28 (JG), 1 called near Lewisburg Saddle 5/2 (LM), and 2 were near Fitton Green 5/7 (JG). A pair of **California Quail** were leading their babies through the grass along Campus Way 5/6 (HH, OH).

A female **Pied-billed Grebe** appeared to be building her nest in plain view of the Finley HQ 5/8 (MM), and a trio of stripy youngsters were being fed by a parent at EEW 5/22 (JG). 7 **Eared Grebes** were at Philomath STP 4/28 (HH), 5 at Finley 5/1 (HB) and 7 on a lake E of Albany 5/11 (JF1). A **Clark's Grebe** was an unexpected find at Philomath STP 4/29 (DR).

A young **Double-crested Cormorant** was still at Bruce Starker Arts Park in SW Corvallis 5/5 (LM, DB), but practically all had departed for the coast by the middle of the period.

**American Bitterns** continued to be reported from a pond along Bruce Rd at Finley, but a few were reported from elsewhere: 1 flying over Peoria Rd 5/9 (JF1) and 2 flying S of Brownsville 5/14 (JF1). A **Great Egret** was still lingering at Ankeny 5/19 (TJ). What may be our area's most approachable **Green Heron** continued to be seen regularly at Stewart Lake throughout the period (JS).

Along major rivers and large marshes, **Ospreys** continued to tangle with **Bald Eagles** intent on fish piracy throughout the area. A **Red-tailed Hawk** dove after a female **Northern Harrier** on the Finley prairie 5/8 (PR). 3 **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were seen along Campus Way 5/6 (HH, OH). A highly aggressive **Cooper's Hawk** chased a Red-tailed Hawk over Bald Hill Farm for about 1/2 mi 5/6 (LM), perhaps protecting a nest. A pair of **Red-shouldered Hawks** nesting at Sunset Park in SW Corvallis had fuzzy chicks in the nest at the end of the period, and there may have been additional nesting pairs at EEW and in S and W Corvallis.

A group of photographers has some privileged looks at foraging **Soras** and some **Virginia Rails** with little fuzzy black chicks at Finley 5/8 (PR). Brightly-colored and oddly cute **American Coot** chicks swam around with their parents in the pond along Bruce Rd at Finley 5/6 (MG, BC). A **Sandhill Crane** visited a pond at Finley 5/21 (DR).

As they migrated through, a few **Black-bellied Plovers** stopped at Finley 4/27 (WW) and 4 were at Ankeny 5/4 (JHa). 3 **Semipalmated Plovers** were also at Ankeny 5/4, 1 on 5/6 (JHa), and 1 was at the Beta Dr. pond in S Albany 5/14 (JF1). **Killdeer** chicks scurried around in the shoreline mud of the wetlands off Riverside Dr 4/29 (JF1).

2 **Black-necked Stilts** were noted at the wetland along Bellfountain Rd 4/28 (DR), 1 was at Ankeny 4/30 (JHa), and 2 appeared at Ankeny again on 5/10 (JHa). An **American Avocet** at Finley 4/27 (WW) may have been the first record

in a decade, and it stuck around for a couple of days--long enough for other birders to get a look. Numbers of **Greater Yellowlegs** tapered off early in the period. A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was found off Riverside Dr 4/29 (JF1), and one was at the Beta Dr pond in S Albany 5/9 (JF1). At least 7 **Solitary Sandpipers** were at Sunset Park 4/28 (LM, DB), a remarkably high count. **Spotted Sandpipers** were easily found along area waterways this period. 3 **Whimbrels** at Finley 5/2 was a rare treat (JL, PL), and 1 was found at Ankeny 5/9 (RG, TS). **Long-billed Curlews** were rare migrants; 1 was a nocturnal migrant at LSNA 4/27 (JG, WG), 1 flew over Finley 4/30 (DR), and 6 were found at the Beta Dr. pond in S Albany 5/11 (JF1). A flock of 80 **Least Sandpipers** was the largest one reported this period, as these tiny birds continued to pass through. 3 **Pectoral Sandpipers** were found in the wetlands along Riverside Dr 4/29 (JF1). **Dunlin** numbers declined as they continued on their way north. A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was an uncommon visitor at Finley 4/29 (DR). 29 **Long-billed Dowitchers** near Brownsville 5/14 was the largest flock reported (JF1). A **Wilson's Snipe** was making his "winnowing" display sound near Brownsville 5/11 (MN); it's possible he was attempting to breed there.

**Wilson's Phalaropes** turned up at Finley 5/1 (DR), and sparse reports of small numbers of birds continued until the end of the period. **Red-necked Phalaropes** were also moving through, with about 30 at Ankeny 5/13 (JK).

