

# The July-August 2016

**News from Lane County Audubon Society** 

### From Our President



# **Bluebirds of Happiness**

Maeve Sowles

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• Third Saturday Bird Walks

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his year we are excited that we have a pair of Western Bluebirds nesting in a nest box on our property southwest of Eugene. This has not always been the case, so we feel very fortunate to have them successfully raising six chicks this year. As I write this in mid-June, these chicks are within a day or two of flying. The pair of adults may even nest again this year if all goes well!



It is quite a treat to see them on a daily basis. They hunt insects in the vegetable garden, come to the water source in the front yard, and make food deliveries to the nest box throughout the day. They vigorously defend their box from any other birds that get too close. One morning the male bluebird chased off a Western Wood-Pewee looking for a perch and forced it to move on to a nearby tree.

Western Bluebirds have population pressures due to habitat loss and competition from other bird species, mainly European Starlings and House Sparrows. These two non-native species nest earlier and take nest cavities that might otherwise be used by bluebirds.

It has been four years since we had Western Bluebirds fledge successfully at our property. The last time they tried, the female parent disappeared, perhaps the victim of a predator, and the male was unable to continue feeding the chicks, so the nest failed. The past few years, bluebirds showed up in the spring but did not stay to build a nest here. Over our 20-plus years of providing nest boxes, we have seen 79 fledged Western Bluebirds. After this year we hope to add six or more to the total. You can see why this year is special, both for us and for the bluebird pair with six chicks!

For more information about them visit allaboutbirds.org/guide/Western\_Bluebird/lifehistory.

### **Conservation Column**



# The State of North America's Birds, 2016 Report

Debbie Schlenoff 541.685.0610 dschlenoff@msn.com

n 1916, at the urging of dedicated, concerned citizens, the Convention for the Protection of Migratory Birds was signed, and twenty years later it was expanded to protect birds throughout North America. This spring, in recognition of the convention's 100th anniversary, numerous organizations across the continent collaborated to produce the annual State of the Birds report, which focuses on an assessment of all native bird species that live in Mexico, the continental United States, and Canada—birds which, of course, know no borders. Extensive data, some of it from e-bird submissions, were used to determine the conservation status of each species as well as to determine conservation standing of various habitat types. The analysis included trends in population growth and size, extent of breeding and wintering ranges, and an evaluation of the severity of the threats impacting the birds. Although the report is careful to highlight conservation successes, the overall trend is distressing. Of the 1,154 bird species analyzed, a whopping 37% of them are considered to be at high risk of extinction; 49% are species of concern with a moderate risk of extinction, while only 14% are classified as being of low concern.

As for habitat, the species in sharpest decline live in ocean, coastal, grassland, aridland, and tropical forest habitats. Seabirds are threatened by invasive predators at nesting sites and are killed as accidental bycatch in commercial fishing operations. They are further threatened by pollution, coastal development, decreased food availability due to over-fishing, and reductions in food supply related to climate change. In fact, climate change threatens the habitats, ranges, and available resources in most locales. Grassland birds have been decimated by development, while land-use conversion has led to the disappearance of large swaths of grassland that historically occupied the continent. Aridland birds of desert, chaparral, and sagebrush habitat are dealing with loss of habitat due to residential and energy development, unsustainable land use, and invasive species. Deforestation and fragmentation continue to reduce forest bird populations. Tropical forests are the most impacted, but a significant number of temperate and boreal forests are still suffering

losses. Generalists who can utilize many different habitats are faring well. In the wetlands, waterfowl have benefited from intensive management (since they are game birds), so they are okay for now.



But wetlands continue to disappear.

Immediate conservation action is vital for over one-third of our continent's birds. Some efforts are underway. For instance, action is being taken to remove invasives from ocean and coastal bird habitats, especially island nesting grounds. Forage fish are being managed for the first time with an eye toward sustaining this food source. More people are calling for research and for utilizing methods that reduce bycatch or clean up plastic pollutants in the ocean.

