

A voice for education and conservation in the natural world
Rogue Valley Audubon Society
www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Deadline for the November issue is October 20



OCTOBER Virtual Program
Tuesday, Oct. 26 at 7:00 pm
The Nature of Oregon's Great Basin



Join us for our October program when Pepper Trail, our globe-trotting conservation co-chair, will take us somewhere truly exotic: Oregon's Great Basin! Pepper is particularly fond of the Summer Lake area, and his talk, "The Nature of Oregon's Great Basin," will introduce the varied birds and ecosystems of the Oregon Outback - with particular emphasis on what the region has to teach us about past and future climate change. There might even be a poem or two - you have been warned!

About The Speaker

Pepper Trail is the long-time conservation chair of the Rogue Valley Audubon Society, and one of the ornithologists at the National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Lab in Ashland. In his vacation time, he leads natural history trips around the world.

Zoom instructions: If you haven't registered for RVAS virtual events, you will need to do so. Once registered, you will receive a link with the virtual address for the meeting.

Click on this link to register: <https://www.roguevalleyaudubon.org/zoom-signup/>

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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.

NOTE: Until further notice, chapter meetings will be held on Zoom.

Birding Hot Spots of Jackson County is New and Improved!

Thanks go out to Nate Trimble for updating our Birding Hot Spots of Jackson County brochure. The new version has information about the recent fire damage that affected some of the sites, and also includes icons to show if a site is wheelchair accessible (paved access). Thanks also to Carol Mockridge for concluding this lengthy project, and to Pronto Print for the excellent printing job.

Brochures are typically available at the Northwest Nature Shop in Ashland and Wild Birds Unlimited in Medford. They can also be purchased through RVAS at <https://www.roguevalleyaudubon.org/birds-of-jackson-county/>.

Do you have a suggestion of where to display these brochures? Your favorite B&B, community center, or coffee house? Email me and tell me your ideas!

Erin Ulrich
RVAS President

Hello fellow birders!

My name is Jamie Trammell, and I am your newest RVAS board member. I'm starting my fifth year here in the Rogue Valley, after spending 5 years in Anchorage, AK. I'm currently the chair of the Environmental Science and Policy program at Southern Oregon University, and although my specialty is in all things geospatial, I love getting students out looking at birds. I've done everything from backyard birding, to volunteering with HawkWatch, to completing a dissertation on the urban ecology of birds in the Truckee Meadows of Nevada. But I'm relatively new to RVAS, so I look forward to meeting many of you as soon as it is safe to do so.



Status of upcoming events

Field trips - No field trips are scheduled at this time

October Chapter Meeting: Tues., Oct. 26th
@ 7pm

The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

Editor's note: In lieu of his standard comprehensive column this month, Pepper has shared the following comments he submitted to the City of Central Point Park Planner on Sept. 26 regarding proposed changes to Mingus Pond. Thanks to Pepper for his tireless work on behalf of our valley's birds and their ecosystems!

Subject: Comments on Mingus Pond proposal

Dear Dave,

I'm the conservation co-chair of the Rogue Valley Audubon Society (RVAS). Mingus Pond is one of the top birding sites along the Bear Creek Greenway, and is one of the locations being surveyed every month by the Bear Creek Community Birding Survey to document the effects of the Almeda Fire on the birdlife of the Bear Creek Greenway. Given our long involvement with Mingus Pond, we would like to provide input on the proposed changes to the area. (https://www.centralpointoregon.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/parks_and_recreation/page/1087/bear_creek_greenway_site_plan_210715_-_final_7-15-21.pdf).

I asked two RVAS members who regularly bird around Mingus Pond to review the proposed site plan. Here are their comments:

- Mingus Pond is an important overwintering area for waterfowl. It is heavily used by Canvasbacks in the winter (up to 50 or more at some times). One of the only reliable places in the valley to see them. The pond has historically had a lot of use by green herons and kingfishers too.

