



THE CHAT

FEBRUARY 2019

VOL. 48 #6

ASC General Meeting

Thurs, Feb. 21st, 2019, 6:30-8:30 pm
2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th) in Corvallis

Dr. Tyler Hallman - Study of historic & present bird populations and habitat changes

Tyler was introduced early to birding by then-president of the Pasadena Audubon Society, who was also his father. Though he attempted to rebel, his love of birds stuck with him. As an undergraduate at Pitzer College he helped design a course on how to survey bird populations. After receiving his Organismal Biology degree (the study of structure, function, ecology and evolution at the organism level), he spent two years as a field technician on projects including nest searching for grassland species in Nebraska, hawk watching in the Grand Canyon National Park, and monitoring swallow breeding biology in Tierra del Fuego, Argentina. He received his Masters of Science degree from Southern Illinois University (Carbondale) in 2012 with a project on the combined effects of rising global temperatures and common pollutants on amphibians. While in Illinois, he ran ornithology labs and participated in the state's annual Big Day competitions. In 2012 Tyler moved to Oregon to begin his Ph.D. as a part of the Oregon 2020 project. In his time at Oregon State University, Tyler advised the undergraduate Bird Nerds club, taught Systematics of Birds every quarter, and became an essential member of the Oregon 2020 team.

Tyler's research focuses on how to map the distributions and abundances of birds, how these distributions and abundances have changed through time, and how to best use citizen science data to meet these objectives. Tyler successfully defended his degree in December, 2018.

Future 2019 monthly programs:

March 21 - Bill Proebsting - Birding in Colombia or Australia

April 18 - William Sullivan - New Hikes in the Oregon Cascades by this popular local author

May 16 - Matt Lee & Sue Powell - Birding in Costa Rica



Tyler Hallman

*Mark Baldwin, Vice Pres. & Program Chair,
mark.baldwin2@comcast.net*

ASC General Meetings

Third Thursdays at Chintimini Senior Ctr: September – May
2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th) in Corvallis

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Field Trip Schedule

Local Monthly Second Saturday Field Trips

Our Saturday morning local field trips meet at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 757 NW Polk St., Corvallis at 7:30 am. This field trip is free and 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 or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ, <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 Ctr by 12.

Next Field Trips:

February 9: Cheadle Lake, Lebanon. Park at the North Shore Trailhead and explore the trail network among the ponds. Flat, easy walking.

March 9: Snagboat Bend NWR

Weekend Field Trips:

March 15-17 starts ASC's weekend bird trips with a visit to Oregon's south coast. The **Bandon** field trip features sea ducks (with a chance at Long-tailed Duck), alcids (including Marbled Murrelet), raptors, such as Red-shouldered Hawk and White-tailed Kite, many other birds, and some hefty mammals - Steller's and California Sea Lion and Elephant Seal. Here is a look at the route:

Friday: Yaquina Head, Newport south jetty, Sea Lion Caves (?), Jesse Honeyman State Park, Winchester Bay, Coos Bay north sandspit, Coquille, Myrtle Point, and Bandon.
Saturday: Bandon Rocks, Bandon Marsh NWR, Bullards

Beach State Park, New River, Port Orford, Cape Blanco, and back to Bandon
Sunday: Bandon Marsh NWR, Cape Arago & Simpson Reef, Charleston, Fossil Point, Siuslaw River south jetty, and Corvallis at ~ 7 pm.

We will sample one of the coast's excellent seafood restaurants and stay in comfortable motel rooms.

Note that the trip precedes the March members' meeting, so February's meeting will be the last one where a signup sheet will be available. If you cannot make that, you can sign on to this trip - and others - by email to framsey5@comcast.net.

Looking to the future, these other trips are planned:

South Coast	March 15-17
Klamath Basin	April 12-14
Rogue Valley	April 26-28
Malheur NWR	May 17-20
Summer Lake	June 14-16
Wallowas	July 18-22
Steens Mtn.	August 15-18
Shorebirds	August 23-25

Fred Ramsey

President's Corner

Spring is Coming

Woodland plants will begin to flower this month, signaling approaching spring. Indian Plum, Red-flowering Currant, Oregon Grape and a host of others. Besides adding color to the woods, birds use the flowers. Over the course of the season, they also glean insects from the leaves and consume fruit.

