



The

April 2015

Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

Audubon Phone – 541.485.BIRD

From Our President



Lack of Rain Is Problematic for Wildlife, Plants, and People

Maeve Sowles

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tgodsil@gmail.com

April showers are on my wish list this year. As I write this in early March, we are in a dry spell and are well below our normal rain and snowfall amounts in western Oregon. I will perform a rain dance if it will help bring us rain. At our property, spring began in February this year. A young satsuma pear tree was in full bloom before the end of February. Pollinators were out looking for flower nectar, but most were left wandering and wondering where their food was during the untimely warm days. Bats were out looking for food earlier than I've seen them before too. Many of the spring birds arrived at our property early—Turkey Vultures, Tree Swallows, Violet-green Swallows, and Rufous Hummingbirds.



How will the early warm weather and lack of rainfall affect the natural cycles this summer and fall? Plants and animals can adapt to a point, but for some, survival without adequate water may be difficult. Last fall we had two thirsty bobcat kittens on our property. The lower creek was dry, so they ventured up the hill toward our house. Our dogs chased one of them up a tree. Once I got the dogs inside, the young cat escaped. This year we set up a water tank and trough away from the house for the wild animals to drink from. It is one small thing we can do to help wildlife.

We use stored water for irrigation, but usually don't need it until late June or July. I'm already watering some garden plants! Our house is on a well that has met our needs adequately each year. We use water wisely, hoping it will last, until the rains come back in the fall. We hope each year that the water table below ground is not exhausted. As more people move into rural areas, water will become a critical factor in our lives. All natural life cycles depend upon adequate water.

(continued on page 5)



Senate Bill 613 Addresses Herbicide Spraying

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The Oregon public is concerned about the harmful effects of spraying herbicides from helicopters, a routine practice in the Oregon timber industry. There have recently been several reports of people, especially rural residents (and their pets), being harmed from exposure after aerial spraying. The current laws insufficiently protect and inform people about aerial sprays, but now some sensible people aim to change that. The Public Health and Water Resources Protection Act (Senate Bill 613) has been introduced in the 2015 Oregon Legislature to address these concerns. The buffer zones protecting our waterways are smaller than in other states. There are no buffers around schools. There is a confusing, difficult-to-access notification system that does not provide specific information about when the chemicals will be sprayed or follow-up information that identifies the chemicals that were actually applied. The bill would improve notification to the public about aerial sprays so people can better act to protect themselves, their families, pets, and food crops; improve public access to records so that residents and their health practitioners know what has been sprayed if they need to seek appropriate treatment; and prohibit aerial application of pesticides on forestlands near residences, schools, waterways used as community water sources, and waterways that support native fish populations.

In addition to protecting people, better regulation of aerial sprays will help protect fish and wildlife. Recent research (Betts et al. 2013) on intensive forest management in Oregon demonstrated that the abundance of several bird species declined in study areas that used herbicides, with the effect being most pronounced on leaf-gleaning insectivorous birds. Tellingly, the species most negatively affected by herbicide treatments in the study were more likely to have demonstrated population declines across the Pacific Northwest.

Birds may be affected by direct exposure to sprays, as well as by contamination of their food sources and water supply. Sublethal effects accumulate, the several pesticides that are sprayed together may have synergistic effects, and untested “inert” ingredients (such as diesel-fuel carrier, which reduces

egg hatchability) can multiply risk to wildlife. Various pesticides have been shown to be skin, eye, and lung irritants, to damage liver and immune function, and to alter behavior. Indirect effects include loss of shelter, greater exposure to predators, reduction in food sources, and increased energy expenditure from carrying food longer distances to hungry nestlings.

The effects may be long lasting, since many herbicides persist in the soil and/or water. Additionally, the soil itself is eroded, nutrients are leached, and the beneficial soil bacteria and mycorrhizae fungi that help plants take up nutrients are harmed. The effects are also more widespread than a map of the sprayed area might indicate because the toxins run off; they find their way into the water, volatilize, and drift. And of course, releasing toxins from helicopters means off-target spray and drift, exacerbated by the slopes of Oregon’s remaining forests.

The need for *any* use of herbicides after logging is dubious. Herbicide sprays are not used in federal forests or by several Oregon-based sustainable timber businesses. However, if herbicides are to be used, it is important to have legislation in place that protects people, water, birds, and the environment.

Contact your legislators to let them know you support Senate Bill 613. Or use this Oregon Wild link: http://org.salsalabs.com/o/1780/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=17213

You can find more information on the bill at Beyond Toxics: <http://www.beyondtoxics.org/work/pesticide-reform/forestry-pesticide-project/public-health-water-resources-protection-act/>

Reference: Betts, M. G., J. Verschuyf, J. Giovanini, T. Stokely, and A.J. Kroll. 2013. “Initial Experimental Effects of Intensive Forest Management on Avian Abundance,” *Forest Ecology and Management* 310:1036–1044.

