



# We Are Bird Alliance of Oregon

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Great Horned Owllet / Tara Lemezis

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# The Promise of Our New Name

by Stuart Wells, Executive Director

I want to thank our community for the overwhelming support that you have given us as we've journeyed through the process of identifying our new name. In February last year, we announced our intention to drop Audubon from our name. While we recognize that John James Audubon's work was influential in our knowledge of birds species in North America, we cannot condone the man's unrepentant viewpoints as an enslaver and anti-abolitionist and his plundering of Indigenous burial sites and in good conscience continue to carry the Audubon moniker.

There are many examples of reconsidering the places, plants, and most recently bird species with human names that are problematic. While the suite of proposed name changes can be dizzying, a metric that I personally embrace is whether the viewpoints, philosophies, or beliefs embraced by those individuals of the past still impact representative members of identified BIPOC groups today. In the case of John James Audubon, the answer is clearly yes, as we still see systemic impacts of those beliefs on BIPOC communities.

What we promise is that our new name, Bird Alliance of Oregon, will foster new opportunities to tell our story of 122-plus years protecting birds and habitats, advocating for access to nature with an important consideration of environmental justice, and providing education programs that welcome all communities and provide real opportunities for all people to work together for nature.

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# We Are Bird Alliance of Oregon

Portland Wildlife Sanctuary / Tara Lemezis

## NEW NAME, SAME MISSION

by Ali Berman, Director of Communications  
& Marketing

A year ago we announced our decision to drop the name Audubon and find a new name that better reflects our mission and values, one that would make this organization a more welcoming place for all people. Now, after listening to feedback from our members, volunteers, and the broader community, we are excited to share our new name: Bird Alliance of Oregon.



### BIRD

We were founded to protect birds in 1902, and that remains at the heart of our work. By calling out birds, we get to quickly and effectively share who we are and why we're here.



### ALLIANCE

We are strong because of our collaborative relationships with partners, members, volunteers, activists, birders, donors, and learners. It's only through these connections that we can protect wildlife and wild places.



### OREGON

Our advocacy and education efforts have always been statewide, from the coast to the high desert and sometimes even following ecosystems across state borders. Now our name reflects the fuller geographic range of our work.



### TOGETHER FOR NATURE

Our tagline is meant to go side by side with our name to show that while birds are central to our mission, we are also more than birds. We fight for all wildlife, habitats, and people. We stand together for nature. Always.





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## Why We Changed Our Name

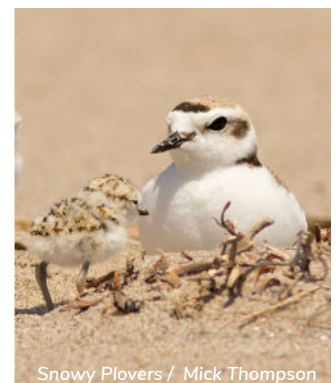
Bird Alliance of Oregon's commitment to equity and racial justice continues to grow through our programs, partnerships, and the evolution of our internal culture. John James Audubon's name is synonymous with birds for some, but for many, the name celebrates a slaveholder who stole human remains from the graves of Native Americans and Mexican soldiers.

We heard from many staff, volunteers, and community members who are people of color, specifically Black, that it's painful to bear the name of a slaveholder at the place where they work or volunteer, or to wear a shirt with our name on it. The environment needs everyone's voice at the table, and John James Audubon's name has become a significant barrier to ensuring this organization is inclusive. If we wanted to live our values and make sure this organization is a place of belonging for all people, changing our name was not only important, it was necessary.

As you may have noticed, we also changed from "Portland" to "Oregon." Many people are surprised to hear that for the first 66 years of our history, we were the Oregon Audubon Society. That's because we were founded to protect birds and habitat across the state, starting with our work to establish Malheur, Klamath, and Three Arch Rocks National Wildlife Refuges. In 1968 National Audubon said that if we wanted to be affiliated with the larger Audubon network, we needed to change our name to reflect a smaller geographic area. And so, reluctantly, we changed our name and became the Audubon Society of Portland, or Portland Audubon.

Despite that name reflecting only a small percentage of the state, our work remained statewide. We advocated for the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges, fought in the Timber Wars to protect old-growth forest and the Northern Spotted Owl, and helped establish five marine reserves across the coast, to name just a few of the countless battles and victories. We have permanent staff on the coast and in the high desert and will expand soon to southern Oregon. At times our work even extends across Oregon borders, like in the Klamath Basin, and in Vancouver, Washington. We are excited to return to our roots and have our name reflect our statewide work again.

We acknowledge that even "Oregon" is a term that has issues, as Oregon is a colonial boundary that was placed on the land, bisecting both tribal homelands and bioregions. We recognize this challenge with the name, and more broadly with living and working on land that has been colonized.



Snowy Plovers / Mick Thompson

## How Did We Choose the Name Bird Alliance of Oregon?

We knew that if we wanted to find a name that was welcoming, we needed to hear directly from the community. That meant reaching out to members, volunteers, activists, donors, and the general public for feedback. We formed a name change committee made up of staff, board, and community partners. The committee had 14 members, each with expertise in areas like conservation, education, communications, and development. The committee was 60% BIPOC, with representation from LGBTQIA+ and disability communities as well. This committee was charged with leading the process, hiring a marketing firm, doing community outreach, and recommending a name to the board. The board then voted on the final name choice.

