



The

October 2014

# Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

Audubon Phone – 541.485.BIRD

## From Our President



### Field Guide to the Future: Half of North America's Birds Are at Risk from Global Warming

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An alarming new report by National Audubon Society (NAS) reveals that hundreds of bird species are threatened by global warming. NAS ornithologists spent seven years studying 588 bird species and found that 314 face significant risk in a warming world. Of those, 126 species are at risk of severe declines by 2050, and a further 188 species face the same fate by 2080, with numerous extinctions possible if global warming is allowed to erase the havens birds currently occupy. To understand the links between where birds live and the climatic conditions that support them, the NAS ornithologists analyzed more than 40 years of historical North American climate data and millions of historical bird records from the U.S. Geological Survey's North American Breeding Bird Survey and the Audubon Christmas Bird Count. Understanding those links allows scientists to project where birds are likely to be able to survive—and not survive—in the future.

If we do nothing, many of these birds could disappear in our children's lifetimes. The extinction by itself would result in a less joyful future, but we know that losing our birds is not the only consequence of global warming. Extreme weather, fierce wildfires, agricultural disruptions, sea-level rise, and greater threats to our health—these are consequences we're already seeing today. (As I write this, the smoke from fires near Eugene makes the outdoors unpleasant and unhealthy.)

To me, this is personal. This is about who I am and what kind of world I want to live in and leave behind. We have an imperative to act. And the NAS study, despite wildly clanging alarm bells, also contains plenty of reasons to hope. It's a roadmap to a better future for birds and for ourselves.

*(continued on page 5)*



## Human Activities Affect Birdsong

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Scientists are studying the psychological benefits that accrue when people listen to the sounds of birds. It is thought that hearing birds sing may help us to relax and recover from stress, assist our focus on tasks, and inspire us to think creatively. Given our deep connection to birdsong in poetry, music, and our daily lives, people would be wise to try to understand the potential impact of human activities on this behavior.

### Artificial Light

The prevalence of artificial light at night disrupts the normal daily biological (circadian) rhythms of many animals (including us). Because of artificial lighting, the dawn chorus has been shown to occur earlier than in the past, especially by the more light-sensitive early singers, and some birds are not joining in at all. Rather than waiting until dawn, birds may sing during the artificially lit night. There are documented nighttime recordings of songs that historically were heard only during the day. Certain birds may benefit—getting an early start on the day because of streetlights at the edge of a forest has enabled some blue tits to be more successful at attracting females. However, others may not be so lucky, especially if the nighttime disruption increases energy expenditure or disrupts sleep. It has long been known that reproductive hormones are important to both the production of and response to birdsong. Artificial light has been found to cause a decrease in the production of reproductive hormones in birds, which may in turn affect birdsong and the ability to select a satisfactory mate.

### Noise

Cities are noisy places and this may affect vocal communication in birds. Research has shown that birds that live in urban environments sing in higher frequencies than their counterparts living away from cities. Not only are the higher frequency sounds easier to hear above the rumble of traffic, but it turns out that birds can produce higher frequency sounds at a higher volume. They basically have to shout to be heard when they live in the city, and it's easier to do so when

singing at a higher pitch. Birds may also change their timing to avoid singing during rush hour. Although some bird species are capable of producing song that is better heard in the city, the overall picture is not good; a Canadian study concluded that the higher the noise level, the fewer the number of bird species living in a given area.

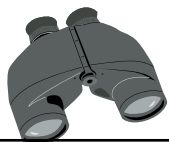
### Pollutants

Recent research has highlighted the ill effects of chemical contaminants on birdsong. For example, most birds along a mercury-polluted river in Virginia sing simpler, shorter, lower-pitched songs than noncontaminated birds. The extent of the effect is wider than originally thought—even birds in that ecosystem that don't eat fish suffer from high mercury loads (many area songbirds are getting the mercury from eating spiders). Another study in England revealed that birds near a smelter (that emits heavy-metal pollution) learn fewer songs and sing less than birds from nonpolluted sites. Likewise, chickadees exposed to polychlorinated biphenyls along the Hudson River in New York show poor vocal performance. On the flip side, starlings exposed to estrogen-mimicking chemicals (such as bisphenol-A) sing more complex songs. Although this is a boon to those particular males, it is not good for the starlings overall. Contaminated males have poor immune systems, yet they are the ones being chosen by the females due to their chemically enhanced song. Normally, complex songs represent a high-quality male to a selective female and she would be improving, rather than reducing, her chance of producing healthy offspring by selecting such a male. One of the main functions of birdsong is to advertise quality to a potential mate, and the human-induced changes in song may have negative long-term consequences on bird populations.

