



THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CORVALLIS CHAT

MAY 2015

VOL. 44 #9

ASC GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY, MAY 21, 7:00-8:30 PM
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH;
9TH AND MONROE, CORVALLIS

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILDERNESS ACT



Join us on May 21 for our final 2014-15 ASC program. Our speaker, Bridget Callahan, will present: Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act -Successes and New Opportunities.

Protection of our wild lands is a priority for Audubon, and it is fitting for us to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act.

Bridget Callahan is the Wilderness Organizer for Oregon Wild, a 40-year-old conservation organization working to protect Oregon's wild lands, wildlife and waters. A native Oregonian, Bridget has worked in the political and environmental sectors to protect the quality of life we all enjoy. At Oregon Wild she works across the state to highlight the wonders of Crater Lake and other public lands, and to see that these areas are protected for future generations to enjoy.

As detailed elsewhere in this issue of the Chat, our chapter will elect a new slate of officers at the May meeting; all the more reason for you to attend.

As usual the evening will be at 6:30 for coffee, cookies, and conversation. The meeting will begin at 7:00, and after some chapter business, including the election of next year's board, the program speaker will be introduced at about 7:30. Questions

can be directed to me at mathewsc2@comcast.net.

Chris Mathews

Vice President and President Pro Tem

Directions: The monthly chapter meeting is in Dennis Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 114 SW Eighth Street in Corvallis

FUTURE MEMBER PROGRAMS

Monthly General Member Meeting programs will take a summer break after May 21. Monthly meetings will resume on September 17. See you in the fall!

FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE

REMAINING 2015 WEEKEND FIELD TRIPS

May 14-17: Malheur NWR. The 45th running of ASC's signature field trip! Three openings.

June 26-28: Summer Lake to Crater Lake. Full, with a waiting list.

August 13-16: Steens Mountain. One opening.

September 11-13: The North Coast: Tillamook to Astoria. Two openings.

Transportation on these trips is in 12-person and/or 15-person vans rented from Enterprise. Expenses are shared. Participants will be provided with tour information a month prior to departure. Bird, mammal, herp, butterfly, and odonate checklists are provided.

There will be signup sheets for weekend field trips at the Field Trip table at ASC general meetings through May. Or email Fred Ramsey at flramsey5@comcast.net. Deposits of \$50 per person per tour are requested. Make checks out to ASC and mail them to ASC at PO Box 148 in Corvallis, 97339.

ASC GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, May 21, 7:00-8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church
9th and Monroe

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Fred Ramsey

MONTHLY SECOND SATURDAY HALF DAY FIELD TRIP

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of from September through June at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 777 NW 9th St., Corvallis at 7:30 am. This field trip is free and geared towards beginning birders, birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area and persons looking for a pleasant outing. Contact Bill Proebsting at proebstw@gmail.com or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley Listserv at www.midvalley-birding.org/pipermail/birding/, a couple of days before the field trip for updates. Weather may alter plans. Watch the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Return to Benton Center by noon.

COMING SECOND SATURDAY FIELD TRIPS:

May 9 Finley NWR

June 13 Beazell Forest/Kings Valley

Bill Proebsting

BICYCLE BIRDING

MAY THROUGH SEPTEMBER

Bring a bicycle helmet, water and binoculars. We ride slowly, listen for birds and stop frequently. Trip lengths are less than 10 miles.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED

To ensure an optimal birding experience for all participants, this year we will be taking registrations and limiting each trip to 12 participants. There will be waiting lists in case of cancellations. Registered participants will be notified a few days prior to each event and those on the waiting list will be notified if they may attend. There is no deadline for registration, but register early for any or all trips to ensure your spot.

May 31: (one opening) E.E Wilson Wildlife Area. (Parking permits required from ODF&W)

June 28: Willamette Park/Kendall Natural Area—Corvallis

July 26: Downtown Corvallis to Sunset Park and back

Aug 30: Albany Bike Trails and Talking Water Gardens

Sept. 27: Benton County Fairgrounds, Bald Hill Park and Campus Way Covered Bridge—Corvallis

You'll receive meeting locations and instructions upon registration.

To register, contact Don Boucher, donaboucher@gmail.com (email preferred). You may also call for questions 541-753-7689

Don Boucher



Birding along Bear Creek with ASC's Rogue Valley field trip



Birding in Mountains east of Ashland with local guide and Freeway Birding Author Harry Fuller

ASC BOARD ELECTIONS

The Board of Directors of the Audubon Society of Corvallis is offering the following slate of candidates for the 2015/2016 term, which begins at the summer board meeting (date to be set in May).

