

Audubon Society of Corvallis

the **CHAT**

September 2004

VOL. 34

#1

General Meeting

September 15, Thursday, 7:30-9:00 PM

Corvallis Public Library

The first meeting of the 2004-5 year will be held Thursday, September 15, beginning at 7:30 PM in the public meeting room of the Corvallis/Benton County Public Library, at Fifth and Monroe, in downtown Corvallis. As usual, the meeting will be preceded by a social period, with refreshments, beginning at 7:00.

Bird Sounds and Bioacoustics

Our speaker will be Arch McCallum, an ornithologist who has worked as an interpretative naturalist and college professor, and is now a conservation-oriented bioacoustics consultant working out of Eugene. His current work includes projects on the Breeding Bird Survey in Maryland, management of the Tricolored Blackbird in California, and individual recognition of Bonin Petrels in Hawaii, all based on bird sounds. He also is developing spectrogram-based learning tools on the sounds of *Empidonax* flycatchers and the breeding land birds of the Pacific Northwest.

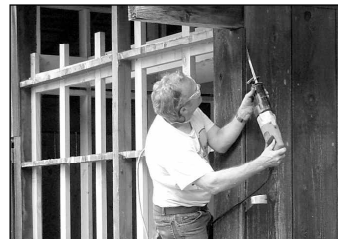
Most birders and field ornithologists are visual learners, but during the breeding season land birds are 9 times more likely to be heard than seen. For those of us who have to relearn songs and calls every year (if ever), a visual aid to remembering the hundreds of song-types and call-types around us would be really useful. A standard tool of bioacousticians, the sound spectrogram (a.k.a. sonagram), is such an aid. This program will show you how spectrograms represent different qualities of sound (e.g., nasal, harsh, sweet, pure), and how to use them to remember sounds by the way they look. Spectrographic differences among similar-sounding species will be revealed.

The program will also cover the amazing vocal gymnastics of birds, e.g., singing two songs at once and chaos, and how these phenomena can be recognized with spectrograms.

Hesthavn Nature Center Developments

Several work parties were held over the summer with efforts directed towards getting the museum room functional. As of this writing insulation has been placed in the walls and the electric circuits have been roughed in. Many thanks to Richard Brookes and Russ Stymer for their electrical work. It is my hope to have the museum room functional by the time we have the September general meeting. There will be several volunteer opportunities between now and then to meet this goal, but things are in too much flux at this time to post formal dates in this newsletter. Please contact me (Ray Drapek; drapek@fsl.orst.edu) if you are interested in participating in this project.

See "Hesthavn" on next page



Jim Fairchild removing siding so we can install insulation.



Volunteers Kathy VanWormer and Amy Folz cutting rigid insulation for interior wall.

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Hesthavn: continued from front page

No September 25 Work Party

Generally we have work parties at least on the last Saturday of every month. But for September there will be no last weekend work party since I will be out of town. There is much to do there and I may try to make up that work party on another weekend, so please contact me if you are interested in such things.

Hesthavn Programs

We still have a ways to go in our barn development plans, but we think it already has progressed to the point where we can begin to plan for some programs on site. So, with that in mind the Hesthavn committee met in August and came up with a set of four programs that we think we can pull off at Hesthavn for this coming year. These programs are still in the process of development, but we will fill you in on more details as we get them worked out. There are plenty of opportunities for participation, from planning to implementing, so please contact me if you are interested. The programs are:

October 23: A fall bird program

There will be several short workshops through the day with each workshop directed towards a different age group. Topics will include bird identification and how birds are studied. Weather permitting, there will be a demonstration of mist-netting and students will be able to see birds up close. Elise Elliott-Smith (eelliottsmith@yahoo.com) has agreed to take the lead on this. Elise would very much welcome any help anyone might want to offer for this program.

January (date not set): Critters of the Creek

I just made that name up, but the workshop will be directed towards sampling and identifying stream insects with discussions on life histories and the functions different insects perform in the stream. There is no lead as of yet for this program.

Spring Program #1: An Entangled Bank.

OK, I need help on these names, but basically this program will focus on the plants of Hesthavn. We may have some help from the OSU Botany Club for this program.

Spring Program #2: Bird program #2.

A repeat of the fall program, but with different birds and different plumage to look at.

-Ray Drapek

Fall North American Migratory Bird Count

Saturday, September 18th, 2004.

I invite anyone who is interested in counting birds that date to participate. You can set for yourself the amount of time spent birding and where you bird (some suggested places are listed below). If possible, I would appreciate knowing ahead of time where you plan to bird.

I am the county coordinator for Benton Co. For those of you who bird in Benton Co. on that date, I'd appreciate hearing the results from you. Please provide bird species and numbers, the mileage and hours spent (broken down by mode of transportation). If you bird several areas, a bird list by area is appreciated. Backyard counts are also welcome. You can send the results to me at mccarmel@peak.org. or mail them to my home address (see back of CHAT).

