



East Cascades Audubon Society

# Summer Newsletter

July 2012

## SUMMER GREETINGS

I hope the showers that brought June flowers and a late start to the gardens are now history. Encountering snow several times while looking for the elusive Three-toed Woodpecker was a typical Central Oregon experience. Spring migration was also busy time for birds and birders, culminating in the Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival. (see related article) Many volunteers spent many hours scouting likely locations and were rewarded by great sightings. On June 13<sup>th</sup>, the Wednesday Morning Birders reached a high of twenty-seven people! Woodpeckers were in their sights.

Remembering Dean is ever on our minds and the Woodpecker Festival will continue to honor his memory. In addition, the ECAS Board of Directors voted at our June 5<sup>th</sup> meeting to create a memorial to Dean by finishing the interior of the Summer Lake Viewing Blind and placing a bronze plaque there in Dean's memory. Several years ago, Dean and Dave Ledder built the blind and Dave brought the proposal forward to the Board. If you would like to join a work party to complete the blind, please contact Board member Damian Fagan. If you would like to make a contribution toward the cost of materials and the plaque, you may send a check to ECAS with the notation that it is for the Dean Hale Summer Lake project. Other projects in Dean's memory may go forward in the future, but we'd like to complete this one in 2012.

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Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization and we must be mindful of the value of their energy and commitment. Dean was the consummate volunteer and in his spirit I would like to thank everyone who is devoting his or her time to ECAS activities be it on a committee, a project, a leadership role, an administrative position, or a special event. As we go forward, determining the goals that guide us in the future through strategic planning, our mission remains the same - for the birds.

*Sherrie Pierce, President*



*Saturday Sign-In, Photo by George Jameson*

## *DEAN HALE WOODPECKER FESTIVAL DEBUTS*

Eighty-four birders from five states gathered at the Sisters Village Green in the early hours of June 16 for the new Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival (formerly Woodpecker Weekend). The weather was glorious, coffee from Sisters Coffee Company started the day, and trips to Black Butte, Camp Sherman, and the Rooster Rock and GW Burns turned up all eleven of our local woodpeckers, although three-toed and pileated were rare. Rounding out the festival were pre- and post-trips

to the Ochocos, Summer Lake, Camp Polk Meadow, and the Entrada Burn, as well as "night prowls" and Sunday morning "catch-up" excursions. All told, participants took 170 trips and saw 154 species, including life-birds for a number of participants. Not only was the Festival fun and educational, it also raised over \$3000 for ECAS!



*Rooster Rock Burn, Photos by George Jameson*

Thanks to John Gerke for serving as Committee Chair and count-down master, to Jan Rising for managing registration, to Kim Kathol for organizing trips and guides, to George Jameson and Damian Fagan for web site and publicity, to the very early-rising Saturday sign-in team of Anne Gerke, Mary Jensen, Jan Clark, Gilah Tenenbaum, and yours truly, and, most of all, to stellar guides Mike Golden, Don Sutherland, Kim Kathol, Sherrie Pierce, Tom Crabtree, Craig Miller, Judy Meredith, Steve Kornfeld, Howard Horvath, Cindy Zalunardo, George Jameson, Chuck Gates, Damian Fagan, Charley Berry, and Jan Rising.

*Mary Oppenheimer*

## *Personality: Howard Horvath, Lister and Guide*

On one of the first days of summer, two cars climb a gravel road on Green Ridge heading towards Whiskey Springs. Yellow Mule's Ears and Snowbrush (*Ceanothus*) bloom along the roadway past Indian Ford Campground and rainfall the night before had kept the dust to a minimum.

As we leave the cars, Howard Horvath, who is the leader of this Wednesday Birders expedition, instructs the group to be as quiet as possible so as to not disturb the birds we hoped would be visible at the springs above. The reverent tone of his voice reinforced a sense of an almost holy place. In single file with lawn chairs in tow, the group silently climbs towards the springs.

Howard is one of East Cascade's Audubon's loyal field trip leaders. For several years, he has led several of the Saturday trips to such places as the High Lakes, Summer Lake and Burns. He's a veteran birder, having joined up with Bend's crew of bird enthusiasts in the early 90's. Also a world traveler, Howard has visited every continent in the world except Antarctica.

