



# THE CHAT

FEBRUARY 2018

VOL. 47 #6

**ASC General Meeting**  
Chintimini Senior Ctr: 2601 NW Tyler Ave (& 27th) in Corvallis. Thurs., Feb. 15, 2018, 7-8:30 pm

**February 2018 Program**  
John Shewey and Tim Blount: **Birding the Border Country: Lake, Harney, Washoe & Humboldt Counties**

Among the remotest regions in the Western United States, Northwestern Nevada and adjacent Southeast Oregon—the border country—offers outstanding and largely unheralded birding opportunities. Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge (Oregon) are familiar hotspots to many Oregon birders, but Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge (Nevada) is nearly twice as large and offers outstanding birding prospects. And the lands along the edges of Sheldon—along the Oregon/Nevada border—expand the opportunities even further for people who love wild lands and wildlife.

Within this vast desert landscape, little-known gorges echo with the call of canyon wrens, sage grouse swarm to hidden water holes, lacustrine marshes erupt with a cacophony of myriad water birds, sage thrashers sing ebulliently throughout broad scrubland basins, and common poorwills roost unobtrusively amid jumbled boulders and rugged rimrock-topped slopes guarding vast high-elevation plateaus.

John Shewey is a longtime freelance writer and photographer, and coauthor of *Birds of the Pacific Northwest*. He has spent decades exploring the border country. He's left boot prints in places few people tread, changed flat tires on so-called roads better walked than driven, and rejoiced in finding remote locations teeming with birds. At the very real risk of catching John's infectious enthusiasm, join him for this special presentation celebrating the diversity of the Northern Great Basin, and learn where, when, and how to explore this remarkable region.

Tim Blount, the coauthor of *Birds of the Pacific Northwest*, has been an institution in Oregon birding for many years, serving on the Oregon Birds Records Committee and working as the director of Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. A few years ago, Tim set a Harney County big year record with 253 species. He has birded every corner of the state.

Doors open at 6:30 pm for refreshments and visiting. The chapter meeting commences at 7:00 pm, followed by John and Tim's presentation at 7:30.

**Next Month's Speaker: March 15:** Jenna Curtis, 50 Years of Change in Corvallis' Birds: Revisiting Historical Data

Bill Proebsting, Vice Pres. & Program Chair [proebstw@gmail.com](mailto:proebstw@gmail.com)



John Shewey



Tim Blount

## ASC General Meetings

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

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## Field Trip Schedule

### Half Day Birding Trips

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](mailto:proebstw@gmail.com) or 541-752-0108 with questions. Check the ASC Facebook page, the Willamette Valley ListServ, <http://birding.aba.org/maillist/ORS>, 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 trip: February 10**, Newport. This trip to the OR coast will run into the afternoon. Bring lunch, water, etc.

### Multiple-day Field Trips

Winter is winding down, and the field trip season is rapidly approaching. ASC's first trip is to Bandon on the south coast. We dart over to Newport on Friday morning, March 23, to see how the Peregrine Falcon nest on Yaquina Head is progressing. We then head south with multiple stops for wintering shorebirds and waterfowl. A jog over to Myrtle Point usually picks up a Red-shouldered Hawk, a Black Phoebe, and a White-tailed Kite. Then we settle in Bandon and enjoy a superb seafood meal. Saturday morning we visit Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge and explore Bandon's rocky coastline. Heading south again takes us to New River, where we may find Allen's Hummingbirds around blooming manzanitas. Then to Port Orford, which

offers sea ducks – Marbled Murrelet sometimes - and (gasp) gulls. Then it is back to Bandon for another seafood treat. Sunday we revisit Bandon Marsh before heading north. Simpson's Reef at Cape Arago hosts Harlequin Ducks along with an abundance of Harbor Seals and Sea Lions ... often with a couple Elephant Seals. Our last stop is at the south jetty of the Siuslaw River, where we have had wonderful views of Rhinoceros Auklets on past trips.

### The full schedule (proposed at this point) of field trips is:

Bandon	March 23-25	Fri-Sun
Klamath Basin	April 13-15	Fri-Sun
Rogue Valley	April 27-29	Fri-Sun
Malheur NWR	May 22-25	Tue-Fri
Summer Lake	June 15-17	Fri-Sun
Wallowas	July 18-22	Wed-Sun
Steens Mtn.	August 16-19	Thu-Sun
South Coast	September 1-3	Sat-Mon

These are "proposed." Anyone who is willing to lead, co-lead, or drive on any of these trips is encouraged to volunteer. A few of the trips may not run without such assistance.

Transportation for these trips is in 12 or 15 passenger vans rented from Enterprise. Accommodations are in motels or lodges, and meals are in quality restaurants. Costs are shared, and usually run around \$100 per day.

