

The Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

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From Our President

Maeve Sowles, 541.343.8664, audubon@laneaudubon.org

Our Program Meetings Have Evolved for the Better



Image: Horia Varlan, Wikimedia Commons

Since COVID paused our ability to have in-person Program meetings in March of 2020, we have been through some major changes in how we present these meetings. Post-COVID shutdown, in September 2020 we held our first ever Zoom Program meeting with a speaker presenting from Washington! It was a drastic change, but we continued

hosting monthly Program meetings via Zoom for that whole season. In 2022 we continued with Zoom-only programs for most of the year except for three hybrid Zoom/in-person Programs for speakers who wished to have a live audience.

That experience made us realize how much we missed gathering together for our Programs. So in September of 2022 we began meeting in the Campbell Center in Eugene, where we could enjoy a live gathering and have Wi-Fi access for Zooming as well.

Dennis Arendt Has Been Key

I've described this timeline to present a picture of the big changes from our old Program format and to acknowledge the driving forces

behind the successful programs we have provided through these changing times. **Dennis Arendt** has envisioned and managed these changes, as well as recruited our diverse and engaging speakers from far and near. He also followed up by editing the Zoom recordings to make them presentable for viewing. So we now have about 22 saved Program recordings that folks can access through our website! See: laneaudubon.org/program-meetings/ This greatly broadens our outreach potential!

Dennis also looks for new ways to make the Program experience run more smoothly, so the presenters and audience, both in-person and on Zoom, can hear and see the whole event. We truly thank Dennis for keeping the Programs fresh, and for pursuing a quality end product! His commitment to improvement and support for our Programs, speakers, and audience is amazing. Thank you, Dennis!

We also owe many thanks to a few other folks who have helped during each program meeting:

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Lane County Audubon Society

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Conservation

Debbie Schlenoff, 541.685.0610, debschlenoff@gmail.com

A Voice for the Forests



Photo: Forest Service, Wikimedia Commons

Olympic National Forest

Why do trees hate riddles?

Because they don't like being stumped.

How do trees get online?

They just log in.

Why are trees the best networkers?

They're constantly branching out!

Forest management got a tree-mendous (okay, I'll stop) amount of consideration this spring. At the national level, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) considered a proposed rule to apply "land-health" standards to managing public BLM lands. The BLM oversees nearly 250 million acres of public lands. The proposed policy would elevate conservation goals to be on par with other uses such as logging. The US Forest Service is considering how to protect mature and old-growth forests as part of a strategy to improve the climate resilience of federally managed forests. Here in Oregon, the Board of Forestry is considering a Habitat Conservation Plan for State Forests. Lane County Audubon has submitted comments on these issues, urging protection of forests.

Why care about forests and forest management?

This list, by no means exhaustive, highlights some reasons. Intact healthy forests:

- provide critical habitat for fish, birds, and other wildlife. In the western United States, they provide habitat for over 3,000 species, many of which do not occur elsewhere.
- provide safe and accessible wildlife corridors across the landscape. This is critical for healthy gene flow, successful mating opportunities, securing resources throughout the seasons, and protecting large animals that range widely.
- promote climate resiliency by sequestering and storing carbon and maintaining healthy watersheds.
- increase resilience to the risks imposed by climate change and concurrent disease threats.
- reduce wildfire impacts and are more resilient to the impacts of wildfire.
- clean and filter water, providing clean drinking water.
- cool stream temperatures to promote salmon success and reduce algal blooms.
- clean the air.
- reduce erosion and the spread of invasive species.
- mitigate storms, droughts, and other harsh weather impacts.
- provide opportunities for healthy outdoor recreation and solace. Data has shown that time spent in nature is good for both our physical (including immune health) and our mental wellbeing. Have you heard the term "forest-bathing"?

- improve local economies through recreation and tourism industries.

The comment period for the BLM and US Forest Service is now closed, and we hope for a good outcome where conservation measures are valued, especially for mature and old growth forests. In Oregon, the comment period for the June 7 meeting on the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for Oregon state forests is also officially closed. However, the Board is not making its decision until the fall, and we think it will be very important for Board members to hear from ordinary citizens in light of the heavy pressure from timber lobbies. **The new HCP will determine wildlife habitat management in the 639,489 acres of western Oregon state forests for up to 70 years!**

The proposed Habitat Conservation Plan was reached as a compromise solution after years of public input and debate between various stakeholders. Although part of the group of stakeholders that negotiated the draft HCP, the timber industry is now pushing to get rid of the compromise, erroneously claiming that it would cut jobs. In fact, HCP annual timber harvests are projected to be higher, as compared with typical harvest years.