A meticulous "lister", his records include His sightings from around the world. His list of Deschutes County birds as the time of this writing, has added six new species for 2012: Tennessee and Blackpoll Warblers, White-winged Crossbill, Broad-winged Hawk, Franklin's Gull and Snowy Plover. The number of this year's vagrant species appearing in the county has intrigued him. He also expected that 2012 will break his county record for the number of species seen in Deschutes County: already he has recorded over 200 species, a number not usually reached until August.

Howard is also a regular on the Central Oregon Christmas and Migratory Counts. When he's in town, he leads the group covering the High Lakes section of the North American Migratory Count and participates in four to five of the Central Oregon Christmas counts. He recalls that his first bird count was with Dean Hale, Craig Miller and Elaine Moisan at Summer Lake several years ago.

Meanwhile back at the Springs, we follow the example of our leader, and quietly settle into the shade above the outlet, the sound of running water from the small pipe below us signaling the genesis of the lush habitat. Ferns poke green fronds through the blanket of pine needles and Swallowtail butterflies flap lazily above our heads. As our eyes adjust to the shadows cast by



*Howard Horvath and Marion Davidson at Whiskey Springs.  
Photo by Abigail Meckem.*

the shrubs around the water, the activity around the springs becomes more evident. A Hermit Warbler darts among the leaves of the shrub above us. A MacGillivray's Warbler perches momentarily on a low branch beside the spring. Lower down the hill, Yellow-rumps compete for our attention. Above, hidden in the foliage a Black-headed Grosbeak sings his *margarita* song. Two Chickadees chase around. In the pool below the pipe, sparrows "frolic" in the pool.

Howard had instructed us that we would stay an hour. Obediently we sat quietly for almost entire hour. Then the group folded up their chairs and quietly returned to the cars, heading for the next springs on the itinerary.

I asked Howard why he was so captivated by birds. He answered that watching birds reveals a different world that is "unaffected" by human behavior. Also, he said, there's always something new to learn. Since he will soon be traveling to Australia, he looks forward to adding some new species to his list including the Fairywren and some Bowerbirds.

*Marion Davidson*

## ***LEARNING BIRDSONG WITH DAVE TRACY***

Bird songs punctuate the early morning. Dave Tracy takes roll: song sparrow, yellow warbler, red-winged blackbird, common yellowthroat, belted kingfisher, mourning dove. Dave has yet to lift his binoculars because he is birding by ear.

The East Cascades Audubon Society is fortunate that Dave shares his knowledge and experience with the flock of birders that follows him. "Listen for the *witchity witchity witch* in the common yellowthroat's song," Dave points out as the warbler calls from a perch. His mnemonics provide a foothold for the birders to relate to the call. In addition to the calls and songs, Dave shares a wealth of knowledge about birds, their occurrence in Central Oregon, and their life histories.



*Dave Tracy, photo by Damian Fagan*

So practice up this winter listening to bird songs on the Internet, through downloaded apps, or on CDs. The Western version of the *Birding by Ear* series groups birdsongs by type and the narrator also provides handles and mnemonics for memorizing the calls. Dave also recommends listening to a few calls at a time and getting comfortable with those species.

Thanks again to Dave for leading the Birding by Ear class this spring and getting the flock "tuned up!"

*Damian Fagan*

*And here is another of Marion Davidson's bird songs to enjoy, written while she was visiting Summer Lake earlier this year. Marion is a great fan of Dave Tracy and a loyal pupil of his Birding by Ear classes.*

## **Summer Lake Medley**

April 2012

All around the Willets harangue:

*Look here my dear, look here my dear, look here my dear.*

Forty Buffleheads cruise silently.

A pair of Shovelers shoveling.

Always the Willets.

On the fence, a quartet of Yellow-headed Blackbirds:

*Awh, what the hell. Kack kack kacck.*

Choirs of Mosquitoes:

*Hmmmmmmmm.*

ADHD Marsh Wrens work the tules:

*Ti ti ti ti ti ti ti.*

Several Coots a *k k kkeying*.

Always the Willets:

*Look here my dear, look here my dear, look here my dear.*

The muffled courting song of Sir Ruddy Duck:

*Pop pop pop pop oh wow!*

In the tree a pair of Northern Flickers get to know each other:

(quietly) *wika, wika, wika.*

Hundreds of White-crowned Sparrows stop by.

A single well-guarded gosling.

And always the Willets, *my dear*.

*Marion Davidson*

## *YOUTH EDUCATION HAS A BUSY YEAR*

One of the primary ECAS goals is to provide educational activities to the youth of our community. At its July meeting, the ECAS Board heard a report from Education Committee Chair, Mary Yanalcanlin on implementation of the ambitious plan the committee laid out last summer.

