



Audubon Society of Corvallis the **CHAT**

January 2014

VOL. 43

#5

General Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 7:00-8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church; 8th and Monroe

Guatemala with Fred Ramsey



Ocellated Turkey photo by Fred Ramsey

January's program speaker needs no introduction to ASC members. Fred Ramsey is one of the founders of our chapter and has served in most Board positions, currently as treasurer. He leads about a half-dozen ASC field trips per year and has taken members on field trips as far as Australia. His ASC programs, both on birds and on butterflies, traditionally rank among our most popular. In the following two paragraphs, Fred describes our January program in his own words:

Going south from Mexico into Central America, the first country one enters is Guatemala. Although many bird tours skip over to Costa Rica or Panama, that is a huge mistake. Guatemala is a strikingly beautiful country with highland lakes, spectacular volcanoes, delicious locally-grown coffee, a colorful culture, and—of course

—a host of brilliant birds. The January program features a 2010 WINGS tour of Guatemala, starting in the Sierra Madre—backbone of the country—and ending in the amazing ruins of the Mayan city of Tikal. Guatemala is the wintering grounds for many neotropical migrants that breed in the U.S. But the prized locals include such tantalizing creatures as Pink-headed Warbler, Azure-rumped Tanager, Blue-throated Motmot, Ocellated Turkey, Resplendent Quetzal (considered the world's most beautiful bird by many birders), and one of the world's most sought-after species: the Horned Guan. As on all WINGS tours, birding includes searches for interesting mammals and reptiles, and there are exquisite butterflies aplenty in Guatemala.

See you there! Chris Mathews

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 Chris Mathews at mathewsc2@comcast.net or 541-754-1172.

Directions

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

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Field Trip Schedule

2014 Weekend Field Trip Schedule

Explore Oregon from its Pacific Ocean shores to the lofty mountains on its eastern border. ASC schedules ten weekend birding trips all across this marvelous state. "Weekend" consists of either three days—Friday through Sunday or four days—Thursday through Sunday. Comfortable vans supply transportation. We stay in comfortable motels and lodges and eat at some excellent restaurants. All ASC members and prospective members can participate.

The trips are led by an experienced crew of good birders who take pride in their abilities to help beginners. Expenses are shared by all participants. So pick up your 2014 calendars, and mark these dates:

- **March 28-30** Bandon and the south Coast
- **April 18-20** Klamath Basin wildlife refuges
- **May 9-11** Rogue Valley, with a performance of the Marx Brothers classic *Cocoanuts* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival
- **June 5-8** Malheur National Wildlife Refuge
- **June 27-29** Summer, Agency & Crater Lakes
- **July 15-18** The Wallowas
- **August 14-17** Steens & Hart Mountains
- **September 5-7** Return to Bandon for shorebirds

Starting in January there will be sign-up sheets at the Field Trips desk. Alternatively, you can register by email atflramsey5@comcast.net. We request a \$50 deposit for each trip.

Fred Ramsey

Local 2nd Saturday Field Trips & Half Day Field Trips

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of from September through June at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 777 NW 9th St., Corvallis, at 7:30 am. This field trip is geared towards beginning birders, birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area and persons looking for a pleasant outing. Contact Bill Proebsting at proebstw@gmail.com or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ, www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding/, a couple of days before the field trip for updates. Weather may alter plans. Watch the weather forecast and dress appropriately. Return to Benton Center by noon.

Upcoming Field Trips

January 11: Finley NWR, Philomath STP.

Bill Proebsting

President's Corner

Ecological Forestry Principles v. County Funding from O&C lands: Creating Public Lands Conflict

Dr. Jerry Franklin et al(*) describe the 3 principles that define ecological forestry: retention of biological legacies, stand treatments that increase heterogeneity, and allowance for extended recovery periods after disturbance. Even when applied across of spectrum of management priorities, these principles theoretically will result in more biologically diverse and resilient forest landscapes.

Senator Wyden's O&C Act of 2013 focuses on one portion of one of the three principles in his 180+ page legislation—the protection of live older trees. It abandons the balance of even that first principle— retention of native tree regeneration, snags and woody debris, other non-merchantable trees, plants and shrubs, to be implemented correctly by federal land managers. Without also legislating protection of early seral conditions and thinnings that don't both maximize timber production, ecological forestry will be anathema to volume production needed by cash-strapped counties.

