



# *Audubon Society of Corvallis* *the* **CHAT**

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May 2003

VOL. 32

#9

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## **Four and Ninety Blackbirds: A Very Tasty Dish**

**May 15 Thursday, 7:30 PM  
First Presb. Church**

Gordon Orians, Zoology Professor, University of WA, will give a presentation on blackbirds in the Americas. The nearly 100 species of American blackbirds (Family Icteridae) live in a rich variety of environments from Alaska to Tierra del Fuego. They exhibit most types of social systems found among passerine birds, and have been the subjects of intensive behavioral and ecological investigations. I will describe how the evolution of gaping (forcibly opening the bill against varied substrata) has enabled blackbirds to exploit food sources unavailable to most birds and has, in turn, influenced the evolution of their plumage patterns and social systems.

### **Summer**

No General meetings in June, July or August. General meetings resume in September

### **About General Meetings**

General meetings are held on the third Thursday of every month from September through May. Meet at the Education Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 8th Street and Monroe, downtown Corvallis. We give updates on conservation and Audubon activities and we have a featured guest speaker. Meetings start at 7:30 PM. The speaker begins at 8:00 PM and wraps up by 9:00 PM. Come early for refreshments, conversation and browsing at display tables. Everyone's welcome at our meetings.

## **No Chat issue in June or August, July only**

## **When the Fireworks are over, will the Ospreys Remain?**

Since 1976, Corvallis has had a yearly July 4th fireworks display, launched from the east side of the Willamette River opposite Michael's Landing. For those who feel this year's very real display of military might in Iraq wasn't quite enough, chances are good our 2003 show will pull out all the stops. The question remains, how will our nesting osprey take to the show?

The answer seems to be we don't know. Increases in osprey populations, use of artificial nesting structures, urbanization and development of waterfront parks, and most significantly, increases in human population, conspire to replicate our situation nationwide. But noise disturbance studies so far have not indicated a significant deleterious impact on nesting ospreys. At this later stage of nesting, it is unlikely that nests will be prematurely abandoned.

This year, PacifiCorp's provision of an alternate nest pole and platform for the Hwy 20 osprey pair has helped resolve the concern of the old nest causing power outages or the nest catching fire as a result of a nest-caused outage. Now, although the new nest site is closer to the fireworks launch site, the birds have some vegetative screening from the launch site. Based on other raptor research studies,

*continued on next page*

### **In This Issue:**

ASC Field Trips	66
ASC Board Nominees	70
Environmental News	71

## Opsreys

*continued from front page*

this helps buffer line-of-sight ground disturbances that might stress the birds.

What we do know, from observations of the birds at last year's nest, is that pre-show fireworks sent an adult off the nest. After a brief time, she returned to the nest and remained on it for the balance of the show. And we know that the young fledged successfully last year. In fact, an average of 2 young have fledged from this site during 1998-2002 when researchers monitored productivity at the site. This year a pair has returned to the Corvallis bridge site for the 10th consecutive year and have taken up residence on the new nest structure.

It is safe to assume the birds will probably be upset by the fireworks display again this year, but that does not appear to translate into any lasting harm as a pair returns to nest at the site year after year. Maybe our present effort should be to carefully observe this pair's reactions to the fireworks and anticipated success in raising young, and be ready to offer remedies if a problem can be identified.

*-Jim Fairchild*

## Turkey Vulture Courtship

On Saturday, April 13, several of us participating in Don Boucher's Beginning Birding class at E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area were treated to a display of the Turkey Vulture courtship ritual. We first noticed two Turkey Vultures on adjacent power poles. One of the TVs had his wings outstretched like he was sunning (there was no sun) or drying out his wings (it hadn't been particularly wet). While standing around and talking about this, I realized that there was something a bit peculiar about the way the wings were held (more vertical?), not only that, the bird would occasionally slowly swivel the wings about 15 degrees and then go back to the original position. After a bit, the bird, with wings still outstretched, performed a slow bow with his head going down in front of his feet. This was repeated. All very slowly and with lots of pauses between the acts. The bird then turned his head back over his body - rather like what some courting ducks do. After this, there was some slow foot work on the pole like he was dancing in place. This rather elegant, though very slow dance was interrupted by a head scratch. But the female didn't seem to mind. Shortly thereafter the male flew over and mounted the female.

*-Marcia Cutler*

## Hesthavn Work Parties

Hesthavn Sanctuary is located 8590 NW Oak Creek Road, west of Corvallis. It is a quarter mile before the OSU Forest Field Station and trail head.

## May 31- Hesthavn work party 9am-noon Also June 28, July 26, August 30

Work parties will be held out at the Hesthavn Sanctuary every month during the summer. On May 31 we plan to install the Ted Regier memorial bench, plus do vegetation control and maintenance of our plantings. On subsequent work parties, we will be working on the barn and driveway, as well as doing vegetation control and plant maintenance. Please call Ray Drapek, 754-7364 for details, or just show up any of those days at 9am!

