

The

July–August 2015

# Quail



News from Lane County Audubon Society

## From Our President



## Malheur NWR Is a Birding Paradise

Maeve Sowles

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[tgodsil@gmail.com](mailto:tgodsil@gmail.com)

We spent the first week of June in Eastern Oregon touring Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and some of the surrounding areas. This is the fourth year of drought there, and it was obvious that several key areas were lacking water. Along Highway 205 south of Burns in an area called The Narrows, no water was in sight. Two lakes, Malheur and Harney, intersect there and usually there's water at least 15 feet deep beside the road. In years past, we have seen pelicans fishing there and both Western and Clark's Grebes were easily seen from the road. Another location with NO water this year is in the northeast portion of the refuge along Lawen Lane, which runs into Ruh-Red Road. In previous years, we have seen Avocets feeding and Ruddy Ducks swimming happily there. This year, because their traditional nesting pond is bone dry, over 300 Yellow-headed Blackbirds flew around aimlessly and sat forlornly on fences, wondering what their options might be. Many birds will not be able to reproduce, much less survive, in a year like this. Birds do fly, of course, so my hope is that they will move to alternative sites where the conditions are better. For them, it is all about habitat options.



In spite of the unusually dry conditions, we saw an amazing number of species (108) and many individual birds going about their normal feeding and mating activities. Malheur NWR is managed for wildlife, especially birds, and it keeps many populations of birds viable. Some of our birding highlights were Great Horned Owl nests with juveniles (at refuge headquarters), Burrowing Owls (Highway 205 and Ruh-Red Road), Trumpeter Swans (Benson Pond), Swainson's Hawks at nest tree (along Highway 205), Ospreys (Page Springs), and Red-tailed Hawks (at the cliff along Highway 205). We also enjoyed seeing some typical eastern Oregon birds such as Mountain Bluebirds, Golden Eagles, Magpies, Sage Thrashers, and

*(continued on page 7)*



## BLM Needs Your Comments on Resource Management Plan

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While hiking on a shaded trail next to a burbling creek, you reach for your guidebook to identify a striking wildflower.... To find the diameter of an immense old-growth tree, you and your companions encircle it, stretch your arms wide, and reach for one another's hands.... When a flash of

color catches your eye or a warbling note touches your ear, you reach for your binoculars, asking, "What kind of bird was that?" Have you ever done these things? Do you want people to be able to have these kinds of experiences in the future? If so, then reach for your keyboard, write your comments on the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) draft resource management plan, and email them to the BLM.

In April, the BLM released its draft plan for 2.6 million acres of land in western Oregon. Several alternative proposals are suggested in the plan. They all increase logging on our public lands. Rather than emphasize science-based projects (such as thinning in dense, young stands) or acknowledge that timber operations continue to deliver logs to mills, the BLM emphasizes ramping up timber extraction from the few remaining mature forests. Some of the alternatives will allow thousands of acres of clear-cuts, a particularly destructive practice that knowledgeable people tried to leave behind decades ago. The proposals will also reduce streamside buffers. These riparian reserves are necessary to provide drinking water and the shade and cool water essential to salmon. Rather than emphasize the maintenance of existing roads, the alternatives increase road construction, which would further degrade and fragment habitat, dump sediment into streams, and allow quicker access for invasive plants.

The economic analysis focuses myopically on timber production without adequately taking into account the value of the ecosystem services of intact forests—clean water, habitat, carbon sequestration, and erosion prevention, for example. Furthermore, outdoor recreation is a growing multibillion dollar industry with significant job creation potential.

There are many opportunities in the proposals to provide conservation for fish and wildlife. Unfortunately, they are scattered among the different alternatives. For example, the alternative that includes a relatively large streamside buffer allows significantly more forest to be logged. The BLM can do better. We hope for an alternative that synthesizes the many conservation values that will support this important ecosystem over the long term.

BLM is seeking to engage the public in its decision. Encourage officials to protect our public lands and to manage them for the ecosystem services they provide, for fish and wildlife habitat, and for recreation. Please consider submitting your comments. The deadline is July 23.

See <http://www.blm.gov/or/plans/rmpswesternoregon/> for more information. Send your comments via email to [blm\\_or\\_rmpwo\\_comments@blm.gov](mailto:blm_or_rmpwo_comments@blm.gov).