As current House and Senate legislation must be merged in Conference Committee, the survival of core principles of Ecological Forestry is at risk. The fundamental conflict is not environment vs. economics, but production of merchantable wood volume from federal lands having any relation to providing sustainable county revenue, local jobs or wood products industries.

Recent history shows that 1) timber dependent counties refuse to tax themselves realistically, 2) automation reduces domestic employment and wages more than timber supply, and 3) log exports and global markets continue to drive wood products industries overseas. Simply increasing the land base available for industrial wood volume production is unlikely to provide either certainty for county revenues or sustainability in timber supply. This O&C Act will certainly decrease the availability of public lands for recreation, clean air and water, carbon storage, and the rich assemblage of wildlife, fish, and plant species of Oregon.

*USDA General Technical Report NRS-19

Natural Disturbance and Stand Development Principles for Ecological Forestry

Jerry F. Franklin, Robert J. Mitchell, Brian J. Palik

Jim Fairchild

Conservation Corner

New Rule Threatens Eagles— Please Write Letters

In early December, the U.S. Department of the Interior issued a rule that would weaken protections for eagles by making it possible for wind energy companies to acquire 30-year permits to kill and injure eagles. Today, wind companies are required to obtain a five-year permit, and those permits can require them to take steps to conserve eagles.

But in moving to 30-year permits, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has not approved a single Advanced Conservation Practice that is scientifically defensible, so permits cannot be written now with scientifically sound practices for reducing eagle deaths. Furthermore, the agency also has made clear that it does not have the resources to monitor these permits adequately.

This rule was not necessary to promote responsible wind power development; the Department of the Interior simply gave up on finding a solution that would both protect eagles and promote wind power. Nationwide, wind turbines have been estimated to kill 573,000 birds per year, including 83,000 raptors, as well as an unknown number of bats. Developing wind power is necessary to combat global warming and achieve energy independence, but it needs to be done with consideration for wildlife too. To make your opinion known about this issue, please write to Secretary Sally Jewell, Department of the Interior, 1849 C Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240. You can also CC President Obama at The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20500.

Dave Mellinger

Audubon Reducing Bird Window Strikes

Local birds roosting near Jackson Street Youth Shelter in Corvallis are now safer from window strikes thanks to Conservation committee member John Gaylord and Ken Vandehey of Pane Relief Window Cleaning.



John Gaylord and Ken Vandehey install CollidEscape™ window film

Brendon Neal, employee at the Youth Shelter, noticed dead birds below their two large picture windows located on the second story. John Gaylord chatted with the shelter supervisor, Cathy Roberts, and made arrangements to help

the birds with grant assistance to Audubon from the OSU Thrift Store. John ordered CollidEscape™, a window film which makes windows visible to birds without obstructing the view from inside.

Ken brought his tall ladder to the shelter and worked on the outside of the building while John held materials from inside and together they installed the new window coverings. “CollidEscape™ is easy to mount and I have had zero bird strikes on my home windows that have the covering,” said John. Youth Shelter staff are pleased with the results and would love to have more windows covered in the future.

Stacy Gaylord

Field Notes

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

As temperatures dropped to near 0°F and up to 10 inches of snow blanketed parts of our area this period, many birds found themselves faced with bitter cold and little available food. The remainder of the period was unseasonably dry, with persistent temperature inversions producing valley fog and clear, sunny weather at higher elevations. 123 species were found on the Corvallis Christmas Bird Count (Corvallis CBC) held on 12/21. A complete summary of the Corvallis CBC will be published in the next edition of the *Chat*, but some sightings are discussed here. Not all CBC sightings could be attributed to specific observer(s).

Observer abbreviations: Chris Adlam (CA), Rich Adney (RA), Mike Brawner (MB), Lary Brown (LB), Don Boucher (DB), Pam Comeleo (PCo), Jenna Curtis (JC), Barbara Dolan (BD), Karan Fairchild (KFa), Jeff Fleischer (JFI), Niels Garlick (NG), Joel Geier (JG), Jessica Greer (JGr), Jeff Harding (JHa), Oscar Harper (OH), Susan Hatlevig (SH), Jordan Hazen (JHz), William Hemstrom (WH), Hendrik Herlyn (HH), Adrian Hinkle (AH), Christopher Hinkle (CH), Evan Jackson (EJ), Tim Johnson (TJ), Erik Knight (EK), Judy List (JL), Peter List (PL), Dennis Manzer (DM), Greg Metcalfe (GM), Lisa Millbank (LM), Molly Monroe (MM), Linda Morrison (LMo), Randy Campbell (RCa), Randy Moore (RM), George Neavoll (GN), Lars Per Norgren (LPN), Bill Proebsting (BP), Mary Ritter (MR), Doug Robinson (DR), Steve Seibel (SS), Jamie Simmons (JSi), Jim Smith (JSm), Max Smith (MS), Evan Smouse (ES), Brandon Wagner (BWg), Bobby Wilcox (BWe), Will Wright (WW)

