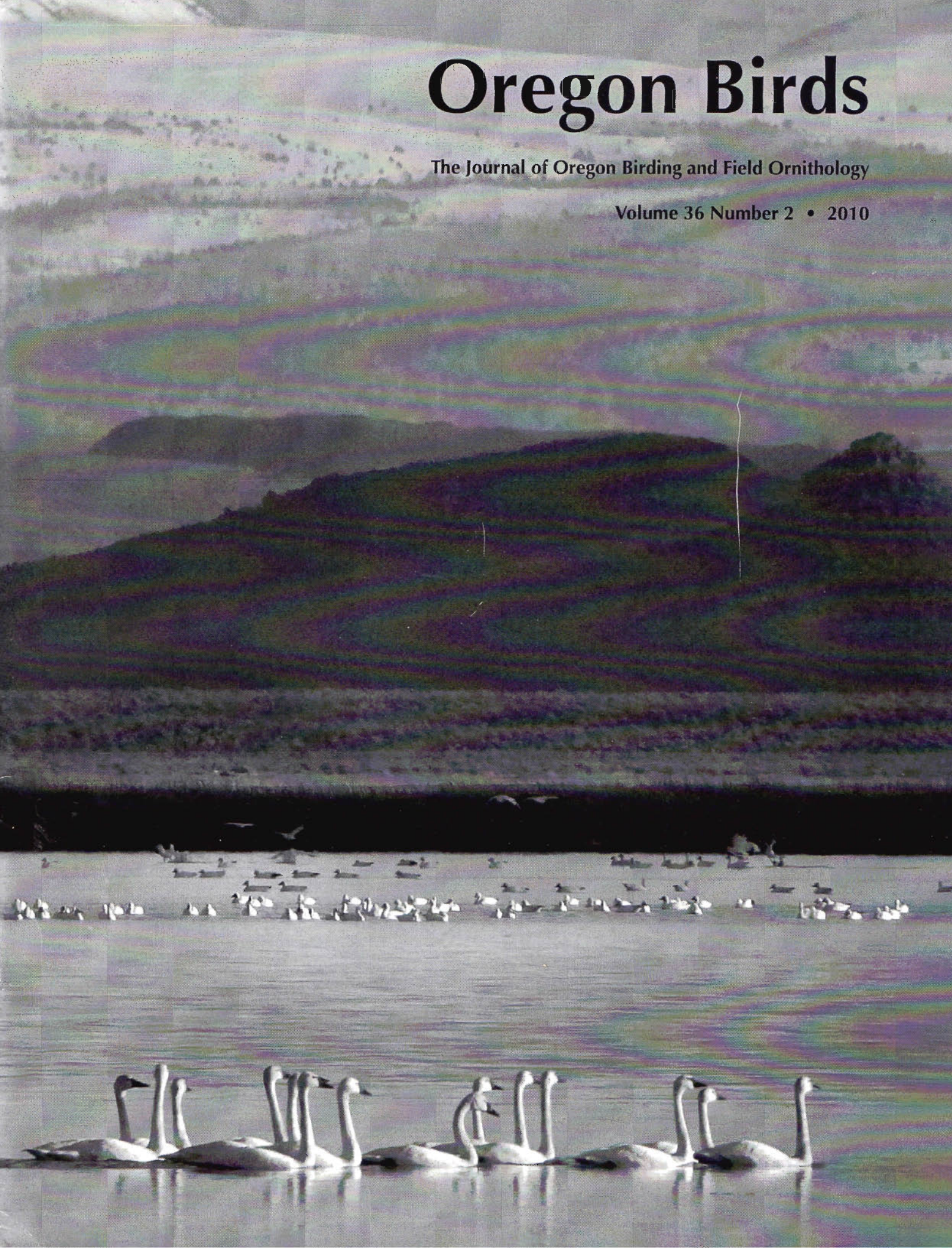


Oregon Birds

The Journal of Oregon Birding and Field Ornithology

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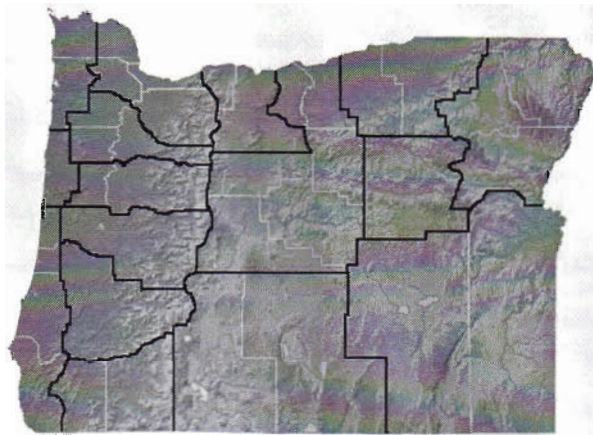
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Front Cover: Swans, geese, ducks and Steens Mountain, Malheur NWR in winter. *Photo by Steve Shunk (Sisters)*
 Back Cover: Vole's-eye view of N. Saw-whet Owl, 10 June 2010, Lane Co. *Photo by Erik Bruhnke (Wisconsin)*

deadline for submissions for
Oregon Birds Volume 37(1):

January 31, 2011

Contact **Oregon Birds** Editor Alan Contreras
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Increase of Brown Pelicans during Christmas Bird Counts along the Oregon Coast since 1970

Range Bayer

Brown Pelican under stress on Coquille Valley CBC, Bandon, Oregon, 3 January 2009. Photo by Alan Contreras.

In the 1970s, Brown Pelicans were common in summer and early fall along the Oregon Coast (e.g., Gladson 1974, Ramsey 1978, Bayer 1995). However, they have become much more frequent in winter in recent years. Christmas Bird Counts (CBC) occur in late December and early January and are the most systematic data available to determine if pelican status along the Oregon Coast has changed during this time. Further, these CBCs could help determine if pelicans are more frequent along the southern than the northern Oregon coast.

Although there were some gaps in CBC coverage, no pelicans were recorded during the 1970/71-1979/80 Count Years (Table 1). In the next two decades, pelicans were recorded on 10% of the Columbia Estuary, none of the Tillamook Bay, 30% of the Yaquina Bay, 0-20% of the Florence, and 20-25% of the Port Orford CBCs; they were more frequent (43-50%) on the Coos Bay CBCs (Table 1).

Pelican frequency increased at all sites with CBCs for the 2000/01-2008/09 Counts, with pelicans more common along the southern coast (Coos Bay and Port Orford)(Table 1).

Pelican abundance has usually been low during CBCs. Generally, 11 or fewer pelicans were recorded at a CBC site each year. Exceptions were for Coos Bay, where there were 21 pelicans in 1991/92 and 48 in 2007/08, and for the 2002/03 and 2008/09 counts. During the 2002/03 CBC, a total of 554 pelicans were tallied, including 118 at Columbia Estuary, 254 at Tillamook Bay, 13 at Yaquina Bay, none at Florence, 125 at Coos Bay, 4 at Coquille Valley and 40 at Port Orford. The sum for the 2008/09 CBC was over six times greater (3,647), with 486 at Columbia Estuary, none at Tillamook Bay, 11 at Yaquina Bay, 370 at Florence, 2,717 at Coos Bay, 38 at Coquille Valley, and 25 at Port Orford.

Some of the variation among CBC sites could result from differences in observation effort or for the amount of each Count Circle that includes coastal habitat where pelicans occur. Further, some pelicans may have been recounted by different groups at a CBC, so numbers may have been overestimated. Nevertheless, the CBC data seem adequate to show that pelican frequency and abundance has greatly increased in recent years.

Table 1. Frequency of Brown Pelicans during Oregon Coastal Christmas Bird Counts for Count Years 71 (1970/71) through 109 (2008/09). Sites are arranged from north to south. CBC data are from National Audubon (<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/hr/index.html>).

Count Years	Columbia Estuary		Tillamook Bay		Yaquina Bay		Florence Bay		Coos Bay		Coquille Valley		Port Orford		Gold Beach	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	
1970/71-1979/80	1	0	10	0	7	0	0	-	7	0	0	-	1	0	7	0
1980/81-1989/90	10	10	10	0	10	30	6	0	7	43	0	-	5	20	1	0
1990/91-1999/00	10	10	10	0	10	30	10	20	10	50	9	11	4	25	0	-
2000/01-2008/09	9	44	9	22	9	44	9	33	9	56	3	100	9	67	0	-

N=number of CBCs held during Count Years period at the location.

%=percentage of CBCs during a Count Years Period in which pelicans were recorded on Count Day or during Count Week.

--=percentage not calculable because there were no CBCs during period at this site.

References

Bayer, R. D. 1995. Semimonthly bird records through 1992 for Lincoln County, Oregon; part II: records sorted by species. *J. Oregon Ornithology* 4:395-543.

This is at ScholarsArchive@OSU (<http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/dspace/handle/1957/8070>).

Gladson, J. 1974. Brown Pelican. *Oregon Wildlife* 29(11):6-7. Published by Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.

Ramsey, F. L. 1978. *Birding Oregon*. Published by Audubon Society of Corvallis, Oregon.

Another unexpected Brown Pelican, Crater Lake National Park, 13 Sep. 2005. Photo courtesy National Park Service, provided to Oregon Birds by Kevin Spencer.

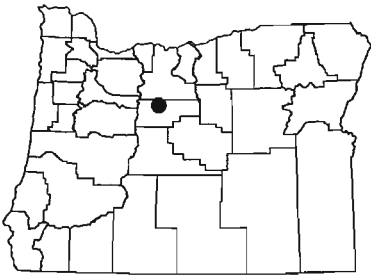
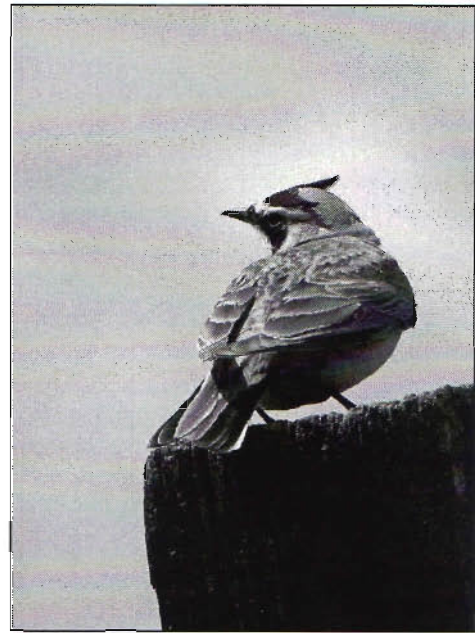


New Oregon CBCs

Madras

Wednesday, Dec. 15

Kimdel Owen

Horned Lark. Photo by Ed McVicker.

A few years ago, when I did the Utopia CBC, I learned that there was a lot of area to the north that was not in any count circles. The Utopia count covers Haystack reservoir, part of Lake Billy Chinook, and the towns of Metolius and Culver, but the towns of Madras and Warm Springs, all the farm land to the north of Madras, Lake Simtustus, and a good stretch of the Deschutes River were not covered by any count. In that area Gray Partridge, Chukar, and Black-capped Chickadees, all of which are hard to find in central Oregon, can sometimes be found. Wintering gulls and occasionally shorebirds frequent parts of the Deschutes River. Large flocks of Horned Larks with an occasional Lapland Longspur winter in the farm fields just north of Madras. While considering this, I drew a new circle to include these areas.

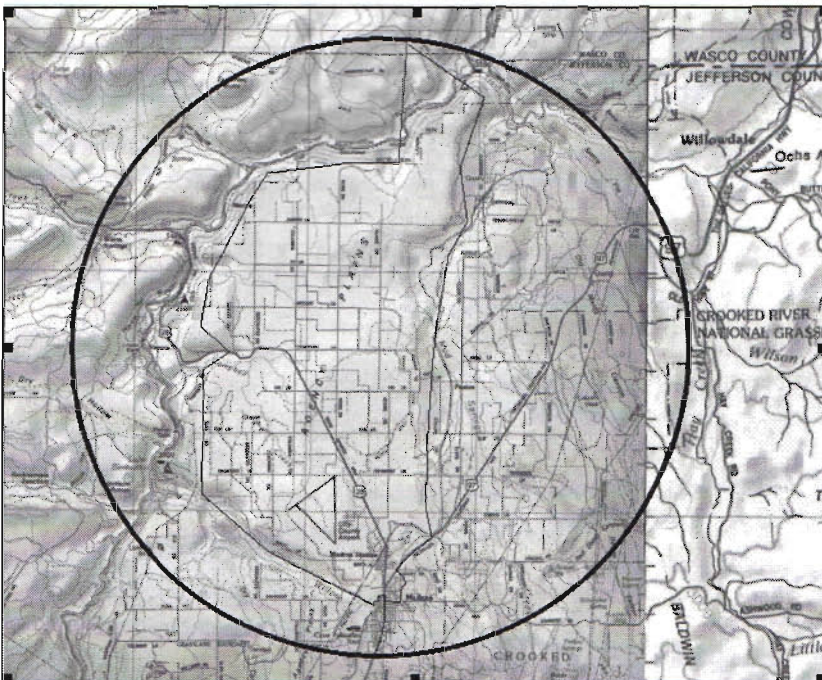
At the time I found little interest among central Oregon birders in adding a new count. We already had six counts in the area, and observer availability to cover another circle was an issue. Last year, with some of the birders in the area retiring from their jobs, a Wednesday birding group formed. I asked if they

might be willing to take on this new count, and after some discussion, they agreed to do it.

Last year we did a trial count for the new circle. Three teams covered the area and found 70 species, including a Common Redpoll in Warm Springs. Species totals were kept a bit low because of lingering fog in parts of the circle. When weather is good I expect this circle to average around 80 species.

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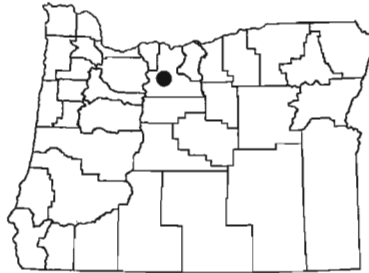


New Oregon CBCs

Tygh Valley

Wednesday, Dec. 29

Jeff Hayes



WASCO CBC



The Tygh Valley CBC circle in south Wasco County is centered upon the intersection of US 197 and Route 216 (Sherar's Bridge Hwy.) just outside of the town of Tygh Valley. The White and Deschutes Rivers flow through the count circle, and the confluence of the two rivers lies near the eastern edge of the circle.

A sizeable portion of the Deschutes and its associated canyonlands is included, from just north of Sherar's Bridge to the bend southwest of Maupin, and the White River is accessible from several points, including White River Falls State Park east of Tygh Valley. Jordan and Tygh Creeks enter the circle from the foothills to the northwest, and Pine Hollow Reservoir lies near the western edge in pine-oak scrubland. Much of the north side of the circle is wide-open wheat and pasture country, rising to the windswept heights of Tygh Ridge.

Habitats range from open fields (plowed and unplowed wheat stubble) and cattle and sheep pasture to remnant sage steppe and juniper/sage woodland to pine and oak scrub (Lewis's Woodpeckers and Western Scrub-Jays are common in this habitat), arid canyonlands and riparian strips, residential areas and farmsteads. Pine Hollow Reservoir offers a chance for waterfowl and gulls.

This is also excellent raptor country. Elevations range from about 750 feet on the Deschutes to 3200 feet on Tygh Ridge.

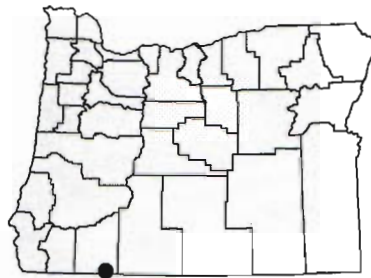
Contact the compiler, Jeff Hayes, at balgryph@gmail.com or (503) 933-6294.

New Oregon CBCs

Ashland

Wednesday, Dec. 29

Harry Fuller



The first official bird count in Ashland since 1941 will be held **Wednesday, December 29, 2010**. The count circle center is the concrete spillway in the northwest corner of Emigrant Lake, southeast of Ashland. Areas included in the circle are Ashland and its city parks, Siskiyou Summit at 4,310', Emigrant Lake reservoir, Dead Indian Memorial Road to 4000' elevation including lower Shale City Road.

