



December 2010–January 2011

# The Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

## From Our President



### Winter birding perspectives from local birders

Maeve Sowles

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**I** wanted to write about winter birding for this issue of The Quail, and decided to ask a few birding friends for their thoughts. The wonderful responses capture many aspects of what makes winter birding special. We hope it will help inspire you to get into the outdoors, or tuck in and watch from a window. Read and enjoy!

Maeve

Dave Bontrager wrote about field trips with bird classes: “I remember a winter trip to Dexter Lake. It was raining part of the morning, and the wind chill factor made conditions barely tolerable. Everyone, including the instructor, was miserable. but we were seeing so many great birds that we couldn’t leave. We’d bird, we’d complain, we’d jump in the cars and warm up, and then we’d go back for more.

Two winters ago I took another group to Dexter Lake. It was snowing so hard that visibility was 100 feet or less. Most of the birds on the lake may as well have been a mile away. In some areas, the snow was 8–10 inches deep. Nearly every person stayed to the very cold but beautiful end. We saw very few birds but sensed that we would likely never experience this again. Why? It was April!

One more winter memory is from December of last year. On a morning trip to Kirk Pond the temperature at starting time was a brisk 12 degrees! But the weather had improved by the following Sunday when the second section of the class enjoyed a balmy 18 degrees. And what was the name of this course? You guessed it, ‘Birds in Winter.’ Sometimes you can’t help but question your sanity.”

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## Winter birding perspectives, *continued*

**Leila Snow** wrote: “There are so many great places to bird in winter and birds are much easier to see and observe for long periods of time.

I love anywhere on water—Delta Ponds and the bike path north of Valley River are always productive. Water birds seem, well, more used to water. They don’t disappear in our rainy weather and will often let you look at them a good long time. If you boat, it’s a good time to put the kayak out on local streams and lakes; many birds can be observed as you paddle along.

When the winter cloud cover is dense and oppressive, I long for the wide open spaces and head to grasslands for sparrows, Horned Larks, raptors, and other birds. My favorite is Diamond Hill Road—Stop #6 on the Santiam birding loop. After birding the grasslands, move on to Brownsville to bird the county parks and have a cup of hot tea at the bakery.

When the valley gets to be too grey and cloudy, it’s time to head over the hill to the Fort Rock area for raptors galore in February. By the end of the weekend I can tell a Rough-legged Hawk from a Red Tail from a Ferruginous or Swainson’s while zipping along in the car. One of my favorite sights in this area was a huge flock of robins in the snow. While robins aren’t

an unusual bird, their red breasts against the white snow was visually stunning, and we stopped to watch the behavior of the group for quite a while.

You can have a sumptuous sparrow moment at almost any thicket of blackberry or other dense vegetation. Find a quiet place, park the car in the weak winter sun, and watch the birds hop out, scratch a bit, then run for cover. In even the weakest sun, the interior of your car will warm to a comfortable temperature, and you can watch for hours. You’ll be a sparrow expert in no time!

If you’re dying of winter boredom, head over to the coast and try your hand at identifying gulls by species, gender, and age. Always entertaining!”

**Steve Gordon** wrote: “Winter is a birding season with its own highlights. The days are shorter (for both birders and birds) with feeding activities more concentrated than in other seasons. The weather is colder and wetter, which means a season of survival for birds and a temptation for birders to stay indoors. What a mistake, for winter is a time to layer up, don warm socks and boots, put on rain gear, and take advantage of the avifauna that live here in the southern Willamette Valley for the next three months, including the Christmas Bird Counts.

Winter is a perfect time to study concentrations of gulls and water birds. The coast, local lakes, rivers, and ponds are worth visiting—especially with a spotting scope. I have two favorite habitats for winter birding. First, the fencerow and hedgerow habitats are refuge to juncos, sparrows, and finches. The fencerows and hedgerow habitats that are refuge to flocks of juncos, sparrows, and finches. You never know what special visitor may pop up in these areas—from White-throated Sparrows to a rare winter warbler. These habitats are great places to study the various plumages, subspecies, and non-breeding season sounds of little brown birds; second, forest birding offers mixed flocks traveling together. Here you can



*Red Crossbill*  
Photo by Cary Kerst

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listen for sounds from such a flock, locate them, and stand and watch as six or more species consisting of chickadees, creepers, nuthatches, kinglets, and warblers feed above your head and at your feet. One of the best parts of winter birding is that it blends February and March into spring. Light green leaves open on the Osoberry bushes, the days grow longer, and you ache for the first swallow to appear. Without winter, no such ache could occur.

