



The

July–August 2014

Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

Audubon Phone – 541.485.BIRD

From Our President



Oak Trees Play Important Roles

Maeve Sowles

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We have several large Oregon White Oaks on our property. During midsummer, as the high sun filters through the leaf canopy, the oaks create cool, shady spots where we can sit and enjoy the summer afternoons. These trees are always filled with birds. The oaks provide good nest sites, and we have seen Purple Finches, Cedar Waxwings, American Robins, and Warbling Vireos nesting in them. One year, we found a juvenile waxwing on the ground under an oak tree. It tried to get up on the fence but could not yet fly, and it was vulnerable on the ground. We put it up on a lower branch of the oak tree and the parents continued to feed it; we hope it survived.



Many other birds forage in the oaks throughout the year. The chickadees and mixed flocks of kinglets and warblers move through the trees as they migrate, and the chickadees also gather moss for their nests from the oak limbs. We have a pair of Black-capped Chickadees in a nest box this year, and the adults feed their young every day with insects gleaned from the oaks. Of course, the acorns are great food for jays, Band-tailed Pigeons, and woodpeckers.

A pair of Downy Woodpeckers have a nest in an old ash snag nearby, so we often hear a *tap-tap-tap* as the birds forage for insects in the oaks. These large trees host successive hatchings of various insects that the birds in our area depend on for food. One June morning, I saw swallows sweeping under the oaks right off our deck. I went outside to see what they were after and watched as small green larvae dropped on tiny filaments out of the oak branches. The swallows were capturing the larvae

(continued on page 4)

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See page 5.



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North America's Bird Nursery Is Under Pressure

Debbie Schlenoff

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I'm always impressed by the skill with which many birders can identify bird species by ear. The birds can one-up us though; they can recognize individual birds by song. Several scientific studies have demonstrated that birds can discriminate between the songs sung by their neighbors and those sung by strangers. For birds, good relationships with neighbors may prove important. When blackbirds have familiar neighbors, they expend less energy to defend boundaries and have better reproductive success than birds that have to deal with strangers in the adjacent territory. In Great Tits, familiarity between long-term neighbors leads to cooperative behavior that increases nesting success. Birds, of course, do not recognize the territorial boundaries between neighboring human nations. Turns out that many of the birds we see in our backyards journey from our urban environment to the most extensive wilderness area left on earth, the boreal forest of our neighbor to the north.

Boreal forest spans Canada from the east coast of Newfoundland to the Yukon and separates the tundra on the north from the temperate rain forest and deciduous woodlands of southern Canada. The boreal region is dominated by coniferous forests interspersed with vast wetlands and provides habitat for over a billion nesting birds each summer—it is considered North America's bird nursery. The area provides nesting habitat for about 325 species of birds. For example, 74% of all Common Loons breed within the boreal forest, as well as 93% of Red-necked Grebes, 48% of Double-crested Cormorants, 64% of American Widgeons, 84% of Black Scoters, 85% of White-winged Crossbills, 58% of Fox Sparrows, and 67% of White-crowned Sparrows.

Canada's boreal forest provides ecosystem services on a global scale. It purifies air and water, slows the pace of climate change by storing carbon, and supports billions of migratory birds as well as populations of woodland caribou, lynx, wolverines, and bears. Boreal birds act as plant pollinators and pest controllers. They distribute seeds and redistribute nutrients. The birds are responsible for billions of dollars contributed

to the economy of both Canada and the United States from tourism—traveling, hiking, bird-watching, and hunting. Significantly, the birds also act as environmental indicators for the health of the ecosystem. Many boreal species are in decline; populations of some boreal birds such as Olive-sided Flycatchers, Canada Warblers, and scoters have fallen by over

two-thirds of their numbers. The area is threatened by large-scale industrial activities, including logging (over 4000 acres *every day*), mining, and oil and gas development. All of these activities further fragment and degrade habitat through the construction of extensive systems of roadways. Oil-sands activity has led to more than 66% of the 34 million acres in the Alberta boreal region being leased to companies for extraction.

A new report entitled "Boreal Birds Need Half: Maintaining North America's Bird Nursery and Why It Matters" (the full citation appears on page 7) was released this spring to address the threats to the boreal forest and its inhabitants. The report summarizes scientific studies that have shown that boreal birds require connected, large protected areas for their populations to be sustained. These birds do not nest in dense colonies; instead, they require broad, undisturbed habitat. The report concluded that for the health of the ecosystem and its bird inhabitants, a minimum of 50% of the boreal forest should be protected from industrial disturbance. Industrial activity in remaining areas should be well regulated to control degradation, especially of waterways. The report also emphasizes the important leadership role of the Aboriginal communities and governments in boreal forest conservation. A recent poll in Quebec found overwhelming support for



The dark region that extends from the east coast of Canada through Alaska is boreal forest.

