



Audubon Society of Corvallis

the CHAT

November 2009

VOL. 39

#3

General Meeting

Thursday, November 19th 7:00 – 8:30 pm
First Presbyterian Church

Pacific Northwest Condors

A presentation by David Moen, Oregon Zoo and US Forest Service
The Oregon Zoo runs one of only four breeding programs for the California



Condor. The primary objective of that program is to reintroduce the giant bird in the Pacific Northwest. David Moen searches for evidence of century-old nest sites in order to demonstrate that the Northwest can provide viable breeding habitat for the condor. Most of these nests are in cliff caves, and finding them means rappelling in from above and, occasionally, being dropped into an area by a helicopter.

Come and hear David Moen talk about his adventures and the efforts that are being made at the zoo and all over the Pacific Northwest to once again have condors flying free in Oregon.

Doors open at 6:30 pm for refreshments and visiting. The chapter meeting commences at 7:00 pm, followed by the guest lecture at 7:30 pm. Questions about the series can be directed to Dave Mellinger at DavidKMellinger@yahoo.com or 757-7953.

Directions

The chapter meeting is in the meeting hall of the First Presbyterian Church (upstairs), 114 SW Eighth Street.

The Envelope, Please

You saw the envelope in this newsletter. You know it is end-of-year donation time. We know that these are difficult economic times and that many of you have given generously

already this year. If you are considering additional charitable donations for tax purposes or as holiday gifts, please think about the Audubon Society of Corvallis. The bottom line is that, like most non-profits, membership dues help with basic operations such as mailing the newsletter and room rent for meetings, as well as some of our activities. There are additional opportunities for outreach and habitat restoration that are in need of funding. Consider what your donation could support:

- \$10—Scholarship for one child to attend a class at Hesthavn
- \$50—Printing 100 Birding Corvallis brochures
- \$100—One portable environmental education activity kit
- \$250—Bird Bands and equipment for Bluebird Trail
- \$500—Quality sound system for use at meetings and events

With the talented and dedicated volunteer force working for ASC, your financial contribution goes a long way. If you would like to fund a specific project or item, please contact any board member. Thanks to all of you for donating so freely of your time and money in the past. It is your involvement that makes ASC such a vibrant organization. Be assured that when you mail a check in the enclosed envelope, that money will be used to further enhance the outstanding conservation, restoration and education programs coordinated so ably by our membership.

The Board of ASC

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Homer Campbell Trail Now Extends (Seasonally) to Cabell Marsh



"I wish we could just keep on going," is a sentiment often heard at the observation blind overlooking Cabell Marsh at the end of the Homer Campbell Memorial Trail at Finley Wildlife Refuge. As of late October, that wish became a reality, thanks to the Refuge and to two very generous ASC donors, Jane Werner and her daughter Ann Werner.

Just before the observation blind, a hundred-foot boardwalk extension now connects the trail to the gravel berm and road around Cabell Marsh. While wheelchair accessibility ends at the berm, walkers can continue onto the road for a three-plus mile stroll. Well-designed by Refuge staff and builder Ed Rust, the extension is tucked behind willow and ash trees so most of its length is barely visible from the marsh. The connection point is far enough from the observation blind that folks in the blind don't see people popping into their view nearby.

The Homer Campbell Trail and observation blind are open all year. However, the refuge closes all direct access to Cabell Marsh to protect over-wintering waterfowl, so by the time you read this, the new boardwalk extension will be closed (Nov. 1 to April 1).

In the spring we can look forward to the pleasure of walking from the Homer Campbell Memorial Trail around Cabell Marsh and also to a new bench along this new route—a memorial bench to the late Elzy Eltzroth will be placed at the east end of the marsh from which one can view the marsh, the meadows, and the forest. This recycled plastic bench is a

gift to the refuge and the public from Elsie Eltzroth and her family. A similar bench commemorating Elsie's long service to local Western Bluebirds will be placed where one can sit and watch these birds nesting on the Refuge.

