

THE CALLIOPE

EAST CASCADES AUDUBON SOCIETY
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2021



President's Report

By Tom Lawler

Here we are, after a year of COVID, with no ECAS events and birding at social distances. But, as I write this on the first day of Spring, we may be seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. Hopefully we will be able to start or at least start planning ECAS events by the time I write the next President's Message.

In the meantime I look forward to the first day of spring more than any other yearly season change. It brings the end (at least mentally) of short, dreary days and the arrival of migrating birds. For me, living in the south part of Deschutes county, the first migrants to arrive are Western Bluebirds. They always beat the Spring Equinox by a few weeks. The next reliable migrants will be Tree Swallows and Yellow-rumped Warblers which will make their appearance in the first couple weeks of April. A flood of incidentals start arriving mid-April making yard bird watching always fun.

Many birds also nest in the yard or within a property or two. I don't mind the birds that come to the feeders that find better homes nearby. American Robins, Hairy Woodpeckers, and Northern Flickers are some of these birds that come by with young for a free meal. Other birds nest in the yard, such as House Finches, Chipping Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos, but I have yet to figure out where. Dense trees and good ground cover provide some good nesting spots. Other nesters are very obvious. Nest boxes are occupied by Mountain Chickadees, Pygmy Nuthatches, Western Bluebirds and Tree Swallows. Keep your nest boxes in good shape and provide brush piles and dense ground cover for ground nesting birds. Spruce trees provide good nesting spots for some Sparrows, Finches and Robins. I have dwarf Spruce trees and my neighbors have huge Spruce trees. Between the two yards birds find homes. One of my frustrations is that in the nearly 17 years I have lived here I have yet to get a nesting Flicker. Two beautiful boxes that are often checked but never occupied. A Douglas Squirrel raised a family in one of them a few years back. I guess that is something!

In the meantime the Board and ECAS Committees continue to keep this organization running and relevant. As the day approaches that we can once again gather for Wednesday Birders, Birders' Night and Field Trips we will get these events going. Keep up the faith and hope as things improve!

Enjoy the birds.

ECAS April Birders Night

By Gordon Wetzel

Join us on **April 15 at 7 PM** via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87841578620>
Find out how a healthy river will bring better birding to our backyard.

Kolleen Miller of the Upper Deschutes Watershed Council (UDWC) will tell how the UDWC <https://www.upperdeschuteswatershedcouncil.org/> has been coordinating river restoration, stream monitoring, and watershed education in Central Oregon since 1996. Learn how the UDWC uses a collaborative approach working with local landowners and partners to conduct on-the-ground restoration. This presentation seeks to educate our community about the health of the Deschutes River while providing opportunities for volunteers to get involved and do their part to protect our rivers and streams.

Kolleen has taught environmental education courses throughout Alaska, Washington, and Oregon, and worked as the program manager for the Alaska Center for the Environment prior to joining the UDWC in 2002. Kolleen has trained and managed staff and volunteers within the context of watershed education and has coordinated riparian restoration projects, water quality monitoring studies, and collaborative conservation education programs. She was the editor for UDWC's Upper Deschutes Subbasin Assessment (2003) and *The Place We Cross the Water: Whychus Creek* (2007). Kolleen holds a B.A in English from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a M.A. degree in English Studies with an emphasis in Ecocritical Analysis from Western Washington University. As the Education Director for UDWC, Kolleen develops and directs the environmental education programs for the Watershed Council in addition to providing leadership for many community-based watershed education projects in Central Oregon. She has been on the Board of Directors for the Children's Forest of Central Oregon for the past ten years.

Birding Basics

Presented by Lynda Paznokas

New to Birding? Join us for 4 Zoom sessions! Although the sessions are arranged sequentially, you are welcome to attend all or some, as your schedule allows. The presentations start at 6:30 pm, with the sessions open at 6:20. The Zoom invitation below works for all four sessions.

April 8: Bird Identification Strategies: Shape, size, color, behavior

April 15: Birding Resources: Books, apps, websites, games, equipment, birding ethics

April 22: Backyard Birding - Doing it Right: Bird feeders, birdbaths, birdhouses, gardening for the birds

April 29: Birding as a Social Activity: Locations for birding, bird cams, organizations, events, citizen science

Join each Zoom Meeting at 6:20pm on the above dates at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85847318941?pwd=YjJBbHA4RmdMbnV1aXNkbEhEYnlYdz09>

(This is not an ECAS-sponsored activity, simply one that an ECAS member is providing.)

Online Previously-Recorded Video Presentation on Sage-grouse by Stu Garrett

Recorded by the Deschutes Public Library

Learn about the unusual biology of the Sage-grouse and how it has adapted to the challenging ecology of the sagebrush steppe with Dr. Stu Garrett, Sage-grouse coordinator for the East Cascades Audubon Society. Dr. Garrett explores some of the historical events that have led to the deteriorated condition of the plant communities on the High Desert today and discusses the decreasing Grouse population and the threats that changing vegetation and other factors are playing in its ongoing demise.

Dr. Garrett has had a long-standing fascination with the ecology of Oregon's sagebrush steppe and the animals that dwell there, especially the Greater Sage-grouse. Five years ago he took on the job of coordinating Sage-grouse activities for the local Audubon chapter East Cascades Audubon Society - ECAS. Since then, ECAS has worked closely with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Deschutes National Forest, Deschutes County, and Bureau of Land Management on various projects to help the Sage-grouse. He is the author of *The Newberry National Volcanic Monument: An Oregon Documentary Book*.

To access the free video, click on either of the following links:

<https://www.deschuteslibrary.org/calendar/online> select For Adults - Presentations at DPL, scroll down 16 presentations titles to Botany Meets Biology: The Plight of the Sage-grouse by Stu Garrett.

-- OR --

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cb5p-fEC18M&list=PLeQ12HBJmWnDal6fEtsrD7C0c78eSY6Z4&index=14&ab_channel=DeschutesPublicLibrary This link takes you directly to the youtube video.



Photo: OPB

Central Oregon Field Notes – Winter 2021

By Chuck Gates

Below you will find a summary of the rare and unusual bird sightings during the last winter season. This begs the question, “What constitutes a rare or unusual bird sighting?” The answer is not as simple as you might think. Species can be considered rare if their numbers are very low, if they rarely show up at all, or if they are here but very difficult to find. Bird reports are considered unusual if they include species that are out of season, found in unusual numbers, or found doing unusual things. Those are a lot of variables to consider. In the end, it comes down to what I think is rare and unusual, so, let’s get started.

Many species of waterfowl spend their winter vacation in our area. SNOW GEESE were widespread with a high count of 10 individuals seen near Sisters on Feb 11 (Froehlich). CACKLING GEESE were somewhat more common than the “Snows” with over 30 reports and a high count of 21 seen at Agency Plains on Feb 20 (Low). TRUMPETER SWANS were noted along the Crooked River (Gates), near Prineville (White), at Pronghorn Resort (Lear), and Hatfield Lake (Medrano). Seven different EURASIAN WIGEONS were reported from various locations including a very cooperative female at Fireman’s Pond in Redmond (Gates).



