



The Quails

March 2012

News from Lane County Audubon Society



From Our President

Winter into Spring

Maeve Sowles

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president@laneaudubon.org

Audubon Phone – 541.485.BIRD

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Over the past few winter months, my husband and I have hosted a female Anna’s Hummingbird at our property. This is the first year we have had one consistently all winter. We live at 1000-foot elevation, so we tend to have cooler temperatures than the valley floor. I know many folks have been hosting overwintering Anna’s here for the last decade, but this is new for us. It is unusual to see a bird during the winter months that we normally only see in the spring.



Noël Zia Lee

We have also been visited by four Western Bluebirds on some of the relatively warm, sunny days we have enjoyed this winter. On December 25, we were walking the path on our property with visiting family members and were treated to the sight of the four bluebirds going from one nest box to the next, checking out prospective nesting sites. They looked spectacular in the sunlight, and we were able to watch them for several minutes. Typically we would not see them on our property until late February for their first arrival at the nest boxes.

roost under the eaves of our shop each night. We see them first thing in the morning and at the end of each day. As the sun sets they perch in the tops of either fir or oak trees and fly to their spots under the eave of the shop, one on the north side and one on the south side. As the days get longer, the time of their roosting is a little later each day. It makes me happy to know they have had a safe place to shelter throughout the winter as we all wait for spring to arrive. March 20 will bring the spring equinox, when the length of day and night is equal. It is always energizing to have more hours of daylight and to know that spring will soon officially arrive.

Other conspicuous winter visitors have been a pair of Northern Flickers who



Marbled Murrelet, Oregon Wolves, and Waldo Lake

Debbie Schlenoff

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Where the Forest Meets the Sea ... Hopefully There Will Still Be Forests

A bird that dines on seafood but makes its nest inland on hefty branches of old trees in the forest? This describes the Marbled Murrelet, which, due to rapidly declining populations, has been listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act since 1992. Our mature and old-growth coastal forests are essential to its survival in Oregon, but recent state policy has increased clear-cutting in these distinctive forests. In an attempt to encourage the state to reconsider this policy and revisit its abandoned plans for Marbled Murrelet conservation, Cascadia Wildlands, the Center for Biological Diversity, and Audubon Society of Portland gave notice to the state of intent to sue for violations of the Endangered Species Act. Lane County Audubon Society believes that revenue from state forests can be generated through other means, such as thinning in young plantations, carbon markets, and recreation. We value these publicly owned forests for their beauty and the ecosystem services they provide, such as water purification, carbon sequestration, and habitat for wildlife. For more information, visit <http://www.cascwild.org/murrelet.html>.

Crying Wolf?

The Oregon Cattlemen's Association has proposed HB4518 this legislative session, which would declare a false "state of emergency" and allow killing of wolves, an endangered species in Oregon. The majority of Oregonians have welcomed the small population of wolves back to our state. Wolves have been shown to be an important part of healthy ecosystems, and a coalition of many groups has been willing to work with ranchers to establish practices that thwart wolf predation on livestock and reimburse ranchers for livestock killed by wolves. (Livestock kills represent a small percentage compared to livestock typically lost to weather, disease, and other causes.)

The proposed legislation would not only have the potential to decimate Oregon's fledgling wolf population, but it would also establish a precedent that threatens protection for all fish and wildlife in the state. To sign an online petition, got to <http://bit.ly/xyYc2i>.

Waldo Lake Threatened ... Again

By Dave Stone

Two years ago, after ten years of advocating for a ban on all motorboats on Waldo Lake, the Oregon State Marine Board voted to ban gasoline motors on Waldo Lake. We agreed to that compromise. However, this democratic process didn't satisfy motorboat advocates, and they have filed a lawsuit in the Oregon Court of Appeals seeking to allow low-power four-stroke gas engines on Waldo Lake. A group of float-plane owners is also seeking to reverse the ban.

Waldo Lake is one of the three purist large lakes in the world. The use of gasoline motors presents an unacceptable risk of polluting this treasure.

Waldo Lake is the only large lake in Oregon that offers a quiet, primitive wilderness experience. Motorboat users have many nearby lakes available, including Odell Lake, Davis Lake, Crane Prairie Reservoir, Wickiup Reservoir, and Cultus Lake.

