

Birding

the Corvallis and Albany areas



A guide to birding opportunities in the mid-Willamette Valley, Oregon





CORVALLIS TOURISM
Corvallis, Oregon Convention & Visitors Bureau

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The Audubon Society of Corvallis, in partnership with Corvallis Tourism, created this brochure to acquaint visitors and residents alike with some of the excellent birding opportunities in our area.

Join the Audubon Society of Corvallis
PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339
www.audubon.corvallis.or.us

Membership Benefits:

- A subscription to *The Chat*, the Audubon Society of Corvallis newsletter
- Notification of field trips, programs and other events
- Support for Audubon conservation programs, including wildlife sanctuaries and wildlife research
- Access to literature that keeps members informed on local and national conservation issues

September 2008

Juvenile Song Sparrow



www.audubon.corvallis.or.us

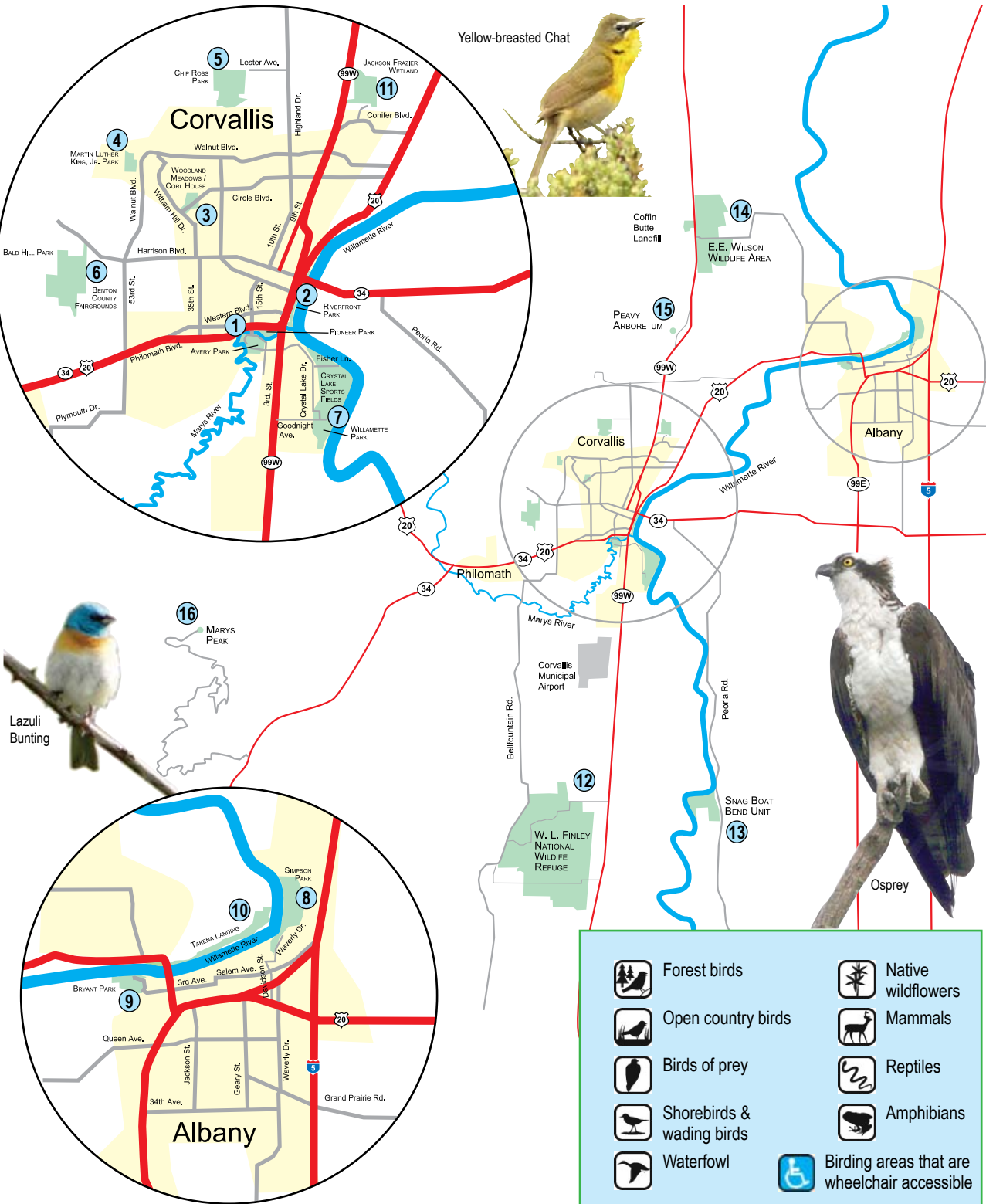
Front cover photos
Top: Northern Harrier.
Center: Western Bluebird (upper left), Great Egret (right) and Solitary Sandpiper (lower left).
Bottom: Cackling Geese

