

The Chat

Number 432
April 2017

A voice for education and conservation in the natural world
Rogue Valley Audubon Society
www.roguevalleyaudubon.org
Deadline for the May issue is April 20.



APRIL PROGRAM MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 25 at 7:00 PM
"Swiftling Around the Valley"
Presented by KAREN HUSSEY

Join wildlife biologist Karen Hussey for a glimpse into the amazing life of the Vaux's Swift. Discover what makes them unique, how they are doing, what we still need to know, and how you can help locally! Karen will introduce a citizen science project and recruit volunteers who want to experience the migration magic here in the Rogue Valley.

Karen Hussey is a wildlife biologist with 13 years of experience working with birds as well as many other species ranging in size from moose to fairy shrimp. She's been in the Rogue Valley for eight years and currently is part of the stewardship team at Southern Oregon Land Conservancy. She is a co-leader of the Medford Winter Raptor Survey, run by East Cascades Audubon, and she serves on the board of the Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society. Other volunteer projects keeping her busy include fisher research, shorebird surveys, and, of course, Vaux's Swift counts!



****Chapter meetings are held at 1801 E. Jackson Street in Medford****
Lidgate Hall, Medford Congregational Church

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

President: Linda Kreisman, 651-303-6671

linda@ashlandhome.net

Vice-President: Nala Cardillo,

nalacardillo@gmail.com

Secretary: Jon Deason,

jdeason39@gmail.com

Treasurer: Sue Polich, 541-608-3802

spolich@charter.net

Laura Fleming

wbumedford1@gmail.com

Wendy Gere

wendy.gere@gmail.com

Carol Mockridge

mockridge50@hotmail.com

Jeanine Moy

Jeanine@kswild.org

George Peterson

sgpeterson1@msn.com

Susan Stone

weaverstone86@gmail.com

Nate Trimble

natetrimble@hotmail.com

John Ward

wardj2@sou.edu

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Archivist: vacant

Annual Picnic: Gaylene & Judd Hurley, 541-621-3196

Birdathon: Katy Reed, 541-245-5095

Book Sales: Sooney Viani, 541-482-5146

Chat Editor: Juliet Grable, chateditor@gmail.com

CBC-Ashland: Carol Mockridge,

mockridge50@hotmail.com & John Bullock,

jas@opendoor.com

CBC-Medford: Bob Hunter, 541-826-5569

Conservation: Pepper Trail, ptrail@ashlandnet.net &

Juliet Grable, julietgrable@yahoo.com

Education: Lynn Kellogg, rvas.ed@gmail.com & Sooney

Viani, sooneyviani@gmail.com

Field Notes: vacant

Field Trips: Russ Namitz, 541-294-2063,

namitzr@hotmail.com

Holiday Party : vacant

Hospitality: Jon Deason, jdeason39@gmail.com

Master Gardener Fair: vacant

Membership: George Peterson, sgpeterson1@msn.com

Programs: Katy Reed, 541-245-5095

Publicity: Wendy Gere, wendy.gere@gmail.com

CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

E-mail: roguevalleyaudubon@gmail.com

The Chat: chateditor@gmail.com

Webmaster: Carol Mockridge

mockridge50@hotmail.com

Web Site: www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/RogueValleyAudubonSociety/)

[RogueValleyAudubonSociety/](https://www.facebook.com/RogueValleyAudubonSociety/)

Chapter Program meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month, September through April, at 7:00 pm. Meetings take place at 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford, in Lidgate Hall of the Medford Congregational Church.

Letter from the Board

New RVAS Website is Online

I'm proud to announce that we have a new website! Building on the great information that Jeff Tufts has posted for the past several years, we decided to create a new look and add some new features. I formed a committee which included Linda Kreisman and Wendy Gere. Together we compiled a "wish list" based on requests we had received from some RVAS members. These requests included online joining and donation capabilities and an events calendar. Take a look at roguevalleyaudubon.org and tell us what you think.

Carol Mockridge

New RVAS President Needed!

After three years as President of the Board of Directors of RVAS, I am "stepping down." My first year as President I spent getting my feet on the ground and maintaining the status quo. The second year I was able to actually start implementing some of my ideas, which then got expanded in the third year. But now, it's time for the new ideas of someone with a different skill set and priorities who can further expand the scope of our Audubon Chapter. We need that person to step forward!

