



THE CHAT

April 2024 VOL. 53 #8

General Meeting

eBird.org: Targeting and Tracking Birds with Citizen Science, presented by Nikki Cross

April 18, 2024, 7:30 PM

Nikki Cross will overview eBird.org, a research tool created by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. The eBird database contains over 100 million bird sightings contributed annually by birders



Sage Thrasher photo by Nikki Cross

around the world. Through this presentation, you'll learn how eBird can be used as a tool to supercharge your birding hobby by targeting and finding new birds and tracking your personal life list. You'll also learn how contributing your bird sightings data helps conservationists, students, and scientists worldwide. If you're not already using eBird, hopefully, this presentation will inspire you to become a part of the world's largest citizen science project!

Nikki Cross is an amateur birder and has been submitting bird sightings to eBird since 2012. Throughout

her career, she honed skills in spatial data analysis using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). So, when her hobby of birding grew, she naturally became interested in recording bird data in a map format and found eBird. Her professional background is in urban and regional land use planning, and she has worked as a planner in Clackamas County, Albany, Corvallis, and Philadelphia.

She earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from Occidental College and a master's degree in urban affairs and public policy from the University of Delaware. Nikki volunteers for the Audubon Society of Corvallis as the Instagram coordinator.

The 2023-2024 Monthly Meetings will be held in person and on Zoom. Join us in the Chandler Ballroom of the [Corvallis Community Center](#) located at 2601 NW Tyler Ave. in Corvallis.

Doors open at 6:30 PM followed by a business meeting at 7:00 PM. The program begins at 7:30 PM and lasts about an hour.

ASC members who provided their email address with their membership dues will receive an invitation and instructions the week of the presentation. Programs are posted on the [ASC website](#) after the meeting. Meetings are open to the public. Email audubon.corvallis@gmail.com for more information about accessing the program.

Thanks to Eric Preston for guiding our Zoom meetings and Program Committee Chairperson Mai Kiigemagi for booking guest speakers. 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!

Mai and Eric, Program Committee



Yellow-throated Toucan photo by Nikki Cross

Renaming Update

Between September and December 2023, we collected your feedback on the Audubon renaming issue. Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey. We received 95 surveys with many thoughtful and honest responses on the issue of renaming and the positive and negative aspects of the Audubon name. When asked “Should the Audubon Society of Corvallis change our name?” 49% voted “No” [do not change the name], 43% voted “Yes” [change the name] and 8% were not sure.

Between January and March 2024, the Renaming Committee presented the survey results to the Board and the board had discussions. A board vote will be held during the Board Meeting on May 9th to decide on changing the name of our organization. As always, Board Meetings are open to the public.

For more context on this issue, read a letter from our Co-President Dave Mellinger in the [October Edition of the Chat](#). Board Meeting Summaries are published in each edition of the Chat as well. For further reading, see the article from the [National Audubon Society about the complicated history of John James Audubon](#) and J Drew Lanham’s article, “[What Do We Do About John James Audubon](#)”.

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Jake Keen, Renaming Committee Member

Find us online



<https://auduboncorvallis.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/CorvallisAudubon/>



<https://www.instagram.com/auduboncorvallis/>

Education News

March has been a busy month for Education! We participated in 5 Winter Wildlife Field Days events at 5 different parks throughout Corvallis. Despite some snow and rain, families came out and the youngsters gave our bird scavenger hunt a try. Children as young as 2 years old had fun running around with their bird ID cards and binoculars to try and find all 10 of our plastic bird cutouts. Several kids said

they thought our activity was very fun. For their efforts they got to take home a sticker and the bird id card to help them identify birds in their yards.

Also, in March we attended the Franklin Science Fair and the Sustainability Fair. We brought our bird specimens and a bird bingo game to the Science Fair. The bird specimens are always a hit with

kids, generating a lot of questions.

The children also enjoyed

playing bingo and getting a sticker whether or not they won. Finally, our table at the Sustainability Fair garnered a lot of attention. Volunteers Suzanne Ortiz, Bev Clark, and Jayshaun Talbert engaged the attendees explaining what we do, and answering questions. Jayshaun also had success



signing up several volunteers to help with the Lights Out surveys this spring.

Thanks to all the volunteers that helped out this month: Phyllis Bailey, Tricia Bowlby, Mai Kiigemagi, Bev Clark, Suzanne Ortiz, Jayshaun Talbert, Katja Erringer, Ann Brodie, Meika Vingelen, Liz Hogan, and Dodie Wilson.

