



THE CALLIOPE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE EAST CASCADES
AUDUBON SOCIETY

SPRING 2013

President’s Message – TIME IS RELENTLESS. SEIZE THE DAY!

When I retired thirteen years ago, this admonishment became my mantra. Always part of my personal philosophy, it suddenly seemed to take on new importance as I began another chapter of life. And each year there are reminders of how time lives up to its reputation - another birthday has come and gone, taxes are due, we’ve “sprung forward”. And the ECAS Annual Report has been written.

Started three years ago by past-president Damian Fagan, this document provides a chance to summarize our organization’s uniqueness, its mission, projects, activities and accomplishments. This year I tried to tie as many names to projects as possible, but there are still many volunteers who are not named. They deserve recognition for their dedication and passion for bird conservation. Their time and energy is reflected in the thousands of volunteer hours logged, amount of data gathered, number of miles traveled and joy of birding shared with many others. A copy of the 2012 Annual Report can be found on the ECAS website, www.ecaudubon.org, under the page top menu item “Search A-Z”. Go to Annual Report for the link.

Thinking of spring, I’m including the picture my sixteen-year old granddaughter drew for my birthday card this year – a Cedar Waxwing. I was thrilled she chose one of my favorite birds to mark the unrelenting passage of time. Now let’s think about the promise of each new day, seize the opportunity, and get out there enjoying the birds.



Sherrie Pierce, ECAS Board President

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Spring Songsters

Song Sparrow

*One two three cheers
spring-is-finally-here!
yup yup yup
and I'll sing some more
cause Song Sparrow am I.*

Steller's Jay

*Stella stella's quite a fella.
That kee kee kee
ain't really me.
Hack hack hack.*

Osprey

*Gee gee gee
I'm back, back
back to Bend.*

Marion Davidson

Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival 2013

On June 13-16, ECAS will host its third annual woodpecker weekend, now named after our late friend and fellow birder, Dean Hale. This year we'll have several new tours, a new location at Sisters' Creekside Park, and an indoor countdown at The Belfry in Sisters

Exact tour routes will be determined as scouts comb the forests around Sisters and find where the woodpeckers are located. In the good news-bad news category, there was another large wildland fire west of Sisters this past September that blackened thousands of acres, but the good news is that woodpeckers will converge on that new burn this spring in search of the insects and worms that will invade the newly charred trees. The Pole Creek Fire area has not been open to anyone since the fire, and now is closed due to snow covering the roads into it. We will be scouting as soon as the snow permits.

Full details and registration forms will be posted at www.ecaudubon.org in early April. The cost for a full day tour remains at only \$30 per person. All funds go to cover expenses and the remainder goes into our education fund. We very much look forward to seeing you this June!

Mary Oppenheimer

Special Events – Eagle Watch and Earth Day

The 18th Annual Eagle watch was held February 23-24 at the Round Butte Overlook. This event is held in a village-style setting with yurts provided by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. East Cascades Audubon once again set up educational displays and provided children's activities for the estimated 800 visitors, adults and kids. Co-ordinated by volunteers Mary Yanalcanlin and Tony Kutzen, other ECAS members helped provide information and a presence over the two days. John Gerke and Tony led a bird tour of the surrounding area on Saturday, adding to the species observed in the park setting. A favorite activity for all ages was the wingspan chart, identifying what bird you would be if arms could fly!



Melinda Walker and Tony Kutzen set up our Eagle Watch display.

The 24th Annual Bend Earth Day Fair and Procession of the Species is scheduled for Saturday, April 20th from 11am to 3pm. This is an exciting community event with interactive displays, art, live music, and hands-on activities for all ages. ECAS once again will have a booth as part of the Kansas Ave Street Fair in front of the Environmental Center. We will have kids activities and information about our project and conservation efforts. Fun-loving member Judy Meredith has issued a call for all like-minded folk to participate in the parade, dressed as your bird of choice. She even has a pair of stilts for some adventuresome heron-type to use. This is a great way to participate in an event that reminds us of our commitment to sustainability and respect for the world in which we live.

Sherrie Pierce



Brewer's Blackbird?

Personalities -- Chuck Gates: Busy with the Birds



Ever wonder about the county's earliest return date for an Olive-sided Flycatcher? Chuck has the data. Or the most recent rare bird sighted in Oregon? Chuck notes a Common Eider was reported on a rock in Coos County on March 16th of this year. A compiler extraordinaire, Chuck manages several extensive bird databases not just for Central Oregon but also for the state of Oregon, providing a priceless resource for the birding community.