The count circle includes a variety of habitats. There are the cultivated city parks and gardens in Ashland, which include North Mountain Park on Bear Creek and Lithia Park on Ashland Creek. Acorn Woodpeckers live in the center of town. Dippers nest and reside along Ashland Creek. Western Screech-Owls are regular on the perimeter of Lithia Park. Wood Ducks winter on its ponds.

On the north edge of Ashland are Ashland Pond and Billings Ranch Pond. Both are good for dabbling ducks, wintering sparrows and Wrentit. Last winter Ashland Pond had two over-wintering White-throated Sparrows.

Emigrant Lake is a reservoir covering up to 806 acres, at 2240' elevation. It often has wintering ducks and grebes. Osprey migrate out in the fall but Bald Eagles remain all year. Peregrine and Merlin are possible here.

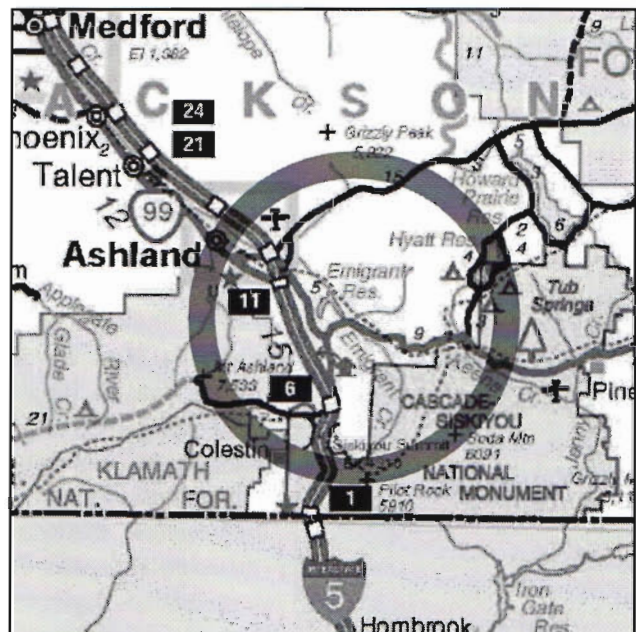
The western side of the count circle includes steep Siskiyou Mountain woodlands. Here woodpeckers, wintering thrush, finch species, nuthatches and chickadees are likely. The eastern section of the count circle covers an expanse of farmland, grassland, oak savannah and riparian corridors.

In a trial run in January 2010, a similar count circle covered by two dozen birders yielded 106 species. This trial count located 16 species of waterfowl, including Eurasian Wigeon. 12 raptors including both Prairie Falcon and White-tailed Kite, were found. Eight members of the finch family, including Evening Grosbeaks and 12 members of the Emberizids, including Harris's Sparrow.

A number of range-expanding species were found in this circle: California Towhee, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Black Phoebe, Oak Titmouse, Red-shouldered Hawk, Hutton's Vireo, Wrentit and Anna's Hummingbird.

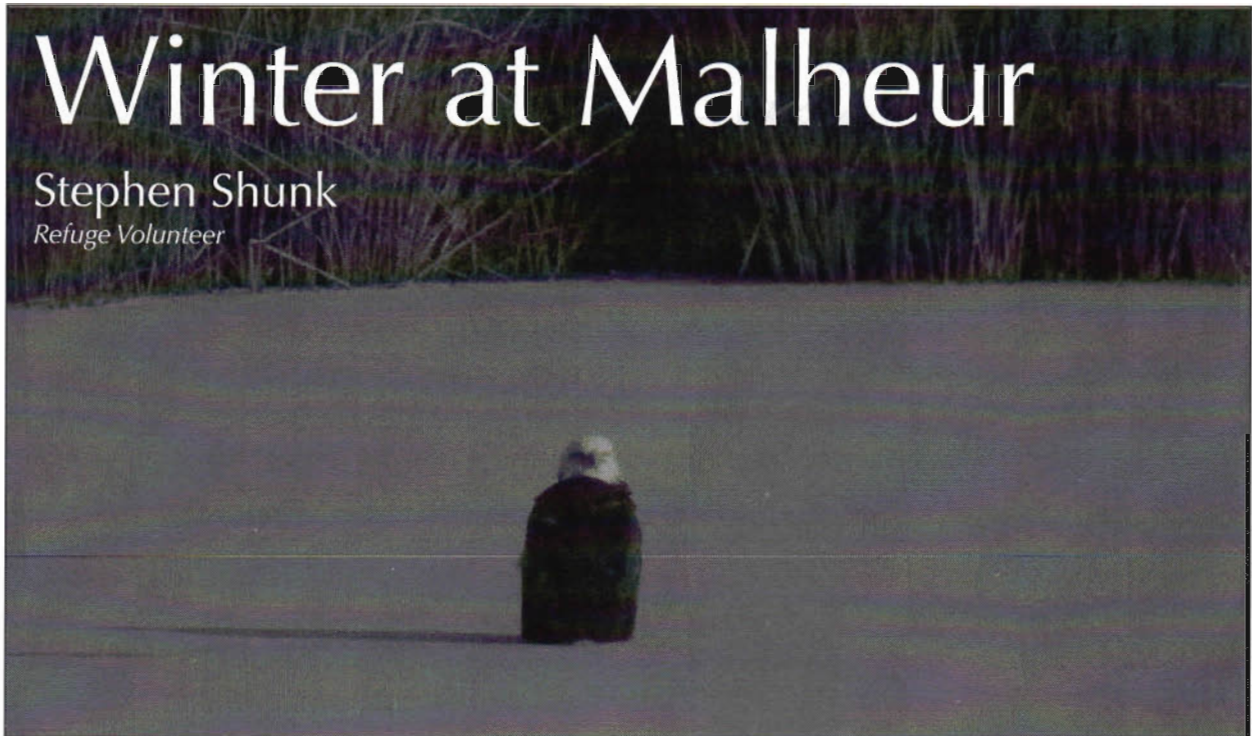
Contact:

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Winter at Malheur

Stephen Shunk
Refuge Volunteer



I took a winter sabbatical at southeastern Oregon's Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and prepared written summaries for each of the three winter months. The summary below is excerpted from these reports.

DECEMBER 2009

The December weather warmed after the severe cold snap of mid-month, but no notable change in bird distribution or behavior was observed. Most water remained frozen, keeping waterbird numbers way down, but raptors continue to be abundant and conspicuous. The shining star of the month and the season was an immature, light-morph **Broad-winged Hawk** (photos at left and



right) found south of P-Ranch on 12/27. The bird was perched low in the willows on the south side of the road to Page Springs, just east of the CPR junction. Diagnostic photos were obtained from both the front and back before the bird flew a short distance toward Page Springs and buried itself in the willows.



This individual was of the "lightly-marked type" described in Wheeler's *Raptors of Western North America*, resembling the images on plates 255 and 258. This is the first winter record of the species for Oregon and the northernmost for the Pacific states.

A wintering Red-shouldered Hawk was outshone by the Broad-wing, but both birds capped off an abundance of raptors seen on the Refuge. Our first raptor survey of the season in the lower Blitzen

Valley tallied 74 individuals of 7 species, the total number being lower than expected but above average for the route. The bulk of the birds counted included Red-tailed Hawk (23), Rough-legged Hawk (15), and Northern Harrier (24). This route covers most of the region north of Diamond Lane, from Highway 205 east to Happy Valley, and north to the Malheur lakeshore.

The P-Ranch ("Malheur") Christmas Bird Count was held 12/16. Abundance highlights for the entire count circle included an astounding 12,500 American Robins, 17 times the rough 50-year average of 700 birds and more than twice the previous high of about 5,200. The other amazingly abundant species was Mountain Bluebird, with 722 birds tallied, more than 20 times the 50-year average and almost twice the previous high of 370. Most bluebirds were found on the dry surfaces of Dredger and West Knox Ponds as the birds actively fed from the ground and the tops of the dry marsh vegetation. Adding to the month's raptor theme, both Merlin and Red-shouldered Hawk were first count records, with American Dipper and Loggerhead Shrike the only two big misses of the count (although a Dipper was present on the east canal from the Page Springs bridge the following week).

Species found on the Refuge in December that are not listed as occurring in winter on the Refuge checklist included: American White Pelican, Cackling Goose, Red-shouldered Hawk, Merlin, Sora, Varied Thrush, and Pine Siskin.

JANUARY 2010

Relatively mild weather continued through January, with most water beginning to open up, including the Blitzen River. The Sodhouse Christmas Bird Count and Frenchglen Raptor Route were both conducted early in the month, with the Catlow Valley leg of the raptor survey completed by month's end. The mid-winter eagle survey produced good numbers of Bald Eagles roosting at Sod House Ranch, although neither Bald nor Golden Eagles were found in the Blitzen Valley, despite tallies of 5 and 9 respectively just a few days earlier. The Broad-winged Hawk found in December was not relocated, although no concerted effort was undertaken in search for the bird. However, the Red-shouldered Hawk (aka "Fred") at Benson Pond continued to be seen between Highway 205 and the Center Patrol Road. This bird was the highlight of the Frenchglen raptor survey, which generally includes the upper Blitzen Valley south of Krumbo Road, with an extension from Frenchglen to Fields along Highway 205.

The survey's overall tally of 112 individuals more than doubled the four-year average of about 41 birds for the survey route. The Red-shoulder was joined by a Merlin as new species for the count. With the exception of American Kestrel, which came in right at the average, all remaining species were tallied at well above average numbers. Nearly all species set records, with only Red-tailed Hawk (26) coming in behind the previous high of 27 birds. Rough-legged Hawk and Golden Eagle were found in especially high numbers, with tallies of 27 and 15 respectively, well above the averages of 7 and 6 birds. Accipiters made a decent showing, with Cooper's Hawk found on only 3 of 15 prior surveys, and Sharp-shinned Hawk on only 2 prior counts.

Sharp-shinned Hawk and Cedar Waxwing starred during the Sodhouse CBC as new birds for the count. American Goldfinch and Townsend's Solitaire were tallied for the 6th and 7th times, respectively, out of 23 prior counts. A flock of 34 Gadwall that spent most of the winter on the display pond at headquarters provided an all-time high count for the CBC. They were all but gone by the end of the month, having likely moved onto other open waters around the Refuge. Overall, 470 individual birds of 24 species were tallied, both relatively low but productive, considering our low total observer-hours.

Mountain Bluebirds continued to be conspicuous in the Blitzen Valley in January, especially on the stubbled surfaces of dry ponds. The Hairy Woodpecker that was seen and heard in December around the headquarters compound continued its vocal presence throughout the month. A few Lesser Scaup at

Krumbo Reservoir represented the latest addition to the winter's waterfowl list, and Hooded Mergansers were widespread in the valley.

Still notable in their absence for the winter to-date are the Chukars. Numerous trips to Krumbo Reservoir failed to produce even vocalizations of this species. Other species listed as "uncommon" in winter on the Refuge checklist but not observed yet this winter include Common Loon, Downy Woodpecker, Mountain Chickadee, and Brewer's Blackbird.

FEBRUARY 2010

Winter weather still lingered in many respects, but the bird activity in February certainly signaled the upcoming seasonal transition. A number of birds started singing this month, waterfowl began arriving in good numbers, and many resident species initiated courtship and pair-bonding activities.

Note: the average arrival dates mentioned below are actually the average dates a species is first reported, as opposed to its actual return date at the Refuge, which is difficult or impossible to monitor.

Early in the month saw the return of the Snow (arr. 2/1) and Greater White-fronted geese (arr. 2/16), Tundra Swans (arr. 2/1), and Sandhill Cranes (arr. 2/18). The Snow Geese and swans arrived just under two weeks ahead of their average arrival date, and the cranes and White-fronts hit their targets almost to the days.

The winter raptor theme continued in February, with additional surveys conducted on and around the Refuge. We also ran the first two of our free winter raptor tours on February 19 and 20. Highlights included the spring emergence of the Belding's ground squirrels, which in turn concentrated raptors in the agricultural areas. Up to 75 Bald Eagles were tallied in a single day, and the evening roost at the Sod House Ranch hosted at least 25 birds. Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, Red-tailed Hawk, and Northern Harrier were all observed performing various courtship displays, and increasing numbers of Rough-legged Hawks easily outnumbered Red-tails. A handful of Ferruginous Hawks appear to have overwintered east of the Refuge along Hwy 78, between Princeton and Crane, aka Raptor Alley. A single Red-shouldered Hawk was observed soaring over Buena Vista ponds on 2/19; this is a few miles north of Benson Pond, where a bird overwintered.

A handful of songbird species began arriving about mid-month, and the resident Song Sparrows began singing in early February. One Marsh Wren was also heard singing, and Red-winged Blackbirds were already staking out territories by the middle of the month. The first Say's Phoebe was reported 2/17 and the first Spotted Towhee was seen at Refuge HQ on 2/19. Both birds were a bit earlier than the average, at 5 and 11 days respectively. One Townsend's Solitaire and one Hairy Woodpecker continued at HQ, and a small flock of Cedar Waxwings was seen occasionally around the compound. Mountain Bluebirds and American Robins began dispersing from their winter concentrations, and the first Canyon



American Tree Sparrow.

Wren song was heard 2/18 at Page Springs. Horned Larks started appearing regularly along roadsides in the northern part of the Refuge.

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Photos by the author

Thanks to Carey Goss, Linda Beck, Terri Hellbusch, and Jim Dastyck for their help on the surveys over the winter.

East Cascades Bird Conservancy Raptor Surveys					Seasonal Raptor Tours	
Lower Blitzen Valley			Upper Blitzen Valley*			
Species	23-Dec	17-Feb	2/18, 24	1/8, 28	19-Feb	20-Feb
RTHA	23	26	20	27	17	14
RLHA	15	34	5	24	21	20
RSHA	0	0	0	1	1	0
FEHA	0	0	0	0	4	5
BUTEO	3	8	2	0	1	0
NOHA	22	28	34	29	17	22
BAEA	0	15	3	7	75	55
GOEA	3	9	11	15	16	17
AMKE	4	0	1	2	2	0
MERL	0	0	0	1	0	0
PRFA	1	2	4	3	4	2
COHA	0	0	3	1	2	1
SSHA	0	0	0	2	0	1
OWLS	0	0	0	1	0	0
UNRA	1	3	1	0	0	0
	72	125	84	113	160	137
HOURS	4.5	5.25	8	10	7	7
MILES	111	112	106	107	n/a	n/a
*includes Catlow Valley as second date listed						

Report of the Oregon Bird Records Committee, 2010

Harry B. Nehls

From May 2009 to May 2010 the Oregon Bird Records Committee (OBRC) completed review of 55 records. The first group of records are those for which the written report and/or photographs or specimens supported the stated identification and are accepted records. If photo(s) or specimen is indicated for a record it was accepted as verified. Other records were accepted as sight records.

Of the 55 records reviewed by the Committee, 45 were accepted and 10 were not accepted. During this period three new species were accepted for addition to the Official Checklist of Oregon Birds: **Solander's Petrel**, **Lesser Nighthawk**, and **White-eyed Vireo**. The Official Checklist now stands at 520 species.

Information presented below for each species includes location of sighting, number of birds, sex and age if known, special information (such as collection and museum number) and date(s), initials of the observer(s) submitting written or other evidence for accepted records, and the OBRC record file number. The OBRC record file number reads as follows: the first 3 digits are the AOU number for the species, the second 2 are the year in which the record was observed and the last numbers are the consecutive numbers for the records as they are filed.

The members of the OBRC for 2010 are David Bailey, Tom Crabtree, Jeff Gilligan, David Irons, Tim Janzen, Gerard Lillie, Craig Miller, Owen Schmidt and Jay Withgott. The alternates are John Rakestraw and Tim Shelmerdine.

