



The

March 2015

Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society



From Our President

Volunteers Are Vital for Teaching Audubon in the Schools

Maeve Sowles

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 - *Third Saturday Bird Walk*

Audubon in the Schools (AITS) is starting up after a year’s hiatus. We are pleased to have Caryn Stoess as the new Program Coordinator! She is learning the details from program founder and braintrust Kris Kirkeby. Longtime volunteers Kathy Wilson and Bonnie Henderson are returning as instructors, providing valuable continuity to the program. All of these dedicated folks are training new volunteer instructors so they can offer classes this spring. Over the past 10 years, nearly 10,000 students have benefited from AITS, learning drawing and observation skills combined with bird biology. The program uses a teaching collection of bird skins, bones, feathers, and nests, which is permitted and legal under the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Board and our members truly want this program to succeed. With Caryn’s leadership and the team of newly trained volunteers, we look forward to educating more Lane County schoolchildren in this wonderful, unique program.

As we express our appreciation to our new volunteers, we also want to acknowledge some past AITS volunteers. Doris Bakshi, who moved to Florida in early 2014, began volunteering with LCAS in 2011 by helping with the membership renewal reminders. Then she was the AITS class scheduling volunteer for almost 2 years. We recently heard that she passed away late in 2014. We are sorry to hear this news and extend our sympathy to her family.



Barclay Browne

AITS lost another strong advocate when Barclay Browne died December 7, 2014. Barclay took on the Program Coordinator role in mid-2012, but her illness made work impossible for the past year. She began volunteering with Lane Audubon in 2010—she helped out at the events booth, attended

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Grazing Improvement Act Will Damage the Environment

Debbie Schlenoff

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The federal government grants grazing permits to allow ranchers to graze their livestock on public lands. It's difficult to see how grazing cattle on public lands contributes to our nation's defense, yet this year's defense bill, the National Defense Authorization Act (NEPA), included the Grazing Improvement Act. (The only connection between grazing and defense I could find browsing the web is that, apparently, the British used COW guns on some armored vehicles. Is there nothing an Internet search can't tell you?) This new bill uses language that, among other things, significantly extends the length of time that a grazing permit is valid, limits environmental review (in some cases, even exempting permitting from the National Environmental Policy Act), and fast-tracks close to 6,000 backlogged grazing permits now awaiting consideration. Currently, the Bureau of Land Management has granted over 18,000 permits on about 155 million acres of land.

An economic perspective: A robust land-management program could commit adequate revenue toward improving current grazing practices with special attention to water, vegetation, and soil protection. Is the federal land program self-supporting? The grazing fee is \$1.35 per animal per unit month (AUM) and the amount that it can increase or decrease is limited by law. This fee is less than 7% of the going rate for grazing on private land, which is around \$20.10 per AUM. The program cost (for management programs and limited range improvement funds) was \$143.6 million in fiscal year 2014, while the receipts from grazing fees came to \$18.5 million, a \$125 million shortfall. This is not an anomaly; costs have exceeded gains by a minimum of \$120 million annually since 2002.

Is it worth it? Most analysts estimate that less than 3% of the country's livestock operators benefit from this subsidy and the number of jobs generated is extremely small. Indirect costs are substantial. To reduce risk to livestock, federal agencies such as the US Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services require funding to kill thousands of native carnivores annually. Programs such as the Wild Horse and Burro Management Program remove competitors. Vegetation and



watershed programs spend money to deal with degradation that results from grazing activities. The US Fish and Wildlife Service must spend money to protect the many species that are threatened by livestock grazing. Even more difficult to measure is the loss of species and ecosystem services that results from habitat degradation.

An environmental perspective: The list of harmful effects on the environment caused by grazing is long. Among the worst are soil compaction, soil erosion, loss of native vegetation, introduction of invasive plants, wildfire suppression, and water quality degradation. The predator removal programs associated with the public lands grazing program kill bears, wolves, coyotes, and cougars; the loss of these top predators leads to detrimental cascading effects throughout the food web.