President- Chris Mathews is currently serving ASC as Vice President and President Pro Tem. Chris moved to Corvallis in 1978 with wife Kate, to assume the chairmanship of the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics at OSU, after previous service on the faculties of Yale University and the University of Arizona. He retired from OSU in 2002, but continues with part-time teaching, writing, and reviewing. He served as President of ASC from 2005 to 2008. Currently he also serves as Vice-President of the Great Basin Society; a nonprofit corporation that oversees Malheur Field Station.

Vice President- Bill Proebsting is a retired professor of horticulture at OSU and long time bird watcher. He served on the ASC board in 2003-05 and presently leads local second Saturday field trips for the chapter. He particularly enjoys birding Benton county, but he and Lena travel periodically around the U.S. and to Latin America. He also birds by bicycle for a motorless birdathon for Hesthavn.



Secretary- Gail Nickerson is a native Oregonian who has lived in Corvallis for most of her life. She joined the ASC after retirement to learn more about backyard birds. She has served as Refreshment Chair, board member at large, and currently as ASC secretary.

Treasurer- Fred Ramsey co-founded ASC in 1970, was its first president, and served in this position again in the 1980s. He is our current Treasurer. Fred has led weekend field trips since 1971, edited the Chat and served in many other positions. As a world-traveled and respected ornithologist, his other interests include music, theatre, fishing and baseball. Fred is also Professor Emeritus of Statistics at OSU. His many publications include *Birding Oregon*, one of the first site guides, published by ASC in 1978.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:

Linda Campbell moved from San Juan Island, WA, back to her native Willamette Valley in 2004. She has been active in ASC since then, primarily in the effort to get the Homer Campbell Memorial Trail boardwalk built at Finley Wildlife Refuge, and as Board secretary and Member-at-Large. Linda works at OR Department of Fish & Wildlife.

Marie Martin is currently serving as a Member-at-large, has been an active participant in numerous ASC field outings, fills in at the book and raffle table, and is rarely found without binoculars in hand. Recently retired as a pharmacist (you might have met her when she worked downtown at the old Albright and Raw Pharmacy), Marie applies the same detailed attention to birding and her hobby as a fledgling wildlife artist. Formerly of Santa Cruz, CA, in 1992 she attended Pharmacy School at OSU so she could explore the natural beauty of Oregon. She is pleased to be nominated again as an at-large board member of ASC.

Teri Engbring joined the Board as an at-large member 2 years ago, and has been an active ASC volunteer with our Education and Outreach programs since moving to Corvallis in 2012. She is a retired Environmental Educator who worked with schools in WA state, CA Dept of Fish and Game, and non-profit foundations, designing curriculum, teaching, and coordinating volunteers in education and conservation programs. She is also editor of the Chat newsletter and enjoys birding and world travel.

Spencer Mair is the founder and past events chair of the OSU Bird Nerds. He grew up in Sacramento, CA, growing his love for birds, and wildlife, on the Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. He banded birds at Big Sur, participated in curlew nest surveys at Malheur and Common Murre studies at Yaquina Head, did point counts on farms in the Willamette Valley, helped with the Oregon 2020 project, and numerous birdathons. He has been an active member of the Corvallis Audubon Society for four-plus years and has enjoyed serving as a member-at-large for the past year and learning about bird conservation and improving and protecting bird habitat.

Jim Parr Philipson has been active in ACS since 2011, participating in the monthly field trips, bird-a-thon and trips to Malheur. Birding became a passion for Jim when he moved to Corvallis in 2010 with guidance from friends, Bill Proebsting and Ken Hilton. He and his wife, Bonnie,

recently retired as United Methodist clergy. He is active in homeless issues in Corvallis.

Mark Baldwin has lived in Corvallis since 1981. He grew up in southeastern Washington as a frustrated upland game bird hunter. He decided to leave his gun at home, and has been a recreational birder for forty years. Since his 2013 retirement from the Corvallis School District (Applied Tech-woodworking to engineering & robotics), he has been birding almost daily with camera in hand for "capturing" birds. He has been an active participant in the Oregon 2020 project and though he has only recently become active in ASC, he looks forward to contributing to the preservation of our natural world in more meaningful ways.

Alternate member-at-large:

Will Wright has served as ASC President and Member-at-Large and is a 3rd/4th grade teacher. He has been a teaching interpretive naturalist at Mt. St. Helens, biology instructor for O.M.S.I., instructor at Camp Hancock, Outdoor School, and staff member for Puffin Project in Maine for National Audubon Society. He spent one year following Spotted Owls with radios; two seasons doing cavity nesting bird surveys; and four seasons doing Marbled Murrelet surveys. He has traveled for birding and education in Alaska, Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Hawaii, Japan, India, Nepal, Kenya, and Europe.

