



THE CALLIOPE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST CASCADES
AUDUBON SOCIETY

WINTER 2012-2013

President's Message – Who is a Birder?

One of my favorite authors, Jonathon Franzen, came to the passion of birding as an adult. Experiencing a personal crisis - his mother had died in Everett, Washington - he went out bird-watching on Hat Island for the first time in his life, the summer of 1999. Writing about his evolution as a birder in a New Yorker article in 2005, titled "My Bird Problem", he describes one person's journey down a path that many of us are on, always personal and in many variations of story. So who is a "birder"?

This question came to mind as I was asking the three new Board members about their personal birding history. (For their answers, see below.) As members of East Cascades Audubon Society, an entity "organized for the charitable, educational, and scientific purpose of bird study and conservation", we should all be self-described birders. We host a Birders' Night as our monthly business meeting. We go "Birding By Ear". We are the Wednesday Morning Birders. Our projects range from the very scientific Winter Raptor Surveys to the introductory Birding for Preschoolers. But as the stories unfold, it reminds me of the recent discussion of dropping Asperger's Syndrome from the Autism Continuum. It is very difficult to put an individual and their personal proclivities in a box. Not to draw too close a parallel, but it seems birders fall along a lengthy continuum of others' observation and self-description. And all are worthy in the great umbrella of English idiomatic usage.

With that to chew on - editorial comments welcome – we are beginning 2013 with a full complement of nine Board Directors. An all-day meeting will be held January 26 to outline the coming year, using the updated Strategic Plan as a template.

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Anne Gerke is a native Texan. A graduate of Rice University, she taught Junior and Senior High School in San Antonio for 10 years. Married to John Gerke since 1961, the couple moved to Sisters in 1999 shortly after son Jeff moved there. Daughter Sarah lives in Boring, Oregon and Jeff now in Colorado, but Anne and John are firmly entrenched in the Sisters community. Self-describing, Anne says, "When I was 9, my parents gave me a Roger Tory Peterson Bird Guide and birds became a continuing interest for me." A member of East Cascade Bird Conservancy (ECBC) and now ECAS since the organizations were started, Anne served on the ECBC Conservation Committee for several years. She is also actively involved in leading Women's Bible Studies at the Sisters Community Church.



Jon Putnam moved to Bend in August of 2011 after working as a Communications Manager at Intel for 24 ½ years. He continues to work part time for Intel from Bend but he says it admittedly cuts into his time for birding, climbing, skiing, biking and other activities. He became a birder 18 years ago on a trekking and birding trip to New Zealand. He gives wife Lynn status as the original birder in the family, (she is on the ECAS Conservation Committee) and when she said "Let's go look at Albatross", he was hooked. While in Portland, they birded around the Northwest with yearly trips to Malheur and other locations. Since coming to Bend, Jon has been active in many ECAS activities including the recent Annual Event. He brings a wealth of experience in marketing and public relations to the Board along with his obvious interest in birding and the outdoors.



Ken Hashagen moved to Sisters about two years ago following retirement from a 35-year career as a biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game. Although mainly a Fisheries specialist, Ken has been interested in birds for a considerable time, actively participating in the Sacramento Audubon society, serving on their board of directors and organizing pelagic trips in the Monterey Bay area. He gives late wife Carmen credit for being the original birder in the family, piquing and feeding his birder persona. He also was part of several bird surveys including Burrowing Owls, Tri-colored Blackbirds, and Raptor counts in the Sierra foothills He is interested in working with the Science Committee and looking forward to helping organize all the woodpecker fun with the upcoming Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival. He also likes cooking and cats.

To close with another birder story, when Jonathon Franzen was growing up, the late Phoebe Snetsinger, famous for seeing more bird species than anyone had seen before, was the mother of one of his classmates. Her memoir, *BIRDING ON BORROWED TIME*, could become an inspiration for us all, echoing my personal sense of carpe diem or "seize the day". As we begin 2013, I would wish all of our members, aka birders, a great year of birding and personal satisfaction

Sherrie Pierce, ECAS Board President

FROM OUR POET LAUREATE



Photo by Kevin Smith,
www.kevin-smith-nature-photos.com

Wintertime

*at the feeder
a foraging group
of Red-breasted Nuthatches—
their surprising chorus
of contact calls
not the shrill yank yank
not the kvetch kvetch kvetch
but Bacall-like notes
languid, breathy
intimate, quiet,
approving the seed.*