Register for any or all of these trips by emailing [flramsey5@comcast.net](mailto:flramsey5@comcast.net), or by signing up at ASC's general meetings on third Thursdays.

*Fred Ramsey*

## Conservation Update

Last month our Chapter joined with the US Fish & Wildlife Service and other groups to offer an additional \$1000 reward for information leading to a conviction of the one or more people responsible for the killing of a four-year old male gray wolf in the Fort Klamath area, radio-collared as OR-33. This brings the combined reward to \$17,500. Enforcement officers hope the increase will tip the scale towards a prosecution of this wildlife crime, after seeing a dramatic increase in Oregon wolf killings in 2017.

We have also added our support to other conservation groups, signing-on to letters opposing offshore oil and gas leasing, and exploration or development along the Oregon coastline. ASC cited unacceptable ecologic, fisheries, tourism, seismic, infrastructure and climate risks posed by such activity. Other groups around the nation similarly oppose development for one or more of these reasons, while exemptions to this development are granted arbitrarily to a state like Florida for apparent political favor. We urge you to take time online to voice your concerns to your federal representatives, the Trump Administration and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

One of our oldest and most important environmental laws for the protection of birds, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, is now also under threat, due to Trump Administration plans

to lift enforcement authority for preventable bird mortality from development projects. In Congress, H.R. 4239 – the "SECURE American Energy Act" – would change the law to cement this interpretation and permanently end the government's ability to address major sources of bird mortality from industrial activities. For decades, power generation and transmission facilities have had working agreements to address bird mortality, and mining waste ponds are covered to prevent accidental contact and death of migrating birds. Along with signing our Chapter on to nation-wide opposition, we urge you to contact your representatives in Congress to personally oppose this effort – and by doing so, to protect our birds.

*Jim Fairchild, Conservation Chair*

## President's Corner

It is a pleasure this month to announce a new initiative for ASC—a student internship, to be supported as a cooperative venture by ASC and the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex. The idea originated with Fred Ramsey, midway through 2016-17. Refuge personnel were intrigued by the idea of a jointly funded intern, who would carry out projects of interest both to Audubon and to the Refuge. However, the idea surfaced too late in the season for the program to develop last year. Refuge personnel wanted the term of the internship to begin in spring term, though this might limit the number of applicants.

In 2017 the project was revived under the leadership of ASC Board member Jesse Laney. Jesse had worked as a student intern at Malheur, and he was aware of the value of the experience. Together with Refuge staff member Brian Root, Jesse developed an agreement describing a program in which the intern will spend this spring and summer carrying out population studies on the refuges and carrying out projects of interest to ASC, primarily at Hesthavn. Ray Drapek has a number of activities in mind. As this is being written, applications are arriving and soon will be evaluated. If the program is successful, it will be repeated in subsequent years. This is a nice initiative for ASC. Thanks, Jesse, for your leadership.

*Chris Mathews, President, ASC*

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## Homer Campbell Award

### Nominations Invited

The Homer Campbell ASC Environmental Award, established in 2005, recognizes a local (Linn, Benton, Lincoln and 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.

Past award winners include: Frances Stilwell, Laurie & Warren Halsey, the OSU Department of Fisheries & Wildlife, Rana Foster, Joel Geier, Don Boucher & Lisa Millbank, Steve Northway, Jeff Mitchell, Elsie and Elzy Eltzroth, Stahlbush Island Farms, Wally & Mary Eichler, and Bob & Liz Frenkel.

A committee from ASC will recommend one of the nominees for approval by the majority of the 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 ASC's Hesthavn Nature Center.

**Nominations should consist of a letter that describes how the actions or activities of the nominee fit the above-described (or related) criteria (*in Italics*). Nominations should include contact information for both the nominee and the nominator and will be accepted until February 28.**

Email submissions may be sent to HC Award Committee members:

Linda Campbell, [lcampbell@peak.org](mailto:lcampbell@peak.org);  
Karan Fairchild, [alderspr@peak.org](mailto:alderspr@peak.org); or  
Dave Mellinger, [mellinger@oregonstate.edu](mailto:mellinger@oregonstate.edu)

Snail mail submissions should be sent to: ASC, PO Box 148, Corvallis, OR, 97339, ATTN: HC Award Committee

*Linda Campbell*

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## Books & Raffle Table Notes

After forty years of living in their spacious southwestern Corvallis home, Chris and Kate Mathews have decided it is time to downsize. As a result of this difficult decision, they are planning a late January move to a small house in the

Stoneybrook retirement community.

