

September 2010

The Quail



News from Lane County Audubon Society

From Our President



The awesome phenomenon of bird migrations

Maeve Sowles

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Our long summer days are numbered, and fall, followed closely by winter, will be here before we know it! Each year in September, there are one or two days when the nighttime temperatures drop below 40 degrees. The cooler temperatures and shorter daylight hours send a signal to all of us that winter is on its way.

Neotropical birds are preparing to migrate and by September many are either gone or are flocking together to prepare for the big trip. For several years, flocks of Tree Swallows and Violet-green Swallows have visited us in mid-September. One afternoon, nearly 500 birds visited our property. We do not KNOW, but we think that the swallows who used our nest boxes came back to reorient to our property before heading south, and they brought the entire migrating flock with them! We have had other swallow flocks visit in September with 100–200 birds. It gives us hope that some of the birds will navigate back to our property when they return next spring.

Most birds migrate in flocks to provide guidance from the elders, and they either travel in close groups or keep in vocal contact, as with the night-migrating thrushes and sparrows. They can be heard throughout the night giving single calls overhead as they make their way south using stars and magnetic signals to guide them.

The juvenile Rufous Hummingbirds hatched at our property are showing a definite bulge around their abdomen as they “tank up” for their first migration. It is amazing that they will instinctively orient themselves and fly south for the winter sojourn to a place they have never seen. I have read that they migrate singly, so they do not benefit from other individuals guiding the way. They simply depend on their hardwired instincts to take them 2,000 miles south.

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Ban on toxic lead in hunting and fishing gear would save millions of birds

Debbie Schlenoff

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It is estimated that 10–20 million birds die each year from lead poisoning as a result of ingesting lead shot, bullets, bullet fragments, or prey contaminated with lead ammunition. This August, several conservation groups submitted a petition to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requesting a ban on the use of toxic lead in hunting ammunition and fishing tackle. The American Bird Conservancy, Center for Biological Diversity, Association of Avian Veterinarians, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, and a hunter's group called Project Gulpile are requesting the ban under the Toxic Substances Control Act, which regulates dangerous chemicals in the United States. The request is not without precedent; the EPA has already taken steps to reduce exposure and lead in the environment by banning the use of lead in such things as gasoline, paint, cooking utensils, water pipes, and wheel weights. There has been a federal ban on lead shot for hunting waterfowl since 1991 and there are sporadic local regulations prohibiting the use of lead shot in isolated areas, including many wildlife refuges in Oregon. To date, however, there is no federal regulation that encompasses most habitats and provides genuine protection for wildlife. Thousands of tons of lead from shot and fishing gear continue to contaminate the environment.

Eagles, hawks, condors, and other birds that scavenge on shot prey or the gut piles left after hunting are susceptible to the effects of lead poisoning, which include neurological dysfunction, organ damage, immune suppression, and behavioral changes that make the animal more susceptible to starvation and predation. Many raptor rehabilitation centers in Oregon and elsewhere routinely report struggles to help lead-poisoned birds. Wetland birds such as flamingoes, rails, shorebirds, terns, and herons often consume fish with high lead levels due to lead shot and sinkers. Studies have shown that seed-eating birds such as Mourning Doves and

woodpeckers, as well as upland game birds such as Chukars, cranes, rails, and partridges also ingest lead shot. The 1991 ban on lead shot for hunting waterfowl has resulted in a reduction in lead



*Bald Eagle and chick on Skinner Butte
photo by Cary Kerst*

mortality in several species of waterfowl. Many believe that this ban has also helped Bald Eagle populations to recover. However, the use of lead sinkers from fishing is still a problem for swans, geese, ducks, and loons. Each year many Bald Eagles continue to be poisoned by ingesting food contaminated with lead. Scientific literature documents harm from lead poisoning in over 75 species of birds as well as in many other types of animals. It is very easy for birds to mistake small lead sinkers for seeds or pebbles. Many birds routinely swallow small pebbles to aid in grinding food in their digestive system.