Corvallis, Chip Ross Park, Jackson-Frazier Wetland, Owens Farm Open Space Area, Stewart Pond, Avery Park, Marys River Natural Area. Willamette Park, Walnut Park, Bald Hill Park, Fitton Green, Benton Co., Tadena Landing, E.E. Wilson GMA, Dunn State Forest, McDonald Forest, Beazell Memorial Forest, Ft. Hoskins Historical Park, Marys Peak, Marys River Park (Philomath), Finley NWR

-Marcia F. Cutler

Kids Day for Conservation

ASC will have a booth at this year's Kids Day for Conservation, Saturday, September 18, 2004, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Benton County Fairgrounds Arena. Like last year, we will feature a bird scavenger hunt. In addition, there will be an opportunity to decorate "binoculars" made from toilet paper rolls. Other fun events will include a climbing wall, stream table, handling snakes, shooting arrows, making fish prints, paper, bird houses, living necklaces, dirt babies and much more! This is a free, fun, hands-on, family-oriented event focusing on natural resources education and is open to everyone.

Neighborhood Birding

Class: October 13, 16, 20, 23

Learn how to identify birds common to urban and residential areas of the Mid-Willamette Valley as well as ways to attract birds and other wildlife to your backyard. A coordinated program by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, Avery House Nature Center and Wild Birds Unlimited. For information about course content, contact Don Boucher, (back page). Cost, \$8

To register, contact the Avery House
www.peak.org/~ecenter, (541) 758-6198

Field Trip Schedule 2004

Sept 11	Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM
Sept 18	Bicycle birding
Sept 29	Wednesday morning bird walk 8 AM
Oct 9	Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM
Oct 23	Fern Hill Wetlands-Forest Grove 7:30 AM
Oct 27	Wednesday morning bird walk 8 AM
Nov 13	Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM
Nov 20	Newport coast birding 7:30 AM
Dec 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 new birders 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

September 18: Bicycle Birding in Corvallis

9:00 AM, Meet at Avery Park Rose Garden. An easy, flat ride of 10 miles or less. We've come across unexpected birds on some of these trips. We'll tour great habitat not accessible to cars and we won't miss those countless birds that motorist whiz by at freeway speeds. Bring water and rain gear. Leader: Don Boucher 753-7689, bouchdon@juno.com

Wednesday walk schedule:

Sept 29	Bald Hill (8 AM in Oak Creek parking lot),
Oct 27	Snag Boat Bend (8 AM Avery Park or 8:30 AM at Snag Boat Bend).

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

Full Day birding Saturday

On the full day trips we carpool sharing gas cost with the drivers. Everyone is to bring a large lunch, drinks, binoculars, spotting scope, warm clothing, and rain gear. We meet at 7:30 AM at the Benton Center parking lot at 757 NW Polk at the corner of 9th Street with Border's Books. The October trip to Fern Hill Wetlands has many restored small lakes where waterfowl are usually abundant year round. We will be walking around the lakes with spotting scopes viewing ducks, grebes, and possibly some shorebirds. We will return by 5:30 PM.

The November Newport coastal trip will make many

stops along the way looking for sea birds, ducks, and shorebirds. It can be windy and rainy, so plan on warm layered clothing a healthy lunch, drinks, binoculars, and spotting scope. We meet at the Benton Center parking lot at 7:30 AM to carpool. We should return by 5:30 PM. Contact Paula Vanderheul for questions.

The 2005 spring weekend trips are set up for the following dates:

Bandon Coast	March 18-20
Klamath Basin	April 22-24
Rogue Valley	May 6-8
Malheur NWR	May 19-22

Sign-up sheets will be available at the general meetings, or contact Paula Vanderheul via email or phone (see back page).

The News from Cabell Marsh

The Homer Campbell Trail project at Finley Refuge has been delayed. The new project leader, Douglas Spencer, called me to introduce himself and let me know that he is enthusiastic about the trail. Doug has lots of experience working with Audubon and friends groups at several other refuges back east. I'm encouraged by our conversation and will meet with Doug in early September. Realistically, work on the trail will probably begin next spring, so all you volunteers hang tough—this will be a very nice enhancement to the refuge.

-Gary Gibson



photo by Karin Donoyan

This Rose-breasted Grosbeak (a species rarely encountered in Oregon) came to Karin Donoyan's feeder on July 17th several times during the day, and again on July 18th. Karin lives about 26 miles from the coast (Waldport) in Lincoln county.

Field Notes:

June 21 through August 23, 2004

This year's version of the annual summer drought was a bit drier and hotter than usual, with many days of temperatures over 90 F. This came to an abrupt end as rainy weather and mild temperatures settled in for the last week of the period.

Shorebirds returning from their Arctic nesting grounds were the first heralds of the changing season. Some Canadian ornithologists suggest that this was a poor nesting year for these birds, due to cold, wet conditions in the North.

Recent weeks also brought the return of a few northern-nesting waterfowl. We also learn that we will have to work harder to identify geese this winter. The American Ornithological Union has decided that what we used to simply call a "Canada Goose" may belong to either of two distinct species. The smaller forms (including Richardson's, Aleutian, and Lesser/Taverner's forms) are now collectively called **Cackling Goose** (*Branta hutchinsii*). The larger forms (including Common, Dusky, Lesser/Anchorage, Western and Vancouver forms) are now collectively called **Canada Goose** (*Branta canadensis*).

If this sounds confusing, you're not alone! If you want to study up, you can find a helpful guide to most of Oregon's subspecies at <http://oregoncoast.fws.gov/images/wildlife/geese.pdf>.

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. Pioneer Villa is along I-5 near Brownsville. Snag Boat Bend in Linn Co. near Peoria is an annex of Finley NWR. Vineyard Mtn. is on the north side of Lewisburg, n. of Corvallis.

