



THE CHAT

OCTOBER 2017

VOL. 47 #2

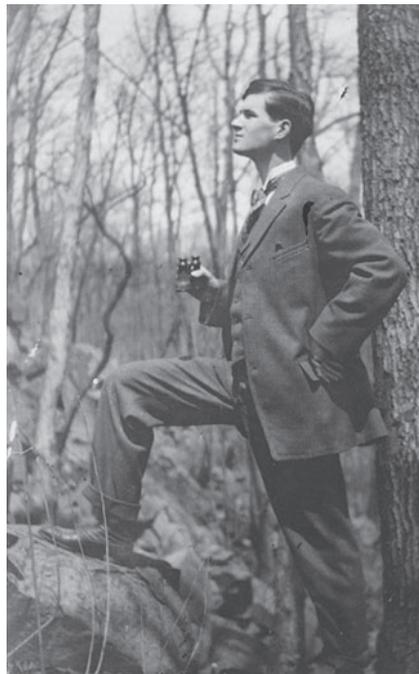
ASC General Meeting

Thurs., Oct. 19, 7-8:30 pm
Chintimini Senior Ctr.
2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th) in Corvallis

October 2017 Program

Chris Mathews presents “Growing Up with a Famous Ornithologist”

“Most birders, when asked to name the top ornithologist of the twentieth century, would say Roger Tory Peterson. Yet I have been told by several that they consider my grandfather, Robert Cushman Murphy, among the top. From his year in South Georgia aboard the last of the sailing whaleships in 1912, through his career as Curator of Birds at the American Museum of Natural History in New York; his publication in 1935 of the two-volume Oceanic Birds of South America and his work on conservation in the 1950s with my grandmother, his life was full of adventure and achievement. I am always glad for opportunities to talk about my grandfather and his effects on my life.” Chris Mathews



Robert Cushman Murphy

Chris grew up in Olympia, Washington and earned a Ph.D. in biochemistry at UW. Chris moved to Corvallis with Kate in 1978 to join the OSU faculty after fourteen years on the faculties of Yale University and the University of Arizona. He retired from OSU in 2002 but remains professionally active. Chris and Kate have both served ASC—Kate as Education Chair, Chat editor and Vice President, and Chris for various periods as President and Vice President.

Next Month’s Speaker: **November 16, Matt Blakely-Smith, “Restoration of the Willamette River.”**

Social hour begins at 6:30, with the chapter meeting starting at 7:00 and the program starting about 7:30.

Bill Proebsting, Vice Pres. & Program Chair, proebstw@gmail.com

ASC General Meetings

Third Thursdays at Chintimini Senior Ctr:
2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th) in Corvallis

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Field Trip Schedule

Our Saturday morning local field trips meet the second Saturday from September through June at the Benton Center (756 NW Polk) parking area, behind the Samaritan Square Buildings, 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 or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the ASC Facebook page, the Willamette Valley ListServ,

<http://birding.aba.org/maillist/OR5>, 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.

Bill Proebsting

Next trips:

October 14: Ankeny NWR

November 12: Tentatively to Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area



Noah Strycker on stage at OSU's LaSells Stewart Center



A crowd of over 800 nearly fills the auditorium.

President's Corner

We started the new program year with a bang! On September 20 Noah Strycker's colorful presentation on his 2015 global adventure and Big Year of Birding, sponsored by ASC, drew an appreciative audience.

Noah was the regular ASC program speaker in October, 2014, and he told us about his planned worldwide Big Year, scheduled to begin just two months hence. It was obvious that a presentation after the Big Year would be a big draw, but how big? ASC conferred with OSU's LaSells Stewart Center to reserve an appropriate venue, but which one? The 250-seat auditorium or the 1200-seat auditorium? We took a deep breath and reserved the larger space—a year in advance.

To justify our choice, ASC volunteers were relentless in publicizing the event. Thanks to too many to mention in this short article. We were greatly helped by Bennett Hall of the Gazette-Times, who interviewed Noah and wrote a terrific and timely front-page story about Noah and his achievements—three days before Noah was to appear in Corvallis.