Look for updates on our website and Facebook page. Or contact me for details at [dschenoff@msn.com](mailto:dschenoff@msn.com).



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## Field Notes: April–May 2015



- Pacific Golden-Plover
- Common Nighthawk

- Black-chinned Hummingbird
- Clay-colored Sparrow

*Tom and Allison Mickel*

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The weather during April and May returned to more normal conditions after an unusually dry and warm winter and early spring, with sunshine, clouds with and without rain, and warm to cool temperatures. This year's spring migration trend continued, with the vast majority of migrant species arriving earlier than normal—some a lot earlier, but most just a little. Typical for this time of year, there were some interesting reports and a few unusual ones. It will be interesting to see what turns up during the forthcoming breeding season!

Abbreviation: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR)

### WATERBIRDS

Ross's Goose	April 2	Cantrell Rd.	SH, VB	A little later than normal
Ross's Goose	April 18	Sutton Creek mouth	DF	A little later than normal
Tundra Swan (4)	April 12	FRR	SNa	Last date seen for the winter
Blue-winged Teal	April 4	Meadowlark Prairie	VT	About three weeks earlier than normal
Blue-winged Teal	April 18	Waite Pasture	SB	Never common on the coast
Pacific Loon (5000)	April 20	Sea Lion Caves	RL	Large migrant flock as the fog raised
Great Egret	April 15	Cushman	DP	Appeared to be six occupied nests
Great Egret	May 17	Cushman	KL	Appeared to be 10 occupied nests
Snowy Egret	April 18	Maxwell Pond	LF, KO	Only second or third spring record
Sora	April 21	Stewart Pond	AP	An unusual location for the species
Sandhill Crane	April 23	Vaughn area	JW	Very rare in the Coast Range
Pacific Golden-Plover	April 14	Sutton Creek mouth	DF	A very rare spring record for the county
American Avocet (2)	April 2	FRR	JW	On a nest in May (SH)
Solitary Sandpiper	April 24	Stewart Pond	BC	A normal time & location for the species
Solitary Sandpiper (4)	May 3	Swallow Pond	A&TM	A large number for one location
Willet	April 28	Alvadore	BC	Very rare inland during the spring
Marbled Godwit	April 18	Sutton Creek mouth	DF	Less than a dozen spring reports
Wilson's Phalarope	May 1	FRR - Fisher Butte	JS	A couple days earlier than normal
Red-necked Phalarope (6)	May 14	FRR - Royal Ave	SH	A normal time for their northward migration
Franklin's Gull	May 9	FRR - Royal Ave	RW	Rare, but regular migrant
Black Tern (10)	May 1	FRR - Fisher Butte	JS	A couple days earlier than normal
Forster's Tern (4)	May 1	FRR - Fisher Butte	BC, JS	Will they stick around to breed again this year?

### GROUSE to WOODPECKERS

Ruffed Grouse	April 8	Fox Hollow Rd.	BC	The far SW end
Bald Eagle	April 8	Skinner Butte	SM	Two downy young in nest
Northern Goshawk	April 19	Meadowlark Prairie	JS	A very unusual location - migrant?
Merlin	May 1	FRR - Fisher Butte	JS	Later than normal
Common Nighthawk	May 6	Walterville area	VB	Almost a month earlier than normal!
Black Swift	May 30	Salt Creek Falls	AB	A normal time for their arrival at this breeding site
Vaux's Swift	April 5	Stewart Pond	SH	About a week earlier than normal
Vaux's Swift (6400)	April 26	Agate Hall, U of O	DL	A high count for the spring
Black-chinned Hummingbird	April 29	North Eugene	DS	About 18 records for the county
Calliope Hummingbird	April 5	Santa Clara area	MRu	First of about 12 reports - higher than normal
Acorn Woodpecker (3)	April 19	Creswell area	SN	Unusual for her location