Sightings:

Great Egrets began their annual post-breeding dispersal into our area in late July, with 5 at McFadden Marsh by 31 Jul (M Cutler). One flew over the Halsey sewage ponds 7 Aug (Randy Campbell). A **Cattle Egret** turned up at Fern Ridge in Lane Co. 10 Jul (Ellen Cantor), where it was seen through 18 Jul.

Sarah Juve saw a small dark heron which she thought was most likely a **Green Heron**, along the Corvallis waterfront twice in mid-July. An immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was seen flying near Circle & 13th on 24 Jun (Hendrik Herlyn).

I saw a couple of **geese** at Toketie Marsh 20 Aug. A month ago I would have called these "Canada Geese" without a second thought. According to the experts, the large ones that breed and summer here can safely still be called **Canada Geese**, but later in fall we will have to watch for flocks of **Cackling Geese**.

The two swans reported at Fish Lake subsequently turned up at another location in the upper McKenzie River drainage, and turned out to be **Trumpeter Swans** based on photographs (fide Allen Prigge). What were undoubtedly the same swans were also seen flying up the McKenzie River near Leaburg in Lane Co. on 5 Jul (Dave Irons).

Eight **Blue-winged Teal** and nine **Cinnamon Teal** were at the rice ponds along Gap Rd. in Linn Co. 24 Jun (Mark Nikas). A pair of **Northern Pintails** were on the lake at Pioneer Villa 20 Jul (J Fleischer). **Green-winged Teal** with young were noted on Fish Lake 28 Jun (Scott Olmstead). A female **Canvasback** turned up at Baskett Slough 15 Aug (Bill Tice).

A female **scaup** with nine babies was discovered at Baskett Slough 3 Jul (B Tice). The mother was determined to be most likely a **Lesser Scaup**, after careful study of head and bill shape in photographs.

An immature/female **Bufflehead** was associating with a flock of 32 juvenile **Barrow's Goldeneyes** on Lost Lake 23-24 Jul (J Geier; Jay Withgott). A **Barrow's Goldeneye** hen with 10 half-grown ducklings was also on the lake, making a total of 42 young goldeneyes on the lake as of 24 Jul (J Withgott). On 17 Jul, seemingly a rather late date for nesting, Roy Gerig saw a **Barrow's Goldeneye** hen circle, then veer into

old-growth canopy near the Robinson Lake trailhead.

Ruddy Ducks with ducklings were observed both at Ankeny 7-12 Jul (Michel Kleinbaum) and at Baskett Slough 12 Jul (B Tice; J Fleischer).

Up to 5 **Ospreys** were seen by the ASC field trip to Luckiamute Landing 10 Jul (M Cutler). A pair was still on the levee nest at Snag Boat Bend 20 Jul (J Fleischer). **Bald Eagles** were also seen over Corvallis 15 Jul (Miranda Cooley) and 22 Jul (M Cutler).

A **White-tailed Kite** was flying over an open mixed woodland/grassland area 3 miles west of Alsea 9 Aug (Nicole Michel). Four adults were at the Finley prairie overlook 18 Aug (Noah Strycker).

Bob Altman and I saw a **Northern Harrier** along Glaser Dr in Linn Co. 13 Jul. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was noted at Finley 30 Jul (M Cutler). A juvenile at the E.E. Wilson canal pond 4 Aug was harassed by an **American Kestrel**.

Two juvenile **Cooper's Hawks** were soaring and interacting at Snag Boat Bend 20 Jul (J Fleischer). Justin Rodecap spotted a juvenile **Red-shouldered Hawk** perched at the Finley prairie overlook 13 Aug "perched in a tree west of the observation deck at the native prairie area just after you enter the refuge along Finley Refuge Road." (Justin Rodecap).

A **Peregrine Falcon** was at Peoria 25 Jul (R Campbell). One near the intersection of Seven Mile Lane and Hwy 34 on 7 Aug gave chase to a flock of starlings (Tom & Christina Snetsinger). At Rigdon Lake in the Waldo Lake Wilderness 18 Aug, Jim and Karl Fairchild watched an immature **peregrine** dive down to perch above a pair of **Common Ravens** which had just come cavorting and calling into a lakeside tree. The falcon went on to scold the ravens for close to five minutes, attracting the attention of a soaring pair of **Red-tailed Hawks**. What had those rascally ravens been up to?

Two **Blue Grouse** wandered into Merlin & Elsie Eltzroth's yard on Vineyard Mtn 26 Aug, spotted first by Aaron Poor as he was visiting. It was the first time the Eltzroths have seen this species in their yard.

Two **Mountain Quail** hens on Vineyard Mtn 12 Jul had only six chicks between them (William & M Eltzroth). A pair in a covey enjoying Pat Waldron's gone-to-seed collard patch east of Scio 11 Aug had done better, with seven half-grown chicks.

An adult **Virginia Rail** with two fuzzy half-grown chicks were foraging in the open at the Pioneer Villa lake 20 Jul (J Fleischer). A **Sora** was at the Gap Rd. rice ponds 24 Jun (M Nikas).

Nate Richardson reported **Semipalmated Plovers** at Finley 24 Jul. **Black-necked Stilts** were reported regularly from Baskett Slough, including two adults with a juvenile 15 Aug (B Tice).

