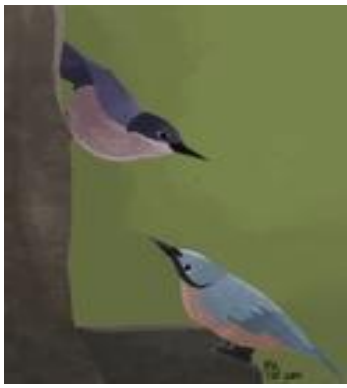




The CHATTER September 2026

September 10 Birders' Night: Jeff Fleischer on the Winter Raptor Birder Surveys

Information about this amazing project is available on the [ECBA website](#) .

The program begins at 6 pm, but please come early to enjoy good food and conversation and a few beverages. There is typically a nice group there by 5:00pm or so. Seating is first come, first serve. Birders' Night programs are free and open to the public. And Worthy Brewing offers a nice Happy Hour Menu from 3-5pm (note that it recently changed to end at 5pm rather than 6pm). Their regular menu is still solid and not unreasonable. See here for their food and beverage menus:

worthybrewing.com/pub

Hawk Watch on Green Ridge

After a two-year hiatus East Cascades Bird Alliance is resuming our Green Ridge Raptor Survey for 2026. As I attempt to eventually hand over the reins to a new group of volunteers, we have some exciting opportunities for participation. We are very fortunate to have raptor biologist Emily Pierce offer two trainings on the challenges of identifying raptors at distance as they migrate to their southernly winter grounds.

The first training will be on Tuesday, Sept. 15th at the new Bend Central Library from 6:30 to 7:30 in meeting room 1 (2nd floor). The second training will be on Thursday, Sept. 17th at the Redmond Library's meeting room from 5:30 to 6:30.

The first count day will be on Saturday, Sept. 19th from 12:00 to 5:00 conducted by Emily. The rest of the schedule will be on Sept. 26 and 27 and the first three weekends of Oct. from 12:00 until 5:00 (unless it's a big day and raptors continue to pass through.) I will conduct a training on data collection on Saturday, Sept. 26th. If you want to participate, please remember that we need both observers and counters so please contact me to sign up for the days that you will be available. No need to commit if you just want to come up as a visitor as there is always a need for more eyes to the skies to assist in spotting and tracking raptors.

I will post reminders and details as we get closer to the season but in the meantime feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Looking forward to sharing the magic of migration with you! ~ David Vick, Project Coordinator

Save the date for the Birds of a Feather Annual Event on Sunday November 8, 2026 at 4 pm at Aspen Hall in Shevlin Park.

MOTUS Update

ECBA is now on the Motus map. In review, Motus is an international collaborative research network that uses automated radio telemetry to track the movement and behavior of small animals, like birds, bats, and insects. Motus is a program of Birds Canada in partnership with collaborating researchers and organizations. There are three basic parts of the system, 1) the central data collection and management system operated by Birds Canada; 2) the researchers tagging animals with radio transmitters; 3) the receiver stations, which detect the animals within range. The data collected by the system is open to everyone, making the whole system collaborative.

Our station in Prineville at the Crooked River Wetlands Complex is up and running as of August 20, 2026. While no tagged birds have been detected yet, I did verify that it is functioning by using a test tag to make sure that each antenna/radio was working. You can view our station on the Motus website here:

<https://motus.org/dashboard/#e=profile&d=stations&s=16370&f=%7B%22dtStart%22%3A%222025-08-26%22%7D>. Our station is a complete and up-to-date station. It consists of 7 antennas, two are tuned to the Lotek frequency (166 MHz), four are tuned to the CTT frequency (434 MHz) and one is on the CTT Bluetooth frequency, which is used for nano tags, think butterflies.

Damian Fagan published an article about our project in The Source. You can read it here: <https://www.bendsource.com/outside/outsidefeatures/motus-comes-to-the-crooked-river-wetlands/>. Thank you, Damian, for helping to inform Oregonians about conservation science in Oregon.