Linda T. Campbell

Call your Senator Now!

About Global Climate Change

The Senate is taking up global climate change, carbon emissions, and what to do about them. So now would be an excellent time to contact our senators and ask them to do something about it. All it takes is calling the Capitol (202-224-3121), asking for Senator Wyden's or Senator Merkley's office, and then telling the person that answers that you support taking strong action against global climate change. You might also mention the recent National Academy of Sciences report that said the health cost of fossil fuels, mainly from air pollution, is about \$120 billion every year. Then hang up and call the other Senator. Your grandchildren will thank you for it (Well they probably won't, but they should.).

Dave Mellinger

Willamette Valley Birding Trail

Now available on-line

The Willamette Valley Birding Trail is now available online at www.oregonbirdingtrails.org/willamettevalley.htm. Many familiar sites are presented in a new context. ASC provided startup funds for trail development and ASC member Joel Geier led and coordinated the work. The printed brochure is expected in early 2010.

Bill Proebsting

Volunteer Needed

Calling all prospective Chat editors

Would you like to edit the Audubon Society of Corvallis Chat, the monthly newsletter that you are reading at this moment? Please volunteer for this rewarding job! In the time we've held the post, we've had fun and learned a lot. There are many perks, and there is no dress code. Plus, as a Chat editor, you get to see the news first, in its embryonic, email form. If you are interested, please contact us at chateditors@gmail.com. Thanks!

Neil and Joan

Field Trip Schedule

Monthly Year-Round Saturday Field Trips

Nov 14: Meet at the Benton Center at 7:30 am

Dec 12: Meet at the Benton Center at 7:30 am

Our Saturday morning local field trip meets the second Saturday of every month at the Benton Center parking area, 757 Polk Ave, Corvallis at 7:30 am. This field trip is especially interesting for beginner birders and birders new to Oregon's mid-valley area. We spend a lot of time identifying local birds by sight and song. We visit the valley national wildlife refuges—Finley, Baskett Slough, and Ankeny, as well as other birding areas throughout the year. Contact Rich Armstrong at richarmstrong@comcast.net or 541-753-1978 with questions.

Spring 2010 Weekend Field Trips

Mar 19 – 21: Bandon/South Coast
Apr 16 – 18: Klamath Basin
Apr 30 – May 2: Rogue Valley
May 20 – 23: Malheur NWR
June 18 – 20: Summer Lake/Ft Rock/Fremont NFS

Fred Ramsey leads all the spring weekend trips. Fred has been leading these field trips for ASC for over 35 years. He is an amazing field trip guide, sharing his knowledge about finding birds in their habitat and pointing out wildflowers, butterflies, mammals, and reptiles. The field trips fill up early in the fall. Sign-up sheets are available at the general meeting or email Fred Ramsey with your requests at framsey5@comcast.net.

Please note:

The Rogue Valley and Malheur trips require deposits by February 28, 2010.

The Rogue Valley trip includes a play at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. The play this year will be *Hamlet*. A deposit of \$40 is required for the play.

The Malheur deposit is \$50. Each deposit must be made payable to Fred Ramsey at 3550 NW Glen Ridge Pl., Corvallis OR 97330.

Rich Armstrong

Hesthavn News



Hesthavn work party

The final work party for the year is scheduled for **November 21, from 9 am to 1 pm**. Join us in cleaning up leftover invasive blackberry, teasel, thistle and false brome.

Our October 24 work party of 21 planted 26 shrubs of Hairy Manzanita, Blue Blossom, and Buckbrush that border the parking lot. These are drought resistant evergreen native shrubs that attract bee and butterfly pollinators. The work party did a great job removing false brome from a section that was filled in like a grass lawn carpet! The 13 OSU students and eight Auduboners volunteer services are immensely appreciated.

A Fall planting in this cleared section with native California Oatgrass, American Slough grass, and Northwest Prairie mix will fill in and crowd out new false brome seedlings.