We spent four months gathering input from the community on what our new name should be, hearing from almost 2,000 people. We launched surveys, asked our members, met with partners, advertised in newspapers, tabled at community events, and held BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) listening sessions. We collected detailed demographic information to see who we were hearing from and—perhaps more importantly—who we weren't hearing from. From early on, the data showed us we needed to do intentional outreach to people under 35, communities of color, and people who live in rural communities. The majority of our outreach centered on those communities, helping us increase participation from those demographics.

We were excited to see that across all demographics, the same themes around the new name kept emerging:

- Directly references birds
- Is clear and accessible
- Reflects the organization's statewide presence
- Aligns with mission and values related to bird conservation, wildlife protection, and environmental education
- Creates a sense of unity and connection to address the barriers that racism has created in reaching diverse groups

## The Continuing Emergence of the Bird Alliance

One of the most exciting elements of the name change is the emergence of "Bird Alliance." Multiple former Audubons have now adopted Bird Alliance as a part of their name, including Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco, and Madison. One of the biggest concerns in changing our name was maintaining the connections between the 450 Audubon chapters around the country, and our 11 sister chapters here in Oregon. When the term "Bird Alliance" gained momentum among chapters and fit well with our findings from community feedback, we jumped

at the chance to help create new connective tissue that could bind our organizations together. However, no matter how other Audubons and former Audubons choose to rename themselves, we are proud to have a name that helps better tell our story and connect with more people.

Join us over the next few months as we celebrate the new name. The Nature Store will carry lots of items featuring our new name, and look out for upcoming events at Steeplejack's Brewery in the late spring where we can gather together.

And thank you to every person who took the time to take our survey or share their feedback in person. This name was created with all of your help, and we couldn't be more grateful.



### Will my membership stay the same?

**Yes, your membership will stay the same. No need to change a thing. Thank you for being a member!**

### Will donations or legacy gifts to the name Portland Audubon still be accepted?

**Donations and legacy gifts made out to Portland Audubon or Bird Alliance of Oregon will both be accepted by our bank. Thank you for your gift!**

### What's your new website? And email addresses?

**www.BirdAllianceOregon.org. Emails made out to our old email addresses will still come through, but you can change to our new email addresses by using the first letter of the first name, and then full last name. For example: Maria Jones would be [mjones@birdallianceoregon.org](mailto:mjones@birdallianceoregon.org)**

### I have more questions about the name change. Who can I reach out to?

**Email Ali Berman, Communications and Marketing Director, at [aberman@birdallianceoregon.org](mailto:aberman@birdallianceoregon.org)**



# Celebrate the Name Change with a Gift and Double Your Impact

As we share our new name, Bird Alliance of Oregon, there is great enthusiasm for how this name will help bring more Oregonians Together for Nature! So much of our success is because of our flock of members, like you, coming together for environmental action. **One donor was so excited about how this change will help bring more people together to love and protect birds and nature that they agreed to match every donation made to celebrate the new name, up to \$100,000.** Help us grow our grassroots community and improve our ability to achieve our mission by making a gift today!

Here are a few ways the new name makes it easier to bring people together.

■ **Statewide Conservation:** Our work has been statewide since our founding. When we had to change our name to Portland Audubon, it hindered our ability to work with communities and organizations throughout the state. We became the big-city outsiders, making it harder to build trust and relationships in Malheur, Harney County, and on the Oregon Coast. This new name removes that obstacle and accurately reflects our 122-plus year history of working to protect wildlife and wild place throughout Oregon.



Double Your Impact  
and Donate Today!



## ■ Urban Conservation and Environmental Justice:

As urban heat increases due to climate change, BIPOC communities and low-income regions often experience the brunt of the disastrous effects. We collaborate with BIPOC-led partner organizations to advocate for climate resilience programs that help not only birds and their ecosystems, but people as well. This new name helps remove any hesitation for organizations to partner with us to advocate for policies and action.

■ **Access to Nature for All:** Over the last few years, we have taken critical steps toward making nature accessible to all. We now offer sliding-scale camps for kids and free birding trips during the Bird Days of Summer to make environmental education affordable to everyone. We host bird outings in community with partner organizations to create safe spaces for people to get outdoors. These steps have helped make nature and our programming more accessible. Now, with our name change, we have removed another barrier to help make Bird Alliance of Oregon a welcoming place for all people.

■ **A More Direct Connection to Our Work:** Within the birding community and our membership, the name Audubon is associated with the love and protection of birds. However, it does not have the same recognition outside of those communities, especially as other names are becoming more prominent. Too frequently, individuals would mistake the name as having something to do with a German motorway. The Bird Alliance of Oregon name makes it clear that our work and passion is about birds, and our tagline "Together for Nature" brings together how our affection reaches beyond to care for wildlife, wild places, and people!

It will take collective action to address the impacts of climate change and habitat loss, and this name change helps us expand that support. **Join us with a gift, and let's build a stronger, more inclusive community!**

# Expanding Our Community with Bird Song Walks!

by *Camelia Zollars, Public Programs & Partnerships Specialist; and Emily Pinkowitz, Director of Education*

For close to 40 years, Bird Song Walks have invited Portland metro area residents to celebrate and track spring migration together. At a host of different locations throughout the city, a dedicated group of volunteers, staff, and neighborhood residents gather weekly to note the comings and goings of species through the chorus of songs that fill the early morning air.

