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President's Column

Last month I wrote about so many other people, there was no room to say anything about myself. I came to Ashland in 1954 as a 7th grader, graduated from Ashland High and married a high school classmate. We spent our working years in Minnesota and only returned to Ashland to visit parents until we retired in 2005. We're happy to be back full-time!

As I mentioned last month, in the absence of a Program Chair a small group of members has been working together to put this year's program schedule together. We now have speakers signed up for all the chapter meetings this year, so here's the schedule as it stands now.

October 28: Gary Palmer will speak on bird photography and photographic equipment, as announced on the front page of this Chat.

November 25: Bob Quaccia, a longtime local birder and Alaskan fisherman will talk about "Fins, Feathers and Fur in the North Pacific".

December 2: Our annual potluck with bird photography by Jim Livaudais.

January 23: Forrest English, our Rogue Riverkeeper, will describe his job and how it impacts birds.

February 24: Marnie Allbritten, ODFW wildlife biologist, will explain how she started and maintains the very successful Purple Martin habitat at the Plat I reservoir near Sutherlin. We're hoping she can help us establish one in the Rogue Valley.

March 23: Ron Cole, Conservation Programs Western Program Manager for the National Wildlife Association, will bring us up to date on issues at the Klamath Refuge.

April 28: Steve Godwin, BLM Wildlife Biologist, will tell us about our local Great Gray Owls.

I hope each of you will find something of interest in this schedule and join us for many of the meetings.

Linda

Field Notes: The Changing Seasons Edited by Jeff Tufts

Hot. Dry. Occasionally smoky. And make that "very dry" if you've been birding the local reservoirs.

Those were the conditions, and it's hard not to believe that there's been a significant effect on at least some of the species expected in Jackson County in August and September.

Arriving waterfowl, most still in eclipse plumage, are finding very low water levels at Howard Prairie and Hyatt Reservoirs in the mountains and at Emigrant Lake and Agate Lake in the valley. As of September 19, Agate was listed at only three percent of capacity.

Northern Shovelers have returned in numbers to their favorite local haunt—the back pond at Kirtland. And Agate Lake briefly had 20 Northern Pintail (RN). Small numbers of Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon and Ruddy Ducks have also been reported.

No sign yet of flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese moving through, but single birds were seen flying over Agate Lake Aug. 27 (JT) and hanging out with Canada Geese at Lost Creek Lake Sept. 19 (JT).

One or two Red-necked Grebe sightings can be expected each fall, and this year two were spotted at Emigrant Lake Aug. 31 (FE) and one at Howard Prairie Sept. 9 (FL). Howard Prairie also had a single Horned Grebe Sept. 12 (FL). Five Eared Grebes were at the same location that day.

Of the raptors that are generally associated with the cooler months, Prairie Falcon is the species most likely to be spotted locally in summer. One put in an appearance in Eagle Point Sept. 18 (BH). Look for more in the upcoming weeks.

And be advised that Ferruginous Hawks have already been spotted in the Klamath Basin. We can expect at least a few later in the year.

The mid-August to mid-September period is generally the peak of shorebird migration, and numbers of most of the commoner species (Least and Western Sandpipers, Greater Yellow-legs, Semipalmated Plovers) have been at normal levels. One exception is Long-billed Dowitcher. Very small numbers of this migrant are being seen occasionally, but the expected flocks of 20 or 30 birds have generally been absent.

Pectoral Sandpiper numbers are well down from previous years, but Baird's Sandpipers continue to be surprisingly common. Six were found at Agate Lake Aug. 20 (RN), and one was found there as late as Sept. 19 (JT).

American Avocets are always notable when they put in an appearance, and at least two were seen in August. One was found at Kirtland Aug. 24 (RN), and perhaps the same bird was seen there Aug. 29 (RN). Another was at Emigrant Lake Aug. 28 (FE).

When the calendar says fall is here but the thermometer says mid-summer, comfort can be taken from the appearance of those birds that traditionally move into the valley in September and stay through the winter.

Lewis's Woodpeckers are one of the most conspicuous of this group. First local sighting of this colorful Acorn Woodpecker relative was Sept. 3 when three were seen at Agate Lake during the monthly First Wednesday RVAS count (JT). Within a week they were showing up at most of their favored local spots, and as many as two dozen were reported at Grizzly Peak the week of Sept. 8 by a visiting birder from Kansas (JTh).

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Migrating flocks of Band-tailed Pigeons are most often found in the local mountains, and a group of 25 was seen on Mount Ashland on Sept. 10 (OS).

