

The Chat

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A voice for education and conservation in the natural world
Rogue Valley Audubon Society
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Deadline for the December issue is November 20.



RVAS NOVEMBER PROGRAM
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28 at 7:00 PM

"Climate Change: A Bird's Eye View"
Presented by JOHN ALEXANDER

Recent research suggests that the challenges bird communities already face are exacerbated by climate change. As climate change brings shifts of habitats, birds can be among the first to tell the story of climate trends. Just like the canary in a coal mine, they may alert us to what is happening and what the future holds—if we are paying attention.



John D. Alexander is the executive director and co-founder of the Klamath Bird Observatory. He has worked to integrate bird conservation with natural resource management in the Pacific Northwest since 1992. He is focused on applying bird conservation science as a tool for advancing ecosystem conservation regionally, nationally, and internationally.

His expertise includes participatory action research; ecological monitoring and research; science delivery for overcoming land stewardship challenges; and development of applied science tools and teaching materials for natural resource management professionals, community members, and students of all ages.

****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

Tabling at the Bear Creek Salmon Festival

It was a gorgeous, sunny day on Saturday, October 7th during the Bear Creek Salmon Festival, which was held from 11:00 to 4:00 pm at North Mountain Park in Ashland. RVAS had a table set up to help inform and educate the public about birds.

As part of our display, we showcased a dozen of the Audubon plush birds that realistically “sing” when squeezed. These were a big hit with kids and adults alike. This festival is a fun, family friendly event that is really geared towards children’s activities. Each child was given a long pipe cleaner to use as a bracelet. They were to go around to all the displays throughout the park, learn what the display was all about, do some activity and earn a bead to put on their bracelet. After they had collected all of the different colored beads they received a prize, which was a native plant seedling.

At our table, the kids needed to identify some of the birds to earn their bead, either the plush toys or pictures on the posters we had set up. I was pretty amazed how well some of the kids did (they were often better than their parents at identifying our common birds). I was also slightly alarmed at the overall lack of knowledge about birds amongst the general public. It made me realize that we have our work cut out for us if we want to make sure our common birds stay common!

Laura Fleming

Surveying Birds on the Sampson Creek Preserve

As your new “Volunteer Coordinator,” I’m highlighting opportunities for RVAS members to become involved in various birding activities in the Rogue Valley. One of these is surveying birds on the Sampson Creek Preserve, which is owned by the Selberg Institute. The surveys are supervised by Ellie Armstrong of KBO. At our March Chapter meeting, Ellie invited RVAS members to sign up for the survey, which began in April. Peter and I have done it every other Saturday since then.

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(Top) Sampson Creek
Preserve;
(bottom left) Wild
honeybee tree;
(bottom right) Bees.
Photos by
Peter Kreisman



We have surveyed four different areas, so we get to each area every six to eight weeks. In addition to the enjoyment of such a large unpeopled area, we have most enjoyed watching the seasonal changes in the birds. One survey in the spring, a few Bullocks Orioles and Lazuli Buntings showed up; on the next survey they were the dominate species, and they were all gone on the next. Likewise, in the spring the Western Meadowlarks were calling from every bush on the hillside and the next survey we couldn't tell where they were until we flushed a flock of several dozen. During fall migration it was fun to watch the large flock of Lark Sparrows annoying the heck out of the resident Spotted and California Towhees. We saw the mixed warbler flocks going through and the migrating Vesper Sparrows make way for the returning Golden-Crowned Sparrows.

If you would like to join in helping with this survey, contact Ellie Armstrong at eea@klamathbird.org.

Linda Kreisman



Jackson County Field Notes: October 2017

By Frank Lospalluto

Fall rains, first snows and blazing big-leaf maples lighting up hillsides and canyons; winter birds are arriving daily. A **Snow Goose** was on Emigrant Lake Oct. 16 with some **Cackling Geese** and **Canada Geese** (KB). Small numbers of **Greater White-fronted Geese** are being seen at most of the lakes and reservoirs. A **Pacific Loon** with a few **Common Loons** were on Lost Creek Lake Oct. 4. Common Loons have also been noted on Howard Prairie and Hyatt Lakes the last few weeks.

Two **Red-necked Grebes** were seen at Lost Creek Sept. 29 (JK). **Horned Grebes** were spotted Oct. 4 on Lost Creek and at Howard Prairie Lake Oct. 10 and 17. On Horned Grebe, look for the white tip on the end of their bills to help separate them from Eared Grebes.