Karan Fairchild

FIELD NOTES

3/24/15-4/28/15

Unusually warm, dry spring weather continued, with just light frosts on 4 & 5 Apr. **Black cottonwoods** at EEW were fully leafed out by 1 Apr when the leaves on **Oregon white oaks** began to unfurl.

Locations: ANWR = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), EEW = E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, FNWR = William L. Finley NWR, JFW = Jackson-Frazier Wetland, LSNA = Luckiamute State Natural Area, McFadden (Marsh) at FNWR, PCT = Pacific Crest Trail, PSTP = Philomath STP, Stewart Lake = lake on Hewlett-Packard (HP) campus in Corvallis, TCP = Teloh-Calapooia Park in Albany, TWG = Talking Water Gardens in Albany.

Observers: ABk: Amber Beck, AHk: Adrian Hinkle, AIC: Alan Contreras, BA: Bob Altman, BGA: Becky Garrett, BPR: Bill Proebsting, BPt: Bruce Pratt, BTi: Bill Tice, BW: Brandon Wagner, CHI: Carol Hiler, CHk: Christopher Hinkle, DBo: Don Boucher, DCg: Donald Coggsell, DEm: Deanna Emig, DFX: Darrel Faxon, DNa: Dileep Naraswagan, DRo: Doug Robinson, DVy: Dave Vesely, EKn: Erik Knight, ESh: Evelyn Sherr, Frk: Frank Kolwicz, GPt: Gayle Peterson, HB: Howard Bruner, HH: Hendrik Herlyn, JCr: John Criscitiello, JDp: Jeremy Depiero, JDS: Jim Smith, JGe: Joel Geier, JGi: Julie Gibson, JHi: Jim Hiler, JiF: Jim Fairchild, JLi: Judy List, JPh: Jim Philipson, JrP: Jerry Paul, JSi: Jamie Simmons, JSu: John Sullivan, JuP: Judith Paul, KnF: Karan Fairchild, KH: Kaynor Heineck, LDu: Laura Duncan, LFX: Laura Faxon, LHa: Linda Hadfield, LJo: Laura Johnson, LM: Lisa Millbank, LPN: Lars Norgren, MAI: Marge Alig, MB: Mark Baldwin, MBS: Matt Blakeley-Smith, MC: Marcia F. Cutler, MG: Mary Garrard, MLI: Mike Lippsmeyer, MLK: Maureen Leong-Kee, MMo: Molly Monroe, MRI: Mary Ritter, MU: Mike Unger,

NNy: Nancy Neary, NRi: Nate Richardson, OH: Oscar Harper, PA: Paul Adamus, PCo:Pam Comeleo, PLi: Peter List, PO: Pam Otley, PRz: Paul Rentz, PWA: Pat Waldron, RCo: Randy Comeleo, RFo: Rana Foster, RMo: Randy Moore, SHg: Susan Hatlevig, SOz: Suzanne Ortiz, THy: Tristen Hynes, TSq: Theo Squires, VSt: Virginia Stanton, WFz: Woody Fitzgerald, WW: Will Wright.

Greater White-fronted Goose migrant flocks were noted from 17 Apr thru the end of the period (m.obs.). At Finley 200 resting 18 Apr were scared up by a **Bald Eagle** (MMo), and another flock lined up to pick grit off of the road 20 Apr (PRz). 2000 flew north over Corvallis in the space of half an hour 21 Apr (HH). 2800 passed NNW over LSNA and 450 more over EEW on 23 Apr (JGe). Huge flocks of thousands also flew over Corvallis 23 Apr (JPh) and over Albany all day 26 Apr (Chi).

Two white geese in a field e. of the HP campus 1 Apr were most likely **Snow Geese** (LM, DBo). A Snow Goose was at FNWR 26 & 27 Apr (HH, OH, THy; WW); a **Ross's Goose** was there 22 Apr (WW). A few **Dusky Canada Geese** stayed at FNWR thru 2 Apr (LM). **Western Canada Goose** goslings were out of nests at EEW by 28 Apr. 7000 **Cackling Geese** were still at McFadden 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy). Two **Tundra Swans** lingered near LSNA thru 7 Apr (JGe).

Wood Ducks were on a lake and in a big-leaf maple in Simpson Park 17 Apr (RFo). Two families of **Mallard** ducklings swam on Periwinkle Creek in Albany 29 Mar (DEm). **Cinnamon Teal** were numerous at McFadden by 15 Apr (HH, OH).

