



THE AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CORVALLIS CHAT

JANUARY 2015

VOL. 44 #5

INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED CHINESE CRESTED TERN

Join us January 15 for a talk by Dan Roby, Professor of Wildlife Ecology at OSU. Dan will discuss the Chinese Crested Tern and how Chinese biologists, working with international bird conservationists and seabird ecologists, are trying to rescue this species from extinction.

The Chinese Crested Tern was presumed extinct from 1937 until 2000, when a few individuals were discovered nesting in a large Greater Crested Tern colony in the Matsu Islands, Taiwan.

Dan Roby is Unit Leader for Wildlife at the U.S. Geological Survey and Professor in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State University. His primary area of research interest is the physiological ecology and conservation biology of birds, with an emphasis on seabirds.

As usual the program will begin at about 7:30, following a social time at 6:30 and the chapter business meeting at 7:00. Questions can be directed to me at mathewsc2@comcast.net. We hope to see you on January 15.

*Chris Mathews,
Vice President & Program Chair*

DIRECTIONS

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

FIELD TRIPS SCHEDULE

2015 WEEKEND FIELD TRIPS

We have six weekend field trips scheduled, starting when birds begin arriving from the south, through their breeding season, and until they leave us for warmer climes to the south again.

March 27-29: The South Coast: Bandon to Port Orford. Head to the coast and south for two nights in Bandon by the sea. The timing of this trip hits blossoming manzanita, where we search for Allen's Hummingbirds at the northern edge of the summer range. Other targets are White-tailed Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Black Phoebe.

April 24-26: Rogue Valley.

May 14-17: Malheur NWR.

June 26-28: Summer Lake to Crater Lake.

August 13-16: Steens Mountain.

September 11-13: The North Coast: Tillamook to Astoria.

Transportation on these trips is in 12-person and/or 15-person vans rented from Enterprise. Expenses are shared. Participants will be provided with tour information a month prior to departure. Bird, mammal, herp, butterfly, and odonate checklists are provided.

There will be signup sheets for weekend field trips at the Field Trip table at ASC general meetings starting this month. Or email Fred Ramsey at flramsey5@comcast.net. Deposits of \$50 per person per tour are requested. Make

GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, Jan 15
7:00-8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church
9th and Monroe

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checks out to ASC and mail them to ASC at PO Box 148 in Corvallis, 97339.

Notice the two gaps in this schedule: mid-May to late June and all of July. We may be able to schedule trips to visit other Oregon locations of your choice then.

Fred Ramsey

LOCAL MONTHLY SECOND SATURDAY HALF DAY FIELD TRIP

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 free and geared towards beginning birders, birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area and persons looking for a pleasant outing. Questions? Contact Bill Proebsting at proebstw@gmail.com or 541-752-0108. Check the Midvalley listserv at 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 10: Talking Water Gardens, Albany.
February 14: location TBD

Bill Proebsting

FIELD NOTES

11/23/14-12/22/14

After enjoying Lisa Millbank's field notes columns in recent years, I'll try to carry this forward as Lisa turns her knowledge and talent to other beneficial projects. Thanks Lisa, for your excellent work!

Following the mid-Nov ice storm, temperatures mostly stayed above freezing this month, as a series of moisture-laden storm fronts moved in off the Pacific. The combination of heavy rain and temperatures approaching 60°F by the end of the period cleared off most of the snow that had accumulated in the Coast Range and Cascades. Seasonal ponds filled with rain water, and moderate flooding along the Willamette and its tributaries produced even more habitat for wintering waterfowl.