Marion Davidson

ANNUAL EVENT 2012

The Bend Senior Center was filled with good music, food, and fellowship at the 2012 Annual Event on November 10, 2012. The music was performed by the "edgy-mellow" duo of ECAS members Kevin and Debby Black-Tanski, the food and drink was arranged by Michelle and Kim Kathol, and the fellowship was provided by over 200 ECAS friends and members. New Board members were elected; memberships were renewed; trips, art, and other goodies were raffled and auctioned; and over \$5000, not including renewals, was raised to support ECAS activities.

Sherrie Pierce presented awards to five people who have made great contributions to ECAS and to birding in Central Oregon.

- Mary Yanalcanlin, profiled below, took a few minutes away from the popular Annual Event "Kids' Corner" to accept the ECAS Volunteer of the Year award.
- Marty St. Louis, Manager of the Summer Lake Wildlife Refuge, was named ECAS Conservationist of the Year, an award accepted on his behalf by former ECBC and ECAS President Steve Dougill.
- Departing Board members Damian Fagan and Mary Oppenheimer received awards in recognition of their years of service to ECAS.



Cal Elshoff receives Honorary Life Membership

- A special award went to Cal Elshoff , who was awarded an honorary Life Membership in recognition of many contributions to Central Oregon as a Bend High science teacher for over thirty years, a Malheur Wildlife Refuge volunteer extraordinaire, and a stalwart Wednesday Birder.

To round out the evening, wildlife biologist Frank Isaacs filled the audience in on his years of tracking the nests and recovery of eagle populations throughout Oregon, while Chuck Gates showed us the ECAS year in pictures, as well as a moving tribute to our beloved Dean Hale.

Many, many thanks are due to Jan Rising and her crew of volunteers who renewed memberships and handled auction payments; to Howard Horvath, Anthony Kutzen, and Jon Putnam for selling a record amount of raffle tickets; to John and Anne Gerke for manning the T-shirt and cap table; to Marion Davidson for another successful "Dollar Bird Book" exchange; to Jon Putnam for arranging a beautiful poster and program cover; and to Sherrie Pierce, Damian Fagan, Judy Meredith and all the other Annual Event Committee members for rounding up auction and raffle items and putting together the whole affair.

Mary Oppenheimer

PERSONALITIES: MARY YANALCANLIN: BRINGING UP BIRDERS



If you happen to be walking through Drake Park on a Monday morning, you might run into Mary Yanalcanlin and her flock of preschoolers, scoping out the sights and sounds. For Mary, every week brings a new adventure and a new challenge to her weekly Birding for Preschoolers expedition.

On one very cold day in December, the intrepid group heard or saw several species of birds despite the weather: Red-breasted Nuthatches were calling close by; further off a Northern Flicker announced itself, but was never seen. Ever alert for curious occurrences, the little band noticed the pattern the snow had left on all the tree trunks leaving one side bare. Rousing up the young gray matter, the group decided that the snow had accumulated on the side of the trunk that had borne the brunt of a recent strong wind. Heading down to the banks of the Deschutes, the waterfowl were easier to spot and name: Mallards, Canada Geese, American Wigeons, Common Goldeneyes.

Not only does Mary regularly preside over those youngsters attending the Monday gathering, but she also files regular reports on COBOL (Central Oregon Birding on Line). Her regular and lively reports provide detailed snapshots of species sighting and activities at the Park at all times of year from an accurate observer. Mary also posts some photos from her visits on ECAS' Facebook page.

For several years now, Mary has volunteered to guide ECAS's Birding for Preschoolers which meets at 10:00 on Mondays at Drake Park. It's open to any interested youngster and is free of charge. A seasoned childcare maven, Mary has extra binoculars if needed. And she has devised a "quiet game" starting with a minute, so kids can begin to see and hear interesting things that reward their stillness. Her only rule for Birding for Preschoolers : don't fall in the river. So far so good.

