

The Chat

Number 390
September, 2012

A voice for education and conservation in the natural world

Rogue Valley Audubon Society

www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Deadline for submissions for the next month's issue is the 20th of each month



CHAPTER PROGRAM MEETING TUESDAY, SEPT. 25

Plan to attend the RVAS Chapter meeting on Tuesday, September 25th, visit with your friends and meet new members. RVAS member and birding expert Harry Fuller will present an unusual program of photos and tips for finding birds during trips along I-5. Harry says this will be "a look at some of my favorite places to bird between San Francisco and Seattle. We'll talk about the variety of birds to be seen and when to see them." Included will be Yellow-billed Magpie, Tricolored Blackbird, American Bittern, Blue Grosbeak and more.

Harry Fuller is an avid birder who lives in Ashland. He leads trips and teaches birding classes for Rogue Valley Audubon, Golden Gate Audubon, Klamath Bird Observatory, Ashland Parks and Recreation, OLLI at SOU, Point Reyes Field Institute and Partnership for International Birding. You can read his birding blog at: <http://atowhee.wordpress.com/>

Chapter meetings are held at 7:00 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Medford Congregational Church meeting hall, 1801 E. Jackson Street in East Medford. The meeting hall is located north of East Jackson Street between North Berkeley Way and North Barneburg Rd. It is most easily accessed from North Barneburg Rd. Just make a left turn into the church parking lot at the tree in the middle of the road.

Photos of birds found along I-5 by Harry Fuller



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President's Page

Since the end of June, when the Board asked me to serve, I've been meeting with RVAS committee chairs, many past and present Board members, and a few previous Presidents. I wanted to get an informed sense of our organization, where we are and how we are doing. As your new President, I knew I had much to learn. My conclusion is that RVAS is doing very well, thanks to an incredible volunteer effort. Without our volunteers, we simply could not exist. And so I want to begin by thanking our many active volunteers.

Look at the list to the left of this column—it just begins to identify the many volunteers contributing to the RVAS conservation and education efforts. Led by Pepper Trail and Robert Mumby, our Conservation Committee is expanding their scope and becoming involved with several local and regional issues. Jeff Tufts has our field trips program off to an excellent start. Bob Quaccia and Alex Maksymowicz have a terrific year of Chapter Programs planned. And there are others, too many to list but I can't resist mentioning the leadership of Gwyneth Ragosine and Denny Niebuhr as the Bob Black Fund develops. They have already accomplished much, and there is much more to come.

Last May at the Oregon Audubon Council meeting I made a brief presentation of the RVAS PowerPoint program for elementary school classes. Thanks to Lynn Kellogg and too many others to mention, RVAS has a truly exceptional program. I knew that, but the many compliments from other chapters reminded me of how much RVAS has accomplished in Education, again, all done by volunteers.

Thank you all very, very much.

Field Notes: The Changing Seasons

Compiled by Stewart Janes

August is a month of rapid changes; most pass unnoticed. It's the disappearance of things. One day you notice that you haven't heard **House Finches** singing for awhile. Has it been two days or two weeks since the last song? The **Bullock's Orioles** were just here. Yesterday or last week?

The beginning of the month delivers the last songs of the breeding season for all except **Collared Doves** and the occasional **Spotted Towhees** which never completely stop until well into the fall season. The second week still finds families of **House Wrens** traipsing around in backyard gardens in silence and families of **Hermit Warblers** with begging young in tow in the highland forests. The third week of the month finds the southward migration in full swing. How quick it all changes.

This year I have been paying a little closer attention to the **Western Wood Pewees**, **Rufous Hummingbirds**, and **Black-headed Grosbeaks**. Female **Rufous Hummingbirds** descended upon my feeders about the first of the month. Stepping outside was to take your life in your own hands with all the aerial acrobatics and chases going on. The **Pewees** drone on in the evenings. Well this year I noticed that there was a large flyout of both on the evening of 8/18. This was the night that the string of days of 100°F weather broke. I don't think it was a coincidence. Migrating birds have challenges with heat management. Marathoners face the same problem. Cool nights make for better flight conditions. **Black-headed Grosbeak** numbers plummeted in my yard on the night of 8/22.

