



Fish & Wildlife Commission Reform

8 Advice from a Green Leader

18 Invasive Cattail in Harney Co.

22 Irene Finley's Legacy



William Finley and Herman Bohlman in action.

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to a New Year Full of Promise

by Stuart Wells, Executive Director

As we begin a new year, this issue will reflect not only on the achievements of the past year, but on the continued legacy of environmental conservation, education, and wildlife rehabilitation that this organization has embraced throughout its history.

Our positive impact on the environment can be seen across the state, from our early work to protect Three Arch Rocks as an important coastal nesting habitat, to recognizing the need to maintain the wetlands of the Klamath Basin, to our efforts to establish the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge as an important biological area for waterfowl and shorebirds. Our decades-long work to protect forests, sage-steppe habitat, wetlands, the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, and urban greenspaces are a part of our rich environmental conservation legacy. Continuing this legacy is even more important than ever, with the effects of climate change, the significant loss of habitat, and a biodiversity crisis that has led to more than a 30% decline in bird populations since the 1970s.

The new year promises to be transformative for our organization and for Oregon. Stay tuned as we prepare to announce our new name in February, continue work to identify a new site for the construction of a new Wildlife Care Center, add a staff person dedicated to the Klamath Basin, continue our education work with young people and adults, and build a stronger, more diverse and inclusive community.

IN THIS ISSUE



- 3 Fish and Wildlife Commission Reform
- 6 Legislative Priorities for 2024
- 7 Ecotour Reflections: The Dammed Columbia
- 8 Advice from a Green Leader to Her Sister
- 10 SWIFTS Nature Camp Is Back!
- 11 Wild Arts Festival Has Another Great Year
- 12 Field Notes & Sightings
- 13 Audubon Birding Days & Field Trips
- 14 Classes, Outings & Events
- 16 Ecotours: Travel with Us!
- 17 From the Coast/From Eastern Oregon
- 18 An Emerging Invasive Threat in the Harney Basin
- 19 2023 in the Wildlife Care Center
- 20 Ambassador Animal Interpretive Program
- 21 Wish List
- 22 The Immense Contributions of Irene Finley
- 25 In Memory
- 26 Business Alliance
- 27 Nature Store





Fish and Wildlife Commission Reform

Fish and Wildlife Commission reform! If that scintillating subject doesn't draw you in, I don't know what will. If, however, you still need some enticement, what if I told you the commission is made up of just seven individuals who make decisions crucial to our wildlife and habitat conservation work and it's gotten better in recent years but is now at risk of getting worse? Much worse.

Chinook salmon / USFWS - Roger Tabor

by Quinn Read, Director of Conservation

The Fish and Wildlife Commission is responsible for overseeing the Department of Fish and Wildlife and enacting rules and regulations related to Oregon's fish, wildlife, and habitat. The department's mission is "to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations." Sounds like an organization that should be a good ally. Unfortunately, the department and the commission have historically prioritized consumptive uses and users of fish and wildlife, focusing on huntable and fishable species with relatively little resources devoted to non-game or imperiled wildlife.

Last year, the legislature passed a bill to restructure the commission. This legislative session, there are multiple seats up for appointment or reappointment. Now we have a recipe for industry and political shenanigans. That's why one of our priorities this session is to advocate for conservation and science-focused candidates to serve on the commission and to watchdog any efforts to stack the commission with anti-conservation interests.

This dynamic didn't come about by accident. Fish and wildlife conservation funding at the state level is typically characterized as a user-pay, user-benefit model. Like most other state fish and wildlife agencies, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife has historically received the majority of its funding from hunting and fishing license fees and federal excise taxes on ammo, firearms, and fishing gear. This is why

Fish and Wildlife Commission Reform cont.

hunting and fishing interests are treated (and referred to repeatedly by officials) as the primary “customers” of the agency. Though this has long been the model, participation in hunting and fishing has steadily declined, leading to significant revenue shortfalls. The department has sought substantially more general fund dollars from the public, but hasn’t made a corresponding shift to address the broad public interest in conservation.

As taxpayers, this should offend all of us. But it maybe shouldn’t surprise us.

Our system of wildlife conservation and management is rooted in our country’s colonial origins, the genocide of Indigenous peoples, and the unfettered exploitation of natural resources. It’s a system created at the turn of the 20th century by and for sport hunters—almost entirely white men—to preserve recreational opportunities after many game species were pushed to the edge (or over the edge) of extinction as a result of overhunting, habitat destruction, and deliberate extermination campaigns, including of species of cultural importance to Indigenous peoples.

It’s worth asking why we would bother reforming a system with these origins. Honestly, I’d love to sack it and start fresh. But in the meantime, because we care about protecting wildlife and habitat, it’s imperative that we understand how decisions are made and who makes those decisions.

Within this wildly imperfect system, Portland Audubon and our conservation partners have worked at many levels to shift dynamics at the commission and the department. This includes changing the makeup of the commission itself because the individuals appointed will determine the future of wildlife conservation in Oregon.

That brings us back to the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

Within this wildly imperfect system, Portland Audubon and our conservation partners have worked at many levels to shift dynamics at the commission and the department. This includes changing the makeup of the commission itself because the individuals appointed will determine the future of wildlife conservation in Oregon.

It may shock you to learn that there are other problems with the commission besides the continued emphasis on consumptive uses of fish and wildlife. Although it’s getting better, there has historically been very little diversity on the commission. These are unpaid, volunteer positions, meaning that service is often limited to financially secure retirees. Special interests drive commission appointments, and previous governors have taken a “one seat per interest group” approach to selecting candidates. Commissioners also often represent the very interests they are supposed to regulate, with conflicts of interest ignored. And they receive no official training to understand the department’s conservation mission or their obligation to the public.

Commissioners are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate. With the passage last year of HB 3086, we will have seven commissioners distributed among the state’s five river basin management districts. Commissioners must have



Marbled Murrelet / Aaron Allred

knowledge or experience relevant to implementing the state's wildlife policy and an understanding of the roles of federally recognized Tribes in Oregon and the relationships those Tribes have with the lands, water, and natural resources the commission governs. If you go to the state's board and commissions website, you'll find a handy how-to guide for applying. But once you submit an application, it disappears into the backchannels of bureaucracy. In practice, appointments are based on political connections, support or opposition from interest groups, and the vague perception of whether a person is "confirmable."

It's the pits, but there are things we are doing to make improvements today and into the future. We are committed to leadership development and building a bench of great candidates, including identifying and supporting informed and thoughtful candidates who care about conserving fish and wildlife and who will prioritize science and value public process.

We prioritize the appointment of people who represent Oregon's rapidly changing demographics and who identify as Black, Indigenous, or people of color. We are working to achieve transparency around conflicts of interest and ensure that new commissioners receive adequate onboarding to understand the wide variety of interests they must represent. We also advocate for improved compensation for commissioners to enable more members of the public to serve without sacrificing necessary income.

Over time, things have slowly started to shift. We've had terrific conservation advocates like Greg Wolley, Kathayoon Khalil, and current chair Mary Wahl push the department to embody its broad conservation mission. Through the commission, Marbled Murrelets gained more protection under the Oregon Endangered Species Act. Cruel and inhumane trap check times were substantially reduced. The Climate and Ocean Change Policy was adopted. Many Tribes established cooperative management agreements with the department. Collaborative work on coexistence, habitat connectivity, and anti-poaching all moved forward.

Unfortunately, the interests that have long enjoyed dominance over the commission, the department, and its agenda have begun to organize to reverse this trend. We are not the only ones who understand the importance of the individuals sitting on the commission. We expect there to be a fight over the slate of appointments and reappointments this legislative session. And we are worried. In previous years, commission seats have been used as political trading stock by governors willing to throw wildlife interests under the bus to advance other policies and appease industry interests. We'll be watchdogging the process and holding our leaders accountable.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission—and our state's fish, wildlife, and habitat—can't afford to go backward. Please stay tuned for how you can get involved. And if you are interested in serving on the commission, or know someone who is, please let us know!