Dodie Wilson, Education Chair

Atop the Nest Box

Western Bluebirds are Looking! Are your nest boxes ready?

In the Willamette Valley, the weather is usually mild enough that you may see Western Bluebirds year round. By early April, some of them will begin building new nests. Therefore, if you have nest boxes on your property, or if you monitor nest boxes for the Bluebird Trail, now is the time to make sure your boxes are ready for the 2024 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 remember that paper wasps often use the boxes as roosting sites or as shelter for their own nests, so look before you reach inside!

Also check that all of your boxes are in good condition. Is the roof still waterproof? Does the door close securely? Is the entrance hole the right size? A hole that was enlarged by rodents or woodpeckers will allow bigger birds, such as European Starlings, to occupy the box. If the box was mounted on a post, is it still at the top of the post?

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

BluebirdTrail.corvallisaudubon@gmail.com.



These two Western Bluebird chicks have just hatched. Their four nestmates will soon join them. Photo by Matt Lee.

Matt Lee

Sustainability News

2024 Sustainability Fair and Town Hall

This year's Corvallis Sustainability Fair attracted between 500-600 people who had the opportunity to engage with over 50 exhibitors to learn how they have initiated and incorporated sustainable practices. Visitors learned about transportation, food waste, local lost creeks, pollinators and many other subjects. The Fair is always a sparkplug event that encourages folks to support local businesses and non-profits that are part of the community-wide sustainability team. The goal is to show how we can make individual choices that can impact our homes and our community.

The ASC team of volunteers placed particular emphasis on the “Lights Out OSU” program that started this March to monitor the impact on birds of glass windows/buildings on the OSU campus. Jayshaun Talbert, ASC conservation chair, was on hand to talk about the project that he coordinates, and to recruit volunteers. The ASC team at the Fair included Jayshaun, Bev Clark, and Suzanne Ortiz.

The 2024 Town Hall was held later that night. Audubon Society of Corvallis is an engaged partner of the Coalition and a supporter of the Town Hall. Around 220 attendees were part of the in-person event which also included a virtual audience. Participants enjoyed a slide show, “The Community Scrapbook,” that highlighted the sustainability achievements of our city and county governments, local businesses and nonprofits, the various Action Teams of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, and ASC. A link to view the scrapbook slide show will be provided in a future issue of The Chat.

The theme of the Town Hall was “The Arts: A Portal to Sustainability” and three guest speakers provided perspectives about how their programs are moving forward with creative new ideas to showcase artists and to encourage community members to participate in creating art.

Cynthia Spender-Hadlock, the director of The Arts Center, talked about the exhibits and programs offered by TAC, as well as their classes and workshops, including Community Craft Nights at the C3 Community Center. She invited visitors to see the newly installed Urban Pollinator Habitat Project located outside TAC. [For more info click here](#)

Carly Lettero of the Spring Creek Project, talked about the collaborative approach the group uses to encourage the creative effort to write, tell and imagine new stories that will help us to sustain ourselves and our communities. Spring Creek Project has initiated a series of podcasts and videos on these processes and their relationship to the natural environment. Click here to link to [Spring Creek videos](#)

Rose Holdorf, a co-founder of the Tarweed Folk School, described the new folk school that opened in 2023. Tarweed kicked off their program with a range of classes including growing medicinal plants and constructing a community-built earth oven that was donated to a local non-profit. Their website lists the classes they will be offering in May 2024, including a class on Bilingual Birdwatching Basics. [To learn more about Tarweed Folk School click here](#)

Suzanne Ortiz, Sustainability Team

Field Trips

Multi-Day Field Trips

2024 Field Trips

Ahh, Spring!

On April 19-21, an ASC field trip heads over the Cascades to the Klamath Lake basin where we visit three National Wildlife Refuges. The first day takes in Klamath Marsh NWR; Day 2 we explore Lower Klamath Lake NWR and Tule Lake NWR just over the California line; Day 3 begins at Putnam Point on Upper Klamath Lake. Five grebe species gather there, with Western Grebes and Clark’s Grebes performing their water sprints. The day includes a hike in nearby Moore Park to look for songbirds before returning north. If our weather is cooperative, this will be the first opportunity to find butterflies (we have recorded over 20 species in the past). Key birds include: Common Goldeneye, Black-crowned Night-Heron, American White Pelican, Plain Titmouse.