The effects of lead poisoning on people are also well documented. Several studies have shown a correlation between the use of lead ammunition and elevated human lead concentrations. Significantly, blood lead levels are higher in people who eat game meat and higher during the hunting season. Fragmentation of bullets makes it difficult for game consumers to protect themselves and their families from the lead ammunition used to hunt game. A recent study in Minnesota found dust-sized particles of lead up to a foot and a half away from the bullet wound. Another recent study found that the majority (up to 87 percent) of cooked game killed by lead ammunition contained levels of lead determined unsafe for consumption.

continued on next page

Conservation Reports, *continued*

Steps to limit lead in the environment and protect both wildlife and people are welcome. Nevertheless, some firearms groups are opposing the petition. Naysayers assert that there is no scientific support for the ban, but the petition references about 500 scientific studies, most of which are peer-reviewed. Some erroneously claim that the ban is an effort to limit hunting. Those same claims were made when the 1991 restriction on lead shot for waterfowl went into effect and, yet, waterfowl hunting (measured by sale of duck stamps) has continued to rise. Today, in areas where lead shot is restricted to protect the California condor and others, the hunting communities continue to thrive. Hunters have admirably contributed greatly to the protection of wildlife through fees on licenses and gear. A more comprehensive lead ban would help ensure that unnecessary poisoning does not undermine the efforts of hunters in the very areas they work to protect. Today all of the lead-containing products mentioned in the petition are available in non-toxic form. Wider distribution and sale of these products will help to drive prices down. Resources including a long list of manufacturers that provide non-lead shot are available on the web. "As a hunter in California, compliance with the recent state non-lead ammunition regulation has been simple," said Anthony Prieto, a hunter and co-founder of Project Gulpile. "I still get to hunt, there is no toxic impact on wildlife or my health, and copper bullets shoot better."

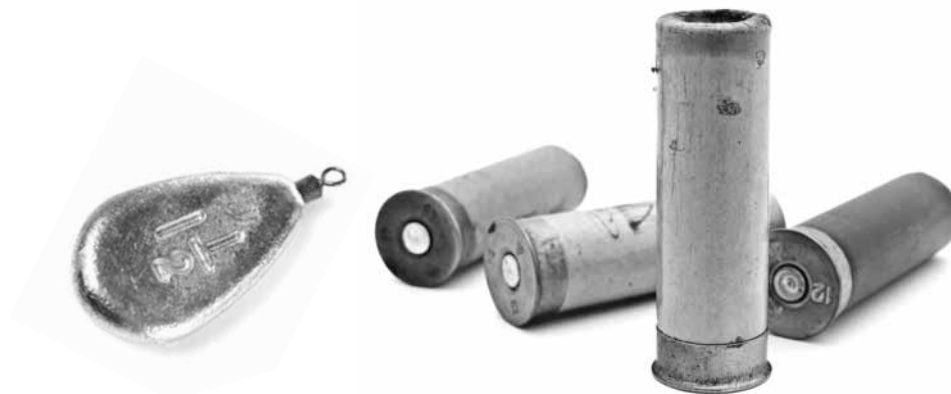
For more information, please visit www.abcbirds.org/conservationissues/threats/lead.html.

The awesome phenomenon of bird migrations, *continued from page 1*

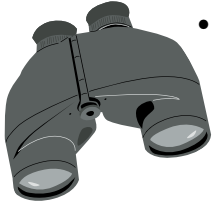
Such bird wisdom is a mystery we are now beginning to understand. New studies are showing the complex systems of genetics, hormones, learning, and adaptive behaviors required for a small bird to accomplish such a feat. Obviously, the birds have successfully found ways to make the hazardous journeys, and their genetic guidance systems give them tools for the job. I find it a wonderful phenomenon for reflection as I watch the flocks of small birds about to embark on such a major journey. Farewell, may the wind be always at your back.



Townsend's Warbler
photo by Thomas Meinzen



Field Notes: June–July 2010



- Spotted Owl visits Cascades Raptor Center
- Common Nighthawks making a rebound?
- Red-eyed Vireos absent along the Willamette
- Peregrine Falcons spotted at Heceta Head
- Rare Foster's Tern spotted at FRR

Tom and Allison Mickel

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June was unseasonably wet and cool, but July's weather was more seasonal. There seemed to be some noteworthy changes in breeding bird numbers and/or locations this summer. A pair of Solitary Sandpipers produced an exciting find at Gold Lake bog after a 25-year absence! On the other hand, Vesper Sparrows were only found singing in one area near Goshen while, just a few years ago, there were numerous breeding locations. A singing Grasshopper Sparrow was found near Stewart Pond when the only breeding location has been on the east side of Fern Ridge Reservoir for a number of years. For the first time in years, Red-eyed Vireos weren't found in their usual breeding riparian habitat along the Willamette River below Dexter Reservoir. Lastly, Common Nighthawk reports were up again this year, so maybe their numbers are starting to slowly rebound after they were nearly eliminated from the Eugene/Springfield area.