Winter is the time that you need to remain physically active. For birders, it just takes a little extra effort to find that excuse to get outdoors.”

**Susan Gordon** wrote: “Years of planning and tending the backyard with an eye to attracting birds and butterflies provide me with more opportunities for winter birding after the butterfly season is over. I see more birds in the backyard during winter than in any other season. What is more, the solarium provides a full view of seven feeders and two bird baths. New landscaping is in place to benefit birds and provide for indoor watching. Snuggled up with a fire in the wood stove, a cup of herbal tea, and a good book, I can pause when movement catches my eye. The juncos are usually the earliest to arrive in the morning and the last to leave at dusk . . . except when the Varied Thrush visits. Black-capped Chickadees are fun to watch and are hopefully the survivors who fledged from my nest box in early summer. Nuthatches roam the tree trunk and limbs in search of a tasty morsel. The Scrub Jays are the winter bullies. The Anna’s Hummingbirds pair up during the winter and cease chasing each other from the feeder. Golden-crowned Sparrows from the north spend the winter with me. All the bird activity will attract the garden ghost, a Sharp-shinned Hawk. Even when I don’t see it, I find fluffs of feathers under its favorite plucking post. A White-throated Sparrow joins the other crowned-sparrows. On the Christmas Bird Count, I am amazed at the number of Bushtits at the suet feeder. Once in a while a rare bird shows up. Last year a female Western Tanager graced the yard on count day and stayed for a week.



*Western Scrub Jay*  
Photo by Cary Kerst

Years of providing black oil sunflower, thistle seeds, and suet pay off. I once cleaned up the Black-eyed Susan patch in the fall, but now leave the stems and flower heads for the goldfinches; they sway atop the stalks and pick at the tiny seeds. I like to think that some of the same individual birds return to my yard from years past, just because they find it such a safe and inviting sanctuary. For many of us, winter birding happens from the comfort of home.”

### **Lane Audubon booth at Mt. Pisgah Mushroom Festival October 31**

The annual Mt. Pisgah Mushroom Festival is popular each year with festival-goers and LCAS booth staffers alike. The event showcases our many resident mycological treasures and gives LCAS a chance to connect with festival attendees about local birds and our organization’s many educational activities.

The booth was a busy place again this year. A big thank you goes to Rick Ahrens, Flo Alvergue, Connie Berglund, Jane Rodin, Debbie Schlenoff, Phil Smyser, Dave Stone, Janie Thomas, and Herb Wisner for helping staff the booth.

If you’d like to participate in this fun and important volunteer opportunity in the coming months, contact Ron Renchler, LCAS Outreach Coordinator, at 541.345.0834 or at [christyandron@qwest.net](mailto:christyandron@qwest.net).

## 2010 Eugene Christmas Bird Count

Sign up now to participate with a Count Team or as a Feeder Watcher

Dick Lamster

541.343.8664

The 69<sup>th</sup> Eugene Christmas Bird Count (ECBC) and the 111<sup>th</sup> National Audubon Society (NAS) Christmas Bird Count will be on Sunday, January 2, 2011. Our 15-mile diameter count circle is centered in the Danebo area and is divided into 27 areas, each with a Team Leader who organizes the team, leads the group through the area during the count day, and submits the results to the ECBC Committee.

### Count Coordinator

Dick Lamster is the **Count Coordinator** this year (officially called the Count Compiler); he will be working with NAS on the Count administrative tasks. He will also be coordinating with the Team Leaders as well as handling publicity, assembling the packets for the Team Leaders, and writing part of the post-count narrative.

### Volunteers

Barbara Gleason is the **Volunteer Coordinator** with Becky Uhler assisting. If you would like to participate on one of the teams that searches for birds on Count Day, please call Barbara (541.345.3974) or Becky (541.729.5947). They will match you up with a team. If you have been on a team in the past, feel free to call that Leader and get “hooked up” for this year.

### Birds

Dan Gleason (541.345.0450) will be accepting the **Bird Checklists** from the Team Leaders at the end of the Count Day. He will also review **rare and unusual bird sightings** and then submit all the results to NAS. Dan also works with Dick in preparing the post-count narrative.