The OBRC thanks the following organizations for having made financial contributions in the past year to help with expenses: Cape Arago Audubon Society, Central Oregon Audubon Society, Audubon Society of Corvallis, Grant County Bird Club, Grande Ronde Bird Club, Kalmiopsis Audubon Society, Lane County Audubon Society, Audubon Society of Portland, Salem Audubon Society, Umpqua Valley Audubon, and Yaquina Birders and Naturalists.

The OBRC solicits nominations for membership. Each year the OBRC elects 3 of its 9 members for 3-year terms. Birders themselves interested in serving on the OBRC should nominate themselves. All nominees must be members of OFO in good standing, and the Secretary must receive all nominations before 15 November 2010. New terms begin at the new calendar year.

Accepted Records:

Steller's Eider

157-07-03 Brays Point, Lane Co., 1 bird on 3 February 2007 (AC,CoW).

SOLANDER'S PETREL (First Oregon Record)

099.2-09-01 60mi. W. Lane Co. coast, Lane Co., 1 bird on 8 May 2009 (DI,SMI).

Black-vented Shearwater

099-07-07 8mi. W. Clatsop Beach, Clatsop Co., 1 bird on 12 September 2007 (BSh).

Wilson's Storm-Petrel

109-09-05 60mi. W. Curry Co., 1 bird on 23 August 2009 (JG,OS).

Brown Booby

115-09-04 Coos Bay, Coos Co., 1 bird 28 October to 8 December 2009 (JMe, photos by OS,RuN, LoM).



Brown Booby with cormorants. Photo by Russ Namitz.

Glossy Ibis

186-09-04 Malheur NWR, Harney Co., 1 bird
on 23 May 2009 (photo by DoB).

Broad-winged Hawk

343-06-16 HQ Malheur NWR, Harney Co., 1
bird on 27 April 2006 (MiM).

343-06-17 Circle Creek, Clatsop Co., 1 bird on 3
September 2009 (MP).

343-09-18 Bonney Butte, Hood River Co., 1
bird on 15 September 2009 (photo by DwP).

343-09-19 Bonney Butte, Hood River Co., 1
bird on 24 September 2009 (photo by DwP).

343-09-20 P Ranch, Harney Co., 1 bird on 27
December 2009 (photo by StS).

Common Moorhen

219-06-10 Black Butte Ranch, Deschutes Co., 1
bird on 10 April 2006 (DM).

219-09-11 Brookings, Curry Co., 1 bird on 24
December 2009 (BzS).

Hudsonian Godwit

251-09-21 Yaquina Bay, Lincoln Co., 2 birds
4-18 September 2009 (EmS, photos by
CyW, SNo, SV, MP, AdH).

Red-necked Stint

242.2-09-21 Tenmile Creek, Coos Co., 1 bird on
19 June 2009 (DaF, photos by HH).

White-rumped Sandpiper

240-09-05 Hatfield Lake, Deschutes Co., 1 bird
on 13 August 2009 (JMe, HHo).

Curlew Sandpiper

244-06-22 North Spit Coos Bay, Coos Co., 1
bird on 12 September 2006 (TR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull

050-09-04 John Day Dam, Sherman Co., 2 birds
20 November to 6 December 2009 (CM, MaM, photos
by CyW, TC, ShH, IBo, JGa, ShS, LGo, AHe).

Slaty-backed Gull

048-08-10 Cape Creek, Lane Co., 1 bird on 6
April 2008 (details and photo by CTu).



*Slaty-backed Gull at mouth of Cape Creek, Heceta Head
park. Photo by Craig Turner.*

Thick-billed Murre

031-09-15 Seaside, Clatsop Co., 1 moribund
bird on 19 November 2009 (photos by MP).

Xantus's Murrelet

025-09-17 20mi. W. Depoe Bay, Lincoln Co., 2
birds on 12 September 2009 (photo by GG).

Parakeet Auklet

017-09-16 15km W. Depoe Bay, Lincoln Co., 4
birds on 7 April 2009 (details and photos by RyM).

017-09-17 8km SW Seaside, Clatsop Co., 1 bird
on 27 March 2009 (RyM, photo not accepted).

White-winged Dove

319-09-21 Frenchglen, Harney Co., 1 bird on 30
May 2009 (photos by PaN, SF, JoP, video by TJ).

319-09-22 Port Orford, Curry Co., 1 bird on 31
August 2009 (photo by LoM).

LESSER NIGHTHAWK (First Oregon Record)

421-09-01 Malheur Field Station, Harney Co., 1
bird on 27 August 2009 (photos by DuE).

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker

409-09-26 EE Wilson State Wildlife Area,
Benton Co., 1 immature 20-26 December 2009 (JGe,
photos by JGe, CyW).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

443-08-21 N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos Co., 1 bird 25
November to 2 December 2008 (TR, photos by
LoM, KnA).



Lesser Nighthawk. Photo by Duncan Evered.

WHITE-EYED VIREO - First Oregon Record

631-09-01 Fields, Harney Co., 1 bird on 9 June 2009 (photos by GrF, video by OS).

Philadelphia Vireo

629-04-04 Fields, Harney Co., 1 bird on 24 May 2004 (M,OS).

629-04-06 Hq. Malheur NWR, Harney Co., 1 adult on 18 May 2004 (StS).

Sedge Wren

724-07-02 Luckiamute Landing, Polk Co., 1 bird 4-9 January 2007 (DoR,RR).

Northern Wheatear

765-09-05 Whalen Island, Tillamook Co., 1 bird 17-18 September 2009 (photos by GG,AC,TC,DHe,TJ, video by OS).

Magnolia Warbler

687-08-33 Sodhouse Historic Site, Harney Co., 1 bird on 30 September 2008 (photo by AC).

Yellow-throated Warbler

663-09-07 Netarts, Tillamook Co., singing male on 2 June 2009 (DVP, LaH).

Prairie Warbler

673-06-14 S. Jetty Siuslaw R., Lane Co., 1 bird on 25 September 2006 (WSc);

Mourning Warbler

679-07-08 Benson Pond, Harney Co., 1 bird on 14 September 2007 (AC).

Hooded Warbler

684-09-15 NE Coos Co., 1 bird on 29 May 2009 (audio tape by JuB).

Chestnut-collared Longspur

538-06-22 S. Jetty Columbia River, Clatsop Co., 1 bird on 6 October 2006 (DBa).

Blue Grosbeak

597-04-06 Fields, Harney Co., 1 female on 27 May 2004 (TR).

Dickcissel

604-09-13 Grants Pass, Jackson Co., 1 bird on 28 May 2009 (photo by PhH).

604-10-14 Nehalem Meadows, Tillamook Co., 1 bird 20-22 February 2010 (TS, photos by DSm,EdD,EMc,ShS).

Common Grackle

511-04-32 Six Mile Pond, Catlow Valley, Harney Co., 1 bird on 30 May 2004 (photo by TR).

Hooded Oriole

505-09-30 Gaston, Washington Co., 1 adult male 26 December 2009 into April 2010 (photos by GG,OS,DoN,JSa,Spa,TWn,AuB).

505-06-31 Bowman Road, Douglas Co., 1 adult male on 13 December 2006 (DaF, photo by TGa).

505-08-32 Days Creek, Douglas Co., 1 adult male on 11 June 2008 (DaF, photo by SeR).

Not accepted records:

Long-billed Murrelet

021.1-03-02 Cape Arago, Coos Co., 1 bird on 7 September 2003. Not accepted as key field marks were not described. Description did not rule out similar species.

Broad-winged Hawk

343-03-13 Fields, Harney Co., 1 bird on 18 October 2003. Not accepted as description did not rule out Red-shouldered hawk.

343-06-15 Baskett Slough NWR, Polk Co., 1 bird on 28 April 2006. Not accepted as description did not rule out Red-shouldered Hawk.

Black Rail
216-07-01 Bayocean Spit, Tillamook Co., 1 bird
on 27 August 2007. Not accepted as key field marks not
described, and apparently not seen.

Alder Flycatcher
466.1-06-11 15mi. E. of Joseph, Willowa Co., 1
singing bird on 24 June 2006. Record not accepted as
no voice recording was made. Voices of Alder and
Willow Flycatchers are so similar separation can not be
verified without voice recording.

Philadelphia Vireo
629-07-07 Oregon City, Clackamas Co., 1 bird
on 1 September 2007. Fall vireos can be very difficult to
identify. This description was too sketchy to eliminate
Warbling Vireo or other species.

629-09-08 Headquarters Malheur NWR,
Harney Co., 1 bird on 5 September 2009. Not accepted
as photo did not show field marks of a Philadelphia
Vireo and appeared to be a very bright Warbling Vireo.

Red-throated Pipit
699-03-03 N. Spit Coos Bay, Coos Co., 1 bird on
23 September 2003. Identified mainly on calls with
poor looks at plumage. Description not detailed
enough to accept.

Phainopepla
620-06-07 Headquarters Malheur NWR,
Harney Co., 1 bird on 11 May 2006. Brief and
incomplete description did not adequately describe a
Phainopepla.

Blackburnian Warbler
662-03-07 Nehalem, Tillamook Co., 24
September 2003. Incomplete and rather poorly written
details did not entirely rule out other warbler species.

Harry B. Nehls, Secretary
2736 SE 20th
Portland OR 97202

Chris Allen (Cal)
Jim Allen (JiA)
Knutte Andersson (KnA)
Don Baccus (DoB)
David Bailey (DBa)
Austin Booth (AuB)
Justin Bosler (JuB)
Ian Boustead (IBo)
Alan Contreras (AC)
Tom Crabtree (TC)
Mike Denny (MD)
Edward Derby (EdD)
Duncan Evered (DuE)
Shawneen Finnegan (SF)
Graham Floyd (GrF)
Louis Fredd (LFr)
Tim Gannon (TGa)
John Gatchet (JGa)
Joel Geier (JGe)
Jeff Gilligan (JG)
Larry Goodhew (LGo)
Sherry Hagan (ShH)

Lauren Harter (LaH)
Hendrik Herlyn (HH)
Ann Heyerly (AHe)
Dan Heyerly (DHe)
Phil Hicks (PhH)
Adrian Hinkle (AdH)
Howard Horvath (HHo)
Annmarie Housely (AnH)
David Irons (DI)
Tim Janzen (TJ)
Maitreya (M)
Mike Marsh (MiM)
David Marshall (DM)
Ed McVicker (EMc)
Judy Meredith (JMe)
Ryan Merrill (RyM)
Craig Miller (CM)
Lois Miller (LoM)
Marilyn Miller (MaM)
Steve Mlodinow (SMI)
Russ Namitz (RuN)
Pam Newman (PaN)

Steve Nord (SNo)
Steve Parsons (Spa)
Mike Patterson (MP)
David Vander Pluym (DVP)
Dwight Porter (DwP)
Johnny Powell (JoP)
Roger Robb (RR)
Douglas Robinson (DoR)
Tim Rodenkirk (TR)
Johnny Sasko (JSa)
Em Scattaregia (EmS)
Stefan Schlick (ShS)
Owen Schmidt (OS)
Wayne Schmidt (WSc)
Bill Shelmerdine (BSh)
Stephen Shunk (StS)
David Smith (DSm)
Bill Tice (WT)
Craig Turner (CTu)
Suresh V. (SV)
Cheryl Wheelchel (CyW)
Cole Wild (CoW)

Oregon Field Ornithologists 32nd Annual Meeting

June 17-19, 2011 in Umatilla County

Hosted by Pendleton Bird Club

2010 Spring North American Migration Count Report

Chuck Gates
State NAMC Coordinator

Violet-green Swallows huddle during the snowbound migration of late May, 2010 in southeastern Oregon. Photo at Malheur NWR by Kit Larsen.

The 2010 Spring North American Migration Count occurred on the weekend of May 8 and 9. In most Oregon counties, people fanned out to sample the spring birding fare that Oregon has to offer. Given a very early starting date (the count occurs on the second weekend of May, which makes May 8th the earliest starting date possible), some species had not yet arrived. Even so, the birding was fantastic. The 2010 NAMC certainly provided some terrific birding adventures.

This year, volunteers counted in 28 of Oregon's 36 counties. No surveys were completed in Clatsop, Grant, Jackson, Multnomah, Sherman, Tillamook, Umatilla, or Washington counties.

Participation was down approximately 44% from the turnout in 2009. This seems to represent the volatility of the volunteer pool, as numbers have varied dramatically throughout the last 10 years (2009 was up 30% from the year before). One hundred thirty-eight teams participated. Just over 225 observers were on those teams.

The individual total settled at just over 175,000 birds counted. This number was down about 25,000 from 2009 but can be explained by lower survey participation, missing data from a few counties, and the fact that there was no pelagic team this year. The species total for the weekend was 273, 25 species fewer than last year. The total number of hours logged by the volunteers (this includes on foot, from an automobile, by boat, and other methods of transportation) was a little over 850 hours. Over 5800 miles were covered. About thirty-five people helped as feeder watchers, 12 people participated as stationary observers, and the number of people owling was 15. Nearly all these numbers are close to half the number that participated in the spring 2009 count.

RESULTS

One draw that seems to get people involved in the NAMC is the opportunity to look for rarities and find birds that are new to the surveyor or new to the area. These rarities can, at times, cause quite a buzz in the birding community. Spring 2010 produced few ultra-rarities, but some very interesting birds were found around the state. Other birds of interest were those that appeared out of place or were rare for the

section of the state in which they were found. Still others just engender a general interest to the average Oregon birder.

Unusual water birds were located on occasion during the count. Six counties tallied GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GEESE and SNOW & ROSS'S GEESE showed up in a handful of eastern counties. TRUMPETER SWANS were found in Harney, Lake, and Deschutes counties. A single report of EURASIAN WIGEON came in from Lane County. Linn County produced two HARLEQUIN DUCKS and a wayward RED-BREASTED MERGANSER showed up in Lake County. Four RED-NECKED GREBES were tallied on the survey; one in Curry County, two in Coos, and another in Klamath. Klamath County provided the only SNOWY EGRETS. Inland BLACK-BELLIED PLOVERS were seen in Crook and Malheur counties. Twenty-six SNOWY PLOVERS were found in Coos, Lane, Lake, and Douglas counties. BLACK-NECKED STILTS were in 9 counties; birds found in Lane and Polk counties were worth noting.

The only western Oregon AMERICAN AVOCETS were the pair counted in Linn County. Among the many nice birds found in Klamath County were a flock of 21 WHIMBREL and one MARBLED GODWIT. Single SOLITARY SANDPIPERS were seen in Benton and Coos counties and PECTORAL SANDPIPERS were seen in Klamath County. A single HERRING GULL was spotted in Douglas County. Two reports of GLAUCOUS GULL came in from Lane County along with a couple of BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKES. TUFTED PUFFINS were seen in Lane and Curry counties.

Game birds were well represented in the reported data. GRAY PARTRIDGE were found in Baker and Union counties. CHUKAR sightings occurred in 3 counties and twenty RUFFED GROUSE reports came in from 10 counties. SOOTY GROUSE outnumbered DUSKY GROUSE by a margin of 32 to 4. Sixty-three MOUNTAIN QUAIL were sighted in 7 different counties (Namitz, Rodenkirk, & Metzler found 40 in Coos County). EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE reports came in from 20 counties.

Nearly every regularly occurring Oregon raptor was tallied. The only WHITE-TAILED KITES were in Lane and Coos counties. NORTHERN GOSHAWKS were in Deschutes and Baker counties. Fifteen RED-SHOULDERED HAWKS were found; all were in western counties. A very late ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK was seen in Klamath County and 8 PEREGRINE FALCON reports filtered in from 6 counties.

A total number of 14 BARN OWLS were tallied from around the state and a total of 6 NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL sightings were produced from Coos, Curry, Klamath, and Deschutes counties. Single BURROWING, GREAT GRAY, and LONG-EARED OWLS were seen in Harney, Klamath, and Columbia counties respectively. Douglas and Coos observers found SPOTTED OWLS within their county borders. WESTERN SCREECH-OWL reports came in from 7 counties and NORTHERN PYGMY-OWLS were seen or heard in 7 different counties (4 individuals were found in Curry alone).

