



THE CHAT

September 2020 VOL. 50 #1

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Calendar

Sept. 6 Weed work party at Hesthavn
Sept. 10 ASC Board meeting
Sept. 17 ASC General Meeting on Zoom
Sept. 24 Submissions due for Oct. 2020 Chat
Sept. 27 Hesthavn Barn and yard work party
Oct. 11 Weed work party at Hesthavn
Oct. 25 Hesthavn Barn and yard work party

Due to the global Coronavirus pandemic, all ASC planned in-person programs and meetings through 2020 have been cancelled or postponed. For the latest info, please visit our website at auduboncorvallis.org.

ASC General Meeting (webinar via Zoom)

Sept 17, 7 pm - Rosabel Miró

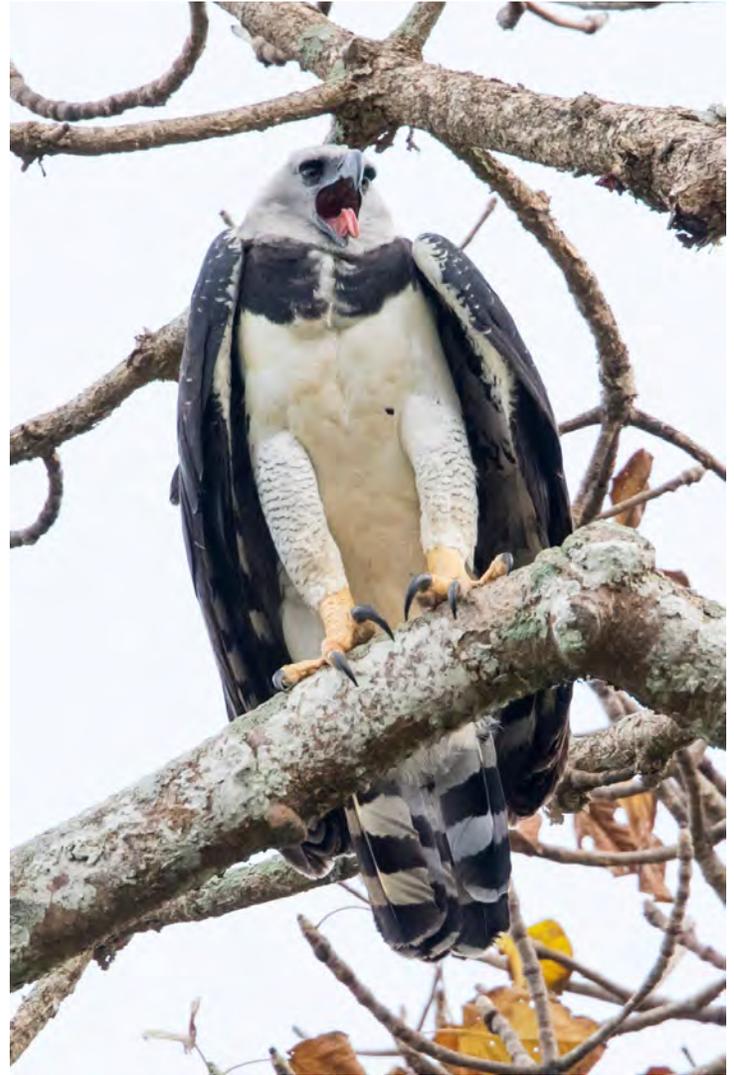
Birds, Wildlife and Habitats of Panama -
Photos and Stories from the Panama
Audubon Society



A happy Rosabel on Panama Viejo grounds, the first city established by the Spanish in the Pacific side of the Americas.

The opening speaker for ASC's monthly member programs this year is Rosabel Miró, executive director of the Panama Audubon Society. She says, *"It will be fun to share some recent experiences and bird pictures of Panama and talk about what we do with local and migrant birds."*

This Central American nation is one of the most popular and accessible international birding sites for Americans. Rosabel will be our local guide, taking us into her country and ecosystem without us leaving home! At a point in the world pandemic where we can't travel, this is an opportunity for our members to experience another part of the world, their fabulous wildlife, and local conservation perspective.



Harpy Eagle photo by Matt Lee

Rosabel also says, *"Panama Audubon Society (PAS) is 52 years old. It started as a chapter of Florida Audubon Society, and in 1982 we declared independence and became an NGO. Since then we have been directed by local people, working in several projects related to bird and habitat conservation, doing research, advocacy and environmental education. We are a membership-based organization, and we own our office. Our 8-person staff is all women. You can check out our Instagram and Facebook accounts to get an idea of what we have been doing: @audubonpanama. We have an environmental education program, Aulas Verdes. Because Panama schools are all closed due to the pandemic, we have been using our @aulas_verdes Instagram account to educate teachers*

and parents. To learn more about Panama Audubon, you can go to:

Web: www.audubonpanama.org

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/audubonpanama>

Twitter: [@audubonpanama](https://twitter.com/audubonpanama)

Instagram: [@audubonpanama](https://www.instagram.com/audubonpanama)

On our Facebook account, you will see our Facebook Live Sunday programs: #birdingdesdeca (birding from home). The hosts are Jan Axel Cubilla (Audubon Panama President and eBird revisor), Beny Wilson (PAS board member and well known bird guide) and me. In each program, we teach people about birds, songs, and places where they could go birding when we can go out safely again. We also talk about major threats, advise people to be Alert! and follow the news related to key issues.”

Rosabel

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.

Online programs will begin at 7:00 PM and will be followed by a short business meeting, if needed.

Next month's program: October 15 - Jamie Cornelius, *How Birds and Other Wild Animals Survive Unpredictable and Changing Environmental Conditions.*

Suggestions for future speakers are always welcome. Send them to mark.baldwin2@comcast.net

Mark Baldwin, Vice Pres. & Program Chair

Presidents' Corner

Welcome to the new 2020-2021 program year for the Audubon Society of Corvallis. We have had a few changes in our leadership (see the current list on the back page of this CHAT or on the website) and a lot of changes in our programs for the foreseeable future. To protect our members and volunteers during the pandemic, all of our meetings and education efforts will

be presented on Zoom. For those who miss the scheduled monthly member meeting, presentations will be recorded and accessible on the ASC website.

