

MARCH/APRIL 2022

## Spring into Birdathon!



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Western Bluebird, photo by Hayley Crews.

## FROM OUR SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

# Spring's Return

by Paul Lipscomb, Interim Executive Director  
Tumko Davaakhuu, Chief Operating Officer  
Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director  
Ali Berman, Communications Manager  
Emily Pinkowitz, Education Director  
Charles Milne, Development Director

It's March, and spring migration has already begun, with our very first migrants arriving in the state. We relish the return of the earliest species like the Tree Swallow, Rufous Hummingbird, Violet-green Swallow, and Turkey Vulture. Once April hits, it will feel like every day another species has arrived.

It's an incredible time and all the more powerful this year in particular, as it coincides with a sharp decrease in COVID cases throughout Oregon. Not only are the birds returning, but we hope to be able to return to more normal times, coming together in community as we have done for 120 years. After all, community has always been the cornerstone of Portland Audubon's success. Our members, partners, volunteers, donors, and activists are the fuel that allows us all to inspire people to love and protect nature across the entire Oregon landscape.

This spring there are so many opportunities to come together in our shared passion for birds and their habitat. You can raise funds through Birdathon, sharpen your birding skills on Bird Song Walks, protect birds through advocacy and activism, send your child to camp, or invest in your backyard habitat. No matter what path you choose, we remain immensely grateful to every single one of you for what you contribute to making Portland Audubon the organization it is today and for stretching your support to keep it strong throughout the pandemic.

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## Spring into Birdathon!

by Sarah Swanson, Birdathon Coordinator

Just as seasonal and eagerly anticipated as spring songbird migration, the yearly return of Birdathon is cause for celebration. It's a chance to get outside with other birders while supporting the important work of Portland Audubon. The funds that we raise help Portland Audubon protect the birds we love and the ecosystems they depend on. We hope to bring in over \$160,000 during Birdathon and inspire people to love and protect the natural world.



Everyone can play a part in Birdathon, as a donor, participant, or team leader. We have a variety of teams this year, with options for seasoned birders, new birders, cyclists, women, and LGBTQIA+ birders. And, of course, folks can always start their own team or participate individually!

We will have COVID policies in place, modeled after those used in our Education department. At this point, we plan to allow carpooling and vans, with appropriate safety measures in place. Policies will be finalized closer to the start of Birdathon.

**REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 15!**  
[birdathon.audubonportland.org](https://birdathon.audubonportland.org)

### Kickoff Events

This year we have added new kickoff events to celebrate Birdathon and get off to a great start with registration and donations. The week before Birdathon trips start, April 18-23, we will have a series of virtual speakers giving talks on a variety of subjects. All who have raised or donated at least \$45 for Birdathon 2022 will be eligible to attend. Speakers will include **Ted Floyd**, author and editor of *Birding* magazine; **David Lindo**, author of *The Urban Birder*; and **Marina Richie**, author of *Halcyon Journey: In Search of the Belted Kingfisher*.

### New to Birdathon?

It's like a walkathon, but instead of counting miles, Birdathoners count birds and try to find as many species as possible during their outing. Participants gather pledges then go out and bird their hardest. Birdathoners are invited to a celebration in June to recognize their collective achievements, try their best at the traditional bird quiz, and win fabulous door prizes.

### Thank You To Our Birdathon Sponsors!



SAUVIE ISLAND  
NATIVES





# Birdathon

These are just a few of the teams that you can join. For a complete list with full team descriptions, see the Birdathon website starting March 15 at [portlandaudubon.securesweet.com](http://portlandaudubon.securesweet.com).

## How can I be a part of Birdathon?

- **Join a team.** See the [portlandaudubon.securesweet.com](http://portlandaudubon.securesweet.com) for a full list with descriptions. Registration begins March 15.
- **Create a team.** See the navy box below for the perks of starting a team
- **Solo Birdathon.** Are you more of a Solitary Sandpiper when it comes to birding? Do a Birdathon on your own! You can register as an individual.
- **Donate.** Can't join Birdathon this year? Support your favorite participant or team with a donation. .

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Want to start a team? Not sure what team to join? Birdathon Coordinator Sarah Swanson is happy to help make your Birdathon experience a great one. Contact her at [birdathon@audubonportland.org](mailto:birdathon@audubonportland.org)

### Pintailgaiting

May 1 (Sun)

Visit Willamette Valley wildlife refuges with **Rebecca Waterman** (she/her), Communications Manager **Ali Berman** (she/her) and former Portland Audubon naturalist and educator **Ian Abraham** (he/him). The team will search for songbirds, raptors, waterfowl, and nesting Black-necked Stilts.

### Owl Be Darned

May 13-15 (Fri-Sun)

Join **Hailey Walls**, **Christine Jarvis**, and **Kayla McCurry** on a 3-day Birdathon experience geared toward women birders. We'll plan to bird together by van for those who are comfortable, and keep in close contact over a messaging platform for those who want to bird alone or in pairs. We are looking forward to racking up a big list of birds with our teammates again in 2022!

### Tequila Mockingbirds

May 14 (Sat)

Join Nature Store staff **Janet Drake**, **Sarah Cameron**, and **Ashley Rojo** along with volunteers as we cruise Washington and Yamhill counties looking for fantastic birds. We will bird Fernhill Wetlands, Jackson Bottom, and a few other birding hotspots in search of woodpeckers, warblers, waterfowl and more!

## The perks of starting your own Birdathon team

- **Birding whenever you want.** Birdathon teams can go out anytime from April 17 to June 12. Your trip can be as short or as long as you want—a morning walk or a weeklong adventure.
- **Birding wherever you want.** Take a trip to a local refuge or count birds during a weekend at the coast—it's up to you!
- **Birding with friends.** Bring along your favorite birding buddies or people that you'd like to introduce to birding. Have coworkers or family members that like birding? Make a team together!
- **Coming up with a fun team name.** Bird puns encouraged. Need ideas? How about "Veery Good Time," "No Egrets," "Accipiterrific," "Huffin' and Puffin," or "Hawkward Pause."



# 2022 Teams

## Voloonteers

May 14 (Sat)

This team of Portland Audubon volunteers, led by **April Brown** and Volunteer Manager **Vicky Medley**, will bird the Willamette Valley around Independence, OR. The half-day trip will end with a stop at the aptly named Ovenbird Bakery.

## Whittemore's Whatzits

May 15 (Sun)

**Laura Whittemore** and **Mark Fitzsimons** will be your guides on a tour of Orenco Woods Nature Park in Hillsboro and Fernhill Wetlands in Forest Grove. This trip is a great opportunity for beginning Birdathoners to learn from seasoned veterans.

## Millennial Falcons

May 15 (Sun)

Calling all young adult birders, photographers, and nature lovers... join avian enthusiasts **Erin Cathcart** and **Brandon Lampkin** for a casual half-day of birding at Fernhill Wetlands. All skill levels are welcome as we explore the restored wetlands for a wide variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors.

## Sage Flight

May 21 (Sat)

Like a flight of your favorite beverages, this team will sample Malheur's finest. Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator **Teresa Wicks** will lead the team from Malheur National Wildlife Refuge headquarters on a loop through the county, hitting all the hotspots, wrapping up with a physically distanced hangout on the lawn of Steens Mountain Brewing.

## Crow-Magnons

May 21 (Sat)

The Crow-Magnon team is heading back to Wasco County! Join Portland Audubon Staff Scientist **Joe Liebezeit** and expert birder **David Mandell** on an all-day exploration of Wasco County's incredible birding diversity from the eastern flanks of Mt. Hood down to the pine-oak savannah and sagebrush.

## Knithatches

May 22 (Sun) and weekly Zoom check-ins

Join a team of birders who knit and knitters who bird, co-led by Volunteer Manager **Vicky Medley** and **Erik Brown** for a month of knitting and birding. Grab your needles, pick a new or existing project, and start knitting. We'll have weekly Zoom check-ins to report our bird sightings and knitting progress, and then meet up to bird and knit together.

## Warbling Yogis

May 23 (Mon)

Join the Birdathon team with a twist (or maybe two)! Team leaders **Tonya Garreaud**, **Martha Gannett** and **Christie Galen** will combine birding with yoga as we bird our way around a few of Portland's parks and natural areas. No mats or yoga experience necessary—all poses will be done in our full birding gear.