Nightjars, swifts, and hummingbirds are popular with birders and a few interesting sightings were made. A total of 7,395 VAUX'S SWIFTS were found and they were joined by only 4 WHITE-THROATED SWIFTS, reported from Jefferson and Crook counties. BLACK-CHINNED HUMMINGBIRDS were found in Baker, Douglas, and Klamath counties. ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRDS were found in 11 counties with the only eastern Oregon sightings coming from Deschutes and Wasco. A total of 25 ALLEN'S HUMMINGBIRDS made the list. COMMON POORWILLS were in Lake, Klamath, and Crook counties.

Woodpeckers appear prominently in the data set. This is due at least partially to the fact that the May date lines up with their breeding period pretty well and finding nest cavities is a little easier than some other kinds of nests. LEWIS'S and ACORN WOODPECKERS were both reported from 13 and 9 counties respectively. While RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKERS were pretty widespread (as expected), RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER reports were limited to Baker, Klamath, Morrow, Deschutes, and Wallowa counties. WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKERS were abundant in the eastern Cascades counties but sightings were also made in Harney, Baker, and Crook counties. AMERICAN THREE-TOED WOODPECKERS were spotted in Deschutes, Klamath, and Wasco counties along with a somewhat unexpected bird found in Morrow County. Surprisingly, BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKERS were only found in Morrow, Klamath, and Deschutes counties (Jefferson may have more BBWP than any Oregon county but Jefferson

surveyors did not make it to nesting areas for this species). Fifty-seven PILEATED WOODPECKERS were reported from 15 counties.

Spring migration conjures hopes of passerine rarities for many Oregon birders. This season produced some nice passerine gems. Malheur County produced 111 WESTERN KINGBIRDS for a very high number while the only EASTERN KINGBIRD records were produced by Baker County; they appeared to arrive late this year. Curry County's 23 BLACK PHOEBES helped bring the state total to 41 and 34 LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES were counted in 9 counties. PURPLE MARTINS were tallied in Coos, Lane, Douglas, Curry, and Columbia counties. Two BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHERS were spotted in Jefferson County for a local RBA. WRENTITS showed up in 9 counties including Benton and Polk (Curry produced 69 individuals). A good number of HERMIT WARBLERS were found (117) and, while this count is sometimes too early for good YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT numbers, a total of 35 seemed about average. GREEN-TAILED TOWHEES were found in Klamath, Lake, Crook, and Deschutes. LARK SPARROWS turned up in 7 counties, including Linn, and SAGE SPARROWS were only reported from Crook and Deschutes counties. The only GRASSHOPPER SPARROW seen during the count period was found in Linn County. Two WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS showed up in Lane and Curry counties respectively. Fifty-one TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS were seen in Klamath County while single birds of this species showed up in both Crook (expected) and Deschutes (unexpected). A single RUSTY BLACKBIRD found in Curry County turned out to be the most unusual bird of the entire count.

Table 1 – Most Abundant Species

Common Murre	15,085	American Coot	6,424	Mallard	3,079
Red-winged Blackbird	10,158	Canada Goose	5,931	American Robin	2,854
Vaux's Swift	7,399	Tree Swallow	5,840	Yellow-headed Blackbird	2,641
Pacific Loon	7,105	Cliff Swallow	5,703	Ring-billed Gull	2,542
Brewer's Blackbird	6,954	European Starling	4,837	Violet-green Swallow	2,540
Western Sandpiper	6,790	White-faced Ibis	4,137	Long-billed Dowitcher	2,209

Table 2 – Species with only a single record

Eurasian Wigeon	Herring Gull	Great Gray Owl	Grasshopper Sparrow
Black Scoter	Burrowing Owl	Long-eared Owl	Rusty Blackbird
Rough-legged Hawk			

Table 3 – Some Species With No Record This Season

Tundra Swan	Either Golden-Plover	Thayer's Gull	Cordilleran Flycatcher
Long-tailed Duck	Wandering Tattler	Heermann's Gull	Juniper Titmouse
Spruce Grouse	Black Turnstone	Flammulated Owl	Red-eyed Vireo
Most Sea Birds	Surfbird	Barred Owl	Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
Yellow Rail	Mew Gull	Black Swift	Black Rosy-Finch

Table 4 – Most Prolific Counties (by individuals counted)

Deschutes	21,214	Douglas	13,054	Klamath	9,743
Lane	16,565	Coos	12,432	Lake	7,357
Crook	14,796	Harney	12,081	Linn	6,518
Curry	13,652	Baker	10,114	Benton	5,031

Table 5 – Most Prolific Counties (by species counted)

Klamath	186	Douglas	156	Lake	141
Lane	175	Baker	148	Harney	139
Coos	173	Crook	148	Linn	135
Deschutes	172	Curry	143	Benton	127

Table 6 – Most Prolific Counties (by participants)

Baker	26	Curry	16	Linn	9
Marion	25	Benton	12	Yamhill	9
Deschutes	24	Douglas	10	Crook	8
Lane	23	Jefferson	9	Klamath	8

Table 7 – Most Prolific Counties (by species / participant*)

Klamath	23.3	Jefferson	14.0	Lane	7.6
Crook	18.5	Yamhill	12.6	Deschutes	7.2
Douglas	15.6	Benton	10.6	Baker	5.7
Linn	15.0	Curry	8.9	Marion	3.6

* Only counties with at least 8 participants

CONCLUSION

There were many negative factors that seemed to stack up against the success of the NAMC this season. First, Mothers Day was May 9th and that created a conflict that, no doubt, cost the volunteer pool some numbers. OBOL had a series of hiccups during the time periods leading up to the count so widespread recruiting was more difficult. The early date, as mentioned before, placed surveyors in the field before some species had even arrived. There was no pelagic group surveying the ocean species. Finally, the state coordinator (me) was coming off the creation of the state-wide site guide and suffered a period of burnout that slowed the recruitment of county coordinators to a shameful crawl.

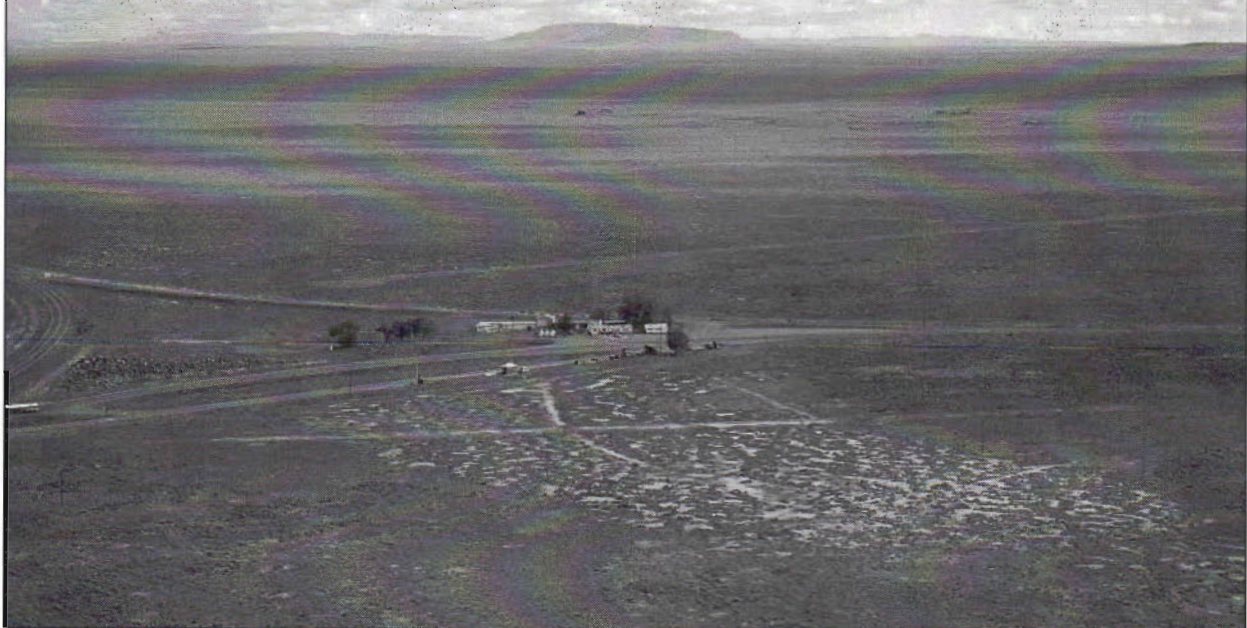
On the surface, the above hurdles would lead one to conclude the 2010 Spring NAMC must have been a complete failure. And yet, it was not. While it's true that 8 counties went without a single surveyor, 28 counties had boots on the ground counting birds. It's not perfect but can't be considered a failure either. Sure, numbers were down from the year before but numbers in 2009 were up from the previous years. While not the best season, Spring 2010 was far from the worst.

Where do we go from here? On the docket for next year is the continued effort to get at least a few people to survey in each county. With a core number of birders in Multnomah, Jackson, Grant, and Umatilla counties, there is no reason why volunteers can't be found to survey those counties. This will be my major emphasis over the summer. Continued processing of past data will go on with the eventual goal of publishing an analysis of the entire historical data set.

The East Cascades Audubon Society would like to thank all volunteers who contributed time, money, and sweat in order to gather data for this project. A special thank you goes to the county coordinators who collated all this data and, more than anyone, contributed to the overall success of this count. If you would like to get involved with this count in the future, please go to the ECAS website (ecbcbirds.org) and contact the state NAMC coordinator. You won't regret this amazing birding experience.

Birding the Migrant Traps of Southeastern Oregon

Alan Contreras
Tim Rodenkirk



Aerial view of Burns Junction, Malheur County, provided by Larry Cottrell. This small stand of trees is covered infrequently but several unusual birds have been found there. Other photos by Alan Contreras except as noted.

One of the pleasures that many birders enjoy is trying to find vagrant passerines at “vagrant trap” oasis sites in the desert region of southeastern Oregon. This article provides updated information about the location of principal sites for vagrant-hunting in Lake, Harney and Malheur counties. For a good discussion of the “oasis effect” in other habitats, see Dave Irons, *Finding the Oasis* (OB 25(4): 97, 1999).

There are five principal “regions” for vagrant searching in the desert region of SE Oregon. These are the Deschutes/western Harney Co. outlier sites, Lake Co. sites, the Malheur NWR sites, the Fields oasis and desert canyon sites of extreme southern Harney and Malheur counties and the northern and central Malheur County sites. We think about these sites in such clusters because that is the way that birders generally cover them. The “connector” for these regions can be thought of as the town and oasis of Fields in southern Harney Co., both because of its geographic location and because it is often covered by people who are otherwise primarily birding one of the other regions.

The birds that are often sought in these isolated oasis sites are typically warblers, vireos, flycatchers, tanagers, thrushes and orioles whose principal ranges are east of the Rocky Mountains or the southwest. In addition, certain species and subspecies barely reach Oregon in this corner of the state. The most regular of these are **Plumbeous Vireo** (at least five records), **Virginia’s Warbler** (13 records), **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** (rare but annual, probably breeds) and **Gray-headed Junco** (irregular, but has bred).

What characteristics do good vagrant sites have? In general, they have one crucial characteristic, and they may have other helpful characteristics. Most important is *isolation*. The reason that vagrants are found at a site is the same reason that all other migrants are found at that site: it is the only place to land.

Listing Report Form

The time for Oregon 2010 listing results is upon us. I'd like to encourage everyone to participate, so we can make the final published report as complete and up to date as possible.

Simply fill in the table below with your total numbers as of the end of 2010 and send them to me at

Paul T. Sullivan, 4470 SW Murray Blvd. #26, Beaverton, OR 97005

The threshold for your numbers to be published are as follows:

Oregon Life List: 300 - Oregon Year List: 250 - County Life and 2010 Year list: 100

Life 2010
 _____ Oregon State

Oregon counties:

Life	2010	
_____	_____	Baker
_____	_____	Benton
_____	_____	Clackamas
_____	_____	Clatsop
_____	_____	Columbia
_____	_____	Coos
_____	_____	Crook
_____	_____	Curry
_____	_____	Deschutes
_____	_____	Douglas
_____	_____	Gilliam
_____	_____	Grant
_____	_____	Harney
_____	_____	Hood River
_____	_____	Jackson
_____	_____	Jefferson
_____	_____	Josephine
_____	_____	Klamath
_____	_____	Lake
_____	_____	Lane
_____	_____	Lincoln
_____	_____	Linn
_____	_____	Malheur
_____	_____	Marion
_____	_____	Morrow
_____	_____	Multnomah
_____	_____	Polk
_____	_____	Sherman
_____	_____	Tillamook
_____	_____	Umatilla
_____	_____	Union
_____	_____	Wallowa
_____	_____	Wasco
_____	_____	Washington
_____	_____	Wheeler
_____	_____	Yamhill



White-winged Dove, Redmond. Photo by Kimdel Owen.

_____ Your chosen 15-mile circle. Please include a description of where your circle is located.

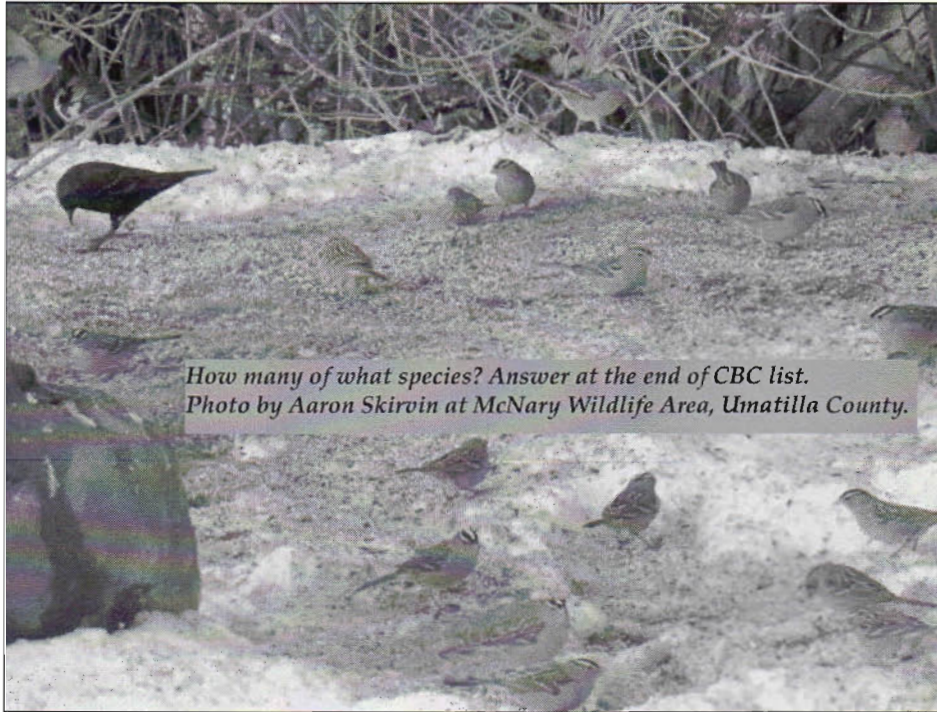
Thanks,

Paul T. Sullivan

The 111th Christmas Bird Count Schedule

December 14, 2010 – January 2, 2011

Compiled by Don Albright
(503) 538-8890
donalbri@teleport.com



*How many of what species? Answer at the end of CBC list.
Photo by Aaron Skirvin at McNary Wildlife Area, Umatilla County.*

Grants Pass
Dennis Vroman
(541) 479-4619
dpvroman@budget.net
Contact the compiler.

John Day
Tom Winters
(541) 542-2006
ducksouptom@centurytel.net
Meet 7:00 a.m. (earlier if you want breakfast), Outpost Restaurant, 201 W. Main St.
Compilation dinner afterward at the Gagnon's home. Contact the compiler for directions.

Klamath Falls
Kevin Spencer
(541) 884-5739
ripparia@charter.net
Contact the compiler.

Medford
Bob Hunter
(541) 826-5569 (home); (541) 778-3310 (cell)
bobhunter@embarqmail.com
Contact the compiler.

Oakridge
Wanda Wilson
(541) 782-5715
wanda2w@gmail.com
Joel Geier
541 745-5821 (8 a.m. - 8 p.m.)
joel.geier@peak.org
Contact the compilers.

