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# The Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society



## From Our President

Maeve Sowles, 541.343.8664, audubon@laneaudubon.org

## Cold, Rainy Days and Long Nights Provide Perfect Reading Weather



Photo: Thomas Meinzen

Its short days and long, dark nights make winter a good time of year to have a stack of books ready for reading. My bedside table has two books I'd like to recommend.

Amy Tan's *The Backyard Bird Chronicles* maps the passage of time through daily entries, thoughtful questions, and beautiful original sketches. Her observations of bird behavior, feeding habits and species

interactions are educational and fun to read. Her bird obsession is relatable for any of us who are feeding birds in our yards. I bought my copy at Tsunami Books, as I like to purchase from local bookstores whenever possible.

*The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer. From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, a bold and inspiring vision for how to orient our lives around gratitude, reciprocity, and community, based on the lessons of the natural world.

I also asked for book recommendations from friends who share some of my interests!

Barbara Bryson suggests *Nature's Best Hope*, by Douglas Tallamy, as it

led her to garden for birds, not just for beauty. She says it is very readable yet based on science.

Cecelia Hagen is reading *Birding to Change the World*, by Trish O'Kane. It's a memoir by a former human rights journalist who earned a PhD in environmental studies. She then went on to working with her neighbors and students in Madison, Wisconsin, to save Warner Park, Madison's second-largest municipal park, from further development that would have stopped it from serving as a major urban wildlife refuge. It's packed with information and stories and serves as an inspirational guide for how people can collaborate to make a positive difference.

Jim Maloney offers a thoughtful list of books to watch for:

*The Lichen Museum, (Art After Nature)*, by Laurie A. Palmer. Serving as both a guide and companion publication to the conceptual art project of the same name. The book explores how the physiological characteristics of lichens provide a

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Lane County Audubon Society

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# 2024 Eugene Christmas Bird Count Overview

By Dick Lamster, Coordinator

The 83rd Eugene Christmas Bird Count (ECBC) was a great success. On December 29, 2024, 170 hardy birdwatchers took to the field and walked 169 miles, drove 409 miles, and rode bicycles 4 miles looking for birds. They, along with 107 Home Counters, identified 138 bird species and counted 73,250 individual birds. Combined, Field Observers and Home Counters spent a total of 552 hours looking and listening for birds.

Articles by ECBC Species Compiler **Vjera Thompson** and Home Count Coordinator **Marcia Maffei** go into more depth about the birds we identified.

A total of 170 Field Observers, our second highest number ever, participated in this year's Count. Last year's total of 190 was the most we've ever had. Combining the 170 Field Observers with 107 Home Counters brought the total to 277 observers, our second highest number of Count participants ever. Last year was the highest at 291. This year's 107 Home Counters was our fourth highest.

Fortunately, the prediction for rain all day did not come true, as the sun came out around 8 am and it didn't start raining until around 3 pm. The early morning birders who went out looking and listening for owls from around 5 to 7 am did get wet. Some teams experienced flooding in areas they would normally walk through looking for birds. Many thought we should submit the number of rainbows we observed in the afternoon because they were as colorful as birds!

At the end of the day, around 75 Field Observers gathered at Putters on

Highway 99N for a Pizza Countdown. This was a fun way to end a full day of finding birds with other birdwatchers.

The ECBC is surprisingly impressive for such a small organization, due to having so many active birders in the Eugene-Springfield area, combined with the outstanding energy and efforts of our 28 dedicated Team Leaders. They organize their teams and guide them all day long while looking for birds. I have listed the Team Leaders on this page. Some have led teams for more than 20 years, some more than 30! We were also happy to welcome five new Team Leaders this year.

I want to thank the LCAS Board of Directors for sponsoring the ECBC; Vjera Thompson, the Species Compiler; Marcia Maffei, the Home Count Coordinator; and all the Team Leaders for making the 83rd ECBC fun, educational, and exciting! Thank you all!