Because this was a free event, with no advance ticket sales, we were in the dark. I hoped for at least 251 to justify our reservation of the larger space. Imagine our delight to see the main floor space in the large auditorium fill up, with over 800 viewers. They were treated to what has to be the most entertaining talk about birding ever presented in Corvallis. Noah was clearly energized, funny, and yet poignant. The following day he emailed his "thanks to Corvallis Audubon for everything (you) did to make for an awesome evening—the best yet! Good birding, Noah."

He told one of our volunteers that this was the biggest

group he had ever talked to, and this OSU grad appreciates the Corvallis community support.

Thanks to all who contributed toward the success of this special event.

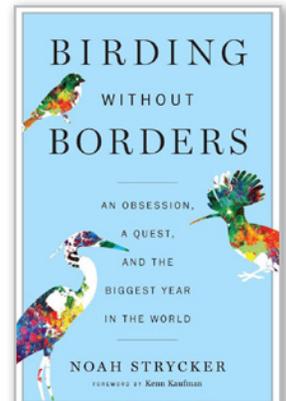
Chris Mathews, ASC President

"Birding Without Borders" book coming to ASC in October

Noah Strycker's new book about his epic Big Year, "Birding Without Borders" will be available at the October 19 ASC monthly members meeting at the ASC Book and Raffle Table on a first come, first served basis.

Through a special arrangement with Noah Strycker's publisher, Harcourt Brace, (which Noah suggested), we will have copies of "Birding Without Borders" for our membership and friends at our Thursday, October 19th ASC members meeting. Although the publication date is October 10th, 25 copies for our meeting were shipped early to ensure availability to Noah's hometown audience.

Retail price of Birding Without Borders is \$27.00, but we are able to offer it to ASC members for \$24.00. If we sell out at the October meeting we will place an additional order for November delivery.



Let us know if you cannot come to the October meeting but would like us to hold a copy for you. I'm at 541-757-2749 or email me at shaws@peak.org. We expect a strong audience for this book based on the excellent reception Noah received to his superb presentation at LaSells Stewart Center September 20th.

Sally Shaw, ASC Book & Raffle Table

Conservation Update

Moving on from Clinton's Northwest Forest Plan

The Clinton (Northwest) Forest Plan (NWFP) included scientific research by people and facilities in Corvallis. It incorporated often controversial biological and ecological capacities for managing federal forests, including areas of Northern Spotted Owl range and Oregon's remaining Marbled Murrelet nesting habitats, both of which have caused much consternation and controversy.

Today the Siuslaw National Forest continues its progressive approach by refocusing timber sales on old clear-cuts that have become tree plantations, and convening local collaborative "Stewardship Groups," where stakeholders focus on benefiting federal forests. Timber sale revenues, contracted locally, stay entirely within stewardship areas, and can be used even on nearby non-federal lands if the group and Siuslaw NF determine they would provide a valuable benefit to federal lands. An excellent example is the removal of multiple fish barriers in the Corvallis municipal watershed on the east slopes of Marys Peak.

The fate of Oregon's remaining Marbled Murrelet nesting habitat also rests with Siuslaw NF. Questions remain about restoring late-successional forests. We know we can grow bigger trees faster by thinning conifer stands. Evidence that this is the most expedient route towards recreating old-growth forests is lacking. Other active and passive approaches may well provide the complex structural needs of a prey base for spotted owls, and the interior forest conditions suitable for successful murrelet fledging. This also supports continued recruitment of dead trees that feed both forest and stream health.

Beyond determining where sale revenues are spent towards restoration projects, Siuslaw NF is now encouraging its stewardship groups to collaborate on environmental analyses, timber sale planning, and project implementation. Climate and carbon sequestration needs also should be included in project planning. These groups (Hebo, Marys Peak, Alsea, Siuslaw, Dunes) are all open and eager for your input. Please contact me for further information.

Jim Fairchild, Conservation Chair

Hesthavn News

On September 5, Egner Roofing installed a new "Forest Green" metal roof on the Hesthavn barn. This new roof should last for many years. Big thanks to Karl Hartzell who put many hours of volunteer time doing prep work for the roofing project. Karl was also present during the installation.

Two work parties are scheduled for October. As usual drop-in volunteers are very welcome!



The barn at Hesthavn has a new roof.

Sunday Oct 8 from 10 am to 2 pm. Barn and yard work party.