Location abbreviations: EEW = E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area, Finley = William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, LSNA = Luckiamute State Natural Area, STP = sewage treatment ponds, Stewart Lake = lake on HP campus in Corvallis, TWG = Talking Water Gardens in Albany

Observer abbreviations: CCBC: Corvallis Christmas Bird Count fide Marcia F. Cutler, AH: Anne Heyerly, AIC: Alan Contreras, BBu: Bob Burke, BGe: Becky Geier, BTi: Bill Tice, BW: Brandon Wagner, ChB: Charlie Bruce, ChH: Charlotte Hottmann, CHI: Carol Hiler, CiB: Cindy Bruce, CW: Cheryl Whelchel, DBo: Don Boucher, DH: Dan Heyerly, DM: Dave Mellinger, DR: Doug Robinson, EKn: Erik Knight, FR: Fred Ramsey, HB: Howard Bruner, HH: Hendrik Herlyn, JDS: Jim Smith, JF: Jeff Fleischer, JH: Jeff Harding, JHi: Jim Hiler, JHz: Jon Hazen, JiF: Jim Fairchild, JJ: Jarod Jebousek, JMe: Jenny Meisel, JSi: Jamie Simmons, KH: Kaynor Heineck, KnF: Karan Fairchild, LGi: Linda Gilbert, LM: Lisa Millbank, LPN: Lars Norgren, MB: Mark Baldwin, MBS: Matt Blakeley-Smith, MC: Marcia F. Cutler, MG: Mary Garrard, MLI: Mike Lippsmeyer, MM: Molly Monroe, MRz: Mitch Ratzlaff, NBj: Neil Bjorklund, OH: Oscar Harper, PCo: Pam Comeleo, PO: Pam Otley, RCo: Randy Comeleo, RCr: Robin Corcoran, RE: Ron Enck, RM: Randy Moore, RN: Russ Namitz, RT: Ray Temple, SH: Sally Hill, SHz: Stephanie Hazen, SM: Sylvia Maulding, SSe: Steve Seibel, VB: Vickie Buck, WGe: Wil Geier, WW: Will Wright, p.obs.: personal observation.

Greater White-fronted Geese were scarce this month, but single birds were at the Philomath STP 6 Dec (VB, SM, SH) and at Finley 16 Dec (CCBC), where a single **Snow Goose** was also found (WW, CCBC). A **Ross's Goose** was with a flock of **Canada Geese** and

Cackling Geese se of Crabtree 22 Nov (JH). By 22 Dec the resident "Western" **Canada Geese** at EEW were flying around in very vocal pairs as a prelude to nesting (p. obs.).

A flock of 8 **Trumpeter Swans** that showed up near Maple Grove in Polk Co. last month were scarce disappear after 7 Dec, perhaps moving to a more secluded field in the Luckiamute bottomlands. One Trumpeter was spotted at Finley 6 Dec (VB, SM, SH). On 7 Dec 500 **Tundra Swans** were feeding in annual grass field along American Dr about a quarter mile e. of Peoria Rd, a traditional location (JF). Large flocks normally roost on McFadden Marsh at Finley in winter; 300 were there 7 Dec (EKn).

Wood Ducks seem to be more scarce than usual with just a few reports from the Corvallis-Albany area. **Gadwall** included "lots" at Cheadle Lake in Lebanon 22 Nov (RN) and 10 at Finley 7 Dec (EKn). A **Eurasian Wigeon** was with the **American Wigeon** flock at TWG 22 Nov (RN); one at Cabell Marsh 13 Dec (NBj) was also found for the CCBC. An apparent **Chiloe Wigeon** at the Brownsville STP 23 Nov (DR), presumably escaped from captivity as this South American species has no record of wandering to North America. Notable concentrations of common dabbling ducks included 350 **Northern Shovelers** at Philomath STP 28 Nov (DH, AH) and 500 **Mallards**, 600 **Northern Pintails** and 450 **Green-winged Teal** at Finley 7 Dec (EKn). **Cinnamon Teal** are rare in winter; one was at Philomath STP 28 Nov (DH, AH) and again 17 Dec (HH, OH); one was at Griggs Pond near Crabtree 14 Dec (JH).

