

The Quail

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News from Lane County Audubon Society



From Our President

Maeve Sowles, 541.343.8664, maeveanddick@q.com

Lane Audubon Summer Updates

As with many other groups, Lane Audubon has struggled over the past sixteen months to maintain our educational and outreach activities due to the COVID pandemic. We were not able to visit schools and have special events as in past years. The **Audubon in the Schools** Program was the primary one that was suspended. We do hope that in the Fall if schools are open and if our volunteers feel safe, we can once again bring that program into classrooms.

Our 2021 **Program Meeting** season from January to May was successful. That will start up again in September. We made the transition to Zoom Programs in September 2020 and that format has gone well. It is not the same as gathering in person for conversation, laughs and

cupcakes, but we have had very good virtual attendance with the bonus of YouTube recordings that folks can watch at their convenience. Dennis Arendt has worked hard to arrange schedules and rearrange speakers using the Zoom technology. He also edits the Zoom recordings and posts them on YouTube. He continues to offer Lane Audubon engaging and interesting programs and speakers. Debbie Schlenoff is our Zoom Program techie and her help has been essential! During our May Program, we had a poll asking whether folks would attend an in-person program in the fall, and the tally was split almost in half! While we hope we can gather again at the Garden Club for Programs in September, we will be in wait-and-see mode. Stay tuned because in September we will have new Programs

scheduled, whether via Zoom, in person, or a combination of the two!

The **Audubon booth** remained inactive due to the cancellations of fairs, festivals or events where we would normally set up the booth. Ron Renchler has managed that activity for years and he hoped to welcome some new volunteers this year. Ron is also Lane Audubon's treasurer and keeps our bills paid and finances accurate. He has been in that role since 2006 and a board member since about 1992!

Audubon Adventures classroom kits have been sent out to about fifteen teachers this past school year. That is a low number for us, but we hope we can make more school contacts and send out many more kits in the next school year, especially if we have a **new volunteer** take on this project! Please consider helping us with Audubon Adventures!!



continued on page 5

Lane County Audubon Society

541.485.BIRD

laneaudubon.org

P.O. Box 5086, Eugene, OR 97405

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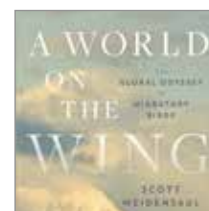
Conservation..... 2



Field Notes 3



Thank You's 5



Book Review 7

Conservation

Debbie Schlenoff, 541.685.0610, dschlenoff@msn.com

Marbled Murrelets Need Our Support

Some of us occasionally enjoy the convenience of buying take-out food and bringing it home to the family. It's not so convenient though, when the take-out place is located up to 100km (over 60 miles) away. That is the daunting challenge faced by Marbled Murrelets (MAMU), seabirds that nest in the old growth forest of the coastal mountains but forage at sea. The split requirements of life at sea and nesting season in forests exacerbates the misfortune of multiple anthropogenic effects that threaten the species.

A recent study found that fewer forage fish (a result of warming oceans) worked synergistically with habitat loss (in the form of timber harvesting) to cause lower rates of nesting, thus, lowering population growth. (Betts, et al., 2020) The study further illuminated that poor at-sea forage conditions may continue for several consecutive years during which time MAMU occupancy for nesting will cease. However, current regulations allow logging at a site that has been surveyed for two years with no observed MAMU nesting occupancy. According to the science, five consecutive years of survey should be the minimum before tree removal is considered.



Photo: Aaron Allred, audubonportland.org

Marbled Murrelet chick

The best available science is clear—habitat loss on state lands is putting the Marbled Murrelet at risk of extinction. In order to support this species, high-quality habitat suitable for nesting should be protected. Despite being listed as “threatened,” the Marbled Murrelet continues to suffer population decline. Uplisting the species from “threatened” to “endangered” would require a comprehensive conservation plan to strategize how to best support and manage the species on our state lands. Further, protecting this species in its critical habitat, will benefit other species that share that environment.

A petition for uplisting is now before the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. We've been here before. The commission voted in 2018 to uplist the species based on testimony from their own scientists and other evidence. Then, they reversed the decision at their next meeting during which timber interests heavily lobbied against it. The reversal was successfully challenged in court and now the decision will be revisited.

The decision on uplisting has been set for the **July 9** ODFW Commission meeting. It is important that the commission hear from many people



Photo: National Park Service

A nesting Marbled Murrelet



Photo: Martin Raphael, U.S. Forest Service

Marbled Murrelet at sea

who support action to protect the Marbled Murrelet. Please consider providing testimony at this virtual meeting. We will supply details when they become available as to how you can help. **Please check our website and Facebook page.**

A few brief updates to share recent good decisions:

Federal:

- The Biden administration has overturned a Trump administration legal opinion that had scrapped protections under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
- The Biden administration suspended oil drilling leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that had been approved by the Trump administration.