3 **Bonaparte's Gulls** turned up at Ankeny 4/29 (JLe), and the numbers grew to 14 5/4 (RG, JHa). 1 was also at the Beta Dr pond in S Albany 5/9 (JF1). One **Ring-billed Gull** was at Peoria early in the period (RCa). 2 **Black Terns** circled over the Philomath STP 5/16 (DR).

**Band-tailed Pigeons** gobbled corn at a feeder in the foothills W of Philomath late in the period, with pigeons stacking 3 levels high on one another's backs (JFa). A single **Eurasian Collared-Dove** showed up for the first time at that location.

Owls were not reported much this period, but a pair of **Great Horned Owls** sang a duet at Finley 4/27 (HH, OH, JS), and one was spotted in its roost along Arthur Dr E of Corvallis 5/11 (JF1).

A **Black Swift** was observed flying over Philomath STP 5/16 (DR), a seldom-seen and enigmatic bird. About 200 **Vaux's Swifts** emerged from the Albany Fire Station chimney 5/2 (BG).

A **Calliope Hummingbird** visited Marys Peak 5/4 (JS), and an **Anna's Hummingbird** was on a nest in Willamette Park 5/8 (LM, DB). Feisty **Rufous Hummingbirds** continued to monopolize most feeders.

A **Lewis's Woodpecker** showed up at Stewart Lake 5/6 (JS), flycatching from the snags. **Acorn Woodpeckers** were excavating nest cavities in snags at Bald Hill Park 5/17 (CH). **Hairy Woodpeckers** were nesting along the LSNA forest trail this period (JG), and **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** were observed mating there on 4/27 (JG, WG). **Downy Woodpeckers**, **Northern Flickers** and **Pileated Woodpeckers** were all observed entering cavities in Bald Hill

Park and McDonald Forest 5/2 (LM).

A single **Merlin** stooped at shorebirds along Riverside Dr 4/29 (JFI), but most have left the area along with the shorebirds this period. One **Peregrine Falcon** flew past Peoria 5/15 (RCa), probably also on its way out of our area for the breeding season.

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was found in Dunn Forest 4/28 (JG), with another reported along the Harrison-Circle bike path 4/30 (HH, OH). **Western Wood-Pewees** showed up at Ankeny 5/19 (TJ, MDR, MxR). There was a likely early **Willow Flycatcher** was at Finley 5/1, and one seen at Peoria 5/8 (RCa). A **Hammond's Flycatcher** was detected at Oak Creek 5/3 (JS). Numbers of **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** spiked early in the period, making them easy to hear at any suitable site. 3 **Black Phoebes** were found at Finley 4/27 (HH, OH, JS). **Western Kingbirds** continued to be very reliable at the Finley prairie, but were also found near Tangent 5/11 (JFI) and 1 near Ward Butte 5/14 (JFI).

4-5 **Cassin's Vireos** were singing on the NE side of Bald Hill 5/19 (LM, DB). Also present at Bald Hill Park were singing **Hutton's** and **Warbling Vireos**. A **Red-eyed Vireo** at TWG/SP 5/20 was an unusual sighting, with only a very few breeding locally (JP).

**Gray Jays** were calling near Lewisburg Saddle 5/2 (LM). **Western Scrub-Jay** nestlings could be heard begging by the middle of the period. **American Crows** were still incubating eggs at the end of the period, just S of downtown Corvallis (LM).

6 "Streaked" **Horned Larks** were along Bruce Rd at Finley 5/2, and 7 were noted singing in a Christmas tree farm in the Airlie area 5/11 (JG).

A **Purple Martin** arrived at Finley 4/29 (MM), and small numbers of martins continued to be reported throughout the period, with a high of 12 birds at Philomath STP 5/22 (DR). **Violet-green** and **Tree Swallows** were picking up feathers shed by ducks at the Bruce Starker Arts Park pond in the third week of May (DB, LM). At least 3 pairs of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** seemed to be nesting in riverbanks at LSNA 5/11 (JG). **Barn** and **Cliff Swallows** continued the process of nest construction/refurbishment throughout the period. **Bank Swallows** at Philomath STP 5/1, 5/16 and 5/22 were rare but annual visitors (DR); this species was also reported from Ankeny 5/19 (TJ).

Protective **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** chased a **Brown Creeper** away from the area of their nest cavity in McDonald Forest 5/2 (LM), and many **Black-capped Chickadees** could be heard begging in neighborhoods throughout the period. **Bushtit** fledglings were also following their parents. A pair of **White-breasted Nuthatches** were noted nesting at Stewart Lake (JS), and another pair nested in Avery Park.