Sunday Oct 15 from 10 am to 2 pm. On this date we will have two OSU student groups participating: the GEOG 300 class and the OSU Service-Learning group. We will have them clearing weeds out of caged plants. Weather permitting, we will also have a group painting the hand-rails for the handicap ramps and the back porch as well as staining the picnic tables. There is also a family oriented education program scheduled in the Nature Center from 1-3 pm on Oct 15 (See Ed News section in this newsletter for details).

Questions? Email: raydrapek@gmail.com

Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair

Education News

Special Sunday Programs at Hesthavn

We are happy to announce two special opportunities to explore and learn at our Hesthavn Nature Center on Oak Creek this fall. Hesthavn Nature Center is at 8590 Oak Creek Drive, west of Corvallis.

On October 15, between 1 and 3 pm, volunteers Valerie and Dale Mitchell will open the doors for "Hammer, Gripper, Ripper, Tweezer – Bird Beaks in Action." The afternoon will feature a fun, interactive game, art project to take home, and chance to explore ASC's extensive collection of birds, nests, bones and Nature artifacts. No RSVP is necessary. Feel free to bring a picnic lunch if weather cooperates, as there are outside picnic tables and walking trails on the 5.75 acre site of meadows, woods and creek.

The program is free and open to kids of all ages, but activities will generally be at an elementary level. Valerie is a retired teacher who has been active in ASC's education program the past six months. Dale is a writer, and lifelong birder.

On November 19, again from 1-3 pm, the Mitchells will return to Hesthavn with another new program, on the timely subject of "Migration", which will be well underway by then. Thanks in advance to Valerie and Dale, for fun, information and a chance for our neighbors to explore the many resources at Audubon's Nature Center.

Winter Wildlife Field Day 2018

Save the date for the fourth annual Winter Wildlife Field Day at Finley on **Saturday, March 10, 2018!** Planning has already begun and volunteers are invited to join the dynamic team who will put this big day together over the next five months. Many more volunteers will be needed for the big event in March. Last year drew 450 participants, so we are gearing up for another great response from our community. Please contact Teri Engring at ASC meetings or via email (on back of CHAT) to volunteer.

Teri Engring, ASC Education Team

Mark Your Calendars For The Next Corvallis Christmas Bird Count

It's coming up to that time of year again – the annual Christmas Bird Count. This year the Corvallis count will be held on **Tuesday, December 19, 2017.** While this is still quite a way off, if you plan to participate, please let me know at: marciafcutler@comcast.net

Marcia F. Cutler

Field Notes

08/22/16-09/26/17

The dry, hot weather of late summer continued through late August into early September, with daily high temperatures above 80 F and approaching 100 F on 2-3 Sep. Passing showers on 8-9 Sep did little to moisten parched soils, but briefly cleared the air of smoke from forest fires burning in the mountains. After another week when temperatures climbed back into the 90s, quenching rain and cooler fall weather finally arrived 17-22 Sep.

Abbreviations and locations: NWR = National Wildlife Refuge, SNA = State Natural Area, STP = sewage treatment ponds. Jackson-Frazier Wetlands is in north Corvallis near Cheldelin Middle School. Luckiamute SNA 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 the Ray Bentley savanna overlook are locations at Finley NWR.

Observations

An immature **Greater White-fronted Goose** was at Big Lake in the Santiam Pass area 27 Aug (Jim Kopitzke, Jeff Harding). Migrant flocks were heard flying south over southern Polk County 19 Sep and over NE Corvallis 20 Sep (Mike Lippsmeyer; Lisa Millbank, Don Boucher). **Cackling Geese** began to arrive from their northerly nesting areas earlier than usual, with small flocks over Corvallis 12-13 Sep (Molly Monroe; Lisa Millbank).

Notable ducks at the Philomath STP 8 Sep included ten **Gadwall**, two **Blue-winged Teal**, and a **Ruddy Duck** (Hendrik Herlyn). Numbers of **Northern Pintails**, **Northern Shovelers**, and **American Wigeons** also increased with the arrival of migrants during the period.

A few **Hooded Mergansers** nest in the Willamette Valley, but their numbers swell noticeably in winter. Four on a pond near Salem 30 Aug may have been inbound migrants (Frank Kolwicz). 25 **Common Mergansers** floated past Luckiamute Landing at Luckiamute SNA

18 Sep (Howard Bruner). 21 **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were still at Clear Lake where this species nests on 21 Sep (Don Albright).