Graphic design by Don Boucher
Photography by Lisa Millbank

Yellow-breasted Chat













Osprey



Lazuli Bunting



 Forest birds	 Native wildflowers
 Open country birds	 Mammals
 Birds of prey	 Reptiles
 Shorebirds & wading birds	 Amphibians
 Waterfowl	 Birding areas that are wheelchair accessible

The mid-Willamette Valley is great for birding! Local Christmas Bird Counts have consistently yielded over 110 species, and in spring, expert birders have encountered over 130 species in a single day. This guide covers places near Corvallis and Albany that are publicly accessible and reliable for birds. But there are many other areas nearby that offer equally good birding. Experienced birders cherish these local natural areas, and there are many convenient opportunities for beginners and visitors to learn local birds.

Corvallis City Parks

Birders love our city parks. For more information about other parks call 541-766-6918 or see www.ci.corvallis.or.us.

①Avery Park and Pioneer Park

1310 SW Avery Park Dr.



Forest birds that are absent from other parts of the city live in Avery & Pioneer Parks. Listen carefully at dawn and dusk for Pileated Woodpeckers and owls. Also good for forest wildflowers in spring.

②Downtown Riverfront

602 SW 1st St.



Downtown Corvallis has a casual, family-oriented atmosphere. Birders can watch Ospreys nesting from April to September, and occasional Bald Eagles any time of year. The Willamette River is graced with herons, mergansers and other water birds. Look for up to five species of swallow, including the uncommon Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and colonies of Cliff Swallows that nest under the bridges. Native sparrows and other birds frequent the riverfront landscaping.

③Woodland Meadows Park and Corl House

3975 NW Witham Hill Drive (at Circle Blvd.)



Open meadows and Oregon White Oaks characterize this lovely park. Acorn Woodpeckers are often seen here. Some native wildflowers bloom in the meadows in spring.

④Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

NW Walnut Blvd. and NW Elmwood Dr.



Located at the base of the Coast Range foothills, this park (formerly known as Walnut Park) is a favorite of birders on the north side of town. Many birds of forest, brush and open areas live here. Western Bluebirds nest in the area.

⑤Chip Ross Park and Timberhill Open Space

Take Lester Ave. from Highland Dr.



Popular among hikers, stargazers and birders. This spot has upland prairies, Oregon White Oak savanna and conifer forests, and a nice array of birds in each habitat. Birders come to see Lazuli Buntings in summer and Western Bluebirds any time of year.

⑥Bald Hill Park and Benton County Fairgrounds

110 SW 53rd St.



Bald Hill Park is a spacious city park, and the adjacent fairgrounds are an extension of this public land. There are paved paths and hiking trails that link to Mulkey Creek and Fitton Green Open Space. Bald Hill Park has fields, oak savannas, oak forests, Douglas-Fir forests, small creeks and hills. Oak savanna birds include Western Bluebirds, White-breasted Nuthatches and Western Wood-Pewees. Also look for Wild Turkeys and hawks. There are deer, Bobcats, Coyotes and other mammals as well as wildflowers. Visit the fairgrounds to see an Acorn Woodpecker colony.

⑦Willamette Park, Kendall Natural Area, and Crystal Lake Sports Fields

North access: End of Fisher Ln. South access: End of Goodnight Ave.



This large urban park draws birders from miles around. Take a walk on trails that visit the riparian forest, conifer, field, and river habitats. You can see more than 40 species during spring migration, but any time of year is good. It's a great site for Ospreys, Bald Eagles, Common Mergansers, and lots of forest birds. A Great Blue Heron rookery of 40+ nests is across the river. Paved paths make for easy wheelchair or bicycle birding.

Albany City Parks

These are three of Albany's largest parks. For more information about other City of Albany Parks call 541-917-7777 or see www.ci.albany.or.us/parks/

⑧Simpson Park

Waverly Dr. NE



This large city park near the Willamette River was once a log pond. Now it's a first-rate urban natural area. Due to the convergence of different habitats—riparian forest, conifers, pond and the river channel—you can expect to see lots of bird species, and spring wildflowers too.

⑨Bryant Park

3rd Ave. SW & Bryant Way SW



This park lies at the confluence of the Calapooya and Willamette Rivers. Cottonwoods, fields and views of the river make for good birding. Ospreys nest on a utility pole in the Willamette River. The river hosts Belted Kingfishers, Common Mergansers and Bald Eagles, along with a few domestic ducks and geese. Brushy areas offer good winter birds like Hermit Thrushes, Fox Sparrows, and occasional White-throated Sparrows.

⑩Takena Landing

NW North Albany Rd. & NW Hwy. 20



This park provides access to a long and seemingly wild forest trail that follows the Willamette River. The park is directly across the river from downtown Albany. Expect good looks at the Ospreys, river birds and brush-dwelling birds.