Honestly, I highly recommend being RVAS Board President. I have had nothing but positive experiences working with a great set of people who want to improve birding education and conservation in the Rogue Valley. We have an excellent team of Board members at the moment. Three or so of us will be leaving after this year (giving the opportunity for new Board members to add their ideas and expertise), but the new president will have a solid set of very capable, interested Board Members to help him or her. While it may seem a challenging time for science-based conservation and education nationally, locally there are some exciting new developments that will offer possibilities for our involvement.

We will be forming a committee soon to help find the right person to lead RVAS. If you would like to be involved in this effort, please let me know.

Linda Kreisman

Letter from the Board continued on page 3

Letter from the Board continued from page 2

A Partnership between RVAS and Wild Birds Unlimited

When RVAS members shop with Wild Birds Unlimited, we will donate 50 cents for every 20 lb. or larger bag of bird seed purchased and 5% of all other items purchased by members of RVAS. If members become WBU Daily Savings Club members, they will automatically receive 15% off all bird food purchased; for every \$200 spent, they will receive \$10 back in Bird Bucks, which can be used for anything in the store.

When members come to the store, they need to tell us they are an RVAS member. We will add them to an RVAS Membership List, and for each member, we will keep track of the number of bags of seed and/or the amount of total dollars spent on other items. At the end of every month, we will add up all the donations due RVAS and send a check. The more RVAS members support their local WBU store, the more donations RVAS will receive—a win-win for both of us. We will also lobby for more members for RVAS from our customer base.

Laura Fleming

RVAS BRIEFS

Ashland Project FeederWatch Wraps Up

By Mary Pat Power, Ashland PFW Coordinator

Project FeederWatch in Ashland completed its 15th season with continued strong attendance and great enthusiasm among the observers. Thanks go to RVAS for providing funds for the bird feed and North Mountain Park staff for maintaining the feeder area and publicizing the watches. Great appreciation to the lead observers **Barbara Massey, Shannon Rio, Bob Quaccia, Vince Zauskey, John and Stephanie Bullock, Bill Hering, Kate Cleland-Sipfle, Sooney Viani, Ron Ketchum, Dick Ashford, and Nala Cardillo.**

[Editor's Note: Medford PFW also enjoyed another successful season. We will provide a brief report in next month's Chat.]

RVAS Receives OBA Grant

RVAS has received a \$500 grant from the Oregon Birding Association Fund for Ornithology (FFO). The grant will fund the placement of four Great Gray Owl nesting platforms in the southern Cascades. Three other organizations—Hawk Watch International, Kalmiopsis Audubon, and Umpqua Valley Audubon Society—also received grants for projects focused on conservation, research, education and outreach. For more information on the FFO, visit **www.orbirds.org**.

RVAS Briefs continued on page 4

RVAS BRIEFS, cont.

RVAS To Sponsor Climate Event

ECOS (The Ecology and Sustainability Resource Center at Southern Oregon University) and the League of Women Voters Rogue Valley are presenting a climate forum, **“Nature’s Trust, Our Children’s Trust: A Climate Forum on Litigation to Save the Future,”** on Thursday, April 13, 2017 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the Rogue River Room of the Stevenson Union on the SOU campus in Ashland, Oregon. Doors open at 5:00.

The program will feature Mary Christina Wood and a panel of youth climate activists. Ms. Wood is a Philip H. Knight Professor, Faculty Director of the University of Oregon Law School’s Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center and author of *Nature’s Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age*. Panelists will include two Plaintiffs in *Juliana et. al. v. the United States et. al.*, a landmark constitutional case based on the public trust legal doctrine brought by 21 young people against the federal government (www.ourchildrenstrust.org) and two youth activists affiliated with Ashland Youth Climate Action. Admission is free, but donations will be gratefully accepted.

For more information contact Shirley Weathers at **541-690-7779** or walsh.weathers@gmail.com.