WATERBIRDS

Brant (3)	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	Uncommon summer report
Brown Pelican	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	Large numbers of birds feeding in the river
Great Egret (2)	June 13	FRR—Royal Ave.	RR	They've been around all season.
Great Egret	July 18	FRR—Royal Ave.	DJ	Numbers have increased as is normal after the breeding season
Black-crowned Night Heron (2)	July 28	FRR—Royal Ave.	DS, et al.	Normal date and location
White-faced Ibis (30)	July 21	North Eugene	AP	Seen flying SE over Sheldon Plaza area

FALCONS TO AUKLETS

Peregrine Falcon	June 2	Heceta Head	B&ZS	A known breeding location
Peregrine Falcon (2)	June 15	Old Town, Florence	DF	Heceta Head pair?
Peregrine Falcon	June 17	Coast Range	J&JD	Fledged two young this year
Peregrine Falcon	July 28	FRR—Royal Ave	DS, et al.	Seen following its prey after breeding
Black-necked Stilt (8)	June 4	FRR—East Coyote	BB	Highest number reported this year
Lesser Yellowlegs	July 20	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	Adults migrating south after breeding
Solitary Sandpiper (pair)	June 25	Gold Lake bog	TM	Appear to be breeding again after a 25-year absence!
Wandering Tattler	July 31	LJSR	JS	First post-breeding report
Whimbrel (2)	June 5	Siltcoos River mouth	DF, LC	Getting late for this species to be headed north
Whimbrel	June 15	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	Headed south already or summering?
Long-billed Curlew (3)	June 5	Siltcoos River mouth	DF, LC	An unusual summer sighting
Black Turnstone (15)	July 31	NJSR	JS	First post-breeding report
Western Sandpiper (60+)	June 28	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	Adults migrating south after breeding
Pectoral Sandpiper (2)	July 20	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	An early report of adults
Long-billed Dowitcher (87)	July 20	FRR—Royal Ave.	JS	First post-breeding report
Wilson's Phalarope (7)	June 4	FRR—E. Coyote	BB	Highest number reported this year
Wilson's Phalarope (3 juv.)	July 20	FRR—Royal Ave.	JS	Are they fledged from the area or migrants?
Red-necked Phalarope (2)	July 16	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	First post-breeding report
Bonaparte's Gull	July 20	FRR—Royal Ave.	JS	Bird has been around all season
Heermann's Gull	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	Large numbers harassing the pelicans

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A Message from Lane Audubon Board of Directors

Maeve Sowles, President

541.343.8664

president@laneaudubon.org



We ask you to become a local member of Lane County Audubon Society and support our grassroots efforts in the local community. All of your local dues stay here to help us work on local education projects and conservation issues related to birds and their habitats. With your support, we will continue to do the things you expect from us. We welcome your suggestions—this is your Audubon!

Lane Audubon Membership Benefits

The Quail—
9 issues/year

Field trips and bird walks

Program meetings

Educational publications

Conservation issue representation

Answers to questions—
541.485.BIRD

Visit our web site:
www.laneaudubon.org

Lane Audubon welcomes you—join or renew today!

Lane County Audubon Society needs your local membership dues to keep our various programs alive! This means that your membership dues for National Audubon Society no longer support a membership in your local chapter. Become a member of Lane Audubon today to help us continue our educational programs and our work in protecting birds, other wildlife, and their habitats in Lane County. We appreciate your support.

Lane Audubon membership dues

Individual \$20\$ _____

Students and seniors (65 and over) \$15\$ _____

Family \$25\$ _____

Lifetime membership \$400\$ _____

I want to do more. Here's my tax deductible contribution for ...\$ _____

Total enclosed (check payable to Lane County Audubon Society) \$ _____

Current National Audubon member Don't know

Name _____

Mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Check here if you prefer to receive your newsletter by e-mail.

Lane Audubon will not release your personal information to other organizations. We will use it only for Lane Audubon communications.

Please contact me regarding

Gift memberships

Volunteering for Lane Audubon activities

Lane Audubon's Living Legacy program

I'd like to receive e-mail alerts about conservation issues.