Legislative Priorities for 2024

by Joe Liebezeit, Assistant Director of Conservation – Statewide; Micah Meskel, Assistant Director of Conservation – Urban; and Quinn Read, Director of Conservation

We are kicking off the new year with a fast and furious legislative session. On February 5, the Oregon legislature will begin a 35-day sprint to get a dizzying array of bills over the finish line. Portland Audubon has been working for months to prepare for session and will be working on bills in each of the below priority areas to protect our state's wildlife and wild places.

✓ Addressing the Housing Crisis and Protecting Nature

Oregon is in the midst of a housing affordability and homelessness crisis. Our longtime vision is to make Portland the greenest metropolitan area in the country—one in which all people have access to affordable housing in complete, healthy, equitable, and climate-resilient communities surrounded by nature. Together with our conservation partners, we are working with the governor's office to help advise and inform housing policy for this session. Although we are encouraged by the progress we've made in discussions, we remain concerned that indiscriminate development will threaten our storied land-use system. Prioritizing lower- and moderate-income housing and investing in infrastructure within existing urban-growth boundaries will more readily create housing when and where we need it. We will advocate for solutions to increase housing affordability that also improve climate resilience and protect nature for people and wildlife.

✓ Marine Reserves

Oregon's marine reserves and marine protected areas were designated in 2012 and cover about 9% of our state waters. These underwater sea parks limit fishing and resource extraction to help protect marine resources and biodiversity and act as natural laboratories to better understand how our ocean is impacted by stressors like climate change. In 2023, we worked on a bill (HB 2903) to enhance the marine reserves program, administered by ODFW, based on recommendations from an Oregon State University 10-year assessment. Despite bipartisan support from the Coastal Caucus, we fell short. Thanks to Representative David Gomberg's leadership and a strong coalition, we will attempt to pass this bill again. For a small price tag (about \$1 million every two years) we can make Oregon's Marine Reserves Program one of the strongest in the nation and better protect our iconic ocean for marine wildlife, commercial fisheries, and coastal communities.

✓ Wildlife Omnibus Bill

We support Representative Ken Helm's wildlife omnibus bill, which includes support for a robust coexistence program within the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The intent is to reduce conflicts and promote coexistence between humans and wildlife through outreach, education, and training, support for legally permitted wildlife rehabilitators, and other work related to living with wildlife. The bill also creates a wildlife disease program to improve the state's response to zoonotic diseases (diseases that spread between animals and people), provides support to the Invasive Species Council, and boosts ongoing work to support wildlife mobility and habitat connectivity.

✓ Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission

Last year, the legislature passed a bill to restructure the Fish and Wildlife Commission, which sets up this session for a potential upset—with a new seat to fill and several reappointments. In previous years, commission seats have been used as political trading stock by governors willing to throw wildlife interests under the bus to advance other policies and appease industry interests. Portland Audubon will watchdog this process and advocate for diverse candidates committed to conservation, science, and meaningful public engagement. (See the cover story for more information.)

Once the legislative session gets underway in February, things will move quickly. Your voice is so important in getting important conservation bills over the finish line. We will be in touch in the weeks to come with ways to get involved, but you can help right now by calling your legislators and telling them you want them to support these bills.



Photo by John/flickr



Ecotour Reflections: The Dammed Columbia

Photo by Claire Weiser

by Brodie Cass Talbott, Educator & Trips Specialist; and Candace Larson, Master Naturalist

On a blustery mid-November afternoon, a group of 15 curious adventurers huddled around Ed Edmo, well-



Ed Edmo / Francene Grewe

known Shoshone-Bannock storyteller and poet, as he told us about growing up at Celilo Falls. We were at Celilo Park, a grassy strip tucked between the freeway and the now-placid Columbia River, where 70 years ago the falls still thundered, and Indigenous people pulled salmon from the rapids

using dip nets and spears. “The house where I lived is under that freeway now,” Ed explained. And Celilo Falls—the most important Indigenous fishing site and trading hub in the Pacific Northwest—is underwater, flooded by the completion of The Dalles Dam in 1957.

We had invited Ed to join us as a part of our four-day ecotour entitled The Dammed Columbia, which traveled upstream from Portland to visit the lower five dams on the Columbia River, as well as Ice Harbor Dam, the lowest of the Snake River dams. Our goal was to investigate the complex impacts of hydropower on fish, birds, habitats, and people, and to explore the unique, human-altered landscapes these massive pieces of infrastructure have shaped. We also wanted to help folks better understand the debate around the removal of the four Lower Snake River dams, which has support from tribes, environmental groups including Portland Audubon, and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, but is opposed by some public utilities as well as industries that rely on the irrigation and river transport that the dams enable.

That’s a lot to unpack, as hydropower provides a key source of renewable energy to a grid that is otherwise still largely powered by fossil fuels. But it also imperils salmon, lamprey, and sturgeon, and violates the treaties the U.S. government signed with local Tribes to guarantee the right of Native people to fish in “all usual and accustomed places.” As we traveled, we learned this history and saw in person many of the intricate and

expensive fish passage systems that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been building for decades to try to minimize impacts on threatened and endangered fish, all while failing to recover a single species.

At our first stop, four American Dippers swam at the mouth of Tanner Creek as a California sea lion—a popular scapegoat for plummeting fish numbers—swam toward the Bonneville Dam. At John Day Dam we saw hundreds of Bonaparte’s Gulls fishing the turbulent waters of the tailrace, where disoriented small fish are easy pickings for the mergansers, gulls, and cormorants that seem unfazed by the multitude of “predator deterrence” mechanisms the Corps has deployed. We visited the fish passage viewing room at McNary Dam, where real-time fish passage numbers are displayed, but without reference to long-term trends or details of how many passing fish are part of the massive program of hatchery fish meant to “augment” the threatened runs. And upstream of the Tri-Cities, we visited the Wanapum Heritage Center, where the Wanapum people tell of their entire village being inundated by the creation of the Priest Rapids Dam, while their traditional root-digging areas lie behind the barbed wire of the Hanford exclusion zone.

We also walked several trails in various wildlife areas that the Corps has created to mitigate loss of riparian habitat created by the dams. We encountered a dozen Black-crowned Night-Herons tucked into a willow copse, side-by-side Tundra and Trumpeter Swans, multitudes of waterfowl, and unexpected treats like Pygmy Nuthatches and a cooperative Northern Shrike, among many, many beautiful moments.

Driving back to Portland, we made a last stop at Maryhill, where a Common Loon was fishing not far from shore. A tug pushed an empty barge up the river as trains pushed goods downstream. The complexity of the Columbia River project was on full display, dwarfed by the beauty of a canyon bathed in the warm light of a fall sunset. Fifteen curious adventurers headed home with new perspectives and passion for honoring the birds and wildlife, habitats, and people that rely on the critical, beautiful Dammed Columbia.



From Me to You: Advice from a Green

by Ethel Hernandez, Educator, Youth & Family Partnerships Specialist

Green Leaders is a program in collaboration with Hacienda Community Development Coalition (CDC) that aims to empower adolescents in their own self-discovery while encouraging their curiosity for the natural world. It is geared toward 15- to 20-year-olds that are part of the Hacienda CDC community. The program is a seven-month mentorship that focuses on leadership development and educator training while remaining culturally responsive. Participants begin the program by receiving education in the natural history and ecology of the Pacific Northwest while simultaneously undergoing their own personal development. Building off these foundations, youth learn, design, and lead activities for children and families within the Hacienda community and begin to transform their own practice as individuals and educators. Green Leaders will continue their journey into summer and become full-time seasonal assistant educators at Portland Audubon. The hope is that as a result of this program, youth can take their acquired knowledge and skills to be environmental leaders and educators in their local communities and wherever they go.

Sophia Quezada will be returning to Green Leaders for the third time. She's an Aquarius, has two cats, loves boba, and is named after her grandmother. A self-taught

artist, she is curious about different art forms and is realizing that she quite enjoys biology class at school. She started as the youngest participant in her cohort and is quickly becoming our most seasoned leader. Sophia is most excited to be joining this year alongside her younger sister, Valeria. This is Sophia's letter to Valeria with glimpses, challenges, and moments of discovery that the program has offered Sophia, in the hope that her sister gets to experience the same.