Free to all, Bird Song Walks were designed to expand access and build community by bringing birding to neighborhood green spaces where Portlanders live and play. Week after week, local residents and expeditious birders alike fold these gatherings into the rhythm of their spring mornings. Since relaunching these walks post-pandemic, each year we've made changes to make these programs more engaging, approachable, and accessible to all. This year, we'll be expanding these efforts with some exciting additions. Read on for highlights.

## ► Beginner Weekends

The songs of spring always awaken a cohort of new birders and "bird curious" folks. Yet it can be challenging to know where to start, and intimidating to make sense of the myriad of species that pass through our city. To break down these barriers, this year we're launching a new series of Sunday walks for Beginners at Whitaker Ponds! Led by Rae Synder, these low-key, meditative walks will practice listening, looking, and learning in a supportive community. Whitaker is a neighborhood gem easily accessible by public transit with wide, flat paths that can be traversed in less than an hour. Binoculars will be provided!

## Hey, Early Birds!

**Bird Song Walks are happening every week this April and May. We've spiced up this year with weekend walks on Sundays. Plus, a new special location along Wilkes Creek in outer East Portland.**



Photo by Tara Lemezis

## ► Conservation Connections along Wilkes Creek

Assistant Director of Urban Conservation Micah Meskel will join Brodie Cass Talbott and others from our Education team to lead a new series of walks around Wilkes City Park every Tuesday. This addition is part of Bird Alliance of Oregon's Greening Wilkes initiative. In collaboration with Friends of Trees, Verde, Columbia Slough Watershed Council, and Portland Parks and Recreation, we're working with the community surrounding the Wilkes Creek Headwaters in outer East Portland to restore and enhance the area's greenspaces and engage the community in activities to increase climate resilience. For the last two years, we've hosted a popular Earth Day festival at this site, and it's our hope that the addition of Bird Song Walks will deepen the community's growing connection to this evolving green space.

## ► More to come...

These highlights are just a sampling of the Bird Song Walk season ahead. We're looking forward to bringing back the accessible Big Sit to engage people with disabilities; launching new walks especially for people who identify as Black, Indigenous and people of color; and returning walks at long-time favorite locations including Mt. Tabor, Oaks Bottom, and others. With our new name, we've got a lot to celebrate this spring, and we hope you'll come out and join us at whatever Bird Song Walk is right for you! For full details, [bit.ly/BAO\\_BirdSongWalks](https://bit.ly/BAO_BirdSongWalks)



# BIRDATHON



Duck the Patriarchy / Rabbit aL Friedrich

## Offering Birding Opportunities For All

by Sarah Swanson, Events Manager

I'm very ready for spring this year, and Birdathon is always a highlight for me. I can't wait to get outside with other birders and support Bird Alliance of Oregon's important work! As a Birdathon participant you'll be part of a community of birders that raises funds to help protect the birds we all love and the ecosystems they depend on. It's also a fun tradition and a great way to revel in spring birding.

With your support, we hope to bring in \$188,000 during Birdathon 2024. Registration begins March 15 and teams will go out birding between April 27 and June 2. See [bit.ly/BAO-Birdathon](https://bit.ly/BAO-Birdathon) for a full list of teams you can join or support. We have team options for everyone: seasoned birders, new birders, photographers, women, and LGBTQIA+ birders. And of course, you can always start your own team!



### What Is Birdathon?

It's a fundraiser where participants ask for donations from friends and family, then head out into the field to count birds solo or with a team. Everyone who registers for Birdathon receives tips and templates to make fundraising easier. Birdathoners are invited to a celebration in June to recognize their collective achievements, try their best at the annual bird quiz, and win fabulous door prizes.



# REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 15!



[bit.ly/BAO-Birdathon](https://bit.ly/BAO-Birdathon)



These are just a few of the teams that you can join. For a complete list with full descriptions, see the Birdathon website.

## Handle-barred Owls | May 11

Join current and former staff members Tara Lemezis and Kelsey Kuhnhausen for a bikes and birds adventure in NE Portland. We'll bike to birding hotspots to look and listen for our favorite springtime migrants, year-round birds, and hopefully a Barred Owl!

## Clackamas Creepers | May 17

Join expert birder Dan van den Broek on a half-day tour of Clackamas County's birding hotspots. From Milwaukie Bay Park to Canby and over to Molalla, we'll find a great diversity of birds and learn some identification tips.

## Sage Flight | May 18

Eastern Oregon Biologist Teresa "Bird" Wicks will take the team on a tour sampling Harney County habitats from forest to wetland and everything in between. We'll look for owls, woodpeckers, eagles, and waterbirds.

## The Murre the Merrier | May 19

Events Manager Sarah Swanson will lead this foray to the oak woodlands, open fields and riparian forests of Champoeg State Heritage Area. We'll enjoy the antics of Acorn Woodpeckers and watch the nesting behavior of Western Bluebirds and Bald Eagles.

## Crow Magnons | June 3 ►

Join Assistant Director of Statewide Conservation 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 savanna and sagebrush.

## How can I be a part of Birdathon?

- **Join a team.** See the Birdathon website for a full list with descriptions. Registration begins March 15.
- **Create a team.** Get together with friends, family, or coworkers.
- **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.

## Kickoff Events

Birdathon will get off to a great start with a series of free virtual classes April 22-26 for all who have raised or donated at least \$45 for Birdathon 2024. Topics will include this year's logo bird, the Lewis's Woodpecker, and other classes that will get you ready for Birdathon.