An **Eared Grebe** turned up on the Philomath STP 8 Sep (Hendrik Herlyn). A **Horned Grebe** was there 17 Sep, joined by another **Eared Grebe** 18 Sep (Howard Bruner; Nancy Stotz). On 19-21 Sep a lone **Western Grebe** dove on "Lake Filbert," the irrigation pond for a large new hazelnut orchard along Hwy 99W near Sarah Helmick State Park. A migrant **Red-necked Grebe** and **Western Grebe** swam on Clear Lake 21 Sep (Don Albright).

A **Common Nighthawk** found dead along Cardwell Hill Rd. east of Wren on the morning of 28 Sep was likely killed during the preceding night (Ben Phalan). Most nighthawks migrate south by early September, but stragglers can occur into early October.

700 migrant **Vaux's Swifts** roosted in the chimney of OSU's Wiegand Hall 8 Sep (fide Larry Schwitters). 425 spiraled into a chimney in downtown Albany 18 Sep (Jeff Fleischer). More than 300 used a different downtown Albany chimney 19 Sep (Deanna Emig). Several foraged with migrant swallows low over a cornfield at Luckiamute SNA 22 Sep.

As of 29 Aug a **Rufous Hummingbird** was regularly visiting Linda Hadfield's homemade suet in the Witham Hill neighborhood. A late **Rufous Hummingbird** (immature male with green back but some rufous beginning to show) was along Oak Creek west of Corvallis from 18 Sep through the end of the period (Bill Proebsting).

A **Virginia Rail** called along Oak Creek at Bald Hill 4 Sep, where **beavers** have created a small wetland (Marge Alig). Many **Virginia Rails** and a **Sora** called from the wastewater-treatment wetlands at Talking Water Gardens 24 Sep (Don Boucher).

A migrant flock of 11 **Semipalmated Plovers** circled the Philomath STP 8 Sep but then flew on (Hendrik Herlyn). A southbound **American Golden-Plover** stopped by Ankeny NWR 1-3 Sep (Roy Gerig; Erik Knight). A well-described **Pacific Golden-Plover** flew around Philomath STP along with a **Black-bellied Plover** 22 Sep (Douglas Stotz, Nancy Stotz).

A **Solitary Sandpiper** was at Big Lake in the Santiam Pass area 27 Aug (Jim Kopitzke, Jeff Harding). Three **Long-billed Curlews** continued at the Philomath STP through 23 Aug, when an **American Avocet** also turned up and stayed through 25 Aug (Andrew Pratt, Eric Pratt; Jesse Laney; Mark Baldwin). Other migrant shorebirds there 25 Aug included two **Pectoral Sandpipers**, a **Baird's Sandpiper**, plus **Western** and **Least Sandpipers**, **Greater Yellowlegs**, a couple of **Long-billed Dowitchers** and six **Red-necked Phalaropes** (Hendrik Herlyn, Oscar Harper).

The rarest shorebird of the period, a juvenile **Ruff**, was photographed alongside of two **Greater Yellowlegs** at Philomath STP 18 Sep (Nancy Stotz). This Eurasian species has been found in the mid-Willamette Valley only a half dozen times previously. Three **Pectoral Sandpipers** were also present, along with **Western** and **Least Sandpipers**. A **Spotted Sandpiper** was at Talking Water Gardens 24 Sep (Don Boucher).

A juvenile **Sabine's Gull** visited the Philomath STP 8 Sep (Pam Otley; Hendrik Herlyn).

Twenty **Great Egrets** hunted at Cheadle Marsh 9 Sep (Don Boucher). At least one **Green Heron** was at Talking Water Gardens 24 Sep (Don Boucher).

Dozens of soaring, southbound **Turkey Vultures** were conspicuous by the last week of the period. A lingering **Osprey** caught a large fish at Luckiamute SNA 18 Sep, then dropped its catch back into the river, perhaps rattled by a **Bald Eagle** flying nearby (Howard Bruner).

Numbers of accipiters in our area tends to increase as residents are joined by migrants following songbird flocks south or downslope. A **Cooper's Hawk** near Teloh-Calapooia Park 31 Aug was the first one Jim Smith had seen there since spring. A **Sharp-shinned Hawk**



soared over NE Corvallis 23 Sep (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank).