## Fish (and Osprey) Story

About 6:30 PM on Wednesday, April 9 I happened to look out into the Albany Channel of the Willamette River. Something was moving rapidly up and down in the water. Through my binoculars it was apparent that an osprey was in the water and was desperately trying to get into the air. He would struggle with all his might, barely get above the water, and then fall back in with only his head above water. Watching him Gerry and I were afraid that he might drown! This behavior occurred a number of times and we wondered whether he was able to release the huge fish that showed briefly. Finally he started rowing himself to shore, at least 40 yards away, and made it to shore with the fish tightly grasped in one talon. After hopping up on shore a few feet and drying off he flew away with a most well-deserved meal.

*-Carroll DeKock*

## Requests for Back Issues of Birding

Matthew Hunter, one of Corvallis' local bird experts and wildlife consultants, has donated his nearly complete collection of American Birding Association's magazine to The Valley Library at OSU. Our Audubon Chapter will be continuing to contribute that subscription to their reference collection. If you have any back issues you would be willing to donate to complete that collection, please contact Matthew Hunter or Jim Fairchild (listed on the back), each has a list of the missing issues.

## The Chat by Email

Now that Spring is here, and the trees are unfurling their new leaves, we might remember that these same trees might prefer to leaf out, rather than become leaflets! If you agree and have computer access to email, we will save trees and also money for postage, and email you the Audubon Society of Corvallis' newsletter. Please contact Amy Schoener (Membership Chair) 929-4041, cloudrun@peak.org.

You will receive the CHAT in Adobe Acrobat format. File size will be 300k or less. Adobe Acrobat reading software is free and can be downloaded from Adobe's web site ([www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)).

-Amy Schoener

## Field Trip Schedule

May 10 Saturday local half-day 7:30 AM  
May 10 Spring Migratory Bird Count  
May 11 Bicycle Birding in Corvallis and Philomath, 9 AM -Noon  
May 17 Butterflies at Hesthavn with Jeff Harding  
May 16-18 Rogue Valley weekend/Theater in Ashland  
May 27 Tuesday morning Bird Walk 8 AM  
May 29-June 1 Malheur NWR  
June 14 Saturday local half-day 7:30 AM  
June 15 Bicycle Birding / E.E. Wilson, 9 AM -Noon  
June 24 Tuesday evening Bird Walk 5:45 PM  
July 12 Saturday local half-day 7:30 AM  
July 22 Tuesday evening Bird Walk 5:45 PM  
July 29 Tuesday morning Bird Walk 8:00 AM

### Local Morning Trip, May 10, Saturday

On May 10, 2003 our second Saturday local field trip meets at the Avery Park Rose Garden parking area at 7:30 AM. This field trip is especially interesting for beginner birders and new birders to Oregon's mid-valley area. We spend a lot of time identifying local birds by sight and song.

### Migratory Bird Count, May 10, Saturday

This Spring, the migratory bird count will be on Saturday, May 10, 2003. I am the county coordinator for Benton Co. For those of you who bird in Benton Co. on that date, I'd appreciate hearing the results from you. Please provide bird species and numbers, the mileage and hours spent (broken down by mode of transportation). If you bird several areas, a bird list by area is appreciated. Backyard counts are also welcome. You can send the results to me at [mccarmel@peak.org](mailto:mccarmel@peak.org). or mail them to my home address (see back of CHAT). If possible, I would appreciate knowing ahead of time where you plan to bird.

-Marcia Cutler

### Bicycle Birding in Corvallis, May 11, Sun.

9:00 AM - Noon, Meet at Avery Park Rose Garden. An easy, flat ride of about 12 miles. We'll ride west along the bike path and bird our way to Marys River Park in Philomath and back. Bring water and rain gear. Leader: Don Boucher 753-7689, [bouchdon@juno.com](mailto:bouchdon@juno.com)

### Butterfly Trip, May 17, Saturday

May 17, Saturday Butterfly field trip will meet at 1 PM at Hesthavn Sanctuary 8590 NW Oak Creek Road Corvallis. Assuming that the weather is favorable for butterflies. Jeff suggest that everyone bring close-focusing binoculars and a butterfly guide if they have them. He recommends Robert Pyle's "Butterflies of Cascadia" as it has a more local angle. Nets are okay and help to get a better look at some of the butterflies. Wear practical shoes as there will be uneven ground. Jeff Harding can be reached at [jmh@proaxis.com](mailto:jmh@proaxis.com) 541-451-2613

### Tuesday Morning (and evening) Trips

On May 27, Marcia Cutler will lead a local Birding Walk. Everyone is to meet at the Avery Park Rose Garden parking lot at 8 AM.

