



Calliope Winter 26 Board Message

East Cascades Bird Alliance, letter from the Board

Welcome, Members!

We're thrilled to welcome new and returning members to another year of birding, learning, and connection. Your membership fuels our mission and makes possible the vibrant programs, partnerships, and conservation efforts we share across Central and Eastern Oregon. Thank you for being part of this flock.

Our newest Members:

Michael Armstrong, Bend OR

Kit Degear, Bend OR

Garrett Gregor, Portland OR

Elise Jackson, Redmond OR

Karen Murphy, Bend OR

Angela Otto, Bend OR

Janis Stenson, Bend OR

Tony Turrini, Bend OR

Board Updates

We warmly welcome **Sierra Schneider** to the ECBA Board and extend heartfelt thanks to **Margi Finch** for her two years of dedicated service. Her thoughtful leadership and attention to detail have helped guide our work—thank you, Margi!

NEW YEAR, NEW WAIVER. Yes, every year. You only need to do it once a year. Easy to access on your phones. Perhaps you pause now and take care of your annual waiver!

memberplanet.com/s/eastcascadesaudubonsociety/ecaactivitywaiver.

Christmas Bird Counts: National Audubon celebrated 125 years of CBCs!

As we wrap up this season's **Christmas Bird Counts**, huge thanks to our organizers, team leaders, volunteers, and backyard counters. If you've never participated, we'd love to connect you with a local organizer for next year. There's currently a **vacancy for a leader in Sisters**, and we welcome anyone interested.

We also offer **accessible routes**, including **driving-only options** and **AdvenChair access** for those with mobility challenges (there is a rental fee). Birding is for everyone.



Sunriver Christmas Bird Count Team at Cardinal Bridge Wendy Andrick, ECBA President; Stephanie Swift, ECBA Board Member; Ander Rhoads, Birders Night Presenter; Mason Jeffries 2025 Annual Event Presenter

Upcoming Events & Outings

[Check out the calendar on our website](#) for details. We update this regularly with opportunities to connect. Highlights include:

- **Birders Nights** are fully booked for 2026. We hope and intend to continue to offer this free programming. There is a \$300 room rental fee per event. If you are able, please consider a donation to support Birders Nights. We will also be bringing in some fun raffle items in an effort to raise some funding for the space.
- **Dean Hale Woodpecker Weekend** with special guest **Paul Bannick**
- Weekly outings:
 - **Wednesday Birders** with Brian MacDonald, Duke Tufty, or other local leaders
 - **Tuesday Birding by Ear** at Sawyer Park with David Tracy (Start date TBD)
 - **Alternating Saturdays** at Crooked River Wetlands with Chuck Gates (Start date TBD)

New Adventures in 2026

We're excited to announce several new opportunities this year. We will add more information to the calendar as details finalize.

- **Hawk Watch returns in October**
- **Weed and Seed while Birding** at Lower Bridge
- **Ongoing care of our Pollinator Garden**, in partnership with **Pollinator Pathways**
- **Schoolhouse Lake Blind at Summer Lake**—an **accessible bird blind** featuring a ramp and wheelchair-accessible viewing windows
- **ECBA Field Trip Klamath Falls**
- **Shorebird Surveys at Summer Lake**

A special thank-you to **Shannon Nordquist**, who keeps all this information updated on our website. Her dedication and attention to detail are invaluable, and we are eternally grateful for her amazing volunteer work.

Community Science in Action

Raptor Surveys continue through March! If you're curious about these surveys or want to get involved, we'd be happy to connect you with a local **route leader**.

Jeff Fleischer, the Winter Raptor Survey organizer, will be presenting data from surveys at an upcoming **Birders Night**—check the website calendar for details.

Conservation & Science Committee (CSC)

Laurel Collins continues to champion conservation through reviewing, signing or advancing requested letters of support to the CSC and **advocating for research on declining populations of Pinyon Jay and Greater Sage Grouse, as well as conservation of various habitat types for threatened, endangered, and bird species of concern in Central Oregon**. Laurel is chairing this committee and currently seeking someone to take over. If you're passionate about birds and habitat protection, we'd love to hear from you.

ecba@ecbirds.org

Brian MacDonald serves as chair of our **Grant Committee**, and we invite **grant applicants** whose projects align with ECBA's mission to apply. Supporting science, education, and conservation is at the heart of what we do.