Nearly a lifelong resident of Central Oregon (his family moved from British Columbia when he was one year old) Chuck and his wife Dorothy have lived in Prineville, where Chuck has taught high school biology, for twenty-five years. (He plans to retire this June.) Raised in Culver, he returned there after college to teach in the high school. When a freak storm brought in a large flock of gulls that puzzled the community, Chuck, the local biology teacher, was consulted. Chuck figured that he needed to brush up on the birds. It was looking through his new spotting scope at a Lincoln's Sparrow in the Crooked River Grassland that clinched the deal. Birding has been Chuck's passion ever since.

Although Chuck modestly says his birding has been mainly concentrated in Crook County, he is the guiding light behind www.birdingoregon.info, a website which reports sighting details statewide and includes maps and checklists for each county. His Central Oregon Bird Database contains 125,000 entries (imported into eBird last July) compiled from COBOL reports, old newsletters and survey results. Chuck continues to update this database with rare bird reports for Central Oregon. In addition, Chuck has served for many years as the State Coordinator for the North American Migratory Count, organizing teams and compiling data. And for many years he has regularly contributed informative and extensive field notes to the East Cascades Audubon Society and Oregon Birding Association magazines, a boon to local birders and visitors to the area.

The above list of activities does not even mention projects like Gray Flycatcher Surveys or habitat restoration in the Ochoco Forest or serving as a founding member of East Cascades Bird Conservancy (now merged into ECAS) and Chuck's membership on the Board of Directors of both ECBC and Oregon Birding Association.

When asked what it is about birding that he finds so engaging, Chuck does not hesitate: "It's the birds; so easy to find; always successful; always something new to learn."

Marion Davidson

2012-13 Central Oregon Winter Field Notes

As I sat on my back deck enjoying the first real spring day of 2013, I began to reflect on the previous winter and thought this would be a good time to write the winter field notes. What follows is a summary of the bird highlights for this year's winter season.

Quite a few interesting water bird events happened this winter. A single SNOW GOOSE spent a few days in the Powell Butte area around mid-winter. CACKLING GEESE were noted in all 3 Central Oregon counties. Three TRUMPETER SWANS were found by Val Johnson along the Crooked River in Crook County in February. EURASIAN WIGEONS were tallied in Drake Park and Prineville while a male hybrid EURASIAN X AMERICAN WIGEON spent some time along the Deschutes River in Bend. Peter Low located a COMMON TEAL at Hatfield Lake and it was enjoyed by many throughout February and March. A GREATER SCAUP was located at Suttle Lake in December along with a SURF SCOTER. LONG-TAILED DUCKS were found on Suttle Lake and Ochoco Reservoir. RED-BREASTED MERGANSERS were reported from Suttle Lake and the Redmond Sewer Ponds. The Bend Christmas Bird Count reported high counts of American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal and Bufflehead. COMMON LOONS were seen in Bend and near Prineville. A PACIFIC LOON showed up at Suttle Lake in December. An unusual winter CLARK'S GREBE was located on the Madras Christmas Bird Count. Just as unusual was a December record of GREAT EGRET from the Warm Springs area. An AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN stayed through the first of the year in Prineville for a very rare winter record. For the first time in the month of February, a Central Oregon GREATER YELLOWLEGS showed up in our region (Redmond Sewer Ponds). Lew Rems found a MEW GULL along the Deschutes River in Bend. This was only the fourth record for this species in Central Oregon. SORA turned up at Camp Polk and on the Bend Christmas Bird Count.

A few good reports came in on the game bird and raptor fronts. WILD TURKEYS were seen in Sisters and northeast of Prineville. Two MOUNTAIN QUAIL were seen crossing the road near Eagle Rock in Crook County. Skyliners Road produced reports of both RUFFED and SOOTY GROUSE. Wintering OSPREY were found near Warm Springs and RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS were reported from Sunriver area begging the question of whether or not there is a resident, year-round population of these birds in that area. One NORTHERN GOSHAWK was found in Bend this winter. A rare GYRFALCON appeared briefly in Alfalfa and PEREGRINE FALCONS were spotted in Smith Rock and in several Bend locations.