## Team Leaders by Area

- 1: Ron Renschler
- 2: Rich Hoyer
- 3A: Dan and Anne Heyerly
- 3B: Darryl Wisner
- 4: Rick Ahrens
- 5A: Rose Britton
- 5B: Marcia Maffei
- 6A: John Sullivan
- 6B: Claire Rozman
- 7: Roger Robb
- 8: Dave Kofranek
- 9: Josh Galpern
- 10: Tim Griffith
- 11A: David Novak
- 11B: Dick Lamster
- 12A: Steve Gordon
- 12B: Ramiro Aragon
- 13A: Sarah Merkle
- 13B: Holly Hartmann
- 14: Julia Siporin
- 15: Thomas Meinzen
- 16: Linda Gilbert
- 17: Jim Thomas
- 18: Caryn Stoess
- 19: Vjera Thompson
- 20A: Nancy Clogston
- 20B: Bruce Newhouse
- 21: Ellen Cantor



*Team 13A at Fern Ridge*

photo: Sarah Merkle

# Eugene Christmas Bird Count Tally

By Vjera Thompson

138 Species + 1 Count Week, 73,250 individuals  
 RH = Record High, RL = Record Low, CW = Count Week



Species	Total	Status	Previous High	Species	Total	Status	Previous High
Greater White-fronted Goose.....	5			Turkey Vulture.....	76		
Cackling Goose.....	14,394			Sharp-shinned Hawk.....	14		
Canada Goose.....	3,038			Cooper's Hawk.....	30		
Tundra Swan.....	25			Northern Harrier.....	108		
Mute Swan.....	6	.....Exotic		Bald Eagle.....	88		
Wood Duck.....	78			Red-shouldered Hawk.....	27		
Northern Shoveler.....	433			Red-tailed Hawk.....	128		
Gadwall.....	263			Rough-legged Hawk.....	1		
Eurasian Wigeon.....	2			American Barn Owl.....	2		
American Wigeon.....	1,436	.....20-Year High		Western Screech-Owl.....	3		
Mallard.....	2,460			Great Horned Owl.....	28		
Northern Pintail.....	2,256			Northern Pygmy-Owl.....	2		
Green-winged Teal.....	1,463			Barred Owl.....	2		
Canvasback.....	2			Short-eared Owl.....	8	.....20-Year High	
Redhead.....	6			Belted Kingfisher.....	26		
Ring-necked Duck.....	532	.....Record High	.....351 (1987)	Red-breasted Sapsucker.....	18		
Greater Scaup.....	1			Lewis's Woodpecker.....	1	.....Unusual	
Lesser Scaup.....	66			Acorn Woodpecker.....	121		
Bufflehead.....	169			Downy Woodpecker.....	119		
Barrow's Goldeneye.....	1			Hairy Woodpecker.....	30		
Common Goldeneye.....	6			Pileated Woodpecker.....	12		
Hooded Merganser.....	81			Northern Flicker.....	399		
Common Merganser.....	194			American Kestrel.....	89		
Ruddy Duck.....	80			Merlin.....	12		
California Quail.....	62			Peregrine Falcon.....	3		
Wild Turkey.....	390			Black Phoebe.....	51		
Ring-necked Pheasant.....	13			Say's Phoebe.....	2		
Rock Pigeon.....	704			Hutton's Vireo.....	2		
Band-tailed Pigeon.....	1	.....Unusual		Northern Shrike.....	3		
Eurasian Collared-Dove.....	158			Canada Jay.....	1	.....Unusual	
Mourning Dove.....	363			Steller's Jay.....	396		
Anna's Hummingbird.....	286			California Scrub-Jay.....	659		
Rufous Hummingbird.....	1			American Crow.....	1,757		
Virginia Rail.....	17	.....Record High	.....12 (2011)	Common Raven.....	135		
Sora.....	3			Black-capped Chickadee.....	804		
American Coot.....	779			Chestnut-backed Chickadee.....	117		
Black-bellied Plover.....	6			Tree Swallow.....	7	.....Unusual	
Killdeer.....	186	.....20-Year Low		Barn Swallow.....	8	.....Unusual	
Long-billed Dowitcher.....	24			Bushtit.....	1,085		
Wilson's Snipe.....	170			Wrentit.....	14		
Spotted Sandpiper.....	5			Ruby-crowned Kinglet.....	443		
Greater Yellowlegs.....	14			Golden-crowned Kinglet.....	356		
Dunlin.....	5,220			White-breasted Nuthatch.....	91		
Short-billed (Mew) Gull.....	1			Red-breasted Nuthatch.....	79		
Ring-billed Gull.....	487			Brown Creeper.....	76		
Western Gull.....	9			Pacific Wren.....	50		
American Herring Gull.....	227	.....Record High	.....175 (1979)	Marsh Wren.....	39		
California Gull.....	34			Bewick's Wren.....	196		
Glaucous-winged Gull.....	345	.....20-Year High		European Starling.....	12,944		
Iceland (Thayer's) Gull.....	2			Western Bluebird.....	129		
Pied-billed Grebe.....	152	.....20-Year High		Varied Thrush.....	46		
Western Grebe.....	3			Hermit Thrush.....	20		
Double-crested Cormorant.....	326			American Robin.....	1,368		
American Bittern.....	7			Cedar Waxwing.....	49		
Snowy Egret.....	2	.....Unusual		House Sparrow.....	304		
Green Heron.....	1			American Pipit.....	92		
Great Egret.....	166	.....20-Year High		Evening Grosbeak.....	0	.....Count week	
Great Blue Heron.....	85			House Finch.....	658		
American White Pelican.....	162			Purple Finch.....	26		

