



# THE CHAT

DECEMBER 2018

VOL. 48 #4

## ASC General Meeting

Thurs, Dec. 20th, 2018, 6:30-8:30 pm

### December is our annual Members Slide Show.

Select your best nature photos to share with the group at the Dec. 20 meeting. Photos should be nature-themed, i.e. any interesting, beautiful or fun photo(s) of birds, other animals, plants, nature scenes, etc. are welcome. Bring no more than 20 of your favorites, along with accompanying stories. Plan your presentation to be 5 minutes or less.

If possible, email your photos to VP Mark Baldwin prior to the meeting. You may also bring them on a USB memory device that evening. Powerpoint seems to be the best format. No more than 20 photos per person, please.

Doors open at 6:30 pm for refreshments and visiting. The chapter meeting begins at 7:00 pm, followed by our guest presentation at 7:30.



### Make sure to mark your calendars for these 2019 monthly programs:

**January 17**—Bill Ripple - Wolves, the World's Wildlife, and a Warning to Humanity

**February 21**—Tyler Hallman - Study of historic & present bird populations and habitat changes

**March 21**—Bill Proebsting - Birding in Colombia or Australia; Plus a Bonus program: The 2018 Audubon Photography Award Winners: Twelve winning world class photos will be on display.

**April 18**—William Sullivan - New Hikes in the Oregon Cascades by this popular local author

**May 16**—Matt Lee & Sue Powell - Birding in Costa Rica

Mark Baldwin,  
Vice Pres. & Program Chair, [mark.baldwin2@comcast.net](mailto:mark.baldwin2@comcast.net)

## 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

### Local Monthly Second Saturday Field Trips

Our Saturday morning local field trips meet at the Benton Center parking area, behind the Cannery Mall, 757 NW Polk 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, <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 Ctr by 12.

**Next Field Trip:** December 8, Finley NWR and Philomath STP.

*Bill Proebsting*

### Amy's Trail

By the time you read this, the trail named in honor of the late Amy Schoener (1943-2016) will be open to the public! In just nine short months, Amy's Trail moved from conception to fruition, as ASC, Crestmont Land Trust, and Benton County teamed up to connect the County's Fitton Green trails with Crestmont Land Trust's public trail system west of Corvallis.



The idea for a connecting trail had been contemplated last year by Greenbelt Land Trust, Crestmont & the County, but the County had no funding available. Meanwhile, ASC received a very generous bequest from Amy Schoener's estate and sought a project to commemorate her.

Amy was a renaissance woman, with skills in tropical sponge biology, classical piano, organic gardening, sheep rearing, and habitat restoration. She was a passionate lover of Nature and a longtime member of ASC. Because Amy & her husband, Bill Pearcy, lived adjacent to Crestmont Land Trust land along the Marys River near Wren, ASC contacted owner Ed Easterling about the feasibility of a memorial trail across his land—and voila!—the concept and the funds were a dazzling match.

With the savvy borne of voluminous trail building experience and a high degree of enthusiasm for the project, Easterling marshalled all forces. He kept communications going throughout, drafted agreements and signage, lined up contractors, arranged for field visits with all the partners, and circulated pictures—the works! The "First Walk" on

November 30th included all those who were involved in the project, and the trail opened to the public on December 1st.

One way to get there is from the gated end of Panorama Drive at the Fitton Green kiosk. The broad walking road (an emergency exit for those in the Cardwell Hill and Chinook Dr. neighborhoods), goes gently downhill past another memorial trail, Alan Throop's Loop, and heads north toward Cardwell Hill Drive. About halfway down, Amy's Trail will be on your left. The one-third mile trail skirts a meadow at the top, meanders through oak and fir woodlands, crosses a culverted creek, then onto a puncheon (heavy oak timbers) across a bog in a deeply riparian area full of ferns and overhung with mosses. At the bottom, one arrives at the intersection of multiple trails in the Crestmont Land Trust ownership which eventually go out to the west end of Cardwell Hill Drive in Wren. From the parking area on Cardwell Hill Drive in Corvallis, one walks the emergency road a short distance down to the trail going south (left) and travels uphill to reach Amy's Trail on the right.