20+ **Canvasbacks** were at the Eicher Rd. gravel ponds e. of Albany 22 Nov (RN); a total of 77 were seen in various places including Stewart Lake and Philomath STP on 16 Dec (CCBC). One **Redhead** was along Bruce Rd at Finley 22 Nov (JH). 8 were at Philomath STP along with 150 **Buffleheads** and 40 **Ruddy Ducks** 28 Nov (DH, AH). 400 **Ring-necked Ducks** were at Finley 7 Dec (EKn). On 17 Dec a **Greater Scaup** turned up at Philomath STP, where the flock of **Lesser Scaup** numbered as high as 75 on 3 Dec (HH, OH). A **Common Goldeneye** was at Stewart Lake 5 Dec (HH, JSi). 35 **Barrow's Goldeneye** were in their usual winter location at Foster Dam 22 Nov (RN); an actively diving female goldeneye apparently of this species, based on head shape and bill size, was at Philomath STP 16



Dec (DR). Ten **Hooded Mergansers** were at Finley 7 Dec (EKn).

No **Ring-necked Pheasants** or **Sooty Grouse** were recorded on the CCBC, but one **Ruffed Grouse** was found at Finley. Eight **Mountain Quail** were along the Coffin Butte trail at EEW 11 Dec (p. obs.)

On 22 Nov a **Common Loon** was still on Foster Res., while the Eicher Rd gravel ponds held a **Horned Grebe**, six **Western Grebes** and a **Clark's Grebe** (RN). Three **Eared Grebes** were at the Philomath STP and a **Western Grebe** was at Finley 16 Dec (CCBC).

Double-crested Cormorants often winter along the Willamette River; six were seen during the ASC field trip to Snag Boat Bend 13 Dec (MB). A flock of 10 birds with long, downward-curved bills seen from I-5 about 10 miles s. of Albany on 1 Dec may have been **ibises** (fide AH).

A **Turkey Vulture** that soared north near EEW during a sun break 11 Dec (p. obs.) may have changed its mind and found company, as three flew south over Arboretum Rd just before the windstorm on 12 Dec (ChB, CiB). **White-tailed Kites** continue to be scarce but one was in s. Polk Co. 6 Dec (SHz, RT). Counts of **Bald Eagles** at the regular winter roost near Tangent reached 59 by 29 Nov (SSe) and 93 either roosting or in the vicinity 22 Dec (MG).

18 **Bald Eagles** lunched on rodents (most likely **Gray-tailed Voles**) in a ponded field near Tangent 21 Dec, skimming over the water to snatch the rodents with their talons (CHi, JHi). Two soaring over the OSU campus on 13 Dec flew over to investigate a remote-control model airplane (DM). In another sign that vole populations are peaking, raptors were found in abundance during surveys during the first two weeks of December, with a total of more than 240 **Northern Harriers**, 410 **Red-tailed Hawks**, and 42 **Rough-legged Hawks** counted in e. Benton and w. Linn Co. (WW, JF, CHi, JHi, JH). A single field off Airport Rd. s. of Corvallis held 28 of these large raptors on 14 Dec (SSe). One **Rough-legged Hawk** was along Campus Way in Corvallis 11 Dec (DBo). A gorgeous individual caused MG to pause in a raptor survey on 22 Dec. **Red-shouldered Hawks** were reported regularly from Finley. One was called during a prairie restoration event at LSNA 28 Nov (DBo et al.). Two more were found along White Oak Rd and Ridge Dr. in Linn Co. 7 Dec (JF).

A **Cooper's Hawk** narrowly missed nabbing a **Western Scrub-Jay** in north Corvallis yard 30 Nov (LM, DBo). One "blew through" songbirds at CHI's feeders in North Albany 22 Dec. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** flying over Coffin Butte 7 Dec must have had more success, as his crop was bulging. A much larger but equally well-fed imm. **Northern Goshawk** flew south over Coffin Butte on 6 Dec (p. obs.); an imm. goshawk was later seen soaring west over Corvallis during count week for the CCBC (FR). At least one imm. **Golden Eagle** was in our area this month, with sightings over EEW 1 Dec (p. obs.) and at Finley 6-7 Dec (WW; EKn) and 15-18 Dec (SSe; CCBC).