Eurasian Wigeon – Fireman’s Pond, Redmond Photo by Chuck Gates 12/5/20

A CINNAMON TEAL turned up at Hatfield Lake on Feb 19 for the earliest known record (Low). Single GREATER SCAUP were noted at Suttle Lake on Jan 28 (Horvath, Oppenheimer), Black Butte Ranch on Dec 12 (Low), Wickiup Reservoir on Dec 13 (Cahill), and Ochoco Reservoir on Dec 31 (Crabtree, M. Gonzalez). HORNED GREBES were located at Brewer Reservoir east of Madras on Dec 5 (Cahill) and at Haystack Reservoir on Dec 20 (Gates). SANDHILL CRANE reports came in from Alfalfa on Dec 6 (Low) and Tetherow near Redmond on Feb 16 (Kathol). An unusual winter GREAT EGRET was found at Sunriver on Jan 17 (Cahill). A wintering SORA was noted on the Prineville Christmas Bird Count on Dec 31 (C. Miller, M. Miller).

Local shorebirds are always a pleasant surprise in the winter season. DUNLIN were recorded on 3 occasions at Hatfield (Dec 14 Meredith Burgess Dougill, Dec 24 Low, Feb 19 Low), Ochoco Reservoir (Dec 31 Crabtree M. Gonzalez) and Johnson Reservoir in Alfalfa (Feb 20 Sutherland). Late migrant LEAST SANDPIPERS were recorded at the Redmond Sewer Ponds on Dec 2 (Burgess) and Hatfield Lake on Dec 18 (Meredith). A GREATER YELLOWLEGS was spotted at the Crooked River Wetlands on Feb 15 for only the second February record (Vick). A LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER turned up at the Crooked River Wetlands in Prineville on Dec 13 for the fifth December record in Central Oregon (C. Miller, M. Miller).

Game Birds rarely migrate so they can be found occasionally in winter. MOUNTAIN QUAIL were discovered at Lake Billy Chinook on Dec 4 and were seen by multiple observers throughout the winter (Crabtree, et al.). CHUKAR were spotted at Pelton Overlook on Dec 27 (Crabtree) and at Smith Rock State Park on Feb 24 (Thomas, Olsen). Single BAND-TAILED PIGEONS were recorded at Deschutes River Woods on Dec 1 (Moodie) and on Dec 24 on Bend's west side (Stacey).



Band-tailed Pigeon – Deschutes R. Woods - Photo by Jim Moodie 12/3/20

Raptors include the diurnal types (hawks, eagles, falcons) and the nocturnal types (owls). We had some nice raptor encounters this winter. Though not a raptor, I will include Turkey Vulture in this section. TURKEY VULTURES were discovered at Camp Polk on Dec 21 (Burgess, Sizoo) and in La Pine on Jan 1 (Hibbs). NORTHERN GOSHAWKS were seen in Sisters on Dec 16 (Dougill), in La Pine on Dec 26 (Arneson), at Twin Lakes Campground on Jan 5 (Kendall), and at Wickiup Reservoir on Feb 7 (Low). An early OSPREY was spotted near Trout Creek on Feb 21 (C. Miller). RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS were located at Sawyer Park in Bend on Dec 17 (Phillips), at Sunriver on Jan 22 (Vine), in Alfalfa on Feb 10 (Gates), and at Ryan Ranch

Nature Reserve on Feb 12 (A. Gonzalez). HARLAN'S RED-TAILED HAWKS were discovered at Ice Avenue in Terrebonne on Jan 18 (Low) and at the Redmond Sewer Ponds also on Jan 18 (Sutherland).



Harlan's Red-tailed Hawk – Redmond Sewer Ponds - Photo by Tom Crabtree 1/20/21

PEREGRINE FALCONS are approaching numbers large enough to warrant exclusion from this rare bird report with over 20 reports coming in from throughout the region. GREAT GRAY OWL sightings occurred at Sunriver on Jan 18 (Cahill) and in the La Pine area on Feb 1 (Rhoads). SHORT-EARED OWLS were seen on their historic wintering grounds near the Powell Butte Community Center on Dec 17 and were seen by many throughout the season (Gates).

WESTERN SCREECH-OWLS were found in Powell Butte on Dec 8 (Trampush), in Madras on Feb 14 (Wolfe), and at Cline Falls State Park in Redmond on Feb 21 (Turner). BARRED OWLS were reported from Aspen Lakes in Sisters on Dec 19 (Bullock), in Bend near Cambridge Court on Jan 21 (Fagan), also in Bend on the 1st Street Trail on Feb 15 (Errichetti), and again in Bend on Feb 15 (Conner).



Barred Owl Vicksburg Photo by Tom Crabtree 12/15/20

Seven different NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWLS were found wintering in our area including a very cooperative bird found on Bend's north side on Dec 1 (Johnson et al.).

Northern Saw-whet Owl –
Deschutes River Woods – Photo
by Chuck Gates 2/13/21



Central Oregon is known for its diversity of woodpeckers. Some stay year-round and some migrate. The following woodpeckers are unusual for either the time of year or location of the sighting. RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKERS were noted west of Grizzly Mountain on Dec 5 (Sharp), at the Cove State Park on Dec 11 (Kornfeld), Bend's Hollinshead Park on Dec 12 (Cantor), and on the 1st Street Trail in Bend on Dec 12 (Low). Unusual in winter, RED-NAPED SAPSUCKERS turned up at Bend's Juniper Park on Dec 19 (Wilson), near Cimarron Drive in Bend on the Dec 21 (Cowan), and at the Cove State Park near Culver on Feb 5 (Thomas). A WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER was seen at Hollinshead Park on Dec 8 (Sutherland). In the unusual location category, a WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER showed up in a neighborhood east of Prineville on Feb 8 (MacDonald).

Passerines (perching birds) are the largest group of birds and are well represented in this winter report. Wintering SAY'S PHOEBES are unusual in our area but at least 8 birds were found at



various locations during the mid-winter season (Multiple Observers). A BLACK PHOEBE turned up at the Crooked River Wetlands on Dec 3 (Thomas) and a possible second bird was discovered at the Prineville Sewer Ponds on Dec 6 (Gates). LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES normally migrate out of our area in winter, but birds were noted north of Prineville on Dec 8 (Gates), at the Crooked River Park in Prineville on Jan 3 (Staats), at Hatfield Lake on Dec 15 (Cantor, Cowan, C. Miller), and SE of Bend on Jan 24 (C. Miller, M. Miller).

Loggerhead Shrike – North of Prineville Photo by Chuck Gates 12/8/20

CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEES were discovered at Suttle Lake on Jan 20 (C. Miller), Virginia-Meissner Sno-Park on Jan 30 (Gallagher), and near Tumalo Falls on Feb 23 (Low, Mlodzianowski). A wintering Sage Thrasher turned up on Neff Road in Bend on Dec 17 (M. Miller). CANYON WRENS and ROCK WRENS are a bit unusual in a normal winter season but this year they were abnormally abundant with about 15 Canyon Wren records and 5 Rock Wren records (multiple observers).