ASC is grateful to the County Commissioners and to Greenbelt Land Trust who cooperated and championed this project. We salute Ed Easterling for his generous philanthropic outlook and his masterful orchestration of the many moving parts involved in getting this project up and running - and completed inside of a year. The miles of public walking trails now available to the community through this connecting trail is a gift Amy Schoener would love.

*Linda Campbell*

## Willamette Valley Bird Symposium January 19

Registration for the 2019 Willamette Valley Bird Symposium is now open! Please join us in bringing together professionals, students, and amateurs to celebrate birds on January 19th, 2019, at the CH2M HILL Alumni Center on the Oregon State University campus.

This year's plenary speaker is Kenn Kaufman, renowned naturalist, artist, and author of the cult-classic book *Kingbird Highway*. Kenn currently serves as a field editor for *Audubon* magazine and puts most of his energy into book projects, including *Lives of North American Birds* and the Kaufman Focus Guides, and painting bird portraits.

For more details on the scientific program, please visit <https://willamettevalleybirds.org/>. General registration includes lunch. Costs are \$15 for students/educators and \$20 for the general public. Register ASAP—space is limited and day-of admission not guaranteed. To register, visit <https://willamettevalleybirds.org/>. Registration ends January 4th.



This year we are offering free admission to students in grades 7-12 who register in advance, courtesy of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Visit our website for details.

Noelle Moen  
Willamette Valley Bird Symposium Committee

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## Education News

### 2019 Winter Wildlife Field Day Planning

Planning is well underway for the fifth annual winter wildlife field day at Finley NWR. Our volunteers, Matt Lee and Sue Powell, are completing the event flyer and patch, featuring a red-tailed hawk in flight. Returning partners for WWFD 2019 include the US Fish and Wildlife Service, ASC, Friends of WVNWRC, Starker Forest, Chintimini Wildlife Center, OSU Bird Nerds, and 4H/OSU Extension. They will be joined by new partners from the Benton Soil and Water Conservation District, Corvallis Library, Mary's River Watershed Council and the OSU Fisheries and Wildlife Club. Other groups in our area from Scouts to the Sustainability Coalition help with critical marketing, parking, transportation and more. It takes over 100 volunteers to pull off an event where up to 800 guests will explore Nature in our community.

Next meeting of the event Planning Team will be December 6 at 3:30 pm. The coming 6 weeks are key for the planning team to develop the twelve activity stations for the big day. To join the team, or for more information, contact Teri Engbring at [chateditors@gmail.com](mailto:chateditors@gmail.com).

### Congratulations, Fruehs and Friends, for Successful Day of Birds



Photo by Cheryl Good

Beautiful fall weather and 150 enthusiastic visitors made this new birding event in Corvallis a huge success on November 11. Kai, Ben and Kerstin Frueh and their hugely supportive friends and neighbors treated families and Nature fans of all ages to guided bird walks, crafts, live and taxidermied birds, displays, hands on activities and more. It's hard to say who had more fun, guests or volunteers, in this day of learning about and enjoying our avian friends. Thanks to all!

Teri Engbring, ASC Education Team

## Hesthavn News

### Please Join Coming Work Parties

All Hesthavn work parties are from 10 am to 2 pm. The schedule for December is:

**Sunday Dec 2:** Barn and yard work party.

**Sunday Dec 16:** Blackberry pull.

Grab a friend and join us in the great outdoors!

Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair

### HH Family programs resume 1/20/19

The next monthly Family Fun at Hesthavn program will be Jan 20 from 1-3 pm. Your Corvallis Audubon team will explore the mystery of what local animals do in the coldest, wettest time of the year: Animals in Winter. We will present exciting games, arts and crafts and a survival challenge to illustrate the many ways animals 'do winter' in Corvallis. See you on January 20, 2019, 1:00 to 3:00 pm, rain or shine, as it's always warm and dry inside our Nature Center. As always, our Hesthavn events are free to all and especially kid-friendly.

Valerie and Dale Mitchell

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### Atop the Nestbox

We had more failures than usual, but also added quite a few locations to our official trail. As a result, the number of bluebirds that fledged with our knowledge was higher than usual. We also spotted several adults that were banded at least 5 years ago. We expect to have some longevity study results next year, so stay tuned!

