



# THE CHAT

March 2022 VOL. 51 #7

Due to the global Coronavirus pandemic, ASC will slowly restart in-person programs and meetings as soon as we can. But our policy changes with pandemic status and restrictions. For the latest info, please visit our website at [auduboncorvallis.org](http://auduboncorvallis.org).

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## ASC General Meeting

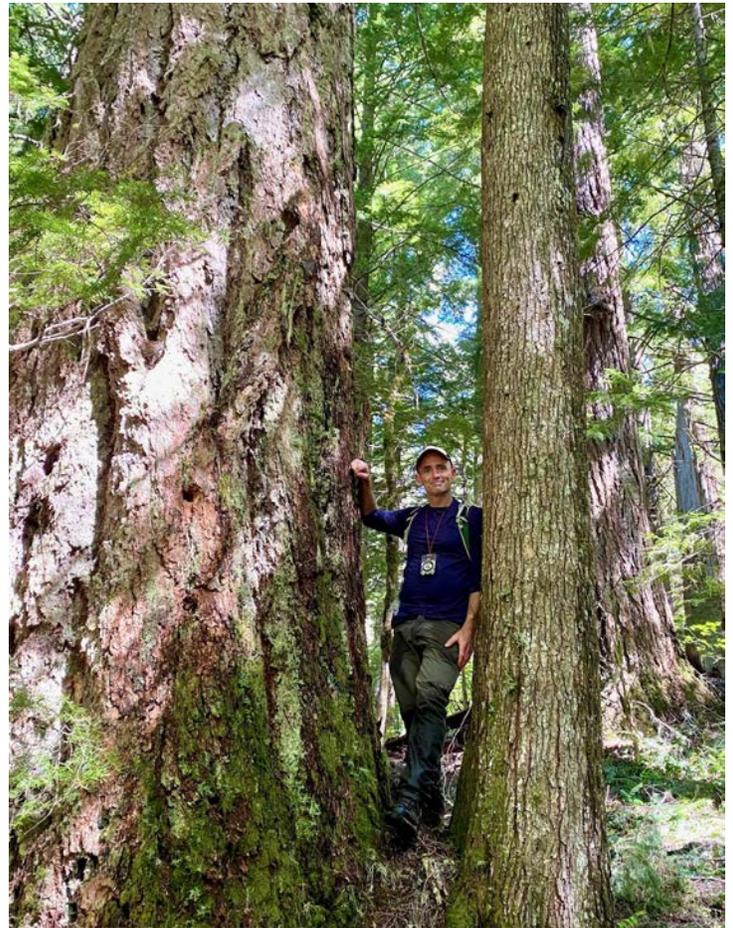
03/17/22 on ZOOM at 7:00 PM

### *Can We Have Our Cake and Eat it Too? Conserving Nature in the Age of Humans*

**Dr. Matthew Betts**

Dr. Matthew Betts is a professor of wildlife and forest ecology in the Dept. of Forest Ecosystems and Society in the College of Forestry at Oregon State University, where he has taught for 15 years. His research focuses on plant and animal responses to forest management activities at local, regional, and global scales. He is the lead investigator for the Oregon Intensive Forest Management project, Lead Scientist for the HJ Andrews Experimental Forest LTER, and the director of the Oregon State University Forest Biodiversity Research Network. He is the author of over 120 peer-reviewed publications (including in the journals *Science* and *Nature*), and his work on ecology

and biodiversity has been profiled in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, National Public Radio, CBC, *National Geographic*, and *Scientific American*. His work is primarily funded by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture and the National Science Foundation.





Matt will present recent findings on 1) the importance of old growth for moderating the effect of climate change on birds, 2) the effect of deforestation on species endangerment worldwide, and 3) the effects of herbicide on birds and biodiversity in the Oregon Coast Range.

*Photos courtesy of Dr. Betts*

You can find a recording of the February Zoom meeting by Dave Mellinger about tracking whales with sound [here](#).

