



The

December 2016-January 2017

Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society



From Our President

Why I Love Birding ... and Birders!

Maeve Sowles

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Audubon Phone – 541.485.BIRD

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There are many reasons to love birding. It keeps your mind and senses active. Listening, observing, trying to decide what bird you are watching are great exercises for the brain. It creates learning challenges for the visual, the sounds and the memory of birds you know, to come up with a bird's identification.



Photo: Camilla Cerea/Audubon

There is also a sense of anticipation and excitement in a day of birding. One is always looking for a new or unusual sighting that gives birding the feeling of a treasure hunt. At times there are surprising discoveries! One year on the Eugene Christmas Bird Count, Dave Bontrager identified a rare Falcated Duck on a pond near Coburg. It was a cold, wet, windy day but he persisted in watching this bird riding the whitecaps on the pond, until he was certain of its identity. Way to go Dave!

Bird watching also takes us out of our own headspace and into the world of the bird. Observing their behaviors, feeding strategies, watching them bathe and preen, interacting with each other, delighting in their lovely feathers and songs; all these give us yet another aspect of the birding adventure. Peeking into their world creates a form of escapism so that we feel a part of the bird's world, a kinship with nature and a sense of awe in the beauty of this world around us. I know it makes me feel happy!

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History of the National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count and How the Data Is Used Today

(Taken from the NAS web site with local information added by Dick Lamster)

How the Count Started

Prior to the turn of the 20th century, hunters engaged in a holiday tradition known as the Christmas Side Hunt. They would choose sides and go afield with their guns. Whichever team brought in the biggest pile of feathered (and furred) quarry won.

Conservation awareness was just in its beginning stages then, as many observers and scientists were becoming concerned about declining bird populations. Beginning on Christmas Day 1900, ornithologist Frank M. Chapman, an early officer in the then-nascent Audubon Society, proposed a new holiday tradition—a Christmas Bird Census that would count birds during the holidays rather than hunt them. So began the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Thanks to the inspiration of Chapman and the enthusiasm of 27 dedicated birders, 25 Christmas Bird Counts were held that day. Locations ranged from Toronto, Ontario, to Pacific Grove, California, with most counts in or near the population centers of northeastern North America. The combined tally of the original 27 Christmas Bird Counters came to around 90 species.

In the present, from December 14 through January 5 each year, tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas brave snow, wind, or rain to take part in the effort.

How the CBC Helps Protect Species

The data collected by observers over the past century allow Audubon researchers, conservation biologists, wildlife agencies and other interested individuals to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America. When combined with other surveys, such as the Breeding Bird Survey, it provides a picture of how the continent's bird populations have changed in time and space over the past hundred years. The long-term perspective is vital for conservationists. It informs strategies to protect birds and their habitat, and helps identify environmental issues with implications for people as well.

What Conservationists Have Learned through CBC Data

Audubon's 2014 Climate Change Report is a comprehensive, first-of-its-kind study that predicts how climate change could affect the ranges of 588 North American birds. Of the 588 North American bird species Audubon studied, more than half are likely to be in trouble. Our models indicate that 314

species will lose more than 50 percent of their current climatic range by 2080.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has included Audubon's climate change work from CBC data as one of 26 indicators of climate change in their 2012 report.

In 2009 CBC data were instrumental in the collaborative report by the North American Bird Conservation Initiative, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - State of the Birds 2009.

In 2007, CBC data were instrumental in the development of Audubon's Common Birds in Decline Report, which revealed that some of America's most beloved and familiar birds have taken a nosedive over the past forty years.

Eugene Christmas Bird Count (ECBC) History

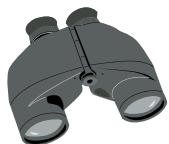
The first ECBC was held in 1912. On Christmas Day, Harriet Thomson took to the field by herself and saw 15 species and reported 377 individual birds to the National Audubon Society (NAS). There are no records of another ECBC until 1942, when Ruth Hopson went out with 10 others and saw 44 species and 1,840 individual birds. While there was no recorded ECBC in 1943, there has been an ECBC every year since 1944. This year will be the 75th ECBC.

In addition to Harriet and Ruth, ECBC organizers, officially called Compilers, have included Ben Pruitt, Lawrence Daggett, Margaret Markley, Don Payne, Irene Flynn, Allan Larrabee, Larry McQueen, Dan Gleason, Chip Jobanck, Steve Gordon, Herb Wisner and currently Dick Lamster. Participants on our Count have ranged from one in 1912 to 255 in 2012. For the past ten years we have been in the top ten counts, with the most participants out of the over 2,500 CBCs in the world.

