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[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 Goals from RVAS Board Annual Retreat

The board agreed on six new objectives for the upcoming year while committing to actively supporting our existing programs. As you'll see below, we have some big challenges. We'll update you on our progress periodically in *The Chat*.

Outreach to national members in Jackson County

With Phase One of our membership program complete, we will now reach out to national Audubon members from Jackson County who are not members of our chapter. Our goal is to increase membership.

Communicate urgency of succession planning to members

Several board members' terms will be up soon, including a couple of officers. We are in need of new board members who could eventually assume key leadership roles.

Conserve the Hedrick Middle School chimney

The board is actively meeting with the Medford School District to save the chimney by coming up with a plan to raise money to retrofit the chimney.

Revise education program

RVAS is piloting a new elementary program this year based on an in-school FeederWatch model. This will be in addition to our ongoing support of various outreach classes and events.

Support committee chairs

This is a personal goal of the RVAS President. We have 18 committees and we want to make sure they have the support they need and know how much their volunteer work is appreciated.

Go birding together

The board works hard throughout the year at meetings and events. We realized that we should reward ourselves by going on a team-building birding trip just for fun.



Remembering Mary Ann Foss

By Carol Mockridge

Rogue Valley Audubon received a very generous bequest from Mary Ann Foss of Medford recently. It was a surprise. There is no record of Mrs. Foss or her husband Joe ever belonging to RVAS and no longtime members I asked recognized her name.

I located her next door neighbor who graciously told me a little about Mr. and Mrs. Foss and shared some photos. Mary Ann met and married Joe in San Diego during World War 2 while he was serving in the Navy. After the war, they moved to Medford where Joe owned a tire shop and Mary Ann worked in the office of a moving company. Joe passed away about 13 years ago.

Her neighbor said Mary Ann was a very sweet, kind lady whom everybody loved. "And she didn't weigh over 100 lbs," her friend added. She was a pink lady volunteer at Asante Rogue Regional Hospital and loved to play bunco. She also loved cats.

Joe was the family member interested in birds. He would open his garage door at their house on S. Holly St. and sit in a chair and watch the birds. He also made bird houses and feeders.

The board is grateful for her donation that will further the mission and goals of RVAS.

Remembering RVAS in your will or trust will help us maintain our programs. Rogue Valley Audubon Society is an Oregon non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. Our tax number is located on the bottom of the RVAS website



RVAS BIRDING FIELD TRIPS

First Wednesday Bird Walks at Denman Wildlife Refuge

Leader: Murray Orr

Murray Orr will continue to lead his monthly bird walks at Denman Wildlife Refuge through 2019. 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 in the parking area accessed from Agate Road in White City. Participants will need an ODFW parking permit. These can be purchased at the ODFW office, Bi-Mart, or at Sportsman's Warehouse in Medford (Delta Waters and Highway 62). Walks begin at 8:30 am and end before noon.

September Walk: Wednesday, September 4

October Walk: Wednesday, October 2

November Walk: Wednesday, November 6

Welcoming the Vaux's Swifts to the Rogue Valley

Family Fun Night This year's Vaux's Swift Family Fun Night sponsored by RVAS at Hedrick Middle School in Medford is Monday, Sept. 9. Join us for a joyous evening of watching the aerial display of hundreds of swifts circling and dropping into the school's famous brick chimney. Hear about why this Medford stopover on their southern migration to Central and South America is so important.

Teachers and students involved in the special RVAS fall education program for seventh graders have activities planned for the whole family. Bring a blanket or chair and meet us next to the football field and the gym around 6:00 p.m. If you can't make it on Sept. 9, RVAS will have representatives there each night throughout the September migration to explain the Vaux's Swift unique story and count the swifts. We look forward to seeing you there.

Save the chimney Rogue Valley Audubon is actively working with the Medford School District to preserve the chimney for future generations of these unique birds. You'll be hearing more about this upcoming project soon.

Citizen science opportunities Volunteers are needed to count the Vaux's Swifts as they drop into roost at dusk at three other sites. The data will be entered into two important citizen science websites: www.vauxhappening.org and www.eBird.org. If you would like to volunteer to count the swifts, check out instructions in the Bird-Centric Events from Around the Region section of this newsletter on Page 13.

Credit: Carol Mockridge



Laura Fleming Named “Friend to the Environment”

Laura Fleming, owner of the Medford Wild Birds Unlimited store, recently received the prestigious Friend to the Environment Award at the annual meeting of the Wild Birds Unlimited franchisees. This annual award is presented to one of over 300 hundred store owners to recognize those who exceed the mission to “bring people and nature together.”