ASC member meetings are held the third Thursday of each month from September through May. Presentations are now held on Zoom due to Covid. We want to keep the sharing, learning, and inspiration going, but health and safety are priorities in these times. For login information, see our website at <http://auduboncorvallis.org>

**Thanks** to Eric Preston for guiding our Zoom meetings, and Program Committee members Mai Kiigemagi—we need another volunteer or two to help with our program committee! Please contact us at the website noted above to help Mai and Eric at least for the next 6 months

**We're still open to speaker and program suggestions for future meetings!!**

*Mai and Eric, Program Committee*

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## President's Message

**Please consider a personal role in our 100% volunteer team and contact us at:**

[audubon.corvallis@gmail.com](mailto:audubon.corvallis@gmail.com) or contact individual team leaders, listed at the end of the Chat and on the website.

Many dedicated volunteers invest their time, skills and energy to creatively support birds, wildlife and critical habitat in our community. And we currently have 240 supportive dues-paying members seeing us through. Thanks! But we currently need more than money.

ASC owns the Hesthavn Nature Center with unique education, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities just west of town on Oak Creek. The 6 acres of trails and outdoor resources have remained open to you and

the public every day, throughout the pandemic. It isn't easy to maintain the woody property against invasive weeds and mammalian pests, let alone the natural processes of aging and decay.

Several key volunteers have had to move away in the past year for personal commitments, leaving gaps in our ability to serve.

Let us know [what role YOU would like to play](#) in keeping Audubon Society of Corvallis an important and active participant in the community.

*Karan Fairchild, Co-President*

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## ASC Website, Social Media

### New Conservation Pages on the ASC Website



*Located northeast of Coos Bay, the Elliott State Forest is the center of a controversy about who will manage it.*

ASC supports the conservation of native Willamette Valley species and habitats through financial contributions, volunteer work, and partnering with other agencies that have similar goals. As Conservation Chair, Jim Fairchild selects issues that are relevant to ASC's mission, presents them to the Board, and responds to the ones the Board approves.

And now you can read about the conservation initiatives ASC is supporting by going to the ASC website (<https://auduboncorvallis.org/>). Look for our

new web page, titled "Audubon in the News," under the Conserve/Protect tab. Current issues involve Lake Abert, the Elliott State Forest, and the effects of climate change on the Northwest Forest Plan. Click the links provided to view more details of each issue.



*Lake Abert in south-central Oregon is the state's only saltwater lake, and a huge diversity of waterfowl depend on it.*

In addition, Oregon Audubon conservation leaders meet each fall to review accomplishments and set priorities for the coming year. All 12 Oregon chapters participated in the fall 2021 meeting. On the ASC website, select "Conservation Accomplishments" under the Conserve/Protect tab to read the results of actions on each critical area of concern.

Below the Accomplishment are profiles of species ASC is working to conserve. Included are Western Bluebirds, Streaked Horned Larks, swifts, Trumpeter Swans, Marbled Murrelets, Vesper Sparrows, Greater Sage-grouse, and California Condors.

*Sue Powell, ASC Website*

Reminder: for contact information to report injured, rare, banded, or dead birds, check the ASC website 'Birding' tab, then the 'Injured or Rare Birds' subtab for email and/or phone numbers. We are at: .

### Corvallis Audubon Facebook

Be sure to keep up to date and be inspired by joining our ASC Facebook page. Just "like" us for the latest news and pictures of wildlife that affect our local area. Feel free to post about what is happening in your neighborhood, street and back yard. Let's stay connected. Join us on Facebook at [corvallisaudubon](#).

## Audubon Corvallis Instagram

Check us out on Instagram at [auduboncorvallis](https://www.instagram.com/auduboncorvallis). We NEED a new coordinator for our Instagram account. Please let us know at [volunteerasc@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerasc@gmail.com) if you can fill this hole. Doesn't take much time. Thanks,

*Christina Linkem, ASC Instagram*

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## Conservation Report

### Coffin Butte due back in the News

In March, mid-valley residents will be hearing a lot more again about the proposed Coffin Butte Landfill expansion. We should expect applicant Republic Services, Inc. will be putting its best foot forward—in this case its best attorneys. In appealing the Benton County Planning Commission rejection, Republic Services contested every finding and insist they have more and better supplemental evidence to prove their need. Though counterintuitive, county ordinances allow applicants to submit additional information, which need not be reviewed by the Planning Commission. All testimony must be re-submitted to be considered.