Rock Wren –
Borden Beck Trail -
Photo by Don Sutherland
1/11/21



A HOUSE WREN was found at Borden Beck Natural Area west of Terrebonne for a first January record for Central Oregon (Low). The only BOHEMIAN WAXWING sighting for the season was a single bird noted at Smith Rock State Park on Dec 29 (Mrvelj). AMERICAN PIPITS were tallied at Hatfield Lake several times (Low et al.), the Crooked River Wetlands several times (Dougill et al.), in Bend at the Old Mill on Feb 14 (Horvath, Oppenheimer), and in Bend's Sawyer Park on Feb 19 (Low).



American Pipit –
Deschutes R. Trail –
Photo by Tom Crabtree
2/16/21

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRDS are expected in small numbers every winter, but this season's numbers were exceptional as illustrated by a tally of 486 birds in Alfalfa on Jan 31 (Low).



Mountain Bluebird – Powell Butte - Photo by Chuck Gates 2/26/21

Multiple reports of YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS were received throughout the season from scattered locations (multiple observers). An ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER found at Farewell Bend Park in Bend on Dec 5 was exceptional (Low). About a dozen SOOTY FOX SPARROWS were reported from around the area as is the norm but a SLATE-COLORED FOX SPARROW seen at the Old Mill on Jan 16 was a surprise (Sutherland).



Sooty Fox Sparrow –
Powell Butte -
Photo by Chuck Gates
2/18/21

A SWAMP SPARROW spent much of the winter at Hatfield Lake and was seen by multiple observers. SAVANNAH SPARROW reports came in from Culver on Dec 20 (Gates, Nordstrom), off Lower Bridge Road near Terrebonne on two occasions (Low, Nordstrom), and on the Agency Plains on Feb 15 (Gates). Central Oregon's first December record of LARK SPARROW occurred at the Prineville Country Club on Dec 11 (Schlanger, Gates).



Lark Sparrow – Prineville Country Club - Photo by Chuck Gates 12/11/20

Comparatively large numbers of WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS were again seen this winter continuing a trend started a couple of years ago (multiple observers). The only HARRIS'S SPARROW reported this season was seen twice near Tumalo on Dec 13 and Feb 14 (Gard). A single report of LAPLAND LONGSPUR came in from Harmon Road east of Bend on Jan 24 (Low). COMMON REDPOLLS were tallied at Hollinshead Park on Dec 8 (Cahill), in NE Bend on Dec 11 (Ogle), and at Borden Beck Natural Area on Jan 10 (C. Miller, M. Miller). A single PINE GROSBEAK was found along the Tumalo Falls Trail on Dec 26 (Low). GRAY-CROWNED ROSY-FINCHES were discovered at Smith Rock State Park on Dec 27 (Low), Jan 3 (Rhoads, McDonell), and Jan 14 (Cowan, Thomas). BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS were found on Lower Bridge Way on Jan 17 (Low), in the O'Neil Valley on Feb 22 (Gates), and an incredibly high number of 75 seen in Culver on Dec 5 (Cahill). Finally, TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS were spotted in multiple locations on multiple occasions.

OBSERVERS (In order of first appearance)

Haleigh Froehlich, Peter Low, Chuck Gates, Brian White, Jerry Lear, Mary Medrano, Howard Horvath, Mary Oppenheimer, Matt Cahill, Mark Gonzalez, Kim Kathol, Craig Miller, Marilyn Miller, Judy Meredith, Diane Burgess, Steve Dougill, Don Sutherland, David Vick, Evan Thomas, Link Olsen, Jim Moodie, Gavin Stacey, Bob Sizoo, Ondi Hibbs, James Arneson, Zac Kendall, Barb Phillips, Milt Vine, Anton Gonzalez, Sevilla Rhoads, Vicky Trampush, Walt Wolfe, Boyd Turner, Scott Bullock, Damian Fagan, Daniel Errichetti, Sharman Conner, Harry Johnson, Linda Sharp, Steve Kornfeld, Glen Cantor, Tyler Wilson, Lisa Cowan, Nancy MacDonald, Janice Staats, Mary Willard Gallagher, Adrian Mlodzianowski, Nick Mrvelj, Jeff Nordstrom, Zack Schlanger, Loren Gard, Mike Ogle, and Alec McDonell.

Spring Arrival Dates of Migrants in Central Oregon

By Tom Crabtree

Back in the 80s after moving to Bend from Salem I became interested in the difference in spring arrival dates between the two places. Some species seemed to return within a few days of when they showed up in Salem, whereas others seemed to be delayed by weeks. I began a project using DataEase, a DOS based relational database (yes, it was that long ago! Windows 3.0 wasn't released until 1990).

After a few years I had a working chart of Spring Migrant Arrival Dates for Central Oregon. Back then there weren't a lot of active birders in Central Oregon. Craig Miller and I both arrived in 1981. There were casual birders around and a group of senior citizens, mainly feeder watchers, in the Madras area. Through a COCC birding class we were able to bring a bunch of new recruits to the hobby that became leaders of the birding community including Judy Meredith, Dean Hale and Chuck Gates, to name a few). Steve Kornfeld and Jim Moodie moved here a few years later and the reports began coming in greater numbers. The first Phenology Chart for Central Oregon was completed by the end of the decade.

Fast forward to 2019 and the Covid 19 pandemic. As a Covid quarantine project I decided to update the chart with 40 years of information instead of the 10 years or less contained in the original. With a greatly expanded pool of birders providing sighting information, the creation and increased use of eBird, and Chuck Gates's Central Oregon Historical Records database, there is now an abundance of information making the chart a much more accurate tool.

The Phenology Chart tracks the earliest arrival date for a species in a given year. Sometimes this is obvious like when the first Turkey Vulture is seen floating across the late winter sky. Others can be a bit more difficult like separating a species that winters in small numbers (e.g. Anna's Hummingbird) from a return to the area by others of that species. In the charts I have tried to exclude wintering birds as much as possible and to include only migrants. This is an inexact process but with 40 years of data, the effect of either including a stray wintering bird or missing an early migrant is minimized. The attached two charts show the early, late and average arrival dates of regular migratory species in Central Oregon. The data comprises records from Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson Counties. In a few instances there will be separate species accounts for each county, but generally they are combined. One chart arranges species in Taxonomic order, the other is in Chronological order. Use these charts to track this year's migration. According to the list, in two hours it will be time for a Ring-billed Gull to appear. Good birding!

