



Audubon Society of Corvallis the **CHAT**

December 2009

VOL. 39

#4

General Meeting

Thursday, December 17, 7:00 – 8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church



Member Slide Show

Corvallis Audubon's traditional holiday sharing of nature photos offers a great opportunity to experience the interesting sights seen by other Audubon folks over the past year. Any fun or interesting photo of a bird or other animal, plant, or nature scene is welcome. To accommodate as many members as possible, please limit your contributions to 10 of your favorites. Unless you can bring a slide projector, all photos must be digital. Please submit them by Tuesday, December 15 by emailing them to David.Mellinger@oregonstate.edu. If you would like to bring high-resolution photos on a thumb drive, please tell me ahead of time how many you have and your general topic (birds, butterflies, scenery, etc.), and then show up at 6:30 for the meeting on the Dec. 17 to allow plenty of time to load your photos.

Doors open at 6:30 pm for refreshments and visiting. The chapter meeting commences at 7:00 pm, followed by the guest lecture at 7:30 pm. Questions about the series can be directed to Dave Mellinger at David.Mellinger@oregonstate.edu or 757-7953.

Directions

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

Dave Mellinger

Call for Volunteers!

Chat Editor

The ASC is looking for a volunteer or volunteers to edit the Chat. This is a fun job that takes about a half-day of work, once a month. The Chat editor collects submissions (usually emailed) and enters them into a Microsoft Word template. It isn't necessary to know how to format the newsletter for publication, or print or distribute the issue – other volunteers perform those tasks. The Chat editor selects the stories that will run in each issue and performs any editing required to make everything fit.

Joan and Neil

Artist

The Audubon Society of Corvallis is searching for a local artist to paint a bird mural using four canvas frames that are 14' X 5'. The framed canvases are ready for artists to paint. Canada Geese flying in their "V" formation is the theme of the mural. Background will be clouds and sky. Artist can choose the type of paints. The finished mural will be mounted on the ceiling of the Audubon Nature Center at 8590 NW Oak Creek Drive. Audubon is willing to pay for the paint cost and a small stipend of \$200.

If interested, contact Paula Vanderheul at 541-752-0470 or vanderp@peak.org.

Paula Vanderheul

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Call for Nominations

Homer Campbell – ASC Environmental Award 2010

The Homer Campbell ASC Environmental Award, established in 2005, recognizes a local (Linn, Benton, Lincoln & Polk Counties) individual or organization that has made significant contributions in the areas of environmental stewardship, awareness, and outreach. Contributions worthy of recognition might include, but are not limited to:

- promotion of environmentally sustainable practices
- leadership on local environmental issues
- classroom education of environmental stewardship restoration or preservation of habitat

Both long-standing (life-long) and short-term but significant contributions will be considered for this award. A committee from the Audubon Society of Corvallis will recommend one of the nominees for approval by the entire Board. The selected awardee will then be presented with an engraved plaque at the April ASC General Meeting. The awardee's name will also be engraved on a permanent plaque that hangs at Hesthavn.

Nominations should consist of a letter that describes how the actions or activities of the nominee fit the criteria described above. Nominations should include contact information for both the nominee and the nominator and are due by January 31st, 2010. Email submissions may be sent to Linda Campbell at lcampbell@peak.org, or Karan Fairchild at alderspr@peak.org. Snail mail submissions should be sent to ASC, Attn: HC Enviro Award Committee.

Previous awardees of the Homer Campbell- ASC Environmental Award:

- 2005- Elzy Eltzroth
- 2006- Bob & Liz Frenkel
- 2007- Wally & Mary Eichler
- 2008- Bill & Carla Chambers, Stahlbush Island Farms
- 2009- Elsie Eltzroth

Karan Fairchild

Holiday Tree Giveaway

Support Oregon White Oak Restoration at Finley NWR this holiday season

Oak restoration is an important part of managing for sensitive species on our local wildlife refuges. As we continue with new Oak Savanna restoration projects on various areas of the refuge, we're finding Douglas-fir seedlings reinvading areas we have restored to oak woodland and savanna in the past. These seedlings need to be removed before they grow too large.

