



# THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CORVALLIS CHAT

SEPTEMBER 2014

VOL. 44 #1

## KLAMATH REFUGES: HARD TIMES FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS

### A presentation by Joe Liebezeit

Join us September 18, as ASC kicks off its 2014-15 general membership meeting program. Our speaker will be Joe Liebezeit, Avian Conservation Program Manager for Portland Audubon Society since 2013. Joe holds a Master's degree in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University and has over twenty years' experience as a wildlife biologist. Previously he worked for the Wildlife Conservation Society in Arctic Alaska.

As we enter the second year of drought conditions throughout the west, water woes in the Klamath Basin are reaching a critical juncture. The system is under incredible stress, with not enough water to go around. The wildlife of the Klamath Basin, particularly migratory birds, are being hit incredibly hard. More than half of all Pacific Flyway birds depend on Klamath Basin wetlands, yet, another punishing drought year could dry up what few wetlands remain. In this landscape, nature bats last, with the National Wildlife Refuges literally at the bottom of the barrel for water rights in a highly over-allocated system.

How did we get here? Joe will discuss the history of wildlife and water usage in the Klamath Basin and what you can do to help Klamath's wildlife. As usual, the chapter meeting will commence at 7:00, following refreshments and visiting beginning at 6:30.

The guest speaker begins about 7:30. Questions about the series can be directed to Chris Mathews at 541-754-1172 or [matthewssc2@comcast.net](mailto:matthewssc2@comcast.net).

Chris Mathews, Program Chair  
**Directions** The monthly chapter meeting is in Dennis Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 114 SW Eighth Street in Corvallis.

## FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

### Local Monthly Second Saturday Half-Day Field Trips

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of each month from September through June at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 777 NW 9th St., Corvallis, at 7:30 am. This field trip is geared towards beginning birders, birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area and persons looking for a pleasant outing.

Contact Bill Proebsting at [proebstw@gmail.com](mailto:proebstw@gmail.com) or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ, [www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding/](http://www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding/), a couple of days before the field trip for updates. Weather may alter plans. Watch the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Return to Benton Center by noon.

### Next Half Day Field Trip:

**September 13.** Bald Hill Park. Start from Oak Creek entrance.

*Bill Proebsting*

## GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, Sept. 18  
7:00-8:30 pm  
First Presbyterian Church  
9th and Monroe

## In This Issue

New Look for the CHAT .....	2
In Memory of Jean Nath.....	2
ASC Education News .....	2
Field Notes .....	2-6
Atop the Nest Box .....	6-7
Wilderness Act Play.....	7
OSU Study Needs Volunteers	7
Membership Info .....	6-7
Contributors to this CHAT .....	7
Calendar .....	8

## NEW LOOK FOR THE CHAT

### Students Help With New Layout

Since 1998, I've been the graphic designer for the *Chat* and I've been using the same template all along. The idea of a new layout has been considered but, like most volunteers with limited time, I tend to put non-essential tasks on the back burner. Luckily, an opportunity to update the layout presented itself.

Early last spring, Christine Gallagher, a graphic design instructor at OSU, contacted the ASC in search of community projects for her students. So I collaborated with students Andrew Galluzzo, Alexandra Saunders and Regan Nishikawa to redesign the look of the *Chat*.

Andrew, Alexandra and Regan corresponded with me to assess the needs of our readers and board members, and together they created a new and fresh look. The design you're looking at was approved during our May board meeting. I will be using this new template to lay out future *Chats*! In this new design, pages are more dynamic and articles will be more easily distinguished from one another. We can publish the same amount of content in this new design, so this means the *Chat* editor doesn't need to make any adjustments.

The goal of this class project was for students to learn how to collaborate as a graphic design team and how to work with a community organization, such as the ASC. I'm pleased with the results.