After six pilot sessions in Spring of 2011, from October 2011 to May 2012, eight Fledgling Fun classes were offered once a month after school at the Environmental Center. Geared to ages 4 to 12, attendance was fairly consistent at 15-20 children plus parents. Topics and materials were developed by Mary Y. and Desiree Johnson, ably assisted at the sessions by volunteers Melinda Walker, Loren Smith, and Surrey Kent, with yours truly providing AV support. The highest attendance was for the owl presentation, 40 kids plus parents, featuring local naturalist Jim Anderson with his special guest, Marley the Great Horned Owl.



*Jim Anderson and Marley*

Mary Y. continues to offer Birding for Pre-schoolers in Drake Park, every Monday at 10. This is a popular program for younger children plus some home-schoolers. Parents are required to attend, and the upshot is that many adults are becoming “bird interested” as well. The attendance has grown, and Mary is always looking for volunteers to help with the materials and bird knowledge. Since July 2011, 354 children and 189 adults have attended this fun opportunity.

In addition, a proposal to complement and enrich the resources available to teachers was presented to the Bend-LaPine school district. Approval was given, and the proposal was shared with neighboring Redmond and Sisters districts. Possible offerings were classroom presentations about local birds, volunteer guides for bird walks and field trips, curriculum enrichment, school feeder installations and assistance with field-based science projects. This resulted in a busy Spring with many requests from school and community personnel.

Over eight hundred children were served through field trips and bird walks, presentations on bird identification, and activities at ecology fairs. With the assistance of Kevin Lair at Wild Birds Unlimited, a bird feeder complex, paid for by ECAS, was installed at Ponderosa Elementary, complementing the bird-based curriculum teachers Anne Thompson and Ryan Schaffer have developed. Another feeder project, installed last year at Realms Charter School, continues to be supported by teacher Eric Beck’s integrated avian and natural resource science lessons.

One hundred eighty third and fourth grade students from Sage Elementary in Redmond attended field day outings at Juniper Golf Course. These included sessions at the newly installed bluebird and kestrel boxes on the course. Volunteers provided information at each

station and the birds put on quite a show! One hundred fifty Madras fifth-graders attended an Ecology Fair at the OSU Extension station where they rotated through an ECAS-staffed birds and habitat presentation. Two hundred fifth-graders from two Bend schools enjoyed a bus ride to the back pond at Hatfield as part of their environmental education experience. Intrepid volunteer Judy Meredith helped introduce them to the birds of this special area, utilizing the newly installed ECAS sign at the kiosk. Mary Yanalcanlin took seventy-five Madras second graders through the bird basics at the Warm Spring Museum. Other students enjoyed outings to Sawyer and Shevlin Parks, with volunteers taking small groups on bird walks.



Additional requests were made by the High Desert museum and Deschutes Land Trust. Mary Y. and Tony gave a presentation and guided bird walk at the HDM and Mary Y. and Melinda Walker are leading kids' bird walks for the DLT. Booths were staffed and provided children's activities at both the Earth Day celebration and Eagle Watch event. Mary Y. also gave a Fledgling Fun presentation at the Spring Audubon Council meeting in Salem. She shared curriculum materials and provided an overview of the ECAS educational programs.

Thanks to all of the great volunteers who gave of their time, energy and ideas to bring birding into the lives of these young people. The hope is to continue being both proactive and responsive in our community. If you would like to be involved or find out more about any of these programs, contact Mary Yanalcanlin or Sherrie Pierce.

*Sherrie Pierce, Education Committee Liaison*

## THREE ECAS PROJECTS BENEFIT OREGON BIRDERS

### CABIN LAKE BLIND REBUILT

On May 22 and 23, eight ECAS members assisted the U.S. Forest Service in rebuilding the upper photography blind at Cabin Lake. The old blind was leaning and considered a safety hazard. The old blind was dismantled, all the logs saved, new support poles cemented in at the corners and the old logs replaced in their original position.



*Photo by Kevin Smith*

The project, originally scheduled for one day, took two as high winds prevented installation of the logs on the first day. We were entertained by birds continually coming to the water despite our close presence. This included approximately 100 Red Crossbills who came en masse and totally halted construction as we watched them frantically compete for a spot at the water. Thanks to Kevin and KaiSmith, John Reuland, Kim Boddie, Chris Carey, Cal and Alice Elshoff. Special kudos to Kevin and Kai, John and Chris for going back a second day to help complete the project.

