

The Chat

Number 435
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A voice for education and conservation in the natural world
Rogue Valley Audubon Society
www.roguevalleyaudubon.org
Deadline for the October issue is September 20.



RVAS SEPTEMBER PROGRAM
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 at 7:00 PM

"Birders' Paradise: A Voyage to New Guinea"
Presented by PEPPER TRAIL

The island of New Guinea is home to some of the world's most exotic birds, including cassowaries, frogmouths, cockatoos, and, of course, the birds of paradise. Decked out in incredible plumes, male birds of paradise perform displays that defy the imagination. Seeing these birds is a dream come true - so come to this month's chapter talk and take a look.

Last November, Pepper Trail made a voyage through the exotic Spice Islands of eastern Indonesia, culminating with two weeks on New Guinea. During this trip, Pepper was able to see eight species of birds of paradise. But that's not all - he also had unforgettable encounters with the people of Indonesia and New Guinea, including the little-visited Asmat region. Join us for this voyage to a region few people will ever see - and with birds to dream about.



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

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**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

Welcome to our 2017-18 season! As your new president, I am committed to continuing to focus on our chapter's goals of conservation and education.

Education

We made great strides in our outreach to students over the last two years through the Birding in the Schools Program, in collaboration with SOU's Environmental Education graduate student interns, and through our RVAS volunteer elementary school program "Bird Adaptations." Board member Jeanine Moy is working to staff the intern positions and the Education Committee, under the leadership of Lynn Kellogg and Sooney Vianni, is organizing for the upcoming school year.

Conservation

The board will be looking for new ways to support our conservation efforts throughout the year. This includes encouraging all members to respond to the conservation committee's calls-to-action and to generously participate in our fundraising efforts such as the Holiday Party and the Birdathon.

Involvement

Finally, at our annual retreat in June, the board discussed ways to get more members involved in RVAS activities. Besides serving on the board or as a committee chair, RVAS offers numerous fun and meaningful activities. I am pleased to announce that past President Linda Kreisman is going to head up a new volunteer committee to match up members with where they are needed. Please keep a watch for additions to our website's volunteer page as Linda develops this exciting new program.

Carol Mockridge

Fall Program Schedule

October 24: TBD

(Regrettably, Noah Stryker is unable to present his program as planned. Details to come.)

November 28: "Climate Change: A Bird's Eye
View"

Presented by John Alexander

Jackson County Field Notes: Summer Highlights

By Frank Lospalluto

Summer is drifting by and the surest sign is the blanket of smoke we call late August. Breeding season has faded, and the family groups of late July and early August are turning to migrant flocks heading south. Keep an eye on the mixed flocks that are now moving through your favorite bird patches, for there might be a nice surprise or two.

An early returning **Common Loon** in breeding plumage was on Howard Prairie Lake in late July and early August (HS, FL). Young accipters are now on the wing and being seen; juvenile **Northern Goshawks**, **Cooper's Hawks** and **Sharp-shinned Hawks** have been sighted and heard around the mountain lakes and near Mt. Ashland recently. A **Solitary Sandpiper** was briefly seen at Emigrant Lake on Aug. 10 and one was at Wilson's Pond on Aug. 12 for a few days (BH, JK, TM, FL). **Lesser Yellowlegs** were noted at Kirtland Ponds Aug. 16 (TM, GS). A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was seen at Kirtland Ponds on Aug. 1 (CS) and one was out at Lost Creek Reservoir on Aug. 7 (BH, FL). A lone **Baird's Sandpiper** was spotted along Howard Prairie Lake on July 26 (MO); two were found at Emigrant along Rosebud Lane on Aug. 10 (JK).

Two **Wilson's Phalaropes** were at Kirtland Ponds on June 7 (JK). **Red-necked Phalaropes** on their way south were spotted at Kirtland Ponds and Wilson Ponds in early August (CS, BH). On July 30 at Lost Creek Reservoir there was a young **Franklin's Gull** and an adult **Western Gull** (NB). **Caspian Terns** have been spotted recently at Agate Lake Aug. 15 (GS, TM).

Black-chinned Hummingbirds were spotted at few local feeders throughout the

summer. A probable **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** was photographed at a feeder in Medford on May 27 (CS).

The first **Lewis's Woodpeckers** have started returning to the valley. A few were spotted above Emigrant Lake on Aug. 5. **Say's Phoebes** have started move back through our area as well. One was spotted outside Gold Hill on Aug. 5 and another at Tou Velle on Aug 6 (SK, SM).