A few **Northern Pintail** continued near FNWR thru 2 Apr (LM). Two **Lesser Scaup** on Apr 9 were the last of season at Stewart Lake (JSi). A **Harlequin Duck** pair loafed along the S. Santiam River at House Rock CG 11 Apr (DCg).

Sooty Grouse boomed on Marys Peak 26 Mar (PCo, RCo) and at Lost Prairie CG 11 Apr (DCg). **Mountain Quail** called from the slopes of Soap Creek Valley 26 Mar and in the Highland Dell area of Corvallis 4 Apr (LM; MG).

A **Common Loon** and **Horned Grebes** were on Foster Res. 11 Apr (Donald Cogswell). By 4 Apr one of two **Horned Grebes** at PTSP was in full breeding plumage (OH, HH, AHk, CHk, PO); at least one continued there thru 25 Apr (HH, OH, THy). Two **Eared Grebes** there were mostly in breeding plumage by 2 Apr (HH); sightings continued thru 25 Apr (WW; PO; HH, OH).

American Bitterns were detected regularly in marshes at FNWR from 15 Apr onward (WW; PRz; m.obs.). A **Green Heron** at Stewart Lake Apr 17 was the first of season for that location (JSi); another was at Willamette Park 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy).

Marys Peak was a surprising place to see an **Osprey** 26 Mar (PCo, RCo); one over Stewart Lake 26 Mar (JSi) was in a more customary location. Three calling at LSNA 15 Apr sparked replies from a **Greater Yellowlegs** near the Santiam River confluence (HB). **Bald Eagles** included 3 adults and 2 juveniles e. of Albany 26 Apr (Chi, JHi), and a pair in courtship at LSNA 26 Apr.

One of a **Cooper's Hawk** pair frequenting a yard near TCP carried willow branches into the forest 3 Apr (JDS). A young **Northern Goshawk** tried to nab a Band-tailed Pigeon sw of Philomath 26 Mar (JiF, KnF). **Red-shouldered Hawk** pairs are nesting near Covered Bridge along Campus Way and at Sunset Park in Corvallis, where one was carrying sticks to an apparent nest site 3 Mar (AHk). Two **Rough-legged Hawks** were still at FNWR 29 Mar (PO); one still hovered over the north prairie 2 Apr (LM).

Three **Virginia Rails** were at Bald Hill Park just south of Oak Cr. 23 Apr, in a wet area produced by **Beaver** activity along Oak Creek (MAI). A **Sora** called along Campus Way 31 Mar (AHk); others were regular at FNWR thru the period. A **Sandhill Crane** foraging on the prairie at FNWR 17 Apr (WW) continued thru the end of the period (LHa; HH; BPT).

Two **Black-necked Stilts** were at BSNWR 26 Apr (LHa). An **American Avocet** turned up there 24 Apr (BTi). Four **Black-bellied Plovers** were at FNWR 9 Apr (WW). A **Semipalmated Plover** was at Cabell Marsh 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy). A **Killdeer** nest near Albany held four eggs by 28 Mar (DEm); hatchlings were noted at BSNWR by 6 Apr (FrK).

Spotted Sandpipers turned up at Willamette Park (a nesting site) 17 Apr (HH) and at Stewart Lake Apr 28 (JSi). **Solitary Sandpipers** made a remarkable showing at Sunset Park with up to 6 there 19-20 Apr, 7 on 23 Apr and ten or eleven on 25 Apr (AHk, CHk; HH). Passage of **Greater Yellowlegs** continued thru the period, with a high count of 45 at McFadden 15 Apr (HH, OH). Single **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at a conservation wetland near FNWR 2 Apr (LM), along Bruce Rd 15 Apr (HH, OH), at TWG 17 Apr (RFo), and at Cabell Marsh 26 Apr (HH, OH). A few **Dunlin** continued thru the period with 25 at Cabell Marsh 28 Apr (HH). 47 **Least Sandpipers** were at PSTP 2 Apr (HH) and 80 were at Cabell Marsh along with 15 **Western Sandpipers** and 40 **Long-billed Dowitchers** 28 Apr (HH). A **Wilson's Snipe** lingered at Sunset Park 19 Apr (AHk, CHk).

A **Bonaparte's Gull** was seen by the ASC field trip to BSNWR 11 Apr (MG); one was at PTSP 12 Apr (WW).

The **Band-tailed Pigeon** flock visiting feeders at Alder Spring sw of Philomath swelled to 40 by 26 Mar and over 100 by 14 Apr (JiF, KnF).

