



Audubon Society of Corvallis the **CHAT**

May 2009

VOL. 38

#9

General Meeting

Thursday, May 21, 7:30 – 9:00 pm
First Presbyterian Church

Speaker Change For May Program



Due to an unavoidable conflict, our scheduled speaker in May is unable to participate in our meeting. Fortunately, our well-traveled field trip guide, Fred Ramsey, has graciously consented to give us a “surprise” talk. Join us for the last meeting of the current season for a fun-filled session. Chris Mathews will also update us on the Malheur Field

Station, which will be of particular interest to those traveling with Fred to Malheur later this month.

We will also be presenting the 2009 Homer Campbell Award and presenting the 2010 slate of nominees for the Board of Directors (board candidate biographies are on pages 69 & 70).

Doors open at 7:00 pm for refreshments and visiting. The chapter meeting commences at 7:30 pm, followed by the guest lecture at 8:00 pm. Questions about the series can be directed to Diana Brin.

Directions

The chapter meeting is in the meeting hall of the First Presbyterian Church (upstairs), 114 SW Eighth Street.

Diana Brin

Letter From the President

Sunday, May 03, 2009

Dear Audubon Members,

Despite rain and wind squalls, we know spring is here, and warmer weather is soon to follow. Many of you are getting out to enthusiastically greet the returning songbirds we have missed these long months. There is a certain thrill to the first-of-years, although we'll enjoy them no less while they sing and forage in our neighborhoods during the summer.

I write to you to comment on the year of work by your

Audubon board. I am impressed by what we have achieved. As a non-profit organization, we do not have a lot of money to throw around, but we always seem to come up with enough to carry us through the projects we take on.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the donors who have helped us, with grants, birdathon contributions, auction items, and your memberships. Many of you have also been very generous with your volunteer labor, and we would not be where we are without you. Thank you, all.

After last summer's hiatus, the board and members met for a potluck at Hesthavn where we set some goals and prepared for the fall meeting in September. You may or may not know that the three main objectives of our organization, as outlined in our strategic plan of 2008, are to: (1) educate the public about birds and wildlife; (2) advocate responsible public policy and personal behavior that respects, conserves, and restores wildlife habitat; and (3) provide opportunities for people to enjoy nature.

I can honestly say that substantive progress and activities occurred in all three areas. Our Thursday membership meeting with its program would be plenty to satisfy goal #1. Vice President, Diana Brin put together a nice slate of programs, and pulled on local resources like our Finley Wildlife Refuge friends, Fred Ramsey, Elsie Eltzroth, and Don Boucher and Lisa Millbanks. But we go beyond that. Consider the Education Committee outreach programs to schools, the nature programs at Hesthavn, the Kids Day For Conservation at the fairgrounds, and often we have a booth at Saturday market.

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Letter From the President

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Involving people in Christmas Bird Counts and helping on Bluebird trails is fun AND educating.

To fulfill goal #2, I started my fall with a trip to Roseburg to join the Oregon Audubon Council, where I met many of the state's other Audubon chapter members. We spent two days discussing important conservation issues and outlining a strategy to be more effective at making our opinions known. Our Conservation Chair, Dave Mellenger, has also been active, giving conservation updates at our program meetings, and offering interested members an opportunity to sign on to letters requesting action on conservation issues.

Our organization has also become involved in Benton County's Habitat Conservation Plan. We were originally asked to provide input to the plan several years ago, but perhaps for lack of interest, we chose not to participate. More recently, when it became clear how the plan would play out, and members with property in the Blue Zone were making their opinions known, and finally, when Hesthavn was identified as possible Fender's Blue Butterfly habitat, we knew it would be best to speak up and give our input. We have since submitted written comments, attended meetings, and met with Tom Kaye, Executive Director of the Institute for Applied Ecology, to discuss our concerns with the plan.

As for habitat restoration, note the 125 plus people that John Gaylord attracted to volunteer to put nectar plants in the ground at Finley Refuge, with the idea of providing food and habitat for Fender's Blue and other butterflies. This is one example of the wonderful cooperation we enjoy with the refuge.

Another is the amazing Homer Campbell boardwalk at Finley Wildlife Refuge which Linda Campbell initiated, raised money for, and saw through to completion. I was honored to receive, on behalf of our organization, a plaque from the refuge thanking us for our help and dedication to wildlife education. Since its opening, thousands of people have experienced the delightful walk through moss-draped ash trees to Cabell Marsh.