An immature **Swainson's Hawk** foraged in a grasshopper-filled field west of Cheadle Marsh 11 Sep (Nancy Stotz). A buteo with a white band at the base of the tail, seen south of Philomath on 14 Sep, may have been an early **Rough-legged Hawk**. A clearly identified **Rough-legged Hawk** was seen two days later in a pasture near Dunn Forest (Bill Proebsting).

A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** sang on Tampico Ridge north of Adair Village 27 Aug. In early September, many observers reported hearing **Great Horned Owls** calling, as pairs "duetted" as part of the pair-bonding process that leads up to their nesting in late winter. A **Barred Owl** was detected on Witham Hill 5-7 Sep (Julie Gibson).

Two **Lewis's Woodpeckers** in the treetops at Clear Lake in the Cascades were harassed by a Sharp-shinned Hawk. Two also turned up at Finley NWR headquarters and another was chased by an **Acorn Woodpecker** near the Ray Bentley savanna overlook 26 Sep (Douglas Stotz). On the same day, another visited the Cheldelin neighborhood in NE Corvallis (Lisa Millbank). Lewis's Woodpeckers nested around Corvallis until the mid-1960s, but due to loss of oak and ponderosa pine habitat with large, old trees, they now occur in the Willamette Valley only as migrants or winter visitors.

A well-described male **Williamson's Sapsucker** visited Douglas firs on timberland near Brownsville 12 Sep (Meghan May). This species is rarely seen west of the Cascades crest, but this summer's fires may have displaced some birds from the east slope. A **Red-breasted Sapsucker** in NW Corvallis drummed on a rhododendron branch 21 Sep (Delores Porch).

A **Merlin** perched briefly in Kris Ebbe's south Corvallis yard 24 Aug. Another was at Big Lake in the Santiam Pass area 27 Aug (Jim Kopitzke, Jeff Harding), and one showed up in Avery Park 21 Sep (Paul Adamus). More can be expected to turn up in the coming month, as they move south to winter in areas where their favored prey, small birds, are more abundant.

A **Willow Flycatcher** perched in oak savanna habitat in the Soap Creek Valley 23 Aug was likely a southbound migrant. A late migrant flycatcher at Clear Lake in the Cascades 22 Sep was identified as belonging to the **Empidonax** genus (Don Albright). Identification of these small, drab flycatchers to species can be very difficult during fall migration, when they seldom vocalize.

Two **Black Phoebes** and a migrant **Olive-sided Flycatcher** were at Cheadle Marsh 9 Sep (Don Boucher). Most **Western Wood-Pewees** left the area by mid-Sep, but stragglers were noted through the end of the period. A migrant **Say's Phoebe** at Lost Lake in the Cascades 21 Sep was actively flycatching from perches and calling (Don Albright). One also turned up at the Irish Bend covered bridge west of the OSU campus 23 Sep (Eric & Andrew Pratt).

A **Loggerhead Shrike** photographed on private ranchland in oak savanna north of Baskett Slough NWR 18 Sep continued there through at least through 21 Sep (Frank Kolwicz). On 19 Sep a flock of about 20 **Horned Larks** were along Livermore Rd. north of Baskett Slough NWR where the threatened subspecies, "**Streaked**" **Horned Lark** still nests in fair numbers on private land.

A flock of 70,000 migrant **Barn Swallows** roosting in corn fields at Grand Island in Yamhill County 9 Sep was large enough for their fly-out to show up on weather radar the next morning (Paul Sullivan). Vast numbers roosted there again the next night (Mary Garrard, Bev Clark). A wayward **Bank Swallow** and a late migrant **Tree Swallow** perched alongside **Violet-green Swallows** and **Barn Swallows** at Philomath STP 13 Sep (Hendrik Herlyn). Thousands of **Violet-green Swallows** swarmed over Luckiamute SNA 19 Sep (Howard Bruner). Another late **Tree Swallow** was at Cabell Marsh 24 Sep (Isaac Denzer, Kai Frueh, Ben Frueh).