Shorebird migration has been ongoing since early July with **Least** and **Western Sandpipers** at Agate Lake, Lost Creek Reservoir, and Emigrant Lake along with **Greater** and **Lesser Yellowlegs** and a few **Dowitchers**.

Additional sightings include a **Semipalmated Plover** at Agate Lake on 8/9 (AC), **Baird's Sandpipers** at Lost Creek Reservoir on 8/3 (JT) and Agate Lake on 8/7 (JT). A **Sanderling** was at Lost Creek Reservoir on 8/17 (NB), a **Solitary Sandpiper** at Agate Lake on 8/18 (JT), and an immature **Semipalmated Sandpiper** on 8/20 at Emigrant Lake (FL).

Red-necked Phalaropes were at Agate Lake on 8/18 (JT) and at Emigrant Lake on 8/19 (FE). **Wilson's Phalaropes** were at Wilson's Pond on 8/7 and 8/23 (BH).

The biggest surprise this month was the immature **Common Gallinule** at Agate Lake on 8/9 (RB). Okay, someone needs to straighten these birds out. **Common Gallinules** breed reasonably close to us in the Sacramento Valley. I can see stray birds showing up in the spring migration... but fall?? Last winter there was one dodging the ice on Hyatt Lake. I don't get it.

Other waterbird sightings of note include **Caspian Terns** at Emigrant Lake on 8/19 (FE) and an **Eared Grebe** at Agate Lake on 8/7 (GS).

A few waterfowl are already moving. A female **Northern Pintail** was at Emigrant Lake on 8/19 (FE), and two female **Blue-winged Teal** were reported from Emigrant Lake on 8/19 (FE).

Another surprise were the two or three **Great-tailed Grackles** at Agate Lake on 8/7 (GS,AC). I am getting used to the lone male at the Avenue G Pond every spring, but the fall sightings of multiple birds is something new.

Back for an encore performance is the **Mountain Chickadee** at Liz Northrup's place near Jacksonville. Last year it came to visit and stayed through the spring. It apparently went on vacation for a bit, but now it is back.

Field Notes Continued on page 10

RVAS Holiday Party
Potluck, Raffle, and Auction
Saturday, December 1, 2012 at 6 pm
Congregational Church, 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford



HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Mark your calendar so you save the date

Tell Carol Palmer if you would like to help with the party

Tell Kate or Sooney if you would like to help with the auction

*Tell Kate or Sooney if you have a donor prospect
(restaurant, store, other provider of goods or services)*

Buy raffle tickets at the Sept., Oct., and Nov. meetings

Get raffle tickets to sell to others you don't see at the RVAS meetings

Invite your bird-loving friends to the event

Raffle tickets are \$5 each, or 5 for \$20

Carol Palmer carol.p@charter.net ; 541-245-9815

Kate Cleland-Sipfle sipfle@aol.com ; 541-482-2933

Sooney Viani sooneyviani@gmail.com ; 541-482-5146

Upcoming Events

NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT: SEPT 16

Birders nationwide who will be participating in the North American Migration Count during the third weekend in September, and Rogue Valley Audubon members and other birders are invited to join the Jackson County portion of the citizen-science project.

Begun in 1992, the NAMC is designed to build a location-specific bird population database during the critical Spring and Fall migrations. Birders throughout the country report sightings to county coordinators, and that data is then relayed to a statewide supervisor. Each reporting state then submits its information to a national clearinghouse.

Jackson County efforts will take place on Sunday, September 16, and all participants will survey a designated area of their choice. RVAS Field Trip Chairman Jeff Tufts will coordinate the selection of areas to avoid overlap. To volunteer to take part in this important project or for further information, please contact Jeff (tallahto@aol.com, phone 541-779-4582).

SHOREBIRD ID: FOCUS OF SEPT. 22 BIRD WALK

Identification of the more common shorebirds seen in the Rogue Valley during fall migration will be the focus of a bird walk Saturday, September 22. Jeff Tufts will lead the group to Agate Lake (and possibly Lost Creek Lake) to see and identify the occasionally confusing sandpipers that can be found on the mudflats at this time of year. Bring binoculars, field guides (and spotting scopes if available) for this approx. 3 hr. walk. Limited amount of level walking. Please contact Jeff to register in advance (email tallahto@aol.com, phone 541-779-4582). We'll meet at the east end of the Dollar Tree parking lot (se corner of Crater Lake Highway and Hwy. 140) at 8 a.m. and carpool to Agate Lake.