Like many of us, although a nature enthusiast from an early age, Mary came late to formal birding. When a newcomer to Bend, she sought answers to birding questions from a helpful staffer at Wild Birds Unlimited, who told Mary of field trips and other activities sponsored by the East Cascades birding group. Later, Mary noticed a yard full of perches and feeders where she spotted her first ever Red Crossbill and White-crowned Sparrow. As she stood looking at the birds, out came the woman she had met earlier at the store. It was Patty Meehan! Mary became a regular at Dave Tracy's springtime Birding by Ear class, another free event sponsored by ECAS. There, Mary honed her knowledge of local birds as well as springtime migrants .

Mary also hosts a Fledgling Fun monthly gathering for kids at the Environmental Center, an hour and a half of bird lore, games and crafts. Each meeting focuses on a particular subject. In February, Ocean Birds will be the topic. A complete calendar can be found on ECAS' website.

Ever wise about the skills of interesting youngsters in birds, Mary points out it's about the kids first, which might mean the adult would never find the loon that was recently reported. She also uses an integrated approach to learning—all discoveries are welcome: poop, pine cones, foot prints, sirens, squeaks, quacks, to name a few.

Mary recalls an early "ah ha" moment in her life many years ago at New Mexico's Bosque del Apache Wildlife Refuge with the fly-out of thousands of wintering Sandhill Cranes, a sound and sight that has stayed with her for decades. It is that unforgettable experience that Mary seeks to install in the children she instructs—kids likely to be ever curious about birds.

For more information see the ECAS website or contact Mary at birdingfun@gmail.com or 541-480-6148.

WINTER EVENTS

While it's cold outside, remember that Birders' Night is a great place for a birding "fix". Meetings are held at the Environmental Center, 16 NW Kansas in Bend. Meetings start at 6:30 pm with refreshments and social time, followed by updates about what's happening in the local birding scene. The final hour, from 7:30-8:30 is reserved for programs about birds, birding and related topics. Here's the program for the rest of the winter. For future programs, check the ECAS web site at www.ecaudubon.org.

On **January 17, 2013**, we are excited to welcome local Sisters naturalist and woodpecker specialist, Steve Shunk for a program on "**Forest Fire, Salvage Logging, and the Black-backed Woodpecker.**" According to Steve, "For 100 years we have suppressed wildfire, leaving volatile fuel loads, which burn violently once sparked. Society's demand for wood products sends us into these burned forests to salvage the charred timber before it can decay; but removing burned timber may be jeopardizing the favored habitat of the Black-backed Woodpecker. This handsome forest carpenter is now the subject of a federal petition to list western populations of the species as threatened or endangered."

But is the Black-back really threatened or even declining in western forests? And how do we balance the demands of a growing populace with the importance of forest ecology? Steve has spent the last two summers studying California Black-backs, visiting dozens of burned forest areas. His recent field experience along with 15 years living in the heart of Central Oregon Black-back habitat has given him a unique perspective on the Black-backed Woodpecker conundrum. Steve will bring to life the ecology of western forests, with an emphasis on forest management and conservation and the keystone roles played by the woodpeckers themselves.

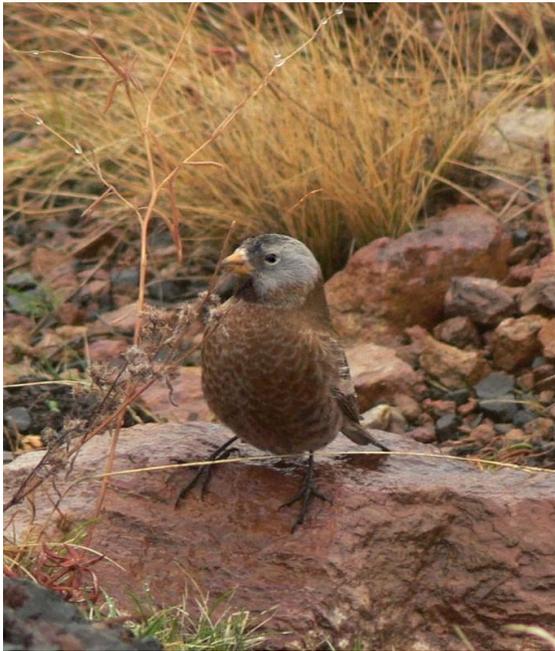
The February 21 Birders' Night features **Dave Tracy** with a primer on "**Birding By Ear.**" Dave has been leading ECAS "Birding By Ear" guided birdwalks each spring for several years, helping local birders identify resident and wintering birds and then noting the arrival of many migrants, as the spring air becomes filled with lively bird songs and other bird vocalizations.