June 24 Evening bird walk to meet at 5:45 PM at the Benton Center parking lot 630 NW 7th  
July 22 Evening bird walk to meet at 5:45 PM at the Benton Center. Go to Albany to watch Bats  
July 29 Morning bird walk to meet at 8 AM at Avery Park to visit Benton County Bezeal park.

### Weekend Spring Trips

May 16-18, 2003 will be to the Rogue Valley. A special play at the Shakespearean theater in Ashland will be included on this trip. May 29-31, June 1, 2003 is our trip to Malheur wildlife refuge. Fred Ramsey will be trip leader for both of these weekends. Sign-up sheets will be available at the general meeting at the field trip table for anyone interested in the long weekend trips. The Rogue Valley and Malheur trips require deposits. Everyone who signed up for these trips should have paid their deposits by now. If you were signed up to attend the Rogue Valley or Malheur trip and haven't paid the deposit, please contact Fred Ramsey, 541-753-3677 evenings, 3550 NW Glenridge Pl Corvallis OR 97330 ([ramsey@stat.orst.edu](mailto:ramsey@stat.orst.edu)). Rogue Valley deposit is \$40 and Malheur is \$50.

### Bicycle Birding at E.E. Wilson in Adair June 15, Sunday

9:00 AM - Noon, Meet at the Pheasant cage parking lot on Camp Adair Drive. An easy, flat ride of 10 miles or less. There's a good chance to hear and see Yellow-breasted Chats among many others. For die-hard bicyclists, you can meet at 8:00 AM at the Benton Center parking lot 630 NW 7th and we'll ride to E.E. Wilson. Bring water and rain gear. Leader: Don Boucher 753-7689, [bouchdon@juno.com](mailto:bouchdon@juno.com)

Look in the Chat for changes, additions, and updates of field trips each month. Come and join other bird watchers exploring a wildlife adventure in Oregon.

-Paula Vanderheul

# Field Notes

March 25 through April 21, 2003

April showers are said to bring May flowers. In western Oregon we seem to get flowers and showers together, even before April comes along. Wildflowers at Willamette Park when Don Boucher checked on 29 Mar included sessile trillium, yellow stream violet, stork's bill, Siberian miner's lettuce, western meadowrue, and slender toothwort. By then the trollius-leaved larkspur was starting to bloom at Luckiamute Landing. Bigleaf maples also blossomed by the start of April, a bit early for the main waves of vireos and warblers that usually feast on insects in the fresh foliage. It will be interesting to see if late migrants make more use than usual of Oregon white oaks, one of our last native trees to leaf out.

On the subject of oaks, an OSU researcher is looking for isolated oak woodlands of about 10 to 50 acres, for a study on White-breasted Nuthatches. The woods need to be unfragmented and predominantly oak (that is, with not too many houses or Douglas firs sprouting up in the middle). If you know of woodlands that fit these requirements – with or without nuthatches! – with property owners who might be willing to grant access, please contact Karen Sparkman at stukar@teleport.com.

*Abbreviations & Locations:* NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; SF = State Forest; WA = Wildlife Area. E.E. Wilson WA is north of Corvallis along Hwy 99W. Bald Hill Park is on the west side of Corvallis. Baskett Slough NWR is near Dallas in Polk Co. Luckiamute Landing is a Willamette River greenway in SE Polk Co. McFadden Marsh is at Finley NWR south of Corvallis. Stewart Lake is the pond at the Hewlett-Packard (HP) plant in northeast Corvallis. Toketie Marsh is the remediation wetland at Coffin Butte landfill, along Hwy 99W north of Corvallis. Willamette Park is in south Corvallis. Sightings from the Audubon Society of Corvallis Bicycle Birding Trip on 13 Apr (ASCBT) on 13 Apr were reported by Don Boucher.

## Inland Sightings:

The **Great Blue Heron** rookery across from Willamette Park was active on 29 Mar (Don Boucher). One heron was brooding on the nest at Toketie Marsh by 15 Apr.

Becky Geier saw a pair of **Turkey Vultures** copulating on a pole along Independence Hwy on 10 Apr. The ASC birding class at E.E. Wilson WA saw the full courtship ritual on 12 Apr (Marcia F. Cutler).

A huge flock of “**Cackling**” **Canada Geese** were still at Finley NWR on 31 Mar (Hendrik Herlyn). On 12 Apr Canada Geese were escorting young goslings at E.E. Wilson WA (M Cutler).

Two pairs of **Wood Ducks** were at Stewart Lake 7 Apr, and on 11-14 Apr a lone male was seen by a nest box where Jamie Simmons suspects a hen was brooding.

A pair of **Cinnamon Teal** showed up on Sarah & Owen Fairbank's pond near Lewisburg on 8 Apr. This month the Fairbanks moved to Port Townsend, but we hear their pond will be in good hands with the new owners.

