



The

September 2015

Quail

News from Lane County Audubon Society

From Our President



Animals Teach Us Valuable Lessons

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We recently had to put our 13-year-old dog, Kahu, to sleep. He had been part of our family his whole life and was a source of fun, companionship, love, and loyalty that whole time. My grieving makes me think of the valuable lessons we learn from animals if we are lucky enough to hold them close in our lives.



Humans living with an animal in their home become open to how that animal thinks and behaves, what they value and prioritize, how they show love and affection, how they learn and adapt, and how an animal can communicate without the use of human words. Humans who live with and observe animals know that animals can function quite well without the trappings that humans need in their lives. To understand them, we use both mental and emotional perceptions, a seeing and knowing beyond what one can put into words. The animals in our lives gift us with unconditional love and loyalty. We let them into our homes and hearts. It is mutually beneficial.

When we observe wild animals, as we do while birding, we get only brief glimpses of their lives. Live cams, such as those on Audubon's Explore (http://explore.org/about/who_we_are/), allow us to enter the lives of animals and learn from observing their day-to-day struggles and triumphs. People who watch the animal cams are amazed and engaged with wildlife in ways never before possible. Will experiences like these give humans a better perspective for making decisions about the habitat needs of wildlife? Can we learn to think beyond our economic-centered decision criteria and allow animals and habitat to be valued for their own intrinsic right to life? Animals are resourceful and can adapt if given the basic needs of clean air, water, food, shelter, and breeding habitat.

The millions of YouTube videos of animals doing things that entertain us show how engaging we find animals. Humans seek out and relish watching animals and

(continued on page 5)



New Rules Adopted to Protect Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat

Kate Jaffe, LCAS intern, University of Oregon Environmental Studies

The Greater Sage-Grouse has been a subject of intense debate in Salem during the last few months. On July 27 of this year, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (OFWC) and the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) adopted new, more restrictive rules to mitigate impacts by solar, wind, and mining projects in the sage-grouse habitat of Oregon. The new rules are an attempt by the state to head off a possible endangered species listing for the bird by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The listing, scheduled to be decided in September, would impose new regulations in the 11 states that contain Greater Sage-Grouse habitat. As one of these states, Oregon would face new federal regulations on development and ranching, particularly in central and eastern Oregon where 90% of the Oregon sage-grouse population resides.

The debate over the Greater Sage-Grouse comes after decades of population and habitat loss for the bird. Habitat fragmentation, urbanization, ranching, and widespread grazing have contributed to a loss of sagebrush habitat and a 40% reduction in the historical range of the bird. A recent study commissioned by The Pew Charitable Trusts determined that the sage-grouse population decreased by 56% between 2007 and 2013. The rapid decline of this key indicator species suggests a similar decline in the health of sagebrush ecosystems across multiple western states. Given these circumstances, it is important that the Greater Sage-Grouse and its unique sagebrush habitat receive adequate protection before it is too late to save them.

The rules Oregon recently adopted are important first steps toward full protection for the Greater Sage-Grouse and include promising new limits on development. For instance, the new rules would establish buffer zones surrounding leks, which are important breeding grounds for the grouse. Yet the conservation community still debates whether the new regulations will provide adequate protection for the bird. The core pillars of the new Oregon rules, which are also key parts of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Greater Sage-Grouse conservation strategy, are minimization, avoidance,



Photo: Dave Stone, Wildland Photography

Male Greater Sage-Grouse facing off on the Millican lek

and compensatory mitigation. The first two of these strategies, minimization and avoidance, do not actually bar future energy developments in core sage-grouse habitat. The third strategy, compensatory mitigation, has not been proven to help achieve conservation goals in a practical setting.

Although the conservation strategies at the heart of the newly adopted rules and the BLM plans contain various shortfalls, they represent progress toward securing the future of the Greater Sage-Grouse. Previous conservation efforts have been hindered by a lack of continuity in federal and state regulations. However, the joint effort by the OFWC and LCDC to develop these rules displays a new level of coordination that will, we hope, result in greater protection for this iconic bird of the Pacific Northwest. Endangered species listing aside, the regional and national discussions surrounding protections for the sage-grouse demonstrate a promising movement in favor of establishing concrete, enforceable rules for wildlife protection.