Wood Duck

⑪Jackson-Frazier Wetland

Benton County Natural Areas & Parks Department

3580 NE Lancaster St., Corvallis

<http://www.co.benton.or.us/parks/parks.php>



Jackson-Frazier Wetland is a county park with a boardwalk accessing the southeast corner. It's teeming with wetland birds and native plants. In addition to views of cattail wetlands, there's an Oregon Ash swale forest and brushy areas. Much of the area floods in winter, but the boardwalk offers precious access (including wheelchairs) that you would otherwise only get with hip waders.

⑫William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

26208 Finley Refuge Road, Corvallis, OR 97333-9533

Phone: 541-757-7236

www.fws.gov/WillametteValley/finley/index.html



A book could be written about the natural spectacles of this area. This large refuge (5,235 acres) is nestled against the Coast Range but includes just about all Willamette Valley habitat types. It holds one of the largest remnant oak savannas in the valley, conifer forests, native prairies, fields, riparian forests, ponds, marshes and seasonal wetlands. Woodpecker Loop and Mill Hill Trails cover the upland areas on the west of the refuge. The Homer Campbell Trail (boardwalk, accessible by wheelchair) leads to the prominent Cabell Marsh and choice looks at wintering waterfowl (including the threatened Dusky Canada Goose). Be sure to see McFadden Marsh on Bruce Road for winter waterfowl (wheelchair accessible). Wintertime at Finley offers some of the best birding anywhere in the valley. There are tens of thousands of waterfowl and many raptors like Bald Eagles and Peregrine Falcons. Try hiking the Pigeon Butte and Maple Knoll areas, accessible from Bruce Road. In addition to birds, any nature lover can enjoy exceptional native wildflowers, herds of Roosevelt Elk, and many other mammal species. Areas of this refuge are closed to public entry to protect wintering waterfowl; call or visit website for current regulations.

⑬Snag Boat Bend Unit

Peoria Rd. & County Rd. 211 (N of intersection), Halsey, OR 97348



This area is managed by William L. Finley NWR but is on the east side of the Willamette River in Linn County. This area has seasonal wetlands, fields, groves of Black Cottonwoods, ponds and the Willamette River. You'll see plenty of waterfowl, songbirds, Ospreys and marsh birds. In the ponds there are Wood Ducks and Western Pond Turtles basking on logs. Listen for the Bullock's Orioles that nest in the tall cottonwoods. This refuge is seasonally closed; call or visit website for current regulations (see Finley contact information above).



Western Kingbird

⑭E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

29555 Camp Adair Road, Monmouth, OR 97361

(541) 745-5334

www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/visitors/ee_wilson_wildlife_area/



Formerly Camp Adair, a WWII army base, this area is arranged like a town with a grid of remnant paved streets, accessible by bike or wheelchair. It's 10 miles north of Corvallis along Hwy. 99W, west of the Allied Waste landfill. Most hikers, bicyclists and mountain bikers seek other parks with vistas, so E.E. Wilson's roads and trails are often empty. The area is full of birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. You may share the trail with hunters (mostly fall and winter) and anglers. Call ahead or check the website for active hunting seasons. The area is great for waterfowl, raptors (including owls), winter sparrows, uncommon migrants, and, in late spring and summer, it has the largest population of Yellow-breasted Chats in the Willamette Valley. There are forested areas, open fields, shrubs, marshes, and ponds, and the proximity of the nearby Coast Range foothills brings in associated conifer forest birds. A small portion of the area is on the west side of Hwy. 99W which includes part of Coffin Butte (north of the landfill). The trail is steep but rewarding with pretty views and forest birds.

⑮Peavy Arboretum

OSU College of Forestry

8692 NW Peavy Arboretum Rd., Corvallis, OR 97330

(541) 737-9476

www.cof.orst.edu/cf/forests/arboretum/



This relatively low-lying area is easy to access from Corvallis. The area offers a chance to visit birds and habitat typically associated with higher elevations in the Coast Range. There are many popular hiking trails so go early for good birds and fewer people. There are forest wildflowers in spring.

⑯Marys Peak

Siuslaw National Forest

Hwy. 34 (Aalsea Hwy.) and Marys Peak Road

www.fs.fed.us/r6/siuslaw/recreation/tripplanning/maryspeak/index.shtml



This area requires a Recreation Pass for parking, which may be obtained from the Siuslaw National Forest and several local recreation stores. The upper part of Marys Peak Road is closed to cars in winter due to snow. This is the highest peak in the Coast Range and offers spectacular vistas. Local birders enjoy mountain birding close to home. During summer the peak echoes with the songs of thrushes, sparrows and warblers. Cascade vagrant birds like Clark's Nutcrackers, Townsend's Solitaires and Gray-crowned Rosy Finches occasionally show up. There are miles of hiking trails including one that takes you through an old-growth Noble Fir forest. A portion of the peak has been designated the Marys Peak Botanical Special Interest Area with mountain meadows of colorful wildflowers and a natural "rock garden" full of uncommon native plants on the southeast slope.