ASC Vice President Mark Baldwin has been recruiting interesting speakers/presenters for our monthly membership meetings. These begin September 17 with an international flair - the Executive Director of Panama's national Audubon chapter! Future speakers were noted in the Summer CHAT and on our regularly updated website, thanks to Sue Powell. Thanks also to Kai Frueh and Nancy DeMasi for maintaining our Facebook page and Christina Linkem for our Instagram site.

We are still hard at work trying to protect the wildlife, habitats, and all other aspects of the natural environment in our community. Our Education and Outreach teams are also developing programs that we can present online or in this newsletter to keep you informed, inspired and aware. Your continuing support as members of our local chapter is appreciated and is critical to maintaining our Hesthavn Nature Center and 5.7 acre reserve on Oak Creek Drive. By the way, the lovely, peaceful grounds feature walking trails and creekside picnic tables that are open for you to enjoy during daylight hours. And volunteers are always needed to help Hesthavn Chair Ray Drapek maintain this treasure.

In this unprecedented time, we are dealing simultaneously with a global coronavirus pandemic, a federal administration that is trying to remove key environmental protections, and climate change that is fast approaching the critical stage where it affects every living thing on this planet. Now is the time to work together in a safe but hopefully effective way, with-like minded, dedicated volunteers and members of your Corvallis Audubon chapter. We are always open to your suggestions and support. Thanks.

Meetings of our board of directors, held the Thursday before our general meetings via Zoom, are open to all, and we encourage you to attend. Please contact Mark Baldwin if you'd like to join in.

Co-presidents Dave Mellinger and Karan Fairchild and Education Chair Teri Engbring

Our Website Keeps You Aware

Reporting Injured, Banded, or Rare Birds

The ASC website (auduboncorvallis.org) has links for who to contact if you find a bird that is injured, dead, banded (especially metal band), or has a deformed beak. Unusual birds or other animal sightings are also welcomed. Phone numbers, office hours, email addresses, and more are provided.

- Injured or abandoned birds - [Chintimini Wildlife Center](#)
- Dead or dying birds - [Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)
- Banded bird - [Patuxent Wildlife Research Center Bird Banding Laboratory](#)
- Deformed beak - [USGS Alaska Science Center](#)
- Rare, unidentifiable, bird observations for The Chat, or other interesting animals - [Joel Geier](#)

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

Sue Powell, ASC Website

Want to see a wonderful **video about Corvallis Audubon** by our youngest board member, Kai Frueh? See it on ASC's Facebook page now! 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. Kai Frueh and Nancy DeMasi, ASC Facebook

Or check us out on Instagram: [@auduboncorvallis](#).
Christina Linkem, ASC Instagram

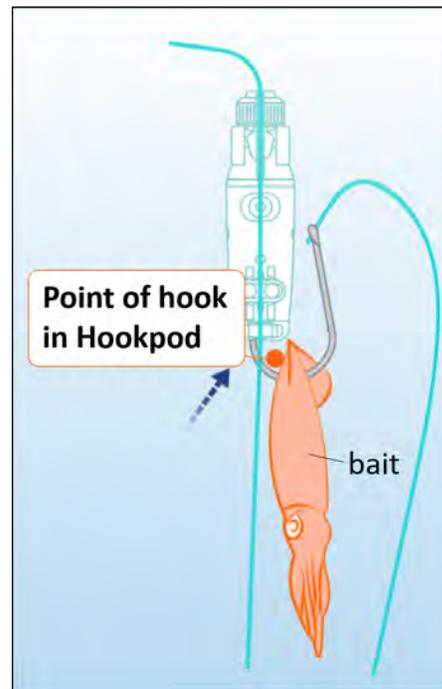
Conservation Update

Potential Good News for Albatrosses and Other Seabirds

Albatrosses, petrels, and other seabirds can get caught on hooks during longline fishing, most often when the birds attempt to steal the bait off a hook as its being deployed off the back of a fishing boat. It is estimated that about 100,000 albatrosses die each year from this. A new device, the Hookpod, is looking very effective at reducing these seabird deaths. The Hookpod is a plastic case that encapsulates the point and barb of a fishhook as it's going into the water - the place where most seabirds get hooked - and then opens up when it

reaches a depth of 10 m (30 ft), releasing the hook.

Hookpods were tested on 129 deployments of longlines with over 59,000 total hooks in South Africa, Brazil, and Australia. The Hookpod-equipped lines caught a single petrel, while adjacent hooks without Hookpods caught 24 seabirds, mostly albatrosses. In



addition, the fish catch did not significantly differ between hooks with and without Hookpods. It appears that this device, in combination with bycatch reduction measures, can largely eliminate the problem of albatrosses and other seabirds getting hooked on longlines. Now we need to get fisheries managers to adopt it.

More Good News (at least for now)

A judge has struck down a Trump administration effort to roll back the century-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). The administration is trying to re-interpret the Act so as to allow "incidental take," which is killing or harming birds when you aren't explicitly trying to. Incidental take includes actions like leaving oil waste pits exposed so that waterfowl land on them, thinking they're safe places for a stopover, or not marking power lines to make them more visible to flying birds. The judge's decision means that the longstanding interpretation of the MBTA, forbidding incidental take, will remain in place. The Trump administration is expected to appeal.

Co-President Dave Mellinger

FYI - OSU Research Forest Management Request Letter

26 August 2020

TO: F. King Alexander, President
Tom DeLuca, Dean

Oregon State University College of Forestry

Re: Future Management of OSU Research Forests

Dear President Alexander and Dean DeLuca,

On behalf of our Oregon Audubon Chapter members, we respectfully request that OSU College of Forestry cease planning harvest activities and institute a moratorium on logging and related activities until a new and more comprehensive Research Forest management planning process is adopted. This process should incorporate climate change, forest carbon, water quality, and ecosystem health considerations in an open and transparent manner.

For decades Oregon Audubon Chapters have been active participants in public lands management planning across Oregon at federal, state, and local government levels. We have contributed to improving public forest land outcomes for both current and future Oregonians, particularly in the conservation and

protection of forest-associated birds, other forest wildlife, fishes, and their habitats. Recent science from OSU adds to the body of literature indicating that intact forests provide greater sequestration and storage of atmospheric carbon and contribute to improved ecosystem health, increased summer stream flows needed for aquatic and riparian wildlife, conservation of threatened and endangered organisms, and improved water quality and recreational opportunity that also benefit human health. These findings should be incorporated in a more holistic approach to OSU Research Forests planning.