With the approaching holidays, you could help support our efforts by hanging your ornaments on a tree removed from these sensitive areas.

The "Charlie Brown Christmas Trees" will be available for pickup from November 27-December 24 at the new refuge headquarters off of Bellfountain Rd. south of Corvallis. The Friends of WV Refuges are available to answer any questions at the new "Wild Goose Nature Store" open Friday-Sunday

from 10-4pm. Donations are gladly accepted, and it's a great place to do some holiday shopping!

Volunteer help with removal of fir trees from restoration areas will be gladly accepted. Contact Molly Monroe at Finley NWR for more information. 541-757-7236

Molly Monroe, USFWS

New ASC Listserves

Want to stay informed about issues and events of interest to Audubon Society of Corvallis? Now you can get updates about the issues you care about delivered directly to your e-mail address. We have set up three new list serves in addition to the existing Hesthavn List. You are encouraged to subscribe to all lists that you find interesting. If you aren't familiar with list serves, they are automatic e-mail broadcast services that deliver e-mails to everyone subscribed without a long list of e-mail addresses. You select which lists you want to be involved in and you subscribe (or unsubscribe) as you choose. To subscribe, simply go the URL for the list(s) that interest you and provide your e-mail address. If you have any problems, contact Paula Vanderheul for assistance. vanderp@peak.org

Membership—for topics of interest to the general membership, including meeting reminders, notice of meeting cancellations due to weather, etc—
<http://corvallisaudubon.org/mailman/listinfo/asc-membership>

Conservation alerts to conservation issues and meetings of the conservation committee—
<http://corvallisaudubon.org/mailman/listinfo/asc-conservation>

Education—announcements about educational volunteer opportunities, event reminders—
<http://corvallisaudubon.org/mailman/listinfo/asc-education>

Hesthavn—postings of the work party and open house schedules
<http://corvallisaudubon.org/mailman/listinfo/hesthavn-news>

Paula Vanderheul

Field Trip Schedule

Monthly Year-Round Saturday Field Trips

Dec 12: Meet at the Benton Center at 7:30 am

Jan 9: Meet at the Benton Center at 7:30 am

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of every month at the Benton Center parking area, 757 Polk Ave, Corvallis at 7:30 am. This field trip is especially interesting for beginner birders and birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area. We spend a lot of time identifying local birds by sight and song. We visit the valley national wildlife refuges—Finley, Baskett Slough, and Ankeny, as well as other birding areas throughout the year. Contact Rich Armstrong at richarmstrong@comcast.net or 541-753-1978 with questions.

Spring 2010 Weekend Field Trips

Mar 19 – 21: Bandon/South Coast

Apr 16 – 18: Klamath Basin

Apr 30 – May 2: Rogue Valley

May 20 – 23: Malheur NWR

June 18 – 20: Summer Lake/Ft Rock/Fremont NFS

Fred Ramsey leads all the spring weekend trips. Fred has been leading these field trips for ASC for over 35 years. He is an amazing field trip guide, sharing his knowledge about finding birds in their habitat and pointing out wildflowers, butterflies, mammals, and reptiles. The field trips fill up early in the fall. Sign-up sheets are available at the general meeting or email Fred Ramsey with your requests at flramsey5@comcast.net.

Please note:

- The Rogue Valley and Malheur trips require deposits by February 28, 2010.
- The Rogue Valley trip includes a play at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. The play this year will be Hamlet. A deposit of \$40 is required for the play.
- The Malheur deposit is \$50. Each deposit must be made payable to Fred Ramsey at 3550 NW Glen Ridge Pl., Corvallis OR 97330.

Rich Armstrong

Hesthavn News

Our November 21 work party of five removed blackberry brambles and false brome along the banks of Oak Creek. It looks great! Thank you Susan Brown, Lori McGovern, Ann, John McGee, and Paula Vanderheul for your volunteer time. Thank you also to the Corvallis Kiwanis Foundation for their \$200 educational grant to purchase materials and supplies to help create Audubon's nature course curriculum, and to the Evening Garden Club for their \$260 grant donation for purchasing shrubs to border Hesthavn's parking lot.