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Field Notes: June–July 2015



- Solitary Sandpiper
- Black Scoter
- Plegadis Ibis

- Franklin's Gull
- Chimney Swift
- Chestnut-sided Warbler

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The season was unusually hot and dry, setting a number of record high temperatures and almost setting a record for the highest number of days without rain for June! The drought conditions seemed to force a number of species (Franklin's Gull, Forster's Tern, and American White Pelican, for example) that would normally breed in the Great Basin or California to places like Fern Ridge Reservoir. Several Arctic breeders, such as geese and scoters, also summered in the area. And, as usual, local birders found a few completely lost individuals—Least Flycatcher and Chestnut-sided Warbler, for example.

Abbreviations: Fern Ridge Reservoir (FRR), North Jetty of the Siuslaw River (NJSR), Oregon Bird Records Committee (OBRC), South Jetty of the Siuslaw River (SJSR).

WATERBIRDS

Greater White-fronted Goose	June 2	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Seen throughout the season—Injured?
Cackling Goose	June 8	FRR—Royal Ave	AC	Seen throughout the season—Injured?
Brant (7)	July 8	NJSR beach	DP, KS	Summering birds
White-winged Scoter (195)	July 23	Lily Lake overlook	JB	A very larger number for the breeding season
Black Scoter	July 11	Siuslaw River	AC et al.	Rarely found during the summer
Red-necked Grebe	July 11	Siuslaw River	AC et al.	Summering?
Great Egret (8)	June 2	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Given the number—are they breeding locally?
Snowy Egret	June 7	FRR—Royal Ave	SH	The second breeding season record for Lane
Plegadis Ibis	July 22	Beltline Rd	AC	A rare summer record

VULTURES to AUKS

Turkey Vulture (50)	July 21	Eugene	fide RA	A kettle headed south
White-tailed Kite (2)	July 22	Delta Ponds	SM	An unusual location
Black-bellied Plover (11)	July 13	FRR	SH	A nonbreeding flock?
Snowy Plover	July 8	Heceta Beach	DP, KS	Not a known breeding location
Semipalmated Plover	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Failed breeder headed south?
American Avocet	June 2	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	On nest, but no reports of young
Solitary Sandpiper	July 24	FRR	J&TL	An unusual summer/fall report
Wandering Tattler	July 5	SJSR	JB	The first report for the fall migration
Greater Yellowlegs (18)	June 27	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A nonbreeding flock?
Greater Yellowlegs (92)	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A very large number for this time of year
Lesser Yellowlegs	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	The first report for the fall migration
Whimbrel	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	An earlier than normal report
Long-billed Curlew	June 7	FRR	JS	A non- or failed breeder?
Marbled Godwit (2)	June 20	Siltcoos River mouth	BC&KW	An unusual midsummer record
Marbled Godwit	July 24	SJSR	J&TL	Postbreeding southward migrant?
Black Turnstone	July 18	SJSR	MB	The first report for the fall migration
Surfbird	July 11	Siltcoos River mouth	LB	The first report for the fall migration
Sanderling	July 8	Heceta Beach	DP, KS	The first report for the fall migration
Semipalmated Sandpiper (2)	July 3	FRR—Royal Ave	OH et al.	A normal time for this species

Semipalmated Sandpiper (6)	July 4	FRR—Royal Ave	JS, SH	A much higher number than normal
Western Sandpiper (2)	June 27	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	The first report for the fall migration
Western Sandpiper (2200)	July 4	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A much higher number than normal
Least Sandpiper (10)	June 27	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	The first report for the fall migration
Baird's Sandpiper	July 26	FRR	JH	The first report for the fall migration
Short-billed Dowitcher (8)	July 11	FRR	MK	The first report for the fall migration
Long-billed Dowitcher (2)	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	The first report for the fall migration
Wilson's Phalarope (10)	June 27	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	Did they nest here this year?
Red-necked Phalarope	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	The first report for the fall migration
Bonaparte's Gull	June 10	FRR—Royal Ave	SH	A summering bird?
Bonaparte's Gull (8)	June 19	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A nonbreeding flock?
Franklin's Gull	June 10	FRR—Royal Ave	SH	Rare for the county—seen throughout season
Heerman's Gull	July 8	Siuslaw River mouth	DP, KS	The first postbreeding report
Mew Gull	July 1	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A nonbreeding bird?
Herring Gull	June 2	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A very late report
Common Tern	July 14	FRR—Royal Ave	JS	A normal time for them to arrive
Forster's Tern (2)	June 8	FRR—Royal Ave	SM	Around for the season but no nesting
Parasitic Jaeger	July 22	Siltcoos River mouth	JB	Following terns & gulls south
Cassin's Auklet	July 11	Siuslaw River mouth	AC et al.	Found in small numbers during the summer
Rhinoceros Auklet (35)	July 11	Siuslaw River mouth	AC et al.	Slightly higher numbers than normal
Tufted Puffin	July 24	Strawberry Hill	JR	An unusual location

