

A voice for education and conservation in the natural world

Rogue Valley Audubon Society

www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Deadline for the June issue is May 20.



Letter from the Board

A Fond Farewell

This will be my final contribution to this part of *The Chat*. I have really enjoyed being the President of the RVAS Board of Directors. When I first accepted this position, I had a goal of getting more of our members involved in chapter activities. Now, three years later, I am very impressed by how many people do so much for RVAS so willingly. Thank you for letting me be a part of your efforts to further bird conservation and education in Jackson County. Of course, I also want to encourage those of you who would like to be more active to step forward. I think you will enjoy it as much as I have.

Linda Kreisman

Rogue Valley Bird Day Report

RVAS wrapped up its spring community outreach with an educational table at Rogue Valley Bird Day on May 13th at North Mountain Park in Ashland! In addition to providing Bear Creek Greenway birding checklists and catnip samples to bring awareness to the challenges birds face from free-roaming cats, we displayed posters with local photos to challenge attendees' bird ID skills, and we helped lead a guided bird walk around the park, ending at the temporary banding station set up by our friends at Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO).

Many happy learning moments were shared by the event's 100+ participants, including during the bird-calling contest and the Big Sit, during which participants recorded 35 bird species before the rain started hailing down. Still, the highlight for me owes thanks to KBO's Bob Frey, as he was getting ready to release one of the birds whose data had been recorded after banding. Noting that this particular bird was a hardy species, he said we could take an extra minute if anyone wanted to listen to the bird's heart, which beats eight times faster than our own! A woman in the group raised her hand and Bob carefully held the back of the bird up against her ear... As our group fell silent and the bird sat still, I dare say that each of us felt a connection with the wild heart of this little feathered neighbor.

Nala Cardillo



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

nateltrimble@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: Nate Trimble, 832-419-5086

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: roquevalleyaudubon@gmail.com

The Chat: chateditor@gmail.com

Webmaster: Carol Mockridge

mockridge50@hotmail.com

Web Site: www.roquevalleyaudubon.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.

RVAS Program Schedule Fall 2017 through Spring 2018

September 26:

"Birder's Paradise: A Voyage to New Guinea"
Presented by Pepper Trail

October 24:

"The Big Year"

Presented by Noah Stryker

November 28:

"Climate Change: A Bird's Eye View"
Presented by John Alexander

January 23:

"The Ocean: Threats and Prospects"

Presented by Daphne Fautin and Bob Buddemeier

February 27:

"Birds of Patagonia"

Presented by Brandon Breen

March 27:

"Dragonflies of Southern Oregon"
Presented by Norm Barrett

April 24:

"Lake Abert: Its Salinity and the Effect on Its Birds"
Presented by Ron Larson



****We will be on summer hiatus for the next
three months.****

Chapter meetings will resume in September.

Spring Field Notes

By Frank Lospalluto

The wet winter carried over into a wet spring and everyone's rain gear got used for a change. The bright side of all the stormy weather is the rapturous moment when one encounters a "fallout" of spring migrants. There have been a few of those this year, and I hope you took a moment with your binoculars in hand to catch a glimpse of a Warbling Vireo or a Wilson's Warbler.

For this month, I will just mention a few highlights from the past weeks. In September, we'll return with a more thorough accounting of birds that have visited the Rogue Valley over spring and summer.

On March 7 a **Long-tailed Duck** was found on Lost Creek Reservoir (BH). It stayed around for a couple of weeks to be viewed by many. Mid-March saw the return of **Rufous Hummingbirds** to many feeders around the valley. A **Calliope Hummingbird** arrived April 2 to a feeder in Eagle Point (HS). A **Long-billed Curlew**, an irregular visitor to our area, made a short pit stop to Ave. G ponds April 7 (BH, FL). Like many migrants, here today; gone tomorrow. A handsome **Lawrence's Goldfinch** visited a feeder in Ruch off and on for the week of April 11 (AG). **Common Loons** in breeding plumage were noted in early April on Howard Prairie Lake in good numbers. A few could be seen at both Hyatt and Howard Prairie throughout the month—a real good reason to invest in a spotting scope or make friends with someone who has.