*continued on page 4*



Species	Total	Status	Previous High	Species	Total	Status	Previous High
Red Crossbill.....	8			Lincoln's Sparrow.....	56		
Pine Siskin.....	2,345	Record High	1809 (1992)	Swamp Sparrow .....	1		
Lesser Goldfinch .....	298			Spotted Towhee .....	493		
American Goldfinch .....	117			Western Meadowlark.....	173		
Fox Sparrow .....	104	20-Year Low		Red-winged Blackbird .....	1,984		
Dark-eyed Junco .....	2,554			Brewer's Blackbird.....	555		
White-crowned Sparrow.....	280			Orange-crowned Warbler .....	12		
Golden-crowned Sparrow.....	759			Common Yellowthroat .....	1	Unusual	
White-throated Sparrow.....	44			Yellow-rumped Warbler.....	435		
Savannah Sparrow .....	23			Townsend's Warbler.....	70		
Song Sparrow .....	511						

## 2024 ECBC Home Count Summary

By Marcia Maffei - Home Count Coordinator

We sincerely hope that you enjoyed a wonderful day of birding from the comfort of your home December 29! This year our 107 Home Count Observers identified 74 species! That came to 6 more observers than last year, identifying the same number of species.

The Pine Siskin emerged as the most reported bird, with 1,074 sightings. Did you know that the collective nouns for a group of Pine Siskins are: a charm, a trembling, a company, or a trimming? I know that I am charmed by them! Dark-eyed Juncos (529) and Bushtits (450) also made an impressive showing. Anna's Hummingbirds hovered in with 128 individuals.

Other species that made a good showing included: Canada Goose: 472; Cackling Goose: 388; European Starling: 289; American Crow: 232; American Robin: 205; House Finch: 193; Black-capped Chickadee: 168; Lesser Goldfinch: 166; California Scrub Jay: 144; Mourning Dove at 130, and the Golden-crowned Sparrow at 104. The remaining species were in single or double digits. And finally, 1 Rufous Hummingbird rounded out the Home Count list.

Many thanks to the 107 observers who observed 74 species, for a total of

5,910 individual birds.

### Read on for Home Counters' comments, in their own words:

*As usual, my favorite day of the year :)*

*Happy New Year!!!*

*This was fun and our birds made their usual appearances today.*

*A very quiet day.*

*We haven't seen birds at our feeders for a week or two. When the sun came out yesterday, these few birds appeared. We usually have a lot of birds through the winter. Very odd. Are others seeing a lack of birds too?*

*Limited numbers, possibly due to weather*

*Sure seemed quiet today in regard to bird movement.*

*Not the best of days for backyard bird watching. I was expecting several more species, but they never showed up.*

*That was fun!*

Look for the final results and narrative recaps of the entire 2024 Eugene Christmas Bird Count on pages 2, 3, 4, and 5 of this issue of *The Quail*.

**Save the date and mark your calendar for 2025 Bird Count, Sunday, December 28, 2025**

If you've never done it before, I encourage you to begin thinking about joining next year's Count, either as a Home Counter or a Field Observer. You'll be glad you did!



*Flooded road where Team 18 counted some ducks*

Photo: Caryn Steess



Photo: Thomas Meitzen

*Cormorants and rainbow at Kirk Pond*

## ECBC 2024 Species Count Summary

By Vjera Thompson

The 83rd Eugene CBC was held on December 29, 2024, under many rainbows. A wet weather system was forecasted to swamp us on Count Day, but thankfully most of the 1.3” of rain fell during the night. The early morning owling teams got wet, but those who started later stayed mostly dry, except for the boots that trudged through flooded wetlands.