GOATSUCKERS to FINCHES

Common Nighthawk	June 7	SW Eugene	AC	The first report for the breeding season
Black Swift	June 3	Snyder Road	BC	Migrating to the breeding grounds?
Black Swift (2)	June 23	Florence	SB	Late migrants?
Chimney Swift (2)	July 24	Craig Lake	SH	The 3rd Lane record if accepted by the OBRC
Lewis's Woodpecker	July 18	Clearwater Park	JM	A rare breeding season record
Least Flycatcher	June 11	FRR—Coyote Ck	LF	Singing—same area as last year
Ash-throated Flycatcher	mid-July	Eugene area	fide BG	Photos with nesting material!
Red-eyed Vireo	June 10	Dorris Ranch	DS	The first report for the breeding season
Red-eyed Vireo	June 22	Walterville	VB	A new area for this species
Horned Lark	June/July	FRR to Junction City	m.ob.	Higher numbers than normal
Violet-green Swallow	July 22	Eugene/Springfield	VT	Leaving the breeding areas
Bank Swallow	July 17	Kirk Pond	BC	A normal time for them to arrive
Bank Swallow	July 23	FRR	SH	A normal time for them to arrive
Rock Wren	June 4	Mt. Pisgah	RF	A rare "overshoot" in the spring
Rock Wren	July 9	Horsepasture Mtn	LG	A breeding location?
Rock Wren (5)	July 20	Old McKenzie Pass	JL	A family group
American Pipit	July 23	SJSR	JB	A normal time for their arrival
Chestnut-sided Warbler	June 23	Clearwater Park	DS	Only the 3rd record for Lane Co
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	June 4	Creswell	NS	A normal time for this rare migrant

AC Alan Contreras, BC Barbara Combs, BG Barbara Gleason, DP Diane Pettey, DS Don Schrouder, J&TL Joshua & Terry Little, JB Jeffrey Bolsinger, JH Jim Hardman, JM Jim Maloney, JR Jennifer Rothe, JS John Sullivan, KS Kate Shapiro, KW Kai Williams, LB Lucas Bobay, LF Luke Ferrenburg, LG Linda Gilbert, m.ob. many observers, MB Mike Buccieri, MK Mark Kelley, NS Noah Strycker, OH Oscar Harper, RA Rich Adney, RF Rachael Friese, SB Sean Burns, SH Sally Hill, SM Sylvia Maulding, VB Vickie Buck, VT Vjera Thompson. **Fide** indicates a sighting that was reported to the listed observer.

The Great Gray Owl of California, Oregon, and Washington with Harry Fuller

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Range of the Great Gray Owl in Oregon

Harry Fuller, an Oregon birder, leads trips and teaches classes throughout the Pacific Northwest and California. He is president of the board of Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO). He teaches bird classes at Pt. Reyes Field Institute, Ashland Nature Center, and other venues, and he leads birding trips for KBO, Golden Gate Audubon (San Francisco), and Partnership for International Birding. Harry is the author of two books—*Freeway Birding: San Francisco to Seattle* and, with coauthor Peter Thiemann, *Great Gray Owl in California, Oregon and Washington*. *Great Gray Owl* was published last May and is also the topic of September’s Program Meeting.

Harry will summarize what we know and don’t know about the southernmost great grays on earth, the relict populations in Oregon and California. There are breeding Great Gray Owls in the southern Cascades and as near to Eugene as the McKenzie River Valley. He will discuss the habitat and prey needs of this elusive species, where and how to find one, and their prospects for survival as the climate changes. Harry will also share the touching story of the eastern Oregon man who became a surrogate father for four young great gray owlets after their father died, leaving their mother to cope with feeding them all on her own. The photos of this family are unique and priceless as the owlets preen, bathe, and feed with no fear of the man and his camera.

September Program Meeting

The Great Gray Owl of California, Oregon, and Washington with Harry Fuller



Tuesday, September 22, 7:30 p.m.

Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St., Eugene

From Our President (continued from page 1)

use them for entertainment. Why then do humans ignore the needs of wild animals we share the Earth with? Their survival is an important cog in the balance of life. Humans need to actually think and feel good about the choices they make regarding wildlife. Habitat needed for animal species is the same as our own needs, yet we ignore and separate ourselves from the living earth around us.

By watching and living with animals are we learning anything?

If animals could speak, what would they have to say about the way humans live on this Earth?

Webmaster Volunteer Position Open

Join the LCAS team of volunteers! We are currently seeking a Webmaster Committee Chair. Help us maintain and develop the Lane County Audubon Society website (www.laneaudubon.org). Primary responsibilities include updating the website with current information and software, performing routine data backups, monitoring and reporting on web analytics, and providing suggestions for improved layout and functionality. All skill levels are welcome, although familiarity with basic HTML and CSS, Drupal CMS, and Google Analytics will be especially helpful. Develop your web skills with Lane Audubon!

Community Calendar, Events, and Opportunities

A service to Lane Audubon members

Oregon Shorebird Festival

September 4–6, Charleston, Oregon

The 29th Annual Oregon Shorebird Festival will include a full weekend of activities for birders of all skill levels. The festival is headquartered at the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology in Charleston. Activities include expertly guided land-based field trips to Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, New River, and the Coos Bay area. There is a pelagic trip on Saturday for those who want to experience birding on the water.

FMI: www.fws.gov/oregoncoast/shorebirdfestival.htm

Nearby Nature

Wednesday, September 16, 6:30–8:00 p.m.

Eugene Public Library, Singer Room

Fall New Volunteer Orientation

Learn all about leading fall school nature walks in Alton Baker Park, as well as Nearby Nature gardening and restoration opportunities. No experience needed; training provided in September.

Free. FMI: 541.687.9699, info@nearbynature.org, www.nearbynature.org/volunteer

Mt. Pisgah Arboretum

Sunday, September 20, 8:00 a.m.–10:30 a.m.

Early fall bird walk

Join Chris Roth and Julia Siporin and discover the Arboretum's avian diversity. All levels of birders welcome. Please bring binoculars.

\$5, members free. Meet at the Arboretum Visitor Center. FMI: 541.747.1504, www.MountPisgahArboretum.org

Willamette Resources and Educational Network (WREN)

Saturday, September 26, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

National Public Lands Day at Stewart Pond

Meet at the Stewart Pond bird blind on Stewart Road, east of Bertelsen. Wear sturdy shoes. WREN, the city of Eugene, and BLM will provide tools and light refreshments.

Free. FMI: 541.338.7047 or info@wewetlands.org. Contact WREN for information about their many other events.

Godwit Days Fall Preview

Saturday and Sunday, September 26–27

Humboldt County, CA

Ten select birding trips with small group sizes are offered over the course of the weekend.

FMI: 707.826.7050, www.godwitdays.org, info@godwitdays.org

Cascades Raptor Center

Sunday, September 27, 12:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.

Family Nature Discovery Day

Migration Station is the theme. Kids can migrate around the CRC nature center and learn about the amazing journeys made by migrating birds. Families can view over 50 resident raptors. Activities are recommended for children ages 4–12 and children must be accompanied by an adult.

General admission (members free) plus \$2 activity fee. FMI: 541.485.1320, www.eraptors.org

Deadlines:

October Issue: September 5

November Issue: October 3

Submit material to
Paula Rich
richpaula@hotmail.com



The Quail is the newsletter of Lane County Audubon Society, which is a chartered chapter of National Audubon Society. Nine issues are published per year (*May-June, July-Aug. and Dec.-Jan. are double issues*).

Local members of National Audubon Society receive a free subscription to *The Quail* but are encouraged to voluntarily join Lane County Audubon Society.

Subscriptions: Contact Tim Godsil at 541.915.8852 or tgodsil@gmail.com.

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Layout by Kerry Lutz

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Audubon Adventures: Classrooms Seek Sponsors

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Audubon Adventures combines the best of all worlds for participating teachers and their students for the 2015–2016 school year—the new materials are available as printed newsletters with exciting online components. This award-winning environmental educational program introduces students to the fundamental principles by which the natural world functions. This year's topics focus on protecting Earth's natural resources:

- Why and how to protect habitats that are home to all living things
- Sources of and challenges to essential clean water resources and how to preserve them
- Different forms and sources of energy and their pros and cons

The Audubon Adventures materials were developed by professional educators, are designed for students in grades 3 through 6, and integrate easily into the existing curriculum areas of science, social studies, mathematics, language arts, and creative arts. Check out the website at www.audubonadventures.org.