Laura received the award in part due to her leadership role in supporting a wide variety of nature education activities and conservation organizations in her community. This she does by providing financial support, giving countless hours of volunteer time, promoting and supporting their events and programs and serving on boards, including the RVAS board.

Laura attends numerous events throughout the area to promote her store and conservation; she is also frequently asked to present talks on feeding and identifying birds through the seasons, designing backyard habitats, nesting season tips, attracting hummingbirds and other topics. Through educational events at Wild Birds Unlimited, Laura and her staff hold many free events at the store every month; see page 14 for a sampling of these.

Along with her community partnerships, and educational events in and out of her store, Laura has also developed her own wildlife habitat on her Eagle Point acreage.

We are lucky to have Laura on our RVAS Board. Congratulations, Laura!

Jackson County Field Notes May 20 — August 19, 2019

By Jeff Tufts

Three months of Jackson County birding to cover in this edition of the Field Notes, and although a few genuine rarities were first reported during that time, we have to start out with an update on the one bird that was undoubtedly seen by more people than any other individual in our area this year. That of course is the **California Thrasher**.

Records from eBird show that more than 100 people submitted checklists that included the avian star of the Talent's Got Talent show. Although the thrasher was first seen on April 5, word didn't get out until April 9, and the first eBird checklists that included the bird were submitted that day. The last checklist that included our Thrasher was from July 16 (TM), and a couple of subsequent visitors to the neighborhood reported that the bird was neither seen nor heard.

Breeding California Thrashers are known to temporarily leave their home grounds in late summer and early fall. The Talent bird was almost certainly a "loner," but reports from a local resident of sightings from previous years give hope that one or more birds could return to the location later this year or some time next year. Keep the faith!!



Eastern Kingbird
Credit: Roxanna Tessman

The two most notable rarities that appeared during our summer break were each reported in June. One, the **Eastern Kingbird**, was seen by a few lucky people at Emigrant Lake, and the other, a **Red-eyed Vireo**, was only heard but was fortunately recorded.

Eastern Kingbirds are common breeders in certain parts of eastern Oregon, but they very rarely venture to our side of the Cascades. The bird at Emigrant Lake was first seen and photographed June 7 (RT) and was re-found by at least one other birder the next day. It was

seen in the vicinity of the water park that's accessed via the main entrance.

The most recent Eastern Kingbird reported in Jackson County prior to this year was seen at North Mountain Park in 2011.

It had been a much longer time—25 years—since a Red-eyed Vireo had been reported in our area. Although this summer's bird was successful in keeping out of sight, the "observer" (FL) was able to make a quality recording that left no doubt about the identity of the singer. A link to the recording of the very distinctive song is on the eBird checklist submitted from the Rogue River Preserve.

Although Red-eyed Vireos are considered irregular west of the Cascades, there was a small colony (10 birds) discovered in 1976 at Dodge Bridge which is directly south of the RR Preserve. That colony persisted at least until 1979.

Shorebird season is upon us, and the mudflats exposed by shrinking water levels at the local reservoirs along with the year-around attraction provided by the Kirtland ponds ensure that some interesting species can be found in the company of the abundant Least and Western Sandpipers.

Two birds found at the Kirtland ponds in late May—a **Whimbrel** and a **Pectoral Sandpiper**—could have been tardy northbound migrants or maybe just non-breeding birds that weren't going to make it to traditional nesting grounds. The Whimbrel was reported May 26 (HS), and the Pectoral Sandpiper was found the next day (TJ).

The south end of Emigrant Lake is a popular spot for shorebirds in the latter half of summer, and it's a rare year that the mudflats don't produce one or two uncommon species. Last year it was a Buff-breasted Sandpiper, and so far this year the most notable discovery is a **Solitary Sandpiper** seen July 22 (FL). The latter bird is so aptly-named that if you see two of them at the same time, it would be a flock.

Although their numbers can vary widely from year to year, we can always count on at least a few **Baird's Sandpipers** putting in an appearance at one or more of the local shorebird haunts. This year's first Baird's was found at the Kirtland ponds Aug. 18 (LdB, AL).

Almost all southbound Baird's Sandpipers seen in Oregon are juveniles, as the adults tend to take a course east of the Rocky Mountains as they head to wintering grounds in South America. The juveniles are distinguished from adults by the white edges of the feathers on the back. Baird's often associate with the other more common Calidrids (Least and Western), and are best identified by the elongated appearance created by wings that extend beyond the tail.

