



THE CHAT

MAY 2020

VOL. 49 #9

ASC General Meeting

MAY 21 LIVE MEETING CANCELLED; BUT ZOOM Webinar is scheduled at 7 pm, as we did for April 9 (hopefully without a delay this time). On Thursday, May 21st, at our scheduled 7 pm meeting time, Fred Ramsey will share photos and stories from his trip to Oaxaca, Mexico, in 2000, online (via a Zoom webinar)

The Mexican state of Oaxaca lies on the Pacific Ocean and is characterized by steep mountains created by the convergence of mountain ranges. The valleys between are deep and narrow, many forming cloud forests and habitat for a wide variety of birds and other wildlife. Oaxaca is one of the most ecologically and biologically diverse areas in Mexico. Nearly half of all species in Mexico are found here including nearly 750 species of birds.

Fred is a founding member of ASC and has been actively involved for more than 50 years. He has been the leader of over 350 ASC field trips over the years.

April's meeting presentation on "Birding Bolivia Amid Regime Change and Climate Change" by Bill Proebsting is available online.

To view this one-hour presentation, go to the following link:

<https://bit.ly/2S57h3i>

Access Password: Bolivia2!

Change is the name of the game these days. Our scheduled Spring speakers: James Sumich, Worth Mathewson and Randy Comeleo, will be on the program calendar for 2020-21. I hope we are able to return to a more normal state of affairs soon. We have reserved a meeting room at the newly remodeled Corvallis Senior Center for our third Thursday general member meetings beginning in September, 2020, but check the website to see if we will be able to meet "LIVE" or via webinar by then.

Please visit the ASC website for program information and updates over the next several weeks at: <https://auduboncorvallis.org>

ASC members who registered their email address with their membership should receive an invitation prior to the webinar. Additionally, instructions on the website can provide directions to the webinar.

Suggestions for future speakers are always welcome at mark.baldwin2@comcast.net

Mark Baldwin, Vice Pres. & Program Chair



Rosita's Bunting photo by Fred Ramsay

Due to the global Coronavirus pandemic, all ASC planned in-person programs and meetings over the next two months have been cancelled or postponed. For the latest info, please visit our website at auduboncorvallis.org.

In This Issue

2020-21 Board Nominations	65-66
President's Corner	66-67
Conservation Update	67
ASC Website and Social Media	67
Education News	67-68
Hesthavn News	69
Field Trips	69
Community Notes	69
Field Notes	69-71
Board Meeting Summary ..	71
Membership Corner	71
Contributors to this CHAT .	71
Calendar	72

Nominations for 2020-2021 ASC Board

The Nominating Committee of the Audubon Society of Corvallis (Karan Fairchild and Teri Engbring) offer the following slate of candidates to serve in the 2020/2021 term, which begins at the as yet unscheduled summer board meeting. Normally, the slate of continuing and new board members is elected by the members at their May General Meeting. We are trying to make arrangements for that meeting, an entertaining and educational program, and vote, all safely online. Please check the <https://auduboncorvallis.org> website for further information.

Officers:

Co-Presidents:

Dave Mellinger has been a member of ASC since 2000 and a board member most of that time. He was Vice President for four years, and has served intermittently as ASC Conservation Chair over several years. He is currently a Professor at OSU, working in Corvallis and at the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport, where he studies sounds of whales and other marine and terrestrial species.

Karan Fairchild has been involved with the Audubon Society of Corvallis for over 30 years. She has served in many capacities during that time, including member-at-large, Secretary, and fundraising chairperson. She instigated the successful Birdathon fundraisers, and is currently on the bylaws committee, nominations committee, Homer Campbell Award committee, Hesthavn committee, and serves in several other functions. Past duties also included bird rehabilitation, bluebird trail, sales table, fair booths and publicity. She and husband Jim have done a local Christmas bird count for over 35 years and a Breeding Bird Survey in the Coast Range for over 25 years.

Vice President:

Mark Baldwin has lived in Corvallis since 1987. He has been an active member of ASC since retiring in 2013, a member-at-large of the board and Vice President for the past two years. An avid birder, he has participated in many ASC field trips and enjoys travel and birding with his wife, Carla. For 25 years, he taught Applied Tech (woodworking to pre-engineering) at Crescent Valley High School and was co-founder of the school's FIRST Robotics team. Photographing birds and other wildlife occupies much of his time.

Secretary: Beth Boroson lives in Corvallis and taught elementary aged students for nineteen years. Now she works full time from home doing educational research for a Portland-based organization. She has been a key education team volunteer in our free family fun and learning programs at Hesthavn Nature Center over the last two years. She has also volunteered to help at other weekend and evening educational events. She enjoys birdwatching in her beautiful backyard in South Corvallis.

Treasurer: Carolyn Peterson After raising two sons, Carolyn retired after nearly two decades as a CPA. She moved to Corvallis from Sherwood, Oregon with her husband Curt about five years ago. Relocating to Corvallis was a return to her stomping grounds of the early 80s when she was a Geology graduate student at OSU. Although not a "lister," Carolyn has enjoyed observing birds since childhood.

Board Members-at-large:

Gail Nickerson has been a member of ASC for 15 years and is a sedentary bird watcher. Prior to serving as member-at-large on the board, she was secretary and refreshment chair. For several years, Gail also planned and hosted the busy volunteer break room at the Winter Wildlife Field Day at Finley. She says she is planning a second retirement soon.

Robert Murray is returning for his second year on the Board and to the Education team. He served as ASC's representative to the Winter Wildlife Field Day steering committee. He is a retired business professor from Maine. As a faculty member, he served on and chaired many committees. He joined Audubon because of its reputation as an environmental organization, and he believes that we must help the young to deal with the challenge of climate change.