The County Board of Commissioners should initiate the appeal process, including public hearings later in March, after the extended appeal deadline. Read more and stay current at [www.coffinbuttefacts.org](http://www.coffinbuttefacts.org)

### Delisting—Then Relisting Gray Wolves:



*Gray Wolf photo by Eric Cole, USFWS*

February 10th saw a court ruling re-establishing the endangered status of gray wolves except in portions of the Northern Rockies and in Oregon east of Hwys 395, 78, and 95. The court cited multiple flaws in the October 2020 Trump Administration delisting rule adoption. Seen as a win by many conservation groups and allies, these fluctuations in policy direction submerge a clearer understanding of wolf biology in favor of political posturing. In Oregon this means nearly \$50,000 is now being offered for the poisoning of Catherine Creek pack members, and another wolf was found shot in Wallowa County in January. Can we move towards co-existence? A steady moving forward is preferable!

### Forest Planning across western Oregon

Legislation establishing an independent state agency and completing the transfer of ownership of the 80,000-acre Elliott State Forest to an Elliott Forest Authority (EFA) appears to have strong bipartisan support in both House and Senate, and the Governor's approval. Final establishment at the end of 2023 will be contingent on approval of a federal Habitat Conservation Plan to cover listed coho salmon, spotted owls, and marbled murrelets. The EFA is also contingent on an approved Forest Management Plan. These will both constrain and further refine the research plan under development by OSU and its College of Forestry, which will implement the management.

Forest management planning efforts are also underway for the smaller but nearby MacDonald-Dunn Research Forest, as well as the much larger Dept. of Forestry lands west of the Cascades, which include the Tillamook and Santiam State Forests. Please [contact me](#) for more information.

*Jim Fairchild, Conservation Chair*

## Field Trips

### Second Saturday Field Trip

**March 12, 2022**

The Second Saturday field trip will be March 12. We'll meet at 8 AM at the shelter in Willamette Park (end of SE Goodnight Ave.) and tour the park. This four-hour excursion is free and geared to people with an interest in learning more about birds that can be found in the Corvallis area. All levels of expertise are welcome. Bring suitable hats, shoes, and rain gear, as well as water and snacks! Participation will be limited due to the ongoing pandemic, and face coverings will be required. Please email [CorvallisAudubonSecondSaturday@gmail.com](mailto:CorvallisAudubonSecondSaturday@gmail.com) to sign up. Led by Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess. Weather may alter plans.

*Caryn Stoess & Duncan Evered*

### 2022 Extended Field Trips on Hold Until Pandemic Situation is Resolved AND we Get a NEW Field Trips chairperson!

Yes, we still need a new weekend field trips chair or co-chairs, ASAP to begin transitioning with and learning from our amazing coordinator of 50 years of fantastic birding trips, Fred Ramsey. Please help us continue the tradition! Even if you can only coordinate one or two field trips a year, please step up so we don't lose this popular and invaluable program for ASC.

We are not yet planning any specific multi-day field trips. COVID-19 conditions don't allow that yet. If that situation changes, AND SOMEONE STEPS UP TO MANAGE THE PROCESS! We will plan for potential 2022 trips to: Bandon; Klamath Basin; Rogue Valley with Shakespeare; Malheur NWR; Summer Lake; Wallowas; Steens Mountain; and a Shorebird Search. If these don't work, we can 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 by checking our website. Suggestions are welcome to [auduboncorvallis@gmail.com](mailto:auduboncorvallis@gmail.com)

## Education News

### Classes for Kids coming in April

Our Education Team has come up with some exciting new classes for kids in April!

For older children (ages 8-13) we are offering a **Junior Birding Program**. Over a 10-week period, children will learn to use binoculars and field guides, get an up-close view of ASC's bird, egg, and nest specimens, learn about flight, and our local birds' adaptations to their habitat. We will have fun activities to explore bird conservation issues. We will have guest birders with unique specialties. This class will meet every Friday from 4:00-5:30 PM for 10 weeks starting April 1 at Audubon's Hesthavn Nature Center or a local park or natural area. If you are interested in registering for this class, please email our education team at [asc.educationteam@gmail.com](mailto:asc.educationteam@gmail.com).

For younger children (ages 2-7), we are offering a **Family Bird Trail Day**. Interactive activity stations will be set up along a short trail at Hesthavn Nature Center. Stations will include viewing bird specimens, science experiments, art, story-telling, and family nature fun! These trail days will occur one Saturday a month, open-house style, from 10 - Noon. The first Family Bird Trail Day will be April 9th. The topic will be Swoop, Soar, and Flap: how do birds do it? In May, the **Family Bird Trail Day** will coincide with World Migratory Bird Day on Saturday, May 14th. The children will learn about how birds migrate and play fun migration games. Keep an eye out for topics and dates for summer Family Bird Trail Days in subsequent issues of The Chat.