Roseburg-Sutherlin
Ron Maertz
(541) 496-3847
hadada@centurytel.net
Contact the compiler.

Salem
Glen Lindeman
(503) 364-6968
gdalindy@msn.com
Contact the compiler; teams arranged in advance.

Tillamook Bay
Owen Schmidt
(503) 789-4854
oschmidt@att.net
Meet at 6:30 am, Denny's Restaurant, 2230 Main Avenue N (Hwy 101), Tillamook.

Tuesday, December 14

Summer Lake
Marty St. Louis
(541) 943-3152
martin.j.stlouis@state.or.us
Meet 7:30 a.m., Summer Lake WA Headquarters.

Upper Nestucca
Don Albright
(503) 538-8890
donalbri@teleport.com
Contact the compiler.

Wednesday, December 15

Madras NEW!
Kimdel Owen
(541) 771-6568
kimdelo@yahoo.com
Meet 7:00 a.m., Black Bear Diner.

Thursday, December 16

Baker County - Salisbury
Joanne Britton
(541) 523-5666
jobr@oregontrail.net
Meet 8:30 a.m. at weigh station on Hwy 7, one mile south of Baker City. Please contact the compiler beforehand as weather conditions may close some roads in the count circle.

Illinois Valley
Romain Cooper
(541) 592-2311
romain@frontiernet.net
Meet 7:00 a.m., Coffee Heaven, Hwys. 199 & 46 in Cave Junction. Please contact the compiler in advance if possible.

Friday, December 17

P Ranch - Malheur NWR
Wayne Bowers
(541) 573-5754
dustdevil@centurytel.net
Rick Vetter
(541) 573-5601 (h) or 573-4369 (w)
rvetter@fs.fed.us
Meet 8:00 a.m. at Frenchglen Hotel (next to the store).

Sauvie Island
Oregon side contact:
Karen Bachman
pppahooie@comcast.net or karen.bachman@tonkon.com
(503) 289-3605 or (503) 802-2057
Washington side contact:
Tammy Bjorkman
bjorkman@columbialandtrust.org
Contact the compilers.

Saturday, December 18

Bend
Tom Crabtree
(541) 388-2462
tc@empnet.com
Contact the compiler.

Burns-Hines
Howard Richburg
(541) 573-4322
hrichburg@fs.fed.us
Rick Vetter
(541) 573-5601 (h) or 573-4369 (w)
rvetter@fs.fed.us
Meet 7:00 a.m., USFS office in Hines. Please contact the compiler in advance.

Florence
Roger Robb
(541) 343-6557
brrobb@comcast.net
Contact the compiler.

Forest Grove
Mary Anne Sohlstrom
(503) 463-9540
masohlstrom@msn.com
Greg Gillson
greg@thebirdguide.com
Meet 7:00 a.m. (earlier if eating breakfast), Elmer's Pancake House, 390 SW Adams, Hillsboro.

Sunday, December 19

Columbia Estuary
Mike Patterson
(503) 325-1365
celata@pacifier.com
Meet 7:00 a.m. at Pig-n-Pancake Restaurant in Astoria.

Little Applegate
Laurel Sutherlin
laurel@kswild.org
Shelly Elkovich
(541) 821-0935
shelly.elkovich@gmail.com
Contact the compilers.

Lyle, WA
(includes The Dalles, Rowena, and Mosier, OR)
Bob Hansen
(509) 637-2736
bobhansen@gorge.net
Contact the compiler.

Sisters
Steve Shunk
(541) 408-1753
steve@paradisebirding.com
Contact the compiler.

Wallowa County
Andie Lueders
(541) 426-5740
andielue@gmail.com
Meet at 7:00 a.m. (earlier if you want breakfast) at Friends Restaurant in Enterprise.

Tuesday, December 21

Antone
David Schas
(541) 350-6251
stpilot_fly@yahoo.com
Contact the compiler.
Post-count gathering at Historic Cant Ranch House, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

Corvallis
Marcia F. Cutler
(541) 752-4313
marciacutler@comcast.net
Contact the compiler.

Wednesday, December 22

Hart Mountain
Craig and Marilyn Miller
(541) 389-9115
goosemiller@msn.com
Pre-count meeting the evening before the count at Hart Mountain National Antelope Refuge Headquarters. Free lodging for participants at headquarters.
Contact the compilers.

Sunday, December 26

Brownsville
Barbara Combs
(541) 689-6660
bcombs232@gmail.com
Meet 7:00 a.m. at Pioneer Villa Restaurant (Brownsville exit off Interstate 5).

Port Orford
Jim Rogers
(541) 332-2555
chlapani@wildblue.net
Meet 7:15 a.m., north side of Driftwood Elementary School on Hwy 101.

Tuesday, December 28

Dallas
Roy Gerig
(503) 589-4636
roygerig@hotmail.com
Meet 7:15 a.m. at Bert's Family Restaurant, 165 Orchard Drive, Dallas.

Wednesday, December 29

Ashland NEW!
John Bullock
jas@opendoor.com
Harry Fuller
anzatowhee@yahoo.com
Contact the compilers.
Post-count gathering at Standing Stone Brewery, 101 Oak Street, Ashland.

Baker County - Baker Valley
Joanne Britton
(541) 523-5666
jobr@oregontrail.net
Meet 8:30 a.m. (7:30 if you want breakfast) at Sumpter Jct. Restaurant, Exit 304 off Interstate 84, in Baker City. Please contact the compiler in advance if possible.

Tygh Valley NEW!
Jeff Hayes
balgryph@gmail.com
(503) 933-6294
Contact compiler

Thursday, December 30

Antelope
Pete Weigel
(206) 819-3821 or (541) 489-3280
peteweigel@clearwire.net
Meet at compiler's house, corner of Maupin & College Sts. in Antelope.
Contact the compiler in advance if possible.

Wahkiakum, WA
(includes Knappa and Brownsmead, OR)
Andrew Emlen
(360) 795-8009
aemlen@centurytel.net
Contact the compiler.

Friday, December 31

Prineville
Charles Gates
(541) 923-1320
cgates326@gmail.com
Meet 7:00 a.m. at McDonalds in Prineville.

Silverton
Roger Freeman
carrotguy55@gmail.com
Contact the compiler.

Utopia
(Culver, Lake Billy Chinook, Haystack Reservoir)
Pete Weigel
(206) 819-3821 or (541) 489-3280
peteweigel@clearwire.net
Contact the compiler.

Saturday, January 1

Columbia Hills-Klickitat Valley, WA
(includes Biggs, Rufus, and John Day Dam, OR)
Stuart Johnston
(509) 493-3363 (call between 6 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.)
johnstonstuartf@hotmail.com
Contact the compiler.

Coquille Valley
Alan Contreras
(541) 510-6161
acontrera@mindspring.com
Contact the compiler.

Cowlitz/Columbia
Bob Reistroffer
(360) 636-5125
breistrof@aol.com
Contact the compiler.

Santiam Pass
Steve Shunk
(541) 408-1753
steve@paradisebirding.com
Contact the compiler.

Tule Lake, CA
(very near Oregon border)
Kevin Spencer
(541) 884-5739
riparia@charter.net
Contact the compiler.

Sunday, January 2

Airlie-Albany
Paul Adamus
(541) 745-7092
adamus7@comcast.net
Contact the compiler.

Eugene
Dick Lamster
(541) 343-8664
maeveanddick@q.com
Barbara Gleason (volunteer coordinator)
(541) 345-3974
bdgleason@comcast.net
Contact the compiler.
Post-count gathering at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St.

Hood River
Catherine Flick
(509) 493-1195
stewart@gorge.net
Meet 6:30 a.m. at the Best Western in Hood River (exit 64 off Interstate 84).

Portland
Wink Gross
(503) 226-3842
winkg@hevanet.com
Contact the compiler.

Redmond
Kindel Owen
(541) 771-6568
kimdelo@yahoo.com
Meet 7:00 a.m. at Big O Country Nook on 5th Street.

Umatilla County
Aaron Skirvin
(541) 276-1948
umatbirder@yahoo.com
Contact the compiler.

Union County
(Cove and Union area)
Trent Bray
(541) 963-2888
avitours@aol.com
Contact the compiler.

Yaquina Bay
Dawn Grafe
(541) 961-1307
oregoncoastbirding@gmail.com
Contact the compiler.
Post-count gathering at USFWS Office, 2127 SE Marine Science Drive, Newport.

Quiz Photo Results

White-crowned Sparrow - 17
Golden-crowned Sparrow - 1
Harris's Sparrow - 1
House Finch - 1
Red-winged Blackbird - 1

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Proceedings of the Oregon Bird Records Committee--Stay current on the rare birds of Oregon.

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Your telephone _____

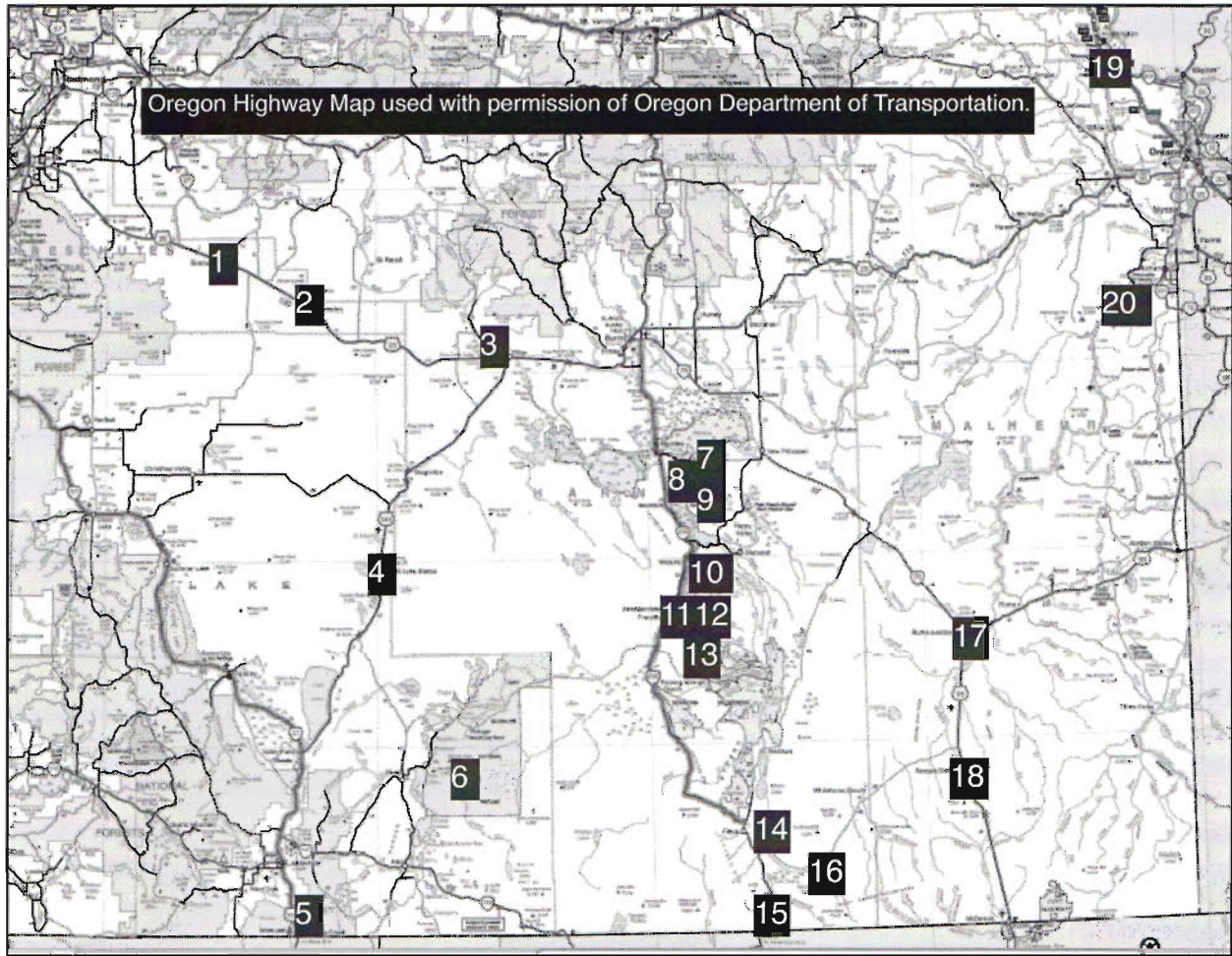
Your e-mail address: _____

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Eugene, OR 97440



The reason that birders find these vagrants, while not finding the same vagrants in all of the rest of Oregon's habitat has to do primarily with the ability of careful observers to find almost every bird that is in a small desert oasis at a given time.

Thus a good vagrant site in southeastern Oregon consists of *trees or substantial shrubbery in an area that is otherwise sage desert or grassland.*

The same factor causes vagrants to be found in patches of trees in the wheat farm regions or along the more unvegetated parts of the outer coast, but those areas are not covered by this article.

Secondary factors that make a site a good place to look for vagrants are the availability of water, the availability of food and, for birders, the ability of an observer to have a reasonable chance of finding most birds that are present. This latter factor is important in settings where there is so much dense cover that many birds never emerge, e.g. at some willow-choked canyons.

Some sites are better at certain seasons and not as good at other times of year. Other sites are better under certain weather conditions or even at certain times of day. These details are discussed below under each site.

The principal sites covered by this article are shown on the Oregon Highway Map above. They are discussed in five groupings as noted above.

Group 1. Deschutes County and western Harney County sites

There are three sites along Hwy. 20 west of the more heavily-covered areas that have some potential for vagrants and where a few have been found. These are essentially the "Malheur Route" sites that many observers stop at going to and from the refuge, but which otherwise are essentially uncovered.

SITE 1. Brothers Oasis Rest Area

This site looks pretty dubious for vagrants, but a **Mourning Warbler** was found here once.. The few trees are worth a quick check.

SITE 2. Hampton Station

This site was treeless until the 2000s. Now there are a few small trees behind the open-again, closed again cafe and store. **Chestnut-sided Warbler** has been seen here.

SITE 3. ODOT pond west of Riley.

This pond, right along Hwy. 20 about a mile west of the junction with Hwy. 395 at Riley, has some willows and, next door to the buildings, larger trees. A **Blue-winged Warbler** was found here one year, and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and **Tennessee Warbler** have also been seen. Most of the action is around the pond.

Group 2. Lake County Sites

The sites that are most likely to produce vagrants all have certain problematic characteristics. From north to south:

SITE 4. Alkali Lake ODOT Station

The best site is probably the Alkali Lake Oregon Department of Transportation complex on Hwy. 395 about 22 miles south of Wagonville. Anyone using the Christmas Valley route to and from southeastern Oregon should consider a short side jaunt to check it. It is a small stand of trees completely isolated in an area of sage desert and alkali flats. However, access is difficult because the complex is usually closed to the public, and birding can be done only along the fence line. However, quite a bit can be found that way, and **Black-throated Blue Warbler** has been found here.

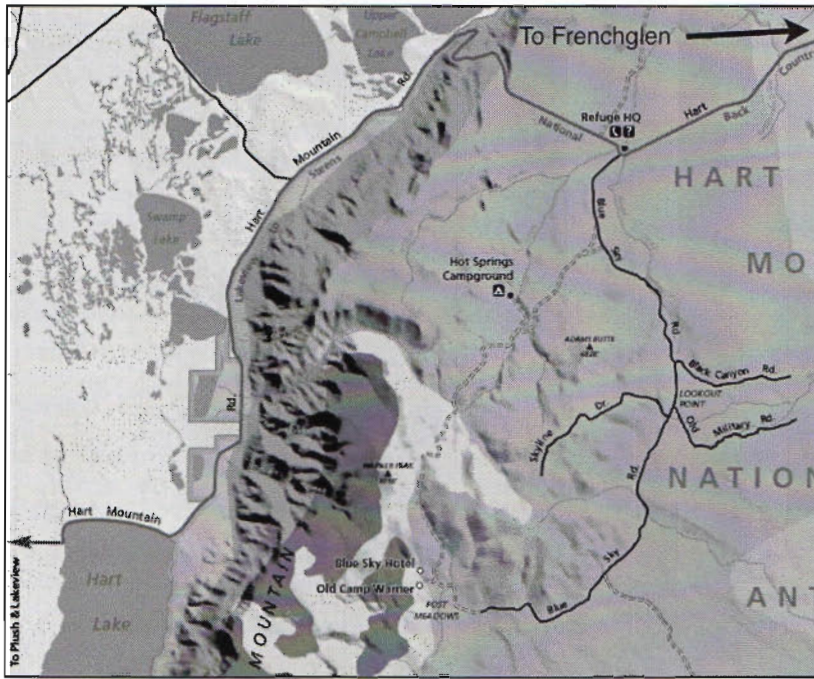
Chandler Park north of Lakeview is not a great vagrant trap but is good birding. **Gray Catbird** has been found there.