Significant destruction of habitat threatens many species, including avian species. Although some birds may respond positively to the environment associated with grazing (think of their historical association with bison on the plains), others that rely on ground cover or streamside vegetation are significantly affected. The denuding and height reduction that results from grazing as well as the changes in riparian vegetation make birds more susceptible to predators and less likely to successfully nest. The list from various studies of affected species includes Sandhill Crane, Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Southwest Willow Flycatcher, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Ferruginous Hawk, Burrowing Owl, Mountain Quail, Le Conte's Sparrow, Bell's Vireo, and Greater Sage-Grouse.

(continued on page 5)

Field Notes: January 2015



- Semipalmated Plover
- Northern Shrike
- Snow Bunting
- Snowy Owl

Tom and Allison Mickel

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January was rather foggy and quite a bit dryer than normal. The mild weather may account for some of the unusual wintering species and the early arrival of Tree Swallows. It will be interesting to see whether the trend continues.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), North Jetty of the Siuslaw River (NJSR)

WATERBIRDS

Snow Goose	Jan 15	Stewart Pond	SH	Normally found in small number with other
Snow Goose	Jan 17	Cesar Chavez school	JD, DH	goose flocks in the valley
Eurasian Wigeon	Jan 5	Kirk Pond	FT	Normally around in small numbers with flocks
Eurasian Wigeon	Jan 10	Creswell Pond	BF	of American Wigeon
Barrow's Goldeneye	Jan 8	Delta Ponds area	SH	Not normally found on the valley floor
American White Pelican (8)	Jan	FRR	m.ob.	Reported throughout the month
Brown Pelican (50)	Jan 6	Sea Lion Caves area	SH	A high number for the middle of winter
American Bittern	Jan 11	FRR - Royal Ave	BN, PB	Only around in small numbers during winter

HAWKS to OWLS

Osprey	Jan 14	McKenzie View Rd	JSa	The only report for the month
Red-tailed Hawk (105)	Jan 12	Raptor route #2	JS, EC	A record number for this route
Black-bellied Plover (80)	Jan 27	FRR	AB	A normal winter flock for the reservoir
Semipalmated Plover	Jan 10	FRR	TB	Rarely found in the winter
Semipalmated Plover	Jan 23	FRR	SH	Rarely found in the winter
Western Sandpiper (2)	Jan 1	FRR - Royal Ave	A&TM, VT	Rarely found in the winter
Western Sandpiper	Jan 25	Siltcoos River mouth	VB, SH	Rarely found in the winter
Glaucous Gull	Jan 26	Bob Creek	SM	The only report for the month
Snowy Owl	Jan	FRR - Royal Ave	m.ob.	It has been seen all month

WOODPECKERS to FINCHES

Acorn Woodpecker	Jan 16	Oakridge	fide CF	Rare in that area
Northern Shrike	Jan	FRR - Royal Ave	m.ob.	Still being seen near parking lot
Tree Swallow	Jan 9	FRR	RS	Earlier than normal by about a month
Tree Swallow (3)	Jan 27	FRR	RR	Normal arrival date is Feb 4
Northern Mockingbird	Jan	Alvadore	m.ob.	It has been seen all month
Snow Bunting	Jan 18	NJSR dunes	KS	Rare in the county
Orange-crowned Warbler	Jan	around town	m.ob.	They seem to be wintering in higher numbers
Swamp Sparrow	Jan	FRR & Waite Pasture	m.ob.	Good numbers being reported this month
Western Meadowlark (30)	Jan 19	Meadowlark Prairie	CS	A large wintering flock
Western Meadowlark (40)	Jan 28	FRR - E. Coyote unit	VB	Another large wintering flock
Brown-headed Cowbird	Jan 19	Washburn Lane	SH	Rarely found during the winter
Purple Finch (4)	Jan 7	SW Eugene	AC	Started coming to feeder

A&TM Allison & Tom Mickel, AB Aaron Beerman, AC Alan Contreras, BF Bob Fish, BN Bruce Newhouse, CF Cheron Ferland, CS Caryn Stoess, DH Dave Hicks, EC Ellen Cantor, FT Forest Tomlinson, JD Joni Dawning, JS John Sullivan, JSa Jim Salerno, KS Kate Shapiro, m.ob. many observers, PB Peg Boulay, RR Roger Robb, RS Robert Snowden, SH Sally Hill, SM Sylvia Maulding, TB Trent Bray, VB Vickie Buck, VT Vjera Thompson. **Fide** indicates a sighting that was reported to the listed observer.

