



# THE CHAT

AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CORVALLIS

MARCH 2016

VOL. 45 #7

## MARCH PROGRAM

Thursday, Mar 17, 7:00-8:30 pm  
At Chintimini Senior Center:  
2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th), Corvallis

## THE SECRET LIVES OF BLUEBIRDS

BY RAYLENE GORDIN,  
ASC BLUEBIRD TRAIL CHAIR

Not to be mistaken for the blue jay, our charming bluebird has delighted us with its quiet mystery and shown us the perils of life as a cavity nester. We will discuss its history in the Willamette Valley and its role in the ecosystem, and share some observations from our banding studies. Are these birds truly monogamous? Where do their young go after fledging? Where do they sleep? Where do they spend the winter? How long do they live? This and more...

Raylene grew up in Los Angeles but made her escape in 1987 when she moved to Milwaukee, WI for medical school and residency. Given the small town atmosphere and proximity to nature there, she became an avid gardener, noted that the neighborhood birds enjoyed her efforts and got hooked on birdwatching.

Starting an orthopedic practice, Raylene chose the rural environment of Lebanon, OR. Although she knew that bluebirds were local residents, she was initially unsuccessful at attracting them to her yard (which was probably too wooded at the time). She discovered a timber clear-cut close to home, and got permission to place nest boxes on it. Both were used by bluebirds the next spring (2004). As all bluebirders understand, she was immediately hooked on *Sialia mexicana*, and all other species took a back seat.

She contacted Elsie Eltzroth via the local Audubon chapter. Not only did Elsie encourage Raylene to start a trail in Linn County, but she taught her to band nestlings, and they became good friends. A few years later, Elsie attempted to retire as chair of the bluebird trail. Initially, nobody stepped up to fill in her shoes, but in 2009, Raylene couldn't stand to see Elsie fret, particularly as she worried about her legacy and the future welfare of her beloved bluebirds, so Raylene agreed to take the position. These were big shoes to fill, but ASC is fortunate to have Raylene continue the successful, widely-recognized program that Elsie established.

Social hour begins at 6:30, with the chapter meeting starting at 7:00 and the program starting about 7:30. Questions can be directed to Bill at [proebstw@gmail.com](mailto:proebstw@gmail.com).

*Bill Proebsting, Vice Pres. & Program Chair,*

## NEXT MONTH'S PROGRAM:

April 21 Scott Hoffman Black, Executive Director of the Xerces Society in Portland, will speak on pollinator conservation.



*Raylene Gordon*

## ASC GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, March 17  
7:00-8:30 pm  
At Chintimini Senior Center:  
2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th),  
Corvallis

Thank you to everyone who helps us set up chairs at 6:15 and take them down afterwards, and to Becky Garrett for coordinating our beverages and treats.

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## FIELD TRIP SCHEDULE

### SECOND SATURDAY FIELD TRIP

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of each month 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. Contact Bill Proebsting at [proebstw@gmail.com](mailto:proebstw@gmail.com) or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the Midvalley ListServ at [www.midvalleybirding.org/pipermail/birding/](http://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 after noon.

### NEXT HALF DAY FIELD TRIP:

March 12. Snagboat Bend NWR.

We should arrive at the parking lot about 8:00 am, for those who want to meet us there. This trip requires more walking than most other sites we visit, perhaps a couple of miles, but level. The footing is generally good. We should see ducks in the slough. Perhaps some swallows and other early migrants.

*Bill Proebsting*

### WEEKEND FIELD TRIPS FOR 2016

There are still a few spots open for this year's weekend field trips, but they are filling up fast! There is already a waiting list for Summer Lake and several other trips are down to less than 5 openings. This year's scheduled trips include:

**April 8-10** Bandon

**April 22-24** Klamath Basin

**May 6-8** Rogue Valley (almost full)

**May 20-23** Malheur NWR

**June 10-12** Summer Lake (full)

**August 11-14** Steens

**September 9-11** South Coast

These are group affairs, where we travel in rental vans from Enterprise, lodge at interesting facilities, and share expenses. Signup sheets will be available at the ASC general meeting or sign up by email to [flramsey5@comcast.net](mailto:flramsey5@comcast.net).