Four pairs of **Gadwall** were in the NW corner marsh of E.E. Wilson WA through 4 Apr (Dave Budeau). The small **American Wigeon** flock at Stewart Lake swelled to counts of 10 to 15 from 11 Apr onward. (J Simmons). A **Eurasian Wigeon** drake was by Finley NWR headquarters on 31 Mar (H Herlyn). On 13 Apr Jeff Fleischer found **Mallards**, **Northern Pintail**, **Green-winged Teal**, **American Wigeon**, **Northern Shoveler**, and **Ring-necked Duck** at the Arthur Rd slough near Albany, plus **Lesser Scaup** and **Buffleheads** at Tangent sewage ponds (Jeff Fleischer).

A female **Canvasback** was at Stewart Lake on 31 Mar and 7 Apr; **Ring-necked Ducks** were there daily through 11 Apr, and a pair visited on 21 Apr. Up to 9 **Lesser Scaup** were present daily throughout the period (J Simmons).

In the Cascades, Diane Pettey and Sylvia Maulding saw **Barrow's Goldeneyes** at Fish Lake and a pair of **Wood Ducks** at Lost Lake on 13 Apr. The same day, I saw a pair of **Cinnamon Teal** in a pothole next to

Clear Lake, an unusual breeding location.

**Ospreys** were calling in display flights at Willamette Park on 29 Mar (D Boucher). One was near Lewisburg 30 Mar (S Fairbank). A pair occupied the new nest platform downtown by 31 Mar (Marie Parcell).

Staff at E.E. Wilson WA found a **Northern Harrier** nest with three eggs on 11 Apr. Seven **Bald Eagles** (1 adult, 6 subadults) were along Seven Mile Lane in Linn Co on 13 Apr (J Fleischer).

A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was at Willamette Park on 29 Mar (D Boucher). One at Pat Waldron's place east of Scio has regularly been chased off by nesting **Tree** and **Violet-green Swallows**. A pair of **Cooper's Hawks** were near a nest at Stewart Lake 26 Mar; since then single birds have been seen on occasion (J Simmons). One soaring over Lewisburg 17 Apr was harassed by an **American Crow**. One visited Vineyard Mtn on 18 Apr (Elsie Eltzroth).

A pair of **Red-tailed Hawks** were building a nest in cottonwoods along the Corvallis riverfront, 14-16 Apr (Paula Vanderheul). Steve Seibel watched two subadult **Golden Eagles** soaring over Finley NWR on 29 Mar.

Marie Parcell saw an **American Kestrel** at Bald Hill on 8 Apr. **Merlins** were spotted along Tangent Rd 13 Apr (J Fleischer) and at E.E. Wilson WA 14 Apr (Alan McGie). A **Peregrine Falcon** soared over our place near E.E. Wilson WA 29 Mar.

Raylene Gordin heard **Wild Turkeys** gobbling in SW Lebanon 20 Apr. A **Mountain Quail pair** visited Merlin & Elsie Eltzroth's yard on Vineyard Mtn through 19 Apr. Sandy Bryce heard one west of Coffin Butte 31 Mar.

A **Sora** and two **Virginia Rails** were calling in the NW corner of EE Wilson WA 8 Apr. Two **Soras** responded to tapes at Arthur Dr slough 13 Apr (J Fleischer).

A **Killdeer** brooding on a nest was a highlight of the Portland Audubon tour of E.E. Wilson WA 14 Apr. Two **Black-bellied Plovers** were at Baskett Slough NWR 7 Apr (Roy Gerig).

Four pairs of **Black-necked Stilts** were at a wetland along Duckflat Rd near Marion 16 Apr (R Gerig). At least five stilts were there 19 Apr (Karen Sparkman). A pair was in a wetland east of Baskett Slough NWR 17 Apr (R Gerig).

Ten **Greater Yellowlegs** were at McFadden's Marsh 30 Mar (E & M Eltzroth). Jeff Fleischer found 70 around Albany on 13 Apr, including 43 in one flooded field in the Dever-Conner area, joined by a **Long-billed Dowitcher**. Jeff also saw four **Dunlin** in breeding plumage at Tangent sewage ponds. Three **dowitchers** were at E.E. Wilson on 25 Mar (M Cutler).

A **Band-tailed Pigeon** was calling in the gallery forest along the Willamette River on 31 Mar. More were at EE Wilson WA 9 Apr (D Horgan). On 21 Apr one perched on tip of a fir near Lebanon, the branch doubling over under its weight (R Gordin).

A **Western Screech-Owl** was still resident on Vineyard Mtn as of 19 Apr (M & E Eltzroth). Two **Great Horned Owl** owlets were in a nest at EE Wilson WA 4 Apr. On 6 Apr they were under the watchful eye of an adult owl (Tom & Jeanne Griffith).