An early pair of **Lazuli Buntings** made an appearance in Gold Hill on April 17. And speaking of early, up in the hills near Gold Hill on April 21, up to five **Swainson's Thrush** were seen and heard! (CS) This species is generally not seen anywhere in Oregon until May 1. There were a number of early sightings throughout Oregon during the third week of April.

A lone **Ross's Goose**, a **Black-bellied Plover** and a **Caspian Tern** were out at Kirtland Ponds April 22 (CS, NB).

April 26 brought the first report of a **Yellow-breasted Chat** along the Bear Creek Greenway (KM). There was also a **Sanderling** at Kirtland Ponds and a **Red-necked Phalarope** at Ave. G on the same day (GS). A **White-throated Swift** was seen high-tailing it over Central Point on April 28 (TJ). Another was seen on May 17 flying over Lily Glen (CS). Two **Black-necked Stilts** were out at Kirtland on May 4 (GS). Three **Red-necked Grebes** were seen during the Birdathon on May 6 by a few of the groups. A **Swainson's Hawk** was also spotted during the Birdathon by members of the Falcons, and another was reported in the Prospect area near the end of April (CS). There appeared to be a rash of sightings throughout western Oregon and western Washington.

Field Notes continued on page 4

Field Notes continued from page 3

A **Lesser Yellowlegs** visited Ave. G ponds May 12 (GS), and a **Short-billed Dowitcher** was identified out at Kirtland ponds the following day on May 13 (TM, GS, BH). And finally, a **Whimbrel** was out at Kirtland Ponds the evening of May 16 (TM).

Thanks to everyone who shares their sighting on the RV birdlist or ebird!

This month's observers include: Anne Goff, Bob Hunter, Cody Smith, Gary Shaffer, Howard Sands, Kate Mackenzie, Janet Kelly, Lee French, Maggie Rackley, Norm Barrett, Pepper Trail, Tiffany Manger and Tim Johnston.

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 am and end before noon.

June Walk: Wednesday, June 7

July Walk: Wednesday, July 5

August Walk: Wednesday, August 2



George Peterson captured this Killdeer posturing at Agate Lake.



The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

The torrent of terrible environmental actions out of the Trump Administration continues, with almost daily assaults on climate change science, public land stewardship, and pollution regulations. In this column, we will focus on only one piece of bad news – Trump's attack on national monuments. But to prevent the hopelessness that is all too easy to feel these days, I'll end with some good news on Oregon's Elliott State Forest.

National Monuments Under Threat – Including the Cascade-Siskiyou

On April 26, President Trump issued Executive Order 13792, directing the Secretary of the Interior “to conduct a review of all Presidential designations or expansions of designations under the Antiquities Act made since January 1, 1996, where the designation covers more than 100,000 acres, where the designation after expansion covers more than 100,000 acres, or where the Secretary determines that the designation or expansion was made without adequate public outreach and coordination with relevant stakeholders...” This Order includes the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, which covers approximately 113,000 acres after the expansion declared by President Obama on January 12, 2017. Also included were Craters of the Moon in Idaho, Hanford Reach in Washington, Giant Sequoia in California, and Grand Staircase-Escalante and Bears Ears in Utah.

Let there be no question: this Executive Order aims to roll back the Antiquities Act and strip protections from these precious places. In the case of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, the threats include logging and increased off-road vehicle activity. The move could open other monuments to oil and gas drilling, uranium and coal mining, tar sands extraction, fishing and other industrial dangers. It is unprecedented attack on our national parks, public lands and oceans, a blatant giveaway to timber, oil, and mining interests, and another brazen attempt to undermine our bedrock environmental laws.

National parks and public lands and waters help define who we are as a nation. Attempts to dismantle national monuments are an attack on our nation's historical, cultural and natural heritage. Please stand strong against President Trump's anti-environment assault and defend national monument protections for Cascade-Siskiyou and all of our threatened national monuments.

The public comment period on National Monument review opened on May 12 and ends July 10. PLEASE CONTACT INTERIOR SECRETARY RYAN ZINKE & TELL HIM:

- Do NOT revoke Cascade-Siskiyou or any other National Monument designations.
- Do NOT reduce any National Monument boundaries.
- Do NOT reduce any National Monument protections.

To submit comments over the web, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> enter “DOI-2017-002” in the “Search” bar and click “Search.”