Local:

Court agrees that the Thurston Hills timber project should not proceed. The timber sale is located next to the Thurston Hills Natural Area near the community of Springfield. The Court determined that the BLM failed to explain or analyze “the degree or severity of fire hazard to the community and neighboring landowners.” The BLM must now decide whether to continue to propose the timber sale. We hope that the flood of public opinion opposed to the sale combined with the latest court ruling will deter future logging in this area.

Field Notes: April/May 2021

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

Parakeet Auklet, Willet, Great Gray Owl, Black-throated Sparrow

We had a very dry spring until the end of May, as did most of Oregon. This drought has dried up marshes in the Great Basin and the Klamath Basin, which most likely is responsible for the large numbers of marsh breeding species (stilts, avocets, Wilson’s Phalaropes, Franklin’s Gulls, and ibises) showing up in large numbers here. Also, the shorebird migration along the coast was one of the better ones in many years! I think that’s also related to the summer-like weather and its strong north winds. This likely caused the shorebirds to migrate along the beaches instead of further out at sea, so they could rest and feed along the beaches. One of the species that really stood out was Red Knots, with upwards of 60 seen in a day. And that went on for over a week—instead of a handful seen on a couple of days!

Abbreviations:

Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), North Fork (NF), North Jetty of the Siuslaw River (NJSR), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR)



Parakeet Auklet

Photo: Art Sowis, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



Willet

Photo: Mike Baird, wiki commons

WATERFOWL TO WADERS

Trumpeter Swan	May 12	Oakridge area	AC,JG	A late report for Lane Co
Harlequin Duck	May 9	Leaburg area	SA	Rare inland, but breed in the Cascades
Long-tailed Duck	May 17	SJSR	VB	A late report for Lane Co
Horned Grebe	May 12	Hills Creek Reservoir	AC,JG	A late sighting
Common Poorwill	April 13	Glenwood	US	Found in a warehouse - rare in the valley
Vaux’s Swift	April 4	River Rd area	RH	About a week earlier than normal
Black-chinned Hummingbird	May 9	South Eugene	JG	About twenty records for Lane Co
Calliope Hummingbird	April 19	River Rd area	BC	First of a number of reports during April
Sandhill Crane	April 27	Ten Mile Ck	SH,DP	An unusual sighting from the coast
Black-necked Stilt	March 30	FRR	RR	First of many reports w/large numbers seen
American Avocet	May 1	FRR	SH	Appear to be nesting - first since 2014
Marbled Godwit	April 21	Siltcoos River mouth	DF	First report for the spring migration
Ruddy Turnstone	May 1	Heceta Beach	NCs	First of many reports for the month
Red Knot	April 23	Heceta Beach	DP	First of many reports w/large numbers
Short-billed Dowitcher	April 1	Siltcoos River mouth	LG	First report for the spring migration
Solitary Sandpiper	April 17	FRR	JS	About a week earlier than normal
Wandering Tattler	May 1	NJSR	JL	First report for the spring
Willet	April 29	NJSR	DP	Rare in Lane Co
Wilson’s Phalarope	May 6	FRR	NS	Right on time
Red-necked Phalarope	May 6	FRR	JS	First inland report for spring migration
Parakeet Auklet	April 5	NJSR	DP	The first live bird seen in Lane Co
Franklin’s Gull	May 6	FRR	NCn	First of many reports
Black Tern	May 6	FRR	JS	Right on time
Sooty Shearwater	April 14	Tokatee Klootchman	CS	A few spring reports
Black-crowned Night-Heron	April 5	West Eugene	JC	Rarely reported in the spring
White-faced Ibis	May 10	FRR	JS	Large flocks reported throughout May
White-faced Ibis (5)	May 14	Siltcoos River mouth	DF,MLS	An unusual sighting from the coast