Green Herons are still around and a few have been spotted around Ashland Pond and at North Mountain Park (SV, DV).

White-tailed Kites and **Red-shouldered Hawks** are oftentimes more visible during the fall and winter. North Phoenix Road and North Valley View Road seem to be good areas to spot kites (KS). **Northern Harriers** are also showing up again in more noticeable numbers.

A lone **Dunlin** was reported from Kirtland Ponds Oct 21 (BL). More should be spotted visiting local lakeshores and mudflats in the coming weeks as they move south. Good numbers of **Wilson's Snipe** were on the west end of Howard Prairie in the Lily Glen area. Twenty-four and 45 were counted there Oct. 14 and Oct. 17, respectively (KS, DG, DL).

Lewis's Woodpeckers are back in numbers. **Northern Flickers** and **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** are dispersing and migrating through our area. Keep an eye out

for **Red-naped** and **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** that may be visiting. It's also a good time to spot "Yellow-shafted" Flickers and notice intergrades between them and our "Red-shafted" Flickers. **Hairy Woodpeckers** and **Downy Woodpeckers** become more visible as leaves fall and the woodland structure is laid bare. While many of these birds will use their old nesting cavities to roost in during the cold nights, some do drill out new holes in which to roost.

Merlins and **Prairie Falcons** are being seen and reported with more regularity from around the valley as we enter winter hawk season. One interesting observation of a Prairie Falcon occurred June 22 along Highway 66 near milepost 11 (CS). This is a breeding season observation and of note, as Prairie Falcons used to breed in the county. Another Prairie Falcon was seen along Road 20 above the McDonald Basin near the end of September (KM).

A few **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** were noted in the valley in early October near Phoenix and at Ashland Pond (JK, KS, FE). **Say's Phoebes** winter in the valley and can be found where there are open grasslands and places to perch. Say's Phoebes have been reported most recently from Agate Lake and Agate Road in Eagle Point and Sampson Creek Preserve near Emigrant Lake (MO, SK, LW, HS).

A lone **Horned Lark** was at Ave.G ponds and another at Lost Creek Medco A flats Oct. 4. The Medco A area is often a good spot to find them in the fall.

Small numbers of **Violet-green Swallows** were still being seen in the first part of the month. It has been a banner year for **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** locally. They seem to be quite abundant from valley floor areas up into the mountains. Some may be refugees from local fires, or perhaps breeding conditions were just right this season with a good number of source sites that produced many successful offspring.

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October Field Notes continued from page 4

Rock Wrens were noted up on Grizzly Peak and on Big Red Mtn. at the end of September (MC, FL). **Pacific Wrens** have been moving in for the winter from Alaska and places north. This time of year they venture out of their normal breeding haunts to feed and find shelter. Listen for their two-part call note: “kit-kit” or “temp-temp.”

Ruby-crowned Kinglets are also back in our area for the winter. Many migrate though but many spend the winter.

From the looks of some of the berry crops this year in some madrone stands and other shrubs, this may be a good year for **American Robin** and **Varied Thrush**. Numerous Varied Thrush have been noted in the mountains the last few weeks and they are starting to show up in the valley (KM, JK). **Hermit Thrush** are also present in the forests in good numbers right now.

American Pipits are out on the drying mudflats and shorelines on many of the lakes and also in some open fields around the valley. They can be identified by their “pi-pit” call and their bobbing tails as they move along feeding until flushed; then look for the white outer tail feathers. They are found throughout the winter and early spring in our area. They are often seen up on top of Lower Table Rock.

Legendary Josephine county bird expert Dennis Vroman found a **KENTUCKY WARBLER** just outside Grants Pass on Sept. 25. Other noteworthy warbler sightings include a **Nashville Warbler** and a **McGillivray’s Warbler** at North Mountain Park during the second week of October (KS, BP). **Black-throated Gray Warblers** and **Yellow Warblers** were also noted at a few locations around the valley, including North Mountain Park, Pioneer Hills, Ashland Pond, Tou Velle and Emigrant Lake over the last couple of weeks (FE, JK, WG, DV, BH). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** are quite abundant

at this time and should continue into the fall. **Townsend’s Warblers** may be found wintering around the valley, and to a lesser extent the occasional **Orange-crowned Warbler** may be seen. A few lingering **Common Yellowthroats** were noted as well (FL).