Location abbreviations: Ankeny = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge, EEW = E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Finley = William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, Monmouth STP = Monmouth sewage treatment ponds, Philomath STP = Philomath sewage treatment ponds, Stewart Lake = lake on Hewlett-Packard campus in Corvallis, TWG/SP = Talking Water Gardens & Simpson Park in Albany

Small numbers of **Greater White-fronted Geese** could still be found at Ankeny and Finley this period. There were 15 **Snow Geese** at Ankeny 12/2 (HH, OH, CH, AH), but no Ross's Geese were reported. 17,000 **Cackling Geese** and 2,450 **Canada Geese** were some of the high counts for these species on the Corvallis CBC 12/21. 6 **Trumpeter Swans** were at Ankeny 12/4 (DR). A **Tundra Swan** at Ankeny 12/6 (JHa) was wearing a numbered neck band; the USFWS reported that he had been banded in Alaska in the summer of 2010, and was already at least 2 years old at the time. A young male **Wood Duck** was running around picking up Wonder Bread with a motley assortment of wild and domestic **Mallards** and **American Wigeons** at Starker Arts Park in Corvallis this period (LM). 20 **Gadwall** were at the Monmouth STP 12/23 (BD, TJ). Although **Eurasian Wigeons** were found in small numbers throughout our area, an interesting hybrid male Eurasian x American Wigeon was photographed at Stewart Lake 11/29 (JSi). **Northern Shovelers**, **Northern Pintail** and **Green-winged Teal** were all reported in high numbers during the Corvallis CBC count week, with 9,500 teal on Cabell Marsh 12/21 (DR). 1 of the Eurasian subspecies, known as Common Teal, was at Ankeny 12/2 (HH, OH, CH, AH), and another (or perhaps the same individual) was at Philomath STP 12/23 (DR). A few **Cinnamon Teal** usually overwinter in our area, and they were seen at TWG/SP 12/14 (BP) and also noted on the Corvallis CBC 12/21. Large ponds S of Corvallis had 38 **Canvasbacks** and 2 **Redheads** 12/21, and Redheads were also seen at TWG/SP 12/14 (BP). 234 **Ring-necked Ducks** were recorded at Finley during the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (JGr, WH). 4 **Greater Scaup** at Monmouth STP 12/26 is an unusually high number of these uncommon ducks, while 66 **Lesser Scaup** and 51 **Buffleheads** were found at Philomath STP 12/20 (HH). 2 **Common Goldeneyes** turned up at Monmouth STP 12/23 (BWg, TJ, BD); they're rare but annual visitors to the valley each winter. 5 **Hooded Mergansers** at Stewart Lake 11/29 were the first ones seen there since 2/3. **Ruddy Ducks** are usually common at Philomath STP, but were also present at TWG/SP 12/14 (BP).

Mountain Quail were frequent visitors in the foothills SW of Philomath (KFa), and 1 was also seen more unexpectedly at Fitton Green Natural Area 12/6 (AH, CH). **Ring-necked Pheasants** are not at all common anymore, but 1 was reported from Ankeny 12/25 (BWc) and another was in NW Corvallis 12/17 (ES). A **Ruffed Grouse** was seen at Finley 12/4 (ES).

A **Western Grebe** visited Philomath STP 12/7 (WW), and 2 **Eared Grebes** were there 12/1 (DR); neither is common in the valley in winter. An amazing 22 **Pied-billed Grebes** were found at a large pond S of Corvallis 12/5 (DR).

36 **Double-crested Cormorants** were found in a large pond S of Corvallis 12/5 (DR).

A **Green Heron** was at Waverly Park in Albany 12/7 (NG); this bird might also visit TWG/SP on occasion. Not many **Great Egrets** were seen this period, but 2 showed up at

Stewart Lake 11/29 (JSi).