*Don Boucher*

### IN MEMORY—JEAN NATH

Jean Nath was a conscientious contributor to Corvallis through her civic associations, which included a life-long membership in the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Beginning in the early 1970's, she shared her love of nature, wildlife, and a healthy environment with her husband, Jack. In 1977 she placed four nest boxes for Western Bluebirds near their hilltop home, where they watched the entertaining activities of the bluebirds. Their large backyard garden provided food for all avian species.

Jean was ever the volunteer when assistance was needed at monthly ASC meetings and special events. She enjoyed field trips and was always a participant on Christmas Bird Counts. Jean was one of the "bird ladies" who presented programs in elementary schools for many years.

She became a volunteer on the ASC Bluebird Trail to monitor and report the nesting results of the boxes on her property and at other sites in the Crescent Valley area. When in 1985 she was asked to care for rehabilitated young birds which had to be released, her second-story deck, with a 360 degree view of the valley, became the flight deck for several fledglings. The following year, a banded female bluebird who had been dubbed *Woodstock*, was found nesting on NW Grandview. Her banded daughter nested near the Nath residence in 1987. The last nest was found at Rosewood Estates in 1988; it belonged to a banded granddaughter of *Woodstock*!

An accounting of three generations of bluebirds, Jean's legacy, was an important addition to understanding the life of Western Bluebirds on the ASC Trail.

*Elsie Eltzroth*

### ASC EDUCATION NEWS

We have exciting news in the Education department! We are teaming up with Oregon State University's Dr. Roy Haggerty, Professor of the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences (CEOAS) to host three years of Aquatic Ecology at Hesthavn geared towards 4th and 5th grade students! CEOAS's grant award was confirmed in August and we are currently in the planning stages with Dr. Haggerty. We will be contacting local schools throughout the fall of 2014 and getting the program and lesson plan in order. Our Aquatic Ecology program gets students out in a creek habitat where they will experience hands-on science learning with a focus on macro-invertebrates and the stream hydrology of Oak Creek. It covers six science standards and is directly connected to OSU's research project within the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest using their integrated model to estimate CO2 efflux from the stream. This is an exciting opportunity for Audubon to better connect with local schools and help bring awareness to our Hesthavn Nature Center! If you know a class that would be interested in this program, please contact Jessica Brothers, ASC Environmental Ed. Chair, at: [educationaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:educationaudubon@gmail.com)

*Jessica Brothers*



## FIELD NOTES

6/12/14 – 8/21/14

The general area covered by the field notes is a rough circle centered on Corvallis, extending just past Lebanon, Monroe/Harrisburg, Marys Peak and the nearby Coast Range, and Monmouth/Dallas.

This summer was one of the warmest on record in our area, and aside from a few thundershowers, there was little measurable precipitation. As the singing and breeding activities of most songbirds wound down, a few shorebirds were already on their southbound migration from their far northern breeding grounds. By the end of the period, some migratory waterfowl were also beginning to return to area wetlands.

Observer abbreviations: Michael Bielenberg (MB), Don Boucher (DB), Howard Bruner (HB), Pam Comeleo (PCo), Randy Comeleo (RCo), Barbara Dolan (BD), Deanna Emig (DE), Jim Fairchild (JFa), Karan Fairchild (KFa), Lukas Ferrenburg (LF), Andrea Foster (AF), Rana Foster (RF), Joel Geier (JG), Roy Gerig (RG), Donald Goodliffe (DG), Jessica Greer (JGr), Jeff Harding (JH), Oscar Harper (OH), Susan Hatlevig (SH), Greg Haworth (GH), William Hemstrom (WH), Hendrik Herlyn (HH), Tim Johnson (TJ), Erik Knight (EK), Karin Lamberson (KL), Glen Lindeman (GL), Don Lyons (DL), Lisa Millbank (LM), Molly Monroe (MM), Kelsey O'Sullivan (KO), Judith Paul (JP), Bill Proebsting (BP), Doug Robinson (DR), Jim Scott (JSc), Jamie Simmons (JSi), Jim Smith (JSm), Evan Smouse (ES), Carol Soderberg (CS), Jackie Swartzendruber (JSw), Mike Unger (MU), Brandon Wagner (BW), Ted Werth (TW), John West (JW), Will Wright (WW)