All of the fore-mentioned activities give people the opportunity to enjoy nature. Still, we also have our weekly birding field trips, led by Rich Armstrong. He deserves kudos for his energy and untiring enthusiasm. We also have longer field trips, usually sold out before they are announced, led by our famous and talented Fred Ramsey.

As a special side note, I would like to personally thank Judy Hays who has been devoted and committed to helping this organization, putting in countless hours of work on our behalf. Judy has been Treasurer for years, but she has been a lot more than that. She rolled many other jobs into hers. Thank you so much, Judy.

There are many more achievements I could list as successes by this year's board. They have made my job easy and contributed immensely to the good of the community. They are worthy of your support, and I hope you are proud of them. If you have ideas, suggestions, or concerns, I ask you to share them with us. After all, it is your organization, and it will be what you make of it.

*Sincerely,
Will Wright, President*

Audubon Society of Corvallis

Homer Campbell Award

The 2009 Award Goes to Elsie Eltzroth

Audubon Society of Corvallis initiated the Homer Campbell Environmental Award in 2004 to commemorate a beloved ASC member and conservationist. This annual award honors a person(s) in our region for outstanding contributions to environmental stewardship, awareness, and/or outreach. The Board of ASC is pleased to recognize Elsie Eltzroth and her decades of service to restoring the Western Bluebird nesting population in the central Willamette Valley.



When Elsie Eltzroth began her volunteer career that earned her the name "The Bluebird Lady," the Western Bluebird was on the Audubon "blue list:" only 6 known pairs of bluebirds nested in Benton County in 1977.

Around that time, Elsie learned to band bluebirds and report data, collaborating with OSU biologists to observe and document behavioral and physiological differences between the Western Bluebird and other bluebird species. She documented every observation, including intra- and interspecies interactions, habitat and weather changes, breeding and social behavior, patterns of geographical movement, and causes of morbidity and mortality. Elsie was patient, insatiably curious and indefatigable in her mission to boost the population of this once-common songbird of the western states. She traveled many miles in all types of weather and road conditions, sometimes just to follow the flight of a single bluebird that she happened to spot, chasing it down and observing its behavior. Bringing back the Western Bluebird became her passion and her full time vocation.

Elsie had helped her husband, Elzy (winner of the first HC Environmental Award in 2005), with his work in rehabilitating injured and ill raptors and other birds. She turned this expertise toward the bluebird, as each bluebird life was vital to the recovery of the species at that time. She also became adept at the processes of necropsy and study skin production.

Elsie used her knowledge for public education, interfacing with countless organizations such as other conservation groups, school classes, boy scouts and gardening clubs, inspiring them to mobilize their resources to contribute to the conservation of the Western Bluebird and other native cavity nesters. With study skins, eggs, mealworms and educational literature in hand, she manned booths at many public events, passing her knowledge on to thousands of individuals over the years.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the data and anecdotal information compiled by Elsie became nationally recognized for its value to the scientific community. Both singly and in collaboration with other authors, Elsie's work was published in a number of journals, from bluebird society newsletters to peer-reviewed ornithological works. Since then, she has

been regarded as one of the leading experts on the Western Bluebird, and her vast network includes ongoing relationships with government entities such as the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Oregon Forestry Department, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Geological Survey/Interior Department and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, as well as many academic and citizen scientist groups. Other bluebird conservation groups on the west coast and across the country have continued to seek her out for productive exchange of information, ideas and advice.

From 6 nesting pairs and 11 birds fledged in 1977 to 144 nesting pairs with 789 fledged in 2008, it is clear that Elsie's efforts have made a difference! In fact, one has to wonder if the Western Bluebird would have been extirpated from the Central Willamette Valley without her. As a "sensitive" species, it is extremely unlikely that the bluebird could have made such a comeback without human support such as Elsie's Bluebird Trail. (See the ASC Website for more information on this ongoing project.)

Elsie has remained steadfast in her efforts, continuing even now to inspire others to join in the process at whatever level they desire. With untiring action and perspective, she has devoted almost her entire adult life to the study and conservation of a beautiful and charming bird that was once quite common in the Willamette Valley, and she has made a difference.