First reports of Golden-crowned Sparrow (one) and White-crowned Sparrow (2) came from Eagle Point Sept. 6 (BH). And, only nine days later, the first White-throated Sparrow sighting came from east Medford (EL). Can we anticipate that some year in the near future, the first Zonotrichia report in the fall will be of a White-throated ?

There were three interesting local reports from the Corvidae family. Although the bird was heard but not seen, there was a reliable Clark's Nutcracker report from Big Red Mountain Sept. 4 (FL). They rarely venture into the Siskiyou's. And Black-billed Magpies are almost impossible to find west of the Cascade foothills, but one showed up on upper Park Street in Ashland Sept. 6 (VZ). Smoke from nearby fires was significant in Ashland that day, and the conditions may have contributed to the Magpie's unexpected wander. Steller's Jays occasionally drift into the lower elevations of the valley as breeding families disperse, but it was unusual to see eight of them at Agate Lake Sept. 19 (JT).

While some Neotropical migrant families have virtually disappeared from the valley (Flycatchers, Orioles, Grosbeaks etc.), warblers continue to move through in small numbers. Orange-crowned Warblers seem to be the most common, and we can count on a few of them sticking around through the winter.

Thanks to this month's contributors including Forrest English, Bob Hunter, Edith Lindner, Frank Lospalluto, Russ Namitz, Otis Swisher, John Theiss and Vince Zauskey. Deadline for contributions to the Field Notes in the next edition of The Chat is October 15.



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Rogue Valley Audubon Society Membership

If you are a current RVAS member, you will have already received a membership renewal letter in the mail. If you are not an RVAS Member, we invite you to help support our local activities by becoming a member. We hope you're aware of the many activities of the Audubon Society, both locally and nationally, that help to further the cause of bird conservation and public education in southern Oregon. Member dues, along with donations and income from local fund-raising events, support our activities and programs, such as:

Educational and social membership meetings (free and open to members and the public)

The Chat newsletter

Website (www.roguevalleyaudubon.org)

Birding forum for posting sightings and active locations

Monthly field trips and bird walks

Educational programs for students and adults

Monitoring of regional conservation issues

Work with local wildlife managers to improve access and bird habitats

Bird counts for national species censuses

Support for local research projects

A one year family membership is \$20, and all memberships expire on September 30th each year. To become an RVAS member, please complete the form below and send with your check for \$20.

RVAS Membership Form

Please fill-in your information:

Name(s): _____

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Email: _____

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

- Include my email on the RVAS list for notification of activities and posting of The Chat newsletter.*
- Do not send a paper copy of The Chat newsletter.*
- Send a monthly paper copy of The Chat newsletter.*

Donation

- I am enclosing an additional donation of \$ _____.*
- I wish my donation to be anonymous.*

Please mail this form with your \$20 check payable to Rogue Valley Audubon Society, along with any additional contribution you wish to make, to:

Rogue Valley Audubon Society
PO Box 8597
Medford OR 97501

The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

Audubon Sounds the Alarm on Climate Change

On September 8, the National Audubon Society released its report *Birds and Climate Change*, based on a comprehensive analysis of Christmas Bird Count (CBC) and North American Breeding Survey data on 588 species of North American birds. Using these data, Audubon scientists defined the "climatic suitability" for each bird species—the range of temperatures, precipitation, and seasonal changes each species needs to survive. Then, using internationally recognized greenhouse gas emissions scenarios, they mapped where each bird's ideal climatic range may be found in the future as the climate changes. These maps serve as a guide to how each bird's current range could expand, contract, or shift across three future time periods (2020, 2050, and 2080). The report is available on the Internet at climate.audubon.org.

What are the primary findings?

Of the 588 North American bird species Audubon studied, more than half are likely to be in trouble. The models indicate that 314 species will lose more than 50 percent of their current climatic range by 2080. For each species, the website offers animated maps showing range shifts and contractions in response to projected climate conditions in 2020, 2050, and 2080.

Of the 314 species at risk from global warming, 126 are classified as *climate endangered*. These birds are projected to lose more than 50 percent of their current range by 2050. The other 188 species are classified as *climate threatened* and are expected to lose more than 50 percent of their current range by 2080 if global warming continues at its current pace.

What Oregon birds are at risk?

Not surprisingly, high-elevation species are among the Oregon birds most threatened by climate change. Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Cassin's Finch, and Red Crossbill, for example, are all projected to lose more than 50% of their current range by 2080. However, so are some familiar Oregon species that are found in the valleys and foothills, including Northern Pygmy-Owl, Band-tailed Pigeon, Western Wood-Pewee, and Hutton's Vireo. The table below gives the predictions for 20 Oregon species. It's important to realize that these predictions are based on each species' entire North American range, not the range in Oregon alone. But the implications for our birds are sobering indeed. Every species on the list below is predicted to lose over 50% of its current range by 2080 due to climate change.