Location abbreviations: Ankeny = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge, EEW = E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Finley = William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, LSNA = Luckiamute State Natural Area, Philomath STP = Philomath sewage treatment ponds, Tangent STP = Tangent sewage treatment ponds

A few **Greater White-fronted Geese** were still lingering at large wetlands at the beginning of the period, and by the end of the period, reports of southbound migrants were already coming in. A single **Cackling Goose** spent its summer at Ankeny with the population of breeding **Canada Geese** there; it seems to be unable to fly. A high count of 107 **Wood Ducks** were at Philomath STP 8/8 (HH). There were 12 **Gadwall** at Ankeny 6/18 (JH). 2 late **American Wigeons** were reported near Brownsville (DR) but a few individuals were returning to sites like Ankeny as early as 8/10 (MU). Very young **Mallard** ducklings were following their mother at Starker Arts Park in Corvallis 7/27 (LM, DB). A **Blue-winged Teal** pair persisted at Philomath STP through June, then just the female remained through mid-August. However, a female at Ankeny was seen with her 5 ducklings 8/10 (MU). Up to 80 **Cinnamon Teal** visited Philomath STP in mid-August (HH). By 7/28, **Green-winged Teal** had already returned to Philomath STP (WW), **Northern Shovelers** showed up there by 8/11, and **Northern Pintail** were

also seen at Finley on the same day (WW). 1 **Canvasback** lingered at Ankeny until 6/14 (JW, JSc), and a southbound migrant was found at Tangent STP 8/7 (DR). A **Redhead** visited Ankeny 7/7 (RG), and 1 was seen 7/25, 7/31 and 8/1 at Philomath STP. While **Ring-necked Ducks** do not often breed locally, a pair with 6 ducklings were spotted at Ankeny 8/17 (EK). 3 **Lesser Scaup** and a few **Ruddy Ducks** spent their summer in the brown lagoons of the Philomath STP instead of migrating, and a female **Hooded Merganser** raised her brood of 7 ducklings there.

Many birders headed up to Marys Peak this summer, resulting in many reports of **Mountain Quail** and several **Sooty Grouse**. A single **Ruffed Grouse** was in the Coast Range foothills SW of Philomath 8/11 (JFa). A covey of **California Quail** showed up unexpectedly in a NW Corvallis yard in August (AF), and 4 adult quail with about 25 fuzzy chicks were seen at Finley 7/28 (MM). A mother **Wild Turkey** successfully defended her brood against a Red-shouldered Hawk by flying after it and chasing it into a tree (JP).

Ankeny had good numbers of **Pied-billed Grebes** this period, with 31 counted on 8/10 (MU). 1 **Western Grebe** was seen at Ankeny frequently, from late June through early July. Some breed at Fern Ridge Res but most spend the summer E of the Cascades.

1 **Double-crested Cormorant** was seen along the Willamette R 7/11 (LM, DB), at a time when almost all are over at the coast. Up to 35 **American White Pelicans** visited Cabell Marsh at Finley this period—a favorite summer location for them. 2 were seen at Ankeny 7/7 (RG).

1 **American Bittern**, 5 **Great Blue Herons**, 2 **Great Egrets** and 3 **Green Herons** were seen 8/10 at Pintail Marsh at Ankeny. A young Green Heron landed in a tree in a suburban yard in NE Corvallis 8/10, and seemed to be stalking songbirds, unsuccessfully (LM).

About 30 **Turkey Vultures** seemed to be leaving their nighttime roost on Tampico Ridge on the morning of 8/17 (JG). An **Osprey** carrying a fish along the Willamette R was confronted by 2 **Bald Eagles**, and immediately dropped the fish rather than fight over it 7/11 (LM, DB). A family of 4 **Northern Harriers** tirelessly harassed an unseen predator in the tall grass and brush at Jackson-Frazier Wetland; it was probably a Coyote (LM, DB). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was mobbed by a number of swallows at Ankeny 8/8 (MU). A **Cooper's Hawk** attacked a Turkey Vulture along the Willamette R, and a **Red-shouldered Hawk** attacked a **Red-tailed Hawk** nearby 7/11 (LM, DB). Many young Red-tails were begging loudly by early July.