Christina Linkem is returning for her second year as well. After earning a B.S. in Biology from the University of Hawaii she moved to Corvallis and got involved with ASC at the Hesthavn Nature Center, running a macro-invertebrate station for 4th and 5th graders. In her first year on the board she started an Instagram account for ASC (@auduboncorvallis) and had planned to volunteer for the Winter Wildlife Field Day for her third year in a row. Christina has served as a Biological Field Technical Crew

Leader for the Forest Service in the summers, visiting remote sites within the Pacific Northwest to conduct stream surveys as a part of a long-term monitoring program for the Northwest Forest Plan. She is now pursuing a Masters degree in Fisheries Science at OSU. She hopes to do research and educate the public about the importance of our fragile PNW forest ecosystems.

Enthusiastic teen birder Kai Frueh still wants to help ASC reach out to all ages in support of birding and conservation. In his first year on the board he established an ASC Facebook page (along with Ed Volunteer Nancy DeMasi) and has been developing a video about ASC outreach efforts. He is a founder of the Benton County Big Sit that has raised funds for ASC and other conservation groups since 2016. He helped lead birding at the Winter Wildlife Field Day at Finley refuge and was a key organizer for A Day of Birds in South Town, in 2018. Kai has written for the OBA magazine, maintains about 20 swallow/ bluebird nest boxes on private land and enjoys contributing data to both NestWatch and eBird.

Dodie Wilson is a long-time member of ASC, and briefly served on its board in the 1990s. She volunteers in Corvallis Schools, where one of her two girls is enrolled, and served on the Mt View Elementary PTA board and as PTA president. She also volunteered for their Naturalist-in-Residence program where she co-taught one a program on birds. In 2001, Dodie received a Masters in Wildlife Science from OSU and worked in a number of positions on bird, amphibian, and small mammal surveys. Dodie works with education and conservation efforts for ASC. She was leading two events this spring for ASC, the National Audubon Award Winning Photo Exhibit and a Catio Tour to publicize ways to help cats and birds both stay safe and enjoy Nature. Sadly, both events had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.

Mikaela Lea began volunteering with the Audubon Education Team in 2016 with the Winter Wildlife Field Day Planning Committee. Since then, she has moved up to working with the Education Team Planning Committee while working part-time and continuing her studies at OSU. She is pursuing a double degree in Natural Resources and Sustainability, as well as a minor in Leadership at OSU. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, camping, and visiting family back home in Brookings, Oregon. She looks forward to serving as a board member and getting to know everyone in the ASC.

President's Corner

Social Distancing



Black-throated Gray Warbler photo by Bill Proebsting

We are all reeling from the impact of COVID-19 on global society. (Lena and I are getting used to saying COVID instead of Corvid.) We can generalize that ASC's membership is a vulnerable population, but as I write this, Corvallis is faring pretty well. We are also fortunate in that birding is a hobby that can still be pursued, albeit with modifications.



In Corvallis, we are fortunate that, despite the lockdown, we can still get outdoors. I am sure many of you have been out birding during this exciting time of the year. As we reflect on this historic event and how it is affecting our lives, our collective interest in birds and nature is a great adaptation to difficult times.

Simply staying at home and improving habitat is another option. Over the past couple of months, in this column I have been harping on gardening as an activity that can demonstrably help birds and, by the way, provide enjoyment for you. As another approach to motivating you to garden for birds, consider the isolation and exercise gardening provides.

In my gardening for birds talk, I make the case for the 'Avian Home Entertainment System' as something that has very few costs and many benefits. The list includes: no payments, no contracts, it is good for you, good for your soul, good for the birds, features intelligent programming, no re-runs or commercials and is solar-powered. We can now add social distancing to this list. Better than a win-win, we can think of gardening for birds as "win to the n". You will get sick of winning!

Stay safe.

Bill Proebsting, Chapter President

Conservation Update

Wanted – A Closer Look after the 50th Earth Day (April 22)

Many of us are spending much more time at home, experiencing a spring unlike any in memory. In between our essential trips, accompanied by face mask, hand sanitizer, and an almost unseemingly social discomfort, getting out in a more natural setting has a familiar feel, plus a new meaning and significance.

Once we manage to get out into these places, are we seeing things in a new light? These natural communities are very dynamic, but it is difficult to note their changes unless we visit a place often or take a much closer look.

One thing I miss in most of our publicly accessible landscapes is dying and dead wood, and the diversity of habitats it provides. Woodpeckers excavate cavities, and some will damage or kill limbs, or even whole trees, with their handiwork. Chickadees and nuthatches also can create nest holes in well-decayed wood. One of our large fallen chinquapin trees had one knothole containing lichens from a flying squirrel nest overlying the tree needle resin ducts from red tree vole use. Months later that prostrated knothole sheltered a roosting Pacific wren who fled at my approach. Deer mice and red-backed voles shelter alongside and within the sloughed bark. Soon the log likely will harbor one or more western red-backed salamanders feeding on the springtails that feed on fungal hyphae, even the root rot that felled this tree.

I see in both our oak woodlands and conifer forests a startling lack of mortality, implemented under a utilitarian ethic that equates a healthy forest to a collection of healthy trees. Death in the forest becomes the call for human intervention. Over time this ethic creates static forest conditions that direct trees towards eventual removal for harvest or a long indeterminate life among look-alikes. And if one day we determine our conifers should instead be oaks (or prairie) because fire would otherwise have made it so, shouldn't fire-killed remnants remain when this conversion is done? Where will the voles, salamanders and lizards of the new woodland take shelter? What can you see when you visit our public spaces?

