



Audubon Society of Corvallis

the **CHAT**

Summer 2004

VOL. 33

#10

Board Election Results

At the May general meeting, we elected our 2004-05 board. Effective in September, the new board will have their contact information on the back of the Chat.

Elected Officers

President: Susan Haig, Vice President/Program Chair: Chris Mathews, Treasurer: Judy Hays, Secretary/Field Trip Coordinator, Historian: Marcia Cutler

Board Members at Large

Hal Batchelder, Renee Bellinger, Elise Elliott-Smith, Karan Fairchild (Fund-raising), Bill Proebsting, Claudia Regier (Refreshments), Dave Mellinger (alternate)

Appointed Committees and Coordinators

Conservation Chair: Jim Fairchild, Hesthavn Sanctuary Chair: Ray Drapek, Bluebird Trail Chair: Elsie Eltzroth, Refuge Keeper/Sales Table: Gary Gibson, Wildlife Watch Chair: Elzy Eltzroth, Education Chair: Kate Mathews, Electronic Communications: Sheridan McCarthy, Membership Chair: Amy Schoener, Publicity Chair Bob Smythe, Birdathon Chair: Van Mary Brocklin

Super Binocular Raffle— we have a winner

The drawing for the winner of the binocular raffle was held at our meeting on May 20. Andrea Foster of Corvallis is the lucky winner of a pair of Eagle Optics Ranger 8x42 Platinum Class binoculars! Congratulations, Andrea!

Our raffle netted \$975 for Hesthavn Sanctuary, with the sale of 195 tickets. Thanks to all who participated, and thanks again to Wild Birds Unlimited of Corvallis, for the generous donation of the binoculars.

Programs and Booths

In May, Kate Mathews and Marcia Cutler gave a presentation on Willamette Valley birds to the ALL Academy (OSU's Adventures in Lifelong Learning program). About 20 people enjoyed the slides and specimens. The next week, Kate and Marcia were joined by Jamie Simmons at the Hewlett-Packard Wellness Fair where we had a booth on ASC activities. At both events, we sold tickets for the binocular raffle.

June saw the intrepid duo at a booth at the Corvallis Farmer's Market on Saturday, the 12th and Wednesday, the 16th. They were ably assisted by Julie and Brian, Pat Smythe and Mary Garrard. Our booth featured ways to attract birds and butterflies to the yard and was well received; we even received a very generous donation to ASC. We have been asked to return to the Farmer's Market in August and are looking for volunteers for both the Corvallis Farmer's Market (possible dates: Wednesday, August 18 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturday, August 28 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) and the Albany Farmer's Market (possible date: Saturday, August 14 from 8 a.m. to 12 noon). If you have an hour or two you would like to spend helping at our booth, please contact Kate Mathews or Marcia Cutler (see contact information on the back of the Chat).

-Marcia F. Cutler

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Birdathon 2004

ASC had another successful Birdathon, bringing in just under \$3,000 for Hesthavn Sanctuary. Nine teams participated this year, and the Gungho Grebos again swept the highest number of species, with 115. The Gadabout Gadwalls were next, with 99, and the Roadrunners (a motorless team!) came in 3rd with 96. Many thanks to all the participants AND pledgers! We couldn't do it without you!

Midsummer Night's Bittern Bonanza

On Wednesday evening, June 23, I led four other birders on a walk along the west side of McFadden Marsh at Finley NWR. The highlight for all of us was at least 3 American Bitterns at the marsh, there may have been more! Two were seen in flight while a third was *oonk-galoonking*. At various points along the walk we heard the bitterns and were treated to several views of them flying around. Marsh Wrens, Virginia Rails and Bullfrogs accompanied the Bitterns' marsh melody. Landside additions to the evening chorus were plenty of Cedar Waxwings, several Western Wood-Pewees, Common Yellowthroats, Red-winged Blackbirds, Robins, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Swainson's Thrushes. Two Greater Yellowlegs were on the south side of the marsh. A special treat when we first arrived to the refuge was hearing a couple of Horned Larks in the field just west of the railroad tracks.

-Marcia F. Cutler



American Bittern

Bush Hides Environmental Policy Documents

President Bush regularly talks about the need for other countries to display “transparency”[1] and create an open system that allows citizens to see what their government is doing. But, according to a new report, the Bush administration is hiding thousands of previously public documents to “undercut the public’s right to know about contamination of the environment, transport of hazardous materials, pipeline routes, and more.” The Working Group on Community Right-to-Know this week reports that, under the guise of “national security,” more than “six thousand public documents have been removed from the web sites of over a dozen government agencies.”[2] The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), for example, has removed from its website parts of once-public Risk Management Plans — documents that helped communities identify nearby chemical hazards. The Department of Energy has taken down environmental impact statements related to nuclear power plants and hazardous materials transport information. The Department of Transportation removed from its web site much of the national pipeline mapping data that allowed communities to find hazardous pipeline routes.[3]

According to the report, President Bush has also issued executive orders that broaden the authority of agencies to withhold information from the public. May 2002’s Executive Order 12958 gave the EPA Administrator authority to designate documents “Secret” or “Confidential,” two of the three highest possible security classifications. The White House has even reduced the public’s access to unclassified information, passing bills allowing agencies to withhold “sensitive but unclassified” information from the public.