Field Notes: February 2015



- Golden Eagle
- Ancient Murrelet
- Mountain Chickadee

- MacGillivray's Warbler
- Lark Sparrow
- Pine Grosbeak

Tom and Allison Mickel

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February started off quite wet, but then turned dry and stayed that way for most of the month. There were some interesting sightings this month—rarities for both the winter season and Lane County, as well as early migrants.

Abbreviations: Alton Baker Park (A. Baker), Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), Golden Gardens Park (G. Gardens), North Jetty of the Siuslaw River (NJSR), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR)

WATERBIRDS

| | | | | |
|---------------|----------|---------------------|-------|---|
| Ross's Goose | Feb 13 | Junction City area | LF | Almost annual in the large cackler flocks |
| Brown Pelican | Feb 13 | Heceta Head | JNS | At least one bird still around |
| Brown Pelican | Feb 15 | Sea Lion Caves | JW | At least one bird still around |
| Green Heron | Feb 2-11 | A. Baker/G. Gardens | m.ob. | They winter in very small numbers |

HAWKS to OWLS

| | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|--|
| Sooty Grouse (2) | Feb 14 | Sutton Lake area | DPe | Always a good bird for the Coast Range |
| Turkey Vulture | Feb 12 | SJSR | DPe | First "spring" report for the coast |
| Osprey | Feb 17 | Dorena Reservoir | TMo | Early away from the Eugene/Springfield rivers |
| Golden Eagle (4) | Feb 21 | 15 mi S of Oakridge | CF | Photographed by a trailcam at a cougar kill |
| Snowy Owl | Feb | FRR | m.ob. | It's been seen all month |
| Sandhill Crane (38) | Feb 14 | Lorane Highway | EC | A few days early and unusual away from the east edge of the valley |
| Glaucous Gull | Feb 4 | Bob Creek | SH | Seen again this month |
| Pigeon Guillemot | Feb 7 | NJSR | TJ | Not normally seen from shore this time of year |
| Marbled Murrelet | Feb 3 | SJSR | JF, LW | Not normally seen from shore this time of year |
| Ancient Murrelet (2) | Feb 3 | SJSR | JF, LW | Unusual, especially this far south in Lane Co |

WOODPECKERS to FINCHES

| | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|-------------------------|-----|--|
| Band-tailed Pigeon | Feb 13 | Lorane Highway | EC | About a month earlier than normal |
| Rufous Hummingbird | Feb 13 | Florence | MM | First report for the coast |
| Rufous Hummingbird | Feb 18 | SE Eugene | DPi | A few days earlier than normal |
| Gray Jay (2) | Feb 13 | Owl Rd, Eugene | DC | They're occasionally found around the butte |
| Horned Lark (2) | Feb 25 | Eugene airport area | SH | An area where they're normally found |
| Violet-green Swallow (15) | Feb 21 | I-5, Brown Ck rest area | AR | A couple days earlier than normal |
| Barn Swallow | Feb 20 | West Eugene | SN | Over a month earlier than normal |
| Mountain Chickadee | Feb 15 | SE Eugene | SC | A rare report away from the high Cascades |
| Cedar Waxwing | Feb 12 | River Road area | BC | Only one bird in yard |
| MacGillivray's Warbler | Feb 3 | Valley River Inn area | SN | About the sixth winter record for Lane Co |
| Lark Sparrow | Feb 8 | North Eugene | DS | A rare mid-winter report |
| Evening Grosbeak (40) | Feb 13 | Oakridge | MLS | A large flock for winter |
| Late Report | | | | |
| Pine Grosbeak | Jan 27 | Foley Ridge Rd | LG | Rare - less than a dozen records for Lane Co |

AR Alex Rinkert, BC Barbara Combs, CF Cheron Ferland, DC David Cole, DPe Diane Pettey, DPi Diane Pigg, DS Don Schrouder, EC Elizabeth Cookson, JF Jason Fidorra, JNS JN Schuler, JW Julie Wawashkeski, LF Luke Ferrenburg, LG Linda Gilbert, LW Lena Ware, MLS Mary Lee Sayre, MM Mike McDermet, m.ob. many observers, SC Saumya Campen, SH Sally Hill, SN Stephan Nance, TJ Tye Jeske, TMo Tori Morgan

Eastern Africa South of the Equator: Babblers to Barbets, Blue Monkeys, and Beyond with Bob Fleming

Herb Wisner

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AFRICA, with an area of almost 12 million square miles, is the world's second largest continent and hosts some 2,500 bird species within about 111 families. The eastern portion of Africa south of the equator features some of the most dramatic topography on the continent, including Mt. Kilimanjaro, the Ngorogoro Crater, the Zambezi River with Victoria Falls, and the Drakensberg escarpment that marks the border between Lesotho and South Africa.