Our final Saturday open house for the year will also be on **November 21 from 10 am to 1 pm**. Please come out to visit the nature center's bird specimen museum and display of eggs and nests. Take a walk along the trail to discover the fall

experience of wildlife, trees and shrubs, stream bank habitat and native plants. Check out our new rainwater catchments system that is used for the irrigation of native trees.

Map directions are available at www.audubon.corvallis.org. The nature trail is open daily to the public.

Stacy Moore and Lori McGovern have joined our educational team adding opportunities for new classes for children, families and adults. The Nature Center would appreciate other volunteers with an interest in sharing nature experiences. Please contact me if you are interested in volunteering with our educational program. We offer nature classes to schools and other community groups as well.

If you are looking for an opportunity to volunteer during a weekday at the Nature Center we have plenty of tasks to offer someone who could help with weeding invasive weeds, mowing, watering native trees and shrubs, and other odd jobs.

Contact me at 541-752-0470 vanderp@peak.org.

Paula Vanderheul

Next ASC Planting

At Finley Refuge, February 20

Finley National Wildlife Refuge officials have selected February 20th for the third annual ASC/Finley planting effort. The past two years have seen a large turnout of Audubon birders as well as local students and citizens. The lovely weather in previous years has encouraged participation, as has the good food served by ASC. Past years' plantings featured nectar plants such as Kinkaid's Lupine, Nelson's Checkermallow, Showy Milkweed, and Henderson's Shooting-Stars. These plants assist the rare Fender's Blue butterfly, which has been near extinction for several years. This coming year's planting will feature plants for the Fender's Blue as well as others as needed by the refuge. Planting will start at 10AM and finish at noon, when food will be served, rain or shine. Volunteers are needed for planting, food service, and parking duties. Audubon believes in restoring ecosystems and you are important to the effort. If you can spare two hours for the planting program, please contact John Gaylord at 541-745-5088. Car pools will be set up. The Fender's Blue, ASC, and Finley thanks you.

John Gaylord



Bewick's Wren photo by Matt Lee

Field Notes

26 September – 26 October 2009

This time of transition from summer to fall brought waterfowl back to us along with the rain. Our familiar breeding birds of summer expressed their dislike for our climate by departing and heading for the tropics, or at least locations with more benign weather. The first snow accumulated on Marys Peak on the evening of 25 October as our first real cold front of fall arrived. A few interesting birds appeared there prior to the snow, including Cassin's Finches, a Northern Goshawk, a Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, and plenty of seed-eating Evening Grosbeaks which took full advantage of the hefty tree seed crop. Other unusual sightings included a Chestnut-collared Longspur at Finley NWR, a very early American Tree Sparrow there, and a rare fall record of Black-throated Sparrow near North Albany.

Abbreviations and Locations: m.ob. = many observers. Observer names are noted in parentheses after their reports. Observations without a name (or with WDR) are the editor's. ASC indicates observations made by Audubon Society of Corvallis field trips. EEW = E. E. Wilson Wildlife Area north of Corvallis. ANWR = Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge in Marion County. FNWR = Finley National Wildlife Refuge, and includes Cabell, Cheadle, and McFadden marshes. STP = sewage treatment ponds; Philomath STP are off of Bellfountain Drive south of Philomath. Knoll Terrace STP are off of Elliot Circle in Corvallis. Stewart Lake is at Hewlett-Packard in Corvallis. Toketie Marsh is the remedial wetland for Coffin Butte landfill north of Corvallis, just off of Highway 99W. The Bellfountain Wetland along Bellfountain Drive south of Philomath is also sometimes called the Evergreen Mitigation Bank. The Diamond Hill Road wetland is in Linn County.

Dusky Canada Geese returned to FNWR, 19 Oct (M. Monroe et al.). They were still uncommon by end of the period, but no doubt most individuals were on their way here. The total number of Duskies in existence is now below 7,000, probably their all-time low (M. Monroe).