For more, see the report at www.Bushgreenwatch.org.

Sources:

1. Presidential Remarks , WhiteHouse.gov, 6/22/2004, <http://daily.misleader.org/ctt.asp?u=1334272&l=41869>.
2. “Bush Administration Secrecy Imperils Environment and Public Health”, Bushgreenwatch.org, 6/23/2004, <http://daily.misleader.org/ctt.asp?u=1334272&l=41870>.
3. “Secrecy in the Bush Administration Obstructs Communities’ Right-to-Know”, Working Group on Community Right to Know (crtk.org), 6/23/2004

Bird Sound CD ROM for the Willamette Valley

More than 100 species recorded in the Willamette Valley. The CD ROM works on any computer but does not play on a stereo. Contact Don Boucher for more information. 753-7689, bouchdon@juno.com

Sample sounds at www.neighborhood-naturalist.com

USFWS Rules Help Timber Companies and Harm Species

Comments due July 26.

Normally, the Endangered Species Act protects threatened and endangered species and their habitats. However, timber companies, developers, and other landowners can apply for “Incidental Take Permits” allowing them to continue destroying imperiled species’ populations and habitats. While these permits must be accompanied by Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) that are supposed to mitigate the impacts of the habitat destruction/degradation, most HCPs still allow substantial habitat losses and/or fail to meet species’ recovery needs.

In 1998 the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) created the “No Surprises” rule. This rule locks/in harmful Take Permits/HCPs for decades and exempts landowners from fixing most problems that may be found with their permits/HCPs—despite the fact that conditions inevitably change over time. The “No Surprises” rule is one of the main reasons that most HCPs function as Endangered Species Act exemptions instead of genuine conservation plans.

A recent court order requires the USFWS to reconsider “No Surprises,” in the process of reissuing the “permit revocation rules” for Take Permits/HCPs. However, the USFWS has not proposed to reform “No Surprises.” The USFWS is also proposing to reissue its revocation rules without correcting their problems.

Please write to the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and encourage them to:

- 1) Reform the “No Surprises” policy by developing rules that require HCPs to:
 - a) address all foreseeable changing circumstances,
 - b) include comprehensive adaptive management programs, and
 - c) allow landowners to modify their HCPs over time.
- 2) Modify the permit revocation rules to:
 - a) include the original, pre-1999 permit revocation criteria in full,
 - b) clarify that the USFWS has the authority to modify or revoke Take Permits/HCPs if they are found to impair species’ long-term recovery,
 - c) give the USFWS authority to revoke Take Permits if the permittee fails to make necessary adaptive management changes to their HCPs, and
 - d) require the recipients of Take Permits to file performance bonds or other securities to guarantee the implementation of their HCPs’ mitigation measures.

Comments must be received by the USFWS by July 26, 2004.

Chief, Division of Consultation, Habitat Conservation Planning,

Recovery, and State Grants,
US Fish & Wildlife Service

4401 N. Fairfax Dr., #420,
Arlington, VA, 22203.

Fax: 703.358.2229. Email: ppr@fws.gov.

Field Trip Schedule

July 10	Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM
July 14	Bat Watch Albany 8 PM
July 28	Wednesday morning bird walk 8 AM
Aug 14	Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM
Aug 25	Wednesday morning bird walk 8 AM
Sept 11	Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM

Local Morning Trip

Our second Saturday morning local field trip meets at the Avery Park Rose Garden parking area at 7:30 AM. This field trip is especially interesting for beginner birders and birders new to Oregon’s mid-valley area. We spend a lot of time identifying local birds by sight and song. We visit the valley National Wildlife Refuges—Finley, Baskett Slough, and Ankeny as well as other birding areas throughout the year. Field trip leader is Paula Vanderheul, 541-752-0470, vanderp@peak.org

Wednesday walk schedule:

June 23:	McFadden/Cheadle Marshes, Finley NWR (5:30 PM north end of LBCC Benton Center parking lot or 6 PM at McFadden Marsh parking lot by viewing blind on Bruce Road.)
July 14:	Bat watch. (Meet at 8 PM at north end of LBCC Benton Center parking lot to car pool or 8:30 PM at west end of parking lot for Takena Point Restaurant [formerly Buzzsaw], 421 Water Ave., Albany)
July 28:	Willamette Park (8 AM end of south parking lot [the turnaround area] accessed from Goodnight Ave).
Aug 25:	Bezell Memorial Forest (8 AM Avery Park or 8:30 AM in parking lot by restrooms)
Sept 29:	Bald Hill (8 AM in Oak Creek parking lot),
Oct 27:	Snagboat Bend (8 AM Avery Park or 8:30 AM at Snagboat Bend).

If you have any questions about the Wednesday bird walks contact Marcia Cutler at 541-752-4313 or mccarmel@peak.org

Field Notes

April 27 through June 21, 2004

As spring migration continued our family also migrated, but only a few miles from the NE side of E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area to the west side. It's surprising how a move of just a few miles in the Willamette Valley can bring one into such different bird habitat!

At our new place on the flank of the first hill south of Coffin Butte (aptly named "Poison Oak Hill"), we now regularly seeing oak savannah and scrubland species like Wrentit, Lazuli Bunting, Willow Flycatcher and Lesser Goldfinch which we seldom saw on the valley floor, but we also seem to have left behind some of the field birds like Savannah Sparrows and Horned Larks.