Field Notes continued on page 6

Field Notes continued from page 5

Speaking of “peeps,” at this writing we’re still waiting for our first confirmed Semipalmated Sandpiper of the year. There have been a couple of false alarms, but I’m convinced that a few genuine individuals of this species will show up in flocks of the much more abundant Least and Western Sandpipers.



Baird's Sandpiper
Credit: Matthew Bowman



Baird's Sandpiper
Credit: Matthew Bowman

It's too early to expect the mass arrival of our common wintering waterfowl, but there were two male **Greater/Lesser Scaup** that put in an unexpected appearance at Emigrant Lake July 28 (CC). They were too far away to identify to exact species, but neither Lesser nor Greater have been previously reported in Jackson County in July.

One waterfowl species that rarely winters in our area, and is uncommon even during the warmer months, is **Blue-winged Teal**. Although abundant in many parts of the country, it is labeled “one of Oregon’s least common ducks” in *Birds of Oregon: A General Reference*.

It's surprising, then, that at least one or two of these teal were at the Kirtland ponds throughout the month of May and well into June. As many as six were seen there in early June, and the last report was on June 21.

In 2010 not a single Blue-winged Teal was reported to eBird for Jackson County, and in 2013 only one was reported.

It's interesting to note that in the recently-released Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey (from U.S. Fish and Wildlife), Blue-winged Teal are second only to Mallards in reported abundance. Although their estimated numbers (5.5 million) are down 16 per cent from last year, they are up 6 per cent from the long-term average.

Also of note in the “waterbirds” category in late spring was a report of 42 **Western Grebes** at Lost Creek Lake (RN) May 21. I couldn't find any eBird checklists with a greater number of these popular birds.

Not much activity in the gulls and terns department so far this summer. There were three **Bonaparte's Gulls** at Agate Lake June 12 (JK) and a single **Herring Gull** was hanging out with Ring-billed and California Gulls at the Kirtland ponds May 21 (HS).

The **Black Tern** reported from Whetstone Pond at Denman June 17 (BF) was only the second-ever Jackson County sighting reported to eBird from that month.

Great Egrets aren't known to breed in Jackson County, but post-breeding dispersal always brings many of them to our area. Agate Lake hosted 20 of them Aug. 9 (GS).

Raptor activity can be on the slow side during late spring and early summer, but one exciting report was of a **White-tailed Kite** in the hills east of Lost Creek Lake on June 6 (KS). Only one other individual of that species has been reported to eBird from that general area, and that was in February 2007. Raptor surveys conducted in Jackson County in recent years indicate that White-tailed Kites are becoming noticeably less common, even in winter months.

A remarkable report from the Butte Falls area July 31 (JC) was of a recording of two juvenile **Long-eared Owls**. Confirmation of this species having nested previously in Jackson County is elusive at best.

By the time you read this column, **Lewis's Woodpeckers** will probably have begun to move into the county in numbers. A single bird was reported from the Shoal Spring area of Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument July 8 (GS, HS), and another individual was seen at a residence in Eagle Point Aug. 18 (HS). Also of note is a single Lewis's that was seen at the Vesper Meadows site in the Cascades on May 22 (JM).

Four out-of-season birds that deserve mention were a **Say's Phoebe** at Upper Table Rock June 6 (WP), a **Horned Lark** June 3 (CM) near Dead Indian Memorial Highway (Walker Creek crossing), an early **American Pipit** at Emigrant Lake Aug. 8 (FL), and a **Fox Sparrow** at Lynn Newbry Park in Talent June 11 (LH,MW).

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Field Notes continued from page 6

Notable because of their locations were **Northern Mockingbird** sightings at Cantrall-Buckley Park June 8 (AG) and Valley of the Rogue State Park July 4 (KC). Both were the first ever eBird reports from those sites.

Also seen at Cantrall-Buckley was a **Varied Thrush** on July 7 (JW). Plenty of reports of this colorful species in February and March at Cantrall-Buckley, but none previously from the summer months.

Thus far this summer, three intrepid birders have submitted eBird reports after tackling the daunting trail to Mt. McLoughlin.

The first trek on Jul 23 (JK) produced two **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches**. The checklist for the second hike on Aug. 16 (DM) included 14 **Clark's Nutcrackers** (including two families) and a single family grouping of five **Townsend's Warblers**. Among the 19 species seen on an Aug. 17 climb (MLA) was a single **Canyon Wren**. That is only the third report of that elusive bird from the north part of the county (excluding Lower Table Rock).

The Townsend's Warbler sighting is notable in that records of them breeding in Jackson County are very sketchy.

Any local birders considering an attempt to negotiate the trail to the summit of Mt. McLoughlin should review the notes in the eBirding column elsewhere in this issue of The Chat.