To send comments by snail mail, write a comment letter to:
Secretary Ryan Zinke – Monument Review, MS-1530
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240.

Conservation Column continued on page 6

Conservation Column continued from page 5

Good News About the Elliott State Forest (from the *Oregonian*)

The Elliott State Forest, the 82,500-acre Coast Range parcel the state nearly sold to a timber company, will stay in public ownership, bringing an end to Oregon's years-long flirtation with divesting the land.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, Secretary of State Dennis Richardson and state Treasurer Tobias Read voted in May to halt the sale, pulling the remote forest – home to wild salmon, Spotted Owls, and Marbled Murrelets – back from the brink of a plan that was wildly unpopular with hunters, anglers and environmental groups.

Read and Richardson's earlier proposal would have sold the forest for \$221 million to Lone Rock Timber Management, which bid in conjunction with Native American tribes and The Conservation Fund. The state would've received an assurance that half of the forest would be kept open to public access.

The potential divestiture had put Oregon at the forefront of a nationwide debate over publicly owned land, leaving a Democrat-controlled state positioned to do something that some Republicans, including President Donald Trump's interior secretary, have rejected.

The sale had been driven by the archaic system by which Oregon holds the state forest. The state is constitutionally required to use revenue from logging the land to benefit schools. But logging was curtailed by environmental lawsuits after the state in 2011 tried to nearly double the amount of clear-cutting allowed each year.

The vote was a major win for Brown, who successfully fought back a February attempt to sell the land. Her plan would use \$100 million in taxpayer-funded bonds to end the state's obligation to earn money for schools from the forest's old growth trees, riparian areas and steep slopes.

Under Brown's proposal, decisions about the rest of the land would be entrusted to a habitat conservation plan, a blueprint that would dictate where logging could occur and where habitat for threatened species like the marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl would be protected. It would need federal approval, something that federal agencies withheld the last time Oregon tried to draft such a plan for the Elliott.

Huge questions about the forest in Coos and Douglas counties remain unanswered. Chief among them: Which agency will manage the land, what role logging and recreation will play in its future and how many acres of the forest will be protected with a proposed \$100 million investment from state taxpayers.

Still, a piece of good news, and these days that is cause for celebration indeed.

The Birds of North Mountain Park

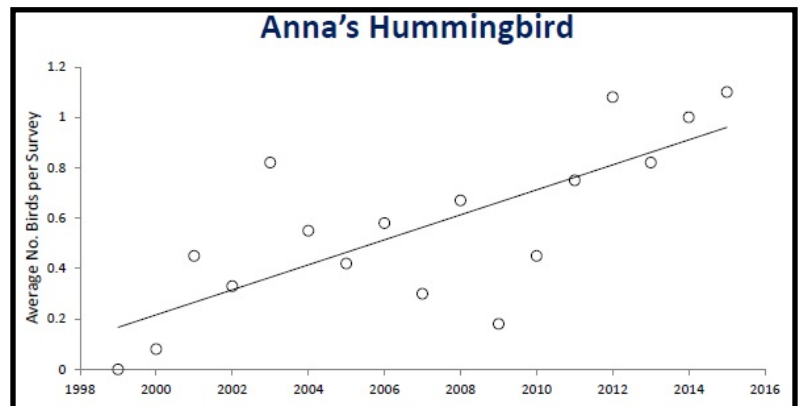
By Brandon Breen

Barbara Massey and fellow prescient birders Bob Quaccia and Vince Zauskey initiated a long-term study of the birds of Ashland's North Mountain Park at the time of the park's creation in 1999. Now, 18 years later, their efforts have yielded an impressive data set that speaks to the health and population dynamics of the birds that breed, winter or stopover at North Mountain Park during their annual cycles.

The first analysis of this data set has been completed and the results are available in a report on the Rogue Valley Audubon Society and North Mountain Park websites. Here I share a few of the highlights from the report.

Between September 1999 and August 2016, Barbara, Bob and Vince (along with help from a few additional surveyors) completed 194 monthly surveys at North Mountain Park and counted 28,284 individual birds from 137 species. The typical survey tallied 146 birds from 27 species. The highest count for a single species on a single day was 500 Turkey Vultures on October 31st, 2004—a fitting datum on Halloween.