How we can help:

- Vote for and communicate with legislators who support the protection of birds.
- Support corporations that use sustainable practices.
- Make smart consumer choices such as buying wood and paper products from certified sustainable timber operations.
- Buy certified sustainable seafood and shade-grown coffee.
- Provide backyard habitat for birds.
- Make an effort to reduce collisions with windows and encounters with cats.
- Buy a Duck Stamp or support other organizations that raise money for conservation efforts.
- Keep birding and contribute your sightings to e-bird to help grow this valuable database.

For more on what you can do visit stateofthebirds.org/2016 /resources/change.

The 2016 report produced fascinating animated distribution maps of some migratory birds. Check them out at stateofthebirds.org/2016/resources/species-abundance-maps.

The 2016 State of the Birds report can be found at stateofthebirds.org/2016.

## Field Notes: April/May 2016



- Brant
- · Long-eared Owl

Tom and Allison Mickel

- Dickcissel
- Cassin's Finch

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he weather for the period was warmer and dryer than normal, but with some cooler and wetter spells. Most of the neotropical migrants showed up earlier than normal, based on our 20-year database. Included were some rare and unusual reports for the season, as is normal for this time of year, and some very interesting finds: nesting Brant, and Great Egrets in a Great Blue Heron nesting colony.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR).

### **WATERBIRDS**

Greater White-fronted Goose	April 18	Eugene	TC	Flocks overhead.
Snow Goose	April 20	Siltcoos Beach	DF	With White-fronted flock.
Brant (nesting pair)	May 21	Sutton Lake	fide DP	Very rare away from the high arctic.
Blue-winged Teal	April 17	Meadowlark Prairie	KM	A little over a week earlier than normal.
Great Egret (8)	May 9	West Eugene	AC,et al.	Are they breeding locally?
Great Egret (2)	May 21	Royal Ave area	VT	In trees with nesting Great Blue Herons.
White-faced Ibis	May 14	FRR - Royal Ave	JW	Almost annual the last few years.
White-faced Ibis	May 19	Munsel Lake	VB,SH	First report from the coast.

### **RAPTORS to GOATSUCKERS**

Swainson's Hawk	April 30	Skinner Butte	JS,et al.	Less than twenty records for Lane Co.
Swainson's Hawk	May 11	FRR - Royal Ave	LM,et al.	Less than twenty records for Lane Co.
Rough-legged Hawk	April 2	FRR - Royal Ave	NS	Last report for the winter season.
Merlin	May 14	Baker Beach overlook	A&CH	Last report for the winter season.
Virginia Rail (w/young)	May 20	Mt. Pisgah	TC	Always fun to see.
Sora	April 9	FRR - Royal Ave	SH	Right on time.
Pacific Golden-Plover	April 29	Sutton Creek mouth	DP	Always a good bird in the spring.
American Golden-Plover	April 29	SJSR	B&KF	Always a good bird in the spring.
Black-necked Stilt (2 young)	May 24	FRR	AC,TMe	Breeding again this year.
American Avocet	May 16	FRR - Fisher Butte	SH	See if they breed this year?
Solitary Sandpiper	April 21	Swallow Pond	SM	Normal time for their migration.
Solitary Sandpiper (2)	May 9	West Eugene	AC,et al.	Getting late for their migration period.
Marbled Godwit (3)	May 1	FRR - Royal Ave	LJ,JS	Good numbers seen this spring.
Marbled Godwit (33)	May 6	FRR - Royal Ave	SM	Much larger number than normal.
Ruddy Turnstone	May 1	Heceta Beach	DP	Good numbers seen this spring.
Red Knot (21)	April 29	Sutton Creek mouth	DP	Good numbers seen this spring.
Baird's Sandpiper	May 7	Siltcoos River mouth	JL	Very rarely found in spring.
Pectoral Sandpiper	May 11	FRR - Royal Ave	LM,et al.	Rarely found in the spring.
Wilson's Phalarope	May 3	FRR - Fisher	SH	Right on time.
Red-necked Phalarope	May 7	Siltcoos River mouth	GR	A normal time for their migration.
Black-legged Kittiwake	April 3	Siuslaw River mouth	EH,AW	The last report for the winter season.
Franklin's Gull	May 7	FRR - Royal Ave	NS	Getting to be almost annual.
Caspian Tern (3)	May 2	FRR - Kirk Pond	SH	Returning for the breeding season?
Black Tern	May 5	FRR - Royal Ave	SH	Right on time.
Common Tern (9)	April 21	Heceta Beach	DSt	Not commonly reported in the spring.
Marbled Murrelet (7 pairs)	April 2	North Lane coast	AC,et al.	Not common every year.
Rhinoceros Auklet (2)	April 10	Siuslaw River mouth	DP,SH	First report for the breeding season.
Barred Owl	April 30	Skinner Butte	AC	Becoming more common in the city.