**Vaux's Swifts** showed up in west Corvallis on 20 Apr (H Herlyn). One was at Stewart Lake on 21 Apr (J Simmons). A female **Anna's Hummingbird** visited Stewart Lake on 3 Apr (J Simmons). Two notable reports of **Rufous Hummingbirds** arrivals came in a bit too late for last month's notes. A male at Joy Linn's feeder on 24 Feb seems to have been the earliest arrival in our part of the Willamette Valley. On 17 Feb and 21 Feb, Sean Burgett saw males zip past along the central Coast Range divide, perhaps part of the coastal migration which begins earlier than inland.

A **Pileated Woodpecker** probed a snag in the Hillcrest neighborhood of Corvallis 1 Apr (Phyllis Bailey). On 18 Apr two were on Vineyard Mtn (Elsie Eltzroth), and Jacob Ringold saw two more plus two **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** in MacDonald SF. At Stewart Lake, a drumming male **Downy Woodpecker** on 9 Apr was joined by a female on 11 Apr (J Simmons).

A **Northern Flicker** with red shafts and plain gray nape (as on "Red-shafted" birds) but with tan cheeks and gray crown (as on the "Yellow-shafted" form), was in NW Corvallis 5 Apr (J Simmons).

A **Cassin's Vireo** was seen at Willamette Park 20 Apr, as a **Hutton's Vireo** gathered hanging lichens for its nest (H Herlyn).

On 31 Mar I watched a flock of **Steller's Jays** courting noisily at Luckiamute Landing. Wanderers were noted near Stewart Lake 8 Apr (Bill Looney) and in NW Corvallis 18 Apr (J Simmons).

A pair of **Purple Martins** arrived at Pat Waldron's place 12 Apr. A **Cliff Swallow** joined the **Tree** and **Violet-green Swallows** at E.E. Wilson WA 25 Mar (M Cutler). 20 **Cliff Swallows** were in downtown Corvallis 27 Mar (H Herlyn). **Barn Swallows** showed up in Lewisburg 9 Apr (S Fairbank). A few **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** were at Willamette Park 20 Apr (H Herlyn).

Nest-building **Bushtit** pairs were noted at Stewart Lake 3 & 8 Apr, and in Jamie Simmons' NW Corvallis yard 6 Apr. Another pair was building at Bald Hill Park on 13 Apr (ASCBBT).

**White-breasted Nuthatches** occupied nest boxes at Stewart Lake by 15 Apr (J Simmons). On 9 Apr Mark Nikas watched a **Brown Creeper** building a nest behind a metal sign on a building in Brownsville. Usually this species nests in crevices behind loose slabs of bark on trees.

A **House Wren** checked out a tree cavity at Stewart Lake 15 Apr; three arrived by 21 Apr (J Simmons). An ASC trip to E.E. Wilson WA on 24 Mar found 3 **Wrentits** in the SW part and one in the NE part (M Cutler). Movement of **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** peaked around 4 Apr, when 20 were around our yard near E.E. Wilson WA. One was still at Willamette Park 20 Apr (H Herlyn).

**Varied Thrush** numbers thinned in the Scio foothills by April 20 (P Waldron), as wintering birds migrated north or to higher elevations in the Cascades. A flock of 100 **American Pipits** turned up in a corn stubble field by E.E. Wilson WA 4 Apr.

**Orange-crowned Warblers** were singing at the Coffin Butte Unit of E.E. Wilson WA 29 Mar (Bob Altman), at our place 30 Mar, at Finley NWR 31 Mar (H Herlyn), and at Stewart Lake from 31 Mar onward (J Simmons). One joined a **Townsend's Warbler** on Vineyard Mtn 1 Apr (Merlin Eltzroth). Marcia Cutler found at least 15 **Orange-crowned Warblers** at Bald Hill Park on 9 Apr.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** passage at Stewart Lake peaked with 50 on 14 Apr (J Simmons). **Townsend's Warblers** were singing near downtown Corvallis 2 Apr (Don Boucher). Sandy Bryce heard a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** singing in SW Corvallis 30 Mar. Phyllis Bailey found three in Walnut Park 19 Apr.

The first local sighting of a **Wilson's Warbler** was 17 Apr on Vineyard Mtn (M Eltzroth). On 20 Apr Hendrik Herlyn enjoyed finding a **Black-throated Gray Warbler**, a **Townsend's Warbler** and a **Wilson's Warbler** in one spot at Willamette Park.

A male **Common Yellowthroat** sang in Adair Park on 29 Mar (B Altman). One was at Finley NWR on 31 Mar (H Herlyn). One singing in a sapling in Mountain View Elementary's wetland 17 Apr was voted **coolest bird of the day** by students from Mrs. Henneck's class.