Finding Home Program Needs Volunteers

By Katie Buttermore, Program Coordinator, Coyote Trails School of Nature

The Coyote Trails "Finding Home Program" is well underway for the school-year. The instructors have been visiting nine 5th-grade, Title-1 classrooms (four schools total) in Jackson County over the past few months. In May, the students will go to the Coyote Trails Nature Center (Medford) for a field trip, where they will learn more about their relationship to the natural world. Coyote Trails is seeking volunteers from RVAS to help lead students during these field trips for the following dates: **May 11, May 18, May 23, & May 25.**

The students LOVED having a bird walk last year; some of them used binoculars for the first time and couldn't get enough of it! The field trips will rotate smaller groups (about 10-12 kids) around to different stations, and the hope is that birding can be one of the stations. Please directly email katie@coyotetrails.org or call **541.772.1390** if you'd like to help.

Also, a Big Thanks to RVAS for their support providing birding field guide brochures for this program, as well as birdseed for the Nature Center.

Save the Date!

The RVAS Annual Picnic will take place at
Tou Velle State Park on Tuesday, May 23

Details to come!

RVAS BIRDING FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS

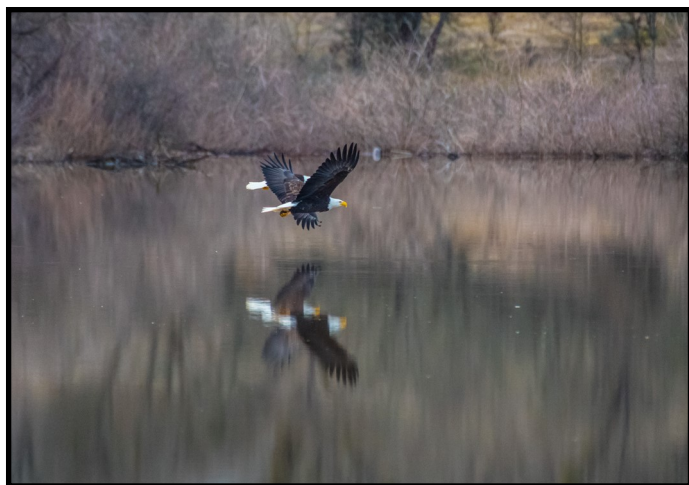
FIRST WEDNESDAY BIRD WALKS AT AGATE LAKE

Murray Orr will continue to lead his monthly bird walks at Agate Lake in 2017. These walks take place on the first Wednesday of each month. In this ongoing citizen science project, the numbers of different species observed by walk participants are entered in the Cornell Ornithological Laboratory's eBird database. Birders wishing to join Murray should meet him at the picnic area off Dry Creek Road on the east side of the lake. Walks begin at 8:30 and end before noon.

April Walk: Wednesday, April 5

May Walk: Wednesday, May 3

June Walk: Wednesday, June 7



George Peterson captured this pair of Bald Eagles in flight over Agate Lake in February.

ROGUE RIVER PRESERVE BIRDING

Saturday, April 22, 7:30 am—12:00 pm

Leader: Pepper Trail

The focus of this trip will be birds and the Rogue River. We will look for Lewis's Woodpeckers, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Wood Ducks and Pygmy Owls during this private tour of the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy's Rogue River Preserve, exploring vernal pools, oak woodlands, chaparral and the riparian forest along the Rogue River.

Expect moderately easy and flat terrain at a slow birding pace walking on roads, trails, and off-trail. No restrooms are available. There may be a porta-potty present. Bring binoculars, your favorite bird book, water, and snacks. Weed seeds and ticks may be present, so long pants and closed-toed sturdy shoes are advised.

We will car pool from Dollar Tree at 7338 Crater Lake Hwy, White City, OR 97503. The parking lot is accessible from both highways, but the entrance and parking lot fronts HWY 140. Meet in the northeastern portion of the parking lot by 7:30 am. This trip is limited to 15. To reserve your spot, contact Pepper at ptrail@ashlandnet.net