Mail this form and your payment to:

Lane County Audubon Society
P.O. Box 5086
Eugene, OR 97405

Thank you, Jim and Selena!

Jim Blick and his daughter, Selena, have been the membership data coordinators for Lane Audubon since January 2006. The job entails keeping the database current and printing mail labels for *The Quail* mailing crew for each issue. Jim has improved the system and made it easier to modify and keep current with the monthly National Audubon reports. He and Selena have been great Lane Audubon volunteers, and we hope they enjoy more free time on the Blick farm, since I know that keeps them busy. We truly appreciate their five years of accurate and timely work!

Jim is the perfect volunteer —he has found a replacement for this job! Starting this month, Tim Godsil has agreed to take over working on the membership database. We are thankful for his willingness and look forward to working with him. Welcome!



Deadlines

October issue: September 11

November issue: October 9

Submit material to
Rob Hoshaw, editor
rhoshaw@gmail.com

The Quail is the newsletter of Lane County Audubon Society, which is a chartered chapter of National Audubon Society. Nine issues are published per year (May/June, July/Aug., and Dec./Jan. are double issues).

Local members of National Audubon Society receive a free subscription to *The Quail*, but are encouraged to voluntarily join Lane Audubon (see page 5).

Subscriptions: Contact Tim Godsil at 541.915.8852 or tgodsil@gmail.com.

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Field Notes: June–July 2010, *continued from page 4*

FALCONS TO AUKLETS, *continued*

California Gull	June 28	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	Adults starting to show up along the coast
Glaucous-winged Gull	June 13	FRR—Royal Ave.	RR	Not normally found during the summer
Caspian Tern	June 23	FRR—Royal Ave.	DA,et al.	Normally found in small numbers
Forster's Tern (2)	June 13	FRR—Royal Ave.	RR	Rarely found during the summer
Black Tern	July 11	FRR—Royal Ave.	A&TM	The first fledgling was seen
Common Murre	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	Large numbers feeding in the river
Pigeon Guillemot	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	Large number feeding in the river
Marbled Murrelet	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	Large numbers feeding in the river
Rhinoceros Auklet (30)	July 31	Siuslaw River mouth	JS	A very large number for this location

DOVES TO FINCHES

Eurasian Collared Dove	July 19	Delta Oaks area	CT	Numerous calling birds in the area
Spotted Owl	July 29	Cascade Raptor Center	LS	A wild bird heard and seen outside their Spotted Owl enclosure; a very rare report from the south hills of Eugene, but not the first. A radioed bird spent most of its first winter in about the same area in the 1990s.
Common Nighthawk	June 4	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	An unusual coastal report
Common Nighthawk	June 6	Elijah Bristow State Park	JS	An area where their numbers may not have been quite so reduced
Common Nighthawk (2)	June 12	River Road area	BC	One of the first areas where their numbers increased
Common Nighthawk	June 16	West Eugene	VT	The second report for the year
Common Nighthawk	June 25	Southwest Eugene yard	SG	Only the second sighting since 1975!
Black Swift	June 12	Salt Creek Falls	SM,PS	Small numbers were reported for the season
Olive-sided Flycatcher	June 18	Skinner Butte Park	VT	Breeding in the area?
Ash-throated Flycatcher	June 11	Alton Baker Park	NN-P	Another rare breeding season report
Western Kingbird	June 10	Old Town, Florence	DF	Rarely found on the coast
Loggerhead Shrike	June 1	Alton Baker Park	MH	Rarely found, but a normal time
Loggerhead Shrike	July 22	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	A rare breeding season report
Red-eyed Vireo	June 23	Skinner Butte Park	JS	First report of this species for the year
Red-eyed Vireo	June 24	Alton Baker Park	JS	No reports of the small population along the Willamette River at Elijah Bristow SP or Jasper SP
Purple Martin (8)	June 28	King Estates Winery	SG	They must be breeding in the Lorane Valley.
Horned Lark (2)	June 3	FRR—East Coyote	CT	Could they be breeding in the area?
Horned Lark (2)	July 18	Eugene Airport area	DJ	An area where they've bred in the past
Townsend's Solitaire	June 2	Skinner Butte	DS	Always a nice bird to see in the valley
Red-breasted Nuthatch (2)	July 28	Southeast Eugene	AC	Only the second record from his feeder
Yellow-rumped Warbler	18 June	Eugene South Hills	TM	Singing birds were heard along the Ridgeline Trail and at Hendricks Park through the second week of July. They normally only breed in the High Cascades and in the lodgepole pine on the coast.
Black-and-White Warbler	July 7	Ferry Street Bridge area	A&DH	A rare breeding season report
Vesper Sparrow	June 5	Goshen area	JS,LJ	The only report of this species breeding in the county!
Lark Sparrow	June 5	Delta Ponds	JC	Another rare breeding season report
Grasshopper Sparrow	June 7	Stewart Pond	PG	Last report from this area; did they breed?
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	May 19	Springfield	RV	A late report photographed at a feeder
Indigo Bunting	July 17	Stewart Pond	RS	About a dozen records for the county