It turns out that birdsong matters to the birds. And it matters to us. Rachel Carson first alerted us to the dangers of chemicals in her 1962 seminal work *Silent Spring*, and recent evidence warns us that we still need to pay attention to these issues if we want our world to be filled with the delightful songs of birds.

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## Field Notes: August 2014



Tom and Allison Mickel

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**August was a mostly normal month, both weather- and birdwise.**

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

### WATERBIRDS

Greater White-fronted Goose	Aug 19	Groundhog Mtn	LG	A normal time for their southward migration
Eared Grebe	Aug 27	FRR	BU, VB	Unusual this time of the year
Red-necked Grebe (7)	Aug 28	Bob Creek	RH, et al.	A little earlier than normal
Red-necked Grebe (2)	Aug 28	Siltcoos River mouth	RH, et al.	A little earlier than normal

### FALCONS to JAEGERs

Peregrine Falcon	Aug	Coast Range	JD	Fledged three young this year
Marbled Godwit (15)	Aug 27	NJSR	DP	A normal time for their migration
Marbled Godwit	Aug 30	FRR	AC, et al.	A normal time for their migration
Sanderling	Aug 27	FRR	AC, et al.	Rare away from the coast
Baird's Sandpiper	Aug 6	FRR	DB	First report for the fall migration
Stilt Sandpiper	Aug 1	FRR	SH	Same bird as seen in late July?
Red-necked Phalarope	Aug 1	FRR	JS, BMc	First report for the fall migration
Franklin's Gull	Aug 27	FRR	AC, et al.	Found this time of year
Elegant Tern	Aug 18	NJSR	DP	First report for this summer
Elegant Tern (100)	Aug 27	NJSR	RH, et al.	Being found in good numbers this fall
Parasitic Jaeger	Aug 26	Stonefield Beach	DA	A normal time for their migration

### WOODPECKERS to SPARROWS

Lewis's Woodpecker	Aug 24	Melakwa Lake	TMe	Normal migration through the high Cascades
Gray Flycatcher	Aug 23	LCC	AP	An unusual summer/fall record
MacGillivray's Warbler	Aug 4	Santa Clara area	MRu	First time seen in yard other than spring
Green-tailed Towhee	Aug 24	Melakwa Lake	TMe	A good time to find this species in the high Cascades
Clay-colored Sparrow	Aug 3	FRR	TMe, et al.	A very early report for the state
Clay-colored Sparrow	Aug 28	FRR	RR	The same bird or another?
Brewer's Sparrow	Aug 3	FRR	TMe, et al.	They're found in small numbers
Brewer's Sparrow	Aug 31	FRR	AC, et al.	this time of year at this location
Lincoln's Sparrow	Aug 27	Mt Pisgah	LM, et al.	An early return to the wintering grounds

AC Alan Contreras, AP Al Prigge, BMc Barry McKenzie, BU Becky Uhler, DA Dan Allen, DB Dave Bontrager, DP Diane Pettey, JD Jim DeLapp, JS John Sullivan, LG Linda Gilbert, LM Larry McQueen, MRu Mark Rudolph, RH Rich Hoyer, RR Roger Robb, SH Sally Hill, TMe Thomas Meinzen, VB Vickie Buck

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## Save the Date! Bike Path Cleanup on Nov. 2

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In 1998, Lane County Audubon made a commitment to the city of Eugene by adopting the west end (about five miles) of West Eugene's Fern Ridge Bike Path. This decision expresses LCAS's dedication to keeping Eugene's waterways an inviting habitat for wildlife and a safe and clean area for recreation.