Look for the 2010 monthly work party and open house schedules in the January Chat. Volunteers are needed to work with our educational team, sharing nature experiences as instructors and helpers (we offer nature classes to schools and other community groups as requested). There are also volunteer tasks that could be performed on week days, such as weeding invasive plants, mowing, and watering native trees and shrubs.

Map directions to Hesthavn are available at www.audubon.corvallis.or.us. The nature trail is open daily to the public. Contact me at 541-752-0470 or vanderp@peak.org with any questions.

Paula Vanderheul

Excellent Field Trips

Although only 5 Corvallis Audubon people went on the November all-day coast trip, we had five hours with no rain, no wind, and good birds. We began at Boiler Bay at dawn where 30-foot breakers were fun to see. I think all saw a dark morph Northern Fulmar on the water and flying a little. There were three Red-Necked Grebes flying together, Western Grebes on the water, a winter plumage Pigeon Guillemot on the water, many Bonaparte's Gulls, many Common Murres, all three loons, and flocks of Brant. Depoe Bay had scope views of Black Turnstones, and very cooperative Black Oystercatchers. At the Newport jetties we found super close Harlequin Ducks, many Common Loons in various plumages, and two White-winged Scoters with the many Surf Scoters. The bird of the

trip was a Snow Bunting! We had one that literally wandered around six feet in front of our entire group. Because of the high waves we had Surfbirds and two Rock Sandpipers on the rocks quite close, and a Whimbrel playing in a puddle. A Red-necked Phalarope landed at the gull puddle and then a Red Phalarope landed on the other side. There were also five Red Phalaropes on the water close. There were still many Brown Pelicans and Heermann's Gulls, and we had a Pelagic Cormorant standing right next to a Brandt's Cormorant for great comparison. Behind the science center we had rain, but a Marbled Godwit right in front of us, four Sanderlings stopped briefly, excellent comparison of Ring-billed, Mew, and California Gulls, and one very dark-backed gull we decided was a dark Western. Also one Bald Eagle flew over. We managed some Horned Grebes and a lot of Bufflehead. It was all in all a pretty good day.

The half-day Corvallis Audubon field trip went to Finley and also enjoyed no rain. The birds of the day were a Lewis Woodpecker and a Northern Shrike seen well by all. Other highlights included a nicely perched American Kestrel that fought a Steller's Jay and later a Western Scrub-Jay to keep her perch, many Western Bluebirds, many Acorn Woodpeckers that chased Red-breasted Sapsuckers as well as jays, a posing Lincoln's Sparrow that sat next to Song and Golden-crowned Sparrows, a close Ruby-crowned Kinglet, not very cooperative White-tailed Kites, a distant but perched Rough-legged Hawk, and 15 presumably Tundra Swans. On the way back into town we stopped on Goodnight Road and easily saw two Eurasian Collared-Doves to end a good morning.

Rich Armstrong



Wood Duck photo by Matt Lee

Field Notes

27 October – 27 November 2009

Several strong wind storms during the month generated a lot of excitement when some rare species appeared in our area. Although winds in Corvallis rarely topped 40 mph during brief gusts, the sustained winds near 80 mph along the Oregon Coast were enough to push two species new to Benton County, Leach's Storm-Petrel and Heermann's Gull, and several Red Phalaropes, across the Coast Range. In Linn County, a Parasitic Jaeger was also probably a storm-associated occurrence. The first Barrow's Goldeneye for Benton County visited the Philomath Sewage ponds late in the period.

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

One to three **Snow Geese** visited FNWR intermittently throughout the period, first appearing 8 Nov. **Dusky Canada Geese** arrived in normal numbers at FNWR (m.ob.). The maximum count of **Cackling Geese** at FNWR was 25,000 on 7 Nov.

Tundra Swans were present in low numbers until 25 Nov when 225 were at Cabell Marsh. Two days later numbers had climbed to 525.