## Talk Birdy to Me

June 4 (Sat)

Join fowl-mouthed Eugene-based birders **Rachael Friese** (she/her) and **Rebecca Waterman** (she/her) for a day of birding at Fern Ridge Wildlife Area. We will hit several hotspots and look for Grasshopper Sparrow, Black Tern, Yellow-breasted Chat and more.

## Duck the Patriarchy

June 4 (Sat)

Join members of **Portland's Feminist Bird Club** on this all-day ramble to the Oregon Coast. FBC leaders **Stephan Nance** and **Rabbit aL Friedrich** will be your guides, seeking early summer songbirds, raptors and waterbirds galore. A highlight will be our search for nesting Tufted Puffins and other seabirds at the iconic Haystack Rock.

## Handle-Barred Owls

June 4 (Sat)

Join current and former Portland Audubon staff members **Tara Lemezis**, **Tim Donner**, and **Kelsey Kuhnhausen** for a bikes, birds, and beers adventure in Portland. We'll bike to birding hotspots to look and listen for our favorite springtime migrants, year-round birds, and hopefully a Barred Owl! The trip will end with a celebratory checklist count and outdoor bevies!

## Clickadees

Date TBA

Grab your camera and join team leaders **Angela Calabrese** and **Tom Myers** on a birding treasure hunt as we collectively attempt to photograph as many bird species as possible over a long weekend. Team members can stay close to home or head out to their favorite locations. We encourage bird photographers of all skill levels.





Photo by Mike Houck.

## Green Infrastructure and Climate Resilience: Jump-starting Portland's Environmental Agenda

by Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director; and Micah Meskel, Activist Program Manager

One of Portland Audubon's long-standing priorities has been to ensure that the Portland metro area is one of the greenest metropolitan regions in North America. On a rapidly urbanizing and warming planet, it is more essential than ever that we build our cities in ways that protect and preserve nature. Integrating natural systems into our built landscape retains biodiversity, improves air and water quality, improves climate resilience, builds wildlife habitat and habitat connectivity, and provides access to nature for community members.

These natural systems, often referred to as green infrastructure, provide additional benefits including improved health outcomes for its residents, greater livability and economic viability for neighboring communities, and mitigation of negative impacts of climate change such as flooding and heat waves. Green infrastructure is also critical to achieving the city's equity goals. Data clearly shows that lower income communities, communities of color, and people with disabilities are disproportionately impacted by lack of green infrastructure.

Portland Audubon has worked for decades to integrate green infrastructure into the DNA of our region's landscape through its policies and codes. Portland has long been perceived as a national leader in this arena, but that leadership is at significant risk. The City has taken a step back, shying away from innovating in the environmental arena, reducing funding and the scope of its environmental work, and generally lacking leadership in crafting a cohesive big vision for making our landscape more resilient to climate change and increased urbanization. This is in part due to the elevation of challenges such as the housing crisis, COVID-19 response, and extreme weather events. However, these crises point toward, not away from, the need for healthy, resilient urban landscapes. The fact is that the current City Council is the least environmentally focused council in more than four decades, further exacerbated by a huge turnover of natural resource staff within the City bureaus. Where Portland once boasted some of the most innovative and aggressive environmental programs in the country, that edge has largely evaporated. As large amounts of infrastructure money flows into Portland, the City is simply not prepared to enact the sort of bold environmental initiatives it excelled at in the past.



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The big vision will take time to reinvigorate, but there are many opportunities in the coming 12-18 months to advance substantial environmental initiatives. Many of these have been stalled or delayed for years. We offer the following as priorities to jump-start the City's commitment to a healthy, green, climate-resilient landscape:

- **Environmental Zone Map Updates:** Portland depends on environmental zones (ezones) to protect its streams, wetlands, steep slopes, and forests. Ezones are the foundation for natural resource protections in our city, but its natural resource maps are decades old and based on outdated technology. Over the past three years, the City has been updating the maps using modern technology and conducting over 800 site visits. The new mapping is now in front of City Council for adoption. Council should quickly adopt these maps to ensure that our natural resources are accurately and adequately protected.
  - **Floodplain Resilience Plan:** As the direct result of a Portland Audubon lawsuit, the City is advancing a Floodplain Resilience Plan that provides significant new protection and mitigation standards for flood-prone areas. The plan is now in front of the Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission and from there will head to Council for a vote. Adoption of this plan represents a critical step toward creating a flood-resistant landscape and protecting salmon that migrate through our city.
  - **Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA):** Many people have never heard of the EOA, but this analysis, updated every five years or so, determines whether the City has enough industrial land to meet statewide requirements. For too long this process has been dominated by development interests, and the EOA has been used as a barrier to updating environmental protections along the industrialized portions of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. The City was set to conduct a more inclusive EOA update process in 2021 but has now delayed that process. It is critical that the City fund and advance an EOA process that is inclusive and integrates important community objectives such as environmental protection and climate resilience with river industrial development.
  - **Tree Code:** Portland tree protections are woefully insufficient. The tree code needs to be updated to provide stronger protections for big trees, increased opportunities to plant large-form trees in the right of way, especially in urban heat island areas, and to shift maintenance of trees in the right of way from property owners to the City.
  - **Dark Skies Initiative:** Light pollution is a growing problem, impacting human and wildlife health and wasting energy. The City worked with Portland Audubon during 2019 to develop a plan to address light pollution but suspended work on new lighting codes recommended in the plan at the start of COVID. At that time the City committed to revisiting funding in fall 2021.
  - **Willamette River Habitat Mitigation Banks:** For more than 15 years, the City has recognized the need to establish mitigation banks on the Willamette River in order to offset the impacts of river development. These are restoration sites that developers fund when environmental impacts of development cannot be avoided. Several mitigation bank concepts have been considered over the years but have failed to advance.
  - **Portland Harbor Superfund Program:** The City should advance inclusive final cleanup plans (remedial design plans) for all Superfund sites within Portland Harbor for which it has significant liability. As it stands, Cathedral Park is the only site with identified responsible parties within Portland Harbor that has not entered into an agreement with the EPA to develop final cleanup plans.
  - **Collaborative Community Restoration Partnerships:** The City works with local communities and partners to develop neighborhood-scale greening projects, especially in areas most vulnerable to poor environmental conditions (see article in this issue on the Wilkes Greening Project)
- We view this as a modest and realistic list of priorities that can be achieved in the next 12-18 months by the City of Portland. At the same time there is a need to reinvigorate discussion around developing a much bigger vision of what a green climate-resilient city should look like. Making good on this list will significantly advance natural resource protection, climate resilience, and climate justice in the short term.





## Greening Wilkes

### A Community-Visioned Green Infrastructure Project

by Micah Meskel, Activist Program Manager

Greening Wilkes is a collaborative project that engages the community surrounding Wilkes City Park and Wilkes Creek Headwaters in outer East Portland in revitalizing and expanding green infrastructure to improve wildlife habitat throughout the neighborhood. Portland Audubon, Friends of Trees, Verde, and Columbia Slough Watershed Council have teamed up on this pilot project to lead unique and complementary efforts to restore and enhance the area's greenspaces, while engaging the community in efforts to learn about the amazing natural resources present and build a stronger connection to nature and space.

Wilkes Creek Headwaters is a natural area owned and managed by Portland Parks and Recreation at the outer east limit of the city. The 20-acre parcel includes a diverse mix of open oak savannah and dense Douglas-fir forest habitat that provide refuge for a wide variety of wildlife. Located just south of the main stem of the Columbia Slough, the natural area contains springs that feed the only free-flowing stream in the city that still enters the slough, providing essential cold water to the watershed, which is especially important to the unique aquatic species of the slough.

While the centerpiece of the collaborative project is Wilkes Creek Headwaters and its unique natural resources, other aspects of the project will branch out along neighborhood streets to multifamily apartment complexes and individual backyards to improve habitat and community connectivity. This will include habitat restoration along the creek corridor and adjacent natural areas, tree planting and maintenance along nearby streets and private property, rain garden and native plant installations at a nearby apartment complex, and habitat restoration and plantings in backyards around the neighborhood. Each project will be an opportunity for the community to engage in work to improve the health of their local environment while helping envision how these greenspaces can help increase the climate resilience of the watershed and community.