A **Greater Yellowlegs** at Gap Rd. rice ponds 24 Jun (M Nikas) marked the start of southbound migration, only 30 days after the last presumed northbound straggler was reported. More were reported from Finley 11-31 Jul (Erik Knight; M Cutler) and from Pioneer Villa 20 Jul (J Fleischer). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at McFadden Marsh 18 Aug (N Strycker).

A **Solitary Sandpiper** was at the Halsey sewage ponds 7 Aug (R Campbell). One was in the vicinity of McFadden Marsh 9 Aug (N Strycker) and again 21 Aug (Paula Vanderheul, M Cutler). On 24 Jul I saw a half-grown juvenile **Spotted Sandpiper** attended by an adult at Lost Lake, after Nik Geier found a hatched eggshell by our campsite the previous day.

Five **Western Sandpipers** on a gravel bar at Luckiamute Landing 10 Jul (M Cutler) and a **Least Sandpiper** at Pioneer Villa 20 Jul (J Fleischer) were the vanguard of the southbound "peep" migration, which continued through the end of the period. While camped at Demaris Lake in the Three Sisters Wilderness 9 Aug, Jim, Karan & Karl Fairchild saw an apparent **Baird's Sandpiper** working the edges of snowbanks on slopes above the lake.

An adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** stopped by Toketie Marsh 20 Aug. A total of fourteen **Long-billed Dowitchers** were at the Pioneer Villa and Brownsville sewage ponds 20 Jul (J Fleischer), as this species also began to head south.

Two juvenile **Wilson's Phalaropes** were at Pioneer Villa sewage

ponds 17 Jul (R Gerig). A male **Red-necked Phalarope** in transition plumage was at Tangent sewage ponds 20 Jul (J Fleischer). 10 in basic plumage were on Knoll Terrace sewage pond in Lewisburg 25 Aug.

A **Ring-billed Gull** over Lewisburg 10 Jul (M Cutler, P Vanderheul, Mary Garrard) was the first gull to show up this season. An apparent first-year **Herring Gull** was at Pioneer Villa 20 Jul (J Fleischer). An immature **California Gull** was at Lost Lake while our family camped there 23-24 Jul.

Seven **Band-tailed Pigeons** were at Vineyard Mtn 24 Jul (M Eltzroth). A Rock Pigeon that our family watched feeding on the ground near Big Lake 24 Jul was an odd bird to see in the Santiam Pass area.

The pair of **Western Screech-Owls** which have preyed on the **Big Brown Bat** colony in downtown Albany in past years were no-shows this year, in eight vigils 2-18 Jul (J Fleischer). As for the bat colony, it seems to be doing fine, with a high count of 151 bats 12 Jul. The **Big Brown Bat** colony in downtown Corvallis faces a threat, as the proposal for a luxury condominium high-rise would require tearing down that building.

Dave Mellinger heard a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** on Marys Peak 11 Jul. Carol Karlen and Paul Sullivan found a family of two adult and two nearly full-grown **Barred Owls** at Bezell Memorial Forest 17 Jul. This invading species now appears to be well-established in our area.

Paul Adamus saw a **Common Nighthawk** feeding over an irrigated field near Jefferson 26 Jun. Two **Black Swifts** were at Salt Creek Falls on the evening of 18 Aug (Jim, Karan & Karl Fairchild).

Vaux's Swifts raised their young in Ellen and George Moore's dampered chimney on Chintimini Ave. during early July, as they have done for several years now. The parent swifts used to occasionally make a wrong turn down an adjacent chimney and wind up in the house, but the Moores solved that problem this year by capping the second chimney with a screen.

The resident **Anna's Hummingbird** male was patrolling Andrea Foster's feeders to keep one lingering **Rufous Hummingbird** away as of 3 Aug (through 12 Aug). Most **Rufous Hummingbirds** dispersed to higher elevations by late July. One was still around to buzz the Western Wood-Pewees at Willamette Park 28 Jul (M Cutler).

A flock of 8 to 10 dark birds, apparently **Lewis's Woodpeckers**, flew over Karan Fairchild as she was canoeing on Rigdon Lake in the Waldo Lake Wilderness 18 Aug.

The 2003 B&B Burn continued to produce interesting woodpecker sightings, including a **Lewis's Woodpecker** was excavating a cavity in a burn near Mt. Jefferson 4 Jul (Barbara Combs), a male **Williamson's Sapsucker** and two **Black-backed Woodpeckers** were just north of the Hwy 20 on the west side of Santiam Pass 15 Jul (R Gerig), and a territorial pair of **American Three-toed Woodpeckers** were at Round Lake (Jefferson Co.) 23 Jun (Steve Shunk). Dave and Lilly Irons found an adult female **Black-backed Woodpecker** feeding a juvenile as well as a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** tending a nest of begging young near the Hoodoo ski area 5 Jul. An immature female **Williamson's Sapsucker** and six vocal **Black-backed Woodpeckers** were at a Duffy Lake in the Linn Co. part of Mt. Jefferson Wilderness 15 Aug (Floyd Schrock).

On a breeding-bird survey along Crabtree Creek in Linn Co. 5 Jul, the highlight for me was finding four kinds of **flycatcher** (**Olive-sided, Willow, Hammond's, and Pacific-slope**) in a one-mile stretch. These drab birds can be hard to spot, let alone identify by sight, so I was glad they were calling. Most of them will quietly depart our area over the coming month.