BARN OWLS were found in predictable locations in Crook County. A BARRED OWL at Farewell Bend Park in Bend generated a good buzz including some newspaper articles. NORTHERN PYGMY-OWLS were reported on several occasions and a LONG-EARED OWL was found at the Sunriver Nature Center in December. A SHORT-EARED OWL turned up on the Madras Christmas Bird Count and several birds wintered along the Crooked River near Prineville. NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS were seen along the Crooked River and along Skyliners Road west of Bend.



Bend's Barred Owl. Photo by Ginger Sanders.

Woodpecker news was brief but interesting. A WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER report came in from Bend for an unusual January record. RED-NAPED SAPSUCKERS were seen on Skyliners Road and in Prineville. More expectedly, RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKERS were found in 3 different Crook County locations. Wintering WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKERS are to be expected but birds found at Smith Rock, Prineville, and Bend were a bit out of the

ordinary. BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were located at China Hat and Skyliners while several PILEATED WOODPECKERS were found west of Bend.

Many good passerines were located this winter. Reports were received from 5 different NORTHERN SHRIKE sightings in areas as diverse as Culver, Prineville, and Bend. An amazing 21 BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES were tallied on the Madras Christmas Bird Count. A single CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE was found on a snow trek near Todd Lake. A HOUSE WREN was located on the Bend Christmas Bird Count for only the third winter record for this species in Central Oregon. Scattered reports of ROCK WREN and CANYON WREN were of note. A BEWICK'S WREN was found in Prineville around the first of the year for a second county record. YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS were recorded in Culver, Madras, and Prineville. A much more unusual TOWNSEND'S WARBLER showed up and posed for photographs north of Madras. A CLAY-COLORED SPARROW made a brief appearance in east Bend and hard to find wintering SAVANNAH SPARROWS seemed easy to locate east of Culver. A few LINCOLN'S SPARROWS were recorded on several local CBCs. WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were seen at 5 different locations and HARRIS'S SPARROW reports came in from Culver and Bend. LAPLAND LONGSPURS were found near Powell Butte and Culver. These constituted second and fourth records for Crook and Jefferson counties respectively. Wintering TRICOLORED BLACKBIRD flocks were spotted near Prineville as were 3 BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS. Ten PURPLE FINCHES found near Trout Creek in Jefferson County were a surprise while a more expected wintering CASSIN'S FINCH showed up in time for the Prineville Christmas Bird Count. Fifty-five GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCHES decided to call Powell Butte home for a couple of weeks this winter, giving dozens of birders an easy view of this hard-to-find species. A single WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL sighting occurred on Skyliners Road. This location also produced up to 16 PINE GROSBEAKS this winter. Fully 10 separate reports of COMMON REDPOLLS occurred this winter. That certainly qualifies 2012-13 as a great redpoll year.

Chuck Gates

What's Happening

Old Mill Birdwalks, co-sponsored with the Old Mill District, begin at the Old Mill Ticket Booth at 10am on April 5 and 19, and May 3, 17, and 31. Binoculars and bird lists are available, so this is a great option for new birders and visitors to Bend.

Birding by Ear with Dave Tracy begins on April 2. Meet at Bend's Sawyer Park at 7:30am.

Spring Field Trips began March 24 with a successful trip to Fort Rock and Silver Lake and continue April 7 with a journey east to Burns for Sage Grouse and Snow Geese. For the complete schedule, check www.ecaudubon.org.

Wednesday Birders continue to meet each Wednesday, generally at 7:50am at Nancy P's in Bend. Some trips meet at different times and places, so be sure to check the web site. Information is also posted on COBOL. To sign up for COBOL, email jmoodie@cocc.edu.

Birding for Preschoolers continues at 10am each Monday in Drake Park. Fledgling Fun has two more sessions -- April 8 and May 13. Details on our website.

Birders' Nights this spring feature John Goodell of the High Desert Museum on Empidonax Flycatchers on April 18; Chuck Gates on Owls on May 16; and Howard Horvath and Mary Oppenheimer on Birding Australia on June 20. All programs are held at The Environmental Center, 16 NW Kansas, Bend, at 6:30pm. No Birders' Night in July -- we picnic instead!