Eurasian Wigeon were still quite uncommon so far this fall. Two were at Cabell Marsh and McFadden Marsh, 15 Nov, and continued intermittently the rest of the period (WDR, J. Landau). The high count of **American Wigeon** was 365 on 19 Nov at Cabell Marsh. At least 5,700 **Mallards** were at McFadden Marsh, 13 Nov. **Northern Pintails** are less numerous than during the last few falls; the high count was 5,000 at McFadden Marsh on 19 Nov, but numbers quickly declined after that date. **Green-winged Teal** congregated at Cabell Marsh during Nov; 7,000 were there, 19 Nov.



This female Barrow's Goldeneye discovered by P. Vanderheul and R. Armstrong at Philomath STP established the first local record (photo by W. D. Robinson).

A **Redhead** visited Cabell Marsh, 22 Nov. **Greater Scaup** have been uncommon this fall; a single female has been at Philomath STP throughout Nov. Three **Surf Scoters** stopped at Philomath STP for a few hours, 13 Nov. Up to 45 **Bufflehead** visited Philomath STP throughout

the period. A **Common Goldeneye** was discovered at the Knoll Terrace STP, 5 and 26 Nov (R. Armstrong). The species is regular, but rare in the area. Another **Common Goldeneye** was present at Philomath STP, 15 Nov through the end of the period. It was joined on 19 Nov by the county's first **Barrow's Goldeneye**, a first-year female (P. Vanderheul, R. Armstrong, WDR; see photo). The Barrow's was a tough identification because it spent so much time foraging that its head shape was not as distinctive as it should have been. Nonetheless, the bird did show yellow distal half of bill, larger body size than the Common Goldeneye, large dark nail on the bill, longer nape feathers, and the bulging, steep forehead when the bird took breaks from foraging.

A female **Red-breasted Merganser** stopped at Philomath STP, 22 Nov; the species is rare but regular there.

Ruddy Ducks reached their maximum number of 115 on 21 Nov at Philomath STP.

A **Common Loon** was swimming along the Willamette River at Peoria, 3 Nov (R. Campbell).

A **Horned Grebe** stopped at Philomath STP, 5 Nov (WDR) and 19 Nov (R. Armstrong). A single **Eared Grebe** was there, 6 Nov through end of the period. A **Western-type Grebe** was spotted in the Willamette River at Corvallis, 25 Nov (L. Millbank). Single **Western Grebes** visited Philomath STP, 5 and 17 Nov, and single **Clark's Grebes** were there 29 Oct, 5 and 6 Nov.

The surprise of the year, perhaps, was a **Leach's Storm-Petrel**, a strictly pelagic bird that fluttered across the Philomath STP, 22 Nov, on the day the strong winds were moving lots of birds around. As good fortune would have it, WDR had his camera ready (see photo) and took advantage of the 30-second appearance of the bird.



A Leach's Storm-Petrel, drifting in from the Pacific Ocean, passed by Philomath STP, 22 Nov, just long enough to be photographed (photo by W. D. Robinson).

A **Prairie Falcon** returned to its normal wintering spot along Lakeside Drive, 8 Nov. Another was foraging on a Killdeer along Robison Road, 26 Nov.

Rough-legged Hawks were regularly reported from FNWR and along Highway 99W, especially in the second and third weeks of Nov (m.ob.).

A **Sandhill Crane** foraged along Robison Road, 27 Nov, then flew south along Rifle Range Road before circling higher and higher and disappearing out of sight (see photo). The species is quite rare this late in fall.



This Sandhill Crane loitered along Robison Road, 27 Nov (photo by W.D. Robinson).

There were no large flocks of **Dunlin** reported; high counts were less than 50. A late **Lesser Yellowlegs** was at EEW and Toketie Marsh, 17-18 Nov, with 2 **Greater Yellowlegs** (J. Geier). Most **Long-billed Dowitchers** had left the area by 10 Nov. Storm-assisted **Red Phalaropes** appeared at Philomath STP, 7 and 22 Nov (see photo of the latter bird); McFadden Marsh, 17 Nov (N. Ranta, WDR), and Cabell Marsh, 22 Nov. The Red Phalaropes are the first ones reported in at least 6 years. A very late **Red-necked Phalarope** foraged at Philomath STP, 23 Nov.



Strong winds during the month brought several Red Phalaropes to our area. This one was at Philomath STP, 22 Nov (photo by W. D. Robinson).