### 2018 Bluebird Nesting Data

Attempts	251
Failures	40
1st broods	148
2nd broods	79
3rd broods	7
Eggs laid	1216
Hatched	1018
% hatched	84
Fledged	919
% fledged	90
Fledged/box	5

Raylene Gordin, Bluebird Trail

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## Community Notes

### Calling All Elk!

The Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex are hosting a Nature Walk on Sunday, December 2 from 2:30-4:30 pm. Friends President David Landkamer will lead the adventure. Learn about elk behavior, calls and habitat with touchable artifacts. Then visit prime viewing spots in search of Finley's resident Roosevelt elk.

Meet your guide at the William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge Office and Visitor Center. They will go rain or



shine! Please wear appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear for limited walking; and don't forget binoculars and/or camera!

*Carolyn Suckow, Friends of WVNWR*

## 2019 Winter Wings Festival

The 40th Annual Klamath Basin Winter Wings Festival will be February 14-17, 2019. Enjoy over 50 guided birding and photography field trips, workshops, receptions, keynotes, and more throughout the Klamath Basin in Oregon and California. Our featured speakers are Pepper Trail, George Lepp and Julie Zickefoose. To learn more, visit [www.WinterWingsFest.org](http://www.WinterWingsFest.org). Registration opens December 15th at 9 am PST, and many activities will sell out quickly. You can see program details on the website now. We look forward to seeing you in the Klamath Basin in February!

*Anne Wenner and Diana Samuels,  
Festival Coordinators, Klamath Basin Audubon*

## 2018 Benton County Bird Sit Results

Before dawn on Saturday, Sept. 22, 2018, Benton County Bird Sit organizers Isaac Denzer and Jacob Mathison were in their 17-foot diameter circle at Cabell Marsh in Finley National Wildlife Refuge. Their mission: to raise money and awareness for the conservation of birds and their habitats.

Over 17 hours they saw or heard a total of 80 bird species. The young birders and friends raised funds for ASC, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Friends of Malheur NWR and Friends of Willamette Valley NWR Complex. Isaac and Jacob were joined by other teen birders: Tye Jeske and Joshua Galpern from Eugene; and Kai and Ben Frueh, who had helped organize the 2016 and 2017 Big Sit events.

The day started and ended with a Barred Owl and at least four Great Horned Owls. In between they reported 300 Canada Geese, several Greater White Fronted and Cackling Geese, and over 50 American White Pelicans, along with an assortment of migrant shorebirds and ducks. On the mudflats they saw an American Avocet; and a Red-necked Phalarope.

A large falcon zoomed over the blind, which they thought was a juvenile Peregrine, but photos showed it to be a Prairie Falcon. Later they saw two Peregrine Falcons. Birding slowed in the afternoon, including a Robin and Belted Kingfisher. Their 80th and final species was a Western Screech-Owl. They also saw American Goldfinch, Lincoln's Sparrow, Western Wood-Pewee, Western Tanager, Virginia rail, and Hermit Thrush, but sadly could not count them because they were outside the circle.

A full list with photos can be seen at <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S48684910>.

*Isaac Denzer*

## Corvallis CBC on Dec 18th

The 2018 Corvallis Christmas Bird Count will be held on Tuesday, December 18th, 2018. Everybody is invited to join us, and participation is free.

The count is an all-day event and an excellent opportunity for novice bird watchers to join with seasoned veterans and

learn more about identifying and finding local birds.

Half-day participants and home feeder-watchers are also welcome. I would like to particularly encourage anyone with feeders in the count circle who can spare at least one hour to watch their yard to participate. Winter feeder watching can be quite rewarding as birds try to expend the least amount of energy to get the highest amount of food.

Participants should bring cold-and wet-weather gear, binoculars, a scope, if you have one, and snacks for the day. A notepad and pencil or electronic recording devices, field guides, camera and a thermos with something hot are always good ideas as well.

There will be a countdown potluck held for CBC volunteers after the count at the Tunison Fire Station. More detailed information on the countdown and potluck will be given to all participants who are asked to sign up in advance with coordinator, Marcia Cutler at [marciafcutler@comcast.net](mailto:marciafcutler@comcast.net).

If you are interested in participating or would like more information, I will be happy to hear from you.