### Feeder Watchers

If you cannot participate on a Count Team but would like to count the birds that visit your yard, please call Herb Wisner (541.344.3634). He will send you a form to help you record the birds you see. He will coordinate your sightings with the leader of the Count Area you live in and will submit your sightings to Dan to be included in the official results. Please call Herb by December 27 if you would like to be a Feeder Watcher.

### Chili Feed

All Team Leaders and Count Participants are invited to gather at the Eugene Garden Club at 1645 High Street after the Count for the traditional Chili Feed. Allison Mickel will again make homemade vegetarian chili. We will tally results at the Garden Club and swap stories of the day’s sightings. Doors to the Garden Club will open around 3:30 p.m. The Chili Feed will start around 5:00 p.m. Chili, salad, dinner rolls, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. Please bring a dessert to share with others and your own table service including plate, bowl, cup, and silverware. If you would like to drink something other than what we furnish, then please bring that also. I really encourage you to join us for this delicious ending to a day full of birding.

### Last year’s results

Last year we had the third largest number of participants in the Christmas Bird Count out of the 2,160 official NAS counts in the United States, Canada, Latin America, Caribbean, and Pacific Islands. This is an amazing accomplishment for all of us, including the committee, Team Leaders, team members, and Feeder Watchers! We had 144 birders in the field and 91 feeder watchers for a total of 235 participants. The entire group identified 135 species and 92,476 individual birds. You can see the results of last year’s Count as well as all the other Christmas Bird Counts in North America at: [www.christmasbirdcount.org](http://www.christmasbirdcount.org). Our Count code is OREU.

We hope you can join us for this year’s ECBC. Please call Dick (541.343.8664) or any of the other committee members listed above if you have questions. We are looking forward to seeing you on January 2!

## Wildlife on the move—animal migration

Debra Eichner

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aceichner@msn.com

**A**udubon Adventures supplies everything needed to deliver an enriched environmental science and language arts curriculum using nature-based learning. Designed for students in third through sixth grades, *Audubon Adventures'* materials are easy to use in any classroom. The content and activities allow teachers to successfully adapt the materials to students' different skills and learning styles.

"Wildlife on the Move" is this year's curriculum. It focuses on three types of animal migration—birds, monarch butterflies, and marine animals.

Thanks to the generous support of our members through a program called "Adopt a Classroom," our local teachers have been able to utilize this curriculum in their classrooms at no cost to the school system. If you would like to sponsor a classroom, please send a check for \$45 to Lane County Audubon Society, PO Box 5086, Eugene OR 97405. Your contribution is tax deductible. Below is a list of sponsored schools and schools still needing sponsors.

### Audubon Adventure Kits

*Audubon Adventures* Classroom Resource Kits include:

- **Nature News for Kids:** 32 copies
- **Classroom Resource Manual for Teachers:** a 64-page guide complete with background information on selected topics and themes, detailed lesson plans, tips for outdoor study, ideas for hands-on activities, research material, duplicating masters, links to relevant websites, glossaries, and more.
- **Full-color posters and brochures:** These can be used to supplement the information in the classroom.

In addition to the kit, participating classrooms receive program and member benefits through the Lane County Audubon Society and the National Audubon Society.

### Thank you sponsors!

School/Grade	Sponsor
Agnes Stewart Middle School/6	Freeman Rowe
Awbrey Park Elementary/4	Charles and Reida Kimmel
Charlemagne Elementary/3	Margot Fetz
Fairfeild Elementary/4	Edrey Anker
Gilham Elementary/3	Charles and Reida Kimmel
Gilham Elementary/3	Marge Vinton
Gilham Elementary/4	Elizabeth Hall
McCornack Elementary/5	Herb and Ruth Wisner
River Road Elementary/3	Herb and Ruth Wisner
Riverbend Elementary/4	Robin Gage
Thurston Elementary/5	The Quail mailing crew
Walterville Elementary/3	Robin Gage

### Schools needing sponsors!

School	Grade
Adams Elementary	3
Arts and Technology	5
Camas Ridge Elementary	3
Charlemagne Elementary	3
Chavez Elementary	4
Fairfeild Elementary	4
Gilham Elementary	3
Guy Lee Elementary	4,5 blend
McCornack Elementary	3
River Road Elementary	3

*continued on next page*

### Seeking New Coordinator

I have appreciated having the opportunity to coordinate the *Audubon Adventures* curriculum for the last few years. It has been a joyous and rewarding experience for me. The teachers and the sponsors have been great to work with, and I am glad that I have been able to keep things organized for them. I feel that there is a vital need for this curriculum in our community of educators.