RVAS Field Trips continued on page 6

RVAS Field Trips continued from page 5

BIRD WALK AT IMPERATRICE

Saturday, April 22

Leader: Nate Trimble

Nate Trimble is pleased to inform you of a great birding opportunity here in Ashland. The city of Ashland owns a large parcel of grassland habitat known as the Imperatrice property. It is located on the east side of I-5 at the end of East Ashland lane near the Ashland Greenhouses. Nate is a new member to the RVAS board, has several years of professional and recreational birding experience, and will be leading guided bird walks on this property for the Spring. The property offers wide open spaces perfect for raptor viewing with the opportunity to see Golden Eagles, Rough-legged Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Ferruginous hawks, and many other raptor species. Whether you are looking to increase your skills at raptor identification or simply want to enjoy watching Kestrels and Red-tails kiting and riding the wind at close range, this property offers one of the best raptor viewing opportunities in the Ashland area. For those willing to hike a little further, the margin of the property also offers oak woodland habitat with the possibility of Black-billed Magpies and Lewis's Woodpeckers. Accessing and exploring the property will involve some uphill hiking, possible muddy conditions, and exposed and windy terrain, so come prepared to exercise and get dirty. For more info email Nate at nateltrimble@hotmail.com

GIVAN RANCH PARK

Saturday, May 13, 8:00 am—??

Leader: Howard Sands

Givan Ranch consists of beautiful pine-oak acreage and riparian habitat along the Rogue River. It is located on Agate Road north of Medford. Expect a leisurely walk of two to three miles over mostly flat terrain. Walking shoes should be fine, but if we have a lot of rain in the days leading up to the field trip, rubber boots might be in order. Folks should bring water and food if they want, and be advised that there are no restroom facilities.

Meet at Howard's house at 10655 Agate Rd. at 8:00 am, as Givan Park does not have very much parking. We'll carpool over to the park, which is just a 1/2 mile up the road. If you have questions please call Howard at **541-821-0174**.



Peter Kreisman photographed birders enjoying the February Bird Walk in Lithia Park, which was led by Nate Trimble.

February Imperatrice Bird Walk Report

Story and Photos by Nate Trimble

On Saturday, February 25, about a dozen RVAS members led by Nate Trimble enjoyed a successful morning of raptor watching at the Imperatrice property in Ashland. Trip participants were treated to beautiful views of Ashland and the Rogue Valley and a large wide open parcel of habitat full of easily observable raptors.

As we wandered the 800 acres of grassland habitat, we successfully identified six species of raptor, including Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Harriers, Red-tailed Hawks, Golden Eagles, a Ferruginous Hawk, and American Kestrels. We also enjoyed listening to Western Meadowlarks sing throughout the morning and watching some colorful locals, including American and Lesser Goldfinches and Western Bluebirds. Eighteen species were identified in total.



Trip highlights included watching a three-way aerial battle between a Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, and Northern Harrier, close-up views of a low-flying Ferruginous Hawk with the sun perfectly illuminating its colorful plumage, and a flock of at least 80 migrating Sandhill Cranes calling high overhead.

Official Bird Count from Imperatrice Field Trip



Mallard: 7
Golden Eagle: 2
Northern Harrier: 2
Red-tailed Hawk: 5
Rough-legged Hawk: 2
Ferruginous Hawk: 1
Sandhill Crane: 80
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon): 100
American Kestrel: 3
Common Raven: 6
Western Bluebird: 15
Dark-eyed Junco: 12
White-crowned Sparrow: 1
Golden-crowned Sparrow: 13
Savannah Sparrow: 4
Western Meadowlark: 6
Lesser Goldfinch: 40
American Goldfinch: 4

The Conservation Column

By the RVAS Conservation Committee

This month, the Trump Administration's war on federal environmental and science programs came into sharp focus with the release of their 2018 budget proposal. The final budget, of course, is produced by Congress, and so it will be up to all engaged citizens to contact our elected representatives and make sure they know that we oppose these terribly destructive cuts. Here is the statement by David Yarnold, President of the National Audubon Society on the Trump budget proposals:

Statement by the National Audubon Society on the Trump Administration's Proposed 2018 Budget:

WASHINGTON—"The budget proposal released today would be a death sentence for America's long, bipartisan legacy of protecting our cherished natural places and the birds and other wildlife that depend on them," said David Yarnold, Audubon's president and CEO.

The White House budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2018 would mean crippling reductions to America's most important conservation initiatives, many of which support Audubon's efforts to protect birds and the places they need.

"Millions of birders, hunters and outdoor lovers from all political backgrounds stand to lose forever their opportunity to pass on our shared natural heritage to their kids and grandkids if such a severe proposal is implemented," Yarnold continued.