The Rogue trip includes a play at Ashland's Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where we will actually see a play written by Shakespeare - the delightful comedy *Twelfth Night*.

If there are parts of Oregon you want to add to the schedule, please consider organizing a tour. Assistance in the planning and execution is available.

*Fred Ramsey*

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### ASC TO SPONSOR INTERNSHIPS AT FINLEY

For the past several years the Friends of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Association, in conjunction with Malheur Field Station, have sponsored a summer internship program at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Each year this program has brought two superbly qualified undergraduates, who spend most of their time conducting wildlife surveys under the supervision of Refuge biologists and a small part of their time doing service work at the Field Station. A small stipend and living quarters are provided.

Long-time ALS stalwart and Malheur enthusiast Fred Ramsey has proposed instituting a comparable program at the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex (which includes Finley NWR). At a recent ASC Board meeting Fred outlined his ideas, and the Board agreed that we have the resources and interest to sponsor such a program. Fred has been

in contact with staff at Finley, and there is great interest and appreciation at that end. All agree that it is too late in the year to initiate the program in 2016, but all agree that the program can begin in 2017. This is another example, a significant one, showing how Corvallis Audubon is forging partnerships with wildlife managers in our geographical area.

*Chris Mathews, ASC President*

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## ASC EDUCATION NEWS

### WINTER WILDLIFE DAY AT FINLEY IS MARCH 12

Families, nature fans and kids of all ages are invited to our second annual Winter Wildlife Field Day (WWFD) on March 12, 2016 at Finley National Wildlife Refuge from 10 am to 2 pm. Most of the 12 activity stations are near the refuge headquarters.

## A DEDICATED TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS WILL ALLOW GUESTS TO:

- 1) See live raptors from the Chintimini Wildlife Rescue Center.
- 2) Dissect owl pellets to identify what they have eaten recently.
- 3) Learn how to find and identify wildlife on hour long guided hikes along the Homer Campbell Trail. Hikes begin at 10:30, 11:30, 12:30 and 1:30.
- 4) Examine and touch animal pelts with Starker Forest volunteers.
- 5) Learn about why birds are killed when they fly into windows, then make and take a free tool for preventing this at home.
- 6) Learn how birds fly and migrate and how wildlife interacts with our local forests.

These are just some of the free, family friendly, fun activities anyone, (all age groups) is welcome to check out. For more information, see the ASC website.

Thanks to the dozens of volunteers from OSU, Chintimini Wildlife Rescue Center, Corvallis Audubon, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Institute for Applied Ecology, Friends of Finley, and Starker Forests, Inc., for making this event available and free for our community. .

ASC's education team is also still in need of a few special volunteers to help teach their popular hands on Aquatic Ecology program to elementary school classes this spring. Classes will run for 4 hours all but one Thursday from April 7 to June 2 at the Hesthavn Nature Center on Oak Creek northwest of Corvallis. Please email Education Team leader Jessica Brothers at [educationaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:educationaudubon@gmail.com) if you can help with some or all of these classes.

Teri Engbring

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## HESTHAVN NEWS

2016 Open House Scheduled June 18

The 2016 Hesthavn Open House will be Saturday, June 18, from 10 am to 2 pm. Look in spring issues of the CHAT for more information about the schedule of informative walks, talks, demonstrations and interactive games and programs. It's a rare chance to see the ASC collection of bird specimens and natural artifacts that fascinate and educate those of all ages who enjoy nature, and explore the creekside and forest environment with experts.

Ray Drapek ([raydrapek@gmail.com](mailto:raydrapek@gmail.com)).

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## BIRDING BY EAR

Sponsored by the Audubon Society of Corvallis and the Avery House Nature Center. Lisa Millbank and Don Boucher will instruct this class.