The number of observed species has steadily risen from the 15 seen in 1912 to the record 140 species seen in 2005, plus two more during Count Week. With lots of people out looking in the field, plus upwards of 100 Home Counters, we now expect to see 130 species or more every year. After seeing 377 total individual birds in 1912, the numbers have risen steadily to a record 129,874 in 2000. The total number of species seen at least once in the past 74 years is 214.

Help us continue to make history by participating in the 75th ECBC on January 1, 2017. Call Dick Lamster at 541.343.8664 or email at maeveanddick@q.com for more information.

Field Notes: October 2016



• **White-winged Crossbill**
• **Heerman's Gull**

• **Lesser Black-backed Gull**
• **Brant Surf Scoter**

Tom and Allison Mickel

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tamickel@rioussa.com

We made up for summer's lack of rain in October—it rained almost non-stop most of the month! Along with the rain, we had a couple of wind events the middle of the month. These most likely displaced some birds, brought some seabirds close to shore, and pushed coastal birds inland.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR), Valley River Center (VRC).

WATERBIRDS to ALCIDS

Brant	Oct 14	FRR	JS	Rarely found inland
Surf Scoter (5)	Oct 12	FRR	JS	Rarely found inland
Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel (2)	Oct 19	Brays Point	MN	Rarely seen from land
White-tailed Kite (4)	Oct 22	Waite Ranch	AC et al.	A very high number for this area
White-tailed Kite (2)	Oct 29	Meadowlark Prairie	VT	Returning for the winter
Sandhill Crane (19)	Oct 23	Creswell area	NS	Normal time for their southern migration
Golden-Plover species (4)	Oct 3	FRR	JS	Unusually large numbers
Red Knot	Oct 9	FRR	JS	Still being seen
Pectoral Sandpiper (12)	Oct 9	FRR	JS	A large number
Red-necked Phalarope	Oct 19	FRR	LM et al.	Getting late for this species
Red Phalarope (2)	Oct 19	FRR	LG	Rarely found inland
Red Phalarope (250)	Oct 28	Heceta Head	AC et al.	Not uncommon this time of year
Red Phalarope (3000+/-)	Oct 29	Sea Lion Caves	SH,DP	A large number
Sabine's Gull (3+)	Oct 14	FRR	JS	Normally found in the fall
Heermann's Gull	Oct 14	W 11th cemetery	SH	Rarely found inland
Caspian Tern (2)	Oct 28	FRR	JS	Late date for this species
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Oct 22	Stonefield Beach	AC et al.	Third record for Lane Co
Parasitic Jaeger	Oct 28	Klootchman	AC et al.	Uncommon from land
Ancient Murrelet	Oct 22	Klootchman	AC et al.	A little early for this species

OWLS to FINCHES

Short-eared Owl	Oct 10	Alvadore	BC	First report for the winter season
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	Oct 12	Mt. Pisgah	DA et al.	Last report for the breeding season
Tropical Kingbird	Oct 28	Florence	AC et al.	Almost annual along the coast in the fall
Northern Shrike (3)	Oct 22	SJSR deflation plain	AC et al.	High number for this early in the season
Streaked Horned Lark (5+)	Oct 1	Junction City area	DL&MS	Locally winters in small numbers
Tree Swallow (12+/-)	Oct 18	Junction City area	BC	Last report for the breeding season
Violet-green Swallow (10's)	Oct 16	VRC, Alton Baker	DH,RR	Seen foraging over the river
Cliff Swallow	Oct 4	FRR - south	BC	Last report for the breeding season
Barn Swallow (2)	Oct 4	FRR - south	BC	Last report for the breeding season
Swainson's Thrush	Oct 9	Sitlcoos River mouth	GR	Last report for the breeding season
Lapland Longspur	Oct 9	FRR	JS	Normally found during fall migration
Orange-crowned Warbler	Oct 18	Hendricks Park	TM	Last report for the breeding season
Common Yellowthroat	Oct 11	West Eugene wetlands	BB	Last report for the breeding season
Yellow-rumped Warbler (none)	Oct 9	SJSR	AC	Very unusual; they are normally common
Black-throated Gray Warbler	Oct 26	Creswell	NS	Last report for the breeding season
Wilson's Warbler	Oct 12	Mt. Pisgah	DA et al.	Last report for the breeding season
Clay-colored Sparrow (2)	Oct 28	Florence	AC et al.	Occasionally seen in the fall
Vesper Sparrow	Oct 31	Bond Rd	SH	Rare during the winter season
Western Tanager	Oct 10	River Road area	BC	Last report for the breeding season
White-winged Crossbill (2)	Oct 16	30th & Spring area	fide CB	Rarely found in the valley