As for the period gone by, I seem to recall it rained a good deal of the time during May (as it always seems to do while moving). However, I notice that others have commented on dry conditions in the Cascades. Despite the good snowfall this winter, a warm early spring caused much of that to disappear. After a hike along the McKenzie River trail 2 May, Larry McQueen reported that "This beautiful forest is unnaturally dry — shouldn't be in the spring!"

Back down in the valley, Marcia Cutler reports that the Peacock Larkspur, one of the Willamette Valley's rare endemic prairie wildflowers, was blooming very nicely at the prairie overlook at the north entrance of Finley NWR on 8 May. This is a good season to keep in mind some of our prairie and savannah bird species which have also declined significantly in recent years, due to loss of habitat and other human impacts.

Results from the North American Migration Count (NAMC) on 8 May, for Benton Co. and Linn Co., were compiled by Marcia Cutler and Mark Nikas respectively.

Abbreviations & Locations: *NWR = National Wildlife Refuge. E.E. Wilson (Wildlife Area) is north of Corvallis along Hwy 99W. Ankeny (NWR) is in Marion Co. s. of Salem. Baskett Slough (NWR) is near Dallas in Polk Co. Cabell Marsh and McFadden Marsh are at Finley (NWR) south of Corvallis. Fort Hoskins County Park is on Kings Valley Rd. Snag Boat Bend in Linn Co. near Peoria is an annex of Finley NWR. Stewart Lake is on the HP campus in north Corvallis. Vineyard Mtn. is on the north side of Lewisburg, n. of Corvallis.*

Sightings:

Jamie Simmons and Matt Hunter saw a family of **Pied-billed Grebes** at Finley 31 May. A **Double-crested Cormorant** in Linn Co. on 8 May (NAMC) and three at Finley 31 May (Tim Lee) were unusual inland sightings for so late in the spring.

An **American Bittern** was reported at Finley 1 May (fide Stuart Sparkman). While canoeing down the Willamette from Albany to Buena Vista 19 Jun, Mitra, Max and Gilda Geier saw a **Green Heron** and an active rookery of about 40 **Great Blue Heron** nests.

Barbara and Dan Gleason saw two **swans** of undetermined species at Fish Lake in Linn Co. 12 Jun. They noted that the swans behaved as a territorial pair, with one swan chasing a **Canada Goose** up a bank. There are no records of native swans breeding in the Oregon Cascades. One possibility is that these might be Mute Swans expanding from the introduced colony in Bend.

Sally Klein reports that a friend near Wren had **Wood Duck** family nesting around her pond. About a dozen ducklings appeared in early May, but by 9 May only two were seen, attended by their father while the mother gave a broken-wing distraction display to lure off the observer and her dog.

Linn and Benton Cos. yielded one **Gadwall** apiece and an **American Wigeon** was also found in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC).

Mallard drakes have a generally bad reputation as "deadbeat dads," but on 10 May Alan Reid watched one which was actively attending six ducklings with their mother, along the McKenzie River in Lane Co. He reports that the drake swam around in a subtle sort of

distraction display until the hen and ducklings had safely disappeared into the bushes.

The first local report of a **Blue-winged Teal** this spring was at Baskett Slough 2 May (Troy Guy, Joe Fontaine). A male at the Tangent sewage ponds 8 May (Randy & Mary Campbell) was one of five in Linn Co., along with a pair at Finley (NAMC). Pairs were still present in three locations s. of Corvallis 31 May (J Simmons, M Hunter).

A total of 37 **Northern Shovelers** were found in Linn & Benton Cos. 8 May (NAMC). One **Northern Pintail** and 8 **Green-winged Teal** also remained in our part of the valley through 8 May (NAMC).

A pair of **Ring-necked Ducks** made a return showing at Stewart Lake 30 Apr (J Simmons). A drake was on a pond at Snow Peak Logging Rd and Richardson's Gap Rd 6 Jun (Jeff Harding, Bill Thackaberry). Two **Lesser Scaup** were in Linn Co. and six were on the Philomath sewage ponds 8 May (NAMC).

On 1 Jun Paul Sullivan spotted a male **Harlequin Duck** loafing on a rock in the North Santiam River, at MP 63 on Hwy 22 above Detroit.

Six **Buffleheads** were found in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC). 20 **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were on Lost Lake 24 May (A Reid).

18 **Hooded Mergansers**, 10 **Common Mergansers**, and one **Ruddy Duck** were found in Linn & Benton Cos. 8 May (NAMC). Jamie Simmons and Matt Hunter saw a **Hooded Merganser** family at Finley 31 May. A brood of eight **Hooded Merganser** ducklings on a pond near Alsea on 11 Jun were half-grown and seemed to be doing fine, despite the disappearance of their parents shortly after they had hatched (Wayne Hoffman).

The **Osprey** count for Linn/Benton Co. 8 May came to 23 (NAMC). A **White-tailed Kite** showed up in Oak Creek neighborhood west of Corvallis 7 & 8 May (Bob and Elke Doss fide Bill Proebsting).