Spring Arrival Dates by Species

<https://groups.io/g/COBOL/attachment/3684/0/Central%20Oregon%20Migration%20Timetable%20-%20short.pdf>

Spring Arrival Dates Chronologically

<https://groups.io/g/COBOL/attachment/3684/1/Central%20Oregon%20Migration%20Timetable%20-%20chronological.pdf>

Central Oregon Nests and Young Photo Resource

By Ken Hashagen

The East Cascades Audubon Society (ECAS) has recently added a comprehensive data set to their website. Entitled *Central Oregon Nests and Young Photos*, it can be accessed from the East Cascades website, click on 'Birding Oregon', and then click on the site, or use this direct link: www.ecaudubon.org/nestseggsandyoung

A compendium of photos of all birds that regularly breed in Central Oregon, it includes photos of each adult bird and then five photos of each bird's nest and five photos of the young of each species. The database was put together by Chuck Gates and Ken Hashagen through the voluntary contributions of many excellent photographers, using photos from Facebook, iNaturalist, eBird, and other sources.

There are many resources on the web for finding photos of adult birds in various plumages. The site is intended to provide birders with a resource that is lacking on the web. It offers images of nests, eggs, and young that are not easily found elsewhere. Birds are particularly vulnerable during the nesting season and this site is in no way intended to encourage people to seek out nests or young. The website clearly states that **ECAS does not "encourage searching for, approaching, or photographing birds on or near their nests."** The motivation for making this site was strictly academic and meant to be an informational source only. With that in mind, only photographs that were already in existence were used in the formation of this resource. The bulk of the photos were collected after the 2020 nesting season so people would not be tempted to go into the field and photograph birds. The site clearly states that ECAS wants to encourage ethical behavior in the field and provides a link to the American Birding Association Code of Birding Ethics to drive home this point.

Keep an Eagle Eye on the 2021 ECAS Golden Eagle Cam

Petra is back and sitting on the nest!

Rocky and Petra's Golden Eaglet(s) usually hatch in early April and fledge in June. See the live video of the nest at www.goldeneaglecam.org as well as the history of the Eagle Cam and more photos.

Petra (aka "Mombird") soaring near the nest.
Photo from the ECAS website.



The Eagle Cam is an expensive project to run. The visual quality of the video is outstanding. Please help support this effort by donating to the Eagle Cam through ECAS at <https://www.memberplanet.com/s/eastcascadesaudubonsociety/ecasdonationform>

A Pinyon Jay Study in Central Oregon

by Kevin Smith

In 2012 I became curious about Pinyon Jays as they often overwhelm our bird feeders. The horde of hundreds cleans us out to the point that we must refill all of our feeders, but when we do that, the darn birds return to clean us out again! This indicates that they leave one bird behind as a scout and then it goes and tells the rest of the flock what we have done.

I put together a crew of 40 'spotters' who have sent me sightings for some years. I had hoped that the information could be put together in such a way that I could determine where they spent the night roosting. That never materialized.

Finally in 2017 Ken Hashagen, a local bander, was certified to band them. Now, with Ken's help we at least have something to go on. I was told early on the flocks don't intermingle "because they don't fly that far." But we have had flocks in Madras, Redmond, Bend, Sisters, Prineville and here at my home in Crooked River Ranch with as much as 35 miles between them. Since banding we know that they CAN mingle with flocks as far as 17 miles away (red banded birds from Crooked River Ranch show up in Sisters and yellow banded birds from Sisters show up in Crooked River Ranch.)

This photo shows that when birds are turned over they tend to freeze in place until returned to an upright position at which time they sprint away.

Pinyon Jay
(*Gymnorhinus Cyanocephalus*)
adult banded by Ken Hashagen at
Crooked River Ranch 6/15/18 -
86547. Photo by Kevin Smith



Ken's latest records show the following:

There are approximately 50 red-banded (Crooked River ranch), 300 yellow (NE of Sisters), 9 orange (Tetherow), and 1 blue (east of Sisters). One of the 9 orange-banded birds has a white band on its left leg as well as the orange on the right leg indicating a 2021 banded bird.

When you see Pinyon Jays in Central Oregon, we would appreciate you sending us a report at kevinsmithnaturephotos@gmail.com Please indicate where and when you saw them and how many there were. If any were banded we would love to know what color bands they wore. Take photos if you can!

A New Year Brings New ECAS Members!

By Miriam Lipsitz, Membership Committee

Welcome to:

Elayne Barclay	Prineville, OR
William Cloran	Sunriver, OR
Margot Gerritsen	Bend, OR
Laura Goold	Bend, OR
Dennis Hanson	Terrebonne, OR
Theodore Hegg	Bend, OR
Brandon Herman	Bend, OR
Shari Howard	Bend, OR
Emily Kozie	Sunriver, OR
Jennifer and Kevin Lair	Bend, OR
Betty Marshall	Redmond, OR
Maggie McLaughlin	Bend, OR
Colleen Merickel	Bend, OR
Curt Millington	Bend, OR
Leslie Olson	Bend, OR
David Phillips	Bend, OR
Sevilla Rhoads	Sunriver, OR
Dave Russell	Irvine, PA
Cheryl Stewart	Sunriver, OR
David Stranahan	Bend, OR
Laura Thompson	Redmond, OR
Cherry Williams	Bend, OR
Peter Winslow	Sunriver, OR
John Wysham	Bend, OR

ECAS Field trips and outings will be scheduled and advertised as available. Please check the ECAS website and watch The Chatter newsletter for announcements. ECAS members will be notified of any trips via MemberPlanet.

The Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival has been cancelled for 2021

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCES EFFORTS TO PROTECT BIRDS OF PREY 2/1/2021

From <https://www.blm.gov/office/prineville-district-office>

Central Ore. -- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Prineville District has started implementing a series of annual wildlife closures to protect several birds of prey species during sensitive nesting periods. Harassment by humans – unintentional or deliberate – is a leading cause of nest failure or abandonment. People walking or riding near a nest—or even being within view of an Eagle on a nest—can cause an adult bird to abandon the nest. This means eggs can get cold, young don't get fed, and the nest is open to predation. The BLM will manage the closures to be lifted once monitoring demonstrates the nest is not being used, the nest has failed, or the young have fledged to allow continued recreation access on public lands.

All public uses will be prohibited in the closure areas including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, and off-highway vehicle (OHV) riding/driving.

Depending on the type of bird, closures begin between January 1 through February 1 and continue until August 31. BLM wildlife staff will monitor nests frequently and will lift closures as soon as possible; no sooner than May 15.