Fifty-one bird species were encountered in sufficient numbers and regularity to allow for analyses of abundance trends. Of these, six species (12%) showed increasing abundance trends over the 17-year study period (Acorn Woodpecker, Anna's Hummingbird, Fox Sparrow, Oak Titmouse, Purple Finch and White-breasted Nuthatch) and eight species (16%) showed decreasing abundance trends (Belted Kingfisher, Brewer's Blackbird, Great Blue Heron, Killdeer, Song Sparrow, Western Wood-Pewee, Wrentit and Wood Duck). Moreover, several birds that were formerly common at the park have seen noticeable drop-offs in their occurrence, including California Quail, Ring-necked Pheasant, American Kestrel, Western Bluebird, Ring-necked Duck and Western Meadowlark.

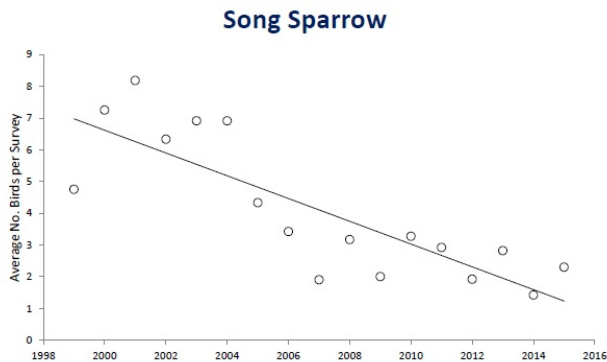


Numbers of Anna's Hummingbird in North Mountain Park have increased over the past 17 years.

The North Mountain Park continued on page 8

North Mountain Park continued from page 7

The results of this study echo and draw attention to the situation for birds throughout North America. Most of the bird species exhibiting abundance trends at North Mountain Park had results consistent with regional or continental trends. For example, local declines in Western Wood-Pewee and Song Sparrow agree with continental declines for these species. There were also a few exceptions. The Purple Finch and Fox Sparrow have both increased at North Mountain Park over the study period, despite population declines across western North America. Conversely, the Wood Duck has declined at North Mountain Park, while its population has increased during the same time period across North America.



Song Sparrow abundance has decreased over the 17-year study period.



Overall, the numbers of bird species and individual birds at North Mountain Park have remained reasonably consistent over the past seventeen years—an era of increasing human population and footprint—and this fact is a testament to the wise stewardship of the park by staff, managers, volunteers and citizen scientists. Browse the report online (Rogue Valley Audubon Society and North Mountain Park websites) for more in-depth information on long-term abundance trends of the birds of North Mountain Park.

Bird-Centric Events from Around the Region

PRESENTATIONS AND WALKS WITH WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

Birding by Ear Workshop

Birding by ear is an essential tool for detecting more birds in the field, and your birding experiences will be greatly enhanced as you improve your birding-by-ear skills. In this workshop, John Alexander will teach bird songs and calls using sound recordings, mnemonic devices, sonograms and drawing. The workshop integrates lecture, images, guided listening, and participation. We will focus on breeding songbirds of the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion, comparing sound-alike species of riparian, fir, pine and oak habitats.

DATE: Wednesday, June 14

TIME: 6:00—7:00 pm

PLACE: 961 Medford Center, Medford; Denman Wildlife Area

COST: Free

LEADER John Alexander is the co-founder and Executive Director of Klamath Bird Observatory and has been working to integrate bird conservation with natural resource management in the Pacific Northwest since 1992.

ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Summer Saturday Bird Walks

Stroll through North Mountain Park with local birding experts from the Rogue Valley. This will be an opportunity to see and hear a variety of birds that spend the summer here in the valley. Binoculars & field guides will be available for checkout. Please register online or call the Nature Center at 541.488.6606.

DATE: Second Saturdays: Jun 10 | Jul 8 | Aug 12

TIME: 8:00—9:00 am

PLACE: North Mountain Park Pavilion (620 North Mountain Park, Ashland)

COST: free

INSTRUCTORS Volunteer birders

2017 Birdathon Report

By Katy Reed

Birdathon 2017 started at 6:00 pm on May 6 and went through 6:00 pm on May 7. We had four teams: 1) the Falcons, led by Pepper Trail; 2) the Great Gray Owls, led by Bob Hunter; 3) the Old World Warblers, led by Maggi Rackley; and 4) the Wandering Tattlers, led by Sooney Viani. A total of 180 species was seen in the 24-hour period, close to the record of 185 set last year.