*Marcia F. Cutler, CBC Coordinator*

## Field Notes

### 10/25/18 – 11/22/18

Mild, damp weather in the last week of Oct through 5 Nov brought a bit of moisture before clear, dry weather returned. Temperatures down to 26 F on 9 Nov brought the first killing frost to the valley floor, followed by frosty mornings and dry weather for most of the rest of the period. More seasonably wet weather finally moved in on 21 Nov., but total rainfall for the period was only about 1.5 inch, less than half of typical rainfall for this time of year.

With no standing water in most natural seasonal wetlands, waterfowl continued to concentrate in artificial ponds. Water levels remained low on area reservoirs. At Green Peter Reservoir east of Sweet Home, the water level was still 12 feet below the bottom of the Thistle Creek boat ramp at the end of the period.

**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.

## Conservation focus: Trumpeter Swans

Two species of swans winter in our area: Tundra Swans and Trumpeter Swans. The smaller of the two species, **Tundra Swan**, is far more common, with flocks of hundreds to over a thousand showing up regularly at mid-valley refuges and in the Halsey area. The North American subspecies of Tundra Swans, known as "Whistling" Swans, is generally considered to be stable and is regulated as a game species in some states (though hunting is not allowed in Oregon). The larger species, **Trumpeter Swan**, is the largest wild bird species by weight in North America, with males weighing up to 30 lbs, and with a wingspan close to that of eagles.

In our area, wintering Trumpeter Swans typically arrive in

mid- to late November and stay through February. A flock of 30 to 60 winters regularly near Airlie in s. Polk County; in recent smaller flocks have also been seen at Finley NWR and in southwest Linn County. Tundra Swans usually arrive a week or two earlier, and stay longer into spring, with the main concentrations farther south in the valley.



*Trumpeter Swan photo by Jon Hazen*

Both **Trumpeter Swans** and **Tundra Swans** were among a group of 20 swans on Kester Pond near Airlie 12 Nov. About 50 swans at Baskett Slough NWR that day were too far off the road to identify (Frank Kolwicz). Four **Tundra Swans** were on the Philomath STP 13 Nov (Howard Bruner). Ramesh Sagili had a flock of 18 Tundra Swans fly over his home in sw. Corvallis during late November.

Historically Trumpeter Swans nested across the continent from Alaska down to Oregon in the west, and across the midwestern prairie provinces and states to the New England seaboard, and wintering south to the Rio Grande. Early accounts from Oregon suggest that this species was more abundant than Tundra Swans in the mid-1800s. However the population all across the continent was decimated by market hunting (for meat, millinery feathers, and skins used for powder puffs), to the point that the species was believed to be extinct until a tiny, nonmigratory population was discovered in the Yellowstone area.

Older ASC members will remember when Trumpeter Swans were the focus of conservation efforts nearly as intensive as those for Whooping Cranes. Fortunately a larger population was discovered nesting in Alaska and remote regions of northwestern Canada.

The Pacific Flyway population that nests in Alaska (and very small corners of SW Yukon Territory and NW British Columbia) is now the most robust population, estimated to total around 15,000. This population furnishes most of the winter migrants to our region. The Rocky Mountains population (including migrant swans in the Canadian Rockies as well as non-migratory swans in the Yellowstone region) is around 2500. Several small, non-migratory populations have been established by reintroduction in the Great Basin, Great Plains, and Great Lakes regions.

Conservation threats for migratory Trumpeter Swans include loss of winter habitat, collisions with utility wires, lead poisoning. Wintering swans favor wide open landscapes where they can see predators at a distance, and where these massive birds have plenty of room for takeoff and landing. When such areas are fragmented by rural development or conversions to orchards and vineyards, they become less suitable. In smaller fields also put swans closer to roadside utility wires. The Airlie flock has lost at least one member to this cause, after striking a roadside wire on a foggy morning.

Lead poisoning is an elevated risk for Trumpeters due to their long lifespans (often over 20 years) and slow reproduction. Although lead shot has been banned for waterfowl hunting for decades, the pellets persist in wetlands, and can be taken up along with lead fishing sinkers (which are still legal) when swans dabble for food and grit. The risk is elevated in seasons with low water levels such as this one.