A remarkable array of species lives within this region, such as the Malachite Sunbird, Orange-headed Lizard, Ice Rat, Golden-orb Spider, as well as a stunning variety of endemic wildflowers, including Agapanthus, Crocosmia, and Gladioli—ornamentals often seen in Lane County gardens.

Besides meeting folks and learning about Chaga, Masaai, Zulu, and other traditions, a visit to Africa offers the opportunity to observe large mammals. However, after seeing the umpteenth lion lying in the shade with its feet in the air, one may begin to look around. And there, perched on a bush nearby, might be a stunning, two-toned blue Lilac-breasted Roller. This bird, on more than one occasion, has tweaked a person's first interest in the feathered world.

Naturalist Bob Fleming first journeyed to African in 1973 and has enjoyed visiting the continent many times since. His presentation begins along the northern rim of Tanzania and then continues south to the Sani Pass and the Thula Thula Game Preserve in KwaZuluNatal. Join us on April 28 at the Eugene Garden Club at 1645 High Street for a vicarious journey with Bob through Africa.

April Program Meeting

Africa: Babblers, Barbets, Blue Monkeys, and Beyond



Tuesday, April 28, 7:30 p.m.

Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St., Eugene

The male Kori Bustard, *Ardeotis kori*, advertises on its grassland lek in hopes of attracting the attention of a female. Besides this strut display, males may stand bolt upright, puff out their necks, and call, their voices a deep, resonant boom, boom, boom. A big kori tops out at 40 lb. and is one of Africa's heaviest flying birds.

Get Involved—Volunteer!

Lane County Audubon Society is an all-volunteer organization, and our members are very proud of the energy and diverse talents that volunteers bring to our cause—we couldn't do it without them. Volunteering with LCAS is a great way to meet new people, give back to the community, and—best of all—have fun! For more information, visit our Volunteer page online at www.laneaudubon.org/support/volunteer or contact Maeve Sowles at 541.343.8664 or president@laneaudubon.org.

Lane Audubon Community Outreach

Help introduce Lane Audubon to community members at local events and present talks on birding and the natural world

to small groups upon request. Help develop our “speaker bureau” materials and resources.

This is a great opportunity to use your creativity and get involved in community outreach for Lane County Audubon!

Program Committee

The Program Committee works as a team to develop ideas and recruit speakers for the chapter Program Meetings. Programs are scheduled eight times per year. The Program Committee is responsible for engaging speakers and organizing publicity and other logistics well in advance of each meeting. The Board will assist with ideas for Program speakers.

Welcome Back Vaux's Swifts at Agate Hall



Lane County Audubon Society will hold its annual spring Swift Event outside Agate Hall on Saturday, April 25, at sunset. We hope to see early arrivals by mid-April and the numbers will increase 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.

Lane Audubon 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.

Call 541-343-8664 for more information about the event. Check the Vaux's Happening website for more information about Vaux's Swifts: http://www.vauxhappening.org/Vauxs_Happening_Home.html

LCAS Offers Birding Resources and Apparel

Lane County Audubon has several items available for purchase to help you get ready for spring and summer birding. All proceeds help LCAS fund its educational, conservation, and outreach programs.

You can purchase these items at the LCAS program meetings on Tuesday, April 28, and Tuesday, May 26.

High-quality, heavy canvas tote bags with Quail logo (\$12)
National Audubon hats, one-size-fits-all (\$10)
T-shirts—LCAS Quail logo and Swift Event theme (\$15)
52 Small Birds, by Richard Weeks (\$20)
Birds of Lane County (half-price sale, \$10)



From Our President (continued from page 1)

In previous years at this time, I've written about hearing the sounds of water all around, because we usually have the blessing of rainfall to celebrate. Indigenous cultures celebrate the coming of rain because it ensures a successful growing season. I know if our rains come in April and May, I will be celebrating. I take nothing for granted. Humans are part of this big earth ecosystem. Although many people try to ignore their vulnerability, we are indeed members of the biological community. We need the same things to survive as other creatures—clean air, clean water, food, and shelter. These are things we must treasure and preserve.

John Cooney bequeaths book collection to LCAS

John Cooney, who was a vocal presence for the environment in our community, passed away last November. His radio show, John Cooney's Natural World, aired on KLCC for 15 years and provided audio glimpses of the natural areas that surround us. His style was distinctive, reverent, informative, and poetic. He gave us a unique perspective and educated us while entertaining us with his radio shows. He will be missed.