If you haven't been to Cabin Lake, you should go. A wonderful opportunity to see desert birds, up close and personal. Follow the directions found on the ECAS web site. Next up is working with the Forest Service to see what type of facility to provide at Pumice Springs.

*Mike Golden*



*Peter Low at the kiosk, photo by Cindy Zalunardo*

### ECAS SPONSORS MALHEUR SIGHTING KIOSK

The Malheur Wildlife Refuge recently created a small informational area across the road from the Frenchglen Hotel. The area includes a large informational kiosk and a smaller kiosk, donated by ECAS, which includes a sighting log. The large sighting list at Headquarters will always be invaluable, but take a look at this log as well and be sure to add your sightings.





*The Installers, photo by Sherrie Pierce*



*Mike Golden and Judy Meredith admire the finished product. Photo by Mary Oppenheimer*

### ECAS TEAM CREATES HATFIELD KIOSK

Visitors to Hatfield Lakes will now find a large informational kiosk just inside the entry. The kiosk features a map of the often-confusing roads around the Hatfield ponds, a description of habitat features, and a beautiful graphical rendering of the area on which photos of typical birds are superimposed.

Tom Crabtree, Judy, and Mike spent many hours planning the kiosk with Scott Thompson, water reclamation operations supervisor; Tom and Kevin Smith donated photos; Barbara Gleason of Eugene designed the kiosk and supervised production; Tom brought the completed work back from Eugene; Tom, Mike, Kim Kathol, and Sherrie Pierce installed it; and Mike added a box for handouts to the completed project.

Many thanks to all, and to Scott, for making this wonderful birding site more understandable to visitors.

**JEFF FLEISCHER GOES NATIONAL!**  
 No, Jeff's winter raptor routes have not yet spread beyond the Pacific Northwest. But his fame has. The July/August 2012 issue of Wild Bird features an article about him and the ECAS-sponsored Winter Raptor Route project by our August speaker, Noah Stryker. If you look for it, the title is "Raptor -- Will you find birds of prey in your 'hood?'"

## SUMMER BIRDERS' NIGHTS

- July 19      ANNUAL EAST CASCADES AUDUBON POTLUCK PICNIC AT SHEVLIN PARK  
Bring the whole family, some food to share (or not!) and join us for a relaxed evening of fun, socializing and even a bit of birding. We've reserved the picnic pavilion from 4pm until dark, and Kevin Lair of Wild Birds Unlimited will give a short presentation on optics around 6pm.
- August 16    AMONG PENGUINS  
Ice, penguins, and the cold comforts of living and working in Antarctica will be featured in a lively slide show by Oregon birder and author Noah Strycker. Strycker recounts his experiences on the coldest, windiest, driest, least populated, highest, and most remote continent in his book, *Among Penguins: A Bird Man in Antarctica* (Oregon State University Press, 2011). Noah is well known to birders in Oregon and nationwide. He grew up in rural Oregon near Creswell, where he caught the birding bug in fifth grade. Although he is only 26 years old, Noah has an amazing resume. He has published numerous articles and photographs about birds in all major birding magazines, has contributed to journals and books, and is the associate editor of "Birding" magazine. When he's not writing and editing, he works as a bird researcher on short-term projects in adventurous places around the world. He spent the first three months of this year (2012) studying Wedge-billed Woodcreepers in Amazonian Ecuador.
- Sept. 20     PLAYA LAKES AND DESERT WETLANDS  
  
Larry Pecenka, Oregon Fish and Wildlife habitat biologist, will talk about the past and future of these important habitats. Historically, playa lakes and desert wetlands supported a diversity of local and migratory birds and other wildlife, but they have been compromised by past developments (water dug-outs) and current management (unrestricted livestock access). Larry will talk about developments that create hope for the protection and restoration of these unique habitat features of Central Oregon's High Desert Region.

All Birders' Nights are held at The Environmental Center, 16 NW Kansas Avenue, in Bend and are free and open to the public. Join us at 6:30pm for coffee, cookies, and fellowship, followed by birding news and program at 7pm.

