



Audubon Society of Corvallis

the CHAT

May 2011

VOL. 40

#9

General Meeting

Thursday, May 19, 7:00 – 8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church

Spotted Owls

A presentation by Eric Forsman
Dr. Eric Forsman will present information on the Northern Spotted Owl. After the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) was adopted in 1994 to manage forests in our region, the Forest Service and BLM agreed to monitor Spotted Owl populations on eight long-term study areas in Washington, Oregon, and California. The objective of these studies was to determine if the Spotted Owl population would eventually stabilize or increase as cutover forests on federal lands gradually began to recover. It has now been 17 years since the plan was adopted, and some of the long-term demography studies have been in existence for nearly 25 years.



In January 2009, Dr. Forsman and the other biologists who perform long-term studies of Spotted Owls conducted an analysis of all of the data collected since 1985. They found that, despite the large amount of habitat protected for Spotted Owls, the population is continuing to decline, especially in Washington State. Overall, the average rate of population decline was 2.9% per year. Their analysis suggests that the continued decline of the Spotted Owl population is due to continued habitat loss and to the invasion of the Barred Owl, which is gradually increasing in numbers along the west coast. It is not



clear whether anything can be done to alter the Barred Owl situation, as they seem to be here to stay.

Dr. Forsman is a Wildlife Biologist at the U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station in Corvallis, Oregon. Eric received his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees from the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State University. He has spent over 30 years conducting research on the ecology of forest birds and mammals, especially spotted owls and their prey. He was a member of the Interagency Scientific Committee that developed the first region-wide management plan for the Northern Spotted Owl, and was also a member of the Forest Ecosystem Management Assessment Team that laid the framework for the NWFP. His current research interests include the population dynamics of spotted owls, and the natural history, habitat associations, and population trends of tree voles.

Directions

The monthly chapter meeting is in Dennis Hall of the First Presbyterian Church, 114 SW Eighth Street.

Dave Mellinger

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President's Corner

Hello Membership,

Spring migration is bringing new arrivals every day, and blooming flora says a new and fruitful year is coming. We all feel the warmth of increasing daylength, the return of familiar feathered friends, and the sprouting of dormant plants. The bright colors of fresh flowers, and the perfume of daphne and currant in the air pulls us out of winter dol-drums and reawakens our sensitivities to the new season that is upon us.

Not to spoil the moment, but I have sad news: some long-time Audubon stalwarts are leaving us. Rock-solid pillars of support for our organization, Paula Vanderheul and Rich Armstrong, are moving on to complete other adventures in their lives. These two have given a large chunk of their lives and their energy making ASC the prominent community society it is today. The number of people who have had a pleasant afternoon on a trail at Hesthavn, or on a Saturday morning bird walk, gaining a greater appreciation for nature because of the efforts of Paula and Rich, we will never know. We do know that it is a large number.

Paula has been here going way back before I came into the picture. I know she led the weekend field trips for a long time, she was Secretary at one point, and her grand finale was the transformation of Hesthavn, taking over work begun by Ray Drapek. The beautiful nature center we see today at Oak Creek is something Helen and Alan Berg would be proud of, and the community at large certainly is, as we observe the flow of visitors enjoying the property. Paula put her heart into changing the old horse barn into a center for learning, and she succeeded.

Rich came to our area about six years ago, excited about birding a new territory for him, the wild Oregon frontier. He's covered a lot of it by now and created some extensive lists of birds seen in Benton County. Rich isn't shy about rushing out to find a bird. Then he volunteered for a time consuming job, and a generous one; sharing his love for birding with others. Being the weekend field trip leader takes a serious commitment. If you've ever been one to help someone else get their first view of a new species, you know why Rich was in the business. His enthusiasm was boundless, and his commitment was impeccable.

How do you say thank you to two people who have given us so much? I know their work was a labor of love, but I want to say THANK YOU from the society, from me personally, and as a citizen of Corvallis, where we all enjoy the fruits of their labors. We will miss you, and best of luck to you.