### **RAPTORS to GOATSUCKERS cont.**

Long-eared Owl	April 13	Skinner Butte	DA,et al.	An unusual location - rare in county.
Common Poorwill (2)	April 20	Cougar Mountain	CH	Rarely reported in Lane Co during spring.

### **HUMMINGBIRDS to KINGLETS**

Costa's Hummingbird	April 14	River Road area	BC	Less than fifteen records for county.
Calliope Hummingbird	mid-April	Eugene/Springfield	m.ob.	About five reports - less than the last years.
Black Swift	May 21	Meadowlark Prairie	AC,et al.	Rare away from breeding locations.
Black Swift (11)	May 21	Heceta Beach	DP	Almost annual during migration.
Black Swift (2)	May 25	Salt Creek falls	SH	A breeding location.
Vaux's Swift (2)	April 8	SW Eugene	MH	A couple days earlier than normal.
Vaux's Swift (3668)	April 30	Agate Hall, UO	BC	A normal number for spring migration.
Lewis's Woodpecker	May 1	FRR - Perkins	HL	Never common in the spring.
Lewis's Woodpecker	May 11	Mt. Pisgah	DSc	Never common in the spring.
Olive-sided Flycatcher	April 30	Skinner Butte	SH,et al.	Right on time.
Western Wood-Pewee	April 28	Cottage Grove area	TMo	A few days earlier than normal.
Willow Flycatcher	May 5	Skinner Butte	SM	Over a week earlier than normal.
Hammond's Flycatcher	April 24	Mt. Pisgah	CB	A couple days later than normal.
Gray Flycatcher	May 1	Bloomberg Park	AP	Almost annual in the spring.
Dusky Flycatcher	April 29	Coburg Hills	TMi	About a week later than normal.
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	April 21	Florence area	DSt	Right on time.
Western Kingbird	April 17	Mt. Pisgah	JSi,et al.	About a week earlier than normal.
Cassin's Vireo	April 5	Skinner Butte	SH,RR	A couple days earlier than normal.
Warbling Vireo	April 17	Skinner Butte	SH, et al.	About a week earlier than normal.
Purple Martin	April 2	FRR - Royal Ave	NS	About a week earlier than normal.
Northern Rough-winged Swallo	w March 27	Mt. Pisgah	BU	About a week earlier than normal.
Bank Swallow	May 20	Stewart Pond	BC	Rare in the spring.
Rock Wren	May 14	Row River Nature Park	TMo	Annual in the spring.
House Wren	April 8	Springfield	LK,JS	A couple weeks earlier than normal.
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	May 5	Mt. Pisgah	fide BN	Last found in the area in 2007.
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	May 20	Mt. June area	JL	Last report for the winter season.