I am looking for a replacement as the demands upon my time are ever increasing. If you have a computer and a little time, I would love to share with you how I have coordinated this program. It takes flexibility, organization, and a sense of timing to make things work well for the teachers and sponsors.

Outreach to schools needs to be completed in August and orders placed with National Audubon Society in a timely manner so that teachers receive their kits as they return to school in the fall. Maintaining contact with the teachers over the school year is crucial to making sure they are receiving their material, to see if they need any additional help, and to check in with them at the end of the school year.

We alert our wonderful sponsors of the need from schools through *The Quail*, at program meetings, and with an annual mailing.

Please feel free to contact me if you would find this position an interesting and fulfilling experience. We'll be happy to provide you with all the information and training you'll need to manage the program.

### IBA Fern Ridge Reservoir and Wildlife Area

The Fern Ridge Wildlife Area (FRWA) Important Bird Area is located west of Eugene along both sides of Hwy 126. In 2006 Oregon's state wildlife action plan, the Oregon Conservation Strategy (OCS), was created to ensure the preservation of our statewide natural resources, identifying both target species and habitats. The OCS includes mapping of priority focus areas known as Conservation Opportunity Areas, of which Fern Ridge Reservoir is one. Over 286 species of birds have been documented here in this 12,780-acre complex of wetland, grassland, wet prairie (lowland grasses), oak woodland, and freshwater aquatic habitats. The Army Corps of Engineers owns the property, with 5,261 acres of it licensed to Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to manage as a Wildlife Area. ODFW manages FRWA with three explicit goals in mind: to attract and support waterfowl; to protect, enhance, and restore habitat diversity; and to provide recreational and educational opportunities to the public (including hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing).



New "Important Bird Area" sign at Fern Ridge Wildlife Area  
Photo by James Maloney

# A Message from Lane Audubon Board of Directors

Maeve Sowles, President

541.343.8664

president@laneaudubon.org

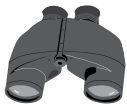


We ask you to become a local member of Lane County Audubon Society and support our grassroots efforts in the local community. All of your local dues stay here to help us work on local education projects and conservation issues related to birds and their habitats. With your support, we will continue to 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](http://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 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- 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



facebook

### Join us on Facebook

Visit Lane Audubon on Facebook. Please join our page and stay informed about events, bird walks, news, and conservation issues. Share bird sightings, photos, links, events, nature news, and stories at [www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Lane-County-Audubon-Society/330177413824](http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Lane-County-Audubon-Society/330177413824).

### 2011 Winter Wings Festival February 18–20, Klamath Falls, OR

Attention birders! The 2011 Winter Wings Festival is coming to the Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls. Hear distinguished keynote speakers and participate in photography workshops for all skill levels. Check out the festival's website at [www.WinterWingsFest.org](http://www.WinterWingsFest.org) for the latest planning information. Online registration will begin in early or mid-December. For more information, please contact [info@winterwingsfest.org](mailto:info@winterwingsfest.org) or call 1.877.541.BIRD.



## The Quail

### Deadlines

February issue: January 8

March issue: February 12

Submit material to  
Rob Hoshaw, editor  
[rhoshaw@gmail.com](mailto: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 7).

**Subscriptions:** Contact Tim Godsil at 541.915.8852 or [tgodsil@gmail.com](mailto:tgodsil@gmail.com).

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### Wild Bird Conservation Act: “A Nickel for the birds”

Debbie Schlenoff

541.685.0610

[dschlenoff@msn.com](mailto:dschlenoff@msn.com)

Representatives from around the state gathered in Portland this November for the annual Oregon Audubon Council (OAC) meeting to discuss conservation efforts, including a workshop presentation on the Wild Bird Conservation Act (see below). The many local Oregon Audubon chapters are located in diverse geographical regions, and it is our hope that in working together we can better represent people from all over the state who care about birds and other wildlife. We will strive to keep members informed as we gather more information. Conservation priorities discussed included: actions to support important bird areas (IBAs), legislation to regulate wind power, helping to improve and endorse the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (ODFW) plan to protect Sage Grouse, forest protection, and bird-related legislation.