Dear Valeria,

You've been asking so many questions about the Green Leader program now that you're almost 15 years old! Interviews are soon and I'm so excited for you. I know right now it seems hard or difficult, like you won't be able to do certain things, but I can say I was in that mindset too, like, "Can I really do this?" After my first year, I realized that I'm not the only one who feels like that. There will be people there to help you and push you into challenges that will help you grow. I quickly caught myself thinking "Maybe I could do this." It is a great, supportive group to be in.

The Green Leader program is going to help you find your leadership skills. It helps you find your own voice. You will hear Ethel say this a lot, and it will stick in your brain like it did with me. Not only is it a job but it's also a program of fun with learning. Sometimes it feels like a mini-vacation where



Photos by Ethel Hernandez

Leader to Her Sister

we hop in the van and get to go visit new places, learn new things, and then get to share them when you get back home. The times when we are all together are the most fun. My favorite memories are the summer camping trip, the Earth Day event we did last year, and teaching about turtles and salmon. It's fun and not stressful. It felt like me hanging out with friends, and it also made me think of animals and fall more in love with them. It's also making me think of jobs like "Could I be a vet? Or could I do something with plants? Like protecting ecosystems?" The surprise bonus is that it's helping me in biology class this year.

Your biggest challenge, which was my biggest challenge, will be public speaking. That was the hardest thing for me, especially voice volume. Even then, I liked how behind the children, other Green Leaders or Ethel would make a hand signal to use my voice more and it would make me laugh and it helped me be less nervous. Don't be scared if you feel like you are too quiet—I've been there! I'm so much more comfortable speaking in front of people. Sometimes my teachers will catch me slacking off a little bit and will call me out, but instead of me staying quiet, I'll respond back with "Oh, sorry, I was spacing out. I'm sorry, you can continue." I just feel more comfortable saying how I feel instead of staying quiet since joining Green Leaders.

My hope is that you will be more confident. I see you trying, but the people around you aren't really pushing you like how the Green Leaders will challenge you. They'll make you feel comfortable in speaking, be more open-minded, and feel good about yourself. Green Leaders are all there for similar reasons, like learning and how to improve ourselves. I think you will like that. My advice to you is that it's okay to be nervous, it's okay to mess up, like you don't have to be perfect or read from a script, you can just be yourself. If you're too nervous, you just calm down and act like you're talking to our family because that's pretty much what it feels like when you're in the program. Everyone will become friends and family.

I am confident that you will be welcomed with open arms like I was. People will be excited that you're here. If you're ever having doubts, there will be people rooting for you. Not just the Green Leaders or Ethel but Mom and Grandma too. You're gonna be great!

Love,

Your best & favorite big sister,

Sophia



SWIFTS Nature Camp Is Back!

by Abby VanLeuven, Assistant Director, Youth Learning and Engagement

SWIFTS Nature Summer Camp is gearing up for another exciting season, spanning 10 weeks of nature exploration and making friends! SWIFTS stands for Science, Wildlife, Imagination, Friendship, and Taking a Stand—an acronym that captures the essence of what makes our camps unique. Our swift mascot embodies so much of what we do and what we strive to foster in children, and we are excited to keep building on this theme!

Last year, we made the shift to include some conservation action, however small, in every single camp. This year, we're expanding this by launching conservation-themed camps such as SWIFTS Earth Protectors, Wild in the City, and SWIFTS Conservation Connection. These camps empower campers to understand the importance of preserving our natural environment and the diverse organisms inhabiting these spaces. They'll have the opportunity to engage with experts in the field and use their newfound knowledge to take action. Additionally, we are excited to launch a dedicated Conservation and Nature Connection week. This special week aims to foster a deep connection to the natural world while emphasizing local conservation efforts within our city. Throughout this week, we aspire to inspire everyone to advocate for our natural world while cultivating a profound relationship with the environment.

We've also been listening to you and are relaunching birding-focused experiences for high schoolers with the SWIFTS High School Birding Club. Whether you're an avid birder or just starting, this camp is designed to build your knowledge and create a community of like-minded peers. Join our staff team of bird experts on a four-day birding adventure!

Encouraged by positive feedback, we are continuing sliding-scale camps and bringing back aftercare. We are committed to ensuring every camper who wants to attend can, and many families have shared that these

changes have made camp possible. Aftercare runs daily until 5:15, with more nature play, art activities, and plenty of snack breaks—a perfect option for working families.

We aim to not only welcome every camper to our camp but also guarantee a positive experience where they see themselves reflected in our educators. We've made significant strides in diversifying our staff and prioritizing educators who have a strong commitment to diversity and inclusivity. We recognize the importance of providing a supportive environment where staff and campers share similar identities. Assembling a staff that reflects the greater Portland community is essential to the success of our programming and the experience of campers. This commitment to representation not only enriches the overall camp experience but also fosters a sense of belonging and understanding.

Last year we revamped our camp structure to better meet the needs of campers and educators, and it was a huge success. One family shared "It was the best camp she's gone to all summer," with campers "brimming with excitement and knowledge, eagerly sharing stories of the adventures and things they learned. It's evident that your team puts in tremendous effort and care into these programs, creating not just fun but educational experiences for the children." We pride ourselves on delivering high-quality educational programs, and we're eager to expand our hands-on nature-based programming to the greater Portland community.

SWIFTS Nature Summer Camp is more than a week of nature education. It's a space for imagination and creativity, a place to learn and make new friends and a place to grow as a person and discover who you want to be. We can't wait to welcome another round of campers for this summer season, running from June 24 to August 30. Registration opens January 20 at 9 a.m. Join us for a summer filled with exploration, discovery, and unforgettable experiences!



**Registration
Opens
January 20!**

Wild Arts Festival Has Another Great Year, Looks to the Future

by Sarah Swanson, Event Manager

Once again, a community of nature lovers filled the halls of the Viking Pavilion to enjoy local art and books while supporting Portland Audubon's mission. The 43rd annual Wild Arts Festival was a fun and successful event, raising more than \$175,000 to help Portland Audubon protect Oregon's wildlife and wild places. The purchases made at the Wild Arts Festival also supported the work of 81 local artists and authors.

This was my first time managing the event, and after seeing all that goes into it behind the scenes, I am even more impressed by the volunteers that make it happen. Every aspect of the Festival that we enjoy is the end result of months of complex planning by volunteer committees followed by a surge of volunteers to get it all set up and keep it running smoothly. From selecting the artists and authors, to crafting a catalog of silent auction items, to managing the flow of people, to all the setup and takedown, volunteers are leading it. I feel lucky to work alongside these dedicated and delightful people on such a wonderful and important event. Thank you to every one of you who help make the Wild Arts Festival exceptional every year.

I want to offer a heartfelt thank-you to our presenting sponsor, Backyard Bird Shop, as well as the rest of our sponsors for their critical support of this unique event that brings together so many who love nature and art. Thank you also to the many generous donors to the silent auction, the fabulous artists and authors, and, of course, the over 3,000 of you who joined us.

Join the Wild Arts Festival Team!

If you are looking for a way to get more involved with Portland Audubon, one of our Wild Arts Festival planning committees could be a great fit. The time commitment varies during the year, increasing in the fall. Contact sswanson@audubonportland.org for more information.

A New Home for the Wild Arts Festival

Next year the Wild Arts Festival is making a move to a new long-term home and a new weekend that will really let it shine. We are delighted to announce that the Festival will be held at the aptly named Wingspan Event Center at the Washington County Fairgrounds on December 7 and 8, 2024. The adjacent light rail and abundant parking will make your visit to the Festival even easier, and Washington County offers abundant opportunities for getting out in nature. See you there in 2024!



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FIELD NOTES

by Candace Larson, Master Naturalist

Understanding Irruptive Finches

Every few winters, Portland parks and neighborhoods overflow with Pine Siskins, small seed-eating birds closely related to our resident goldfinches. They come here, sometimes in enormous numbers, when their food supply in more northern latitudes has failed. This is a phenomenon called “irruption,” an irregular migration driven by the boom and bust of conifer seed crops from year to year, and while Pine Siskins are often the most visible example in our area, many finch-family species participate.