All classes are free and open to the public. If you are interested in volunteering to help with either the Junior Birding Program or the Family Bird Trail Day classes, please contact Dodie Wilson at [asc.educationteam@gmail.com](mailto:asc.educationteam@gmail.com).

*Dodie Wilson, Education Co-Chair*

# Gardening for Birds

## Gardening with Oregon Grape



Fig. 1. Mahonia aquifolium.

Producing bright yellow clusters of flowers in early spring, our three Mahonia species should be integral components of a Pacific Northwest woodland garden. The largest, *Mahonia aquifolium*, is the Oregon state flower. The other, smaller species are Long-leaved Mahonia, *M. nervosa*, and Creeping Mahonia, *M. repens*. All three are often generically referred to as Oregon Grape. They all have bright yellow flowers followed by dark blue, edible berries. Hummingbirds reportedly forage for nectar, though I have not observed this. I have occasionally seen Orange-crowned Warblers on the flowers, however. The fruit are avidly sought by birds and quickly disappear upon ripening.



Fig. 2. Flowering Mahonia aquifolium

*M. aquifolium* grows 3-10 ft. tall. While it prefers good, heavily organic soil in part- to full-shade, it is adaptable to drier, sunnier sites if periodically irrigated. The species spreads by rhizomes to form thickets. Taller types can look awkward, so periodic removal of older, taller shoots will maintain a better looking, more compact stand. A number of compact varieties have been selected and are readily available in nurseries. There is also a compact variety with dark red leaves in winter.



Fig. 3. Mahonia nervosa forms a low thicket

*M. nervosa* grows to 1-2 ft. and also spreads to form an attractive, low groundcover. *M. repens* grows to about 1 ft and spreads. I have had less luck with this species looking good in the garden and prefer the other two.

All three species are adapted to our dry summers if sufficiently shaded. Plants adapted to dry shade are always useful. Sword fern, Salal, Huckleberries, Indian Plum and native rhododendron and azaleas are good companion plants.

The inner bark of *Mahonia* is bright yellow and was reportedly used as a dye. In researching this story, I learned that *Mahonia* extracts can be used to treat psoriasis and skin irritations. The fruit are edible and there are recipes for preserves and syrup.

*Text and Photos by William Proebsting*

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## Hesthavn News

### Work Parties

Sunday March 6, 10 to noon. Weed work party. We need to do something about the shiny geranium, which is taking over a low area inside "Ray's Trail." I'm hoping to obtain some arborist chips to cover this section. If I can get this, I will need some warm bodies to cart and spread the chips. Otherwise, we still need to go after the blackberries, which made a bit of a come-back last year.

Sunday March 27, 10 to noon. Barn and yard work party. We will no doubt need to be mowing and trimming the grass by then. We need to do some more cutting back of shrubs and trees near the barn which pose a bit of a fire hazard.

Bring work gloves and snacks for a picnic lunch at noon.

Check the ASC website or the Hesthavn Facebook page for up-to-the-minute info

*Ray Drapek, Hesthavn Chair*

## Our Trails Are Still Open to Enjoy Nature

Hesthavn's trails and outdoor facilities are still open to our guests during daylight hours, as long as you observe social distancing and wear a mask within 6 feet of others.

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

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## Community Notes

### Go Beavs!

"Dammed Oak Creek" is a 9-minute video about the restoration projects along Oak Creek and its tributary, Lamprey Creek in Corvallis. Stan Gregory, stream ecologist, and Bob Beschta, forest hydrologist, discuss the changes that have occurred along Oak Creek as natural beaver dams have reappeared and the positive impact this has had on carbon sequestration, water quality and storage, biodiversity and fish migration. The film was produced by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition and the Marys Peak Chapter of the Sierra Club. [Dammed Oak Creek - YouTube](#)

*Suzanne Ortiz, Secretary*

## Ankeny Hill Nature Center

This February, the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex opened the new Ankeny Hill Nature Center. We stopped by the hilltop site during the "soft opening week" and met enthusiastic volunteers from the Salem Audubon Society who pointed out the sights, including the upland prairie, oak savanna and riparian habitats that are being restored. The sunny weather encouraged a good turnout of visitors and the sunlight highlighted the colorful Western Bluebirds and Yellow-rumped Warblers that flew through the nature play area and along the loop trail. The interpretive displays are bilingual, in Spanish and English. Learn more about the center:

<https://www.ankenhillnaturecenter.org>

The project is a joint partnership of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Salem Audubon Society and the Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Ankeny Hill Nature Center gates are open from dawn to dusk every day (Gehlar Hall will be open to the public at a future date).