February is an excellent time to think about making your garden more bird friendly. Plant a tree or shrub. Improve connectivity between plants by adding more shrubs to reduce exposure for birds. Add a thicket near your feeders to provide refuge from hawks and cats. Naturally, native plants are the best decision to make for these situations, as they host more insects which birds avidly consume.

Gardening for birds is what I call the Avian Home Entertainment System. Have some fun this winter planning how to augment your own AHES.

Bill Proebsting, Chapter President

Education News

Thanks to Melody Johnson of Franklin School for inviting us to their Science Night January 24. Our dedicated volunteers, Sue Powell, Phyllis Bailey, Nancy DeMasi, Kris Ebbe and I enjoyed the big and enthusiastic crowd as we measured wing spans, told the story behind the western meadowlark becoming our state bird, and explored backyard birding.

Winter Wildlife Field Day 2019

Despite the government shutdown that kept our USFWS friends off the job for a critical month, we still hope to hold

our Fifth Annual Winter Wildlife Field Day at Finley National Wildlife Refuge March 9 from 11-3. It's just nine miles south of Corvallis.

Save the date, pass the word, and bring your friends and family to four hours of free, hands-on fun, exploring the natural world with the help of skilled volunteers. This year's theme is Nature's predators. Take a close look at critters from owls and carnivorous insects, to coyotes, bobcats and invasive bullfrogs! This inspiring outing is suitable for all ages. See live birds, walk the Homer Campbell Trail with expert guides, touch real animal fur and bones, rebuild tiny skeletons as you dissect owl pellets, get creative, and much more.

ASC volunteers and our partners with Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Chintimini Wildlife Center, and OSU Fisheries and Wildlife Club, continued to prepare for the event through the shutdown and will soon be rejoined by our partners at Finley and other groups.

The planning team will meet again Feb. 7 to finalize program details and marketing. We will also consider whether to continue planning the event at Finley or consider an alternate site. IF a change of venue is warranted, we will make sure the information is broadly distributed, but our fingers are crossed.

Over 100 volunteers are needed to operate the twelve stations exploring wildlife, from setup to cleanup and 4 hours of programs in between. If you can join the volunteer team on March 9, please contact Teri Engbring at chateditors@gmail.com or refuge Visitor Services Manager Samantha Bartling at Samantha_bartling@fws.gov. And if you have questions about the event, call 541-757-7236.

Teri Engbring, ASC Education Team



Hesthavn News

It's time for my unsung heroes awards. This goes to those who have helped keep Hesthavn in good shape. First there's John Criscitiello and Suzanne Ortiz who have been frequent volunteers for years, sometimes taking on difficult tasks like weeding "Ray's Trail." Ann Brodie has also been a frequent volunteer for years mostly working on keeping the barn clean and mouse-free as well as working to get the new garden installed next to the barn. Julie Gibson has put many hours of her free time into working on her own restoration projects on the property as well as working on the new garden next to the barn. Karl Hartzell is the go-to man when things need fixing. Jim Fairchild got our broken water pump functional again. This is what allows us to collect and store water so that we can irrigate our plants during the dry season.

All of these volunteers deserve credit not only for the great help they have been, but for their longevity. Volunteers come and volunteers go, but these guys show up year after year.

But what has been especially encouraging for me this last year has been the appearance of some new faces. Tracy Ann Robinson has come out on her own to work on projects such as clearing the weeds off of "Ray's Trail." I think Alice Formiga has been to every one of my work parties since September. I knew Karen Canan many years ago from playing piano in community theater productions, so I was surprised to hear from her this fall and learn that she was interested in volunteering at Hesthavn. Since then, she has showed up on her own to do some blackberry digging. Her son William has also showed up to help out and he's been a really good sport about it.

So it's been a good year volunteer-wise. I very much appreciate the help of these folks, but I also appreciate the help of anyone who has ever come to help out, even if it was only for one visit. Every little bit helps. Thank you all!

Coming Work parties:

Sunday Feb 10: 10 am to 2 pm. Barn and yard maintenance. This very possibly will end before 2.

Sunday Feb 24: 10 am to 2 pm. Weeds. Blackberry removal.

Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair

Check out Winter Animals at Hesthavn

February 17 sees the return of our monthly family friendly program, with "Animals in Winter." Explore the mystery of how local animals survive the coldest, wettest time of the year in the Hesthavn Nature Center. And feel free to walk our two acres of maintained trails on your own before or after.