Thanks to the many birders whose reports to eBird and the Rogue Valley Birds listserv are indispensable in the preparation of the Field Notes: Martin Lopez Aguilar, Kathryn Cooper, Cliff Cordy, Jon Cox, Bill Feusahrens, Lauren diBicarri, Anne Goff, Leslie Hart, Tim Johnston, Janet Kelly, Alex Lamoreaux, Frank Lospalluto, Tiffany Manger, Corey McQueen, Drew Meyer, Jeanine Moy, Russ Namitz, William Proebsting, Howard Sands, Gary Shaffer, Kendra Slown, Roxanna Tessman, Mary Wells and Jennifer Wolcott.

Help Populate the RVAS Photo Gallery

By Nick Viani

Several months ago, Carol Mockridge and I were enjoying the display of photos populating the masthead of the [RVAS website](#). One photo caught our attention, but before we could examine the image more closely, it cycled through and was gone. Our inability to pause the slideshow was frustrating, and Tom Pratum, the gracious web guru of the RVAS site, indicated that was unfortunately the function of the software driving the masthead.

We discussed having photographs available on the RVAS website for all to enjoy and learn from, and that resulted in the current gallery of photos being displayed. All have been photographed by a RVAS member (currently Jesse Hodges and me), are recent images of birds photographed locally, and may be downloaded for instructional and non-commercial use. Those are the fundamental objectives of the gallery.

For the simplest photo gallery site that interfaces favorably with the RVAS site, Google Photos was selected as the photo hosting client. This has absolutely no impact on local photographers and merely serves as the online location of photos contributed to RVAS. (As photos are uploaded by the site manager; the newest appear at the top of the gallery and others cascade down.)

After Tom and I collaborated in getting the images to display properly on the RVAS site, George and Sally Peterson, Carol Mockridge, Sooney and I gathered at Standing Stone to discuss where the project needed to go next. Thanks to the feedback, the submission process was streamlined, the objectives of the project were revisited, and the criteria for submitting photos has been clarified. Hopefully, visitors will soon see a more diversified collection of recently-taken photos gracing the RVAS home page.

The objectives of the RVAS Photo Gallery are:

- To provide visitors to the RVAS site photos of recently seen birds.
- To provide a general location where the photos were taken so that viewers may visit the sites
- and possibly view similar species.
- To provide RVAS members with an opportunity to display their copyrighted photos online.

RVAS Photo Gallery continued on page 8

RVAS Photo Gallery continued from page 7

Call for submissions: To contribute to this live compilation of recently-viewed (and photographed) birds, begin by clicking on the link to the [Submission Form](#) and adhere to the photo criteria:

1. The photo will feature species recently seen locally.
2. All images will have been taken within an expanded RVAS area. (e.g. Southern Oregon, Klamath County, the coast, and Northern California)
3. The bird in the photo needs to be identifiable by the photographer.
4. For optimal online viewing, it's recommended that the largest side of the photo will not exceed 2,000 pixels.
5. Signatures may be embedded into the image (Note: the photographer's name will be automatically included in the photo info with © preceding the photographer's name).
6. Please limit your uploads to approximately one per/week (up to 3 photos in a series may be submitted if the subject is a single species demonstrating interesting behavior).

This last item supports one of the fundamental objectives of the gallery by allowing members the opportunity to submit photos they feel will contribute to the educational objectives of the RVAS site. Show your best with the understanding that all will benefit from your submission. (Note: photos displayed on the home page will be limited to the six most recent contributions. As new photos continue to arrive, older submission will be compiled in the Archived Photo Gallery.

The Archived Photo Gallery

The Photo Gallery will host photos for an undetermined length of time for all to enjoy. < Embed link: <https://roguevalleyaudubon.org/gallery-page/> >

***TME TO RENEW!* Rogue Valley Audubon Society Membership Form**

Mail check to: Rogue Valley Audubon Society, PO Box 8597, Medford OR 97501
or join online with PayPal at www.roguevalleyaudubon.org
Welcome to the flock! We are a dedicated group.

____ **Regular Membership (\$20)** ____ **Printed newsletter (\$20)** ____ **Total Donation (amount)**

Name(s): _____

Address _____

City, State: _____ **Zip** _____

Email (required to receive online newsletter and other RVAS announcements:

Phone # _____

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

- ☐ Check here if you wish to be sent a printed copy of The Chat by U.S. mail. Add \$20 to membership check.
- ☐ Check here if you wish to volunteer for Rogue Valley Audubon.
- ☐ Check here to opt out of all electronic communications from Rogue Valley Audubon.