Dave assures us that "Anyone who can hear can learn how to identify different Central Oregon birds by their songs and sounds." If you think can't tell the song of a House Finch from a House Wren, then come to February Birders' Night and learn some simple tips, explore online birdsong libraries and find out about different software and apps that are available for listening to and recording birds. With these new tools, you can make learning birdsongs easier and explore new ways to enhance your birding experience.

On Thursday **March 21**, we will welcome environmental steward and Juniper Golf Course Superintendent **Kurt Noonan** to Birders' Night as he shares what was involved in Juniper's recent designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary golf course (not affiliated with our National Audubon). His presentation, "**Juniper Golf Course Audubon Certification...in the Rear View Mirror**" will include why he pursued certification and what it means for local birds and to our community. Last spring, ECAS members Kim Kathol, Kevin Smith, Loren Smith, and Sherrie Pierce helped Kurt make Juniper a bird friendly golf course by siting kestrel and bluebird nest boxes and participating in two "field day education programs" at Juniper for local elementary school students. Some of these local members will be on hand as well to answer questions.

Diana Roberts, Birders' Night Co-Chair

FALL 2012 FIELD NOTES – By Chuck Gates



GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH Grizzly Mt, Crook County, 11/24/12 Photo by Cindy Hatcher

The fall is the longest of the 4 birding seasons. It is largely accepted that the fall birding season runs from August 1 to November 30. This is but one reason why the fall season produces more rare birds than any other season. Fall is the time of migration and that is an additional factor. Regardless of the reasons, fall field notes provide us with some of the best bird sightings of the year.

There is a reason duck hunting season is in the fall. Large numbers of waterfowl of all sorts flood down from the Tundra and Boreal Forests of Canada and either pass through our region or winter here. We had some great waterfowl sightings this season. SNOW GEESE are annual visitors but their sheer charisma lands them on any seasonal list. CACKLING GEESE made a better-than-normal showing this fall with flocks as big as 70 and 37 being seen in places like Tumalo Reservoir, Houston Lake, and Wickiup Reservoir.

TUNDRA SWANS are another regular migrant/winter resident in Crook County but the discovery of 236 in the eastern part of the county was pretty impressive. As many as 6 TRUMPETER SWANS were seen in the same area (Several spent the fall at Hatfield Lake as well.) EURASIAN WIGEONS were spotted at Wickiup and near Drake Park while GREATER SCAUP surfaced at Wickiup Reservoir in October. SURF SCOTERS were abundant this season in the larger water features and WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS were found at Wickiup and the Prineville Sewer Ponds. Lew Rems found Central Oregon's 3rd and Deschutes County's 1st BLACK SCOTER at Wickiup on November 6. LONG-TAILED DUCKS showed up at Wickiup and Suttle Lake. Wickiup also produced RED-BREASTED MERGANSER, PACIFIC LOONS, HORNED GREBES, and RED-NECKED GREBES (Single Red-necked Grebes were also seen on Ochoco and Prineville Reservoirs.)

While most AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS abandoned Central Oregon by the beginning of November, one individual remained through the season sparking speculation about its health. BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER is not common here so one at Hatfield resulted in a local rare bird alert. A HEERMAN'S GULL seen briefly at Wickiup Reservoir was Deschutes County's 3rd record. Nearly as rare, a THAYER'S GULL turned up at Hatfield Lake for about the 10th county record. HERRING GULLS were seen at Wickiup, Haystack, and Ochoco Reservoirs.

There were many reports of game birds in the area during the fall but perhaps the most interesting was a covey of MOUNTAIN QUAIL that consisted of 2 adults and 4-5 offspring. While included on almost everyone's want-to-see list, the rarity of this species was not the main reason for its inclusion in this report. Rather, the fact that this covey was seen regularly for such a long period of time was what was so unusual. Birds were seen coming to a water source near Prineville Reservoir regularly from early August to almost mid-September. This regularity provided an opportunity for many local birders to add this bird to their "list".