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Abbreviations

FRR: Fern Ridge Reservoir; NJSR: North Jetty of the Siuslaw River

Thank you, contributors!

DA Dennis Arendt, BB Ben Burnette, JC Jim Carlson, BC Barbara Combs, AC Alan Contreras, LC Lydia Cruz, J&JD Jim & Judy DeLapp, DF Daniel Farrar, PG Paul Gordon, SG Steve Gordon, A&DH Anne & Dan Heyerly, MH Mike H, LJ Laura Johnson, DJ Dave Jones, SM Sylvia Maulding, A&TM Allison & Tom Mickel, NN-P Nicole Nielsen-Pincus, AP Al Prigge, RR Roger Robb, DS Don Schrouder, PS Paul Sherrell, LS Louise Shimmel, RS Randy Sinnott, B&ZS Bill & Zanah Stotz, JS John Sullivan, CT Charlie Thomas, VT Vjera Thompson, RV Rob VanCamp

Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

A service to Lane Audubon members

Fall New Volunteer Orientation

Nearby Nature

Thursday, September 9, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Love nature? Enjoy kids? Learn about leading school nature walks in Alton Baker Park this fall as well as other Nearby Nature volunteer opportunities. No experience needed; free training provided in September.

Meet in the Tykeson Room at the Eugene Public Library.

FMI: 541.687.9699 or info@nearbynature.org

Family Walk:

Animals and Plants are Preparing for Winter

Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, September 12, 10:00 a.m.–noon

Come join nature guide Tom Bettman for this kid-friendly walk in the Arboretum. See how the animals and plants that live here are bustling with activity to prepare for the upcoming cold winter months. Rain or shine.

Meet at the Arboretum Visitors Center; fee: \$5 adults;

FMI: 541.747.1504

Wetland Wander at Golden Gardens

Willamette Resources Education Network (WREN)

Tuesday, September 14, 9:00–10:00 a.m.

Wetland Wanders are casual walks through various areas in the West Eugene Wetlands the second Tuesday of every month. Golden Gardens is a 146-acre natural area located in Eugene's Bethel district at the intersection of Golden Gardens Street and Jessen Drive.

Free! WREN will provide binoculars.

FMI: 541.683.6494 or info@wewetlands.org

Family Exploration Day

WREN

Saturday, September 18, 3:00–7:00 p.m.

Discover the Tsanchiifin Trail with your family. WREN staff and volunteers will supply bug nets, field guides, and binoculars to promote unstructured exploration. Families are encouraged to bring a picnic and experience the joy of independent discovery. This program is funded by a Take It Outside grant from the BLM.

Free! Meet at 751 S. Danebo Ave., north of West 11th Ave.

FMI: 541.683.6494 or info@wewetlands.org

Back to Basics—Enhancing your Nature Sketchbook

Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

Workshop 1: Saturday, September 25, 9:00 a.m.–4 p.m.

Workshop 2: Saturday, November 6, 9:00 a.m.–4 p.m.

Join us for one or both workshops with natural science illustrators Kris Kirkeby and Katura Reynolds. Each workshop will include a morning of learning basic drawing techniques and an afternoon of field sketching, which will allow you to quickly put these lessons into practice. Both instructors will be available for the full day.

Registration required; Meet at the Arboretum Visitors Center;

fee: \$30 (MPA members: \$25); FMI: 541.747.1504

National Public Lands Day

WREN

Sunday, September 26, 11:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Your local natural area needs you! National Public Lands Day is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve public lands. WREN, the BLM, and the City of Eugene Stream Team are hosting a stewardship day at Stewart Pond, a 150-acre natural area located east of the intersection of Bertelson Road and Steward Road. Gloves, tools, lunch, and fun provided!