The first **Tundra Swan** of fall was at Cabell Marsh, 20 Oct (B. Proebsting, K. Hilton). Very few others had returned by end of the period.

American Wigeon began arriving in large numbers, 10 Oct. The peak count at Philomath STP was 800 on 26 Oct. The last **Cinnamon Teal** was reported from Philomath STP, 8 Oct. **Northern Shovelers** reached their maximum count, 21 Oct, when 805 were at Philomath STP. The first **Canvasback** of fall was at Philomath STP, 25 Oct. A **Redhead** was still there, 28 Sep. **Ring-necked Ducks** reached their highest numbers on 26 Oct, when 227 foraged at Philomath STP. Four **Greater Scaup** were at Philomath SP, 12-15 Oct. No **Surf Scoters** have yet been reported this fall. The first **Bufflehead** of fall was at Cabell Marsh, 10 Oct.

The last **Eared Grebes** at Philomath STP were 2 on 28 Sep. No **Horned Grebes** have been reported. Two **Western Grebes** visited Philomath STP, 16 Oct, and one was there 18-19 Oct. Another Western Grebe was at Cabell, 19 Oct (J. Geier et al.).

The last report of **American White Pelicans** at Cabell Marsh was of 10 on 10 Oct.

Great Egrets foraged daily at McFadden Marsh throughout the period. The high count was 17 on 18 Oct. An immature **Black-crowned Night-Heron** was still at Cabell Marsh, 13 Oct (A. Hadley, N. Ranta).

The last **Turkey Vulture** was seen 16 Oct near Philomath (K. Fairchild).

Six **White-tailed Kites** at Cliff Hall's wildlife refuge in King's Valley, 27 Sep, was quite a high concentration for the Coast Range. Five were at the FNWR prairie, 28 Sep (M. Monroe).

An immature **Northern Goshawk** was detected at Snag Boat Bend NWR, 11 Oct (H. Bruner) and 24 Oct (R. Campbell). Another was on Marys Peak, 24 Oct.

Red-shouldered Hawks became quite conspicuous at several places during the period. One along Oak Creek Drive, 2+ Oct, was at an unusual location (B. Proebsting). Five or more continued to be detected

at McFadden and Cabell Marshes throughout the period (m.ob.).

The first **Rough-legged Hawk** of fall was seen, 20 Oct, along Llewellyn Rd (M. Monroe). They were still not numerous by the end of the month.

Most shorebirds had already departed and the flocks of **Dunlin** were yet to arrive. A late **Solitary Sandpiper** was at EEW, 29 Sep (J. Geier). Several flocks of **Long-billed Dowitchers** at Cabell Marsh topped 100 individuals in early Oct.

Eurasian Collared-Dove numbers continue to climb in our area. Eleven attended a feeding station in North Albany during Oct (T. Turpin). They have also occurred at Mountain View Elementary School along Granger Rd (B. Altman, J. Geier).

Northern Pygmy-Owls were quite vocal on Marys Peak during Oct. Up to 4 were detected per day near the top and at the campground.

A late **Rufous Hummingbird** visited Oak Creek Drive, 2 Oct (B. Proebsting), and an even later one stopped by Philomath, 16 Oct (K. Fairchild).

Quite the spectacle this fall were the many **Lewis's Woodpeckers** during late Sep and early Oct. A high count of more than 20 (estimated to be as high as 40) in a restored oak woodland near Jefferson, Marion County, is undoubtedly the largest concentration in a very long time (B. Altman et al.). A maximum count of 5 at FNWR, 6 Oct, was quite good, too (B. Proebsting).

The last **Hammond's Flycatcher** was along Oak Creek Drive, 2 Oct. A rather late **Western Kingbird** was at EEW, 8 Oct (B. Proebsting). This date is quite late for the species and falls into the time window when a Tropical Kingbird may be more likely, although there are extremely few records away from the Oregon Coast. Bill had good looks and was confident the bird was not a Tropical Kingbird.