## FLYCATCHERS to THRUSHES

Olive-sided Flycatcher	May 1	Coburg Hills	TM	Right on time
Olive-sided Flycatcher	May 1	Florence	SB	Right on time
Western Wood-Pewee	May 1	Coburg Hills	TM	Right on time
Willow Flycatcher	May 22	Stewart Rd.	BC	About a week later than normal
Hammond's Flycatcher	April 14	Clearwater Park	DS	About a week earlier than normal
Dusky Flycatcher	April 14	Clearwater Park	DS	About a week earlier than normal
Pacific-sloped Flycatcher	April 11	Skinner Butte	LF, KO	A little over a week earlier than normal
Western Kingbird	April 14	FRR - W Coyote	SH	About a week earlier than normal
Cassin's Vireo	April 10	Skinner Butte	KL	A couple days later than normal
Warbling Vireo	April 20	Creswell area	SN	A couple days earlier than normal
Warbling Vireo	April 20	FRR - Perkins Pen.	SH	A couple days earlier than normal
Horned Lark	May	FRR & Eugene Airport	BC	Areas where they've been reported previously
Purple Martin	April 3	FRR	MB	About a week earlier than normal
Rock Wren	April 17	Coburg Hills	A&TM	A normal spring overshoot
House Wren	April 15	Willow Creek	TM	About a week earlier than normal
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	April 8	Skinner Butte	SH, DJ	About 25 records for the county
Swainson's Thrush	April 16	Mt. Pisgah	BN, PB	Over two weeks earlier than normal!
Swainson's Thrush	May 3	SE Eugene	TM	When the "mass" arrival started - right on time
Northern Mockingbird	May 4	Alton Baker Park	SNa, ACa	Rare during the breeding season

## WARBLERS to FINCHES

Nashville Warbler	April 6	Clearwater Park	SNa	About a week earlier than normal
MacGillivray's Warbler	April 25	Jefferson Park	SNa	A few days later than normal
Yellow Warbler	May 1	FRR - Fisher Butte	JS	A few days later than normal
Black-throated Gray Warbler	April 1	Skinner Butte	SM, et al.	A few days earlier than normal
Hermit Warbler	April 18	Hwy 126 - Badger Mt	HH, OH	A few days earlier than normal
Wilson's Warbler	April 8	Fox Hollow Rd.	BC	A few days earlier than normal
Yellow-breasted Chat	April 27	Grimes Rd.	SH	About a week and a half earlier than normal
Clay-colored Sparrow (singing)	May 22	Mt. Pisgah area	TM	Very rare this time of year
Vesper Sparrow	April 19	EWEB - Roosevelt	E&VT	A new breeding location for the species
Vesper Sparrow	May 15	Mt. Pisgah - South side	JC, et al.	They haven't been found here for a number of years
Vesper Sparrow	May 26	Mt. Pisgah Arboretum	BC	A new breeding location for the species
Black-throated Sparrow	May 17	FRR - Royal Ave	AH	A normal spring overshoot
Black-throated Sparrow	May 26	Camas Swale	HL	A normal spring overshoot
Grasshopper Sparrow	May 5	FRR - Royal Ave	TM	A couple days earlier than normal
Grasshopper Sparrow	May	Meadowlark Prairie	m.ob.	Many new breeding locations in the valley
Western Tanager	April 20	Creswell area	SN	A couple days earlier than normal
Rose-breasted Grosbeak (3)	May 16+	Florence area	fide DP	Rare, but normal in spring - photos
Black-headed Grosbeak	April 21	North Eugene	DS	About a week earlier than normal
Lazuli Bunting	April 21	Wayne Morse Park	SNa	About a week earlier than normal
Bullock's Oriole	April 19	FRR - Perkins Pen.	DS	About a week earlier than normal
Red Crossbill	April/May	Eugene/Springfield	m.ob.	Commonly reported in unusual habitats!

A&TM Allison & Tom Mickel, AB Aaron Beerman, ACa Adam Caswell, AH Adrian Henkle, AP Al Prigge, BC Barbara Combs, BN Bruce Newhouse, DF Daniel Farrar, DJ Dave Jones, DL Dick Lamster, DP Diane Pettey, DS Don Schrouder, E&VT Eddie & Vjera Thompson, HH Hendrik Herlyn, HL Hydie Lown, JC Jim Carlson, JS John Sullivan, JW Jason Wolf, KL Kit Larsen, KO Kelsey O'Sullivan, LF Luke Ferrenburg, m.ob. many observers, MB Mick Bressler, MRu Mark Rudolph, OH Oscar Harper, PB Peg Boulay, RL Roy Lowe, RW Rebecca Waterman, SB Sean Burns, SH Sally Hill, SM Sylvia Maulding, SN Sally Nelson, SNa Stephan Nance, TM Tom Mickel, VB Vickie Buck, VT Vjera Thompson. Fide indicates a sighting that was reported to the listed observer.