*Will Wright,
President, Audubon Society of Corvallis*

ASC Board Elections

Members are encouraged to participate in the election of our board and officer candidates during the May 19 meeting. The new Board term begins after the summer Board meeting 2011. The Nominating Committee offers the following slate of candidates:

President: no candidate as yet*

Vice President and Program Chair: Dave Mellinger

Secretary: Linda Campbell

Treasurer: Fred Ramsey

Board Member-at-Large: Gail Nickerson

Board Member-at-Large: Lori McGovern

Board Member-at-Large: Tom Penpraze

Board Member-at-Large: Stacy Moore

Board Member-at-Large: Peter Moore

Board Member-at-Large: no candidate as yet*

Dave Mellinger has been a member of ASC since 2000, served as ASC Conservation Chair for many years, and is currently ASC's Vice President. Dave is currently an Associate Professor at OSU, where he studies sounds of whales and other marine and terrestrial species. In particular, he studies ways to detect and locate animals acoustically and estimate their populations, in Corvallis and at the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport.

Linda Campbell moved back to her home valley after 25 years of living on San Juan Island. She works for Oregon Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and takes frequent long rambles in the woods where she lives, along the Mary's River. Linda was instrumental in securing the completion of the Homer Campbell Trail at Finley Wildlife Refuge, the first year round accessible trail on the refuge. She has served ASC in many capacities over the years.

Fred Ramsey co-founded ASC in 1970, was its first president, and served in this position again in the 1980s. He is currently Treasurer. Fred has led the weekend field trips since 1971, edited the Chat and served in many other positions over the years. As a world-traveled and respected ornithologist, his other interests include music, theatre, fishing and baseball. Fred is also Professor Emeritus of Statistics at OSU. His many publications include *Birding Oregon*, one of the first site guides, which was published by ASC in 1978.

Gail Nickerson is a native Oregonian who has lived in Corvallis most of her life. Upon retirement from OSU (as a hop chemist) in 2003 she joined the Audubon Society of Corvallis. She volunteered for the refreshment committee because she likes to bake. She has been an at large member of the board for two years.

Lori McGovern moved to Oregon from Lake Havasu City, AZ with her son in 2000. Her formal training is in working with at-risk youth and she currently works as a Juvenile Corrections Counselor/Case Manager. In 2008 Lori became interested in birding and has a special fondness for birds of prey. That same year she joined the Audubon Society of Corvallis and in 2009 the Audubon Society of Portland. In 2009 she began volunteering with the ASC's education

department and has participated with other volunteers in presenting nature programs to children. Lori is involved with the Vaux's Swift survey. She has also been actively involved in projects at Hesthavn and Finley National Wildlife Refuge, as an educator with the Freshwater Trust's Salmon watch program and the Willamette Community Garden in Albany. Lori's interests include the continued development of Hesthavn and expanding nature education/conservation programming and native plant restoration.

Tom Penpraze has been an ASC member for many years. Previously active on the Conservation Committee, Tom is also familiar to us as one of the van drivers for Fred's weekend field trips for many of those years. He is director of the Utilities Division for the City of Corvallis and is active with the Friends of the Willamette Valley refuges, the Marys Peak Stewardship Group and other local organizations.

Stacy Moore obtained a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and a Secondary Science Teaching Certificate from Oregon State University. She has an M.S. in Environmental Education from Southern Oregon State University. She has instructed general biology and biological field methods at Oregon State University. In New Zealand, she worked as Community Relations Program Manager for the Department of Conservation, bringing innovative education programs to local schools and the public and participating in ornithological research in the subantarctic. She currently works as Ecological Education Director at Institute for Applied Ecology in Corvallis.

Peter Moore was born in New Zealand and obtained his Wildlife Biology Degree and honors thesis on white-faced herons at Victoria University. He worked 27 years for the Department of Conservation in New Zealand where he specialized in studies on penguins, oystercatchers and albatrosses. He has also worked on predation and habitat restoration on off shore islands. Peter currently works for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife as Wildlife Restoration Coordinator managing federal grants for restoration projects.

*Nominations Committee Note: Please help us fill the last two positions before the May meeting! We need candidates for President and for one Board Member-at-large. To volunteer or suggest a nominee, contact Will Wright, Karan Fairchild or Tom Penpraze. Contact info on back of Chat. If no candidate steps forward for President, Karan Fairchild and Dave Mellinger have agreed to run as candidates for "co-President", meaning they would share the duties of President.