Among the many possessions, the Mathews must sell or give away is a two-volume portfolio containing the complete works of John James Audubon. Chris and Kate have decided to donate it to ASC to be used as a raffle prize. This rare Audubon portfolio will be the featured item at the February chapter meeting monthly raffle. Our sincere thanks to Chris and Kate for their thoughtful generosity.

*Sally Shaw, Book and Raffle Chair*

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## Education News

### Winter Wildlife Field Day is March 10, 2018

With only a few weeks to go to the Big Day, we still need several volunteers to help staff our fun and interactive learning stations at Finley NWR that Saturday between 11 am and 3 pm. How would you like to help a child dissect an owl pellet or learn about the critters of the night? Or maybe you'd prefer to show them the world of native trees or Finley's famous elk herd? Please contact Teri Engbring at ASC meetings or via email (on back of CHAT) to volunteer.

*Teri Engbring, ASC Education Team*

### Nests? Nests. NESTS!!!

Please join us on for a celebration of nests, nesting, nesters, and all other things *nidicolous* at Corvallis Audubon's own **Hesthavn Nature Center on Sunday, March 18, 1-3 pm!** Our birds, squirrels, mud-daubers and other nest builders have been hard at work this season; so, come out with your family to spend a pleasant hour or two admiring and learning about really-old-school 'Tiny Living.' We have several fun activities planned and friendly staff on hand to answer any questions or share in your previously unrequited nest-related enthusiasm. Rain or shine, we've got things covered at our beautiful site—graced with hiking trails, a sparkling stream and our historic main building. We will open our doors for business from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm on March 18. 'Home Tweet Home—Nest Builders Wanted' is a free and child-friendly event, but fun for all ages. For further information, please feel free to contact us at [valchuckwalla@yahoo.com](mailto:valchuckwalla@yahoo.com).

*Dale and Valerie Mitchell, ASC Education*

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## Hesthavn News

Big thanks to the dedicated and hardworking team of volunteers who devoted many hours on Saturday, Jan. 20 to help us mouse-proof and clean inside the barn, sort through supplies and collections, and get it organized for additional programming this year. Sue Powell, Matt Lee, Suzanne Ortiz, Valerie and Dale Mitchell, Linda Campbell, Mark Baldwin, Marie Martin and Ray Drapek did a super job! Thanks!

*Teri Engbring, Ed Team*

At one point during the mouse-proofing work party we needed to find a wall outlet to do some vacuuming. Mark Baldwin was feeling some of the posters on the wall just in case they were hiding a plug when he felt something under one of them. Pulling the poster back he found a small bat. We were concerned since we were busily plugging as many



entry spots as possible in the barn and we wanted the bat to be able to leave when it needed to. I placed a call to Chintimini and the woman there said it probably got in from an entry hole farther up than where we were working so it was probably OK. We pinned the poster back to the wall. As far as I know the bat is still hanging out there behind the poster. We will check in every now and then and make sure our new pet is doing OK, but we'll disturb it as little as possible so that hopefully in the spring it can head back out to live a long and prosperous bat life.

The mice are attacking from all directions this winter. The phone lines at Hesthavn started acting up. It was not possible to call in. Calling out was hit-and-miss, and if you did get a connection it was hard to hear anything through the static. The phone repairman came, inspected the phone box outside the barn, and determined that it was OK. But he could see that the signal was very poor. I followed him out to the street where he opened the box there and proceeded to pull out handfuls of mouse nesting material. After clearing all of the nesting material and repairing the chewed-on wires he determined that there STILL was a poor signal so he made his way to the next box up the street. I had to get in to work so I got his assurance that he wouldn't need to get into the barn to fix this problem and then I headed out. As I drove past him on my way to work it looked like he was pulling more nesting material from the next box. Happily the phone was functional the next day when I checked.

If you would like to help us care for the Hesthavn Nature Center, please contact Hesthavn Chair, Ray Drapek, at [ray-drapek@gmail.com](mailto:ray-drapek@gmail.com), to volunteer.

We have two work parties coming up where you can join classes from OSU working on blackberry control Saturday, February 17th, and on fencing on Sunday, March 4th. Both work parties are from 10 am to 2 pm. Thanks.

Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair

## Field Notes

### 12/28/17-01/25/18

This month's weather was wet but remarkably mild in terms of temperatures. At the Corvallis airport weather station, temperatures stayed above freezing for the entire period except briefly on the mornings of 31 Dec and 1 Jan, when the thermometer dipped down to 28 F. **Snow Queen** (*Synthyris reniformis*) started to bloom on Dimple Hill by 16 Jan (Catherine Otto). By 21 Jan buds of **Osoberry** (*Oemleria cerasiformis*, also called Indian-plum) were swelling in Willamette Park (Don Boucher) and native willows were beginning to put out "pussy willow" buds.