For more information and to keep current on this ever-changing issue, visit <http://bit.ly/xyYc2i>.

If you'd like to weigh in on the Waldo Lake situation, contact Governor John Kitzhaber at <http://www.oregon.gov/Gov/contact.shtml>, or send mail to Governor John Kitzhaber, 160 State Capitol, 900 Court Street, Salem, OR 97301-4047.

Backyard Birding: Thirty-Six Years and Counting

By Steve Gordon



Peter Wallack

My wife Susie and I moved into our Friendly Neighborhood flatlands home in October 1975. Here we raised our two children, and the backyard transitioned from almost all lawn to vegetable garden. When the children left home, half of the raised-bed, organic garden became a butterfly/hummingbird flower garden. A garden shed and greenhouse were added, and the beautiful yard is always a laboratory for an improved landscaping approach or new plant. (We now leave many more standing dead plants for wildlife in the fall and winter.)

Constants over thirty-six years have been the feeders and baths for the birds. We currently have two covered platform seed feeders, two tube sunflower seed feeders, a thistle tube feeder, a suet feeder, a hummingbird feeder (Susie keeps two and rotates them to maintain freshness and uses one as a substitute during freezing conditions), and four bird baths.

Susie is a Christmas Bird Count backyard bird watcher—she identified a female Western Tanager on the 2009 count—and we have participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count. We retired in 2007, and we both spend time gardening—and sneaking peeks at the birds while pulling weeds. We enjoy coffee, tea, lemonade, an occasional glass of wine, and meals on the back deck during nicer weather. On a recent warm afternoon day this early January, we sat on the deck and sipped coffee.

Over the years, we kept a list of birds identified (seen or heard) in or from our yard. Before this year, our list had grown to 90 species, an impressive number for a suburban-type yard with no oak or conifers (the South Hills end about four blocks from our home) and no real water feature other than the tiny bird baths. Overhead we have recorded Green Heron, Tundra Swan, Greater White-fronted Goose, Osprey, Barn Owl, Sandhill Crane, Golden Eagle, and Common Nighthawk. During one of our strong November storms, a Bald Eagle landed atop a poplar tree in our neighbor's yard. During a severe winter freeze, American Pipits showed up. Susie found a sick Calliope

Hummingbird in the front yard one year; it failed to survive at the Cascade Raptor Center.

Wanderers from the hills have included Acorn and Hairy Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, and a male House Wren. (He sang for a week, but attracted no mate.) We have hosted White-throated Sparrows, various warblers and flycatchers in migration, and a December Chipping Sparrow. Black-capped Chickadees and Violet-green Swallows regularly use our nest boxes. Every year or so we add another bird to our yard list, but we've never seen a backyard bird so rare that we placed it on the hot line for others to see.

Then came 2011, when we added six new species. Three were added while we were gardening: California Quail (no, it was not a European Starling imitating a quail), Western Meadowlark, and Western Kingbird. One new yard species, Lazuli Bunting, was added outside our kitchen window when two males showed up at a feeder.

The last two species—American White Pelican and Greater Yellowlegs—were added while we sat on the deck having tea one afternoon in late June. Susie pointed to the sky and said, "Steve, I can't believe what's up there. It looks like White Pelicans!" Sure enough, a flock of about forty individuals circled above lazily before drifting off southward. Even after thirty-six years, surprises can happen. Will we see Eurasian Collared-Dove this year? Will a Wild Turkey wander through our yard? Northern Mockingbird, Costa's Hummingbird, and Black-throated Green Warbler have been found within a few blocks of our home. Or will the next species be one of the more usual Eugene visitors that we haven't observed yet?

It really doesn't matter. We spend joyful hours watching Oregon (and occasional Slate-colored) Juncos and American Goldfinches. When number one hundred shows up, we'll celebrate and let you know. The birds seem to know and enjoy a bird-friendly yard in the Friendly Area Neighborhood.