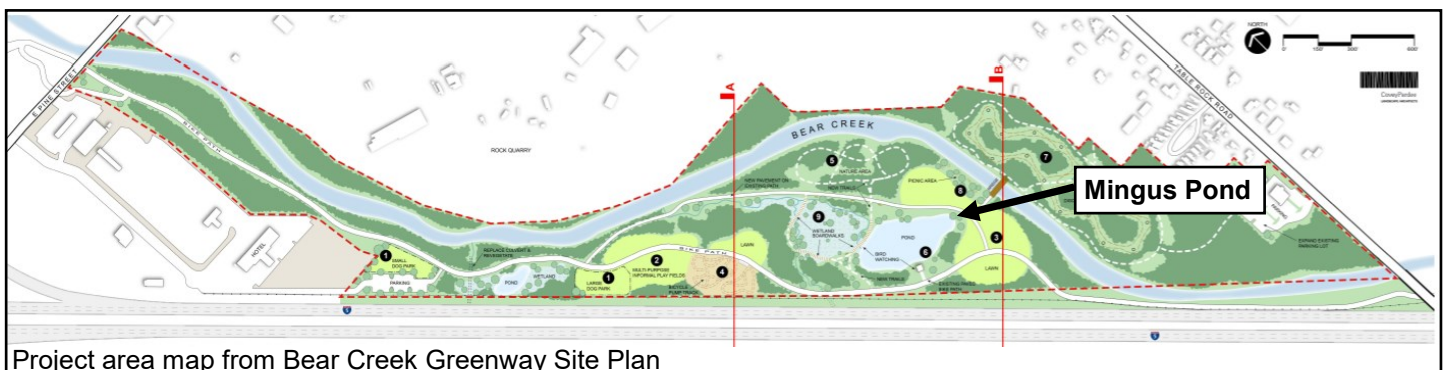
The main concern I have with the plan is that there may not be a large enough buffer area around the pond to avoid disturbance of the birds. If possible it would be good to pull the proposed newly paved path and lawn area back from the northeast corner of the pond. In the buffer area there should be a plan to replant with appropriate vegetation and control for blackberries.

- I would like to see more distance between the newly paved path and the pond. To add to that, the boardwalk that borders the pond should be eliminated so as not to create more disturbance to the birds and wildlife. It seems that with the loss of vegetation around the pond there will be more views of the pond from the newly paved path, and that adding access around the pond completely might be too much disturbance. The portion of the boardwalk on the westside of the wetlands could be kept.

What is the timeline for this proposal? Will there be a public meeting, or other opportunities for feedback?

Thank you,

Pepper Trail
Rogue Valley Audubon Society



Field Notes for Jackson County September 2021

By Frank Lospalluto

*I want to tell what the forests
were like*

*I will have to speak
in a forgotten language
— Witness, W.S. Merwin*

Snow Geese have started to pass through our area with 11 spotted at Howard Prairie Lake Sept. 24 (BH). The sound of migrating **Greater White-fronted Geese** overhead is the sound of autumn arriving. A flock of 60 was heard and seen over Emigrant Lake Sept. 19 (VZ). Many of our common wintering ducks are arriving and many are molting out of their drab brown 'eclipse' plumage into their more colorful 'alternate' plumage.

Flocks of **Band-tailed Pigeons** heading south have been observed by many this last month. Many of these birds will winter in California, though some do overwinter in our area. The Bear Creek Community Bird Survey (BCCBS) crews have been doing a good job documenting the flow of birds over Bear Creek this fall. Thirty-four birds were spied over the Ashland portion of the greenway Sept. 11 (PT) and 50 were over the Suncrest section Sept. 24 (JK).

Vaux's Swifts continue to migrate with good numbers at a few of the well-known roosts. And after two seasons of low numbers, the chimney at the old Voorhies Mansion (EdenVale Winery) is back in play with hundreds being seen entering each evening it's been surveyed the last few weeks (KM).

Three **Black-necked Stilt** were found at Whetstone Pond Sept. 5 (JV). Eleven **Black-bellied Plovers** were at Lost Creek Lake Sept. 6 (NB, JL). Four **Semipalmated Plovers** were at Howard Prairie Lake Sept. 3 (EB) and four were at Whetstone Pond Sept. 8 (KS). Two **Pectoral Sandpipers** were at Kirtland Rd. Ponds Sept. 12 (GS). It has been a good season for **Solitary Sandpiper** with a few more making an appearance recently. Two at Mingus Pond Aug 30 (LH, MW), one was at Agate Lake Sept. 10 (JK), and another near the mouth of Little Butte Creek Sept. 19 (JH). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at Kirtland Rd. Ponds Aug 28 (HS).