A **Chipping Sparrow** turned up at Bob Altman's place near Lewisburg 1 Apr. Two were at Stewart Lake 14 Apr, and single migrants were there 16 & 18 Apr (J Simmons). A **Vesper Sparrow** was south of Independence on 16 Apr (K Sparkman).

Locally breeding **Savannah Sparrows** showed up by 31 Mar when seven were singing near Lewisburg (B Altman). A migrant population came through on 19 Apr, as flocks feeding up in the maples at our place were noticeably brighter than the ones on territory in the fields.

Singing **Fox Sparrows** were noted in Corvallis through 2 Apr (D Boucher). A few were still around in the Scio foothills on 20 Apr (P Waldron). A **Swamp Sparrow** was still at E.E. Wilson WA 30 Mar (B Altman). Migrant **Lincoln's Sparrows** were near E.E. Wilson WA 19 Apr, at Willamette Park 20 Apr (H Herlyn) and at Stewart Lake 21 Apr (J Simmons).

A fresh wave of **White-crowned Sparrows** were noticed as breeding birds arrived after most wintering birds had left. Two visited Jamie Simmons' NW Corvallis yard 27 Mar. On 30 Mar some turned up east of Scio (P Waldron), and I saw a few singing on territory at Luckiamute Landing. Arrivals continued through 21 Apr, when one turned up in a SW Lebanon brush pile (R Gordin).

Two **White-throated Sparrows** were singing near E.E. Wilson WA 29 Mar. One was singing north of downtown Corvallis 12 Apr (D Boucher). A migrant was in NW Corvallis 18 Apr (J Simmons) and one stopped by North Albany, 17 Apr to 25 Apr (A McGie). Migrant **Golden-crowned Sparrows** at Stewart Lake peaked with high counts of 7 on 17 & 21 Apr (J Simmons). A **Slate-colored Junco** visited Tom Snetsinger's feeder north of Brownsville 4 Apr.

A well-described male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** showed up at Tom and Viola Manning's feeder near Philomath on 20 Mar, but moved on.

Several **Western Meadowlarks** sang at the north entrance of Finley NWR on 31 Mar (H Herlyn). **Brown-headed Cowbirds** showed up at our place by 14 Apr.

On 28 Mar three **Lesser Goldfinches** gleaned seeds from dandelions in Phyllis Bailey's Corvallis yard. A few have visited Stewart Lake off and on since 10 Mar (J Simmons). **Pine Siskins** joined **House Finches** in SW Lebanon on 14 Apr, with **American Goldfinches** showing up 19 Apr (R Gordin). Francis Stilwell saw an **albinistic finch** in Buena Vista in mid-April, perhaps the albinistic **House Finch** seen there last year.

**Evening Grosbeaks** showed up at Tom & Jeanne Griffith's Corvallis feeder 6 Apr. Ten visited Stewart Lake 18 Apr (J Simmons). Raylene Gordin heard a flock daily from 13 Apr on, but had to wait until 20 Apr to see them at her SW Lebanon feeder.

Last month Carolyn Paynter saw a probable **Bobcat** curled up in a tree along the Willamette River north of downtown Corvallis. Our family found a road-killed young female along Independence Hwy on 30 Mar. On 14 Apr Alan McGie saw one sneaking around E.E. Wilson WA.

## Next two months

A great way to enjoy the peak of spring migration is to help with the North American Migration Count on 10 May. To find out how to participate, please contact the coordinators: Benton Co. Marcia F. Cutler (tel. 752-4313, e-mail: mccarmel@peak.org), Linn Co. Jeff Fleischer (e-mail: raptorrinner97321@yahoo.com). Our next Chat will be in July, so please send your observations by 30 June.

Joel Geier, 14505 Corvallis Rd., Monmouth, OR 97361  
Telephone: (541) 928-2815  
e-mail: jgeier@attglobal.net

## Bird Language

### Introductory Lecture and Workshop

Observing bird behavior and listening to their calls, we begin to perceive what they perceive - and to realize what we've been missing: a roosting owl in a tree; a fox stalking along a hedge row; a hawk swooping in for the kill.

Don Boucher will conduct the workshop in conjunction with the Avery House Nature Center. It is suitable for adults and kids.

- June 14 Bird Language Nature Talk and Walk, Free and open to the public. 10 - 11 AM
- June 28 Bird Language Intensive Workshop. Includes field experiments. \$7, 10 AM - Noon

To register, contact the Avery House at 758-6198

# ASC Officer and Board Nominees

Election on May 15 at the General Meeting (see front page)

**President: No candidates filed yet**

**Vice President / Program Chair: Chris Mathews.** Chris recently retired from the Biochemistry/Biophysics faculty at OSU after holding faculty positions at Yale and the University of Arizona, as well as OSU. As a teenager he helped his father with Audubon Christmas counts in Washington state. He served Corvallis Audubon in the early 1980s as Vice President and as Conservation Chair, and he returned to the Board in 2002 as Vice President and program chair.