A **Turkey Vulture** was at Finley 12/10 (WW), another was N of Corvallis near Peavy Arboretum 12/10 (CA). **White-tailed Kites** were seen by many observers at Finley, but on 12/4 one interacted with a dark-morph Rough-legged Hawk, a Cooper's Hawk and a Northern Harrier (SS). 4 different **Golden Eagles**—3 non-adults and 1 adult—seem to have been present at Finley 12/7 and 12/9 (SS, WW); this is an extremely unusual concentration. A **Northern Harrier** ate part of an unfortunate Cackling Goose whose legs had become frozen into the ice of McFadden Marsh 12/8 (WW). The Tangent **Bald Eagle** roost contained 80 birds the evening of 12/14 (JFI). The Linn Co raptor survey route 3B produced 13 **Rough-legged Hawks** 12/10 (JFI), and 87 **Red-tailed Hawks** were found along route 3A 12/14 (JFI). A **Red-shouldered Hawk**, 2 **Cooper's Hawks** and 1 **Sharp-shinned Hawk** were just a few of the birds found on the S Benton Co raptor survey route 12/12 (WW).

3 **Virginia Rails** were found at Finley 12/21 (DR). 2 **Soras** were at TWG/SP 12/14 (BP); they are less common overwintering birds than Virginia Rails, but probably take advantage of the warmer water at this site. 720 **American Coots** were in a large pond S of Corvallis 12/21 (DR).

1 **Least Sandpiper** was a surprising find S of Corvallis 12/21 (DR). **Dunlin** were reported at Peoria during the first week of December (RCa) and also during the Corvallis CBC 12/21. **Wilson's Snipes** and **Killdeer** were having a tough time finding unfrozen mud to probe during the cold weather. The only report of a **Spotted Sandpiper** was one along the river at Peoria in the first week of December (RCa).

Gulls noted on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 included **California**, **Herring** and **Glaucous-winged Gulls**. Also recorded was a **Thayer's Gull**, a less-common gull in the valley. **Ring-billed Gulls** were uncommon this period, but were found S of Corvallis 12/5 (DR), at Waverly Park in Albany 12/7 (NG), and at Ankeny 12/25 (BWc). The Monmouth STP had 24 **Mew Gulls** 12/23 (BWg, TJ, BD).

A **Western Screech-Owl** was regularly roosting in a Wood Duck box at Peoria this period (GM). Female **Great Horned Owls** could be heard giving their begging call (a part of courtship), and a pair were seen mating at Teloh-Calapooia Park in Albany 12/24 (JSm). An impressive concentration of 9 **Short-eared Owls** were flying around the grass fields of SW Linn Co 12/9, some of them interacting with a Rough-legged Hawk (LPN). A **Burrowing Owl** was found SE of Halsey 12/1 (RA), and it remained there for a good portion of the period while many birders paid it a visit. Perhaps the most impressive of all owls, and rare in our area, a **Great Gray Owl** was seen at Fitton Green Natural Area 12/5 (PCo), silhouetted in front of Marys Peak, Venus and a crescent moon. **Barn**, **Northern Saw-whet**, **Northern Pygmy-** and **Barred Owls** were also found on the Corvallis CBC 12/21, making December an excellent month for local owls.

Anna's Hummingbirds were able to endure the extreme

cold with the help of bird lovers who provided thawed nectar.

Some **Belted Kingfishers** were forced to move to the few remaining areas of open water—such as rivers—when small streams and ponds were frozen over.

2 male **Downy Woodpeckers** displayed aggressively toward one another with wings and tails fanned and bills pointing upward, followed by extended chasing in SW Corvallis 12/21 (LM) while a **Hairy Woodpecker** called nearby. 3 **Northern Flickers** with yellow wing linings were seen at EEW 12/26 (JG); they could be the “Yellow-shafted” subspecies or an intergrade with the typical “Red-shafted.” 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers** were at Fitton Green Natural Area 12/13 (AH). 2 **Lewis’s Woodpeckers** were reported at a reliable spot at Ankeny 11/28 (GN), and were seen fairly regularly for most of the period; this species was also reported on the Corvallis CBC 12/21.