Birding by ear will take your birding ability to the next level, especially in forested areas where birds are difficult to

see. During the classroom sessions, we don't try to memorize lists of bird sounds; instead, we learn methods to help remember bird sounds, and get a basic understanding of the ways in which birds use sound to communicate. It's intended to be fun and interesting. Classroom sessions will feature lots of videos and sound clips. During the field trips, there will be listening exercises and many opportunities to practice the techniques learned in class. You'll be amazed by how many birds you'll find by just listening.

You should already be familiar with common local birds to take this class. The field trips will focus on habitats: wetland (Jackson-Frazier Wetland), grassland & savanna (Finley NWR), and forest (McDonald Forest & Hesthavn Nature Center). We'll enjoy the spring bird sounds at their peak.

## 3-WEEK CLASS

Wednesday, May 18, classroom session, 7pm - 9pm

Saturday, May 21, field trip, 9am - noon

Wednesday, May 25, classroom session, 7pm - 9pm

Saturday, May 28, field trip, 9am - noon

Wednesday, June 1, classroom session, 7pm - 9pm

Saturday, June 2, field trip, 9am - noon

## Register through the Avery House Nature Center

[www.corvallisenvironmentalcenter.org/averyhouse/](http://www.corvallisenvironmentalcenter.org/averyhouse/)

**\$35** (ask about student or low-income discounts)

If you have other questions about the course, you can contact us at [donaboucher@gmail.com](mailto:donaboucher@gmail.com), 541-753-7689

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## FIELD NOTES

### 01/27/16-02/23/16

February in this mild, wet El Niño winter brought spring-like weather with several days above 60 F, and just one frosty morning (23 Feb). Signs of spring were widespread. As an early fawn lily emerged and osoberry/Indian-plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*) was beginning to bloom along the Dimple Hill trail in NW Corvallis by 6 Feb (Catherine Otto). Red columbines began to put up leaves by 10 Feb. The Neighborhood Naturalist field trip to Lewisburg Saddle enjoyed blossoms of Spring Queen (*Synthyris reniformis*) as well as one early-blooming bush of Red-flowering Currant (*Ribes sanguineum*), just in time for Rufous Hummingbirds that were beginning to show up.

**Abbreviations and locations:** NWR = National Wildlife Refuge, STP = sewage treatment ponds. Jackson-Frazier Wetlands is in north Corvallis near Cheldelin Middle School. Luckiamute State Natural Area is along the Willamette River northwest of Albany. Philomath STP is south of Philomath and requires access permission. Teloh-Calapooia Park is in

south Albany near Linn-Benton Community College, Talking Water Gardens is in NE Albany. Cabell Marsh, McFadden Marsh, and North Prairie are locations at Finley NWR.

Along with flocks of **Cackling Geese** staging for spring migration in fields around Finley NWR, there were occasional sightings of a **Ross's Goose**, a **Snow Goose**, and one or more **Greater White-fronted Geese**. Pairs of the resident "**Western**" **Canada Geese** began to stake out wetland sites in anticipation of the nesting season, calling loudly as they chased off rivals.

A total of at least 31 **Trumpeter Swans** continued in the Suver-Airlie area of southern Polk County through the end of the period. Howard Bruner heard a few more **Trumpeter Swans** among hundreds of **Tundra Swans** that continued in the Halsey area on 3 Feb.

After being scarce last month, **Wood Ducks** began to turn up on the Philomath STP by mid-Feb. Three **Eurasian Wigeon** drakes and at least two hens were with the large flock of **American Wigeons** at Grand Prairie Park in Albany 7 Feb (Wayne Hoffman). Wintering **Cinnamon Teal** continued to be seen at Talking Water Gardens, with a drake and two hens there 7 Feb and a pair resting on a log there 14 Feb (Wayne Hoffman; Maurie Kirschner). Wintering flocks of **Mallards**, **Northern Shovelers**, **Northern Pintails**, and **Green-winged Teal** continued on local wetlands through the period.