Through the generous support of LCAS members, Lane Audubon's Adopt-a-Classroom Program offers free subscriptions to local classrooms for this outstanding educational program.

If you would like to sponsor a classroom, please mail a tax-deductible donation of \$45, payable to LCAS, to Audubon Adventures, PO Box 5086, Eugene, OR 97405. You can also donate online through the LCAS website: www.laneaudubon.org/education/audubon-adventures.

Please contact Joyce Trawle at jtrawle@comcast.net or 541.515.6244 if you have any questions.

LCAS Seeks New Audubon Adventure Coordinator

Audubon Adventures is National Audubon Society's (NAS) award-winning environmental education program. Audubon Adventures was designed by the environmental experts at NAS and boasts top-quality educational materials. Through our Adopt-a-Classroom Program, Lane County Audubon offers teachers in grades 3–5 an opportunity to participate at no cost to their schools.

LCAS is looking for someone who can link the participating teachers with the generous sponsors of this program. If you have a computer and a little time, this might be the volunteer opportunity you've been looking for! It takes flexibility, organization, and a sense of timing to make things work well for the teachers and sponsors.

Outreach to schools and sponsors begins in September. Orders for the kits are placed with NAS in October so that

teachers receive their kits as soon as they are available for shipping. Maintaining contact with the teachers throughout the school year is crucial. You'll want to make sure they've received their kits, see if they need any additional help, and check in with them at the end of the school year.

Potential sponsors find out about teachers who would like to participate through *The Quail*, at program meetings, and through an annual mailing. Please contact Maeve Sowles (maeveanddick@q.com) if this rewarding position sounds interesting to you. We'll be happy to provide you with all the information and training you need to manage the program.

Save the Date! Join us for the bike path cleanup on Saturday, November 14!

**September
Program Meeting**
**The Great Gray Owl
with Harry Fuller**




**Tuesday, September 22
7:30 p.m.
Eugene Garden Club, 1645
High St., Eugene**



**NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
LANE COUNTY CHAPTER**

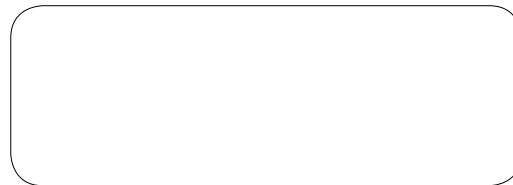
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Bird Walks and Events



Jim Maloney

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**Saturday,
September 19**

THIRD SATURDAY BIRD WALK

The Third Saturday Bird Walk for September will take place at the Royal Avenue part of Fern Ridge Wildlife Area to take advantage of the late fall migration for shorebirds. The guest leader will be local birder, photographer, and world traveler John Sullivan, who is keen to discover which shorebirds are there and whether they're adults or young born this year.

We will meet to carpool at the usual South Eugene High School east parking lot just before 8:00 a.m. Those wishing to meet the group can expect us to arrive at the Royal Avenue parking area at about 8:30. Remember that you need an ODFW permit to park at Fern Ridge, although street parking seems to be an option. Also keep in mind that it is not a good idea to leave valuables, packs, purses, or similar items in parked vehicles at either location because they may invite undesired attention.

If his schedule permits, Ramiro Aragon will join the group to assist any Spanish-speaking participants.

All levels of birders are welcome. A \$3 donation is appreciated to help support LCAS activities. For more information, contact walk coordinator Jim Maloney at 541-968-9249.

**Friday,
September 18
and Friday,
September 25**

Bon Voyage to Vaux's Swifts at Agate Hall

LCAS will hold its annual fall Swift Event outside Agate Hall at sunset on September 18 and 25. The Vaux's Swifts use the chimney to roost for the night as they gather prior to migration. We may see several thousand birds entering the chimney! It's fun to observe the swifts before they fly off to Central and South America for the winter.

Lane Audubon will have handouts with information about the Vaux's Swifts. Look for the LCAS banner at 17th and Agate. Stop by and enjoy this annual natural phenomenon. It's free! Call 541-343-8664 for more information about the event.

Another good location to check for Vaux's Swifts is the Smith Family Bookstore (5th and Willamette, downtown Eugene), where several thousand birds have been observed. For more information about Vaux's Swifts, see www.laneaudubon.org/docs/vauxs-swift.