SITE 5. Goose Lake State Park

This campground and picnic area on the California border is a campground complex with several stands of trees, isolated by the lake on the west and agricultural land on the east. It is rather spread out

for careful coverage, but has had **Red-eyed Vireo**, **Gray Catbird**, **Black-and-White Warbler** and **Yellow-throated Vireo**. Coverage has been very limited, but has increased in recent years.

SITE 6. Hart Mountain



The refuge offers two sites that are both rather hard to get to, but are fairly close to each other and have produced a number of vagrants. The Hot Springs campground is generally good birding and has had **Least Flycatcher**, **Hooded Warbler**, **Broad-tailed Hummingbird** and **Virginia's Warbler**. The large pine stand farther south on the same road (sometimes in poor condition) is where banders working in the late 1970s and early 1980s caught **Scarlet Tanager**, **Summer Tanager**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Least Flycatcher** and other delights. This area, known as Blue Sky Hotel, is again rather large and

hard to cover at the end of a somewhat rough gravel road, but is the only "forest" for dozens of miles in any direction.

Group 3. Malheur National Wildlife Refuge sites

The refuge sites are the most well-known to birders and so are not covered in detail here. The most productive ones are as follows.

SITE 7. Malheur refuge headquarters

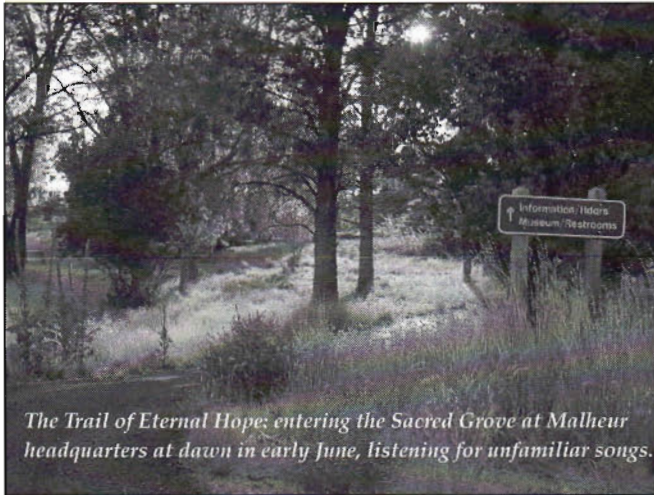
A list of the vagrants that have occurred at Malheur HQ would read like a list of the rare birds of Oregon. In addition to a full array of "normal" vagrants, HQ has offered **Streak-backed Oriole**, **Philadelphia Vireo**, **Eastern Wood-Pewee**, **Worm-eating Warbler** and other exceptionally rare birds, including a mid-winter **Smew** on the display pond! It is also an excellent place to study a broad spectrum of regular migrants.

Birding headquarters requires patience, as birds move in and out of the area all day. In particular, if you arrive early in the morning when it is cold, many birds will be down in the surrounding sagebrush waiting for insects to rise as the day warms.

On sunny early mornings, activity generally concentrates on the east side of the compound, where the trees have been warmed longer. These "morning trees" often have more birds in them for the first hour or more of the day, before the shadowed western shrubbery gets much action. Small flocks often move

slowly around the complex. Find where the action is and stay with it. Afternoons are much harder, as birds are quieter and more spread out.

Headquarters is a very user-friendly site, with 24-hour rest rooms, benches, feeders and part-time visitor assistance staff available. It is best for vagrants in late May and early June and again from late August through early October, as is true of the other sites discussed in this article. After mid-September, huge flocks of Yellow-rumped Warblers and (after October 1) Ruby-crowned Kinglets make finding vagrants harder.



The Trail of Eternal Hope: entering the Sacred Grove at Malheur headquarters at dawn in early June, listening for unfamiliar songs.

Site 8. Sodhouse Historical Site

This site just west of Refuge Headquarters is open only from August 15-October 15 each year, but is a good vagrant spot. It consists of two stands of ancient cottonwoods flanking a huge, dense willow, with a wet ditch running the length of the area under the trees.

It has held **Magnolia Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **Red-eyed Vireo** and others.

Morning birding here is best accomplished by crossing the low ditch (usually dry in fall but full of dead plant matter) and stationing yourself in the thistle beds east of the large willow. From here you can see the sunlit side of

every tree, as well as most of what is in the ditch. The ditch gets a lot of sparrow and towhee movement.

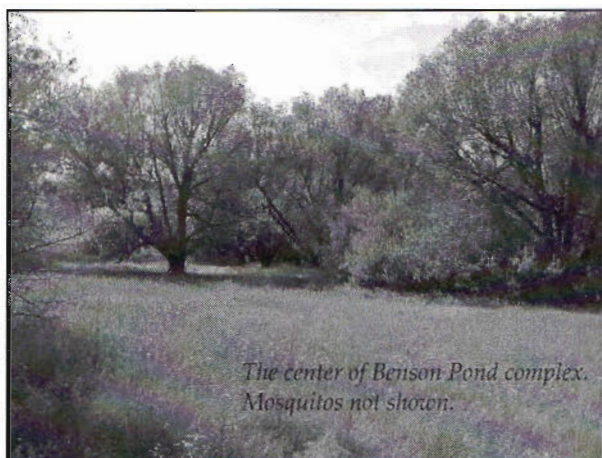
After checking this area for a while, cross back to the west side of the ditch and walk south along the path until you pass the first in the east-west line of huge cottonwoods. The ditch and nearby low brush there is excellent for sparrows, yellowthroats, marsh wrens and other near-ground species.

SITE 9. Malheur Field Station

The Field Station is generally thought of as housing, but it has a few small trees, and vagrants such as **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Common Grackle**, **Northern Mockingbird**, **Dickcissel**, **N. Parula** (4 times) **Magnolia Warbler**, **Brown Thrasher** and **White-winged Dove** have been seen there. In particular, check the manager's house (middle of the three houses on the north side of the complex) where there is a feeder and water dripper.



Sodhouse Historical Site.



*The center of Benson Pond complex.
Mosquitos not shown.*

SITE 10. Benson Pond

The open wooded area at the northeast corner of Benson Pond is often the mosquito capital of the refuge, but its mid-valley location has attracted a steady flow of vagrants over the years. **Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Tennessee Warbler, American Redstart, Blackpoll, Summer Tanager, Baltimore Oriole and Least Flycatcher** have all occurred here.

Don't ignore the row of trees along the walk in from the Center Patrol Road; some of the best birds have been found there.

SITE 11. Frenchglen

The town of Frenchglen lies at the southern end of the Blitzen Valley, up against the hills on the west side. Most of the town is accessible to birders. However, keep in mind that most of the town is private property and that birders should always ask permission before entering such property. As of this writing, permission has always been granted to bird around the Hotel (a state park), the adjacent B&B that is for sale, the store and the area behind the school. Do NOT bird east of Hwy 205 north of the teachers' house at the east end of the gravel road on the north side of the school, residents have objected. The teacher's back yard with feeders may be viewed from the back of the schoolyard. This area can be reached by walking down the narrow gravel lane on the north side of the school building. Check the small spruce trees as you walk in. Check the feeders at the teacher's house on the north side of the rear school yard.



The area beyond the fence at the back of the school yard can be very productive but stay south of the teacher's yard. Go through the gate (close it behind you) and walk thirty feet to the small slough. This area is especially good in fall. Frenchglen as a whole is better birding in fall than in spring. It has harbored a wide variety of vagrants, including **Blackpoll Warbler, N.**

Parula, Summer Tanager, Least Flycatcher, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and other delights.

SITE 12. P Ranch

P Ranch is a difficult site for vagrant-finding because the habitat is dense and spread out. Nonetheless it has had some good birds

Lodging in the immediate area (many motels in Burns/Hines, 35 miles north of Malheur HQ)

Malheur Field Station
(Duncan Evered and Lyla Messick)
34848 Sodhouse Lane
Princeton OR 97721
541-493-2629

Frenchglen Hotel
541-493-2825

Steens Mountain Resort
800-542-3765
(A recreational vehicle park just east of Frenchglen, it also rents cabins.

McCoy Creek Inn
Diamond, OR
541-493-2131

Hotel Diamond
10 Main Street
Diamond, OR 97722
541-493-1898

over the years, including **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Blackpoll**, **Northern Waterthrush**, and locally rare **Green Heron**. The only easily accessible birding area has been along the dike, but the refuge plans to open much of the area around the complex to the public, which will make coverage easier.

SITE 13. Page Springs BLM campground

Page Springs does not look like a typical vagrant site, as it is largely covered with juniper and the riparian willows go on for miles upriver. However, it has been surprisingly productive over the years, perhaps because of its location at the "outlet" of the Blitzen River. **Blackburnian Warbler**, **N. Parula**, **Blue-winged Warbler** and **Common Grackle** have been seen here, and birding in general is very good.

Other sites

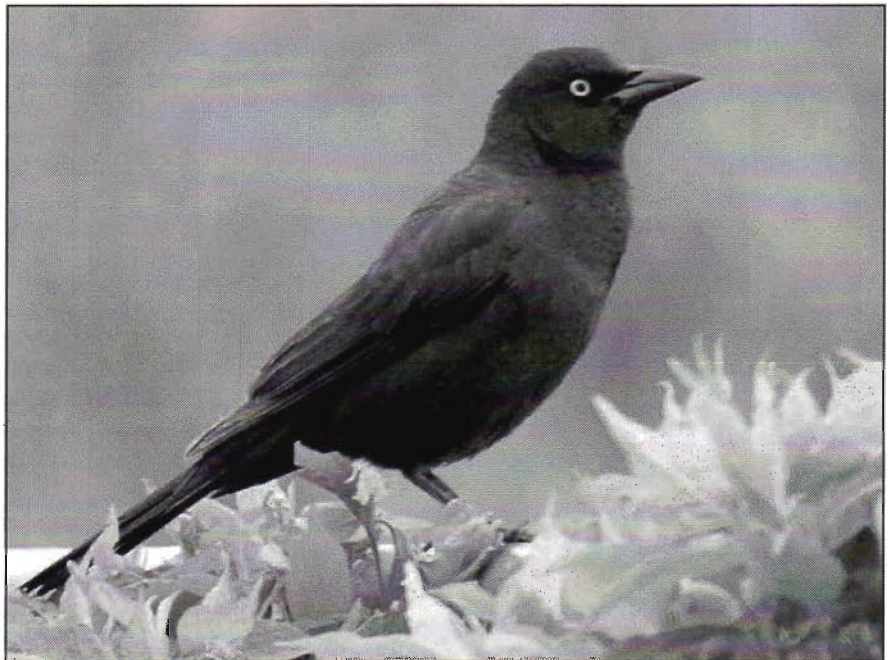
In addition to these numbered sites, Buena Vista station has held numerous vagrants over the years, including **Baltimore Oriole**, **Least Flycatcher** and **Eastern Phoebe**. However, most of the complex is restricted-access so birding has to be from the edges. The pond can be good for shorebirds in fall.

The small stand of trees along Hwy 205 just north of the Krumbo turnoff, generally know as The Corral, has not been very productive over the years but is worth a look, as it is quick to cover. The OO Station at the extreme west end of the refuge is rarely covered but would undoubtedly offer some vagrant potential.

The route to Fields offers several sites that can offer vagrants, though none of them are easy to bird. The solitary tree north of Roaring Springs Ranch indicates a place to stop and check the shrubby hillside underlaid with heavy seepage of water east of the road. It is a good place for chats in spring (and White-throated Swifts overhead), but has also offered **Least Flycatcher**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** and others. The wet sump on the north edge of the first entrance road to Roaring Springs Ranch is especially good for migrants, more consistently in fall.

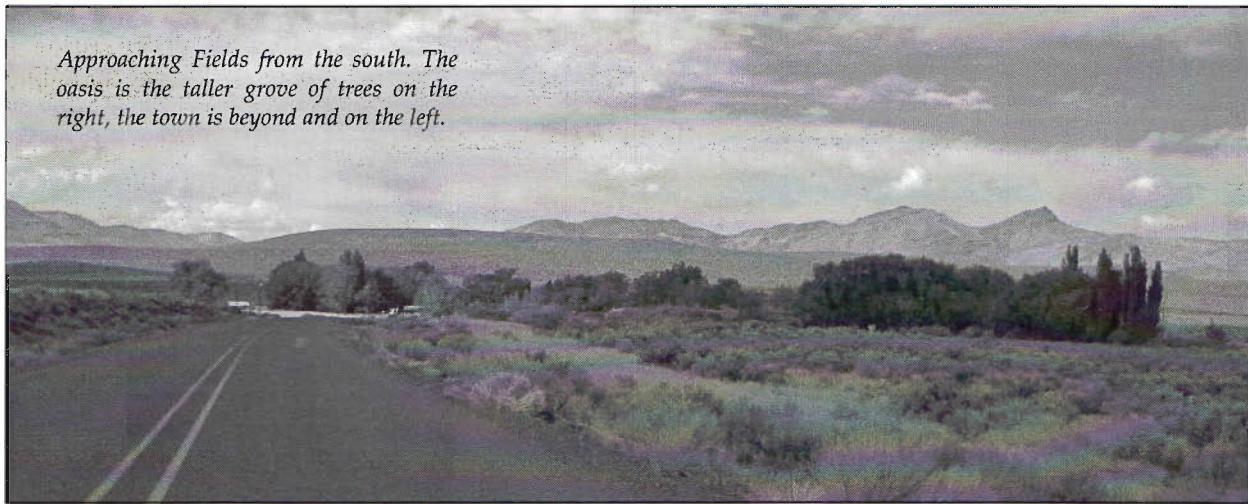
Do not bird the Roaring Springs headquarters complex without checking with staff. The manager's house is at the south end of the complex. Depending on current policy, permission is sometimes granted to bird the complex.

Permission from Roaring Springs HQ is also required to enter the small grove of willow trees at the south end of Sixmile Pond, located about 14 miles south of Roaring Springs HQ. **American Redstart**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler** and other unusual species have been seen there.



Common Grackle, Malheur NWR. 22 May 2010. Photo by Kit Larsen.

Group 4. Fields and the Desert Canyons



Site 14. Fields town and oasis.

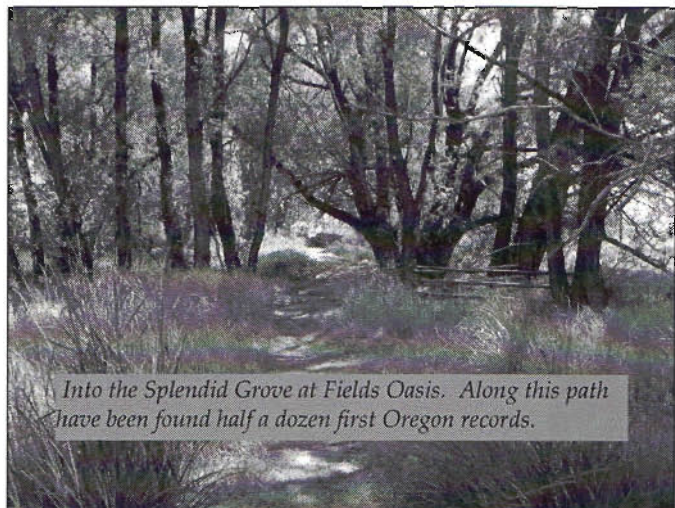
The oasis at Fields is arguably the single best place to find vagrants in Oregon. It has many virtues, chief among which are its isolation between the Pueblo Mtn. complex and the Alvord Desert, with only a few nearby ranches also drawing migrant birds. It also has water, for except in unusually dry years there is always at least a small puddle and seepage in the "oasis" east of Hwy. 202. In very wet years the center of the oasis is a pond sufficient to allow breeding of ducks and Virginia Rail.