Field Notes: January 2012



- Cinnamon Teal
- Black-headed Grosbeak

- Red-naped Sapsucker
- Tree Swallow

Tom and Allison Mickel

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The weather during the first part of the month was mostly drier and cooler than normal. The last part of the month was closer to normal except for the wind and rain storms that blasted the coast and inland, causing flooding and a sharp increase in water levels at area reservoirs. The storms didn't appear to blow any unusual bird species into the area as sometimes happens. And the Snowy Owls seemed to have left the area before the first of the year, as we haven't received any reports this month.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), many observers (m.ob.).

WATERBIRDS

Greater White-fronted Goose	Jan 4	Oakridge	JC,TM	Not normally found away from the valley
Cinnamon Teal	Jan 2	Delta Ponds	A&TM	Rarely found during the winter
Canvasback	Jan 2	Oakridge	CF	Occasionally found in the area
American White Pelican (5)	Jan 1	FRR	CBC	A species that has rarely wintered before
Common Loon	Jan 4	Hills Creek Reservoir	CBC	Not normally found away from the coast

OSPREY to OWLS

Osprey	Jan 14	Autzen Stadium area	SM	The first report for this winter season
White-tailed Kite (26)	Jan 14	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	One of the highest counts of birds using the communal night roost
Red-shouldered Hawk	Jan 4	Oakridge	JC,TM	A first for the Oakridge CBC
Rough-legged Hawk (2)	Jan 6	Eugene airport area	JS	A normal wintering area for the species
Golden Eagle	Jan 1	FRR area	CT	Rarely found in the valley
Peregrine Falcon (5)	Jan 26	Eugene airport area	A&DH	A large number for the area
Prairie Falcon	Jan 6	Mt. Pisgah area	AP,BH	Good numbers are still being found in the area
Prairie Falcon	Jan 6	Eugene airport area	JS	Good numbers are still being found in the area
Black-bellied Plover (60)	Jan 6	FRR	JS	A normal wintering flock for the area

WOODPECKERS to SPARROWS

Red-naped Sapsucker	Jan 1	Southeast Eugene	TMe et al.	Third report for this winter
Say's Pheobe	Jan	Eugene airport area	m.ob.	Reported through the first part of the month
Northern Shrike	Jan 27	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Smaller numbers than normal this winter
Horned Lark (40)	Jan 15	Eugene airport area	RR	The first report for the winter season
Tree Swallow (10)	Jan 1	Eugene CBC area	CBC	Rarely found during the winter
Swallow species (2)	Jan 26	FRR	A&DH	White-bellied, unknown species
Northern Mockingbird	Jan	Alvadore	m.ob.	Seen throughout the month
Common Yellowthroat	Jan 1	West Eugene	BN	Occasionally reported during the winter
Black-headed Grosbeak	Jan 11	Southeast Eugene	JSi	Very rare in the winter
Pine Siskin (50)	Jan 21	North Eugene	BG	Flocks have been wandering the area
Evening Grosbeak (3)	Jan 28	North Eugene	BG	Stopped at the feeder for a day

JC Jim Carlson, CBC Christmas Bird Count participant, BG Brandon Green, CF Cheron Ferland, A&DH Anne & Dan Heyerly, BH Bill Hunter, SM Sylvia Maulding, TMe Thomas Meinzen, A&TM Allison & Tom Mickel, BN Bruce Newhouse, AP Al Prigge, RR Roger Robb, JSi Julia Siporin, JS John Sullivan, CT Charlie Thomas.

Wanted: Observations of Harlequin Ducks, Northern Waterthrush in Cascades

The U.S. Forest Service, Willamette National Forest is seeking reports, historic and current, of Harlequin Ducks and Northern Waterthrush in the Cascade Mountains.

Historically, Northern Waterthrush have been documented in the western Cascades, Lane County, at Mule Prairie/Salt Creek, Gold Lake Bog, Skookum Marsh, and in Linn County at Lost Lake Creek (off Highway 20). Records have been patchy over the years, and we would like to confirm consistent breeding period occupancy at these locations and any other new locations that we may not be aware of.

Harlequin Duck breeding on the Willamette National Forest appears to be declining, particularly on the southern portion of the national forest (i.e., Upper Middle Fork of the Willamette River and its tributaries). We will be conducting river surveys at several key locations this summer, but we can only cover a limited area. Any reports of Harlequin Ducks on their breeding grounds in the western Cascades would be valuable.