Conservation Column (continued on page 7)

Field Notes: April–May 2014



- Chimney Swift
- Harlequin Duck

- Dusky Flycatcher
- Clay-colored Sparrow

Tom and Allison Mickel

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This is a condensed version of the spring field notes because we were in Europe for five weeks during the period (birding) and returned just before the end of May. Most of the neotropical migrants seemed to return on schedule, but the waterfowl were around the valley a little later than normal.

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

WATERBIRDS

Blue-winged Teal	May 17	FRR	JS	A species that always arrives late
Blue-winged Teal	May 17	Meadowlark Prairie	VT	A species that always arrives late
Green-winged (Common) Teal	April 13	EWEB, Roosevelt Ave	AC	Found annually during migration
Harlequin Duck	May 9	Salmon Ck, Oakridge	MLS	Hasn't been reported on the breeding grounds for a number of years
Common Goldeneye	May 23	FRR	JS, et al.	A late report for this species
Eared Grebe	April 5	FRR	RS	Becoming almost annual in the spring
Black-crowned Night-Heron	April 19	W Eugene	MN	Getting to be time for them to start breeding—
Black-crowned Night-Heron	May 20	W Eugene	E&VT	are they breeding somewhere in the area?
Black-crowned Night-Heron	May 26	Camas Swale	BC	
White-faced Ibis (16)	May 26	FRR	SH	They are normally found this time of year

CRANES to TERNS

Sandhill Crane	May 20	FRR	EM	A very late report
Black-necked Stilt (4)	May 6	FRR	RR	They breed in small numbers at this location
American Avocet	May 30	FRR	VT	They bred last year at this location
Solitary Sandpiper	May 4	Stewart Pond	SH	They migrate through the first week of May
Solitary Sandpiper	May 4	FRR	A&CH	They migrate through the first week of May
Marbled Godwit	April 15	SJSR	DJ	A normal time for their migration
Red Knot	May 8	FRR	PS, SMC	Rarely found inland—normally migrate along coast
Wilson's Phalarope (4)	May 6	FRR	RR	They breed in small numbers at this location.
Franklin's Gull	May 3	FRR	A&CH	Found almost annually in small numbers.
Black Tern	May 3	FRR	A&CH	A normal time for this breeding species to return.
Forster's Tern (3)	May 31	FRR	AH	Almost annual during the spring migration

SWIFTS to SPARROWS

Vaux's Swift (7780)	April 26	Agate Hall, UO	DL, MS	Migration numbers are starting to increase
Chimney Swift	May 11	Agate Hall, UO	BC	In roosting flock of swifts—first Lane Co record and will be second Oregon record if accepted by the OBRC
Calliope Hummingbird	April 16	Santa Clara area	MRu	A normal spring migrant in small numbers
Lewis's Woodpecker (2)	April 16	FRR	NS	The last winter date for the species
Dusky Flycatcher	April 20	Bailey Hill	SH	The only report this spring
Horned Lark	May 10	Eugene airport area	RM	An area where they may breed

Field Notes (continued on page 4)

Field Notes (continued from page 3)

Horned Lark (2)	May 26	Eugene airport	SMa, VB	An area where they may breed
Rock Wren	April 25	Hills Creek dam	MLS	An area where they may breed
Mountain Bluebird	April 5	EWEB, Roosevelt Ave	BC	Rarely found in the valley
Townsend's Solitaire	April 27	Creswell	NS	They breed in the Cascades & Coast Range
Varied Thrush	May 20	SW of Eugene	MS	A late date for a singing bird in the area
Northern Mockingbird	April 4	Alvadore	DB	Last date seen this winter
Yellow-breasted Chat	May 5	Oakridge	CF	Never common in this area
Yellow-breasted Chat	May 21	Woahnik Lk	DF	Never common in this area
Clay-colored Sparrow	May 7	N Eugene	DS	About a dozen records for the county
Grasshopper Sparrow	May 3	FRR	BC	A normal time for their return
Harris's Sparrow	April 13	Cantrell Rd	SH	Less than annual wintering species

A&CH Adrian & Christopher Hinkle, AC Alan Contreras, BC Barbara Combs, CF Cheron Ferland, DB Dave Brown, DF Daniel Farrar, DJ Donald Joseph, DL Dick Lamster, DS Don Schrouder, E&VT Eddie & Vjera Thompson, EM Elliot McIntire, JS John Sullivan, MLS Mary Lee Sayre, MN Mark Nikas, MRu Mark Rudolph, MS Maeve Sowles, NS Noah Strycker, PS Priscilla Sokolowski, RM Randy Moore, RR Roger Robb, RS Robert Snowden, SH Sally Hill, SMa Sylvia Maulding, SMc Scott McNeeley, VB Vickie Buck

Program Meeting

Program Meetings to Resume in September

We take a break from our regular Program Meetings for the summer, while our members are busy traveling, birding, and enjoying the warm weather. We begin another series of informative, engaging presentations in September. Program Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High Street, Eugene.