**Abbreviations and locations:** AACBC = Airlie-Albany Christmas Bird count, NWR = National Wildlife Refuge, STP = sewage treatment ponds. Jackson-Frazier Wetlands is in north Corvallis near Cheldelin Middle School. Luckiamute State Natural Area (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 North Prairie are locations at Finley NWR.

### Observations:

A **Ross's Goose** was with **Cackling Geese** at Finley NWR 15 Jan

(Pam Otley). Nine Snow Geese were on McFadden Marsh 10 Jan (Tom Nelson, Julie Gibson).

Two male **Cinnamon Teal** continued at the Philomath STP into Jan (Hendrik Herlyn); eight were at Talking Water Gardens 2 Jan (Roger Robb, Dennis Arendt). A **Blue-winged Teal** was also at Talking Water Gardens 21-22 Jan (Adrian Hinkle; Kaplan Yalcin).

Upward of 3000 ducks including **Northern Pintails**, **American Wigeons** and **Buffleheads** flew north over Finley NWR at dusk on 15 Jan perhaps heading toward another water body for nocturnal roosting (Rana Foster). Ten **American Wigeon** and five **Hooded Mergansers** were along Dunawi Creek in sw. Corvallis 12 Jan (Julie Gibson).

An immature **Barrow's Goldeneye** continued in a mitigation pond along Bruce Rd. through ...5 Jan. Both **Barrow's Goldeneyes** and **Common Goldeneyes** were at their usual winter spot below Foster Dam in Sweet Home 7 Jan (Jeff Harding). Two **Redheads** and a **Canvasback** were on Stewart Lake 17 Jan (Jamie Simmons; Hendrik Herlyn).

A flock of up to 120 **Tundra Swans** were along Elkins Rd. n. of Airlie throughout the period, with at least a few **Trumpeter Swans** in the mix on 24 Jan (John Thomas, Pam Reid). 100 **Tundra Swans** near Halsey 1 Jan included two adult **Trumpeter Swans** (Margaret LaFaive). An apparent "**Bewick's**" **Tundra Swan** along Hwy 99E s. of Halsey 5 Jan (Howard Bruner) was likely the same bird later found 25 Jan along Smith Rd. along with 1005 of the regular "**Whistling**" subspecies (Deanna Emig).

Three **Mountain Quail** showed up in Fred Ramsey's nw Corvallis yard 26 Jan.

A **Red-necked Grebe**, two **Horned Grebes** and a dozen **Western Grebes** were on Foster Reservoir 7 Jan (Jeff Harding).

On 14 Jan **Anna's Hummingbirds** picked aphids off of some tomato and chile pepper plants that I'd moved outside of our greenhouse to take advantage of the mild weather.

At least one **Sora** and multiple **Virginia Rails** continued at Talking Water Gardens through the period. **American Coots** were surprisingly scarce at McFadden Marsh 10 Jan when Tom Nelson noted just one while leading a field trip of Stoneybrook residents.

A **Spotted Sandpiper** was surprisingly running around in the parking lot for the Crystal Lake boat ramp in s. Corvallis 3 Jan (Wendy Boyd). One was in the same area but in a more expected situation along the river's edge 21 Jan (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank). Scrapes for an apparent new wetland restoration project along Belts Rd. s. of Brownsville drew in 22 **Greater Yellowlegs** by 23 Jan (Mark Nikas).

Six **Great Egrets** were in a field along Garden Ave in NE Corvallis 8 Jan (Don Boucher).

The mild weather may have encouraged a few **Turkey Vultures** to return from California ahead of schedule. One was found during the AACBC 31 Dec. Three circled over a field s. of Corvallis 19 Jan (Hendrik Herlyn). One flew low over Kings & Circle Blvd in Corvallis 21 Jan (Richard F. Hoyer).

An **Osprey** along the Willamette just s. of Buena Vista 31 Dec was chased off by an eagle. A seasonal eagle roosting site off of McLagan and Seward Rds. sw. of Tangent had at least 69 **Bald Eagles** on the evening of 1 Jan (Mary Garrard), 96 on 13 Jan (Viviane Simon-Brown), and 107 on 24 Jan (Jeff Fleischer).

An unusual, very pale raptor hunting fields north of Coffin Butte since late November turned out to be a **leucistic Northern Harrier**, photographed by Deanna Emig 2-8 Jan and Hendrik Herlyn 9 Jan, and seen again 24 Jan (John Thomas, Pam Reid).

On 25 Jan a medium-sized accipiter, possibly a female **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, nabbed a **Bushtit** out of a flock that were on the ground giving alarm calls under a small fruit tree (Rana Foster).