6 *arcticola* **Horned Larks** were seen on Marys Peak, 5 Oct, right in line with their typical passage dates.

The last **Violet-green Swallow** flew past Philomath STP, 17 Oct. The highest count this autumn was 2,020 at Cabell Marsh, 3 Oct. The last **Barn Swallow** reported was at Philomath STP, 20 Oct (R. Armstrong).

A male **Mountain Bluebird** joined a flock of **Western Bluebirds** passing over Bruce Rd, 26 Sep. Two **Townsend's Solitaires** foraged on berries on Marys Peak, 5 Oct.

Numbers of **Swainson's Thrushes** declined rapidly after the last days of Sep. Late birds were at Oak Creek Drive, 7 Oct (B. Proebsting); on Marys Peak, 9 Oct (WDR); and at EEW, 25 Oct (J. Geier).

A **Varied Thrush** arrived along Oak Creek Drive, 26 Sep (B. Proebsting). The highest count was of 34 on Marys Peak in the snow on 26 Oct.

Judith and Jerry Paul saw their first **Townsend's Warbler** at their feeder in Corvallis, 28 Sep. The last **Common Yellowthroat** reported was busily foraging at Philomath STP, 21 Oct.

A very early **American Tree Sparrow** was at McFadden Marsh, 18 Oct. Tristen Gholson reports a **Black-throated Sparrow** in north Albany, 17 Oct. This would be the second local fall record in the last few years.

A **White-throated Sparrow** visited Bill Proebsting's feeder along Oak Creek Drive, 22 Oct.

A **Chestnut-collared Longspur** was with Horned Larks along Bruce Rd at FNWR, 18 Oct. No **Lapland Longspurs** had been reported yet this fall.

A **Black-headed Grosbeak** was still in Corvallis, 26 Sep (W. Wright).

A bit ahead of schedule, a **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** returned to Marys Peak, 20 Oct; it was still there 22 Oct.

Certainly not necessarily annual in our area, **Cassin's Finches** appeared regularly on Marys Peak during Oct. 1 male was there, 5 Oct, and a female-plumaged bird was there, 9 Oct. A female-plumaged individual continued through at least 25 Oct (see photo), when two were present.

Lots of **Evening Grosbeaks** took advantage of the abundant seed crop on Marys Peak. The high count was 150, 25 Oct.



photo by Cheryl Whelchel

This Cassin's Finch was foraging with a flock of Western Bluebirds on Marys Peak, 24 Oct

Next issue

Please send your reports for the next issue by 24 November.
W. Douglas Robinson
Dept. of Fisheries and Wildlife
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331
(541) 231-1567
Douglas.robinson@oregonstate.edu

Loon Print Auction

Don't miss the auction at this month's general meeting!



This black and white print of a loon and two chicks by Maine marine biologist and artist Mark McCollough will be the feature of a silent auction at our November meeting. Created in 1984, this framed print is number 82/150. The print and a silent bid sheet will be located on a table near the entrance to our meeting room. Bidding will close at the end of intermission and the fortunate bidder can take immediate possession of the print. Proceeds from this silent auction will benefit Hesthavn's education programming. Thanks to John Gaylord for donating this fine McCollough work to our ASC Book and Raffle table.

Sally Shaw

GreenTip

OF THE MONTH

The Sins of greenwashing

Ever heard of greenwashing? It's when a company makes misleading, but not necessarily untrue, claims about their products or about company policies. Consider the Sin of Vagueness: how many products claim they are "natural"? It's a meaningless claim, since there is no agreed-upon definition of "natural" (the entire universe can be considered "natural"), and "natural" doesn't necessarily mean "green." Indeed arsenic, mercury, and cyanide are natural, but you wouldn't want them in your breakfast cereal. The Sin of Irrelevance is illustrated by the claim on an air freshener that it is "CFC-free." This is true but irrelevant, since *no* air freshener has CFCs — they are banned by law. Another sin is to imply — often with a logo or seal containing a green-sounding name — that a product has been certified by a trustworthy third party, when in fact it hasn't.

