



# 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

## Our Home County Sits at a Crossroad of Natural Wonders



Lane County includes some of my favorite places. When I look at a map of Lane County, each compass point beckons with interesting destinations.

To the north we have the confluence of the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers and the Coburg Hills. Our waterways are a network of rich habitat providing corridors for birds and wildlife throughout the region. Clean water assures survival

for aquatic species and animals that depend on them, such as fish-eating birds. Clean water provides for our own needs as well. Further north, the broad fertile Willamette Valley holds a few remnant wetland habitats, providing open moist areas attractive to migrating shore birds and their predators.

The natural areas are fringed with oak savanna, an important food source for nut-eating birds such as Acorn Woodpeckers, Band-tailed Pigeons, and jays. Oak trees are also a source of many insects for the smaller insect-eating birds. Agriculture dominates the sprawling valley to the north, and hedgerows are the main bird habitat there. From my first visits to Oregon as a child, I have loved the dark green hills framing the bright green valleys.

To the west, the Coast Range offers wonderful remnants of old-growth habitat in just a few areas, keeping a small population of big-tree-dependent species alive. As the old-growth forests disappear, the animals that have lived there for millennia will die. Efforts to stop the logging seem to have failed, and I fear the value of these pristine areas will be lost.

Further west, beyond the Coast Range, lies the big blue pulsing expanse of the Pacific Ocean. Oregon's coast has world-famous beauty and delicate sand dune habitat. The coast is also a migration route for shore birds, arctic nesting birds, and other species that fly north to their eventual breeding destinations.

Milder temperatures at the coast allow the birds to move north and wait until inland temperatures are warmer. Then they fly inland to their breeding areas. Spring migrations of birds and other animals still follow an ancient ritual, despite human presence and disturbances. The coast's rocky shores, open ocean, estuaries, and mud flats

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Lane County Audubon Society

541.485.BIRD

laneaudubon.org

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## Conservation

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



# Bird City Oregon—May Update

**B**irds are awesome. They're beautiful. They lift our spirits and spark our imagination. They contribute to functional ecosystems and act as indicators of healthy environments. But, alas, their populations are declining all over the world due to a variety of threats. Birds need our help.

As our landscape becomes more developed, urban and suburban landscapes play an increasingly important role in the survival of wild birds. Nearly 500 species of wild birds utilize Oregon for some portion of their life cycle, and many of these birds pass through our cities and towns.

This was our motivation for working to create Bird City Oregon, a designation program that emphasizes the important role that local communities can play in protecting wild birds. It is both an education and a recognition program. Lane Audubon is the lead organization of this statewide program, developed in partnership with the late **Bob Sallinger**

of Bird Conservation Oregon, along with input from Audubon chapters around the state and other organizations. Bird City Oregon has joined the Bird City Network, a hemispheric network containing more than 200 bird-friendly communities across four countries working to make their environments healthier for birds and people. FMI: [birdcity.org/](http://birdcity.org/)

Interested communities start by forming a coalition of bird-friendly partners and obtaining a resolution from their city officials in support of joining. The application includes a menu of impactful actions that communities can take, and each city decides which actions to focus on.

Actions fall into four categories: (1) Creating and Protecting Habitat, (2) Reducing Threats, (3) Engagement and Education, and (4) Sustainability.

Our Lane County chapter secured a grant from National Audubon to pilot the program and help support the first certified communities designated in Oregon. In Eugene and a few other

cities we are currently working through the application process required to join. Joining will provide communities the opportunity to:

- Partner with like-minded organizations to create and enhance healthy native habitats and adopt sustainable bird-friendly practices.
- Raise awareness about the threats birds face and provide actionable solutions for the public.
- Help pollinators and human health. When you do good things for birds, you are also improving the environmental health of your local community.
- Support economic development. Becoming certified as a Bird City can promote local tourism and local businesses.
- Become part of an interconnected, growing network of Bird Friendly Communities in Oregon.
- Celebrate and educate through community events!

*From Our President, continued from page 1*

provide diverse habitats for birds.

In Eastern Lane County the deep woods, waterfalls, lakes, and lava beds are a treasure trove of mountain pleasures to explore. Northeast Lane County has the McKenzie River Valley leading to the Three Sisters Wilderness. This densely vegetated land rises up to 10,000-foot-high peaks of barren alpine habitat. The southeastern route takes you to reservoirs, Salt Creek Falls, and the pristine Waldo

Lake. These and other high lakes are microhabitats drawing birds from the surrounding area. The interface of the lake and the forest fringe allows us to see birds coming to the water.