Raylene Gordin, M.D. and Linda Campbell

Field Trip Schedule

Monthly Year-Round Saturday Field Trips

June 13: Meet at the Benton Center 7:30 am

July 11: Meet at the Benton Center 7:30 am

August 8: Meet at the Benton Center 7:30 am

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of every month at the Benton Center parking area, 757 Polk Ave, Corvallis 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. Contact Rich Armstrong at richarmstrong@comcast.net or 541-753-1978 with questions.

Spring 2009 Weekend Field Trips

May 28-31: Malheur NWR

June 12-14: Summer Lake/Ft Rock/Fremont NFS

Fred Ramsey leads all the spring weekend trips. Fred has been leading these field trips for ASC for over 35 years. He is an amazing field trip guide, sharing his knowledge about finding birds in their habitat and pointing out wild flowers, butterflies, mammals, and reptiles. The field trips fill up early in the fall. Sign-up sheets are available at the general meeting or email Paula Vanderheul with your requests. vanderp@peak.org

Rich Armstrong

May Hesthavn News

May 23: Work Party from 9 am – 1 pm

May 23: Open House from 10 am – 1 pm

A work party is scheduled for Saturday, May 23 from 9 am to 1 pm. Bring your shovels, loppers, weeding tools, gloves, boots, and work clothes for a morning of service work.

We will host an open house on the same day from 10 am until 1 pm. If you would like to greet visitors during the open house, please contact me.

April's spring blooming of native plants provided two class opportunities for the Academy of Lifelong Learning to study Hesthavn's native flowers, trees, and grasses with two Native Plant Society of Oregon experts Matt Blakely-Smith and Laurel Moulton.



Photo by Paula Vanderheul

Many thanks go out to Marcia Cutler, Jerry Paul, Karl Hartzell, Leslie Green, Susan Brown, Jim Fairchild, and John Gaylord for their gracious volunteer assistance with ongoing projects that enhance programs, operations, and maintenance of Hesthavn through the months of March and April.

On April 25 we had an amazing crew of 26 volunteers for the work party. Seventeen of those were from an OSU Geosciences class that participates in community services work quarterly. Lots of invasive Hawthorn trees were removed, 55 trees and shrubs were planted, fence covers for the new trees were made, mowing and weed whacking was accomplished, along with removal of false brome, weeding the gravel trail, greeting visitors and a bulletin board was mounted inside the center. Thank you all for spending your Saturday morning at Hesthavn Nature Center restoration work projects.



Photos by John Gaylord

You can find map directions to Hesthavn Nature Center which is located at 8590 NW Oak Creek Drive from ASC website at www.audubon.corvallis.or.us. The nature trail is open to the public every day of the week to stroll along viewing native habitat and wildlife. A great place to take young children wearing their boots and play clothes.

A volunteer email bulletin board that publishes work party

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dates and other events as they happen at Hesthavn Nature Center is available at www.corvallisaudubon.org/mailman/listinfo/hesthavn-news. The website has information on how to subscribe to the Hesthavn-news bulletin board.

Paula Vanderheul, Hesthavn Chair

Youth Outdoor Day Volunteers needed!

ASC (Diana Brin and Marcia Cutler) has volunteered to lead Nature Safari walks at the Youth Outdoor Day at EE Wilson on Saturday, May 30, 2009. The Youth Outdoor Day attracts about 750 kids and adults from Benton, Linn, Polk and other nearby counties. This is a new event for ASC; we are taking this over from the EE Wilson staff who need to concentrate on their other responsibilities for the event.

I am looking for volunteers to help with the event. Our activities are still in the planning stage (there will be a meeting on Thursday, May 7th in the evening, just after the deadline for submission of this article to the Chat). It looks like we will be leading 30–45 minute nature walks hourly from 8:30 until 1:30. I would also like to set up a binocular use and scope demonstration at the Canal Pond overlook (just to the west of the Angler's Pond). It might also be interesting to do a running tally of all the bird (and other) species we see from this location – sort of like a “Big Sit”.

If you are interested in helping out for a few hours, please contact Marcia Cutler at marciafcutler@comcast.net or 752-4313.

Marcia F. Cutler

Field Notes 25 March – 5 May 2009

Overall, most of this period was much drier than average. The exception was the first few days of May, which were met with a series of drenching rains. The dry March and April allowed farmers to prepare their fields early, so little shorebird habitat was available away from the refuges. Yet, water levels at the refuges were too high to create much shorebird habitat. Nonetheless, this time of year is quite exciting because of all the new arrivals streaming in to take advantage of spring and summer breeding opportunities. As a result, most of the field notes are dominated by first reports of the spring for each species.