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## Program Meetings to Resume in September

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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. On Tuesday, September 22, Harry Fuller will present on Great Gray Owls. We'll give more details about his talk in the September issue of *The Quail*. In the meantime, add Harry's new book to your summer reading list: <https://ecowise.wordpress.com/2015/05/08/the-great-gray-owl-book/>. 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.

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## We and the Swifts Thank Kate

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A big thank you to our intern from UO, Kate Jaffe. Kate contributed to the citizen-science Vaux's Happening Swift Study. She spent many evenings enthusiastically counting Vaux's Swifts as they entered the chimney at Agate Hall, and she reported the data to the West Coast Swift Study coordinator. Kate counted swifts on 14 evenings for a total of over 60,000 birds. She also skillfully updated our Vaux's Swift handout. Check it out on our website. Visit [http://www.vauxhappening.org/Vauxs\\_Swift\\_Study.html](http://www.vauxhappening.org/Vauxs_Swift_Study.html) for more information.

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## Thank You for Community Outreach

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CBT Nuggets invited Lane Audubon to their new company headquarters in Eugene to talk about birding. On May 14, Caryn Stoess and Maeve Sowles presented Birding at Delta Ponds.

In May, Jim Maloney and Ramiro Aragon presented three Latino Outreach sessions at local high schools. They discussed migratory birds and local birding opportunities with Spanish-speaking students.

Thanks to Caryn, Maeve, Jim, and Ramiro for representing Lane Audubon and promoting our conservation message to the community.

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## LCAS Seeks New Audubon Adventure Coordinator

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Audubon Adventures is National Audubon Society's (NAS) award-winning environmental education program. Audubon Adventures was designed by the environmental experts at NAS and boasts top-quality educational materials. Through our Adopt-a-Classroom Program, Lane County Audubon offers teachers in grades 3–5 an opportunity to participate at no cost to their schools.

LCAS is looking for someone who can link the participating teachers with the generous sponsors of this program. If you have a computer and a little time, this might be the volunteer opportunity you've been looking for! It takes flexibility, organization, and a sense of timing to make things work well for the teachers and sponsors.

Outreach to schools and sponsors begins in September. Orders for the kits are placed with NAS in October so that teachers receive their kits as soon as they are available for shipping. Maintaining contact with the teachers throughout the school year is crucial. You'll want to make sure they've received their kits, see if they need any additional help, and check in with them at the end of the school year.

Potential sponsors find out about teachers who would like to participate through *The Quail*, at program meetings, and through an annual mailing. Please contact Maeve Sowles ([maeveanddick@q.com](mailto:maeveanddick@q.com)) if this rewarding position sounds interesting to you. We'll be happy to provide you with all the information and training you need to manage the program.

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## Webmaster Volunteer Position Open

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Join the LCAS team of volunteers! We are currently seeking a Webmaster Committee Chair. Help us maintain and develop the Lane County Audubon Society website ([www.laneaudubon.org](http://www.laneaudubon.org)). Primary responsibilities include updating the website with current information and software, performing routine data backups, monitoring and reporting on web analytics, and providing suggestions for improved layout and functionality. All skill levels are welcome, although familiarity with basic HTML and CSS, Drupal CMS, and Google Analytics will be especially helpful. Develop your web skills 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](http://www.laneaudubon.org)

### Deadlines:

September Issue: August 1  
October Issue: September 5

Submit material to  
Paula Rich  
[richpaula@hotmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.laneaudubon.org/support/join)**

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### 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

### Lane Audubon Officers & Board Members

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## Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

*A service to Lane Audubon members*

### **Mt. Pisgah Arboretum**

**Thursday, July 16, 9:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.**

*Dragonfly Adventure with Steven Gordon and Cary Kerst*

In this walk for all ages, you'll get a closer look at the mighty dragonflies that grace the summer fields and waterways of the Arboretum. Nets provided.

**Sunday, July 19, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.**

*Butterfly Walk with David Hagen*

Explore the diversity of butterflies found at the Arboretum. This will be a gentle walk for kids and families through the meadows. Nets and bug boxes will be provided.