AC Alan Contreras, BB Brian Broderick, BC Barbara Combs, CB Clint Brumitt, DA Dennis Arendt, DH Dan Heyerly, DL Dick Lamster, DP Diane Pettey, GR Glenn Reubon, JS John Sullivan, LG Linda Gilbert, LM Larry McQueen, MN Mark Nikas, MS Maeve Sowles, NS Noah Strycker, RR Roger Robb, SH Sally Hill, TM Tom Mickel, VT Vjera Thompson. **Fide** indicates a sighting that was reported to the listed birder.

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge—An Inside Look at Its Natural Wonders, and Implications of the Occupation in 2016

Judy Brown

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towhee@centurylink.net

Tim Blount, executive director of Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, will present a photo-rich presentation of wildlife at Malheur NWR and surrounding areas. Tim will also speak about the occupation by armed militants that occurred in January and February of 2016, and the implications to our public lands, such as Malheur, that have now become larger targets with the acquittal of the refuge occupiers.

Known throughout the birding world as one of the top places to bird in North America, and cherished by many, the refuge was threatened by antigovernment protestors who staged an armed occupation lasting almost two months. In October 2016, all of the protestors on trial for conspiracy and weapons violations were acquitted in a Portland court.

This should prove to be an entertaining, informative and timely presentation.

Join us Tuesday, January 24, 2017, 7:30 p.m., Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St., Eugene.

**January Program Meeting
Malheur National Wildlife Refuge
An Inside Look at Its Natural Wonders, and
Implications of the Occupation in 2016**



**Tuesday, January 24, 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club
1645 High St., Eugene**

Mushroom Festival Booth Staffers Shine

Lane County Audubon Society was on hand at Mt. Pisgah's annual Mushroom Festival on Sunday, October 30. Our staffers answered festival-goers' bird-related questions and let them know about LCAS's bird walks, bird talks, and other educational outreach programs. Booth staffers Flo Alvergue, Connie Berglund, Sally O'Donnell, Janie Thomas, and Susanne Twilight-Alexander did a great job of welcoming visitors to our booth. Special thanks go to Connie Berglund for arranging our display materials before the booth opened Sunday morning.

If you'd like to help spread the word about LCAS's contributions to the community, volunteering to staff the booth for a two-hour shift at local events once or twice a year is an easy way to get involved. No experience is necessary; new volunteers are paired up with an experienced booth staffer to make the learning process easy. For more information, e-mail Ron Renchler at christyandron@qwest.net.

From the President *(continued from page 1)*

Birders tend to be fun to be around. There is a humor, enthusiasm and optimism to birders' approach to the pastime of birding. I've met many friends through birding and find we have much in common. Birders tend to be alert, eager to learn, engaged in the world and also willing to share their experiences.

Every birding experience is not necessarily a happy one. Birds are like every living thing—they need to eat to survive, and sometimes they eat each other. They compete for food, territory and nest sites; they may be injured or killed. It can be sad and distressing to watch these events. We find a way to accept the finality of nature and take this experience to heart. Birding gives us rich experiences, which may be either positive or sad. It does make us feel alive and gives us a deeper understanding of nature's ways. Natural processes will prevail, if given a chance. Caring about birds and nature is one way to find peace of mind and hope for our future, even if it's only a glimmer of hope.

All of these reasons make me feel thankful to be a birder!

2016 Eugene Christmas Bird Count Approaches



Dick Lamster

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maeveanddick@q.com



This year marks the 75th Eugene Christmas Bird Count (ECBC) and the 117th National Audubon Society (NAS) Christmas Bird Count. This year's ECBC will be on Sunday, January 1, 2017. Our 15-mile-diameter count

circle is centered in the Danebo area of Eugene and is divided into 27 areas, each with a Team Leader. The Team Leaders organize the teams, lead the groups through the area during the count day, and then submit the results to the ECBC Steering Committee.