In March, some of our Chapters joined with other organizations and individuals (representing over 75,000 Oregonians) in submitting a letter to then President Ray which expressed our concerns with McDonald-Dunn Research forest management in the last decade:

- The 2005 McDonald-Dunn Forest Plan was abandoned after the 2008 recession to allow accelerated cutting to meet budgetary targets.
- The Research Forest had no GIS staff person to enable impact analysis of resource inventories resulting from accelerated stand removals.
- Forest managers grossly strayed from the intent of forest planning and sustained yield management—basic tenets of good forestry.

This Research Forest mismanagement culminated in the clearcutting of spotted owl habitat reserves committed to in the 2005 Plan, logging which also removed scores of trees living there since the seventeenth century.

We recognize that the university now faces significant challenges in responding to the COVID pandemic. We also know now that the 2005 McDonald-Dunn Forest Plan was not robust enough to meet the challenge of an economic downturn. Good forest management functions in both good times and bad, and coming generations rely on what we do now with their natural resources. We therefore request that the OSU College of Forestry halt all logging-related activities on the OSU Research Forests until a comprehensive forest planning process is adopted.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to your reply.

Karan Fairchild, Co-President, Audubon Society of Corvallis

Steve Griffiths, Audubon Society of Lincoln City

Ann Vileisis, Kalmiopsis Audubon Society

Ray Temple, Salem Audubon Society

Pepper Trail, Rogue Valley Audubon Society

Debbie Schlenoff, Lane County Audubon Society

Submitted by Jim Fairchild, ASC Conservation

- 2) Join ASC Education Event Coordination and planning efforts which will be electronic until we can safely meet in person.

We are still looking for innovative 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!

ASC Member and frequent volunteer Dale Mitchell suggested we ask our members:

In this unprecedented time of isolation and threats to both humans and our environment, how is nature helping you to cope?

Please send your response, Subject: Coping with COVID, to Teri at chateditors@gmail.com

Teri Engbring, ASC Education Team

Education News

ASC Seeks Safe Ways to Reach Out

Sadly, it is still far too risky to hold in-person events, though fun, interactive learning programs are our specialty. Our team members have worked hard this summer to develop new, huge, colorful, informative signs for the two kiosks at Hesthavn. We have been very happy to see many neighbors, families and individuals getting acquainted with the trails, birds, native plants, benches, picnic tables, and bridge over Oak Creek. A hardcore crew of volunteers have spent 100s of hours sorting through 35 years of programs; bird, nest and bone specimens; supplies, books, and miscellaneous collections over the last two months and have made MAJOR progress!

For those who would like to continue to support our efforts to benefit local wildlife, ecosystems, and conservation behind the scenes, please:

- 1) Share your best new local nature photos, tales, and birding news with ASC's Facebook page or website,

Hesthavn News

September Update

Things are quiet at Hesthavn. After a dry summer the jungle growth of foliage has finally slowed down. It's a good thing since the cement hard ground makes weeding difficult. Increasingly more visitors of all ages come by and walk the trails.

The parking crisis seems to have subsided for the time being. We placed sandwich board signs in the parking lot saying that parking was for Hesthavn visitors only, and they seem to be working. Looking for a parking space, Mac Forest visitors drive into the parking lot in their cars loaded with mountain bikes. They stop and read the signs and (for the most part) drive away. As the rains come in and (perhaps) recreational use of the forest subsides a bit, hopefully the parking pressure will subside as well.

Those of us who work on the property are looking forward to cooler weather. There will be plenty of projects and opportunities for volunteer work through the winter. Stay tuned and consider coming out and joining us some time!

Work Parties

Looking for a chance to help a local nonprofit (Audubon) in a natural setting and still be safe from COVID-19 exposure? Please consider joining us for our twice-a-month work parties on the grounds of the Hesthavn Nature Center near the northern end of Oak Creek Rd. **All work party hours are 10 am - 2 pm.**

Sunday, September 6 - Weed work party. These work parties are meant to further our plant restoration goals, which means planting natives and removing aggressive non-natives. For this work party, we will work on clearing weeds out the caged plants

Sunday, September 27 - Barn and yard work party. We will be replacing the chicken wire on the bridge and the handicap ramp. The chicken wire serves to maximize traction for people walking on these surfaces, and without it they would be very slick at times. The chicken wire that is there now is aging and starting to pull up. We may simply replace the chicken wire with more chicken wire, but we are examining alternatives.

Sunday, October 11 - Weed work party. We possibly will be still working on the caged plants at this time, or we may move on to working on one of our other weed problems (shiny geranium, yellow archangel, or Himalayan blackberry).

Sunday, Oct 25 - Barn and yard work party. Once again, we will be working from our task list. Tasks range from raking leaves to checking mouse traps.

Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair

Another Kiosk Sign Added at HH

A second information sign has been installed in the kiosk, built years ago by ASC member Jerry Paul, on the south side of the Nature Center, just outside the back door. Check it out! And thanks to Sue Powell and Mikaela Lea of our ASC Education Team for many hours of skilled work in producing it this summer. This colorful new sign helps our many guests explore the history and goals of Hesthavn, including Restoration, Conservation, and Green Solutions. This is one of several projects the ASC Education Team is working on to enhance Hesthavn.



Mikaela Lea

Visitors are welcome on the grounds during daylight hours, but due to COVID, we sadly cannot safely open the Nature Center (barn) to the public yet. Please note when you visit that a few of our volunteers might be working in the barn to clean and maintain the collections and educational materials, practicing safe social distancing and wearing masks. We sure do look forward to the day when we can once again open the Nature Center to the public with fun, interactive wildlife and science programs for all. Until then, thanks for your patience.