The Wild Bird Conservation Act calls for a fee of a nickel per pound on wild bird seed to be collected at the wholesale level. Proposed projects range from improving suburban and rural backyard habitat for songbirds to restoring rare native prairie and oak savanna habitats. A full list of these proposed projects can be found at the online conservation section of the Lane Audubon website. We are requesting feedback from our members, both positive and negative, suggestions for improvement, and ideas for projects that could be funded through the Act. Please e-mail Debbie Schlenoff with your comments.

#### **Wild Bird Conservation Act: “A Nickel for the Birds”**

*Bob Sallinger,  
Conservation Director at Portland Audubon*

During the 2011 legislative session, bird lovers will have a chance to support a bill which will help ensure that conservation of native bird species in Oregon receives adequate funding in Oregon. The Wild Bird Conservation

Act places a five cents per pound fee on birdseed—a “nickel for the birds”—to fund our state’s most important bird-related priorities. The Wild Bird Conservation Act was developed by a coalition of conservation organizations and the Backyard Bird Shops.

#### **What would the Wild Bird Conservation Act do?**

By paying an extra nickel for each pound of birdseed, bird lovers would directly generate nearly \$2 million per year to fund wild bird conservation initiatives in Oregon. This funding would be matched 1:1 with federal funds, effectively doubling the impact to \$4 million. Less than \$100,000 per year would go towards funding an Avian Conservation Coordinator at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), with the rest (minus administrative costs) going directly towards funding wild bird education and restoration projects on both urban and rural landscapes across Oregon. Priority would be placed on projects involving partnerships benefiting birds.

#### **Why is it important that Oregon bird lovers help fund this initiative?**

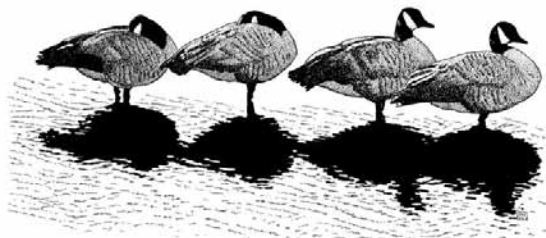
Many of Oregon’s bird populations are in trouble. Recent reports show as many as 25% of Oregon species experiencing serious long-term declines. The ODFW Non-Game program manages all species that are not hunted or fished in Oregon, 88% of which, including most of the bird species, are found in Oregon! Historically, the program has been woefully underfunded. The non-game program currently receives less than 2% of the ODFW budget and may see even further cuts in the face of an unprecedented budget crisis.

The reason for the disparity between funding levels of game and non-game species is that for decades, hunters and fishermen have paid a 10% tax on hunting and fishing gear, which directly funds conservation of game species. It is no

*continued on next page*

## Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

*A service to Lane Audubon members*



*Geese line  
Drawing by David Wagner*

### **Wild Bird Conservation Act, continued**

coincidence that in the recent State of the Birds report released by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, waterfowl, most of which are hunted, were cited as an example of species which have made a tremendous comeback over the past several decades, while almost all other categories of birds (forest, coastal, aridland, and grassland) have seen major declines.

The Wild Bird Conservation Act represents a critical step toward providing a permanent, stable source of funding for wild bird conservation efforts in Oregon.

### **Accountability**

Funding from the Wild Bird Conservation Act would be managed by the ODFW with oversight from a stakeholder group, including representatives from conservation organizations and birdseed retailers. The Wild Bird Conservation Act has a sunset clause which would require evaluation of the program in 2018 prior to renewal.

### **Color Vision and Color Blindness in Admirals, Coppers, and Metalmarks**

#### **North American Butterfly Association**

**Monday, December 6, 7:30 p.m. (refreshments at 7:00 p.m.)**

University of Washington professor Gary Bernard will present a program based on the complex eyes of butterflies.

*FREE! Meet in EWEB Training Center, 500 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Ave.*

*FMI: woodnymph3000@gmail.com*

### **“On the Wing” Art Show**

#### **Willamalane Parks and Recreation District**

**December 8–21**

Exhibit of bird images by five local artists

*Island Park Art Gallery, Willamalane Adult Activity Center, 215 W. C Street, Springfield. FMI: 541.736.4444*

### **Nearby Nature Quest: Twiggin’ Out**

#### **Nearby Nature**

**Saturday, December 11, 10:00 a.m.–noon**

Get to know trees... even without their leaves. Look for patterns in nature and make a tie-dyed snowflake to take home.