One analysis (Department of Forestry) calculated that timber jobs would increase more than 40% in Tillamook County and 10% in Clatsop County. The draft HCP contains several alternative versions that vary in the amount of timber harvesting allowed. HCP Alternative 3 appears to be the most balanced, and is supported by the conservation community. It protects critical habitat for endangered Marbled Murrelets and Spotted Owls. Under this alternative, about 50 percent of the forest is designated for conservation,

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Field Notes: April/May 2023

Tom and Allison Mickel, atmickel@gmail.com

Hooded Oriole, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Ruff, Red-naped Sapsucker

Oddly, we went from winter to mid-summer, before settling into spring this year—quite the rollercoaster ride these past two months! Migration seemed a little later, but that could be caused by the cool, wet weather early on. That weather was most likely the reason for some east-side and high-elevation species found in larger numbers than normal.

Abbreviations:

Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), South Jetty Siuslaw River (SJSR)

Ross's Goose	April 11	C&M Stables	DP	Later than normal for this species
Tundra Swan	May 13	Alvadore Rd	SH	Later than normal for this species
Trumpeter Swan	April 28	Walterville Res.	VB	Neck collar from Summer Lake refuge
Harlequin Duck	April 28	Belknap Hot Springs	PT	Reported from that area in the past
Sandhill Crane (2)	April 22	Gold Lake	GM	They have nested in marshes in Cascades
Ruddy Turnstone	May 2	Heceta Beach	JS	Small numbers can be found in migration
Red Knot	April 25	Heceta Beach	SH,VB	Small numbers can be found in migration
Ruff	April 9	Bond Rd	NP	Rare in the spring
Wilson's Phalarope (2)	May 3	Creswell	NSr	Arriving for the breeding season
Wilson's Phalarope	May 3	Meadowlark Prairie	LG,CS	Arriving for the breeding season
Solitary Sandpiper	April 28	Meadowlark Prairie	SH	Found in small numbers during migration
Forster's Tern	May 12	FRR	NB	They have bred here in the past
Snowy Egret	April 8	FRR - Royal Ave.	AS	Uncommon during the spring
Great Egret (26)	May 13	Meadowlark Prairie	SH	Numerous - where are they breeding?
Great Egret (20)	April 30	Coyote South	SH	Numerous - where are they breeding?
Swainson's Hawk	April 12	Airport area	DA	Very small numbers seen during spring
Rough-legged Hawk	April 13	Meadowlark Prairie	BP	Last sighting for the winter
Great Gray Owl	May 7	Lane Cascades	HF	An area where they've been found before
Calliope Hummingbird	April/May	Eugene/Springfield	M.ob.	More reports than normal
Red-naped Sapsucker (photos)	April 23	Skinner Butte	JH	Rare for the valley
Lewis's Woodpecker	April/May	Eugene/Springfield	M.ob.	More reports than normal
Gray Flycatcher	April/May	Eugene/Springfield	M.ob.	More reports than normal
Ash-throated Flycatcher	May	Eugene/Springfield	M.ob.	More reports than normal
Western Kingbird	April 28	Big Ck & Highway101	NSz	Unusual along the coast
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	May	Mt. Pisgah	M.ob.	Back for another breeding season
Western Bluebird	April 27	Westmoreland area	S&SG	Nesting in backyard again this year
Mountain Bluebird	April 10	KR Nielsen Rd	PO,VJ	Unusual for the valley
Mountain Bluebird	April 11	Amazon Park	RF	Unusual for the valley
Swainson's Thrush (8)	April 30	River Rd area	RH	Recorded flying overhead - early
Pine Siskin	April 23	Oakridge	MLS	Very few reported this spring
Brewer's Sparrow	April 8	River Rd area	RH	Very uncommon in the spring
Brewer's Sparrow	April 12	River Rd area	RH	A second bird
Grasshopper Sparrow	May 8	FRR	DF	First report from the breeding season
Lark Sparrow	May 3	Westlake	JS,LJ	Uncommon for Lane
Lark Sparrow	May 15	Mt Pisgah	GH	Uncommon for Lane
Lark Sparrow	May 18	Hills Creek dam	DF	Uncommon for Lane
Western Meadowlark	April 12	River Rd area	RH	Very unusual location for this species
Hooded Oriole (photo)	May 8	Eugene	TC	Rare for Lane

