

February 2009

• Red-shouldered in dunes • Harlan's & Brant west of J.C. • Phoebes all over • No Horned Grebe

The dry weather trend in January continued into February. As is normal for this time of year, the first spring migrants began showing up: Sandhill Cranes, Band-tailed Pigeons, Rufous Hummingbirds and swallows. Some people say that spring has arrived when the Rufous Hummingbirds return for the breeding season, but, to us, February seems a little early to label "spring." Instead, we like to set that benchmark as the return of the Common Yellowthroats about the first of April. Their return isn't far off, so let us know when you first hear their "wichity-wichity" song. Also, it's interesting to know when the wintering species leave for their breeding areas, so let us know that last date you see Golden-crowned or White-throated Sparrows or any of the wintering waterfowl.

#### WATERBIRDS

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<b>Brant</b>	Feb. 11	W. of Junction City	TM et al.	A rare bird wintering in this area
<b>Ross's Goose</b>	Feb. 11	W. of Junction City	TM et al.	Increasingly common in large flocks of wintering <b>Cackling Geese</b>
<b>Tundra Swan</b> (12)	Feb.	Deflation Plain	B&ZS	This small flock was seen all month.
<b>Eurasian Wigeon</b> (5)	Feb. 11	Kirk Pond	TM et.al.	A large number for one pond!
<b>Canvasback</b>	Feb. 14	Siltcoos Lake	B&ZS	Last sighting for the winter
<b>Redhead</b>	Feb. 28	Kirk Pond	A&DH	Occasionally found at this site
<b>Black Scoter</b>	Feb. 28	Klootchman SW	B&ZS	The only one they've seen this winter
<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b> (31)	Feb. 28	Siuslaw River mouth	B&ZS	This flock has been seen most of the month.
<b>Horned Grebe</b> (not sighted)	Feb.	Florence area	B&ZS	They haven't seen any all winter!
<b>Sooty Shearwater</b> (3+)	Feb. 27	coast N. of Florence	SG,CK	Following a boat off-shore with numerous gulls

#### VULTURES & RAPTORS

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<b>Turkey Vulture</b>	Feb. 11	Springfield	TE	A wintering bird or an early migrant?
<b>Bald Eagle</b> (9)	Feb. 21	Creswell	SN	Circled in thermal above her house, then moved south. All previous sightings were of single birds.
<b>Red-shouldered Hawk</b>	Feb. 28	Alder Dunes	B&ZS	A species that's increasing in Lane County
<b>Red-tailed (Harlan's) Hawk</b>	Feb. 4	W. of Junction City	JS	They occasional winter in the area.
<b>Rough-legged Hawk</b> (3)	Feb. 28	W. of Junction City	JS	Staying later than usual

#### SHOREBIRDS, ALCIDS, DOVES & OWLS

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<b>Sandhill Crane</b> (180)	Feb. 11	LCC	DB	About a week earlier than usual
<b>Black-bellied Plover</b> (20)	Feb. 22	Eugene airport area	JS	A normal wintering flock
<b>Snowy Plover</b> (9)	Feb. 26	Siltcoos River mouth	B&ZS	The flock has moved to the breeding area.

<b>Lesser Yellowlegs</b>	Feb. 6	Delta Ponds	AP	A rare wintering species in Oregon
<b>Glaucous Gull</b>	Feb. 21	Old Town, Florence	B,B,DH	A species that winters most years
<b>Glaucous Gull</b>	Feb. 22	Eugene airport area	JS	An occasional wintering bird in the valley
<b>Black-legged Kittiwake (50+)</b>	Feb. 27	Florence area	SG,CK	Higher than usual numbers
<b>Pigeon Guillemot</b>	Feb. 28	Brays Point	B&ZS	First sighting of breeding plumage
<b>Band-tailed Pigeon</b>	Feb. 22	Creswell area	HL	A little earlier than normal
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl</b>	Feb. 3	W. Eugene	MN	A normal time for this species to start calling

## PASSERINES

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<b>Rufous Hummingbird</b>	Feb. 21	N. Eugene	KA	Right on schedule!
<b>Rufous Hummingbird</b>	Feb. 28	Florence	B&ZS	First of the year at their feeder
<b>Black Phoebe</b>	Feb.	Eugene–Springfield	m. ob.	Numerous birds were reported during the month all around the area.
<b>Say's Phoebe</b>	Feb. 19	Knight Road	DI	About a week earlier than normal
<b>Say's Phoebe</b>	Feb. 28	E. of Mt. Pisgah	PS	A normal time for this species to migrate
<b>Say's Phoebe (5)</b>	Feb. 28	Alton Baker Park	E&VT	through the area, but 5 is a very high number
<b>Northern Shrike</b>	Feb. 20	Meadowlark Prairie	E&VT	An area where one has wintered previously
<b>Tree Swallow</b>	Feb. 28	FRR area	A&DH	Large numbers of both species were found
<b>Violet-green Swallow</b>	Feb. 28	FRR area	A&DH	near water in the area.
<b>American Dipper</b>	Feb. 28	Cape Creek	B&ZS	It seems late for one to be singing.
<b>Orange-crowned Warbler</b>	Feb. 10	central Eugene	EC	Most likely a wintering bird, as migrants don't normally show up until mid-March
<b>Townsend's Warbler</b>	Feb.	Florence	B&ZS	Visiting their feeder daily this month, whereas normally they only see them occasionally
<b>American Tree Sparrow</b>	Feb. 21	Siltcoos River mouth	B,B,DH	A rare migrant in the county
<b>Purple Finch</b>	Feb. 18	SE Eugene	AC	First birds to return this spring. (While we used to see them at our feeders all winter, for the last five years we've seen none—until a few days after Alan's report.)

## ABBREVIATIONS

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**FRR** Fern Ridge Reservoir; **LCC** Lane Community College; **SW** State Wayside

## THANK YOU, CONTRIBUTORS!

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**KA** Kat Allison, **DB** Dave Bontrager, **EC** Ellen Cantor, **AC** Alan Contreras, **TE** Tom Escue, **SG** Steve Gordon, **A&DH** Anne & Dan Heyerly, **B,B,DH** Bill, Bob, & Dave Hunter, **DI** Dave Irons, **CK** Cary Kerst, **HL** Hydie Lown, **TM** Tom Mickel, **SN** Sally Nelson, **MN** Mark Nikas, **AP** Al Prigge, **PS** Paul Sherrell, **B&ZS** Bill & Zanah Stotz, **JS** John Sullivan, **E&VT** Eddie & Vjera Thompson

## **CORRECTION**

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The **Black-headed Grosbeak** reported in last month's fieldnotes was at Charlie & Kathy Frazer's feeder and photographed by Becky Uhler.