*Registration suggested. Fee: Free for members, \$2/person, \$5/family for non members FMI: 541.687.9699*

### **Wetland Wander at Stewart Pond**

#### **WREN**

**Tuesday, December 14, 9:00–10:00 a.m.**

Wetland Wanderers are casual walks through various areas in the West Eugene Wetlands, held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month. Stewart Pond is a 150-acre natural area located east of the intersection of Bertelsen Road and Stewart Road.

*Free! WREN will provide binoculars.*

*FMI: 541.683.6494 or info@wewetlands.org*

### **New Volunteer Orientation**

#### **WREN**

**Thursday, January 7. Time TBA**

If you are interested in volunteering, you will want to attend the New Volunteer Orientation held at WREN, 751 South Danebo Ave. Eugene

*Free! WREN will provide binoculars.*

*FMI: 541.683.6494 or info@wewetlands.org*

### **Wetland Wander at Golden Gardens**

#### **WREN**

**Tuesday, January 11, 9:00–10:00 a.m.**

Golden Gardens is a 146-acre natural area at the intersection of Golden Gardens Street and Jessen Drive.

*Free! WREN will provide binoculars.*

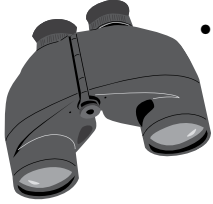
*FMI: 541.683.6494 or info@wewetlands.org*

### **The Willamette Valley 2011 Nature Calendar**

This is David Wagner’s 32<sup>nd</sup> year of calendar-making. All the usual nature notes and gardening hints are present; drawings for each month are posted.

*FMI: web.mac.com/davidwagner/Site/2011\_drawings.html*

## Field Notes: October 2010



- **Rusty Blackbird**—first record in Lane County
- **Mew and Herring Gulls**—first winter reports
- **Clay-colored Sparrow**—rare sighting in Eugene
- **Horned Grebe on Fern Ridge Reservoir**

Tom and Allison Mickel

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October turned out to be a good month for migrants, including lingering neotropical migrants and arctic or taiga breeders arriving or migrating through, as well as birds wandering in from other parts of the state. Some of these included the first Rusty Blackbird record for Lane County, Clay-colored Sparrow, Common Poorwill, Mountain Chickadee, and Sage Thrasher.

### WATERBIRDS

Eurasian Wigeon	Oct. 11	Delta Ponds	SH	First report for the winter season
Cinnamon Teal (2 males)	Oct. 6	FRR—south end	TM	Last report for the breeding season
Black Scoter (3)	Oct. 31	Klootchman SW	AC	Always a good place for this species
Goldeneye spp. (female/imm)	Oct. 31	FRR—Orchard Point	JS	First report for the winter season
Ruddy Duck	Oct. 13	SJSR—Crab Dock	B&ZS	Rarely found near the ocean
Horned Grebe	Oct. 19	Siuslaw River mouth	B&ZS	First for the winter season
Horned Grebe	Oct. 31	FRR—Shore Lane	JS	Rare on the reservoir
Red-necked Grebe	Oct. 8	FRR—Jeans Rd	ES	Rarely found inland in Lane County
Eared Grebe	Oct. 23	FRR—Shore Lane	JS	Becoming more regular during migration
American White Pelican (56)	Oct. 6	FRR—Royal Ave	LM, et.al.	Last report for the summer
Brown Pelican (140)	Oct. 27	SJSR	DP	Roosting on the jetty
Brown Pelican (50)	Oct. 31	N Lane Co coast	AC	Migrating south
Green Heron	Oct. 6	Alton Baker Park	EC	Small numbers winter most years
Black-crowned Night Heron(3)	Oct. 9	FRR—Royal Ave area	EC	Flushed from the reeds while kayaking

