



The

April 2016

Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

Audubon Phone – 541.485.BIRD

From Our President



Spring Migration Is in Full Swing

Maeve Sowles

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Contact Tim Godsil at
tgodsil@gmail.com

By April, spring migration is in full swing. Birders eagerly await the “first of the year” bird sightings at their favorite birding spots. We have kept track of yard birds for over 20 years at our property. We feel a rush of excitement and joy when we see and hear the first Tree Swallows fly down to our bird boxes each spring. The same is true for the first Rufous Hummingbird and Turkey Vulture sightings. Part of our amazement is the realization of how far the birds have travelled since we saw them last in the late summer.



Since its inception in 2002, eBird has become a repository for bird-sighting information. The 14 years worth of data can be used in new ways to illustrate the marvels of bird migrations. This year, eBird released a Mesmerizing Migration Map—see it at <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/lasortemap/>. The data points represent millions of bird sightings by citizen scientists. Scientists have studied data showing the birds’ migration pathways and have concluded that a combination of geographic features and broad-scale atmospheric conditions influence the choice of routes used during spring and fall migration. The study finds that the spring migration path follows a more roundabout route but the birds move faster thanks to the presence of strong tailwinds as they head north to their breeding grounds. “It’s an exciting new area of research,” says lead author Frank La Sorte, a research associate at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. “By using eBird data and other forms of migration tracking information, we’re getting a more detailed picture than ever before about where and when birds migrate. That’s the kind of information

(continued on page 5)



Pesticide Ballot Initiatives Need Your Support

Debbie Schlenoff

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During our walks this March, we have been delighted by the activity of birds preparing for spring. It's particularly amusing to observe the crows flying overhead and calling boisterously as they choose their evening roosting site. Most people who study birds believe that one function of this gathering process is information exchange, and I wonder what they are saying to one another each evening. Despite the voices, both raucous and melodious, that we hear this spring from our bird neighbors, we are well aware that when it comes to human policy decisions, the birds have no voice and it is up to us to speak on their behalf. Fortunately, what's good for the health of wildlife is good for the health of people. We need to speak out against the dangerous practice of aerial spraying of chemicals on logged forests because we are concerned about the well-being of people, fish and wildlife, and our waterways and soils.

Private timber forests are managed under the 1971 Oregon Forest Practices act, which many consider to have the weakest environmental safeguards in the West. The laws have led to protection of timber companies at the expense of people and the environment. Current forest practices mean an increased risk of landslides, erosion, wildfire, and inadequate habitat. Chemical sprays, especially through aerial application, have affected the health of people in our communities and led to the poisoning of area soils, water, and wildlife. Releasing toxins from helicopters means off-target spray, drift, and increased runoff that contaminates neighboring waterways and lands, including farms that practice organic agriculture. The body of scientific documentation on the hazardous effects of commonly used pesticides and herbicides continues to grow. We've examined the many ill effects of these toxins on birds in this column previously; see www.laneaudubon.org/sites/default/files/quail_pdf/April2015_Quail_web.pdf.

Last year's bill that featured commonsense reforms was not enacted in the legislature, largely due to the funded opposition by the logging and pesticide industries. Yet statewide polling found a majority of Oregonians supported the ban. This year, thousands of signatures have been collected in

support of three ballot initiatives. All three initiatives make aerial spraying of pesticides and herbicides unlawful "on or near any watershed that serves as a source of drinking water, any school, or any home." One of the initiatives proposes the elimination of clear-cuts, requiring timber companies to leave 50 trees per acre in western Oregon (15 in the eastern part of the state.) Another restricts logging on steep slopes to reduce the risk of landslides. The signatures have been submitted for verification. In the next phase, we need 88,000 registered voters to sign on to put the measures on the ballot.

Citizens of Lane County are also flocking together to gather signatures to ban the practice of aerial spraying of pesticides here in Lane County. Forests can be well managed without the use of toxins. The US Forest Service has banned the practice on federally owned land for over 30 years. The state and county can likewise do better for its citizens.

So how can we work in chorus to provide a voice for the birds? Educate people about the dangers of aerial spraying of toxins. Encourage people to support forest practice reform! We urge everybody to sign the petitions, to help get these measures on the ballot, and to vote them into law. More information can be found at:

www.beyondtoxics.org/work/pesticide-reform/forestry-pesticide-project/3-proposed-ballot-initiatives-reform/

www.oregonwild.org/

www.freedomfromaerialherbicides.org/ (county)



Field Notes: February 2016



- Golden Eagle
- Eastern Towhee

- Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- Hermit Warbler

Tom and Allison Mickel

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The weather was pretty typical for February. As is normal for the month, some of the early migrants are starting to show up, but alas, most of the neotropical migrants won't show up until April or May, when all the insects start to hatch!

