I Miss My Audubon Friends!
But Nature Offers Solace

Our last Program Meeting was in late February and our last face-to-face Board Meeting was in early March. Since then, we have suspended our normal scheduled activities. I often think about our many volunteers and members who attend these Lane Audubon functions, people I only see at that time. Now months have passed and I feel the loss of normal contacts, hugs, smiles, and bird sightings that we would normally share when we see each other. I hope each of you is doing what you can to stay safe and healthy!

We have all been forced to find new ways to live our lives. For Lane Audubon we are using new technologies like Zoom for our Board meeting, and this month we will have our first Zoom Program meeting presentation. Nothing can replace the enjoyment of our in-person gatherings, so we do hope we can return to the traditional format in the future. For now, we hope you will stay connected to us via the electronic world. We are also open to new ideas and suggestions for keeping in touch, so please reach out if you want to share those with us! Our organization continues to adjust to the pandemic world, and we plan to stay involved with environmental outreach and education as the situation allows.

This is a year of many changes. Spending time in nature is one of my survival strategies. I find it comforting and healthy to be outdoors, both doing physical activity and observing and taking in nature’s beauty. The 2020 pandemic stay-at-home lifestyle gives us a chance to hone our yard bird lists. Birding at home, we can have a Yard List for birds, other animals, wildflowers, and mushrooms. Tracking the date of first arrival of a bird species in the spring and the last sighting before birds leave for fall migration is easier when we are home all the time!

Have you become a user of eBird or iNaturalist this year to help track your observations? Have you learned

continued on page 5
I have always been charmed by watching videos of bowerbirds decorating their bowers to attract females. Historically, they have decorated with colorful flowers, leaves, feathers, shells, and berries. But now the display sites contain a preponderance of plastic waste, including bottle caps and straws.

During these difficult times, it is easy to get distracted from threats to bird populations. As a result, environmental protections are being rolled back at breakneck speed and habitat continues to be lost. Issues that were on our radar tend to fall aside as other concerns become paramount. One such issue is rampant plastic pollution, but recent reports remind us that the problem will not just fade away without a change in the way we do business. More than 80 percent of seabirds (some sources say 90 percent) were found to have plastic in their bellies. To get a feel for how fast the problem has grown, compare that to 1960 when that number was a mere 5 percent. When dead Laysan Albatross chicks were examined, plastic was found in more than 97 percent of them. The number of seabirds that die due to plastic is estimated to be one million per year. And that figure does not include other types of birds, nor both terrestrial and marine wildlife.

The UN estimates that 79 percent of the plastic ever produced has ended up in the environment. Only 9 percent has been recycled. And wherever the plastic ends up, it has a good chance of finding its way into waterways. These eventually dump it into the oceans, where it can persist for centuries.

Some reasons why plastic is such a problem for birds:
- Plastic debris may look like food, smell like food, and float like food.
- The animals fill up with plastic (no nutritional value) and basically starve to death.
- Parents unwittingly collect plastic debris or prey containing microplastics to feed to their chicks.
- Sharp edges may puncture the digestive tract and other internal organs.
- Birds are at risk from the toxic effects of the chemical coating on plastics.
- Birds (and other animals) become entangled in plastic debris.
- For diving birds, the entanglement often results in drowning.
- Tightly wrapped plastic leads to infection of the constricted area.
- Restricted movement leads to greater risk from predators and less ability to forage.

Where Do We Go From Here?
A recent article in the journal Science (June 2020) used models to determine the efficacy of various interventions to reduce plastics. A major point was that mismanagement of plastic waste needs to be addressed globally. In many places, plastic is burned as a way to get rid of it. This is a major health hazard and does nothing to keep plastic particles out of the environment. In addition to environmental degradation, it is a social justice issue with severe health consequences that disproportionally affect communities with emerging economies.

The authors note opportunities for improvement. They suggest that further investment in resource-efficient business models, reuse and refill systems, incentivizing collection for recycling, substitution of sustainable materials for plastics, better waste management technology, and focused government policies are necessary to reduce the problem of plastics.

During this pandemic, we might need to alter our habits in ways that are less than ideal. Out of cautious necessity, the ban on plastic bags imposed by many states has been lifted. Stores may disallow reusable bags. Take-out service is on the rise meaning increased prevalence of single-use dishware and utensils. It’s ever more important to be aware of options and consequences.