There were at least 5 singing male **House Wrens** at Hesthavn Nature Center 5/2 (LM). A female **Marsh Wren** appeared to be brooding eggs at Jackson-Frazier Wetland 5/8 (LM, DB).

The last reported **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** was a singing male at Fitton Green 5/7 (JG). A female Rufous Hummingbird harassed a **Western Bluebird** on Marys Peak 5/4 (JSh). 3 **Swainson's Thrushes** were found at Willamette Park 5/10 (HH), and soon thereafter, their lovely songs filled lush woodlands every evening. A singing **Wrentit** at Freeway Lakes 5/14 may have been the first one reported from that area (JFI).

**European Starling** fledglings foraged on lawns with their parents this period, and the anxious adults gave alarm calls whenever an American Crow approached too closely. **Cedar Waxwings** became abundant this period, feasting on the earliest fruits like Twinberry, Osoberry, strawberries and small cherries.

A male **Orange-crowned Warbler** pursued a female and grabbed her tail in his bill 4/26 (JG). **Nashville Warblers** passed through among the huge numbers of Orange-crowns, 1 was seen near EEW 4/28 (JG), 1 in downtown Corvallis (RM) and 1 in Willamette Park 5/10 (HH). A **Yellow Warbler** sang in downtown Corvallis 4/30 (LM), and over the next week or two they became quite common. The last report of **Yellow-rumped Warbler** was a single Audubon's female at Stewart Lake 5/23 (JS). **Wilson's Warblers** were moving through McDonald Forest in spectacular numbers 5/2 (LM), although they seemed unusually scarce at Stewart Lake this year, where they were detected for just 6 days this period (JS). There were good numbers of **Hermit Warblers** and **Black-throated Gray Warblers** in most of the higher hills around the valley by the middle of the period. **Townsend's Warblers** continued to make their way north. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was reported from Bellfountain Rd near Finley 5/5 (WW), and another was noted S of Brownsville 5/11 (MN).

**Western Tanagers** turned up at the end of April, but weren't widely common until the first full week of May.

5 **Chipping Sparrows** visited a yard near EEW 5/3, and a male was singing from the native plant restoration site at LSNA 5/4 (JG). 9 singing male **Vesper Sparrows** were detected on a survey of part of Bald Hill Farm 5/17 (JG, BA). At least 20 **Savannah Sparrows** were in a small grass field at LSNA 5/11 (JG). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was at the Finley prairie 5/8 (BP, GR), 1 was S of Brownsville 5/11 (MN) and another was near Ward Butte 5/14 (JFI). Altogether, some of these sites combined produced 9 birds 5/21 (BA), probably one of the highest daily counts for the Willamette Valley. **Song Sparrow** fledglings were following their parents by 5/9 (LM), and **Dark-eyed Junco** babies were also out in the middle of the period. The last reported **Lincoln's Sparrow** was at Hesthavn Nature Center 5/2 (LM). A lingering **White-throated Sparrow** was near EEW 4/27 (JG, WG), and 2 **Golden-crowned Sparrows** were still in NW Corvallis during the last week of the period (JL).

**Black-headed Grosbeaks** showed up at the end of April, but by the first week in May, their songs were heard frequently and they began visiting feeders. The first week of May also brought an influx of **Lazuli Buntings**.

**Western Meadowlarks** were nesting on the Finley prairie. **Brewer's Blackbirds** dive-bombed any creature approaching the vicinity of their nests this period. **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** seemed to persist at Finley, but were also in the Diamond Hill Rd area S of Brownsville 5/11 (MN), and some were at Ankeny 5/19 (TJ). **Bullock's Orioles** showed up at the end of the last period, but most seemed to be arriving/passing through during the first 2 weeks of May.

**Red Crossbills** continue to be easily detectable in urban/suburban areas. While numbers of **Pine Siskins** became very high on OSU campus in late April (flocks of 2000-3000), their numbers now seem to be decreasing overall (DB). **American Goldfinches** are once again abundant. A survey of **Evening Grosbeaks** on the OSU campus 5/2 turned up 203 birds (DR), but historically, it was estimated that 750,000 were on campus in the 1970s. **House Finch** fledglings were out and begging for food.

Please post your reports to [midvalleybirding.org](http://midvalleybirding.org), send them to [lisaaves@peak.org](mailto:lisaaves@peak.org), or leave a message at 541-753-7689 by 8/2913.