Save the date—Sunday, November 2—to join other volunteers in cleaning up the bike path. Watch for more information on our website and Facebook page, or contact Kat Beal at [Jkbeal@comcast.net](mailto:Jkbeal@comcast.net) or 541.517.0284. All levels of effort are welcome!

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## Avian Mistletoe Project Researchers Ask for Your Help

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**A**s cool fall weather approaches and leaves begin to gather on the ground beneath the oak trees, you may notice something special if you look up into the treetops. Clumps of Pacific Mistletoe, known to scientists as *Phoradendron villosum*, are slowly being revealed in the canopy.

Mistletoes compose a group of shrub-like flowering plants that parasitize both coniferous and deciduous trees. There are many species of mistletoes, some of which can parasitize only one host tree species. In the Willamette Valley, Pacific Mistletoe parasitizes mainly Oregon White Oak, though it sometimes uses pin oaks and other ornamental trees.

Although mistletoes are parasites on trees, they can benefit other organisms in many ways. Across the globe, mistletoes are keystone species, increasing biodiversity by providing a host of resources for wildlife, including nutritious fruits and leaves, increased leaf litter, cavities for nesting, and dense cover and loose bark for sheltering. A recent study by Dr. David Watson of Charles Sturt University in New South Wales, Australia, found that 20% of bird species disappeared from a forest after mistletoe had been removed. Watson believes that this decline in bird diversity may be due to the loss of resources provided by the mistletoe.

Scientists know that mistletoes are generally good for wildlife, but there has been no research on the effect Pacific Mistletoe has on wildlife in western Oregon. Dr. David Shaw (Oregon State University College of Forestry), Dr. Joan Hagar (U.S. Geological Survey), and graduate student Kyle Pritchard



(Oregon State University) are trying to find out whether and how mistletoe benefits overwintering birds in the Willamette Valley. Understanding which bird species use mistletoe berries and how mistletoe is dispersed will provide information about a critical link in the ecology of the system.

You can help in this research by volunteering to report sightings of birds that are foraging on mistletoe berries this fall and winter. Volunteers can report their sightings online at the Avian Mistletoe Project website (<http://avianmistletoe.forestry.oregonstate.edu/>). The Observation Form asks for detailed location descriptions or coordinates, if possible, and feeding observations. Your data contributions can help scientists better understand the role of this fascinating parasite in Oregon ecosystems.



### 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 Godsfil at [tgodsil@gmail.com](mailto:tgodsil@gmail.com).





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# Get Involved—Volunteer!

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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](http://www.laneaudubon.org/support/volunteer) or contact Maeve Sowles at 541.343.8664 or [president@laneaudubon.org](mailto: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](mailto:christyandron@qwest.net) for more information.

## Booth Coordinator

Help with our booth appearances at local events and festivals. This opportunity involves setting up and taking down the booth four or five times a year and scheduling other volunteers to staff the booth at events. One or two people could share or split these duties. We will provide orientation and training. If you enjoy coordinating activities and working with people, this could be the opportunity for you. For more information, contact Ron Renschler at 541-345-0834 or [christyandron@qwest.net](mailto:christyandron@qwest.net).

## 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 must be able to engage speakers and organize publicity and other logistics well in advance of each meeting.

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

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Broadly speaking, we need to do two things: First, we need to protect the places birds need today and the places they'll need in the future. The places birds live today may be bridges to the future. The NAS study also reveals areas that are likely to remain stable for birds even as the climate changes, enabling us to identify “stronghold” areas that birds will need to survive in the future. This is a powerful new approach that will help us make smart conservation investments in places that will help birds weather the disruption of climate change.

Second, we must make progress in reducing pollution and using energy more efficiently. Actions like these will help reduce the severity of global warming. Let's work together and make intelligent choices to create a better future for all of us.

To see more details of the NAS study, go to [Audubon.org/Climate](http://Audubon.org/Climate).