Abbreviations and Locations: m.ob. = many observers. Observer names are noted in parentheses after their reports. Observations without a name (or with WDR) are the editor's. ASC indicates observations made by Audubon Society of Corvallis field trips. EEW = E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area north of Corvallis. ANWR = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge in Marion County. FNWR = Finley National Wildlife Refuge, and includes Cabell, Cheadle, and McFadden marshes. STP = sewage treatment ponds; Philomath STP are off of Bellfountain Drive south of Philomath. Knoll Terrace STP are off of Elliot Circle in Corvallis. Stewart Lake is at Hewlett-Packard in Corvallis. Toketie Marsh is the remedial wetland for Coffin Butte landfill north of Corvallis, just off of Highway 99W. The Bellfountain Wetland along Bellfountain Drive south of Philomath is also sometimes called the Evergreen Mitigation Bank. The Diamond Hill Road wetland is in Linn County.

A **Ross' Goose** was still present along Bruce Rd, FNWR, 16 Apr (K. Hilton). **Greater White-fronted Geese** passed through the area, but no large concentrations were reported; perhaps the good weather allowed many to pass overhead without stopping this year. A **Red-breasted**

Goose was at FNWR, 11 Apr (R. Armstrong); the species is a Siberian endemic with a very small global population size, so the origin of the one at FNWR remains unclear.

The numbers of ducks present were a mere shadow of what they were a couple months ago. The most numerous species were **Mallards** and **Green-winged Teal**. 400 of the latter were still at FNWR, 1 May (R. Armstrong).

Most diving ducks were long gone. **Canvasback** was last reported from Stewart Lake, 10 Apr (J. Simmons). A few **Lesser Scaup**, **Bufflehead**, **Ruddy Ducks** and **Ring-necked Ducks** lingered at Philomath STP through the end of the period. Continuing to be quite rare in the area, four **Redheads** (2 pairs) were at Philomath STP, 3 May. A **Common Merganser** was still at Starker Arts Pond, 28 Mar (J. Gibson).

A **Mountain Quail** at Pigeon Butte, FNWR, 18 Apr was a nice surprise (L. Millbank, D. Boucher); it was still calling there, 4 May.

Locally rare during spring, a **Clark's Grebe** at Philomath STP was a nice find, 19 Apr (P. Sullivan, C. Karlen).

The first **Sora** of the spring was reported from Jackson-Frazier marsh, 16 Apr (J. Simmons), although this is late by about 10 days, so perhaps a few arrived earlier but went unnoticed.

Very rare during spring, a **Sandhill Crane** flew by EEW, 4 Apr (M. Monroe).

Most **American Coots** had departed by 27 Apr (J. Simmons), but for a few that might breed locally at FNWR.

Eight **Black-bellied Plovers** were seen at Baskett Slough NWR, 28 Apr (M. Monroe); 6 were along Bruce Rd, FNWR, 5 May. Twenty-five **Semipalmated Plovers** were along McFarland and Bruce Roads, FNWR, 5 May. The first report of the spring was on 1 May (R. Armstrong).

Regular, but uncommon, during spring, five **Black-necked Stilts** were at Baskett Slough NWR, 22 Apr (M. Monroe); two visited the scrape along Bruce Rd, FNWR, 5 May. Most unusual was an **American Avocet** at Baskett Slough NWR, 22 Apr (M. Monroe); the species is very rare west of the Cascades in any season.

A general lack of shorebird habitat reduced concentrations of peeps in the area. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was along McFarland Rd, 4 May. High counts of **Western Sandpipers** were under 20 and **Least Sandpipers** barely topped 130, 5 May at FNWR.

Exceptional inland away from the Pacific Coast were 3 **Whimbrels** at Baskett Slough NWR, 28 Apr (M. Monroe).

The first **Lesser Yellowlegs** of the spring appeared at FNWR, 28 Mar. It was a good spring for **Solitary Sandpipers**. Among the many reported, the first arrived at EEW, 21 Apr (J. Geier); the maximum count was 8 at EEW, 27 Apr (J. Geier).

Two each of **Wilson's** and **Red-necked Phalaropes** were at Cabell Marsh, 5 May, for the first local reports of the year.