John's wife, Angela Andre, has donated John's bird books to Lane Audubon. The collection includes 93 books, with topics ranging from hummingbirds, warblers, seabirds, and birds of North America to birds of the world. The donation also includes a collection of the Life Histories of North American birds, including 18 bird groups.

Apparently, John could never pass up a bird book. Angela said that he had planned to be involved with our group when he retired.

We also received monetary donations in his name from friends and family. For all these donations, we are thankful.

Thank You, Dick Weeks!

Over the past year, sales of Dick Weeks's book, *52 Small Birds*, have resulted in almost \$1,000 that he has donated to LCAS! If you have not yet seen Dick's work, visit <http://rweeksart.com/>.

Thank you, Dick, for sharing your wonderful book and the proceeds with Lane Audubon!

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 4
July–August Issue: June 6

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

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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
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Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

A service to Lane Audubon members

John Scharff Migratory Bird Festival

April 9–12, 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

Olympic Peninsula BirdFest

April 10–12

Participate in guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, a silent auction, and a gala banquet.

FMI: www.olympicbirdfest.org

Southern Willamette Ornithological Club

Monday, April 13, 7:00 p.m.

Eugene Birders Night

Horsefly Lookout with Maitreya

Everyone is welcome to attend these monthly meetings. After initial introductions, we'll share recent sightings and discuss birding-connected topics. Then Maitreya will present photos from his work as a lookout on Horsefly Lookout in south central Oregon. He will discuss the 105 species of birds that were found on Horsefly Mountain in 2014, as well as some of the unusual local flora.

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 just north of the house.

Free. FMI: ellencantor@gmail.com

North American Butterfly Association

Monday, April 13, 2015, Refreshments 7:00 p.m., presentation 7:30 p.m.

The Eugene Garden Club at 1645 High St.
Monarch Waystations: A Milkweed Railroad along Migration Routes with Tom Landis.

Tom Landis, a retired forester, will present an in-depth look at how to create monarch waystations—specialized pollinator gardens that link up to create a “milkweed railroad” along the monarch butterfly migration route.

Free. FMI: 541.344.7630

Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival

April 15–21, 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.

FMI: www.godwitdays.org

Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN)

Saturday, April 11, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Family Exploration Day at Meadowlark Prairie

Meet at the parking area on Greenhill Road, north of West 11th Ave. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes. WREN will provide exploration packs and binoculars.

Tuesday, April 14, 9:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

Wetland Wander at Wild Iris Ridge

Park on Bailey View Drive in Eugene and walk to the end of the street to meet our group at the entrance. Bring water and wear sturdy shoes. WREN will provide binoculars.

Free. FMI: 541.338.7047, info@wewetlands.org

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, April 5, 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. Please bring binoculars. Rain or shine.

Sunday, April 12, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Pollination Ecology Walk

Join Arboretum Assistant Site Manager August Jackson for a tour of the Arboretum's wildflowers and their pollinators. Learn the foraging and nesting habits of common

native bees, and meet a cartoonish bumblebee-mimic fly that finds a home on Mount Pisgah's prairies.

Sunday, April 19, 10 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Wildflower Walk

Join local ecologists Peg Boulay and Bruce Newhouse in enjoying April wildflowers at the Arboretum. Rain or shine. Co-sponsored with NPSO.

\$5, Members free. All events begin at the Arboretum visitor Center. FMI: 541.747.1504,
www.MountPisgahArboretum.org

Mountain Bird Festival

May 29–31, Ashland, OR

Registration is open for the second annual Mountain Bird Festival. 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



April Program Meeting

**Africa: Babblers,
Barbets, Blue Monkeys,
and Beyond**




**Tuesday, April 28
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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**Saturday
April 18**

THIRD SATURDAY BIRD WALK

Elijah Bristow State Park, led by Dave Bontrager

Expert birder Dave Bontrager will lead April's Third Saturday Bird Walk to Elijah Bristow State Park near Dexter. Dave knows the area well and has led trips there in the past.

Folks can meet for carpooling at the east parking lot of South Eugene High School. We will leave the parking lot at about 8:00 a.m. and travel out Highway 58 to Elijah Bristol, which is about 16 miles away. I hope to be there at or before 8:30 a.m. Those wishing to meet the group there should go to the last parking lot on the road through the park.

All levels of birders are welcome. We have a couple of pairs of binoculars to loan to beginners, if needed. We plan to return by about noon. Remember that it's not a good idea to leave valuables or your vehicle registration 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.

**Saturday
April 25**

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 5 for more information.

Spring is here! Think about the birds as you garden and work around your home. See the LCAS website for tips for creating a bird-friendly environment: www.laneaudubon.org/conservation/issues/gardening and www.laneaudubon.org/conservation/issues/bird-window



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