Remarkably, two different observers (Sally Klein and Nancy Hyde) spotted what must have been the same **Bald Eagle** over the Safeway in downtown Corvallis 9 May. Both described the eagle as flying with something in its feet (a stick or a short snake?) as it was harrassed by two smaller birds.

On 29 Apr Marcia Cutler saw an apparent food exchange (courtship ritual) between a male and female **Northern Harrier** at McDowell Creek and Berlin Rds in Linn Co. 29 Apr. On 31 May Dan & Anne Heyerly saw a male harrier at the same location, suggesting nesting at this location. A male and several juveniles were at Finley 31 May (T Lee).

Marcia Cutler and Mary Garrard saw a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** at Bald Hill City Park 5 May. Mike Lippsmeyer saw one flying over the Hwy 99W toward the hill just south of Coffin Butte opposite E.E. Wilson three times in early June. He suggested there might be a nest there. While typing up these field notes on the back porch on the morning of 27 Jun, I saw an adult **Sharp-shinned Hawk** repeatedly chase after the **Turkey Vultures** who like to soar over that ridge in the mornings, which seems to confirm Mike's hunch.

A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was seen along the east side of Cabell Marsh at Finley 8 May (NAMC). One flew over a clearcut on Middle Ridge s of Lebanon 13 May (Raylene Gordin). On 6 May a **Swainson's Hawk** spent a few minutes circling over the Eugene airport before continuing northbound (M Nikas). Two juvenile **Red-tailed Hawks** fledged from a nest on Poison Oak Hill 15 Jun. A **Peregrine Falcon** was at Lava Lake on 19 Jun (J Harding).

Randy & Pam Comeleo saw a **Ruffed Grouse** with a brood of chicks near Beaver Pond at Finley 30 May. A family of six showed up along the forest edge on Middle Ridge s of Lebanon 12 Jun (R Gordin). Two **Ruffed Grouse** and a calling **Blue Grouse** were at Fitton Green Open Space 6 Jun (Paula Vanderheul, M Cutler). On 13 May I hiked last year's B & B burn near the Corbett Sno-Park just east of Santiam Pass, and found three male **Blue Grouse** booming from isolated trees with green needles, all adjacent to what must have been grassy forest openings before the fire. Seven were found on Mary's Peak 22 May (R Hoyer).

Two **Wild Turkey** hens with 4-5 poults were at Fitton Green 6 Jun (M Cutler, P Vanderheul). A **Mountain Quail** was calling in the distance near Middle Ridge s of Lebanon 21 May (R Gordin). Dave Mellinger saw one in MacDonald SF near Crescent Valley HS on 31 May and again on 2 Jun. Pat Waldron has had pairs of both **Mountain** and **California Quail** at her place e. of Scio, but she had seen no young as of 21 Jun.

On 16 May Mike Lippsmeyer heard what seemed to be the call of a **Virginia Rail** twice from overhead, while out late in the evening at his place in SE Polk Co. Some were found in more conventional circumstances at E.E. Wilson 16 May (Don Boucher), and a pair with seven black chicks were along the east edge of Cabell Marsh 30 May (R & P Comeleo). On 8 May Randy & Mary Campbell had the rare experience of seeing a flying **Sora** in SW Linn Co. Two **Sandhill Cranes** were at Lava Lake in the Cascades 19 Jun (J Harding).

Two **Black-bellied Plovers** stopped by the Halsey sewage ponds 9 May (R Campbell). About 12 **Semipalmated Plovers** were at Baskett Slough 2 May (T Guy, J Fontaine). On 9 May, Sally Klein saw a **Killdeer** give its distraction display to defend two chicks by a pond near Wren.

Ten **Black-necked Stilts** were at the marsh along Farmer Rd e. of Baskett Slough 8 May (R Gerig). At least two continued in the area through 11 Jun (B Tice). A late migrant **Greater Yellowlegs** was still at Finley 25 May (Ellen Cantor), after 11 were found in the Linn/Benton area 8 May (NAMC). Three **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at Baskett Slough 2 May (J Fontaine, T Guy). Single **Solitary Sandpipers** were reported from the Baskett Slough vicinity 2-8 May (J Fontaine; R Gerig).

Western Sandpipers and **Dunlin** were noted at Finley by the Salem Audubon field trip 1 May (S Sparkman). A dozen **Least Sandpipers** were still around for the Linn/Benton migration counts 8 May, along with one **Long-billed Dowitcher** and one **Wilson's Snipe** which were both found in Linn Co.

This spring again brought good numbers of **Wilson's Phalaropes** to the valley, including 3-4 at the Halsey sewage ponds 8-9 May and 2 at the Pioneer Villa ponds 9 May (R Campbell). One along Bruce Rd at Finley 29 May (Justin Rodecap) was followed by two pairs there by 31 May (Randy Moore; J Simmons). Larger numbers have been seen around Baskett Slough where this species has become an expected breeder in recent years.

A **Red-necked Phalarope** was at the Halsey sewage ponds 8-9 May (R & M Campbell). Three were along Bruce Rd 22 May and were some seen there through 28 May (R Hoyer; R Moore). Three pairs were swimming and displaying on a pond near Big Lake in the Cascades 26 May (Mitch Ratzlaff)

On 18 Jun Matt Hunter heard a **Caspian Tern** over NW Corvallis, then looked up to see nine flying high in the sky. Two **Black Terns** were in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC), and a copulating pair were at Baskett Slough 11 Jun (B Tice).