**Secretary: No candidates filed yet**

**Treasurer: Susan Ford** has served several years as Treasurer for Timberhill Racquet Club. Worked as computer programmer and income tax preparer. She and Steven enjoy outdoor activities such as birding, hiking, and gardening. Their travels include birding trips with ASC and others farther afield.

## Nominees for Board Members at Large

**Bill Proebsting** has lived in Corvallis for 23 years as a member of the Department of Horticulture at OSU. He has been a member of Corvallis Audubon over that period and is interested in habitat preservation and restoration to maintain and improve ecosystem services, as well as benefit bird populations.

**Gay Brier:** After living in Bend for 25 years, my husband and I retired and started traveling until we came to Corvallis about a year ago. We recently purchased a home here. While living in Bend, we put up bluebird boxes for Mountain Bluebirds on our 2 1/2 acres. We were quite successful at it and derived much pleasure from it. I have belonged to the Audubon Society and Nature Conservancy for many years but never took the time to participate in local activities or do volunteer work. This year I went on two Christmas bird counts and really enjoyed the experience. Birds are my special interest, and I have been studying them for 36 years. I would like to put my knowledge and experience to use in the local Audubon Society.

**Susan Haig** is a Professor of Wildlife Ecology at OSU and a Wildlife Ecologist at the USGS Forest and Rangeland Ecosystem Science Center. She is a Fellow of the American Ornithologists Union and a member of the Board

of Governors for the Society for Conservation Biology. She has served as a recovery team leader and then international coordinator for Piping Plover Recovery since 1984, has been involved with Micronesian Kingfisher recovery planning since 1987, and is currently involved with research and conservation of a number of other avian species including: Spotted Owls, Puerto Rican Parrots, Guam Rails, Mariana Common Moorhens, and Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. She and her students have also spent a number of years working on shorebird and wetland conservation issues in the Great Basin and Willamette Valley.

**Paul Catullo:** I enjoy Nature and the Outdoors. As a school-teacher, I took my students on Discovery Walks each season to experience changing fauna and flora of the local area. I like working with people and believe my management skills are an added plus in moving ideas and plans toward action.

**Susan Brown:** I am interested in serving in this position because I appreciate the role Audubon plays in the area of concern and preservation of our environment. I have been a part of the organization in a variety of ways in the past including serving as a member at large, acting as Publicity chair, Hospitality chair, attending conservation meetings and field trips, and assisting with the sales table. Currently, I monitor a nature conservancy tract on a monthly basis, and enjoy volunteering on Greenbelt trail work, at Hesthaven, on ODF&W stream surveys, and OSU archeology projects. I hope to continue my support of Audubon by serving on the board again.

**Siobhan VanLanen:** Her enthusiasm for activating positive eco-change is fueled by various sources. Her longtime involvement with conservation organizations, a wilderness study program at the University of Montana and experience as an articulating canvasser for GreenPeace back in 1990, have been a great way to learn about the complex relationships of the natural world, and how to relate to it. As a singer-songwriting guitarist, her most joyous contribution comes in the form of her songs. She has written a handful of songs about ecological awareness such as a song called, "Endangered" and performs them regularly. Much of her focus is as a licensed massage therapist and Yoga instructor so she can bring to the ASC clarity and energy

**Dave Mellinger** has had an interest in the natural world since early childhood and has always liked nature-watching, hiking, backpacking, and climbing. He has been active in conservation issues since the mid-1980's, and has been chair of ASC's Conservation Committee for the last three years. He has been an active birder since 1994.

## State Legislature Busy with Anti-environmental Bills

A huge number of conservation issues are before the state legislature right now, most of them unfriendly to a healthy natural world. Most of the bills involved are changing so fast that anything I write now will be outdated by the time you read it in two weeks. Instead, I'll provide some brief synopses of various types of issues, along with the names of conservationists who are keeping track these issues in the legislature. Please pick issue(s) that matter the most to you, call up the relevant person listed below to find out what's happening now, and then contact our legislators:

Oregon House: Rep. Kelley Wirth, D-Corvallis,  
503-986-1416

Oregon Senate: Sen. Frank Morse, R-Corvallis,  
503-986-1708

- Land use: There are many, many attempts afoot to weaken the Urban Growth Boundary law, to allow factories and Wal-Marts to be built on much of our farmland, to permit housing development willy-nilly, etc. Contact Randy Tucker, 1000 Friends of Oregon: 503-497-1000.
- Wildlife: There are attempts to allow cougar hunting with dogs, to weaken the endangered species act, and to redefine hatchery salmon to be considered "wild." Contact Kelly Peterson, Humane Society of Oregon, 503-872-9623; or about salmon, contact Les Helgeson, Native Fish Society: 503-398-5965.
- Forests: There are attempts to greatly increase logging on landslide-prone slopes and to weaken oversight of logging operations where there are endangered species. Contact Daniel Hall, American Lands Alliance: 503-978-0511.
- Wetlands: There are attempts basically to kill Oregon's wetland conservation program, and to redefine what a wetland is so that many, many of our wetland areas are suddenly excluded from consideration. Contact Liz Frenkel, Oregon League of Women Voters: 541-754-6790.
- Oceans: There are attempts to cripple our ocean conservation program and to derail the establishment of Marine Researves. Contact Avalyn Taylor, Audubon Society of Portland: 503-292-6855 x126.
- Recycling (good news finally!): There are moves afoot to improve our aluminum can recycling and our recycling of electronic products. Contact Wayne Rifer, Recycling Advocates: 503-644-0294.
- Energy: There are bills to make car registration fees reflect how energy-efficient your car is (hooray!),

but other bills would eliminate tax breaks for energy conservation and terminate a program for energy efficiency and renewable energy. About registration fees, contact Matt Blevins, Oregon Environmental Council: 503-819-9375; or about the other bills, contact Jeff Bissonnette, Citizens' Utility Board of Oregon: 503-227-1984.

## Birdathon 2003

By the time you read this article, the 3rd annual ASC Birdathon will be history. But as I write this article, Birdathon teams are calling up their last pledgers and making their game plans for the weekend's race. Tide tables are being checked, the weather reports anxiously scanned, and routes marked on the map. The coast will be hit by at least two teams, and many of Corvallis' hot spots, like Willamette Park and Bald Hill Park, are on the schedule, as well as Finley Wildlife Refuge and EE Wilson Wildlife Area. One team will be birding at Sauvie Island in the Columbia River and another will be covering Linn County, from the valley to the crest of the Cascades. One team will even be in Arizona!

I'd like to thank members of our teams for their hard work in getting out and birding AND collecting pledges. Teams this year include the Wandering Tattlers, Gung-ho Grebos, Gadabout Gadwalls, Roadrunners, Disjunct Juncos, Baldpates, Healthy Hummers and Towhee-Hees.

I'd also like to thank the following businesses for generously donating prizes. GRAND PRIZE- Eagle Optics 8x42 armored and waterproofed binoculars from Wild Birds Unlimited. Gift certificates were donated by BiMart, Browser's Bookstore, Old World Deli, Java Connection, The Book Bin, Intaba's Kitchen Evergreen Restaurant, El Sol De Mexico, The Gables, Michael's Landing, Pegasus Gallery, Grassroots Bookstore, New Morning Bakery, Footwise and the First Alternative. Artworks were donated by Leslie Green (ceramics), Terry Steele (photography) and Bonnie Hall (silkscreens). Also we've received a Sibley Guide cover from Fieldfare; 40 pounds of birdseed from Densons', wine from Tyee Winery, and signed copies of guidebooks from Bob Morse and Bill Sullivan.

And last, but definitely not least, a GREAT BIG thank you to our many generous pledgers! We appreciate your support for our work at Hesthavn very much.

*-Karan Fairchild*

## Contributors to *The Chat*

Thanks to volunteers who bring you the content and editing for this issue of *The Chat*:

Paula Vanderheul, Joel Geier, Marcia Cutler, Karan Fairchild, Carroll DeKock, Dave Mellinger, Audrey Ansell, and Jim Fairchild.

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## Calendar

May 8 Board meeting, 7:30 PM – Amy Schoener's house in Wren  
May 10 Saturday local half-day 7:30 am\*  
May 10 Spring Migratory Bird Count\*  
May 11 Bicycle Birding in Corvallis and Philomath, 9 AM -Noon\*  
May 17 Butterflies at Hesthavn with Jeff Harding\*  
May 15 General Meeting, 7:30 PM, 1st Presbt. Church  
Gordon Orians on Blackbirds (see front page)  
May 16-18 Rogue Valley weekend\*  
May 27 Tuesday morning Bird Walk 8 am\*  
May 29-June 1 Malheur NWR\*  
May 31 Hesthavn work party 9am-noon, Ray Drapek, 754-7364  
June 14 Saturday local half-day 7:30 AM\*  
June 15 Bicycle Birding / E.E. Wilson, 9 AM -Noon\*  
June 24 Tuesday evening Bird Walk 5:45 PM\*  
June 28 Hesthavn work party 9am-noon, Ray Drapek, 754-7364  
June 30 Field Notes deadline  
July 3 Chat deadline for Summer issue  
July 12 Saturday local half-day 7:30 AM\*  
**NOTE: No General meetings in June, July or August**

\*See page 67 for field trip descriptions  
Everybody's welcome, including nonmembers, to any ASC function

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