HAWKS TO SWALLOWS

Swainson's Hawk	May 8	Eugene Airport area	KY	Rare, at least two birds in the area
Great Gray Owl	April 11	McKenzie Bridge area	JP	Rarely seen in Lane Co
Short-eared Owl	May 11	FRR	JH	Are they nesting in the area?
Olive-sided Flycatcher	May 1	Skinner Butte	TJ	Right on time
Western Wood-Pewee	April 23	Skinner Butte	EC	About a week earlier than normal
Willow Flycatcher	May 12	Mt Pisgah area	TMi	Right on time
Hammond's Flycatcher	April 15	Big Creek	BMe	A few days earlier than normal
Gray Flycatcher	April 21	Oakridge area	AC, JG	First of more sightings than normal
Dusky Flycatcher	April 24	Walterville Reservoir	VB	A couple days later than normal
Pacific-slope Flycatcher	April 21	Blanton Rd - Eugene	SH	Right on time
Western Kingbird	April 14	Eugene Airport area	RH	A few days earlier than normal
Ash-throated Flycatcher	May 5	Hills Creek Reservoir	SH	About a week earlier than normal
Cassin's Vireo	April 10	Hendricks Park	JG	A couple days later than normal
Warbling Vireo	April 18	Skinner Butte	LG	A couple days earlier than normal
Blue Jay	May 30	Eugene - south hills	CQ	Rare - especially in breeding season
Purple Martin	April 2	FRR	EW	Almost a week earlier than normal
Bank Swallow	May 2	Westfir area	NCs	An unusual spring report

WRENS TO BUNTINGS

House Wren	April 22	Wild Iris Ridge	LG	A few days later than normal
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	April 22	Mt Pisgah	JS	Nested in the area for last few years
Mountain Bluebird	April 15	Mt Pisgah	JH	A rare lowland sighting
Townsend's Solitaire	April 8	NF Willamette River	RR	First report for the breeding season
Swainson's Thrush (recording)	April 22	River Rd area	RH	About a week earlier than normal
Northern Mockingbird	May 6	Alton Baker Park	RR	Rarely found except in the winter
Pine Grosbeak (4)	May 24	Heceta Beach area	DAn	Rarely found in Lane Co
Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch	May 11	Diamond Peak	GC	A normal location for this species
Brewer's Sparrow	May 16	FRR	NCs	Rarely reported in the spring
Vesper Sparrow	April 13	Razor Park	PH	A few days later than normal
Lark Sparrow	May 3	River Rd area	RH	Rare, but a normal time for them
Grasshopper Sparrow	May 6	Mt Pisgah area	TMi	Right on time
Black-throated Sparrow	May 6	FRR	DP	Rare, first of three records
Yellow-breasted Chat	May 6	FRR	JS	Right on time
Yellow-headed Blackbird	April 3	FRR	SH	A couple days later than normal
Bullock's Oriole	April 19	Pleasant Hill area	MJ	A couple weeks earlier than normal
Black-and-White Warbler	April 22	Skinner Butte	JS	About the fifteenth record for Lane Co
Nashville Warbler	April 5	Dorris Ranch	DA, et al	A couple days earlier than normal
MacGillivray's Warbler	April 14	Creswell area	TMo	About a week earlier than normal
Yellow Warbler	April 5	Dorris Ranch	DA, et al	A couple weeks earlier than normal
Black-throated Gray Warbler	April 4	Skinner Butte	MH	Right on time
Hermit Warbler	April 22	Skinner Butte	M.ob	Right on time
Wilson's Warbler	April 5	Dorris Ranch	DA, et al	A couple weeks earlier than normal
Western Tanager	April 1	Mt Pisgah	MP	Three weeks earlier than normal
Black-headed Grosbeak	April 5	Dorris Ranch	DA, et al	A couple weeks earlier than normal
Lazuli Bunting	April 24	Skinner Butte	JS	A few days earlier than normal

AC Alan Contreras, BC Barbara Combs, BMe Bob Meinke, CQ Charlie Quinn, CS Carter Strobe, DAn Debby Anderson, DA Dennis Arendt, DF Daniel Farrar, DP Diane Pettey, EC Ellen Cantor, EW Evan Wilder, GC Gavrett Carlson, JC John Contreras, JG Joshua Galpern, JH Jennifer Haynes, JL Joshua Little, JP Jared Purch, JS John Sullivan, KY Kaplin Yalcin, LG Linda Gilbert, MH Matt Horton, MJ Mary Johnson, MLS Mary Lee Sayre, MP Margie Paris, NCn Nancy Clogston, NCs Nolan Clements, NS Noah Strycker, PH Phil Henderson, RH Rich Hoyer, RR Roger Robb, SA Steve Alter, SH Sally Hill, TJ Tye Jeske, TMi Tom Mickel, TMo Tori Morgan, US Ulrike Streicher, VB Vickie Buck. M.ob signifies many observers.