Jim Fairchild

A Chapter forest conservation advocate since 1985, Jim currently participates in the Mary's Peak Stewardship Group of the Siuslaw National Forest. He tries to stay abreast of Corvallis Watershed activities, adjacent to the 80 acres of forestland he and Karan manage under FSC certification. Jim will soon assist Benton County in evaluating forest management revision proposals for Fort Hoskins, Beazell Memorial Forest, and Fitton Green. He welcomes your input. He also recommended the following article by Pepper Trail:

BEST. EARTH DAY. EVER.

For the Earth, I mean. Not for us, of course. For us – sheltering in fear, consumed with money worries, perhaps grieving for loved ones struck down by COVID-19, perhaps under attack by the virus ourselves – it is the worst Earth Day ever. No sunlit ceremonies, no face-painted kids racing around on the grass, no feel-good speeches, no pledges to do better, this time. But it is a sad truth, worth considering, that everything that is afflicting us is benefiting the Earth. We are not driving or flying, so pollution is at its lowest level in decades. Our factories are mostly stilled, rolling out neither the dubious "goods" they were designed to produce, nor the associated waste. Millions of animals are still alive today thanks to the pandemic: normal traffic is estimated to kill a million animals per day in the US. The examples are endless.

There is a fundamental question to be asked when a relationship is in crisis: is your life better without your partner? There can be no doubt that our relationship with the Earth has become toxic. The Earth WOULD be better off without us. That truth should fill us with shame. If we love the Earth, which we say we do, if we cannot live without the Earth, which is a simple fact, then we must change.

This Earth Day, instead of driving to a self-congratulatory event, let's stay in our rooms, and look in the mirror. Let us take stock of all the harm we are doing in this relationship. Let us apologize, and mean it. And when what we call "the world" starts up again, let's set out on a new path, no longer takers only, but partners. Who knows ... at the next Earth Day party, maybe the Earth will be glad to see us.

Pepper Trail, Forensic Ornithologist, USFWS

For Up to the Minute ASC News

The updated ASC website is at <https://auduboncorvallis.org>, and it is a handy place to find current ASC news, especially as this is the last CHAT until August. We are trying to find safe ways to help you Connect with Nature in the coming weeks. so check in periodically.

Tired of self-quarantine? Birdwatching is the perfect activity for social distancing. See the National Audubon Society's take on how to add spice to your confinement. The link is provided on the ASC homepage.

Enjoy the beautiful bird photos on 30 pages, and try your skill at identifying them. Hover your cursor over the photo to see the subject and photographer.

Keep in touch and send a message to us at audubon.corvallis@gmail.com.

Sue Powell, ASC Website

Learn about what's new with ASC, and share your questions, photos and exciting bird sightings: at Audubon Society of Corvallis or tag us on [Facebook@corvallisaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/corvallisaudubon).

Kai Frueh and Nancy DeMasi, ASC Facebook

Check us out on Instagram at our new handle, which is [@auduboncorvallis](https://www.instagram.com/auduboncorvallis).

Christina Linkem, ASC Instagram

Education News

ASC Education Programs on hold due to social distancing

Our schedule of education and outreach events have either been cancelled or postponed through June while we wait to see the status of the pandemic in our area. There is no resource more important to us than our volunteers and members, and nothing is worth risking their health and safety.

For those who would like to continue to make a difference and

support local wildlife and conservation behind the scenes, please consider:

- 1) Sharing your best new local nature photos, tales, and birding news with ASC's Facebook page or website, and
- 2) Joining ASC Education Event Coordination and planning efforts that will be electronic until we can safely meet in person.

We are looking for new ways to make a difference and help our neighbors Connect with Nature. Let us know if you have ideas by emailing Teri at chateditors@gmail.com. Thanks!

How Are You Connecting with Nature now?

In these challenging times for humanity, we hope that you are finding safe ways to connect with Nature. This is the time of year when breeding birds are at their most magnificent colors and behaviors. Listen to the bird songs and watch them raise their spring and summer families in our back yards. Wildflowers and neighborhood flower beds are also in their beautiful prime, so keep your eyes open and soak it all in.

Teri Engbring, ASC Education Team

Enjoy Nature and Act for Them

To Enjoy our Wildlife from Home:

Our National Audubon Society asks us all to take action and share the love of birds on social media, including our own <https://auduboncorvallis.org> website, Facebook page and Instagram site. They also invite you to see their photos, videos and articles at www.audubon.org/joy-of-birds.

To Take Action:

As Congress begins to consider what investments to make to bring our economy back, ask them to support programs that build more resilient communities. If we have more jobs that ensure clean air, water, bird protection, and habitat restoration, we can help communities and ecosystems threatened by climate change. Everyone wins. Ask your Congressperson and Senators to invest in conservation jobs and programs and alternative, clean energy.

NAS

Homer Campbell Award

The Homer Campbell Award is now awarded every two years rather than annually, so nominations will be sought in 2021.

Hesthavn News

May and June work parties at Hesthavn are cancelled

Please check the ASC website for current status on work parties and other events. Trails at Hesthavn are open to responsible visitors from dawn to dusk, but the Nature Center building will be closed to the public until it is safe for us all to reopen. If you come on our grounds, please practice safe social distancing and common courtesy, which includes keeping all dogs on leash in this wildlife friendly space, and cleaning up their mess and your trash before leaving. No bikes on our trails please, as they cause damage to sensitive plants. Currently McDonald Forest is closed to visitors and so we currently are not having a problem with spill-over parking, but for the long term we ask that people only park in our lot if they are visiting Hesthavn. The lot may look empty, but we often need those spaces for our volunteers and program participants.