Karan Fairchild

Spring Migratory Bird Count

The 2011 Spring Migratory Bird Count for Benton County is scheduled for Saturday, May 14th. The North American Migration Count (NAMC) is like the Christmas Bird Count, but with a few twists. The area is not a 15-mile diameter circle but an entire county. The big twist is the timing: unlike Christmas Bird Counts, which are spread over several weeks, this count is done in Oregon over a single weekend.

Among the goals of the NAMC are:

- Have fun.
- To obtain a "snapshot" of the process of Spring and Fall Migration.
- To obtain information on the abundance and distribution of each species.

The North American Migration Count is an event not affiliated with any particular organization and there is no fee to participate. In Oregon, the East Cascades Audubon Society coordinates the event.

The count has been designed so that it is outside everyone's house, and not limited to a set of widely-spaced, discrete circles. After all, migratory birds are everywhere and should be of concern to everyone. But you should remember to count all the birds (not just migrants). Participation by ALL birders, irrespective of skill or style, is encouraged. So whether you just count the birds in your yard, visit a favorite spot for an hour or two or spend the entire day birding, I would appreciate a report from you. Please provide a count for each bird seen listed by location (this way, I can amalgamate counts from the same location such as Cabell Marsh, Philomath Sewage Pond, etc.). Also provide the amount of time spent birding and mileage broken down by method of transportation (i.e. foot, car, bicycle, etc.).

If possible, please let me know ahead of time if you plan to participate. Also feel free to ask me any questions. I can be contacted at marciafcutler@comcast.net or 541-752-4313.

Marcia F. Cutler

Field Trip Schedule

Monthly Year-Round Saturday Field Trips

May 14: Meet at the Benton Center at 7:30 am

Finley NWR

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

McDonald Forest from Oak Creek Entrance

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 while enjoying the outdoors. We visit the valley national wildlife refuges—Finley, Baskett Slough, and Ankeny, as well as other birding areas throughout the year. Contact Bill Proebsting at proebstw@gmail.com or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ, <http://www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding/>, the week before the field trip for updates.

Bill Proebsting

Spring Weekend Field Trips - 2011

ASC offers two weekend field trips to different Oregon locations. Summer Lake is a three-day trip covering Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. The trip to Malheur National Wildlife Refuge covers Thursday through Sunday. It is

continued on next page

Field Trip Schedule *continued from page 63*

full, but you can sign on to a waiting list. Both trips are led by Fred Ramsey, with Jim Faulkner and Tom Penpraze driving and providing substantial guiding expertise. Except for the Malheur trip (where we stay at the Malheur Field Station, now with an operational mess hall), we stay in motels and eat in restaurants. Enterprise 12-passenger or 15-passenger vans transport us. We have a maximum of 8 participants in each van so that everyone has a window seat. Expenses are shared.

MALHEUR National Wildlife Refuge - May 26-29.

Our signature trip, and the 40th year led by Fred. The refuge is Oregon's most famous birding area, but this tour also hits many great spots going over the Cascades, following the Crooked River, and coming back through the High Desert. We usually see over 100 species each of the four days and around 175 species overall. Maximum tour size: 32 persons.

SUMMER LAKE and a return to KLAMATH - June 17-19.

Our 2010 tour scored a rare Oregon Swift trifecta: Black (Salt Creek Falls), White-throated (Fort Rock), and Vaux's. Add Snowy Plover, Common Poorwill, American Bittern, and Yellow Rail and you understand that this is a special conclusion to the spring offerings. Maximum tour size: 21 persons.

Come join us! Signup sheets for these trips are available on the Field Trip table at all of the general meetings. Also, you may sign up by sending an email to Fred at framsey5@comcast.net. But here is a new twist: confirming a reservation on any one of these trips requires a \$50 deposit. The deposits will be refundable only if a replacement exists on the waiting list. People who have signed up but not sent in their deposits have been moved to the waiting Lists. They can recapture their spaces on the Go Lists by sending deposits, as long as spaces exist.

Fred Ramsey

Bicycle Birding

Come out and enjoy life and birding at a human pace. By "going green" and forgoing the automobile for a birding trip, you won't be sacrificing your potential bird encounters. I like to think of bicycle birding as high-density birding. When you're driving down the highway, you're whizzing by hundreds of birds without seeing or hearing them. While bicycle birding, we won't miss anything, and we'll be covering more ground than hiking.