From Our President *continued from page 1*

One outreach activity that is not highly visible is our **Audubon phone line** (541-485-BIRD). Each year we get close to 1,000 calls on that line with questions on bird ID, injured birds and other animals, bird sightings, bird diseases, bird feeding, where to go birding, where have “my” birds gone, habitat destruction, cat predation, funny or sad bird stories, and general information about our group. The nature of the calls varies, depending on the season and what bird activities are prevalent. Occasionally we also get calls from outside Lane County. Dick Lamster typically answers the bird phone as he has for a decade! His experience and good humor help people know we care. Thanks to Dick for his continued work to help answer questions from the community about birds and other wildlife.

Our **Bird Walks** have been a regular event in spite of COVID. Rebecca Waterman has managed to keep them going, although with fewer participants to assure social-distancing. Our regular **Third Saturday Bird Walks** have been popular, as usual! Plus Bex has created a new regular **First Saturday Bird Walk** with the goal of reaching out and welcoming community members who previously may have felt hesitant to join (see page 8).

Ramiro Aragon created a recurring **Kids’ Bird Walk** that we intended to open to families, but haven’t done so yet due to COVID. In spite of that, a small group of three-to-four families have gone birding regularly with their kids (aged seven and above) over the past year. We do hope this Kids’ Birding group will be opened up to more participants once the vaccinations reduce the threat of COVID for families.

In January, Lane Audubon

successfully held its **2020 Eugene Christmas Bird Count**, which included 259 bird observers, socially distanced, either on teams or at their homes. We could not have the traditional chili feed, but had a Zoom Countdown at the end of the day. We also held the spring **Bike Path Cleanup** in April, with the help of 22 socially distanced people, spread out along the bike path. Both events were fun and safe, allowing birders to share the experience without close contact.

Debbie Schlenoff, our conservation chair since 2008, continues to monitor for **advocacy opportunities regarding the protection of the environment**. She also works with other groups locally, statewide, and nationally to give feedback on issues we all care about. Clean air, clean water, healthy old forests, riparian habitats, dark skies for migrating birds, window strikes, pollution by plastics and pesticides, ocean protections, climate change, and many other issues. Debbie keeps us informed and engaged in the important work of environmental conservation. We are lucky to have her talents and commitment!

The Lane Audubon website is being redeveloped into a new content management system, due to the expiring system we have been using for nine years. We have contracted with a local company, Ruby Porter, who is helping us make this big transition. Stay tuned as we roll out the new look website very soon!

Over the past year, we have had to make some changes, but we have found new ways to interact in the community while advocating for the birds, animals, and environment we all value. Lane Audubon’s commitment to conservation of and education about our natural environment, with a primary focus on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats has not diminished.

We welcome new members and look for new ways to engage, share, and inform the public about the amazing natural world around us. We also eagerly **welcome new volunteers** who can contribute to existing programs or help us create some new activities.

Thanks to our loyal and generous members who keep us motivated and moving forward! We hope to see you in person again soon!



photo: Katy Vizdai



photo: Katy Vizdai

Bike Path Clean Up

Appreciative Thank Yous

Thank You to Bryan Ribelin for creating an original poster for our Bike Path Clean Up event in April! His original bird artwork is always fun and joyful to see.

Many thanks, also, to LaRue Rodgers and Robert Piersol for keeping *The Quail* mailing process on time and in members’ mailboxes. They have taken on the whole task of picking up the newsletters from the printer and labeling each one. They then box and deliver them to the post office to make sure the mailed *Quails* arrives on time in your mailbox.

We all appreciate your hard work for each mailing!

Lane County Audubon Society



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 tgodsil@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

Lane County Audubon Society Yearly Membership

- Individual \$20.....\$ _____
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- Lifetime Membership \$400.....\$ _____
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To pay by PayPal, go to laneaudubon.org/support/join

I am a Current National Audubon member Don't know

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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.

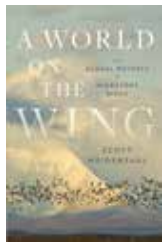
I would like to volunteer for Lane County Audubon activities.

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

Amazing Bird Migrations

By Jim G Maloney



I just finished yet another book on the subject of bird migrations. Scott Wiedensaul's second book on the subject is, *A World on the Wing*, published this year, 2021. Why two books on the same subject? Because so much has changed in the intervening 20 years.

I read that first book, too, when it came out: *Living on the Wind – Across the Hemisphere with Migrating Birds*. Its focus was on avian migration that occurs primarily in the Western Hemisphere. In the second book he has expanded his subject to the global stage. This change reflects not only the more appropriate scope for some of the world's most long-distance avian travelers, but also the increased range of Scott's own travels from China's Yellow Sea tidelands to the Mediterranean killing grounds, to Africa, the mid-Atlantic islands, and more.