ASC volunteers may be working inside or on the grounds during

this time, but we ask that you give us space. Our intention is to be working on the grounds upkeep on Sundays. There will be no formal work parties for the time being, but if you want to come some Sunday and help out we can give you instructions (from a safe social distance). For the months of April and May we will be emphasizing pulling false-brome and herb-Robert (aka "stinky Bob"). Anyone is welcome to work on these on your own as long as you are sure you can correctly identify them and dispose of them properly. Send me a note for more details (raydrapek@gmail.com). In any case, we look forward to interacting with you in future.

Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair

Directions to Hesthavn at 8590 NW Oak Creek Drive, Corvallis. Take Harrison west from downtown Corvallis; after you cross 53rd, it becomes Oak Creek Drive. Pass Bald Hill farm and follow the signs for Nature Center. Hesthavn will be on your left shortly before the end of Oak Creek Dr.

2020 Birdathon Cancelled

The global pandemic has cancelled many activities for ASC, including Hesthavn's biggest annual fundraiser, the Birdathon. Over 19 years, the Birdathon has raised more than \$80,000 for our Nature Center, used for the solar composting toilet, museum display cases, new flooring, weather tight doors and windows, the rainwater collection system and other projects. If you can help replace some of the lost yearly revenue for Hesthavn projects, please send a check earmarked for Hesthavn to Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis, OR 97339 or use Paypal through our website <https://auduboncorvallis.org/donate/>. Thank you very much!

Karan Fairchild, Fundraising Committee

Field Trip Schedule

Second Saturday field trips are CANCELLED at least through July.

Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess

Weekend Field Trips

As noted last month, all our 2020 extended field trips are CANCELLED and reservations released.

For more info, check the ASC website, or email Fred Ramsey at flramsey5@comcast.net, or call 541-753-3677.

Fred Ramsey, Weekend Field Trips Chair

Catio Tour Cancelled

The Corvallis Catio tour sponsored by Benton Soil and Water Conservation District, Heartland Humane Society, Chintimini Wildlife Center, and the Audubon Society of Corvallis scheduled for May 28 has been cancelled. We hope to reschedule for a later date.

Dodie Wilson, ASC Board member

Community Notes

Finley Wildlife Refuge Access

The entrance gates at Bellfountain Road and Finley Refuge Road will be closed till further notice. You cannot drive through the refuge as we did in the good-old days.

The refuge is open but you cannot drive to your favorite hiking trailhead. Please do not block the gates or park on Finley Road. There are some pullouts on Bruce Road. You could park there if not crowded and take a stroll onto the refuge. If pullouts are crowded, please keep driving.

I know this is difficult for us all, but we must follow the guidelines presented to us by Refuge staff and the CDC. Remember to maintain social distancing and avoid overcrowding even in the refuge.

Finally, the flora and fauna of the refuge will be able to enjoy



days without cars. We owe that much to them: our dearest creatures now get a break from US!

Diane Young, Secretary, Friends of Finley
secretary.friends@gmail.com
541-757-7236 ext. 116

National Wildlife Refuge Association

As you know, many national and state parks, national wildlife refuges and other public lands have been closed to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Be sure to research the status of your local refuge and if you choose to visit wildlife refuges that remain open, remember that they are not at full staffing right now.

Enjoy Your Backyard

While national wildlife refuges often represent the best places to see wildlife in your area, you might be surprised by what you can find in your own backyard. I encourage you to share what you are seeing on local Facebook and Instagram pages. At my house, we are creating a list of the birds we are seeing during this time and look forward to comparing it to what we see when we head out to our local national wildlife refuge.

Consider Indoor Options

If you live in an urban or populated area, it may be hard to find good outdoor options and still comply with social distancing guidelines. Consider some of these indoor activities that can help you stay connected to the natural world, and if you have a good idea - share it on your Corvallis Audubon Facebook page.

- Get active with your kids. <https://bit.ly/2VKNKaW>
- Read up on your refuges, with our "6 Books About National Wildlife Refuges To Keep You Busy During Quarantine" reading list. <https://bit.ly/2VFyyM6>
- Virtually visit national wildlife refuges across the country. <https://bit.ly/2V13dZF>
- Start planning what you'll do when we can return to our refuges and public lands. <https://bit.ly/3bKa4a8>

We want this crisis to pass as quickly as possible and we know from the CDC guidelines that social distancing is the best way for us to flatten the coronavirus curve. National wildlife refuges continue to be managed for wildlife in spite of the coronavirus and will be there for us to enjoy when this crisis ends.

Geoffrey Haskett, President,
National Wildlife Refuge Association

Field Notes

03/27/20 – 04/26/20

Precipitation continued to be scant for the season, with abundant sunshine punctuated by a few passing rain/hail squalls, with frost on 13 Apr. The last week of the period brought more sustained showers but cumulative precipitation for the month was only about 1/3 of normal.

Cottonwoods and big-leaf maples nearly fully leafed out, and oak leaves unfurling by the end of the period. A sprig of **golden paintbrush** was blooming at Baskett Slough NWR 11 Apr (Howard Bruner). By then **fawn lilies** were fading at Bellfountain Park but **shooting-stars** were in spectacular bloom (Rana Foster). On 20 Apr Catherine Otto noted many wildflowers along the Mulkey Ridge Trail w. of Corvallis, including **calypso orchid**, **starry false Solomon's seal**, **checkered lily** and **Pacific bleeding-heart**.