On a sunny morning in February, over 65 community volunteers helped plant nearly a thousand native trees and shrubs at Wilkes Creek Headwaters, led by Friends of Trees and partners. Photo courtesy of Friends of Trees.

In addition to enrolling nearby residents in our Backyard Habitat Certification Program, Portland Audubon will also lead free educational events to engage the local community. In a collaboration between our Conservation team and Education department's Green Leader's program, we will co-lead nature walks to explore the local greenspaces and wildlife with the goal of helping facilitate a greater understanding and closer connection to nature near home. These walks will also highlight the collective work of our partners and how each green infrastructure project will reconnect the local ecosystem and achieve an ecological uplift that is greater than the sum of the separate projects.

The Greening Wilkes project is funded by a grant from the Port of Portland's Airport Futures Slough Enhancement Fund, which is designated to mitigate the environmental impacts of airport operations that affect surrounding natural resources and neighborhoods like Wilkes. The project also leverages several other funding sources and works to build on other City of Portland environmental investments in the Columbia Slough Watershed. Project partners hope to build on this collaborative approach by adding layers to the original project in the coming years and exporting this model to other neighborhoods.



## DEFINITIONS

**Green infrastructure:** The use of natural systems to protect water quality and improve environmental health on an urban landscape. Some examples are trees/native plants, bioswales, eco-roofs, creeks, parks, wetlands, forests, and floodplains.

**Climate resilience:** The ability for our society and systems to adapt in the face of issues caused by climate change and be better prepared for future climate change impacts.



# 2022 Legislative Agenda

by Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director

Historically, the Oregon Legislature met every other year for a session that spanned upwards of six months. In 2010 the legislature approved what is called a “short session” in the off years. Only 35 days long, this session moves very quickly, and legislation that is not scheduled for a committee hearing in the first week is largely dead on arrival. Despite the exceptionally fast pace, Portland Audubon is prioritizing several important wildlife bills that have already cleared this first hurdle.

Our top priorities for the 2022 Legislative Session are passing legislation to create an Elliott State Research Forest and enact new riparian protections across more than 10 million acres of private forestland in Oregon. Both are the result of years of work and offer the opportunity to transcend decades of conflict.

- **Senate Bill 1546-1** will create a new Elliott State Research Forest owned by the State of Oregon and managed by OSU, with strong oversight and accountability measures and strong protections for the Elliott’s older forests, riparian corridors, and imperiled species. It will also create the largest reserve in the Coast Range, more than 34,000 acres. For nearly three years, Portland Audubon served on the stakeholder advisory committee that developed this plan. It has the support of diverse stakeholders, including more than 25 conservation organizations, tribes, timber interests, recreational interests, education interests, and Coos County.
- **Senate Bills 1501 and 1502** will significantly strengthen riparian protections on over 10 million acres of private forestland in Oregon governed under the Oregon Forest Practices Act. Portland Audubon was honored to have participated in more than a year of direct negotiations between conservation and timber interests overseen by the Governor’s Office.

Legislation we are supporting in this session either directly or through the Oregon Wildlife Coalition:

- **House Bill 4130-1**, which would allocate \$5 million for wildlife crossings in Oregon.
- **House Bill 4128**, which would help prevent and respond to zoonotic disease outbreaks linked to the import, trade, and handling of wildlife by strengthening state agency coordination, monitoring, and response plans.

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- **General Fund** request for funding for one staff position at the Department of Land Conservation and Development to support implementation of the Rocky Habitat Plan, which covers more than 40% of the Oregon Coast and provides essential habitat for seabirds and other wildlife.

We are opposing two bills that would harm wildlife:

- **House Bill 4127**, which would allocate \$1 million for an unaccountable Wolf Compensation Fund beyond \$400,000 that has already been allocated and could be used for payments for “missing” livestock (as opposed to direct depredation loss) that are not verifiable.
- **House Bill 4080**, which would authorize formation of Predator Damage Control Districts to raise money to subsidize federal lethal wildlife control programs.

To date, it appears most of our priorities are advancing, but they will still have to travel a long legislative road on a short timeline. By the time this issue reaches mailboxes, much of the session will have passed and we are likely to be in a final push to secure passage. Look for a flurry of action alerts in late February and early March and please send emails to legislators—it makes a huge difference in a fast, crowded session.



# Spring Is Coming: Get Involved in Community Science!

by Joe Liebezeit, Staff Scientist

& Avian Conservation Manager

Candace Larson, Field Biologist

Teresa Wicks, Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator

Spring is at our doorstep and birds are starting to sing—time to get involved in our community science projects! Portland Audubon's Community Science program spans the state, from the iconic coast to the high desert of eastern Oregon as well as the Portland Metro region. We engage members of the public to help us better understand the ecology of birds and other wildlife and the habitats they depend on—and have fun doing it! These efforts enable us to accomplish our conservation initiatives, inform wildlife protection, and influence public policy. Because these projects are outdoors and can be done alone or in small groups, we are happy to encourage your participation using social distancing guidelines for COVID-19 safety. Below we highlight some of our spring and summer projects.

## PORTLAND METRO

### Washington County Greenspace Bird Surveys:

Portland Audubon and Clean Water Services are partnering to understand how bird communities are responding to habitat restoration and enhancement at Washington County greenspaces. If you love to bird, no matter what your skill level, consider helping with surveys at Cook Park in Tigard, Fernhill Wetlands in Forest Grove, and at the PCC Rock Creek Greenspace in Bethany. Submit your data to eBird and know that your effort will contribute toward a better understanding of bird life in urban greenspaces and help inform restoration and management efforts.

## COASTAL PROJECTS

**Plover Patrol:** We partner with Oregon State Parks to help monitor Snowy Plovers at four designated management areas on the North Coast. The Western Snowy Plover is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, but its population is rebounding through intensive management efforts. In recent years, plovers have returned to nest at some sites where they haven't nested in decades. We need your help to conduct presence/absence surveys, resight color-banded birds, and monitor nests.



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**Oregon Black Oystercatcher Project:** Since 2015 we, and partners including coastal Audubon chapters, Friends groups, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife, have been monitoring nests of this iconic coastal bird of conservation concern along the entire Oregon coast. Findings from our monitoring are helping inform efforts to protect important rocky habitats on Oregon's coast from Ecola Point to Cape Blanco.

**Seabird Colony Monitoring:** This project promotes wider recognition of Oregon's marine reserves/marine protected areas and seabird conservation through local community participation, outreach, and education. The monitoring provides baseline information on Oregon's seabird population adjacent to two of Oregon's Marine Reserves at Cape Perpetua and Cape Falcon.

## EASTERN OREGON

**Project IBIS:** Help Portland Audubon and our partners, including the Harney Basin Wetlands Initiative, better understand how ranchlands near Malheur National Wildlife Refuge are supporting birds. Over the past several years, conservationists have been working with





1. Greenspace bird surveying at Fernhill Wetlands, courtesy of Candace Larson. 2. Lazuli Bunting, photo by Hayley Crews. 3. Snowy Plover monitoring, photo by Joe Liebezeit. 4. Black Oystercatcher, photo by Andy Reago & Chrissy McClarren. 5. Seabird monitoring, photo by Phyllis Thompson. 6. Semaphore grass, photo by Teresa Wicks. 7. Snowy Plovers, photo by Mick Thompson.

ranchers on replacing aging flood-irrigation structures with newer structures that are expected to increase waterbird habitat. Follow our simple survey protocol next time you eBird one of Oregon's premier birding destinations and contribute to conservation!

**Malheur Shorebird Survey:** Help Portland Audubon and our partners, including USFWS and ODFW, monitor how the playas in the Double O unit of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge are supporting the interior population of Snowy Plovers and other migrating and breeding shorebirds, and how these populations have changed over time. These surveys require sign-up ahead of time and will be conducted in teams with refuge and Portland Audubon staff.

**Marsh Madness:** Help Portland Audubon and our partners collect information about marsh bird distribution and abundance in the Harney Basin. As water availability becomes more variable, it's important to better understand which marshes at Malheur

National Wildlife Refuge, and in the greater Harney Basin, are providing adequate habitat for secretive marsh birds like Sora and Virginia Rail. These surveys require sign-up ahead of time and will be conducted in teams with Portland Audubon staff.