BEAR CREEK SALMON FESTIVAL: SAT. OCTOBER 6

In it's 8th year, the annual festival celebrates salmon and salmon habitat in our area with a Participants of this free event will enjoy a variety of fun outdoor activities such as fly or spin-casting, exploring Bear Creek, listening to Native American drumming and story-telling, and learning how to become better stewards of local streams. For details go to www.BearCreekSalmonFestival.net

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM: NOV. 15-18

On November 15th-18th, 2012, the Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 16th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium at the Stockton Hilton Hotel, in Stockton, CA. To view the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips check out our website at: www.cvbs.org

Local Membership Renewals Are Due

Rogue Valley Audubon Society (RVAS) has over 332 members of whom 147 pay dues to our local chapter? Most of you belong to the National Audubon Society, which means you are automatically a member of Rogue Valley Audubon Society. This national /local partnership is true across Audubon societies in every state, and results in the healthy membership size in local chapters. Funds from the National Audubon Society as well as your local dues and donations, help support a variety of activities and programs in the Rogue Valley.

The Chat - nine issues per year.

Seven educational and social program meetings per year.

Field trips and local bird walks.

Educational programs for students and other adults.

Monitoring of regional conservation issues and working with local wildlife managers to improve access and bird habitats.

Bird counts for e-bird and national species censuses, such as the Birdathon and Christmas Bird Count

Support for local research projects

If you have a paid local membership, it will expire this September 30th. If you joined within the last four months your RVAS membership is good until September 30, 2013.

Please keep your membership and your support of RVAS active by completing the application below, and mailing it with your check before September 30th. (If you are reading this on our web-page, print the form you will find on the "Join and Support" page.) If you are uncertain of your membership status, or have any questions about membership, please send an email to: rdmumby@charter.net, or call Robert Mumby at 541-535-2934 or Stan McIntosh at 541-535-2053. Thanks very much!

The Rogue Valley Audubon Society dues are \$20 per year. Membership benefits are listed above.

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RVAS MEMBERSHIP and CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (optional): _____ Email: _____

Rogue Valley Audubon Society will not share your information with any other organization.

Check if you are a: New member _____; Renewing member _____

The Chat, our newsletter, is available on the RVAS webpage or by email. Please check YES if you would like a printed copy mailed through the USPS. YES _____

Dues alone are not enough to support our many activities, conservation, educational and research projects. Please consider a contribution in addition to your \$20 membership. Your additional contribution is tax deductible as RVAS is a 501(C)3 organization.

Donor — \$50 _____

Sponsor — \$250 _____

Supporter — \$100 _____

Benefactor — \$500 _____

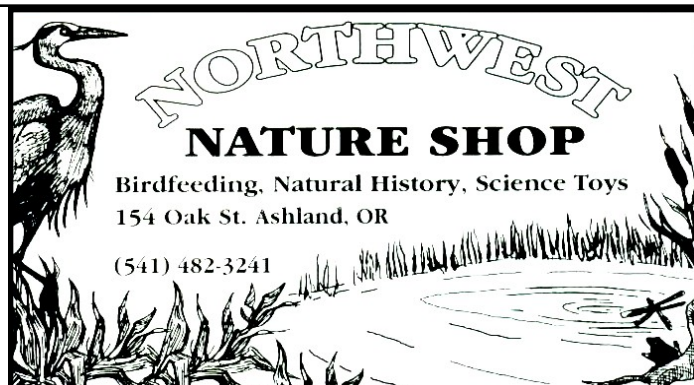
Bob Black Fund — \$ _____

Other \$ _____

Please check here if you wish your contribution to be anonymous _____.

Mail this form with your check for **\$20** RVAS dues and any contribution you wish to make, to:

Rogue Valley Audubon Society
P.O. Box 8597
Medford, OR 97501



Field Notes Continued from page 3

Bob Hunter is debating the **Green-tailed Towhee** sighting in his yard near White City on 8/23. It sure sounds like one from the description, but this would indeed be something new for the valley floor. They nest above 4000' in Jackson County.