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), Oregon Birds Record Committee (OBRC), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR)

WATERBIRDS

Redhead	Feb 27	Kirk Pond	LG	First report for the winter
Barrow's Goldeneye	Feb 12	Mt. Pisgah	JF	Unusual to find on the river
Red-breasted Merganser (27)	Feb 7	SJSR crab pier	AC	A high count for the Lane coast
Common Loon	Feb 15	Dexter Reservoir	ID	Unusual to find them inland
Eared Grebe (3)	Feb 6	Florence - old town	NS	A good wintering location
Green Heron	Feb 13	Row River Nature Park	BB	They winter in small numbers most years

RAPTORS to OWLS

Osprey	Feb	multiple locations	m.ob.	Found around nesting sites already
Bald Eagle	Feb 22	Skinner Butte	AP	A bird on the nest
Golden Eagle	Feb 15	Coburg area	BC	Rare in winter
Golden Eagle (3)	Feb 20	multiple locations	m.ob.	Three reports from wide areas in the valley
Sandhill Crane	Feb 18	Creswell area	NS	Right on schedule for spring migration
Western Sandpiper	Feb 5	FRR	SH	Rare wintering species
Glaucous Gull	Feb 6	SJSR crab pier	NS	Normally found in small number in winter
Band-tailed Pigeon (4)	Feb 18	S of Eugene	MS	About normal arrival time the last few years
Great Gray Owl	Feb 9	Jasper area	fide BN	It's been seen in the area since late Dec
Short-eared Owl (2)	Feb 27	FRR- Royal Ave	EC	A normal wintering location

HUMMINGBIRDS to GROSBEAKS

Rufous Hummingbird	Feb 21	Siltcoos River area	GR	A normal arrival time
Rufous Hummingbird	Feb 23	South Eugene	MS,LM	Right on time for their arrival
Red-breasted Sapsucker	Jan 31	Bloomberg Park	RF	Hybrid w/Red-naped
Say's Phoebe	Feb 5	Mt Pisgah	CA,SMa	About a month earlier than normal
Say's Phoebe (2)	Feb 21	Mt Pisgah	JS	A more normal time for their migration
Northern Shrike	Feb	numerous locations	m.ob.	Seem to be more common than usual
Tree Swallow	Jan 31	FRR - E Coyote	RR	The first report for the "spring"
Violet-green Swallow	Feb 15	FRR - Royal Ave	SH	About two weeks earlier than normal
Mountain Chickadee	Feb 17	Kirk Park	BU	At least one still being reported for the area
Northern Mockingbird	Feb 19	SE Eugene	A&TM	Same area where one was reported in Jan
Cedar Waxwing (6)	Feb 24	Delta Ponds	SMc,SMa	They winter in small numbers most years
Orange-crowned Warbler	Feb 17	River Rd area	BC	They winter in small numbers most years
Common Yellowthroat	Feb 6	Meadowlark Prairie	VT	They winter in small numbers most years
Hermit Warbler	Feb 8	Eugene - S hills	DG	One or two have been found in winter recently
Eastern Towhee	Feb 6	SE Eugene	AP	First Lane record if approved by the OBRC
Swamp Sparrow	Feb 25	Lynn Hollow area	NS	A new wintering location for this species
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Feb 11	Walterville area	VB	A rare species, especially in the winter

A&TM Allison & Tom Mickel, AC Alan Contreras, AP Al Prigge, BB Barbara Butzer, BC Barbara Combs, BN Bruce Newhouse, BU Becky Uhler, CA Cindy Armstrong, DG Dan Gleason, EC Ellen Cantor, GR Glenn Reubon, ID Isaac Denzer, JF Judy Franzen, JS Julia Siporin, LG Linda Gilbert, LM Lori Markoff, m.ob many observers, MS Maeve Sowles, NS Noah Strycker, RF Rachael Friese, RR Roger Robb, SH Sally Hill, SMa Sylvia Maulding, SMC Scott McNeeley, VB Vickie Buck, VT Vjera Thompson. Fide indicates a sighting that was reported to the listed observer.

Douglas-fir National Monument with Stephen Sharnoff

Judy Brown

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Stephen Sharnoff, nature photographer and research associate at UC Berkeley, is our featured guest at the April Program Meeting. He will give a presentation about a major new public-lands conservation initiative that he and Oregon conservationist Andy Kerr are leading. They have drafted a proposal for a national monument to the Douglas-fir forests of the Pacific Northwest, to be located in the Santiam River watershed of the western Cascades. Stephen's work has been published in two guidebooks on lichens and in *National Geographic* and *Smithsonian*, among many others.



Anna's Hummingbird in a nest camouflaged with lichens

April Program Meeting Douglas-fir National Monument with Stephen Sharnoff



A Douglas-fir forest near the Middle Santiam Wilderness, Oregon Cascades.