We recorded 73,250 birds with a total of 138 species, the highest species count since 2012. A group of 6 Mute Swans were new for the count. Mute Swans are considered “exotic,” thus not countable by American Birding Associations standards. But the Christmas Bird Count is interested in documenting them if they are free-flying. The other unusual birds were a Band-tailed Pigeon, a Barrow’s Goldeneye, 2 Snowy Egrets (5th year and a recent high count record), a Lewis’s Woodpecker (only found on 3 of the last 20 counts), a Canada Jay, 7 Tree Swallows, 8 Barn Swallows, and a wintering Common Yellowthroat (9th year). Crowd favorites at Fern Ridge were the American White Pelicans that soared above rainbows for 7 different

teams. Typically, the pelicans are only found in one or two areas.

One additional species was found during Count Week, the three days before and after the count: a lone Evening Grosbeak. Other misses were Snow and Ross’s Goose (one was here Christmas Eve), Least Sandpiper, Osprey, Prairie Falcon, and Brown-headed Cowbird.

As always, we set some new high records. We had high numbers of ducks such as 532 Ring-necked Ducks (previously 351 in 1987) and 1,436 American Wigeons for a 20-year high (record high is 5,603 in 2003). Four teams found a record high 17 Virginia Rails (previously 12 in 2011). We hit a new high of 227 American Herring Gulls (175 in 1979) and a 20-year high with 345 Glaucous-winged Gulls. Other waterbirds that hit 20-year highs were 152 Pied-billed Grebes and 166 Great Egrets. We also had a record high of Pine Siskins with 2,345 seen by 26 different teams (1,809 in 1992). Pine Siskins are irruptive, and some years are better than others. This year was record-setting.

We also had a few 20-year lows:

## Coming Soon, Your Chance to Vote on Our New Name!

As you have read in previous *Quail* articles, after long and thoughtful consideration the LCAS Board has decided to change the name Lane County Audubon Society to a name that does not include the words Lane or Audubon. We have spent many months weighing in on the numerous suggestions submitted by members, and now it’s time for the general membership to have their say.

The Board plans on emailing a shortened list of contenders to you for a membership vote, likely in February. **Keep an eye on your inbox for this survey.** It will be **your** chance to help decide our organization’s new name. Your voice matters!

Killdeers at 186 (we’ve averaged 528 in the 20-year time period), and Fox Sparrows dropped even lower this year, from 123 to 104 (we’ve averaged 267 in the 20-year time period). Eurasian Collared-Doves went back up slightly, from 143 to 158. The ice storm in January 2024 may have wiped out some birds, but it’s not obvious in the data.

The morning rain hindered the owling teams, but we still found all the expected species except Northern Saw-whet Owl. Teams enjoyed daytime sightings of 1 Barred Owl, 1 Western Screech-Owl, and 8 Short-eared Owls (a record high for the last 20 years).

Thanks to all the birders that made this another successful count.

## CBC – Florence

By Vjera Thompson

The 40th Florence Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, December 14, 2024. We had a decent turnout with 44 birders in the field. A wet, windy weather system moved through the night before. Fortunately for us, it moved on around 8 am Saturday morning. The day was overcast, but we mostly avoided rain the rest of the day except for a few sprinkles and a brief hailstorm with a rainbow. The sun even came out briefly in the afternoon. The wind was steady but not terrible. The 8-foot king tide at 11 am was impressive to see, but it made the beach inaccessible all morning. We met together in person afterwards and had another enjoyable Countdown at Best Thai in Florence.

The paltry 116 species we recorded is the lowest we've had since 2016. The weather was not conducive to ocean birding. We missed alcids and shearwaters on Count Day but found both for Count Week on the next day. We added 8 more species during Count Week: Eurasian Wigeon, Greater White-fronted Goose, Ancient Murrelet, Pink-footed Shearwater (new for the Florence Count), Sooty Shearwater, Eared Grebe, American Pipit, and Lesser Goldfinch.

The best bird found was a Brown-headed Cowbird that had been near Bay Street in Oldtown at the Gazebo Park for about a month. It was the 3rd record for the count. The Osprey was our 8th record; one occasionally winters. We had three sightings of Long-tailed Duck, which was only found twice

in the last 9 Counts. Seventeen of the species were only found by one team.

We had several record highs. It was a fabulous count for Pine Siskins with 2,943 reported across almost every sector. This more than doubled the previous high of 1,301 in 1992. We also set a new record for Marsh Wrens (113, previous high was 109 in 2019) due to gaining access to a new McKenzie River Trust property up the North Fork. Other record highs: 23 Greater Yellowlegs (previous high 15 in 1994), 2,023 Pacific Loons (previous high 1,177 in 2006), 24 Bald Eagles (tied with 2008), 30 Black Phoebes (previous high 22 in 2021), 175 Golden-crowned Sparrows (previous high 169 in 2009), and 444 Red-winged Blackbirds (previous high 408 in 2019).