The following areas now have seasonal closures in effect:

- **Millican Plateau OHV Trail System** (Route #95 only) – This one-mile section of the route is closed Jan. 1 – Aug. 31 to protect nesting Bald Eagles. There are numerous other routes in the area for out-and-back as well as loop rides.
- **Tumalo Reservoir** – This route is closed January 1 to August 31 to protect nesting Bald Eagles. Visitors can hike or ride in the northeast corner of this trail area or move east to the Cline Buttes Recreation Area for a similar experience.
- **Trout Creek Trail** (South side of the Trout Creek Trail only) – Visitors are required to stay on the Trout Creek Trail or between the Trout Creek Trail and the Lower Deschutes River. This area, which includes the Trout Creek climbing walls, is closed from January 15 to August 31 to protect nesting Golden Eagles. Climbers can use other climbing locations such as Rattlesnake, Skinners Butte, or the Gorge at Smith Rocks.
- **Cline Buttes Recreation Area** – Portions of the Deep Canyon, Fryrear, Maston, and Jaguar Road only are closed from February 1 to August 31 to protect nesting Golden Eagles. Alternative Trail Use Areas in Cline Buttes include Tumalo Canal Historic Area, the Buttes, and the open portions of the areas listed above.
- **Horny Hollow Trail** near Crooked River Ranch is closed from February 1 to August 31 to protect nesting Golden Eagles. Alternate trail sites in the area include Otter Bench, Scout Camp, Folley Waters, and Steelhead Falls.
- **Dry River Canyon Trail** on the southeast side of the Badlands is closed to protect nesting Prairie Falcons and Golden Eagles from February 1 to August 31. Alternate places in the area to recreate include Badlands Rock Trail, Flatiron Trail, and the Horse Ridge Trail Complex.

Bald and Golden Eagles are protected by three Federal laws: the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and the Lacey Act. Coverage provided by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act also extends to prairie falcons.

Violating the closure orders can lead to a fine up to \$1,000, imprisonment of up to 12 months, or both. Convictions under the protection acts listed above can be much more severe. The BLM will lift closures earlier if biologists determine a nest is not occupied or the young have left the nest.

For more information about these closures, please call the Prineville BLM office at (541) 416-6700. Maps of these closures are posted at the closure areas and are available on the BLM website at <https://www.blm.gov/office/prineville-district-office> under the seasonal closure tab.



The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 Western states, including Alaska. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. The agency's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Diverse activities authorized on these lands generated \$111 billion in economic output across the country in fiscal year 2019—more than any other agency in the Department of the Interior. These activities supported more than 498,000 jobs.

Two juvenile Bald Eagles in Jefferson County, photo by Claire Weiser

Climbers and Drones Give Raptors Respect and Space at Smith Rock State Park

By CRISTINA PETERSON, The Bend Bulletin, Jan 22, 2021

For centuries, probably longer, Golden Eagles have nested in the cliffs of Smith Rock State Park. This year will be no exception. Eagles are returning to some of the dozen documented nests in the park where they settle in and raise their young. Around this time each year, mating pairs add material to nests from previous years. Females lay one to four eggs and incubate them for about six weeks. They will then care for the fledglings for about three more months. Typically, only one or two will survive to fledge. Juvenile Golden Eagles reach full independence by sometime in the fall.

Golden Eagles are protected by several laws including the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Act, and the Lacey Act. The Eagle Act prohibits anyone from harassing, shooting, or possessing a Bald or Golden Eagle or any of its parts. Eagle population numbers were once so low that the birds warranted specific measures to ensure their survival. These efforts have been successful in stabilizing populations. Golden Eagles are extremely sensitive to human disturbance. This can include the visual presence or noise impacts from people who are too close. If Eagles encounter these unexpected stressors, they might abandon their nest and leave the young with little chance of survival.

Because of Eagles' sensitivity to disturbance, the Monument area of the park is closed to climbing starting Jan. 15. Hikers using the Canyon Trail are limited to groups of four or less and noise in the area needs to be minimized. Additionally, the park-wide drone ban goes into effect. This ban prevents any unmanned aircraft from getting too close to the Golden Eagles or to other nesting raptors in the area. These closures will remain in effect until Aug. 1. Park staff post signs to notify visitors of these closures and share the information on their website and several partner websites as well.

Visitors can observe the nests from the small picnic shelter just a short walk from the parking area or from the Rim Trail by looking across the Crooked River, north toward the Monument area. The nests often look like dark areas on the wall but a lot more detail can be seen with a magnified view so don't forget to bring binoculars!

Eagles have also nested at another popular climbing area in Central Oregon known as Trout Creek which is located along the Deschutes River north of Madras. Although Trout Creek is on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the same laws apply to protecting Golden Eagles. To avoid disturbance, that area closes to climbing beginning Jan. 15 each year.

Other raptor species, such as Peregrine and Prairie Falcons, also use the cliffs of Smith Rock State Park to nest. These birds use pockets or small ledges called "scrapes." Additional climbing areas are sometimes closed in February or later if Falcons are observed nesting. Typically Falcons use the areas around Kiss of the Leper, but they've also been spotted near the Smith Rock Group and the Voyage of the Cowdog.

Climbers as a whole typically respect the closures at Smith and Trout Creek and help to ensure others do too. Hundreds of thousands of visitors enjoy Smith Rock State Park each year. Before it was a state park with trails winding through the canyon cut by the Crooked River, and cliffs with premier climbing routes, many wildlife species made the park their home. Protecting natural areas that include valuable habitat for these animals is one of the objectives of Oregon State Parks.

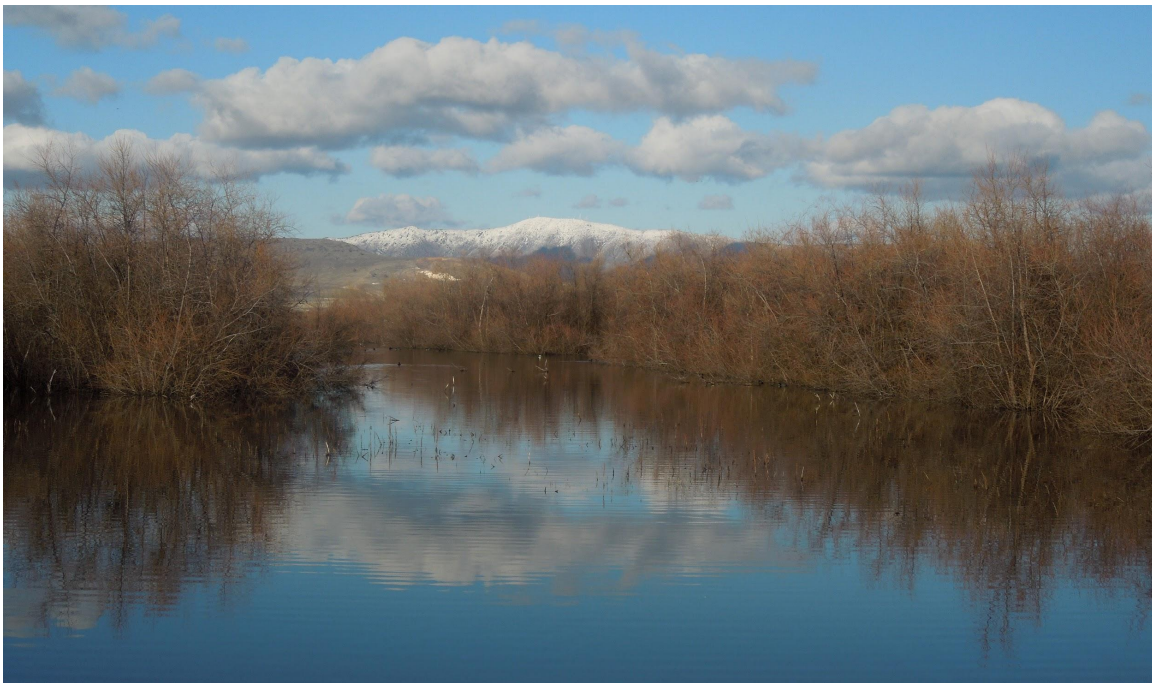
Area closures to protect raptors from disturbance during their nesting season is one of the many ways the park upholds this aspect of their mission. The future of these species relies on people's compliance with these closures.