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# 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:

November Issue: Oct. 4

Dec.–Jan. Issue: Nov. 1

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 Godsfil 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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*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

### Lane Audubon Officers & Board Members

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## A Florida Ramble with Dave Stone

**D**ave Stone took the spring 2014 term off from his teaching duties and drove (yes, drove!) to Everglades National Park in southern Florida, then up the East Coast, to Lake Erie, and west across southern Canada. He arrived back in Oregon with enough material for two or three programs. This month, he will take us on “A Florida Ramble.” He’ll treat us to a virtual visit to wildlife refuges on the Gulf Coast, in central Florida, and on Florida’s eastern shore, and, of course, the incomparable Everglades.

Dave teaches photography, including nature and bird photography, at Lane Community College, and he leads photography trips all over the western United States.

### October Program Meeting A Florida Ramble with Dave Stone



Credit: Dave Stone, Wildland Photography

White Ibis spreads its wings on Mrazeck Pond in the Everglades

**Tuesday, October 28, 2014, 7:30 p.m.  
Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St., Eugene**

## Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

*A service to Lane Audubon members*

### Godwit Days Fall Preview

Saturday and Sunday, October 4–5, Humboldt County, CA  
*3rd Annual Fall Preview*  
Ten select birding trips are offered over the course of the weekend.  
FMI: 707.826.7050, [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org), [info@godwitdays.org](mailto:info@godwitdays.org)

### Mount Pisgah Arboretum

Saturday, October 4, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.  
*Ethnobotany Walk*  
Join Devon Bonady on an exploration of the arboretum through the eyes of a plant gatherer. Learn about the relationships between people and plants in the southern Willamette Valley.

Sunday, October 19, 8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

*Fall Bird Walk*  
Join Nature Guides Chris Roth and Julia Siporin for a bird walk for people with all levels of birding experience, beginner to advanced. Please bring binoculars. Option to continue the walk until noon for those who are interested. Meet at the Arboretum Visitor Center.  
*Arboretum events are \$5, members free. FMI: 541.747.1504, [www.MountPisgahArboretum.org](http://www.MountPisgahArboretum.org)*

Sunday, October 26, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

*Mushroom Festival*  
Huge mushroom exhibit, live music, scarecrow contest, apple pressing, kids’ activities, food vendors, plants and art for sale. Guided nature walks. And don’t miss the LCAS booth!  
*Suggested donation \$8, kids under 12 free. FMI: 541.747.3817, [office@mountpisgaharboretum.org](mailto:office@mountpisgaharboretum.org)*

### Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN)

Saturday, October 11, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.  
*Family Exploration Day at Steward Pond*  
Meet at the parking lot on Steward Road, east of Bertelsen Road.

Tuesday, October 14, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

*Wetland Wander at Wild Iris Ridge*  
Meet at the end of the cul-de-sac on Bailey View.  
*All WREN events are free. FMI: 541.338.7047, [info@wewetlands.org](mailto:info@wewetlands.org)*

### North American Butterfly Association

Monday, October 13, 7:30 p.m.  
Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St. in Eugene  
*Natural History of Eastern Oregon*  
Sue and Jim Anderson of Sisters, Oregon, will talk about some of their adventures in the eastern Cascades.

Friday, October 17, 7:30 p.m.

Willamette Hall on the UO campus, Room 100  
*From Ancient Capitol to South of the Clouds: Butterflies and Others in Wild China*  
Robert Pyle, internationally recognized butterfly expert, author, and naturalist will present on the remarkable habitats he visited during his 2011 trip to China.  
*NABA events are free. FMI: 541.344.7630*

**October Program Meeting  
A Florida Ramble  
with Dave Stone**



Dave Stone, Wildland Photography

**Tuesday, Oct. 28, 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,  
October 18**

### **Third Saturday Bird Walk**

*Site and leader to be determined*

The destination for October's Third Saturday Bird Walk will be determined by interesting bird sightings posted to OBOL and other pertinent information available prior to the day. If a location is identified before then, we will post it on the LCAS Facebook page and on the LCAS website ([www.laneaudubon.org](http://www.laneaudubon.org)).

We meet at 8:00 a.m. at the South Eugene High School parking lot (corner of 19th and Patterson), rain or shine, for greetings and car pooling, and we plan to return by noon. Please remember that it's not a good idea to leave valuables in your vehicle if it's parked in the high school lot. Folks who wish to meet at the actual walk location can check the website or Facebook page. All levels of birders are welcome. 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).