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Hooded Oriole

Photo: Laura Tanner, Wikimedia Commons



Yellow-headed Blackbird

Photo: Andy Regal & Chrissy McClarren, Wikimedia Commons

Field Notes: April/May continued from page 1

Yellow-headed Blackbird (2)	April 24	Oakridge	MLS	Rare for the area
Palm Warbler	April 16	Alton Baker Park	JS	The same bird as last month?
Palm Warbler	April 29	Mt Pisgah	RF	Unusual for spring and inland Lane
Palm Warbler	April 30	SJSR Crab Dock	TJ, JG	Unusual for spring
Yellow-rumped Warbler (40+)	April 17	Springfield	RR	Very large numbers at the feeders
Western Tanager	April 9	North Eugene	DG	A very early report for this species

AS Andrew Still, BP Bert Pooth, CS Cynthia Stockwell, DA Donna Albino, DF Daniel Farrar, DG Dan Gleason, DP Diane Pettey, GH Greg Hyde, GM Gerry Meenaghan, HF Harry Fuller, JG Joshua Galpern, JH Jim Huffsmith, JS John Sullivan, LG Linda Gilbert, LJ Laura Johnson, MLS Mary Lee Sayre, NB Neil Bjorkland, NP Nic Paget, NSr Noah Strycker, NSz Nancy Stotz, PO Pam Otley, PT Pepper Trail, RF Rachael Friese, RH Rich Hoyer, RR Roger Robb, SH Sally Hill, S&SG Steve & Susie Gordon, TC Taylor Clark, TJ Tye Jeske, VB Vickie Buck, VJ Victoria James. M.ob. signifies many observers.

From Our President continued from page 1

- **Debbie Schlenoff**, who hosts the Zoom aspect of the Program. She monitors the chat and gives feedback about any glitches on the Zoom end, so we can make improvements, if possible.
- **Vjera Thompson** has recently helped with the live end of setting up the Zoom Program, thus taking the pressure off Maeve for some of those tasks.
- **Ron Renchler** helps host the in-person Program with an information table, answers questions, and helps with setting up and taking down of the room.
- **Dick Lamster** helps with general room management as well, getting the room ready for each presentation and helping shut things down afterward.

Each of the people helping with the Programs plays an important role. Thanks again to Dennis, Debbie, Ron, Dick, Vjera, and Maeve for making this Program season successful! We look forward to seeing you again in September!

Conservation continued from page 2

with substantial protections for wildlife habitat. It also provides for clean water, while offering recreational opportunities.

We encourage everybody to contact the Board of Forestry and urge Board members to adopt Alternative 3. **Please email Chair Kelly and the Board at boardofforestry@odf.oregon.gov**

An outpouring of support from Oregonians will show the Board that the public is paying attention and that we care about decisions affecting management of our public state forests.

Sad to Report the Passing of Barbara Combs

Long-time Lane County birder Barbara Combs passed away on April 21, 2023, at the age of 75. Barb was originally from New Jersey and came to Oregon in 1972 to get her PhD in psychology at the UO.

She was active in bluebird recovery efforts, Christmas Bird Counts, eBirding, and raptor counts in western Oregon. She volunteered in various roles, including as the Oregon Field Ornithologist treasurer and archivist, as well as writing sections of Birds of Oregon and Birds of Lane County. Barb reached 100 species in every Oregon county in 1986, the same year as Dennis Rogers. The two of them were the first to do so.

In 2014 she was inspired by the OSU Oregon 2020 project and started eBirding frequently, with a focus on lots of short complete stationary checklists. She continued to eBird for the next several years and was the top eBird contributor in the world in 2018! Lane County is one of the most frequently eBirded counties in the United States, largely due to her efforts. She was a distinctive and highly independent person, had a great sense of humor, and was a good researcher and an excellent field observer.

Submitted by her friends and fellow birders, Vjera Thompson and Alan Contreras



Barbara Combs

Western Bluebird Success Story

By Steve Gordon

Once described as a common Oregon bird in the 1930s, the Western Bluebird experienced dramatic population declines by the 1970s. In part, assisted by artificial bluebird projects, the species made a recovery. Preferred cavity nesting habitat in western Oregon is open country, including oak woodlands, and rural farmlands. It appears that Western Bluebirds are now using city habitats.

Several nesting records in Eugene occurred in 2022. Our home in the Friendly neighborhood is such a case. Developed at suburban densities in the late 1950s, our lot is about 1/4-acre in size with a garden consisting of organic vegetable raised beds and a hummingbird-, butterfly-, and bee-friendly flower garden. Trees, shrubs, seed feeders, and six bird baths provide an attractive, urban habitat for birds. We have three bluebird boxes mounted on 4" x 4" posts along our south fence line.

In 2022, for the first time in our 47 years residing in our home, Western Bluebirds nested successfully, raising two broods of five young each. This year, a month ahead of the 2022 schedule, they raised a brood of six young. We are waiting to see if a second or even third brood will be attempted.

These photographs were taken hand held with a Canon Powershot SX50 HS camera. They represent many of the behaviors and the joyous beauty of this thrush family member.