## Birdathon Questions?

Events Manager Sarah Swanson wants to make your Birdathon experience a great one. Contact her at [birdathon@birdallianceoregon.org](mailto:birdathon@birdallianceoregon.org)

## Thank You to Our Birdathon Sponsors!







# A Species in Rapid Decline: New Efforts to Recover the Tufted Puffin

by Katherine Luscher, Senior Coordinator - Tufted Puffins, National Audubon;  
and Joe Liebezeit, Assistant Director of Statewide Conservation

Just 553. That is the estimated number of individual Tufted Puffins remaining in Oregon, based on the 2021 coastwide survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). It's a staggering decline from the nearly 5,000 puffins counted back in 2008 and other surveys in the 1990s. It's a number that demands action, and action is exactly what we plan to take.

Bird Alliance of Oregon is teaming up with National Audubon and other stakeholders on a new effort to help recover the Tufted Puffin, focusing primarily on populations in Oregon, Washington, and California where their numbers are declining at an alarming rate. With new capacity and a recently hired Tufted Puffin coordinator, National Audubon will be supporting the development of a conservation action plan to help understand and reverse the rapid decline of this iconic species.

Tufted Puffins are the largest of the puffins and breed along the Pacific Rim from northern California to Alaska in North America, and Japan and Russia in Asia. They are named for the beautiful pale-yellow feather tufts on their heads during breeding season. They spend almost the entire year at sea, only coming to land to nest in burrows at cliff edges, on grassy slopes, or in rocky crevices. They lay one egg per pair and raise their chick, called a puffling, before making their way back to open water. A seabird in the auk family, their antics and appearance have earned them the nickname "clown of the sea." But don't be fooled by their circus-like waddle—these birds can dive up to 200 feet, fly up to 55 miles per hour, and catch and carry up to 20 fish crosswise in their uniquely grooved bill.

Tufted Puffin decline along the southern portion of their range is not fully understood, and the dramatic declines documented over such a short time span are truly perplexing. Warming ocean temperatures related to climate change and subsequent impacts to their forage fish prey base is thought to be one factor. In addition, pollution and invasive species, which can severely alter their breeding habitat, are likely additional stressors. The Tufted Puffin is listed as endangered in Washington State, sensitive in Oregon, and a species of special concern in California. In 2014, the species was petitioned for listing under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, and a subsequent assessment by the USFWS determined that listing was not warranted. The decision was in part based on the large number of puffins in Alaska, where, according to the USFWS, about 96% of the species breed and are relatively stable. But the outlook is different farther south, especially in Oregon.

Today, Three Arch Rocks in Tillamook County hosts the largest colony—about 40%—of Oregon's remaining Tufted Puffin population. Farther north in Cannon Beach, Haystack Rock serves as one of the Northwest's most accessible locations to observe puffins during breeding season, despite their declining population—from 42 birds counted in 2010 to 15 counted in 2023. Oregon is unique among Pacific states in that the federally protected Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex covers almost all of the rocks, islands, and reefs off the coast where Tufted Puffins return each spring to breed—including Haystack Rock. Bird Alliance of Oregon's (then Oregon Audubon Society) early work lobbying then President Theodore Roosevelt protected Three Arch Rocks in 1907 as the first wildlife refuge



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west of the Mississippi, and the protection has since been expanded to this larger refuge complex managed by USFWS. Established in 1935, the refuge complex hosts an estimated 1.3 million colonial nesting seabirds and thousands of marine mammals. The refuge complex includes 1,853 rocks, reefs, and islands and stretches from Tillamook Head south to the California border. All the islands of the refuge are designated national wilderness areas, with the exception of one-acre Tillamook Rock. This means that the Tufted Puffin breeding grounds fall under federal jurisdiction, and almost all conservation work must be done in coordination with USFWS. While scientists and federal land managers are working hard to better understand the decline of the Tufted Puffin, more must be done—and quickly—if we are to save this iconic bird.

In early January, 20 stakeholders representing Bird Alliance of Oregon, USFWS, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, American Bird Conservancy, Oregon State University, Oikonos, National Audubon Society, and others met to talk about present and future priorities for Tufted Puffin conservation. The coordinated work now being developed will address the decline of the Tufted Puffin utilizing three interrelated strategies.

- The first strategy is focused on science and subsequent management actions: the coordination of on-the-ground actions that will—if successful—restore and

maintain self-sustaining populations of Tufted Puffins within their historic range. The research and surveys being conducted by USFWS, Oregon State University, and others will continue, but we are also working to prioritize specific conservation actions that will include direct, hands-on activities like invasive species removal, social attraction (e.g., using decoys to attract Tufted Puffins to viable breeding grounds), placement of nest boxes, soil amendments, and appropriate management of predators.

- The second strategy will focus on using existing policies as well as advocating for stronger policies with the aim of leveraging the best regulatory tools to better protect the Tufted Puffin.
- Lastly, we will raise the profile of this iconic species' plight through targeted outreach and engagement to build public support for Tufted Puffin conservation efforts.

The work won't be easy, and we know we will learn valuable lessons along the way, but if we are to save the beloved Tufted Puffin, we must take immediate action.

Just 553 birds. We would love to reach a point where that number not only increases, but that there are so many Tufted Puffins at their historic breeding habitat that it is impossible to count all of them.



Tufted Puffin / Tom Ingram - Audubon Photography Award



## FIELD NOTES

by Laura Whittemore, Warbler Editor

### Northern Flicker: Talent Plus Charisma

One of the first birds to really get going in the early breeding season is the Northern Flicker. And by “get going” I mean drumming on trees, phone poles, gutters, or street signs, and sounding off with its trademark rapid-fire *wik wik wik wik* call. (If a flicker has chosen your home to drum on and it's too loud, you can help them find a new spot by covering the area they are drumming on with burlap, canvas, foam rubber or heavy plastic.)