The road south goes through Creswell and Cottage Grove, where the valley tapers up to the sweep of the surrounding hills. Reservoirs are tucked along the watersheds to the south and east. Few settlements go deep into the woods in this area.

Each part of Lane County is still rich with potential for preserving habitat. We have a treasure of habitat variety here, with ecological value beyond our dollar-based economy. Our open lands are worth our attention. We are the caretakers and advocates for those that cannot speak. These habitats are worth preserving for their innate value to life forms with wings, tails, horns, claws, scaly skin, and hooves.

## Field Notes: March 2025

Tom and Allison Mickel, atmickel@gmail.com

# Painted Bunting, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Mute Swan, Great Gray Owl, Sandhill Crane

This has been one of those cool and wet, then sunny and warm Marches. It makes you think spring is here, then winter returns. But plants are leafing out and many flowers are blooming. So, it got more like spring day by day. Which means those breeding birds aren't too far behind. But our first question is – where are the Rufous Hummingbirds? We haven't seen one at our feeders yet this year and by this time most years we have many fighting over the feeders and perches in the yard. The reporting of the male Painted Bunting was delayed because the homeowner didn't want birders coming to the yard to see it. It's the first report for Lane County!

**Abbreviations:** Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR)

Mute Swan	March 30	FRR – Royal Ave	RRb	Rare for Lane – reported earlier this winter
Sandhill Crane	March 24	SE Eugene	JP	An unusual location
Black-necked Stilt	March 26	FRR - Royal Ave	LG	First report for the breeding season
Long-billed Curlew (5)	March 13	FRR - Perkins Pens	RA, RG	Rarely found this time of the year
Western Sandpiper (3)	March 3	FRR – Royal Ave	JT	Rarely found in the winter
Black-legged Kittiwake (5)	March 25	Sea Lion Caves	LP, SM	Getting late for this species
Snowy Egret	March 3	FRR – Royal Ave	RRz	Last report for the winter
Great Gray Owl	March 28	McKenzie Bridge area	AM	Area where they've been seen in the past
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, photo	March 8	Hills Creek	JS, LJ	Rare for Lane Co
Lewis's Woodpecker	March	Coburg area	M.ob.	Seen throughout the month
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	March 24	Oakridge	SM	First report for the breeding season
Chipping Sparrow	March 24	Sorrel Way Park	MH	First report for the breeding season
Common Yellowthroat	March 22	Alton Baker Park	VB	First report for the breeding season
Painted Bunting – male, photos	Feb 21	North of Eugene	Fide DA	First record for Lane Co
Western Tanager	March 2	River Rd area	TM	Rare during the winter
Western Tanager	March 17	Skinner Butte area	SP	Rare during the winter – same bird?

AM Andrew Merz, DA Dennis Arendt, JP Jesse Pline, JS John Sullivan, JT Jim Thomas, LG Linda Gilbert, LJ Laura Johnson, LP Lalla Pudewell, MH Matt Horton, RA Ramiro Aragon, RG Ruth Guzman, RRb Roger Robb, RRz Ricardo Rodriguez, SM Sylvia Maulding, SP Shannon Pocan, TM Thomas Meinzen, VB Vickie Buck. M.ob. signifies many observers. Fide means reported by a person other than the observer.



Painted Bunting

Photo: Wikimedia, Domoinic Shernoy



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

Photo: Wikimedia, Rhododendrites



Mute Swans

Photo: Wikimedia, ACharles J. Sharp



Great Gray Owl

Photo: Wikimedia, Elaine R. Wilson



Sandhill Cranes

Photo: Wikimedia, Gary Lavens

## Birding & Volunteer Day at Perkins Peninsula – May 17th!

Come enjoy the outdoors, learn from an experienced birder, and make a positive impact on one of Lane County's beautiful outdoor spaces!

**8 am- 9:45:** Guided birdwatching tour with Lane County Audubon member **Ellen Cantor**, Eugene-area birder and CBC Team leader for the Fern Ridge Royal/Fisher Butte Area since 2018. Spring at Perkins Peninsula offers a chance to spot warblers, vireos, flycatchers, woodpeckers, shorebirds, waterfowl, and more! Bring your binoculars if you have them!

**10 am – noon:** Volunteer session to help remove invasive species and refresh the park's natural beauty with Lane County Parks.