What We Can Do About It
- Help raise awareness. This spring, the theme of World Migratory Bird Day was “Protect Birds: Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution!”
- Reduce your use of plastics, especially single-use, disposable plastic products. Cut out plastic cutlery, straws, single-use water bottles and cups. Drink tap water and utilize reusable water bottles.
- Try sealing food with wax-coated cloth instead of plastic wrap.

continued on page 7
The weather for the period was more or less normal, with a hot spell at the end. As is typical, some of the far northern breeders were already headed south after failed attempts at breeding during the latter portion of the period. Much larger numbers will head south in the next two-to-four months.

**Abbreviations**: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), Oregon Bird Records Committee (ORBC), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR)

### WATERFOWL TO SHOREBIRDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canvasback</td>
<td>July 3</td>
<td>FRR - Royal</td>
<td>Rare during the breeding season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canvasback</td>
<td>July 14</td>
<td>FRR - Royal</td>
<td>A breeding pair!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Nighthawk</td>
<td>June/July</td>
<td>Eugene/Springfield</td>
<td>More reports than the last few years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-chinned Hummingbird</td>
<td>June 13</td>
<td>Leaburg area, M&amp;SA</td>
<td>About twenty records for Lane Co.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calliope Hummingbird</td>
<td>July 12</td>
<td>Warner Mtn area, SH/VB</td>
<td>Rare breeder in the high Cascades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calliope Hummingbird</td>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>Cottage Grove area, SS</td>
<td>Quite rare in the valley this time of year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-necked Stilt (ad &amp; 2 juv)</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>FRR - Royal, SJSR</td>
<td>Nesting again this year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Avocet</td>
<td>July 29</td>
<td>FRR - Royal, GM</td>
<td>Rare during fall migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marbled Godwit</td>
<td>July 3</td>
<td>SJSR - crab dock, AC, VT</td>
<td>A little earlier than normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semipalmed Sandpiper</td>
<td>June 29</td>
<td>FRR - Royal, GM</td>
<td>A little earlier than normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson’s Snipe</td>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>S Coyote Unit - FRR, JGe</td>
<td>Uncommon breeder in the valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitary Sandpiper</td>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>FRR - Royal, MS</td>
<td>Rare during fall migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wandering Tattler</td>
<td>July 22</td>
<td>Strawberry Hill, JW</td>
<td>First report for fall migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesser Yellowlegs</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>FRR - Royal, AC, TJ</td>
<td>A little earlier than normal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### GULLS TO VIREOS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sabine’s Gull</td>
<td>July 14</td>
<td>Siuslaw River mouth, RR</td>
<td>Rare for the breeding season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heerman’s Gull</td>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>Siuslaw River mouth, AC, JGa</td>
<td>Normal time for northward movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marbled Murrelet (100+)</td>
<td>July 3</td>
<td>Bray Point area, AC, VT</td>
<td>Very high numbers for recent years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassin’s Auklet</td>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>Siuslaw River mouth, AC, JGa</td>
<td>Uncommon during the breeding season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storm-Petrel sp. (dark-rumped)</td>
<td>July 10</td>
<td>Siuslaw River area, TG-T</td>
<td>If accepted by the OBRC - Lane Co. first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-crowned Night-Heron</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Danebo Pond, VT</td>
<td>Rarely seen during breeding season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White-faced Ibis</td>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>FRR - Royal, RA</td>
<td>Rare during breeding season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-eared Owl</td>
<td>July 30</td>
<td>Lorane area, DK</td>
<td>Rarely found during breeding season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Three-toed Woodpecker</td>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>Scott Lake area, AC, et al</td>
<td>They breed in the high Cascades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Three-toed Woodpecker</td>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>Gold Lake road, Jl</td>
<td>Adults feeding young in nest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-backed Woodpecker</td>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>Scott Lake area, AC, et al</td>
<td>They breed in the high Cascades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-backed Woodpecker</td>
<td>July 17</td>
<td>Ollalie Mtn, LC</td>
<td>In recent burn - farther west than normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash-throated Flycatcher</td>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>Steward Pond, EB</td>
<td>Continuation of the large spring numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash-throated Flycatcher</td>
<td>June 9</td>
<td>Delta Ponds, Jl</td>
<td>Continuation of the large spring numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red-eyed Vireo</td>
<td>July 1</td>
<td>Finn Rock Reach, RR</td>
<td>The only sighting for this year!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SWALLOWS TO WARBLERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bank Swallow</td>
<td>July 14</td>
<td>FRR - Royal</td>
<td>A little earlier than normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horned Lark</td>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>FRR - Royal</td>
<td>Uncommon in this area during breeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Bluebird</td>
<td>June 4</td>
<td>Wild Iris Ridge, VB</td>
<td>Rare in the valley during breeding season</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Field Notes: Summer 2020