A Predictable Tragedy: Avian Botulism in the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges in 2020

By Pepper Trail, January 2021

The Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges have fallen into their winter silence now. The huge, clamorous flocks of geese that filled the sky during migration have moved south into the ice-free marshes of California. Bald Eagles hunch against the wind and wait for the victims of the night's bitter cold to be revealed.

This summer, a different silence gripped the Basin. A dead silence. The 90,000 acres of marshes and open water that make up the Lower Klamath and Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuges are a small remnant of vast wetlands that once filled this region on the Oregon-California border. With over 75% of the original wetlands now converted to agriculture, these refuges are a precious oasis for nesting waterfowl and other marsh birds like White-faced Ibis, Black-necked Stilts, and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. For this oasis to burst with life, it simply needs water. Sadly, nothing is simple about water in the Klamath Basin. And this summer, that led to tragedy.



All the water in the Klamath Basin is promised to somebody - and almost every year, far more water is promised than is available. The biggest promises are made to agricultural irrigators and to the preservation of three species of endangered fish - two Klamath Lake suckers upstream of the refuges, and coho salmon downstream in the Klamath River. Even though the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge was America's first waterfowl refuge – established in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt – it comes last on the water distribution list. So, every year, much of the “protected” wetlands turn to mud.

In 2020, the situation was so dire that the Bureau of Reclamation, which controls the water, released three emergency allocations to the refuges, totaling 14,000 acre-feet. It was not enough - and compared to the 147,000 acre-feet received by irrigators, barely a drop in the bucket.

The resulting shallow, stagnant pools provided the perfect breeding ground for a bacterium called *Clostridium botulinum*. This bacteria produces a botulism toxin deadly to birds (but harmless to humans). The toxin is taken up by aquatic invertebrates as they filter-feed on the bacteria, and then reaches fatal concentrations in waterfowl and other birds that eat the invertebrates. The dead birds pile up and attract swarms of flies, whose maggots ingest the toxin and become yet another vector for the disease as they are eaten in turn.

Death by avian botulism is gruesome. Poisoned birds lose their ability to walk, then to control their wings. Unable to hold up their heads, poisoned ducks often drown in the water that should have given them life.

Outbreaks of avian botulism are all too frequent in the Klamath Basin's refuges in late summer, when the water is lowest and the temperatures hottest. That is also the time when ducks molt their flight feathers, temporarily losing their ability to escape an outbreak by flying away. In a "normal" year, a few hundred birds may be brought in for treatment. This summer, the outbreak was a conflagration.

It began a full month earlier than usual, and continued far longer, into mid-October. The first afflicted bird was brought in for rehabilitation on July 17, but wildfires in the region restricted the initial response, giving time for the disease to spread unchecked. Search and collection wasn't in full force until early August, when the number of birds coming into the "Duck Hospital" skyrocketed to an average of 75 birds a day, with a one-day record of 167 birds. The rehabilitation organizations Bird Ally X and Focus Wildlife were soon caring for hundreds of ducks and shorebirds, with birds released on a daily basis to make room for the new ones arriving each afternoon.

In total, more than 3,000 afflicted birds were brought for rehabilitation. The birds that made it to treatment were the lucky ones. Among birds that survived the first 24 hours, over 80% recovered and could be released. The tireless work of volunteers, the support of community and conservation organizations, and the expertise of rehabilitation staff were awe-inspiring, especially against the backdrop of the COVID pandemic and the horrific wildfire season in the region.

But sadly, only a small fraction of the poisoned birds made it to treatment. Field surveyors at the refuge gathered the bodies of about 20,000 dead birds, a number equivalent to the population of Klamath Falls, the region's largest city. The California Waterfowl Association, whose staff assisted with collection of poisoned birds and carcasses, estimates that at least 60,000 birds died.

So -- at least 60,000 dead birds. Dead Mallards, with their emerald-green heads. Dead Northern Pintails, long-necked, long-tailed, and elegant. Dead Northern Shovelers, with their comically enormous bills. Delicate little Green-winged Teal and brawny Canada Geese – dead. And waterfowl were not the only victims. Bird Ally X treated over 35 bird species poisoned by botulism, including Northern Harriers, Virginia Rails, Forster's Terns, and American Avocets.

The struggles for water in the Klamath Basin date back decades, and are as intractable as any in the West, even leading to armed confrontation between irrigators and federal employees in 2001. The most determined recent effort at a compromise solution, called the Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement, expired in 2015 because Congress failed to ratify it.

A host of seemingly legitimate claims on the Klamath Basin's water exist: farmers whose roots in the region go back generations; Upper Klamath tribes whose ties to the lake suckers stretch back to time immemorial, and Klamath River tribes whose bonds to the salmon are equally ancient.

But older than any human claim, any human "right," are the rights of the wild. The rights of lake suckers, who evolved right here in the Klamath Basin, and are found nowhere else on earth. The rights of salmon, whose life journey from freshwater to ocean and back to spawn and die in the stream of their birth is an epic beyond our imagination. And the rights of marsh birds to have a place, a place of abundance and safety in this dry and dusty world, to live their lives.

How easily we forget that water is wild. We claim it, we fight over it, but we did not make it. The water of the Klamath Basin created a world of overflowing abundance, of lakes filled with suckers, a great river bursting with salmon, and also of marshlands filled with ducks and grebes and ibis and egrets. Our use, our heedless overuse, has almost destroyed that world.

There are glimmers of hope. The dams that choke the Klamath River may be finally nearing removal, to the great benefit of salmon. Over \$6 million was recently made available to the wildlife refuges to lease additional water. But the comprehensive plan needed to assure a supply of water sufficient to prevent a recurrence of 2020's botulism tragedy remains elusive.

In my mind's eye, I see the 60,000 dead birds gathered in a great poisoned pile, a pyramid of lost lives. The bodies are perfect and unmarked. The feathers are still beautiful. If the masters of the Klamath Basin's water, all the contending parties, could be brought to stand before that awful sight, would they, I wonder, fall silent for a moment? Would their dusty hearts soften? Can we, at least, agree that this must never happen again?

Pepper Trail is an ornithologist and the conservation co-chair of the Rogue Valley Audubon Society.