Due to the pre-dawn rain, we did not have any owling.

As often happens, we missed several birds that were expected: Sora (found 5 of the last 7 counts), Marbled Murrelet (found on the last 7 counts), Pileated Woodpecker (found on 34 counts), and Brewer's Blackbird (found on 31 counts). We also missed the Tropical Kingbird and Bullock's Oriole that were seen about a week prior to the count.

Thanks to team leaders **Tye Jeske, Ellen Cantor, Rich Hoyer, Pat Blue Heron, Vjera Thompson, Marcia Maffei, Timothy Moffett, Linda Gilbert, Peter Ralph, Paul Adamus, Adele Dawson, Dennis Arendt, and Josh Galpern**. Thanks also to **Ellen Cantor** for doing the upfront coordination.

## Oakridge CBC 2024

By Joel Geier, Count Coordinator and Compiler

On Tuesday, December 31, the Oakridge CBC volunteers enjoyed favorable conditions with scant snow, mild temperatures, and rain holding off until late afternoon.

Teams on Hills Creek Reservoir found one loon and five grebe species, including a Red-necked Grebe, the first recorded in our Count history. No grouse were found, but small groups of Mountain Quail were seen in two sectors.

Thrush numbers and diversity were high, with 18 Western Bluebirds, 2 Townsend's Solitaires (both feeding on madrone berries along with 12 Purple Finches in the same heavily-laden tree!), 14 Hermit Thrushes, 400 American Robins, and 62 Varied Thrushes. Forest finch numbers were also up, with 130 Red Crossbills and a record-high 1,180 Pine Siskins.

Despite getting skunked on nocturnal owls (just one Northern Pygmy-Owl was found in the daytime) and generally low numbers of sparrows and other brush birds, the overall Count Day total of 73 species was the highest since 1982!

Thanks to volunteers **Jesse Pline, Deb Hill, Josh Galpern, Nancy Clogston, Vickie Buck, Ramiro Aragon, John Sullivan, Laura Johnson, Jim Thomas, David Braunschweiger, Mary Lee Sayre, and Alicja Nichols** for a great effort!



L to R: Song Sparrow, House Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow

photo: Thomas Meitzen



## CBC Cottage Grove

By Grace Fowler-Gore, Count Coordinator and Compiler

Eight of us gathered at 6:30 am, Saturday, December 28, to enjoy a delicious hot breakfast at Vintage Inn. After a gloriously dry day counting birds, 21 of us gathered at El Tapatio Mexican Restaurant to share our results. This year **Anne Heyerly** spotted Cottage Grove's first ever CBC Turkey Vulture. Several counters mentioned that there weren't many sparrows. We even missed seeing a House Sparrow for only the second time out of 22 counts.

Twenty-two Field Counters in 10 teams, along with 2 Home Counters, reported 92 species. Our total count of 6,449 was an increase of 751 more birds than last year, only 397 birds below our recent high of 6,052 birds in 2021.

Once again, European Starling (932) was our highest Count bird, up 320 from last year. Dark-eyed Junco (595) was next, followed by American Robin (468), Pine Siskin (385), American Crow (365), Wild Turkey (331), Canada Goose (221), and Brewer's Blackbird (193). Others in the 100+ category included: Black-capped Chickadee, Mourning Dove, California Scrub-Jay, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Mallard, Common Merganser, Rock Pigeon, and American Pipit.

**From Our President** *continued from p. 1*

valuable template for reimagining human relations in an age of ecological and social precarity.

*The State of Fire: Why California Burns*, by Obi Kaufmann. The author presents fire as a force of regeneration rather than apocalypse. Packed with Kaufmann's signature watercolor maps and paintings, *The State of Fire* confronts one of California's most



Photo: Caryn Stoess

*Team 18 pose in front of Thistle-down barn for Eugene CBC*

Exciting sightings of only one or two of a species included: American Coot, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Goldeneye, Red-necked Grebe, Ruffed Grouse, Green Heron, Canada Jay, Merlin, Great Horned Owl, Northern Pygmy-Owl, Hermit Thrush, Turkey Vulture, Eurasian Wigeon, and Pileated Woodpecker. This is only our third sighting of a Red-necked Grebe. For details and locations of these birds, please check out our trip report.