These greenwashing sins and others are now being described and tracked by an organization called TerraChoice. Two years ago they produced a report that described six greenwashing sins, and checked hundreds of products to see how prevalent the sins were. (The answer: Extremely prevalent.) They've now updated the report, this time with thousands of products, and have now added a seventh sin. You can find their new report, *The Seven Sins of Greenwashing*, on their web site, TerraChoice.com. It's interesting reading.

Dave Mellinger

Atop the Nestbox

The bluebird trail volunteers have met twice now since our change in the committee chairmanship. We have accomplished quite a bit, including the creation of a mission statement, appointing "czars," obtaining business cards, defining monitors and banders' rights and responsibilities, sharing tips of the trade, updating our nest box inventory, revising handouts, reorganizing trail segments, and planning future activities. We had the pleasure of visiting Elsie at her home and seeing the female bluebird currently being rehabilitated (wounded by a cat). The trail "reconnection" work is well under way. I have met with Nancy Fraser, president of the Prescott Bluebird Recovery Project. Her group is interested in collaborating with us on our longevity/survivorship study, though the logistics for them are daunting. I am now in the process of revising our ASC webpage, which will hopefully be ready to go live before Thanksgiving.

I am happy to report that Elsie looks better every day. She is very well taken care of. I would like to express my gratitude for her support and for the enthusiastic reception I have had from the trail volunteers. You are a special group of people, and I look forward to a long and enjoyable relationship.

Raylene Gordin

Christmas Bird Count

**Mark Your Calendar for Tuesday,
December 22, 2009**

Everybody is invited to join us for the 49th Corvallis Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Whether you are a beginner or experienced CBCer, every set of eyes and ears is needed to help tally all the birds within a 7.5 mile radius of the Corvallis airport. The Christmas Bird Count is an organized continent-wide, survey which documents every bird seen on a given day from sunrise to sunset. Since the turn of the 20th century, the Christmas Bird Count has contributed to the knowledge base of wintering birds in North America.

The count is an all-day event open to anyone wishing to participate. This is an excellent opportunity for novice bird watchers to join with seasoned veterans and learn more about identifying and finding the local birds. Half-day participants and home feeder-watchers are also welcome. I would like to particularly encourage anyone with feeders in the count circle who can spare at least one hour to watch their yard to participate. Some counts, particularly in Canada, are mostly made up of feeder watchers. Even Eugene has about 30 feeder watchers compared to the 4-6 Corvallis usually gets, so there is room to grow in this area. Winter feeder watching can be quite rewarding as birds try to expend the least amount of energy to get the most amount of food.

Participants aged 19 and older need to pay a fee of \$5.00 to cover National Audubon's costs of printing the results. As in the past, the Corvallis count circle will be divided into 13 units, with a team of 3-6 individuals assigned to each section. Team leaders for each section will make arrangements with the rest of their group for a meeting place and time (usually between 7:00 and 7:30 a.m.) the morning of the count. Participants should bring cold- and wet-weather gear, binoculars and snacks for the day. A notepad and pencil, field guides and a thermos with something hot are always good ideas as well.

There will be a countdown potluck after the count at the Community Room at Corvallis Fire Station #5. This is the fire station located just south of MLK Park (formerly Walnut Park) off Walnut Blvd.

If you are interested in participating or would like further information I will be happy to hear from you (my contact information is at the back of the Chat); however, I will be unavailable until after December 1st. If you would like to sign up or have any questions before that date, please contact Paula Vanderheul at 541-752-0470 or vanderp@peak.net.

Marcia F. Cutler

Oregon White Oak

Support Oregon White Oak restoration at Finley NWR this holiday season and get your own Charlie Brown Christmas tree

Oak restoration is an important part of managing for sensitive species on our local wildlife refuges.