### VULTURES to TERNS

Turkey Vulture (23)	Oct. 15	Alton Baker Park	AM	Headed south together
Osprey	Oct. 6	FRR—south end	TM	Last report away from the river in Eugene
Rough-legged Hawk	Oct. 30	Eugene airport area	DC	First report for the winter season
Merlin	Oct. 9	FRR—south end	JS	First report for the winter in the valley
Merlin (2)	Oct. 19	Eugene—College Hill	MP	Rarely found together
Black-bellied Plover (70)	Oct. 23	FRR—Shore Lane	JS	Normal wintering numbers
Lesser Yellowlegs (4)	Oct. 9	FRR—south end	JS	Last report for fall migration
Western Sandpiper (6)	Oct. 9	FRR—south end	JS	Last report for fall migration
Least Sandpiper (50)	Oct. 23	FRR—Shore Lane	JS	Normal wintering numbers
Pectoral Sandpiper (2)	Oct. 23	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Last report for fall migration
Dunlin	Oct. 6	SJSR	B&ZS	First report for the winter season
Dunlin (500)	Oct. 23	FRR—Shore Lane	JS	A wintering species in even larger numbers
Long-billed Dowitcher (150)	Oct. 23	FRR—Shore Lane	JS	Normal wintering numbers
Red-necked Phalarope	Oct. 2	FRR—south end	JS	Last report for fall migration
Red Phalarope	Oct. 26	Siuslaw River mouth	B&ZS	A normal time for their southward migration
Pomarine Jaeger (probable)	Oct. 31	Klootchman SW	AC	Never common from shore
Heermann's Gull (80)	Oct. 31	N Lane Co coast	AC	Later than normal
Mew Gull	Oct. 16	Siuslaw River mouth	B&ZS	First report for the winter season
Herring Gull	Oct. 9	FRR—south end	JS	First report for the winter season
Sabine's Gull	Oct. 27	NJSR	DP	Not normally seen from shore

*continued on next page*

## Field Notes: October 2010, *continued*

### VULTURES to TERNS, *continued*

Black-legged Kittiwake	Oct. 31	Kloutchman SW	AC	First for the winter season.
Common Tern (2)	Oct. 27	NJSR	DP	Later than normal
Cassin's Auklet	Oct. 31	Kloutchman SW	AC	Not commonly found from shore anymore.
Black Tern (immature)	Sept. 17	FRR	DI,JS	About a month after the breeding birds had left the reservoir

### OWLS to GROSBEAKS

Northern Saw-whet Owl (6)	Oct. 17	Spencer Butte	JS	Large numbers for a few hours of calling!
Common Poorwill	Oct. 14	Florence	DP	Rarely found during the day and even more rarely found at the coast!
Vaux's Swift (300+)	Oct. 1	Skinner Butte	TM	Last report for the breeding season
Willow Flycatcher	Oct. 6	Alton Baker Park	EC	Last report for the breeding season
Northern Shrike	Oct. 13	SJSR road	B&ZS	First report for the winter season
Violet-green Swallow (1,000)	Oct. 9	FRR—south end	JS	Last report for the breeding season
Barn Swallow	Oct. 6	FRR—Royal Ave	LM, et.al.	Last report for the breeding season
Mountain Chickadee (2)	Oct. 24	River Road	B&KA	Rarely found in the Eugene/Springfield area
House Wren	Oct. 2	N Eugene	BMc	Last report for the breeding season and later than normal
Western Bluebird	Oct. 15	SJSR overlook	B&ZS	Not common along the coastal plain
Swainson's Thrush	Oct. 13	Alton Baker Park	LM, et.al.	Last report for the breeding season
Northern Mockingbird	Oct. 6	Neptune State Park	DS	Show up for the winter season during this
Northern Mockingbird	Oct. 12	Washburn Lane	PS	time of year—reports increasing
Sage Thrasher	Oct. 15	SJSR road	AC,DF	First record from the coast and in the fall
American Pipit (200)	Oct. 23	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Normal numbers during migration/winter
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Oct. 3	N Eugene	BG	Last report for the breeding season
Palm Warbler	Oct. 24	Alton Baker Park	JS	Found in very small numbers during the winter, normally at the coast
Common Yellowthroat (2)	Oct. 6	FRR—south end	TM	Last report for the breeding season
Western Tanager	Oct. 6	River Road	BC	Last report for the breeding season
Chipping Sparrow	Oct. 1	Skinner Butte	TM	A larger number of reports than normal this
Chipping Sparrow	Oct. 1	N Eugene	DH	late in the season
Chipping Sparrow	Oct. 9	N Eugene	BG	Last report for the breeding season
Clay-colored Sparrow	Oct. 1	N Eugene	A&DH	About a dozen records for Lane County
White-throated Sparrow	Oct. 1	River Road	BC	First report for the winter season
Yellow-headed Blackbird	Oct. 24	Eugene airport area	DI,SF	Rarely found after the end of September
Rusty Blackbird	Oct. 24	Eugene airport area	DI,SF	The first record for Lane County
Purple Finch	Oct. 19	River Road	B&KA	Second time in yard in eight years