A single **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was seen at their normal winter roost in the willows at Whetstone Pond

Sept. 7 (EB) and Sept. 11. That is a great location to see this species over the next few months in the valley.

Raptors are migrating and no doubt many have taken note of **Turkey Vultures** heading to the exits. A hatch year **Ferruginous Hawk** was seen at Lily Glen Park Sept. 20 (BH).

Lewis's Woodpeckers are returning in force to our area. Fifty were estimated near Jenny Creek Sept. 6 (PT).

A **Prairie Falcon** was over Whetstone Pond Sept. 5 (HS). Another was near Lily Glen Park Sept. 14. One was seen over Agate Rd. in Eagle Point Sep19 (HS).

It's getting late for Western Wood-Peepees and Willow Flycatchers. A **Western Wood-Peepee** was seen along the Bear Creek Greenway in Talent Sept. 26 (PT). A **Willow Flycatcher** was spotted at Ashland Pond Sept. 15 and 18 (NT, CM).



Pectoral Sandpiper
Credit: Howard Sands

A **Say's Phoebe** was at Klum Landing Campground Sept. 3 (JK) and another was spotted on Vesper Meadow Sept. 6 (KS). Say's will be seen through the winter throughout the Rogue Valley and at higher elevations until colder temps and snow arrive.

Two **Warbling Vireos** were observed in TouVelle State Park Sept. 26 (JV).

Two **Horned Larks** were on the Medco A flats near Lost Creek Lake Sept. 16.

A real sign of autumn are the increasing reports of **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**. One was along the Bear Creek Greenway in Talent Sept. 22 (MG) and another along

Field Notes continued on page 5

Field Notes continued from page 4

American Pipit
Credit: Frank Lospalluto



the Ashland portion Sept. 26 (LH, MW). A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was in North Mtn. Park Sept. 8 and another was at Emigrant Lake Park Sept. 9. Their numbers seemed to be down this summer in our area.

An **American Dipper** was spotted on the Little Applegate River in Cantrall-Buckley Park Sept. 15 (AG).

Three **Varied Thrush** were in the forest near Siskiyou Summit Sept. 24 (VL). A **Swainson's Thrush** was near North Mtn Park Sept. 8 (MDA).

Large numbers of **Cedar Waxwings** appear to be everywhere these last weeks.

Twenty-four **American Pipits** were at the Medco A flats Sept. 6 (NB, JL). Twenty-eight were on Big Red Mtn. Sept. 21 (VL).

An early **Lapland Longspur** was at Medco A Sept. 20 (JK). Many sparrows are migrating through and many will be our winter companions. One **White-crowned Sparrow** was on Mt. Ashland Sept. 4, 15 were near Lincoln along Highway 66 Sept. 5 (JM), and six were near Rosebud Lane Sept. 7 (VZ). **Golden-crowned Sparrows** started to arrive around Sept. 12 and have arrived in force with widespread reports. Fourteen were recorded on the BCCBS survey at the north end of the greenway Sept. 26. (VL). **Vesper Sparrows** are trickling through with 11 unbanded birds at Lily Glen Sept. 20 (BH). Those Vespers that were up on the plateau all summer are also leaving. **Lincoln's Sparrows** are coming down into the valley, favoring wet and weedy areas. There has been a strong movement of **Song Sparrows** from up north coming in for the winter.

Warblers have been moving, with many already gone. Five **Orange-crowned Warblers** were observed along

the Rogue in TouVelle SP Sept. 26 (JV). A **Nashville Warbler** was in Lynn Newbry Sept. 25 (MG). A **MacGillivray's Warbler** was along Little Butte Creek in Denman Sept. 19 (JH). **Common Yellowthroats** will continue to move through until the end of Sept. **Yellow Warblers** will continue into October. While many **Yellow-rumped Warblers** move through, many will be with us for the winter. Two **Black-throated Gray Warblers** were in Liberty St. Park in Ashland Sept. 24 (NT). One **Townsend's Warbler** was there Sept. 20 (NT). A few Townsend's will spend the winter in the valley. Four **Hermit Warblers** were near Lincoln up in the Greensprings Sept. 12 (JM). Two **Wilson's Warblers** were in TouVelle SP Sept. 26 (JV).