As we continue with new oak savanna restoration projects on various areas of the refuge, we're finding Douglas-fir seedlings reinvading areas we have restored to oak woodland and savanna in the past. These areas are in need of maintenance by removing this encroaching species before they grow too large.

With the approaching holidays, you could help support our efforts by hanging your ornaments on a tree removed from these sensitive areas.

The "Charlie Brown Christmas Trees" will be available for pickup from November 27 – December 24 at the new refuge headquarters off of Bellfountain Rd. south of Corvallis. Donations will be happily accepted by the Friends of WV Refuges who are available to answer any questions at the new "Wild Goose Nature Store" open Friday-Sunday from 10 am – 4 pm. Also a great place to do some holiday shopping!

Volunteer help with removal of fir trees from restoration areas will be gladly accepted. Contact Molly Monroe at Finley NWR for more information. 541-757-7236

Molly Monroe

An Evening Walk in August

Early evening finds me walking slowly along the graveled dike road around Cabell Marsh at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge near Corvallis, Oregon. To my right, open water stretches about a quarter-mile west; to my left, small fields and ash woods occupy the area east of the road. Scattered in the marsh and partially submerged, many-limbed oak snags lie on their sides. They provide perches for flocks of Double-crested Cormorants, American White Pelicans, shorebirds, Brewer's and Red-winged Blackbirds. The low sun illuminates the dense stalks of tall grasses that grow along the roadsides; their intricate seedheads glow in the yellow light.

White spots in the tall ash snags on the far side of the marsh – about a quarter-mile away – are heads of Bald Eagles. One flies from its perch, takes a pass at some ducks, then snatches a fish from the water's surface before flying back to a snag for a fresh-fish dinner.

A Common Yellowthroat warbler calls from the brushy willows near the road: "witchity, witchity, witchity." A beaver tows a willow branch across the marsh to an island where it has a den in a cavity above the waterline, but only entered through a burrow beneath the water's surface.

Near the far shoreline ducks feed and splash: shovelers sieve mud through their spoon-like bills for aquatic insects and crustaceans; Mallards turn butt up and dabble for aquatic weeds.

Cries overhead alert me to an Osprey coming in for a look at the fishy menu. The hawk hovers, dives into the water feet first, then emerges shedding water and grasping a fish in its talons.

The setting sun accentuates the tall, stealthy Great Blue Herons walking in super-slow motion along the shorelines,

looking for fish or frogs to feast on. One snaps up its victim, points its beak straight up, and with several upward thrusts, uses gravity to help slide the prey down its long slippery gullet.

An elk bugles near the old Cheadle Barn — the big red barn visible on a hill about one mile to the west. In an ancient orchard there, big bulls use their antlers to shake down apples; these animals can pack away many pounds of fat-producing fruit before the winter scarcity.

I pick up a faint, pungent smell, then see a decaying Canada Goose lying in the road ahead of me. When I pass the goose, legs, wings and a mass of feathers are all that remain; I guess a coyote or bobcat got a nice meal a few days ago. A v-shaped flock of white pelicans glide in from the west and slide over the water's surface with their webbed feet as they land. Fishing together, they scoop their enormous pale-orange bills into the water in a graceful rhythm. At the southwest corner of the marsh, dragonflies hover, dart and criss-cross each other in a frenzy; their favorite insect prey must hatch from the nearby trees.

In the distance, I spot an animal crouching on all fours, creeping intensely toward a cottontail rabbit nibbling small plants along the roadside. Through my binoculars, I become "one" with the large cat. At about six feet from the rabbit I leap on my prey, and pin it down with my front feet. After the laws of nature have insured the balance of life on this planet, I lick my paws, claws extended, and feel content to be the top predator in my world.