I would like to thank the people who helped me make this project a reality. Chuck Gates was instrumental in getting approval from the City of Prineville Wastewater Treatment Facility to use their site and pole. Chuck also helped with the installation, and he volunteered his brother's time and vehicle to haul the scissor lift rig to the site. The Friends of Crooked River Wetlands Complex donated the cost of renting the scissor lift. My friend Dave MacGurn, a former electrical contractor, spent all day with Chuck and I on the installation of the antennas. Dave was also very helpful with design of the electrical system and hardware. William Blake, the American Bird Conservancy Motus Coordinator for the Pacific Northwest, was very helpful with overall project design/implementation. And of course, East Cascades Bird Alliance for funding the project.

So, what's next? I would like to get more Motus coverage in Central Oregon. I think that the other two sewage treatment ponds in the area, Redmond and Bend's Hatfield are important. It just takes some effort to work the problems and get it done. It

also takes funds. If you want to contribute to this effort, you can donate to ECBA – go to the website, click the donate button and select the Motus Project.

~Gordon Wetzel, ECBA Board Member



Osprey nest pole with 7 antennas and the SensorStation cabinet and solar panel.



SensorStation with power supply and solar panel mounted on a pole

Bluebird Nest Box Project - Volunteers Needed

ECBA's bluebird nest box project is located on USFS land between Tumalo Reservoir and Sisters. This area sustained a forest fire in the summer of 1990. Called the "Delicious Fire," it consumed over 2,000 acres. The ensuing years of slow regrowth have provided an outstanding environment favorable for bluebirds. Starting next spring, 2027, this project needs one or two volunteers to monitor a section that contains 14 nest boxes. Monitors are needed to **visit each nest box once a week** from April through July and take notes from observations throughout the nesting season, and all training will be provided. Some preliminary training can begin now. For additional information go to <https://ecbirds.org/projects/bluebird-project/> for a description of this project.

You can leave a message at ecba@ecbirds.org for details. Put "bluebird project" on the subject line.

Annual Membership Drive

The annual membership drive for East Cascade Bird Alliance will be held on Saturday, September 12 from 10am - 2pm in front of Wild Birds Unlimited in the Forum Shopping Center. This is for new and renewing members. Stop by and say hi!

Marina Richie Book Launch

Marina will have a book launch at [the downtown Dudley's Book Shop](#) on September 8, 5:30 – 7pm at for her new book Feathered Forest. She plans on having folks walk over to observe the Vaux's' Swifts after the talk. She will be giving a different PowerPoint presentation for November's birders' Night.

Welcome ECBA Board Member Brenda Cullen



A long-time lover of Central Oregon, its people, and its flora and fauna (including birds!), Brenda joins ECBA's board with a desire to facilitate the identification of solutions that will increase the well-being of all the area's residents, both feathered and not. Coming from an investment management background, Brenda hopes to use her relationship management skills coupled with knowledge in ecological restoration and rangeland science gained from studies at Oregon State University and her passion for people, places, and things to inspire folks, both young and old, urban and rural, to engage with each other and the world around them in a way that leaves us all better off.

In an effort to bring people together and bridge differences, Brenda and her husband, Joe, have sought out organizations in central Oregon which both support the local economy and sustain ecosystem resiliency such as Central Oregon Locavore which pairs food from local farmers with hungry urban residents. She has a keen interest in urban forests and the value that they provide in economic as well as ecosystem (read: bird!) benefits such as increased commercial activity, erosion mitigation, and improved ground water infiltration. She hopes to apply all the knowledge gained and lessons learned in central Oregon to her second, wildfire devastated community in Altadena, CA.

Remembering Marion...



A beloved icon in the local birding community, Marion Davidson passed away on August 8, 2026. Chuck Gates remembered her in an ECBA Facebook post on August 17. Her obituary appeared in the Bend Bulletin on August 27. For those of you who missed it, here is Judy Meredith's post on COBOL on August 22.

"Well it was ECBC and then ECAS but she was a birder and wrote poetry about birds. One I recall fondly was about Red-winged Blackbirds and she read it at birders night.