A **Prairie Falcon** was at the Corvallis Airport 12/4 (RM) and 1 was seen N of Brownsville 12/15 (PL, JL); although very uncommon, they’re found annually in our area. 2 **Peregrine Falcons** turned up on the Linn Co raptor survey route 3 on 12/10 (JFI). An impressive total of 51 **American Kestrels** were found along the Linn Co raptor survey route 3A on 12/14 (JFI). A hatch-year female **Merlin** plucked and ate an American Robin on the roof of a home in S Corvallis 11/29 (MM); her leg band number indicated that she had been banded in Mountlake Terrace, WA in the summer of 2013.

Quite a few **Black Phoebes** successfully weathered the severe cold, and 1 male was singing in S Corvallis 12/20 (LM).

An immature **Northern Shrike** was found at EEW 12/2 (JG); 1 was SW of Tangent 12/14 (MS), and another was S of Halsey 12/17 (JC, EJ). A **Hutton’s Vireo** at Oak Lawn Memorial Park in S Corvallis gave its whining chatter call and then offered a brief bit of song 12/21 (LM).

9 **Gray Jays** were in the low-elevation foothills SW of Philomath 12/22 (KF). A couple of **Western Scrub-Jays** created a minor commotion in an Acorn Woodpecker colony at EEW 12/2 (JG); perhaps they were trying to steal acorns. 23 **Common Ravens** were counted in Linn Co SE of Corvallis on the CBC 12/21 (HH, OH). Hundreds of **American Crows** could be seen each morning as they flew out of a large roost somewhere WNW of Corvallis.

40 “Streaked” **Horned Larks** (the endemic subspecies) were at the Corvallis Airport 12/4 (RM).

2 **Mountain Chickadees** showed up at a feeder in Lebanon 12/25 (LMo). 431 **Black-capped Chickadees** were counted in SW Corvallis and E Philomath on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DB, LM). **Bushtits** crowded onto suet feeders during the cold weather. While 21 **White-breasted Nuthatches** were counted in SW Corvallis and E Philomath on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DB, LM), there were only 6 **Red-breasted Nuthatches**--fewer than expected.

McFadden Marsh at Finley had 7 wintering **Marsh Wrens** 12/21 (DR). **Bewick’s Wrens** and **Pacific Wrens** resorted to

foraging for dormant insects, spiders, eggs and pupae in the crevices of bark during the snowy weather.

308 **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were counted in SW Corvallis and E Philomath on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DB, LM); the high-pitched calls of these abundant winter visitors to the lowlands often go unnoticed. A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** flashed his red crown while visiting a Corvallis yard 12/25 (SH).

A **Townsend’s Solitaire** was found in S Corvallis 12/10 (AH, CH), but was not seen again. **Western Bluebirds** were seen eating Oak Mistletoe berries at Ankeny 12/4 (DM); the mistletoe is partially dependent on bluebirds to spread its seeds to new oak branches. Numbers of wintering **Hermit Thrushes** appear to be a bit lower than the last few years, but 3 were at EEW 12/19 (JHz). 1397 **American Robins** were counted in SW Corvallis and E Philomath on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DB, LM). 30 **Variied Thrushes** were found at Bald Hill 12/8 (CH); they are also fairly common in yards around feeders and fruiting trees and shrubs.

A **Gray Catbird** was feeding on crabapples in the snow in Lebanon 12/6 (LMo); this was a very unusual visitor to our area, with the last local report from Corvallis in 1997. A flock of **American Pipits** took flight in a panic when a Merlin cruised low over a field along 53rd St 12/21 (LM); all of the pipits escaped, even the one singled out and pursued with incredible agility by the falcon managed to get away. Numbers of **Cedar Waxwings** have dropped dramatically, with only a few isolated flocks persisting.

The avian celebrity of the month must have been a **Yellow-throated Warbler** at Ankeny, found on 11/30 (MR). This fancy little bird took advantage of suet feeders and survived the cold, and continued to hang around through the end of the period, to the delight of crowds of admiring birders. A few **Orange-crowned Warblers** were sticking around for the winter locally; these included 1 at Ankeny 12/2 (CH, AH), 1 at Avery Park 12/4 (CH, AH) and one that was present for most of the period at Peoria (GM). **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and **Townsend’s Warblers** were frequent visitors to suet feeders this period, especially with the extremely cold weather. There was one **Common Yellowthroat** noted on the Corvallis CBC 12/21.