Mary Oppenheimer

ECAS Comments on Pole Creek Salvage Proposal

At its February meeting the ECAS Board of Directors agreed to submit comments on the Forest Service's request for concerns, questions and suggestions regarding a project proposal to harvest killed trees in the Pole Creek Fire area. This fire, starting from a lightning strike in September 2012, grew to 26,120 acres entirely on National Forest System lands located in the Sisters Ranger District. Approximately 60% of the fire occurred within the Three Sisters Wilderness, Wychus Creek Wild and Scenic River corridor, Inventoried Roadless area, Late Successional Reserve and Riparian Reserve allocations. After the fire was contained, planning was begun on fire suppression rehabilitation efforts. The analysis resulted in a final 1,051 acres deemed available timber for salvage harvest. That was the amount proposed to be offered for sale by auction after a final decision is made regarding implementation of the proposed action. The complete proposal and a map can be found at the Forest Service website. After due consideration and input from several members of ECAS, the following letter was submitted to Kristie Miller, District Ranger for the Sisters Ranger District.

Dear Ms. Miller,

The East Cascades Audubon Society (ECAS) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the salvage plan for the Pole Creek Fire.

As you are aware, birds extensively use forest lands. This is particularly true of newly burned forest. Woodpeckers, such as White-headed, Lewis', Pileated, American Three-toed, Black-backed, Downy, and Hairy, are attracted to newly burned areas, finding the burned trees attract large numbers of wood-eating insects. Burned trees with cavities are used extensively as nest sites for woodpeckers and other cavity nesters, such as Western and Mountain Bluebirds and some species of owls.

We are pleased to see that your salvage plan incorporates only a small portion of the total burn and that provisions have been made to leave snags for cavity nesters. Additionally, the Plan makes provisions for the protection of Northern Spotted Owl and its habitat.

ECAS members, several with formal scientific training, can be a source of information on bird distribution and numbers, species composition, nest locations, etc. We would like to offer this expertise if you can see a role for citizen science or cooperative programs as you proceed with the salvage operations on the Pole Creek fire or future fires.

Sincerely,

*Sheryl Pierce, President
East Cascades Audubon Society*

Welcome New Members!

Barbara and Bill Arthur, Bend
 Bill Bradford and Lara Minty, Portland
 Steven Burgess, Bend
 Tom Calderwood, Bend
 Joseph Ditzler, Bend

Pat Grediagin, Bend
 Paula Mason, Bend
 Joe Stevens, Bend
 John Stockham, Bend
 Kermit Williams, Bend

Thanks for your support!

Board Members

President	Sherrie Pierce
Vice-President	Ken Hashagen
Secretary	Anne Gerke
Treasurer	Jan Rising
Board Members	Tom Crabtree
	John Gerke
	Tony Kutzen
	Jon Putnam
	Kevin Smith

Spring Board Meetings
 April 2
 May 7
 June 4

Board meetings are held at 6pm at The Environmental Center on the first Tuesday of each month. All members are welcome to attend. Future Board meeting dates can be found in the activity calendar at www.ecaudubon.org. Board minutes are also posted at that site after approval by the Board.

Contact information for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Project Leaders is posted at the "Contact Us" button on the ECAS website.

Committee and Event Chairs

Annual Event	Sherrie Pierce
Bluebirds	Ken Hashagen
Birders' Night	Diana Roberts, Nancy Merrick
Communications	Jon Putnam
Conservation	Kevin Black-Tanski, Lynn Putnam
Education	Mary Yanalcanlin
Field Trips	Howard Horvath, Tony Kutzen
Finance	Terri Hyde
Green Ridge Raptors	Kim Boddie
Lake Abert Study	Steve Dougill
Lewis's Woodpeckers	Diane Kook
Membership	Jan Rising
NAMC	Chuck Gates
Newsletter	Mary Oppenheimer
Science	Sue Tank
Summer Lake Survey	Steve Dougill
Technology	Steve Dougill, George Jameson
Vaux's Swifts	Bob Johnson, Mary Anne Kruse
Volunteers	Sherrie Pierce
Wednesday Birders	Judy Meredith, Howard Horvath
Woodpecker Festival	John Gerke
Winter Raptor Survey	Jeff Fleisher

If you would like to volunteer for a committee or event, please contact Sherrie Pierce at 541-548-4641.

The East Cascades Audubon Society (ECAS) is a 501(c)(3) organization that furthers knowledge and appreciation of birds and their habitats through field trips, education, and field studies. Join ECAS, and help preserve the birds of the Central Oregon region at www.ecaudubon.org.