



# The Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

Please consider receiving The Quail electronically

## From Our President

Maeve Sowles, 541.343.8664, audubon@laneaudubon.org

### “In a Time of Destruction, Create Something.” — Maxine Hong Kingston

This year of 2025 has turned into a time where we need to find ways to take action in accord with our values. We value nature in all its variety and uniqueness. Birdwatching, gardening, and nature walks at a park, along a river, at the coast, or in the mountains are all ways of communing with nature. These outings give us a chance to breathe and to gain perspective of our place on this earth.

These healing pastimes also allow us to clear our minds and find the resolve to act in positive ways to protect the things we value and love: habitat, wildlife, clean air and water, local food sources, and the rich variety of arts and education we have in our Lane County community.

Another way to positively engage with the world is to help groups who also represent these values of concern for wild things and the wonderfulness of wilderness.

Lane Audubon is reaching out to encourage more volunteers to help us with the important work we do with education programs, community outreach, and just the business of operating and running our nonprofit

organization. We also could use help with efforts to do more in the schools and host community activities for both education and birdwatching pleasure. Let’s work together to bring more people together to enjoy nature, learn more about birds, and generally enrich our lives by being out in nature in this wonderful part of Oregon.

Please check out our website for a list of ways you could help us with our work in Lane County and beyond. For more information see: [laneaudubon.org/volunteer](http://laneaudubon.org/volunteer). You could also call 541.485.2473, or email [audubon@laneaudubon.org](mailto:audubon@laneaudubon.org) to volunteer with us.

We look forward to working together to help our community engage with nature!



Photo: Dennis Arendt

More than 150 birders showed up Sunday, January 26, to look for a rare Baikal Teal first spotted on Saturday by Rachel Friese on fields west of the Eugene Airport.

Lane County Audubon Society

541.485.BIRD

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

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## Conservation

Debbie Schlenoff, 541.685.0610, [debschlenoff@gmail.com](mailto:debschlenoff@gmail.com)

# Proposed NWFP Changes Move It in the Wrong Direction



photo: Wikimedia Commons, US Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region

Old-Growth tree

The Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) could be better but has been somewhat beneficial as is. Unfortunately, it turns out that it could also be a lot worse. The National Forest Service is supporting changes to the plan, some of which are alarming. The NWFP covers 24 million acres of federal forests across western Washington, Oregon, and northern California. It was established in 1994 to create balance between logging activity and protection of old-growth forest ecosystems. It led to forest restoration, cleaner water, and watersheds; protected wildlife habitat, and has been one of our most useful tools for carbon capture and storage. The suggested amendments would remove many protections for mature and old-growth forests and emphasize logging over wildlife and habitat protections.

Currently, trees more than 80 years old are given some levels of protection from logging. Under the proposed amendments, trees between 80 and 120 years old would lose this protection. Allowing logging in “Late

Successional Reserves” (LSRs) that are up to 120 years old would open up an additional 824,000 acres to logging. On the dry forest side, logging would be rapidly increased, targeting more than 964,000 acres in just 15 years. Proposed changes would double or even triple current logging levels. Moreover, instead of using stand age to determine protection (for example, trees less than 120 years old are on the chopping block), they will turn to using stand establishment dates (for example, stands established after 1905 are not protected). What this will mean on the ground is that these forest stands will never age into protection, and the recruitment of old-growth forest will be grossly inhibited.

**The ability of mature and old-growth trees and forests to store large amounts of carbon is a significant natural climate solution.** Under the new plan, much of this protection would be removed under the guise of “wildfire resiliency.” This doesn’t make much sense, since scientific research has demonstrated that mature forests are more fire-resistant than are younger, logged, or plantation-style forests.

The NWFP was always a compromise between logging and environmental protections, but the new amendments lean much more heavily toward allowable extraction. Another rationale for the increase in logging is economic security. Yet, in the US Forest Service’s own words, “Viewed in terms of total jobs supported, *recreation visitation is the largest contributor to the regional*

*economy*, supporting an estimated 12,551 jobs, followed by agency operations (7,070 jobs), and forest products (5,091 jobs).” Yet the pitch for the amendments is based on allowing more logging to help local economies.

