

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

Deadline for the February 2022 issue is January 20



JANUARY Virtual Program

Tuesday, January 25 at 7:00 pm

Presenter: Erin Ulrich & RVAS Members

Topic: Members' Showcase

Hi, Everyone! I'd like to have our January Chapter Meeting be about YOU and the birds you've seen either in your backyard or on a special trip you've taken. Pick your top three to five photos and get ready to share them with the group! Tell us about your birds and why your photos are so special to you. Maybe you took a trip to a faraway place and found an extraordinary bird, or maybe you went to North Mountain Park and saw a White-throated Sparrow (an extraordinary bird in its own right). If you're interested in sharing some photos, **please contact me (408-499-0315**



Lazuli Bunting
Credit: Erin Ulrich

or eulrich44@gmail.com no later than January 15. Time allotted will depend on the number of people interested in sharing. If you're not sure how to do that on Zoom, let me know and I will help you out. We will also hopefully have a recap of our Ashland and Medford Christmas Bird Counts.

Hope to hear from you soon! Have safe and happy holidays!

DECEMBER Annual Party & Fundraiser

Out of an abundance of caution, we have decided once again to cancel our holiday party. We will miss seeing all of you, but we hope to see a return to normalcy in 2022. In the meantime, have a wonderful holiday season, and happy birding!

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/>

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

President: Erin Ulrich, 408-499-0315,
eulrich44@gmail.com

Vice-President: George Peterson,
sgpeterson1@msn.com

Secretary: Carol Mockridge,
mockridge50@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Kay Simmons,
mwsimmons1@verizon.net

BOARD MEMBERS

Jon Deason jdeason39@gmail.com
Kate Halstead katherine.elspeth@gmail.com
Jamie Trammell trammelle@sou.edu

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Archivist: Vacant

Annual Picnic: Wendy Gere, wendy.gere@gmail.com

Birdathon: Gretchen Hunter,
gretchenhunter@embarqmail.com

The Chat Editor: Kate Halstead, chateditor@gmail.com

CBC-Ashland: Carol Mockridge,
mockridge50@hotmail.com & Emmalisa Whalley

CBC-Medford: Bob Hunter, 541-826-5569

Conservation: Pepper Trail, ptrail@ashlandnet.net &
Juliet Grable, julietgrable@gmail.com

Education: Erin Ulrich, eulrich44@gmail.com

Field Notes: Frank Lospalluto,
fdlospalluto@gmail.com

Field Trips: Vacant

Holiday Party : Lynn McDonald,
junelynnjacobs@gmail.com

Hospitality: Jon Deason, jdeason39@gmail.com

Outreach & Tabling: Vacant

Membership: George Peterson, sgpeterson1@msn.com

Programs: Katy Reed, 541-245-5095

Publicity: Wendy Gere, wendy.gere@gmail.com

Swift Monitoring, Kate Halstead,
katherine.elspeth@gmail.com

Volunteers: Linda Kreisman, linda@ashlandhome.net

CHAPTER COMMUNICATIONS

Email: info@roguevalleyaudubon.org

The Chat: chateditor@gmail.com

Webmaster: Tom Pratum, tkp9551@gmail.com

Website: www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Facebook: Wendy Gere,
https://www.facebook.com/RogueValleyAudubonSociety/

Mailing Address

RVAS
P. O. Box 8597
Medford, OR 97501

Letter from the Board

The holiday season is upon us. It has been another challenging year for our organization, yet we keep moving forward and doing the best we can. The holidays bring happy thoughts of gathering with family and friends. Although we were not able to gather this year, it is my hope that next year will bring us back together again. In the meantime, I hope you will all consider whether you have a couple of extra hours each month to dedicate to our organization. We are in need of a Field Trip Coordinator and a Program Coordinator. We would also welcome new Board members who are interested in turning their passion for birds into action. If you would like to attend a Board meeting to see how you can help out, please let any Board member know. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Thank you to all of our wonderful RVAS members for your continued support. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year! We'll see you in January!

Erin Ulrich

2021 Vaux's Swift Fall Migration

By Carol Mockridge

The Vaux's Swift fall migration through the Rogue Valley was surveyed again by the Rogue Valley Audubon Society. This is the fourth year in which we collected almost nightly data and submitted it to vauxhappening.org, where it is compiled and published by Larry Schwitters. Comparing the yearly numbers, it is clear that the birds don't stick to one roost. Numbers were down at Hedrick Middle School, but up at the nearby residence on Florence Ave. And swifts returned to Voorhies Mansion. The Florence Ave. roost had the honor of being in the Top Ten North American Roosts for Fall 2022.