Additionally if you are interested in volunteering to assist with Northern Waterthrush and/or Harlequin Duck surveys, we could offer you fresh air, beautiful scenery, and great companionship! We will be conducting surveys April through July, 2012.

Please report sightings and/or interest in volunteering to Joe Doerr, Willamette National Forest, 541-225-6433, jdoerr@fs.fed.us.



Dick Daniels

Note: If you have a sighting this spring or summer, the sooner you report the observation the better!

Happy birding!

 The Seventh Annual 

FERN RIDGE WINGS & WINE FESTIVAL

May 12, 2012

Domaine Meriwether Winery
& other Fern Ridge locations
Veneta, Oregon

Nature Walks & Birding Stations
Sailing, Kayak, & Canoe Tours
Children's Activities & Live Music
Wine Tasting with Artisan Wineries

Presented by

The City of Veneta, Domaine Meriwether,
Lane County Audubon Society, Travel Lane County,
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife,
Fern Ridge Chamber of Commerce,
South Willamette Wineries Association,
and City of Eugene Outdoor Program

WingsandWineFestival.com



Check us out on Facebook

Lane Audubon is now 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.

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Lane-County-Audubon-Society/330177413824>



Deadlines:

April issue: March 3

May-June issue: April 7

Submit material to
Cheron Ferland
cheron.ferland@mac.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 County Audubon Society (see page 7).

Subscriptions: Contact Tim Godsfil at 541.915.8852 or tgodsfil@gmail.com.

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Electronic version of *The Quail* available!

Help us save paper and postage! Lane County Audubon Society offers an electronic version of *The Quail*. It's easy to change your current membership to an electronic notification. Each month, LCAS will send a link to your email address that will take you to a pdf version of our newsletter. You'll receive the added benefit of viewing *The Quail's* photos in color, and families can sign up more than one email address to receive the newsletter under one membership. If at any time you decide you'd rather switch back to receiving your *Quail* in the mail, no problem! If you would like to begin receiving *The Quail* electronically or would like more information, please contact Tim Godsfil at tgodsfil@gmail.com.

Lane Audubon Officers & Board Members

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	Jim Maloney	541.968.9249	jimgmal@comcast.net

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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 County Audubon Society
Membership Benefits**



The Quail—
9 issues/yr.



**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 County Audubon Society 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 County Audubon Society 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



Volunteer with Lane Audubon!

Lane County Audubon Society is an all-volunteer organization, and our members are very proud of the energy and diversity of talents volunteers bring—we couldn't do it without them! Volunteering with Lane Audubon is a great way to meet new people, give back to the community, and best of all, have fun! Currently, we are looking for volunteers to fill the following roles, but please feel welcome to contact us if you'd like to help in another capacity.

Bird Walk Coordinator: Lane Audubon is looking for a volunteer to plan the monthly third Saturday Bird Walks. This is a fun opportunity to meet and learn from birding experts; best of all, you get to pick the location and be out birding! Lane Audubon has all the dates set, a network of willing field trip leaders, and a list of past birding locations to choose from. Your responsibility would include deciding on a location, contacting field trip leaders, emailing the field trip publicity, and meeting the birding group on the day of the walk to get things started. Contact Maeve Sowles, 541-343-8664, president@laneaudubon.org.

Distribute and Deliver *The Quail* in the Community:

Help us get *The Quail* mailed to our members by delivering them to the post office. We also need them distributed to high-visibility locations around the community in an effort to reach new members. Each of these tasks only require a couple of hours nine times per year, and it is a huge help! Contact Ron Renchler at 541.345.0834 or christyandron@qwest.net to find out more.



Publicity Volunteer: Help us get public notices to various media services and spread the word about upcoming Program Meetings, bird walks, and other activities. We also need to make sure we are ahead of publication deadlines. Other goals include developing new contacts with media and keeping contacts and deadlines organized. Contact Maeve Sowles at 541.343.8664 or president@laneaudubon.org.

LCAS Booth at the Good Earth Show—A Success All Around

Several hundred visitors to the Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show at the Lane County Fairgrounds Convention Center stopped by the Lane County Audubon booth January 20-22 to look over our mounted bird specimens, report their recent sightings, and learn more about LCAS education and conservation activities.