Many local observers found themselves spending more time at home and commuting less, as schools, offices, and many businesses remained closed due to the COVID-19 virus. Some popular bird-watching sites remained closed, including all state parks and state natural areas, as well as the OSU forests, Starker Forests, and national forest trailheads. Portions of Finley NWR that were closed last month re-opened to pedestrian access by 1 Apr, but Finley Refuge Rd. remained closed to vehicles. E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area stayed open for daytime use, along with Benton County natural areas, parks and trails. This shift in circumstances no doubt affected bird reporting, with more backyard observations but

fewer chance sightings along roadsides, and less coverage of forested habitats in the Coast Range and Cascades.

Abbreviations and locations: NWR = National Wildlife Refuge, SNA = State Natural Area STP = sewage treatment ponds. Butterfield Wetland is s. of Goodnight Ave. in s. Corvallis. Jackson-Frazier Wetland is in north Corvallis near Cheldelin Middle School. Luckiamute SNA is along the Willamette River northwest of Albany. Marys River Mitigation Bank is a newly constructed wetland adjacent to the Philomath STP, both south of Philomath off Bellfountain Rd. Tampico Ridge is just nw. of Adair Village. Teloh-Calapooia Park is in south Albany near Linn-Benton Community College, Talking Water Gardens are in NE Albany. Cabell Marsh, McFadden Marsh, and North Prairie are locations at Finley NWR.

Conservation focus: "Oregon" Vesper Sparrows

The subspecies of Vesper Sparrow that nests in western Oregon and Washington, called "**Oregon" Vesper Sparrow**, has dwindled to a total population of fewer than 3000 birds. In October of 2017, the American Bird Conservancy (ABC) petitioned the US Fish & Wildlife Service to list these birds under the Endangered Species Act.

As part of an ongoing study by ABC, the Center for Natural Lands Management, and Klamath Bird Observatory, seeking to identify factors that are causing the ongoing population decline, many of the Vesper Sparrows that nest in our area as well as in the south Puget Sound region and the Rogue Valley have been marked with colored leg bands.

This winter, for just the second time, one of these birds was sighted on their wintering range in California. That bird - seen by many birders near Vacaville during the first two weeks of Mar - turned out to be a bird from Joint Base Lewis-McChord. Just 13 days after the last sighting of that bird in California, a different color-banded male returned to a monitoring site near Corvallis on 28 Mar (Bob Altman).

Four years of observations indicate that the earliest Vesper Sparrows to return are usually older males (at least into their third spring after their hatch year). Female Vesper Sparrows and younger males tend to arrive later, many of them not until mid-April. A young male that fledged from a nest at Bald Hill Farm last July turned up on 18 Apr, singing from a perch east of the ramada along the trail to the north side of Bald Hill Park. A female near Airlie got to work quickly after arriving, building a nest by 20 Apr and laying her first egg by 26 Apr.

You can help by keeping an eye open for banded Vesper Sparrows, and noting the colors on their leg bands if you do manage to see one. Also, dog owners can help these and other ground-nesting birds by keeping your dogs on leash and on trails, while visiting grassland habitat during nesting season from Apr thru Jul. Nests can be surprisingly close to roads and trails - one nest at Bald Hill Farm was found within 5 feet of the access road.

Courtship and nesting

Sooty Grouse were booming in the hills w. of Corvallis 21 Apr (Howard Bruner). At least one male **Mountain Quail** on Vineyard Mtn seems to have had a successful courtship, as a pair showed up under Paul Adamus' bird feeder w. of Lewisburg 24 Apr.

A **Killdeer** pair s. of Independence tended two chicks by 10 Apr (Karen & Mike Lippsmeyer). By then two pairs of **Black-necked Stilts** were back at Baskett Slough NWR where this species now nests annually, and seven were there by 19 Apr (Ron Peterson, Frank Kolwicz; Erik Knight).

At least fifteen **Great Blue Heron** nests were active in a stand of poplars at Coffin Butte Regional Landfill by 3 Apr. A pair of **Turkey Vultures** frequenting an oak woodland s. of Independence as of 29 Mar may have been planning to nest there (Mike Lippsmeyer).

A pair of **Osprey** returned to the Harrison Ave. bridge in Corvallis by 29 Mar (Andi Stephens). A pair was also back at a nest near Luckiamute SNA by 1 Apr.

Two **Northern Pygmy-Owls** "sang" their monotonous, slow-paced tooting songs from opposite sides of the Soap Creek Valley 3 Apr. A **Western Screech-Owl** sang near Fitton Green after dark on 2 Apr (Randy & Pam Comeleo).

A **Pileated Woodpecker** drummed outside Randy Comeleo's home office in sw. Corvallis 15 Apr discovered that a nest box designed for Northern Flickers made an even better sounding board. A pair of **Red-breasted Sapsuckers** worked on a nest cavity in a utility pole in NW Corvallis during the week leading up to 13 Apr (Phyllis Bailey).

A pair of **American Kestrels** near Seavy Meadows in ne. Corvallis seemed to be using a cavity in another utility pole for nesting; in Mar Don Boucher and Lisa Millbank saw one go into the cavity, and on 25

Apr they heard the female making begging sounds, which is a sign of courtship.

A **Barn Swallow** that turned up at Mike & Karen Lippsmeyer's farm s. of Independence 4 Apr acted "like he owned the place"; by the next day three more had shown up and were singing inside the barn. **Cliff Swallows** returned to nests there by 6 Apr.

A **Black-capped Chickadee** investigated a nest hole and an **American Robin** carried moss to a nest under construction near Forest Dell Natural Area in nw. Corvallis 15 Apr (Mary Garrard).