Volunteers kept asking why the patterns were different from previous migrations. For the past three years, Kathy Blackshear and I, along with many other volunteers, have counted swifts at Hedrick Middle School and Florence Ave. For the first time this fall, by communicating live with one another by phone or text while they were at different sites, they were able to document behavior they had long wondered about.

Vaux's Swifts continued on page 3

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.

Status of upcoming events

Field trips - Denman Bird Walk is back! See page 3

January Chapter Meeting:
Tuesday, Jan. 25 at 7:00 pm

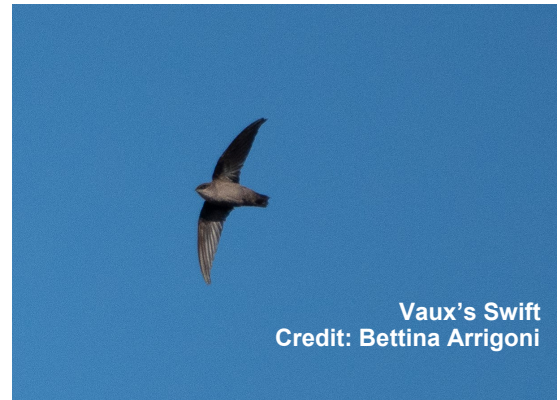
Vaux's Swifts continued from page 2

On at least three occasions, when a predator appeared, the swifts went to the other chimney and roosted there that night. "It made it more fun to be in contact in real time and know that when the birds left Hedrick, they appeared a couple of minutes later over at Florence," Kathy said. I think it's wonderful for the swifts to have the option of an alternative roost so close by.

For future migrations, we hope to recruit more volunteers so we can continue this research at multiple sites. Only then may we be able to see some patterns of which roosts they use and be able to answer the many "Why" questions.

Thanks to the following volunteers who enjoyed counting the swifts: Kate Halstead, volunteer coordinator, Kathy Blackshear, Sue Polich, John and Sam Elliott, Mitchell Yee, Erin Ulrich, Carol Mockridge, Carey Mercer, Yvonne Lynn, Kristi Mergenthaler, Tom Pratum, Peggy Leviton and Jim Harper.

2021 Vaux's Swift Fall Migration Stats		
Site	Observations	Counts
Hedrick Middle School	39	4,912
Florence Ave. (Medford)	38	12,401
Voorhies Mansion	11	4,186
Nunan Estates	2	0
Phoenix Exit	1	0



BIRDCENTRIC EVENTS FROM AROUND THE REGION

Wild Birds Unlimited

Mingus Pond Walks

Max McClarnon will lead a walk to Mingus Pond and the surrounding area this month. 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, December 11

TIME: 9:00 am

COST: Free

Erin Linton will lead a walk to Mingus Pond and the surrounding area this month. 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, December 15

TIME: 9:00 am

COST: Free

First Wednesday Bird Walk: January 5; February 2; March 2

First Wednesday Bird Walk has resumed at the Denman Wildlife Area. Walks begin at 8:30 am and end before noon. Jim Hostick is the leader. The gate will be open from 8:00 - 8:20 am. Participants need to purchase an ODFW Area Parking Permit at the ODFW Office, Sportsman Warehouse on Delta Waters and Highway 62 in Medford, or at Bi-Mart. We request that all participants be vaccinated for COVID-19.

Directions to meeting spot: We will meet at the entrance off Agate Rd. between 1/4 and 1/2 mile past the fire station on the left side of the road. Coming out Table Rock Rd., turn right on Antelope Rd. and go to the light on Agate Rd. and turn left. The fire station will be on your left at the corner of Ave. G and Agate Rd. Go 1/4 to 1/2 mile past the fire station and the gate will be on your left. Coming out on Highway 62 to Antelope Rd., turn left and go to the next light. Turn right and continue to the gate on Agate Rd.

Field Notes for Jackson County November 2021

By Frank Lospalluto

*Let the fox go back to its sandy den.
Let the wind die down. Let the shed
go black inside. Let evening come.*
Jane Kenyon

Bob Hunter spotted two **Tundra Swans** at Hammel Pond Nov. 10. A scoter found on Fish Lake Nov. 16 by Howard Sands was determined to be a **White-winged Scoter** after Howard took a closer look at his photos and had a closer look at the facial pattern and bill shape as the bird did reveal the white on its wing.

On Oct.31 John Vial picked out a **Franklin's Gull** from the 50 or so Bonaparte's Gulls that were at Emigrant Lake that day.

At least two **Rough-legged Hawks** have been observed and photographed by multiple observers the last few weeks in the Vesper Meadow/Lily Glen Area. Another Rough-legged was seen near the 4-mile marker of Indian Memorial Rd. Nov. 21 by Stacy Taueber. And another singleton was on the backside of Mt. Ashland Nov. 22.