A note to travelers: although the road to Fields is commonly called Hwy. 205, in fact that state highway stops at Roaring Springs Ranch 18 miles south of Frenchglen. The road from Roaring Springs to the Nevada line is Harney County road 202, generally called the Catlow Valley Road in its northern portion and the Fields-Denio Road in the southern part.

The list of vagrants found at Fields is matched only by Malheur HQ. **Orchard Oriole, Scott's Oriole, White-eyed Vireo, Bell's Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Virginia's Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, LeConte's Sparrow, Gray-cheeked Thrush and Broad-winged Hawk** have all occurred here. Many were first state records; some remain the *only* state records.

In addition to the oasis, there is the town, which has hosted **Yellow-billed Cuckoo, grackles, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, Gray Catbird, Hooded Oriole** and other rarities. Birders who visit the oasis should also check the town. Local residents are glad to have birders visit, and it is easy to walk through town and see what is around. The small cafe at Fields is known for its milkshakes but also has excellent burgers and is a good lunch stop. It only seats about a dozen people, though, so avoid mid-day on holiday weekends.

Birding the oasis and the town is fairly straightforward. The oasis is a dike trail



around the pond, with the ditch of usually-dry Fields Creek on the south edge. That ditch often holds most of the birds and rewards multiple checks. It takes patience to work back and forth from one end of the ditch to the other, especially because many birds hide in the dense willows at the west end. When the creek has pools of water, many birds come to drink and bathe. The creek ditch extends into the town, and the short segment by the parking area can be very birdy, especially in fall.

Fields is good birding anytime from late April through late fall. It is often very good during bad weather in spring, unlike Malheur HQ, which tends to be slower on such days, perhaps because it is harder to bird in bad weather owing to limited sheltered low growth.

SITE 15 . The Pueblo Range creeks

South of Fields the Pueblo Mountains rise up over 4,000 feet from the desert floor. Several canyons reach the valley floor with riparian vegetation ranging from narrowleaf cottonwood to dense tangles of red-osier dogwood, chokecherry and willow. The gravel/dirt roads into all these canyons from the main highway are short, but normally require a high clearance vehicle. Even if you only have a low-clearance car you can park just off the main highway and walk up to the mouth of most of these canyons fairly easily with most of the good birding the first ½ mile of the creek from the highway.

The northernmost of these canyons and the most well known is Cottonwood Canyon. The mouth of this canyon has been one of the traditional locations for Oregon birders looking for breeding Black-throated Sparrows. To get there take the main highway south out of Fields 7.8 miles and turn right (west) onto a dirt road that can be negotiated by a car most years the first couple of tenths of a mile, but is best traversed in a high clearance vehicle especially if you'd like to reach the end of the road at the wilderness boundary (0.5 miles). There are several campsites along the creek and these are occasionally used by campers, hikers, hunters, ATVers and other recreationists.

The best bet for birding is to start low near the main highway and hike up along the creek looking and listening for birds and avoiding occupied campsites. The birdiest area is the top ¼ mile of the riparian area right before the road ends at the wilderness boundary. Species of interest found in this canyon have included: **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** (at least twice), **Northern Parula**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Indigo Bunting**, and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** (multiple sightings). This is a good area to hear Common Poorwills at dawn and dusk. Black-throated and Lark Sparrows can also be found near the mouth of the canyon and Chukars are hard to miss. Western Screech-Owl and Long-eared Owl have both nested in the canyon but are not regular nesters. You can continue a hike up into the wilderness here, there is a trail for a short way, but bird-wise you will

Lodging

Fields Station
(Tom and Sandy Downs)
22276 Fields Drive
Fields, OR 97710
(541)495-2275

Alvord Inn
(Chris and John Hodges)
22308 Fields Drive
Fields, OR 97710
(541) 589-0575
chris@alvordinn.com



mostly find the regular breeding species. During wet springs, this area is full of wildflowers and is an enjoyable hike whether any rarities are uncovered or not.

From the main highway at the entrance to Cottonwood Canyon continue 7.7 miles south to a dirt road on the right (west) that accesses the bottom of Colony Creek. You can drive up this road only about 0.2 or 0.3 miles, then pull off the road and park. There is actually a trail that follows this canyon way up into a saddle that goes into Van Horn Canyon. The trail is in good shape because it is used by a local rancher to move his cows up and down the mountain, so occasionally you'll see cows along this trail. The best birding is the bottom ½ mile of trail or so. The trail continues an additional 2 or 3 miles up to the saddle which is high above the desert floor and offers some superb views east into the Trout Creek Range on the way up. Unusual birds found here have included: **Plumbeous Vireo**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Blue Grosbeak**, **Common Grackle**, and **Baltimore Oriole**. Regular breeders include Lazuli Buntings (numerous), Lark Sparrows (in the flats near the main highway), and Yellow-breasted Chats.

Back at the main highway continue south 1.3 miles from the Colony Creek entrance and you will cross a cattle guard. There will be a dirt road immediately to the right (west). Ignore this road and 0.1 miles further there is another road that goes up to the mouth of Van Horn Canyon on the right (west). Better yet, continue 0.3 miles on the main highway to a different road that is in a little better shape that also goes to the mouth of Van Horn Canyon. It's about ½ mile into Van Horn where the road dead ends at a turnaround area next to the creek. There is a small campsite here and sometimes there will be campers here.



Since there is no real easy trail to follow here, it is birded less than Cottonwood or Colony Creek. From the end of the road you can follow the south side of the creek up about a ½ mile or further before the canyon becomes extremely narrow and super difficult to continue on. To best bird this area you'll need to cross the creek back and forth- this involves a bit of bush whacking and weaving back and forth across the creek where you can find bits of trail. There are some beautiful large cottonwood groves along the bottom section of this creek that look promising for harboring vagrants. A pair of Cooper's Hawks often nest in this area, and they will let you know if they are around when you are hiking up the creek! Blue-gray Gnatcatchers have been found along

the creek here and it seems likely that rarities like those found in Cottonwood Canyon should also be found here.

From the southernmost entrance into Van Horn Canyon continue south on the main highway 2.9 miles to a dirt road on the right (west) side of the highway which accesses a cemetery. Park almost immediately at the cemetery and walk cross country about ½ mile to get to the mouth of Denio Canyon which used to be accessed via a road which now is not accessible, although the canyon is public land. The walk to the canyon mouth is a good area to spot Lark Sparrows and other low desert breeders. Once again, the bottom ½ mile or so is the best portion of this canyon to bird. Recent rarities found here include **Indigo Bunting** and **Chestnut-sided Warbler**.

From the entrance to the cemetery it is 0.6 miles to the Oregon/California border in the town of Denio. A very small portion of the town is in Oregon but most of it lies in Nevada. It is worth walking the Oregon side in hopes of finding a surprise.

SITE 16. The Trout Creek Range creeks

The Trout Creek and Oregon Canyon ranges are much less often covered than are the Pueblo creeks. However, they are the most likely place in Oregon to find **Virginia's Warbler** (in ridgetop groves of mountain mahogany) and have hosted breeding Gray-headed Junco. Such vagrants as **Wood Thrush** and **Scarlet Tanager** have been found in riparian areas along the lowland creeks. The main east-west road here is the Whitehorse Ranch road, a long haul on gravel but usually in good condition unless the creeks have recently overflowed into the road. This road leads to Hwy. 78 and provides access to Site 18 as noted below. This article does not discuss in detail the birding possibilities in the upper Trout Creek and Oregon Canyon Mtns.

Site 17. Burns Junction

Southern Malheur County sites sometimes visited by birders covering the Malheur-Fields areas are far distant from each other but can be very productive. Malheur County offers several sites with excellent potential, but because they get limited coverage their actual productivity is not well known. The most frequently visited site is also probably the best, Burns Junction. This crossroads with a few trees (see aerial photo frontispiece for this article) is extraordinarily isolated in sage flats 90 miles southeast of Burns on Hwy. 78. Its vagrant productivity has been quite good for its limited coverage, with **Least Flycatcher**, **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Black-and-White Warbler**, **Tennessee Warbler** and others found there.

The site is based on a small store and diner that is not always open, but when it is, stop for a meal or a cookie and ask permission before birding the grounds. The best habitat consists of dense shrubbery and trees around the house, but there are a few scattered trees as well. The town of Rome to the east may also be worth checking, though it is not as easy to bird.

Site 18. Basque Station

The site called Basque Station on highway maps is an ODOT road maintenance station like the one at Alkali Lake. It has a large fenced compound with medium-sized trees, a single picnic table sometimes available in front outside the fence, and limited low shrubbery. Access is poor, but it is possible to see into most of the trees. Unusual birds found here with very limited coverage include **Gray Catbird**.

Group 5. North Malheur County sites

Site 19. Farewell Bend

The campground and picnic area at Farewell Bend State Park in extreme northeastern Malheur County is rarely covered by birders, but it is surrounded by sage-covered hills and gets a lot of migrants. There is limited low growth at the park, with the northern edge perhaps the best area. **Virginia's Warbler** has been found here.

The Snake River is adjacent to the park and when water is low, the area hosts gulls and shorebirds. An **Ancient Murrelet** was once found on the river nearby.

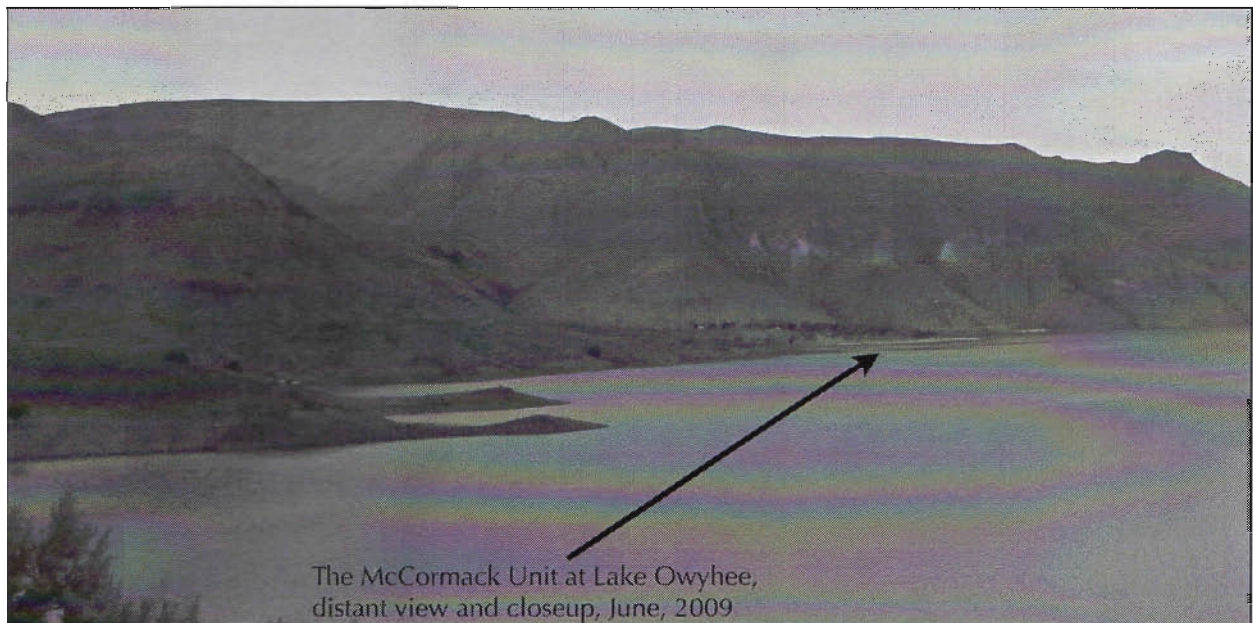


Farewell Bend State Park. *Photo courtesy Oregon State Parks.*

Site 20. The Owyhee Lake Parks

There are four sites quite close to each other in the vicinity of Owyhee Dam southwest of Adrian. Three of these sites are all state parks and are therefore quite accessible. The fourth is the small park below the dam itself, which has good access to a significant part of the habitat along the river.

The three state park sites are, from north to south along the narrow access road, the picnic area (Gordon Gulch), the main campground (McCormack Unit), and the Indian Creek campground at the southern end of the road, a site acquired around 2001 from a private owner. Of these, Indian Creek may be the best vagrant site, though none have had much coverage. The picnic area is almost entirely small canopy trees with little undergrowth. McCormack is a good mix but is often full of campers. Indian Creek is adjacent to a creek mouth with dense cover; the creek itself goes up a nearby canyon with dense willow cover. A downloadable map to these sites is available from the Oregon State Parks web site at <http://www.oregonstateparks.org/searchpark.php>.



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A New Longevity Record for Rhinoceros Auklet (*Cerorhinca monocerata*)

Russ Namitz

After the completion of the 2010 Oregon Shorebird Festival, I was motivated to scour some of the less-often birded sections of shorebird habitat around Coos Bay, Oregon. On September 1st, I decided to drive along Horsfall Beach in search of feeding shorebird flocks, but stayed north of the closed "Snowy Plover" section of beach that is closer to the jetty. I noticed several dead birds in the wrack line, including Common Murres, Rhinoceros Auklets and a couple of gulls. One Rhinoceros Auklet caught my eye as I noticed a metal band on its leg as I drove by. I removed the band and reported the band number electronically to the Bird Banding Laboratory (BBL) at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center (<http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/index.cfm>).



I was contacted by Jo Lutmerding, the Encounter Data Manager for the BBL. She requested a photograph of the band to verify the number and the condition of the bird when found. She stated that the age of this bird was "unusual" and a "potential longevity record." After I provided a photo confirming the band number, I received an email and later a pdf certificate giving details of the bird's capture, age and sex.

This bird was banded on Triangle Island, British Columbia as an After Second Year bird on July 28th, 1984 in at least its 3rd year, so its latest assumed hatch month (by BBL protocol) was June 1982. That makes this bird at least 28 years 3 months at its death. The previous longevity record for this species was 9 years old, so this encounter is significant on many levels.



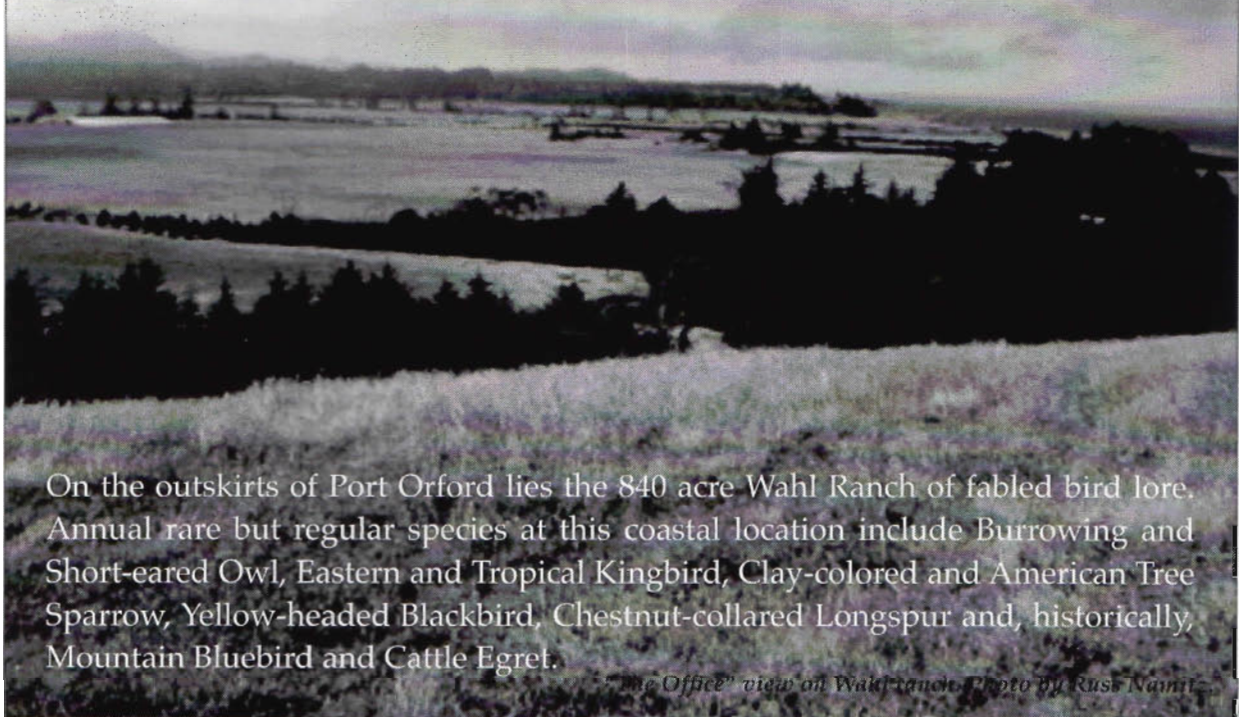
This record is now posted on the BBL's longevity record website <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbl/homepage/long0010.cfm#Alcids>. The bird was banded under the banding permit of Wendy Easton, a Landbird Biologist Environment Canada for the Canadian Wildlife Service.