Count Coordinator

Dick Lamster is the Count Coordinator, and he will work with NAS on the administrative tasks of the count. He will also coordinate with the Team Leaders, handle publicity, co-write the post-count narrative, and assign new participants to teams. If you want to participate this year or change teams, call or email Dick. Otherwise, call your Team Leader from last year (although he or she might be calling you soon).

Birds

Dan Gleason will accept the bird checklists from the Team Leaders at the end of the count, hopefully at the chili feed. He will review rare and unusual bird sightings and then submit all the results to NAS. Dan will also work with Dick to prepare the post-count narrative.

Home Counters

If you cannot participate on a count team but would like to count the birds that visit your yard, please call Herb Wisner at 541.344.3634. Herb is in charge of the Home Counters and will assist you in recording the birds you see and including them in the official count. He will send you a form to help you record birds, coordinate your sightings with the leader of the count area you live in so that birds are not reported twice, and submit your sightings to Dan to be included in the official results. Please call Herb by December 28th if you would like to be a Home Counter.

Chili Feed

All Team Leaders and count participants are invited to gather after the count at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High Street,

for the traditional chili feed. Allison Mickel, assisted by Sandy Poinsett and Kathy Wilson, will once again provide her homemade vegetarian chili for this fun ending to a day full of birding. We will tally results and swap stories of the day's sightings. The door to the Garden Club will open around 3:30 p.m., so you can stop by as soon as you finish your count. The free chili feed will begin around 5:00 p.m. Lane County Audubon Society will furnish the chili along with salad, dinner rolls, chips, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate. Please bring your own table service, including plate, bowl, cup, and silverware. If you would like to drink something other than what we provide, bring that too. I really encourage you to join us for this delicious ending to a long day. To celebrate our 75th Anniversary, there will be a surprise dessert for everyone so you do not have to bring one as in past years.

Last Year's Results

Last year the weather was lousy and the road conditions were treacherous, but we still had 117 birders in the field and 108 Home Counters, for a total of 225 participants. The number of birders in the field was about 30 less than our average number for the past eight years, but the number of Home Counters set a new high record. Some people who had planned to go out all day were stuck at home because of the road conditions, so they counted birds at home. The entire group identified 128 species on count day and two more species were added during Count Week. This is just a couple of species below the average number for the past 20 years. Our record, established in 2005, is 140 plus two more during count week.

We recorded 113,678 individual birds. This is above average for the past twenty years, but does not surpass the record of 129,874 in 2000. You can view results of last year's ECBC, as well as all the other Christmas Bird Counts in North America, at christmasbirdcount.org. Our count code is OREU.

We hope you can join us for this year's ECBC. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, January 1st!

Give to LCAS When You Shop Online



Go to smile.amazon.com and select Lane County Audubon Society

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 laneaudubon.org



Deadlines:

February issue: Jan. 7

March issue: Feb. 4

Submit material to
Karen Irscher
quailkaren@earthlink.net

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 Godsfil at 541.915.8852 or tgodsfil@gmail.com.

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Layout by Kerry Lutz



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.....\$ _____
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To pay by PayPal, go to 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

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, December 11, 8:30 a.m.-11 a.m.

Late Fall Bird Walk

Come discover the Arboretum's avian diversity. Join Julia Siporin and Joni Dawning for a monthly bird walk intended for people with all levels of birding experience. We'll use vocalizations, habitat, and behavior clues to identify fall migrant and year-round residents. Please bring binoculars. Option to continue the walk until noon for those who are interested. Rain or shine. Meet at the Arboretum Visitor Center. \$5, members free.

FMI: 541.747.3817 or MountPisgahArboretum.org

Southern Willamette Ornithological Club (SWOC)

Monday, December 19, 7 p.m.

Eugene Birders' Night Holiday Gathering and Group Photo Show

We'll share recent sightings and discuss birding-connected topics. In honor of the holiday season, we'll also enjoy social time while sharing savory or sweet finger food, which you are invited to bring. Camera buffs are encouraged to bring your birding photos to share, 10 minutes max, taken anywhere. Bring on a thumb drive or your laptop. We'll provide the projector, screen, and a laptop. Contact Ellen Cantor at the email address below if you are bringing photos.

Location: McNail-Riley house, 601 W 13th Ave., Eugene. It's on the NW corner of W. 13th Ave. and Jefferson St., near the old Lincoln School. Parking is accessed from Jefferson St., via a driveway just north of 13th Ave. Free. All are welcome!