2 **Virginia Rails** and 1 **Sora** were seen at Pintail Marsh at Ankeny 8/10 (MU). 1 **Sandhill Crane** was seen from I-5, SE of Tangent on 6/30 (DG). Numbers of **American Coots** are still relatively low, but will greatly increase over the next two periods.

This period brought a good assortment of shorebirds. Single **Black-necked Stilts** were reported from the Duckflat



*Spotted Sandpiper photo by Matt Lee*

Rd area of Marion Co 6/28 (RG) and from the ponds on Eicher Rd in Linn Co 6/15 and 8/7 (DR). **Pacific Golden-Plovers** also turned up at Duckflat Rd 6/25 (GL), the Eicher Rd ponds 8/2 (DR) and the Corvallis Airport 8/17 (RM). 1 **Semipalmated Plover** was also at the Duckflat Rd site on 6/28 (RG), and a juvenile was found at Philomath STP 8/14 (HH). An orphaned baby **Killdeer** settled in with its new family 6/12, a day after it was brought from Chintimini Wildlife Center to a rural stable with a pair of adults and their 4 babies (DE). Young **Spotted Sandpipers** along the Willamette R were on their own by 7/11 (LM, DB). A **Solitary Sandpiper** was visiting the rice ponds at Gap Rd in Linn Co 7/26 (JH). On 6/28, 43 **Greater Yellowlegs** and 1 **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at the Duckflat Rd site along with an assortment of other species (RG), it appeared that these birds were already on their southbound migration although unusually early. A **Sanderling** and a **Baird's Sandpiper** were uncommon visitors to the Philomath STP 8/16 (WW), and another Baird's had been seen there 7/21 (OH, HH). By the end of the period, **Least Sandpiper** numbers had built to 46 at Philomath STP (HH), and **Western Sandpiper** numbers had reached 140 at the Beta Dr pond S of Albany (DR). A **Pectoral Sandpiper** showed up at Philomath STP 7/21 (DR), and 1 was seen on 7/30, 8/14 and 8/17 at the Eicher Rd pond in Linn Co (DR). Single **Semipalmated Sandpipers** seemed to be spotted sporadically at Philomath STP from 8/14-8/24 (HH) and at Beta Dr 8/7-8/14 (DR). There were 66 **Long-billed Dowitchers** at Ankeny 7/17 (MU); their uncommon and almost indistinguishable relatives, **Short-billed Dowitchers**, were also reported a few times. Only single birds were reported from Duckflat Rd 6/29 (JGr, WH), Philomath STP 8/21-8/26 (HH), and Eicher Rd 8/7 and 8/14 (DR). **Wilson's Snipe** were reported from Ankeny somewhat regularly throughout the period, indicating that at least a few may have bred there. Juvenile **Wilson's Phalaropes** were spotted at Ankeny along with defensive adults 7/4 (RG), while **Red-necked Phalaropes** began to return on their southbound migration in late July, and from then on were regularly seen at Philomath STP.

A **Bonaparte's Gull** was present at Philomath STP 6/27 (HB), another was found at Duckflat Rd in Marion Co 7/2 (RG), and 2 were at Philomath STP beginning 8/13 and continuing for a few days (HH, OH, WW). A few single **Ring-billed Gulls** were seen this period, with Philomath STP being the most reliable location. **California Gulls** moved through the valley on their way to the coast in late July, with 122 present at Philomath STP 7/13 (HH). 2 **Black Terns** were spotted at the Eicher Rd ponds in Linn Co 7/16 (OH, HH).