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Ranching and Birding Coastal Curry County

An inside look at Wahl Ranch

Russ Namitz



On the outskirts of Port Orford lies the 840 acre Wahl Ranch of fabled bird lore. Annual rare but regular species at this coastal location include Burrowing and Short-eared Owl, Eastern and Tropical Kingbird, Clay-colored and American Tree Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Chestnut-collared Longspur and, historically, Mountain Bluebird and Cattle Egret.

"The Office" view of Wahl Ranch. Photo by Russ Namitz.

Over 270 bird species have been recorded here with a high number of Oregon rarities as well as Oregon's first and only accepted records of Common Ground-Dove and Sprague's Pipit. Terry Wahl met me at his barn, one of the "hotspots" on the ranch that has attracted such rarities as **White (Black-backed) Wagtail**, **Dickcissel**, **Lark Bunting** and **Broad-winged Hawk**. Dressed in jeans and a long-sleeved shirt, he sported a ball cap and scarf for battling the ever-present, off-shore wind in Curry County. A day's growth of beard glinted on his sun-browned face.

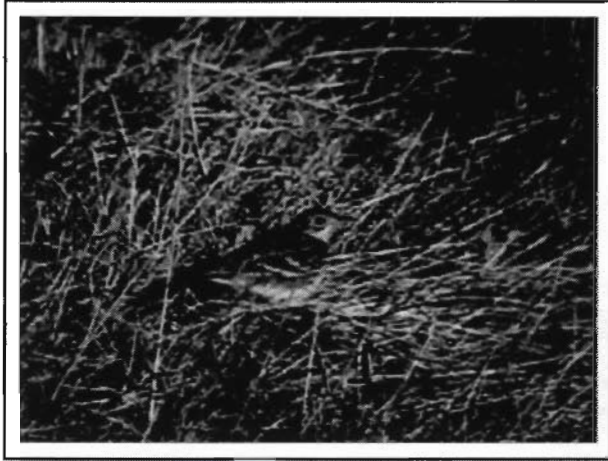
He hopped in my truck, and we navigated our way through a myriad of pastures, fences and sheep to drop down into a calm hollow at one of the fifteen or so man-made ponds on the property. Laugh wrinkles showed at the corners of the 52-year-old's blue eyes as we swapped stories about the birders we knew and their eccentricities.

The Wahl Ranch was once part of a larger 2400-acre ranch run by Terry's late maternal grandfather. Those approximately 2400 acres were



Common Ground-Dove 3 Aug. 2006, photo by Lois Miller.

divided between Terry's parents, aunts and uncles. Land has subsequently been passed down to Terry and his eight siblings for a family partnership. Wahl Ranchers & Company is a partnership within a partnership, if you will, where four of the siblings use the land for ranching and rent land from the siblings that do not ranch. Terry proudly stated the land has been in his family for 130 years. As he puts it, life is about "family, fun and doing the right thing. Throw in a little birding, here and there."



Sprague's Pipit, 1 October 2005, photo by Terry Wahl.

The siblings that run the Wahl Ranch are Terry, his brothers Pete and Buck and his sister Toozer. The ranch works under intensive grazing or rotation grazing rather than set stocking. Consequently, sheep flocks are moved almost daily using dogs, ATVs and temporary fencing. This has proven an excellent strategy for exotic weed control, predator control and bird watching.

Every day, Terry is out in the field working and birding. He grew up on the ranch with a natural curiosity for the outdoors. Though he noticed when there was an unusual bird (i.e. Yellow-headed Blackbird) that showed up, he didn't get hooked on birding until December 1995. After noting Terry's curiosity with unusual bird

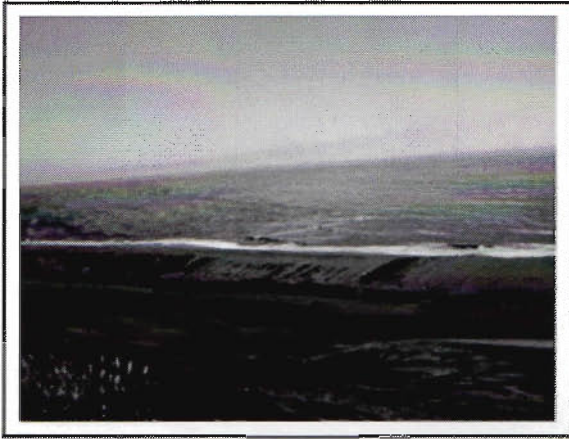
sightings, known "environmentalist" Jim Rogers invited him to participate in the Port Orford CBC. The two have been birding the Curry and Coos CBCs together ever since.

Terry acknowledged the long history of conflict between ranchers, environmentalists and the government. None of these groups are going to go away, in his opinion and he sees a need to "meet in the middle." He believes in "working landscapes" where conservation lands and production lands are mixed, increasing biodiversity. Most of his man-made ponds were funded or cost-shared by grants such as those from the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP). The WHIP Program is a voluntary program for conservation-minded landowners who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat on agricultural land, nonindustrial private forest land, and Indian land. Funds from the program provide for excavation, trees, shrubs and fencing among other things.

Terry works hard at producing wildlife habitat on his land. Of the 840-acre ranch, 540 acres are used for production (i.e. grazing). The other 300 or so acres are tied up in non-production habitat such as riparian, pond, beachfront and forest. Besides the aforementioned man-made ponds, Elk River cuts through the property, as do two different creeks and a 40+ acre swamp. Essentially the ranch is a huge grassland that is buffered by beach on one side with permanent water sources interspersed with shelter breaks made of conifer or mixed conifer-deciduous forest. There are approximately 500 nest boxes nailed up around the property used by Violet-green &



Red-throated Pipit, 30 April 2004, photo by Don Munson.



Restoring Snowy Plover Habitat. Photo by Russ Namitz.

Tree Swallows and Western Bluebirds, about 10 small owl boxes and half a dozen Wood Duck boxes.

The Wahls, as well as two adjacent and related families, the McKenzies and Van Loos, are working with the USFW service to eradicate European beach grass. They are bulldozing dunes to create 2 miles of Snowy Plover habitat. One of the reasons that Terry believes his ranch is such a bird magnet is the rock quarry which is managed with the intention of eventually turning the land back into pasture. The bare ground provides unique habitat for a wider variety of bird species like Horned Lark, sparrows and upland shorebirds.

On the issue of sharing bird sightings with the Oregon birding community and opening the ranch up to the public, Terry has mixed emotions. He says he is not hiding birds and informs local birders to photograph or publicize birds, but "can't show everybody in Oregon a rare bird and I don't want to." Obviously, it is a working ranch, and he can't be interrupted from his daily routine of rotating multiple sheep flocks. He runs about 8000 head of sheep (ewes & lambs) on the ranch each year. These sheep are broken into smaller, manageable flocks and parceled out to graze on various parts of the ranch. He is busy all year, but lambing season (March-April) tend to be the busiest when approximately 4500 lambs are born. Some people have told him that he works too hard, but he loves it. "I think my life is pretty much great. You know, hitting on all cylinders."

A perusal through the OFO website of "Accepted Records" for the Oregon Birds Records Committee (OBRC) turns up a number of rarities for the Wahl Ranch, some already mentioned.

*A **Magnificent Frigatebird** (never reported to the OBRC) was seen flying over the bluffs on a sunny day in July, 1998(?)

Common Moorhen: 219-01-09 Elk River, Curry Co., 1 bird 16-17 May 2001 (TWa).

Common Ground-Dove: 329-06-02 Cape Blanco, Curry Co., 1 bird on 3 August 2006 (photos by LoM, video by TWa).

***Eastern Phoebe:** May 25th, 2010 (record submitted, pending review)

White (Black-backed) Wagtail: 695.1-96-02 Cape Blanco, Curry Co., 1 bird on 9 November 1996 (TWa, photos by DMu).

Red-throated Pipit: 699-04-04 Cape Blanco, Curry Co., 2 birds 29-31 April 2004 (photos by LoM, DMu, videos by TWa).

Sprague's Pipit: 700-05-05 Langlois, Curry Co., 1 bird on 1 October 2005 (video by TWa).

Lark Bunting: 605-94-16 Cape Blanco, Curry Co., 1 breeding plumaged male during May or June 1994 (photo by TWa).

Indigo Bunting: 598-99-23 Cape Blanco, Curry Co., 1 female on 19 November 1999 (TWa).

Dickcissel: 604-07-12 Cape Blanco, Curry Co., 1 bird on 10 June 2007 (videotape by TWa).



Elk River mouth from the bluffs of Wahl Ranch. Photo by Russ Namitz.

Report from the 2010 OFO Annual Meeting - Newport

Russ Namitz



Friday night greeted OFO participants with good weather, a festive social hour and dinner rounded out with Dr. Bill Bridgeland's scientific talk on birds, insects and trees. Graphs and statistical analysis about grasshoppers, those darn cicadas and limiting factors were explained in detail.

Saturday was an eclectic mix of weather that vacillated one's attire between short-sleeve shirts, hats, fleece and even a little rain gear. The bird of the day was a LEWIS'S WOODPECKER found by Darrel Faxon on his farm at Thornton Creek (near Toledo). Other rare birds were a pair of Western Scrub Jays at Yaquina Head and an American Golden-Plover at Salishan Spit.

After a quick social hour, participants headed over to the Rogue Brewery for a catered dinner before the evening meeting. The OFO membership meeting was held at 7 p.m. and nominations were held for the open board positions. Russ Namitz was nominated for President, Mary Anne Sohlstrom for Treasurer, Craig Tumer for Secretary (nominated after the meeting) and three of the four board positions had nominations for Pamela Johnston, Craig Tumer (replaced by Tom Shreve the following week after agreeing to serve as Secretary) and David Schas. David Smith will remain in his current board position until his term ends next year.

Diana Bradshaw was recognized for her devotion and volunteer efforts, especially in regards to starting and maintaining the OFO website. Various items were purchased from the OFO bookcase, paintings and photographs were auctioned off silently and wine, T-shirts and photos were raffled as well.

Jon Dunn's talk on warblers was entertaining and elucidated identification points of possible vagrant eastern warblers, especially in fall/winter plumage.

Sunday was unfortunately a bit of a challenge birdwise as rain and fog dampened the day's birding activities, especially for groups that stayed north. The southern trip to Waldport had better weather and more birds were seen, but nothing rare or out of the ordinary. Large flocks of waterfowl were being seen migrating right along the beach, probably due to the heavy fog.

The fund-raising field trip with Jon Dunn suffered from the soggy conditions, but remained enjoyable.

Green Gables Italian catered Friday night's festivities and the Holiday Inn Express hosted the entire event.

Next year's meeting will be held **June 17-19 in Pendleton.**



Left to right: Jay Withgott, Dave Irons, Jon Dunn and Dan Heyerly. Photos by Shawneen Finnegan.

Contests !

First Prize in each category: \$50 and a one-year membership in OFO. 2nd and 3rd prize receive a one-year membership. The OBRC list is definitive for birds occurring in Oregon.

Photo - submit no more than **two** bird photos taken in **Oregon** or waters offshore of Oregon to: oregonbirds@centurytel.net. Each file no larger than 2mb for judging, please, and smaller is good. Winners to be published in *Oregon Birds* 37(1), April 2011. Photos must **not** have been previously published in *Oregon Birds*.

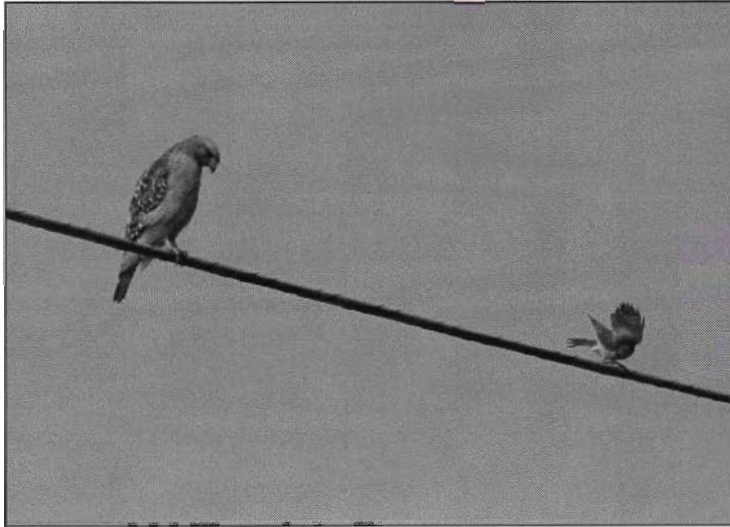
Art - submit no more than **two** scanned, printable works of art depicting a bird that has occurred in Oregon to the editor at acontrer@mindspring.com. Files no larger than 2mb for judging, please. Winners to be published in *Oregon Birds* 37(1), April 2011.

Poetry - submit **one** poem mentioning a bird that has occurred in Oregon, or a bird-related experience in Oregon, to the editor at acontrer@mindspring.com. 40 line maximum. Winners will appear in *Oregon Birds* 37(2), fall 2011.

Eligibility: OFO members and their immediate family members are eligible to submit.

Ineligible: OFO board members and the *Oregon Birds* editor are not eligible to submit.

Deadline: December 31, 2010

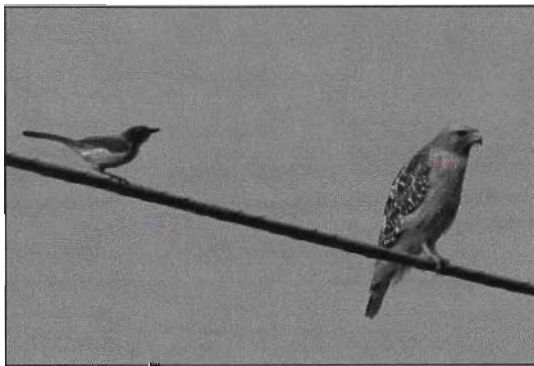


Diary of a Red-shouldered Hawk

Photos by Erik Bruhnke
Fern Ridge Reservoir, Lane Co., summer 2010

<http://www.pbase.com/birdfedr/profile>

What exactly do you want?



No, I will not notice you.



You have got to be kidding.



This neighborhood has gone downhill.

Oregon Birds *The journal of Oregon field ornithology*

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Oregon Birds is looking for material in these broad categories: **Birding Oregon, Recent Research and Local News and Notes.**

Birding Oregon articles deal with identification, distribution, bird finding guides, e.g. "where to find a _____ in Oregon" (for some of the rarer birds) and site guides "where to find birds in the _____ area" (for some of the better spots).

Recent Research articles typically deal with ecology, management, conservation, taxonomy, behavior, biology, and historical aspects of ornithology and birding in Oregon.

Local News and Notes includes local information (new checklists, new birding sites, event information)

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