Not all of the amendment suggestions are bad. Some advocate increasing tribal involvement, which we heartily support. The importance of forest stand improvements is noted, as is the operations jobs that would be created. Many well-meaning words are in the release, but the reality of what the amendments will mean for our magnificent forests is worrisome.

**The Forest Service needs to hear from us.** It is accepting comments until March 17 at 8:59:59 PM (Pacific Standard Time). We will soon post talking points on our website and social media pages.

Submit comments here: [cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=64745](https://cara.fs2c.usda.gov/Public/CommentInput?Project=64745)

Oregon Wild has posted an online petition, should you care to sign on. [oregonwild.org/northwest-forest-plan-petition/](https://oregonwild.org/northwest-forest-plan-petition/)

It’s good to do so, but honestly, the more individual comments received, the better.

## Be a Nature Guide at Mt. Pisgah

Join the passionate team of Volunteer Nature Guides at Mount Pisgah Arboretum! Guides are trained in local ecology, working with kids, and more, before leading guided field trips aimed at making the students’ classroom science education come alive out on the trails!

Orientation Night is Wednesday, March 12, 5 pm–6:30 pm.

FMI email Sara: [education@mountpisgaharboretum.org](mailto:education@mountpisgaharboretum.org).

## Field Notes: January 2025

Tom and Allison Mickel, atmickel@gmail.com

# Wood Thrush, Baikal Teal, Winter Wren, Costa's Hummingbird, Hammond's Flycatcher

The month started out wet, then ended dry and cold – not a normal January. The birds for the month weren't normal either, with three Oregon Birds Record Committee birds and six other rare winter birds.

**Abbreviations:** Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), Oregon Birds Record Committee (OBRC), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR), North Jetty of the Siuslaw River (NJSR).

Snow Goose.....	Jan 26.....	FRR .....	TM.....	Small numbers found most winters
Ross's Goose (2) .....	Jan 25.....	Washburn Ln.....	DB,JRB.....	Occasionally found with goose flocks
Baikal Teal .....	Jan 25.....	Bond Rd .....	RF .....	Second Lane Co record if accepted by OBRC
Cinnamon Teal (5) .....	Jan 1.....	Fiddle Ck area .....	DP,SH.....	A known wintering location
Long-tailed Duck (2-3).....	Jan .....	NJSR.....	M.ob .....	Occasional in the winter
Costa's Hummingbird.....	Jan 5.....	Aspen St, Spgfld.....	JS,LJ .....	Rare visitor – seen through month
Semipalmated Plover.....	Jan 7.....	Delta Ponds area.....	SH.....	Rare in the winter
Lesser Yellowlegs.....	Jan 7.....	Washburn Ln.....	JS.....	Uncommon in the winter
Surfbird (3).....	Jan 26.....	SJSR.....	AL,SO.....	Getting to be rare during the winter
Black-crowned Night-Heron.....	Jan 18.....	FRR .....	SH.....	Not commonly seen during the winter
Snowy Egret.....	Jan 25.....	FRR .....	RG,RA.....	One has wintered the last few years
Golden Eagle.....	Jan 12.....	Dexter Reservoir.....	JG.....	Not common in Lane Co
Hammond's Flycatcher .....	Jan 10.....	Alton Baker – Eastgate.....	LP.....	Quite rare in the winter
Tree Swallow.....	Jan.....	FRR area.....	M.ob .....	Larger numbers than normal for winter
Barn Swallow .....	Jan.....	FRR area.....	M.ob .....	A few seen with other swallows
Winter Wren .....	Jan 12.....	Coburg area .....	RA,RG.....	Second Lane Co record if accepted by OBRC
Wood Thrush.....	Jan 1.....	Heceta Head area .....	VT,RF.....	First Lane Co record if accepted by OBRC
American Tree Sparrow .....	Jan 7.....	Washburn Ln.....	SH.....	Rare winter visitor in Lane Co
Swamp Sparrow.....	Jan 6.....	Mt Pisgah .....	NS.....	Found in small numbers most winters
Tricolored Blackbird.....	Jan 5.....	Lehman Dairy.....	SH.....	Found in small numbers at dairy in winter
Tennessee Warbler.....	Jan 11.....	SE Eugene area .....	GM .....	About a dozen records for Lane Co
Common Yellowthroat.....	Jan 11.....	Coburg area .....	LS.....	Rare in winter
Western Tanager (photos).....	Jan 13.....	Delta Ponds .....	A&DH.....	Rare in winter
Black-headed Grosbeak (pics).....	Jan 27.....	River Road area .....	MM.....	Rare in winter