A **Western Screech-Owl** sang on Marys Peak 26 Mar (PCo, RCo). Another was heard four times at Hesthavn 16-27 Apr (JGi). **Great Horned Owls** were nesting at PSTP by 3 Apr (WW). Other owls included a **Northern Pygmy-Owl** tooting on Marys Peak 26 Mar (PCo, RCo), a **Barred Owl** calling regularly up on Witham Hill thru 16 Apr (JGi), and a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** tooting on Kiger Island in mid-Apr (fide BGA).

Vaux's Swifts showed up over Corvallis 13 & 14 Apr (AHk; LPN; KH). Hundreds used a chimney at 1st and Van Buren in Corvallis 26 Apr (LDu fide MG). 1597 were counted going to roost in the Albany fire station chimney 26 Apr (LSc).

Male **Calliope Hummingbirds** turned up near TCP 23 Apr (JDS), in s. Corvallis 25-27 Apr (WFz), and near the OSU campus 27 Apr (HH). **Rufous Hummingbirds** continued to be seen in good numbers with at least 6 visiting an Oak Cr. yard 26 Mar (BPr). An imm. male with greenish back was in Corvallis 18 Mar (NNy).

A **Red-breasted Sapsucker** worked on a nest hole near TCP 29 Mar (JDS). An **American Three-toed Woodpecker** was s. of Big Lake near Santiam Pass 5 Apr (JSu, LJo). A female **Yellow-shafted (Northern) Flicker** was at EEW 25 Mar (JGe).

A very dark **Merlin** squabbled with a female **American Kestrel** over a perch at FNWR 2 Apr (LM). Reports of **Merlins** around town continued thru 9 Apr when one was on the OSU campus (DBo). A **Peregrine Falcon** flew over n. Corvallis 13 Apr (LM, DBo) and one was at FNWR 15 Apr (HH, OH).

Migrant flycatchers began to show up, with a **Hammond's Flycatcher** at FNWR 15 Apr (HH, OH) and a **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** sw of Philomath 17 Apr (KnF). The now-resident



Black Phoebes also moved around a bit, with birds noted at Stewart Lake 26 Mar (JSi), at the Corvallis water treatment intake in Willamette Park 2 Apr (LM), and near McFadden 13 Apr (AIC). Two **Western Kingbirds** sallied after flying insects near the prairie overlook at FNWR 25-26 Apr (WW; HH).

A **Loggerhead Shrike** was at BSNWR 25-26 Mar (BW, PO; DNa).

Early **Cassin's Vireos** sang near Monmouth 13 Apr (Olin Allen) and along Muddy Creek at FNWR 15 Apr (HH, OH). A **Warbling Vireo** sang at Cardwell Hill 20 Apr (BA); migrants were numerous at Willamette Park by 26 Apr (WW).

40 "**Streaked**" **Horned Larks** continued s. of Monmouth thru the end of the period (MLi).

Purple Martins turned up at nesting sites e. of Scio 13 Apr (PWa), sw of Philomath 14 Apr (JiF, KnF), and around 16 Apr on Dunn Forest (DVy) where four were near the nesting "gourds" along the 110 Rd on 25 Apr (PCo). **Tree Swallows** defended nest boxes thru the period. A pair of **Violet-green Swallows** started building a nest near TCP by 15 Apr (JDS). **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** turned up at Willamette Park 2 Apr (LM) and at PTSP 4 Apr (OH, HH, AHk, CHk). A **Cliff Swallow** was of Monmouth 30 Mar (MLi); many were at PSTP along with numerous **Barn Swallows** on 2 Apr (HH).

A pair of **Black-capped Chickadees** quickly occupied a new bluebird nest box at the Oddfellows' Cemetery in mid-Apr (JCr). Meanwhile pair of **Chestnut-backed Chickadee** claimed a nest box normally used by Black-capped Chickadees in N. Albany 8 Apr (CHi). A male **Bushtit** peeked out of nest in Willamette Park 2 Apr (LM).

A pair of **Bewick's Wrens** took up quarters in an old nest box in n. Corvallis, and on 23 Apr one carried a fecal sac out of the box (MC). Early **House Wrens** were noted on Baskett Butte 28 Mar (BA), at FNWR 2 Apr (BPr), sw of Philomath 4 Apr (KnF), and at Bald Hill Park 10 Apr (AHk). **American Dippers** tended a nest under the bridge at the Alsea Fish Hatchery 4 Apr (OH, HH, AHk, CHk). A few **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were still singing sw of Philomath 18 Apr (KnF, JiF), but most migrated out by the end of the period, while many **Golden-crowned Kinglets** will stay to nest.