## How To Get Involved

For general information about Community Science programs, visit our webpage or contact Joe Liebezeit ([jliebezeit@audubonportland.org](mailto:jliebezeit@audubonportland.org)). Also contact Joe to get involved in one or more of the coastal projects. To sign up for the Washington County Greenspace Bird Survey projects, contact Candace Larson ([clarson@audubonportland.org](mailto:clarson@audubonportland.org)), and for our Eastern Oregon projects, contact Teresa Wicks ([twicks@audubonportland.org](mailto:twicks@audubonportland.org)). **Upcoming trainings for these projects are posted on our events calendar. We look forward to welcoming you to the growing community of Portland Audubon community scientists!**



## FIELD NOTES

# Bald Eagle: Hunting for Prey

Ben Franklin famously referred to Bald Eagles as birds of “bad moral character” as he bemoaned his country choosing a national bird that “does not get his Living honestly...[he] is too lazy to fish for himself.” Franklin was of course right: the majority of the eagle’s diet is carrion, and another large portion comes by way of kleptoparasitism—stealing food caught by other predators.

And so it was with fascination that a group of birders enjoying an Audubon Birding Day to The Dalles watched a young eagle divebomb a lone American Coot in the Columbia River. The eagle would stoop, and just before it reached its target, the coot would dive underwater. The eagle would circle around for another pass, but by then, the coot had resurfaced, waiting to dive again at the next approach. We watched as we ate our own lunches and this seemingly hapless eagle



Bald Eagle, photo by Jerry McFarland.

made attempt after attempt. This type of hunting is rarely successful, and even less so for immatures.

But the eagle was not deterred, and even seemed to be adapting: with each pass, he would make his circle slightly smaller, until, after maybe 30 or 40 passes, he wheeled around on the exhausted coot who simply no longer had time to resurface and dive.

In front of awed onlookers, the young eagle took his prize back to a small island and began to eat, even considerate enough to hide his kill behind a rock. Despite his modesty, a large immature female had noted his success and swooped in, dislodging the smaller male and taking his hard-earned meal. He chased her for a few hundred meters but eventually gave up, conceding in his defeat that questions of moral character have little bearing on the easiest way to fill one’s belly.

## SIGHTINGS

The new year always brings a fresh bounty of avian rarities, as birders jump to work on their “year list” (the list of how many species they see each year), and the Christmas Bird Counts wrap up. The 96th annual Portland count had two “count-first” species, including a **MacGillivray’s Warbler** found along the Columbia Slough, earning its finder the coveted Eagle Eye Award, as well as three **Common Redpolls**, also found along the slough, which would have been a shoo-in most years as “best bird,” but was narrowly edged out by the warbler for rarity. Check the CBC write-up in this issue for more count details.

Also in early January, a female **Williamson’s Sapsucker** was found on Mt. Tabor, very near where the only other known record for Multnomah County occurred a number of years ago. Amazingly, a **Cassin’s Finch** was reported a few blocks away just days later.

While not in Oregon (but in the greater Portland area), a **Tennessee Warbler** was found coming to a feeder in North Vancouver, for a first Clark County record, and a very rare over-wintering record for the Pacific Northwest. In a similar vein, a **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was seen coming to a feeder near West Linn for over a week in December, but then disappeared seemingly as soon as it finished molting into adult plumage.



MacGillivray’s Warbler, photo by Robin Agarwal.

**Red-throated Loons** seem to be having a banner year, with multiple birds reported in all five Portland-area counties, and even farther upstream on the Columbia River. Other near-annual rarities include a **Tufted Duck** near Broughton Beach, reports of **Glaucous Gull** along the Willamette and in agricultural fields in Washington County, and several **Brant** seen across the region.

And the longevity award goes to the Pleasant Valley Road **Northern Mockingbird** in Washington County, back for its third winter. A **Harris’s Sparrow** is also back at Rentenaar Road on Sauvie Island for at least the second winter in a row.

Those are only a few of the rare birds reported across the region. **For corrections, tips, and reports, email Brodie Cass Talbott at [bcassstalbott@audubonportland.org](mailto:bcassstalbott@audubonportland.org), and for a more detailed weekly report, visit [audubonportland.org](http://audubonportland.org).**





**Portland Audubon** is offering unique overnight camp options for middle schoolers and teens this summer! Campers can learn survival techniques in Archery and Wilderness Skills, master the art of creative Nature Photography, spend the week exploring the majestic Redwoods, or experience the joy of making paper and handmade books, dyeing textiles, nature exploration, and more in Forests & Fibers. We can't wait to adventure with you this summer!

**NEW in 2022: Sliding Scale!**

The outdoors should belong to everyone. This summer, Portland Audubon is shifting to a sliding scale payment model to ensure all families can play, learn, and explore in nature with us.



**JUNE 27-SEPTEMBER 2 | GRADES 1-12**

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Gabe Sheoships, Exec. Director of Friends of Tryon Creek.

## NATURE NIGHTS

### The State of Western Organizations Working on Indigenous Landscapes

March 8 | 7-8:30 p.m.

Friends of Tryon Creek Executive Director Gabe Sheoships, will share a presentation that draws cultural differences and parallels between Indigenous stewardship practices and western models of environmental engagement, sharing examples and lessons from his work.

Cost: Free, donation suggested

FREE



### Advancing Climate Action and Environmental Justice with the Portland Clean Energy Fund

April 12 | 7-8:30 p.m.

Join Sam Baraso and David Grandfield of the Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) team to hear about how they are granting resources to nonprofits to bring clean energy, green infrastructure and clean-energy jobs to Portland.

Cost: Free, donation suggested

FREE



## CLASSES FOR ADULTS

### Beginning Birding by Ear Series

*Birdsong Basics:* March 10 | 6-7 p.m.

*Tips & Tricks:* March 17 | 6-7 p.m.

*Backyard Favorites:* March 24 | 6-7 p.m.

Hone your birding by ear skills in our beginning birding by ear digital courses. These classes will take you on a deep dive into the fascinating world of bird calls in your own backyard and beyond. **Please register separately for each class in this series.**

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Brodie Cass Talbott



Cedar Waxwing watercolor by Ronna Fujisawa.

## CLASSES FOR ADULTS

### Birding at Mount St. Helens National Volcanic Monument

March 14 | 6-7 p.m..

Take a tour through the diverse habitats of Mount St. Helens and learn where to bird in the area.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Gina Roberti



### Virtual Birding Classes with Greg Baker

*Virtual Birding on Sauvie Island:* March 15 | 6-7 p.m.

*Virtual Birding-Springtime Migrants on Mt. Tabor:* March 21 | 6-7 p.m.

Improve your birding skills and confidence in these interactive class modules that document a day birding in the field. **Please register separately for each class.**

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Greg Baker



### Watercolor Painting with Ronna

*The Barn Owl:* March 18 | 6-7:15 p.m.

*The Common Tern:* March 28 | 6-7:15 p.m.

Join live, online classes to paint alongside Ronna Fujisawa, an experienced watercolor painter, art educator, and bird enthusiast. **Please register separately for each class.**

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Ronna Fujisawa



### Introduction to Herping: Amphibians & Reptiles of Portland

March 22 | 6-7 p.m.

Join us to learn about the amphibians and reptiles of the Portland area.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: John Rakestraw







Townsend's Warbler, photo by Emilie Chen.



Western Tanager, photo by Jerry McFarland.

## CLASSES FOR ADULTS

### Flycatchers!

April 5 | 6-7 p.m.

In this class we will look at the dozen flycatcher species typically found in the Portland area, learning how to distinguish each one by sight and sound.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: John Rakestraw



### Amazing Crossbills

April 7 | 6-7 p.m.

In this class, you'll learn all about our most enigmatic and unique finch: the Red Crossbill!

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Brodie Cass Talbott



### Warblers!

April 14 | 6-7 p.m.

Learn to identify our local warblers by sight and sound, where to look for them, and how to deal with the dreaded "Warbler Neck."

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: John Rakestraw



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## FIELD CLASSES

### Field Class: Birding by Ear, Year-Round Species

Classes: April 14 and April 28\*: 7:30-10:30 a.m.

In this two-session field class with longtime ear birder Laura Whittemore you'll get to know the songs and calls of resident songbirds such as Song Sparrow, American Robin, Spotted Towhee, and Bewick's Wren.