A&DH Anne & Dan Heyerly, AL Annie Lamas, DB Don Berg, DP Diane Pettey, GM Gerry Meenaghan, JG Joshua Galpern, JRB Jonathan Reimer-Berg, JS John Sullivan, LJ Laura Johnson, LP Lalla Pudewell, LS Lars Skalmes, MM Marcia Maffei, NS Noah Strycker, RA Ramiro Aragon, RF Rachael Friese, RG Ruth Guzman, SH Sally Hill, SO Seth Ontiveros, TM Thomas Meinzen, VT Vjera Thompson. M.ob signifies many observers.



Wood Thrush

Photo: David J. Stang, Wikimedia Commons



Baikal Teal

Photo: Sun Jiao, Wikimedia Commons



Winter Wren

Photo: Rhododendrites, Wikimedia Commons



Costa's Hummingbird

Photo: Alan Vernon, Wikimedia Commons



Hammond's Flycatcher

Photo: Dominic Sherony, Wikimedia Commons



## Stay Tuned

### Your Chance to Vote on Our Name Change

In response to the announcement about our upcoming name change, we received many suggestions for what our new name might be. In changing, we will join more than 40 former Audubon chapters that are now using the “Bird Alliance” moniker. The Name Change Committee is narrowing the new-name candidates down to a short list of those that best represent our Lane County coverage. **Stay tuned:** Look for an email this spring requesting your vote from our “short list.”

Members, if we do not have your most current email, please contact us at [outreach@laneaudubon.org](mailto:outreach@laneaudubon.org). Or call 541.485.2473, if you don't do emails.

### Bird City Oregon Grant

We have been awarded a grant from National Audubon to launch Bird City Oregon, a certification program which works to create bird-friendly communities around our state. We have been working with organizations throughout Oregon to build the program and will shortly be part of the Bird City Network. **Stay tuned:** Look for more information about the program this spring.

### Response Planning for Federal Conservation Rollbacks

An alarming rollback of protections for the environment has recently occurred at the federal level. In order to conserve the diverse and bountiful ecosystems of Oregon and to keep our environment healthy, it is more important than ever that our state legislators hear from us, their constituents. To that end, chapters of the Oregon Audubon Council are working to create a Lobby Day in Salem this April. **Stay tuned:** Look for details on our website and social media as April approaches.

Looking for classrooms that would be interested in learning more about birds.



Find out about birds with "Audubon in the Schools!"

We combine Science and Art in two different lessons available to Lane County Elementary classrooms:

- ▶ Birds and Feathers
- ▶ Introduction to Birding With Binoculars

Both presentations include bird specimens and materials for student participation. To schedule a FREE presentation and/or for information, contact [aitsbirds@gmail.com](mailto:aitsbirds@gmail.com)

### LCAS Board Changes Katie McInnis Leaving

We want to thank Katie McInnis for her time spent as a Board member for LCAS. Her new job working with raptors at Cascades Raptor Center is now keeping her too busy to participate as an LCAS Board member.

Katie's enthusiasm helped get us rolling on the initial Bird Friendly City projects and she has always helped with outreach and bird outings when she could. We hope she will continue to help on bird outings and some other activities when her schedule allows, and we are very grateful for that!

### Audubon in the Schools Continues to Fledge Young Birders

In 2024, the Audubon in the Schools initiative served 732 students. Through the dedication of six volunteers, we facilitated 25 visits, resulting in 51 hours of classroom engagement. Our educational offerings comprise two distinct programs: *Feathers* and *Binoculars*. By providing these programs, we hope to inspire future generations of budding ornithologists. As we prepare for the 2025 academic year, we are looking for volunteers to contribute to our classroom presentations, and we are also looking for more classrooms that would be interested in learning more about birds.

FMI: Interested individuals should contact Barb Pope [aitsbirds@gmail.com](mailto:aitsbirds@gmail.com).