On deeper ponds, wintering flocks of **Ring-necked Ducks**, **Buffleheads** and **Lesser Scaup** continued to be seen. Some of the less common diving ducks for our area included up to four **Common Goldeneyes** continuing on Adair Pond, joined by three **Greater Scaup** there 12 Feb (Howard Bruner), and a male **Canvasback** and another **Common Goldeneye** on one of the newer irrigation ponds near Airlie 12 Feb (Deanna Emig).

On 19 Feb Frank Kolwicz watched a **Hooded Merganser**

near Baskett Slough NWR catching, "pummeling" and finally eating what looked to be a **Rough-skinned Newt**. The merganser spent nearly ten minutes thrashing, gnawing, and washing its prey, possibly to remove the deadly toxin that newts secrete through their skin. Jim Fairchild observed similar behavior by a **Hooded Merganser** that captured either a **Rough-skinned Newt** or a **Northwestern Salamander** on a pond near Philomath last year.

A male **Ring-necked Pheasant** on Cole School Rd. near Scio 7 Feb had almost no ring on its neck, perhaps a descendant of the "Sichuan" variety that the state fish & wildlife department released decades ago (Jeff Harding). A few **Ruffed Grouse**, **Sooty Grouse**, and **Mountain Quail** were noted by birders who took advantage of mostly snow-free roads in the Coast Range.

A **Clark's Grebe** was with 23 **Western Grebes** on Foster Reservoir near Sweet Home 9 Feb (Hendrik Herlyn, Oscar Harper). A few **Horned Grebes** were also noted there through the period. One **Eared Grebe** continued into late February at the Philomath STP.

A **Great Blue Heron** nesting colony north of Monmouth had five birds standing on nests by 21 Feb (Frank Kolwicz). Other places to watch nesting herons in the coming month include across the river from Willamette Park, and the woods along Muddy Creek behind the Turtle Flats restrooms at Finley NWR. **Great Egrets** continue to be seen in our area, but will likely leave soon for their nesting colonies along the south Oregon coast, the northern Great Basin, and inland areas elsewhere.

**Turkey Vultures** were reported regularly, though still in small numbers, from mid-February onward. One fed on roadkill along the highway NE of Corvallis 14 Feb (Maurie Kirschner). One flew north along the west side of the Willamette River at Peoria 15 Feb (Greg Metcalfe). One circled over Witham Hill 17 Feb (Hendrik Herlyn, Oscar Harper). One was over Albany 19 Feb (Mike Lippsmeyer, Karan Lippsmeyer).

An **Osprey** frequented the angling pond at E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area from 29 Jan onward (Mike Lippsmeyer). A **White-tailed Kite** was along Tarter Rd. north of Airlie 15 Feb (Caleb Centanni) and again on 22 Feb (Mark Baldwin).

An adult **Bald Eagle** circled over 35th and Harrison in Corvallis 27 Jan (Pam Comeleo). 79 gathered at a roost SW of Tangent on 31 Jan (Mary Garrard, Bev Clark). A pair preened and copulated at Talking Water Gardens 14 Feb (Maurie Kirschner). A female was brooding on a nest near Halsey by 24 Feb (Delores Porch).

An immature **Golden Eagle** was at Finley NWR 7 Feb (Wayne Hoffman). An adult dined on a Mallard north of Airlie 13 Feb (Deanna Emig). One preened, waded, and drank from a pond east of Baskett Slough NWR 20 Feb (Linda Fink).

Wintering raptors including **Northern Harriers**, **Red-tailed Hawks** and **Rough-legged Hawks** continued to be seen in grass fields around the area. **Catherine Otto** had a



Turkey Vulture photo by Matt Lee



close encounter with a Red-shouldered Hawk as it zoomed low over a above 29th at Dimple Hill 15 Feb.

A **Cooper's Hawk** hunting around bird feeders in the Cheldelin neighborhood seemed to be taking advantage of sluggish **Pine Siskins** that were weakened by a salmonellosis outbreak, despite Lisa Millbank's best efforts to keep feeders sanitized; Lisa speculated that the hawk might have helped to limit the disease outbreak by culling sick siskins.