20 to 30 **Western Wood-Pewees** were at Willamette Park 28 Jul, along with two **Willow Flycatchers** which could be heard across the river (M Cutler). An Olive-sided Flycatcher was still near Lewisburg 23 Aug (P Adamus).

Bob Altman saw **Western Kingbird** just north of Lewisburg in early July, suggesting the one reported earlier may have stayed to nest. The kingbird nest at our place on Poison Oak Hill apparently failed, within a few days after I saw parents feeding hatchlings 17 Jul. A pair along McLagan Rd. in Linn C. was feeding nearly full-grown young 20

Jul (J Fleischer). One showed up near the north entrance of Finley 30 Jul (M Cutler).

A **Loggerhead Shrike** was just east of Ward Butte 18 Aug (R Campbell). **Cassin's Vireos** were at Bald Hill Park 22 Jun (H Herlyn) and at Lost Lake 23-25 Jul (J Withgott). One turned up on Vineyard Mtn 19 Aug (M Eltzroth), where a **Hutton's Vireo** was also seen 21 Jul (E & M Eltzroth). **Warbling Vireos** were noted by the ASC field trips to Luckiamute Landing 10 Jul and to Willamette Park 28 Jul (M Cutler).

A **Gray Jay** was on Vineyard Mtn 14 Jun (M Eltzroth). A **Black-billed Magpie** which has been seen in Monmouth for the past couple of years was still around 4 Jul (Mike Lippsmeyer).

Five "**Streaked**" **Horned Larks** were NE of E.E. Wilson 3 Jul. One was in the grasslands along Belts Rd. 13 Jul (B Altman), and close to a dozen (all apparently adult males) were along Glaser Rd. as adjacent grass fields were being harvested the same day. Another male was singing in flight over a field at Mike Lippsmeyer's place in SE Polk Co. in mid-July.

Five **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were at Pioneer City Park 23 Jun (M Nikas). Some were at Luckiamute Landing 10 Jul (M Cutler). Two houses of nesting **Purple Martins** had not yet fledged but **Tree Swallows** were nearly done raising their second broods east of Scio 11 Aug (P Waldron). A flock of 80 juvenile **Cliff Swallows** was in a roadway near Brownsville 13 Jul, picking at the ground (B Altman, S Shunk). Massing flocks of **Tree, Violet-green, and Barn Swallows** were noted around the mid-Willamette Valley by mid August.

Doug and Tara Robinson saw and heard a **Mountain Chickadee** along the East Ridge Trail on Marys Peak 8 Aug, a rare sighting for the Coast Range.

A flock of **Bushtits** visited Andrea Foster's yard 3 Aug, as these sociable little birds began to regroup after nesting. Roy Gerig and Floyd Schrock noted "a bumper crop" of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** in young lodgepole pines in the Santiam Pass and Breitenbush Lake areas in mid-July.

Two **Rock Wrens** were in a slash pile near Hoodoo in Santiam Pass 5 Jul (D & L Irons). **House Wrens** at Pat Waldron's place east of Scio were still reminding her whose territory was whose, as of 11 Aug.

Five young **Western Bluebirds** have been hanging out on wires by the bluebird houses along Soap Creek Rd. near Tampico Rd.

On 24 Jul, Wil & Nik Geier and I saw a **Townsend's Solitaire** flush from nearly underfoot as we walked past a burnt-out stump near Hoodoo. Most likely the bird was on a nest. Another solitaire was in a clear-cut in the Mill Creek drainage in Polk Co. 3 Aug (T Snetsinger).

Dave Mellinger noted both **Hermit Thrushes** and **Swainson's Thrushes** on Marys Peak 11 Jul. Lisa Millbank and Don Boucher spotted an **albinistic American Robin** near Finley 3 Jul. Many **Cedar Waxwings** were flycatching over the river at Willamette Park 28 Jul (M Cutler).

Lost Lake can be a nice place to watch warblers in late summer. On a walk around the lake 24 Jul, I came across 8 **Orange-crowned Warblers**, 2 **Yellow Warblers**, 5 **Audubon's (Yellow-rumped) Warblers**, 14 **Hermit Warblers**, 7 **MacGillivray's Warblers**, a **Wilson's Warbler**, and 9 **Common Yellowthroats**, including juveniles of most species. The Fairchilds found a similar abundance of warblers at Demaris Lake 9 Aug, including a family group of **Townsend's Warblers**.

At lower elevations, several observers reported warblers tending **Brown-headed Cowbirds**. A **Yellow Warbler** east of Scio had two cowbird chicks 14 Jul (P Waldron), while one at Willamette Park 28 Jul had one cowbird chick (M Cutler). A pair of **Black-throated Gray Warblers** north of Lewisburg 27 Jul also had a cowbird chick to deal with (B Altman).

A female or immature **MacGillivray's Warbler** at Willamette Park 28 Jul (M Cutler) was an unusual bird to find in the riverside habitat. A **Wilson's Warbler** at Luckiamute Landing 10 Jul (M Cutler) likely marked the start of downslope dispersal from breeding areas in the

See "Field Notes" on next page

Field Notes

continued from page 85

Coast Range. On 10 Jul a **Yellow-breasted Chat** was just north of the angler's parking lot at E.E. Wilson (M Cutler, M Garrard, P Vanderheul).