Last Sunday of each month. 9am - Noon.

Sunday, May 29, 9am - noon

Meet at E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area (this trip only). Meet at the pheasant cage parking area, north of the road, 29555 Camp Adair Rd Monmouth, OR

Sundays, June 26, July 31, Aug 28, Sept 25,

9am - noon

Meet at Avery Park Rose Garden: 1210 SW Avery Drive in Corvallis.

Trips are free. Bring a bicycle helmet, water and binoculars. We ride slowly, listen for birds and stop frequently. Trip lengths are usually less than 10 miles. For more information, contact Don Boucher, 541-753-7689, bouchdon@peak.org

Atop the Nestbox

We had about 80 participants at the 2011 Spring Bluebird Workshop on March 19th. The discussion focused on how to monitor bluebird nests, and we will plan to extend that discussion next year, as there is never enough time to cover it all! Two new volunteers, Wendy Novak and Mary Boyd, signed up to be monitors. Welcome to the trail, ladies!

The bluebirds have started nesting a bit later this year than usual. It has been pretty cold, and it's good that they're waiting for better conditions. We do have some nests with eggs, and more coming soon, but many are still biding their time. For those of you hosting bluebirds on your property, please be sure to check on any nesting activity and let us know if you have nesting bluebirds. In Benton and Polk counties, please contact Rita Snyder at 541-752-6457 or rsnyder14@msn.com. In Linn and Marion, please contact Raylene Gordin at 541-258-6625 or gordin@centurytel.net.

Please help us with our Western Bluebird longevity/survivorship study. If you see banded bluebirds, please report them by calling me or using the reporting form on our web page at www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/bluebird_trail.shtml.

Last year's birds were banded with unique color combinations, so you will not need to read any numbers to get an identification and a chance to win a predator-proof nest box. Your assistance is greatly needed and appreciated.

Raylene Gordin

Hesthavn News

The weather has been slowly improving and we have been able to start the spring clean-up at Hesthavn. If you have been one of the volunteers assisting with this process, we thank you very much and appreciate your hard work!

Dessert Party to Honor Paula's Work at Hesthavn: Wed, May 11, 7-8:30 p.m.

Join us at Hesthavn Nature Center to celebrate with Paula Vanderheul, her years as Hesthavn manager, and wish her well in her move to the Olympic Peninsula. Everyone is welcome. Please carpool, as parking is limited. Come early and enjoy a spring evening at Hesthavn. Contact Gail Andrews if you want to bring a dessert or help with the event. (gailandrews@peak.org 541-745-5323)

Oak Creek Riparian Projects Open House

May 14, 10:00 a.m. - Noon at Hesthavn

Audubon Society of Corvallis (ASC) and Benton Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) are partnering to showcase riparian restoration projects in the Oak Creek Watershed west of Corvallis. In 2009, ASC completed a rainwater catchment system with a solar pump and drip irrigation to support planting of riparian vegetation at our Hesthavn Nature Center on Oak Creek. This project was done with a grant and technical assistance from SWCD. Oak Creek has been focused on by SWCD for riparian restoration and water quality improvement projects. You may have noticed some of these projects and wondered about them. Come join us and learn more about the projects at Hesthavn and elsewhere along Oak Creek.

Open House 10:00 a.m. to Noon: Hesthavn Nature Center will feature Oak Creek Riparian Project displays and SWCD staff will be on hand to answer questions. ASC volunteers will also be available to discuss our conservation and education efforts. The museum room will be open. Refreshments will be served.

Guided tours every half hour: Paula Vanderheul will lead Riparian Vegetation Restoration walk at 10:00AM & 11:00AM. She will highlight non-chemical methods for removing invasive plants and strategies to promote survival of new plantings. At 10:30AM and 11:30AM Jim Fairchild will demonstrate the Rainwater Catchment system which he designed and installed.

At the Creek between tours: Fish Trap demonstration and seining to find out who lives in Oak Creek. Creek-side residents may want to consider these methods to explore their own waterway.

Feel free to enjoy a picnic lunch at Hesthavn and stay for the Critters in the Creek Family Class

Critters in the Creek Family Class

May 14, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Special FREE class this month taught by Michelle Croft. Suitable for all ages: Young children with parents, curious youths, and young-at-heart adults will all learn something new about life in Oak Creek. We will be getting into the creek - so wear wading boots and be prepared to catch live critters with nets. For more info: hesthavneducation@gmail.com

Visitor's Center Now Open May and June!