**Rock Pigeons** still had begging young in downtown Corvallis at the end of the period, while **Eurasian Collared-Doves** and **Mourning Doves** seemed to be congregating in flocks. 35+ **Band-tailed Pigeons** were at the Camp Adair Rifle Range 7/20 (JG, MB).

A **Barn Owl** left pellets, droppings and feathers under the downtown Corvallis bridges where it apparently roosted this period (LM). 1 **Western Screech-Owl** was reported from EEW 8/14 (GH). A Northern Pygmy-Owl called at McDonald Forest 8/16. 1-3 **Great Horned Owls** called regularly throughout the period in the Coast Range foothills SW of Philomath (JFa, KFa), and a **Barred Owl** was reported from Fitton Green 6/24 (BP). Very rare in the Coast Range during the breeding season, 2 **Long-eared Owls** were flying low and investigating birders at Marys Peak 8/8 (RCo, PCo).

3 **Common Nighthawks** were calling and "booming" as they flew over Dunn Forest 7/25 (RCo, PCo). **Vaux's Swifts** began to accumulate in communal roosts this period, and between "a few hundred" to more than 1000 entered a chimney on 1st St in Corvallis 8/13 (DL).

Young male **Anna's Hummingbirds** practiced their songs and courtship diving throughout the summer, although they were not able to make the characteristic tail-feather "squeak" of the adult males. Adult male **Rufous Hummingbirds** were mostly absent from the lowlands by early in the period, but females and juveniles were present in at least some locations through the end of the period.

A young **Belted Kingfisher** begged for food from a parent at Ankeny 8/8 (MU).

**Acorn Woodpeckers** at OSU seemed to still be feeding begging young at the end of the period (DB). A **Red-breasted Sapsucker** was feeding young in Teloh-Calapooia Park in Albany 6/15 (JSm), and a juvenile was spotted at Luckiamute SNA 7/20 (JG, MB). A young **Downy Woodpecker** in SW Albany managed to evade a juvenile Cooper's Hawk 6/21 (JSm), and a female **Hairy Woodpecker** fed 4 young at a suet feeder at the same location in late June. A young **Northern Flicker** with a red marking on the nape seemed to be another individual in a line of "Red-shafted" x "Yellow-shafted" hybrids in Corvallis (SH).

A male **American Kestrel** was observed catching dragonflies off algae mats at the Philomath STP 6/24 (WW); insects can be a significant part of their diet. A few **Peregrine Falcons** were reported over the summer, mostly around Ankeny and Philomath STP, but 2 were also seen



circling over the Coast Range foothills SW of Philomath in mid-July (JFa).

An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** was noted at the same site in NW Corvallis on 6/12 and 8/21 (ES). By late July, feisty fledgling **Western Wood-Pewees** were out with their parents. 2 **Willow Flycatchers** were heard at Bald Hill Park 6/14 (DB). **Hammond's Flycatchers** were reported from the Coast Range foothills and Mary's Peak throughout the period, while **Pacific-slope Flycatchers** were widespread. A couple of **Black Phoebes** were seen at Finley 7/15 (TJ, CS); they seem to have been hit hard by last winter, but enough remain that the population will probably increase over the next few years. The **Western Kingbirds** breeding on the Finley prairie produced 4 hungry fledglings this year; on 7/28 the youngsters grouped together on a branch for a nap (MM). An **Eastern Kingbird** found along the Campus Way bike path last period was seen as late as 6/13 (KO, LF).

3 **Cassin's Vireos** were along the S Santiam R near Crabtree 6/29 (DR). All 3 vireo species, including **Hutton's Vireo** and **Warbling Vireo**, were singing at Bald Hill Park early in the period.

A family of 3 **Gray Jays** visited a suet feeder about a mile E of Fitton Green 7/4. **Steller's Jays** and **Western Scrub-Jays** plucked hazelnuts this period, when they could get to them before the squirrels and chipmunks did. Young **American Crows** placed peanuts into birdbaths in a Corvallis yard this period (SH). **Common Ravens** and Turkey Vultures descended upon newly-cut fields this period to feast on chopped rodents.