A huge thank you goes out to all the participants in the CBC process. We were fortunate to have CBC birders who drove in when some of our local birders were unavailable. It takes all of us to make a difference.

pressing social and ecological challenges.

*Dawn Songs: A Birdwatcher's Field Guide to the Poetics of Migration*, by Jamie K Reaser (Editor), J Drew Lanham (Editor)

*Joy is the Justice We Give Ourselves*, by J. Drew Lanham. This provides a sensuous new collection in Lanham's signature mix of poetry and prose.

## Not Too Late to Donate or Renew

If you haven't already donated to Lane County Audubon Society or renewed your LCAS membership since our annual call in the November issue of *The Quail*, you can still do so. It's not too late! If you'd like to use snail-mail, just go to any issue of *The Quail*, then print and fill in the renewal/donation form, and drop it in a mailbox. Make your check payable to Lane County Audubon Society and mail it to LCAS, PO Box 5086, Eugene, OR 97405.

If you'd like to renew your membership online using a credit card, you can go to the Memberships link at [laneaudubon.org/memberships/](https://laneaudubon.org/memberships/). To donate to LCAS online, go to the Donate link at [laneaudubon.org/donate/](https://laneaudubon.org/donate/).

LCAS has many different programs and initiatives underway, so 100% of your donation is put to good use. We thank you for your support.

## New Board Member Cammi Ganshert

We welcome Cammi Ganshert as our newest Board member! Cammi is from Wisconsin, where she graduated in 2023 with a double degree in Biology and Environmental Studies. As a Board member, she "hopes to bring people together from all walks of life to create urban habitat and encourage community-based action in this time of uncertain futures." Cammi has also been an active Habitat Haven volunteer.

## Field Notes: November/December 2024

Tom and Allison Mickel, atmickel@gmail.com

# Common Grackle, Mute Swan, Hermit Warbler, Virginia Rail, Snow Goose

It was a wet late fall/early winter with snow in the high Cascades. As you can see below, we're finding more species that normally don't winter in the area—climate change and/or more birders?

**Abbreviations:** Eugene Pioneer Cemetery (EPC), Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), North Jetty of the Siuslaw River (NJSR), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR)



Common Grackle

Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Rhododendrites



Mute Swan

Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Sanctzen

Snow Goose.....	Nov 8.....	Florence area.....	AC,et al.....	Flying with cormorant flock
Snow Goose.....	Dec 15.....	Hileman Landing.....	RH.....	First valley sighting
Ross's Goose.....	Dec 21.....	Bond Rd.....	RF.....	Annual in small numbers
Greater White-fronted Goose.....	Nov 20.....	Alton Baker Park.....	DA.....	Later than normal
Brant (17).....	Dec 10.....	NJSR.....	LH.....	Never common along the coast
Mute Swan (6).....	Dec 20.....	FRR.....	JSu.....	Where did they come from?
Tundra Swan.....	Dec 16.....	Royal Ave, FRR.....	FT.....	Normal arrival time
Cinnamon Teal (2).....	Nov 28.....	Meadowlark Prairie.....	VT.....	Later than usual
Long-tailed Duck (2).....	Dec 6.....	NJSR.....	LB.....	Found some years along the coast
Red-breasted Merganser (3).....	Nov 21.....	FRR.....	JG.....	Rare away from the coast
Band-tailed Pigeon.....	Dec 29.....	Armitage Park.....	RA.....	Rare in the winter
Virginia Rail (18).....	Dec 29.....	River Rd area.....	RH.....	An amazingly high number
Sora.....	Nov 6.....	NF Siuslaw River.....	LH.....	Rare in winter, but becoming more common
Sandhill Crane (1).....	Nov 8.....	Walterville area.....	DT.....	In field—dropped out of migrating flock?
Sandhill Crane (5).....	Dec 5.....	N Eugene.....	BG.....	Heard overhead after dark—late migrants
Semipalmated Plover (20).....	Nov 15.....	Perkins Pen. FRR.....	NC,et al.....	A little later than normal
Whimbrel.....	Nov 3.....	NJSR.....	DPe,LH.....	A little later than normal
Long-billed Curlew (5).....	Nov 15.....	Perkins Pen. FRR.....	SH.....	Uncommon and later than normal
Surfbird.....	Dec 5.....	SJSR.....	RR.....	Only report for period—where are they?
Snowy Egret.....	Nov 8.....	Perkins Pen. FRR.....	JSu.....	Has wintered the last couple years
Brown Pelican.....	Nov 11.....	NJSR.....	LH.....	Last report for the season
Osprey.....	Dec 8.....	Mt Pisgah.....	JSi,MA.....	Last report for the season, will any winter?
Red-b X Red-napped Sapsucker.....	Dec19.....	Luper Cemetery.....	DA,JT.....	Rare, but regular—mostly in the high Cascades