A "**Harlan's**" **Red-tailed Hawk** continued at Mike & Karen Lippmeyer's farm s. of Independence through 31 Dec when



another turned up just e. of Adair Village. A juvenile **Golden Eagle** was at Baskett Slough NWR 31 Dec (Erik Knight). An adult was near Ward Butte nw. of Brownsville 13 Jan (Jeff Fleischer).

Nesting season for owls starts in late winter. Near Jackson-Frazier Wetland on 3 Jan, a female **Barred Owl's** solicitation calls were answered by hoots from a male. Shortly afterward, a female **Great Horned Owl's** begging squawks (given as part of the pair-bonding ritual) were answered by calls of a male (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank). Another **Barred Owl** was actively hunting on the WOU campus 22 Jan (fide Nik Geier).

On 7 Jan a local resident noticed a **Great Gray Owl** in a neighborhood near Fitton Green Natural Area. After being photographed by numerous birders, the owl disappeared. However on 22 Jan a dead **Great Gray Owl** was recovered along Reservoir Rd. sw. of Bald Hill Natural Area, apparently killed by a vehicle (Manuela Huso). Photos of the dead owl indicated that it was not a first-winter bird (fide Mel Clements). Barring on the underparts appeared to be different from the one that was photographed on 7 Jan. In recent years this species has been found nesting in madrone-oak woodlands in SW Oregon, similar to the habitat around Fitton Green. With any future local sightings of this sensitive species, efforts should be made to avoid disturbance.

Two **Short-eared Owls** were near Brownsville 20 Jan (Jeff Fleischer). A **Northern Pygmy-Owl** tooted near Luckiamute SWN 4 Jan. Two more called in the Griggs area n. of Lebanon 7 Jan (Jeff Harding).

A **Hairy Woodpecker** visited a hawthorn in Elsie Eltzroth's back yard in Stoneybrook Village 2 Jan. On 25 Jan a **Downy Woodpecker** foraged on a big old oak in s. Corvallis which also has been drawing numbers of **Brown Creepers** (Kris Ebbe).

A Lewis's Woodpecker sallied after flying insects 3 miles e. of Crabtree 30 Dec (Jeff Harding). One continued through the period near the Ray Bentley Savanna Overlook at Finley NWR, where it was enjoyed by many birders. Up to nine Lewis's Woodpeckers have been present wintered in oaksavanna on private land n. of Finley NWR this winter (Bob Altman, Jarod Jebousek).

A **Prairie Falcon** flew over Hwy 99W toward Finley NWR 18 Jan (Mary Rose Kent). Two **Prairie Falcons**, a **Peregrine Falcon**, and a **Merlin** were on the other wide of the Willamette River in SW Linn Co. 15 Jan (Jeff Fleischer).

A **Black Phoebe** perched and foraged over cattails on the pond at Finley NWR headquarters 1 Jan (David Hargreaves, Natalie Laswell). One was catching insects atop the Benton County Historical Museum in Philomath 5 Jan (Rana Foster). This species is now well established in the Willamette Valley, after expanding its range northward in recent decades. Four were at Snag Boat Bend 13 Jan (Don Boucher). A total of 18 were found for the AACBC.

A **Say's Phoebe** was on the east side of Ward Butte (nw. of Brownsville) 10-13 Jan (Jeff Harding; Jeff Fleischer). Another was sw. of Halsey 14-26 Jan (Deanna Emig). One was along McFarland Rd. s. of Finley NWR 17 Jan (Hendrik Herlyn).

A **Northern Shrike** was in Richardsons Gap se. of Scio 30 Dec (Jeff Harding). Another was at the North Prairie observation deck 23 Jan (Howard Bruner).

On 30 Jan Jim Leonard photographed a female "**Streaked**" **Horned Lark** with colored leg bands at Baskett Slough NWR. According to Gary Slater of the Center for Natural Lands Management, this lark was banded on an airfield at Joint Base Lewis-McChord near Olympia in 2016, and returned to a different airfield on the same base to nest last spring. 22 **Horned Larks** were along Blueberry Rd. nw. of Halsey 19 Jan (Sally Hill, Vickie Buck).  
*Swallows*

A lone **Barn Swallow** circled over the Philomath STP 1 Jan (Hendrik Herlyn, Oscar Harper; Howard Bruner).

A **Wrentit** sang at the old Griggs mill site n. of Lebanon 7 Jan

(Jeff Harding), near the northern limit of this species' range on the east edge of the Willamette Valley. A **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** sang in our yard near EE Wilson WA 20 Jan.

Five **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** were still near the summit of Marys Peak 6 Jan (Mike Lippsmeyer).

Two **Common Redpolls** showed up at Jed Irvine's feeder in nw. Corvallis 14 Jan, and were enjoyed by many visitors through the end of the period. At least 18 **Evening Grosbeaks** visited a ne. Corvallis yard 10 Jan (Lisa Millbank).