Fee: \$75 members / \$95 non-members \*for both classes

Leader: Laura Whittemore

### Field Class: Birding by Ear, Spring and Summer Migrants

Classes: May 12 and May 26\*: 7:30-10:30 a.m.

In this two-session field class with longtime ear birder Laura Whittemore you'll get to know the songs and calls of spring and summer migrant songbirds such as Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Tanager, House Wren, Common Yellowthroat, and Swainson's Thrush.

Fee: \$75 members / \$95 non-members \*for both classes

Leader: Laura Whittemore

### The New School of Birding, Module 2: Breeding Ecology and Birdsong

Online classes: April 20, April 27, May 4, May 11, May 18, and May 25 from 6-7:15 p.m.

Field days: April 30, May 14 and May 28, from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. or 4 p.m. (depending on destination)

In this module, we'll explore how and why birds sing, diving into breeding and nesting ecology from courtship and nest building to mating and fledging.

Fee: \$450 members / \$600 non-members

Leaders: Candace Larson and Dan van den Broek



Upland Sandpiper, photo by Andrew Cannizzaro.

## ECOTOURS & PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRIPS

### Pacific Northwest Trip: Newport to Florence, Oregon's Central Coast

March 19-21

Join Stefan on a coastal adventure where we will enjoy our rugged coastal landscape and watch for seabirds. A highlight target bird is the endangered Western Snowy Plover.

Fee: \$355 members / \$455 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick

### Pacific Northwest Trip: Klamath Basin

March 31-April 3

Explore Klamath Basin, home to six national wildlife refuges and one of the most important wetland ecosystems in the west! Our visit is timed to see the spectacular spring migration of geese, along with a great diversity of waterfowl and plenty of raptors.

Fee: \$945 members / \$1,145 non-members

Leaders: Brodie Cass Talbott and April Brown

### Explore Beautiful Alberta: Prairies and Boreal Forest, Warblers and Fossils!

June 10-18

From the Canadian Badlands to Boreal Forest, from warblers to eastern sparrows, to dinosaurs and bison —this trip has it all! We will find a fantastic assortment of bird species and other wildlife on this one-week exploration of Alberta, east of the Rockies.

Fee: \$2,245 members / \$2,895 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick

## Go Birding this Spring!

Visit [bit.ly/PA-FieldTrips-ABD](https://bit.ly/PA-FieldTrips-ABD) to register and for more information.

### Field Trip: Beginning Birding at Mt. Tabor

March 11 | 8-10 a.m.

Join us for the companion field trip to the two-part How to Identify Birds class series. This trip to Mt. Tabor aims to put theory into practice in identifying birds.

Fee: \$45 members / \$65 non-members

Leader: Brodie Cass Talbott

### Field Trip: Birding the Sandy River Delta

March 17 | 7:30-10:30 a.m.

Join Erin and Tara for an early migration field trip to the Sandy River Delta. The open habitat and proximity to water make the delta a productive place for early open country migrants.

Fee: \$45 members / \$65 non-members

Leaders: Erin Law and Tara Lemezis

### Field Trip: Beginning Birding by Ear at Mt. Tabor

March 25 | 7:30-10:30 a.m.

This field trip to Mt. Tabor is the companion trip to the Beginning Birding by Ear class series and aims to put theory into practice in identifying birds by ear.

Fee: \$45 members / \$65 non-members

Leader: Brodie Cass Talbott

### Audubon Birding Day: Clackamas County Hotspots, Molalla Area

March 26 | 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Discover the birding patches around Molalla with birds galore at the beginning of spring.

Fee: \$65 members / \$85 non-members

Leader: Dan van den Broek

Sign up for Ecotours at  
[bit.ly/pdxaudubon-ecotours](https://bit.ly/pdxaudubon-ecotours)







## Portland's Christmas Bird Count: The Results Are In!

by Candace Larson, Field Biologist  
Joe Liebezeit, Staff Scientist & Avian Conservation Manager

On January 2, 2022, Portland Audubon held our 96th annual (and second "COVID-safe") Christmas Bird Count. Field teams and feeder watchers enjoyed a cold and mostly dry day, dodging the snow, ice, and heavy rains that plagued the days prior and immediately following. Because of ongoing risks associated with COVID-19, field teams were once again reduced in size, but a hardy group of 215 field observers and 115 feeder watchers managed to tally a respectable 123 species, right smack in the middle of the 10-year average for the Portland count.

Many special birds were sighted, including several rare or unexpected species. This year's coveted "eagle eye" award—bestowed upon the birder who finds the most unusual bird of the day—goes to Ezra Cohen, who found the first-ever Portland CBC MacGillivray's Warbler, seen skulking in the brambles near the Columbia Slough! Other notable sightings included Common Redpoll, Common Yellowthroat, American Dipper, Black-crowned Night-heron, Greater Yellowlegs, and Western Bluebird. This year's count also produced 6 Red-throated and 2 Common Loons, a welcome return after zero loons of any variety on last year's count. Notable misses included Greater White-fronted Goose, a regular on Portland's count, and Tundra Swan, found on about half of our CBCs.

Overall, field counters and feeder watchers tallied nearly 80,000 individual birds, a recent record high. This was aided in part by a substantial increase in American Crows: over 12,500 this year, which is more than twice last year's record. Waterfowl numbers overall were

pretty average, but Ring-necked Ducks and Greater Scaup revealed themselves in record numbers. Raptors, woodpeckers, and jays also had a strong showing. Species with unexpectedly low totals included Golden-crowned Kinglets and Yellow-rumped Warblers, while Lesser Goldfinches hit another peak. It should be noted that one year's species total represents a snapshot in time, and does not necessarily reflect trends in overall population numbers.

The Portland CBC feeds into a data set that encompasses over 2,500 CBC count circles across North America and as far south as Brazil. This was the 122nd year for the CBC, making for an impressively long, large-scale data set. Hundreds of studies have been published using CBC data, and findings are used to inform climate change science as well as important management and conservation decisions that help protect birds across their flyways.

Heartfelt gratitude to area leaders Brodie Cass Talbott, Dan Strong, Lynn Herring, Carol Murdock, and Joe Liebezeit, each of whom organized under COVID-era protocols and then compiled the piles of data into a usable tally. And a big shout-out to the field counters and feeder watchers for making this year's Portland CBC another outstanding success. We look forward to seeing you again next year! If you'd like to participate as a community scientist on next year's CBC or another project, please visit our website to check out all the exciting opportunities. We'd love to have you join in!



See more Community Science opportunities and join us at [bit.ly/PA-CommunityScience](https://bit.ly/PA-CommunityScience)





Black-headed Grosbeak, photo by Jason McGinnis.

# Bird Song Walks: Rebirth of a Portland Audubon Tradition

by Erin Law, Senior Educator, Adult Classes & Trips; Camelia Zollars, Public Programs & Partnerships Specialist;  
Brodie Cass Talbott, Educator & Trips Specialist

The thrills of spring migration can turn an ordinary morning into something extraordinary. The familiar rhythm of seasonal bird song inspires hopefulness, wonder, and curiosity. The first week of April brings our resident birds, some winter stragglers, and a few early migrants such as swallows, all easily seen on the barren trees. Before we know it, Black-headed Grosbeaks and Bullock's Orioles have arrived. The trees have brilliant green foliage, making bird songs the more reliable way to identify which species are around. Luckily we've had practice by now at both seeing and hearing residents and early migrants, so we are ready to learn the new bird songs filling the forests. In the last weeks of May, we observe nesting birds frantically filling up on protein-packed insects, and we may even spot some baby birds. Each week is entirely captivating, and everyone can't wait to do it again!

For decades, Portland Audubon has marked this changing season with weekly Bird Song Walks. We are delighted to share that after a two-year hiatus, we are bringing back these iconic walks in April and May! You can expect the familiarity of early mornings with longtime leaders at favorite locations such as Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge and Mt. Tabor, but we are also adding a new "Bird Song for Beginners" walk at Whitaker Ponds Natural Area for the bird curious who noticed birds for the first time during the pandemic. In celebration of the return of Bird Song Walks, we're taking a look back at the history of these volunteer-powered community events.