"Whether it's cranes migrating through Nebraska, shorebirds nesting along our coasts or any of the 314 North American species threatened by a changing climate, birds all across the United States benefit from federal investment through conservation programs and now find themselves on the chopping block. From special places like the Everglades to the Colorado River, and the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, these programs protect birds and the places they need now and in the future.

"The slash and burn approach proposed by the President would be nothing short of lethal for bird habitat—whether it's a local park or an iconic landscape—and communities that depend on these places."

The Trump Administration's proposed cuts for the Departments of the Interior (12%), Agriculture (21%), Energy (6%), the Environmental Protection Agency (31%), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (16%) would affect all Americans and endanger birds all across the United States, especially those already facing threats from disappearing habitats and climate change.

"Conservation investments at the federal level have already struggled in recent years to meet the demand from local communities," said Sarah Greenberger, Audubon's VP of conservation. "But the President's proposal would push birds and ecosystems all across America over the edge."

"We look to our leaders in Congress to reject this White House budget and counter with a plan to restore funding for conservation to a level that secures a natural legacy our children and grandchildren can be proud of."

Conservation Column continued on page 9

Conservation Column continued from page 8

Below are some examples of federal departments and agencies in President Trump's crosshairs. Highlighted are conservation programs that partner with Audubon and the birds at risk if those programs are eliminated:

Department of Agriculture: Important programs include: Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Regional Conservation Partnership Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, Conservation Reserve Program, US Forest Service.

Department of Energy: Important programs include: Solar Energy Program (SunShot Initiative), Wind Energy Program.

Department of the Interior: Important programs include: the Land and Water Conservation Fund, North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Neotropical Migratory Bird Protection Act, State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, WaterSMART.

Environmental Protection Agency: Important programs include: Geographic Programs, National Estuary Program.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: Important programs include: Coastal Zone Management Grants, Regional Coastal Resilience Grants, National Estuarine Research Reserve System.

Hundreds of bird species benefit from federal support and could easily disappear forever if collaborative conservation efforts like those listed above are made impossible by draconian budget cuts. For more than 100 years, Audubon has worked with local, state and federal officials from both parties. With nearly one million members from across the entire political spectrum spread out in red states, blue states and purple states, Audubon will continue fighting to protect birds and the places they need.

We also need to remain engaged on the local level. One issue of concern is Jackson County's contract with the USDA's Wildlife Services agency for wildlife control.

USDA's Wildlife Services on the Wrong Side of Conservation

By Lin Bernhardt

The recent unintended killing of a grey wolf in eastern Oregon highlights the indiscriminate methods used by the highly secretive arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, known as Wildlife Services, for resolving human conflicts with wildlife. It also highlights Wildlife Services' emphasis on lethal control of predators, which does not advance an ethic of living in harmony with nature. It's proven that predators, from hawks and eagles to coyotes and wolves, are essential to the healthy functioning of natural ecosystems.

While this wolf was killed with an M-44 cyanide capsule, a device perhaps not used in Jackson County, other deadly control methods used by Wildlife Services are equally indiscriminate.

Wildlife Services killed more than 3.2 million wild animals across the U.S. during fiscal year 2015, according to new data released by the agency. The total number of animals represents a half-million-animal increase over the 2.7 million animals the agency killed in 2014. These animals are

Conservation Column continued on page 10

Conservation Column continued from page 9

shot, crushed in steel traps, strangled by snares and poisoned, often suffering painful and prolonged deaths, most as a “preventative” measure to avoid conflicts with agricultural and other interests. Their targets include bears, cougars, foxes, coyotes, muskrats, bobcats, raccoons, otters, herons, flickers, cormorants, beavers and others. Since 2000, over 50,000 were unintended targets including family pets and endangered species. According to agency insiders, the number of unintended animals killed goes vastly underreported, citing a common mantra “shoot, shovel and shut up.”

Not surprisingly, Wildlife Services has been under withering attack for many years by members of Congress, editorial boards, conservation and animal welfare organizations and wildlife ecologists, who call it a rogue program with no basis in science that has no place in modern society.

Wildlife Services claims to use lethal control as a last resort but the numbers don’t agree. Even with an internal program researching non-lethal methods, the numbers have stayed relatively constant over the years, and even increased since 2014. According to a *High Country News* investigation, new control methods are not reaching the seemingly entrenched agency trappers (<http://www.hcn.org/issues/48.1/wildlife-services-forever-war-on-predators>). While Wildlife Services claims to work with land owners on conflict prevention, the fact is, prior to trapping or shooting there is no requirement for property owners to follow any of the basic animal husbandry practices that are proven to reduce conflicts with animals, including removing attractants or installing appropriate fencing.