The Trumpeter Swan Society has tips for swan identification and further information on ways to support Trumpeter Swan conservation on their website: [www.trumpeterswansociety.org](http://www.trumpeterswansociety.org). Several national organizations including Audubon and the American Bird Conservancy are working to reduce use of lead in hunting and fishing, which could benefit other species including California Condors.

### Adjustments for winter

Several **Sooty Grouse** were along the road to the upper parking lot on Marys Peak 13 Nov (Janet Lamberson). These hardy grouse tend to move upslope in winter, where they feed on conifer needles after other food sources are buried in snow.

A female **Downy Woodpecker** excavated a roosting cavity in a birch snag that Don Boucher and Lisa Millbank erected in their yard. After several days of work including a couple of false starts, by 25 Oct the woodpecker had created a large enough cavity to shelter for the night. Two Downy Woodpeckers (at least one a male) chased each other around in an apparent territorial interaction at Bald Hill 18 Nov (Nancy Stotz).

On a very cold morning 10 Nov, a male and female **Anna's Hummingbird** perched side-by-side without bickering at a feeder near Teloh-Calapooia Park (Jim Smith).

### Avian hunters and fishers

A **Red-shouldered Hawk** dropped down from an oak tree to nab a snake at Finley NWR 28 Oct (Randy Comeleo).

A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** spooked flocks of robins, starlings, waxwings and finches at Sunset Park 14 Nov (Don Boucher). Two small **Sharp-shinned Hawks** had a territorial conflict at a bird-feeding station near a Teloh-Calapooia Park 14 Nov (Jim Smith).

A small **Peregrine Falcon** hunted Killdeer along Stapleton Rd. s. of Independence 10 Nov, making several rapid passes and stooping from low altitude (Mike Lippsmeyer). A **Merlin** stooped on an American Kestrel over NE Corvallis 13 Nov, in what seemed to be interspecies aggression rather than a full predatory attack (Don Boucher).

A **Belted Kingfisher** fished from a perch over the Willamette River at the Marshall Island boat launch near Junction City 6 Nov (Rana Foster).

### Amorous behavior

Two pairs of **Red-tailed Hawks** soared over SW Corvallis 12 Nov. The male of one pair dangled his legs while soaring, as done in courtship flights. Even though breeding season for this species is still months away, this kind of pair-bond behavior can be seen at any time of the year (Don Boucher).

### Autumn dawdlers and departures

Up to two female **Blue-winged Teal** continued at the Philomath STP through 12 Nov (Hendrik Herlyn).

Two **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Baskett Slough NWR through 1 Nov (Roy Gerig) were unusual for this late in the season.

Single **Turkey Vultures** were over Willamette Park 29 and 31 Oct (Duncan Evered) and one was over Bald Hill 18 Nov (Nancy Stotz). A late **Osprey** circled the ponds at Philomath STP 3 Nov (Hendrik Herlyn). A light-colored **Merlin** turned up near Teloh-Calapooia Park 28 Oct, where a similar bird wintered last year (Jim Smith).

A female **Selasphorus (Rufous or Allen's) Hummingbird** visited a feeder west of Bald Hill 12-13 Nov (Barbara Cherner and Michael Heher).

A late **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** was photographed at the Philomath STP 31 Oct (Russ Morgan). A late **Barn Swallow** was at Ankeny NWR 22 Nov (Roy Gerig). An apparent **Western Tanager** visited a water feature in SW Corvallis 17 Nov and in preceding days (Don Kuhns).

On 8 Nov a **Red Admiral** in NE Corvallis visited fruit trees with oozing sap and rotting fruit, which Lisa Millbank notes these butterflies may use when flowers are scarce. Swarms of **yellowjackets** were at the Philomath STP 13 Nov, a late date to see them active.

### Passersby

Eight **Snow Geese** (five of them juveniles) stopped by a field s. of Philomath 13 Nov (Howard Bruner). Three more were along Old River Rd. se. of Finley NWR 14 Nov (Deanna Emig).

A flock of southbound **Sandhill Cranes** called over Silverton in early afternoon on 8 Nov (Pam Reid). Two hours later a flock of 50 flew south over the Creswell area (Noah Strycker).