But they aren't just about yelling and pounding on things for attention—flickers also engage in ritualized courtship displays. Two birds will face each other, point their bills to the sky, and bob their heads in a figure eight while uttering another trademark call, the rhythmic *wicka wicka wicka*. A potential mate is usually looking on from the sidelines, silently judging.

These displays might go on in short bursts over several hours, and at some point, one “dancer” just flies away



Northern Flicker pair / Dagny Gromer

without further conflict. And you might see more than three birds together; I can recall seeing five or six gathered in a tree and displaying.

Flickers are common backyard visitors, especially to suet feeders, and seeing one up close for the first time can be startling. They're not small, they're covered with polka dots, their underwings are orange, and they have a sizable bill. Add these spectacular physical features to their big voice and enthusiastic displays, and you have one very entertaining bird to watch.

Don't be surprised to see one on the ground digging up an ant nest, and if you can leave a dead tree standing on your property, flickers might excavate a nest cavity in it! Wherever you see flickers this season, be sure to appreciate their talent and charisma.

## SIGHTINGS

by Brodie Cass Talbott, Senior Educator, Trips Specialist

The Portland Christmas Bird Count is always a boon for rare species, as hundreds of birders fan out and try to document all the birds in our area. The headline bird this year, found along the Columbia Slough, was a **Hermit Warbler**. Or was it? Close examination of photos revealed it may more likely be a Hermit X Townsend's Warbler hybrid. Either taxon is exceptionally rare in winter, and the bird earned its observer the Eagle Eye award.

Other fun CBC finds included **Western Tanager** (for the third time in four years) in North Portland, the continuing **Gray Catbird** at Koll Center wetlands, and a surprising number of **Barn** and **Tree Swallows**. The nearby Sauvie Island CBC also had a very surprising find of a **Black-necked Stilt**. Almost certainly the same bird that has been frequenting the Vancouver lowlands, this is a first winter record for the species in Oregon, and the bird was seen again on Rentenaar Road on Sauvie Island in February.

A lucky pair of homeowners in Clackamas County hosted a **Hooded Oriole** at their hummingbird feeders. A first county record, the bird was seen for two months before being found deceased in the area. In happier news, a **Black-and-white Warbler** spent several weeks at Whitaker Ponds and was appreciated by many.



Hermit Warbler (showing potential hybridization with Townsend's Warbler) / Nathan Usselman

There have been a couple reports of **Common Redpolls**, a small northern finch rarely found in Oregon outside of Wallowa County. One visited a feeder for one day only in NE Portland, another was reported from Chapman Landing near Scappoose, and a third was reported in Vancouver.

Hagg Lake in Washington County has been home to many rare birds this winter, including **Clark's Grebe**, **Red-throated Loon**, and **Black-legged Kittiwake**.

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



## Birding Days, Field Trips and Classes

### Birding Day: Gorge Wildflowers— Catherine Creek, Lyle Cherry Orchard & Horsethief Butte

March 23 | 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Wildflowers this time of year are incredible! We'll visit several hotspots in the Columbia River Gorge to look for these showy bloomers, as well as birds like Canyon and Rock Wren, Western Bluebird, and Lewis's Woodpecker.

Fee: \$95 members / \$125 non-members  
Leader: Stefan Schlick

### Birding Day: Catherine Creek and Sheridan's Green Hairstreak

March 30 | 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

The wildflowers of Catherine Creek are magnificent at this time of year! This early date is also great for the small Sheridan's Green Hairstreak, which should be out in full force, weather permitting.

Fee: \$95 members / \$125 non-members  
Leader: Stefan Schlick

### Field Trip: Fernhill for Beginners

March 31 | 7:30-10:30a.m.

Calling all beginning birders and bird-curious folks! Please join Stefan in discovering the plethora of birdlife at Forest Grove's Fernhill Wetland

Fee: \$45 members / \$65 non-members  
Leader: Stefan Schlick

### Birding Day: Deschutes River State Recreation Area

April 6 | 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Join Ross for some early spring birding along the lower Deschutes River near its confluence with the Columbia River. We'll look for arriving songbirds and returning breeding birds.

Fee: \$65 members / \$85 non-members  
Leader: Ross Barnes-Rickett

### Beginning Birding and Sauvie Island Exploration: Migration Edition!

Saturdays: April 20, May 18, and June 15 |  
8 a.m.-12 p.m.

Sundays: April 21, May 19, and June 16 |  
8 a.m.-12 p.m.

This field class series is perfect for those interested in developing and sharpening their birding skills under various field conditions with local expert birders. We will venture deep into the refuge as spring unfolds and the island becomes a wonderful cacophony of territorial bird songs. Explore various habitats on the island, learn bird voices, and search for waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors.

Fee: \$115 members / \$145 non-members  
\*fee covers all three mornings  
Instructors: Greg Baker and Ricky Allen

### Birding Day: Mount St. Helens—Silver Lake: Sunset, Birds, and Ecology

April 26 | 4-8 p.m.

Join naturalist Gina Roberti on an ecology and birding tour of Silver Lake at the Mount St. Helens Visitor Center at Seaquest State Park.