**Horned Larks** were reported on De Armond Rd and at Buena Vista Rd 7/20 (JG, MB)

Several **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** and 1 **Bank Swallow** were among a large flock of swallows at Philomath STP 8/13 (HH, OH). Another Bank Swallow was at Eicher Rd 6/16 (DR). **Purple Martins** were reported fairly often this period, with multiple reports from Finley and the Coast Range. 3 mobbed a Red-tailed Hawk at McDonald Forest 8/17 (JSi). After their breeding season was complete, **Tree Swallows** and **Violet-green Swallows** tended to congregate in prime feeding sites around wetlands. Several late broods of **Barn Swallows** were still in progress in mid-August. **Cliff Swallows** were active at nesting colonies until late July-early August.

A young male **Black-capped Chickadee** was practicing his whistled song and his "gargle" sound with great enthusiasm 7/11 (LM, DB). By the end of July, **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** were wandering out of breeding areas into suburban Corvallis (DB, LM). Baby **Bushtits** were still in their nest at Willamette Park 6/22 (DB, LM). A very warm day prompted a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** to take advantage of a hose sprayer nozzle to bathe in and drink the mist 8/11 (JG). **White-breasted Nuthatch** juveniles were observed in SW Albany this period (JSm), and **Brown Creeper** youngsters were seen S of Corvallis (JSw).

S of Corvallis, one yard produced 5 broods of **House Wrens** this season (JSw). 16 vocal **Marsh Wrens** were counted at Ankeny 7/17 (MU). Young male **Bewick's Wrens** and **Pacific Wrens** were busy learning their complex songs this period.

An **American Dipper** was present on Crooked Creek S of Marys Peak 6/24 (KL), and many were seen at Alsea Falls and Green Peak Falls during a bicycle camping trip 8/3-8/5 (DB). **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were generally absent from the valley floor this period, but fairly common in coniferous forests at a slight elevation. A **Wrentit** at Finley popped up out of the brush, long enough for a birder to get a new life bird 7/12 (SH). A **Western Bluebird** family foraged along Campus Way 6/17 (DB). On the evening of 7/25, **Swainson's Thrushes**, **Hermit Thrushes** and **Varied Thrushes** were all singing at the same time on Marys Peak (RCo, PCo). Young **American Robins** were still heard begging for food in mid-August, but didn't seem to be getting too much from their parents anymore.

**European Starlings** and **Cedar Waxwings** congregated at cherry trees early in the period. Waxwing fledglings were being fed at Dunn Forest 7/25 (PCo, RCo).

**Orange-crowned Warblers** and **Wilson's Warblers** were beginning to show up away from breeding areas by late July, with movement fairly conspicuous during August. A female **MacGillivray's Warbler** perched in full view at the Soap Creek Ranch 7/20 (JG, MB), where there were also many adult and juvenile **Common Yellowthroats**. A whole family of **Yellow Warblers** hopped around in the shrubby willows on an island adjacent to Willamette Park 7/11 (LM, DB). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were reported from Marys Peak throughout the period; unlike **Hermit Warblers**, they are an uncommon breeding species in the Coast Range. **Black-throated Gray Warblers** were still feeding fledglings at EEW on 8/10 (LM, DB). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was along Reservoir Ave in Corvallis 7/24 (RF); it was likely the same individual noted at Bald Hill last period.

A trip to OSU's Soap Creek Ranch 7/20 produced **Spotted Towhees**, **Chipping Sparrows**, **Vesper Sparrows**,



*Black-headed Grosbeak photo by Matt Lee*

## OPEN ASC BOARD MEETINGS

ASC Board of Directors meetings are open to all ASC members, and the board encourages you to come and see what we do. Our monthly board meeting is on Thursday one week before the General Meeting. See the calendar on the last page of the Chat for meeting location.

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Travis Coley  
Tom & Sue Guss  
Anne Smith

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## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

To renew your membership online go to the ASC website ([www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml](http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml)) & renew via Paypal, or you can mail a check to ASC, PO Box 148, Corvallis, OR 97339.