Teri Engbring, ASC Education Team

Directions to Hesthavn

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 brown signs for 'Nature Center.' Hesthavn will be on your left shortly before the end of Oak Creek Dr

Field Trip Schedule

Second Saturday Field Trips Are CANCELLED At Least Through September

Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess

Weekend Field Trips

2021 Extended Field Trips will not Occur Unless Pandemic Situation is Resolved

ASC's multi-day field trips ordinarily entail long stretches of riding enclosed in passenger vans. This is definitely taboo until COVID-19 has been defeated. If that rosy prospect occurs, we will plan on a full schedule for 2021: Bandon; Klamath Basin; Rogue Valley with Shakespeare; Malheur NWR; Summer Lake; Wallowas; Steens Mtn.; and a Shorebird Search. If not, we will try to find other venues and/or other transportation, so that we may enjoy this great state of ours. Stay tuned and keep up to date on our website. Suggestions are welcome.

Fred Ramsey, Weekend Field Trips Chair

Community Notes

Sustainability Coalition Virtual-Town Hall

The 2020 Corvallis Sustainability Coalition Virtual-Town Hall was held on August 26th.

The 2020 Virtual-Town Hall emphasized bold climate action. An introductory presentation featured Johanna Hamilton, co-leader of the CSC's Community Inclusion Action Team and co-chair of the King Legacy Advisory Board. Hamilton gave a brief overview about

how communities of color are impacted by many factors, including urban heat islands, the placement of pollution-producing-factories that affect air quality, and an increasing number of extreme weather events, like Hurricanes Katrina and Maria.

The keynote speaker was Kristin Ebergard, Director of Climate and Democracy at Sightline Institute. Ebergard's presentation focused on a number of cities, including Eugene and Portland (OR) and Copenhagen, Denmark, comparing their emission reduction goals and the varied actions they have taken towards achieving those goals.

Included in the actions were Eugene's 2019 plan to provide EmGo electric cars that offer free transport in the downtown area from M-F (during the day). In 2010, Copenhagen installed bicycle footrests (and hand rails) at the side of bike paths. Footrest/railings help to reduce the number of bike riders who run red lights and were subsequently adopted in Seattle, Chicago, and Montreal.

Eberhard focused on Copenhagen, a city that has an ambitious goal to become the first CO2-neutral capital by 2025. Like many cities, it is implementing plans to change its energy infrastructure at the same time that it faces population growth. The city decided to replace an old, coal-fired plant with a power plant that burns biomass instead of fossil fuel. The architects included a ski and hiking slope in their design (skiers take off from the top of the power plant's roof).

<https://qz.com/1560143/copenhagens-state-of-the-art-power-plant-doubles-as-a-ski-slope/>

The last presenter was Coral Avery, OSU senior and Climate Change Coordinator for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians. Avery presented a call for action that addressed the important relationship between social justice and climate action.

Our Audubon team is looking forward to 2021 and the return of the Town Hall, along with the Sustainability Fair. We want to thank our partner organization, the CSC, for their tremendous effort to stage the 2020 Virtual-Town Hall.

Suzanne Ortiz

Community Calendar

This summer several Corvallis organizations have partnered to create a joint-community-wide conservation calendar. The Conservation Volunteer Calendar is sponsored by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition.

ASC has already listed the work parties at Hesthavn Nature Center where the January-May rainfall encouraged lots of growth for wanted (and unwanted) plant species. Volunteers are needed to help out.

There are many other sites around Corvallis that might be closer to your own neighborhoods, including Starker Arts Wetland Restoration area, Dixon Creek near CHS, Lamprey Creek at MLK, Dunawi Creek Restoration area, and the Native Plant Garden at Avery Nature Center. Social distancing is practiced at all of these sites.

Recently, there have been many articles that stress the importance of gardening as therapy (The New Yorker: Nature and Nurture; <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/08/24/the-therapeutic-power-of-gardening>).

Our ASC members can bird while volunteering. Maybe sharing our lists of birds seen-or-heard-while-volunteering will become a thing!

Check out the Conservation Calendar for projects, dates and contact information: <https://sustainablecorvallis.org/get-involved/volunteer/volunteer-calendar/>

Suzanne Ortiz

Community Scrapbook

The Audubon Society of Corvallis is a partner organization of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition. Each year the CSC prepares a Community Scrapbook for the annual Town Hall that highlights the accomplishments of the partner organizations in the preceding year.

Thanks to all the ASC members who volunteered their time and participated in ASC activities. Your actions & support demonstrate how important wildlife and nature is in our lives!

Click the link to view the Community Scrapbook video.

<https://sustainablecorvallis.org/about/our-partners/>

Suzanne Ortiz

Gardening for Birds

Cascara Trees

Cascara (*Rhamnus purshiana*) is a small tree found mainly west of the Cascades from California to British Columbia. Interestingly, perhaps 5 million pounds of Cascara bark are harvested each year for use as a laxative. The medicinal is called Cascara Sagrada, translated as sacred bark, and was used by indigenous people for centuries. Harvest pressure is heavy enough to require regulation in British Columbia. Cascara has been promoted as a laxative in the U.S. since the 19th century. When asked by the FDA to document claims of efficacy, the industry reclassified the product as a dietary supplement, which is unregulated.



Western Tanager eating a Cascara fruit. Photo by Bill Proebsting

In the landscape, Cascara is easy to overlook, but is actually quite common in our area, in the understory and along edges. It grows mainly as a single-stemmed small tree. In deep shade, it generally doesn't amount to much, just a spindly, unproductive sapling. Given

some sun and reasonable soil and moisture, however, it can grow to about 30-40 feet tall. While not unattractive, nothing about the tree is particularly showy. Pleasant green leaves, described by one source as “a mixture of alder and birch with some cherry thrown in.” Unremarkable fall foliage color. Non-showy flowers which are nonetheless attractive to bees and butterflies. On a warm morning last spring, I was walking along a line of Cascara at Finley NWR near Pigeon Butte. They were loaded with a variety of bees.

The use of Cascara in your bird garden is two-fold. First, it reliably produces a crop of small fruit scattered about the tree. These ripen to blue-black, though not simultaneously, but rather over about four to six weeks. During that time, a variety of birds passing through the garden avidly search the tree for ripe fruit. Second, birds regularly search Cascara for insects. Thus, it is attractive to warblers and vireos, species which don't routinely eat fruit.