Bonaparte's Gulls have been rare during 2009. One visited Philomath STP, 13 Nov (WDR), and two were there for a little while on 22 Nov (W. Wright, K. Nelson). One was at McFadden Marsh, 18 Nov. Establishing the first Benton County record, a **Heerman's Gull** entertained the OSU Systematics of Birds class at McFadden Marsh, 18 Nov (WDR). Then, on 22 Nov, an amazing count of six appeared at Philomath STP (W. Wright, K. Nelson; see photo).



Prior to Nov 18 there had been no local records of Heerman's Gull. The first one appeared at McFadden Marsh on that date. These 6 were at Philomath STP four days later (photo by W. D. Robinson).

At the Diamond Hill Road wetland in Linn County, an adult dark-phase **Parasitic Jaeger** was present, 23 Nov (R. Moore). The bird was probably resting after being blown inland by the 22 Nov storm.

A **Barred Owl** entertained several observers at Stewart Lake, 25 Nov (J. Simmons).

Two **Lewis's Woodpeckers** continued to forage at FNWR throughout the period (m.ob.).

A **Northern Shrike** was at EEW, 8 Nov (B. Proebsting). One or two were present at the FNWR prairie throughout the period (m.ob.).

Three **Barn Swallows** were still present along the Willamette River near Peoria, 8 Nov (R. Campbell).

A female **Mountain Bluebird** joined a flock of **Western Bluebirds** on Marys Peak, 2 Nov.

The only report of **Lapland Longspurs** this fall was of two at Diamond Hill Road, Linn County, 23 Nov (R. Moore).

Single **Snow Buntings** flew over Philomath STP, 1 Nov, and Bruce Road, 8 and 17 Nov.

A very late report of a **Dickcissel** visiting a Corvallis feeder for a day in mid-Aug sounds quite credible. Unfortunately, no documentary details were obtained.

The last report of **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** on Marys Peak was of one bird on 1 Nov.

A **Cassin's Finches** was still on Marys Peak, 2 Nov.

Eight **Evening Grosbeaks** visited feeders at Judith and Jerry Paul's house in Corvallis, 23 Nov. A few have been around this fall, but they have not been regularly occurring at feeders.

Next issue

Please send your reports for the next issue by 28 December.

W. Douglas Robinson
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GreenTip

OF THE MONTH

Upcoming Programs and Projects

Many important environmental issues require action from ASC. Currently on our plate is the Audubon/Finley planting scheduled for February 20th, and action to restore the Wildlife Watch program, which was active from 1981 and is now dormant. The Green programs in ASC that brought us our cloth tote bags, removed paper cups and plates from our meetings, and started the planting programs will need updating. Other worthwhile projects include efforts to clean up the Willamette River, encourage marine reserves along the Oregon Coast, and support efforts to keep the forests green and water clear. A conservation committee is being formed to share the many issues facing us. Glen Akins, Stacy Moore and Jerry Paul have agreed to serve on the new committee, and additional names are being solicited. In addition we are inviting any interested persons to attend our open meetings which will probably be held in downtown Corvallis, possibly at the New Morning Bakery or similar location. There is a conservation e-mail system in operation: asc-conservation@corvallisaudubon.org. Please come join us!

John Gaylord

Who to Look For

Winter flocks of little birds

Starting in early winter, the occurrence of mixed flocks of arboreal, insect-feeding birds increases and may become an everyday observation. These roving flocks are initiated by a founding species and then other birds join in as time goes on. It's an exciting event for birders as the trees come alive with a wave of activity. Some rare and unusual birds are spotted in these flocks.

Here's an example of this process. A flock of Black-capped Chickadees starts hunting for insects through the tree tops. Soon, a nearby flock of Bushtits joins in. The flock keeps moving and eventually comes to a tree with Golden-

see "Who to Look For" on page 30

Who to Look For *continued from page 29*

crowned Kinglets and they join in, too. All this commotion recruits species who are normally solitary, like Ruby-crowned Kinglets or nuthatches. The flock may be initiated by species other than chickadees. The benefits of this behavior are not entirely understood, but it seems that the number of hunters overwhelms their prey. Another suggested benefit is that territorial sparrows, wrens or towhees are overwhelmed and can do little to avert the invading flock. Of course, it's well known that flocking is protection from predators.