A pair of **Western Bluebirds** in the Cheldelin neighborhood had to fend off House Sparrows, chickadees and swallows but persevered and laid their first egg 11 Apr and second on 12 Apr (LM, DBo). A pair of **Mountain Bluebirds** were just below the summit of Marys Peak 31 Mar (DFx, LFx). A lingering **Hermit Thrush** was at Willamette Park 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy). A **Varied Thrush** also lingering in the valley sang at LSNA 10 Apr (JGe); six were moving through the foothills sw of Philomath 17 Apr (KnF, JiF).

An adult **White Wagtail** (apparently ssp. *ocularis*) was found 29 Apr during surveys for **Streaked Horned Larks** at BSNWR (JDp, NRi, BW, m.obs.). The closest place where these birds nest is in the Bering Strait region of Siberia and Alaska. The wagtail was foraging in the company of a flock of **American Pipits**, its distant relatives.

Three **Cedar Waxwings** at Stewart Lake 30 Mar were the only ones noted there for the period (JSi); about 20 migrants were on the OSU campus 13 Apr (AHk).

Nine **Orange-crowned Warblers** were singing along the bike trail between Fitton Green and Bald Hill Farm 27 Mar (RCo). Migrants were numerous at Willamette Park 26 Apr

(WW). A **Nashville Warbler** stopped by Sunset Park 25 Mar (HH, OH, THy). An early **Yellow Warbler** visited Sunset Park 19 Apr (AHk, CHk). More were singing at EEW 25 Apr and at Willamette Park 26 Apr (JGe; HH, OH, THy). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were also on the move; a bright male "**Audubon's**" **Warbler** visited a suet feeder in Corvallis 26 Mar (MRi) and migrant "**Myrtle**" **Warblers** were also noted thru the period.

Singing **Black-throated Gray Warblers** turned up sw of Philomath and along Campus Way 6 Apr (JiF, KnF; AHk). **Hermit Warblers** arrived sw of Philomath 17 Apr (KnF) and along Bellfountain Rd near FNWR 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy). **Townsend's Warblers** seemed to be sparser than usual in the mid-valley this winter and into early spring, though a few visited suet feeders or were heard around town (GPT; ESh; CHk). As April wore on, migrants were heard singing in widespread locations (m.obs.). A **MacGillivray's Warbler** was along Bellfountain Rd. s. of the FNWR entrance 16 Apr (WW); one was sw of Philomath 18 Apr (KnF, JiF), and single migrants were noted at Willamette Park 17 Apr (HH) and Sunset Park 19 Apr (AHk, CHk). **Common Yellowthroats** continued to arrive with one at FNWR 25 Mar (DRo) and three in S Corvallis 26 Mar (BPr). A migrant found dead apparently after flying into the side of a barn near Albany 30 Mar (DEm). **Wilson's Warblers** kept up the trend of early arrivals, with one at Bald Hill Park 10 Apr (AHk), one Apr 13 at Stewart Lake (JSi), and one sw of Philomath 14 Apr (JiF, KnF). One hovered to glean insects from hellebore flowers in a NW Corvallis yard 22 Apr (SHg). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** sang at FNWR 28 Apr (MB).

Western Tanagers were heard at FNWR 26 Apr (HH, OH) and in Corvallis 28 Apr (LPN).

Chipping Sparrows began to show up with one in the Cheldelin neighborhood 29 Mar and one singing on Bald Top at FNWR 2 Apr (LM). Numbers at OSU's Soap Creek Ranch exceeded 20 by 24 Apr. A **Vesper Sparrow** sang at Bald Hill Farm 27 Mar (RCo). Three were there by 1 Apr (MBS). Many **Savannah Sparrows** were singing on territory by the end of the period, but many migrants were still moving through.

A lingering **Fox Sparrow** sang at Willamette Park 17 Apr (HH). Nine migrant **Lincoln's Sparrows** were at Sunset Park 19 Apr (AHk, CHk). A **Swamp Sparrow** was still at LSNA thru 10 Apr (JGe).

Lingering **White-throated Sparrows** included 2 thru 22 Apr and 1 thru the period in nw Corvallis (JSi), and one at Willamette Park 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy). One wintering s. of Philomath left on 27 Apr (VSt). Migrant **White-crowned Sparrows** moved on, last seen in a nw Corvallis yard Apr 23 (JSi). Meanwhile nesting birds settled in; a mating pair were noticed in a hawthorn at LSNA 26 Apr (BGa). Some observers noticed that wintering flocks of **Golden-crowned Sparrows** left yards around 26-27 Apr (JSi; VSt) but a few remained thru the end of the period. A male **Slate-colored (Dark-eyed) Junco** visited a nw Corvallis yard twice on 26 Apr after other juncos had left (JSi).