**Location:** Perkins Peninsula Park - 26647 OR-126, Veneta, OR 97487

**What to Bring:** Work gloves, water, sun protection, and binoculars (if birding).

Tools, snacks, and a day parking pass will be provided. Restrooms available.

RSVPs are helpful. Send RSVPs or questions to [laura.linn@lanecountyor.gov](mailto:laura.linn@lanecountyor.gov)



## Habitat Haven Certification Program Praised by Participants

Our Habitat Haven program is in full bloom this spring, as it continues offering guidance and support to families wishing to increase natural habitats attractive to birds and other wildlife.

Recent participants Katie and Jim stated the following:

“Habitat Haven was/is extremely helpful as we transform our yard into a micro habitat for local birds and wildlife.

The initial site visit was just what we needed to begin the planning process.

The individual report with suggestions was incredibly valuable in constructing a plan for our yards. Barbara and company really know how to provide resources and suggestions for homeowners. We are loving the process!

Thank you for all that you do!”



Ohana



LaRue

## Thank You

We want to extend our thanks to **Janet Barnes** as she transitions away from her long commitment to Audubon in the Schools (AITS). She has been a valued member of the team since 2018, assisting with in-class sessions until those ended with Covid. Since then, she has stayed involved with the planning sessions and helped where needed.

Another task Janet managed was the AITS database, which captures all the sessions, locations, instructors, number of students, and types of lessons taught for

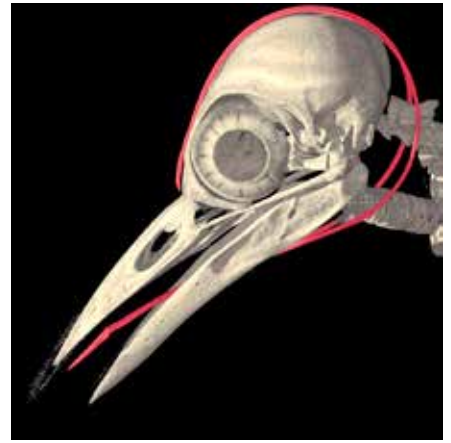
each school year. This is a BIG task, and she did a wonderful job maintaining the spreadsheets that provide the data needed for our annual reports to both the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and National Audubon.

We will miss you, Janet, and hope you enjoy your summer travels.

Fortunately for LCAS, another AITS volunteer, **Amy Dessert**, has assumed the database record-keeping responsibility. Thanks to Amy as well!

## LCAS Program—In Person and Zoom Tuesday, May 27, 2025, 7:00 pm

Dennis Arendt, 541.221.3691, dennisarendt@gmail.com



*A woodpecker skull*



*Cuban woodpecker stamps*



*Ivory-billed Woodpecker, extinct or ?*

## Living with Woodpeckers: Folklore, History, and Science



*Steve Shunk above Cajamarca*

On Tuesday, May 27, join professional naturalist, woodpecker expert, and author **Steve Shunk** for an entertaining evening of woodpecker tales and taboos at the Campbell Center in Eugene. Prepare to leave with a newfound appreciation for these ubiquitous woodland carpenters. Lane County Audubon Society is pleased he has once again agreed to share his knowledge, expertise, and experiences with our members.

According to the Paradise Birding website, “Steve’s presentations are the perfect combination of science and entertainment.”—Bartshe Miller, coordinator of the Mono Lake Bird Chautauqua.

For many thousands of years, woodpeckers have pervaded the lives of humans. From Old World myths to modern urban legends, our fascination with woodpeckers has frightened, entertained, and inspired. Some

ancient cultures depicted woodpeckers as the devil, and others described their power to summon rain. Woodpecker drumming has even been touted as one of the inspirations for our own instrumental drums. In the early 20th century, woodpeckers were alternately credited with both positive and negative impacts on North America’s forests.

Today, we study woodpecker anatomy to learn how to build safer football and motorcycle helmets, while some humans despise woodpeckers for waking them up every morning with their incessant drumming or for drilling into their expensive homes. Many birders swoon when they see woodpeckers feeding their young in a nest cavity.