Five **Virginia Rails** were at Finley and three more at JFW on 16 Dec (CCBC). 250 **American Coots** crowded the waters of Philomath STP 28 Nov (DH, AH). Shorebirds found for the CCBC on 16 Dec included single **Black-bellied Plovers** at Finley and in the Linn Co. portion of the count, 6 **Least Sandpipers**, 13 **Western Sandpipers** and three **Long-billed Dowitchers** around a seasonal pond off Greenberry Rd, and one **Greater Yellowlegs** at Finley. A **Greater Yellowlegs** was found earlier in a Greenbelt Land Trust easement along Riverside Dr 26 Nov (MBS). **Wilson's Snipe** were present in small numbers at EEW throughout period (p. obs.). Noteworthy gulls on 16 Dec included one **Western Gull**, 25 **Tayer's Gulls**, and 125 **Herring Gulls**, all in the Linn Co. portion of the CCBC (LPN). **Glaucous-winged Gulls** were seen regularly in supermarket parking lots around Corvallis and Albany, as well as at the Coffin Butte landfill.

An imm. **Band-tailed Pigeon** continued near EEW through 24 Nov (BGe). Two **Barn Owls** were circling and calling over Cascades School in Lebanon 22 Dec (Linda M.), after one was heard over the Lebanon High School (KH). Another wandered into a hangar at Corvallis Airport and stayed for several days; staff persuaded it to leave before closing up for the long Christmas weekend, by use of Great Horned Owl calls (RE). A **Snowy Owl** photographed near Dallas on 24 Nov (fide CW) was relocated in a residential neighborhood 6 Nov (BTi) and continued on private property through 14 Dec (fide MRz), apparently hunting over fields north of town (p. obs., 22 Dec).

A freshly killed **Northern Pygmy-Owl** was found along Hwy 99W at EEW 5 Dec (WGe). A live one was found at Finley 16 Dec (CCBC). An unbanded **Burrowing Owl** first seen in the Tangent area in mid-Nov continued to be reported through the end of the period (JF; MB); another one originally banded in Kamloops BC continued in the Brownsville area (JF). A **Barred Owl** flew over the Homer Campbell Trail at Finley NWR 30 Nov (MM, JJ, and daughter Amelia). One was hunting rats in sw Corvallis 4 Dec (WW). One was found dead along Hwy 99W at EEW 23 Dec (p. obs.). A **Short-eared Owl** injured by car near Ankeny NWR 25 Nov did not survive rehab efforts (CHH). Live birds included one over Diamond Hill wetlands 14 Dec and three along Davis Rd. in Linn Co. 16 Dec (JF).



Short-eared Owl photo by Matt Lee

A territorial **Anna's Hummingbird** in North Albany took to attacking his own reflection in a Christmas ornament that CHI hung out on 4 Dec; after she removed the ornament, the hummingbird perched on the string of lights where it had been, keeping watch in case his "rival" returned.

Acorn Woodpeckers continued to be seen at Finley NWR HQ as of 29 Nov (PO). A **Red-naped Sapsucker** photographed near the Corvallis Aquatic Center 5 Dec (HB) may have shown up later in the College Hill neighborhood 8 Dec (LPN). Two territorial **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** wrestled and pecked at each other in n. Corvallis 4 Dec, but seemingly didn't inflict serious damage on each other (LM). A **Hairy Woodpecker** at the old Finley HQ vocalized persistently 29 Nov (PO). A **Pileated Woodpecker** flew over LSNA during a prairie planting party 28 Nov. Among the numerous **Northern Flickers**, two intergrade Yellow-shafted x Red-shafted birds were noted: a male with all Yellow-shafted marks except red malar in the College Hill neighborhood 8 Dec (LPN), and one this winter and last with the red crescent on the nape, red moustachial stripes, and red-shafts in NW Corvallis yard as of 9 Dec (JSi).

More than 176 **American Kestrels** were found on raptor surveys

in valley portions of Linn & Benton Co. in early/mid Dec. A **Peregrine Falcon** was spotted a few miles west of Lebanon 7 Dec (JF). 1 flew over EEW 3 Dec (p.obs.) where filling ponds were beginning to attract teal. One soared over the top of Marys Peak in strong se wind just after sunrise 14 Dec (SSe). **Prairie Falcons** included one on a s. Benton raptor survey 13 Dec (WW), one in the Crabtree area 13 Dec (JH, BBu), one at the south end of Seven Mile Ln south of Morgan Rd and one along Brownsville Rd about a mile north of Forry Rd 7 Dec (JF), two in sw Linn Co. 14 Dec (JF), and one in s. Benton 13 Dec (WW).