### **THRUSHES to FINCHES**

Townsend's Solitaire	May 4	Cottage Grove area	TMo	Returning for the breeding season.
Swainson's Thrush	May 6	LCC/Skinner Butte	RR,SH	A few days later than normal.
Northern Mockingbird	May 5	Springfield	CE	A rare breeding season record.
Northern Mockingbird	May 17	Skinner City gardens	LS	A second breeding season record.
Sage Thrasher	May 28	SW of Eugene	fide DG	Occasionally reported during the spring.
Nashville Warbler	April 9	Skinner Butte	JS,SH	A few days earlier than normal.
Mourning Warbler	April 29	Skinner Butte	Ma,et al.	Second record for Lane County.
MacGillivray's Warbler	April 6	Delta Ponds	SH,DP	A couple weeks earlier than normal.
Hooded Warbler	April 28	Eugene Airport	CT	Second record for Lane County.
Yellow Warbler	April 16	SW Eugene	AC	About two weeks earlier than normal.
Black-throated Gray Warbler	April 2	Skinner Butte	DH	A couple days earlier than normal.
Hermit Warbler	April 21	Florence area	DSt	Right on time.
Wilson's Warbler	April 8	Skinner Butte	LG	A few days earlier than normal.
Yellow-breasted Chat	April 30	Mt. Pisgah	TMi	About a week earlier than normal.
Chipping Sparrow	April 3	FRR - Perkins	SH	Right on time.
Chipping Sparrow	April 3	SJSR	EH,AW	Right on time.
Vesper Sparrow (30+ pairs)	May 11	Creswell area	BA,JG	Largest breeding population in W Oregon.
Grasshopper Sparrow	May 7	FRR	m.ob.	Right on time.
Fox Sparrow	May 17	Jasper Road area	JK	Last report for the winter season.
Lincoln's Sparrow	April 27	FRR - East Coyote	VB	Last report for the winter season.
White-throated Sparrow	May 1	Willow Creek area	BB	Last report for the winter season.

### THRUSHES to FINCHES cont.

<b>Golden-crowned Sparrow</b>	May 9	Alvadore	BC	Last report for the winter season.
Western Tanager	April 21	Mt Pisgah/Cottage Grove	MBP,TMo	A couple days earlier than normal.
Black-headed Grosbeak	April 21	Skinner Butte	SH,et al.	A couple days earlier than normal.
Lazuli Bunting	April 27	Mt. Pisgah	BA	Right on time.
Dickcissel	March 29	Westfir	fide MLS	Third Lane County record.
Yellow-headed Blackbird	April 2	FRR - Royal Ave	NS	Right on time.
Great-tailed Grackle	May 21	Sutton Lake	fide DP	Third record away from the Willamette Valley.
Bullock's Oriole	April 20	Mt. Pisgah	AJ	About a week earlier than normal.
Cassin's Finch	April 19	Fox Hollow area	RF	Rarely found in the Willamette Valley.

AC Alan Contreras, A&CH Adrian & Christopher Hinkle, AJ August Jackson, AP Al Prigge, AW Annika Willette, BA Bob Altman, BB Brian Broderick, BC Barbara Combs, B&KF Ben & Kai Frueh, BN Bruce Newhouse, BU Becky Uhler, CB Camden Bruner, CE Clara Emlen, CH Casey Hase, CT Craig Tumer, DA Dennis Arendt, DF Daniel Farrar, DG Dan Gleason, DP Diane Pettey, DSc Don Schrouder, DSt Douglas Stotz, EH Eric Heisey, GR Glenn Reubon, HL Hydie Lown, JG Joel Geier, JK Jacob Koopmann, JL Joshua Little, JSi Julia Siporin, JSu John Sullivan, JW Jay Withgott, KM Katie McInnis, LG Linda Gilbert, LJ Laura Johnson, LK Lucas Knutter, LM Larry McQueen, LS Lorelle Sherman, m.ob. many observers, Ma Maitreya, MBP Mary Beth Pattyn, MH Matt Hunter, MLS Mary Lee Sayre, NS Noah Strycker, RF Rachael Friese, RR Roger Robb, SH Sally Hill, SM Sylvia Maulding, TC Tom Cable, TMe Thomas Meinzen, TMi Tom Mickel, TMo Tori Morgan, VB Vickie Buck, VT Vjera Thompson. Fide indicates a sighting that was reported to the listed observer.