We have several Cascara on our lot, but the best one is visible from the house and deck, perhaps 75 feet away. This tree was planted by a bird in the early 80's and has slowly grown into a beautiful specimen easily 30 feet tall. Fruit begin to ripen in late July. Birds immediately descend in search of ripe fruit. Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak, Spotted Towhee, Purple and House Finches, Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, and Swainson's Thrush comprise the main action. Occasionally a Hermit Thrush will arrive in time to get some of the last fruit. Over the course of a day, some subset of these species checks for ripe fruit. During the summer, I spend as much time as possible watching the wall of foliage in our garden. My gaze is anchored to the Cascara to catch birds coming through for a snack.

Cascara is easy to grow, but also fairly slow. At our age, time is of the essence and we want to push our trees into fruiting. Three or four years ago, I recommended this species for a landscape I volunteer with. At a nursery, they found a nice 6-foot-tall tree that had already produced flower buds. Since then, it has grown very deliberately, but is already productive and attracting birds. Occasional deep watering two or three times a summer will help the tree establish and grow

well. Full to part sun will improve growth, form, and fruit production.

William Proebsting

Our Final Field Notes Section in the CHAT

The Audubon Society of Corvallis and the Chat team would like to thank Joel Geier for his many years of compiling bird and nature observations for the Field Notes column. After this issue, Joel is retiring from the role of Field Notes compiler, but you'll be hearing from him again in the Chat in other ways. The ASC Board has decided to discontinue the Field Notes thereafter. Years ago, before resources like eBird and local email listserves, the Field Notes were the best way to get an overview of local bird observations. These days, multiple online resources make it easier for a local birder to instantly review current observations at any time. These resources have also made the Field Notes compiler's job more and more time consuming every year. We feel that precious volunteer hours would be better served on other ASC efforts, such as conservation, Christmas Bird Counts, Breeding Bird Surveys and more. The Chat will continue to cover the joys of birding and nature in many other ways.

Field Notes

04/24/20 - 08/31/20

These notes cover a much longer period than usual, spanning four months from the later stages of spring migration, on through the breeding season, and into the beginning stages of southbound migration. For the entire period, bird-watching activity in our area was affected by restrictions on social interactions, due to

the COVID-19 epidemic. Closure of schools and many businesses, together with appeals to all Oregonians to minimize travel that might bring us into contact with other communities, meant that many of us stayed much more focused on our backyards and local natural areas than we might otherwise be. The circumstances may have changed our focus, but also brought some surprising rewards.

Weather was mostly mild and humid in comparison with recent summers. Persistence of cool, wet weather into early Jun may have limited the supply of insects at a time when many songbirds are feeding chicks in the nest.

On Logsdon Ridge n. of Lewisburg, Carma Henry was surprised to see a **Song Sparrow** visiting her suet feeder, in search of high-energy food. **Swallows** were frequently seen foraging very low, skimming the tops of grass fields and wetlands. At Bald Hill Farm on 9 Jun, Lisa Millbank noted **Vaux's Swifts** also skimming just above the top of pastures, while others dipped low around cattle, perhaps hoping to catch flies that congregate on the cows' faces, or the **golden dung flies** on cow patties.

Also on 9 Jun, I noticed **Chipping Sparrows** and **Savannah Sparrows** hovering around tall wildflowers to try to pick off insects – seemingly a very energy-intensive method of feeding for sparrows! “**Streaked**” **Horned Larks** at monitoring sites seemed to be nipping off grass seed heads much more often than they found insects.

Continuing humid conditions as the weather warmed in mid-Jun brought a few thunderstorms, and even one funnel cloud that nearly touched down on E.E. Wilson WMA on 16 Jun. Late June and July finally brought a shift to warmer, dry weather, though daily high temperatures mainly stayed in the high 70s to mid 80s F until the last week of July brought the first sustained heat wave of summer. August continued to be dry as typical for the season, and mostly mild except for a heat wave with temperatures back into the 90s F during 14-17 Aug.

Abbreviations and locations: NWR = National Wildlife Refuge, WMA = Wildlife Management Area. Herbert Farm (and Open Space) is on the south edge of Corvallis just w. of Hwy 99W. Jackson-Frazier Wetland is in north Corvallis near Cheldelin Middle School. Luckiamute State Natural Area is along the Willamette River northwest of Albany. Morgan Lake is on the north side of Baskett Slough NWR. Talking Water Gardens are in NE Albany. Cabell Marsh,

McFadden Marsh, and North Prairie are locations at Finley NWR.

Late spring lingerers

A **Snow Goose** swam on a private wetland s. of Brownsville through 7 May (Roy Gerig; Nancy Stotz).

A late **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** flitted through low bushes sw. of Philomath 1 May (Karan Fairchild). Two **American Pipits** foraged around the edge of a pond on a prairie/wetland restoration site s. of Brownsville 8 May and one was still there 10 May. A female **Townsend's Warbler** was in Willamette Park 22-24 May (Duncan Evered, Caryn Stoess).

Perhaps the most surprising “late” bird was a **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** in the “rock garden on the sw. side of the summit of Marys Peak 27 May (Justin Rodecap). Although this species regularly shows up there in Nov-Dec and may sometimes stay through winter, sightings after late March are rare.

Spring arrivals and passersby

Ten **White-faced Ibis** stopped to forage at Baskett Slough NWR 12 May (Mitch Ratzlaff); smaller numbers were noted there through 24 May. A lone **Sandhill Crane** called as it foraged at Cabell Marsh 24 May (Kaplan Yalcin).

A **Ruddy Turnstone** foraged at Baskett Slough NWR 3 May (Russell Campbell). A **Red Knot** stopped by there 13 May (Bill Tice, Dena Turner). A **Long-billed Curlew** called as it flew over downtown Philomath 4 Jun (Randy Moore). A stray migrant **Forster's Tern** fished over Baskett Slough NWR 8 May (Harry Nehls).

A **Common Nighthawk** called over ne. Corvallis 29 May (Don Boucher). Karin Lamberson heard nighthawks from 21 Jun onward in the Coast Range w. of Alsea, where this species still nests. A **Black Swift** flew low over Baskett Butte 22 May (Nancy Stotz).

An **Ash-throated Flycatcher** sallied after insects along the Betty Griffiths Trail in s. of Chip Ross Park 9 May (John Dachenhaus, Jill Tengeres). Another stopped by Bald Hill Natural Area 4 Jun (Kaplan Yalcin).

An early **Swainson's Thrush** perched on a fence in Willamette Park 29 Apr (Duncan Evered). **Cedar Waxwings** returned to Mike and Karen Lippsmeyer's farm s. of Independence 10 May.