The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

Welcome back from summer! Except for that brief period of smoke from the Milepost 97 fire, what a lovely summer it has been! Fingers crossed for continued smoke-free skies, and a cool, wet September.

I wish I had such good news on the conservation front, but sadly the Administration's attacks on the environment only accelerated over the summer. Really, there are too many to review them all, so I will focus on two: BLM logging proposals and new rules weakening the Endangered Species Act.

BLM, Bad to Worse

First, a little background on the national situation regarding the BLM. It is fair to state that the Bureau of Land Management is an agency in crisis. The Administration appears to be intent on "kneecapping" the agency, in the memorable phrase of the *Washington Post*. Ever since President Trump took office, BLM has been ordered to prioritize oil and gas development proposals on the lands it manages, and this pressure continues to increase. Now, the Department of the Interior, of which BLM is a part, has announced plans to move 84% of the agency's Washington, DC staff to Grand Junction, Colorado, where most will be directed to report to BLM state directors rather than the national headquarters. Even worse, in early August, Interior Secretary David Bernhardt named William Perry Pendley as the acting director of BLM. It is difficult to imagine a less appropriate choice. Pendley has long advocated transferring federal land to the states or private ownership, has called for even greater reductions to national monuments than proposed by then-Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, and has publicly sympathized with Cliven Bundy in his stand-off with the BLM over illegal grazing activities. As the *Washington Post* stated in an editorial that was reprinted in the *Mail Tribune*, "During any other administration, [Pendley's appointment] would be a front-page scandal."

Locally, BLM is pushing some truly terrible logging proposals. The Medford and Roseburg Districts of the BLM are preparing a proposed "Integrated Vegetation Management Plan" (IVMP) calling for extensive logging and road-building activities, suspension of many protections put in place by the Northwest Forest Plan, and drastically reduced public input. In the Medford District, this envisions 14,000 acres/yr of alleged "beneficial" logging and 20 miles/yr of "temporary" roads. Shockingly, this plan would also specifically apply to the 2017 expansion areas of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM).

RVAS is very concerned that the IVMP would result in inappropriate management for this area of extraordinary diversity and ecological importance. We have joined a coalition led by the Soda Mountain Wilderness Council, with legal advice from Nada Culver, Vice President and Senior Policy Counsel on Public Lands for the National Audubon Society, in submitting extensive scoping comments opposed to the IVMP proposal. These adamantly call for the exclusion of the CSNM from the plan. We were able to recruit seven other Oregon Audubon chapters, as well as National Audubon, to sign onto these comments.

BLM has also proposed a huge timber sale, named "Poor Windy" near the Rogue-Umpqua Divide. According to an analysis by KS-Wild, the impacts from this sale would include:

- 13,288 acres to be logged in designated Late Successional or Riparian Reserves.
- 5,410 acres within the Late Successional Reserve subcategory are proposed for treatments that will remove federally designated Critical Habitat for at-risk species and the prey they depend on for survival.
- 61 forests with known Northern Spotted Owl activity could be negatively impacted by this proposed logging. BLM has failed to complete surveys for all of the federally threatened owls present in the project area.
- 30.5 new miles of roads are to be built in this road-heavy project area.
- 321 miles of timber haul is proposed adjacent to Clean Water Act federally listed streams with haul allowed during the wet season.

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Conservation Column continued from page 9

For more information, or to contact Governor Brown and Congressman DeFazio (whose district includes the sale area) about this proposed Poor Windy sale, go to: <https://www.kswild.org/action-alerts/2019/7/24/blm-forest-carnage-take-action>

Weakening the Endangered Species Act

On August 12, the Administration announced new rules that would drastically weaken the Endangered Species Act. In response, the National Audubon Society released the following statement:

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) is our nation's most powerful tool for protecting wildlife. Protections provided by the Act have succeeded in preventing the extinction of 99 percent of the species listed and benefitted many others that depend on the landscapes it has helped to protect. The final ESA regulatory reform package, released on August 12 by the Departments of the Interior and Commerce, fails the most important measure of any changes to a bedrock environmental law by marginalizing science-based protections for wildlife.

The ESA currently protects about 100 U.S. bird species, including the Northern Spotted Owl, Piping Plover, and Marbled Murrelet. The law prohibits harm to listed species, designates "critical habitat," and initiates a recovery plan with population goals and specific management activities. The ESA has also served as an important tool for incentivizing large-scale conservation efforts, such as the case with the Greater Sage-Grouse. The ESA has helped numerous bird species recover and be delisted, such as the Brown Pelican, Bald Eagle, and Peregrine Falcon, and has set many other species on the path to recovery.