Hermit Warbler

Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Berchard



Virginia Rail

Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Mike Baird



Snow Goose

Photo: Wikimedia Commons, Cephas



Lewis's Woodpecker	Dec 29	Coburg area	JJ	Winter some years in small numbers
Say's Phoebe	Nov 21	Cantrell Rd.	SH	First report for the winter
Tropical Kingbird	Nov 29	Florence	VT,AC	Rare late fall migrant along coast
Northern Shrike	Nov 2	Royal Ave, FRR	SR	First report for the winter
Tree Swallow (18)	Dec 29	Royal Ave, FRR	SM	Still being seen
Violet-green Swallow	Dec 29	Fisher Butte, FRR	DPa	Last report
Barn Swallow (5)	Nov 29	Fisher Butte, FRR	HS	Last report
Chipping Sparrow	Nov 1	Alton Baker Park	JSu	Late sighting
Harris's Sparrow	Nov 30	Mt Pisgah	RT	Rare, but almost annual
Harris's Sparrow	Dec 10	Hayden Bridge Rd.	DA	Rare, but almost annual – same bird as above?
Common Grackle	Dec 18	K.R. Nielsen Rd	BP	2nd Lane Record
Bullock's Oriole	Dec 2	Florence	NC,EC	Rare in winter, but almost annual in Florence
Brown-headed Cowbird	Dec 10	Florence	D&FN	Uncommon in the winter
Orange-crowned Warbler (11)	Dec 29	River Road area	RH	A very high count for the winter
Common Yellowthroat	Nov 12	Alton Baker Park	JSu	Later than normal for this late migrant
Common Yellowthroat	Dec 29	River Road area	RH	Wintering?
Hermit Warbler	Dec 21	Sutton Lake	SK	Rare wintering species
Wilson's Warbler	Dec 3	EPC	QL	Occasionally winters

AC Alan Contreras, A&TM Allison & Tom Mickel, DP Diane Pettey, EC Ellen Cantor, JE Jacqueline Edwards, JM Jeff Miller, HS Hal Sadofsky, LB Larry Brown, LH Lars Hovde, LP Lalla Pudewell, LW Lisa Wallace, MP Magnus Persmark, NC Nancy Clogston, RH Rich Hoyer, RR Roger Robb, SH Sally Hill, SM Sylvia Maulding, TJ Tye Jeske.

## Habitat Haven Update

By Barbara Bryson

We have a success story to share! Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District has again funded Habitat Haven with a generous grant. This will allow us to continue our work assisting community members to create bird- and pollinator-friendly yards. Since our startup in May, more than 70 people have enrolled, and 22 percent now have certified habitat. Site visits will pick up again soon, so this is a good time to enroll. We thank you, UWSWCD!

You might wonder what our process is like. Let me give you an example. I recently visited a homeowner who had solarized his lawn and covered it in mulch, ready for planting. He was eager to get plants in the ground, but didn't know which plants would be best or where to put them. He said, "I used to see Towhees when I lived in the south hills, but I

don't see them here." The reasons were clear. Neat and tidy neighborhoods of lawns, with few canopy layers and no leaves on the ground, will not attract Towhees, which need excellent shrub cover, canopy layers for protection, and leaves to dig in.

We discussed what types of plants he wanted and spent some time going over the other important educational pieces of our program. These include wildlife stewardship, identifying invasive plants for removal, water conservation, pesticide elimination, and soil improvement.

After the visit, I created a list of suitable plants native to the south Willamette Valley. His report included tips for habitat creation, links to resources, and what he needed to do to certify as backyard habitat. He received a lawn sign that says "Habitat Restoration in Progress." When he certifies, he will get a metal sign with



Photo: Barb Bryson

*Adele, Habitat Haven participant*

replaceable stickers showing his level of certification, a great way to let neighbors know that you care about helping nature!

As Debbie Schlenoff explained so well in the last *Quail*, urban and suburban yards with 70 percent or more native plants increase survival rates of songbirds. Sometimes a change in our idea of beauty can mean a big difference in the lives of birds and bees.