Purple Martins are breeding in a few locations around the valley, as they have regularly been reported near Lower Table Rock and near a private home outside of Ashland. They were reported a couple of times from the Rogue River Preserve near Dodge Bridge as well (KS, DV, BH). **Pygmy Nuthatches** have been spotted a couple of times this summer up in the Mt. Ashland area (FL). A **Varied Thrush** was also reported from Mt. Ashland July 15 on ebird. There are apparently a few pairs that utilize the shady fir forest up there and in some of the damper, darker draws along the Siskiyou Crest.

Great-tailed Grackles bred at Whetstone Pond very near the parking area this spring, making them easy to see and photograph (KS).

An out of state PCT hiker spotted a **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** near Big Red Mtn. on June 27. There was a second discovery of three **Lawrence's Goldfinch** this summer at the Hall tract in Denman by Steve Kaiserman on July 9.

Thanks to everyone who contributed: Bob Hunter, Tiffany Manger, Cody Smith, Howard Sands, Gary Shaffer, Norm Barrett, Karl Schenk, Janet Kelly, Marcelo Olivares, Dennis Vroman. I apologize if I missed anyone. Please feel free to email me with any observations or questions.
(fdlospalluto@gmail.com)

Until next time, get outside and bird!

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.

September Walk: Wednesday, September 6

October: Wednesday, October 4

November Walk: Wednesday, November 1

Nick Viani captured this Rufous Hummingbird from his upstairs bedroom window.



The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

The Fate of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument

This month's Chat is coming out a few days late because we wanted to wait for the announcement regarding the results of the Trump Administration's review of national monuments designated under the Antiquities Act – including, of course, our own Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. The recommendations from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke were due August 24.

As most of you know, Secretary Zinke visited Medford in July to tour the monument and meet with local officials and stakeholders representing both supporters and opponents of the monument expansion proclaimed by President Obama in January. I was one of the scientists who met with Zinke, and I strongly emphasized the importance of the expansion to preserve the biological values that the monument was established to protect. Zinke made no statement revealing his position on the expansion, but some of his comments gave us concern that he was considering reducing the size of the monument or changing its management.

Well, I'm writing this on August 25, and the news is bad – but we still don't know how bad. Yesterday's announcement was certainly positive in that none of the 27 monuments under review were recommended for elimination, and most were allowed to stand unchanged. Unfortunately, at least three monuments were targeted for size reductions. These three were not actually named in the very short press release, but numerous news sources reported that they include Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monuments in Utah...and the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. However, the full Department of the Interior recommendations, although reportedly submitted to the White House, have not been made publically available. The *Oregonian* reported that neither Oregon Senators Wyden or Merkley nor Governor Kate Brown have been briefed on the recommendations.

The approximately 47,000-acre expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument in January was vital to increase the resilience of this unique biological crossroads to the effects of climate change, and to strengthen its connections to adjacent ecoregions. Any reduction in the monument's boundaries would fly in the face of the recommendations of regional scientific experts, which were endorsed in a letter signed by 220 scientists from around the country.

We will closely analyze the Zinke recommendations once they are actually made public, and we will of course keep RVAS members posted on all the Trump Administration's actions related to the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, one of our region's – and our nation's – great biological treasures.

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The Westerman Bill

Meanwhile, there is another huge threat to public forestlands looming in Congress. Misleadingly named the “Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017” (H.R. 2936), this bill is sponsored by Rep. Bruce Westerman of Arkansas and usually referred to as the Westerman bill. The following is taken from the Public Lands blog maintained by veteran Oregon environmental activist Andy Kerr (<http://www.andykerr.net/kerr-public-lands-blog/2017/7/28/the-westerman-bill-the-timber-industrys-wet-dream>).

The Westerman bill would legislate horrifically harmful public forest policy into law. Among its many sins, the Westerman bill would:

- gut the National Environmental Policy Act by giving the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) essentially a blank check to just start logging in many places for no reason other than getting out the cut;
- gut the Endangered Species Act by letting the Forest Service and the BLM—not the Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service—judge whether federal logging will harm threatened and endangered species;
- gut the Equal Access to Justice Act so citizens and conservation organizations won’t get their costs reimbursed by the federal government for holding the federal government accountable in federal court to follow its own laws (the timber industry could generally still recover fees and costs);
- gut the Roadless Area Conservation Rule to allow wholesale logging in national forest roadless areas;
- gut the Administrative Procedure Act by allowing the federal forest agencies to avoid judicial review for up to 230 lawsuits each year;
- make it nearly impossible for federal forest agencies to decommission environmentally harmful and fiscally challenging roads;
- gut the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act by converting it to a Secure Timber Industry and Community Oppression Act;
- gut the Fair Labor Standards Act to allow children to work in the logging industry; essentially require salvage logging after any disturbance regardless of any ecosystem benefits.

Most particular to the Pacific Northwest, the bill would abolish the survey-and-manage requirement of the Northwest Forest Plan and repeal the “eastside screens” that have protected large trees on eastside (non-spotted owl) Oregon and Washington national forests.