Wildlife Services operates in most counties in Oregon. Jackson County each year signs a contract with Wildlife Services to deal with nuisance animals, at taxpayer’s expense (\$64,436.62 for FY 2016/17).

Jackson County has the opportunity to shift wildlife conflict resolution to a more humane and ecologically sound manner by altering their contract. Recent workshops held locally have helped educate the public on prevention and non-lethal methods to deal with the reintroduction of wolves. This effort should extend to all predators and nuisance wildlife.

Some counties, such as Marin Co., California, have ended their funding of Wildlife Services, and instead used those funds to provide assistance to property owners on prevention. These non-lethal methods have shown to work better, cost less, reduce the risk to the public and pets, and benefit all county residents, including those who enjoy “watchable” wildlife.

Wildlife belongs to all citizens. Please let the Jackson County Commissioners know you’d like them to recognize the important role predators play in our ecosystems and encourage changes to their contract with Wildlife Services. Transitioning their activities from killing to prevention and providing technical assistance on good animal husbandry and non-lethal control methods will benefit all of us.

To contact the county commissioners, go to www.jacksoncounty.org. To get an inside look at Wildlife Services by former staff, go to predatordefense.org to view the documentary EXPOSED: the USDA’s secret war on wildlife, and go to the Center for Biological Diversity for more information at www.biologicaldiversity.org (home page/ Wildlife Services in search bar).

[Editor’s note: Lin Bernhardt recently joined the RVAS Conservation Committee.]

Summer Breeding Migrants in the Klamath Basin

By Barbara Massey

In the Klamath Basin the winter raptor spectacle is a huge draw for bird lovers, but the summer months are very low on visitors. This is odd, as Malheur NWR in eastern Oregon draws large numbers of spring and summer birders, all checking out the large and diverse habitat for breeding. In June 2011, I spent a long weekend at Malheur and found it so wonderful I went back regularly in late spring thereafter. Breeding birds were numerous and diverse, including not only waterbirds from grebes to terns, but landbirds, including sought-after migrants like Bobolink and Eastern Phoebe. These two species reach their farthest western breeding territories in eastern Oregon. I wondered why the same attention was not accorded to the Klamath Basin, and that is when I began thinking about doing a year-round survey.

In 2013, I decided it would be worthwhile to visit the basin every month and document these changes. So for the next three years we did so, my companions in this adventure being two similarly committed friends – Terence Philippe and Sooney Viani. Toward the end of the study we were joined by Brandon Breen, who joined us on the counts and also entered the data in **ebird**. We have continued to monitor, although with bi-monthly, rather than monthly counts. This article is the first of several about our findings. I chose to write about the breeding season because so little has been written about it and it was so rewarding.

As winter wanes in the Klamath Basin, many species (especially waterfowl) leave to breed farther north. But surprisingly, the influx of birds in May/June coming from the south and east to breed is about equal to the number that left. And arguably the most spectacular event is the uncountable number of waterbirds that breed on algal mats in Tule Lake. In the spring of 2016, we learned from John Beckstrand, biologist at the refuge, that the huge breeding colony of Eared Grebes and other waterbirds could be seen from shore. Nesting is dependent on the development of algal mats, which supply the material for building floating nests. We tried to find it in June but it was too soon. On July 7, Terence and I were successful—and thrilled. Here are my field notes.

“Across from the refuge headquarters on Hill Road, a very bumpy dirt road borders the north side of Discovery Marsh. About two miles in there was a large body of open water, and a yellow/orange algal mat stretched along beyond the tules that were along the shore. Beyond the mat and totally separate from it was a long string of hundreds of active nests. There were no nests on the mat itself but it was being used as building material. Viewing was almost at the limit of our scope but we could see that most birds were Eared Grebes. There were also scattered Forster's Tern, Red-head, Ruddy Duck and Northern Shoveler nests. Present also were Ring-billed Gulls, Snowy Egrets, and Black-crowned Night Herons. They were presumed to be nesting, although not seen on nests. Visibility was about at the limit of our scope so not as good as we need. Go next July and do it right.”