The main driver of irruptions, like other bird movements, is food availability. Christmas Bird Count data has helped us correlate and measure the connection between cone-crop failure at higher latitudes and the presence of irruptive migrants where we live. While irruptive years are irregular, they aren't random: cone crops run in cycles, and irruptions do too. Many trees have evolved a clever



Pine Siskin / Doug Greenberg

collective strategy to encourage regeneration: every few years, they produce an overwhelming crop of seeds, so many that birds, squirrels, and other customers can't possibly eat them all, and many are left on the ground to germinate. After this particularly bountiful, or “mast” year, the trees rest and not much is produced the following season. That mast year, though, may have led to a population boom in finches as well. This puts extra pressure on birds to irrupt, as more birds try to make their living off fewer resources.

Keep an eye out this winter for Pine Siskins, Red Crossbills, and several rare irruptive finches (see Sightings below). And if you are feeding birds, remember to clean and sanitize your feeders frequently, especially in damp conditions and when birds congregate in large numbers.

SIGHTINGS

by Brodie Cass Talbott, Educator & Trips Specialist

The irruption mentioned last time in this space (see Field Notes above for an explainer on the concept) has continued apace, with further observations of **Pine Grosbeaks**, **Clark's Nutcrackers**, **Pygmy Nuthatches**, **Mountain Chickadees**, **Bohemian Waxwings**, and **Common Redpolls**, both from mountain viewpoints like Larch Mountain and Saddle Mountain, and from neighborhoods, such as a backyard in Scappoose that hosted the first Columbia County **Pine Grosbeak**. A **Snow Bunting** was also found at the Larch Mountain parking lot, where it was unsurprisingly a brief visitor, owing to the substandard habitat.

Outside of thematic rarities, the rarest bird of the period was the **Eurasian Skylark** found in Clark County in late November during a bird survey of the Vancouver Lake lowlands. This is a “mega” rarity in the Lower 48, with only one previous wild record each for Oregon and Washington (a record in Sequim was determined to likely be an escapee from Vancouver Island, where it is a known caged bird).

A close second for rarity was the **Spotted Owl** found injured at Mt. Tabor. The bird was taken to the Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center, where it succumbed to its injuries. After news of its presence was disclosed, photographs emerged showing that the bird had been there for at least a week.



Northern Spotted Owl found at Mt. Tabor Park / Tara Lemezis

A top late-fall highlight was the **Black-and-white Warbler** found at Whitaker Ponds. These birds sometimes overwinter in suitable habitat, so this could be a contender for new bird on the Portland Christmas Bird Count.

Inner SE Portland, long overlooked as a birding hotspot, was visited by an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** in early November. This species is a rare annual visitor, generally in spring in appropriate open habitat, so its presence in a residential area, mere blocks from where the **Summer Tanager** was seen in January, was exceptional.

Those are only a few of the rare birds reported across the region. **For corrections, tips, and reports, email Brodie Cass Talbott at bcasstalbott@audubonportland.org, and for a more detailed weekly report, visit audubonportland.org.**

Birding Days and Field Trips

Field Trip: Kelley Point Park in Winter

February 3 | 8:30-11 a.m.

Join us for a laid-back morning walk at Kelley Point Park in search of any and all birds that call this North Portland peninsula their winter refuge.

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

Leader: Ross Barnes-Rickett

Birding Day: Lower Columbia Estuary

February 19 | 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Explore the bird-rich winter habitats of the Lower Columbia Estuary in the Brownsmead area.

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

Leader: Brodie Cass Talbott

Birding For Beginners

Birding Day: Beginning Winter Raptor ID at Scappoose

January 26 | 2:30-6 p.m.

In this beginner-focused trip, we'll search for and practice identifying raptors along the Crown Zellerbach Trail in Scappoose.

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

Leader: Brodie Cass Talbott

Birding Day: Beginning Winter Raptor ID at Sauvie Island

February 2 | 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

In this beginner-focused trip, we'll search for and practice identifying hawks, harriers, eagles, and falcons on Sauvie Island.

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

Leader: Brodie Cass Talbott

Beginning Birding and Sauvie Island Exploration

Sundays: February 4, March 3, and April 7

Sign up for the three-part morning explorations on Sauvie Island! This field class series is perfect for those interested in developing and sharpening their birding skills under various field conditions with expert birders. Explore different habitats on the island, learn bird calls, and search for waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors.

Fee: \$115 members / \$145 non-members

*fee covers all three mornings

Leaders: Greg Baker and Ricky Allen

Field Trip: Beginning Waterfowl Identification at Fernhill Wetlands

February 15 | 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Learn the basics of telling our many ducks and geese apart with a trip to Fernhill Wetlands in Hillsboro, a classic hotspot for wintering waterfowl.

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

Leader: Brodie Cass Talbott



Northern Harrier /
Frank D. Lospalluto

Sign-up for birding days & trips at
bit.ly/PA-Birding-Days





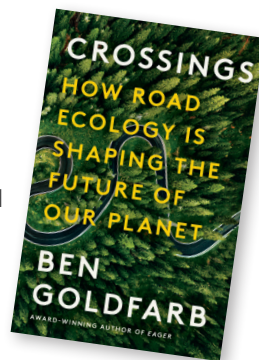
Ben Goldfarb

NATURE NIGHT

Nature Night | Crossings: How Road Ecology Is Shaping the Future of Our Planet

January 16 | 7-8:30 p.m.

Some 40 million miles of roadways encircle the earth, yet we tend to regard them only as infrastructure for human convenience. While roads are so ubiquitous they're practically invisible to us, wild animals experience them as alien forces of death and disruption. More than a million animals are killed by cars each day in the U.S. alone; creatures from antelope to salmon are losing their ability to migrate in search of food and mates; and the very noise of traffic chases songbirds from vast swaths of habitat. Today road ecologists are seeking to blunt that destruction through innovative solutions. In his talk, Ben Goldfarb will discuss the ecological harms wrought by transportation and the movement to redress them—and how we can create a better, safer world for all living beings.



Cost: Free, donation suggested



Cost Involved



Public Transit Available



Free



Family Friendly



Wheelchair Accessible



Virtual Event or Program

Sign up for classes and trips at
bit.ly/pdxaudubon-classes



Steller's Jay / Mick Thompson

CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Ducks at a Distance

January 9 | 6-7 p.m.

Learn to recognize ducks and geese from a distance by shape, color, and behavior.

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

Instructor: John Rakestraw



Bird Journals: Capturing Bird Basics

January 13 | 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

In this in-person class, you will gain observation skills and learn to draw birds in any pose. Less detail and fuss and more suggestion is an effective key for successful bird journaling.

Fee: \$55 members / \$75 non-members

Instructor: Jude Siegel



Feeding Birds: What and How to Safely Feed Wild Birds

January 17 | 6-7 p.m.

Feeding birds is a great way to enjoy a variety of species from the comfort of home. This class will show you how to feed effectively and safely.

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

Instructor: John Rakestraw



Birding and Photography Series

January 18, Deconstructing Composition | 6-7 p.m.

February 1, Mastering Light for Bird Photography | 6-7 p.m.

Join wildlife photographer and author Faraaz Abdool to learn the basics of bird photography and how to master it in a four-part series. Register separately for each class. No prior experience necessary.

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

Instructor: Faraaz Abdool





Rough-legged Hawk / Tara Lemezis

CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Plant Fossils of Oregon

January 24 | 6-7 p.m.

Did you know that Oregon is a great place to find plant fossils? Join us to learn about Oregon's geologic history, how plant fossils are formed, and how and where to find them!

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

Instructor: Brian Magnier



Raptors Series

January 25, *Understanding Raptors* | 6-7 p.m.

January 31, *Winter Raptors* | 6-7 p.m.

Join Brodie for a two-part series focused on raptors and their natural history. Register separately for each class.

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

Instructor: Brodie Cass Talbott



Forest Therapy at the Sanctuary

February 19 | 10:30-11:45 a.m.

Join Andrea Kreiner, a certified nature and forest therapy guide, for a slow and mindful sensory journey to connect with nature at the Portland Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary.

