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The Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society



From Our President

Maeve Sowles, 541.343.8664, maeveanddick@q.com

Trees and Other Natural Settings Offer a Healing Balm for Sanity



Maeve and cat Hercules

When I was a young girl, we had a big Modesto Ash tree in our front yard. I loved to climb that tree and sit up in its canopy as high as possible. I would watch the world go by—cars, bikes, walkers, cats, birds, insects, all while feeling safe

and invisible to the rest of the world. If I had a bad day at school, or wanted to get away from my big brothers, I would climb that tree and disappear. My mother liked to recount that one day after school, I came home, put down my things, and ran out to climb the tree. She did not know why, but she knew what the action signified. I needed time alone. While I was in the tree, a boy from school came over and rang the doorbell. Mom answered the door and said she did not know where I was, but he could call me later. She did not reveal my secret location. I watched as he walked away. I don't remember what had upset me that day, but I do remember that my mother had my back, and that the tree was also my protector.

The experience of that tree haven helped form many of my later priorities and ideas about the solace one can have while in nature. Surrounding oneself in nature can be healing and comforting, and can give a feeling of wholeness. Being outdoors each day gives me a peace of mind that helps me get through most tough times.

I do not climb trees anymore, but I still consider time out among the trees and in a natural setting as a lifeline for my sanity. I think it is important for each person to find a way to renew themselves in the natural world. It is also important to see the intrinsic value that nature holds. It is what has made our lives possible; the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat are all part of an interconnected web that supports life on earth. Humans seem to forget this interdependence. Protecting our natural systems gives each person on the earth a chance to have that deep, fresh breath that is life. It is our environmental home that we desperately need to save.

Lane County Audubon Society

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laneaudubon.org

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Conservation

Debbie Schlenoff, 541.685.0610, dschlenoff@msn.com

Environmental Protections Necessary For Survival of Our Essential Ecosystems

The health of the natural environment is not a Republican or Democrat issue. It is not a liberal or conservative issue. It is what all of us, non-humans and humans alike, depend on for our very existence. Unfortunately, it has been politicized, resulting in a critical loss of environmental protection over the past few years. Although many environmental laws have already been weakened, there have been some attempts to halt the rollbacks.

I'm happy to report that the administration's attempt to reinterpret the Migratory Bird Treaty Act was struck down by the Southern District of New York with a ruling that included "[i]t is not only a sin to kill a mockingbird, it is also a crime." Here's a partial list of some environmental protection rollbacks that have been enacted by the current administration.

- Enacted an executive order instructing agencies to waive the required environmental reviews of infrastructure projects, like highways and pipelines. The order allows "action with significant environmental impact" without regard to the requirements of federal laws like the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Endangered Species Act (ESA). Note: both these laws were passed under a Republican administration.
- Made it more difficult to protect animals under the Endangered Species Act from long-term threats posed by climate change.
- Overturned a ban on the use of lead ammunition on federal lands (lead ammunition kills raptors and other avian species or causes sub-lethal effects from lead poisoning).
- Reversed a ban on hunting predators in Alaska and using bait to lure and kill bears.
- Loosened several fishing restrictions including harvest limits, fishing in protected areas, and regulations that limit by-catch of wildlife such as blue-fin tuna, sea turtles, and marine animals.
- The US Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing "Categorical Exclusion" for post-disturbance (or post-fire) "salvage" logging and road building, which would exempt such projects from environmental review and public comment.
- The BLM has proposed eliminating the 15-day public protest period for NEPA reviewed projects. This does away with the protest process for timber sales in Oregon.
- Authorized several environmental rollbacks to the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act (Incongruously, recent research has established a link between air pollution and susceptibility to COVID-19).
- Weakened a rule that required coal plants to cut mercury emissions and rolled back requirements for disposal of coal ash.
- Revised the Clean Water Act to make it harder for states, tribes and the public to block pipelines and other projects that could pollute



their waterways.