Local residents

A **Cooper's Hawk** called as it hung on a stiff breeze over Witham Hill Park 29 Mar (Andrea Foster).

On 20 Apr Catherine Otto noted that **Acorn Woodpeckers** were active and vocal along Mulkey Ridge, where numbers have swelled since Douglas-firs were logged off to release the older Oregon white-oaks and restore oak woodland/savanna habitat.

A hail squall on 2 Apr drove a **Black Phoebe** to shelter in a sequoia tree in Bruce Starker Arts Park 2 Apr (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank).

Little Brown Bats were active at ASC's Hesthavn sanctuary 10 Apr (Rana Foster).

Western Pond Turtles basked on logs in restored ponds at Raindance Ranch near Alpine in early April (Warren & Laurie Halsey).

Migrants passing through

Several small flocks of **Snow Geese** joined **Cackling Goose** flocks staging at Baskett Slough NWR in the first week of Apr, and a high count of 17 were just north of the refuge 11 Apr (Frank Kolwicz). One stopped by Warren & Laurie Halsey's wetland restoration ponds near Alpine 5 Apr, joining a mix of other waterfowl including a brightly crowned **Eurasian Wigeon**.

Northward migration of **Greater White-fronted Geese** was underway by 11 Apr when 50 flew over Mike & Karen Lippsmeyer's farm s. of Independence. Numbers peaked around 20-25 Apr, as flocks of hundreds to a thousand or more were noted flying north/northwest over the west side of the valley.

A lone **Sandhill Crane** flew over Brandon Wagner's organic farm n. of Independence 13 Apr. A **Swainson's Hawk** glided northward along the east side of the Willamette River near Willamette Park 16 Apr, and a second drifted north riding thermals the next day (Duncan Evered).

Shorebirds passing through included single **Semipalmated Plovers** at Philomath STP 18 Apr and Baskett Slough NWR 19 Apr (Will Wright; Erik Knight). While Don Boucher was working in his ne. Corvallis yard 31 Mar, he heard, then saw three **Greater Yellowlegs** as they flew over, heading south, then arcing eastward. These birds may have been refueling at Jackson-Frazier Wetland, where Irene Schoppy saw half a dozen there on 1 Apr. Two **Lesser Yellowlegs** were at Marys River Mitigation Bank 14 Apr (Jamie Simmons).

A **Solitary Sandpiper** showed up s. of Independence 10 Apr, and a second stopped by on 15 Apr (Karen & Mike Lippsmeyer). One foraged on a gravel bar in Willamette Park 18 Apr (Duncan Evered, Caryn Stoess). Don Boucher and Lisa Millbank heard several calling at Jackson-Frazier Wetland at dusk on 18 Apr.

An early migrant **Western Sandpiper** foraged alongside Dunlin at the Marys River Mitigation Bank 28 Mar (Jesse Laney). Numbers of "peeps" there increased through 19 Apr when Isaac Denzer spotted a **Baird's Sandpiper** foraging along with **Western** and **Least Sandpipers**.

On 8 Apr Mike Lippsmeyer heard the distinctive call of a **Long-billed Curlew** over his farm 8 Apr, and looked up to see five flying north together. 16 **Red-necked Phalaropes** were at the Marys River Mitigation Bank and the nearby Philomath STP 22 Apr (Jamie Simmons).

On 20-21 Apr a female **Calliope Hummingbird** managed to squeeze in for a few sips at our busy hummingbird feeder. A male visited Carolyn Coyle's feeder in nw. Corvallis 26 Apr.

A **Say's Phoebe** perched along a fence in the Soap Creek Valley 29 Mar (Bob Altman). A **Western Kingbird** turned up along the w. side of Jackson-Frazier Wetland 19 Apr (Jamie Simmons).

On 17 Apr Roy Gerig found a **Gray Flycatcher** as well as a **Pacific-slope Flycatcher** at the top end of Detroit Reservoir. Two days later, Tim Johnson found two more Gray Flycatchers there along with four **Hammond's Flycatchers** and a **Dusky Flycatcher**. Both Gray and Dusky Flycatchers nest mainly on the east side of the Cascades crest, but each year a few stray west of their main migration route and turn up in

patches of open habitat.

On 18 Apr I heard the distinctive calls of an **Olive-sided Flycatcher** from Tampico Ridge. As this was two days earlier than the earliest date recorded for our area, I had to wonder if I was hearing an especially talented starling. However subsequent days brought numerous local detections, so it seems that this species arrived ahead of schedule this year.

A **Townsend's Solitaire** turned up in oak savanna north of Baskett Slough NWR 7 Apr (Frank Kolwicz). Another that turned up in E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area 14 Apr (Bill Proebsting) may have been a bird that was seen this past winter on nearby Coffin Butte.

A **Nashville Warbler** visited John Tietjen and Pat Cummins' yard near Lewisburg 17 Apr. Movement of northbound flocks of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** through our region seemed to around peak 19 Apr when multiple observers noted flocks of dozens to hundreds throughout our region; Mary Garrard saw dozens hovering like giant bumblebees to feed among camas blooming at the North Prairie 23 Apr.

Spring arrivals

Several pairs of **Cinnamon Teal** were along Bruce Rd. 7 Apr (Susan Hatlevig). Although small numbers now winter in our area, there's a noticeable influx around the end of March as migrants return.

American White Pelicans continued to show up, as 20 drifted north over NW Corvallis on 9 Apr (Nancy Stotz) and 22 flew over Willamette Park 17 Apr (Jamie Simmons). A Sora was at a private wetland restoration along Finley Rd. 6 Apr (Jamie Simmons).