Pam Vorachek had a single **Band-tailed Pigeon** show up at her feeder near Dallas 17 May, which was joined by a whole flock by 26 May. Hundreds have frequented Pat Waldron's feeders e. of Scio through May and the first part of June.

A **Western Screech-Owl** was seen sticking its head out of a nest box on Vineyard Mtn 18 Jun, but there was no sign of chicks (M Eltzroth). Lisa Millbank saw a **Short-eared Owl** over a field two miles s of Albany near Hwy 99E on 13 May (fide D Boucher).

Two **Common Nighthawks** showed up to perform diving displays over Jim, Karan and Karl Fairchild's place 6 mi. sw of Philomath 4 Jun. More **Vaux's Swifts** arrived in early May, with some near Lewisburg 4-5 May (M Eltzroth; P Adamus). 41 were tallied in the Linn/Benton area by 8 May (NAMC).

A male **Anna's Hummingbird** in the Timberhill neighborhood of NW Corvallis was doing his mating display dive 16 May; Andrea Foster wondered if this might mean the start of a second brood. An adult female was at Vi and Clarence Omoto's feeder in NW Corvallis 16 Jun (fide

Elsie Eltzroth).

On 5 May Marcia Cutler and Mary Garrard watched a female **Rufous Hummingbird** diligently work a whole stand of Fringe Cups while ignoring the flowering Camas. I can believe it would take some diligence to glean much nectar from such small flowers! A male and a female were interacting near our place on Poison Oak Hill 15 Jun. That was my last sighting of a male; typically they move to higher elevations in late June.

Last year's B & B burn is shaping up as a good place to look for woodpeckers. On 23 May, Dan and Anne Heyerly saw a **Lewis's Woodpecker** flying one half mile e. of Lost Lake, where **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** can regularly be found. Steve Shunk reported a **Black-backed Woodpecker** along Hwy 20 19 May, and Jeff Harding and Tom Snetsinger found a pair tending a nest with young above the Santiam Sno-Park 19 Jun. **Hairy Woodpeckers** and **Northern Flickers** were conspicuous when I hiked the burn above Corbett Sno-Park on 13 May. **American Three-toed Woodpeckers** were reported from the area last month. Wil Geier saw a **Pileated Woodpecker** at Camp Davidson at the west end of the burn in late May.

Three **Olive-sided Flycatchers** arrived near Lewisburg 5 May (P Adamus). Some showed up on Middle Ridge s of Lebanon by 13 May (R Gordin). One at Snag Boat Bend 31 May (J Simmons, M Hunter) was notable as a low-elevation sighting. The first **Western Wood-Pewee** of the spring was calling near Finley on 3 May (Karen Sparkman). Two were at Lewisburg by 5 May (P Adamus). Arrivals were noted at Middle Ridge 14 May (R Gordin) and at Lost Lake by 24 May (A Reid).

One **Willow Flycatcher** was detected in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC). Some were at E.E. Wilson 16 May (D Boucher). Reports from later in the season included several in a clearcut on Dawson-Green Peak Rd 22 May (R Hoyer), several at Fort Hoskins County Park 26 May (M Cutler), some at Snag Boat Bend 31 May (J Simmons, M Hunter), one on Middle Ridge s of Lebanon 4 Jun (R Gordin), and one in Bald Hill Park 16 Jun (M Cutler).

Hammond's Flycatchers had shown up in breeding habitat along the McKenzie River trail near Trail Bridge Reservoir by 2 May (L McQueen). Ten singing birds were in mixed forest near Summit in the Coast Range 13 May (Darrel Faxon). A total of 19 **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** were tallied in Benton & Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC).

Western Kingbirds made a good showing in our area this season. In Linn Co., two or three were near Ward Butte 9 May (R Campbell), one was along Richardson's Gap Rd 18 May (J Harding), a pair was at Griggs Dr. and Providence School Rd n of Lebanon 22 May (J Harding), and a pair was nesting atop the power lines at Snow Peak Logging Rd and Richardson's Gap Rd by 6 Jun (J Harding, B Thackaberry). Another was along Gap Rd s. of Brownsville 9 Jun (R Gerig), and one stopped by Middle Ridge s. of Lebanon 12 Jun (R Gordin). In Benton Co., following the previously reported arrival near Lewisburg 27 Apr, Sandy Bryce saw one near the OSU Horse Center w. of Corvallis 4 May. A pair was nesting along Oak Creek Dr. west of there by 4 Jun (T Guy, Lisa Sheffield), and "still going strong" as of 24 Jun (J Fontaine). A kingbird also showed up along Bruce Rd at Finley 28 May (R Moore). Another pair began nest-building at our place on Poison Oak Hill around 7 Jun, and began incubating by 19 Jun despite the unwelcome attention of a **Steller's Jay** which the kingbirds emphatically drove away.