Marion was a real joy to know, bird with, do conservation actions with, etc. She had a large "cabin" up near Skyliners and opened it for board retreats, sometimes with snow

piles as tall as us. We would do our business and go birding together, Pileated Woodpeckers, Western Screech Owls etc. Perfect easy hostess for our rowdy gang, sharing meals and the job of stocking the fire.

Marion was an attorney in her life before retiring to Bend, helping many people get what was due them. She had strong feelings, value for natives in New Mexico where she worked for years. She had many interests; music, singing with Sweet Adelaide's, belonged to a writer's group, was an active mushroomer and was good on snowshoes and cross country skis. Her dogs were the happiest as she gave them lots of exercise and adventures.

Marion, we miss you and when the Red-winged Blackbirds sing their spring "conk-a-ree" we will think of you and your influence making birding more enjoyable. For those who never had the privilege, know that wonderful people have paved a path for all of us. “

Some Other Ways of Looking at a Blackbird (after a poem by Wallace Stevens)

- I. Early in the morning along the River Trail blackbirds call from the alders.
- II. At the lake, blackbirds peck the crumbs of last night's dinner.
- III. Peering from a nest beside the Aspen Hall Pond three young blackbirds.
- IV. For a yellow-headed blackbird go south to Summer Lake.
- V. In wintertime don't look— you won't see many blackbirds.
- VI. You'll find blackbirds in several poems, but are they really blackbirds?
- VII. On the Nature Channel there should be a few blackbirds.
- VIII. The landfill has plenty of crows (if they count as black birds.)
- IX. The female red-winged blackbird is a blackbird but isn't black. (Looking at her does count)
- X. A blackbird crosses the Safeway parking lot. Black on black— a stealth bomber.
- XI. Harbinger of doom bringer of fire— a Janus of a bird.
- XII. The Ravens of the Tower of London insist on being included on this list of black birds.
- XIII. Use of binoculars might provide a new perspective on blackbirds.

~Marion Davidson

And because Marion lived at the end of First Street next to the River Trail, here is

Zono Quartet (Heard along the River Trail)

Golden-crowned Sparrow: Oh dear me. Late for tea!

White-crowned Sparrow: Cheese, cheese . . . chili, chili cheez cheez

Golden-crowned Sparrow: Passing through.

White-throated Sparrow: It's all about food, about food, about food.

Harris Sparrow (silence)

~Marion Davidson

Go Birding!

- **Crooked River Wetland Walks**

The 2026 Wetlands Walks schedule is now complete. Come join us as we walk the paved paths of the Crooked River Wetlands. These walks are essentially bird tours, so we go slowly and talk about the birds we see. Wear appropriate clothes for the current weather and remember, "Bring Your Own Water!!" If you are not walking too well these days, we have 3 seats available on a golf cart so everyone can enjoy the walk. If you want to join us, the address is 4035 NW Rimrock Acres Loop Prineville, OR. We meet at 7:45AM and start the walk at 8:00AM. We are usually done by 10:00AM. The walk covers about 2 miles. Walks occur on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the warm months (Apr. through Sept.). For more information (including reserving space on the golf cart), contact Chuck Gates at 541-280-4957 or cgates326@gmail.com.

- **Wednesday Birders**

[Wednesday Birders](#) is a group of birders, birding, but not a traditional field trip with a named leader who always provides a guided field experience. Everyone helps everyone else, shares, learns and enjoys birding together. Usually, some advanced birders are there and are so helpful. All are welcomed. We carpool when possible.

Please remember to read [COBOL](#) by Tuesday mornings for last minute details and changes to plans in case of adverse weather, road conditions or detours, bird news or better birding opportunities. Watch COBOL (COBOL is Central Oregon Birders Online and free to join.) for meeting and carpooling times and places or for changes in the plan. Remember to dress for the weather. Be prepared with food, sunscreen, etc. and bring a pair of binoculars. Spotting scopes are helpful on many trips.

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 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](#)



Golden Eagle by Amanda.

Good Birding