54 **Spotted Towhees**, 16 **Fox Sparrows** and 67 **Song Sparrows** were counted in SW Corvallis and E Philomath on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DB, LM). 4 **Savannah Sparrows** were feeding along the fenceline on Campus Way at OSU 12/6 (MB). A **Swamp Sparrow** was found at EEW 12/2 (JG), another was seen on Campus Way on the same day (CH), and one was found at McFadden Marsh at Finley on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DR). 6 **White-throated Sparrows** were hanging out with other sparrows at EEW 12/26 (JG). A **Harris’s Sparrow** showed up at a feeder in NW Corvallis 12/15, these are rare winter visitors, but they show up almost annually in the Willamette Valley. About 2 dozen **Lincoln’s Sparrows** were forced to pick seeds from dead weeds when

the snow cover interfered with their usual habits 12/8 (DB, LM). **156 Golden-crowned Sparrows** and **792 Dark-eyed Juncos** were counted in SW Corvallis and E Philomath on the Corvallis CBC 12/21 (DB, LM), which serves to emphasize how important the valley is for many wintering birds. A “Slate-colored” Dark-eyed Junco was found at EEW 12/2 (JG). Single **Lapland Longspurs** were noted at the Corvallis Airport on 12/8 (RM) and 12/21 (DR); this grassland bird is a casual visitor to the Willamette Valley and can often be found with Horned Larks.

43 Brewer’s Blackbirds were at OSU 12/12 (AH). **20 Western Meadowlarks** were along Campus Way 12/8 (CH), a reliable winter site for these birds. **Brown-headed Cowbirds** are uncommon in winter, but small numbers were found south of Corvallis at several locations this period (DR), and 1 was at OSU 12/12 (AH).

While **House Finches** and **Lesser Goldfinches** were fairly easy to find this period, other, more nomadic finches were very scarce. Just a few flocks of **American Goldfinches** were reported this period, although 22 were found in SW Corvallis during the CBC 12/21 (LM). **Purple Finch** numbers are quite variable from winter to winter, and very few were found on the Corvallis CBC 12/21. Single **Pine Siskins** were noted at OSU 12/4 and 12/11 (AH), and small flocks were at Peoria throughout the period (GM), but none turned up for the Corvallis CBC. **Evening Grosbeaks** were detected on the Corvallis CBC 12/21, but there are very few in the area overall.

Please post your reports to midvalleybirding.org, send them to lisaaves@peak.org, or leave a message at 541-753-7689 by 1/23/14

- Lisa Millbank

Atop the Nestbox

Bluebird Hazards

In 2011, the birding literature and biology blogs lit up with warnings about cavity-nesting birds getting trapped in pipes and other cylindrical structures. A particularly impressive discovery took place in Nevada, where PVC claim pipes used in mining were found to contain the corpses of alarming numbers of birds. A single 20-foot tall irrigation pipe at the California Audubon’s Kern River Preserve that had been in place for 50 years was found to contain hundreds of decomposed birds packed in a 7-foot long mass. In fact, it has been estimated that in the western states alone, more than a million birds die in these types of pipes each year.

The most susceptible species seem to be bluebirds, flickers and kestrels, although any bird can become a victim. We have long been warning folks of stove-pipe vents and tree protectors becoming death traps for bluebirds, but actually the type of pipe matters little. Any type of pipe can draw in birds: roof vents on buildings, fence posts, sign posts, outhouse vents, chimneys, and even exhaust pipes

on old tractors or other equipment. Dead birds have been found in pipes from 1 to 10 inches in diameter, and in pipes of PVC or metal. Rusty and corroded pipes trap birds just as easily as new, shiny, smoother pipes.

There are several simple solutions to the hazards posed by open vertical pipes. Please take a moment to check your property and to make suggestions to owners and managers of other properties. Any pipes that are not serving a useful purpose should be removed. For pipes that cannot be removed, caps or screens can be placed on the exposed ends. At fishing sites where angled PVC pipe is provided for fishermen to stuff coils of old fishing line into, a rubber cap with a slit allows the pipes to remain in service without trapping curious birds.

Now, of course we need to keep some chimneys open for the Vaux’s Swift, but it seems those chimneys could be screened off outside the swift’s nesting period. Window strikes, cats, windmills, open pipes, etc. ...Let’s make this New Year the safest ever for our avian friends.