A **Black Phoebe** singing near the old HQ at Finley NWR 22 Nov (AIC) was a continuing bird (fide HH). It continually returned to a pole sw of the of barn 29 Nov (PO). One was singing at LSNA HQ 25 Nov (p.obs.). Another was at the GLT easement off Riverside Dr. 26 Nov (MBS). A **Say's Phoebe** was reported from a private pond e of Corvallis airport 16 Dec (CCBC).

After a **Northern Shrike** was photographed at Corvallis Airport 18 Nov (JHz) there were no subsequent reports from Benton Co., and only one report from Linn Co. (per eBird 14 Dec). Four **Gray Jays** were in the Beaver Cr. area 16 Dec (KnF, JIF).

Mid-valley volunteers checked five sites where **Horned Larks** had been sighted but no color-banded larks were observed. A flock of 300 larks on a prairie restoration / grass seed field off Highland/ Stapleton Rd. s. of Monmouth 15 Dec (MLi) was only partially checked (BW, 17 Dec)

White-breasted Nuthatches were noted at Finley NWR HQ 29 Nov (PO). They were noticeably absent at a feeding station near Teloh-Calapooia Park this period (JDS). An **American Dipper** sang at Larwood Bridge on Crabtree Creek 13 Dec (JH, BBu).

A flock of **Western Bluebirds** fed on mistletoe in the oaks by Dunn Forest Rd. 100 on 24 Nov (RCr). Ten fed on mistletoe in the oaks at Tyee Winery 16 Dec (MB). A **Hermit Thrush** was at Bald Hill 22 Dec (MB). **Varied Thrushes** showed up in good numbers on the valley floor but were still present at higher elevations of Coast Range due to minimal snow cover and mild conditions as of 22 Dec. 100 **American Pipits** were along Davis Rd. 9 Dec (MB). A few small flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** were still around for the CCBC.

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** foraged in a large Japanese maple in SW Corvallis 30 Nov (JMe), along with numerous **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, and **Bushtits**. Another **Orange-crowned Warbler** was detected at Finley NWR 16 Dec (CCBC). Ten **Yellow-rumped Warblers** with an equal number of **Western Bluebirds** tried to glean bugs from a field along Campus Way in Corvallis, in a stiff headwind on 11 Dec (DBo). A few **Townsend's Warblers** were also around town (CCBC). A **Common Yellowthroat** at McFadden Marsh for the CCBC may have been the same bird found there in late Nov.

Most **Savannah Sparrows** that nest locally head south for the winter, but 35 were at Corvallis Airport 16 Dec (RM). A banded **Song Sparrow** at LSNA 8 Dec appeared to be different from the resident nesting birds, more "gray with mahogany trim" (HB). Numbers of **Sooty Fox Sparrows** at EEW are typical for the season but **Lincoln's Sparrows** seem sparser than. The only **Swamp Sparrow** report of the period was of 1 heard at Talking Water Gardens 14 Dec (DR). Two **White-throated Sparrows** were with 20 **Gold-en-crowned Sparrows** foraging among leaves at the old Finley NWR HQ 29 Nov (PO). A "Slate-colored" **Dark-eyed Junco** turned up in MC's NW Corvallis yard 17 Dec.

Lapland Longspurs included two along Glaser Rd. se of Tangent in late Nov and one at Corvallis Airport 16 Dec (RM). A **longspur**

not identified to species was with a large **Horned Lark** flock s. of Monmouth 17 Dec (BW).

On a foggy morning on 6 Dec I saw a **Western Meadowlark** perched on a wire right next to an **American Kestrel** by the south unit of LSNA. I had to wonder which one was more surprised to find itself next to the other one.