This process is not a feeding aggregation, like at a bird feeder or fruit tree. Another feeding aggregation happens when soil invertebrates concentrate in fields or lawns while robins, starlings, crows and/or killdeer gather to take advantage of it. During feeding aggregations, different species just happen to gather to partake in the feast. It seems that roving flocks actually loosely collaborate. Similarly, ground-feeding sparrows like Dark-eyed Juncos and White- and Golden-crowned Sparrows may be found in mixed flocks. What I'm covering here are birds which hunt for invertebrates in the trees.



Mixed flocks can be a reliable way to find the otherwise hard-to-locate Hutton's Vireo.

Photo by Lisa Millbank

Here's what to look for:

Pay close attention to flocks of Black-capped Chickadees, Bushtits, Yellow-rumped Warblers or other flocking birds that are common in your area. It helps to know their sounds but even if you don't, you can simply look for a lot of movement in the trees. If at first all you see is one species, be patient, pursue the flock and pick out individuals to watch. Soon enough, you'll likely see other kinds of birds. Here's a list of common birds you may see in these mixed flocks:

Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Bushtit, Red- and White-breasted Nuthatches, Brown Creeper, Golden- and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Hutton's Vireo, Yellow-rumped and Townsend's Warblers.

Occasionally, an astute birder may find a Palm Warbler, Mountain Chickadee or some other uncommon bird amongst these groups. I'm rarely so lucky. Even if there's only a few common species, these mixed flocks are delightful spurts of joy on a gloomy winter day. This winter flocking pattern can be observed until April, the time when wintering birds migrant. Sometimes this pattern is most dramatic on one of

those on-and-off rainy days with occasional sun breaks. When the rain stops, bird activity spikes. This happens in the city, in the forest or anywhere there are trees. Don't let the poor winter weather stop you from enjoying a neighborhood birding walk or an outing to a nearby park.

Don Boucher

Hog Island Reopens Birding in Maine, Summer 2010



Hog Island Audubon Camp

Photo by Steve Kress

The National Audubon Society will reopen its legendary Hog Island for four adult ornithology sessions and one teen bird studies session during the summer of 2010. Dr. Steve Kress, Audubon's VP for Bird Conservation will direct the sessions. He will be joined by some of the country's top ornithologists who will serve as instructors, including—Kenn Kaufman, Pete Dunne, and Scott Weidensaul. Additionally, said Dr. Kress, there will be two totally new sessions offered in association with Elder Hostel (now Exploritas) where participants will assist Project Puffin biologists to census gulls, eiders and cormorants at several nearby seabird nesting islands. Participants in the September session will learn about land and seabirds through bird banding and presentations and assist with a habitat management project for endangered terns and storm-petrels at Eastern Egg Rock.

Known to thousands as the Audubon Camp in Maine, Hog Island was closed during the summer of 2009 to permit planning for the future. This process led to Project Puffin bringing back the popular ornithology programs for adults and teens. The adult programs are for both beginning and avid birders who would like to learn more about Maine birdlife and the biology of birds. The teen session is for 14-17 year olds with a keen interest in birds. This session is co-sponsored by the American Birding Association. Due to its varied habitats, Hog Island and vicinity are an ideal setting for the program, as more than 100 species frequent the area.

Participants live in authentic, turn of the century housing on the 330 acre spruce-covered island. Here, they will enjoy three home-cooked meals a day in an historic island farmhouse that overlooks Muscongus Bay. During the five-day sessions, small field groups will go on a variety of trips and boat cruises, and attend workshops and presentations on topics ranging from migration and the identification of warblers to the restoration

of Atlantic Puffins and terns on nearby Eastern Egg Rock.

The Hog Island camp first opened in 1936, with Roger Tory Peterson as its first bird instructor. It is well known in America's environmental community as a distinguished and beautiful place of learning and enjoyment. For more information on dates, sessions, costs, instructors, etc. visit www.projectpuffin.org. To read testimonials and see photos from previous Hog Island programs, visit www.naturecompass.org/fohi.