Fee: \$25 members / \$35 non-members

Instructor: Andrea Kreiner



Watercolor Painting with Ronna: The Bald Eagle

February 10 | 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

The great and mighty Bald Eagle can be seen quite often around Portland and it's always exciting to spot one of these majestic birds of prey. This in-person class will focus on creating contrast, feather patterns, and watercolor wash backgrounds.

Fee: \$55 members / \$75 non-members

Instructor: Ronna Fujisawa



CAMPS FOR KIDS

Spring Break & No School Day Camps

Calling All Campers
in Grades K-6!

Spring is in the air in March and there's no better place to experience it than in our Wildlife Sanctuary. Join us over Spring Break for day camp adventures to explore the world of birds and mammals, find native plants and cool amphibians, and create springtime art!

REGISTER TODAY AT:

bit.ly/PASpringBreakCamps



From Boreal Forest to the Sax-Zim Bog: Explore Minnesota!

June 8-15, 2024

Join us to experience the stunning beauty of Minnesota and the unique birdlife of the north. We'll visit this premier birding location in June to enjoy many birds of the boreal forest in the north and also birds of the oak-hickory and oak-savannah forests of the St. Croix River floodplain.

Fee: \$2,895 members / \$3,495 non-members
Leader: Stefan Schlick



Cerulean Warbler - Mathew Malwitz/Audubon Photography Awards

The Best of Trinidad and Tobago: Birding and Wildlife

April 1-15, 2024

Join us in Trinidad and Tobago where we'll visit all of the birding hotspots with a special focus on the dizzying array of easy-to-see, gorgeous hummingbirds and other neotropical species. From the unforgettable experience of watching thousands of Scarlet Ibis return to their roost, to catching a glimpse of the critically endangered Trinidad Piping-Guan sipping water from a bromeliad, you are sure to have the trip of a lifetime!

Fee: \$6,495 members / \$7,095 non-members
Leaders: Brodie Cass Talbott and Faraaz Abdool

Spain: Extremadura, Doñana, and Sierra de Gredos

April 27-May 11, 2024

Join Stefan and Randy to explore Europe's birding hotspot: Spain! The timing is perfect to witness the trailing end of migration and Spain's birds in their breeding glory. Combine fabulous birding with excellent food, fantastic scenery, and ease of logistics, and you have an amazing trip that you wouldn't want to miss!

Fee: \$4,495 members / \$4,995 non-members
Leaders: Stefan Schlick and Randy Hill

Pacific Northwest Trip: Hiking and Birding the Rogue Valley

May 20-23, 2024

On this four-day van trip, we'll also use our hiking boots to search for some of Oregon's hardest to find bird species like Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Oak Titmouse, and California Towhee, while enjoying the unique plants, butterflies, and geology that make this region so special.

Fee: \$1,045 members / \$1,245 non-members
Leaders: Brodie Cass Talbott and Cameron Cox

California Condors and Coastal Migration

September 9-13, 2024

Join us to search for North America's largest bird, the endangered California Condor, in the wild! The central California coast and inland areas offer excellent opportunities to see these majestic birds and a wide variety of other species like Yellow-billed Magpie, Ridgway's Rail, and migrating eastern warblers.

Fee: \$1,995 member / \$2,495 non-member
Leaders: Kirk Hardie and Tara Lemezis

Sign up for trips at
bit.ly/pdxaudubon-ecotours



NEWS FROM THE COAST

Blue Carbon a Key Part of Oregon's Climate Resilience Package

by Joe Liebezeit, Assistant Director of Conservation – Statewide

Last legislative session we secured a big win, helping pass the Climate Resilience package bill that will push Oregon further toward its carbon sequestration objectives. The bill established state policy to move forward with natural climate solutions—land-use practices that sequester carbon (e.g., reforestation, habitat restoration, cover crop planting)—on natural working lands including managed forests, agricultural land, and coastal habitats. The bill also established a \$10 million fund to incentivize and support projects to sequester carbon. At the same time, the Institute for Natural Resources (INR) was tasked with developing a methodology to inventory net carbon capture in Oregon's natural and working lands, among other objectives, and include it in a final report to help guide this big undertaking.

Since the bill passed, we've been working to help ensure the smooth implementation of this work so that it happens efficiently and effectively. There are a lot of moving parts to this emerging program—several state agencies must coordinate on many potential projects with the shared funds while continuing to leverage federal dollars. Portland Audubon and the Natural Climate Solutions Coalition have met with agency leadership to discuss this new program, and we continue to advocate to agencies and key decision-makers, such as the Oregon Global Warming Commission, to build a strong natural working lands program.

We were encouraged to see findings in the recently released INR report recommending tidal wetland conservation and restoration as well as seagrass conservation as key components to protect and restore blue carbon habitats in Oregon. Blue carbon habitats such as eelgrass beds, mudflats, and tidal forested wetlands can sequester significant amounts of carbon—in some cases rivaling that of old-growth forests. If we better protect these habitats, we can help meet Oregon's climate change objectives and protect vital habitats for fish and wildlife at the same time. Stay tuned for more updates and ways to engage as this important work unfolds.

NEWS FROM EASTERN OREGON

Funding for the Future

by Teresa "Bird" Wicks, Eastern Oregon Biologist

Over the past several years, our Eastern Oregon program has been working with partners to deepen understanding of birds and habitat management throughout Harney County. This includes understanding the effects of invasive grasses, hybrid cattail, and other noxious weeds, and understanding the effects of water depth, duration, and timing on focal bird species. Many of the wetlands in the Harney Basin are managed through irrigation, rather than through natural surface or underground flow. Because of this, information about managing water on the landscape—both to create wetland habitat and to control invasive plant species—and how that management influences bird species is important. This information is particularly important when creating management plans that take into account climate change and reduced water availability in the Harney Basin.

Because of the increased scope of our work in the Harney Basin, we applied for funding through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, to support our monitoring efforts. In late October, we were awarded the approximately \$134,000 we applied for. This funding will provide three years of support for a technician, for a minimum of five months (860 hours) each year. We're hoping to find someone interested in this work for the full three years, in part to provide long-term mentorship and in part to create continuity between years. This technician will not only help collect data at Malheur, but will help with analyzing data, outreach, and other potential projects. Additionally, this funding will allow us to buy equipment to support diverse monitoring efforts and objectives.

Through this OWEB funding, we're not only better able to support our partners, including Malheur National Wildlife Refuge staff, we'll be better able to support the birds that bring us so much joy throughout the year.



Wilson's Phalarope at Malheur / Tara Lemezis

An Emerging Invasive Threat in the Harney Basin

by Teresa “Bird” Wicks, Eastern Oregon Biologist

For much of my life, when I thought of wetlands and wetland bird species, I thought of cattails. I have an affection for their fluff and the way it drifts on the wind. I love watching Marsh Wrens gathering the fluff for their nests. I find awe in the number of different ways that North American Tribes use cattails, from the rhizomes to the pollen and all the vegetation in between. When I moved to Harney County, I learned that not everyone has the same affection for cattails. It took me years to understand why.

Our native broad-leaf cattail (*Typha latifolia*) grows in wetlands throughout Oregon and across North America. Being a wetland obligate, cattails grow on land that is inundated by water for a decent percentage of the year, though they can withstand short periods of drought without declining in patch size. Cattail species typically expand or maintain their patches through underground, asexual reproduction via rhizomes and start new patches via seed dispersal. This makes cattails of all varieties very good at persisting in wetlands. Historically, muskrats would keep patches in check both by foraging on cattails (they’ve been described as a muskrat’s favorite food) and by building their huts out of its stalks and vegetative parts.

Below left: USFWS staff member points to invasive cattail. Native cattail is in his other hand. Below right: Invasive cattails.



Across North America, narrow-leaf cattails (*Typha angifolia*) have become naturalized after introduction from Europe (possibly via ballast water from ships). This invasive wetland plant is also found in a few locations in Oregon, including throughout the Harney Basin. The narrow-leaf cattail grows in mixed stands with broad-leaf cattail, sometimes outcompeting the broad-leaf to create semi-homogenous stands. Even more concerning is that narrow-leaf cattail is known to hybridize with broad-leaf cattail, creating a resilient hybrid species that seems to expand in patch size even in periods of drought. The hybrid grows in dense, tall stands, crowding out sedges, aquatic grasses, and other native emergent vegetation. This greatly alters wetlands into systems that are structurally unlike native emergent habitat, particularly where cattails are left untreated for long periods.