Cassin's Vireos returned to Middle Ridge s of Lebanon by mid-April (R Gordin). A dozen each of **Cassin's Vireos** and **Warbling Vireos** were found in the Linn/Benton area 8 May (NAMC). Adult **Hutton's Vireos** with begging fledglings were at Fitton Green Open Space 6 Jun (P Vanderheul, M Cutler). On 6 Jun Jeff Harding and Bill Thackaberry checked the cottonwoods along Crabtree Creek for **Red-eyed Vireos**, which have been found there in past years, but they did not detect any.

see "Field Notes" on next page

Field Notes *continued from previous page*

Gray Jays were reported from two Coast Range locations: a clearcut on Dawson-Green Peak Rd 22 May (R Hoyer) and in the Ritner Creek drainage of s. Polk Co. 8 Jun (T Snetsinger).

Reports of **Horned Larks** (all presumably of the "Streaked" or "strigata" subspecies which is of concern in the Willamette Valley) included some near Finley 1 May (S Sparkman), totals of 23 in Linn Co. and 3 n. of the Corvallis Airport in Benton Co. 8 May (NAMC), upward of 20 in the area from Baskett Slough north to Perrydale 15 May (M Cutler, P Vanderheul), 3 males singing on 17 May from a mint field where they nested east of E.E. Wilson last year, and a pair at Stapleton Rd x Corvallis Rd 18 May (Mike Lippsmeyer). By 11 Jun Randy Moore estimated the number of territorial males south of Bruce Rd at Finley to be at least 12, with at least three more along each of Dawson and Blatchford Rds. in Linn Co. Three more were detected at Triumph and Dennison Rds. in the Marion Co. part of the Scio Breeding Bird Survey route (Jeff & Patricia Harding). A pair were along Seven Mile Ln 20 Jun (Dan Hoyerly).

20 **Purple Martins** were found in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC). On 26 May Tom Snetsinger saw a pair in the gravel along Bruce Rd at Finley, but sadly the female was dead (apparently struck by a vehicle), with the male sitting in the road and poking at the female's body.

By 18 Jun the **Purple Martins** at Pat Waldron's place e. of Scio appeared to be getting down to nesting. On 14 Jun Pat spread a bucket of crushed oyster shell which drew many swallows, including **Northern Rough-winged** and **Barn Swallows**. One **Tree Swallow** at Willamette Park was incubating eggs by 1 May (P Vanderheul). About five pairs of **Violet-green Swallows** showed in late April up to nest at Middle Ridge s. of Lebanon, where Raylene Gordin watched one pair wrangle with a **House Wren** over a nest box. Don Boucher noticed the **Violet-green Swallows** in Corvallis had started their pre-dawn chorus by 14 May.

A total of just six **White-breasted Nuthatches** were tallied in Linn & Benton Cos. 8 May (NAMC). Raylene Gordin reported a couple of sightings from her place s. of Lebanon on 7 & 14 May. As of 11 Jun a pair at Stewart Lake were feeding two young and another pair had "an unknown number of screaming youngsters" inside a nest box in SE Polk Co. 11 Jun (M Lippsmeyer). One was tooting from high in a walnut tree at Dick & Kathy Sherman's place in Scio on 19 Jun.

A **Rock Wren** was in the burn above the Santiam Sno-Park 19 Jun (J Harding). One or two **American Dippers** were observed carrying food to a presumed nest at McDowell Creek Park n. of Sweet Home 29 Apr (M Cutler). **Golden-crowned Kinglet** sightings included one in Lewisburg 29 May (P Adamus) and some in the Ritner Creek drainage of s. Polk Co. 8 Jun (T Snetsinger). A singing **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** at Avery Park 30 Apr (P Vanderheul) and eight in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC) were the only reports this period.

Mountain Bluebirds are another species that seems to find the scorched but open habitat of the B & B burn to be livable. I found one pair above Corbett Sno-Park 13 May, and Jeff Harding found another near Santiam Sno-Park 19 Jun.

A **Townsend's Solitaire** was at Fitton Green 27 Apr (T Guy). The first **Swainson's Thrush** report this season was of one calling as it passed over SW Corvallis on the night of 2 May (Sandy Bryce). One popped up from a thicket at our old place NE of E.E. Wilson on 4 May and gave several "whit!" calls which assured me it was not a **Hermit Thrush**. The **Swainson's Thrushes** s. of Lebanon began singing on the morning of 14 May, and four days later Raylene Gordin saw one visiting her water feature. Two **Hermit Thrushes** were singing on Mary's Peak 17 Jun (D Mellinger). **Cedar Waxwings** were noted by many observers from late May onward, when they became conspicuous around fruit trees.

Nashville Warblers were noted at Lava Lake 19 Jun (J Harding). There were no low-elevation reports from the area this season. A **Yellow Warbler** showed up in Lewisburg 5 May (P Adamus), and four were

NE of E.E. Wilson the next day. By 8 May dozens had arrived in Linn & Benton Co. (NAMC).

A pair of **Audubon's Warblers** stopped by Middle Ridge s of Lebanon 3 May (R Gordin). Two males were singing in the B & B burn above Corbett Sno-Park by 13 May, and a pair of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were at Lost Lake 22 May (Greg Gillson). One straggler was at Lewisburg 29 May (P Adamus).

A **Townsend's Warbler** was singing from young trees adjacent to a clearcut s. of Lebanon 23-26 Apr (R Gordin). Dave Mellinger heard many at Fort Hoskins State Park 2 May.