Two **Chipping Sparrows** were spotted on Ousterhout Farm in Eagle Point on Oct. 3 and one on Oct. 6 (BH). A single bird was seen at North Mountain Park Oct. 4 (DV). **White-throated Sparrows** are back with one seen at Ashland Pond Oct. 4 and another at a residence along North Valley View Rd. outside Ashland Oct. 22 (JT, CS, KS).

A small flock of five **Western Tanagers** were seen from the PCT on lower Mt. Ashland near the Colestin Rd. Oct. 6 (FL). A **Black-headed Grosbeak** was spotted at Jackson Wellsprings Oct. 8 (KB).

Pine Siskins have returned to our area and are being seen at many local thistle feeders. **Red Crossbills** are also more abundant this season, as there is a good crop of pine cones locally. Listen for their “jip-jip-jip” calls. These calls can be used to identify the type of crossbill. There is currently a good article on the eBird Northwest page about crossbill call types here:

<http://ebird.org/content/nw/news/crossbills-of-north-america-species-and-red-crossbill-call-types/>

Most of this month’s observations were taken from eBird and a few from the RVbirds list. Thank you to everyone who contributed including: Janet Kelly, Bob Hunter, Gretchen Hunter, Jeff Tufts, Cecile Shohet, Kate Sipfle, Forrest English, Sooney Viani, Wink Gross, Brodie Lewis, Peter Kreisman, Linda Kreisman, Kristi Mergenthaler, Dennis Vroman, Mark Chichester, Ken Burton, Keith Bailey, Murray Orr, Steve Kaiserman, Larry Wright and Violet. My apologies to anyone I forgot.

New Event Honors Otis Swisher

Otis Swisher, outstanding educator, longtime advocate for birds and beloved founder of RVAS, passed away in June of this year. He was a friend to many RVAS members and made many program and education contributions. Otis was also a popular field trip leader.

To honor and remember Otis, RVAS will be offering an annual Otis Swisher Memorial Field Trip beginning next spring. Otis' close friend, Vince Zauskey, will lead the first annual trip in honor of Otis to Lower Klamath Wildlife Refuge, one of Otis' favorite birding sites. Subsequent trips will be led by other RVAS trip leaders who had birding experiences with Otis. A modest fee will be collected for those signing up for these annual trips; the proceeds will form an RVAS educational fund to support activities Otis supported. Trips will be limited to the first fifteen applicants. Stay tuned as more details, including registration procedures, are released early next year.

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.

November Walk: Wednesday, November 1

December Walk: Wednesday, December 6

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH SCHEDULE



Wrentit (photo by Peter Kreisman)

Coyote Trails (Medford) PFW

2931 S. Pacific Highway, Medford

Thursdays: Noon – 1:00 pm; open to the public
Nov 16, Nov 30, Dec 14, Dec 28, Jan 11, Jan 25,
Feb 8, Feb 22, Mar 8, March 22

Fridays: Noon – 1:00 pm; open to the public
Nov 17, Dec 1, Dec 15, Dec 29, Jan 12, Jan 26,
Feb 9, Feb 23, Mar 9, Mar 23

North Mountain Park (Ashland) PFW

620 N. Mountain Ave., Ashland

Fridays: 9:00 – 10:00 am; counts done by one person;
not advertised to the public
Nov 10, Nov 24, Dec 8, Dec 22, Jan 5, Jan 19,
Feb 2, Feb 16, Mar 2, Mar 16

Saturdays: 9:00 – 10:00 am; open to the public
Nov 11, Nov 25, Dec 9, Dec 23, Jan 6, Jan 20,
Feb 3, Feb 17, Mar 3, Mar 17

The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

The following information on pending serious threats to the Endangered Species Act and our National Wildlife Refuges comes from the Ornithological Council and the National Audubon Society.

CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL ATTACKS ON THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT House Natural Resources Committee marked up and advanced several bills that would weaken the Endangered Species Act. House Chair Rob Bishop (R-UT) has said he would like to eliminate the ESA entirely. The bills considered last week are just a start.

H.R. 717 (The Listing Reform Act), introduced by Rep. Pete Olson (R-Texas) would require consideration of the economic costs of protecting an animal or plant on the endangered species list and remove all deadlines for completing the listing process.