Tuesday, April 26, 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club
1645 High St., Eugene

Welcome Back Vaux's Swifts at Agate Hall



Lane County Audubon Society will hold its annual spring Swift Event outside Agate Hall, although this year we will wait to set a date until we see swifts begin to arrive at the chimney. Their migration patterns are less predictable than ever before. In the past we have seen the earliest Vaux's Swifts arrive by mid-April with increasing numbers over the next three to four weeks.

The Vaux's Swifts use the chimney to roost for the night as they gather during spring migration. The LCAS Swift Event is a wonderful chance to observe and learn about the birds

as they return from Central and South America for the breeding season.

LCAS will offer handouts with information about the birds. Look for the LCAS banner at 17th Avenue and Agate Street. Stop by and enjoy this annual natural phenomenon. It's free and open to the public.

The date of the event will be posted on our website calendar and Facebook page. You may also call 541.343.8664 for more information. Remember to check out the Vaux's Happening website for more information about Vaux's Swifts: www.vauxhappening.org/Vauxs_Happening_Home.html

From our President *(continued from page 1)*

we need to make smart conservation decisions for species that live in vastly different regions during the year. Citizen science makes it possible to do this for populations across an entire hemisphere.”

This type of citizen science engages birders across the globe. It helps us all feel as though we are a part of something bigger than ourselves. The birds travel wild and free, guided by instincts, with only their brains and beating hearts to get them to their destinations. We can help them by maintaining old habitats and creating new ones and by protecting lakes, forests, and valley flyways from destruction. The birds face many natural hazards, but we can reduce manmade hazards by choosing to preserve, protect, and cherish the natural richness of Earth. It is our Earth, but we are not the only ones using it. Spring is a celebration of the growing and breeding seasons and the renewal of our commitment to care for the beauty around us. We wish safe travels to the birds during the spring migration this year!

Audubon in the Schools Instructors Needed

The Audubon in the Schools program sends teams of volunteer instructors into the schools to teach third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade students both science and art using bird specimens, feathers, bones, and nests. No teaching experience or artistic talent is required. All you need is an interest in teaching children and a few hours a month. You can check out the program by sitting in on a class. For more information, contact Caryn Stoess, Audubon in the Schools Coordinator, at 541.357.8739 or AITSEugene@gmail.com.

Thanks to Dick Lamster

Thanks to Dick Lamster for presenting a talk on local birds at the March meeting of Fern Ridge Rotary.



Like us on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/pages/Lane-County-AudubonSociety/330177413824?ref=hl

Volunteer Opportunity: *The Quail* Editor

Lane Audubon is looking for a special someone to gather and edit content for *The Quail* newsletter. There are nine issues per year. Editor responsibilities include setting submission deadlines and communicating with contributors; collecting, organizing, editing, and proofreading submissions; selecting photos for print; and communicating with the layout person and printer.

This is an exciting opportunity to take responsibility for a newsletter that reaches nearly 1,500 members across Lane County! For more information, call Maeve at 541.343.864 or email president@laneaudubon.org.

Thanks to CBT Nuggets and LCAS members

Lane County Audubon Society owes a very big thank you to the local company called CBT Nuggets! They selected LCAS as the nonprofit to receive “NuggetLOVE” during the month of February. This gave us an opportunity to have donations matched up to \$5,000 by the company! Through electronic outreach, we were able to raise \$4,253.15 from our members during February. CBT Nuggets matched this amount, plus they donated another \$5414.12! Our grand total was \$13,920.42!!

Thank you to our members for their support and thank you to CBT Nuggets for their amazing donation!



Lane Audubon welcomes you—join or renew today!



We ask you to become a local member of Lane County Audubon Society and support our grassroots efforts in the local community. Your membership dues

for National Audubon Society no longer support a membership in your local chapter. 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! We appreciate your support. —Maeve Sowles, President

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 www.laneaudubon.org



Deadlines:

May-June issue: April 2
 July-Aug. issue: June 4
 Submit material to
 Paula Rich
richpaula@hotmail.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.

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

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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)\$ _____

To pay by PayPal, go to www.laneaudubon.org/support/join

- Current National Audubon member Don't know

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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 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

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Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

A service to Lane Audubon members

Harney County Migratory Bird Festival

April 8–10, Burns, OR

Spend an amazing weekend witnessing the spectacular spring migration in the Harney Basin of Southeast Oregon. View thousands of migratory birds as they rest and feed in the wide-open spaces of Oregon's high desert.

FMI: www.migratorybirdfestival.com, 855.438.8625

Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival

April 13–19, Arcata, CA

Observe the bird species and wildlife of the Redwood Coast through field trips, lectures, workshops, and boat excursions led by experienced local guides.