Dale Mitchell leads a team of six ASC volunteers who will offer a scavenger hunt, animal and habitat matching game, an art project where guests can create their own perfect winter habitat, and a special intro to critters that winter in our area. Bring your friends and family for a fun, interactive, afternoon in Nature.

The Hesthavn Museum Room will also be open for guests to check out the dozens of real, taxidermied birds in the ASC collection, from a snowy owl to falcons. As always, this free program will be from 1-3 pm at ASC's Hesthavn Nature Center at 8590 NW Oak Creek Drive. If weather is good, some activities will be outside, but the Nature Center has plenty of room to stay warm and dry inside.

Directions: Take Harrison west from downtown Corvallis and after you cross 53rd, it becomes Oak Creek Drive. Pass Bald Hill farm and follow the signs for Nature Center.

Hesthavn will be on your left shortly before the end of Oak Creek Drive.

Hope to see you there. Programs are still in the planning stage for March and April. Information will be on the ASC website and in future CHAT issues.

Community Notes

Insights into Gardening

A fun, day-long educational conference for anyone interested in gardening - from beginners to experienced gardeners. Sponsored by the Benton County Master Gardener Association it provides participants with up-to-date, research-based gardening information.

Attendees choose from 16 classes offered in four concurrent sessions taught by local experts. In addition to classes, participants can visit with over 20 exhibitors for one-on-one advice and to make a few purchases. Buy some raffle tickets are for a chance to win prizes provided by our exhibitors. There is also a silent auction with unique items.

Join us Saturday, Feb. 9th at LaSells Stewart Center from 9:00 to 4:00. Cost is \$35 in advance, \$40 at the door. Parking is free. Register on-line at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton/events/insights>. Proceeds from this event help fund grants, scholarships and educational outreach.

Jana Tindall

2019 Eco-Film Festival

Odd Fellows Hall, 223 SW 2nd St, Doors open at 6:30 pm, film starts at 7 pm. A suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 per family.

Friday, Feb. 1: *The Kingdom* - How fungi made our world

Friday, Feb. 8: *The Human Element* - Humans join earth, air, fire, and water in environmental balance

Friday, Feb. 15: *A Bold Peace* - Costa Rica chooses its people and its environment over having a military

Suzanne Ortiz

2019 Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Fair & Town Hall

Thursday March 7th, Fair hours 5 pm-7pm; Town Hall 7-9 pm at CH2MHill Alumni Center, 725 SW 26th St on the OSU Campus

The Fair is free and open to the public and runs from 5-7 pm. There will be more than 50 exhibits, refreshments, music and kid's activities.

The Town Hall will run from 7-9 pm and requires registration. The keynote speaker will be Mary Christina Wood, University of Oregon law professor and author known for her advocacy of the use of the Public Trust Doctrine to compel governmental action on climate change. The deadline for registration is March 1. You can register at:

www.surveymonkey.com/r/Sustainability_Town_Hall_2019

Suzanne Ortiz, ASC Sustainability Coalition Rep

Great Backyard Bird Count

The 22nd Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will take place from **Friday, Feb. 15 through Monday, Feb. 18**. Volunteers from around the world are invited to count the birds they

see for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, then enter their checklists at birdcount.org. Anyone with internet access can participate, no matter what their skill level—it's a great family activity, too.

During the 2018 count, bird watchers from more than 100 countries submitted more than 180,000 bird checklists reporting a record 6,456 species – more than half the known bird species in the world!

To learn more about how to take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, visit birdcount.org.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, with partner Bird Studies Canada and is made possible in part by founding sponsor Wild Birds Unlimited.

Pat Leonard, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, pel27@cornell.edu

Lebanon Senior Center Birding

We are looking for volunteers with birding skills who could help host some of our seniors in learning to look for and identify birds. I'd like to share a Great Courses video on bird watching this spring and do an outing or two in conjunction with it. The class is free and we hope to inspire seniors to get outdoors and enjoy nature. There are some great bird watching locations in your area, so I could bring a group of twelve that direction in our bus.

For more information contact Rebecca Wirths, Lebanon Senior Center and Dial-a-Bus. Phone: 541-258-4919 ext. 4224; 80 Tangent Street, Lebanon, OR 97355 or e-mail: rwirfs@ci.lebanon.or.us or www.ci.lebanon.or.us

Rebecca Wirths, Lebanon Senior Center

Olympic BirdFest 2019

Grab your binoculars and join the 16th annual Olympic BirdFest 2019 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, **April 12-14, 2019**.