During the months of May and June, the visitor's center will be open for viewing at the Hesthavn Nature Center at 8590 Oak Creek Drive, between 9:00a - 1:00p, Saturday mornings only, from May 7th through June 25th, with the exception of May 14th and Memorial Day weekend. There are lots of exciting exhibits to view, with seed and nectar feeders hanging outside a large picture window for the viewing of our local bird varieties. Wildflowers are abundant and in bloom and the guided self-tour is ready for your viewing of the local riparian habitats. Hope to see you there!

Susan M. Atkisson

Now on Facebook!

I have created a Facebook page for Hesthavn and its education programs. If you would like me to post something for you, just let me know. If you would like to be an admin (and you have a Facebook page) send me that as well and I will add you so you can post things. This is just a way to advertise our programming for free. Please spread the word and share this link with your friends: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Corvallis-Audubon-Society-Hesthavn-Nature-Center/175335605848479>

Michelle Croft

Tule Trotters Birdathon Team

The Tule Trotters is a Birdathon team for the Audubon Society of Corvallis that is persuading friends, family and other bird watchers to make a pledge for at least 150 species seen and heard,

OR

...a flat pledge donation,

OR

...meet a challenge offered from Paula Vanderheul, team captain for the Tule Trotters. The challenge states that for the first 10 individual pledges of \$100 each, Paula will pledge \$200. Your participation in any of the offered pledges will help the team reach its goal of \$1500. The Tule Trotters will be birding on the Klamath Basin Field Trip on the weekend of April 29- May 1, 2011. Pledges after May 1 will be happily accepted. 100% of all donations go directly to ASC Hesthavn Nature Center!

Last year's pledges from the Tule Trotters raised over \$1700 finding 161 species. All the Birdathon teams raised \$4500 towards sustaining improvements and operational expenses for the Nature Center. The Birdathon is the main source of income keeping the ongoing restoration projects along the riparian Oak Creek stream, upland prairie, oak savannah, camas meadows, and providing educational programs for children and adults on topics of natural environments.

Please consider joining us with your pledge to the Tule Trotters team.

*Paula Vanderheul
541-602-2870; pvanderheul@gmail.com*



Cassin's Vireo photo by Matt Lee

Field Notes

24 March 2011– 28 April 2011

Highlights of the month were **Sabine's Gull**, **Red & Red-necked Phalaropes**, **Pacific Golden Plover**, **Black-bellied Plovers**, **Northern Goshawk**, **Golden Eagle**, **Say's Phoebe**, and many 1st sightings of Spring!

Abbreviations and Locations: mob = many observers. Observer names are noted in parentheses after their reports. Philomath means the Philomath Sewage Treatment Ponds. EEW = E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area north of Corvallis.

A **Horned Grebe** was at Philomath 4/10 (D Robinson). 3 **American White Pelicans** were at Cabell 4/25 (D Robinson). There were 44 **Greater White-fronted Geese** at Ankeny on 3/27 and many reports rest of the period. 2 **Blue-winged Teal** were at McFadden 4/25 (A Booth, D Robinson). 1st **American Bittern** reports came from Ankeny 4/21 (M Stephens) and back at Finley 4/22 (J Simmons, H Herlyn).

The 1st **Sora** report came from Cabell 4/2 (D Robinson). 8 **Greater Yellowlegs** were near Finley 4/2 (P Otley) and after that there were many reports including 47 at Philomath 4/10 (D Robinson). There was a report of 2 **Black-necked Stilts** near Philomath 4/22. A **Short-billed Dowitcher** and a **Black-bellied Plover** were at Philomath 4/10 (D Robinson). 1st **Solitary Sandpiper** report came from Peoria 4/22 (R Campbell). The bad weather on 4/25 brought in a breeding plumage female **Red Phalarope** (remember it is the female phalarope that is the most colorful), (Finley), 63 **Black-bellied Plovers**, 237 **Red-necked Phalaropes**, a **Pacific Golden-Plover** (Llewellyn Rd), a **Solitary Sandpiper** (McFarland Rd), 8 **Semipalmated Plovers**, 2 **Short-billed Dowitchers**, 2 **Long-billed Dowitchers**, 284 **Least Sandpipers**, 40 **Western Sandpipers**, many **Dunlin**, and gulls - **Sabine's Gull** (Philomath), 2 **Bonaparte's Gulls**, and 3 **California Gulls** (D Robinson). About 40 **Wilson's Snipes** were in Linn County (H Bruner). 2 **Western Gulls** were at Toketie 4/1 (J Geier). A **Ruffed Grouse** was heard in McDonald Forest 3/28 (J Gibson). **Sooty Grouse** were heard at Fitton Green 4/7 and on Marys Peak 4/24 (R&P Comeleo). A **Mountain Quail** visited a yard in Albany 4/10 (Sandy P).