Photo by Gary Schaffer

Summer Breeding Migrants continued on page 12

Summer Breeding Migrants continued from page 11



This sandy mound in a remote part of the Refuge houses a colony of Bank Swallows. Photo by Gary Shaffer.

A week later I returned with Gary Shaffer, a very fine nature photographer, who photographed the site. This phenomenon is unknown to most local birders, although the resident staff knows it well. There is another such algal mat nesting area that can barely be seen from the south shore of Tule Lake.

Another exciting find for us was a colony of Bank Swallows nesting in cavities on the vertical face of a sandy mound in an abandoned quarry. It is along a road on the far east side of the refuge rarely traveled by birders, so is undetected by many. This species is not endangered but its breeding habitat is so restricted that it needs protection. There is just one colony in the refuge, although there is at least one more in the Klamath Basin. We came upon it by chance in May 2015 when we approached the mine from the east, instead of our usual route from the west. There were hundreds of nest holes, and we estimated at least 200 were occupied. In July 2016, Gary Shaffer also photographed this site and took close-ups of adults feeding young.



Adult Bank Swallows feeding their young. Photo by Gary Shaffer.

Bird-Centric Events from Around the Region

PRESENTATIONS AT WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

Birds You Love to Hate

With photos and sound, we will explore why some birds are so disliked and what humans have to do with the presence and abundance of these birds. Take the hated starling. Did you know that Mozart had a pet starling that influenced his musical compositions, and that he wrote a poem for the bird and read it at its funeral? Come prepared to be informed, entertained and willing to look into how we love to hate some birds that are so much like us! (P.S. Mozart's poem will be read!)

DATE/TIME: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 6:00—7:00 pm

PLACE: 961 Medford Center, Medford

COST: Free

PRESENTER Shannon Rio is President of the Board of the Klamath Bird Observatory. She interweaves poetry, pictures, stories and fun facts to teach about the lives of our local birds.

ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Baby Birds and Nests

Pictures of nests, eggs and babies will give insight into how birds mate in spring, how eggs become baby birds and how and when these babies learn to fly and sing. Pictures will include nesting owls and robins, mating flickers, baby killdeer and blackbirds and many others. By learning the five stages of nesting — courtship, nest building, incubating eggs, feeding the babies and fledglings — you will be more likely to see and hear these springtime bird behaviors. **Please register online at ashland.or.us/register** or call the North Mountain Park Nature Center at 541.488.6606.

DATE: Wednesday, April 12

TIME: 6:00—7:30 pm

PLACE: North Mountain Park Pavilion, Ashland

COST: \$15

INSTRUCTOR Shannon Rio interweaves poetry, pictures, stories and fun facts to teach about the lives of our local birds. She also teaches classes about plant medicine and yoga.

Bird-Centric Events continued on page 14

Siskiyou Singers present

— Tickets —
\$20 General
\$5 Students

— Ashland Outlets —
Paddington Station
Music Coop

— Medford Outlet —
Grocery Outlet

Info. & Reservations
541-482-5290
www.siskiyouingers.org

Don't Miss This Inspirational Choral Tribute
for the
beauty of the earth



APRIL 22 SAT. 7:30~ 23 SUN. 3:00~
SOU Music Recital Hall - Ashland

Musicologist Ed Wight will present a free, pre-concert
lecture about the music one hour before the concerts.

Bird-Centric Events from Around the Region, cont.

SPRING HIKES AT THE TABLE ROCKS

The Nature Conservancy and Bureau of Land Management Medford District sponsor an annual series of free guided hikes every weekend in April and May. Hikes are free but pre-registration is required. Space is limited to 20 individuals, unless otherwise noted. Please register online at

<http://TableRockHikes2017.eventbrite.com>

For information contact the Medford District BLM at **541.618.2200**, M-F 7:30—4:30 pm.

Hikers will meet at the trailhead for a 2.5-4.5 mile round trip hike along a moderate grade trail with some short, steep sections. Participants should dress for the weather and bring water (drinking water is not available) and snacks, since hikes may last 3 to 5 hours. Restrooms are available at both trail heads. To help protect this special place, dogs, mountain bikes, and OHVs are NOT allowed on the trail.