A **Lapland Longspur** was along Belts Dr. s. of Brownsville 20 Jan (Douglas Stotz).

An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was near the confluence of the Luckiamute & Willamette rivers at 31 Dec. Another wintering **Orange-crowned Warbler** and a **Nashville Warbler** visited Jed Irvine's suet feeder in nw. Corvallis 14 Jan through the end of the period, along with a flock of **Yellow-rumped Warblers**. Two **Townsend's Warblers** were along the bike path near the Corvallis STP 8 Jan (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank). Another joined juncos under Kris Ebbe's feeders in s. Corvallis 25 Jan.

In addition to more regular wintering sparrow species, an **American Tree Sparrow** was at Talking Water Gardens 2 Jan (Roger Robb, Dennis Arendt). A **Chipping Sparrow** visited a feeder near Teloh-Calapooia Park 22 Jan (Jim Smith). Only two **Savannah Sparrows** were found during the AACBC.

A wintering **Swamp Sparrow** continued at Luckiamute SNA through 31 Dec. One called near the Muddy Creek bridge along Dawson Rd. s. of Finley NWR 17 Jan (Hendrik Herlyn). A flock of **Dark-eyed Juncos** at Snag Boat Bend 13 Jan included one "**Slate-colored**" **Junco**.

The **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** that turned up in nw. Corvallis last month was last seen 26 Dec (Tom Olson).

Up to half a dozen **Tricolored Blackbirds** continued to be reported both from the Philomath STP and along Eicher Rd. se. of Albany through the period. This species, which has become a species of concern due to its colonial nesting habits that make it susceptible to field harvesting operations, may be shifting its range northward into our area, though numbers here are still tiny compared with the main population in California.

Only one **Western Meadowlark** was found during the AACBC.

A **bat** has taken up residence in the main building at the Hesthavn Sanctuary, where it was found hibernating on a wall behind a poster. Two **American Mink** were at Talking Water Gardens 2 Jan (Roger Robb, Dennis Arendt). 150 **Elk** were in a field north of Robison Rd. 7 Jan (Mike Lippsmeyer), as the Soap Creek herd continues to range more widely.

**Next month:** Early spring migrants could include Tree Swallows, more Turkey Vultures, and perhaps even Rufous Hummingbirds. 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 25 Feb.

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## 2017 Corvallis CBC Report

After putting together my lists and checking them more than twice, I've finally finished tallying the results of the Corvallis Christmas Bird Count (CBC) held on December 19, 2017. The species total is 119 plus 7 count week (cw) birds. In the interest of saving the expense of an insert into the Chat, this year the list shows only the total number of birds seen for each species. The complete results, with breakdowns by count areas and details on effort can

be seen on the ASC website under Bird Counts – Christmas Bird Count ([http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/bird\\_counts.shtml](http://www.audubon.corvallis.or.us/bird_counts.shtml)). You can also see results of previous CBCs there along with information about historic highs and the number of counts a bird species has been seen. In lieu of a complete insert, I'd like to highlight some of the more interesting results from each count sector, including the number of bird species / individual bird seen.

Each sector was covered by at least one team. Additionally, there were 2 roving teams covering various areas mostly within the Corvallis city limits and one person covered a short stretch of the Willamette River by kayak. One of the roving teams and one of the teams in South Corvallis used bicycles. The results from these two teams were quite impressive, particularly in the number of Anna's Hummingbirds and several of the common passerine species.

• **Area 1A:** Northwest Corvallis – [52 / 2314](#)

A bicycle team was attracted to the only **Northern Pygmy-Owl** seen on the count by the commotion made by other birds – this was in the Witham Hill area. This area also had the highest number of **Wild Turkey**, **Rock Pigeon** and **Pine Siskin**. It was also one of the 2 areas where a **Hutton's Vireo** was seen.

• **Area 1B:** Northeast Corvallis – [65 + 1 cw / 23,222](#)

The only **Western Screech-Owl** was seen in this area and **Virginia Rail** was a count-week bird, seen at Jackson-Frazier Wetlands on a scouting trip the Sunday before the count. One team saw several large flocks of **Cackling Geese**. **Gulls** in general were very scarce on this count, the 6 gulls seen in this area were the largest concentration, unfortunately, they were not able to be identified as to species. High counts included **Anna's Hummingbird**, **Bushtit**, **Western Bluebird**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, **Spotted Towhee**, **Fox Sparrow** and **American Goldfinch**.

• **Area 1C:** Central Corvallis – [38 + 1 cw / 1230](#)

The only **Cedar Waxwings** seen were in this area and **Barred Owl** was a count-week bird.