The stage is set... quiet bays and estuaries, sandy beaches, a five-mile-long sand spit, and a protected island bird sanctuary on the Strait of Juan de Fuca; wetlands, tide pools, rainforests, and lush river valleys. The players are ready ... Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, Barred and Pygmy Owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tour, and a gala banquet. Our featured speaker this year, John Marzluff, is a professor of wildlife science at the University of Washington and a noted author.

Come bird with us and experience the spectacular landscapes of the Olympic Peninsula! Check out the offerings by going online (www.olympicbirdfest.org).

Also available: a three-day, two-night birding cruise of the spectacular San Juan Islands on April 9-11, 2019 with stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort; and Neah Bay post-trip, April 14-16, 2019: exploring northwest coastal Washington.

Questions? Contact us by phone, at 360-681-4076, or Email us at info@olympicbirdfest.org

*Marion Rutledge,
Olympic BirdFest Co-chair,
Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society*

Conservation Update

Help pass Oregon Clean Energy Jobs bill

Climate change has been in the news a lot lately, and with good reason. It appears to be happening at a rate in the middle-to-high range of the predictions, not at the low end, with more wildfires, worse hurricanes, and more sea-level rise than policymakers have been wishing for.

Oregon can help address the problem via the Oregon legislature, which is now in its half-year-long session. It will be considering the Clean Energy Jobs bill, a policy to cap and price climate pollution from the largest emitters in the state and reinvest the proceeds into Oregon's clean energy economy.

This bill will cap carbon emissions statewide for emitters of large amounts of greenhouse gases, those who produce the equivalent of burning about 133 train cars of coal or more per year. The cap will decline over time until 2050, both reducing climate pollution and providing certainty for businesses. The largest emitters will pay for every ton of greenhouse gases they put into our air. The price is stable and adjusted over time, giving polluters incentive to cut emissions and allowing flexibility to do so efficiently and at least cost. This will generate revenue that will be plowed back into in clean energy jobs—affordable solar, energy efficiency upgrades to homes and businesses, more transportation options, and job training programs. Investments will be targeted to rural communities for projects like wildfire prevention, drought protection, and clean energy. Fairness and a just transition to clean energy are central to the policy.

Please contact your legislators and governor and encourage them to pass this bill!

Gov. Kate Brown, Office of the Governor, 900 Court Street NE, Suite 254, Salem, OR 97301-4047.

Sen. Sara Gelser, Oregon Senate, 900 Court St. NE, S-405, Salem, Oregon 97301.

(Corvallis) *Rep. Dan Rayfield*, Oregon House of Representatives, 900 Court St. NE, H-275, Salem, Oregon 97301.

(Albany) *Rep. Shelly Boshart Davis*, Oregon House of Representatives, 900 Court St. NE, H-389, Salem, Oregon 97301.

Dave Mellinger

Field Notes

12/28/18-01/24/19

This month's weather was mostly wet as typical for the season, but mild for the season in terms of temperatures, with afternoon temperatures rising above 50 F on half of the days in the period, and only one morning dipping below 25 F in Corvallis. Correspondingly mild temperatures in the mountains meant limited snow accumulation, prompting concerns about possibly low streamflows and water supplies in late spring and summer.

Abbreviations and locations: CBC = Christmas Bird Count, NWR = National Wildlife Refuge, SNA = State Natural Area, STP = sewage treatment ponds. Jackson-Frazier Wetlands is in north Corvallis near Cheldelin Middle School. Luckiamute SNA is along the Willamette River northwest of Albany. Philomath STP is south of Philomath and requires access permission. (Bruce) Starker Arts Park is in sw. Corvallis. Talking Water Gardens is in NE Albany. Cabell Marsh, McFadden Marsh, and North Prairie are locations at Finley NWR.

Conservation focus: Horned Larks

Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*) are the only member of the lark family native to North America but they are also found across



Eurasia and in North Africa. Their name comes from the distinctive horn-shaped tufts of feathers on adult males, which are often difficult to see in the field.



Male Streaked Horned Lark in a fescue field near Baskett Slough NWR, February 2018. Photo by Joel Geier

Some 42 subspecies of Horned Lark are recognized in the northern hemisphere. One subspecies, *E.a. strigata*, also known as **Streaked Horned Lark**, is endemic to western Oregon, western Washington, and formerly sw. British Columbia. The Willamette Valley birds are year-round residents, while those from the Puget Sound region may migrate south into Oregon. Several other subspecies are longer-distance migrants and can account for many of the larks in our region in winter.