Unfortunately, treating hybrid cattail can also potentially increase its chances of persisting on the landscape, as it does well in disturbed areas and seems to withstand drier conditions better than the narrow-leaf or broad-leaf cattails. There is some evidence that monostands of hybrid cattail not only reduce habitat for open-water-dependent species by filling in that open water, but can reduce habitat for marsh bird and passerine species.

However, most studies on hybrid cattails and birds are short-term, meaning that useful data for managing this plant for wildlife are difficult to find. As part of our partnership with Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, we are not only working to educate the public about this increasing issue, we are also looking for individuals with experience with hybrid cattails and who have information about the long-term effects of hybrid cattail invasion and successful management tips. If you have worked in such an ecosystem, particularly in the Great Basin or high desert, and have experience with systems invaded by hybrid cattails, please contact me at twicks@audubonportland.org and I will work to connect you with refuge staff.





One of only a few Northern Shrikes that have ever come into the Wildlife Care Center.

2023 in the Wildlife Care Center

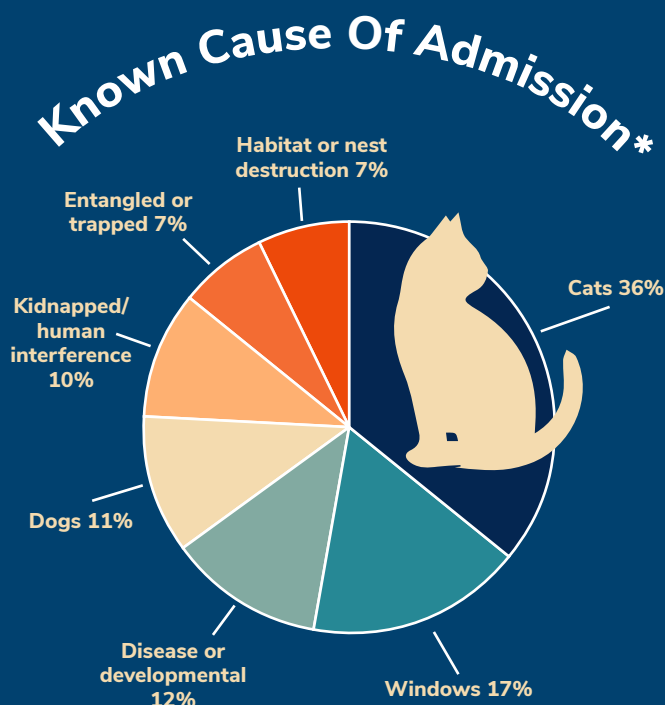
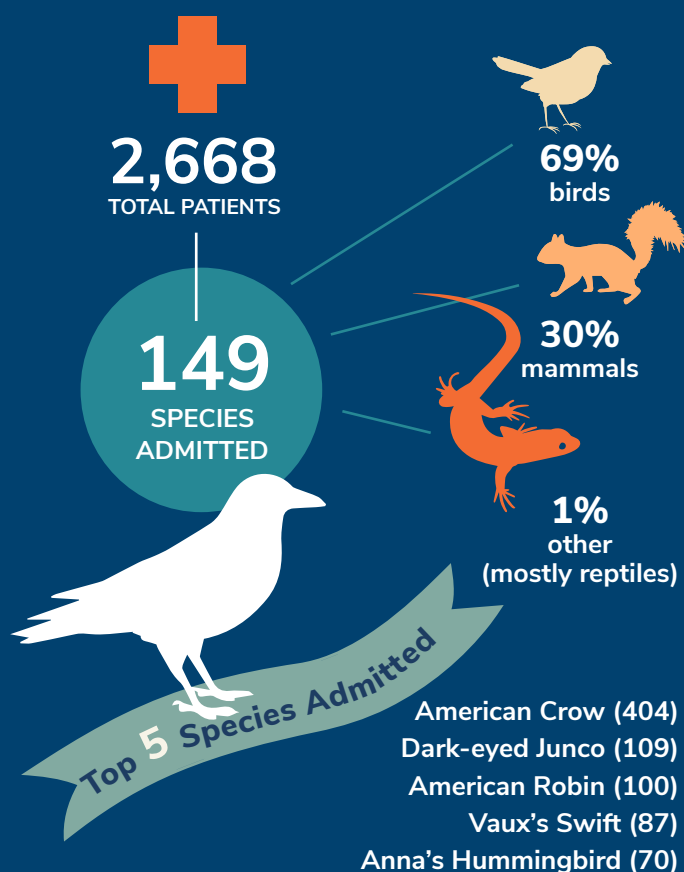
by Stephanie Herman, Assistant Director of Conservation - Wildlife Care Center

Around this time last year, I walked up to the door of the center to the unexpected sound of a waterfall, which turned out to be water pouring down from broken pipes in the ceiling. After rushing to turn off the main water and ensure our patients were safe, I really looked at the damage and knew that our facility would need to close for repairs. Closing is a big deal—there just isn't another local wildlife hospital that can step in for us. Our staff and volunteers know this, and our feelings of responsibility to ensure there is always an option for the people and animals that need our services go beyond our jobs. We did our best during repairs, and so did all our amazing partners, but the people and animals who needed more were always on our minds.

So on May 25, the center reopened, our dedicated volunteers flooded back, and with huge relief we accepted our very first patients of the year. With 50 patients arriving in less than four days, it was game time, and we were finally back on the field.

Our numbers look different this year, and that service gap lingers in the mind of our staff and volunteers. But we choose to celebrate these numbers because they mean we are back and there is a place for wildlife to go in Portland, as there has been for more than a hundred years. Whatever comes our way, we will recover. The Wildlife Care Center will be here to help answer your wildlife questions and care for injured and orphaned animals when you need us, now and in the future.

WILDLIFE CARE CENTER BY THE NUMBERS



*Approximately half of the cases have known causes. Wildlife Care Center staff will complete data verification over the next two months so these percentages will be further refined.

Introducing the Ambassador Animal Interpretive Program

by Katie Newton, Ambassador Animal Care and Outreach Coordinator

The Ambassador Animal Program has been a valuable component of our conservation messaging and our mission to inspire all people to love and protect birds, wildlife, and the natural environment upon which life depends. This program gives the public a chance to see wildlife up close, something not readily available to most people. Through such an intimate encounter, we have inspired many people to pursue conservation action alongside Portland Audubon and beyond. We provide a permanent home for several nonreleasable birds and one Western Painted Turtle. Each of these animals came to us imprinted on humans or with an injury so severe that they would have been unable to survive in the wild. They are beloved members of our team, and sharing their stories provides a unique educational opportunity.

Our Ambassador Animals have fostered connections with wildlife and educated the public for many years. This program is intentionally small to allow people to get to know each animal as an individual with their own unique story and as a representative of their species. Many members of the public have interacted with our

Ambassadors repeatedly, making each one a beloved member of our community. These lasting relationships are what we strive for within the program, opening the door to a more personal connection with wildlife.

Portland Audubon's permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dictates that the program must be entirely educational in nature, further our organizational mission, and embody respect for wildlife. We emphasize our animals' inherent wildness and dignity while teaching about their natural history, distinct and irreplaceable roles within our natural world, and related conservation issues we must address. Through this, we help create an organic appreciation for these species and many others. We want each person to walk away with a recognition of the value of wildlife and a drive to take action.

This year, we are excited to announce the debut of our new Ambassador Animal Interpretive Program! The program was hit hard during COVID and has been in the rebuilding phase since then. While the process will take time and effort, we are diligently working on a new program that features connection, education, and conservation messaging. The initial phase will focus on informal, conversational interactions to share each Ambassador's story and species information and set the stage for continued wildlife appreciation and conservation action.