"As a whole, the rule changes are political, unwise, and will only increase litigation. They tip the balance in decision-making against vulnerable wildlife and undermine incentives for effective conservation," said Sarah Greenberger, senior vice president for conservation policy at the National Audubon Society.

While some of the new rules are reasonable – including making it easier to direct resources to conservation projects by speeding up consultation requirements for federal projects that are beneficial to species – other changes would severely weaken protections for imperiled species. The most egregious of the new changes would allow the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to consider the economic costs of listing a species – something expressly prohibited under existing law. Other changes will make it much more difficult to provide any protections to newly listed "threatened species" or to designate the "critical habitat" species need to recover. The new rules also allow the FWS to ignore the dire effects of climate change on imperiled species – effects we are seeing with greater regularity, such as hurricanes that jeopardize the Piping Plover.

"While Audubon could have supported some changes that may improve implementation while speeding up support for at-risk wildlife, these damaging new rules will weaken protections for imperiled species and include language that is wholly contrary to the law," said Greenberger.

National Audubon provides a link to take action to defend the ESA. Go to the following webpage and click on the TAKE ACTION button:

<https://www.audubon.org/news/new-endangered-species-act-rules-will-weaken-protections-birds-and-other>

Thanks for all you do!

RVAS Financial Summary July 2018 to June 2019

Submitted by Susan Stone, Treasurer

The total income of \$68,620 came from the following sources:

Generous bequest from the Estate of Mary Ann Foss	\$52,845
Sales of the <i>Birds of Jackson County</i>	307
Advertisers in <i>The Chat</i>	400
Local Dues	3,450
Birdathon	4,092
Donations	3,296
Donations for Swifts of Hedrick Middle School	618
Holiday Event	3,512
Great Gray Owl donations	100

The total expenses of \$15,479 went to the following:

Administrative Expenses	\$1,424
Book Expenses	333
Chapter Meeting Expenses	450
Oregon Audubon Chapter Conference	516
Printing and Mailing <i>The Chat</i>	2,122
Conference Attendance	125
Miscellaneous Expenses	993
Fundraising Expenses	149
Membership Expenses	463
Expenses which support the RVAS Mission	8,525 *
Great Gray Owl Expenses	379

*RVAS mission support includes funding for Fall in the Field (SOU), donations to Waterwatch, Malheur Field Station, and Klamath Bird Observatory, funds for Birding in the Schools, purchase of bird seed for North Mountain Park, scholarships for educators at the Siskiyou Field Institute, educational materials regarding Vaux's Swifts, informational sign about American Dippers, and tabling events for Earth Day and Migratory Bird Day.

The World of eBirding: Location Confusion

By Jeff Tufts

Three months ago I'd hoped that this column would offer a comprehensive discussion of eBird hotspots in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. And it will. But I'm not really any closer to knowing how to organize the hotspots in a way that provides clarity for eBirders visiting the portion of the Cascade Mountains that includes Howard Prairie, Hyatt, Little Hyatt and a multitude of other sites that may or may not have precise names.

Many of the eBird hotspots in Jackson County are well-named and well-organized, and a few of them are poorly named and almost useless in terms of data collection. Topping the list of the latter is the unfortunately named Howard Prairie Circuit. The word "circuit" implies a regular route that has established starting and finishing points, with those points often being the same location. If you travel a "circuit," you may start at point A, visit points B, C and D, and then return to point A.

Looking over the checklists submitted to eBird using the Howard Prairie Circuit hotspot, it's obvious that it's become a catch-all for birders whose travels in the Cascades range from one or two miles to forty or fifty miles. There are even a few stationary checklists using the Howard Prairie Circuit hotspot which implies that the birders submitting those checklists were at a single location. But which location?

Location Confusion continued on page 12

Ebirding: Location Confusion continued from page 11

The Howard Prairie Circuit hotspot marker just happens to be placed a very short distance from the little turnout that overlooks Howard Prairie Lake and Willow Point Campground. The latter is an eBird hotspot, and several of the checklists submitted from that hotspot were from birders who were at the turnout and not actually at the campground. Confused?

Abandoning the Howard Prairie Circuit hotspot would mean relegating more than 250 checklists to personal location status and giving up the aggregated data that includes almost 200 species. The Howard Prairie Circuit hotspot currently ranks third on the Jackson County list, behind only Agate Lake and Emigrant Lake. But the species list doesn't really have much value because it's generally impossible to know with any significant degree of specificity where the birds were seen.