New Projects & Partnerships

We're continuing to build on last year's collaborations:

- With **Think Wild** and **Osprey Watch**:
 - Upcoming **Osprey nest** webcam installation
 - Distribution of **Osprey entanglement** brochures
- With **Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge**:
 - Support for **Harney County Migratory Bird Festival**
 - **Trail maintenance project**
 - Sponsorship of a **volunteer work weekend**

Education & Outreach

Wendy Andrick serves as chair and is seeking a new volunteer to chair this committee. We've been rebuilding our outreach efforts—attending festivals, **elementary school STEM nights**, **garden clubs**, **assisted living communities**, and supporting new birding groups. Our **youth birding community** continues to grow, with several birders under 16 joining CBCs this year. We're proud to offer another **Youth Scholarship** in 2026. Last year's recipient, **Mason Jeffries**, inspired us with his Arizona Birding Festival adventures. This year, our winner will attend the **ABA Youth Camp in Colorado**—see our website for details.

Merchandise

This past year, we added **Dean Hale Woodpecker Weekend shirts** and **ECBA hats** to our offerings—thank you to everyone who sported them in the field! We're excited to share that **artists are currently working on a new ECBA shirt design**, and we can't wait to unveil it later this year.

Volunteer Opportunities

With all that's happening, we have many ways to get involved: For volunteer opportunities email: ecba@ecbirds.org

- **Tabling at LaPine Elementary STEM Night, Feb. 26th 4:00-7:00**
- **Sisters High School Biology Class visit, Date TBD**
- **Board Member positions open. Including Treasurer and Vice President.**
- **Dean Hale Woodpecker Weekend Committee** (Happening now!)
- **Membership coordination role**
- Or bring your own idea—we welcome it! ecba@ecbirds.org

Some recent volunteer contributions include:

- **Gail Sabbadini** offering intimate birding experiences
- **Don Sutherland** providing stunning artwork for DHWW shirts
- **Sevilla Rhoads** organized a new birders event at Black Butte Ranch, accessible birding trips and more
- **Gordon Wetzel**, exploring **Motus Tower** options for bird tracking

Volunteer Highlight: Jan Clark

Jan Clark's birding journey began with a spark from the next generation: her five-year old granddaughter, whose early fascination with birds blossomed into a career as a wildlife biologist, an ornithologist! That spark soon lit Jan's own path. Encouraged by a neighbor to attend Birders Night at the Environmental Center, she found herself drawn into the East Cascades Bird Alliance community and hasn't looked back since (yes, different name back then!).

Her first major outing was to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge after her retirement. This deepened her passion, and international birding adventures soon followed: Panama, Costa Rica (twice!), Belize, Mexico and beyond.

Jan has served ECBA in many ways: on the Membership Committee (currently seeking a new chair), at Outreach tabling events, membership drives and wherever help is needed. She has especially treasured David Tracy's birding by ear outings and quiet days spent observing bird behavior - like the recent joy of watching a Dark-eyed Junco discover a little cup of suet she had placed out in the snow. A treat for both!

Locally, you'd find Jan at Sawyer Park or Shevlin Park, soaking in the sights and sounds. She credits ECBA with helping her build lasting community connections and is especially grateful for the welcoming spirit of Birders Nights. When asked about the future, she quips with a smile, "I'll be dirt-maybe a birdseed block". Her advice to aspiring birders and volunteers? "Get off your phones. Look up. Look around. Sit in the park and enjoy your surroundings. And remember-no experience is needed to get involved." Just curiosity, and maybe a little suet.

We are grateful to Jan and to all who make ECBA soar—thank you. Your energy, creativity, and care make this community truly special. We look forward to another year of shared discovery, stewardship, and joy in the natural world.



Jan Clark, in Panama feeding a Streamertail Hummingbird.

Wendy Andrick, President

East Cascades Board Alliance