• **Area 2:** Orleans (Linn Co) – [46 / 2227](#)

2 **Redheads** were the only ones on the count. The area also had the highest number of **Hooded Merganser** and the only **Ruddy Ducks** seen away from the Philomath Sewage Ponds.

• **Area 3:** Oakville (Linn Co) – [35 / 3081](#)

This area is primarily farmland with lots of grass seed fields. Not surprisingly it had high counts for **Killdeer**, **American Pipit** along with **Brewer's Blackbird**. One of the 4 **Peregrine Falcons** was seen here.

• **Area 4:** Peoria (Linn Co) – [66 / 6258](#)

This was the only area where **Spotted Sandpiper** and **Herring Gull** were seen. It had the highest number of **Song Sparrow** and **Purple Finch**, notable numbers of **Wilson Snipe**, the second **Hutton's Vireo** and 1 of the 2 **Prairie Falcons**.

• **Area 5:** Southwest Corvallis – [36 / 2160](#)

**Wild Turkey** made a good showing in this area. Several teams saw the **Red-shouldered Hawk** at the Sunset Park Boardwalk.

• **Area 6:** Southtown – [68 / 2937](#)

Separate teams covered the east and west sides of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. High counts were tallied for **Northern Flicker**, **Brown Creeper**, **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Townsend's Warbler**, **Lincoln Sparrow**, **Dark-eyed Junco**, **Western Meadowlark** and **House Sparrow**. There were also notable concentrations of **Bushtit** and **Double-crested Cormorant**.

• **Area 7:** Airport Rd – [59 / 8926](#)

Shorebirds were in short supply on this count and the 3 **Least Sandpipers** found here were the only ones found. **Burrowing Owl** and **Lapland Longspur** were found in areas not open to the public. A **loon** was glimpsed flying away and could not be further identified. High counts include **Short-eared Owl** (tie), **Horned Lark** and **Marsh Wren**. Other notable finds were a **Prairie Falcon** and a **Slate-colored Junco**.

• **Area 8:** Greenberry – [53 / 3797](#)

A highlight in this area was seeing 2 **Lewis's Woodpeckers**, the only ones for the count. Other good birds include the only **Tundra Swan** seen away from Finley NWR, **Barn Owl** and a **Slate-colored Junco**.

• **Area 9:** Finley NWR – [83 + 2 cw / 59003\\*](#)

Finley has many overwintering waterfowl along with a variety of bird-friendly habitats. Species unique to this area were **Ross's Goose**, **Snow Goose**, **Eurasian Wigeon**, **Long-billed Dowitcher** and a **Tree Swallow**. High counts include **Green-winged Teal**, **Northern Harrier**, **Peregrine Falcon**, **Dunlin**, **Short-eared Owl** (tie). One of the 2 **Common Golden-eyes** was here. Count week birds include **Trumpeter Swan** and **Say's Phoebe**.

\* This number does not include the fly-off count of 45,000 Cackling Geese done by Refuge personnel. For purposes of the local reporting of the Corvallis CBC results, I've included the numbers reported in each of the other areas. However, for the official CBC report, I will be using the 45,000 Cackling Geese counted at the fly-off, to avoid a double-count.

• **Area 10:** North Philomath and Reservoir Rd. – [44 / 1512](#)

The highlight in this area was seeing 1 of the 2 **Common Golden-eyes** for the count. It and all the other waterfowl were seen from the covered viewing platform at the Philomath Boy Scout Lodge which provided a much appreciated shelter from the rain.

• **Area 11:** South Philomath, Philomath Sewage Ponds – [80 / 4037](#)

**Tri-colored Blackbirds** were reported at the Philomath Sewage Ponds earlier in December and stayed around to make their debut on this count. Other unique species were **Cinnamon Teal**, **Canvasback**, **Greater Scaup**, **Glauca-winged Gull**, **Northern Saw-whet Owl** and **Brown-headed Cowbird**. High counts include **Northern Shoveler**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Bufflehead**, **Ruddy Duck**, **American Coot**, **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, **Black Phoebe** and **American Crow**. A **Peregrine Falcon** was also seen.

• **Area 12:** Beaver Creek – [32 / 307](#)

A notable sighting in this mostly forested area was a **Short-eared Owl**.

• **Feeder Count:** [38 + 2 cw](#)

A young, male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** showed up at a feeder at the north end of Corvallis after the count was over, but still within the count-week period. This was a first for the count. Feeder watchers also had the highest count for **Lesser Goldfinch** and made substantial contributions to the number of **Anna's Hummingbirds**, **Townsend's Warbler**, **Spotted Towhee** and **Dark-eyed Juncos**. A **White-breasted Nuthatch** was seen during the count-week period.