Kate McKenzie found joy in a **Ferruginous Hawk** sighting during an autumn stroll outside of Ashland Nov. 7.

At least three and possibly five migrating **Williamson's Sapsuckers** were found near Howard Prairie Lake Nov. 20 by Elliot Bury.

Janet Kelly found a late **Hammond's Flycatcher** at Cantrall-Buckley Park in Ruch Nov. 8.

The **Loggerhead Shrike** found last month at Kirtland Rd. Ponds has been reported again recently. Janet Kelly observed a **Northern Shrike** in the Denman Hall Tract Nov. 11 and she found one near Willow Point Campground up near Howard Prairie Nov. 17. Howard Sands found one at Agate Lake Nov. 21.

Pepper Trail photographed an interesting **Dark-eyed Junco** at a feeder in North Mountain Park Nov. 20

(see photo). According to Pepper: *The white spots in the wings are what attracted my attention, and made me think it might be a "White-winged" form. However, it appears to have too much brown on the back and tertials for that form. Perhaps a hybrid "Oregon" x "White-winged"?*

The "White-winged" (*J.h. aikenii*) form breeds and mostly winters in the interior West to the Midwest, rarely venturing too far astray. There are a few records of "White-winged x Pink-sided" (*J.h. mearnsii*) hybrids. So perhaps this bird will be seen and photographed more extensively over the winter at NMP, especially with it being FeederWatch season.

There was a little late rush for the exits by a variety of warblers recently. Vince Zauskey found a **Nashville Warbler** at his feeders in Ashland Nov. 8. This is the only November record in Jackson County. Nate Trimble also had a couple of November records for the county with a **Yellow Warbler** Nov. 3 and a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** Nov. 5, both in Ashland. Anne Goff found a **Wilson's Warbler** in Cantrall-Buckley Park in Ruch Nov. 10. This too is an unusual November sighting. Janet Kelly spotted a **Common Yellowthroat** Nov. 18 at North Mountain Park.

All errors and omissions are my own. See you in the New Year! Peace.



Dark-eyed Junco
Credit: Pepper Trail

The Bear Creek Community Bird Survey Update

By Juliet Grable

It's hard to believe, but the Bear Creek Community Bird Survey, which was conceived after the Alameda Fire in 2020, has been going for nearly a year, thanks to our many volunteers and team leaders. Nate Trimble and Pepper Trail have written a story about the survey and the fire's impact on birds in the Bear Creek Greenway. Called "**Birds and the Burn: Effects of the Alameda Fire**," the story appeared in a recent issue of *Jefferson Journal*; it is also available online. The story aptly explains the importance of this citizen science effort and is illustrated with brilliant photos taken by Frank Lospalluto and Pepper.

To learn more about the survey, visit <https://www.roguevalleyaudubon.org/bear-creek-surveys/>
To volunteer, contact us at bearcreekbirdssurvey@gmail.com

The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

Good News, and Not-So-Good News

Climate change. Just about everything we do in conservation to protect birds and their habitats could be undone if climate change continues on its current path. Therefore, this Conservation Column focuses on two big climate change stories, one in Washington, and the other in Glasgow, Scotland.

Big News in Washington, DC

This month, at long last, the House of Representatives passed the \$1 trillion Infrastructure Bill – which had passed the Senate earlier this summer – and also advanced the “Build Back Better” bill, which still needs Senate passage. “These bills are a turning point that puts the U.S. on a path toward a cleaner future for both people and wildlife,” said Marshall Johnson, acting chief conservation officer at the National Audubon Society. “Our science shows that birds are telling us that we need bold action now to ensure both their survival and ours. We recognize that there is still more to do to meet the challenge posed by a changing climate, but this legislation represents a critically necessary and significant step in the right direction.”

Both bills contain critical funds for a cleaner future. The Infrastructure Bill includes over \$100 billion for public transit, electric vehicle charging stations, and updates to the electric grid, all of which will reduce use of fossil fuels. The Build Back Better Bill would have even greater—far greater—impacts on our climate future. In its current form, the bill is estimated to deliver well over one gigaton, or a billion metric tons, of greenhouse gas emissions reductions in 2030—at least ten times larger than any legislation Congress has ever passed. The framework’s \$555 billion allocation would be the largest single investment in the clean energy economy in history, spanning buildings, transportation, industry, electricity, agriculture, and climate-smart practices. The framework will set the United States on course to meet its climate targets, achieving a 50-52% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below 2005 levels in 2030. Of course, this bill still faces obstacles in the Senate, where some of these provisions could be weakened before final passage.