Fee: \$65 members / \$85 non-members  
Leader: Gina Roberti



Sign up at  
[bit.ly/BAO-  
BirdingDays-  
FieldTrips](https://bit.ly/BAO-BirdingDays-FieldTrips)





Rufous Hummingbird / John Shewey



Mason Bee / Mark Jones

## NATURE NIGHT

### Nature Night | For the Love of Hummingbirds

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

Hummingbirds amaze and intrigue us. Their high-speed enigmatic lifestyles are a blur; their startling colors and exotic behaviors are delights. Hummingbirds also inspire us—they are like tiny ambassadors with the power to usher people into a deeper interest in and appreciation for the natural world. Catering to these frenetic, fascinating birds borders on a national obsession, and author John Shewey taps into the intrigue with this program based on his new book, *The Hummingbird Handbook*. Join John for this fun-filled program and learn more about hummingbirds, including how to attract them to your yard, and how to be a great hummingbird host.



Cost: Free, donation suggested



**\$** Cost Involved

Public Transit Available

**FREE** Free

Family Friendly

Wheelchair Accessible

Virtual Event or Program

Sign up for classes and trips at [bit.ly/BAO-Classes](https://bit.ly/BAO-Classes) or scan the QR code:



## HOMES & HABITATS

NEW!

### Homes & Habitats Workshops

This spring we're piloting a new and exciting series of workshops and field classes focusing on the intersection of gardens, plants, and birds! From painting birds and native plants to writing haiku to native bees and botany for birders and edible gardening, there's something for every budding plant enthusiast! Stay tuned for more this April and May!

### Botany for Birders Series

Introduction, March 6 | 6-7:30 p.m.

Conifers, April 18 | 6-7:30 p.m.

Rose City Flowers, May 15 | 6-7:30 p.m.

Join local arborist, ecologist, and birder Ryan Gilpin for a series of online and field classes designed to help birders more confidently navigate the plant world. Please register separately for each class. \*Check online for field class dates and registration.

Fee: \$20 members/\$30 non-members  
Instructor: Ryan Gilpin



### Mason Bee Care and Hosting

March 7 | 6-7 p.m.

Learn how to care for and maintain a healthy Mason Bee colony in your own garden!

Fee: \$20 members/\$30 non-members  
Instructor: Janet Gifford





Striped Coralroot Orchid / Brian Magnier

## WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS

### Online Watercolor Painting with Ronna: Hummingbirds and Native Plants

April 10 | 6-7:30 p.m.

Join this live, online class to paint hummingbirds and native plants alongside Ronna Fujisawa, an experienced watercolor painter, art educator, and bird enthusiast. Anna's Hummingbirds are some of our region's earliest nesters, and they rely on early blooming native plants for fuel. We'll paint these tiny gems with some of their favorite native plants!

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

Instructor: Ronna Fujisawa



### Orchids of Oregon

April 17 | 6-7 p.m.

What makes orchids such a special group of plants? Together we will learn about orchid evolution and ecology, and go through some of the beautiful and bizarre orchid species native to the Pacific Northwest.

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

Instructor: Brian Magnier



### Writing Haiku in Nature

April 28 | 10 a.m. -12 p.m.

Writing haiku is for everyone! Join us for a morning of writing poetry in nature. Our Nature Sanctuary will surround participants with native plants that benefit our native wildlife, birds, and pollinators to draw inspiration from.

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

Instructor: Natalie DaSilva



## NATURE STORE

### Spring Optics Fair

Saturday, April 20  
10 a.m.-3 p.m.



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

Have you been eyeing a new high-end set of binoculars? Ready to take the next step to a spotting scope? You'll get a chance to try every piece we have in store, see new products, and get all of your questions answered. There are sure to be great deals and sales, giveaways, and more!

Plus, you can try out the new Swarovski AX Visio! It's the first-of-its-kind pair of smart binoculars with enhanced features such as Merlin Bird ID in several languages, a sharing feature that allows you to connect several devices to a live view from the binoculars, and much more! Check out this awesome video featuring Nature Store Manager Janet Moler: [bit.ly/SwarovskiAXVisioBinoculars](https://bit.ly/SwarovskiAXVisioBinoculars)

SAVE THE DATE AND LEARN MORE AT

[bit.ly/BAO\\_SpringOpticsFair](https://bit.ly/BAO_SpringOpticsFair)







Barred Antshrike / Patty McCann

## Explore Guanacaste, Costa Rica!

November 8-17, 2024

Join us to explore Guanacaste, the northwesternmost province in Costa Rica, home to dry tropical forest and bordered on the east by a series of protected national parks along the slopes of several active volcanoes. We'll visit both and throw in some mangroves to boot!

Fee: \$3,695 members / \$4,295 non-members

Leaders: Candace Larson and  
Dan van den Broek

## 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

## 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. The birding is unparalleled, with plenty of warblers, vireos, sparrows, and flycatchers! We'll visit hotspots all over Minnesota, including Sax-Zim Bog; in summer, this spot should be on every birder's to-do list!

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

Leaders: Stefan Schlick and Randy Hill

## Pacific Northwest Trip: The Birds, Bugs, and Plants of Mt. Adams

July 7-9, 2024

Join us for a weekend summer getaway to explore the diverse habitats around Mt. Adams. We'll explore Conboy National Wildlife Refuge looking for Gray Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, and White-headed Woodpecker. Birding around Trout Lake at a lower elevation will bring species like Veery and Gray Catbird. We'll also focus a great deal on the beautiful wildflowers, dragonflies, and butterflies of the area. On this trip, we'll look at and appreciate all flora and fauna around us.