Gary Gibson

Riparian Habitat Recovery

Input sought on Benton County water projects

Adam Stebbins, water project coordinator for Benton County, has asked ASC for assistance in locating a good stream to improve the riparian habitat. Adam has come into some funds to do streamside recovery and is aware of Audubon's interest in rehabilitation and conservation. He is hopeful one of our members might have an ideal property to showcase riparian upgrades. We all know how improving streamside habitat encourages birds to return and lowers water temperatures to help aquatic dwellers. Adam will be looking at the Hesthavn property later in the month. Hopefully we can help Adam in his quest. For information contact: Adam Stebbins 541-766-6085 or adam.stebbins@co.benton.or.us.

John Gaylord

Contributors to the Chat

Gary Gibson, Molly Monroe, Raylene Gordin, Paula Vanderheul, Dave Mellinger, Sally Shaw, Cheryl Whelchel, Rich Armstrong, Linda T. Campbell, Bill Proebsting, John Gaylord, Douglas Robinson, Marcia F. Cutler.



Male Bushtit photo by Lisa Millbank



Baby Eastern Cottontail photo by Lisa Millbank

Audubon Society of Corvallis
www.audubon.corvallis.or.us

President: Will Wright, willwright26@q.com, 753-4395
Vice-president: David K. Mellinger,
DavidKMellinger@yahoo.com, 757-7953
Secretary: Karan Fairchild, alderspr@peak.org, 929-4049
Treasurer: Fred Ramsey, framsey5@comcast.net, 753-3677

Board Members

Raylene Gordin, gordin@centurytel.net, 258-6825
Gail Nickerson, gailhops@aol.com, 754-0406
Jerry Paul, jlpaul2006@msn.com, 745-3934
Carroll DeKock, candgdecock@centurytel.net, 491-3934
Becky Schwiebert, Schwiebert@linkline.com, 310-729-5039
Gail Andrews, gailandrews@peak.org, 745-5323
Alternative: **Glen Akins**, gnlakins@comcast.net, 745-5447

Committees and Coordinators

Conservation Chair: John Gaylord, gaylordjohng@aol.com, 745-5088
Education Chair: Marcia F. Cutler, marciafcutler@comcast.net, 752-4313
Bluebird Trail Chair: **Raylene Gordin**, gordin@centurytel.net, 541-258-6625
Christmas Bird Count Compiler: Marcia Cutler, marciafcutler@comcast.net, 752-4313
Hesthavn Chair: Paula Vanderheul, vanderp@peak.org, 752-0470
Publicity Chair: Don Boucher, bouchdon@peak.org, 753-7689
Webmaster: Tom Haig, tomhaig@hotmail.com, 231-6583
Birdathon Coordinator: Mary van Brocklin, maryvanbrocklin@yahoo.com, 745-7170
Membership Chair: Karl Hartzell, karlerun@yahoo.com, 758-2275
Field Trip Chair: Rich Armstrong, richarmstrong@comcast.net, 753-1978
Sales Table team: Sally Shaw, shaws@peak.org, 757-2749
Bev Clark, oreflygirl12@earthlink.net, 753-4456
Refreshment Chair: Gail Nickerson, gailhops@aol.com, 754-0406
Field Notes Compiler: Douglas Robinson, douglas.robinson@oregonstate.edu, 737-9501
Newsletter Editors: Joan Newhouse and Neil Lidstrom, chateditors@gmail.com, 754-3120

Audubon Society of Corvallis
P.O. Box 148
Corvallis, OR 97339

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the **CHAT**

Renew your membership before the date on the mailing label to avoid missing issues of the Chat.

Calendar

Nov 12: Board meeting
Nov 14: Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am
Nov 19: General meeting—now starting at 7 pm!
Nov 21: Hesthavn work party and open house
Nov 24: Field notes submission deadline for Nov Chat
Nov 26: Article submission deadline for Nov Chat
Dec 12: Second Saturday field trip, 7:30 am
Dec 22: Corvallis CBC



American Robin photo by Matt Lee

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