Since October, 2013 the **Streaked Horned Lark** has been listed as Threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), due to extirpation of populations in the north and south parts of its range (including sw. B.C. in the north and the Rogue and Umpqua valleys in sw. Oregon), plus significant declines in the remaining parts of its range.

The rangewide population is estimated to be roughly 1200 to 1600 birds, about 80% of which breed in the Willamette Valley. The bulk of the population nests on private land, especially large grass-seed and clover-seed fields which have three key features of habitat structure that larks require: wide-open landscapes, low vegetation height, and areas with bare ground for foraging. Larks also make use of Christmas-tree farms in early stages, when the young trees are less than two feet high.

While these farming situations are important as habitat, they are not ideal. Larks are ground-nesting birds so their nests and nestlings are vulnerable to disturbance and destruction by equipment such as spray buggies, swathers, and combines. A greater long-term threat is posed by current trends for conversion of grass-seed acreage to hazelnut (filbert) orchards, vineyards, and residential development.

The 2013 ESA listing provides no real protections for larks on private farmland, nor any restrictions on conversions from grass seed to orchards or other crops that are unsuitable for larks. It does provide limited protections for larks at airports such as Corvallis Airport, which hosts one of the largest known populations on or around public-owned land. Stronger protections and lark-focused habitat management are in place for smaller populations on Ankeny, Baskett Slough, and Finley NWRs which were included in the "critical habitat" designation as part of the ESA listing

How to help

If a site used by nesting Horned Larks is being developed for non-agricultural uses, the USFWS may be able to impose restrictions or requirements for remediation. For this to happen, there needs to be a "federal nexus" (for example, involvement by a federal agency, or some amount of federal funding). If you know of a site that larks are using, please contact Audubon to see if there is a chance for protection.

Another way you can help larks, especially in winter, is to keep an

eye out for color-banded larks!

The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM) has banded many Streaked Horned Larks from the critically imperiled Puget Sound population, to gain a better understanding of their wintering range. At least two of these birds have turned up in the Willamette Valley in winter. OSU researchers (Randy Moore and colleagues) have also banded many larks at Corvallis Airport. Sightings of these larks could help to give insights into habitat utilization and dispersal.

Researchers at the University of British Columbia have also been banding an alpine-nesting population of Horned Larks from another subspecies that nests in northern B.C. According to Devin de Zwaan, a Ph.D. researcher at UBC, data from geolocator devices shows that at least a few of these larks visit the Willamette Valley in winter.

Color-banded larks will usually have a metal band and a colored plastic band on one leg, and two colored plastic bands on the other leg. If you see such a lark, please note which colors you see on which legs. Also be sure to note which color is on top vs. on the bottom on each leg!

You can find more information on how to report banded larks at the following links (the first one is for the UBC project, the second is for CNLM):

<https://bit.ly/2BbvGfg>

<https://audubonportland.org/files/banded-larks>

You can also send reports to me. I'll make sure they go to the right research group!

Locally this month, the largest reported flock of Horned Larks was 45 along Davis Rd. near Shedd on 17 Jan (Tom Gilg). Mike & Karen Lippsmeyer had a flock of 25 on their farm s. of Independence through 5 Jan. Another flock of 19 were along Waggener Rd. sw. of Brownsville 7 Jan (Nancy Stotz). Numbers have been lower than usual this winter along Livermore Rd. n. of Baskett Slough NWR, with a peak count of just 12 on 2 Jan (Eric Bergman). Elsewhere reports have been in the single digits.

Seasonal bird activity

Late-winter courtship

A pair of **Hooded Mergansers** were seen frequently at Starker Arts Park in sw. Corvallis. On 15 Jan they were busy in their courtship display (Rana Foster).

On 5 Jan a male **Sooty Grouse** "hooted" from a stand of oaks and Douglas-firs in a pasture on the OSU Soap Creek Beef Ranch (Mary Garrard, Bev Clark).

Bald Eagles began to show interest in nestings sites already back in early Dec, when an adult pair were standing in and next to a nest in E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area that eagles used last year (Pam & Randy Comeleo).

Amorous **Pacific Chorus-Frogs** gave their "ribbit!" calls along Conser St. in ne. Corvallis 24 Jan (Don Boucher).