H.R. 1274 (the State, Tribal, and Local Species Transparency and Recovery Act), introduced by Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-Wash.) would deem any information submitted by a state or local government to qualify as “best available” science even if inaccurate, out-of-date, fraudulent, incomplete, or otherwise faulty, and without any merit review.

H.R. 3131 (the Endangered Species Litigation Reasonableness Act), introduced by Rep. Bill Huizenga (R-Mich.) would discourage citizen enforcement and participation in the implementation of the Endangered Species Act. It would award attorneys fees to the prevailing party, contrary to the general rule in the United States that each party pays its own attorneys fees, regardless of outcome.

H.R. 2603 (the Saving America's Endangered Species or SAVES Act), introduced by Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-Texas) would bar ESA protection for non-native species that are present in the U.S.

Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) has introduced yet another bill, **S.1863 (Native Species Protection Act)**, to clarify that noncommercial species found entirely within the borders of a single state are not in interstate commerce or subject to regulation under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 or any other provision of law enacted as an exercise of the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce. A lower federal court in Utah ruled in 2014 that there was no Constitutional basis for the exercise of federal authority in such instances, but that ruling was overturned by the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in March 2017. A request for a re-hearing “en banc” (a three-judge panel) was denied in August. The Supreme Court has never ruled on the issue, although John Roberts, the current Chief Justice, hinted in a dissent he wrote when he was a lower court judge that a species found in only one state does not affect interstate commerce. The legislation is backed by extreme anti-ESA organizations that oppose the protection of the Utah Prairie Dog, an animal only found in Utah. In addition to ending protections for the prairie dog, the legislation would terminate protections for all 1,098 intrastate species, including 497 species in Hawaii, 234 species in California, 86 species in Florida (including the Florida Panther) and 20 species in Utah. Since January congressional Republicans have launched 50 legislative attacks against the Endangered Species Act or particular endangered species. To keep track of this legislation and other legislation of interest to ornithologists, visit the Ornithological Council legislative database, (URL: http://ornithologyexchange.org/articles/_/community/callingcongress-should-not-be-a-full-time-job-new-resource-for-ornithologists -r242).

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SANTA ANA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE THREATENED BY BORDER WALL CONSTRUCTION

Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) of Texas is currently under an immediate threat from the Trump Administration's border-wall plans. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and its subcontractors have recently been taking soil samples and making other preparations to build a huge and intrusive 18-foot border-wall through the north end of the refuge. Santa Ana NWR represents 2,088 acres of vital borderland habitat along the banks of the Rio Grande. The refuge was originally created in 1943 to protect migratory birds, and almost 95% of the property was acquired through Duck-Stamp/MBFC dollars. Some 400 bird species have been recorded in the refuge, including migratory waterfowl, raptors, warblers, and a suite of "South Texas specialties" that are Mexican in character and barely range into Texas. Moreover, Santa Ana NWR is an essential part of that intricate network of natural hotspots in the four-county LRGV that draws an economic income of over \$465 million per year from eco-tourists and birders.

Why is Santa Ana NWR the center of concern? Santa Ana NWR is viewed as a relatively convenient location to fulfill the Trump Administration's promise to build "a wall." Santa Ana NWR is one of the few federally owned properties immediately along the Texas border. (Ninety-five percent of the land abutting the Mexico border in Texas is privately owned.) By initiating the new border wall at Santa Ana NWR, the administration is hoping to avoid the logistical nightmare of negotiating with private landowners - and even state and county authorities - to build a wall through their own backyards. Presently the plan is to build the wall on the levee that goes through and beyond the north end of the refuge. There is already enough current funding in the pipeline to start the project somewhere on the levee.