Another impetus for revisiting the subject was changes in the ways people track and monitor birds. Over those 20 years, the evolution in tracking technology has led to ever smaller, lighter, and more sophisticated bits of hardware that could be attached to ever-smaller birds as well as the larger ones. It's the similar hi-tech evolution that led to our current smart phones and flying drone video cameras.

The second evolutionary change was the advent of what Scott calls "big data": the massively increased collection of bird sighting, dates, locations, and more, by ever-increasing numbers of birders, researchers, and inadvertently through Doppler radar. This led to huge amounts of new data that could only be made

useful through the development of sophisticated cataloging and smart retrieval processes and, yes, through the application of artificial intelligence algorithms.

These two changes over the ensuing 20 years led to vastly better understanding of what species were going where, when, and in what numbers. It also cast the light of science on what had been unrecognized threats to the continued survival of a great many migratory bird species from Spoonbills to Amur Falcons.

Scott, too, changed over the 20 years, morphing from an interested reporter/outsider eager to write about the work of bird banders and other researchers, to an actual participant in research efforts. These included hummingbird, Snowy Owl, and Northern Saw-whet Owl banding, erection of data collecting radio tower networks, and other hands-on field work around the globe.

It's a well written book which can get a little heavy at times with so much attention to detail and numbers. The first book was a bit more lyrical, more like a travel saga. The second displays a much more journalistic style, though Scott's interactions with the folks doing the work on the ground and in the air are described richly.



Volunteers Needed

Administrative Assistant

Lane Audubon would like a volunteer who could serve as an Administrative Assistant for Board and Chapter responsibilities. Requisite skills include use of typical word processing, Excel spreadsheets, and PowerPoint. Since we do not have a physical office, working from home is required.

Audubon Adventures Coordinator

Help us deliver this important educational resource to our local teachers who want to provide environmental education to their students. Skills needed are organization, basic computer and email skills to manage the order and delivery of teaching kits to the classrooms. Follow up with the sponsors and teachers to complete the circle of providing this important teaching tool for our schools. If you have a computer and a little time, this might be the volunteer opportunity you've been looking for!

FMI: please contact Maeve Sowles at audubon@laneaudubon.org or 541.343.8664

Help Start an LCAS Photo Library

Often while editing *The Quail*, I wish I had more local photos. Starting an LCAS photo library seems like a good solution. Several people already send me photos. Cary Kerst is an appreciated regular.

If you have clear pictures of birds that you would enjoy sharing, email them to me. Also, please take photos when leading or participating in LCAS activities. Seeing local people involved in enjoying nature together may well encourage more to join us. Send to quailkaren1@gmail.com.



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your *Quail* subscription expired?
See page 6 to renew!



LCAS Bird Walks & Events

Rebecca Waterman, 541.653.3354, fieldtrips@laneaudubon.org

As of *The Quail* publication date, July and August, walks will continue as they have been for the time being.

First Saturday Bird Walks, July 3 & August 7

Our newish First Saturday bird walks are a celebration of the recently adopted Lane Audubon Inclusivity and Diversity Statement. We encourage women, members of the BIPOC and LGBTQIA communities (and their allies) to join these, particularly anyone who has felt intimidated at the thought of joining previously existing walks.

Third Saturday Bird Walk, July 17 & August 21

Details to be determined. Check the LCAS website and/or Facebook page closer to the date.

FMI or to sign up for any of the walks, please email Bex at rebecca.waterman@gmail.com.

No interested birders will be excluded and new birders are always welcome. Masks and distancing may still be required throughout walks, depending on evolving COVID-safety guidelines and the decisions of walk leaders.

Birding By Canoe/Kayaks Trip Plans To Be Determined

Maeve and I had planned to have the four-decades historical Birding-by-Canoe field trip to Fern Ridge Lake this coming July. However, when I checked out the launch site on Coyote Creek south of the Lake, I saw that the water is already too low to safely navigate the creek and the boat dock is gone. The Lake is only expected to get lower as the summer progresses, so we are not going to schedule this very popular birding trip this year.

We have cancelled this trip in the past due to low water at Fern Ridge (2005, 2013 and 2020). In 2005 and 2013 we went to Gold Lake instead. It is off Highway 58 near Willamette Pass. It is a fun lake to canoe (no motors allowed) and a good place to bird watch, so we are considering going there in July. We won't make that decision until late June. If we decide to do this, we will advertise on the LCAS website, Facebook and Instagram. —Dick Lamster