- Relaxed regulations on coal-fired power plants' disposal of wastewater which contains dangerous pollutants, such as lead, selenium, and arsenic.
- In a series of moves, the EPA ordered the dissolution of advisory boards that offer external, apolitical science-based guidance. They have changed the composition of advisory committees to bar scientists but include more industry and anti-regulatory members. They limit the scientific research that the committees could consider.
- Eliminated or weakened regulations that limit greenhouse gas emissions.
- Lifted bans on oil and gas exploration in wildlife refuges, coastal waters, and even a national monument.
- Reversed decision to ban chlorpyrifos, a pesticide that is known to harm birds, bees, and humans.
- Weakened protections for wetlands.
- Relaxed the rules on refrigerant leaking (considered to be a major culprit in climate change).
- Weakened fuel economy laws for vehicles.
- Directed agencies to not consider calculations of the social cost of carbon.
- Revised a program that protected communities from power plant pollution.

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Field Notes: August 2020

Tom and Allison Mickel, 541.485.7112, tamickel@riouisa.com

Red-eyed Vireo, Marbled Godwit, Lark Sparrow, Rufous Hummingbird (albino)

It seemed like a fairly normal month weather wise—warm, dry and windy. Migration started for a number of species, including neotropical migrants headed south for the winter, northern breeders coming down here for the winter, or northern breeders headed further south for the winter.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), Lane Community College (LCC), Springfield (Spfd), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR)



Photo: Merlin Shank, Nature Friend, iAudubon.org

Rufous Hummingbird (albino)



Photo: Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren, iAudubon.org

Red-eyed Vireo

SWIFTS TO TERNS

Vaux's Swift (77)	Aug 9	River Road area	MRu	Roosting in their chimney
Vaux's Swift (-30)	Aug 27	River Road area	MRu	Feeding on insects in trees by "stalling"
Vaux's Swift (2790)	Aug 29	Agate Hall - UO	BC	Large roosting chimney during migration
Anna's Hummingbird	Aug 8	SW Eugene	BA	Mating pair
Anna's Hummingbird	Aug 11	FRR - Royal Ave	BN	Female collecting cattail down for nest
Rufous Hummingbird (albino)	July 25	Eugene	DT	Very stunning bird - all white w/pink bill
American Avocet	Aug 15	FRR - Royal Ave	JS	Unusual migrant
Pacific Golden-Plover (photo)	Aug 15	SJSR	GM	Normal time for southward migration
Pacific Golden-Plover	Aug 23	FRR - Royal Ave	RR	Normal time for southward migration
Marbled Godwit	Aug 16	FRR - Royal Ave	VT, et al	Rare inland migrant
Ruddy Turnstone	Aug 28	SJSR	JL, NC	Early fall migrant in small numbers
Ruddy Turnstone	Aug 28	Heceta Beach	TJ	Early fall migrant in small numbers
Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Aug 28	FRR - Royal Ave	LM, et al	Rare, but regular early fall migrant
Phalarope sp.	Aug 25	FRR - Royal Ave	RR	Normal time for southward migration
Black Tern	Aug 3	FRR - Royal Ave	RSi	Last report for the breeding season
Common Tern (6)	Aug 23	FRR - Royal Ave	DF	Small #s migrate through in the fall