### Save This Date for Bike Path Cleanup

Our annual bike path cleanup is set for Saturday, April 12, 10 am to 1 pm. Because it feels good and is fun, we typically have a good turnout. We will meet near the Euphoria Chocolate Company at Stewart Road and Bertelsen, just north of West 11th.

Staff from the Bureau of Land Management will be on hand to offer guidance and support. Bags and tools will be provided. You bring your own gloves, water, sanitizer, and snacks.

FMI or to volunteer, email Cammi Ganshert: [gansherthockey98@gmail.com](mailto:gansherthockey98@gmail.com)



New board member Cammi Ganshert

## LCAS Program—In Person and Zoom Tuesday, March 25, 2025, 7:00 pm

Dennis Arendt, 541.221.3691, dennisarendt@gmail.com



Photo: Chammel City Camera Club, Wikimedia Commons

*Vaux's Swift*



Photo: Annette Teng, Wikimedia Commons

*Vaux's Swifts Settling In*

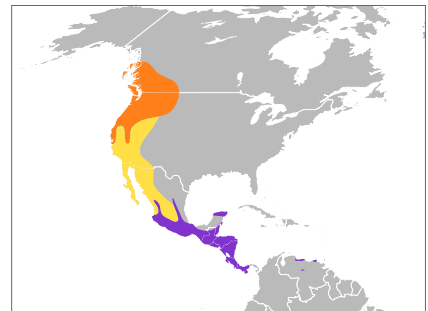
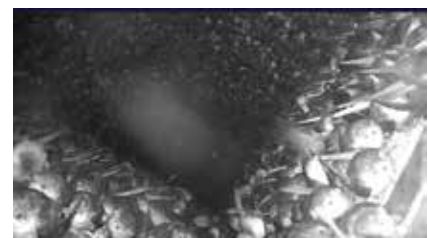


Photo: Cephas, Wikimedia Commons

*VASW migration map*



*Swifts in a chimney*

## Our Amazing Swifts



*Maeve and Dick at Ngorongoro Crater*

The Lane County Audubon Society will feature a presentation about the thousands of little long-distance fliers who visit a local chimney each spring and fall. Our own **Dick Lamster** and **Maeve Sowles** will discuss the fascinating life of the Vaux's Swifts and the wonderful experience they provide to birdwatchers (new and old) who watch them roost in the Agate Hall Chimney at the University of Oregon campus in Eugene.

Vaux's Swifts are somewhat difficult to watch as they often fly very high, hunting insects that are carried on winds above 1,000 feet in the sky. Because of this, many casual birders are not familiar with this species. They are small 4.3-inch birds with an 11-inch wingspan that hunt insects while flying all day and roost in dark chimneys or tree snags at night. If you do see one flying, it may pass by too quickly to be easily identified. Swifts are often confused with swallows, which they are not.

For decades Vaux's Swifts have used the Agate Hall chimney, on UO campus at 17th Avenue and

Agate Street, to roost for the night during their migration stopover in the Willamette Valley. They feed and recover here during their northward migration in spring as well as their southward migration in the fall. This phenomenon is a real-time nature extravaganza right here in Eugene! Vaux's Swifts' numbers can reach as high as 15,000 birds using the chimney for a night, or the number can be zero. When we go to count them, we have no idea what we will find.

The upcoming March Program will give more details about this fascinating species of birds, including:

- A range map extending from northern British Columbia to Venezuela
- Nest building and reproduction
- Predation by a variety of larger birds
- Habitat adaptations due to logging in most of their range
- History of Agate Hall chimney at UO campus

The Agate Hall chimney is now integral to the survival of this small bird, and we need to encourage protection of the chimney in perpetuity to provide migration habitat for the Vaux's Swifts. People who experience the birds' use of the chimney as a roost site for the first time are amazed and awed by this special in-town wildlife experience. It is a phenomenon the whole family can enjoy.

### Maeve Sowles and Dick Lamster

Maeve and her mother would watch birds out the kitchen window when she was a child. She feels

fortunate to have had a parent who valued the wonders of nature, curiosity, and education. When Maeve moved to Eugene in the early 1990s, one of her first activities was a Lane County Audubon bird walk where she met Eugene birders, including her husband Dick. Maeve says "We found

*Continued on page 7*

# 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

April: March 1  
May-June: April 1

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

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





Before



After

## Habitat Haven Update

By Barb Bryson

Our backyard habitat certification program, Habitat Haven, has resumed full-time site visits to community members who desire to help birds, pollinators, and wildlife by enhancing habitat in their yards. We have a waiting list, so sign up soon if you would like a visit this spring!