To view the full hike schedule, please visit: **<http://TableRockHikes2017.eventbrite.com>**

Whooo Comes Out at Night?

BLM wildlife biologists Steve Godwin and Tony Kerwin will lead a night hike to look for and listen to the creatures of the night on the Lower Table Rock Loop Trail, which is a half-mile accessible trail. They will attempt to lure Pygmy, Great Horned, and Screech Owls – no guarantees! A short presentation about the unique characteristics and adaptations of the common bats, owls and other animals that are active at night in this area will precede the hike. Bring flashlights and wear good hiking shoes.

DATE/TIME: Saturday, May 13, 7:30 pm

PLACE: Lower Table Rock

COST: Free

For the Early Birds

Join local bird experts Bob Quaccia, with Rogue Valley Audubon, and Frank Lospalluto, with Klamath Bird Observatory, to view the spring birds of Table Rocks. Learn I.D. tips and conservation information. Bring binoculars and I.D. books if you desire. Limited to 15 individuals.

DATE/TIME: Saturday, April 15, 8:00 am

PLACE: Lower Table Rock

COST: Free

Reminder: Sign Up Your Birdathon Teams!

Birdathon returns on **Saturday, May 6**. There is still plenty of time to form your teams and sign up.

Birdathon is an important fundraiser for RVAS. The object of Birdathon is for sponsored teams to count as many species as possible within a 24-hour period. Teams can range widely or stick close to home, so long as they stay in Jackson County. The event officially kicks off on Friday, May 5 at 6:00 pm. A celebratory dinner on Saturday night allows teams to compare notes and claim bragging rights.

Most teams include two to five birders, although a single individual may also comprise a team.

A task equally important as picking your all-star team is finding sponsors—that's the fundraiser part. A person can sponsor your team with either a fixed donation or an amount per species your team sees.

If you've never participated in this annual event, why not make 2017 your year? To sign up your team or for more info, contact Katy Reed at kmreed24@hotmail.com or **541-245-5095** or Linda Kreisman at **651-303-6671**.

Please include the form below with your Birdathon pledge/donation.
You may also add your pledge online at www.roguevalleyaudubon.org.
We will include this same form in next month's newsletter.

BIRDATHON 2017: Please Pledge or Donate

You can either make a donation of a set amount or pledge a certain payment per species seen. That way you can do your own Birdathon species list, put together your own Birdathon team, or support a team of your favorite birders. If you are participating as a birder, please ask friends and team members to pledge as well.

☐ My tax-deductible donation of \$ _____ is enclosed.

☐ I pledge \$ _____ per species.

☐ This pledge is for birds I will see myself.

☐ This pledge is for birds seen by _____ (name of Birdathon team or other birder).

Please mail your check to

Rogue Valley Audubon Society

P.O. Box 8597, Medford, OR 97501

RVAS is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization, and all donations to RVAS are tax-deductible.

RVAS will mail you a receipt for your tax records if you provide us with your address.

Rogue Valley Audubon Society Membership

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 costs \$20. To become an RVAS member, please complete the form below and send with your check for \$20 or go to www.roguevalleyaudubon.org and sign up with your PayPal account.

RVAS Membership Form

Please fill in your information:

Name(s): _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

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**

NORTHWEST
nature shop
SINCE 1985

Intriguing gifts, toys, and tools for discovering the natural world.



for the explorer

for the scientist

for your garden

"The Northwest Nature Shop proudly sponsors the Ashland Independent Film Festival!"

154 Oak Street, Ashland, Oregon 97520
(541) 482-3241 | www.northwestnatureshop.com
Mon-Sat 10am to 6pm and Sun 11am to 5pm

ALLEN G. DRESCHER, P.C. *Attorney At Law*

Member, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

21 South 2nd Street (541) 482-4935
P.O. Box 760 Fax (541) 482-4941
Ashland, OR 97520 drescheral@aol.com
www.ashlandoregonlawyer.com

**Thanks to everyone who
has contributed their
wonderful bird photos.
Keep them coming!**

—The Editor

**Better Bird Seed Equals
Better Value.**



Wild Birds Unlimited

961 Medford Center, Medford, OR • (541) 772-2107

THE CHAT

Newsletter of the
ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
Post Office Box 8597
Medford, OR 97501

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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. 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.