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

Calliope Hummingbird, Common Grackle, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Waterthrush
SWALLOWS TO WARBLERS CONTINUED

Mountain Bluebird .................................................. July 2 ............... Taylor Burn Rd. .......... A&TM .............. They breed in the high Cascades
Northern Mockingbird ........................................... June 2 ............. Mt Pisgah ............... JH ................. Rare in the valley in breeding season
Northern Mockingbird ........................................... June 22 ............. Silcoos River mouth .... DF ............... 2nd year of sighting in breeding season
Cassin’s Finch ......................................................... July 6 ................. Taylor Burn Rd. .......... RR ............... They breed in the high Cascades
Brewer’s Sparrow ................................................... July 10 .............. FRR - Royal ............... JGa ............... A little earlier than normal
Vesper Sparrow ....................................................... July 26 .............. High Prairie - Oakridge ....... JI ............... Are they breeding in the area?
Grasshopper Sparrow ............................................. July 4 ................. Alton Baker Park ........ JS, LJ ....... Singing in old landfill
Grasshopper Sparrow ............................................. July 22 .............. S Coyote Unit - FRR ....... JGe ............... Possible breeding
Lincoln’s Sparrow .................................................... July 17 .............. FRR - Royal ............... MS ............... Rare away from the high Cascades
Common Grackle ...................................................... July 9 ................. FRR - Orchard Pr ........ BC ............... About the fifth record for Lane Co
Great-tailed Grackle ................................................. July 4 ................. FRR - Royal ............... VT, NC ........... The first report since 2017
Northern Waterthrush ............................................ July 2 ................. Mule Prairie .......... A&TM .............. First report from this area since 2002
Black-and-white Warbler ......................................... June 4 ................. Owasso Bridge area ....... RH ............... Second breeding season report for Lane


Bird Walk Coordinator Needed!

Lane Audubon is looking for a volunteer to plan the 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 rules allow us to gather in small groups again.

Online Resources for Lane County Birders

We’ve posted these before, but they are so useful that they bear repeating.

- Birding News on the American Birding Association’s Oregon Birding Online (OBOL) website offers the primary bird-sighting listserv for Oregon: birding.aba.org/maillist/OR0. First click on Home, then scroll down to the OBOL link. It can be sorted to include postings from Lane County, other counties and regions in Oregon, and even for other states and countries. To set your list for local sightings, go to Birding News. Scroll down in the search field at the top, and choose OR-Lane County or, for a more limited list, OR-Willamette Valley. Sightings by local birders, along with occasional bird-related comments, will show up in your email, and it’s all free.

- Birding Eugene is another useful online site for local birders: thefarleys.us/BirdingEugene/Welcome.html. This is a website that details birding spots close to Eugene. To visit a site, just click on the name in the list at the top. Each page introduces birding sites of interest, describing key features of the area, indicates the birds likely to be seen there, and includes several pictures of birds common to the site. By clicking on the name of a bird, one is taken to the page for that species maintained by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. That page provides background information about the bird, including a recording of its song.

- Willamette Valley Birding Trail is a website for those who want to travel a little farther afield: oregonbirdingtrails.org/willamettevalley.htm. This website provides resources for planning your visit to this trail and has links to eight other Oregon birding trails. Each includes a trail guide with maps and information about the birds that you can look for along the trail.

Links for these and other resources are listed in the Web Links section of the Resources listing on LCAS’s website: laneaudubon.org/resources/links.
The coronavirus has required many changes in our lives, including to our upcoming Program Meetings. **Fall’s Audubon meetings will be online only.** The meetings will be “live” on Zoom, but also recorded so that you can access them from the website afterwards. Our first Zoom program meeting will be on Tuesday, September 15, at 7. Check the LCAS webpage (lanecountyaudubon.org) for instructions on how to access the meeting. Presenters for the fall meetings have been revised as well. Doctoral thesis changes and a job in Switzerland have forced two of the scheduled speakers to cancel their programs. Doing Zoom meetings will be new for us. We hope you like them. Because the programs will be available online for a long time, perhaps even more people will be able to enjoy them.