A tardy **Glaucous-winged Gull** was still in Corvallis, 24 Apr (R. Armstrong).

Perhaps the highest local count in a long time, 5 **Caspian Terns** foraged at Cabell Marsh, 25 Apr (B. Proebsting).

A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** apparently killed a **Mourning Dove**, a bird larger than it is, at the Fairchilds' place near Philomath, 3 Apr. It must have been able to go without eating for at least several days after such success.

Vaux's Swifts seemed to be late, with the first report being 20 Apr from Albany (D. Boucher).

Calliope Hummingbirds arrived exceptionally early this spring. A male was near Philomath, 5 Apr (Fairchild family), and one was in Peoria, 11 Apr (R. Campbell). Otherwise, there were none reported during their typical period of passage in the last week of Apr.

The first report of **Western Wood-Pewee** was of one calling at Cabell Marsh, 5 May. **Hammond's Flycatcher** in Corvallis, 28 Apr (W. Wright).

Pacific-slope Flycatcher was about a week ahead of the Hammond's, being first reported from Coffin Butte, 21 Apr (J. Geier). An early **Western Kingbird** was at Pigeon Butte, FNWR, 21 Apr (B.

Proebsting).

The first **Cassin's Vireo** of spring was reported from Sunset Park, Corvallis, 17 Apr (R. Armstrong). **Warbling Vireos** arrived on schedule, 21 Apr, at Stewart Lake (J. Simmons, N. Lidstrom).

A **Gray Jay** wandered to almost the valley floor, 26 Apr, near Adair Village, where they are quite rare (J. Geier). A pair continues to occur in the old-growth forest reserve just east of Lewisburg Saddle.

A **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** arrived at FNWR, 28 Mar. The first **Bank Swallow** of spring was at Cabell Marsh, 5 May. **Cliff Swallows** appeared at FNWR, 29 Mar, right on schedule.

House Wrens returned a few days ahead of schedule: 17 Apr (K. Fairchild) and 18 Apr at FNWR (B. Proebsting). By 20 Apr they were nest-building in Corvallis (M. Landys).

A **Townsend's Solitaire**, very rare on the Valley floor, especially during spring, was in Albany, 30 Apr (D. Boucher).

Three **American Pipits** lingered along Bruce Rd, FNWR, 5 May.

One of the joys of spring migration is running across the warblers as they arrive. This spring, the first **Nashville Warbler** was reported from Stewart Lake, 15 Apr (J. Anderson, J. Simmons, N. Lidstrom); 2 were at EEW, 27 Apr (J. Geier). **Yellow Warblers** arrived at Cabell Marsh by 16 Apr (B. Proebsting). A nice high count of 90 **Yellow-rumped Warblers** was at Stewart Lake, 23 Apr (J. Simmons, N. Lidstrom). A rather early **Black-throated Gray Warbler** appeared at FNWR, 29 Mar. The next report was of one near Philomath, 6 Apr (K. Fairchild), a few days ahead of their typical arrival date there.

Townsend's Warblers continued at local bird feeders through 15 Apr, Corvallis (R. Armstrong). A high count of 15 near Adair Village, 15 Apr was a good count for spring migration (J. Geier). The first report of **Hermit Warbler** was from Dunn Forest, 17 Apr (J. Fairchild). Two **MacGillivray's Warblers** were found along Oak Creek Drive, 25 Apr (B. Proebsting). **Wilson's Warblers** arrived in McDonald Forest by 19 Apr (B. Proebsting).

The first **Common Yellowthroat** of the spring was one in the cattail marsh on the north side of EEW, 25 Mar. By mid-April they were practically everywhere. J. Geier reports hearing a **Yellow-breasted Chat**, 28 Apr, near Adair Village, a couple days ahead of the usual arrival date.

The first **Western Tanager** of spring was found in Corvallis, 23 Apr (J. Ray), but the species was still not common even by 5 May.

Chipping Sparrows arrived at FNWR, 29 Mar. Two were in Corvallis, 5 Apr (E. Eltzroth). A **Vesper Sparrow** arrived at its traditional breeding site at Bald Hill, Corvallis, 17 Apr (B. Proebsting).

Perhaps the toughest data to summarize about spring migration are the departure dates because few observers keep complete lists of all species they see each day in the field. Last reports are just as interesting as first reports. The last **Fox Sparrow** reported was one on 53rd St in Corvallis, 26 Apr (L. Millbank, D. Boucher) and the last **White-throated Sparrow** was still at Oak Creek Drive, 27 Apr (B. Proebsting).