*Diana Roberts, Birders' Night Co-Chair*

## DATES TO REMEMBER

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| July 19      | Potluck Picnic at Shevlin Park                                  |
| August 3     | First Friday.<br>City Hall. Vote for your favorite work of art! |
| August 19    | Birders' Night with Noah Stryker                                |
| September 15 | North American Migration Count                                  |
| September 18 | Birders' Night with Larry Pecenka                               |
| November 10  | Annual Event at Bend Senior Center!                             |

## *SPRING 2012 NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATION COUNT*

On the weekend of May 12 and 13, the state of Oregon held the North American Migration Count. This count is sponsored by our own East Cascades Audubon Society. Across the state teams assembled to count birds county-by-county. An additional pelagic team cruised the Oregon Coast and collected offshore data for each of the coastal counties.

The total number of volunteers fell just short of 300 at 297. The time commitment totaled out at 1183 hours and surveyors logged 7691 miles. Our own Deschutes County had the most volunteers with 56 hardy souls. This more than doubled the next most active county. Crook County had 13 volunteers and Jefferson had 11. Needless to say, this was a monumental collaborative effort.

As for the results of the count, numbers were as good as the volunteers' efforts. Three hundred and four species were tallied, and a total of 195,000 individuals were surveyed (One county had not submitted totals at the time of this writing so actual totals will be slightly higher than those listed.) The most common species were:

COMMON MURRE (38,192),  
WHITE-FACED IBIS (9823)  
CLIFF SWALLOW (),  
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (7368)  
AMERICAN COOT (7285)  
CANADA GOOSE (6661)  
EUROPEAN STARLING (5493)  
WILSON'S PHALAROPE (5492)  
BREWER'S BLACKBIRD (5149)

Species with just a single individual noted throughout the state included

LAYSAN ALBATROSS	SPOTTED OWL
NORTHERN FULMAR	COMMON NIGHTHAWK
NEWELL'S SHEARWATER	BLACK SWIFT
ASHY STORM-PETREL	WILLOW FLYCATCHER
MERLIN	BLUE JAY
PACIFIC GOLDEN-PLOVER	GRAY CATBIRD
SOLITARY SANDPIPER	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD
BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE	AMERICAN REDSTART
GLAUCOUS GULL	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW
SOUTH POLAR SKUA	LAPLAND LONGSPUR
POMARINE JAEGER	
CRESTED AUKLET	

The most unusual sightings were the above mentioned NEWELL'S SHEARWATER and the CRESTED AUKLET. These sightings are under review but should the identifications be verified and the records accepted by the state record committee, these would both be first sightings for the state of Oregon. A report of 11 COMMON REDPOLLS came in from Deschutes County but this sighting is also under review.

Other unusual species seen during the count included HARLEQUIN DUCK, LONG-TAILED DUCK, YELLOW RAILS, both PUFFINS, BLACK-THROATED SPARROWS, WHITETHROATED SPARROWS, and TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS.

Unrelated to the spring count but still big news, Ron Halvorson completed the process of creating the comprehensive NAMC Database. This electronic database now includes all sightings for the 15 years that this count has been in existence. Finally, this data is now available for detailed analysis. The ECAS Board will discuss the possibility of having this data analyzed by a professional, and it is hoped that a report can be generated that will draw an informed picture of the birds of Oregon during the migration season.

*Chuck Gates, NAMC State Coordinator*

## **CHUCK GATES' FIELD NOTES – SPRING 2012**

My favorite part about the spring is the lengthening of the days. Coming out of those stunted winter days when the sun rarely shines and the birding opportunities are restricted just seems to invigorate me. Longer days yield more time to bird. All that birding produced some great bird sightings in this spring season. Our spring season is defined as the time between March and the end of May.

On the waterbird front, several good species graced our area this season. About 10 SNOW GEESE and at least 20 ROSS'S GEESE were counted at places like Houston Lake, Johnson Cr. Ranch, and Paulina Valley. CACKLING GEESE are less abundant in spring than winter so birds at Houston Lake, Johnson Cr. Ranch, and Haystack Reservoir were of note. A pair of TRUMPETER SWANS made Hatfield Lake their home for the season and another was spotted at the Zalunardo pond in Powell Butte. EURASIAN WIGEON were seen at Meadow Lakes in Prineville, Hatfield Lake, the Redmond Sewer Ponds, Ochoco Reservoir, and Redmond's Fireman's Pond. BLUE-WINGED TEAL began showing up in small numbers in early May while the first CINNAMON TEAL arrived on March 11. LESSER SCAUP are common on a Central Oregon lake in spring but GREATER SCAUP at Hatfield and the High Lakes region were more unusual. A similar situation occurs between EARED GREBE and HORNED GREBE. AMERICAN WHITE PELICANS began showing up in force around the end of March. A WHITE-FACED IBIS spent a couple of days at Hatfield Lake. A GREAT EGRET visited Bend's Mirror Pond in April and another was reported from the Crook County NAMC. SANDHILL CRANES were spotted in areas as diverse as Indian Ford and the city of Bend.