Trumpeter Swans from Malheur, Sunriver, and Sisters in the News



Photo by Janelle Wicks, January 28, 2021

Malheur's Swan Saga *by Gary Ivey* from The Friends of Malheur January 2021 newsletter

Due to the pressures of hunters and fur trappers who targeted Trumpeter Swans, the species was nearly extinct at the turn of the 20th Century. A survey in 1932 found a mere 69 Trumpeters alive in the United States. At the time the Swans persisted in Montana's Centennial Valley and Yellowstone National Park where severe winters kept out hunters and geothermal springs maintained enough open waters for a small group to survive.

Malheur Refuge was among the first of several sites selected for saving the Trumpeter Swan from extinction in the late 1930s. Malheur's Trumpeter flock began breeding in the 1950s and grew to a peak of 55 adults by 1983. The historic flood of the early 1980s allowed carp populations to decimate aquatic foods in Malheur Lake for 8 years and this loss of their traditional wintering site caused the flock to relocate its wintering grounds to the south Blitzen Valley where much less food was available to sustain a large flock during severe winters. Consequently, because Trumpeters imprint on their wintering sites, the flock has declined, mostly due to winter mortality caused by the very limited winter carrying-capacity. Malheur

Refuge has supported only one breeding pair during the past 6 years and was down to only four adults (3 female and 1 male) in spring of 2020.

You may be familiar with the pair that had nesting consistent, yet largely unproductively, for the last 6 years at Benson Pond. The male is uncollared and his mate who is uncollared is known as Theta 64. In the summer of 2020, the breeding male disappeared from his Benson Pond territory, leaving only the three females remaining at Malheur. Additionally, one of these females (Theta 76) went missing in September, which suggests the Refuge flock may be doomed to extinction.

Since 1992, Malheur Refuge staff have been involved in a project to expand the breeding and wintering range of Trumpeters in Oregon through releases at Summer Lake Wildlife Area. Several new breeding pairs of Trumpeters have been established from those releases and to date, about 20 wild-hatched Trumpeters are in the Summer Lake flock. A young male from a pair which produced a brood along the Crooked River in Crook County in 2016 has found our missing female as identified by her color Theta 76. They were observed together acting as a pair and wintering at Summer Lake Wildlife Area. Our great hope is that she brings her new friend to Malheur and raises young that the pair can teach to winter at Summer Lake, where Trumpeter habitat is not limiting the population. Cross your fingers!

Malheur NWR *by Alexa Martinez*

Throughout the months of January and February, Malheur NWR staff conduct surveys for Trumpeter Swans that may be utilizing the refuge during the winter months. Most survey sites are located at the south end of the refuge where there tends to be more water, as well as the Diamond Swamp area. On a weekly basis, biologists, volunteers, and staff report any sightings of Swans on the refuge. Visitors are also welcome to send in their Swan sightings during this time. Information collected includes the date, time(s), location(s), and whether the observer was able to distinguish between the two species of Swans found on refuge: Trumpeter and Tundra Swans.

Every February, Malheur NWR collaborates with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to gather an overall count of Swans in Oregon. We try to coordinate with biologists from Summer Lake Wildlife Area on a time and date when this will occur. This year we conducted our survey on the 4th of February. Malheur had 177 Swan sightings: 46 Trumpeter Swans, 89 Tundra Swans, and 42 unidentified. At Summer Lake Wildlife Area they had a total of 422 Swan sightings.

Throughout the 2021 survey conducted at Malheur NWR, two collared Swans were recorded, which included both our native female from Benson Pond, 064, and also 2@1, a female that was tagged at Boca Lake in 2018. Both female Swans have been hanging around each other at Benson Pond for most of the winter. It is thought that 2@1 may be the daughter of 064. 2@1 had been typically seen with another female, 076, but that female has been observed with a male at Summer Lake Wildlife Area. 064 lost her mate for unknown reasons last year. With that said, hopefully, 2021 will bring 064 some luck, and who knows, luck might have brought her a surprise for this Valentine's Day. We are all anxiously awaiting the next chapter of this Swan Saga.

New Swans at Sunriver Nature Center and Aspen Lakes Golf Course

By KYLE SPURR, The Bulletin, Feb 11, 2021 (edited for clarity and space)

Gus, the Trumpeter Swan at the **Sunriver Nature Center**, was introduced to a new mate in February after being alone since the fall, when his mate, Gracie, was [found dead](#) from a likely coyote attack. Gracie was a beloved resident of the nature center and helped repopulate the threatened species in Oregon. Gus watched as his new mate, who has not yet been named, was released onto the water. The new 4-year-old female glided toward Gus, but, then as he approached, she showed more interest in eating the vegetation in the lake and cleaning herself. It was not exactly love at first sight. “But there is still plenty of time before breeding season starts in May. He’s definitely interested,” said Gary Ivey, of Bend, a past president of the Trumpeter Swan Society and former biologist at the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Amanda Accamando, manager of the Sunriver Nature Center, said nature center staff worked quickly to find a new mate in time for this spring breeding season. The nature center bought the new bird from a waterfowl breeder in Indiana, and it was flown to Portland where staff drove to pick it up. The total cost to buy and transport the bird was about \$3,000 which is covered through grants and donations to the nature center. “We are excited we were able to find a Swan so quickly,” Accamando said, and she is hopeful Gus and his new mate will start producing young this season to help boost the population. “We have some time to get them situated and acclimated,” Accamando said, and “hopefully we will have a successful nesting season again.”

The Aspen Lakes neighborhood in Sisters is just as optimistic for Eloise and her new mate, Bob, named after local resident Bob Landwehr, who volunteered to fly to North Carolina to transport the bird. Eloise’s mate, Pete, [died unexpectedly](#) Jan. 23 from a bacterial infection. That pair had been the most prolific in Oregon’s breeding program to reestablish the species, producing 15 young in three years. Eloise was introduced in early February to Bob, a 5-year-old male Swan who was donated from the same breeder in North Carolina that had sent Pete to the Sisters golf course. Robin Gold, a wildlife rehabilitation expert who lives in the Aspen Lakes neighborhood, said Eloise was startled at first when her new mate arrived, but she has since welcomed Bob around the golf course. “She seems to be following him around, which is a good sign,” Gold said. “They really do seem to be bonding, but we are not going to know until it’s time to start building a nest and laying eggs.”

Wildlife officials are relieved to see the new Swan pairs in Sunriver and Sisters. Outside of those protected environments, officials only counted four breeding pairs in the wild last year. Through the breeding program, the state is attempting to increase the population each year so the species becomes self-sustaining. Until then, the nature center and Sisters golf course are critical parts of the repopulation effort.

Aspen Lakes Golf Course near Sisters

By KYLE SPURR, The Bulletin, Jan 26, 2021 (article excerpts)

Wildlife officials rely on the two pairs at Aspen Lakes and Sunriver to produce young in the protected environments at the golf course and at the nature center. The young, or cygnets, that are produced from the pairs are sent to the [Summer Lake Wildlife Area](#), a 19,000-acre wetland in central Lake County that offers ideal habitat for Swans.