### Late report

White-breasted Nuthatch	summer	River Road	B&KA	A pair fledged three young in the area
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### Abbreviations

FRR: Fern Ridge Reservoir, NJSR: North Jetty of the Siuslaw River, SJSR: South Jetty of the Siuslaw River, SW: State Wayside

### Thank you, contributors!

B&KA Bill & Kat Allison, EC Ellen Cantor, DC Don Cogswell, BC Barbara Combs, AC Alan Contreras, DF Daniel Farrar, SF Shawneen Finnegan, BG Brandon Green, A&DH Dan Heyerly, SH Sally Hill, DI Dave Irons, BMc Barry McKenzie, LM Larry McQueen, AM Allison Mickel, TM Tom Mickel, MP Margie Paris, DP Diane Pettey, DS David Schlesinger, ES Eva Schults, PS Paul Sherrell, B&ZS Bill & Zanah Stotz, JS John Sullivan



**Willamette River Open Space Vision**

*Herb Wisner*

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by Jeff Krueger

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**R**esidents of the Eugene/Springfield area have long treasured the Willamette River for the natural, recreational, and visual qualities it offers in close proximity to the urban environment. The river provides the community with a sense of place and contributes greatly to the quality of life for all who call this area home. Jeff Krueger, a landscape architect with Lane Council of Governments, will present an inspiring long-range vision for the Willamette River corridor that will help lead the way for coordinated efforts to further improve this outstanding resource in the coming years and decades. Numerous elected officials and interest groups, including Lane County Audubon Society, have endorsed the open space vision. This 30-year vision calls for significant habitat improvements, the addition of multiple paths, trails and recreational facilities, and outlines concepts for eco-friendly, river-oriented development. For more information on this effort, visit [www.lcog.org/willamette](http://www.lcog.org/willamette).

**Program Meeting**  
*Willamette River Open Space Vision*  
*by Jeff Krueger*



**Tuesday, January 25, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Eugene Garden Club**  
**1645 High Street, Eugene**

**Special December Program Meeting**

co-sponsored with the Eugene Natural History Society

***Tropical birds vanishing from Panama island***  
*by Doug Robinson*

**Friday, December 10, 7:30 p.m.**  
**100 Willamette Hall, University of Oregon**

**L**ane Audubon and the Eugene Natural History Society will team up to present a joint program meeting on Friday, December 10. Doug Robinson will talk about why so many birds have disappeared from a tropical island in Panama. The meeting is at 7:30 p.m. in Willamette Hall, Room 100 at the University of Oregon.

**Upcoming Program Meetings**

*February: "Brazil and the Pantanal" by Bob Fleming*

*March: Bend Area Bird Projects and Vaux Swift Migration*  
*by Nicole Nielson-Pincus*

*April: Kit Larsen*

*May: "The Colorful World of Birds" by Dan Gleason*



## Bird Walks and Events

Leila Snow

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**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

### Third Saturday Bird Walk

No December Bird Walk—instead, we'll be joining the Christmas Bird Count.

### Eugene Christmas Bird Count

If you are new to the area or have not been on our Christmas Bird Count recently, please contact Dick at 541.343.8664 to get more information or to sign up. See page 4 for details.

### Third Saturday Bird Walk—Royal Avenue Oak Woodlands

Tom Mikel has been birding since the mid-1970s and has led numerous field trips. He's been a Christmas Bird Count leader for at least two decades! Barbara Butzer has been organizing birders in the Cottage Grove area for the past year. In January, they'll team up to take us to some of the most interesting winter bird spots in the Cottage Grove area.

*All levels of birders are welcome, from first timer to expert. We will meet at South Eugene High at 19th and Patterson, rain or shine, at 8:00 a.m. and return by 12 noon. A \$3 donation is suggested, as well as a share of gas costs for carpooling. Please note: As a precaution, do not leave valuables in your parked car.*

Questions? Contact Leila at [leilas@ori.org](mailto:leilas@ori.org).

#### Special December Program Meeting

*Tropical birds vanishing from Panama island by Doug Robinson*

Friday, December 10,  
7:30 p.m.  
100 Willamette Hall,  
University of Oregon

#### January Program Meeting

*Willamette River Open Space Vision by Jeff Krueger*


Tuesday, January 25,  
7:30 p.m.  
Eugene Garden Club  
1645 High Street,  
Eugene



NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER

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