Thank You, Good Earth Show Booth Volunteers!

Ron Renschler, LCAS Outreach Coordinator

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Lane County Audubon's great group of friendly booth volunteers were on hand to greet and talk with several hundred visitors during the 10th Annual Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show, held on January 23–25 at the Lane County Fairgrounds.

LCAS has had a presence almost every year during Good Earth's 10-year run, and the show is by far the busiest event on our booth schedule. Each year, hundreds of show-goers stop by the booth during the three-day, sustainable-living-themed event to ask questions and learn about bird identification and behavior, as well as LCAS's many conservation and educational outreach efforts, including bird walks, program meetings, school programs, and more.

A hearty "thank you" goes out to each volunteer: Connie Berglund, Pat Bitner, Teresa Burnett, Gaylene Carpenter, Margot Fetz, Barbara Foreman, Diane McInnes, Sally O'Donnell, Nancy Radius, Ron Renschler, Debbie Schlenoff, Phil Smyser, Caryn Stoess, Dave Stone, Janie Thomas, Vjera Thompson, Jennifer Tucker, and Susanne Twight Alexander.

Special thanks go to Dick Lamster, former LCAS President and current Christmas Bird Count Coordinator, for presenting a seminar entitled "Inviting Birds to Your Backyard: The Value of Citizen Science." Nancy Radius and Connie Berglund also

deserve a special shout-out for working multiple shifts at critical times during the show.

If you'd like to get involved in spreading the word about LCAS's great work in the community, contact Ron Renschler at christyandron@qwest.net or 541.345.0834.



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.

Birding Thailand

Herb Wisner

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Twice the size of Oregon, but with 1,011 species of birds, Thailand is a hot spot in Asia for bird diversity. Combine great birds with fantastic food and very friendly people and you have the perfect place to go birding in winter! Anne and Dan will show photos from the deep south jungles of Krabbe, the shorebird flats just south of Bangkok, and the high mountains of the far northwest corner of the country. You will marvel at colorful pheasants, bulbuls, minivets, barbets and sunbirds. They promise photos of other wildlife, flowers, and bugs too!



March Program Meeting
Birding Thailand with Anne and Dan Heyerly
Tuesday, March 24,
7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St., Eugene

Conservation Column: Grazing Improvement Act Will Damage the Environment *(continued from page 2)*

Some conservationists predict that further harm will come from the relaxation of environmental standards emphasized in the latest public lands grazing act. Since this law allows grazing licenses to be issued before completion of environmental review through NEPA, the door is open to further streamline federal approval of oil and gas leases. Is it any wonder that in addition to organizations such as the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the bill was supported by America's Natural Gas Alliance, United States Oil & Gas Association, Independent Petroleum Association of America, and similar groups? Public lands should be for the benefit of the public. The idea of granting permits and leases for a few people to make a profit while destroying the benefits of the environment for all seems indefensible to me.

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.

From Our President *(continued from page 1)*

board meetings, and was an AITS Instructor. Barclay was a passionate teacher, cared deeply about environmental education, and *loved* the AITS program. We will miss her energy and commitment to our organization. Barclay willed a new MacBook Air computer to Lane Audubon. We wish we could thank her in person, but we will remember her many hours of teaching and helping Lane Audubon over the past five years. We plan to use the computer for community outreach presentations and for programs. Thank you, Barclay—we will think of you often as we continue our environmental education and outreach work.



Birders from all over the county traveled to Fern Ridge Wildlife Area to see this Snowy Owl, which spent the winter in the Tern Island area. Photo: Jim Hardman

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:

April Issue: March 7

May–June Issue: April 4

Submit material to
Paula Rich
richpaula@hotmail.com

The Quail is the newsletter of Lane County Audubon Society, which is a chartered chapter of National Audubon Society. Nine issues are published per year (*May–June, July–Aug. and Dec.–Jan. are double issues*).