A few migrant **Hermit Warblers** were singing in mixed woods NE of E.E. Wilson 4 May. By 8 May the count in the Linn/Benton area reached 34 (NAMC). I heard four males (one seen well enough to rule out a Townsend's x Hermit Warbler hybrid) singing in the B & B burn above Corbett Sno-Park 13 May. A **Northern Waterthrush** was in the willows on the SE side of Lost Lake 23 May (R Hoyer).

The first local report of a **MacGillivray's Warbler** was in clearcut on Middle Ridge s of Lebanon 30 Apr (R Gordin). A total of 5 were found in Linn & Benton Cos. 8 May (NAMC). A pair was among the species taking up residence in the B & B burn near Corbett Sno-Park on 13-19 May (Steve Shunk).

Passage of **Wilson's Warblers** was still going strong 8 May, with 52 reported from the Linn/Benton area. Six were in breeding habitat at Lost Lake by 24 May (A Reid). Low-elevation reports from later in the season included many at Fort Hoskins Park 26 May and some in Bald Hill Park 30 May (M Cutler), one in Lewisburg 3 Jun (P Adamus), and one s. of Lebanon 4 Jun (R Gordin).

Four calling **Yellow-breasted Chats** were at E.E. Wilson by 1 May (K Sparkman), with numbers increasing to at least 13 there by 16 May (D Boucher). Single Yellow-breasted Chats were reported from the bike path near Starker Park in SW Corvallis 7 May (L Millbank fide D Boucher), and near Summit in the Coast Range 13 May (D Faxon), the last being a notably westward location. Rich Hoyer noted the species in a clearcut on Dawson-Green Peak Rd 22 May, and Raylene Gordin found another in a clearcut s. of Lebanon 1 Jun. On 6 Jun Jeff Harding and Bill Thackaberry heard one at Larwood Bridge and several along the Snow Peak Logging Rd near Lacombe.

A pair of **Western Tanagers** turned up on Middle Ridge s of Lebanon on 2 May (R Gordin). 18 at Peavy Arboretum 8 May suggested a significant movement (fide M Cutler). A male tanager was seen in the Oak Creek neighborhood 5 Jun (Janet Jarvis).

A few more **Chipping Sparrows** showed up including one s. of Lebanon 4 May (R Gordin) and two in Lewisburg 5 May (P Adamus). Five were tallied in the Linn/Benton area 8 May (NAMC). One in Lewisburg 3 Jun (P Adamus) was late enough to indicate a locally breeding bird.

Vesper Sparrows are another species that has been greatly reduced in the Willamette Valley. One was west of the soccer fields at Willamette Park 1 May (P Vanderheul). The migration count on 8 May turned up just three in Linn Co. and none in Benton Co. On 28 May Randy Moore saw one along Bruce Rd at Finley, and he heard another in the Oak Creek neighborhood w. of Corvallis around 4 Jun. Marcia Cutler and Paula Vanderheul found several in the upper meadow of the Fitton Green Open Space 6 Jun. Roy Gerig heard a few s. of Brownsville 8 Jun. Jeff and Patricia Harding found two in young Christmas tree plantings along the Scio BBS route 13 Jun.

A **Black-throated Sparrow** at Fish Lake 24 May (Dan & Barbara Gleason fide Dael Parsons) was a rare bird for our area. Usually this species sticks to the dry, rocky desert slopes of southeastern Oregon.

A **Savannah Sparrow** in a clearcut s of Lebanon 30 Apr (R Gordin) was likely a migrant, perhaps a different subspecies than the ones that breed abundantly in the grass fields at lower elevations.

One **Grasshopper Sparrow** was found in Linn Co. 8 May (NAMC). One was near Gap Rd and Rowland Rd s. of Brownsville 8 Jun (R Gerig). Two or more were reported from the same area 14-16 Jun (Bob

Stites; Al Prigge).

Both **Fox Sparrows** and **Lincoln's Sparrows** were at Lava Lake in the Cascades 19 Jun (J Harding).

The last report of wintering **White-throated Sparrows** was of the wintering birds last seen in Peoria 1 May (R & M Campbell). Three **Golden-crowned Sparrows** stuck around the Linn/Benton area long enough to be counted 8 May (NAMC); the last report was one in Lewisburg 12 May (P Adamus).

Mary Garrard found a **Dark-eyed Junco** nest with five eggs along the trail at Bald Hill Park 5 May (fide M Cutler). Several juveniles were noted at Fitton Green 6 Jun (M Cutler).

Singing male **Black-headed Grosbeaks** were noted at Stewart Lake 27 Apr (J Simmons) and s. of Lebanon 28 Apr. A female NE of E.E. Wilson 4 May arrived a few days after the males, as is typical. The first arrival on Vineyard Mtn was 8 May (M & E Eltzroth, Karen Harvey).

Many **Lazuli Buntings** were at Finley by 1 May (S Sparkman). Several observers from around the valley suggested that numbers were higher than usual this year. One male even turned up near Nashville in the Coast Range (Lincoln Co.) 15 May (Carol Krog fide D Faxon). A notable high-elevation report was two at Lava Lake 19 Jun (J Harding).