Rana Foster and Don Boucher both heard **Vaux's Swifts** over Corvallis 16 Apr. Mary Garrard counted 57 going to roost in the College Hill neighborhood 19 Apr.

An early **Cassin's Vireo** was photographed at Willamette Park 28 Mar (Kai Frueh). One sang in NW Corvallis 31 Mar (Jamie Simmons). A **Warbling Vireo** foraged in a big-leaf maple on Tampico Ridge 20 Apr. Two more – one of them singing – were in Willamette Park the same morning (Duncan Evered).

A **male Purple Martin** gave its characteristic rich warble as it flew over Butterfield Wetland (Caryn Stoess, Duncan Evered). Swallows foraging over the S. Santiam River near Crabtree 30 Mar included several **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** along with many **Violet-green** and **Tree Swallows** (Jeff Harding).

A **House Wren** sang s. of Philomath 17 Apr (Virginia Stanton).

A few **Orange-crowned Warblers** continued to show up. One sang in ne. Corvallis 2 Apr (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank). One probed flowers in a red-flowering currant near Teloh-Calapooia Park 3 Apr (Jim Smith). One in NW Corvallis 5 Apr gleaned insects from ferns in Louise Barden's yard.

Paul Adamus found two **Black-throated Gray Warblers** in the Lewisburg neighborhood 9 Apr. A **Wilson's Warbler** sang near Forest Dell Natural Area in nw. Corvallis 15 Apr (Mary Garrard). Wanda Parrott spotted a **MacGillivray's Warbler** in undergrowth near Marys River in Corvallis 16 Apr; the earliest arrival noted in our area was in Willamette Park 31 Mar (Duncan Evered). A **Yellow Warbler** was along the Marys River near Wren 21 Apr (Rana Foster).

A **Common Yellowthroat** called at Luckiamute SNA 26 Apr (Lars Norgren). Four sang along the Dunawi Creek bike path in sw. Corvallis by 16 Apr (Don Boucher).

An early **Western Tanager** called from the edge of Dunn Forest 18 Apr. One visited Carma Henry's suet feeder alongside of a **Western Bluebird** on Logsdon Ridge 25 Apr.

A female **Black-headed Grosbeak** visited Tom Gilg's feeder near Brownsville 19 Apr; another female visited Joy Jensen's feeder near Bald Hill on 21 Apr. A male sang in Fred Ramsey's yard 24 Apr; Fred notes that this was about 2 weeks ahead of the typical arrival date for the Corvallis area in past decades.

Two **Chipping Sparrows** turned up at a regular nesting site in the Soap Creek Valley on 5 Apr. By then **Savannah Sparrows** were singing on territory in grass fields and other grassland habitats around our area.

A **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was along Bruce Rd. 7 Apr (Susan Hatlevig). Two were there by 13 Apr (Andi Stephens).

Evening Grosbeak flocks began to make their annual appearance in Corvallis by 27 Mar when 50 visited a yard in the Cheldelin neighborhood (Don Boucher). **Purple Finches** continued to show up in breeding habitat, giving their rich, bubbling songs. Ten swarmed Judith & Jerry Paul's feeders in the Highland Dell neighborhood 18 Apr.

Lingering winter birds and stragglers

A male **Common Goldeneye** swam on the South Santiam River w. of Crabtree 30 Mar (Jeff Harding). Warren & Laurie Halsey were still encountering many **Wilson's Snipe** on walks around the edges of their wetland restoration ponds near Alpine through 5 Apr. A distinctive **Rough-legged Hawk** along Llewellyn Rd. 1 Apr appeared to be the same hawk that Howard Bruner spotted there in mid-Dec.

Three **Lewis's Woodpeckers** investigated a cavity in a cottonwood snag near Baskett Slough NWR 11 Apr (Howard Bruner). One that wintered at Bald Hill Farm was still there 12 Apr (Matt Blakeley-Smith).

Varied Thrushes lingering in the valley were heard singing through the period. A **Hermit Thrush** hanging around Gayle Peterson's nw Corvallis yard since mid-Feb was still there 30 Mar.

Two **American Pipits** lingering near Airlie 18 Apr skirmished with each other, in a sign that breeding hormones were beginning to surge. By late Apr, most wintering pipits had left our area, on their way to the arctic and alpine regions where they nest.

Movement of **Lincoln's Sparrows** was evident by mid-Apr when one turned up in Susan Hatlevig's nw Corvallis yard. One splashing in Virginia Stanton's bird bath s. of Philomath was the first one that she's ever seen there.

A **White-throated Sparrow** sang by Stewart Slough in ne. Corvallis 2 Apr (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank). One stopped by Jamie Simmons' nw. Corvallis yard 24 Apr. **Golden-crowned Sparrows** wintering at Virginia Stanton's yard s. of Philomath all left by 20 Mar, but migrant flocks continued to be seen through the end of the period. **Junco**

flocks passing through included one "**Slate-colored Junco**" in Virginia Stanton's yard visited 12-13 Apr and another near Airlie 19 Apr.

Rare or off-course birds and other surprises

One of two collared female **Trumpeter Swans** that visited Finley NWR early last May turned up again on 31 Mar, this time on McFadden Marsh where she interacted with three lingering Tundra Swans (Howard Bruner), and was still there 11 Apr (Jamie Simmons). This swan was released as a cygnet at Summer Lake in 2017, traveled north to Vancouver Island in BC last May, flew back to Finley by 1 Jun, then by 27 Jun returned to Summer Lake where she spent the winter (Gary Ivey, Trumpeter Swan Society).