Local members of National Audubon Society receive a free subscription to *The Quail* but are encouraged to voluntarily join Lane County Audubon Society.

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

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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.....\$ _____
- Total Enclosed (check payable to Lane County Audubon Society)\$ _____

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

- Current National Audubon member Don't know

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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

Southern Willamette Ornithological Club—Eugene Birders Night

Monday, March 9, 7:00 p.m.

Birds of Peru with Anne and Dan Heyerly

Everyone is welcome to attend these monthly meetings. After initial introductions, we'll discuss recent sightings and other birding-related topics. Then Anne and Dan Heyerly will share tales and present photos from their off-the-beaten-path birding trip to Peru.

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

Free. FMI: ellencantor@gmail.com

Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN)

Tuesday, March 10, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Wetland Wander at Stewart Pond

Meet at the Stewart Pond Overlook on Stewart Rd. east of Bertelsen. Bring water and wear muck boots—it will be quite wet. WREN will provide binoculars.

Saturday, March 14, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Family Exploration Day at Tsanchiifin Trail

Meet at 751 S. Danebo Ave. in Eugene. WREN will provide exploration field packs! Bring a picnic lunch and water and wear sturdy shoes.

Free. FMI: 541.338.7047,
info@wewetlands.org

Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, March 15, 8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

Early 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. We'll use vocalizations, habitat, and behavior clues for identification of our spring and year-round residents. Please bring binoculars.

Rain or shine. Meet at the Arboretum Visitor Center.

\$5, members free. FMI: 541.747.1504,
www.MountPisgahArboretum.org

Saturday, March 21, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Early Spring Wildflower Walk

Join Arboretum Assistant Site Manager August Jackson for an engaging look at the Arboretum's early spring wildflowers. Learn the identification and natural history of up to 20 native wildflowers. Perfect for beginning and intermediate plant enthusiasts. Rain or shine. Meet at the Arboretum Visitor Center.

\$5, members free. FMI: 541.747.1504,
www.MountPisgahArboretum.org

Sunday, March 22 & 29, 1:00 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

The Art of Nature Photography

Join Dave Stone for his popular two-day workshop. Learn to express your love for and connection to the natural world through photography. The workshop emphasizes composition, with a minimal discussion of the technical aspects of camera operation. Bring your camera (point & shoot up to digital SLR), fully charged battery, empty memory card, and a tripod if you have one. Plan to attend both Sunday sessions.

\$30, members \$25. Registration required.
Call 541.747.3817 to register.

Spring Beach Cleanup

Saturday, March 28, 10:00 a.m.

Meet at the Big Dog Donut Shop parking lot at 11th and Hwy. 101 in Florence. Plan to spend two to four hours picking up litter on the beach in the North Jetty area. Bring heavy gloves and rain gear.

FMI: Richard Beaudro at 541.991.6677 or
richard@trhunter.com



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For more information:
www.olympicbirdfest.org
info@olympicbirdfest.org
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www.visitsequim.com
503-737-8462

First Federal

Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival

April 15–21, Arcata, CA

Registration is open! Celebrate the Marbled godwit and explore the lush Redwood Coast. Observe many bird species and wildlife through field trips, lectures, workshops, and boat excursions led by experienced local guides. Tour the expansive mudflats, wild river valleys, and rocky ocean coast of the Klamath bioregion in northwest California.

FMI: www.godwitdays.org

**March Program Meeting
Birding Thailand with
Anne and Dan Heyerly**




**Tuesday, March 24
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
March 21**

THIRD SATURDAY BIRD WALK

Lane Community College, led by Jim Regali

Notable local birder and world traveler Jim Regali will lead the March Third Saturday Bird Walk to the Lane Community College campus.

Folks can meet to carpool at the east parking lot of South Eugene High School. We will try to leave the parking lot at about 8:00 a.m. and travel out 30th Avenue to the LCC campus. Those wishing to meet the group at LCC should go to the northeast area of the main LCC parking lot. We'll meet everyone there at about 8:20 a.m.

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

For more information, contact Jim Maloney at 541.968.9249 or jimgmal@comcast.net.



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