A **Virginia Rail** called from cattails at Talking Water Gardens 14 Feb (Maurie Kirschner). In mid-February migrant **Sandhill Cranes** were observed at locations both south of us in the Eugene area, and north of us at Sauvie Island, but there were no local reports.

The first stirrings of shorebird migration were noted with 20 **Greater Yellowlegs** and 40 **Long-billed Dowitchers** at Baskett Slough NWR 10 Feb (Caleb Centanni), and eight more dowitchers along Finley Rd. 16 Feb (Pam Otley).

A large flock of many hundreds of gulls in a field just outside Tangent along Hwy 34 on 31 Jan consisted mostly of **Mew Gulls** along with many **Ring-billed Gulls**, a few **Glaucous-winged Gulls**, and one **Western Gull** (Lars Norgren). A well-described 3rd-year **Glaucous Gull** was west of Plainview 8 Feb (Roy Gerig).

**Band-tailed Pigeons** began to show up, with four southwest of Philomath 18 Feb (Karan Fairchild).

A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** called occasionally in the Lewisburg Saddle area of McDonald Forest through February (Paul Adamus). A **Burrowing Owl** that wintered near Tangent was last reported 9 Feb (Deanna Emig).

Ten **Short-eared Owls** were still hunting over fields southwest of Tangent 31 Jan (Mary Garrard, Bev Clark). Those had been mowed by 3 Feb but two of the owls were still around (Howard Bruner). Another **Short-eared Owl** roost north of Independence had ten owls fly out to hunt on the evening of 28 Jan (Caleb Centanni, Brandon Wagner).

Our resident hummingbirds, **Anna's Hummingbirds**, have gotten to be thick in nw. Corvallis. On 3 Feb Andrea Foster noted that just about every block in her neighborhood near Timberhill now has some. They'll have some competition for feeders as migrant **Rufous Hummingbirds** began to show up in late February, starting with a male near Lewisburg 21 Feb (John Tietjen, Pat Cummins).

A **Lewis's Woodpecker**, sallied out from the oaks at Finley NWR headquarters to catch flying insects on the wing on 28 Jan (Camden Bruner); this bird may have wintered locally.

The resident colony of **Acorn Woodpeckers** in the oaks above 29th St. at Dimple Hill were active on 15 Feb, calling and working in the oaks (Catherine Otto).

A possible **Red-naped Sapsucker** was reported from EE Wilson Wildlife Area 15 Feb (Jordan Hazen), but it was not relocated. Meanwhile the resident **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** became more conspicuous with the approach of nesting season, calling frequently.

**Downy Woodpeckers** near Teloh-Calapooia Park in south



*Violet-green Swallow photo by Matt Lee*

Albany also seemed to be in the early stages of courtship on 30 Jan, as a male shared a feeder with a female, then started to drill on a nearby branch (Jim Smith). An apparent female **"Yellow-shafted" Northern Flicker** was in southeast Albany 13 Feb (Deanna Emig).

A female **Merlin** caught and ate a screaming **European Starling** in the Cheldelin neighborhood of NE Corvallis 28 Jan (Lisa Millbank). On 13 Feb three **Northern Flickers** and a **Steller's Jay** crowded around a **Merlin** that perched in a treetop near Teloh-Calapooia Park (Jim Smith), perhaps figuring that keeping an eye on the predator was the best way to avoid a similar fate. Another **Merlin** was s. of Independence 21 Feb (Mike Lippsmeyer, Karan Lippsmeyer).

A **Peregrine Falcon** chased an immature **Bald Eagle** off its perch at Ankeny NWR 22 Feb (Jim Leonard), a remarkable encounter between two species that were formerly on the Endangered Species list but have recovered thanks to the ban on DDT and many years of intensive conservation efforts.

**Prairie Falcons** continued to be seen regularly at four locations around western Linn County, plus around Baskett Slough NWR where one fed on prey high atop a power pole 7 Feb (Frank Kolwicz). Finley NWR also produced multiple **Prairie Falcon** reports thru the period, most often at the North Prairie overlook.