A **Hermit Warbler** visited a water feature near

Brownsville 11 May (Tom Gilg). A pair of **Yellow Warblers** were along Dixon Creek 6 May (Susan Hatlevig). One sang from cottonwoods in a wetland s. of Independence 9 May (Mike Lippsmeyer). A **Yellow-breasted Chat** called near Crabtree 4 May (Jeff Harding); another called in E.E. Wilson WMA 6 May (Pam & Randy Comeleo).

Mary Garrard spotted a **Lazuli Bunting** near Chip Ross Park 1 May. Several **Bullock's Orioles** called in sw. Corvallis 1 May (Don Boucher).

Courtship, nesting, fledglings and other youngsters

A pair of **Canada Geese** tended goslings at Stewart Lake 16 May (Andrea Foster). A flock of **Ruddy Ducks** at Baskett Slough NWR 11 Jun included eight downy young; a female Blue-winged Teal there was also tending ducklings (Bill Tice).

A male **Mountain Quail** advertised his territory in Dunn Forest with loud “queé-ark” calls 24 May (Pam & Randy Comeleo). Martha Geier and I saw a pair with 21 half-grown chicks above Quartzville Creek ne. of Sweet Home 3 Aug. A covey of chicks visited a stream in Doug & Mardi Bilstrand’s Soap Creek valley yard during the first week of August.

A family of **Green Herons** hunted at water’s edge at Baskett Slough NWR 15 Jul (Frank Kolwicz). A **Black-crowned Night-Heron** called as it flew over se. Corvallis at dusk on 15 Jun (Jesse Laney); an adult flew over Hwy 34 e. of Corvallis 9 Aug (Kaplan Yalcin).

Three downy **Killdeer** babies tagged along behind their parents foraging on a gravel lot near Herbert Farm & Open Space 25 Apr (Rana Foster). A Killdeer pair flared their wings to distract from two tiny chicks on the pavement in front of Crescent Valley High 26 Apr (Nancy Fisher).

Two **Black-necked Stilts** were at Morgan Lake 1 Aug; by then there was very little water remaining in nearby wetlands where stilts have nested in recent years (Harry Fuller). **Wilson’s Snipe** “winnowed” in mating display over a restored wetland s. of Independence for several weeks through 11 Jun (Mike & Karen Lippsmeyer).

On 29 May three **Black Terns** hunted over Cackler Marsh at Baskett Slough NWR (Rick Leinen) where this species has nested in past years. Six were there by 11 Jun (Bill Tice). On 1 Aug Harry Fuller photographed one carrying a small fish toward a nest.

Soras seemed to be exceptionally abundant in E.E.

Wilson WMA during early May (Pam & Randy Comeleo).

An **Osprey** nest with a live-streaming nest camera in Independence had a sad outcome when the male disappeared on 23 May, presumably after being injured or killed. The female abandoned the nest with three eggs by 28 May. Another nest in Dallas had two healthy chicks as of 18 Jun; the male for that nest also disappeared around mid-Jun but the chicks had already hatched; as of 28 Jun the mom continued to feed them on her own, often leaving the nest for long periods to find food (Randy Gray).

A **Red-tailed Hawk** nest n. of Baskett Slough NWR had three gray fuzzy nestlings sitting up by 4 May (Frank Kolwicz). On 28 Jul a very young juvenile **Golden Eagle** stood in a recently harvested ryegrass field, within a mile of sites where this species is known to nest in the Coburg Hills s. of Brownsville.

On 29 Jul Reed Wilson and friend heard calls of a possible **Great Gray Owl** in the Quartz Middle Santiam timber sale area in the Sweet home ranger district. They contacted the district biologist who planned to deploy recording devices to confirm whether this species – rare in western Oregon – could be nesting in the area.

While camped out at an old-growth site ne. of Sweet Home 3 Aug, I heard a pair of **Barred Owls** calling back and forth loudly. After they moved on, a male **Spotted Owl** called tentatively, giving just a couple of calls which did not bring an answer before he went quiet. A female **Barred Owl** and a male “**Sparred**” **Owl** (Spotted x Barred Owl hybrid) duetted in McDonald Forest on the evening of 15 Aug (Lisa Millbank, Don Boucher).

An adult **Red-breasted Sapsucker** fed a fledgling along the Cardwell Hill trail near Wren 10 May (Gary Whitehouse). An adult male **Hairy Woodpecker** was accompanied by a juvenile as he visited Carma Henry’s suet feeder on Logsdon Ridge 5 Jun. Another adult male fed a youngster at Andi Stephens’ feeders in Albany 5 Jun.

Eight **Vaux’s Swifts** skittered across the sky over a stand of old-growth ne. of Sweet Home, where this species still nests in natural snags, on the evening of 3 Aug.

On 3 May a **Western Kingbird** perched near the North Prairie overlook where pairs have nested in recent years (Rana Foster). A lone kingbird at Herbert Farm 25 May seemed to be searching for a mate, calling repeatedly before it gave up and made a long flight s. toward the airport.

Migrant **Western Wood-Pewees** were noted in Albany and Corvallis from 26 Apr onward. **Willow Flycatchers** were calling on territory s. of Brownsville by 16 May.

A pair of **Black Phoebes** carried insects to four recently fledged young at Talking Water Gardens 20 May (Maureen Leong-Kee, Nicholas Martens).

On 3 Jun a pair of **Red-eyed Vireos** at Luckiamute SNA defended a cottonwood near the edge of a meadow from a **Steller's Jay**; at least one male vireo was heard singing there through 9 Aug (Kaplan Yalcin).

A flock of eight **Gray Jays** moving through old growth at Crabtree Lake on 4 Aug included several clumsy juveniles.

A "**Streaked**" **Horned Lark** gathered nesting material on a private restoration site s. of Brownsville 8 May. A female laid her first egg in a nest at Herbert Farm on 4 Jun. Three chicks hatched from the same nest by 18 Jun but the nest was found by raccoons before the young were old enough to fledge. However at least five other lark nests at these sites produced fledglings later in the season.