Raptors have yet to start moving in earnest, but a **Prairie Falcon** was seen over Medford on 8/11 (FL). Maybe not unusual, but still a great sighting was the **Northern Goshawk** at Crater Lake on 8/22 (JT).

Other sightings of note include **Brewer's Sparrows** at Agate Lake on 8/9 and 8/18 (AC,JT) and at Grouse Gap on 8/15 (FL). An **Evening Grosbeak** was at Hobart Bluff on 8/10, and **Red Crossbills** are abundant this year throughout the Siskiyou. Many years they simply are not here.

Thanks to this month's contributors including Norm Barrett, Ralph Browning, Alan Contreras, Forrest English, Bob Hunter, Frank Lospalutto, Liz Northrup, Gary Schaffer, and Jeff Tufts. Deadline for contributions to the Field Notes in the next edition of The Chat is September 20.

Additional bird walks in the area

Sat. September 1st: Emmigrant Lake bird walk sponsored by Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO); Meet at 8:00 am at the Northwest Nature Shop in Ashland.

Sat. September 8th: Birding Little Hyatt Reservoir sponsored by KBO. The walk is part of the Greensprings Mountain Festival, A Greensprings Community Benefit Event. For more information, contact John Alexander at jda@klamathbird.org. For information about the Greensprings Mountain Festival visit <http://greenspringsmountainfestival.org>

Sat. October 6th: KBO sponsored bird walk at North Mountain Park. Meet at the Northwest Nature Shop in Ashland at 8:00 am.



FIELD TRIP LEADERS NEEDED

RVAS Field Trip season will return in September, and when it does, it is time for local birders to volunteer to lead our field trips. Field Trip Chairman, Jeff Tufts, will coordinate the events, but leaders will have the options of choosing the destinations. Please contact Jeff at tallahto@aol.com to volunteer or for further information. Thank you.

Our Annual Plan

At the Board Retreat in June we adopted an Annual Plan for 2012-13:

Increase member participation in Chapter activities, field trips, education programs, committees and Chapter meetings.

Expand local conservation advocacy efforts.

Increase member involvement in "Citizen Science" activities; e.g., bird counts, Feeder Watch and e-bird.

Identify long term Education and Conservation projects for RVAS funding.

Many will be needed to accomplish this plan. Please contact any of the Board members, and let us know how you want to be involved. Thank you for your support!

Rogue Valley Audubon Society Membership

Members of the National Audubon Society are automatically enrolled as members of RVAS. If you are not a member of NAS you can still be a member of Rogue Valley Audubon Society. To join, please send a check for \$20.00 annual dues to RVAS, P.O. Box 8597, Medford, OR 97501. Include your name, address, e-mail address and (optional) phone number. If you have any questions about membership, please contact membership chair Bob Mumby at 541-535-2934 or rdmumby@charter.net.

Do you have a favorite retailer or service provider?

Is there a restaurant you would like to support? You can help them succeed while supporting RVAS. Consider using your personal contact to suggest they buy an advertisement in *The Chat*. For as little as \$100. per year our members can be reminded that a retailer or restaurant supports RVAS every time they see *The Chat*. For details, contact our Treasurer, Kathy Simonsen at simonsen@mind.net.

ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE CHAT

Newsletter of the ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Sign up to receive easy notification of Chapter activities

Your Audubon Chapter wants to be sure you are aware of upcoming field trips, chapter meetings, the most recent edition of *The Chat*, and other items we post on-line. Send an e-mail RogueValleyAudubon@gmail.com and ask to be added to the e-mail notification list. And be assured, we will never share your e-mail address with any other organizations.

MONTHLY BIRD WALK WITH MURRAY ORR

First Wednesday Each Month: Little Butte Creek Walk. For the Sept. 5th walk, Meet at the Agate Road entrance gate of the Denman Wildlife Area at 7:30 and the walk will start at 8:00, instead of the usual 8:30. Leader: Murray Orr 857-9050. Please contact Murray if you are willing to join him in organizing these bird walks. He needs volunteers to help him open and close the gate and record observed species when he is not available. Walks will continue through 2012-2013.