This tradition began 37 years ago. In 1985, Portland Audubon launched Bird Song Walks in the April Warbler with this opening line: "Recently, it's been



discovered that spring migrants gather along higher ridges and hilltops of the Willamette Valley.” The following spring, the walks continued at Pittock Mansion and Oaks Bottom, led by Portland Audubon’s Urban Naturalist Mike Houck. According to Tom Love, Field Trip Coordinator for Portland Audubon for the first decade of the Bird Song Walks, one of the early goals was to make wildlife more accessible to everyone, not only by leading walks in urban areas but also by including nearby public transportation options, as the descriptions did even as far back as the 1980s.

By the 1990s, the walks had expanded to Mt. Tabor—by this time appreciated by birders as a favored stopover site for migrating warblers, flycatchers, and vireos—with Gerard Lillie starting a decades-long commitment as the walk’s leader. By 2019 it was common for over 40 birders to assemble at 7 a.m. to welcome old and new Bird Song Walk friends. Stories of rare and unusual sightings accumulated over the decades of birding, like the time a still-warm Cassin’s Auklet was found dead under a fir tree during a walk. Beyond the rarities, Gerard remembers how leading the walks brought him an appreciation for common birds seen through the eyes of a beginner. Most of all, he recently said, he enjoyed watching birders grow and learn over the weeks and years. Gerard fondly

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remembers a pair of elementary-school-aged twins who came with their mother, only to become two of the top birders in the state a decade later. Tom McNamara, who led the walks with Gerard, chuckled, recalling a walk where he proclaimed that you’d never find a Mountain Chickadee on Mt. Tabor, only to have the twins find one 30 minutes later.

In the 2000s, walks expanded to the Camassia Natural Area and Tualatin Hills Nature Park, led by Paul Sullivan. In 2009, Wink Gross took over the Pittock Mansion walks and became a mainstay there until 2019. Stephanie and Rick Wagner led walks at Tryon Creek State Park, Hailey Walls at Oaks Bottom, and Ron Escano at Leach Botanical Garden. The simplicity of these walks held strong across the decades. “Folks leave when they have to for work,” read a description from 1988. A full recounting of the many places these walks have happened is probably not feasible on these pages. Still, it is beyond doubt that they would not have been possible without the dedication and generosity of many leaders who love to share their joy of birds. And of course to the many staff members, like Dan van den Broek, Steve Engel, Dave Helzer, and Steve Robertson, who organized the program, led birdsong walks, and supported volunteers over many years.

We are grateful to the many leaders volunteering this spring to welcome us all back to Bird Song Walks! They will be joined by Portland Audubon’s new Public Programs & Partners Specialist, Camelia Zollars, who began working with us this winter. In the coming years, she will grow the program to host walks for People of Color and those new to birding, expand to more accessible Portland locations, and offer evening and weekend walks for non-early birds and families.

We look forward to keeping the tradition alive and creating a place for you to join us, year after year, with the birds.





Black Phoebe, photo by Peter E. Hart.

## Black Phoebes: New Year-Round Portland Resident?

by Brodie Cass Talbott, Educator & Trips Specialist

Arriving at Whitaker Ponds on an overcast January afternoon, I soon hear a now familiar sound. “Pip! Pip!” It pauses, then starts again, this time nonstop as it seems to circle the pond. I scan from the shoreline, and the bird grabs my attention as it zips from perch to perch: oversized dark head and fluffy crest, diminutive tuxedo, black on the back and breast, and a white belly. Black Phoebes are instantly recognizable and immediately loveable. They are at once graceful and playful, energetic and dignified.

And an increasingly common sight in Portland. A few scant years ago, these were considered a rarity. The annual Portland Christmas Bird Count, held on January 2 this year, does a great job showing the change. For the last three years, we have had six to seven individuals each year. For the previous 93 years of the count, we had four. Total.

Walking to the back pond of Whitaker, another sound grabbed my ear. “Pitee...pitew...pitee...pitew...” Not the energetic call of the bird I heard on the front pond, but a song from a second bird! Presumably the male of what is now a breeding pair in the park, this bird singing and apparently defending territory. And highlighting another big change in their range. Whereas birds over much of the Willamette Valley for the last decade were mostly found in the winter—thought to be reverse migrants

from their southern breeding range—over the last few years, many seem to have simply stayed, found a mate, and are now year-round breeding birds at many of our local areas, especially along the Columbia Slough.

So what accounts for this rapid change? Climate change is the obvious guess, as warmer temperatures have meant more insects in even the coldest months, allowing these birds to survive the winter. But the species has seen a range expansion everywhere, it turns out, again because of human effect. Black Phoebes traditionally nested on large rocks or cliffs, but the increasing human construction of buildings has created perfect habitat for their cup nests, carefully constructed of mud. In many places their nests are found almost exclusively on human construction, similar to Barn Swallows.

So where can you enjoy these dapper acrobats? You can look for them anywhere that has smaller bodies of water, including small rivers, wetlands, and wooded ponds. As noted, the Columbia Slough now hosts many pairs across its course, but they are also well known at Force Lake in North Portland, as well as Fernhill Wetlands and the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, and have recently jumped into Washington, where they appear to have bred at Ridgefield for the first time in 2021. The list keeps growing!



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- Gift card: Bonka Bird

# Dark Skies Help Birds Fly

Downtown Portland, photo by Sama093.

by Mary Coolidge, BirdSafe and Lights Out Coordinator

Spring is upon us, and with it the rolling arrival of our beloved spring migrants. Migration is a truly marvelous, if perilous feat, and one that most birds will perform under the cover of darkness. About 70% of North American birds are migratory, and over 80% of those migrate at night. Nighttime passage offers a number of benefits, including refuge from diurnal predators, cooler temperatures, a less turbulent atmosphere, preservation of daylight hours for refueling, and star maps.

Though migration is already well underway, we will see peak numbers of birds between mid-April and mid-May. There are a number of ways we can each contribute to helping safeguard birds on their journeys (keeping cats indoors, providing habitat in our yards, and marking our windows to prevent collisions), but one of the easiest things we can do is turn off unnecessary overnight

lighting—especially during peak migration—to reduce the fog of skyglow that clouds the skies over our cities and towns, drowning out the stars and luring birds into lit areas.

Want to lend birds a hand? Researchers at Colorado State University's AeroEco Lab use the unique signatures produced by concentrations of birds on radar maps to predict when and where bird numbers will be highest each night during spring migration. With this information, aeroecologists issue forecasts, including red, orange, and yellow alerts, that help focus our efforts on peak movement nights. **This spring, visit [bit.ly/GoLightsOut](http://bit.ly/GoLightsOut) and Take the Pledge to Go Lights Out**, and watch our social media feeds for red alert nights when it is most critical to turn off our lights to keep our avian friends aloft!

## DID YOU KNOW?

- **During migration, some birds modify their sleep patterns to facilitate long-distance nocturnal travels.** Frigatebirds, for example, use a strategy called unihemispheric sleeping, which allows them to rest half the brain while the other half stays alert. Other birds will take brief power naps during the day. On her 3,000-mile journey between Central and South America and northern Canada and Alaska, a Swainson's Thrush can sleep for just nine seconds at a time!
- **In preparation for migration, some birds nearly double their weight** (or more!) in a feeding frenzy called hyperphagia, which helps them put on fat to fuel their rigorous journeys.
- The last species to arrive in Oregon include many aerial insectivores—birds like kingbirds and nighthawks whose migration is carefully choreographed to align with warming days and the associated increase in flying insects.
- Some birds talk to each other while migrating, which likely evolved to facilitate collective decision-making in flight. **Researchers in the Midwest found that when these species get drawn into lit areas and vocalize, they inadvertently lure other birds in, resulting in collisions with buildings.** Such birds are known as supercolliders and include Dark-eyed Junco, Song Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Brown Creeper, Fox Sparrow, Swainson's Thrush, and Common Yellowthroat, to name a few.
- The same researchers looked at collision rates at the Chicago Convention Center and found **a 75% reduction in collision rates** when the building turned off overnight lighting.
- Some Bar-tailed Godwits undertake a 6,800-mile nonstop migration from Alaska to New Zealand every fall. To achieve this feat, they absorb 25% of their liver, kidneys, and digestive tract, increase the size of their heart and chest muscles, and put on a lot of fat!
- Recent tagging has shown that **Sooty Shearwaters are among the longest distance migrants on earth, with some individuals traveling over 47,000 miles each year** on their figure-eight route between South Pacific breeding areas and wintering grounds in the subarctic.
- A Rufous Hummingbird measures three inches long, weighs less than a nickel, and undertakes one of the longest migrations of any bird relative to body size. They can fly nearly 3,900 miles one way from SE Alaska to Mexico (or 78 million body lengths)!