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## EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS

Please note that you need to opt into the ASC listserv. After you sign up, you'll receive up-to-date email notifications about ASC events, fieldtrip locations, volunteer work parties and weather-related cancellations. Send an email to our listserv administrator, Karan Fairchild, and request to be added to the listserv: [alderspr@peak.org](mailto:alderspr@peak.org)

**Savannah Sparrows, Song Sparrows** and **Dark-eyed Juncos**, all with fledglings (JG, MB). A junco family nesting in a hanging fuchsia basket successfully fledged their young in early July (SH). Migrating **Brewer's Sparrows** turned up at Philomath STP 8/4 (DR) and at Ankeny 8/25 and 8/31 (RG). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** continued at a restored grassland at Finley 6/12 (DR), and up to 11 were reported from Belts Dr E of Harrisburg 7/15 (BD).

**Western Tanagers** began to appear outside of breeding areas by late July, and adult male **Black-headed Grosbeaks** were on their way south again by early August. A movement of **Lazuli Buntings** was conspicuous by the end of July, and most of them were gone by the end of the period. A possible Indigo Bunting was seen at Springhill Dr and Independence Hwy 7/8 (JG), but could not be confirmed.

**Red-winged Blackbirds** finished up breeding early in the period and formed loose flocks with European Starlings and **Brewer's Blackbirds**. A surprising flock of at least 44 **Tricolored Blackbirds** (including one female feeding fledglings) were found along Eicher Rd in Linn Co. 7/16 (DR); these are rare in the valley but do disperse widely after breeding. **Western Meadowlarks** were seen with young at the Finley prairie 7/28 (MM). Small numbers of **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were observed sporadically at Finley and Ankeny throughout the summer, with occasional wanderers showing up at Philomath STP and Eicher Rd. A **Great-tailed Grackle** was found at Ankeny 6/15 (TW); although still very uncommon, this species is increasing in Oregon. Fledgling **Brown-headed Cowbirds** were reported with a variety of "foster parents:" Song Sparrows

on 7/11 (LM, DB), Black-capped Chickadees 7/13 (JG) and Yellow-breasted Chats 7/18 (JG). A pair of **Bullock's Orioles** seemed to be breeding near the water treatment plant in S Corvallis (DB, LM). A vagrant **Hooded Oriole** turned up at a hummingbird feeder in Independence 6/16 (BW); it was speculated that this was a young male transitioning into adult plumage.

Young **House Finches** and **Purple Finches** visited a yard in SW Albany this period (JSm). A pair of **Cassin's Finches** were on Marys Peak 7/10 (WW); they are very infrequently found in the Coast Range during breeding season. 1 was also observed on 8/6 and 8/18 (DR). Although **Red Crossbills** and **Pine Siskins** have been almost absent for a year or so, some crossbills were heard singing as they flew over the Coast Range foothills SW of Philomath 7/1 (KFa), and reports were more frequent through the rest of the period. Siskins were noted by multiple observers in the nearby Coast Range, but numbers were still low. **Evening Grosbeaks** were also reported by visitors to the Coast Range, but 1 was also reported from NW Corvallis 7/4 (JSi). A **Lesser Goldfinch** fledgling was still begging for food from its parents 7/4 (JG). Many **American Goldfinch** fledglings started to appear in August, begging for tarweed and thistle seed from their parents.

Are you interested in compiling the Field Notes column for the ASC Chat? Due to other commitments, I need to hand off the task to another volunteer. Please contact me if you'd like more information.

Please post your reports to [midvalleybirding.org](http://midvalleybirding.org), send them to [lisaaves@peak.org](mailto:lisaaves@peak.org), or leave a message at 541-753-7689 by 9/20/14.