• As previously reported, the total number of species seen was lower than many other recent counts. This may have been partly due to the rainy weather all day. However, several other counts in Oregon during the earlier part of the Christmas Bird Count period (Dec. 14 – Jan.1) also reported lower numbers despite mostly favorable weather. Three species established high counts: **Hooded Merganser**, **Eurasian Collared-Dove** and **Anna's Hummingbird**. The latter two species continue their expansion into this area. Interestingly, Hooded Merganser numbers were notably high in several other CBC counts in Oregon.

• Some bird species seemed to have unusually low counts. Looking back at all the counts from 2002 onwards, **Red-breasted Nuthatch** (18) and **White-breasted Nuthatch** (12) both had low counts along with **House Finch** (189). **Dark-eyed Junco** (1307) had the second-lowest count after last year's low of 1231 birds. Three birds commonly seen were missed: **Ring-billed Gull**, **Pileated Woodpecker** (cw) and **Northern Shrike**, the Pileated Woodpecker for the first time in the past 16 years.

I'd like to thank all those who volunteered and helped in this year's CBC. In addition, many warm thanks go to Gail Nickerson, Teri Engbring, Ann Brodie and others for helping put together the countdown potluck.

*Marcia F. Cutler, Corvallis CBC Compiler*

## Community Notes 2018 Eco-Film Festival

This year's three-day Eco-Film Festival will take place at the Odd Fellows Hall, 223 SW 2nd Street, Corvallis. Doors open at 6:30 pm and the program begins at 7 pm. A suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 per family is requested to help cover costs of the festival. Event sponsors are the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, the Corvallis Environmental





Center and Corvallis Odd Fellows.

**February 2** – Catching the Sun: Clean energy, social justice

**February 9** – Stink: Removing hidden chemicals from your life

**February 16** – Wasted: The real cost of wasted food

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## Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Fair & Town Hall

The 2018 Sustainability Fair & Town Hall will be held on Monday, March 12th at the CH2M Hill Alumni Center, 725 SW 26th St on the OSU Campus. The Fair will take place from 5-7 pm and will include exhibits, refreshments and music. The Town Hall will be held from 7-9 pm. Both events are free & open to the public, but registration is required for the Town

Hall due to limited seating.

Asher Miller, the Executive Director of the Post Carbon Institute, will deliver the keynote address at the Town Hall. The title of his talk is "Post Carbon Corvallis: Creating a Resilient Community."

The Corvallis Sustainability Coalition is sponsoring the event and Audubon Society of Corvallis is one of the partner organizations of the Coalition. ASC will be hosting a table at the Fair.

You can register for the Town Hall at this website:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Sustainability\\_Town\\_Hall\\_2018](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Sustainability_Town_Hall_2018)

*Suzanne Ortiz, ASC Rep to Sustainability Coalition*

## Board Meeting Summary

### Summary of January 2018 Meeting of ASC Board of Directors

- The Board unanimously approved another letter protesting the Klamath water diversion bill before Congress that would leave too little water in the system to sustain wildlife.
- The Conservation Committee will contribute \$1000 to the reward for the successful prosecution of the person who illegally shot the Klamath County wolf known as OR-33, last October.
- After this year's award, the Homer Campbell Environmental Award will be given out every two years instead of annually.
- The successful candidate for the inaugural year of an ASC-sponsored Internship at the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex will be announced in March.

The next Board Meeting will be at 7 pm, February 8, at Natural Grocers, 1235 NW 10th St.

*Linda Campbell, Secretary*

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## 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.

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## Membership Corner

### Welcome New Members!

John Campbell  
Susan Dornfeld & Walt Ream  
Liz Hogan

### 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 listserv to receive emergency email notifications about meeting cancellations related to weather, updated information about ASC events, fieldtrip locations and volunteer work parties. Send an email to our listserv administrator, Karan Fairchild, and request to be added to the [listserv: alderspr@peak.org](mailto: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](mailto:ortizsv@gmail.com).

*Suzanne Ortiz, ASC Membership Chair*

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## Contributors to this Chat

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

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

## Audubon Society of Corvallis

## Calendar

Feb 8	ASC Board meeting, 7 pm at Natural Grocers
Feb 10	Field Trip to Newport (OR Coast)
Feb 15	ASC General Meeting at Chintimini Sr Ctr
Feb 17	Hesthavn Grounds Work Party, 10 am-2 pm
Feb 22	March CHAT stories due
Feb 25	Field Notes submissions dues
Feb 28	Homer Campbell Award Nominations due
Mar 4	Hesthavn Fence Work Party, 10 am-2 pm
Mar 10	Winter Wildlife Field Day at Finley, 11-3
Mar 12	Sustainability Fair & Town Hall (details in community notes)

**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.**

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Find us on   
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Interested in volunteering?  
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