Our loudest migrants, **Black-headed Grosbeaks** showed up with singles near TCP 21 Apr (JDS), in Lacombe and near Fitton Green 24 Apr (ABk; PCo). Reports were widespread by the end of the period. A **Lazuli Bunting's** flight call was heard over Corvallis at 11 PM 20 Apr (CHk); several were at FNWR by 27 Apr (BPr).

Yellow-headed Blackbirds turned up at FNWR by 15 Apr (WW). **Brown-headed Cowbirds** started to be noticed away

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

APRIL 2015 ASC BOARD MEETING

The meeting was held at Teri and John Engbring's house with Chris Mathews acting as president pro-tem. The board approved a policy for announcements at ASC general meetings: Announcements would be welcome if they are (1) not commercial, (2) not political, and (3) aligned with the principles of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. They also approved the nominating committee's slate of new officers, listed in this issue of the CHAT. The next board meeting will be May 14 at 7 pm at Hesthavn.

Gail Nickerson, Secretary

OPEN 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 CORNER

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Walter & Terry Frueh

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

To renew your membership online go to the ASC website (<http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml>) & renew via Paypal, or you can mail a check to ASC, PO Box 148,

from wintering locations by 2 Apr; by 26 Apr they were abundant. An early **Bullock's Oriole** was on Baskett Butte 19 Apr (BA); one was at FNWR 26 Apr (HH, OH, THy).

At least 100 **Pine Grosbeaks** continued in the Santiam Pass area 5 Apr (JSu, LJo); some still there 11 Apr (DCg). **Purple Finches** sang thru the period. **Red Crossbills** were noted around Corvallis throughout the period by many observers; 30 fed on sweetgum tree seeds on the OSU campus 13 Apr (MLK). **Pine Siskins** sang in n. Corvallis 10 Apr (LM). **Lesser Goldfinch** males were doing display flights and **American Goldfinch** males were sporting lemon-bright plumage by 9 Apr (LM). **Evening Grosbeaks** arrived in numbers in downtown Corvallis on 29 Mar (RMo). On the OSU campus, at least 600 were around by 23 Apr (AHk), and "clouds" of them were vocalizing on 25 Apr (MG).

Several **House Sparrow** males courting a female in n. Corvallis didn't notice a neighborhood cat that crept up and caught one of the suitors 29 Mar (LM).

The next Chat will be the summer issue. We can still look forward to our latest migrants including several flycatcher species and nighthawks, plus lots of excitement from the activities of nesting birds. Please post your reports to the Mid-Valley birding list at midvalleybirding.org, e-mail them to me at joel.geier@peak.org, or call (541) 745-5821.

CONSERVATION CORNER

PROTECT THE GREATER SAGE-GROUSE

The Greater Sage-Grouse is one of the most iconic and imperiled bird species of the American West. It has already disappeared from a number of states and provinces, and its population in Oregon has declined precipitously. Now, in spite of the urgent need to protect it, the U.S. Congress, via a rider added to must-pass legislation, has approved a bill that prevents the possibility of protecting the grouse under the Endangered Species Act. Meanwhile, management plans are underway that have yet to address findings of government scientists, which indicate that saving the grouse will require both protecting large areas of habitat and limiting future energy development.

Eleven leading sage-grouse scientists sent a letter in March to Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack noting that current sage-grouse conservation measures in the draft agency conservation plans inconsistently apply the best available scientific information on Greater Sage-Grouse, and will not adequately protect them from further decline.

Please send a letter(s) to our leaders in Washington, urging that they stand up for the Endangered Species Act and science-based management plans, and oppose further delays in the conservation of Greater Sage-Grouse. You can do this at the American Bird Conservancy's web page <http://tinyurl.com/n5tp92h> or by Googling "no delay in protecting sage grouse".

Dave Mellinger

ATOP THE NESTBOX

On April 21st, the bluebird trail volunteers traveled to Salem to present "The Secret Life of Bluebirds" to a gathering of about 60 people. Many excellent questions were asked. One of our new volunteers, Heaven Roberts, made up a wonderful brochure on the topic of Citizen Science, complete with several on-line resources for learning, blogging and reporting. As always, I am very grateful for the enthusiasm and support of our volunteers.