The migration count 8 May turned up 21 **Western Meadowlarks** in Linn Co. but only 4 in Benton Co., where all reports this period came from Finley. A few were singing in Richardson's Gap 6 Jun (J Harding, B Thackaberry), and a few more were a few miles NE of Stayton in Marion Co. 13 Jun (J Harding).

A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was reported at Cheadle Marsh in Finley 1 May (fide S Sparkman). On 17-18 May Justin Rodecap saw one in a small marsh along Bruce Rd, and reports from this location continued through 31 May (J Simmons). One also turned up in a pine tree at Pat Waldron's place e. of Scio 3 Jun, a big surprise as she seldom sees blackbirds of any sort there. **Bullock's Orioles** were heard at Willamette Park 1 May (P Vanderheul). One was at E.E. Wilson 16 May (D Boucher).

On 12 May 50 **White-winged Crossbills** were discovered at Santiam Sno-Park (Jay Withgott, Tim Janzen). About 30 were still there 19 May (Steve Shunk), and lone individuals were reported by various birders through 4 Jun. Large numbers of **Red Crossbills** and **Pine Siskins** were also seen regularly in the area.

Several **Western Pond Turtles** in the marsh west of the restrooms were noted by the Salem Audubon field trip on their visit to Finley 1 May (S Sparkman). A young **Rubber Boa** was along the McKenzie River trail near Trail Bridge Reservoir 2 May (L McQueen). A nearly 3-ft-long specimen was the first snake I encountered in our new yard to the west of E.E. Wilson, on 5 May. Al Prigge spotted 4 to 6 **Monarch** butterflies s. of Brownsville 16 Jun.

Coastal Notes

On 13 May Wayne Hoffman and Roy Lowe both decided to go fishing offshore on boats headed to the "Chicken Ranch" some 35 miles offshore of Newport. Between the two of them, they saw an interesting assortment of pelagic birds, including **Black-footed Albatross** (14 sightings but probably fewer individuals), one **Flesh-footed Shearwater** about 20 miles offshore (seen by Wayne), three **Pink-footed Shearwaters** 37 miles offshore (seen by Roy), and about 1000 **Sooty Shearwaters** which were mostly well offshore. Roy saw two **Arctic Terns** and 8 **Cassin's Auklets** around 37 miles offshore. Wayne noted that five **Pigeon Guillemots** were more than ten miles out, and 2 of the 35 **Rhinoceros Auklets** he saw were standing on a floating log.

Roy also saw some birds that were not so expected offshore. About 37 miles out he saw a **Whimbrel** flew low over the boat. Later when they stopped to fish at 19 miles out, an exhausted female Townsend's Warbler landed on board. After unsuccessfully searching for insects for a few minutes, the bird flew on, despite that the Coast Range was barely visible in the distance.

Mary Van Brocklin enjoyed the abundance of **Brandt's** and **Pe-**

lagic Cormorants at Yaquina Head 17 May, as well as three **Caspian Terns** and 31 **Whimbrels** at the Hatfield Marine Science Center.

Some unusual onshore birds included four **Great Egrets** and a pair of **Blue-winged Teal** along Beaver Creek 17 May, and a very late migrant **Solitary Sandpiper** there on 24 May (D Faxon). One male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** even dropped by a farm 5 miles up the Yachats River, 12-16 May (fide Range Bayer, Betty Bahn).

Next months

Please send your sightings for the September Chat by August 23 issue to:

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18th annual Oregon Shorebird Festival

September 3-4, 2004 in Charleston, OR

Join in on the sensation of fall shorebird migration. The Oregon Shorebird Festival will have a weekend full of activities for birders at any level. Expert guided field trips to Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge will give participants a chance to see common migrants including Pacific Golden-plover, Semi-palmated Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Western Sandpiper and rarities that have been seen in the past including Mongolian plover, Curlew Sandpiper, and Ruff. A pelagic trip on Saturday will be led by Greg Gillson and crew highlighting Black-footed Albatross, Northern Fulmar, Sooty Shearwater, Red-necked Phalarope and more. Additional guided field trips to Coos Bay and New River will turn up Baird's Sandpiper and Western Snowy Plover along with a variety of other birds. Evening programs will feature lectures by prominent bird researchers. To register for the festival or for more information contact Dawn Grafe with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at 541-867-4550 or oregoncoast@fws.gov.

Dawn Grafe, Refuge Operations Specialist, Oregon Coast NWR Complex, 2127 SE Marine Science Drive Newport, OR 97365, Phone 541-867-4550 Fax 541-867-4551 Website: <http://oregoncoast.fws.gov>

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the **CHAT**

Calendar

July 10	Saturday local morning birding**
July 14	Bat Watch**
July 16	Summer Board meeting and potluck at Bill Proebsting's
July 28	Wednesday morning bird walk**
August	No Chat issue in August
Aug 14	Saturday local morning birding**
Aug 23	Field Notes deadline
Aug 25	Wednesday morning bird walk**
Aug 26	Chat deadline for September
Sept 9	Board Meeting 7:30 PM
Sept 11	Saturday local morning birding**
Sept 16	General Meeting 7:30 PM

Everybody's welcome, including nonmembers,
to any ASC function

**See page 75 for field trip descriptions

The Chat is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. Annual ASC memberships are \$20 for an individual, \$25 for a family, \$15 for a student. Chat-only subscriptions are \$10.