A **Townsend's Solitaire** on Marys Peak 28 Oct (Jesse Laney) was likely a wayward migrant.

### Arrivals and continuing wintering birds

Two "**Dusky**" **Canada Geese** with red collars (one labeled as 09T and one possible 8E7) were at Ankeny NWR 4 Nov (Gayle Peterson). More were at Finley NWR 12 Nov (Paul Rentz). Eight **Greater White-fronted Geese** in a cattle pasture s. of Independence 10 Nov (Mike Lippsmeyer).

34 **Canvasbacks** were on the Philomath STP 27 Oct (Hendrik Herlyn). **Green-winged Teal** and **Dunlin** clustered around a patch of water at Baskett Slough NWR 1 Nov (Harry Fuller). A few coastal gulls began to visit the valley, including a **Herring Gull** at Cabell Marsh 30 Oct (Bruce, Eric, & Andrew Pratt).

On 1 Nov Sandy Horning and Elsie Eltzroth watched a **Wilson's Snipe** as it foraged along a fence in Elsie's backyard at Stoneybrook Village in SW Corvallis. Elsie notes that this neighborhood was a farm with creeks running through it, prior to development. With less access to creeksides and with dry soil conditions elsewhere, a watered lawn might have been attractive for this species that feeds mainly by probing in soggy ground.

At least two **White-tailed Kites** continued at the North Prairie at Finley NWR, where this species is regularly found in winter. Sightings of other raptors continued to increase as wintering birds showed up alongside of residents. A juvenile **Bald Eagle** soared over Jackson-Frazier Wetland 30 Oct (Chris Dunfield). Seventeen **Red-tailed Hawks** were in sheep pastures along Lake Creek Rd. s. of Halsey 25 Oct (Nancy Stotz). A regular wintering "**Harlan's**" **Red-tailed Hawk** continued s. of Independence (Mike Lippsmeyer) as of

2 Nov. A dark-morph **Rough-legged Hawk** at the North Prairie 13 Nov was likely the same one that has spent the past several winters there (Howard Bruner)

A female **Prairie Falcon** was along Bell Plain Dr. s. of Tangent 25 Oct (Richard Hoyer). A **Prairie Falcon** also turned up s. of Philomath 31 Oct (Russ Morgan).

A **Say's Phoebe** sallied after flying insects at McFadden Marsh 28 Oct; two **Black Phoebes** were also in the area (Pam Comeleo). At least two **Northern Shrikes** were at Finley NWR by 27 Oct: one along Bruce Rd. (Nancy Stotz) and one at the North Prairie overlook (per eBird).

By 2 Nov five **Horned Larks** turned up on a field s. of Independence where larger numbers have wintered in recent years (Mike Lippsmeyer). A flock of **American Pipits** were along Bruce Rd. at Finley NWR 28 Oct (Randy Comeleo). More were along Garden Ave. in NE Corvallis 5 Nov (Don Boucher).

In Kings Valley on the morning of 19 Nov, Chris Shonnard found a **Golden-crowned Kinglet** that must have died the previous night. This is the smallest species of songbird in North America. It nests in conifer forests both in the Cascades and in the Coast Range. During winter, flocks move to lower elevations and can be one of our most abundant birds, though usually difficult to see up close due to their habit of foraging high in trees.

**White-throated Sparrows** began to be noted by 10 Nov, usually with wintering flocks of Golden-crowned Sparrows and/or Dark-eyed Juncos. Although most field guides don't show the Willamette Valley as part of the winter range for this species, small numbers winter regularly, usually found in brushy edges of woodlands. A **Swamp Sparrow** turned up at the Philomath STP 27 Oct (Hendrik Herlyn).

A **Vesper Sparrow** that was banded on a Benton Co. Christmas tree farm last April turned up on 4 Nov near the small town of Rumsey, California, in the coast range foothills nw. of Sacramento (Holly Coates, Emmett Iverson). This was the first winter detection of a banded "Oregon" Vesper Sparrow, from local populations which are being monitored as part of an American Bird Conservancy study.

A **Snow Bunting** continued to be seen near the summit of Marys Peak through 6 Nov (Nancy Stotz), joined by two more 9 Nov (James Philipson, Bev Clark; Eric & Andrew Pratt). At least two continued there through 12 Nov (per eBird) but could note be found 13 Nov (Janet Lamberson).