Raylene Gordin

Corvallis CBC Results

The Corvallis CBC was held on Saturday, December 21, 2013 under pleasant conditions – dry, with temperatures in the 40’s. and only small patches of fog. However, there was a lingering impact from the 8-inch snowfall followed by a week of frigid weather earlier in the month. The total number of species seen was 123, which is about average, but lower than many recent counts. Teams reported frozen water at many of the shallower ponds and sloughs and counters reported working harder than usual to come up with sparrows and finches. Several teams reported remarkably few Killdeer in their area. No rarities were found. Good birds for this count include:

Mountain Quail
Lewis’s Woodpecker
Trumpeter Swan
Cinnamon Teal
Redhead
Virginia Rail
Least Sandpiper
Thayer’s Gull
Orange-crowned Warbler
Common Yellowthroat
Swamp Sparrow
Lapland Longspur (on property not open to the public)
Evening Grosbeak

Like many other counts that have been held this year, no Pine Siskins were seen (reported from 40 of 51 counts). Other notable misses include:

Northern Shrike (seen in 45 counts)

Ring-billed Gulls (39 counts)
Golden Eagle
Prairie Falcon
Spotted Sandpiper
Long-billed Dowitcher
Mew Gull

Marcia F. Cutler

Malheur Field Station

Planning on Malheur

Visiting Oregon's premier National Wildlife Refuge is made easy by staying at the Malheur Field Station (MFS). The station now has comfortable accommodations for singles through field trip sized groups. And it is located ON the refuge—one of the first and best refuges in the US system. Meals are available at the MFS mess hall during active periods—generally April through June. MFS's directors, Duncan Evered and Lyla Messick, offer a variety of courses on the ecology and history of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and the surrounding high desert region. To make reservations, Google their website or phone them directly at 541-493-2629. (Although MFS has an email address, they prefer phone reservations.) ASC is an Institutional Member of MFS, which entitles ASC members to a 10% discount on lodgings, meals, and purchases at its gift shop. So be certain to let them know you are an ASC member when you make your reservations. And if you are not currently an ASC member, this is an excellent reason to become one.

Fred Ramsey

Board Meeting Summary

ASC Meeting

The December meeting of the Corvallis Audubon board was canceled due to inclement weather.

Linda Campbell

Open ASC Board Meetings

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

Membership Corner

Welcome New Members!

Jeanette Schafer

ASC Annual Appeal

Many thanks to our members and friends for their generous support during ASC'S Annual Appeal. With your help we look forward to having a successful year in 2014. We hope you'll join us at one of our lectures, field trips, or Hesthavn

work parties, or that you'll participate in our Bluebird, conservation or environmental education projects!

Membership Renewal

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

Email Notifications

To receive email notifications about ASC events, field trip locations & volunteer work parties, email our listserve administrator, Karan Fairchild, and request to be added to the listserve: alderspr@peak.org

Have You Changed Your Contact Information?

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

Suzanne Ortiz

Upcoming Events

Twenty-fifth Annual Insights Into Gardening,

Saturday, February 8, 2014,

LaSells Stewart Center, OSU Campus, Corvallis

Benton County Master Gardeners Association presents Insights Into Gardening, a day-long series of seminars for home gardeners and gardeners-to-be. There will also be gardening-related exhibits and books. Raffle tickets are available for sale to support the Marie Madison Horticultural Scholarship. Pre-registration cost is \$30; \$35 at the door-cash or check only.

A catered box lunch is available, if you pre-order, for \$8.00. All proceeds support the Benton County Master Gardeners Association. Parking is free. Visit us at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/benton> for more information.

Kate Mathews

Contributors to the Chat

Chris Mathews, Fred Ramsey, Bill Proebsting, Jim Fairchild, Dave Mellinger, Stacy Gaylord, Lisa Millbank, Raylene Gordin, Marcia Cutler, Linda Campbell, Suzanne Ortiz, and Kate Mathews.

Chat Articles

The *Chat* editors welcome monthly articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the *Chat* editor by the 4th Thursday of the month. Always submit text using Microsoft Word.

Audubon Society of Corvallis

Audubon Society of Corvallis
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Interested in volunteering?

Please let us know: volunteerasc@gmail.com



Burrowing Owl photo by Matt Lee

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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

- Jan. 9 ASC Board Mtg., 7:00 pm at M. Cutler's house
- Jan. 11 Field Trip to Finley/PPP
- Jan. 16 General Mtg—7 pm at church
- Jan. 23 Chat and Field Notes submissions due

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