This program offers:

- In-person visits from educated technicians who listen to your goals and make recommendations based on your specific site.
- A packet of resources, including discounts on native plants from Doak Creek and Trillium native plant nurseries.
- A lawn sign to show others your commitment to healing nature in your yard.
- After your visit, you receive a written report with recommendations for each category, as well as online resources to boost your habitat improvement knowledge.

- When ready to certify, you receive a new sign.
- Ongoing support along the way as needed!

Certification at silver, gold, or platinum levels is based on actions in five areas: percent of native plantings, removal of invasive plants, pesticide elimination, wildlife stewardship, and water conservation measures.

We are extremely grateful to the **Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District** for awarding us another grant for 2025! This allows us to increase capacity and move our community forward in our goal of creating habitat connectivity throughout the Eugene-Springfield area.

Thank you also to Sheila Klest of **Trillium Gardens** and Cynthia Lafferty of **Doak Creek Native Plant Nursery** for supporting this program! We are truly fortunate to have native plant nurseries in our area.

*Swifts, continued from page 5*

common ground in our birdwatching pastime. He was the first person that took me (and my visiting mother) to watch the Vaux's Swifts at Agate Hall chimney and we have visited Agate Hall every year since, both spring and fall." Maeve has now served as president

of LCAS for more than two decades.

Dick has been watching birds since he was a child. He was a member of the Lane County Audubon Society's first Board of Directors in the mid-1970s and served as President in the 1980s and early 1990s. He and Maeve have

## Delivering Audubon Adventures to Students

By Cecelia Hagen

LCAS members were super supportive of *Audubon Adventures* this year. For a listing of sponsors, look at the Dec. 2024 /Jan. 2025 *Quail* or visit [laneaudubon.org/audubon-adventures/](http://laneaudubon.org/audubon-adventures/).

These donations mean that 28 classrooms in 18 Lane County elementary schools are now receiving *Audubon Adventures*. The topics for this year's three learning modules are Raptors, Seabirds, and Sharing Our Shores.

The schools, and number of their classrooms participating, are: Adams Elementary (3), Chinese Immersion School (1), Applegate Elementary (2), Howard Elementary (3), Riverbend Elementary (2), Yolanda Elementary (1), Awbrey Park Elementary (2), Elizabeth Page Elementary (1), Thurston Elementary (1), Veneta Elementary (2), London School (1), Prairie Mountain School (1), Edison Elementary (1), Ridgeline Montessori (3), Dorena Elementary (1), Spring Creek Elementary (1), Lundy Elementary (1), and Elmira Elementary (1).

It's no secret that schools are struggling after Covid and funding cuts. Audubon Adventures helps teachers engage their students with the natural world, and that's a beautiful thing!



Check your mailing label. Has  
your *Quail* subscription expired?  
See page 6 to renew!



## LCAS Saturday Bird Outings & Events

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

### First Saturday Bird Outing, March 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, March 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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Help us lower costs and reduce  
our carbon footprint. Email  
[audubon@laneaudubon.org](mailto:audubon@laneaudubon.org) to  
receive the eQuail!



Photo: Barb Bryson

## January 18, Third Saturday Bird Outing at South Eugene Meadows

By Barb Bryson

Despite a foggy, freezing morning, 17 eager birders joined our guide, Tim Griffith, for a three-hour walk in the south Eugene meadows off Blanton Road. Tim heard duetting Great Horned Owls before the group arrived, but they were silent during our walk. Golden-crowned Sparrows flitted in bushes, while several Acorn Woodpeckers watched over their granaries. Several snags were riddled with cache holes. A couple of high moments for us were watching a Red-tailed Hawk consuming her prey on an open branch, and seeing an adult Bald Eagle flying overhead. Surprisingly for this winter, we saw only two Pine Siskins. As we left, the sun appeared—of course! Thank you, Tim, for another birdy day! Total species: 23, Travel distance: 3.06 miles