Evening movements and congregations

At dusk on 29 Dec, Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess saw several thousand **ducks** fly low over the North Prairie, heading northeast. A few observers have noted this same phenomenon in years past. Could this low evening flight be a way for ducks to avoid grabbed by eagles or other raptors, on their way to their nocturnal roosts?

On the same evening, Duncan and Caryn also saw a remarkable concentration of 29 **Northern Harriers**, and four **White-tailed Kites** flying to roost.

Wintering **Bald Eagles** continued to roost in good numbers off McLagan Dr. sw. of Tangent, with 66 there on 21 Jan (Mary Garrard).

As diurnal raptors go to roost, "crepuscular" raptors come out. Just after sunset 8 Jan, members of a Portland Audubon field trip saw three **Short-eared Owls** come off a roost along Farmer Rd.

east of Baskett Slough NWR to hunt over a wetland restoration there (Stefan Schlick). Fifteen more came out over the North Prairie at Finley NWR 14 Jan chasing each other and “barking” after the harriers there went to roost (Pam & Randy Comeleo).

Winter visitors

Up to five **Eurasian Wigeon** continued along with many **American Wigeon** at Talking Waters Garden. On 31 Dec two hybrid **Eurasian x American Wigeon** were in a wigeon flock at Starker Arts Park (Don Boucher).

Large flocks of **Tundra Swans** continued to be seen in the Halsey area and at Finley NWR. Twelve **Trumpeter Swans** were n. of Airlie 6 Jan (Roy Gerig). A family group of six including four juveniles were off Bell Plain Dr. sw. of Tangent 16 Jan (Deanna Emig). Eight were on Cabell Marsh 20 Jan (Erik Knight) and 6 were still there 21 Jan, along with 13 Snow Geese (Isaac Denzer). By the end of the period a total of 16 Trumpeters had gathered in the Suver area of s. Polk Co., where flocks often gather in February while staging for migration.

A flock of over 600 **gulls** visiting the Coffin Butte Regional Landfill this month included an adult **Western Gull** and at least 4 **Iceland (“Thayer’s”) Gulls** along with many **Glaucous-winged Gulls**, **Herring Gulls**, and **California Gulls** when Isaac Denzer and Jim Fairchild checked on 5 Jan. A well-described first-winter **Glaucous Gull** was with another large flock sw. of Albany 17 Jan (Craig Tumer).

During winter **Great Egrets** often hunt in pastures around the OSU dairy barns. Eight were on the e. side of 53rd St. near the fairgrounds 13 Jan, and fifteen were there at the end of the period (Kelly Collins).

An imm. **Golden Eagle** flew over ne. Corvallis 31 Dec (Lisa Millbank, Don Boucher). One was at Finley NWR 11 Jan (Jewel Murphy). Andrea and Greg Foster saw a very tawny-rufous immature **Cooper’s Hawk** and heard two more calling near the end of Circle Blvd (where this is now being extended) on 12 Jan. A **“Harlan’s” Red-tailed Hawk** continued s. of Independence through 5 Jan (Mike Lippsmeyer). Two **Rough-legged Hawks** – one light morph, one dark morph – were along Bruce Rd. at Finley NWR 14 Jan (Pam & Randy Comeleo).

A **Prairie Falcon** was along a regional powerline e. of Adair Village 5 Jan (Kai Frueh).

A **Say’s Phoebe** and a **Townsend’s Solitaire** were n. of Airlie 6 Jan (Roy Gerig). Another **Say’s Phoebe** was on the n. side of Ward Butte near Lebanon 17-18 Jan (Alex Farrand; Tom Gilg).

Two **Northern Shrikes** were seen regularly along Livermore Rd. n. of Baskett Slough NWR 31 Dec through mid Jan. One hunted from a utility wire along the edge of a private conservation property on Finley Rd. 14 Jan (Pam & Randy Comeleo).

Two **Hermit Thrushes** were along the bike path near Ashbrook School in Corvallis 18 Jan (Don Boucher). Eight **Cedar Waxwings** were in sw. Corvallis 31 Dec (Don Boucher). Don notes that wintering waxwings can be easy to miss, as they tend to be very localized in flocks, their vocalizations are thin and high-pitched, and they look similar to starlings when in flight.

Pine Siskins have been sparse throughout Oregon this winter, and none were found on the Airlie-Albany CBC. A flock of 39 finally turned up se. of Brownsville 13 Jan (Tom Gilg). **Evening Grosbeaks** have also been very scarce; one lonely-sounding bird called as it flew over Luckiamute SNA 5 Jan.