Our first program of the season will be on September 23 and features Dennis Arendt, who will present "Birding in Bolivia: From Lowlands to Highlands." More information is forthcoming in the next issue of *The Quail* and on the LCAS website (laneaudubon.org).

From Our President (continued from page 1)

as they dropped, and the birds systematically worked the area under the trees while the insects tried to fulfill their life cycle.

Before European American settlement, oak savannas were a primary ecosystem in the Willamette Valley. The loss of the big oak trees to agriculture and human habitation and the encroachment of Douglas-fir trees has harmed the survival of many bird species that depend on the oaks for year-round food and shelter. Declines in numbers of Lewis's Woodpeckers

and White-breasted Nuthatches have been linked to the loss of oak woodland habitat. We consider our big oaks an important part of the neighborhood, which would be drastically changed if the oaks were not there. The trees are beautiful as well as essential for the ecosystem. I think of them as old friends or family members who need my care and attention, but who will also (I hope) outlive me!

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 <http://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!

Quail Distributor

Help us distribute *The Quail* to high-visibility locations in our community in an effort to recruit new members. This task requires only a couple of hours of your time nine times per year, and it is a huge help! Contact Ron Renschler at 541.345.0834 or christyandron@qwest.net for more information.

Audubon in the Schools Program Coordinator

The Audubon in the Schools (AITS) curriculum, developed by Kris Kirkeby, our former Education Chair, comprises five fun-filled lessons that combine bird biology and basic art techniques. It is designed to provide elementary students with a solid introduction to core aspects of bird biology, including feather anatomy and function, bird identification techniques, bird field marks, and habitat. The lessons are excellent examples of participatory education. The coordinator keeps all facets of the program going, including classroom scheduling and volunteer training, and also teaches lessons to students along with the other volunteers. We hope to find a new coordinator who can take this wonderful education program to new heights!

Program Chair

The Program Chair recruits speakers for the chapter Program Meetings that are scheduled eight times a year. This person seeks new programs that will enhance our members'

awareness of birding, habitats, natural history, conservation, and other issues, and he or she must be able to engage speakers and organize publicity and other logistics well in advance of each meeting.

Wildflower Festival Booth Staff Helps LCAS

A few rains showers didn't dampen the spirits of Lane County Audubon Society's booth staff at the Mt. Pisgah Wildflower and Music Festival on Sunday, May 18. Our volunteers were on hand to greet festival-goers and let them know about upcoming LCAS events and programs. Many thanks to each of them: Pat Bitner, Theresa Burnett, Thomas Meinzen, and Susanne Twight-Alexander.



Photo: Dave Stone

The Skinner Butte Bald Eagles have raised another chick! This is their eighth year nesting on the butte and the seventh year they've had chicks.

Electronic version of *The Quail* available!

Help us save paper and postage! Lane County Audubon Society offers an electronic version of *The Quail*. Each month, LCAS will send a link to your email address that will take you to a PDF version of our newsletter. If you would like to begin receiving *The Quail* electronically or would like more information, please contact Tim Godsil at tgodsil@gmail.com.

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:

September Issue: Aug. 2

October Issue: Sept. 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) \$ _____

- 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

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Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

A service to Lane Audubon members

Friends of Buford Park & Mt. Pisgah

Sunday, July 20, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Willamette Confluence Tour

John Helmer leads this tour and will give an update on TNC's restoration efforts. Bring your binoculars! You should see lots of Bald Eagles and Osprey. Registration is required.

Free. FMI: 541.344.8350, www.bufordpark.org/tours

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, July 13, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Butterflies and Dragonflies with Dave Hagen

Sunday, July 13, 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m. and Sunday, July 20, 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

*The Art of Nature Photography Workshop with Dave Stone
Registration required.*

Sun, July 20, 8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

Summer Bird Walk with Julia Siporin and Chris Roth

Saturday, July 26, 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

Wet Feet and Cool Treats with Tom Bettman

Sunday, August 3, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Yoga on the Mountain with Susan DeHart

Sunday, August 17, 8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

Summer Bird Walk with Julia Siporin and Chris Roth

There is a small fee for most activities for nonmembers. For more information about Arboretum activities, go to www.MountPisgahArboretum.org or call 541.747.1504.