A **Say's Phoebe** hawked insects alongside of **Western Bluebirds** near Manning Butte 8 Feb (Roy Gerig). Another

## 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.

## MEMBERSHIP CORNER

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Violet Campbell  
Albert Ryckman

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

To renew your membership online go to: [www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml](http://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, fieldtrip 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](mailto: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](mailto:ortizsv@gmail.com).

*Suzanne Ortiz,  
ASC Membership Chair*

was along Smithfield Rd. near Baskett Slough 7 Feb (Frank Kolwicz).

A **Northern Shrike** was seen from the Hwy 22 overlook at Baskett Slough NWR 10 Feb (Caleb Centanni). **Hutton's Vireos** were heard singing their simple, two-syllable "zu-WEEP!" song from 1 Feb onward.

Ten very loud **Western Scrub-Jays** gathered in the top of a tall evergreen in NW Corvallis on 23 Feb, then moved on after a few minutes (Andrea Foster) – perhaps pestering an unseen raptor?

The largest reported concentration of **Horned Larks** this month was 60 to 70 s. of Independence 21 Feb (Mike Lippsmeyer).

Migrant **Tree Swallows** arrived in numbers, with eight flying northward over the North Prairie at Finley NWR 8 Feb (Jesse Laney) and two checking out nest boxes at Finley headquarters by 9 Feb (Molly Monroe). Fifty fed on a mosquito hatch over the Philomath STP 15 Feb (Howard Bruner). An early **Violet-green Swallow** was at Luckiamute State Natural Area 15 Feb; several more were at Ankeny along with Tree Swallows and an early **Barn Swallow** 18 Feb (Deanna Emig).

**Black-capped Chickadees** continued to sing through the period. A **Mountain Chickadee** wintering near Crabtree was seen through 13 Feb (Jeff Harding).

A **White-breasted Nuthatch** called from a black cottonwood in Peoria 6 Feb, as two **Brown Creepers** sang and counter-called nearby (Greg Metcalfe). **Bewick's Wrens** and **Pacific Wrens** also sang frequently this month, throughout the mid-valley region. A **Marsh Wren** sang at Baskett Slough NWR 10 Feb (Caleb Centanni). **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** also began to sing by the end of the period.

Nine **Western Bluebirds** foraged in a fallow field next to an experimental hop field east of Corvallis 15 Feb, flying up to perch on the hop wires (Linda Campbell). A **Hermit Thrush** visited a feeder near Teloh-Calapooia Park 8 Feb (Jim Smith). A striking "mockingbird-gray" **American Robin** with extensive white in its wings was at Finley NWR 7 Feb (Wayne Hoffman). **Varied Thrushes** wintering at low elevations continued to sing, including in NW Corvallis through 23 Feb (Andrea Foster, Greg Foster).

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** at Willamette Park 2 Feb (Mark Baldwin) was likely a wintering bird rather than an early migrant. Several Corvallis birders commented that **Townsend's Warblers** seemed to be more scarce than usual this winter. However at least one continued in the Timberhill area 3 Feb (Andrea Foster, Greg Foster) and several frequented feeders in the 9th & Buchanan area as of 14 Feb (Bill Gerth). Our most frequently-seen winter warblers, **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, also seemed to be somewhat less common than usual in some areas, but some feeder watchers reported small flocks coming to suet feeders, and several dozen continued at E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area through the period.

Howard Bruner encountered a remarkable brush-sparrow bonanza in the south unit of Luckiamute State Natural Area on 12 Feb, when – in the space of a few steps – he managed to see eight members of the sparrow tribe: **Fox Sparrow**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, **Song Sparrow**, **White-throated Sparrow**, **Golden-crowned Sparrow**, **White-crowned Sparrow**, **Dark-eyed Junco** and **Spotted Towhee**. Many observers enjoyed the trilling song of "**Oregon**" **Dark-eyed Juncos** as they began to sing from early February onward, one of our most ubiquitous sounds of spring.

Three **Lapland Longspurs** were with a large flock of **American Pipits** at the Philomath sewage ponds 20 Feb (Isaac Denzer). A **Snow Bunting** flew over Corvallis Airport calling 6 Feb (Will Wright).