So far, our bluebirds are off to an interesting start this nesting season. We had several very



Greater Sage-Grouse photo by Steve Ting USFWS



early nestings, followed by a quiet period. The remaining nesting pairs seem to be starting later than usual. In Linn County, there was an ice storm in mid-November last year that had me wondering how our bluebirds would fare. So far, it seems our numbers are down somewhat, perhaps as much as 20%. Of the banded birds I had known well, we lost a 7 year old male, a 5 year old and two 4 year olds. We'll have an update for the mid-summer Chat.

For those of you with nesting bluebirds, please be sure to provide good ventilation and shading to your nest boxes when temperatures reach the 90s. Please don't hesitate to call us with any questions or concerns. Benton County: Rita Snyder, 541-752-6457. Linn County: Raylene Gordin, 541-258-6625.

Raylene Gordin

COMMUNITY NOTES

KLAMATH BASIN AUDUBON FIELD TRIP

The Sycan Marsh field trip sponsored by the KBAS and TNC, with Craig Bienz hosting, has been re-scheduled for May 16th. It was originally May 2nd. So you still have time to plan a day in the mountains of eastern Oregon! Lots of migrants and nesters will be present. Directions: From Klamath Falls, go east on Hwy 140 past Beatty to Ivory Pines Road (RD 30) and go left. Then left on Road 27 until it intersects Road 46. Meeting time is 7:45AM. Bring lunch!

Mary Ellen Sargent, KBAS field trip chair

MAY 9 FINLEY NWR OPEN HOUSE

The Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex will be holding an Open House at Finley NWR on May 9. They could also use volunteers. Please contact me at doug_spencer@q.com if you can help.

Thanks, Doug Spencer

AMAZING NUMBER OF BIRD OBSERVATIONS

The number of U.S. bird observations entered into the eBird citizen science database in 2014 was 37,579,297.

Extracted from a very interesting article "A Birder's Guide to the Future" in POPULAR SCIENCE magazine, April, 2015, page 28-29.

Andrea Foster

AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY:

SPRING MEANS EASY PREY FOR OUTDOOR CATS

With spring now here, baby birds and other young wildlife will soon be arriving and later venturing from their nests in a generally defenseless state. ABC is reminding cat owners that even the most well-fed domestic cats pose serious threats to vulnerable wildlife. "Spring is an incredibly dangerous time for wildlife because newborn prey don't have the same physical defenses as their parents and have not fully developed the danger awareness regarding predators that comes with time," said ABC Invasive Species Program Director Grant Sizemore. "Spring is perhaps the single most important time of the year for cat owners to protect wildlife by keeping their cats indoors or under their direct control," he said. For more details go to <http://tinyurl.com/lsdh4sv>.

FORAGE FISH PROTECTION TO BENEFIT PACIFIC SEABIRDS

The Pacific Fishery Management Council, which regulates federal waters off California, Oregon and Washington, has voted to adopt measures protecting forage fish that are vital for a wide variety of birds. The preliminary preferred alternative will amend the Council's Fishery Management Plans and identify these species as "ecosystem component" species thereby prohibiting directed harvest without a full scientific review. American Bird Conservancy sent a letter to Council in support of this action and included an article about this conservation effort in the Feb. 2015 issue of Bird Calls (p. 11). Here is a link to a follow-up story on the Audubon Society of Portland website: <http://audubonportland.org/news/march13-2015>

Corvallis, OR 97339.

EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS:

Please note that you need to opt into the ASC listserve. After you sign up, you'll receive up-to-date email notifications about ASC events, fieldtrip locations, volunteer work parties and weather-related cancellations. Send an email to our listserve administrator, Karan Fairchild, and request to be added to the listserve: alderspr@peak.org

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?

If you have moved or changed your email address, send your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at ortizsv@gmail.com.

Suzanne Ortiz

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CHAT

Chris Matthews, Fred Ramsey, Bill Proebsting, Joel Geier, Karan Fairchild, Raylene Gordin, Dave Mellinger, Gail Nickerson, Suzanne Ortiz, American Bird Conservancy, Doug Spencer, Andrea Foster

CHAT ARTICLES

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

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF

CORVALLIS

CALENDAR

May 9	Field trip to Finley NWR
May 14	ASC Board Meeting, 7 pm at Hesthavn
May 21	ASC General Meeting, 7 pm
June 13	Field Trip to Beazell Forest-Kings Valley
June 25	Chat and Field Notes deadline for summer Chat

The Chat is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. Annual ASC memberships are \$25 for an individual; \$35 for a family; \$15 for student; \$15 for Chat only subscriptions (email delivery only); \$50 for Supporting Level; \$100 for Patron Level; and \$200 for Benefactor Level.

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Interested in volunteering?
Please let us know: volunteerasc@gmail.com

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

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