An adult male **Western Tanager** at our place on Poison Oak Hill was busy tending two cowbird chicks 17 Jul. One visited Vineyard Mtn 19 Aug (M Eltzroth).

A **Green-tailed Towhee** flew over the road to Big Lake in the Santiam Pass area 15 Jul (R Gerig). **Chipping Sparrows** were noted in the valley at Bald Hill Park 22 Jun (H Herlyn) and at Finley 21 Jul (M Cutler, P Vanderheul). Singing **Vesper Sparrows** were found at on the SW slope of Bald Hill Park 22 Jun (H Herlyn) and along Belts Rd. in Linn Co. 13 Jul (B Altman). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was singing from a sapling in the latter location 13 Jul, and many tailless fledgling **Savannah Sparrows** were in the same area (B Altman, S Shunk).

A juvenile **Fox Sparrow** at Lost Lake was closely attended by an adult 24 Jul; a pair of territorial adult **Lincoln's Sparrows** were close by. **White-crowned Sparrows** were noted on Marys Peak 11 Jul (Dave Mellinger) and 2 Aug (D Boucher).

A **Black-headed Grosbeak** with a **Brown-headed Cowbird** chick in tow showed up at Andrea Foster's feeder 12 Aug. A male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** visited Karen Donoyan's feeder along the Alsea Hwy in eastern Lincoln Co. 17-18 Jul.

Lazuli Buntings were numerous at Bald Hill Park 22 Jun (H Herlyn). A male was west of the barn in Walnut Park 11 Jul (M Cutler), and a female with at least one juvenile was in a meadow atop Marys Peak 2 Aug (D Boucher). **Lazuli Buntings** were still at Finley 21 Aug (M Cutler), by which time their southbound migration was well underway.

On 10 Aug Agnes Vomocil had an unusual bird which she described as having a blue head, green back, and red breast at her seed feeder west of Bellfountain. The closest match she could find in her field guide was **Painted Bunting**, which would be very unusual in Oregon, but the bird did not return (fide E Eltzroth).

A surprisingly large flock of up to 80 **Brewer's Blackbirds** (including begging juveniles) and **Red-winged Blackbirds** at Lost Lake 23-25 Jul contained at least three **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** 24 Jul (Susan & J Withgott).

Eight **Western Meadowlarks** (including several carrying food and one fledged juvenile) were in the grasslands along Belts Rd. 13 Jul; more were at Finley 21 Aug (M Cutler). Two **Bullock's Orioles** were at Pioneer City Park 23 Jun (M Nikas) and one was in Lewisburg 15 Jul.

A **Lesser Goldfinch** turned up at Andrea Foster's thistle feeder 3 Aug and was regular there through the month, along with several **American Goldfinches** and their young. The goldfinches of both species in our yard adjacent to E.E. Wilson have been dipping into the seeds of Chilean tarweed (*Madia sativa*) which is now ripe.

Jim, Karan & Karl Fairchild saw **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** at Demaris Lake 9 Aug. **White-winged Crossbills** were reported near Waldo Lake 15 Aug (Roger Robb), so some have remained in the Cascades. **Pine Siskins**, **Red Crossbills**, and **Evening Grosbeaks** were at Marys Peak in early Aug (D Boucher).

Pam and Randy Comeleo watched a **Bobcat** hunting in the meadow at Hesthavn on the evening of 15 Aug. The Fairchilds encountered an **American Marten** and **Pikas** at Demaris Lake 9 Aug.

Coastal Notes

Al Schmierer reported an all-white **Pelagic Cormorant** at Cape Foulweather 5 Aug (fide Range Bayer).

Coastal shorebird arrivals included a **Wandering Tattler** and four **Black Turnstones** on the south jetty of Yaquina Bay 12 Jul (Roy Lowe), and a **Whimbrel** on Yaquina Bay and 400 **Surfbirds** at Yachats 3 Aug (Roger Robb). A juvenile **Franklin's Gull** was along the Newport waterfront 13 Aug. On 20 Aug Wayne Hoffman noted concentrations of thousands of gulls on Alsea and Yaquina Bay, mainly **California Gulls**

but also **Western, Glaucous-winged**, and **Heermann's Gulls**.

The annual jumping-off of **Common Murre** chicks from Colony Rock at Yaquina Head took place 8-15 Jul (R Bayer). Large numbers of **Cassin's Auklets** were seen on offshore surveys in mid-July, so this may be a good year to watch for them in nearshore waters (R Lowe).

Over 200 **Vaux's Swifts** had gathered at a chimney in Toledo by 16 Aug (Chuck Philo fide R Bayer). A juvenile **Black-chinned Hummingbird** turned up at Darrel Faxon's farm on Thornton Creek 2 Jul.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks also turned up on the coast, including one near Ona Beach 1-2 Jul (Pam Parker fide R Bayer) and one in Waldport 21 Jul through 7 Aug (Ray & Imogene Travis fide D Faxon).