### Dead Trees: Why We Need Them

Ken Bevis is now our first speaker. Ken is an accomplished natural history educator and wildlife biologist whose entertaining environmental conservation lectures focus primarily on the birds and forests of the Pacific Northwest. His presentation will be about dead trees. Fortunately, he is very humorous and has the ability to make something as seemingly dull as dead trees exciting. He will elaborate on the many creatures that find food and housing there: slugs, bugs, and salamanders for starters. If you have ever wondered how many ways dead trees can be valuable, tune into this program.

Ken Bevis is currently the Stewardship Biologist for the Washington Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Small Forest Landowner office. He helps landowners learn how to manage small private forest lands for the benefits to wildlife. For 15 previous years, he worked for the U. S. Forest Service, Yakama Indian Nation, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. He was one of first biologists to look at the Spotted Owl situation in Washington.

Originally from Virginia, he has made Washington his home since 1986. He holds a BS in Forestry and Wildlife from Virginia Tech (1979) and a MS in Biology from Central Washington University (1994), where he studied woodpeckers and owls, and deepened his knowledge and appreciation of dead trees.

He frequently teaches workshops and classes for Washington State University Extension programs. An accomplished singer-songwriter, he has also acquired some local renown as a nature troubadour. Living surrounded by nature in the beautiful Methow Valley of far North-Central Washington, he creates songs inspired by a deep sense of wonder, passion, and insights on the natural world. Ken says that his songs emerge and music flows as he watches, remembers things felt, smelled, and lived. FMI: To hear or order his songs and albums: kenbevis.com/music.
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 County Audubon Society Officers & Board Members

President       Maeve Sowles..............541.343.8664........maveanddick@q.com
Treasurer       Ron Renchler.............541.345.0834........christyandron2@gmail.com
Members
Debbie Schlenoff..........541.685.0610........dschlenoff@msn.com
Ramiro Aragon..................aragon.nw@gmail.com
Rachael Friese...................audadventures@gmail.com
Jim Maloney..............541.968.9249........jimjm@comcast.net
Rebecca Waterman........541.653.3354........fieldtrips@laneaudubon.org
Herb Wisner (Emeritus)....541.344.3634........hrwisner@comcast.net

Lane County Audubon Society Committee Chairs

Audubon Phone.............Dick Lamster........541.485.BIRD
Audubon Adventures........Rachael Friese...............audadventures@gmail.com
Audubon in the Schools......Volunteer Opportunity
Booth......................Ron Renchler........541.345.0834........christyandron2@gmail.com
Conservation.............Debbie Schlenoff..........541.685.0610........dschlenoff@msn.com
Education....................Volunteer Opportunity
Field Notes..............Allison & Tom Mickel......541.485.7112........tamickel@riouusa.com
Field Trips............Rebecca Waterman........541.653.3354........fieldtrips@laneaudubon.org
FRESH................................Art Farley........541.683.1186........art@cs.uoregon.edu
Membership Data...........Tim Godsil........541.915.8852........tgodsil@gmail.com
Program Coordinator......Dennis Arendt........541.221.3691........dennisarendt@gmail.com
Quail Editor..............Karen Irmscher........quaikaren1@gmail.com
Recording Secretary......Kathy Wilson...........kfred1953@yahoo.com
Webmaster......................Hilary Dearborn........hcdearborn@gmail.com

Lane County Audubon Society Yearly Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual $20</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students and Seniors (65 and over) $15</td>
<td>$15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family $25</td>
<td>$25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifetime Membership $400</td>
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<tr>
<td>I want to do more. Here's my tax-deductible</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>contribution for</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Enclosed (check payable to Lane</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Audubon Society)......................</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

I am a☐ Current National Audubon member☐ Don’t know

Please contact me regarding
☐Gift memberships☐Lane Audubon’s Living Legacy program

Name ________________________________________
Mailing Address _______________________________
City____________________State______Zip_________
Phone ________________________________
E-mail ______________________________________

☐ I would prefer to receive the e-Quail newsletter by e-mail.
☐ 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
Herb Wisner’s Bird-rich Memoir Now Available on Amazon

Long-time LCAS board member Herb Wisner, now 98, has completed his memoir, *My Life... and Then Some: A Memoir?* Herb’s bird-filled autobiography is available on Amazon! The following teaser is shortened slightly from what appears on the Amazon website:

For 98 years, Herb Wisner has lived a remarkable life. Raised in an extraordinary childhood home near the New Jersey shore, his journeys took him to colleges in Alabama and New York, to overseas exploits while in the Army Airforce during WWII, and to a teaching career that stretched from rural Unadilla, New York, to Eugene, Oregon.