Violet-green Swallows were singing before dawn in nw. Corvallis by 2 Jun (Susan Hatlevig). Near Alpine On 5 Jun Warren and Laurie Halsey noticed **Tree Swallows** diving at a large **Gopher Snake** that had climbed up a fence post and was crawling into a nest box near their garden. Warren slowly pulled out the snake – which came out with a still-naked nestling firmly gripped in its mouth, plus a few feathers from the nest lining – and relocated it to a distant part of their ranch. Laurie reports that the swallows abandoned that nest but **Western Bluebirds** continued to use nearby next boxes.

Dozens of **Purple Martins** massed at Baskett Slough NWR 9 Jun (Bill Tice, Mike Lippsmeyer), perhaps driven out into the valley in search of insects. Several martin pairs were nesting in the metal crossarms of a utility pole se. of Crabtree as of 13 Jun (Jeff Harding).

On 25 May Don Boucher, Paul Howard & Stacy Drake were on hand to watch several **Bushtit** fledglings emerge from a nest in Willamette Park.

A pair of **American Dippers** appeared to be nesting under a bridge on Rock Creek sw. of Philomath 6 May (Rana Foster). A **Wrentit** sang at Jackson-Frazier Wetland 22 May (Andrea Foster).

Western Bluebirds nesting in boxes at Stewart Lake had hatched at least one brood of chicks while others were still incubating 16 May (Andrea Foster). A fledgling turned up on Logsdon Ridge 16 Jun (Carma

Henry).

An **American Robin** nestling, lingering in a nw. Corvallis after its siblings had already fledged, decided to leave in a hurry as a **crow** approached on 5 May; Nancy Stotz saw the young robin fly over the back of the crow, then down into some low bushes where three other fledglings had already taken shelter. **Swainson's Thrushes** began to sing (albeit tentatively) in nw. Corvallis by 18 May (Susan Hatlevig); juveniles were noted n. of Baskett Slough by 23 Jul (Frank Kolwicz).

Catherine Otto heard a **Hermit Thrush** singing along the Ridge Trail e. of Lewisburg Saddle 14 Jun. This species nests regularly in higher elevations of the Coast Range and western Cascades, but in years with sustained cool weather they might nest at lower elevations.

Two **European Starling** fledglings tagged along with their parents as they visited a suet feeder on Logsdon Ridge 11 May (Carma Henry).

A **MacGillivray's Warbler** sang from the top of a young Douglas-fir along Marks Ridge near Sweet Home 8 May (Kaynor Heineck). An **Audubon's (Yellow-rumped) Warbler** sang at the Union Hill cemetery n. of Lyons 27 Jun.

Hikers along the Pacific Crest Trail north of Santiam Pass frequently encountered **Green-tailed Towhees** in chaparral-like habitat in the recovering B&B Burn south of Three-Fingered Jack. After Steve Kornfeld saw an adult 17 Jul, on 19 Jul Bill Proebsting noted two adults that seemed to be accompanied by a juvenile. Vickie Buck saw an adult feed a juvenile on 7 Aug. Tom Gilg encountered a lone juvenile along the trail 20 Aug.

An **Oregon Junco** carried food to nestlings begging in the shrubs outside Oregon State Credit Union's 9th St. drive-through 12 May, as locals lined up in cars to do their banking amid the COVID-19 restrictions.

Up to three male **Grasshopper Sparrows** that turned up along Belts Rd. s. of Brownsville by 26 Apr (Tom Gilg) were heard singing throughout May, with one male giving his wren-like "soliciting song" on 16 May. One also sang on a Christmas tree farm near Airlie 9 May (Bob Altman) and one sang on Baskett Butte 21-24 May (Kaplan Yalcin; Roy Gerig). At least one pair seems to have nested on the North Prairie at Finley NWR again this year, with adults seen carrying food to a presumed nest on 14 Jun (Jesse Laney). On Fern Ridge WMA where a larger population nests annually, I saw an apparent fledgling in restored wet prairie on 22 Jul.

A begging **Black-headed Grosbeak** fledgling turned up in Randy & Pam Comeleo's yard near Fitton Green

10 Jun.

A pair of **Bullock's Orioles** gathered nesting materials near Lewisburg 6-8 May (John Tietjen & Pat Cummins). **Brewer's Blackbirds** tended fledglings on Logsdon Ridge 16 Jun (Carma Henry).

On 14 Jul a pair of **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** came in close to Bill Dwyer as he descended from the summit of Mt. Jefferson at around 8500 ft. on the s. side of the Milk Creek drainage. During late Jul and early Aug, Randy Comeleo heard small flocks of **Red Crossbills** daily as they flew over his outdoor "office" (a laptop on his deck) near Fitton Green Natural Area.

Three young **River Otters** frolicked while the mother kept watch at Snag Boat Bend 14 Jun (Nancy Stotz). On the evening of 24 Jul, Pam & Randy Comeleo heard the calls of **Beaver** kits at E.E. Wilson WMA.

Post-harvest raptors

The annual grass-seed harvest started with swathers cutting ryegrass fields in sw. Linn Co. in the third week of Jun. Right behind the swathers come the raptors, ready to feast on the numerous small vertebrates that, if not already killed by the swathers, are easy to nab in the exposed stubble.

South of Brownsville 26 Jun I saw twelve **American Kestrels** lined up along a 150-yard section of fenceline – some of them juveniles but at least three pairs of adults. The same fields had four **Northern Harriers**, two subadult **Bald Eagles**, and two **Red-tailed Hawks**, as **Turkey Vultures** also gathered on thermals overhead.

On 13 Jul a **Prairie Falcon** coursed low over a grass stubble field e. of Harrisburg. This is a regular wintering location for this eastern Oregon species which may wander into our region in late summer, but rarely so early in July.

Post-breeding dispersal and early fall migration

By the first week of July southbound shorebird migration was picking up with good numbers of **Greater Yellowlegs**, **Long-billed Dowitchers**, and **Least Sandpipers** taking advantage of vernal wetlands that became post-vernal puddles thanks to the prolonged rainy season. Five **Common Terns** flew over Willamette Park 19 Aug (Duncan Evered).

A female **Calliope Hummingbird** was on the West Point spur of Marys Peak 28 Jul (Lars Norgren).

A flock of 21 **Sandhill Cranes** called as they flew over Lewisburg 8 Aug (Pat Cummins).

130 **Vaux's Swifts** went to roost in a chimney in Dallas 21 Aug (fide Larry Schwitters).