These interactions will occur trailside in front of the enclosures for Julio (our Great Horned Owl) and Xena (our American Kestrel) to build that intimacy by seeing these birds up close. A team of dedicated volunteers will share the stories of our Ambassadors while highlighting opportunities to help their wild counterparts, such as preserving snags and decreasing pesticide use. By learning about our Ambassadors, we hope our guests can recognize the power that they have to help wildlife.

The talks will take place on weekends
(weather permitting):

- **Saturdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1-3 p.m.**
- **Sundays, 1-3 p.m.**



Additionally, a sign at the start of the Pittock Sanctuary Nature Trail (adjacent to the Wildlife Care Center) will indicate if a talk is in progress.

As the program matures, we'll create more opportunities to reach wider, more diverse audiences within our community. The potential for this program is immense, and we hope to do right by our Ambassadors by letting them shine as individuals and species representatives, giving them their own voices here at Portland Audubon. Stay tuned for future developments within this program, and we hope to see you on the trails soon!



Xena the American Kestrel / Katie Newton

BACKYARD HABITAT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

- Handheld boot brushes
- Lapel/computer microphones
- Print copies of the Portland Plant List

COMMUNICATIONS

- iPhone (XR, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15) for social media

CONSERVATION

- Unihedron Dark Sky Quality Meter (LU-DL)
- Fund for rebranded tabling cloth (~\$300)
- Bushnell Essential E-3 Trail Cams
- Bushnell Aggressor Security Case
- Extra computer screens
- Extra laptops

EDUCATION

- Portable hot water/coffee carafe
- Comfy armchair

WILDLIFE CARE CENTER

- All Free & Clear laundry detergent pods
- Dish brushes
- Nitrile, powder-free, non-sterile exam gloves
- N-95 face masks
- Rubber or vinyl dish gloves
- Wet-erase Expo pens in black, brown, or blue
- Dry-erase Expo markers
- Heavy-duty kitchen shears
- Hose spray nozzles
- Brother Genuine High Yield Toner Cartridge (black, TN660)
- Wellness Core Natural Grain Free Dry Cat Food (Turkey & Chicken)
- EliteField 3-door folding soft dog crates (20"L x 14"W x 14"H)
- Portable oxygen generator
- Brother P-Touch label maker refill (white)
- 6' round galvanized stock tank
- Quality Cages Collapsible Chinchilla Travel Cage
- Ophthalmoscope

QUESTIONS? Email Keila Flores at kflores@audubonportland.org



Transform Your Yard into a Habitat for Wildlife

BACKYARD HABITAT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Join the Backyard Habitat Certification Program, a growing community of thousands of people who are working together to actively transform their yards and greenspaces into **climate resilient habitats**. Our team will give you the tools you need to get started.



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BackyardBirdShop.com

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PORTLAND • BEAVERTON • HAPPY VALLEY • LAKE OSWEGO • WEST LINN • VANCOUVER

The Immense Contributions of

by Ali Berman, Communications and Marketing Director

As is true in science, math, art, and beyond, women in the conservation movement have been downplayed, ignored, and, in many cases, forgotten by history. And yet, women have shaped Portland Audubon from its very beginnings, and continue to make up the lion's share of our volunteers and staff. We'd like to begin to remedy those omissions, and share stories of women who've made immense contributions to Portland Audubon's mission. And we can't think of a better place to start than with the exceptional Irene Finley. While we can't tell you everything there is to know about her—a lot of information has been lost over time—we can help you get to know her through her writing, advocacy, and photography.

Many know Irene Finley as the wife of William Finley, one of the founders of Portland Audubon. That description is often where the conversation begins and ends, with her mentioned in passing, defined by her husband. Early in William's life, his constant companion in his exploration of birds and nature had always been Herman Bohlman, who is credited as Finley's equal. But when Bohlman decided to devote more time to his family's plumbing business, leaving less time for wildlife photography, Irene and William became a powerful and inseparable husband-and-wife team. For decades, Irene and William would write and publish articles together, present lectures on their findings, and take part in advocacy initiatives, all while raising a family.

Irene was passionate about wildlife, and she defied the societal expectations of the time by writing and offering lectures both with William and alone, climbing mountains, and traveling to remote places, all in service of her mission to document nature and use those findings to protect birds and other wildlife. Because Irene and William's work was done together, and almost always published under William's name, it's nearly impossible to suss out which photographs, articles, and discoveries belonged to her. It was only later in her career that Irene would start taking credit for her work.



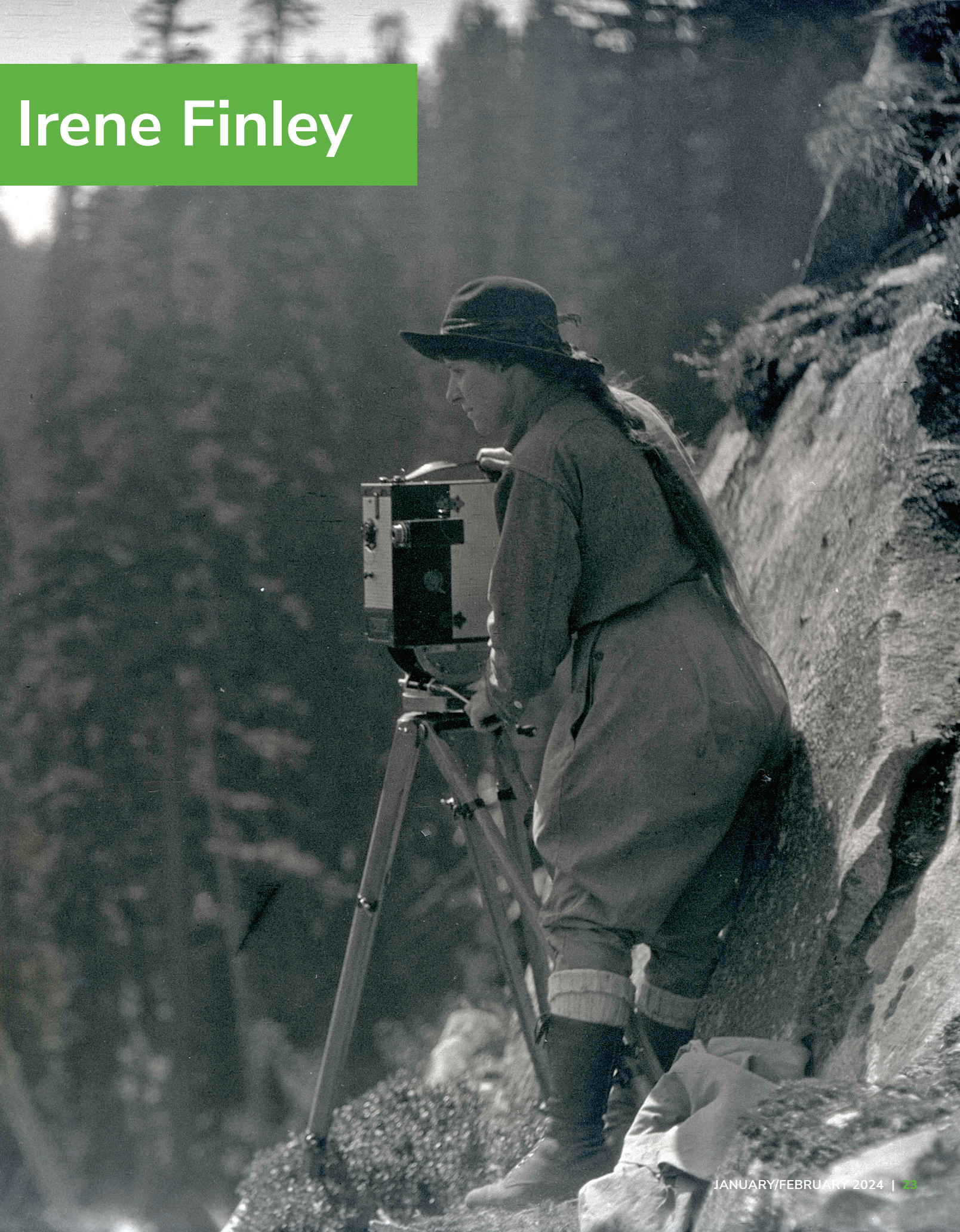
"The Bat, a Winged Mammal," an article that credits both William and Irene, is a prime example of how William's name on something doesn't necessarily mean he was a contributor. In the marginalia at the top of that article, William's handwriting can be seen. He wrote, "written by Irene July 23 all night to 7AM July 24."