Fee: \$375 members / \$450 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick

## Winter Wildlife: Whooping Cranes, Butterflies, and Specialties of South Texas

November 30-December 8, 2024

Beat the winter blues with an epic adventure to South Texas! December offers Whooping Crane encounters and a unique combination of wintering shorebirds and warblers and year-round highlights like the Green Jay and Plain Chachalaca, among other specialties. We'll get to know the abundance of butterflies that visit the valley as well. If you haven't done any butterflying, it's time to start! This trip will be a lovely escape from the start of Oregon's rainy season.

Fee: \$2,500 members / \$3,000 non-members

Leaders: Stefan Schlick and Randy Hill



Sign up for trips at  
[bit.ly/BAO-Ecotours-PNWTrips](https://bit.ly/BAO-Ecotours-PNWTrips)  
or scan the QR code:



## NEWS FROM THE COAST

## Welcome Cara Gates, Our New Coastal Community Science Biologist

by Joe Liebezeit, Assistant Director of Statewide Conservation

Bird Alliance of Oregon welcomes Cara Gates as our Coastal Community Science Biologist! Cara will lead two core coastal community science programs: Plover Patrol and the Oregon Black Oystercatcher Project. She takes over from Allison Anholt, who helped substantially grow these programs over her two years with us. These projects have been vital to protecting Oregon's iconic rocky habitats, with the Black Oystercatcher as our emblematic ambassador of the rocky intertidal zone. Some of the volunteers with the Black Oystercatcher Project have been instrumental in designating rocky habitat protections and continue to be important stewards of rocky habitat up and down the coast. Plover Patrol focuses on recovering the endangered Western Snowy Plover on the north coast, work done in close partnership with Oregon State Parks. In recent years plovers have expanded their range to the north coast, and our community scientists have been there to monitor this positive development and contribute key information that informs ongoing management efforts. These programs engage our growing coastal volunteer base, who act as "eyes and ears" on the coast to monitor abundance patterns and nesting behavior and also provide vital public outreach to reduce human disturbance to wildlife.

Cara fell in love with the ocean at an early age, and since getting her bachelor's of science at Humboldt State University in 2013 has gained experience in various realms of conservation, including wildlife rehabilitation, habitat restoration, environmental education, and threatened species monitoring. Cara is excited to combine her passions for conserving threatened species and community engagement in her new position with Bird Alliance of Oregon.



## NEWS FROM EASTERN OREGON

## Bird Crawl Your Way through the Harney County Migratory Bird Festival

by Teresa "Bird" Wicks, Eastern Oregon Biologist

The 2024 Harney County Migratory Bird Festival (April 11-14) will be the third year of the Bird Crawl, like a Pub Crawl but with birds. We station birders around the Harney Basin and encourage festivalgoers to bird at each location.

Participants who sign up for the Bird Crawl get a passport to carry with them and get stamped at each stop. Last year all of the stops were at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, and we sold out of passports well before the festival.

This year our Bird Crawl has 10 locations spread from the Malheur National Forest north of Burns, west to the sagebrush of BLM land, through the Silvies Floodplain, and to the southern end of Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. For folks interested in chatting with birders, we'll have volunteers stationed at Malheur on Friday, April 12, and near town on Saturday, April 13. For folks interested in a more DIY experience, we'll have stamps and ink pads stashed at all 10 sites Friday to Sunday. The great thing about both options is that they create opportunities to visit birdy spots between tours or as a stand-alone experience.

The Bird Crawl draws birders from diverse backgrounds, and this year we're building on the more fun and casual style with a second year of our Wetlands Happy Hour, Bird Trivia, and a Saturday Swoop capstone event. Rather than a formal keynote, there will be a series of three short presentations interspersed with a Bird Call contest (bring your best bird impersonation!) and a Name that Bird challenge, concluding with Focus on Finley trivia.

Pictured above: The cover of the Bird Crawl passport, artwork created by local artist Marylou Wilhelm.



# A Hawk and Her Hip Bone

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

When Red-tailed Hawk 24-15 arrived at the Wildlife Care Center after being hit by a car, we knew something was wrong but we weren't sure exactly what. She was weak, unable to stand, and had some blood in her mouth, but she seemed remarkably healthy otherwise. Unlike many birds that are hit by cars, she had made it through the incident without major damage to her eyes, fractures of her wings or legs, or the lack of awareness and incoordination that often accompanies head trauma. It wasn't until we took radiographs (x-rays) that we found the problem—a fracture of the bird's left ischium, or pelvic bone.

Stabilization of this bird looked a lot like it does for any other bird with a traumatic injury or fracture—it's all about fluids, heat support, pain management, nutritional support, and providing a safe, confined space where the bird can heal. But there are a couple special challenges that we face when nursing a raptor with a pelvic fracture back to health. A pelvic fracture means the bird won't be able to stand until the fracture is mostly healed. A bird that can't stand can end up with damaged feathers (which must be in top condition for flight), they can become contaminated with urates and feces buildup that causes additional health concerns, and since the bird isn't able to distribute their weight normally, we sometimes see pressure sores on their feet and chest. To prevent this, we use towel "donuts" that prop the bird up in a specific way to redistribute weight and keep the body up and away from droppings. We also closely monitor their feet and feathers, and we can use special protective wraps if we see signs of trouble.