*Lisa Millbank*

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## ATOP THE NEST BOX

Not all nitrogen is the same. Catherine Dale at Queen's University is conducting research on the latitudinal movements of migratory songbirds. When the birds return to their nesting territories, nail clippings are taken and analyzed for their specific nitrogen signature. The food that provided that nitrogen was presumably consumed in the bird's wintering grounds. Within a fairly narrow range, researchers can determine how far south the bird spent the winter. There is no currently identified element for east-west determinations, however, this groundbreaking work will likely stimulate more research.



The results of Ms. Dale's research are expected to be published this fall.

I have been given the honor of speaking at the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project's annual meeting this fall. It will be exciting to share information with this 80+ person group and open more channels of communication within the bluebird community of Oregon.

Our 2014 nesting season was quite successful, thanks to relatively good spring weather. We expect to have data ready soon.

Raylene Gordin

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### PLAY ABOUT WILDERNESS ACT ANNIVERSARY

In celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Wilderness Act, Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club will present an original play about the historical roots of this landmark law at 3:30 pm, Sunday, Nov. 9 at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 2945 NW Circle Blvd. in Corvallis.

The play tells the story through the voices of key people who initiated the conservation movement, including Teddy Roosevelt (Gary Burris), Gifford Pinchot (Gary Prince), Eleanor Roosevelt (Leslie Hogan) and Lorena Hickok (Jane Donovan), in this original readers' theater production of *An Essential Triumvirate: Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, John Muir and the Conservationists' Ethic*.

ASC's own Ray Drapek will perform period piano music in the performance. A \$10 donation at the door is requested to support trail building, school arboretums, leadership training and advocacy.

This short play illustrates both the alchemy between Teddy Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, and John Muir and the unique personality of each of them. It will also show the tension between these advocates over conservation versus preservation of green spaces; a tension that continues in conversations today. Watching and listening to *An Essential Triumvirate* shows that such dialogues have been going on for over a hundred years. Come, listen, and then add your voice to that dialogue.

Barbara Loeb

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### OSU GRAD STUDENT NEEDS VOLUNTEER HELP

I am a graduate student in the Oregon State University College of Forestry. My colleagues and I are trying to determine the role of Pacific mistletoe (*Phoradendron pauciflorum*) on songbird communities in the Willamette Valley. Pacific mistletoe is a native plant that parasitizes Oregon white oak (*Quercus garryana*) and produces fleshy, white fruits in the late fall and early winter. It is believed that these fruits are an important resource for resident birds and that the mistletoe spreads from tree to tree when birds defecate the seeds as they move around the landscape. However, there is no published research to confirm these ideas.

One of the main questions of interest is which bird species eat mistletoe berries. I am trying to recruit citizen scientists who would be interested in helping to answer this question. Specifically, I am looking for volunteers who are willing to report any observations of birds eating mistletoe berries via our website. The data will be used to determine which bird species are most dependent on mistletoe and what time of year is most critical. You can check the website below for additional details. Thank you for your time.

Kyle Pritchard, MS Candidate, OSU College of Forestry  
<http://avianmistletoe.forestry.oregonstate.edu>

### HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?

If you have moved or changed your email address, please send your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at [ortizsv@gmail.com](mailto:ortizsv@gmail.com).

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### CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CHAT

Chris Matthews, Bill Proebsting, Raylene Gordin, Suzanne Ortiz, Barbara Loeb, Lisa Millbank, Don Boucher, Jessica Brothers, and Elsie Eltzroth, Kyle Pritchard

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### CHAT ARTICLES

The Chat editors welcome monthly articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the Chat editor by the 4th Thursday of the month. Always submit text using Microsoft Word. Send submissions to [chateditors@gmail.com](mailto:chateditors@gmail.com).

### AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CORVALLIS

## Calendar

Sept 11	ASC Board Meeting, 7 pm at Hesthavn
Sept 13	Bald Hill field trip
Sept 18	ASC General Meeting
Sept 20	Oct. Field Notes submissions due
Sept 26	Oct. Chat submissions due

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Interested in volunteering?  
Please let us know: [volunteerasc@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerasc@gmail.com)

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

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