130 Ankeny Hill Road SE, Jefferson, OR

*Suzanne Ortiz, Secretary*

## Sharing Space with Otters

The Elakha Alliance was formed by Oregon tribal, nonprofit, and conservation leaders with the goal to restore Oregon's sea otter population and to encourage more robust marine and coastal ecosystems. In October 2021, Rob Lowe, formerly with the USFWS, and former Project Leader for the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex, presented a webinar on [Birds & Kelp Forests - YouTube](#)

Tuesday, March 29, 2022, 6 PM: Sharing Space with Sea Otters: A Case Study of Coexistence in a Crowded World (link to webinar registration below)

Presenters: Sea Otter Savvy's founder and director, Gena Bentall, and Science Communications Director, Heather Barrett

[https://www.elakhaalliance.org/sharing\\_space\\_with\\_sea\\_otters/](https://www.elakhaalliance.org/sharing_space_with_sea_otters/)

*Suzanne Ortiz, Secretary*

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## Atop the Nest Box

### The bluebirds are looking! Are you ready?



One of the advantages of living in the Willamette Valley is that we have the pleasure of seeing and hearing Western Bluebirds year round. During the fall and winter, you may observe small flocks of bluebirds flying overhead, using the bird bath in your yard, or investigating nest boxes or natural cavities in trees.

In our area, some Western Bluebirds will begin building their nests by the end of March. Therefore, if

you have nest boxes on your property, or if you monitor nest boxes for the Bluebird Trail, you should act now to make sure your boxes are ready for the 2022 nesting season.

If you forgot to clean out your boxes last fall, do that now. Remove any old nests, and scrape away droppings that may be stuck to the inside walls of the box. Dispose of the discards far from the box to lessen the chance of predators finding it. And be careful when you reach into your boxes—wasps often use them as roosting sites!

Also check that all your boxes are in good condition. A roof that was waterproof in August may have split open during the six months since then. An entrance hole that was perfectly sized for a bluebird last summer may have been enlarged by a rodent or woodpecker, allowing bigger birds to compete for the box.

The photo accompanying this article shows one of the boxes I monitor for the Bluebird Trail at Finley National Wildlife Refuge. I discovered it in this condition in January, when I went to the site to install a couple of additional boxes nearby. What happened to it? I can't say for certain, but I do know that the refuge

has a sizable population of elk, which love to rub against nest boxes mounted conveniently at shoulder height, so I suspect one of them may have uprooted the post and loosened the clamps holding the box to it. That wouldn't have been a difficult feat for a 500-pound animal. You may not have elk in your neighborhood, but if your nest boxes are mounted on posts, it's still a good idea to make sure each post is upright and its box is firmly fastened near the top.



*What's wrong with this picture?*

If you need help with nest box repairs or replacement, contact me:

[BluebirdTrail.corvallisaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:BluebirdTrail.corvallisaudubon@gmail.com).

*Matt Lee*

# Board Meeting Summary

February 10, 2022

Zoom meeting called to order by Dave Mellinger at 7 PM.

Present: Phyllis Bailey, Mark Baldwin, Ray Drapek, Jim and Karan Fairchild, Mai Kiigemagi, Dave Mellinger, Susan McNutt, Suzanne Ortiz, Carolyn Peterson, and Dodie Wilson. January minutes were approved as submitted.

## Officer Reports

**President** – Funding for Finley Horned Lark intern discussed. Board voted to provide \$6,500 that will be sent as a contribution this year to Willamette Valley NWR Complex. A report or presentation by the intern will be requested.

Board and General meetings will continue on Zoom for another month or so. Eric Preston will run General meeting and Karan will run the March board meeting in Dave's absence.

## VP/Program Committee –

**Treasurer report** sent online report that shows a little over \$70,000 in accounts. Carolyn will be adjusting data re: amounts for National report Karan sent. Awaiting funding from National.