- Lisa Millbank

## Oregon 2020

### A Benchmark Survey of Oregon's Birds

We are excited to announce the public launch of a new statewide project on Oregon birds. We call the project Oregon 2020. Please visit our website at <http://oregon2020.com>

The project name is a bit of a play on words because we want to create a benchmark survey of the abundance and distribution of Oregon's birds by the year 2020. And, we will do this so that future generations can look back to our time and compare their own data, gathered decades and centuries from now, with our data. This will give them an ability to see with "20/20 vision" how bird numbers and distributions have changed.

We live in a dynamic time on our planet. We are changing the land, the sea, and the climate. Understanding how birds respond to these changes requires data gathered now so that future citizens and scientists can do better retrospective studies. Instead of guessing what might happen, let's generate a fabulous legacy of data on Oregon's birds right now. We can do this, together, and we can have a really great time doing it!

At Oregon 2020, we have special projects where you can join in. If you like getting to know your local birds really well, take a look at the County Explorer project. <http://oregon2020.com/get-involved/county-explorer/>

If you just like knowing the birds of your own backyard and don't have a ton of time, check out the Yard Counting project. <http://oregon2020.com/get-involved/yard-counting/>

There will be lots of fun social activities, too, where we join forces to spend long weekends on poorly known areas of the state. Our County Blitzes should be a blast. The blitzes will have workshops to help you improve your counting methods, to teach you tips and tricks associated with use of eBird, and to introduce you to fun ways to keep birding exciting all year long. Can't wait for a blitz to learn these things? Check the tutorial videos we have posted on our web page.

Our first County Blitz will be 21-23 June in Polk County. We

hope you can join us for the fun! <http://oregon2020.com/news/>

We are building partnerships and look forward to hearing from those of you who see the value and the fun in this new adventure.

*Douglas Robinson*

*Jenna Curtis*

*Tyler Hallman*

*and the whole Oregon 2020 team*

## Board Meeting Summary

### ASC Meeting

1. The board voted unanimously to sign on to the letter written by the American Bird Conservancy to USFWS requesting tighter, rather than looser regulations on logging in marbled Murrelet habitat.
2. The Summer Board meeting, at which new Officers and Board Members are installed, will be held on Saturday, July 27th at Jim & Karan Fairchild's house, 31540 Homestead Rd., Philomath. Bring anything you'd like to BBQ and a side dish. The potluck dinner begins at 5 pm, followed by the Board meeting at 6:30 pm. Please RSVP to Fairchilds at 541-929-4049.

*Linda Campbell*

## Open ASC Board Meetings

ASC Board of Directors meetings are open to all ASC members, and the board encourages you to come and see what we do. Our monthly board meeting is on Thursday one week before the General Meeting. See the calendar on the last page of The Chat for meeting location.

## Membership

Is it time to renew your ASC membership? Mail your renewal check to: ASC PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. If there are no changes in your contact information, you can also renew your membership by going to the ASC website and renewing through Paypal: [www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml](http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml)

If you have moved or changed your email address, please forward your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at [ortizsv@gmail.com](mailto:ortizsv@gmail.com).

*Suzanne Ortiz*

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Jim Fairchild, Dave Mellinger, Bill Proebsting, Fred Ramsey, Raymond Drapek, Michelle Shula, Raylene Gordin, Karan Fairchild, Lisa Millbank, Linda Campbell, Suzanne Ortiz

## Chat Articles

The Chat editor welcomes monthly articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the Chat editor by the 4th Thursday of the month. Always submit text using Microsoft Word.

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**Interested in volunteering?**

Please let us know: [volunteerasc@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerasc@gmail.com)

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*the* **CHAT**

*Renew your membership before the date on the mailing label to avoid missing issues of the Chat.*

## Calendar

Jun 8 Field Trip: Bald Hill Park, 7:30 am  
Jun 23 Bicycle Birding: Willamette Park, 9-12 pm  
Jun 28- 30 Field Trip: Summer and Crater Lakes  
Jul 11-14 Field Trip: Wallowas  
Jul 20 Hesthavn Work Party, 9 am  
Jul 27 Summer Board Meeting, Fairchild home,  
Philomath, 5 pm  
Jul 28 Bicycle Birding: Sunset Park to Philomath, 9-12 pm  
Aug Youth Summer Camps, Hesthavn, (see article)  
Aug 8-11 Field Trip: Steens Mountain  
Aug 24 Hesthavn Work Party, 9 am  
Aug. 25 Bicycle Birding: Monteith Park Albany, 9-12 pm  
Aug 29 Articles & Field Notes deadline for CHAT  
Aug 31 Oregon Wild Work Party  
Sept 6-8 Field Trip: Bandon

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