Irene's articles were rich with storytelling and natural history, her prose poetic, capturing the finest of details on a species or on the adventure to take the perfect photograph. Robert Sibley, editor of the California Monthly and professor at University of California, Berkeley, wrote about Irene, "She believes that natural history is not centered entirely on records, on species and all the other forms into which man has molded it; but that it is rather made up in part of the habits, behavior, instincts, and personalities as well."

With Irene's love of natural history on full display, she describes Cedar Waxwing behavior and appearance as follows in an article on the beauty of Kodachrome images. "Waxwings are gentle bird folk. They can't get along without the companionship and courage of the flock. They eat daintily and preen their warm mauve feathers till they shine like changeable satin, underparts paling to fawn, on their wing tips beads of red wax, and a pointed crest. They are leisurely homemakers and somewhat late, building a rather indifferent, coarse nest of bark, roots, twigs, leaves, and even bits of paper, lined with grasses, hair, wool, or anything at hand."

Irene and William shared in almost everything, including their advocacy efforts. Within a few years of our founding, Portland Audubon was working hard to stop the slaughter of egrets, grebes, and other birds for their feathers. Despite Portland Audubon's success with the passage of a law to ban the sale of feathers, plumes were still in fashion, and the hat trade continued to flourish in Oregon. After minimal progress through letter writing to Portland's elite women, and to milliners, more drastic action needed to be taken. William and Irene worked with the police to put together a sting operation

Irene Finley



to catch milliners in the act of selling hats adorned with illegal feathers. As a clerk at Frakes Millinery Company showed Irene various hats, the clerk said, "You can't get another one like it in the city. And these feathers are going to be the thing for fine hats this summer." The clerk was shocked when the constable intervened, confiscating the large feather and several smaller ones.

Irene and William darted as fast as they could in a large red touring car from one milliner to the next, trying to catch them in the act of selling illegal feathers before word spread. In total, nine citations with fines were made that day to milliners and department store proprietors for selling egret plumes, causing hundreds of dollars of hats and other finery to be seized as evidence. Reports on the raids were published in newspapers across Oregon, and all the way to San Francisco, Chicago, and Washington D.C.

Irene's advocacy extended to her writing as well in pieces like, "Effect of Oil Pollution on Sea Fowl," an article she wrote after the *SS Frank H. Buck* collided with the *SS President Coolidge*, dropping 2,730,000 gallons of crude oil into the ocean, covering about 55 miles along the California coast. A count was taken on a stretch of 5.5 miles of coastline, revealing 452 dead birds. Irene wrote, "This probably was barely a drop in the bucket of the mortality of birds snuffed out by this oil disaster, but assuming it as an average if the full length of the coastline affected had been canvassed, some 6,600 murres must have been killed by oil...Lone murre, smudged of breast and rigid of wing, standing helpless on the sand, petition all powerful man to abate thy persecution."

Irene was a writer, photographer, educator, advocate, and expert on natural history. And all the while she was also a wife and a mother to two children. Her name and contributions should be known.



Irene Finley's contributions to Portland Audubon's earliest efforts and to the field of conservation and ornithology are incalculable. We are grateful her grandson, William, and his wife, Carole, collected so much information about her for their book, *For the Love of Nature: The Adventures and Achievements of William L. and Irene B. Finley*. Thanks to family scrapbooks, they had an incredible collection of articles, stories, and photos to use as source material. And yet, it's still not enough. Irene was a writer, photographer, educator, advocate, and expert on natural history. And all the while she was also a wife and a mother to two children. Her name and contributions should be known. I'd like to leave you with this note from William and Carole:

"As Irene's grandchildren, we were not aware of her contributions to wildlife and conservation. When Bill and I started our research for the book, we realized Irene's expertise as an author, photographer, lecturer, and artist. We were amazed how she took risks but loved the adventures, from the Pribilof Islands to the Gulf of Mexico. We realized she worked with William as a significant contributor in her own right to the Finley legacy. We are delighted to share Irene's story through our book."





IN MEMORY

IN HONOR

Portland Audubon gratefully acknowledges these special gifts:

Shirley Ann Coffin

Robert W. Coffin

James Davis

Barbara D. Loomis

Joan Frances Feraco

Karen Damaso

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Caroline Myler

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Cynthia Schubert

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Kory Keller

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 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!**



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As we enter a new year, we are excited for new opportunities to connect people with birds and nature. Keep an eye out for a year of fun events, new products, and great sales. From our Spring Optics Fair with great deals and expert advice, to events with local authors and our yearly holiday activities, there is sure to be a way to connect with the Nature Store. We are appreciative of and grateful to our regular customers who support us year after year, as well as each new face that walks through the door. We are happy to help rookie and seasoned birders alike find the perfect tools to help them on all their birdy adventures.

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

Questions? Email: store@audubonportland.org | Phone: 503-292-9453

**Shop the Nature Store online at
www.naturestorepdx.squarespace.com**



Ruby-crowned Kinglet - Karola Hanks/
Audubon Photography Awards

Optics Focus

Opticron Savanna R PC 8x33

A great choice for those just getting started is the **Opticron Savanna R PC 8x33**. This "Goldilocks" pair of binoculars features good glass quality, a portable and lightweight size, and comfortable open-bridge design that nestles securely into your hands... all with a price point that's just right.

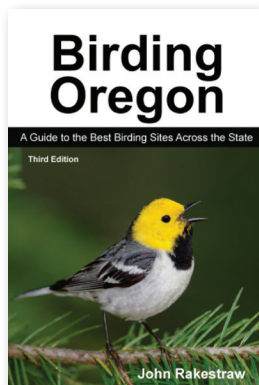


Member Price: \$149.00

New Year, New Birds!

Birding Oregon by John Rakestraw

Whether you are looking for species to add to your year list or birding destinations locally and beyond, the Nature Store has resources to help. *Birding Oregon* is a staff favorite to find out where to go and which species you might see when you get there. Our expert staff and volunteers will also help answer any questions and recommend our favorite birding hotspots, too!



Member Price: \$13.49

Calendars on Sale

Huge 2024 Selection

The Nature Store has a wide variety of wall calendars and planners, all discounted now that we're into 2024! Start planning your new year with beautiful birds and wildlife.

Prices vary - 20% off or more!



PNW Pick

Snack Bag

The Nature Store loves to carry products made by local artists and vendors! We are always sourcing new products made in the PNW, and love to support our local community.

Is one of your New Year's resolutions to cut down on plastic waste? Check out these reusable cloth snack bags from Eugene-based maker Marley's Monsters! We carry other single-use replacements from them like cloth napkins, reusable cotton rounds, and more! Stop by and check out the selection!



Member Price: \$10.80

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



Red-tailed Hawk / Jim Cruce

Hawks and Hot Chocolate Returns!

Saturday, February 17 | 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Join us for a day of winter birding on Sauvie Island in partnership with Topaz Farm and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service! We'll keep you warm with free hot chocolate and coffee, plus sweet farm-baked goods for purchase.

Bring your crew, your family, or come solo for a cool and casual day road-tripping through Sauvie Island's birding hotspots. We'll get outside together in search of the fiercest birds, the Fantastic Four of raptors: Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, and Bald Eagle. At each spot, check out birds through spotting scopes and ask your curious questions to our stationed naturalists.



audubonportland.org/event/hawks-hot-chocolate

GET IN TOUCH

Administration Offices

503-292-6855
Open M-F, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Subject to change; call before
you visit.

Wildlife Care Center

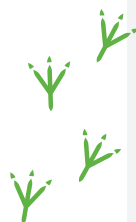
503-292-0304
Open daily, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Nature Store & Interpretive Center

503-292-9453
Open daily, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Wildlife Sanctuary

Dawn to dusk every day



Birdy Brain Buster!

**Which bird has
a "snood"?**

- A. Sooty Grouse
- B. Tufted Puffin
- C. American White Pelican
- D. Wild Turkey