Next month

Please send your sightings for the next Chat issue to:
Joel Geier, 38566 Hwy 99W, Corvallis, OR 97330-9320
Telephone: (541) 745-5821 or 745-5020
e-mail: jgeier@attglobal.net

Editor's Note: due to space considerations, some reports have been omitted. The Field Notes in their entirety can be found on our web site: www.audubon.corvallis.or.us
-Don Boucher

Oceans in Collapse

After decades of human abuse, the world's oceans are in a state of "silent" collapse. That's the chief conclusion of a report to Congress issued in June 2003 by the Pew Oceans Commission, a bipartisan, independent group created to chart a new course for the nation's oceans policy.

The commission's final report to Congress is the first such comprehensive look at all aspects of ocean health in 30 years. Over the course of its rigorous assessment, the commission issued seven reports on various subtopics, and makes a series of recommendations. At the heart of these recommendations is the need to refocus human activity in the oceans — away from constant use and extraction of resources, and toward better stewardship, revitalization and recovery.

The commission concludes that human misuse of the seas is the heart of the problem:

"Marine life and vital coastal habitats are straining under the increasing pressure of our use. We have reached a crossroads where the cumulative effect of what we take from, and put into the ocean substantially reduces the ability of marine ecosystems to produce the economic and ecological goods and services that we desire and need. What we once considered inexhaustible and resilient is, in fact, finite and fragile."

The problems the report details are far-reaching:

Coastal development is destroying wetland areas and estuaries,

The runoff of nutrients from farm and yard fertilizers is causing harmful blooms of algae, resulting in the loss of seagrass and kelp beds, as well as coral reefs.

Overfishing and destructive fishing practices exact a heavy toll.

Invasive species are taking root in coastal waters, crowding out native species.

In addition, climate change over the next century will “profoundly impact coastal and marine ecosystems.” Expected problems include rising sea levels and an accompanying loss of coastal wetlands and other important waterways, and damage to habitat-rich coral reefs from increased temperatures.

‘A New Course’

The Pew Oceans Commission recommends:

- a national ocean agency that consolidates existing federal agencies and directs them to develop policies to protect and restore ocean resources
- better management of fisheries
- the creation of marine reserves that would act as national parks of the sea
- increased protection of wetlands, sounds and beaches from unwise development

Chartered in 2000, with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Pew Oceans Commission explored all aspects of ocean health, issuing a series of reports on marine fisheries, ecosystem management and conservation, the ecological effects of fishing, coastal sprawl, marine pollution, marine aquaculture, and introduced species.

See:

http://www.pewoceans.org/oceans/oceans_report.asp

Slippery Salmon Science, or Administration Sleaze?

The Bush Administration’s assault on the environment continued over our summer holidays. Rule changes not subject to public comment heading the list—abandoning the forest roadless rule, redefining pollutants, and opening industrial access to public lands. But of particular affront to our communities, the assault on rigorous scientific inquiry and those who pursue it for government agencies must be both deeply offensive and demoralizing.

The *Washington Post* (Opinion, April 29) clarified the Bush modus operandi in this excerpt:

“Six of the world’s leading experts on salmon ecology complained last month (April) in the journal *Science* that fish produced in hatcheries cannot be counted on to save wild salmon. The scientists had been asked by the federal government to comment on its salmon-recovery program but said they were later told that some of their conclusions about hatchery fish were inappropriate for official government reports.”

At the beginning of summer Bob Lohn, politically appointed USFWS Regional Director, announced that hatchery fish production can now be counted as part of wild fish stocks, and that will help in their upcoming delisting decisions of salmon species.

Coast Conference

Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition

The annual Coast Conference, sponsored by the Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, is coming up Oct. 9-10 in Newport. This year’s version will focus strongly on shoreline and marine environments and how citizens can help to protect them.

Featured speaker on the conference’s first day is Orrin Pilkey, perhaps the nation’s most outspoken coastal geologist, an internationally known expert on erosion, shoreline modifications such as riprap, and their consequences. Pilkey, a professor at Duke University and director of its Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines, will take a global look at eroding shorelines and the results of ill-considered efforts to artificially armor them.

Other speakers on the first day will focus on ocean habitats and on the campaign to create marine reserves (wilderness areas in the sea) off Oregon’s coast. Oregon Shores is an active member of the Oregon Ocean Coalition that is leading this campaign. Presentations and breakout sessions will also consider various land use and development issues on the coast.

Sunday’s portion of the conference will feature a presentation by Mark Hixon, professor of marine ecology at Oregon State University, on undersea habitats, revealing the topography of the ocean bottom off Oregon’s coast and the habitats these undersea mountains, ridges, and reefs create.

Other speakers on Sunday will focus on practical, how-to information helpful to those monitoring the shoreline and getting involved in its defense. Topics will tentatively include marine debris, getting involved in the riprap permitting process, beach water quality monitoring and seabird habitat protection.

The conference’s first day takes place at the Newport Performing Arts Center in Nye Beach, beginning at 9:30 AM. Conference fee, which includes lunch, is \$15 for Oregon Shores members, \$20 for non-members (those joining at the conference can take the discount).

The second day, Sunday, Oct. 10, shifts to the Hatfield Marine Science Center in South Beach. There is no charge for this day, which also begins at 9:30.

For information, contact Phillip Johnson, (503) 238-4450; orshores@teleport.com.