Teams combed all of Jackson County, from Highway 140 and Dead Indian Memorial Road and Howard Prairie to the Table Rocks and Denman Wildlife Refuge. Reports were of amazing fly-throughs of Western Tanagers on Table Rock, flocks of warblers, vireos and more at Emigrant Lake, and a dozen or so Sandhill Cranes feeding in light snow cover at Howard Prairie.

Although the team Binosaurs opted to sit out the competition this year, their team captain Norm Barrett spent the day taking photos of as many birds as he could find. He then presented a slide show of his photos at the evening get-together, where everyone compiled their results. Amazing photos! Now what were your camera settings again, Norm? And congratulations for getting all the southern Oregon owls!! (Only wish we could have seen something of them besides the nicely labeled black slides...) And that ringer, the Fiery Arcari, was **definitely** a winner!

The totals for each team and its members are as follows:

The Great Gray Owls: 154* species
Team members: Bob Hunter, Frank Lospalluto, Dominic DiPaolo, Brian Barr, assisted by Gretchen Hunter and four-legged team member Violet.

* team leader Bob Hunter discovered he had failed to include the team's sighting of a Vesper Sparrow earlier in the evening, so the team actually saw 155 species.

The Falcons: 153 species
Team members: Pepper Trail, Stewart Janes and Nate Trimble. John Alexander had a last-minute conflict.

Old World Warblers: 100 species
Team members: Maggie Rackley, Edith Linder and Lynn Kellogg

Wandering Tattlers: 97 species
Team members: Sooney Viani, Juliet Grable, Kate Cleland-Sipfle and Goly Ostovar.



Peter Kreisman photographed this Spotted Sandpiper at Emigrant Lake.

Birdathon continued on page 11

Thanks go to all who participated. The reason we have Birdathon is that it is the major fundraiser for Rogue Valley Audubon. To date, we know of one team which has raised \$1900. That is a fantastic contribution! Please use the following form to send in your donations, or donate through the RVAS website at www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

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



Peter Kreisman photographed this Ring-necked Duck pair at Ashland Pond, and George Peterson captured this Canada Goose family at Agate Lake.



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

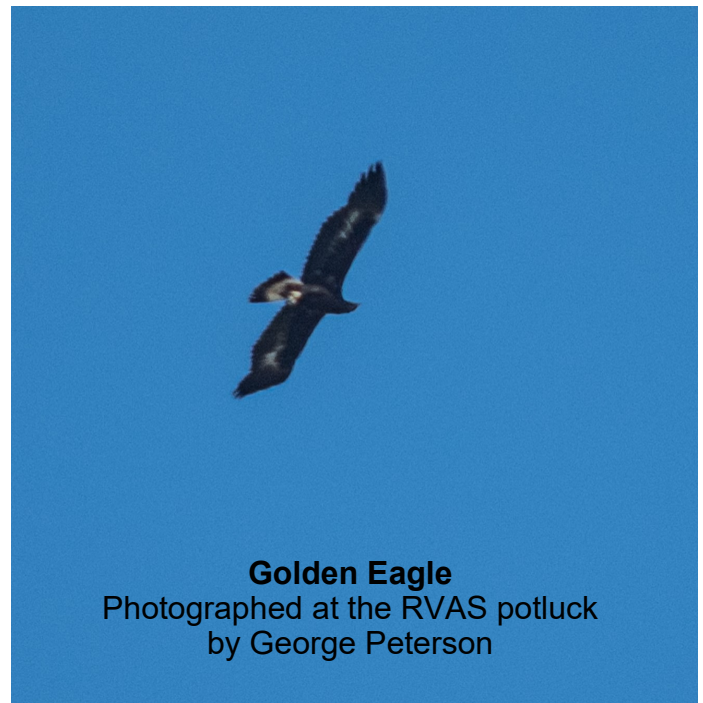
**Have a great summer—
Happy birding!
—The Editor**

Better Bird Seed Equals
Better Value.



Wild Birds Unlimited

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



Golden Eagle
Photographed at the RVAS potluck
by George Peterson

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.