A **Brant** at the Philomath STP 28 Apr (Will Wright, Kim Nelson, Jamie Simmons and others) appeared a stray representative of the pale-breasted Atlantic subspecies rather than the darker Pacific subspecies.

On 24 Apr Pam Otley noticed three **Black Turnstones** standing on a log at Finley NWR and managed to snap several photos before they flew off to the south. While common along rocky sections of the Oregon coast during winter, inland sightings of these "rockpipers" are extremely rare.

Robert Jilek spotted an adult male **Red-naped Sapsucker** at Finley NWR 17 Apr.

Next issue will be at the end of summer. Meanwhile please post your observations to the Mid-Valley birding list at <http://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 27 Aug.

Board Meeting Summary

For April 9, 2020

The meeting was held online via ZOOM.

1. Mark Baldwin reported that April and May general member meetings have been cancelled. He'll arrange for speakers on Zoom. The hope is that the technology will also allow a vote on next year's board at the May "meeting".
2. A majority of Board members recommended we cancel all programs through June.
3. Bluebird Trail can roll-over funds into next year for storing the Bluebird trail materials in a mouse-proof storage unit at Hesthavn.
4. Ray asked that we not publicize Hesthavn work parties for volunteers to protect volunteers.
5. The next Board meeting will be May 14, via Zoom.

Teri Engbring

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 or ASC website for location and time.

Membership Corner

Welcome to new member:

Mikaela Lea

General Membership Renewal Information

For membership renewal online go the ASC website (<https://auduboncorvallis.org/membership/>) and renew via PayPal. To renew by USPS, mail a check to ASC, PO Box 148, Corvallis, OR 97339.

Email Notifications/Meeting Cancellations

We encourage members to join the ASC listserv to receive emergency email notifications about meeting cancellations related to weather conditions, updated information about ASC events, fieldtrip locations, and volunteer work parties. Send an email to the listserv administrator (Karan Fairchild, alderspr@peak.org) and request to be added.

Have You Changed Your Contact Info?

If you have moved or changed your email/mail addresses please update your contact information.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

Paul Adamus, Membership Chair

Contributors to this Chat

Mark Baldwin, William Proebsting, Teri Engbring, Karan Fairchild, Jim Fairchild, Naomi Weidner, Joel Geier, Don Boucher, Ray Drapek, Sue Powell, Christina Linkem, Paul Adamus, Dodie Wilson, Diane Young and Geoffrey Haskett

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

Please note that ASC takes a break from meetings and newsletters in June and July

May 14	ASC Board meeting on Zoom
May 21	ASC General Member Meeting on Zoom
Aug 27	Submissions due for Sept. 2020 Chat
Aug 27	Field Notes submissions due
Sept 10	ASC Board meeting
Sept 17	ASC General Meeting

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
P.O. Box 148
Corvallis, OR 97339

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Officers

President.....	Bill Proebsting.....	proebstw(at)gmail.com.....	541-752-0108
Vice President.....	Mark Baldwin.....	mark.baldwin2(at)comcast.net.....	541-757-0834
Secretary.....	Linda Campbell.....	lcampbell(at)peak.org.....	541-929-9420
Treasurer.....	Carolyn Peterson.....	chinstrapdreams(at)comcast.net	

Board Members

Karan Fairchild.....	alderspr(at)peak.org.....	541-929-4049
Kai Frueh.....	kaifrueh2(at)gmail.com	
Christina Linkem.....	cnlinkem(at)hawaii.edu	
Bob Murray.....	robert.murray(at)maine.edu	
Gail Nickerson.....	gbnickerson(at)comcast.net	
Dodie Wilson, alternate.....	dgwilson802(at)gmail.com	

Committee Chairs

Birdathon.....	Karan Fairchild.....	alderspr(at)peak.org.....	541-929-4049
Bluebird Trail.....	Matt Lee.....	sueandmatt(at)comcast.net	
Chat Editors.....	Teri Engbring, Naomi Weidner.....	chateditors(at)gmail.com	
Christmas Bird Count.....	Marcia Cutler.....	marciacutler(at)comcast.net.....	541-752-4313
Conservation.....	David Mellinger.....	dmell3.14159(at)gmail.com	
Corvallis Sustainability Coalition.....	Suzanne Ortiz.....	ortizsv(at)gmail.com.....	917-273-4917
Education Team Coordinator.....	Teri Engbring.....	engbring(at)hotmail.com	
Field Notes Compiler.....	Joel Geier.....	joel.geier(at)peak.org.....	541-745-5821
Field Trips-local.....	Duncan Evered, Caryn Stoess.....	CorvallisAudubonSecondSaturday(at)gmail.com	
Field Trips-regional.....	Fred Ramsey.....	flramsey5(at)comcast.net.....	541-829-0383
Hesthavn.....	Ray Drapek.....	raydrapek(at)gmail.com.....	541-760-6053
Historian.....	Marcia Cutler.....	marciacutler(at)comcast.net.....	541-752-4313
Membership.....	Paul Adamus.....	adamus7(at)comcast.net.....	541-231-3095
Publicity.....	ASC Website-Sue Powell.....	jabirusue(at)comcast.net	
	Facebook-Kai Frueh.....	kaifrueh2(at)gmail.com	
	Instagram-Christina Linkem.....	cnlinkem(at)hawaii.edu	
Refreshments.....	Becky Garrett.....	becky.bittern(at)yahoo.com.....	541-757-7474
Sales Table.....	Sally Shaw.....	shaws(at)peak.org.....	541-757-2749



AudubonCorvallis.org

Find us on 
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.

Printed on Recycled Paper