



## The CHATTER February 2026

### February Birders' Night

#### **Birders' Night: Central Oregon Christmas Bird Counts**

Join us for a recounting of the local Christmas Bird Counts held at the end of 2025.

**Located at [Worthy Brewing](#), the program will start at 6pm on February 12, 2026.**

Feel free to come early for dinner and a beverage. Worthy Brewing offers a happy hour from 3-6pm.

#### **New to birding? An offer from Gail...**

Would you like to spend an hour or so with a seasoned (old) birder?

I have a biology/ecology background and although I am not an "expert" birder by any means, I enjoy sharing my enthusiasm for birding and experiencing the excitement of a beginning birder's new insights and discoveries.

Email me if you would like to set up a meeting time and Bend location that works for both our schedules. And yes, you can bring a friend or family member.

Gail Sabbadini

[ggsabba@gmail.com](mailto:ggsabba@gmail.com)

#### **Second Annual Youth Scholarship Application**

The application is available for a student to attend the American Birding Association's (ABA) Camp Colorado in Allenspark, CO, from August 2-8, 2026 (the Camp). As part of the Camp, attendees explore Colorado from grassland to glaciers, from the shortgrass prairie of northeastern Colorado to the aspen groves and alpine tundra of Rocky Mountain National Park.

For details, please visit our [Scholarship Application](#) web page.

#### **Feathered Forms: Sketching Birds**

Here's a class being offered at Central Oregon Community College. Follow the link for more information. [Feathered Forms](#)

#### **Take Action Now**

**Oregon's wildlife needs us — and a small change can make a huge difference for conservation across the state. The 1.25% for Wildlife Bill is back by popular**

**demand!** Last year, Oregon state legislators came incredibly close to passing this groundbreaking bill. Now, with renewed momentum and public support, we have a real opportunity to get it across the finish line in 2026. Oregon is home to an extraordinary diversity of birds and wildlife, but many species are in serious decline. The **Western Snowy Plover, Flammulated Owl, and Black-backed Woodpecker** are just a few of the 63 bird species currently listed as **Species of Greatest Conservation Need** in our state. Without dedicated funding, their futures — and the health of Oregon's ecosystems — are at risk.

The **1.25% for Wildlife Bill, or HB 4134**, would provide **dedicated funding to support conservation efforts** for **ALL** of these species — and many more. This legislation would **increase Oregon's Transient Lodging Tax by just 1.25%**, directing the new revenue specifically to wildlife conservation projects across the state. Most of the cost would be paid by out-of-state visitors, the impact on tourism would be minimal, and the benefit could be enormous — raising up to \$30 million every year for wildlife conservation across Oregon! This isn't just a conservation bill. It's an investment in Oregon's identity.

### **Oregon Can Help Reverse Bird Population Declines.**

**ACT NOW: Tell your state representatives that the 1.25% for Wildlife bill makes 100% sense for Oregon's future!**

### **ECBA Merchandise is Now Available**

ECBA is again offering custom t-shirts and hats for sale. These would make great gifts for any time of the year! Designed by our long-time friend and most talented artist, Don Sutherland, we are pleased to make them available online. You can order merchandise from a local small business, Our Personal Touch, and you can either pick up your order in the store or have it sent to your home. Ordering information is at the top of [the ECBA home web page](#)

### **Waivers - Need To Sign Once Per Year**

If you are taking part in any ECBA activity, you need to have a waiver on file. You can [fill out the waiver online.](#)

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

With such an active organization, we have many ways to get involved: For volunteer opportunities email: [ecba@ecbirds.org](mailto:ecba@ecbirds.org) Some upcoming opportunities are:

- Earth Day Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 11-3. There will be four shifts
- Sisters High School Biology Class visit, Date TBD
- Board Member positions open including Treasurer and Vice President. Leadership and financial skills helpful. No birding experience required!
- Dean Hale Woodpecker Weekend Committee (Happening now!)
- Membership coordination role
- Or bring your own idea—we welcome it! [ecba@ecbirds.org](mailto:ecba@ecbirds.org)

# LOVE IS IN THE AIR!

## A VALENTINE'S DAY BIRD PROGRAM AT BLACK BUTTE RANCH

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14TH

Looking for a nature-themed way to start your Valentine's Day or just a fun way for the whole family to celebrate love and connection while learning about local birds?



Join us to learn about the intriguing and fascinating 'romantic' lives of birds in a special family-friendly Valentine's Day Bird Program.

From stories about hawks and eagles spiraling with talons locked in a courtship trust fall to finch couples that create special songs together, we'll explore the dramatic and sweet relationship stories of our local birds.

At the Black Butte Ranch Activity Center at 10 a.m., the program starts with an entertaining slide show talk (feel free to bring your coffee and pastries) followed by an interpretative birding experience at the Lodge fire pit.

The program ends at noon, but leaving early is okay.

Registration through EVENTBRITE (QR code below) or use registration button on [www.deifer.net](http://www.deifer.net)

LIMITED SPACE SO REGISTER EARLY.

Cost: \$25 per person with free admission for kids under six (food and beverages not included).



For more details please email [nature@deifer.net](mailto:nature@deifer.net). **Accessibility questions welcome!**

## LAKE ABERT UPDATE

Lake Abert has long been an area of interest and activism for East Cascades Bird Alliance (formerly ECAS). Brent Fenty, Executive Director of Oregon Desert Land Trust (ODLT), recently informed us of an opportunity ODLT has to “acquire Rivers End Ranch, a 6,369-acre private property in south Lake County. The property includes thousands of acres of water rights including one of the largest reservoirs in southeast Oregon as well as several miles of Willow Creek, Crooked Creek and the Chewaucan River. The property also encompasses the southern shore of Lake Abert, the sixth largest and only hypersaline lake in the state of Oregon.” This is an amazing opportunity one many years in the making. For more information, you can read an article in the Oregonian, [“Oregon's Lake Abert is in deep trouble”](#).

To make the acquisition of Rivers End Ranch a reality, ODLT has submitted a grant request to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) to help offset the cost of purchasing the property. OWEB is currently accepting public comment on the project, and it is hoped you and others will weigh in to provide your support! Access the [Public Comment Site](#) and fill out your name, email address, click on the "written comment" option, and type in whatever you want to say about your support for the project. It need not be long, a quick note helps too! Thank you.

**February is Black History Month. Celebrate with a fun video about a local landmark.**

[youtube.com/live/UsjTQj6LZOU?si=2Q1lxndd4XUA8xD-](https://youtube.com/live/UsjTQj6LZOU?si=2Q1lxndd4XUA8xD-)



Golden Eagle by Amanda

**GOOD BIRDING!**