On the shorebird front, a BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER made its way to the Redmond Sewer Ponds on March 16<sup>th</sup> creating the earliest record known for this species in the Central Oregon (5 more were seen in Paulina Valley later in the spring). Another "earliest" record was set when a GREATER YELLOWLEGS appeared at the Redmond Sewer Ponds on March 14. AMERICAN AVOCETS and BLACK-NECKED STILTS were found on the local NAMCs. LONG-BILLED CURLEWS were reported from Jefferson and Crook counties. Redmond Sewer Ponds also produced an unusual spring record for SOLITARY SANDPIPER.



*Franklin's Gull*

Not to be out-done, Hatfield Lake produced an equally rare spring PECTORAL SANDPIPER. RED-NECKED PHALAROPES began arriving on May 18.

FRANKLIN'S GULL is a much sought after species locally so 4 individuals at Houston Lake were a note-worthy find. A few BONAPARTE'S GULLS also visited during the season.

Two HERRING GULLS were located at Wickiup Reservoir in April. CASPIAN TERNS first appeared on April 27 and a single FORSTER'S TERN was seen at Ochoco Reservoir (also in April).

Spring can be the best time to locate game birds. Drumming, crowing, booming, quarking, and other calls give away the location of these otherwise difficult to discover birds. The only CHUKAR reported from our area this season came from the O'neil Valley near Prineville. RUFFED GROUSE were found at Camp Polk and along McCay Creek in the Ochoco Mnts. SAGE GROUSE were again being seen in the Millican area after a new lek was discovered. SOOTY GROUSE and WILD TURKEY sightings came mostly from the Sisters area but grouse were also seen at Skyliner and turkeys were reported from Eagle Crest and the High Desert Museum.

Who doesn't love a good raptor sighting? Seventeen species of diurnal raptors were seen in our area this spring. The expected reports of NORTHERN GOSHAWK from the Sisters area were present but additional birds found in Powell Butte, Prineville, and Bend were nice to add to the list. Three presumably separate records of RED-SHOULDERED HAWK were tallied along Three Creeks Rd., Sisters Airport, and Hatfield Lake respectively. A very unusual BROAD-WINGED HAWK report came in from Calliope Crossing (This was the first time this species has been reported in the spring in Central Oregon.) Late MERLIN sightings came in from Prineville, Powell Butte, and Crane Prairie (an odd bird at this location at any time). Formerly, PEREGRINE FALCONS in the spring would set off a solid "rare bird alert" in Central Oregon. Now they are happily becoming ho-hum. Six different Peregrines showed up this spring in both Crook and Deschutes counties.



*BROAD-WINGED HAWK*

Only 8 species of owls were reported (there are 13 or 14 species that could be found here in the spring) which is reflective of the lack of birders who make "owling" an annual spring event. A BARN OWL was released in Culver while a pair nested in a barn near Prineville. A single FLAMMULATED OWL was located SW of Bend along with a NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL. Two SHORT-EARED OWLS were located in far eastern Crook County. NORTHERN PYGMY-OWLS showed up at Calliope Crossing, Stein's Pillar, and Horse Ridge. GREAT GRAY OWLS were seen in Crook County for the second year in a row. A single LONG-EARED OWL report arrived

from the Haystack area in Jefferson County.

Near-passerines, as their name implies, are not quite passerines but they don't fit in with the other birds either. This group includes the corvids, nightjars, and woodpeckers. Nightjars began arriving in mid-to-late May with COMMON POORWILLS showing up on May 15 and the first COMMON NIGHTHAWKS getting here on May 31. Skyliner was the only location that produced a AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKER. BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were well represented from their normal haunts in the burns of the Sisters area. The BLUE JAY that wintered near Tumalo Falls was still present throughout the spring and 2 GRAY JAYS were located on the Deschutes NAMC.