A group of nineteen dedicated booth volunteers were on hand to handle the heavy flow of foot traffic. LCAS thanks each of them for giving their time to help community members learn more about birds and our organization: Flo Alvergue, Joyce Baker, Connie Berglund, Ann Best, Pat Bitner, Barbara Butzer, Debra Eichner, Margot Fetz, Diane McInnes, Dolly Marshall, Sally O'Donnell, Nancy Radius, Debbie Schlenoff, Phil Smyser, Bruce Stermer, Dave Stone, Janie Thomas, Susanne Twight-Alexander, and Herb Wisner.

A special thanks goes to Dick Lamster, who presented a workshop on attracting backyard birds that was attended by more than 50 people.

If you have an interest in helping staff the LCAS booth at local festivals and events, contact Ron Renchler, 541-345-0834, christyandron@qwest.net.

Correction

In the article on winter reading in February's *Quail*, a title of a book by Kathleen Dean Moore was incorrectly given as *Solitude*. The title should have been *Wild Comfort—The Solace of Nature*. Moore also has a new title out: *Moral Ground—Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril*.

Not Quite a Full Deck

Herb Wisner

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hrwisner@comcast.net

At our March meeting, artist and former educator Richard Weeks will illustrate a six-year quest, involving nine separate trips to eight states, to locate, photograph, and paint the 52 breeding warblers of the U.S. “Not Quite a Full Deck” will reveal which birds are missing from Richard’s deck of warbler “cards.”

According to Richard, most of his art revolves around travel. He finds inspiration in the natural beauty and cultural uniqueness of the Americas. For 40 years, he has enjoyed almost yearly trips to Latin America. His background in biology immediately draws him to wildlife, and in recent years he has concentrated on photographing birds wherever he goes. He finds that observing, photographing, and painting a bird showing its natural setting is an extremely satisfying process and lets him relive the travel experience long after returning home.

Please join us Tuesday, March 27, at 7:30 p.m. at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High Street, for a window into Richard’s travels—and meet some of the warblers he’s captured on canvas along the way.

Upcoming Program Meetings

April: Steve Gordon and Cary Kerst, Dragonflies

May: Arch McCallum, Topic TBA

March Program Meeting

Not Quite a Full Deck

by Richard Weeks



**Tuesday,
March 27, 7:30 p.m.**

**Eugene Garden Club
1645 High St., Eugene**

Community Calendar, Events and Opportunities

Aquatic Health Workshops

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Burns, OR

March 12-14

Registration and Fees Required

FMI: 541-493-4242

WREN Wanders

Willamette Resources and Educational Network

Meadowlark Prairie

Tuesday, March 13, 9:00 a.m.

Free. FMI: 541-338-7047

Birding Trip

Willamalane Adult Activity Center

Birding at Ankeny and Basket Slough National Wildlife lead by Floyd Weitzel

Wednesday, March 14

Registration, Fees. FMI: Floyd Weitzel, 541-344-8619

Willamette River Hydrology

Eugene Natural History Society

Gordon E. Grant, professor at Oregon State University

Friday, March 16, 7:30 p.m.

Free. Location: Room 100, Willamette Hall, UO Campus

FMI: <http://biology.uoregon.edu/enhs/>

Nearby Nature’s 20th Birthday Party

Nearby Nature

Saturday, March 17, 1-4 p.m.

Free. Location: First United Methodist Church. FMI: 541-687-9699

Bird Walks and Events



Maeve Sowles

541.343.8664

president@laneaudubon.org

Bird Walk Coordinator needed

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SATURDAY
March 17

THIRD SATURDAY BIRD WALK Location and Leader to Be Announced

Check the LCAS website at <http://www.laneaudubon.org/birdwalk.htm> to learn more about the leader, location, and start time. We will meet at the South Eugene High School parking lot (corner of 19th and Patterson) for carpooling. A \$3 donation is suggested. Please remember not to leave valuables in your car as a precaution.

March Program Meeting

Not Quite a Full Deck

by Richard Weeks



Tuesday,
March 27, 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club
1645 High St., Eugene

NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER




The Quail

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