*\$5, \$8 for families, members free. All events begin at the Arboretum Visitor Center. FMI: 541.747.1504. Go to [www.MountPisgahArboretum.org](http://www.MountPisgahArboretum.org) for information about their many other summer events.*

### **Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN)**

**Saturday, July 25, 8:30 p.m.–10:30 p.m.**

*Summer Bat Walk at Delta Ponds City Park with special guest leaders Stuart Perlemeter and Aimee Hart*

Meet at the Delta Ponds parking lot on Goodpasture Island Road (and Alexander Loop), just north of the auto dealership.

*RSVP to 541.338.7047 or [info@wewetlands.org](mailto:info@wewetlands.org). Contact them for information about their many other summer events.*

### **Cascades Raptor Center**

**Last Sunday of each month, through September**

**12:00 p.m.–4:00 pm.**

*Family Nature Discovery Days*

Each Discovery Day features a different theme and activities for families with children ages 4–11.

### **From Our President** *(continued from page 1)*

Bobolinks. We also saw ducks, geese, and water birds in good numbers. I especially enjoy observing and hearing the large sandpipers—Willetts, Common Snipes, Long-billed Curlews, and Whimbrels—as they perform their breeding displays. The whole valley at Malheur is alive with bird sounds and sights. Even though we were a bit late to see the migrating birds before they continued their journey northward, we were absorbed by new bird sightings at every stop along the road.

The road up Steens Mountain was open early this year, so we were able to drive part of the Loop Road and take in the incredible scenery. We had lunch and walked at Lily Lake, which we had all to ourselves. We saw several fun birds there among the newly leafed-out aspen. We got as far as Jackman Park Campground, where the road was blocked. The aspen

July 26: Wildlife Play Hospital. Kids can find an “injured” stuffed animal on the grounds and treat it in the mobile play hospital.

August 30: All About Owls. Explore the world of owls, make a pine-cone owl, and dissect owl pellets. Free ice cream!

*Regular admission fees plus \$2 activity fee if participating*  
FMI: 541.485.1320, [www.eraptors.org](http://www.eraptors.org)

### **North American Butterfly Association (NABA)**

**Several dates in July**

*Butterfly field trips/counts*

See the NABA website for details on opportunities to participate in field trips as a citizen scientist. They also offer some family walks.

FMI: [www.naba.org/chapters/nabaes](http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabaes)

### **Oregon Shorebird Festival**

**September 4–6, Charleston, Oregon**

The 29th 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>

### **Southern Willamette Ornithological Club**

*Eugene Birders Night*


Eugene Birders Night is on hiatus but will resume in September. Their regular meeting nights will switch from the second Monday of the month to the third.

were just budding at this high elevation. I was surprised to see a White-crowned Sparrow singing happily—what a bold bird to be setting up breeding territory at 7,800 feet, near the top of a mountain.


Each time I've traveled to this mecca for birds, Malheur, I've loved every minute (except for the mosquitos). It is a big-sky, craggy-rock-faced, sagebrush-, juniper-, and pine-scented paradise brimming with birds. What's not to like? If you haven't made your pilgrimage there yet, I recommend you plan a trip. Let's hope the winter brings rain.

FMI: <http://www.fws.gov/refuge/malheur/>

**September  
Program Meeting**  
**The Great Gray Owl  
with Harry Fuller**



**Tuesday, September 22  
7:30 p.m.  
Eugene Garden Club, 1645  
High St., Eugene**




**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY  
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER**

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Quail*

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**Bird Walks and Events**



*Jim Maloney*

541.968.9249

*jimgmal@comcast.com*

**Saturday  
July 18**

**THIRD SATURDAY BIRD WALK**

*Site and leader to be determined*

**Saturday  
August 15**

The Third Saturday Bird Walks on July 18 and August 15 will be determined by interesting bird sightings posted to OBOL and other pertinent information available before the day of the walk. We will post the location on the LCAS Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Lane-County-Audubon-Society/330177413824?ref=hl>) and on the website ([www.laneaudubon.org](http://www.laneaudubon.org)).

All ages and skill levels are welcome. To carpool, meet at 8:00 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.

For more information, contact Jim Maloney at 541.968.9249 or [jimgmal@comcast.net](mailto:jimgmal@comcast.net).