Join the Habitat Haven community today! [laneaudubon.org/habitat-haven/](http://laneaudubon.org/habitat-haven/)

# 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](mailto:tgodsil@gmail.com)

### The Quail Upcoming Content Deadlines

December-January: November 1  
February: January 1

Submit material to Karen Irmischer at [quailkaren1@gmail.com](mailto:quailkaren1@gmail.com)

Nine issues published per year (Feb., Mar., Apr., May-June, July-Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., and Dec.-Jan.)

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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](http://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/memberships/](http://laneaudubon.org/memberships/)

I am a  Current National Audubon member  Don't know

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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

## LCAS Program—In Person and Zoom Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 7:00 pm

Dennis Arendt, 541.221.3691, dennisarendt@gmail.com



Photo: Tim Shelmerdine

*Black-footed Albatross*



Photo: Tim Shelmerdine

*Juvenile Short-tailed Albatross  
chasing a Black-legged Kittiwake*



Photo: Tim Shelmerdine

*Inca Tern*



Photo: Tim Shelmerdine

*Magellanic Penguins*

### Upcoming Programs

March 25 – Dick Lamster and Maeve  
Sowles: Our Amazing Swifts

April 22 – Monarch Butterflies

May 27 – Steve Shunk



*Tim Shelmerdine*

Our program meeting Tuesday, February 25, will feature **Tim Shelmerdine**. Tim is a well-known world-wide birder who has organized and led birding trips off the coast of Oregon for a decade. In this presentation, he will discuss what defines a “seabird,” while focusing on the seabirds near the Oregon coast. We’ll hear stories about the paths that led him to become a seabird enthusiast, leader, and trip organizer, along with details of experiences and adventures during three decades of pursuing this passion. Along the way, he’ll offer tips on seabird identification, along with advice on finding viewing opportunities.

Tim brings years of expertise about ocean birds that are seldom seen from shore. A retired high school Spanish teacher who lives in the Portland area, he uses his great teaching skills and sense of humor to make understanding and identifying ocean birds easier.

His birding journey started when his brother, Bill, showed an interest in birds. After taking some ocean trips

off the coast of California, he became hooked on seabirds. Fascinated by the hostile environment and elegance of ocean birds, he has since spent nearly 40 years seabirding. Tim took over organizing pelagic birding trips when Greg Gillson, who he had worked for leading trips through The Bird Guide, moved to California in 2014.

In 2015, Tim started his own company, Oregon Pelagic Tours (OPT). Until now, his tours have focused on trips out of Newport and Garibaldi. In the near future, Tim is planning on expanding to include repositioning cruises. (Repositioning cruises occur when cruise lines move ships they were using for Alaska tours back to the Caribbean for tours there. These cruises are attractive to birders because they are relatively cheap, and they do not stop between Vancouver, BC, and LA.) Birders bring scopes and take over the bow of the ship as they look for pelagic birds flying by.

Although seabirds remain Tim’s main interest, he has also enjoyed birding in more than 40 countries on six continents. In 2024, he reached his goal of birding in all 50 states and is now working on seeing at least 100 species in every state.

Please join your friends at the Campbell Center (155 High Street) on Tuesday, February 25, at 7 pm. Doors open at 6:30 for some social time. A Zoom link will be available on the LCAS website one week before the event. This program will be recorded and posted on the LCAS website a few days later.





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your *Quail* subscription expired?  
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## LCAS Saturday Bird Outings & Events

Lalla Pudewell, [tolalla@gmail.com](mailto:tolalla@gmail.com)

### First Saturday Bird Outing, February 1

Our First Saturday Bird Outings, created as part of our commitment to the Lane Audubon Inclusivity and Diversity Statement, are meant to hold intentional space for women, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ birders. 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](mailto:1stsatbirdwalks@laneaudubon.org)

### Third Saturday Bird Outing, February 15

Our Third Saturday Bird Outings are open to all participants. TBA.

FMI: Lalla Pudewell, [tolalla@gmail.com](mailto:tolalla@gmail.com), or check the Lane Audubon website and/or the Lane Audubon Facebook page close to the outing date.



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### Joan Bray's Work on Display

By Nancy Bray

The Downtown Eugene Library is showing an exhibit of calligraphy and art by **Joan Bray** (1920-2012). Joan was a longtime LCAS member and one of the "Quail Mailers" for many years. She enjoyed sharing her love of birds and her collection of bird nests in classrooms of many schools. Her work is displayed in the large East Room on the library's second floor through February.