Contributors to *The Chat*

Arch McCallum, Ray Drapek, Paula Vanderheul, Joel Geier, Marcia Cutler, Jim Fairchild, Lisa Millbank, Gary Gibson and Karin Donoyan

Chat Distribution: Fran Gates, Alberta Pierce, Eleanor and Ken Kidd, Joan Siegienski and Joe Fontaine

Audubon Society of Corvallis
www.audubon.corvallis.or.us

President: Susan Haig, 1646 NW Crest Pl., Corvallis, 97330,
753-5068, sue_haig2003@yahoo.com
Vice President/Program Chair: Chris Mathews, 3336 SW
Willamette Ave., Corvallis, 97333, 754-1172,
mathewsc2@comcast.net
Treasurer: Judy Hays, 6920 NW Cardinal Dr., Corvallis, 97330,
745-5692, haysj@comcast.net
Secretary/Field Trip Coordinator: Paula Vanderheul, 991 NW
Sequoia, Corvallis, 97330, 752-0470, vanderp@peak.org
Historian: Marcia Cutler, 835 NW Merrie Dr., Corvallis, 97330, 752-
4313, mccarmel@peak.org

Board Members at Large

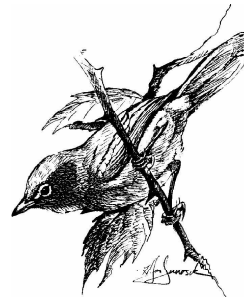
Hal Batchelder, 24566 Elderberry La., Philomath, 97370, 929-3537,
hbatchelder@coas.oregonstate.edu
Renee Bellinger, 2492 SE Powell Pl., Corvallis, 97333, 752-1750,
renee.bellinger@oregonstate.edu
Elise Elliott-Smith, 1163 NW Polk, Corvallis, 97330, 754-3906,
eelliottsmith@yahoo.com
Karan Fairchild (Fund-raising), 31540 Homestead Rd., Philomath,
97370, 929-4049, alderspr@peak.org
Bill Proebsting, 7350 NW Oak Creek Dr., Corvallis, 97330,
752-0108, proebstw@science.oregonstate.edu
Claudia Regier (Refreshments), 1030 SW Sunset Dr., Corvallis,
97333, 753-0879
Dave Mellinger (alternate), 3798 NW Jameson Dr., Corvallis, 97330,
757-7953, DavidKMellinger@yahoo.com

Committees and Coordinators

Conservation Chair: Jim Fairchild, 31540 Homestead Rd.,
Philomath, 97370, 929-4049, alderspr@peak.org
Newsletter Editor/Outreach: Don Boucher, 913 NW Tyler Ave.,
Corvallis, 97330, 753-7689, bouchdon@juno.com
Hesthavn: Sanctuary Chair Ray Drapek, 3273 SE Hathaway,
Corvallis, 97333, 754-7364, drapek@fsl.orst.edu
Bluebird Trail Chair Elsie, Eltzroth, 6980 Cardinal Dr., Corvallis,
97330, 745-7806, eltzroth@peak.org
Refuge Keeper/Sales Table: Gary Gibson, 25071 Evergreen Rd.,
Philomath, 97370, 929-3804, gibgrm@juno.com
Wildlife Watch Chair: Elzy Eltzroth, 6980 Cardinal Dr., Corvallis,
97330, 745-7806, eltzroth@peak.org
Education Chair: Kate Mathews, 3336 SW Willamette Ave.,
Corvallis, 97333, 754-1172, kate.mathews@comcast.net
Electronic Communications: Sheridan McCarthy, 2807 NW
Morning Glory Dr., Corvallis, 97330, 602-1470,
sheridan@larkonline.net
Membership Chair Amy Schoener, 24362 Cardwell Hill Dr.,
Philomath, 97370, 929-4041, cloudrun@peak.org
Publicity Chair Bob Smythe, 2758 SW Fairmont Drive, Corvallis,
97330, 757-6357, smythe@stat.orst.edu
Birdathon Chair Van Mary Brocklin, 6050 NW Happy Valley Dr.,
Corvallis, 97330, 745-7170, mary_vanbrocklin@yahoo.com
Chat Distribution: Fran Gates, 2960 NW Bryant Street, Corvallis
OR 97330, 757-0036
Chat Email Distribution: Joe Fontaine, fontaine_joe@hotmail.com
Field Notes Editor: Joel Geier, 14505 Corvallis Rd, Monmouth OR
97361, 928-2815, jgeier@attglobal.net

Audubon Society of Corvallis
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the **CHAT**

Calendar

Sept 9 Board Meeting 7:30 PM
Sept 11 Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM**
Sept 15 General Meeting 7:30 PM, Corv. Public Library
Bird Sounds with Arch McCallum (see front page)
Sept 18 Kids Day for Conservation (see page 2)
Sept 18 Bicycle birding 9 AM**
Sept 27 Field Notes deadline
Sept 29 Wednesday morning bird walk 8 AM**
Sept 30 Chat deadline for October
Oct 9 Saturday local morning birding 7:30 AM**
Oct 9-10 Coast Conference (see page 7)
Oct 13 Neighborhood Birding class starts (see page 2)
Oct 14 Board Meeting 7:30 PM
Oct 21 General Meeting 7:30 PM, Corv. Public Library
Oct 23 Fern Hill Wetlands-Forest Grove 7:30 AM**
Oct 23 A fall bird program at Hesthavn (see page 2)
Oct 25 Field Notes deadline
Oct 27 Wednesday morning bird walk 8 AM**
Oct 28 Chat deadline for November

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

**See page 3 for field trip descriptions

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