Passerines (perching birds) can generate a lot of excitement in the spring because many migrate and some get lost thus creating rare birds for us to see. A BLACK SWIFT was seen flying over the Redmond Sewer Ponds. ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRDS were fairly easy to find this season but you had to be in Crook County to find one of several BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRDS that were reported. An early March CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD was notable as this species has been seen fewer than 10 times in March in our area. Kim Kathol was surprised by a "TYRANID" FLYCATCHER on March 7. This is a month early for Western Kingbird which would be the default species expected for this area. Other Tyranids were not ruled out so the final identification is left open. Peter Low found a LEAST FLYCATCHER at Calliope Crossing along with a SWAINSON'S THRUSH and Dave Tracy reported a migrant WILLOW FLYCATCHER from Sawyer Park. Fifteen LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES was the final tally on the Crook and Deschutes NAMCs. The Lower Bridge BEWICK'S WREN was seen once in April but has not been reported since. (Another bird was tallied in Wheeler County.) Though we missed them on the Jefferson NAMC, BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEES were found on the Wheeler County NAMC. AMERICAN PIPITS were relatively easy to find along the water features of Central Oregon.

Tony Kutzen located a TENNESSEE WARBLER in Sawyer Park, and many locals got a chance to view this singing visitor. Not to be outdone, Peter Low picked out a BLACKPOLL WARBLER in a mixed flock at Hatfield Lake. This bird also provided good views to several local birders. It's often difficult to find the odd BLACK-THROATED GRAY WARBLER locally so 6 birds found in Deschutes County made this report. A HERMIT WARBLER found at Fireman's Pond was unusual as this species rarely migrates at lower elevations.

While common in Deschutes County, a FOX SPARROW in Crook County is always worth noting and 2 different birds found around Prineville were of importance. WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were seen in Redmond, Prineville, and Gateway. The bird was seen at an even later date.) A single GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE in Crook County reflects the difference in abundance between Crook and Deschutes counties for this species. Two separate LAPLAND LONGSPURS were found at Hatfield Lake and in the Millican area. A ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK made a brief appearance in front of Kristen Tackmier in Sisters and JoAnne Bernt had a brief visit from a LAZULI BUNTING on April 22<sup>nd</sup> making this the earliest record known for this species in Central Oregon. TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS were again easy to find in the Prineville area.

Thirty GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCHES were briefly seen near Mt. Bachelor, and PURPLE FINCH reports came in from Sisters, Deschutes River Woods, Eagle Crest, Sisters, and Black Butte. PINE GROSBEAKS were found at Skyliner and Virginia Meissner Snow Park. Skyliner Road also produced rare spring sightings of WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS and COMMON REDPOLLS. Redpolls were also seen near Three Creeks Lake south of Sisters. Pine Grosbeaks, White-winged Crossbills, and Common Redpolls are very rare in any season but to have all three in comparatively large numbers was unprecedented.

*Chuck Gates, NAMC State Coordinator*

**\*\*\*FIELD TRIP ORGANIZER NEEDED\*\*\***

A VOLUNTEER IS NEEDED TO OVERSEE THE PLANNING, COORDINATION AND PUBLICIZING OF THE POPULAR ECAS FIELD TRIPS. THESE HAVE BEEN OCCURRING FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AND, MOST RECENTLY WERE OVERSEEN BY HOWARD HORVATH, FILLING THE GAP THAT DEAN LEFT. THESE ARE FUN OUTINGS, USUALLY PLANNED FOR SATURDAY OR SUNDAY, 5 or 6 IN THE SPRING AND 4 or 5 FOR THE FALL. AFTER THE TRIP THE LEADER WOULD MAKE A POST TO COBOL LISTING THE SPECIES SEEN AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS. HOWARD HAS WRITTEN A DETAILED LIST OF PLANNING NOTES THAT WILL BE MOST HELPFUL. THIS IS A RESPONSIBILITY THAT COULD BE SHARED BY MORE THAN ONE PERSON.

FALL FIELD TRIPS ALREADY PLANNED ARE:  
CROOK COUNTY, SEPT. 8 OR 9 – CHUCK GATES, LEADER  
HIGH LAKES, OCT. 6 OR 7, HOWARD HORVATH, LEADER  
OTHER TRIP POSSIBILITIES ARE:  
SUMMER LAKE – END OF AUGUST – STEVE DOUGILL  
CENTRAL OREGON AREA – JIM MOODIE – TBA

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE RESPOND TO SHERRIE [sapierce@bendbroadband.com](mailto:sapierce@bendbroadband.com)



*Burns Field Trip, April 2012, Photo by Sherrie Pierce*