The first **Black-headed Grosbeaks** were near Adair Village, 26 Apr (J. Geier), and in Corvallis, 27 Apr (J. Paul), but they were still not common by 5 May. **Lazuli Buntings** had not yet arrived by the end of the period.

The first **Bullock's Oriole** was found at Peoria, 30 Apr (R. Campbell). A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was at the scrape along Bruce Road, FNWR, 1 May (R. Armstrong); 2 males were there 4 May.

A **Pine Siskin** was gathering nest material at Stewart Lake, 29 Apr (J. Simmons).

Per the usual, **Evening Grosbeaks** descended in great numbers (hundreds to thousands) on downtown Corvallis and especially OSU campus during the period. Given that the species is known to be declining nationwide, it might be a good idea for us to establish a formal monitoring program each spring in Corvallis.

Next issue

Please send your reports for the next issue by July 7 to:

W. Douglas Robinson
Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
(541) 737-9501
Douglas.robinson@oregonstate.edu



This Lincoln's Sparrow (left) was at Finley NWR, 25 Apr (photo by Mary Stephens)

(below) Sneaking through the grass at McFadden Marsh, 3 May, was this American Bittern (photo by W. D. Robinson)



ASC Board Elections

ASC officers for 2009-10 will be elected at this month's chapter meeting

Members are encouraged to participate in the election of our board and officer candidates during the May 21 meeting. The position terms will take effect in September 2009. The Nominating Committee offers the following slate of candidates:

President	Will Wright
Vice President & Program Chair	Dave Mellinger
Secretary	Karan Fairchild
Treasurer	Fred Ramsey
Board Member-at-Large	Gail Andrews
Board Member-at-Large	Carroll DeKock
Board Member-at-Large	Raylene Gordin
Board Member-at-Large	Jerry Paul
Board Member-at-Large	Rebecca Schwiebert
Board Member-at-Large	Gail Nickerson
Alternate Board Member-at-Large	Glenn Akins

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Board Candidates, *continued from page 69*

Candidate Biographies

Will Wright is currently ASC President and a 3rd/4th grade teacher. He has served as a Teaching Interpretive Naturalist at Mt. St. Helens, Biology Instructor for O.M.S.I., Instructor at Camp Hancock Outdoor School, and staff member for Puffin Project in Maine for National Audubon Society. He spent one year following Spotted Owls with radios; two seasons doing cavity nesting bird surveys; four seasons doing Marbled Murrelet surveys. He has travel experience for birding and education in Alaska, Canada, Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Ecuador, Hawaii, Japan, India, Nepal, Kenya, and Europe.

Dave Mellinger has served as ASC Conservation Chair. As a bioacoustician, Dave is currently Associate Professor at OSU's Hatfield Marine Science Center. He received BS degrees in math and philosophy from MIT and a PhD in computer science from Stanford University. Dave studied whale sounds in the Bioacoustics Research Program at Cornell from 1992-96, and worked on seal sounds at the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute from 1997-99.

Fred Ramsey cofounded ASC in 1970 and has led the weekend field trips since 1971. As a world-traveled and respected ornithologist, his other interests include music, theatre, fishing and baseball. Fred is also Professor Emeritus of Statistics at OSU and among his publications is *Birding Oregon*, which was published by ASC in 1978.

Gail Andrews is currently a Board Member-at-Large and has been involved in environmental education and research for the past 30 years. Most recently she was a statewide water quality educator for OSU Extension Service. Prior to that, she worked with school-aged and college students in Alaska, Oregon, and up-state New York. A native of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, she has been an avid birder since 1979 and has been a regular on Corvallis Audubon spring field trips since the Malheur trip in 1991. Newly "retired," she looks forward to giving back to the organization.

Karan Fairchild is currently Secretary and has been involved with the Audubon Society of Corvallis for over 25 years. She's served in many capacities during that time, from board member at large to fundraising chairperson. She is currently Secretary and recently instigated the successful Birdathon fundraisers, and continues to work for fundraising today. Karan has a strong interest in environmental preservation and teaching the next generation to protect and respect the earth.