At least 20 **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** continued near the summit of Marys Peak through 22 Nov (JH); a smaller flock of up to 6 was seen from 24 Nov through 13 Dec (LGi; LPN; PCo; RCo; NBj). A female **Pine Grosbeak** continued to be seen near the upper parking lot through 13 Dec (NBj). **Red Crossbills** were reported in small numbers; four were sw of Philomath 19 Dec (KnF). A flock of 80 **Pine Siskins** swirled through birches in nw Corvallis 26 Nov (p.obs.). Flocks regularly attended a feeder near Teloh-Calapooia Park in Albany through the period (JDS). LM felt better about leaving some weeds in her n. Corvallis yard, after noticing how **American** and **Lesser Goldfinches** were eating the seeds of evening-primrose and lemon balm on 4 Dec (LM, 4 Dec). **Evening Grosbeaks** were generally scarce, with none found for the CCBC.

A large **Northwestern Salamander** and a very small salamander (possibly a juvenile **Ensatina** or a **Long-toed Salamander**) turned up in JiF & KnF's yard 23 Nov. 30 **Elk** were near Woodpecker Loop at Finley NWR 29 Nov (PO).

For next month, please post your reports to midvalleybirding.org, e-mail them to me at joel.geier@peak.org, or call (541) 745-5821 by 27 Jan.

WOMEN IN TRANSITION HELP PLANT AT HESTHAVN

"Giving back to nature and the community inspires me to want to do good things in my life and not use drugs. I know I can now enjoy life sober and it feels great!" commented a participant enrolled in the "Young Women's Transition Program (YWTP)" at Oak Creek Youth Correctional Facility in Albany.



These women in transition are feeling good about the positive differences they are making by giving back to the community and the natural environment. Fifteen young

women have overcome barriers and personal fears to reach out to the local community and stretch themselves in outdoor pursuits.

Last November, women participants sowed native violet seeds at the facility's greenhouse. They learned the importance of pollinator plants for native butterflies while they watered and cared for their violets over the summer months. Then in December, a group of women in the transition program took their plants to ASC's Hesthavn Nature Center to help in a restoration planting.

Working side by side in an area cleared of grasses and weeds, the women dug holes using dibbles and trowels and carefully planted 200 native violets alongside the nature trail path. Corvallis Audubon members are slowly removing invasive weeds from Hesthavn property and replanting with beneficial native species. "We greatly appreciate that YWTP women came out and engaged in restoration efforts as there is a lot of work to be done. It is terrific to have young people involved in community efforts," said Ray Drapek, Audubon Hesthavn Chair.

"One thing I love about nature is it makes me feel free of stress and I can enjoy the peace of listening to the birds and flowing water," commented participant Dominique Newcomer. Lori McGovern, transition program counselor, looks forward to bringing the women out again in spring to see their violets in bloom. "Bringing girls from a relatively orderly and somewhat sterile environment into nature and then watching as each individual finds something meaningful strikes me as extraordinary," said McGovern.

"Unlocking the Outdoors," program is run by Institute for Applied Ecology and Cascadia Expeditions and funded by North Face Explore Funds and Willamette Habitat Restoration. "Our goal is to involve these young women in service learning opportunities and outdoor adventure so they can consider new ways to conduct themselves and find hope for the future," said Stacy Moore, education program director at Institute for Applied Ecology.

For information, contact: Stacy Moore at 541-908-1093 or at stacy@appliedeco.org

Stacy Moore

BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

DECEMBER 2014 ASC BOARD MEETING

The board voted to give the Oregon Bird Records Commission \$50 for 2015. The board also voted to contribute \$200 to help the Education Committee provide transportation to classes attending the Aquatic Ecology events. The next meeting will be at Marcia Cutler's January 8th.

Gail Nickerson, Secretary

HOMER CAMPBELL AWARD NOMINATIONS INVITED

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.
- habitat restoration or preservation.

Both long-standing and short-term but significant contributions will be considered for this award.

A committee from ASC will recommend one of the nominees for approval by the entire Board. The selected awardee will then be recognized at the April ASC General Meeting and presented with an engraved plaque. 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 above-described (or related) criteria. Nominations should include contact information for both the nominee and the nominator and will be accepted until January 31st.