Photo: Steve Gordon

Male Western Bluebird



Photo: Steve Gordon

Female Western Bluebird



Photo: Steve Gordon

Bathing together



Photo: Steve Gordon

Blue eggs in nest



Photo: Steve Gordon

Nestlings, about day 6



Photo: Steve Gordon

Male bringing food



Photo: Steve Gordon

Day of fledging



Photo: Steve Gordon

Fledged juvenile

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 Godsil at 541.915.8852 or tgodsil@gmail.com

The Quail Upcoming Content Deadlines

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October: September 1

Submit material to Karen Irmischer at quailkaren1@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.....\$ _____
- Students and Seniors (65 and over) \$15.....\$ _____
- Family \$25.....\$ _____
- Lifetime Membership \$400.....\$ _____
- I want to do more. Here's my tax-deductible contribution for\$ _____
- Total Enclosed (check payable to Lane County Audubon Society).....\$ _____

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

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Please contact me regarding

Gift memberships Lane Audubon's Living Legacy program

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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

More Thank Yous

Mount Pisgah hosted more than a thousand guests, wildflower displays, a varied music lineup, vendors, and nonprofit booths for the Mt. Pisgah Wildflower and Music Festival on May 21, 2023. LCAS's booth was among the nonprofits in attendance, and we had about 250 visitors. Many asked questions and told their stories about birds, and picked up literature along with our newsletter, *The Quail*.

Ron Renchler, as usual, coordinated the set up and take down of our booth. Thanks to the

other volunteers who staffed the booth during the event: **Dennis Arendt, Mary Arendt, Barbara Bryson, Dolly Marshall, Brian Rogers, Denise Rogers, Bryan Ribelin, and Kat Rola.**

Thank you, too, Mary Arendt

Mary recently began volunteering to help with some of our office duties. She has taken on some tasks that will help Maeve and the Board keep up with the operations of our chapter.

We really appreciate Mary's help and flexibility!



Lane Audubon Bird Display at Eugene Public Library

Taxidermied birds, bird nests, bird eggs, and other items drawn from LCAS's collection are part of a new display at the Eugene Public Library. To see it, walk into the children's area from now until the end of August. Thanks go to Ron Renchler for setting it up.

The exhibit is partly in conjunction with a collaboration between LCAS and the library to make birding backpacks available for checkout. The backpacks contain binoculars, bird guides, and other resources meant to encourage birding among youngsters and their families.

Stop by and see the exhibit any time during library hours.

Summer Club at the Arboretum

June 27 - August 23

Mount Pisgah Arboretum is happy to offer its Summer Club Program again this season. Held on either Tuesdays or Wednesdays, 10 am-1 pm, for youth 5-11 years of age, each week we follow a nature theme out on our trails with hands-on activities and games. You can register online here: mountpisgaharboretum.org/resources-youth-programs-for-families/





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



LCAS Bird Walks & Events

Field trip coordinator opportunity

First Saturday Bird Walks, July 1 and August 5

Our First Saturday Bird Walks, created in celebration of the Lane Audubon Inclusivity and Diversity Statement, are reserved for women, BIPOC, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Birders of all levels and backgrounds are welcome to join, particularly those who may have felt intimidated at the thought of birding alone or on other guided walks. Location and leader TBA.

FMI or to sign up, contact Sarah: 1stsatbirdwalks@laneaudubon.org

Third Saturday Bird Walks, July 15 and August 19

Our Third Saturday Bird Walk continues to be open to all participants.

For July's walk Tye Jeske and Josh Galpern will lead, location TBA.

For August's walk, Tim Griffith will lead. Time and location TBA.

FMI: audubon@laneaudubon.org or check the Lane Audubon website and/or the Lane Audubon Facebook page close to the walk date.

Join Our Bird Walk Team

We need help, and these jobs can be really fun for individuals who enjoy looking at birds and sharing that joy with other birders and potential new enthusiasts.

One person (or two, working together) is needed to plan, organize, and implement our monthly Third Saturday Bird Walks. LCAS has the traditional dates set, a network of willing field trip leaders, and a list of past birding locations to choose from. Responsibilities would include contacting field trip leaders, deciding on a location, emailing the field trip publicity, and meeting the birding group on the day of the walk to get things started. This is a fun opportunity to meet and learn from birding experts. Best of all, you get to be out birding!

We also need people to respond to requests from out-of-town visitors, by showing them our wonderful local birding locations! We would really like to have multiple birders involved in this fun and rewarding effort. Please help maintain these wonderful Lane Audubon traditions.

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



Photo: Kelerie Santiago

Lazuli Bunting