Western Tanagers are still being seen and heard as their numbers diminish in October. A few **Black-headed Grosbeaks** linger with one at a residence in the Little Applegate Sept. 14 (MH). Perhaps the last **Lazuli Bunting** of the season left the CSNM Sept. 9 (VL). And that is where we will leave it as well...

Thank you to all observers including:

Nate Trimble, Kristi Mergenthaler, Pepper Trail, Bob Hunter, Janet Kelly, Anne Goff, Marion Hadden, Norm Barrett, Jim Livaudais, Gary Shaffer, Howard Sands, Karl Schneck, Tim Sorby, Elliot Bury, Terry Karlin, Rene Allen, Sammie Peat, John Vial, Kevin Spencer, Jacob Myers, Leslie Hart, Mary Kay Wells, Manny De Aquino, Mary De Aquino, Michael Guss, Vince Zauskey, Carol Mockridge, Emmalisa Whalley, and Violet.

All errors and omissions are my own. Peace.

Lapland Longspur
Credit: Janet Kelly



BIRDCENTRIC EVENTS FROM AROUND THE REGION

Wild Birds Unlimited

Lower Table Rocks Hikes

Erin Linton will be leading a walk to the Lower Table Rocks to look for fall migrants. Limited to 9 participants. Call the store at (541) 772-2107 or come in to register and get directions on where to meet.

DATE: Wednesday, October 13th

TIME: 9:00 am

COST: Free

Max McClarnon will be leading a walk to the Lower Table Rocks to look for fall migrants. Limited to 9 participants. Call the store at (541) 772-2107 or come in to register and get directions on where to meet.

DATE: Saturday, October 16th

TIME: 9:00 am

COST: Free

Southern Oregon Land Conservancy (SOLC)

Open Lands Day at Rogue River Preserve

SOLC is hosting an Open Lands Day at the Rogue River Preserve in Eagle Point, for those interested in exploring the biodiversity of the Rogue River Preserve and learning more about what SOLC is doing to protect land, water and wildlife habitat in the Rogue River region. To limit crowding on the trails, we require pre-registration for one of several specific time slots, which include an 8 am - 9:30 am Bird Hike led by Shannon Rio.

Pets are not allowed. Masks and maintaining a 6' distancing will be required. SOLC will observe all state-mandated COVID precautions. For more information, directions and to register, visit www.landconserve.org/ events or call Teresa Fernandez at 541-482-3069, ext.107.

DATE: Saturday, October 16th

TIME: 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

COST: Free



Renewal time for RVAS Membership

Mail check to: Rogue Valley Audubon, P. O.Box 8597, Medford, OR 97501 or join online at www.roguevalleyaudubon.org using PayPal. Thanks for your continued support.

_____ \$20 Regular membership _____ \$25 for paper newsletter _____ Additional donation (amount)

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_____ Check here if you wish to be sent a printed copy of *The Chat* by U.S. mail. Add \$25 to membership check.

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Where Birds Meet Art: The Audubon Mural Project From National Audubon Society

The Audubon Mural Project is a public-art initiative of the National Audubon Society and Gitler & _____ Gallery that draws attention to birds threatened by climate change. It started in the Har-



Baird's Sparrow by Ralph Serrano
Courtesy: Audubon.org

lem and Washington Heights neighborhoods of northern Manhattan, where pioneering bird artist John James Audubon once lived and is buried; dozens of birds now perch on doors, walls, and security gates in a several-block radius. The project is informed by Audubon's groundbreaking science report "Survival By Degrees," which found that climate change will threaten 389 bird species—at least half of all North American birds—with extinction, and that no bird will escape the impacts of climate-change-related hazards like increased wildfire and sea-level rise. The project commissions artists to paint murals of these species, and it has been widely covered in the media, including The New York Times.

Visit <https://www.audubon.org/amp> to see images of the 93 murals (featuring 131 bird species) painted thus far!



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ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE CHAT

Newsletter of the
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