The Westerman bill would effectively transfer all road rights-of-way on BLM lands in western Oregon to private timber interests.

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The Westerman bill would statutorily require that 500 million board feet of logs be sold each year off of the O&C lands. (The 2016 BLM resource management plan says a maximum of 278 million board feet annually could be logged and that's only if you don't mind older forest being clear-cut, scenic views being marred, watersheds being fouled, and wildlife being displaced).

In particular, Sec. 913 would

- exalt the Oregon and California (O&C) Lands Act of 1937 above any and all statutes that came before 1937 (for example, the Antiquities Act of 1906) or after 1937 (such as the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act);
- convert 400,000 acres of BLM public domain lands in western Oregon—federal public lands that were never granted away or taken back for noncompliance with the terms of the grant—to be O&C lands and managed exclusively for timber production;
- effectively override the two presidential proclamations—issued under authority granted by Congress to the president in the Antiquities Act—that established (2000) and expanded (2017) the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument;
- effectively disestablish the portion of the Wild Rogue Wilderness on BLM land, the Table Rock Wilderness, and the Soda Mountain Wilderness; and
- effectively disestablish the portions of the Sandy, Rogue, Salmon, North Umpqua and Elkhorn Creek wild and scenic rivers on BLM lands, and the Quartzville Creek Wild and Scenic River.

Will the Westerman bill pass the U.S. House of Representatives? Probably, as the Republicans control that body. Representative Greg Walden (R-2nd-OR) is a cosponsor of the Westerman bill, and the bill is expected to easily pass through the House Agriculture Committee. It has already been approved by the House Natural Resources Committee.

In stark contrast, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee recently held a hearing on Senators Ron Wyden's and Jeff Merkley's Oregon Wildlands Act of 2017 (S.1548, 115th Congress). The bill would, among other good things, establish the Rogue Canyon and Molalla national recreation areas, expand the Wild Rogue Wilderness, establish the Devils Staircase Wilderness, expand the lower Rogue Wild and Scenic River, establish the Franklin Creek, Wasson Creek, Molalla, Nestucca, Walker Creek, North Fork Silver Creek, Jenny Creek, Spring Creek, Lobster Creek, and Elk Creek wild and scenic rivers—all entirely or mostly on BLM lands in western Oregon and mostly O&C BLM lands at that.

Big Timber has long had the goal of exalting the O&C Lands Act of 1937 to override any and all other federal law—making it a combination of [the] 11th Commandment and the 28th Amendment, if you will.

The battle for the heart and soul of low-elevation older (mature and old-growth) forest in western Oregon is joined. The timber industry has not been successful in court; will it be successful in Congress?

More Than Just a Butterfly

By Ashley Waymouth

I grew up in South Texas and, for as long as I can remember, every fall I would dance around my yard through clouds of Monarch butterflies, *Danaus plexippus*. I would constantly wonder, “Where are you going, butterfly? Where have you come from?!” For whatever reason, my school never studied the monarch migration, even though this natural phenomenon was something our entire city would experience. As I grew older, I decided to take it upon myself to learn about monarchs, their migration, and the inherent mysteries that surround them. The more I learned, the more astounded I became: how could an organism so small travel so far and know where it was heading even though it had never been there? This was one of the first things that really blew me away about the natural world, and ultimately, what led me to become interested in butterfly and moth species at large.

At this point in time, I am a graduate student at Southern Oregon University pursuing a Master’s of Science in Environmental Education. One of the major components of our program is to create an outdoor education program for the Rogue Valley, called Fall in the Field. Each cohort writes all of the lessons, plans the budget, drafts protocols, creates assessments, and recruits K-12 schools from all over the Rogue Valley. We offer programming at the Siskiyou Field Institute, the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, and Ashland Pond; this year, we anticipate having over 1,000 students join us in the field.



When it came time to write a lesson for the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, I knew that I wanted to write a lesson about butterflies and moths. Not only were butterflies (monarchs) my first love with regard to natural phenomena, but there are also over 130 species of Lepidoptera that have been recorded on the Monument – it seemed perfect! However, I quickly realized that I knew very little about butterflies and moths that were not monarchs. Luckily, it just so happened that the Siskiyou Field Institute was offering a class on Lepidoptera in mid-June, which was right when my Spring quarter ended. Thanks to the generosity of the Rogue Valley Audubon Society, I was awarded a scholarship to take this course and was able to broaden my knowledge of our local Lepidoptera.

Over the days of this course, I learned about so much more than just butterflies and moths. I had the opportunity to connect with members of our community that I otherwise would have never had the chance to meet; I had the opportunity to look at our public lands in a whole new light; and I had the opportunity to look at our public lands in a whole new light; and I had the opportunity to learn from an expert, Dana Campbell.