# Volunteering in a Pandemic: How Volunteers Continue to Embody Our Mission

by Vicky Medley, Volunteer Manager

Portland Audubon's volunteers enrich our community with their personalities, skills, interests, and dedication. We are not just supported by volunteers, we were founded by them, and they lead and serve at every level of the organization! Their contributions expand the reach of our conservation mission in ways that limited paid staff would never be able to achieve.

How painful it has been to limit volunteer activities and staff presence on campus due to COVID- 19! We miss the chats on the breezeway, the impromptu lunches between shifts, and the staff and volunteers stopping by our front desk to say hello. I miss hearing about the grandkids, a volunteer's new job, or the rare bird that someone spotted. Those interactions are what strengthen our community fabric at Portland Audubon; it is how we get to know new volunteers and stay connected to our long-term volunteers.

And yet, despite the inability to gather in person, volunteers continue to rise up to support Portland Audubon. Since the beginning of the pandemic, our Wildlife Solutions Counselors have served from home. They guide callers through solutions to wildlife conflicts, whether it be advising a caller with an injured animal, answering a question about Salmonella in a birdfeeder, or helping manage a nest of baby skunks under a porch. Together, that team contributed more than 3,000 hours of volunteer service and answered more than 10,000 phone calls in 2021! Their contributions have had an enormous positive impact on the wildlife in our area.

With careful adherence to CDC guidelines, the Wildlife Care Center remained open this entire time. During the darkest days of the pandemic, few volunteers were able to serve indoors, but that has changed with access to vaccines. In 2021, Care Center volunteers contributed more than 10,000 hours of service! They have assisted in animal care and feeding, prepped diets, cleaned outdoor cages and enclosures, helped with admissions, and washed many, many, loads of poop laundry and dirty dishes. Our Ambassador Animal volunteers continue to provide care, feeding, and enrichment to the four birds and one turtle who live permanently at Portland Audubon.

While for many volunteers, serving at Portland Audubon has been a source of connection and comfort over the last two years, but for others it has become a burden. The easing of the lockdown has not meant a big surge in returning



Kristin Jamerson, a longtime volunteer who serves on the Sanctuary Board Committee and is a Mamie Campbell Award winner, removing invasive vines as part of the Wednesday Work Crew.

volunteers; we are facing normal attrition as well as challenges created by the pandemic. Volunteers may have health complications that continue to demand isolation. Others have faced a difficult two years of additional pressure at work, and at this point something needs to give. Some volunteers are caring for children or grandchildren to keep their exposure bubble small. And for others, we have not yet brought back the activity that keeps them active at Portland Audubon.

Even though many of our traditional volunteer roles are limited now, we welcome YOUR involvement at Portland Audubon as a volunteer! It only takes a few minutes to follow our Activist alerts and write to a legislator to support our conservation efforts. If you want to spend a weekend with us, check out our Stewardship Weekends in Harney County.

Our Community Science projects can be done in isolation and do not require an ongoing commitment. As this pandemic hopefully eases, we look forward to the connections, the community and the interactions with our volunteer flock.

**To find out more, contact Volunteer Manager Vicky Medley, at [vmedley@audubonportland.org](mailto:vmedley@audubonportland.org).**



Rock painted by volunteer Shelley Reynolds



# Giving Back to Malheur

by Teresa Wicks, Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator

Eastern Oregon is home to some of the most spectacular landscapes and important bird habitats in Oregon. The cerulean and emerald wetlands of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge along with the ruddy rimrock, gray-green sagebrush, juniper-speckled hills of Steens Mountain, and other geologic features have provided respite to birders for nearly a century. Now more than ever, the places and species that bring us so much joy, solitude, and comfort deserve our support and reciprocity. In 2022, Portland Audubon has a diversity of programs for engaging with Malheur and the Harney Basin.

As part of our commitment to equity and inclusion in the outdoors, Portland Audubon is working with local, regional, and national partners and organizations to provide access to gear while birding, camping, and participating in events in Harney County. In 2021 we worked with Friends of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge with funding from the Oregon Wildlife Foundation to build 15 "Explorer Packs," Osprey backpacks with binoculars and a variety of ID guides in them. Ten of these backpacks are available for Harney County residents to check out from the Harney County Library, and five are available to borrow from the Nature Store at Malheur Headquarters. Additionally, we were fortunate to receive a donation of binoculars and a scope from Leupold and Stevens for participants to borrow during our bird outings.

More recently, we received a grant from the Roundhouse Foundation to start building a gear library. This library will have camping gear available for participants to use during our stewardship weekends and other overnight events at Malheur and in the larger Harney Basin. Eventually, we hope to provide assistance with gas or travel to the Harney Basin to further remove barriers to participating in our exciting conservation programs in southeastern Oregon.

To the right is a calendar of volunteer opportunities in the Harney Basin. **To learn more about these and other opportunities, go to [audubonportland.org](https://audubonportland.org) or the Restore Malheur Facebook page, or contact Teresa Wicks, Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator, at [twicks@audubonportland.org](mailto:twicks@audubonportland.org).**



## STEWARDSHIP PARTIES

These multiday events are for folks who want to get their hands dirty. Join Portland Audubon and local partners in restoring wildlife habitat in Harney County (and of course doing some great bird watching!)

- **Sod House Ranch Stewardship Weekend**  
August 11-14  
Camping provided at Sod House Ranch
- **Mud Lake Fence Cleanup**  
September 1-4  
Camping provided, location TBD
- **Burns Paiute Tribe Upland Restoration**  
October 17-20  
Camping provided east of Juntura
- **Oregon Semaphore Grass Planting**  
October 20-22  
Camping provided at Crystal Crane Hot Springs





## IN MEMORY

Portland Audubon gratefully acknowledges these special gifts:

**Marylou Alberdt**  
Kathleen Golden

**Jason Alldrin**  
Leslie Holder

**Janet Brock**  
Susan Brock

**Christine Ann Colasurdo**  
Patricia Dresler

**Virginia Covey**  
Barbara Ann Covey

**Marion Craig**  
Barbara & Carl Witt

**Amy Frank**  
Lisa Frank  
Kathy Stewart

**Fred Hauptman**  
Robert Priest

**Nancy Hawkins Gurney**  
Marshall Hawkins

**Rose Herrera**  
Edith Herrera

**Spencer Higgins**  
Suellen & Larry Amateis  
Mary Bunn  
Amelia O'Connor  
Rebecca Olson  
Paula & Robb Roberts  
Linda Robinson & David  
Jolma  
Sharon Swift  
Robert Tracey

**Chance Alexa Hoyt**  
Lynne Hoyt

**Doris Kryz**  
Madeleine & Jack  
Menashe

**James Leachman**  
Philip & Holly Kline

**Norbert Leupold**  
Leupold & Stevens Foundation

**Judi & John Match**  
Jan Rimerman

**Dick Pugh**  
Bernard Carlsen

**Marcia Ryan**  
Jayme Hauck

**Barbara Schaffner**  
Shap Shapiro & Martha Moore

**Yu Mui Siu**  
Belinda Siu & Wai Man

**Daryl Smith**  
Elona Landau

**Ron L. Spencer**  
Cheryl & Adam Knobloch  
Tammy Spencer

**Bill Stachnik**  
Charmaine Hunt

**Loran Starr**  
Claire Houston

**Carol Stewart**  
Bill Waslo

**Betty White**  
Gertrude Allen  
Alina Bowers  
Mary Conover  
Margaret Harber  
Lisa Hess  
Anna Horvitz  
Kennedy Odowick  
Jerome Schiller  
Jennifer Steen-Reavis