Accompanied by hundreds of photos, Herb’s stories span nearly a century. They include vivid portraits of family and friends whose paths have crossed his. He remembers them all in his unique voice infused with gentle humor.

Born in 1922, he describes his rich childhood growing up on an old 5-acre estate near Asbury Park, New Jersey, where his parents, aunts, uncles, and cousins all lived together, running the place as a summer hotel for guests who returned year after year to spend the entire summer. He paints vivid pictures of little-known, behind-the-scenes situations when stationed in Italy, Libya, and Egypt during WWII, where he and fellow meteorologists were the ones to decide when the weather was safe for pilots to fly. Returning home from the war, he details meeting Ruth Usher, the love of his life, and changing career directions to become a teacher and the lifelong naturalist he still is.

Teaching is in Herb’s blood. His father, aunts, and uncles were teachers. From them, he also inherited a love of birds and the natural world. You will share Herb’s deep appreciation of birds and the natural world, and his life-long love of teaching—from instructing not-always-attentive junior high and high school students in Unadilla, New York, to inspiring hundreds of students in the biology department at the University of Oregon.

After retirement, he continued to teach through the numerous slide lectures he gave for many organizations in the Eugene area. He also served as a guide for natural history tours in Oregon offered by Elderhostel (now Road Scholar).

Many he taught still come up to Herb to exclaim “you were the best teacher I ever had!” Herb Wisner is a man who loves his family and friends, and his family and friends love him back. That love shines throughout this book, as his daughter and two sons grow up, yet return again and again to be with him and their mom, Ruth. And still Herb has stories to tell.

FMI or to purchase: [amazon.com/My-Life-Then-Some-Memoir/dp/1734388838](amazon.com/My-Life-Then-Some-Memoir/dp/1734388838)

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Conservation continued from page 2

- Buy metal razors and wood-handled toothbrushes.
- Don’t use balloons; find earth-friendlier ways to be festive.
- Use matches instead of plastic lighters (one of the most common items found in albatross bellies).
- Avoid buying items packaged with excessive amounts of plastic. Buy items that come in paper and glass bottles. Buy bulk.
- Recycle whatever plastic you do use.
- Support businesses that use sustainable packaging or offer plastic alternatives.
- Participate in beach and community cleanups.
- Let elected officials know that you support policies to reduce plastic, create and improve all facets of the recycling chain, and better manage plastic waste.

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Thanks for a Job Well Done

Thank You to Ramiro Aragon for completing a bird survey and list for a property near Cheshire, Oregon. He was helped by John Sullivan on one of the visits. The 219-acre property was designated a perpetual wetland by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the owner requested our help in supplying a bird list. Ramiro did a great job!
Bon Voyage to Vaux’s Swifts at Agate Hall

Lane County Audubon Society will host two of its annual fall swift events outside Agate Hall at sunset on consecutive Fridays, September 4th and 11th. We will spread out to maintain social-distancing, so please be careful of your and other’s safety! Vaux’s Swifts use the chimney to roost for the night as they gather prior to migration. We may see thousands of birds entering the chimney, but there is no guarantee!

It is fun to observe the swifts before they fly off to Central and South America for the winter. Look for the LCAS banner at the south parking lot of Agate Hall. Stop by and enjoy this annual natural phenomenon. It is free! And conveniently close to Prince Puckler’s Ice Cream, which is not free but can be a low-cost addition to your evening’s fun.

FMI see the Vaux’s Swift page on the LCAS website: laneaudubon.org/docs/vauxs-swift, or call 541.343.8664.

The Mysterious Lives of Birds Who Never Come Down Except to Nest

Swifts spend all their time in the sky. Common Swifts are the big cousins of our Vaux’s Swifts and are found throughout Europe during breeding season. They fly south to Africa, to equatorial and sub-equatorial regions for the winter. What can their journeys tell us about the future?

If you’d like to know more about these mysterious birds, check out this link: nytimes.com/2020/07/29/magazine/vesper-flights.html