Carroll DeKock is currently a Board Member-at-Large. He grew up on an Iowa farm and has kept his interest in the outdoors since those formative years. His formal training is in chemistry and he served for 32 years on the Chemistry faculty at Oregon State University. Since retirement he and his wife have enjoyed many birding trips. He currently serves as a volunteer with the US Fish and Wildlife agency and is especially interested in habitat preservation and construction. He is a member of the newly established Friends of the Willamette Valley NWR and helped organize the February 2008 Owling night at Findley NWR. He has about 25 swallow nest boxes at his home and has hung a similar number

at Snag Boat Bend. He has helped check and clean out the Wood Duck nest boxes at Snag Boat. If elected, one of his interests would be to serve as liaison between the Audubon Board and the Friends group.

Raylene Gordin joined the Audubon Society of Corvallis in 2001 and began working on the Bluebird Trail in 2003. She expanded the ASC Bluebird Trail throughout Linn County and earned a Master Bander permit in 2008. She lives in Lebanon and practices orthopedic surgery part-time in Salem. When not working or bluebirding, Raylene enjoys gardening, hiking, spending time with her husband and dogs, and constructing nest boxes for many avian species. She conducts wildlife surveys and leads nature hikes for a volunteer group called Build Lebanon Trails. In 2005, she and her husband, Erez, undertook a habitat restoration project on their property on Middle Ridge, converting several acres to upland prairie and oak savanna habitats, and beginning a gradual conversion of coniferous forest to mixed forest. Raylene is particularly interested in the interdependency of native plants and wildlife, and hopes to conduct a study in the near future. She is very glad to have established relationships with many fine conservationists through the Audubon Society of Corvallis and other groups associated with her work, and she looks forward to the opportunity to give back by serving on the ASC Board of Directors as a member at large and continuing Elsie Elzroth's work as Bluebird Trail Chair.

Gail Nickerson is a native Oregonian who came to Corvallis to attend college and never left. She worked at OSU as a hop chemist and upon retirement in 2003, she found out that there were many birds in the backyard that she did not recognize. Gail thought the Audubon Society of Corvallis would be a good organization to join. She has learned a lot from Fred Ramsay! Since she likes to bake, Gail volunteered for the refreshment committee. And after Claudia Regier's retirement, she became Refreshment Chairman. Gail looks forward to also contributing to the organization as a board member.

Jerry L. Paul is currently a Board Member-at-Large and active in Hesthavn projects. His formal education is in Architecture and Urban Planning. He has worked as an urban planner in both the private and public sectors. After 15 years as a planner, he changed careers and became the Information Technology Manager for the City of Salinas, CA, from which he retired in July 2004. During their working careers, Jerry and his wife, Judith, owned and ran a cow/calf cattle operation. Their interest in landscaping with native plants brought many new species of birds to the ranch. Before leaving the ranch and relocating to Corvallis in August 2006, Jerry and Judith had recorded 90 species of birds on the ranch. In addition to birding, Jerry's other areas of interest are carpentry and woodworking.

Rebecca Schwiebert is currently a Board Member-at-Large. She is a veterinarian and moved to Corvallis in 2008 to begin work as the Associate Director of Laboratory Animal Resources at OSU. She has lived in the Midwest, Southeast, and southern California, but considers herself a Californian at heart. Becky was previously active with the Los Angeles Audubon Society, and served as a member of the LAAS board. In addition to birds, she is interested in native plant gardening

and habitat restoration/preservation.

Glenn Akins has lived in Corvallis for three years and is currently a board member of the Willamette NWR Friends Group. He has been active in the local Audubon chapters where he and his wife have lived, including Vancouver (WA), Anchorage and of course, Corvallis. Glenn retired as an environmental planner and consultant, with experience in Alaska, Colorado, other western states and western Canada. Glenn holds a B.A. in Geography from the University of Minnesota, and an M.S. in Physical Geography/Biology from Western Washington University. His Oregon experience includes service as a regional planner for the Council of Governments in Salem; chief planner for the Oregon Coastal Commission, and as a consultant to the Secretary of the Interior's Office in Washington D.C. In the 1980s Glenn and his business partner founded and operated a consulting firm, America North Inc., which served clients across Alaska and the Yukon for several years. Glenn has served as a board member of the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership, the Friends of Ridgefield NWR, and the City of Juneau's Eaglecrest Ski Area.