Email submissions may be sent to Linda Campbell, lcampbell@peak.org; Karan Fairchild, alderspr@peak.org; or to Dave Mellinger, mellinger@oregonstate.edu

Snail mail submissions should be addressed to:

ASC PO Box 148 Corvallis OR 97339 ATTN: HC Award Committee

Linda Campbell

2014 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FOLLOW-UP

The Corvallis Christmas Bird Count was held on Tuesday, December 16th, under cloudy, but dry and mild conditions. There were 47 field observers. Nine additional parties submitted feeder counts. A total of 128 species were seen. The Philomath Sewage Ponds were especially generous, albeit a bit capricious. On count day, a record number of Northern Shovelers and Bufflehead were seen. The next morning, Doug Robinson found a female Barrow's Goldeneye, a new bird for the count (though only "count week"). When Hendrik Herlyn and Oscar Harper went out a couple of hours later, they were unable to relocate the Barrow's Goldeneye, but did add Cinnamon Teal and Greater Scaup to the count week birds.

Other bird species setting new high counts include: Hooded Merganser, Wild Turkey, Great Egret, Bald Eagle,

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBER!

Donna Timlin

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:

To renew your membership online 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:

Please note that you need to opt into the ASC listserve. After you sign up, you'll receive up-to-date email notifications about ASC events, field trip locations, volunteer work parties and weather-related cancellations. Send an email to our listserve administrator, Karan Fairchild, and request to be added to the listserve: alderspr@peak.org.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION?

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

Suzanne Ortiz

Red-shouldered Hawk, Virginia Rail, Thayer's Gull, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Anna's Hummingbird, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker and Gray Jay. Peregrine Falcon tied the previous high count.

Good birds, seen in no more than one-quarter of previous counts, include: Western Grebe, Golden Eagle, Virginia Rail, Black-bellied Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, Western Sandpiper, Western Gull, Say's Phoebe, Black Phoebe and Lapland Longspur. Other count week birds include: Burrowing Owl, Barred Owl and Northern Goshawk.

Misses include Northern Shrike, Evening Grosbeak and for the third straight year, after previously being recorded every year of the count, Ring-necked Pheasant.

I'd like to thank all the participants on the count for making it a truly wonderful experience. And special thanks go to Linda Campbell, Suzanne Ortiz, Sally Shaw and Kate Mathews for helping with the countdown potluck.

Marcia F. Cutler, Corvallis CBC Compiler

LOOKING FOR LARKS

Volunteers are needed to search for color-banded Horned Larks in the mid and southern Willamette Valley. This is part of a project to identify wintering locations for two specific populations of the federally threatened Streaked Horned Larks: (1) the South Puget Sound prairies, and (2) Corvallis Airport. Researchers in Washington and Oregon have been fitting hundreds of young larks with colored plastic leg bands, so that if someone sees one, it will be possible to know exactly where they hatched. Now we need to find them! There are two ways to help:

1. The easy way to help: Just report larks when you see them!

Keep an eye open for Horned Lark flocks whenever you happen to be in open landscapes. If you spot a flock anywhere in the Willamette Valley, please contact the coordinator (see below for contact information). Please include a description of when and where you saw the larks, and if possible, a rough indication of their numbers.

Please note the approximate distance and direction from the nearest intersection. GPS coordinates are also helpful, but not necessary. An estimate of the location within ¼ mile is good enough. The larks are sure to move around!

2. The more involved way to help: Go on lark patrol!

Contact the coordinator for more information on how to help with more detailed surveys, including how to document color-banded larks if you find one, and how to distinguish Streaked Horned Larks from other types.

You can choose from a list of sites where there have been recent sightings of lark flocks. The goal is to make sure that each site gets visited at least twice within a month after the initial report, and to get good looks at all of the larks that are present.

A spotting scope and/or camera with a high-powered lens will be very helpful for this part of the project. In most cases, you'll be scanning fields from along rural roads.