Still, the two landmark bills contain important funding for initiatives that will curb carbon pollution, build the climate resilience of communities, and lay the foundation for cleaner energy systems. Provisions include:

- the extensions and expansions of clean energy tax credits, along with funding for electricity transmission and demonstrations of new technologies, which will drive significant emissions reductions in the power sector,
- investments in clean transportation technologies like batteries, charging stations, and green hydrogen that will help decarbonize the transportation sector,
- funding for orphaned well clean-up and a fee on methane emissions,
- funding for a Civilian Climate Corps, to mobilize the next generation of conservation and resilience workers,
- funding to build climate resilience through investments in coastal and water resilience, including response to drought, hurricanes and other extreme weather,
- canceling the oil and gas leasing program in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and nullifying existing leases,
- funding for climate-smart agriculture and forestry to support natural climate solutions.

“We look forward to ensuring that the programs in these bills are implemented as intended, and to continue to work to protect and restore natural landscapes that provide habitat to wildlife while also protecting communities from climate threats like sea-level rise, flooding, drought, and wildfires,” said the National Audubon Society’s Johnson.

“There is much work left to do, but the resources provided by these historic bills will help give us the momentum we need to make real progress against climate change.”

Meanwhile, in Glasgow...

The UN COP26 climate talks were held in Glasgow, Scotland in November. These meetings were billed as the last, best chance for the nations of the world to respond to the “code red for humanity” warnings contained in this

Conservation Column continued on page 6

Conservation Column continued from page 5

summer's report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and commit to drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

The talks began with the urgent goal to “keep 1.5C alive,” referring to the temperature target of the Paris Agreement—what experts believe is the maximum amount of warming that would avoid catastrophic effects on natural and human environments.

The IPCC report suggested that current policies put us on course for a 2.7C temperature rise—and a world that would likely be incompatible with human civilization as we know it. While new commitments in Glasgow give hope that we can avoid that fate, unfortunately the most optimistic analysis suggest that the Cop26 summit bends the curve only to 1.8C—definitely still in the zone that would mean disastrous changes to world climate.

That leaves a gap that the deal seeks to narrow by requesting another round of national climate plans—both stronger 2030 targets and long-term strategies—next year. The package makes incremental progress on how to cope with the impacts already brought by 1.1C warming and mobilize support for developing countries.

“We can say with credibility that we have kept 1.5C within reach but its pulse is weak,” said Cop26 president Alok Sharma as the conference closed. “It will only survive if we keep our promises, if we translate commitments into rapid action and if we deliver on the expectations set out in this Glasgow Climate Pact to increase ambition to 2030 and beyond.”

And back in Oregon...

Finally, on the local level, I took part in November's virtual meeting of the Oregon Audubon Council (OAC), which set conservation priorities for 2022. I'll report on the results of this meeting in the next *Chat*. And yes, climate change remains a top conservation priority for our state chapters and for National Audubon. Now, if we could just get the nations of the world to feel the same way...

Thank You, Murray!

RVAS salutes Murray Orr for more than ten years of leading the First Wednesday Bird Walks at the Denman Wildlife Area and Agate Lake. Murray was always there at 8:00 am to open the gate at Denman for the Little Butte Creek Walk, or in some years to meet at Agate Lake. Every month the numbers of different species observed were entered into the eBird database, providing a valuable historical record. We appreciate Murray's willingness to share his expertise and introduce all participants to the wide variety of species that can be found at Denman and Agate Lake. Murray is retiring from leading the First Wednesday Bird Walks and is passing the torch to Jim Hostick. See “Birdcentric Events” on page 3 for more information about these walks.



Photo: Murray Orr (far right, in the green hat) at Agate Lake.
Credit: Carol Mockridge

NORTHWEST
nature shop 
SINCE 1985

Intriguing gifts,
toys, and tools
for discovering
the natural
world

Ziplines,
Ninjalines,
& Slacklines

Birdfeeders
Suet &
Seeds

\$5 OFF
with any purchase of \$25
or more with this coupon
Redeem at NW Nature Shop
or use at northwestnatureshop.com
Coupon Code:
welovebirds

Binoculars
& Field
Guides

Personalized Shopping & Curbside Service: 541-482-3241
Visit NorthwestNatureShop.com for online ordering
184 Oak Street, Ashland Oregon 97520

Happy Holidays!
Stay safe, and
see you in 2022!




Wild Birds Unlimited
Nature Shop

**20% OFF One
Regularly-priced Item**

*Valid 10/1/21 thru 6/30/22 at the Medford, OR WBU
store. One discount per member. Not valid on bird seed,
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 online.

At the bottom of every page on our website roguevalleyaudubon.org you will find a form where you can request to be added to our mailing list. And be assured, we will never share your e-mail address with any other organizations.