Thirty **Western Meadowlarks** were on a private prairie restoration site south of Independence 21 Feb (Mike Lippsmeyer, Karan Lippsmeyer).

So far this winter, no **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** have been reported from Marys Peak, where at least a few occur in most winters. **House Finches** seemed to be pairing up in late Feb when Andrea Foster noted a pair at her NW Corvallis feeder. The large flocks of **Pine**



**Siskins** that appeared around Corvallis earlier this winter thinned out noticeably, as many seemed to be affected by a salmonellosis outbreak. A few were still being heard in mixed flocks in NW Corvallis through 23 Feb (Andrea Foster).

A few **Evening Grosbeaks** began to turn up in local yards by the end of the period. By then **House Sparrows** were also seen prospecting for nest sites.

**Pacific Chorus Frogs** sang from ash swales along Soap Creek Rd by 1 Feb (Pam Comeleo). **Rough-skinned Newts** swam in a quarry pond in McDonald Forest 22 Feb, with some coming up for air gulps of air and several mating (Don Boucher).

**Next month:** Look for more returning swallows, rails, Ospreys, and Orange-crowned Warblers toward the end of the month, and movement among the wintering waterfowl as they continue to stage for migration. Please post your observations to the Mid-Valley birding list at [midvalleybirding.org](http://midvalleybirding.org), e-mail them to me at [joel.geier@peak.org](mailto:joel.geier@peak.org), send by post to 38566 Hwy 99W Corvallis 97330, or call (541) 745-5821 by 24 Mar.

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## COMMUNITY NOTES

### IMAGINE CORVALLIS 2040

The City of Corvallis is sponsoring a series of workshops in March and community members are invited to participate in Imagine Corvallis 2040, the City's new vision and action plan. Three 3-hour workshops will each focus on 2 broad topics. Members of the public are encouraged to share their ideas at each event:

**March 5** from 1pm to 4pm; Lincoln Elementary School, 110 SE Alexander Ave

- How We Engage and Support – Involvement, Equity, and Diversity
- How We Prosper and Innovate – Economy, Employment, and Innovation

**March 12** from 10am to 1pm; Linus Pauling Middle School, 1111 NW Cleveland

- How We Learn and Thrive: Education, Health and Human Services, Personal Growth
- How We Create and Celebrate – Arts, Culture, and Creativity

**March 19** from 10am to 1pm; Corvallis-Benton County Public Library

- How We Plan and Change: Livability, Development, Housing, Planning
- How We Steward and Sustain: Environment, Sustainability, and Community Safety

For more information go to:

<http://www.corvallisoregon.gov/index.aspx?page=1843>

*Suzanne Ortiz*

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## BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

### FEBRUARY 11, 2016 ASC BOARD MEETING

The February ASC board meeting was held at Chris Mathews' house. The board voted to cosponsor a Bird Nerds trip to Eastern Oregon and give \$250 for scholarships. The board also approved donating \$3000 for two student internships at Willamette National Wildlife Complex. Karan Fairchild will chair the 2016 ASC nominating committee. The next meeting will be March 10th at Mark Baldwin's house.

*Gail Nickerson*

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## CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS CHAT

Bill Proebsting, Chris Mathews, Joel Geier, Ray Drapek, Teri Engbring, Gail Nickerson, Suzanne Ortiz

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## 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. Please submit text using Microsoft Word to:

[chateditors@gmail.com](mailto:chateditors@gmail.com)

## AUDUBON SOCIETY OF CORVALLIS



*Acorn Woodpecker photo by  
Matt Lee*

## CALENDAR

Mar 10	ASC Board Meeting, 7 pm at Mark Baldwin house
Mar 12	Half Day Field Trip to Snagboat Bend
Mar 17	ASC General Meeting at Chintimini Senior Center, 2601 NW Tyler Ave, Corvallis
Mar 24	April Issue CHAT submissions due
Mar 24	Field Notes 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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