Andrea Foster noted that numbers of birds visiting her NW Corvallis yard generally seem to be low this winter, but occasionally a **Fox Sparrow** joined the towhees, juncos and others at her feeders.

Golden-crowned Sparrow numbers were lower than usual on the Airlie-Albany CBC, with just 549 (about 40% under the long-term average). However, this month brought a good showing of more uncommon wintering sparrows: Single **Swamp Sparrows** were found the south unit of Luckiamute SNA (Nancy Stotz), in Ankeny NWR and the north unit of Luckiamute SNA during the Air-

lie-Albany CBC, then one was sw. of the angling pond in E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area 11 Jan, and another was at Cabell Marsh 21 Jan (Isaac Denzer). A first-winter **Harris’s Sparrow** visited a Lebanon feeder 30 Dec (Linda Morrison; Jeff Harding), and another turned up at Jackson-Frazier Wetland 3 Jan (Hendrik Herlyn), with both continuing through mid-Jan.

Birds gotta eat!

A **Mallard** near Baskett Slough NWR 7 Jan swallowed a large tadpole after fending off several **Hooded Mergansers** that were interested in the same lunch (Frank Kolwicz).

About half a dozen **Western Bluebirds** fed on mistletoe in an Oregon white oak near Sunset Park 13 Jan (Rana Foster).

Northward range expansions

For long-term local birders, winter is when we notice that some species seem to be wintering more regularly at our latitude. Walking around a farm near Monmouth 11 Jan, I noticed a **Red-shouldered Hawk** sneaking around the woods along Ash Creek, a **Black Phoebe** chirping and catching insects around the barn, and **Anna’s Hummingbirds** grinding away at their song in three different spots. On their farm s. of Independence, Mike and Karen Lippsmeyer also had a **Black Phoebe** stop by in early Jan and regular visits by a **Red-shouldered Hawk**. A male **Anna’s Hummingbird** turned up on Kirk and Judy Lewis’s tree farm at the Luckiamute River confluence.

Two or three decades ago, all three of these species were associated with northern California and the southwest corner of Oregon. Now they’re part of our regular local avifauna in the mid-Willamette Valley. **Turkey Vultures** have also become a frequent though still uncommon sight on warm, sunny days in winter.

For the first 35 years of ASC field notes, **Cinnamon Teal** were regarded as spring migrants, usually arriving in early- to mid-March. But over the past two decades, wintering birds have become regular. Several were seen at Talking Water Gardens and the Philomath STP throughout this period. Along with **Virginia Rails**, **Soras** are now also found regularly at Talking Water Gardens, with at least two there through mid-Jan.

While still rare, winter sightings of swallows are increasing in the region. Harry Fuller notes that **Tree Swallows** now winter in the thousands in the Sacramento River Valley. It’s hard to predict the effects of continuing global climate change, but one thing seems likely: the winter range maps in our bird guides will need to be updated frequently!

Rare or off-course birds and other surprises

A **Brant** continued to be reported at Finley NWR was photographed on McFadden Marsh through mid-Jan. A **Tundra Bean-Goose** popped up again at Cabell Marsh 19 Jan (Nancy Stotz, Jack Maynard) after going unreported since the Corvallis CBC. It continued to be seen through the end of the period. A **“Eurasian” Green-winged Teal** turned up at Finley NWR in the mitigation wetland along Bruce Rd. s. of Pigeon Butte 6 Jan (Pam Otley).

A first-winter **Red-necked Grebe** called and dove on an inlet of the Willamette River at Willamette Park 20 Jan (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank).

A female **Red-naped Sapsucker** turned up at Aaron and Sara Liston’s place in the College Hill neighborhood of nw. Corvallis, for the third winter in a row. A male **“Yellow-shafted” Northern Flicker** was along Pirtle Rd. sw. of Albany 9 Jan (Deanna Emig).

An **Acorn Woodpecker** was in a surprising location when it called from the top of a tall, spindly oak along the 100 Road in Dunn Forest 7 Jan (Pam & Randy Comeleo), where oaks have been “released” by recent logging of conifers.

Peregrine Falcons are regular in winter in our area, but usually in open habitats around concentrations of waterfowl or shorebirds. So on 31 Dec Howard Bruner was surprised to see one strafing a raucous group of **Common Ravens** deep in McDonald Forest, before the ravens turned the tables to harry the falcon until it left the area.