Altamira Oriole in the Santa Ana NWR



At Santa Ana NWR, the issue of public access itself is still unresolved. We do not know if public access will continue to be allowed if this intrusive wall is built, or what kind of restrictions would be placed on future NWR visitation. The proposed 18-foot tall wall and corresponding land clearing would surely discourage visitors from experiencing the refuge. Naturally any reduction in visitation at the refuge and other wildlife habitats in the LRGV would have significant economic impacts to the local communities. If you wish to express concern about this issue to Congress, you can access a template letter from

the National Wildlife Refuge Association which you can edit at: <http://refugeassociation.org/action/#/87> You can also obtain more details from the Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp at: <http://www.friendsofthestamp.org/santa-ana-nwr-in-jeopardy/> (from Birding Community E-bulletin, August and September 2017, <http://refugeassociation.org/news/birdingbulletin/>)

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MOST SERIOUS THREAT EVER TO THE ALASKA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Republicans in Congress have tried many, many times to open the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling, but have always been beaten back by determined conservationists and their allies in Congress. The refuge is now facing its biggest threat yet, as Congress attempts to use the budget reconciliation process to pay for tax cuts through Arctic drilling—a scheme that would force the legislation through without typical debate, and allow the Senate to pass the bill with a simple majority vote.

The first clue of the renewed effort to drill in the refuge came in the spring, when President Donald Trump's proposed budget included a novel line item: revenues of \$1.8 billion earned between 2018 and 2027 from selling oil and gas leases in the Arctic Refuge. Then, on October 5, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a 2018 budget resolution in a 219-206 vote that called for the Natural Resources Committee, which has jurisdiction over the refuge, to find a way to reduce the deficit by \$5 billion over 10 years—a covert nod towards new revenues from refuge drilling.

The budget proposal released by the U.S. Senate the previous week includes a parallel ask: The Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which like its House counterpart oversees leasing in the Arctic Refuge, must find a way to save \$1 billion over the next decade—another furtive glance toward refuge oil. Under typical Senate rules, new legislation would require 60 votes to overcome a potential filibuster, support Arctic Refuge drilling doesn't have. But budget reconciliation requires only 51 votes.

As a result, the refuge's fate now lies in the hands of a few moderate Republican senators, whose names are familiar to many Americans after months of attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act. In the past, Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and John McCain (R-AZ) have opposed drilling in the refuge, though they haven't yet announced how they'll vote. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), a moderate voice during the healthcare debate, supports drilling, arguing that it would bring jobs and revenues to her state. Republicans hold 52 seats in the Senate, and if two senators defect from their party, Vice President Mike Pence could vote to break a 50-50 tie.

The arithmetic doesn't add up in two ways. First, the U.S. is in the midst of an oil and gas glut with enough surplus that the industry is sending it overseas. Given that, "it's not clear that a lot of oil companies are interested in drilling in the refuge," Justin Stokes, director of legislative affairs at the National Audubon Society, says. Second, opening the refuge might not even raise the \$1 billion in revenues legislators project as part of this budget process.

"At the end of the day, not only is this a really special place—a lot of people call it the crown jewel of America's wildlife refuges—it's not even going to do what they claim that it would do, and that is produce a billion dollars of revenue to help them pay for tax reform," Stokes says. "The numbers just don't add up. It's important that people around the country continue to talk about how there are some places that are truly wild and should remain that way."

(Coffee) Beans and Birds: What Do They Have in Common?

By Laura Fleming

There are over 200 species of neo-tropical migrant birds that breed in the U.S. and Canada during the spring and early summer and migrate to the tropics of Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean for the winter. Some of the neo-tropical migrants that nest in our area include Rufous Hummingbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Bullock's Orioles, several warbler species, swallows, Western Tanager, Osprey, Turkey Vultures, and several species of hawks, among others.

Birding surveys have detected a decline in the numbers of our neo-tropical migrants during the past few decades. Tropical habitat destruction in Latin American is one of today's biggest threats to our migratory songbirds. Deforestation forces forest birds into poor unsuitable scrub habitat where they suffer lower survival rates; many do not make it back north to breed and reproduce in the spring. In the past few decades, modern farming has dominated the coffee industry in Latin American and has devastated the last forest refuges for birds. Two million acres of shade coffee have been converted to sun coffee in recent decades. Birds, frogs, bats, insects, and countless other forest creatures suddenly lost their homes. These massive sun farms being created need large amounts of fertilizers, fungicides, herbicides, and pesticides, (many of which have been banned for usage in the U.S. due to their high toxicities). This means that most of the coffee we drink in the U.S. is literally killing songbirds. All instant coffee and most mass-produced supermarket coffees come from these sun farms.