**Secretary** – A volunteer is needed to take minutes at the March board meeting. Susan will be away.

## Committee and Team Reports

**Education** – Dodie talked about potential spring classes at Hesthavn (Jr Birding Program); Wednesday late afternoon beginning in April; short field trips for children 8 -13 yrs. old. Family Bird Trail Days for 2-7 yrs. old may be held every other Saturday starting in April. Specifics will be put on the website with registration forms and asking for volunteers in a CHAT article.

**Conservation** – Jim Fairchild mentioned issues and organizations that are keeping him busy as he continues to follow legislation. We can reinforce efforts and show appreciation.

**Hesthavn** –

1. New influx of (temporary) volunteers – Students from an OSU class have been contacting me to

- volunteer as an assignment for their class. One has already been to three work parties.
2. Douglas spirea planted by Kim and a volunteer in the section of the property between the barn and the creek.
3. New bird feeder – Thanks to Chris Matthews who purchased a new very large feeder for the road side yard of the barn.
4. Parking – issue is re-emerging. Jim put a trail camera out for a month to watch parking lot traffic. May get a sign that says, "OSU does not allow parking here for access to Oak Creek." Sandwich board signs' influence seems to be waning.
5. Bee buddies – For the past few years we have participated in the "Bee Buddies" program offered by the Benton SWCD. For a small fee they would install and maintain native bee boxes on your property.
6. Key problems with barn lock – Any problems - let Ray know.
7. Accessibility – Ray and Kim attended a "Birdability" group webinar – not just physical, but inclusional.
8. Education programs at Hesthavn – April/May – Want to have an open house to share the trails, the barn, and enjoy the area. Maybe coordinated with other activities.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

*Susan McNutt, Board Secretary*

## Open Board Meetings

ASC Board of Directors meetings are open to all ASC members, and the Board encourages you to come and see what we do. Our monthly Board meeting is on Thursday, one week before the General Meeting. See the Board meeting minutes or ASC website for location and time.

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## Membership Corner

### Welcome New Members!

Elizabeth Hoffman  
Pam & Mark Keller

## General Membership Renewal Information

For membership renewal online go to 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](mailto:alderspr@peak.org)) and request to be added.

## Have You Changed Your Contact Info?

If you have moved recently or changed your email/mail addresses, please update your information by emailing it to [adamus7@comcast.net](mailto:adamus7@comcast.net).

Thank you for your generosity and support!

*Paul Adamus, Membership Chair*

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## Contributors to this Chat

Paul Adamus, Don Boucher, Bev Clark, Ray Drapek, Duncan Evered, Jim Fairchild, Karan Fairchild, Matt Lee, Susan McNutt, Suzanne Ortiz, Sue Powell, William Proebsting, Jamie Simmons, Caryn Stoess, and Dodie Wilson

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## Chat Articles

The Chat editors (Kelly Collins, 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, unless another date is indicated in the Chat

calendar the previous month. Submit text using Microsoft Word and photos to: [chateditors@gmail.com](mailto:chateditors@gmail.com).

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## Calendar

Note: please notice that the March Board meeting and general meeting had the wrong dates in the February Chat. *Mea culpa!*

March 6, Hesthavn Weeding work party

March 10, Board Meeting (Zoom)

March 12, Second Saturday Field Trip

March 17, General Meeting – Matt Betts, "Can We Have Our Cake and Eat it Too? Conserving Nature in the Age of Humans"

March 27, Hesthavn Barn and yard work party

April 9, Second Saturday Field Trip

April 14, Board Meeting (Zoom)

April 21, General Meeting – Birds of Ecuador with Matt Lee and Sue Powell

**Board and Member meetings may have to be cancelled or changed to ZOOM due to pandemic challenges, so please check our website for the latest scheduling info.**



*Lesser Goldfinch photo by Tom Heath*

## Officers

Co-President	Dave Mellinger	dmell3.14159(at)gmail.com
Co-President	Karan Fairchild	alderspr(at)peak.org
Vice President	Committee	audubon.corvallis@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 students; \$15 for CHAT-only subscriptions (email delivery only); \$50 for Supporting Level; \$150 for Patron Level; and \$250 for Benefactor Level.

## Interested in volunteering?

Please let us know:

[volunteerasc@gmail.com](mailto:volunteerasc@gmail.com)

## Find us online



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