Were they at Howard Prairie Lake, or Hyatt Lake, or Little Hyatt Lake, or Hyatt Meadows, or Willow Point—or maybe at some unnamed location between any of the above?

Let's forget about Howard Prairie Circuit for now and move on to a hotspot location that had a very misleading name but is now correctly named although still a bit problematic. The old name was Fremont-Winema NP—Mt. McLoughlin Trail. There were very few checklists submitted from that hotspot simply because it's a difficult hike that takes you up 4,000 feet in elevation in about five miles. If you want to add Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch to your Jackson County list, you'd better be willing to pay the price.

The new name of this hotspot is Mt. McLoughlin Trail—Final Two Miles to Summit. Why the change? Well, there was this little problem. The old name implied that the trail was in Jackson County. It was a Jackson County hotspot. But the trailhead just happened to be in Klamath County. And the first three miles (approximately) of the trail were also in Klamath County. So if you were a conscientious eBirder, you'd have to start one checklist when you left the trailhead, start a second checklist when you crossed the Klamath County-Jackson County line, and then return to the first checklist on your way back down.

Did I mention that Mt. McLoughlin is in the Sky Lake Wilderness, and federal regulations dictate that minimal signage is allowed in wilderness areas? Bottom line is that there are no signs to tell you when you are crossing the border between Klamath and Jackson counties. The Google map that eBird uses doesn't show county borders. Google Earth does, but it doesn't show the Mt. McLoughlin trail. I can tell you that the hotspot marker for the newly-named location is actually very close to the point where the trail crosses the county border and is also close to the timberline. If you make it up to Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch territory, you're in Jackson County. And you're tired.

Just for fun I'll mention another Jackson County hotspot that has the potential to confuse anyone using the Google map on the eBird site. It's simply called Tolman Creek Road. Its northernmost terminus (also its lowest point) is at East Main Street. According to the Google map that eBird uses, Tolman Creek Road heads south (up) and crosses Ashland St. and Siskiyou Blvd. and then continues on for a few more miles until it suddenly turns into Ashland Loop Road. Then Ashland Loop Road branches to the west and the former Tolman Creek Road becomes Siskiyou Summit Road all the way to Bull Gap. That's about three miles from the Mt. Ashland Ski Road, and at that point it turns back into Tolman Creek Road all the way to Bull Gap Sno-Park which is adjacent to the Mt. Ashland Road.

And if you're in the Forest Service, the entire unpaved section of Ashland Loop Road/Siskiyou Summit Road/Tolman Creek Road is actually called FS Road 2080.

If you birded from Main Street to Ashland Street along Tolman Creek Road, you could use the eBird hotspot. And you can use the same hotspot if you start at Bull Gap Sno-Park and work your way down to Bull Gap. The two routes would be apart by several miles and a few thousand feet in elevation, but technically both correctly named Tolman Creek Road (at least according to the Google Map).

Any suggestions for dealing with these problematic locations are definitely welcome. But I won't hold my breath.

BIRD-CENTRIC EVENTS FROM AROUND THE REGION

VAUX'S SWIFT SEPTEMBER SURVEYS

The Vaux's Swift Show has returned! We are seeking volunteers to conduct swift surveys at all locations through the month of September and, in some cases, into early October. Training is helpful but not required.

Hedrick Middle School in Medford: No sign-up is necessary. Just come at dusk and join in the count.

Voorhies Mansion at EdenVale Winery in Medford, **Nunan Estate** in Jacksonville and a site by **McLoughlin Middle School** in West Medford: Contact Kristi Mergenthaler at coprolitemergie@yahoo.com to sign up.

Remember, we are guests at these three private locations and want the property owners to be happy with us. For instance, Voorhies Mansion is closed after hours. Please don't visit when they are closed unless you've signed up to do a survey and have contacted Kristi.

ASHLAND PARKS AND RECREATION EVENTS AND CLASSES

Late Summer Saturday Morning Bird Walk

Learn to identify birds by sight and call, with other bird enthusiasts. 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 and some that are migrating through the area. Binoculars and field guides will be available for check-out.

Please pre-register online at ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center for more info: 541.488.6606.

DATE: Saturday September 14

TIME: 8:00 am—9:00 am

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

COST: FREE

INSTRUCTOR: Local birding experts

KBO BANDING DEMONSTRATION AT 7 MILE GUARD STATION

KBO has carried out banding in the Klamath Siskiyou Bioregion for the better part of 20 years and have generously offered to demonstrate their work for Rogue Valley Audubon Society members at the beautiful 7 Mile Guard Station, located four miles west of Fort Klamath. Those interested in learning more about field methods used by ornithologists to study bird populations and want an opportunity to see a variety of bird species very close up will not want to miss this trip.