Coffee plantations started out being planted in the shade of rain forests, which is a coffee plant's natural habitat. Traditional shade-grown coffee farms are biologically diverse ecosystems. Both resident and migratory birds are attracted not to the coffee plant, but to the food that the diverse shade trees provide, including fruit, nectar, and insects. "BirdFriendly®" certified shade coffee farms resemble a natural rain forest and can provide a buffer against forest loss. Bird survey studies show that heavy shade coffee farms are able to sustain almost as many species of birds (30 to 35) as tropical rain forests (35 to 40), while sun coffee farms contain less than five species.

North Americans drink 300 million cups of coffee a day and import more than 3.3 billion pounds of coffee each year. We have helped shape the economies, land, and peoples of Latin America over the last 200 years. Other than having a vague idea that coffee beans were grown and picked in some faraway tropical country, most of us don't think about how our coffee was grown or that it even matters. We have been slow to wake up and realize our coffee habit is causing environmental and social damage, and that we hold the key to the survival of many neo-tropical migrants. Coffee drinkers can be a powerful force for saving the biodiversity in tropical countries and giving our migrants a safe haven for the winter.



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We may not choose to give up our coffee habit, but we can insist that it be grown under trees. Shade grown coffee tastes great, but most people buy it because it is good for the birds and good for the farmers who produce it. Be aware: not all coffees labeled “shade grown” are equal. To be considered shade grown, all that is needed is one tree under which the coffee plant is growing. That is a far cry from a diverse tropical rain forest. Be sure your coffee includes the BirdFriendly® logo on the label.

The RVAS Board of Directors has decided to “walk our talk” and offer Birds and Beans™ Bird-Friendly® coffee during our member meetings. The Bird-Friendly® certification means the farms upon which the coffee was grown have been given the seal of approval by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center. The SMBC has developed a set of strict criteria for evaluating shade coffee farms, making this delicious coffee triple certified: Certified organic, Certified Fair Trade, and Certified Bird-Friendly®. Make sure your next cup of coffee comes from a farm that's good for birds and for the environment. Look for this seal of approval on every bag of coffee you buy. (Birds and Beans™ coffee can be purchased regularly at Wild Birds Unlimited in the Medford Center in medium or dark roast, either as whole beans or ground coffee.)

Christmas Bird Counts are Coming!

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is the nation's longest-running citizen science project. Held between December 14 and January 5, thousands of volunteers collect data about the birds in their regions. The CBC is a great way to learn about local birds and connect with other birders, too. Here is some information about the upcoming CBCs for both Medford and Ashland.

MEDFORD CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, December 16, 2017

The area for the Medford count is a circle 15 miles in diameter, centered approximately a mile west of the junction of Highway 140 and Highway 62 in White City. The circle is divided into 15 sections with teams of birders, each with an experienced leader, counting birds in each section. All birders are welcome to participate, and newcomers will be assigned to a group by the Medford count coordinator.

Those who live in the count circle and have bird feeders can do a feeder watch and add their sightings to the count. CBC feeder watch instructions and a tally sheet can be obtained by contacting Medford CBC Coordinator Bob Hunter at bobhunter@embarqmail.com

ASHLAND CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, December 30, 2017

The count circle is centered at the northwest corner of Emigrant Lake, so the count area includes both the northeastern slopes of Mount Ashland and the western slopes of the Cascades (as far east as Little Hyatt Lake). Also in the official area are the steep Siskiyou Mountain woodlands, extensive farmland-grassland-oak savannah habitats in the eastern section, and the entirety of the city of Ashland with its parks and gardens and riparian habitats.

Birders who wish to count those birds that visit their backyard feeders are also encouraged to join the Ashland CBC lineup. Newcomers are always welcome to participate in this traditional citizen science effort. The Ashland CBC is coordinated by Carol Mockridge and Emmalisa Whalley. To join a counting group or for more information, contact Carol Mockridge at mockridge50@hotmail.com

Save the Date: RVAS Holiday Party

When: Saturday, December 2nd at 6:00 pm

Where: Lidgate Hall, Congregational Church, Medford

Come and Enjoy an evening of food, festivity and friends,
as we raise money to fund
bird habitat improvement projects in the Rogue Valley.
Specific projects will be announced as they are developed.

Potluck Dinner: Bring a dish to share and your own place setting. We will provide non-alcoholic drinks and decoration. If you bring wine, please remember to be discreet and take the bottle home with you.

Entertainment: Jim Livaudais will again show us a selection of his recent travel photographs and The Warblers are planning to fly in again and, for small cash inducements, will entertain us with avian melodies.