## IN HONOR

**Cathy & Bob Barlow**  
Carolyn Crider

**Richard Demarest**  
MJ Murawski-Demarest &  
Marc Demarest

**Robert Dieffenbach**  
Martin Dieffenbach

**Mary Diener**  
Rebecca Hatke

**Rachel Dumont**  
Naomi & Peter Hand

**Bryan Paul Durda**  
Peche Barteaux

**Jeff & Lindsay Farrer**  
Dawn Lloyd

**Ferrier Family**  
Daniel Meddaugh

**Barbara Fishel**  
Matthew Fishel

**Tami Fung**  
Mary & Wayne Lei

**Anne Goetz**  
James Goetz

**Chris & Kari Guy**  
Carol Evans

**Joan & Tim Hamilton**  
Susan Engert

**A.J. Heindel**  
Scott Olesuk

**Mike Houck**  
Christina Scarzello &  
Michael Hayakawa

**Patti Jaso**  
Matthew Jaso

**David Kato**  
Ken Kato

**Johanna King**  
Gerald Hill

**Henry Kiser**  
Kristine and Theodore  
Kiser

**Margaret LaFaive**  
Alison Porter

**Miriam Litt**  
David Parker & Annie  
Popkin

**Ann Littlewood**  
Miriam Pemberton

**Rod, Michelle & Ava  
Lundberg**  
Kimberly Taylor

**Nancy & Gil MacGregor**  
Linda Fox

**Lena Matthews**  
James & Janet Cooke

**Marsie Nufer**  
Elysabeth Hall

**Marilyn O'Grady**  
Susan Bexton & Scott Flor

**Jim Park**  
Allison Park

**Cecilia Rice**  
Meredith Kusch

**Patricia Roberts**  
W.E. & Rebecca Roberts

**Ginnie Ross**  
Billie Erwin

**David Schulman**  
Keith Miller

**Mike Sefton**  
Flying Hinesleys

**John Sehlke**  
Courtney DeVore

**Eric & Meg Valentine**  
Sara Wight

**Fern Wexler**  
Andrea & Eric London

Honor a special person with a gift to Portland Audubon. Your gift will help fund a future of inspiring people to love and protect nature. Make a tribute gift online at [audubonportland.org](http://audubonportland.org) or by calling 971-222-6130.

## BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Through their business practices and financial contributions, the following businesses are helping advance our mission and protect Oregon's birds, natural resources, and livability. If you would like to become a member of the Portland Audubon Business Alliance, please contact Charles Milne, Director of Development at **971-222-6117**. We encourage you to support the businesses that support us!



**Vernier**



**ERATH**  
WINERY



Antler Gallery

Cindy Thompson  
Event Production

Columbia Bank

Columbia Sportswear

The Commerce Group

David Evans and  
Associates

Elk Cove Winery

Erath Winery

Eyes! On Broadway

Garden Fever

Grow Construction

HomeLight

JD Fulwiler & Co.  
Insurance

Labrewatory

Leatherman Tool  
Group, Inc.

McCoy Foat &  
Company PC, CPAs

McDonald Jacobs, P.C.

Miller Nash Graham &  
Dunn LLP

Miller Paint Co.

Morel Ink

Mountain Rose Herbs

Paxton Gate PDX

PGE

Portland Nursery

Pro Photo

Sauvie Island Coffee  
Company

Silver Rain Massage

Tilbury Ferguson  
Investment

Urban Asset Advisors

Washman LLC

West Bearing  
Investments

Wonderland Tattoo



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## Welcome to the Nature Store!

Open daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m.!

Spring has sprung and migration is underway! The Nature Store has all of your spring migration needs covered—from binoculars to field guides to birding by ear resources. We also carry information about birding hotspots, what birds you are likely to see in the area, and resources for other nature identification. Nature Store staff and volunteers are always happy to answer your birdy and nature questions!

Questions? Email [store@audubonportland.org](mailto:store@audubonportland.org)  
or call us at 503-292-9453 ext. 3

Shop the Nature Store online at  
[www.naturestorepdx.squarespace.com](http://www.naturestorepdx.squarespace.com)



Photo by Jason Gebhart.



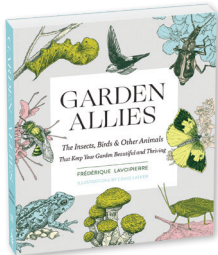
## Spring Field Guides

It's no surprise that spring is a fantastic time to get outside. Whether you're all ears for migrating bird calls, sleuthing under rocks for salamanders, or in search of the most colorful wildflowers, the Nature Store has you covered with all the field guides for your outdoor adventures!



### Member Prices:

Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast: **\$23.36**  
Butterflies of the PNW Pocket Guide: **\$7.16**  
Dragonflies and Damselflies of Oregon: **\$22.46**  
Reptiles of the Northwest: **\$22.46**  
Must-See Birds of the PNW: **\$17.96**



## April Book Club

Monday, April 18 | 7-8 p.m.

**Garden Allies—The Insects, Birds and Other Animals That Keep Your Garden Beautiful and Thriving** by Frederique Lavoipierre

The birds, mammals, reptiles, and insects that inhabit our yards and gardens pollinate our flowers and vegetable crops, and they keep pests in check. Lavoipierre shares fascinating portraits of these creatures and showing how they keep the garden's ecology in balance. With beautiful pen-and-ink drawings by Craig Latker, Garden Allies invites you to make friends with the creatures that fill your garden.

RSVP to [arojo@audubonportland.org](mailto:arojo@audubonportland.org) (attn: Book Club)

## Optics Focus

### Spring Optics Fair

Saturday, April 23 | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

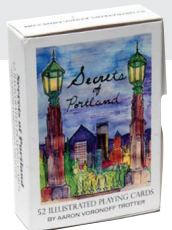
Join us for our annual FREE Spring Optics Fair! We've invited representatives from all our optics lines: Swarovski, Zeiss, Leupold, Vortex, Nikon, and Opticron.

Shopping for optics can feel daunting. To make it easy, for one day we are gathering all the experts and quality lines carried by the Nature Store. You'll be able to try a huge range of optics, see the newest models and features, and quickly get the answers you need to make a wise decision. Check our website for updates about extra sales and discounts!

## PNW Pick

### Illustrated Playing Cards

This unique deck celebrates outdoor places, mountain views, and green spaces, rendered in a riot of colors inspired by the sun breaks of springtime. Sketched in pen and watercolor pencil, the illustrations highlight the scenic natural beauty within and nearby Portland. Includes a hand-drawn map that corresponds to the suits and numbers (we will give you a hint—seven of diamonds is our favorite!)



Member Price: **\$18.00**



TOGETHER FOR NATURE

5151 NW Cornell Road  
Portland, OR 97210

Portland Audubon inspires all people to love and protect birds, wildlife,  
and the natural environment upon which life depends.



Anna's Hummingbird, photo by Tara Lemezis.

## Bottle Drop

### SUPPORT WILDLIFE WHILE RECYCLING!

Want to recycle and donate to Portland Audubon? Simply collect your redeemable cans and bottles, and pop them into a blue Bottle Drop bag. You can pick up pre-tagged bags at Portland Audubon Nature Store during regular business hours. Drop them off at the nearest bottle drop location ([bottledropcenters.com/locations](https://bottledropcenters.com/locations)) and the funds automatically go to Portland Audubon. You can also transfer funds from your own Bottle Drop account.

[bottledropcenters.com/locations](https://bottledropcenters.com/locations)

### GET IN TOUCH

#### Administration Offices

503-292-6855

Please call for updated hours

#### Wildlife Sanctuary

Dawn to dusk every day

#### Wildlife Care Center

503-292-0304

Open daily from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
with COVID protocols

#### Nature Store & Interpretive Center

Open daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

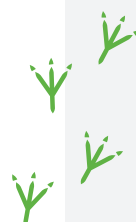
(Closed Mondays)

503-292-9453 ext. 3

Portland Audubon staff are  
working remotely. All staff can still be  
reached by phone or email.

**On the Cover:** Belted Kingfisher, photo by Dave Hamilton.

**On the Inside Cover:** Snowy Plovers, photo by Mick Thompson; Black-headed Grosbeak, photo by Jason McGinnis; Painted Volunteer Rock by Shelley Reynolds; Semaphore Grass planting party, photo by Teresa Wicks.



## Birdy Brain Buster!

Which of these Portland  
breeding birds does not migrate  
south in the winter?

- A. Pacific Wren
- B. Rufous Hummingbird
- C. Wilson's Warbler
- D. Osprey



We are a member of Earth Share Oregon.  
[earthshare-oregon.org](https://earthshare-oregon.org)

Answer: A