Diana Brin

Book Chat

A new publication by one of our area writers will be featured at the Book and Raffle table this month: *The Far Corner: Northwestern Views on Land, Life, and Literature* by Veneta resident John Daniel and published by Counterpoint Press, Berkeley. Daniels won the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association award for non-fiction with *Rogue River Journal* in 2006 and his newest publication of reflective essays likewise will resonate with Audubon members thriving in our wild and beautiful northwest environment. Of particular interest to recent college graduates or anyone examining career changes, are Daniel's essays written as he considered his own choices as a young man.

Also related to our appreciation of our 'sense of place' is William Sullivan's beautiful and precise *Topographical maps of Oregon*. These colorful maps make excellent gifts to young graduates eager to explore our outdoor recreational diversity as well as to appreciative newly arrived transplants curious to stretch beyond Corvallis this summer. And, don't overlook two of our finest guides: the revised edition of *Plants of The Pacific Northwest Coast* and the popular *Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Willamette Valley: A Beginner's Guide*.

Good news for those of you who were disappointed when the first order of six sets of Cornell's *Bird Songs of the Pacific Northwest* were sold so quickly. We've ordered more, and will have them available at our May meeting.

And, what nicer gift could you bring to people you visit this summer than one of our wonderful tote bags? Still only \$10.00 each, they're easy to pack and are a constant reminder of Audubon Society of Corvallis' efforts toward sustainability. All these Book Chat gift suggestions are mentioned to provide ideas for increased enjoyment and appreciation of our spectacular Oregon summer—coming very soon.... Happy Trails.

Sally Shaw

Good News on Endangered Species Reviews!

The Obama administration has reversed a rule implemented late in President Bush's term with great potential harm to endangered species. For years, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries were the agencies which reviewed plans by other parts of the government that might impact endangered species on land and in the sea, respectively. In the eleventh hour, the Bush administration promulgated a rule that said agencies could decide for themselves whether their actions might harm endangered species. Not only did this put the burden of these decisions on agencies with no expertise in wildlife science, it was tantamount to putting the fox in charge of the henhouse.

In late April, Ken Salazar, Obama's Interior Secretary, reversed the new rule and restored USFWS and NOAA Fisheries as the agencies again in charge of endangered species analysis. Hooray!

Dave Mellinger

Birding Classes

Instructors: Don Boucher & Lisa Millbank

Birding in the Willamette Valley

We'll learn identification skills, how to choose field guides and binoculars, and birding sites. We'll spend time outside with the birds at the peak of springtime.

- Classroom sessions: Wednesdays, May 20 & 27, 7–9 pm.
- Field Trips: Saturdays, May 23 & 30, 9 am–noon
- Cost: \$24

Birding by Ear

Would you like to know your local bird songs and calls? Learn to listen and remember bird sounds. Beginners, take "Birding in the Willamette Valley" first.

- Classroom sessions: Wednesdays, June 3 & 10, 7–9pm.
- Field Trips: Saturdays, June 6 & 13, 9 am–noon
- Cost: \$24

Class information: Don Boucher, 753-7689, bouchdon@peak.org.

Registration: Corvallis Environmental Center,
753-9211 or info@corvallisenvironmentalcenter.org

Contributors to the Chat

Diana Brin, Will Wright, Raylene Gordin, Linda Campbell, Rich Armstrong, Paula Vanderheul, John Gaylord, Douglas Robinson, Marcia Cutler, Sally Shaw, and Dave Mellinger.

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Audubon Society of Corvallis

the **CHAT**

Renew your membership before the date on the mailing label to avoid missing issues of the Chat.

Calendar

- May 20/27: Birding in the Willamette Valley class
- May 21: General meeting (including Homer Campbell award and board elections)
- May 23: Hesthavn work party and open house
- May 24: Bicycle birding, 9 am
- May 28-31: Malheur NWR weekend field trip
- May 30: Youth Outdoor Day
- May 31: Spring ASC photo contest deadline
- June 12-14: Summer Lake/Ft Rock/Fremont NFS weekend field trip
- June 13: Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am
- July 7: Field notes submission deadline for Summer Chat
- July 9: Article submission deadline for Summer Chat
- July 11: Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am

Photos from the Klamath Trip



Clark's Grebe photo by Andy Hoffman



Ground squirrel photo by Cheryl Whelchel

The Chat is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. Annual ASC memberships are \$25 for an individual, \$35 for a family, \$15 for a student. Chat-only subscriptions (email delivery only) are \$15.

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