Sabine's Gull photos by Douglas Robinson

The **Bald Eagle** roost in Linn County was active but declining in numbers all period. A **Merlin** was in Albany on 3/30 (D Boucher). A **Northern Goshawk** was near the dump 4/6 (J Geier). A **Golden Eagle** was at Philomath 4/17 (P Otley). A **Barn Owl** was in the nest box at EEW 4/1. A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** was at Lewisburg Saddle 4/18 (J Geier, P Adamus).

1st **Vaux's Swifts** were near Monroe 4/17 (D Boucher, L Millbank) and Corvallis (H Herlyn) 4/19. A **Calliope Hummingbird** was seen 4/11 in Corvallis (Woody), another 4/17 (B Proebsting). The 1st **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** report came from Ankeny 4/2 (S Carpenter). The 1st **Cliff Swallow** report was on the river 4/11 (D Boucher, H Herlyn).

Several **Pileated Woodpeckers** were in McDonald Forest 3/28 (J Gibson). A **Say's Phoebe** was at Finley 3/24 (B Proebsting). **Black Phoebes** have become more common with a report from Starker Park 4/10 (G Watson), and at the Bruce Rd creek crossing (mob) and in Peoria (R Campbell). 1st **Western Kingbird** was at Finley Prairie area 4/25 (D Robinson). 1st **Hammond's Flycatcher** was from Coffin Butte 4/19 (J Geier). 1st **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** was in Corvallis 4/25 (M Cutler). The 1st **Cassin's Vireo** report was from Adair Village 4/16 (J Geier).

A **Northern Mockingbird** was in West Albany 4/28 (D Boucher).

The 1st **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was near EEW 4/11 (J Geier). 1st **Hermit Warbler** report comes from Corvallis 4/25 (F Ramsey). The 1st **Nashville Warbler** report was from North Corvallis 4/18 (M Garrard). 1st **MacGillivray's Warblers** were near the dump (J Geier) and in Corvallis (M Garrard) 4/21. 1st **Western Tanager** report came from near the river 4/15 (H Bruner). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** descended on our area last half of April with 587 at Willamette Park being an amazing number (D Robinson).

The 1st **Vesper Sparrow** reports came from Bald Hill (B Proebsting) and Marys River Natural Area 4/7 (L Millbank). The 1st **Chipping Sparrow** reports came from near EEW (J Geier) and Timberhill (B Altman) and South Corvallis (H Herlyn) 4/10. **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** have nested at the scrape on Bruce Rd in past years. One was there 4/10 (D Robinson) and at least 2 were there later in period. There were also 2 at Ankeny 4/21 (M Staphens). 1st **Brown-headed Cowbird** report came from Corvallis (S Hatlevig).

If you want to venture a little further there was a **Tufted Duck** at Fern Ridge 4/8 and after that, a **Costa's Hummingbird** was at a feeder in Eugene 4/12 and 13.

Next issue

Lisa Millbank will be compiling the field notes starting with the next issue. Post your reports to the Mid-valley Birding list (midvalleybirding.org), send them to lisaaves@peak.org, or leave a message at 541-753-7689, by May 26.

Rich Armstrong

GreenTip

OF THE MONTH

Lawn Care Chemicals: Consider Alternatives

Homeowners often use more pesticides and fertilizer per acre on their lawns than farmers use on their crops. When it rains hard or if we water our lawns to excess, the runoff is carried untreated to our urban streams and the Willamette River through the City of Corvallis storm drainage system. Pesticides and herbicides can accumulate in waterways and are toxic to aquatic life. Excess use of fertilizers put extra nutrients into local waterways, causing algal blooms and low-oxygen conditions in the water which can kill stream plants and animals.