FALCONS TO ORIOLES

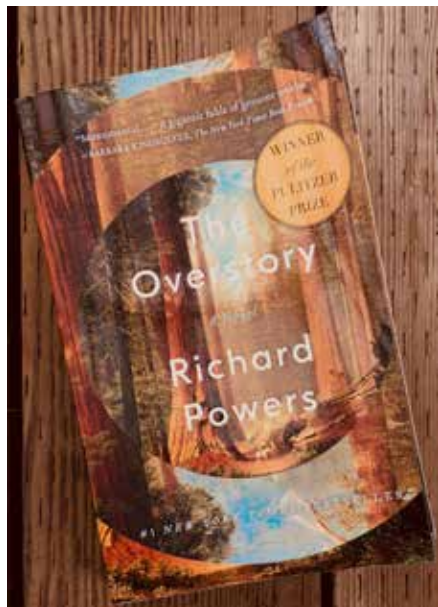
Prairie Falcon	Aug 23	FRR - Royal Ave	RR	Rare summer sighting
Western Kingbird	Aug 12	FRR - Royal Ave	NB	Last report for the breeding season
Red-eyed Vireo	Aug 15	McKenzie River-Spfd	RR	Only the second report this year
Bank Swallow	Aug 4	Delta Ponds	JL	First that I know about for this location
Northern Mockingbird	Aug 23	Alton Baker Park	JS	Rare summer sighting
American Pipit	Aug 10	FRR - Royal Ave	RSn	First report for "winter"
Lark Sparrow	Aug 26	River Road area	RH	Rare - normally found in the spring
Grasshopper Sparrow (juv.)	Aug 23	Alton Baker Park	JS	Was it hatched and raised in the area?
White-throated Sparrow	Aug 18	Coburg	SH	Singing, very early migrant, did it summer?
Yellow-breasted Chat	Aug 28	LCC	SD	Last report for the breeding season
Bullock's Oriole	Aug 15	FRR - Perkins	RA	Last report for the breeding season

BA Ben Ackerman, BC Barbara Combs, BN Bruce Newhouse, DF Daniel Farrar, DT Dave Taube, GM Gerry Meenaghan, JL Joshua Little, JS John Sullivan, LM Larry McQueen, MRu Mark Rudolph, NB Neil Bjorklund, NC Nolan Clements, RA Ramiro Aragon, RH Rich Hoyer, RR Roger Robb, RSi Randy Sinnott, RSn Robert Snowden, SD Steve Dignam, SH Signe Hurd, TJ Tye Jeske, VT Vjera Thompson

A Sort-Of Review by Jim Maloney

The Overstory

A Novel By Richard Powers



Last month I finished a couple of books I probably wouldn't have gotten around to were it not for our ongoing pandemic. The first fiction book I have read in a long time was Richard Powers' latest monumental novel, *The Overstory*. As I pondered writing a review, I decided to just include the intro to Alex Preston's interview with Richard from *The Guardian*. Then I'd follow up with notes on related material.

"There was something fitting about hearing the news that Richard Powers' *The Overstory* had been awarded the (2018) Pulitzer Prize just as Extinction Rebellion activists took to the streets of London. Powers' richly layered novel engages profoundly with questions of protest and conservation. It's a book about the intricacy and beauty of trees, and about nine characters who are drawn into deep relationships with these trees. The novel takes a

radical approach to time, seeking to present the lives of its "sentinel" trees alongside those of its human characters, intertwining normal narratological time with life "at the speed of wood". *The Overstory* is Powers' 12th novel and yet, until his Pulitzer win, he was often referred to as "the best writer you've never heard of." Alex Preston

As a mark of the quality of the remarkable writing I note that the website "Goodreads" (links below) includes 13 pages of quotes:

- [goodreads.com/work/quotes/57662223-the-overstory](https://www.goodreads.com/work/quotes/57662223-the-overstory)
- [theguardian.com/books/2018/jun/16/richard-powers-interview-overstory](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jun/16/richard-powers-interview-overstory)
- [theguardian.com/books/2019/may/11/richard-powers-interview-the-overstory-radicalised](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/may/11/richard-powers-interview-the-overstory-radicalised)

Powers notes in the interview that he uses the research and the writing of his books to change his own orientation in seeing and comprehending the world. While reading, I recognized themes and echoes from many books and articles I had previously read in my non-fiction readings. If you have already read any of these you will find some familiar territory related to the botanical side of the novel. Richard goes on to interweave the life stories of nine main human characters with the lives of multiple species of trees and the forests they populate.

The book is filled with human tragedies in the classic sense and asks profound questions that, in the end, he does not answer, but instead

leaves us with only the immense foundational groundwork of some 500 pages to work out our own.

A powerful book I'm glad to have read.