A few **Tricolored Blackbirds** continued to be reported in a blackbird flock at the Philomath STP through the season. The Naturalist Adventure field trip to Willamette Park 20 Jan found **Gray Fox** scat that was carefully deposited atop a pile of wood chips.

Natural areas

The biggest news is that the dedicated public servants who work to manage natural areas on our federal lands are finally back on the job and getting paid, as of 25 Jan. They're still facing the threat of

another shutdown on 15 Feb. Please take time to thank them for their work, and also please contact your representatives to show support for federal workers and natural areas on our public lands.

Next month: The early part of spring migration gets underway, starting with Tree Swallows and Turkey Vultures then perhaps Rufous Hummingbirds toward the end of the month. Please post your observations to the Mid-Valley birding list at midvalleybirding.org, e-mail them to me at joel.geier@peak.org, send by post to 38566 Hwy 99W Corvallis 97330, or call (541) 745-5821 by 21 Feb.

Board Meeting Summary

Summary of January Board Meeting

1. A budget was created and approved unanimously for a party in March to honor outgoing Treasurer and Founding ASC Member, Fred Ramsey.
2. The Board approved a contribution at the Partner level to the Sustainability Coalition of Corvallis.
3. Parking issues have increased at Hesthavn Nature Center. A plan to leaflet cars whose occupants are recreating in Mac-Dunn Forest, not visiting the Nature Center, has been discussed with Benton County Sheriff's Office and OSU Forestry Recreation leadership.
4. Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess introduced themselves to the Board. They have offered to lead the Second Saturday local field trips, now led by Bill Proebsting.
5. For the third year in a row, problems within the federal government have aborted an ASC-sponsored internship program with Finley Wildlife Refuge personnel.
6. If the federal government is still unfunded by February 7th, the venue for Winter Wildlife Day (March 9th) could be changed. Stay tuned to our website, calendar, and Facebook page for updates!

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for 7 pm on February 14th in the Natural Grocers meeting room, 1235 NW 10th St. in Corvallis.

Linda Campbell, Board Secretary

Open 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 Board meeting minutes for location.

Membership Corner

Membership Volunteer(s) Needed

ASC is on the lookout for one or more volunteers to assume membership responsibilities. If you are interested, please contact Suzanne Ortiz for more information at ortizsv@gmail.com.

Welcome New Members!

Erin Diabola & family
Donald Groom

John Laundré
Karthik Murali

Membership Renewal

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

Email Notifications Regarding Weather Conditions

We encourage members to contact Karan Fairchild to get on the ASC listserve to receive emergency email notifications about meeting cancellations related to weather, updated information about ASC events, fieldtrip locations and volunteer work parties. Send an email to our listserve administrator, Karan Fairchild, and request to be added to the listserve: alderspr@peak.org.

Have You Changed Your Contact Information?

If you have moved or changed your email or mail address, please send your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at ortizsv@gmail.com.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

Suzanne Ortiz, Membership Chair

Contributors to this Chat

Mark Baldwin, William Proebsting, Fred Ramsey, Suzanne Ortiz, Teri Engbring, Naomi Weidner, Joel Geier, Don Boucher, Dave Mellinger, Linda Campbell, Ray Drapek, Rebecca Wirths, Pat Leonard, and Marion Rutledge.

Chat Articles

The Chat editors, Teri Engbring and Naomi Weidner, welcome articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the Chat editor by the fourth Thursday of the month. Submit text using Microsoft Word and photos to: chateditors@gmail.com.

Audubon Society of Corvallis

Calendar

Feb 9	Half-day Field trip to Cheadle Lake, Lebanon
Feb 10	Hesthavn Work Party, 10am-2pm
Feb 14	Board meeting, 7 pm at Natural Grocers
Feb 17	Animals in Winter Program at Hesthavn
Feb 18	Great Backyard Bird Count
Feb 21	ASC Monthly Members Meeting, 6:30
Feb 21	Field Notes submissions due
Feb 24	Hesthavn Work Party, 10am-2pm
Feb 28	Articles due for March 2019 CHAT
Mar 7	Sustainability Fair and Town Hall
Mar 9	Winter Wildlife Field Day at Finley
Mar 9	Snagboat Bend NWR field trip

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Interested in volunteering?
Please let us know:
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Renew your membership before the date on the mailing label to avoid missing issues of the Chat.

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