When the species was at near-extinction at the turn of the 20th century, none were found in Oregon. The population has since slowly recovered. The state breeding program is trying to increase the population which is at about 35 Swans. Eventually, more Swans in Oregon could connect with Swans in other Western states and help increase the region's population.

“So far, less than 1,000 Swans are in the Western United States,” said Gary Ivey, of Bend, a past president of the Trumpeter Swan Society and former biologist at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. “The good news is that more **wild** pairs of Trumpeter Swans appear to be breeding, which is the state's ultimate goal.” Last spring, three Swan pairs produced young in the Summer Lake area. Ivey hopes the trend of wild pairs continues this season. “Those are wild hatched birds that are actually adding to the flock. We should be building momentum on that and producing more wild hatched birds every year.” Having more wild pairs would take the pressure off of the nature center and golf course, but Ivey hopes the two locations are still able to rejoin the breeding program.

A wild Trumpeter Swan family of two adults and one smaller, grayer juvenile visited the Sunriver Nature Center on March 24, 2021.

Photo by Claire Weiser



For more information on Trumpeter Swans, check out these two websites:

https://www.fws.gov/refuge/malheur/wildlife_and_habitat/trumpeter_swans.html

[Trumpeter Swan Society|Plymouth, MN](#)

For the First Time in a Century, California Condors Will Take Flight in the Pacific Northwest

By US Fish and Wildlife Service March 23, 2021



A California Condor in flight, with its wings fully extended in front of a tan rockface.

Photo by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

For the first time in 100 years, the endangered California Condor will return to the Pacific Northwest. Once on the brink of extinction, this iconic species has made significant steps towards recovery. Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and the Yurok Tribe announced a final rule that will help facilitate the creation of a new California Condor release facility for the reintroduction of Condors to Yurok Ancestral Territory and Redwood National Park, which is in the northern portion of the species' historic range. This facility will be operated by the Northern California Condor Restoration Program, a partnership between Redwood National Park and Yurok Tribe.

The rule will designate the Condors affiliated with this program as a nonessential, experimental population under the Endangered Species Act. This status will provide needed flexibility in managing the reintroduced population, reduce the regulatory impact of reintroducing a federally listed species, and facilitate cooperative conservation.

“The California Condor is a shining example of how a species can be brought back from the brink of extinction through the power of partnerships,” said Paul Souza, Regional Director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s California-Great Basin Region. “I would like to thank the Yurok Tribe, National Park Service, our state partners, and others, who were instrumental in this project. Together, we can help recover and conserve this magnificent species for future generations.”

With a wingspan of almost 10 feet, the California Condor is the largest soaring land bird in North America. These massive vultures are essential members of their ecosystems and play a significant role in the spiritual and cultural beliefs of the Yurok Tribe, as well as many other Tribes, throughout northern California and the Pacific Northwest.

Over the past twelve years, the Yurok Tribe has led this reintroduction effort and completed a tremendous amount of legwork to prepare for the return of condors to the Pacific Northwest. Extensive environmental assessments, contaminant analyses, and community outreach were just a few of the requisite tasks. The Tribe completed this endeavor because the Condor is an irreplaceable part of a sacred cultural landscape. Pending completion of the Condor release facility, the anticipated release of Condors would be fall of 2021 or spring of 2022.

“For the last 20 years, the Yurok Tribe has been actively engaged in the restoration of the rivers, forests and prairies in our ancestral territory. The reintroduction of the Condor is one component of this effort to reconstruct the diverse environmental conditions that once existed in our region. We are extremely proud of the fact that our future generations will not know a world without prey-go-neesh. We are excited to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Redwood National Park on the final stages of the project and beyond,” said Joseph L. James, Chairman of the Yurok Tribe.

California Condors prehistorically ranged from California to Florida and, in contemporary times, from Western Canada to Northern Mexico. By the mid-20th century, Condor populations drastically declined due to poaching and poisoning. In 1967, the California Condor was listed as endangered. In 1982, only 23 Condors survived worldwide. By 1987, all remaining wild Condors were placed into a captive breeding program. Thus, began an intensive recovery program to save the species from extinction.

As a result of exemplary conservation partnerships, and intensive captive breeding and reintroduction efforts, there are now over 300 California Condors in the wild in California, Arizona, Utah and Baja California. However, the bird is still listed as endangered and lead poisoning (largely caused by ingesting lead shot or fragments of lead bullets when feeding on carcasses) is listed as one of the species’ primary threats.

“The return of Condors to the skies above Redwood National and State Parks is a critical step toward recovery of this majestic landscape,” said Steve Mietz, superintendent of Redwood National and State Parks. “Working with our friends and partners, the Yurok Tribe and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, we will continue the unparalleled success story of Condor recovery allowing all Americans to visit the tallest trees in the world while watching one of the largest birds in the world soar overhead.”

“We are excited for this opportunity to bring these iconic birds back to California habitat that has not been occupied for decades,” said Stafford Lehr, Deputy Director of Wildlife and Fisheries for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. “These birds are important to the biodiversity of the landscape and we are pleased with the collaboration amongst state and federal agencies, the Yurok Tribe, and private companies to conserve this species.”

The final rule exempts most incidental take of Condors within the nonessential experimental population, provided the take is unintentional and not due to negligent conduct. Although the rule exempts most incidental take, certain activities are prohibited within 656 feet (200 meters) of an occupied nest.

These include habitat alteration (e.g., removing trees, erecting structures, altering the nest structure or perches near the nest) and significant visual or noise disturbance (e.g., tree felling, chainsaws, helicopter overflights, concrete cutters, fireworks or explosives). There are two exemptions: emergency fuel treatment activities by federal, state, tribal, or local government agencies to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires and responses to wildfire or other emergencies.

The final rule was published in the *Federal Register* on March 24, 2021. The document can be found on www.regulations.gov by searching under docket number FWS–R1–ES–2018–0033. More information: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=66364>

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The Yurok Tribe, California's largest federally recognized tribe, exercises its inherent sovereignty in order to conserve, protect and restore Yurok natural resources and culture and the health and social well-being of existing and future Tribal members through its exercise of sovereign rights, culturally integrated methods and high quality scientific practices in coordination with the community, public agencies and private organizations. For more information about our work, visit <http://www.yuroktribe.org/> or connect with us via [Facebook](#).

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 established a single system of federally managed parks, monuments and reserved lands to promote and regulate their use and "...to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." For more information about the National Park Service, please visit [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Flickr](#). For more information regarding Redwood National Park visit <https://www.nps.gov/redw/index.htm>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

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2021 Spring Zoom Board Meetingsfinal

April 6
May 4
June 1

Board meetings are held at 1pm on the first Tuesday of the month online via Zoom. All members are welcome to attend virtually with a link from Tom. Minutes and meeting dates are posted at www.ecaudubon.org/board-meeting-minutes

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Wednesday Birders	Judy Meredith
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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 central Oregon at www.ecaudubon.org/join