Contact and FMI: ellencantor@gmail.com

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, January 8, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Winter Bird Walk

Join Julia Siporin and Joni Dawning for a monthly bird walk intended for people at all levels of birding experience. We'll use vocalizations, habitat, and behavior clues to identify winter and year-round residents. Please bring binoculars. Option to continue the walk until noon for those who are interested. Rain or shine.

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

FMI: 541.747.3817 or MountPisgahArboretum.org

Southern Willamette Ornithological Club (SWOC)

Eugene Birder's Night

Monday, January 16, 7 p.m.

Birds of Guyana

After we share recent bird sightings and bird-connected topics, Kit Larsen, Jim Regali, Dennis Arendt, and Roger Robb will narrate and present photos from their recent trip to Guyana. Guyana, on the northern edge of South America, is characterized by a large expanse of pristine savannas and tropical rain forest. The country offers excellent opportunities

to see rare rain forest birds, mammals, and reptiles. Because of its challenging terrain and developing infrastructure, it is not often frequented by birders.

Free. All are welcome. See December SWOC notice above for location and directions. FMI: ellencantor@gmail.com

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Saturday, January 21, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

Life Among the Mosses Walk

This is our annual celebration of the little folks of the plant world. Botanist David Wagner will tell moss stories and weave lichen yarns to help us understand the elfin world of mosses, liverworts, and lichens. Rain or shine.

Meet at the Arboretum's Visitor Center. \$5, members free.

FMI: 541.747.3817 or MountPisgahArboretum.org

Audubon in the Schools Instructors

Would you like to teach elementary school students about birds? 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. If you would like more information, contact Caryn Stoess, Audubon in the Schools Coordinator, at 541.357.8739 or AITSEugene@gmail.com

Thank You for Supporting LCAS!

The response to our request in the November *Quail* for donations in support of Lane County Audubon Society has been outstanding this year. Your contributions during our annual fundraising drive help us continue to offer a variety of events and activities that promote an appreciation of birds throughout our region—bird walks, field trips, program meetings, school activities, conservation initiatives, and more.

We very much appreciate your continued support. If you haven't yet contributed this year and would like to do so, it's not too late. Send your tax-deductible contribution to Lane County Audubon Society, PO Box 5086, Eugene OR 97405. You can also contribute online at laneaudubon.org/support/donate.

Thanks to everyone for your interest in learning about and protecting the birds in our area.

Jan. Program Meeting
Malheur National Wildlife
Refuge—An Inside Look
at Its Natural Wonders,
and Implications of the
Occupation in 2016




Tuesday, Jan. 24, 7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club
1645 High St., Eugene



NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER

The
Quail

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Bird Walks and Events

Jim Maloney

541.968.9249

jimgmal@comcast.com

2016 Eugene Christmas Bird Count

Sunday, January 1, 2017, is the date for this annual event. See the article on page 5 for all the details. For more information, contact the Count Coordinator, Dick Lamster, at 541.343.8664.

Third Saturday Bird Walk

Saturday, January 21, 8 a.m.

Site and leader will be determined by interesting bird sightings posted to OBOL and other pertinent information available before the day of the walk. Details will be posted on the LCAS Facebook page (facebook.com/pages/Lane-County-

Audubon-Society/330177413824?ref=hl) and on the website (laneaudubon.org).

All ages and skill levels are welcome. To carpool, meet at 8 a.m. at the South Eugene High School parking lot, corner of 19th and Patterson. We plan to return by noon. Remember that it's not a good idea to leave valuables or your vehicle registration in your car if you leave it at the lot. A \$3 donation is appreciated to help support Lane County Audubon's activities.

FMI: Jim Maloney at 541.968.9249 or jimgmal@comcast.net.

Visit the LCAS Booth at the Good Earth Show, January 20-22

LCAS will showcase local birding opportunities and our organization's many bird-related educational activities at the 12th annual Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show January 20-22, 2017, at the Lane Events Convention Center at the Fairgrounds in Eugene.

Put this event on your calendar now—the show features hundreds of environmentally friendly vendors and offers dozens of helpful seminars and workshops throughout its three-day run.

The Good Earth Show is LCAS's premier booth outreach event. Stop by our booth located in Garden Pavilion area to chat with our friendly booth volunteers, let us know about your recent bird sightings, and learn more about our area's many birding opportunities.

For more information on the Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show, visit EugeneHomeShow.com.