Observations of color-banded larks will go to the Center for Public Lands Management in Washington, and to Dr. Randy Moore at Oregon State University. Overall results of this project will be reported next spring in The Chat.

For more information on how to help: Please contact the coordinator, Joel Geier (e-mail: joel.geier@peak.org, phone 541-745-5821).

This project started in November and runs through March, so please keep an eye open for Horned Larks whenever you're out in open agricultural landscapes! As further incentive, there could be a few Snow Buntings or Lapland Longspurs in with them!

Joel Geier



NATIVE PLANT SALE

The Benton Soil and Water Conservation District announces their 2015 Native Plant Sale. Orders can be placed now. There are 70+ varieties of conifers, broadleaf trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcovers and flowers! Pre-order these affordably priced plants - \$0.50 to \$4 each!

- Order online – www.bentonswcd.org/projects/plant-sale w/ PayPal by Jan. 31st.
- Plants are distributed on Saturday, February 21 – pick up time will be assigned.
- Buy raffle ticket for \$1. – the winner takes all remaining inventory.

Or visit the Native Plant Market: Sunday, February 22nd, noon to 3 PM. Most plants are \$3 ea.

For more information visit our website: www.bentonswcd.org, or call 541-753-7208.

*Alice Fairfield, Native Plant Sale Coordinator
Benton Soil & Water Conservation District*

ANNUAL OLYMPIC BIRDFEST

APRIL 10-12, 2015 IN SEQUIM, WA

ASC members are invited to a bird watching experience for beginners to experts, from leisurely strolls to active hikes, for a few hours, or all day; from the dawn chorus to the evening owl prowling. Enjoy guided birding trips, a boat tour of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, silent auction, gala banquet, and more. Featured speaker is Lynsy Smithson Stanley on "Climate Change as a 'Bird Issue'."

There's a Birdfest Pre-trip on April 8-9, for two days exploring northwest coastal Washington, a region rarely seen by birders. BirdFest program information and registration can be found at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

You can also stay on for a three-day, two-night birding/sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 12-14. Register at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon for this separate 3 day event. Information submitted by Robert Hutchison, Editor of Harlequin Happenings, the newsletter of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society in Sequim, Washington, who can also be reached by phone at 360-681-4076

Robert Hutchison, Olympic Penn. Audubon

THE 2014 ANNUAL APPEAL

Many thanks to our members and friends who have helped to make the 2014 ASC Annual Appeal a success! And an extra big thanks to our members who volunteer to provide the energy & spirit behind our lecture programs, fieldtrips, education workshops, conservation efforts, Hesthavn Nature Center, newsletters, sales tables, refreshments, carpools, and all the wonderful things that make up the Audubon Society of Corvallis! Hope to see you all in 2015 at an ASC event!

Suzanne Ortiz, ASC Membership Chair

OPEN BOARD MEETINGS

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

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE CHAT

Chris Matthews, Fred Ramsey, Bill Proebsting, Joel Gaier, Gail Nickerson, Linda Campbell, Joel Geier, Marcia Cutler, Stacy Moore, Robert Hutchison, Suzanne Ortiz, Alice Fairfield

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 final Thursday of the month. Always submit text using Microsoft Word.

**AUDUBON SOCIETY OF
CORVALLIS**

CALENDAR

Jan 8	ASC Board Meeting, 7 pm at Marcia Cutler's
Jan 10	Field trip: Talking Water Gardens, Albany
Jan 15	ASC General Meeting
Jan 27	Field Notes deadline
Jan 29	February Chat submissions due
Feb 14	Field trip: location TBD
Feb 24	Field Notes deadline
Feb 26	March Chat submissions due

The Chat is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. Annual ASC memberships are \$25 for an individual; \$35 for a family; \$15 for student; \$15 for Chat only subscriptions (email delivery only); \$50 for Supporting Level; \$100 for Patron Level; and \$200 for Benefactor Level.

Audubon Society of Corvallis
P.O. Box 148
Corvallis, OR 97339

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Audubon Society of Corvallis

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Interested in volunteering?
Please let us know: volunteerasc@gmail.com

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

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