A **Prairie Falcon** soared over se. Corvallis 28 Jul (Duncan Evered). Dan Fenske saw one s. of Brownsville a few days earlier. Either of these could have been the same falcon that was e. of Harrisburg two weeks earlier, or perhaps more post-breeding wanderers from e. of the Cascades.

A **Dusky Flycatcher** perched in tall brush and called on the West Point spur of Marys Peak 28 Jul (Lars Norgren). Occasional summer reports from this site in recent years suggest that the species might nest there, but by late July dispersal could also occur from nesting populations in the Cascades and Siskiyou.

On 17 Aug while Randy Comeleo was working in his outdoor "office" near Fitton Green Natural Area, a **Black Phoebe** flew in, called and hovered just in front of him. Sightings in dry oak/Douglas-fir woodlands away from rivers are still rare but becoming more frequent, as the population nesting in our area continues to expand.

Nocturnal flight calls of **Swainson's Thrushes** heading southward began to be heard by 24 Aug (Don Boucher). A **Lincoln's Sparrow** turned up at Snag Boat Bend 31 Aug (Nancy Stotz).

Rare or off-course birds and other surprises

A **Red-necked Grebe** in breeding plumage visited Baskett Slough NWR 14 -31 May (Caleb Centanni; Tim Johnson).

A **Swainson's Hawk** soared over Willamette Park 26 Apr (Duncan Evered). One hunted over a grass field NE of Harrisburg 7 May (Roy Gerig).

Three **Wandering Tattlers** turned up at Baskett Slough NWR 19 May (Frank Kolwicz, Brandon Wagner). A **Sabine's Gull** rested there 13 May (Brandon Wagner).

On 26 May while fishing on the North Santiam River at Buell Miller County Park w. of Stayton, retired biologist Mark Henjum heard a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** calling, then caught a few glimpses as it skulked in cottonwoods along the south bank of the river.

On 17 May a scolding mob of songbirds in Dunn Forest drew Nancy Stotz's attention to a **Northern Pygmy-Owl** that was perched on a low branch over the trail, with a **Western Fence Lizard** in its talons.

A stray migrant **Rock Wren** drew a crowd of birders to Herbert Farm 5 May, where it foraged around boulders placed by the city to delineate the parking area. Another turned up in the quarry at Pigeon Butte in Finley NWR 13 May (Pam Otley).

A stray migrant **Lark Sparrow** foraged along a gravel road amid ryegrass fields s. of Brownsville 22 May. Another sang at Bald Hill Farm 25 May but had moved on by the next day (Lisa Millbank).

A **Harris's Sparrow** in full breeding plumage visited a ne. Corvallis yard 17 Jun, nibbling on millet before flying off (Don Boucher, Lisa Millbank).

Jason O'Brien was familiar with **Orchard Orioles** from the upper Midwest, but he was surprised to see an adult male land on his hummingbird feeder in se. Corvallis 16 May. He put out some orange halves in the hopes of a return visit, but the bird never returned.

A **Mountain Beaver** in Fred Ramsey's Corvallis backyard 12 May was certainly a surprising mammal to see at low elevation!

Next month: no more field notes

Over the summer, I indicated to the ASC board that I wished to be relieved of my role as field notes compiler, so this is my final column. The board has opted to discontinue field notes in future editions of The Chat, rather than find a replacement to maintain what has become a difficult column to keep relevant, in an age of rapid digital communication of bird sightings.

Still, the birds we love will continue to go through their regular movements and activities, with the reward of regular surprises for birdwatchers who pay close attention. Conservation work will continue to be important to protect habitat for our most at-risk bird species.

Thank you to all who have made an effort over the years to share your observations, your concerns, and those precious moments of delight about birds. And happy fall migration!

Joel Geier

Board Meeting Summary

For July 16, 2020

Summer 2020 Board Summary

1. Brian Root of Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex thanked ASC for funding intern, Gabriela Judd, who did good work tracking Streaked Horn Lark Breeding on their sites.
2. Board decided that all Board and General meetings for at least the next 6 months will be on line, via Zoom at this point, but considering live streaming options for greater interaction.
3. All weekend field trips this year have been cancelled, but Board will allow Malheur Field station to keep their \$2000 advance as a donation.
4. Thanks to two generous donors, including Bill Percy, we did not operate at a deficit last year. Due to the Pandemic, we had to cancel fundraising efforts.
5. Education volunteers, led by Mikaela Lea, are developing online, interactive options to engage our neighbors in support of wildlife and habitat conservation and education. Virtual Nature Walks in back yards and parks is one of several options being explored in a Connecting with Nature theme.
6. CHAT: Field Notes section will be dropped after the 9-20 issue as the info is hard to gather and available through several internet sites. Thanks to Joel Geier for doing such a great job! Board confirmed that only other Oregon Audubon chapters are allowed to advertise events that require a fee on our website or in the CHAT.

Marcia Cutler, Acting Secretary

Big thanks to **Susan McNutt** for stepping into Beth Boroson's shoes as Board Secretary when Beth had to leave the position suddenly due to unforeseen

circumstances. And thanks to Marcia Cutler for taking notes at the Summer Board meeting.

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 members:

Yvonne McAllister
Susan McNutt

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 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 information by emailing it to adamus7@comcast.net.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

Paul Adamus, Membership Chair

Contributors to this Chat

Paul Adamus, Mark Baldwin, Don Boucher, Marcia Cutler, Nancy DeMasi, Ray Drapek, Teri Engbring, Karan Fairchild, Jim Fairchild, Kai Frueh, Joel Geier, Matt Lee, Christina Linkem, Dave Mellinger, Rosabel Miro, Suzanne Ortiz, Sue Powell, William Proebsting, Fred Ramsey, and Naomi Weidner

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.

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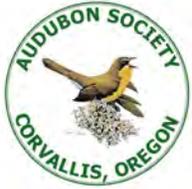
The Chat is published 10 times a year by the Audubon Society of Corvallis, PO Box 148, Corvallis OR 97339. Annual ASC memberships are \$25 for an individual; \$35 for a family; \$15 for student; \$15 for Chat-only subscriptions (email delivery only); \$50 for Supporting Level; \$150 for Patron Level; and \$250 for Benefactor Level.

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