Stephen Shunk wears several hats in his life as a compulsive traveler and general nature nut, including author, public speaker, field biologist, and tour guide. He has fed leeches (his own blood) in Malaysian Borneo and watched Spotless Starlings swarming around the Greek ruins of Sicily. He visited Okinawa to see the world’s most endangered woodpecker and loves exploring the Peruvian Andes among the cushion plants and condors. The more than 25 years Steve spent anchored in Central Oregon’s “Woodpecker Wonderland” inspired the publication of his *Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America*. Today, when he is not guiding for

Arizona-based Naturalist Journeys, he can often be found communing with Happy Wrens in his backyard at the heart of Cabo Corrientes in western Jalisco, Mexico.

Join your friends at the Campbell Center, 155 High Street, Eugene, on Tuesday, May 27, at 7:00. The doors will open at 6:30 for some social time. This program will be available online via Zoom. The link for the presentation will be posted on the LCAS website about one week before the event; a recording of the program will be posted there within the following week.

# 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

July/August: May 30  
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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 \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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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

# Volunteer Spotlight: Hilary Dearborn, LCAS Web Master

By Barb Bryson

Hilary was born in New Jersey and enjoyed many summers by the ocean and otherwise playing outside. She recalls rowing a boat to the National Seashore in the 1960s, seeing many different gulls and terns. Her mother liked birds and had the *Peterson Field Guide*, which added to Hilary’s awareness of birds.

College was spent at Antioch in Ohio, studying political science and music. She moved west in 1980 and landed in Eugene in 1992. After obtaining a master’s degree in landscape architecture from the University of Oregon, she worked in natural resource conservation for the Lane Council of Governments.

Besides music—Hilary plays

standup bass with a local band—birding really took hold for her after taking a birding class from Dave Bontrager a couple of decades ago. She has since been a regular Christmas Bird Count participant. Native plant gardening for birds and wildlife is a related passion. She, her husband, and their Corgi recently moved into town from 11 acres in the country and have been busy reestablishing themselves.

Hilary has been our amazing web master since 2015, keeping the site updated and beautiful, plus occasionally putting in untold hours cleaning up electronic glitches she has no part in creating. We truly appreciate Hilary’s work on behalf of Lane Audubon!



Photo: Barb Bryson

Hilary Dearborn



Photo: Barb Bryson

Hilary Dearborn with her husband Jon Neher and dog, Sirius.



## Thanks to All Who Helped with Bike Path Cleanup

Many thanks to Cammie Ganshert and the 12 volunteers who came out for the Bike Path Cleanup on April 12th. We also appreciate the Bureau of Land Management staff who supported our cleanup efforts.

## Help us make a difference for birds and wildlife!



## VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, June 7, 11 am - 1 pm  
Campbell Community Center  
155 High St, Eugene



Come learn about our volunteer opportunities  
Enjoy refreshments and enter to win prizes!  
Free native plant for first 20 people  
**All are welcome!!**



Lane County  
Audubon Society





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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 Outings, May 3 and June 7

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. Times, locations, and leaders TBA.

FMI or to sign up, contact Sarah: [1stsatbirdwalks@laneaudubon.org](mailto:1stsatbirdwalks@laneaudubon.org)

### Third Saturday Bird Outing, May 17 and June 21

Our Third Saturday Bird Outings are open to all participants. Times, locations, and leaders 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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[audubon@laneaudubon.org](mailto:audubon@laneaudubon.org) to  
receive the eQuail!

### Third Saturday Bird Outing, March 15

By Lalla Pudewell

**M**arch's Third Saturday Bird Outing took place in the UO Natural Areas. It was co-led by **Emily Hamblen**, the UO Natural Areas Steward, and **Rachel Glaeser**, a birding enthusiast who works in UO Transportation.

Fifteen of us met near the Millrace Path on this rainy morning, outfitted with rain gear and hats. A pair of Ring-necked Ducks were seen in the Millrace Pond near the parking area. As we made our way along the Millrace Path, robins, starlings, and flickers called from the wet treetops. Ruby-crowned Kinglets, an Anna's Hummingbird, and a Common Merganser were seen on our way towards the river. At the river we saw Double-crested Cormorants, Lesser Scaups, a Great Blue Heron, and a Greater White-fronted Goose mixed in with a few Canada Geese. Along the way we learned about the restoration progress and research programs taking place. As we returned to the Millrace Pond, we found two Wood Ducks and a Black Phoebe. Thank you to the UO, Rachel, and Emily for hosting this outing, and to the students and other attendees who shared information about this special area.

Mill Race Pond, Lane, Oregon, US  
Traveling - 1.708 miles in light rain  
23 species (+1 other taxa)