Our next trip is to the Rogue Valley on May 4-6. One objective is to find birds of the California chaparral: Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, California Towhee, and Oak Titmouse. Another primary focus will be on the wealth of spring flowers. Top this off with a theater performance at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Then, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (May 12-15). This is ASC’s signature trip, witnessing the spring migration of waterfowl, shorebirds, and songbirds at one of America’s greatest refuges.

Later trips include: Summer Lake (June 7-9); the Wallowas (July 17-21); Steens Mountain (August 15-18); and the South Coast in mid-September.

All trips usually have a wide range of expert observers who point out not only the birds but also butterflies, dragonflies, mammals, reptiles, and flowers.

Signup sheets for all trips will be available at ASC general meetings and by email to flramsey5@comcast.net. Your signup should be accompanied by a \$25 deposit for each trip due one month before departure. You may also volunteer as a driver (slots available on the signup sheets), and drivers will not be charged for the regular trip costs. If the signups are not sufficient to run any trip, it will be canceled and any deposits will be refunded.

Fred Ramsey, Field Trip Coordinator

Second Saturday Field Trip

April 13th (8 AM Noon)

We will meet at the shelter in Willamette Park (east end of SE Goodnight Ave.) and tour the park. This four-hour excursion is free and geared toward 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! Free and open to the public, but registration is required. Signup at:

CorvallisAudubonSecondSaturday@gmail.com. Led by Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess. The weather may alter plans.

Duncan Evered and Caryn Stoess

Community Notes

Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

March 2024 - June 2024. "stik." 1857-1954. Part two of a year-long, 4-part exhibit. Stories from the forest are featured as told through the perspectives of timber industry workers, conservationists, hunters, weavers, and others. Each narrator reflects on how our interaction with the land has changed from time immemorial to the present. Chachalu Museum, 8720 Grand Ronde Rd, Grand Ronde, OR. [Click here for more info](#)

Oregon State University Foundation and Office of the Provost

Tuesday, April 2, 7-9:30 PM. Provost Lecture. Michael Pollan, author, in conversation with OSU faculty member, Emily Ho, Director of the Linus Pauling Center and professor of Nutrition. College of Forestry. Free. [To register for the livestream click here](#)

Oregon State University College of Forestry

Wednesday, April 2, 3:30-5 PM. Starker Lecture. Buddy Huffaker, President of the Aldo Leopold Foundation. "Land Ethic: A Sand County Almanac 75th Anniversary." George W. Peavy Forest Science Center (PFSC), Rm 117, 3100 SW Jefferson Way, Corvallis. In person and virtual. [To register for Zoom click here](#)

Wednesday, April 10, 5-8 PM. Starker Lecture and Open House at Peavy Lodge. "Digging into Forest Soils." Dean Tom DeLuca will speak on the nature of soil ecosystems, their complexity and biodiversity as it relates to forest health and function and the sustainable management of forests. Free. College of Forestry. Peavy Arboretum, 8692 NW Peavy Arboretum Rd, Corvallis. In person and virtual. [To register for livestream click here](#)

Native Plant Society of Corvallis

Monday, April 8, from 7:30-9 PM. Phil Hayes, “Wildflowers of Marys Peak.” Free. Cordley Hall, Room 2602, OSU campus, 2701 SW Campus Way, Corvallis. [To register for the virtual meeting click here](#)

Saturday, April 13 from 10-12. NPSO Wildflower walk at Jackson-Frazier Wetlands. Led by Dan Luoma and Joyce Eberhardt. Free. 3600 NE Lancaster St., Corvallis. [For more info and to register](#)

Saturday, April 20. Time TBD. NPSO Wildflower walk at William L. Finley NWR, Woodpecker Loop led by Esther McEvoy. Free. [For more info and to register click here](#)

Sunday, April 21 from 1-3 PM. NPSO Wildflower walk at Sulfur Springs Baker Creek Loop. Led by Alex Kurowski. Free. [For more info and to register click here](#)

Corvallis-Benton County Public Library

Wednesday, April 10 from 12-1 PM. Random Review. “The Invisible Kingdom: Reimagining Chronic Illness.” Reviewer: Meghan O’Rourke. Free. OSU. Main Reading Room, CBCPL, 645 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis.