# LCAS trip to Malheur National Wildlife Station

by Charlotte Maloney

ver the April 15 weekend, 30 LCAS members enjoyed the early migration at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. We were housed at the Malheur Field Station, some in campers and the rest in dorm or kitchenette accommodations. Although the headquarters remained closed for repairs and was off limits, the rest of the refuge was open. Each morning, half the group birded with Malheur Field Station Co-director Duncan Evered, who blended his knowledge of birds with the natural and cultural history of the area. Members also birded at locations near the refuge, seeing Sandhill Cranes, many types of shore birds, and a nesting Golden Eagle with two eaglets! In addition to birds, we saw numerous ground

squirrels and long-eared jackrabbits, plus signs of badger (but no sightings to this writer's knowledge). An active Great Horned Owl nest several yards from an office building provided hours of entertainment. The weather was sunny and clear each day, and we had a presentation each evening. Friday was an orientation by Duncan, including the effects of the militia occupation. Saturday Jim Maloney shared photography tips, and Sunday was a group bird count. A group photo (dated April 24) and bird list (dated April 19) are posted on the LCAS Facebook page. Many remarked that they would like to return as a group next spring. The planning group expects to organize a trip next year.

## 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 laneaudubon.org

### **Deadlines:**

September Issue: Aug. 3
October Issue: Sept. 3
Submit material to
Karen Irmscher
quailkaren@earthlink.net

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	\$
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☐ Lane Audubon's Living Legacy program	P.O. Box 5086
<ul> <li>I'd like to receive e-mail alerts about conservation issues.</li> </ul>	Eugene, OR 97405

### **Lane Audubon Officers & Board Members**

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### **Community Calendar**

### A service to Lane Audubon members

### Mt Pisgah Arboretum

Sundays, July 10 and 17, 1-3 p.m.

Join nature photographer Dave Stone for this popular two-day workshop. Learn to express your love and connection to the natural world through photography. This 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. Meet at the Mount Pisgah Arboretum Visitor Center, 34901 Frank Parrish Rd, Eugene, Members: \$25, Non-members: \$30. Registration required. Call 541.747.3817 to register. MountPisgahArboretum.org.

### Southern Willamette Ornithological Club (SWOC)

### On vacation until September 19

Eugene Birder's Night, which usually meets on the third Monday of the month, will not meet in July or August. We'll meet again at the usual time and place, 7 p.m. at the McNail-Riley House (13th and Jefferson), on Monday, September 19, when Jim Regali will present photos and tales from his trip to Trinidad. Look for the announcement in the September *Quail*. Hope to see you then. FMI: ellencantor@gmail.com

### **Cascade Raptor Center**

Sundays, July 31 & August 28, noon-4 p.m.

Family Nature Discovery Days

Join Cascades Raptor Center for Family Nature Discovery Days on the last Sunday of the month. Enjoy themed activities, along with visiting dozens of beautiful birds.

**Sunday**, **July 31**: *Wildlife Play Hospital*—Rescue a stuffed animal on the grounds, treat it in our field hospital by bandaging "fractures," healing "wounds," and powdering for "bugs," and then release it! Very popular with the younger crowd.

**Sunday, August 28**: *All About Owls!*—Dissect owl pellets and make pine cone owls. Fun for all ages.

General admission (members are free) plus \$2 activity fee for those participating in the activities. Activity fee waived for anyone hiking the Ridgeline Trail or riding their bikes.

### **Talons, Tastings & Tidbits**

Saturday, August 20, 6-9 p.m.