**Red Crossbills** called near E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area 19-20 Nov.

**Western Meadowlark** flocks were noted north of Baskett Slough NWR 30 Oct (Frank Kolwicz), s. of Independence 2 Nov (Mike Lippsmeyer), and in several areas west of Eugene 22 Nov (Rana Foster) where our state songbird still nests in good numbers.

### Rare or off-course birds

An adult **Brant** turned up with a flock of several thousand **Cackling Geese** s. of Finley NWR 14 Nov (Deanna Emig). A **Heermann's Gull** visited the Philomath STP 2 Nov (Will Wright). This species often wanders north along the coast in winter, but rarely shows up inland.

A **Palm Warbler** was still at Willamette Park 26 Oct and 29 Oct (Duncan Evered; Nancy Stotz), likely the same one reported there at the end of the preceding period. A **Dickcissel** continued to visit birdseed scattered at the Philomath STP through 27 Oct (Jamie Simmons).



## Natural areas

The trail network at Fitton Green Natural Area got a welcome new extension with "Amy's Trail," funded by a bequest of the late Amy Schoener and her spouse Bill Percy to ASC, and with help from Crestmont Land Trust. This trail now makes it possible to hike all the way from Bald Hill Natural

Area to the terminus of the western section of Cardwell Hill Rd., near where Amy and Bill contributed to efforts to preserve native prairie habitat and wildflowers required by the endangered **Fender's Blue** butterfly.

*Joel Geier, Field Notes Editor*

## Board Meeting Summary

### Summary of November, 2018 Board Meeting

1. The Board voted unanimously to pursue upgrades to the ASC website, using the template National Audubon provided.
2. The maple tree has been trimmed & the new landscaping design of native plants in front of the Hesthavn Nature Center will soon be implemented.
3. The Board voted unanimously to cover the registration fee for students, 7th-12th grade, who wish to attend the Willamette Valley Bird Symposium at the end of January,
4. The trail between Fitton Green & Crestmont Land Trust trails, in honor of the late Amy Schoener, is now scheduled to be completed and open to the public on December 1st.
5. The next Board meeting will be held on Dec. 13th at Natural Grocers Community Room at 7 pm. All members are welcome!

*Linda Campbell, Board 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 Board meeting minutes for location.

## Membership Corner

### Welcome New Members!

Carole Cotham  
Mai Kiigemagi

### 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 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 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 or mail address, please send your new contact information to Suzanne Ortiz at [ortizsv@gmail.com](mailto:ortizsv@gmail.com).

### The 2018 Annual Appeal

A huge thank you to all of our members and friends who have participated in the 2018 Appeal. We are at the mid-point in our annual fundraising campaign and there is still time to donate, renew your memberships or give a gift membership for the holiday season.

At this time of year, ASC recognizes our many supporters, who give throughout the year by volunteering their time, energy and enthusiasm at the many outreach and educational events and work parties that have taken place. The gift of your time is greatly appreciated and has enriched our program. Your signatures on our conservation letters and petitions, your presence at our lecture series, special events, and on our field trips, are all valued.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

*Suzanne Ortiz, Membership Chair*

### Contributors to this Chat

Mark Baldwin, Suzanne Ortiz, Teri Engbring, Naomi Weidner, Joel Geier, Don Boucher, Linda Campbell, Raylene Gordin, Ray Drapek, Isaac Denzer, Valerie & Dale Mitchell, Marcia Cutler, and Noelle Moen

### 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

Dec 2	Hesthavn Barn and yard work party, 10-2
Dec 8	Half Day Field Trip to Finley NWR and Philomath STP
Dec 13	Board meeting, 7 pm at Natural Grocers
Dec 20	ASC General Members Meeting, 7 pm
Dec 16	Hesthavn Work Party, 10-2
Dec 18	Corvallis Christmas Bird Count
Dec 27	Stories due for January 2019 CHAT
Dec 27	Field Notes submissions due
Jan 5	Airlie-Albany Christmas Bird Count
Jan 12	Field Trip, location TBD

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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Interested in volunteering?  
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*Renew your membership before the date on the mailing label to avoid missing issues of the Chat.*

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