Marys Peak Group of the Sierra Club, Marys Peak Alliance and Corvallis-Benton Co. Pub Library

Thursday, April 11 from 7-8:30 PM. “Frenkel Environment and Hiking Series: Transforming Marys Peak.” Presenters: Michele Holman, Doug Glavich and Matt Smith (USFS); Scott Snedaker (BLM); Kathleen Westly (Marys River Watershed Council). Virtual. Open to the public. Free. [Click here to register](#)

Corvallis Benton County Public Library, Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, OSU Extension Service, Master Gardeners, Benton County

Thursday, April 18, 9:30-12 PM. Public Seed Library Vegetable Garden Plant Clinic. Bring your vegetable garden questions and check out the available free seeds. Free. Corvallis-Benton County Public Library and OSU Extension/Benton County Master Gardeners with educational support from OSU Extension Service-Benton Co. Belluschi Wing, CBCPL, 645 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis.

Oregon State University Giustina Gallery and Corvallis Art Guild

Exhibit ends April 29, 2024. “Wonder.” The art exhibit showcases members of the Corvallis Art Guild as they explore and express their individual senses of wonder through their artwork. Free. LaSells Stewart Center, OSU, 875 SW 26th St, Corvallis.

Suzanne Ortiz

Board Meeting Summary

March 14, 2024, 5:30 PM

Present: Dodie Wilson, Bev Clark, Phyllis Bailey, Bill Gellatly, Mark Baldwin, Suzanne Ortiz, Karan and Jim Fairchild, Jake Keen, Mai Kiigemagi

The meeting was called to order by Karan. Minutes from the February Board meeting were approved.

President's message: We are still looking for a secretary. Board members will take turns for now.

Treasurer: Carolyn canceled the CenturyLink internet account at Hesthavn, saving \$40 per month. Committees with budgets are asked to review their budget in preparation for approving next year's budget.

Education: March has been a busy month of events, with Winter Wildlife Field Days, Science Night, and the Sustainability Fair. Coming events include Natural Areas Celebration Week (first week of May), Get Outdoors Day (June), and field trips to Hesthavn from Adams School students.

Chat: March 22 is the next deadline

Conservation: Jayshaun Talbert attended the Sustainability Fair and spoke to potential volunteers for Lights Out Corvallis. Surveys have begun, yielding goldfinch skeletons and a dead robin. Evening Grosbeaks are being looked at closely. Volunteers are still needed; email Jayshaun directly. Volunteers are also needed for raptor surveys of back roads in Benton County. This will take place in late April through May. An increase in the conservation budget is requested.

Renaming Committee: Further discussion took place. It was suggested that the Board vote on a name change at the May 9 meeting. Membership should be made aware of when the vote will take place, through the Chat and website.

Field trips: Confirmed field trip leaders (Suzanne-Rogue Valley, Bev-Summer Lake, Mark-Malheur, and Bruce Kelpsas-Steens Mtns) will meet to iron out details of upcoming trips.

Sustainability: There was a good turnout for the Sustainability Fair. Volunteers from ASC were Suzanne, Bev, and Jayshaun. The Martin Luther King, Jr. walk will be rescheduled, and include a planting party.

Hesthavn: Ray has contacted potential volunteers but so far not much response. He will be looking at some possible removal of hazardous trees. The south heater has been fixed, but it may be moved down. The brush mower is not starting and Ray will need help getting it in for repairs. Two YVC work parties are scheduled for summer.

Old Business: Jim received the data about the Corvallis Watershed after several requests. Those interested in viewing it can contact Jim. There is a meeting on March 18 at Harrisburg High School on the proposed southern Linn county solar array farm. Jim will attend.

The April Board meeting will be held at Ray's house.

Meeting adjourned by Karan.

Mai Kiigemagi, Acting Secretary

Open Board Meetings

ASC Board of Directors meetings are open to all ASC members; 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 the ASC website for the location and time.

Membership Corner

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, field trip locations, volunteer work parties, as well as Zoom links. Send an email to the administrator Karan Fairchild at 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 bgellatly@msn.com.

Thank you for your generosity and support!

Bill Gellatly, Membership Chair

Chat Articles

The Chat Editors welcome articles from all members of the Audubon Society of Corvallis. Please submit articles to the Chat Editor by the fourth Monday of the month, unless another date is indicated in the Chat calendar. Submit text and photos to: chateditors@gmail.com.

Calendar

General Meeting Speaker Schedule

Apr. 18: Nikki Cross, Birding in the Digital Age

May 16: Carina Kusaka, Tufted Puffins

Officers

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Interested in volunteering?

Please let us know:

volunteerasc@gmail.com