On 28 Aug two **White-breasted Nuthatches** turned up in Chris Miller's NW Corvallis yard. Chris sees **Red-breasted Nuthatches** there regularly but their white-breasted relatives have become uncommon in our area, due to long-term loss of the oak woodlands that they require.

A **Pacific Wren** sang from a deciduous thicket at Luckiamute SNA on 22 Sep. These wrens, formerly called Winter Wrens, nest mainly in conifer forest, but during winter many move downslope to the valley floor. A young **Marsh Wren** and a **Bewick's Wren** practiced their songs at Talking Water Gardens 24 Sep (Don Boucher). Three **American Dippers** were at Clear Lake 21 Sep (Don Albright).

When I saw a **Bluebird Trails** volunteer at a nest box at Soap Creek Ranch 22 Aug, I assumed that she was just cleaning it out at the end of the nesting season. But no, she was checking on a surprisingly late brood that had recently hatched! The next day I saw an adult **Western Bluebird** carry a fecal sac away from the nest box.

Nocturnal migrant **Swainson's Thrushes** called over Corvallis before dawn on 30 Aug through 9 Sep (Susan Hatlevig; Don Boucher; Catherine Otto; Lisa Millbank).

Varied Thrushes sang in North Albany and at Luckiamute SNA on 22 Sep (Carol Hiler), as another sign that conifer-forest species were beginning to move south and/or downslope into valley locations. By 22 Sep many were also singing at Jim & Karan Fairchild's place SW of Philomath, where this species nests.

American Pipits began to arrive by 8 Sep when two were at the Philomath STP (Hendrik Herlyn). A flock was at Mike & Karen's Lippmeyer's place s. of Independence 22 Sep.

A few **Pine Siskins** visited Don Boucher's and Lisa Millbank's feeder in NE Corvallis 6 Sep. This irruptive species seems to be returning to our area after a notable absence last winter.

Small groups of **Evening Grosbeaks** were heard occasionally over Witham Hill 15-23 Sep (Hendrik Herlyn, Oscar Harper) and over NE Corvallis 23 Sep (Lisa Millbank; Don Boucher).

A **Wilson's Warbler** sang near E.E. Wilson WA 27 Aug. Two **Orange-crowned Warblers** and a **Wilson's Warbler** were still at Clear Lake in the Cascades 22 Sep (Don Albright). A male **Common Yellowthroat** that turned up in Jim Smith's s. Albany yard 22 Sep was likely a southbound migrant. Two more yellowthroats were still at Talking Water Gardens 24 Sep (Don Boucher).

Yellow-rumped Warblers arrived at Mike & Karen's Lippmeyer's place s. of Independence 22 Sep. A recently arrived **Townsend's Warbler** and a soon-to-depart **Black-throated Gray Warbler** were at Finley NWR headquarters 26 Sep (Douglas Stotz).

By 23 Aug **Chipping Sparrows** and **Vesper Sparrows** from late broods were still at nesting sites but were forming flocks in anticipation of migration. Other **Vesper Sparrows** were already beginning to move away from nesting habitat, as singles were reported from Philomath STP, Fern Ridge, and other sites where they're not normally found during nesting season. A migrant turned up at Luckiamute SNA 1 Sep (Roger Robb). On 15 Sep when I checked to see if any were still around at a nesting site in the Soap Creek Valley, I found both a **Cooper's Hawk** and a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** hunting **Oregon (Dark-eyed) Juncos** and **White-crowned Sparrows** that remained in the area. A hatch-year **Lark Sparrow** at Philomath STP 29 Aug (Will Wright) was likely a stray from east of the Cascades, although this species nested around Corvallis up until the early 1900s. A well-described adult **Clay-colored Sparrow** associated with **White-crowned Sparrows** at Philomath STP 18-20 Sep (Hendrik Herlyn; Roy Gerig; Mark Baldwin).

Wintering sparrows began to show up with one **Lincoln's Sparrow** at Philomath STP 13 Sep (Hendrik Herlyn). Early reports of **Golden-crowned Sparrows** included one near Lewisburg 19 Sep

(Paul Adamus) and one s. of Philomath 20 Sep, where a migrant **Fox Sparrow** also turned up 24 Sep (Virginia Stanton).