I find it particularly interesting to see the predictions of how much of the current summer breeding range will remain suitable for the species by 2080. For example, the models predict that NONE of the current range of the White-headed Woodpecker will remain suitable for the species by 2080.

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Some of these losses may be compensated by range shifts: for example, only 26% of the present range of Common Poorwill is predicted to remain suitable, but the total range is predicted to INCREASE by 46%, because the range is expected to shift out of the Great Basin and into the southern Great Plains. Of course, such predictions of range shifts are dependent on many variables, including each species' behavioral flexibility; the presence of "bridge habitat" suitable for dispersal; the actual availability of habitat in the new "climatically suitable" areas (not covered by cities, for example), and so on.

Species	% of current summer range still suitable by 2080	Projected summer range decline by 2080
White-headed Woodpecker	0%	98%
Hammond's Flycatcher	33%	44%
Clark's Nutcracker	16%	72%
Mountain Chickadee	29%	67%
Hermit Warbler	40%	46%
Townsend's Solitaire	9%	91%
Green-tailed Towhee	11%	82%
Cassin's Finch	23%	70%
Red Crossbill	29%	64%
Golden Eagle	21%	41%
Northern Pygmy-Owl	3%	82%
Common Poorwill	26%	46% increase
Band-tailed Pigeon	25%	51%
Rufous Hummingbird	41%	15%
Western Wood-Pewee	26%	69%
Hutton's Vireo	28%	53%
Varied Thrush	18%	65%
Hermit Thrush	27%	27%
Brown Creeper	22%	41%
Black-headed Grosbeak	42%	10%

What Next?

Audubon's scientists are already furthering the climate research in many ways. They're identifying priority areas for conservation, the "strongholds" where birds live now and that are forecast to remain critical for birds even as the climate changes. Our region may well prove to be one of those "strongholds", thanks to our rich mosaic of current habitats and elevations.

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Audubon's scientists are also working to incorporate additional data to generate even more robust projections. Next they will try to clarify how places the current model points to as climatically suitable for species in the future could fall short in other ways: They could be developed areas with roads and parking lots, for instance, or be impossible for a species to reach because of distance or fragmentation. And as more data become available, they'll incorporate the information into the models to continue refining our understanding of how global warming will affect birds.

What We Can Do:

On the Climate Report website, there is a place to sign a pledge stating "*Climate change threatens the birds we see every day. I pledge to help build a brighter future for the 314 birds at risk.*" If you sign up, as I did, you will receive an email from National Audubon outlining a series of actions you can take to spread the word on the Climate Report and to help birds in the face of climate change. These include:

- creating a bird-friendly yard
- get involved with your local important bird area
- put birds on your community's agenda
- meet with your local decision makers
- support policies that lower emissions

The effects of climate change on birds has been chosen as National Audubon's principal new focus going forward, and all local chapters are being encouraged to get involved. Your Conservation Committee will keep you posted on what we are doing, and what each of us can do. Let us know your ideas!

RVAS FUNDS COYOTE TRAILS SCHOOL OF NATURE PROGRAM

RVAS has recently approved a proposal to fund items for our "Finding Home Program," in which we go to local Title-I schools to teach outdoor education, skills, and awareness in an experiential, hands-on way in a series of 8 classes plus one field trip at the end of the school year. This multi-season program has had huge successes in the past five years in increasing student knowledge & appreciation of the outdoors and all its living and nonliving systems. Specifically, RVAS is funding a tablet & speaker for use in the schoolyard, including birding apps and audio files, identification guides from Northwest Nature Shop that the students can take home to identify their local birds, as well as an Advanced Bird Language CD set so that Coyote Trails' instructors can continue to increase knowledge on local birds. So this year, Coyote Trails is very grateful to be able to provide more instruction based on birds, their language, habitat & interactions. Three cheers to RVAS!

Thanks -- Katie Buttermore

Program Coordinator, Coyote Trails School of Nature

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541.772.1390

2931 S. Pacific Hwy, Medford OR 97501

RVAS BIRDING FIELD TRIPS AND WALKS

Birding at Emigrant Lake - Sun. Oct. 12—Leader: Harry Fuller

We will meet at dirt parking lot next to Shop n Kart in Ashland, then proceed from there to Emigrant Lake. We hope to leave the parking lot in carpools by 8:15AM. Bring sack lunch and water. We will finish by 2PM. We hope to find some newly arrived ducks and other birds staying the winter in Jackson County. Among species we will look for: Lewis's Woodpecker, Western Grebe, any shorebirds, Golden-crowned Sparrow and Pacific Wren.