Related books and other sources I've read:

David Haskell, *The Songs of Trees*
Peter Wohlleben, *The Hidden Life of Trees*

Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Gathering Moss*

Jon Luoma, *The Hidden Forest*,
Brodie Goodrich, and Swanson,
Forest Under Story

Suzanne Simard: sciencefocus.com/nature/mycorrhizal-networks-wood-wide-web/

H.J. Andrews Research Forest:
andrewsforest.oregonstate.edu/

A screenshot of a Facebook post from the Lane County Audubon Society. The post features a photograph of a blue heron standing in a grassy field. To the left of the photo is a circular profile picture of the society. Below the photo, the text of the post is partially visible, including the name 'Lane County Audubon Society' and a phone number. The post is set against a light blue background.

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Conservation *continued from page 2*

I could go on. Brookings Institute counts 74 actions as of August to roll back environmental protections; Harvard Law counts 81, and the *New York Times* tallies 100 (with 70 completed and 30 in progress).

A bit overwhelming but let's try to pay attention. Contact your representatives and let them know you support strong environmental protections. And perhaps the most important thing you can do: Get out and VOTE!

Zoom Program Meeting Tuesday, October 27, 7:00 pm

Dennis Arendt, 541.221.3691, dennisarendt@gmail.com



For access details, check laneaudubon.org

All Tied Up in Knots: Seven Years with *Calidris canutus*



Photo: Paul Moyer

Janet Essley

In a slide show of her original paintings, Janet Essley explores the fascinating life cycles of these long-distance migrants, the amazing physiology, and the conservation challenges they face. The Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*), a medium-sized sandpiper, is a regular guest along the Oregon Coast during its spring and fall migrations. Extremists among sandpipers, Red Knots migrate longer distances, breed farther north, display faster beach-probing feeding maneuvers, and ingest harder shelled mollusks than other sandpipers.

Recording scientific knowledge through art forms from around the world, Essley's Cultural Cartography of Red Knots is a unique collage of human and avian natural history. Research for this project has immersed Essley in shorebird scientific studies and an astounding

variety of human artistic expression from around the world. If nothing else, she says, studying migrating birds teaches us that the world is one shared home.

Of her paintings printed here, she reports that "Faithful Foraging" depicts site fidelity of migrating Red Knots at Willapa Bay in Washington state. "Stopover Bohai Bay" records the critically important migration stopover site in northern China for Red Knots migrating from New Zealand and Australia to the Siberian Arctic.

Janet Essley is a painter, muralist, and teaching artist with 30 years of experience creating collaborative murals with youth and adults. Her personal art work has consistently focused on environmental issues. Prior to studying painting at the University of Oregon and settling into an artist's career, she worked for 15 years with the worker-owned reforestation cooperatives of the Pacific Northwest. In 2018 she completed the mural, "We Weave Our Future," on external walls of Oregon Woods, Inc., 299 Garfield in Eugene. The commemorative tree-planter's mural enlivens the yard of a former lumber mill. Janet also embraced opportunities as a seasonal volunteer on a variety of wildlife

studies that included Brant geese and California Gray Whales in Baja, and Orcas in British Columbia. It was in the marine estuaries of Baja that her interest in avifauna took form. "A Cultural Cartography of Red Knots" has been a collaborative project with long-term friend and shorebird biologist, Lee Tibbitts. For those interested, the entire Cartography can be seen on the website theredknotsproject.org.

Janet and her husband, Paul Moyer, a bird listener, reside in White Salmon, Washington, and on the Columbia River Gorge.



"Faithful Foraging"



"Stopover Bohai Bay" For those interested, the entire Cartography can be seen on the website theredknotsproject.org

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The Quail is the newsletter of Lane County Audubon Society, a chartered chapter of National Audubon Society. Local members of National Audubon Society receive a free subscription to *The Quail* but are encouraged to voluntarily join Lane County Audubon Society.