Join Cascades Raptor Center for their fifth annual benefit at Venue 252 in Eugene. Tickets are \$75; tables for 10, \$750. This new indoor benefit evening will feature Barry Lopez, raptors on the glove, fly overs, wine tastings, appetizers and desserts. For more information or to reserve your spot, visit CascadesRaptorCenter.org.

# **Thanks to LCAS Tabling Volunteers**

A hearty thank-you goes out to Hilary Dearborn for staffing LCAS's table at Oregon Wild's Eugene Brewshed & Outdoors Celebration, hosted at Ninkasi Brewery on April 28.

Thanks also to David Stone and Ron Renchler, who staffed a table at the Museum of Natural and Cultural History on the UO campus on May 21.

Spreading the word about Lane County Audubon's programs and activities is an important and valued service. We appreciate everyone who helps in this capacity.

# Welcome to New *Quail* Editor, Karen Irmscher

We look forward to working with Karen and appreciate the skills and talents she brings to creating *The Quail* newsletter for our members to enjoy! —Maeve

My editing career started with the junior high newspaper in the eighth grade. I then went on to edit my high school newspaper. After taking time to raise



three children, earn a BA in English and an MA in education, and work as a teacher and bookkeeper, I returned to school at LCC where I rediscovered my love of journalism and edited the LCC Torch. I earned a BA in journalism at the UO. For four years I wrote for the Tri-County News, West Lane News, Oregon Coast Magazine, and Springfield News before becoming a part-time teacher at LCC for 19 years. I've been recovering from that for about 5 years now and am eager to refresh my skills and more deeply immerse myself in the world of birding. My interest in birds was sparked about 13 years ago when a friend arranged a group birding trip to the Malheur Field Station. I was 60 then. That's also the year I began to hula. Since I've continued with both, I will probably always be less than expert at either pursuit. Other interests include Hawaii, ukulele, reading novels and nonfiction, travel, family, swimming, walking, hiking, dogs, kayaking, and on and on. I've lived in the same house in the River Road area for 40 years, and now share it with my husband, Buck Mueller, and our two dogs. -Karen

### Program Meetings to Resume on September 27

We take a break from our regular Program Meetings for the summer while our members are busy traveling, birding, and generally enjoying the out of doors. Details of our series of informative, engaging presentations will appear in the September issue of the *Quail* and on our website: laneaudubon.org. Program meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St., Eugene.



Has your *Quail* subscription expired? See page 6 for renewal info!

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### **Bird Walks and Events**

Jim Maloney 541.968.9249 jimgmal@comcast.com

### **Third Saturday Bird Walk**

Saturday, July 16

Dick Lamster and Maeve Sowles will lead a bird-watching-bycanoe (or kayak) trip to Fern Ridge Lake. You will need to furnish your own canoe or kayak and lifejackets (required). Each craft also needs an Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Permit. See boatoregon.com for more information on this requirement. To reserve a spot on the trip and/or get more information, call Dick at 541.343.8664. If you do not have a canoe or kayak, call anyway because other participants may have extra space in their craft.

### AmazonSmile—Give to LCAS When You Shop Online

Next time you shop online at amazon.com, first go to smile .amazon.com, search for and select Lane County Audubon Society as your chosen nonprofit, and then make your purchase. By doing so, 0.5 percent of the amount of your Amazon purchases will automatically be deposited in LCAS's checking account each quarter at no additional cost to you.

It's that easy. All your other Amazon account settings and shopping preferences will remain the same, but you'll seamlessly be donating to LCAS as you shop! You'll need to begin your shopping each time at the smile.amazon.com URL, but otherwise Amazon's site will look the same.

Thanks to Amazon—and to you—for supporting LCAS in this way.

### **Third Saturday Bird Walk**

Saturday, August 20

Site and leader to be determined based on interesting bird sightings posted to OBOL and other pertinent information available before the day of the walk. Details will be posted on the LCAS Facebook page (facebook.com/pages/Lane-County-Audubon-Society/330177413824?ref=hl), and on the website (laneaudubon.org).

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

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.



### Like us on Facebook!

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