Birding at Lost Creek Lake and Holy Waters - Sat. Nov. 8—Leader: Russ Namitz

Meet at the eastern side of the Dollar Tree parking lot at the intersection of Highways 62 and 140. We hope to leave the parking lot in carpools by 8:15AM. Bring a sack lunch and water. We will finish by 3PM. Target species include waterfowl, American Pipit, shorebirds and gulls, but will also include some passerine birding around the parking lot at Joseph Stewart State Park.

FIRST WEDNESDAY BIRD WALKS CONTINUE AT AGATE LAKE

Murray Orr will continue to lead his monthly bird walks on the first Wednesday of each month at Agate Lake. Birders wishing to join Murray should meet him on the far side of the lake across from the boat dock to observe birds on and near Agate Lake. The walk begins at 8:30 and will end before noon. Meet Murray at the gate. We hope you can join us. Contact Murray at 541-857-9050.



ACTIVITIES AT NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK

Birds of the Rogue Valley

Are you curious about the birds that live in the Rogue Valley? In this class you will learn about local birds through pictures, story-telling and fun facts! A special focus will be given on owls, hummingbirds, herons and osprey. Pre-register online at www.ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center at [541.488.6606](tel:541.488.6606).

DAY	Wednesday
AGES	All ages - Children under 10 should be accompanied by an adult
DATE	October 1
TIME	6—7:30pm
PLACE	North Mountain Park
COST	\$10
INSTRUCTOR	Shannon Rio enjoys teaching classes about birds. Her enthusiasm makes this class fun. She is a Klamath Board Observatory board member

Bear Creek Salmon Festival

This year's theme: "Water - Make Every Drop Count for Salmon." This admission-free festival will feature all-ages interactive exhibits focusing on healthy salmon habitat in our region and watershed stewardship in our own homes and yards. Regional organizations and businesses will offer a schedule of mini-workshops on topics ranging from water conservation to wildlife. Participants can also enjoy a variety of fun outdoor activities such as fly and spin-casting, exploring Bear Creek, listening to Native American drumming, a Salmon Poetry Slam and a Salmon Spiral Labyrinth. A food concession will be provided by Figgy's Food Truck and lively music by Ashland Taiko, Montana Soul and others. Join us at North Mountain Park, 620 N Mountain Avenue in Ashland and help make this a Zero Waste event. To learn more visit www.BearCreekSalmonFestival.net or call the North Mountain Park Nature Center at [541.488.6606](tel:541.488.6606).

DAY	Saturday
AGES	All ages
DATE	October 4
TIME	11am—4:00pm
PLACE	North Mountain Park
COST	FREE

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North Mountain Park Activities continued from page 10

Beautiful Birds Beautiful Words

Combining bird photography with poetry, myth and lore, this presentation celebrates nature and literature and our connection to them. Pre-register online at www.ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center at [541.488.6606](tel:541.488.6606).

AGES 10 to Adult
DAY Wednesday
DATE October 15
TIME 6:30—8:00pm
PLACE North Mountain Park
COST \$10
INSTRUCTOR Shannon Rio enjoys teaching about birds. Her enthusiasm makes classes fun! She is on the board of Klamath Bird Observatory.



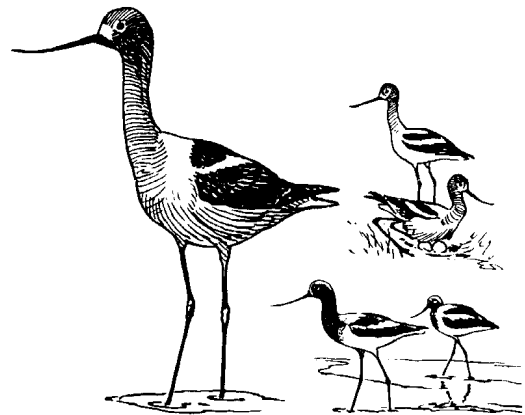
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ANNUAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK

Keep **December 2nd** open for the Annual Holiday Potluck. It will be held at the Congregational Church, 1801 E. Jackson St., in Medford. As always, plan to bring a dish to share and your utensils and plates. Jim Livaudais, a favorite photographer, will be showing pictures of birds from his most recent visit to Ecuador.

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 online. 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.