The Quail Subscriptions

Contact Tim Godsfil at 541.915.8852 or tgodsfil@gmail.com

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Lane County Audubon Society 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 fully cover the costs of 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 Audubon 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
- Website: laneaudubon.org

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- Individual \$20.....\$ _____
- Students and Seniors (65 and over) \$15.....\$ _____
- Family \$25.....\$ _____
- Lifetime Membership \$400.....\$ _____
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- Total Enclosed (check payable to Lane County Audubon Society).....\$ _____

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

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Gift memberships Lane Audubon's Living Legacy program

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I would like to receive e-mail alerts about conservation issues.

I would like to volunteer for Lane County Audubon activities.

Lane Audubon will not release your personal information to other organizations. We will use it only for Lane County Audubon Society communications.

Mail this form and your payment to: Lane County Audubon Society, P.O. Box 5086, Eugene, OR 97405

Tips For Preserving Nature While Hiking

Hiking is a great way to get connected with nature. While hiking you will need to take precautions to help protect the trails and the nature around you. Follow these tips to help preserve nature while hiking.

STAY ON THE TRAIL

When going off a trail, you will likely damage the vegetation that will be stepped on as well as contribute to erosion.



AVOID WILDLIFE

If you encounter a wild animal on your hike, stay a safe distance away. Do not try to feed the animal. This will not only increase your safety, but the animal's as well.



LEAVE NO TRACE

Follow the Leave No Trace principles. If you bring food or drinks with you, hold on to the trash until you find the proper receptacle to dispose of it.



CLEAN YOUR SHOES

After you're done with your hike, the bottom of your shoes may be covered in mud or seeds. Wipe them down to help prevent spreading invasive species to new areas.



DO NOT TAKE ANYTHING

Do not take plants, rocks, etc. while hiking. Removing these items can disrupt the ecosystem. Some plants may even be protected so you are not allowed to take them.



CLEAN UP THE TRAIL

While hiking, you may come across trash left behind by other hikers. Though it's not yours, clean up any trash you find, such as water bottles or wrappers.





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See page 6 to renew!



LCAS Bird Walks & Events

Rebecca Waterman, 541.653.3354, fieldtrips@laneaudubon.org

Bird Walk Coordinator Needed!

Rebecca Waterman, our current walk coordinator, is leaving the area soon. Lane Audubon is looking for a volunteer to take her place in planning our monthly Third Saturday Bird Walks. This is a fun opportunity to meet and learn from birding experts; best of all, you get to be out birding! Lane Audubon has the traditional dates set, a network of willing field trip leaders, and a list of past birding locations to choose from. Your responsibility would include deciding on a location, contacting field trip leaders, emailing the field trip publicity, and meeting the birding group on the day of the walk to get things started. Contact Maeve Sowles at 541.343.8664 or president@laneaudubon.org.

Note: since we are currently not having organized bird walks, this is a role we will need help with once the pandemic guidelines allow us to gather in small groups again.

Third Saturday Bird Walk

Although the regular walks are on a COVID-19 hiatus, we continue to lead small walks with some restrictions in place in order to adhere to local safety guidelines. Attendance is capped at 10 birders. Folks wishing to join a walk can email Bex at rebecca.waterman@gmail.com. All participants must wear a mask for the entirety of the walk and maintain the recommended 6-foot distance from each other.



Photo: Karen Irmischer

Vaux's Swifts at Agate Hall

First Fall Swift Event Enjoyed By Many

Friday, September 4th was the first of two “Welcome Back the Swifts” events Lane County Audubon Society sponsored in September. Approximately 85 gathered, families and groups of friends, along with some dogs, to watch the biannual spectacle of the Vaux’s Swifts entering the chimney at Agate Hall. A Cooper’s Hawk swooped up to the chimney around 7:55, quickly grabbed a swift, and flew away. It took about 15 minutes for the 7,420 Vaux’s Swifts to enter the chimney.

The folks who came to watch, eat Prince Puckler’s ice cream, and hang out were spread out in the playground, parking lots, and down the alley, so everyone had adequate space for safe distancing. It was a fun time for all ages, young to older!