Weed and feed pesticide-fertilizer combinations are some of the worst products to use as they contain high levels of nutrients than can impact water quality, and herbicides that are spread across the lawn whether there are weeds or not. You can have a healthy and attractive lawn without using chemicals. Natural alternatives can be effective and safer for children, pets, and water. Please do your part to promote thoughtful environmental stewardship. To learn about natural lawn care alternatives, check out the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality information at <http://www.healthylawns.org>

See additional articles on Earth-friendly gardening next month.

Tom Penpraze

Book Chat

Two notable guides available in May

Hummingbirds of the American West is our featured book this month. The colored illustrations and descriptions of our favorite hummers will delight beginning birders. Priced at only \$10.00. A wonderful graduation gift!

We have only two copies left of Princeton University Press' newly published *Hawks at a Distance: Identification of Migrant Raptors* by Jerry Liquori. This fine guide has hundreds of colored photographs and flight comparison pictures. \$18.00

Discounted books still available

We still have a few heavily discounted books available as we make room for new titles. Look for them in a special section of our May Book and Raffle Table.

Sally Shaw

Plastic Bag Ban Advances

In spite of Oregon's Senator Frank Morse (R-Albany) objection to the single use plastic bag bill, the Senate Environmental Resources Committee voted 3-2 to pass along the bill for legislative action. SB 536 has been endorsed by many conservation groups, including the Sierra Club and Audubon, as well as many retail outlets such as Fred Meyer. Plastic single use bags are clogging our recycling facilities as well as many streams and oceans and have created havoc for seabirds and turtles. Audubon has been promoting the use of reusable cloth bags for several years. The bill now advances to the floor of the Senate where it is expected to

be heavily lobbied by the Texas petrochemical interests. The Senate will be voting on this bill soon so now is the last opportunity to call or email your senator at: Senator Morse at: 503-986-1703 or sen.frankmorse@state.or.us

John Gaylord

ASC Conservation Chair

Open ASC Board Meetings

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

Contributors to the Chat

Dave Mellinger, Will Wright, Karan Fairchild, Eltzroth, Marcia F. Cutler, Bill Proebsting, Fred Ramsey, Raylene Gordin, Susan M. Atkisson, Michelle Croft, Paula Vanderheul, Rich Armstrong, Tom Penpraze, Sally Shaw, and John Gaylord

In Memory

GEORGE S. BURT

Born 1930, died March 6, 2011.

George Burt was President of Audubon Society of Corvallis from 1985 to 1986. He and his wife, Dorothy, were active members of ASC from 1982 through 1989 and were considered a valuable 'team.' They were Members at Large and co-chaired the Education Committee and the Sales Table. George was passionate about education; he worked with many members of his committee. He developed slide programs to take to schools each year, as well as a 'hands on' interactive game that children used to match birds with properties identifying their basic characteristics. ASC also presented programs for students who attended field trips to Horner Museum, when it was located in a special room in the basement of Gill Coliseum.

George and his wife pursued their interest in education by entering the Peace Corps where they served in Tunisia from 1990-1992 and in Paraguay from 1994-1996 where they taught agricultural practices to improve the living conditions in their districts. George and Dorothy recorded their activities by writing letters home about conditions and frustrations in third world countries. George's love of teaching was seen at all levels from instructing Korean soldiers during WWII in radio operations, working with the children he loved about the natural world and teaching psychology for 24 years, as a highly regarded professor at Oregon State University.

Elsie Eltzroth

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Audubon Society of Corvallis

the **CHAT**

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

Calendar

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|---------|--|
| May 11 | Hesthavn party for Paula, 7:00-8:30 pm |
| May 12 | May Board meeting 7 pm |
| May 14 | Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am
Spring Migratory Bird Count
Hesthavn Open House, 10:00-12:00 am
Critters in the Creek 12:30-1:30 pm |
| May 19 | May General meeting |
| May 26 | Field Notes submission deadline for summer Chat |
| May 26 | Article submission deadline for summer Chat |
| June 11 | Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am |



Marsh Wren photo by Matt Lee

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