*Lynn Tennefoss, Vice President,
State Programs and Chapter Services*

Christmas Bird Count

Airlie-Albany

The Airlie-Albany Christmas Bird Count is Sunday December 20. Contact Paul Adamus, adamus7@comcast.net, phone (541) 745-7092, for more information.

Corvallis

The Corvallis Christmas Bird Count is Tuesday, December 22, 2009. See the ASC website (<http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us>), click on Bird Counts on the left side of the page) or page 22 of the November Chat for more information, or contact Marcia Cutler at marciafcutler@comcast.net or 752-4313.

Nebraska Rivers and Wildlife 40th Celebration focuses on Sandhill Crane Migration

The 40th annual Rivers and Wildlife Celebration will be held March 18-21, 2010, in Kearney, Nebraska. Organized by Audubon Nebraska and the Nebraska Bird Partnership, the conference gathers together nature enthusiasts from across the county to witness the migration of over half a million sandhill cranes and millions of waterfowl and other birds through central Nebraska. Events include guided field trips, workshops, a family fun room, and daily visits to river blinds operated by Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary for up-close views of cranes roosting on the Platte River.

Local and national speakers will present information on a variety of wildlife and conservation topics. Main speakers are Scott Weidensaul, author of more than two dozen natural history books, including *Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds*, a Pulitzer Prize finalist; Mike Forsberg, nature photographer and author of *Great Plains: America's Lingering Wild*; Ron Klataske, executive director of Audubon of Kansas; and Chris Wood, eBird Project Leader, Cornell Lab of Ornithology. More than twenty local environmental organizations will have information booths and hands-on activities on Saturday.

The celebration is open to the general public. Registration materials can be found beginning in mid-December at www.nebraska.audubon.org. Or contact Audubon Nebraska to be put on the mailing list: Nebraska@audubon.org; 402/797-2301. Rowe Sanctuary has information about viewing the sandhill crane migration, 308/468-5282; www.rowsanctuary.org.
Kevin Poague, Audubon Nebraska

Winter Wings Festival February 12 – 14 in Klamath Falls

The 31st annual Winter Wings Festival in Klamath Falls will offer three full days of activities, February 12-14, 2010. Speakers include:

Bill Clark, a photographer, author, and lecturer with over 45 years experience working with birds of prey will recount his adventures with the world's eagles.

Canon's Explorer of Light photographer, Rick Sammon, presents a special slide show "Exploring Wildlife and Nature Photography."

Scott Weidensaul, a well-known wildlife writer, lecturer, and field researcher, will deliver the keynote speech, "Living on the Wind: The World of Migratory Birds", an exploration of how and why birds migrate, and the conservation challenges that face them.

Other activities include photography workshops and field trips, Environmentally Friendly Desert Landscaping, Introduction to Falconry, Bird Sketching, Flyouts, Leisurely Birding, Behind the Scenes at the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, It's Not in My Field Guide, and many more!

Check out the website at www.WinterWingsFest.org for the latest in Festival planning information. On-line registration will not begin until early or mid December unless otherwise notified. Brochures are scheduled to be distributed in early December and will also be available on-line.

If you have questions in the meantime, contact Todd Christian, Festival Registrar, at (541) 850-0084 or e-mail him at singingbear@charter.net.

Darrel Samuels

Contributors to the Chat

Dave Mellinger, Paula Vanderheul, John Gaylord, Douglas Robinson, Marcia Cutler, Molly Monroe, Karan Fairchild, Rich Armstrong, Don Boucher, Lynn Tennefoss, Kevin Poague, Darrel Samuels.



Belted Kingfisher photo by Sue Powell

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

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the **CHAT**

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

Calendar

Dec 10: Board meeting
Dec 12: Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am
Dec 17: General meeting—now starting at 7 pm!
Dec 20: Airline-Albany CBC
Dec 22: Corvallis CBC
Dec 28: Field notes submission deadline for Nov Chat
Dec 31: Article submission deadline for Nov Chat
Jan 9: Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am
Jan 31: Homer Campbell Award nominations due

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