The keynote speaker this year is David Sibley.

FMI: www.godwitdays.org

Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, April 17, 8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.
Spring Bird Walk

Join Nature Guides Chris Roth and Julia Siporin for another monthly bird walk intended for people with all levels of birding experience. Use vocalizations, habitat, and behavior clues for identification of spring and year-round residents. Option to continue the walk until noon for those who are interested. Please bring binoculars. Rain or shine.

\$5, Members free. Meet at the Arboretum Visitor Center.

FMI: 541.747.1504,

www.MountPisgahArboretum.org

Southern Willamette Ornithological Club, Eugene Birders Night

Monday, April 18, 7:00 p.m.

Birding Colombia: Andes to the Caribbean with Ellen Cantor

Everyone is welcome to attend these monthly meetings. After initial introductions, recent sightings and birding-connected topics will be discussed. Then Ellen Cantor will share

images and tales from her recent trip to Colombia, ranging from the humid tropical forests of the Western and Central Andes to the semi-arid Caribbean coast.

Meet at the McNail-Riley house, 601 West 13th Avenue, Eugene (NW corner of 13th and Jefferson). The parking area, located immediately west of the house, can be accessed from Jefferson via the driveway located immediately north of the house.

Free. FMI: ellencantor@gmail.com

The Big Sit!

Saturday, April 23

Schwarz Park (below Dorena Dam)

The Big Sit! is an annual international noncompetitive birding event. Observers simply relax, watch for birds, and make a note of species they see at their selected location. Couldn't be easier! The observation location is just below the dam, about a 1/4 mile walk in from the closed gate at the entrance to Schwarz Park. Bring your own snacks, drinks, and binoculars. Contact Barbara Butzer at 541.942.2401 or bbutzer0520@gmail.com to sign up for a Sit time.

Pacific City Birding and Blues Festival

April 29–May 1, Pacific City, OR

Top birding experts will lead field trips to popular locations including Neskowin Marsh and will teach birders who are just getting started at identification. The 2016 Festival will bring fresh topics such as Behind the Scenes Nature Walk, Seabird Watch, Feeders & Birding, and the incredibly exciting Evening Owl Search. John Marzluff is the keynote speaker. At night, the town comes alive with blues concerts on both Friday and Saturday evenings.

FMI: www.BirdingandBlues.org

Global Big Day

May 14

How many birds can eBirders find in a day? There are many ways to get involved

with Global Big Day. At its simplest, you can just go birding and submit an eBird list from that day. Learn more at <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/savethedategbd2016/> and <http://ebird.org/globalbigday/>.



Mountain Bird Festival

May 20–22, Ashland, OR

This event is hosted by the Klamath Bird Observatory in partnership with several Ashland-area organizations. Participate in guided bird walks, attend keynote presentations, a fine-art auction, cocktail parties, and enjoy live music, local foods, and a feel-good community atmosphere. Registration required.

FMI: www.klamathbird.org, 541.201.0866

Wings Across the Big Sky Festival

June 3–5, Missoula, MT

Choose from more than 20 field trips to a variety of habitats, including wetlands, uplands, mountain forests, sagebrush shrub-steppe, and large rivers. Postfestival day-long field trips for serious birders are also available.

FMI: <http://mtaudubon.org/birding/montana-bird-festival/>



**April Program Meeting
Douglas-fir National
Monument
with Stephen Sharnoff**




**Tuesday, April 26, 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club
1645 High St., Eugene**



**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER**

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Bird Walks and Events

Jim Maloney

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jimgmal@comcast.com

**Saturday,
April 16**

THIRD SATURDAY BIRD WALK

Willamette Confluence, led by Charlie Quinn and Dennis Arendt

The Third Saturday Bird Walk for April will be an insider tour of the Willamette Confluence Restoration Project, just northwest of Mt. Pisgah Arboretum. Join Charlie Quinn of The Nature Conservancy and local birder extraordinaire Dennis Arendt for an informative morning. More details will be posted to the LCAS website and Facebook page as the date approaches.

We will meet to carpool at the usual South Eugene High School east parking lot and plan to leave at about 8:00 a.m.

All levels of birders are welcome. We have a couple of pairs of binoculars to loan if needed. We plan to return by noon. Remember that it's not a good idea to leave valuables in your vehicle if you leave it at the parking lot. A \$3 donation is appreciated to help support Lane County Audubon's activities.

For more information, contact Jim Maloney at 541-968-9249 or jimgmal@comcast.net.

Date tbd

WELCOME BACK VAUX'S SWIFTS AT AGATE HALL

The swifts return, and we hope you'll join LCAS to welcome and celebrate them. See page 4 for more information. The date will be announced on the LCAS website and Facebook page.