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More than Just a Butterfly continued from page 8

Every day in the field was a new adventure – we wandered through the Illinois River Valley, ventured up into the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, and scouted out the hills and creeks of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. In our three days in the field, we encountered over 70 different species of butterflies and moths!

Meeting members of each of these species was an incredible experience; even more incredible was learning about how plant dynamics are one of the greatest indicators for Lepidoptera diversity. Even though I knew that monarch butterflies have a very specific relationship with milkweed, for some reason, it never occurred to me that the same could be said about virtually every species of moth and butterfly. Through this lens, it makes sense that our protected public lands would be a home to so many different species of Lepidoptera; the native vegetation is allowed to flourish and invite in this wide array of species. In places where there is less biodiversity among the plant community, there are fewer varieties of butterflies and moths. This pattern is so simple, yet also incredibly profound.



Looking at a place like the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, where we can see and find a huge variety of Lepidoptera, the land is telling us more than just “look at all these butterflies!” This is the land telling us the story of its own soil, forest, temperature, geology, elevation, and plant diversity; this is the land telling us that it is healthy and abundant in many ways; this is land telling us that it is an important ecosystem for this region. Who would have thought that something as small as a butterfly could reveal such a big lesson? Without this course, I probably would have never made the connection.

Thanks to the Siskiyou Field Institute and the Rogue Valley Audubon Society, my graduate cohort and I will have the opportunity to share this knowledge with all of the students who come out to our programming this fall. My hope is that when our students leave us for the day, they will appreciate the interdependent relationships that exist in the ecosystems of the Rogue Valley – especially those that exist in organisms as small and as powerful as the butterfly.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Sue Polich

2017 Financial Summary

The total income of \$14,273 came from the following sources:

Sale of the Birds of Jackson County	\$ 77
Chat advertising	\$ 300
Local dues	\$2,436
National Audubon dues	\$1,870
Birdathon	\$3,193
Donations	\$2,934
Holiday Event	\$2,963
Great Gray Owl donations	\$ 500

Total expenses of \$15,424 went to the following:

Administrative expenses	\$1,919
Book expenses	\$ 83
Chapter meeting expenses	\$ 428
Printing and mailing the Chat	\$1,581
Membership expenses	\$ 70
Fundraising expenses	\$ 25
Expenses that support the RVAS mission ¹	\$7,297
Miscellaneous expenses ²	\$3,585
Great Gray Owl expenses	\$ 436

1. RVAS mission support includes support of the KBO Mountain Bird Festival; chapter membership in the Oregon Conservation Network; donation to WaterWatch; scholarships for educators at the Siskiyou Field Institute; purchase of bird seed for Project Feeder Watch at Coyote Trails and North Mountain Park; several activities that support education in the schools through Coyote Trails, Fall in the Field (SOU), Birding in the Schools; and analysis of 18 years of data on birds visiting North Mountain Park.

2. Miscellaneous expenses cover development and support of our new website.

Bird-Centric Events from Around the Region

PRESENTATIONS AND WALKS WITH WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

Birds, Beauty, Art, and Nature

This visual and auditory presentation teaches about our local birds while exploring how they got their common and Latin names. Why is a Killdeer called a Killdeer, and what does its scientific name tell us? Using stories, scientific facts, photography, bird sounds and even poetry, this is a fun opportunity to learn about the birds that live all around us.

DATE: Wednesday, September 20

TIME: 6:00—7:00 pm

PLACE: 961 Medford Center, Medford

COST: Free

PRESENTER Shannon Rio is a wildlife educator and president of the board of the Klamath Bird Observatory.

ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Late Summer Morning Bird Walk

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 are year-round residents in the Rogue Valley and some that are migrating through the area. Binoculars and field guides will be available for check out. All level of birders welcome. *Please pre-register online at ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center at 541-488-6606.*

DATE: Saturday, September 9

TIME: 8:00 —9:00 am

PLACE: North Mountain Park, 620 N. Mountain Ave, Ashland

COST: Free

INSTRUCTOR Local birding experts from the Rogue Valley

KLAMATH BIRD OBSERVATORY

2017 Mountain Bird Conservation Fundraiser

Celebrate a love for birds and birding and support science-driven conservation at this International Bird Day event. This memorable afternoon will include a keynote presentation by New York Times best-selling author Noah Strycker; we will also unveil Klamath Bird Observatory's 2017 Conservation Science Stamp and provide updates on science and conservation in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. For more information and to register, visit www.klamathbird.org

DATE: Saturday, September 23

TIME: 4:30 —7:00 pm

PLACE: Historic Ashland Armory, 208 Oak Street, Ashland

COST: \$75

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:

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

—The Editor



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THE CHAT

Newsletter of the
ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
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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.