Banding provides critical information on bird movements, age demographics, and individual condition that is impossible to gather as effectively from any other research technique. It also provides banders and observers with the privilege of observing birds in the hand where subtle details of their form and color are able to be witnessed in a way that is impossible even from the best looks of birds otherwise. Come join us in observing KBO's skilled ornithologists and interns gather data on our region's birdlife right in front of your eyes!

How to register: Email Nate Trimble (nateltrimble@hotmail.com) to RSVP for the trip. The first 20 people to RSVP will be given spots in the trip.

Directions from I-5: Take Dead Indian Memorial Rd and Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway to Hackler Rd in Fort Klamath. Follow Hackler Rd and Nicholson Rd to NF-33. Look for 7 Mile Cabin on the left shortly after the road turns to gravel.

DATE: Friday, September 20

TIME: 8:30 am (carpool meets at Ashland Rote-Aid at 6:50 am)

PLACE: 7 Mile Guard Station

COST: FREE

LEADER Nate Trimble

Bird-centric events continued on page 14

Bird-centric events continued from page 13

PRESENTATIONS AND WALKS WITH WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

***NEW* Fledgling Camp**

Bring your children/grandchildren and join Erin Ulrich at the store on Saturday, September 7 from 11:00 am to noon for our new program: "Fledgling Camp" Storytelling and games for the younger crowd. This month's focus: "Get to Know Birds: What makes a bird a bird?"

DATE: Saturday, September 7
TIME: 11:00 am—noon
PLACE: Wild Birds Unlimited, 961 Medford Center, Medford
COST: Free
PRESENTER: Erin Ulrich

Chickadee Chat: Bird Migration

Erin Linton will talk all about bird migration rehabilitation this month. No registration is required, just show up to learn, share, and have fun with fellow bird nerds!

DATE: Wednesday, September 11
TIME: 10:30 am
PLACE: Wild Birds Unlimited, 961 Medford Center, Medford
COST: Free
PRESENTER: Erin Linton

Monthly Educational Talk: Tips and Tricks to Birding the Klamath Wildlife Refuge

Erin Linton has been birding the Refuge for most of her life. She will discuss where to go, what you can see, and other tips to have a successful birding trip in the Klamath Wildlife Refuge. As space is limited to 25, please reserve your seat today by calling the store at 541.772.2107 or by coming in to register.

DATE: Wednesday, September 11
TIME: 6:00—7:00 pm
PLACE: Wild Birds Unlimited, 961 Medford Center, Medford
COST: Free
PRESENTER: Erin Linton

Bird Walk: Denman Wildlife Area

Erin Linton will be leading a walk to the Denman Wildlife Area this month. Be on the lookout for early fall migrants! Meet at Wild Birds Unlimited at 10:00 am, wear layers of clothing appropriate for the weather and good walking shoes that can get wet and muddy. Bring binoculars, water, and any snacks desired. As space is limited to 15, please reserve your spot today by calling the store at 541.772.2107 or by coming in to register. **Note:** Drivers will need an ODFW parking permit.

DATE: Wednesday, September 18
TIME: 10:00 am
PLACE: Wild Birds Unlimited, 961 Medford Center, Medford
COST: Free
LEADER: Erin Linton

Saturday Bird Walk at Denman Wildlife Area

Join Max McClarnon as he leads a walk to Denman Wildlife Area looking for early fall migrants. Meet at Wild Birds Unlimited at 10:00 am, wear layers of clothing appropriate for the weather and good walking shoes that can get wet and muddy. Bring binoculars, water, and any snacks desired. As space is limited to 15, please reserve your spot today by calling the store at 541.772.2107 or by coming in to register. **Note:** Drivers will need an ODFW parking permit.

DATE: Saturday, September 21
TIME: 10:00 am
PLACE: Wild Birds Unlimited, 961 Medford Center, Medford
COST: Free
LEADER: Max McClarnon

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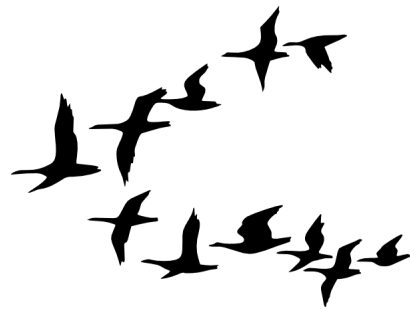
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Medford Christmas Bird Count
Sunday, Dec. 15, 2019

Ashland Christmas Bird Count
Saturday, Dec. 28, 2019



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