Black-headed Grosbeaks were thinning out noticeably by 28 Aug when a female turned up at Judith & Jerry Paul's feeder in the Highland Dell neighborhood. Family groups of **Lazuli Buntings** – including one heavily moulting adult male – continued in the Soap Creek Valley through 23 Aug.

A flock of 20 **Western Meadowlarks** were along Coville Rd. east of Baskett Slough NWR 19 Sep. Prairie restoration efforts on conservation easements bordering the refuge have expanded nesting habitat for this species that was formerly common enough in the Willamette Valley to be chosen as our state bird, by Oregon schoolchildren. In winter the small nesting population will be augmented by migrants from east of the Cascades.

A **River Otter** fished successfully in Clear Lake 21 Sep; nearby a **chipmunk** fed on the remains of a recently deceased, migrant **Sooty Fox Sparrow** (Don Albright).

Large numbers of “rain” beetles emerged from logs on Marys Peak 24 Sep (Catherine Otto).

Next month: As wintering waterfowl, raptors, finches, sparrows and hardy warblers such as Townsend's and Yellow-rumped Warblers continue to arrive, keep an eye open for the last few swallows, warblers, and other neotropical songbirds to linger in our area. Please post your observations to the Mid-Valley birding list at midvalleybirding.org, e-mail them to me at joel.geier@peak.org, send by post to 38566 Hwy 99W Corvallis 97330, or call (541) 745-5821 by 24 Oct.

Community Notes

Olympic Birdfest

SAVE THE DATE: Olympic Birdfest, April 13-15, 2018. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction, raffle, gala banquet, and more. Featured speaker: Claudio Vidal will talk about Patagonia, Chile, Birds & Mammals at the End of the Americas. Festival pre-trip: a three-day, two-night birding -sightseeing cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 10-12, 2018; or post-festival trip to Neah Bay on April 16-17, 2018: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. To learn more and register, visit www.olympicbirdfest.org.

Dungeness River Audubon Center

Vaux Swifts Video of Salem Roost

Using photos from a video I sent to the Statesman Journal, Heather Rayhorn made a video detailing the Vaux Swifts that are roosting in Salem now. See it at: goo.gl/589vsF

Stephanie Hazen, Salem Audubon

Air Quality Rules Workshop

How will Oregon's new air quality rules affect you? Attend a free regional training workshop to see. Share information and build know-how to advocate for clean air. **Saturday, October 17, 1:30 to 4:30 PM.** Corvallis-Benton County Public Meeting Room. For more information contact Marilyn Koenitzer at: marwilko@comcast.net.

Chris Mathews

Reader's Corner

Now, sit back and I will spin you a tale. This yarn is based on science but . . . well, you'll see (or future fossil finds will confirm) if I am right.

Before the 1990s DNA Taxonomic Revolution (picture screams, smoke and breaking glass), the falcons were comfortably grouped with hawks (of course!), parrots were over there consorting loosely with fruit-eating pigeons, the sea of passerines seemed aloof, with only a passing acquaintance with woodpeckers and honeyguides, and the tall, strange, South American seriemas were maybe some sort of crane? Well, that party's over. The new, and very well supported, grouping is (most basal) Sereimas, then Falcons, then Parrots, then all those Perching Birds. Actually, the way the science is done, parrots and perching birds are better described as 'sister' groups and equally kin to falcons. They both evolved from falcons. Now wrap your head around that. How do you get a parakeet from a Merlin?

Here's how. When one thinks of falcons, one automatically sees Peregrines stooping at 200 mph and Kestrels hovering delicately; yet there is another strikingly different group of speed-challenged, sometimes fruit snacking, Falconiformes: The Caracaras. There is even an awkward beeswax/larva loving falcon (Red-throated Caracara). I believe (yes, believe is the right word when you are telling a tale—or proposing a hypothesis) that the ancestral parrot was what we would call a caracara. A thing with feathers clambering awkwardly about in trees while gradually shifting its diet from meat to fruit. I believe that the strongly hooked bill of all living parrots and parakeets is directly derived from the hooked bill of its flesh-eating ancestors. Most fruit-eating birds (think toucans) do not have such strongly hooked 'noses' and no parrot has a weakly-enough curved version to match other fruit-eaters with slight cambers (such as Trogons). This bill was a tool from another use that was just too good to discard, if tree climbing was your style. (Watch parrots climb around and you will quickly see the utility.) The Kea of New Zealand would make a good poster child for my Caracara-like-thing to Parrot notion. The bill of the parrot is a true evolutionary ghost.