FMI: 541.683.6494 or info@wewetlands.org



Program Meeting: Tuesday, September 28



Birding in Colombia

Herb Wisner

541.344.3634

by Christopher Calonje

hrwisner@comcast.net

Christopher Calonje, a Colombian native and Klamath Falls resident for the past seven years, is president of Colombia Birdwatch, specializing in tours to Colombia. Chris holds a degree in natural resources and works as a consultant in environmental education, botanical studies, and wetland restoration. He spends his winters birding throughout Colombia.

Colombia has over 1,870 species of birds—more than North America and Europe combined. Much of this diversity is due to the country's complex topography, which includes three Andean ranges and the valleys between them, a large portion of the Amazon Basin, Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and a diverse array of species in each.

According to Calonje, birding is on the rise in Colombia due to its incredible bird diversity, increasingly improved security, the great food, and the hospitality of the Colombian people. The government, at all levels, has made great strides in bringing peace and prosperity to this beautiful country. Inevitably, the question prospective visitors now ask about Colombia is, "Is it safe again?" For Colombia Birdwatch, the answer is yes!

PROGRAM MEETING

*Birding in Colombia
by Christopher Calonje*



Photo courtesy of Colombia Birdwatch

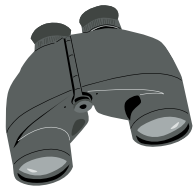
Tuesday, September 28, 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High Street, Eugene

Birding in Colombia provides the opportunity of a lifetime for birdwatchers. More than a vacation destination, Colombia offers an opportunity to learn about conservation efforts as well as how locals live. The September Program Meeting will feature a photographic tour of Colombian birds as well as information on Colombian geography, food, culture, and people.

Thanks, Audubon booth volunteers!

Sunday, June 27, found several Lane County Audubon volunteers on the Lane Community College campus to help staff our outreach booth during KLCC's annual Garden Tour event. Thanks to the following people for helping spread the word about our organization: Flo Alvergue, Joyce Baker, Connie Berglund, Debra Eichner, Dave Stone, and Susanne Twight-Alexander.

The next opportunity for helping with the booth will be on Sunday, October 31, when Mt. Pisgah Arboretum hosts its annual Mushroom Show and Plant Sale. If you're interested in booth staffing for this fun event, please contact Ron Renchler at 541.345.0834 or christyandron@qwest.net.



Bird Walks and Events

Leila Snow

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leilas@ori.org

Monthly Bird Walk: Our monthly bird walks are usually held on the third Saturday of the month, but we often have additional walks or special trips. With knowledgeable leaders and many pairs of eyes to help spot birds, our trips are a great way to increase your birding skills while learning about Lane County birds and their habitats. All birders are welcome, from novice to expert. A \$3 donation is suggested. Questions? Call Leila. We will meet, rain or shine, at 7:00 a.m. at the South Eugene High School parking lot (19th and Patterson Street) and will return by noon unless otherwise stated.. Please note: As a precaution, do not leave valuables in your parked car.

Third Saturday Bird Walk: Shorebirds and coastal sanctuaries

**Saturday,
September 18**

It's time to get over to the coast for migrating shorebirds. We'll spend time birding around Florence before meeting up with Paul Engelmeyer at Audubon's Ten Mile Creek Sanctuary in Yachats. This will be an opportunity to see birds, learn about the sanctuary, and learn more about marine reserves as well. Bring appropriate clothing layers for the coast, a lunch, and gas money for carpooling.

All birders are welcome, from novice to expert. A \$3 donation is suggested. Questions? Call Leila. We will meet, rain or shine, at 7:00 a.m. at the South Eugene High School parking lot (19th and Patterson Street) and will return by 5 p.m.. Please note: As a precaution, do not leave valuables in your parked car.

Bon voyage to Vaux's Swifts at Agate Hall

**Friday,
September 17, 24**

Lane County Audubon Society is holding its annual Fall Swift events outside Agate Hall at sunset. Look for the LCAS banner at 17th and Agate Street. Stop by and enjoy this annual natural phenomenon. For more information, call 541.343.8664.

PROGRAM MEETING

*Birding in Colombia
by Christopher Calonje*



Photo courtesy of
Colombia Birdwatch


**Tuesday, September 28
7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club,
1645 High Street, Eugene**



NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER

The Quail

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