Fall usually brings a smattering of PEREGRINE FALCON sightings as well as other migrating raptors. This season was no different in that respect. Other good raptors included RED-SHOULDERED HAWK at Hatfield and Green Ridge, a late SWAINSON'S HAWK in Sisters on October 26th, and the annual arrival of Merlin at several locations. The "big" diurnal raptor news was the location of more than one BROAD-WINGED HAWK at the Green Ridge Hawk Watch location. Nocturnal raptors reported this season included BARN OWL (near Prineville), WESTERN SCREECH-OWL (near Powell Butte), BARRED OWL (photographed in Bend), LONG EARED OWL (near Powell Butte), SHORT-EARED OWL (near Lone Pine), NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL (in Bend).

The Passerine migration came in like a lamb and went out with a roar. Birding was slow early in the fall but some great birds showed up late in the season. BLACK SWIFTS (not technically passerines but I had no other place to list this species) were located at Tumalo Falls and gave several locals their first look at this species in the county. VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS were found at Hatfield Lake on November 2 for the latest known record of this species. A BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE was found by visiting Portland birders near Cow Camp. North Shore Road along the Crooked River continues to be a good location to find migrating BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS in August and September. Crook County doesn't produce many reports of SWAINSON'S THRUSH so one in Powell Butte was worth noting (Another was found at Camp Polk.) Lew Rems found a BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER at Twin Bridges, and Deschutes County's 1st record of YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER was tallied by Steve Shunk at Calliope Crossing. You simply don't see CHIPPING SPARROWS after mid-October so a sighting of this species on November 11th was really something. Along the Deschutes River, a SWAMP SPARROW turned up briefly. A RED FOX SPARROW was noted at Twin Bridges for a rare Central Oregon record. WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were logged at Powell Butte, near Redmond, near Tumalo, in Bend, and in Prineville. TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS were located early in the season near Prineville but became elusive later. A late BULLOCK'S ORIOLE was located at Sawyer Park on September 11th by the ECAS Birding-By-Ear Class. GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCH reports came in from Grizzly Mt. in Crook County and Pilot Butte in Bend. PURPLE FINCHES were noted in Deschutes County but were not seen in Crook County this whole year.

If you want to find some of the locations mentioned above, go the ECAS Birding Site Guide at www.birdingoregon.info and click on one of the Central Oregon counties. Directions, maps, bird checklists and many more goodies can be found at this site.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Rachel Cornforth monitors bluebird boxes. Photo by Miriam Lipsitz.

Does this interest you? Whatever your interest or experience, ECAS can provide you with opportunities to promote birding and habitat conservation. Four examples are on the next page. If there's something else you're interested in doing, contact a Board member or the appropriate committee chair or project leader. Names and contact information are on our web site, www.ecaudubon.org.

Position: Alternate monitor

Position starts when: nesting season – first week of May through July 2013

Where: Delicious Burn/Rooster Rock Burn

How much time: Nest boxes are checked once per week. As an alternate monitor, time required will vary.

Misc. All training is provided. Need own transportation – rugged car helpful.

Contact: Rachel Cornforth, grcornforth@gmail.com or Miriam Lipsitz, hollyhob7@gmail.com

Project: Membership Committee

Position: Committee member

Position starts when: as available

Where: Work can be done from home, some meetings and a presence at Birders' Night

How much time: 3-6 hours per month

Misc. Should be comfortable with basic computer usage and enjoy greeting and talking with new people.

Contact: Janice Rising, janrising58@gmail.com or Miriam Lipsitz, hollyhob7@gmail.com

Project: Finance Committee

Position: Committee member

Position starts when: as available

Where: Several meetings each year

How much time: 3-4 hours preparation and attendance per meeting

Misc. Committee advises Board through reviews of ECAS investments, budget, and balance sheets.

Contact: Mary Oppenheimer, meoppen@bendcable.com or Jan Rising, janrising58@gmail.com.

Project: Newsletter Committee

Position: Graphic Designer

Position starts when: as available

Where: Work can be done from home, with an occasional meeting

How much time: several hours

Misc. Design template for The Calliope

Contact: Mary Oppenheimer, meoppen@bendcable.com or Sherrie Pierce, sapierce@bendbroadband.com.

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