Live Auction: Pepper Trail will be at his most entertaining over a variety of items and experiences for your bidding pleasure. Gift certificates, chocolates, wines from Grizzly Peak Winery and Platt Anderson Cellars, hand-knitted shawls, oil paintings of ducks by Joan Brown, a Tuscany Bench (46" L x 16" W x 18" H at 175 lbs.; flame-finished granite paired with a zinc-plated, hand forged iron base), specialty field trips, and more in the works.

More Member Contributions: We welcome contributions that you might enjoy donating. One idea is Share a Habitat. Invite a group to your home or a favorite birdy spot. Food could be included by partnering up with another donor. Specialty baskets or hand-crafted items will also be enthusiastically welcomed.

To inquire about:

- ♦ helping with the collecting of greenery in advance
- ♦ decorating the tables at 4:00 p.m.
- ♦ assisting with the pot-luck yummys at 5:30 p.m.
- ♦ helping with the payments at the end of the evening
- ♦ being part of a quick clean up crew at the closure

Please call **Sooney Viani** at (541)301-1732 or
email her at **sooneyviani@gmail.com**

Bird-Centric Events from Around the Region

PRESENTATIONS AND WALKS WITH WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

Winterizing Your Feeding Stations

Are your feeding stations ready for winter? Becoming “seasonally savvy” is another way to help the birds in your yard. We will talk about who you might see during the winter months, types of feed that will be beneficial for the birds in winter, and ways to make your winter bird feeding chores easier for you. Please come by the store or call 541-772-2107 to reserve your seat.

DATE: Wednesday, November 15

TIME: 6:00—7:00 pm

PLACE: 961 Medford Center, Medford

COST: Free

PRESENTER Laura Fleming is the current owner of the Wild Birds Unlimited store. She currently serves on the board of directors for Klamath Bird Observatory and the Rogue Valley Audubon Society.

ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Attracting and Feeding Birds in Your Yard

Students will learn about types of bird feeders, foods that attract birds, feeder placement and bird baths. Find out which birds are most likely to visit feeding stations in the fall, winter and early spring. Questions such as “When should I feed birds? What food do I purchase for certain types of birds? Should I feed birds year-round? What about feeding hummingbirds?” will be answered, with other helpful tips provided. This class will coincide with the nationwide Project FeederWatch program beginning in November at North Mountain Park. *Please register online at ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center at 541-488-6606.*

DATE: Wednesday, November 8

TIME: 6:30—8:00 pm

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

COST: \$15

INSTRUCTOR Vince Zauskey has conducted bird surveys, led field trips and taught classes for North Mountain Park since 1999.

2018 WINTER WINGS FESTIVAL

Winter birds at their finest! Winter Wings brings together birders and photographers of all stripes to learn and explore with top notch professionals and enthusiastic local guides. The Klamath Basin is renowned for its massive wintering population of Bald Eagles, but is prime habitat for many other raptors including owls, as well as a stunning abundance and diversity of waterfowl. The 2018 Festival will feature three dynamic keynoters: Author and woodpecker specialist **Stephen Shunk**, wildlife photographer **Moose Peterson**; and author and instructor with the Cornell Lab, **Kevin McGowan**. **Registration opens December 16.**

DATE: Thursday, February 15 through Sunday, February 18, 2018

PLACE: Oregon Institute of Technology, 3201 Campus Drive, Klamath Falls, Oregon

WEBSITE: www.WinterWingsFest.org

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 and participating in society activities. 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: _____ **Phone #** _____

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.*
- ☐ *Send a monthly paper copy of *The Chat* newsletter (I don't have Internet access).*
- ☐ *Please contact me about volunteering for society activities (see RVAS website for list of opportunities).*

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

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2017-2018 RVAS Program Schedule

December 2:
No program, Holiday Party!

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:
Presentation by KS Wild, TBD

April 24:
"Lake Abert: Its Salinity and the Effect on
Its Birds"
Presented by Ron Larson



20% OFF One Regularly-priced Item

*Valid 9/1/17 thru 3/31/18 at the Medford, OR WBU
store. One discount per purchase. Not valid on bird food,
previous purchases, optics, gift cards, DSC
memberships, or sale items.

961 Medford Center, Medford, OR 97504
541-772-2107

ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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.