Cascades Raptor Center

Last Sunday of each month, July through September, 12:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

Family Nature Discovery Days

Each Discovery Day features a different theme and different activities for families and children ages 4–11. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

July 27: Wildlife Play Hospital (find an injured stuffed animal, rescue it, and be a wildlife rehabilitator for a day)

August 31: All About Owls (dissect owl pellets and create pine cone owls)

General admission (members free) plus \$2 activity fee.

FMI: 541.485.1320, www.eraptors.org

Saturday, August 9, 6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

4th Annual Benefit Dinner

Help birds and enjoy a gourmet dinner with fine wines and good company! Hosted by King Estate. Reservations required.

\$100 per plate, half is a tax-deductible contribution to CRC

FMI: 541.485.1320

North American Butterfly Association

Saturday, June 21, 12:00 p.m.

West Eugene Wetlands Guided Field Trip

Sunday, July 6, 10:00 a.m.

Eugene Fourth-of-July Butterfly Count

Beginners welcome! Preregistration required. NABA hosts several other field trips throughout the summer too.

FMI: www.naba.org/chapters/nabaes

Oregon Shorebird Festival

September 5–7, Charleston, Oregon

The 28th Annual Oregon Shorebird Festival will include a full weekend of activities for birders of all skill levels. The festival is headquartered at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology in Charleston. Activities include expertly guided land-based field trips to Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, New River, and the Coos Bay area. There is a pelagic trip on Saturday for those who want to experience birding on the water.

FMI: <http://www.fws.gov/oregoncoast/shorebirdfestival.htm>

Conservation Column (continued from page 2)

the conservation of at least half the boreal forest and may be indicative of the opinions of many Canadians. Now we just need to get the rest of the neighbors on board.

Find the full report at: www.borealbirds.org/sites/default/files/pubs/birdsneedhalf_0.pdf.

Wells, J., D. Childs, F. Reid, K. Smith, M. Darveau, and V. Courtois. 2014. *Boreal Birds Need Half: Maintaining North America's Bird Nursery and Why It Matters*. Boreal Songbird Initiative, Seattle, Washington, Ducks Unlimited Inc., Memphis, Tennessee, and Ducks Unlimited Canada, Stonewall, Manitoba.

What you can do:

Reduce your use of disposable paper products. Use products such as paper, tissues, and paper towels that have the highest amount of post-consumer recycled fibers. Look for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) logo on wood products. Think energy efficiency. Oppose tar-sands extraction, an inefficient and destructive method that emits large volumes of greenhouse gases and toxic sludge, wastes vast amounts of water, and destroys the boreal forest. A good article and photos of the tar sands are at: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/05/29/photos-keystone_n_5404159.html?utm_hp_ref=green.


September Program Meeting
Birding in Bolivia: From Lowlands to Highlands with Dennis Arendt



Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2014
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 541.968.9249 *jimgmal@comcast.com*

Saturday, July 19

Third Saturday Bird Walk
Canoe or kayak trip to Fern Ridge Lake, led by Dick Lamster and Maeve Sowles

Dick Lamster and Maeve Sowles will lead a bird-watching-by-canoe (or kayak) trip to Fern Ridge Lake. You will need to furnish your own canoe or kayak and lifejackets (required). Each craft needs an Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Permit. See www.boatoregon.com for more information on this required permit. To reserve a spot on the trip and get more information, call Dick at 541-343-8664. If you do not have a canoe or kayak, call anyway because other participants may have extra space in their craft.

Saturday, August 16

Third Saturday Bird Walk
Fern Ridge Wildlife Area, leader to be determined

The destination for the August Bird Walk is the Royal Avenue area of the Fern Ridge Wildlife Area. The leader has not been determined yet. We will meet at the South Eugene High School parking lot (corner of 19th and Patterson) at 8:00 a.m. for carpooling and plan to return by noon. Please don't leave any valuables in your car if you park at the high school. You may meet the group at the Royal Avenue parking lot, but remember to purchase a parking permit in advance (go to <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/parking.asp>). For more information, contact Jim Maloney at 541.968.9249 or jimgmal@comcast.net.

All levels of birders are welcome. A \$3.00 donation is appreciated when you participate in a Bird Walk. Check out our website at www.laneaudubon.org for the latest information about walks and trips.