What about perching birds? One assumed side-theme of my tale is that: just because a DNA lineage is unbroken from Now to Deep Time, that does not mean that the common ancestor of any two groups would look like their end-products—or be classified like them. My take is that, before the parrots evolved their specialized climbing zygodactyl toes (two front/two back—which is likely when 'parrots' actually came into being), one, possibly smaller, line of caracaras began to fancy insects and a more active flycatching lifestyle. They kept the oldschool falcon foot, but gradually flattened the hooked bill to snap bugs. Perhaps, when we find the fossils of early Passerines they may not be recognized because they may look nothing like what we would expect.

My yarn is now unraveled.

Dale W. Mitchell

valchuckwalla@yahoo.com



Board Meeting Summary

Sept.7, 2017 ASC Board Meeting

Motions were passed unanimously to approve supporting several conservation group letters - one to oppose a Senate Energy Bill that would erode environmental gains made in the Klamath basin; and a second to advocate for continued protection from oil drilling in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Motion was passed to find a new printing and mailing service for The Chat.

Hesthavn Nature Center now has a lovely new metal roof that should last a long time. A very large bald-faced hornet nest near one of the trails at Hesthavn was eaten by raccoons before we could have it removed!

The next Board Meeting will be at 7 pm, October 12th, at Natural Grocers, 1235 NW 10th St.

Linda Campbell, Secretary

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 location.

Membership Corner

Welcome New Members!

Kirstin Frueh
Mark Kalmar & family
Marianne & John McNair

Coming Soon! The 2017 ASC Annual Fundraising Campaign

We will be kicking off the 2017 Audubon Society of Corvallis Annual Fundraising Campaign in November when we reach out to our members and friends and ask for your support.

The November issue of The Chat will include a return envelope. Please use the envelope to renew your membership, make a donation, or purchase a gift membership to ASC. This is the only newsletter mailing that goes out to our entire membership, including those who receive the newsletter electronically.

Donations will go to the ASC General Fund unless you designate a specific committee - Education, Conservation, Hesthavn Nature Center or the Bluebird Trail Fund.

You can also go to the ASC website and use Paypal to donate or renew:

www.audubon.corvallis.or.us

ATTN: Suzanne Ortiz, Membership Chair

Membership Renewal

To renew your membership online, go to the ASC website (<http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/join.shtml>) and renew via Paypal, or you can mail a check to ASC at PO Box 148, Corvallis, OR 97339.

Email Notifications Regarding Weather Conditions

We encourage members to contact Karan Fairchild to get on the ASC listserve in order to receive emergency email notifications about meeting cancellations related to weather conditions (as was the case for our December meeting), updated information about ASC events, field trip locations and volunteer work parties. 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 or mail address, please send your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at ortizsv@gmail.com.

Suzanne Ortiz, ASC Membership Chair

Contributors to this Chat

Bill Proebsting, Chris Mathews, Jim Fairchild, Suzanne Ortiz, Ray Drapek, Joel Geier, Marcia Cutler, Sally Shaw, Teri Engbring, Naomi Weidner, Linda Campbell, Dale Mitchell, Don Boucher and Stephanie Hazen

Chat Articles

The Chat editors, Teri Engbring and Naomi Weidner, welcome articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the Chat editor by the fourth Thursday of the month. Submit text using Microsoft Word and photos to: chateditors@gmail.com

Audubon Society of Corvallis

Calendar

Oct 8	Work Party at Hesthavn, 10-2
Oct 12	ASC Board Meeting
Oct 14	Field Trip to Ankeny NWR
Oct 15	Work Party at Hesthavn, 10 am-2 pm
Oct 15	Hesthavn Family Fun & Exploration, 1-3 pm
Oct 19	ASC General Mtg, 6:30 at Chintimini Sr. Ctr.
Oct 24	Field Notes submissions due
Oct 26	November Chat stories due
Nov 11	Field Trip to Luckiamute SNA (tentatively)

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; \$150 for Patron Level; and \$250 for Benefactor Level.

Audubon Society of Corvallis
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Audubon.Corvallis.or.us

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CorvallisAudubon

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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