In addition, Red-tailed Hawks and other raptors hold their food with their feet while they tear it into small-enough pieces to eat, and they rely heavily on their vision to identify food, so if we provide cut-up food that isn't shaped like the whole mouse/rat/bird they would find in the wild, they often don't understand that it is food and won't eat on their own. In this case, it took a couple weeks of placing pieces of food in the hawk's

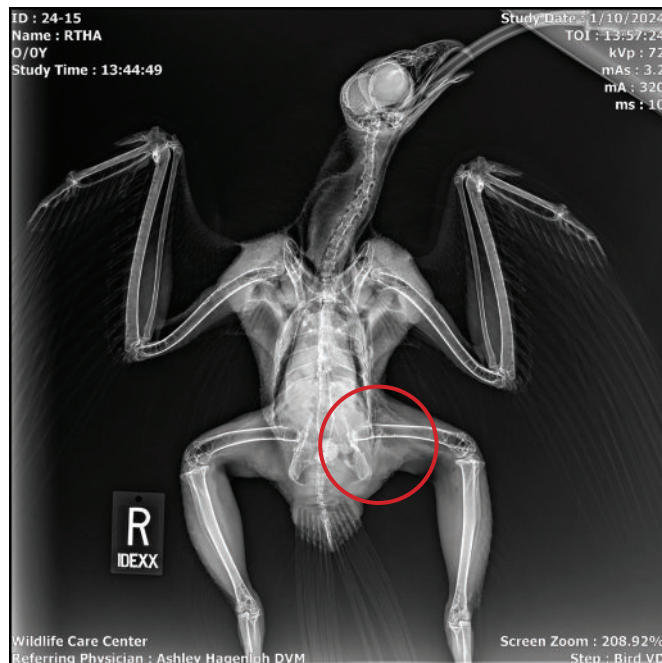
mouth through a technique called assist feeding before she started to eat voluntarily and transitioned to picking up pieces by herself.

Wildlife rehabilitators also need to think long term on behalf of their patients and keep an eye on what their current medical issue will mean after release. One possible outcome of pelvis damage is that it could prevent the bird from safely laying eggs. Being unable to lay eggs is a painful and deadly condition, and laying eggs is something this bird would biologically do every year for the rest of her life. We needed to be

sure we ruled out this possibility so the bird wouldn't suffer once she was beyond the reach of human medical attention. In addition to assessment by both of our expert wildlife veterinarians, we also reached out for consults by other raptor veterinarians and, fortunately, determined that this particular fracture should not pose a threat to the bird's reproductive future.

The good news is that bird bones heal up pretty quickly! So after about two weeks in care, she was starting to prop herself up, and after four weeks she was standing

once again, although still favoring her left side. As of this writing, she has been at the center for five weeks and is regaining strength and agility in a small outdoor enclosure. We expect she will soon graduate to the large flight enclosures where she can gain back the rest of her strength. While we can never be certain a bird will be released until the moment they fly away, we have high hopes for this lucky lady, and we want to take a moment to send gratitude to the Good Samaritan who interrupted their day to drive her to the center, the expert veterinarians who guided her treatment and researched the potential impacts of her injury, the staff and volunteers who patiently and painstakingly provided for this bird's special needs while in care, and the donors who made it all possible. It truly takes so many hands to do this work and to see injured animals return successfully to the wild!



# Northern Spotted Owl Found on Mt. Tabor Died Due to Rodent Poison

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

On Monday, November 6, 2023, a distressed Northern Spotted Owl was discovered on the ground at Mt. Tabor Park in SE Portland. Northern Spotted Owls are classified as threatened on both state and federal endangered species lists, and are rarely seen in developed areas. A Bird Alliance of Oregon employee rescued the bird and brought them to our Wildlife Care Center for treatment. Despite the best efforts of our trained wildlife medical professionals, the bird passed away overnight. After testing performed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, we now know that this bird was suffering from secondary rodenticide poisoning.

Rodenticide poisoning is a common threat to many predatory animals, especially owls and other raptors, as they can ingest the toxin by eating poisoned rodents, or rodent carcasses. In addition, although rodenticides and rodenticide bait stations are often billed as only attracting their target mouse and rat species, other animals including pets, small mammals, and omnivorous species like raccoons can directly consume the poison. Wildlife can become sick or even die from a single exposure to rodenticide but can also suffer chronic low-dose exposure that leads to death over time. In this case, rodenticide was responsible for the tragic death of an imperiled species whose numbers continue to decline in Oregon.

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Rodenticides are billed as an easy solution to rodent infestations, but the isolated use of rodenticide only temporarily reduces local rodent populations.

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There are many types of rodenticide on the market, over-the-counter or via licensed commercial pest management companies, and while some are marketed as safer alternatives, none kill immediately, and thus poisoned rodents can travel away from the point of exposure and enter the food chain. Most rodenticides work over days, but even the fastest acting poisons



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

work over hours, not minutes. Depending on the type, the effects of rodenticides vary widely and include excessive bleeding, respiratory failure, and other organ failure, and are not particularly humane, even on the target species.

We don't know where or when this bird was exposed to rodenticide, but the reality is that wide and unsafe use of these products puts wildlife at risk across the state. Residents, businesses, and government agencies can all do their part to reduce wildlife deaths by using alternative methods to manage rodent populations. If more people had acted, the Northern Spotted Owl might still be alive.

Rodenticides are billed as an easy solution to rodent infestations, but isolated use of rodenticide only temporarily reduces local populations. Controlling rodent infestations long-term requires identifying and removing the access to or presence of attractants such as food, bedding, and safe hiding places that are supporting the rodent colony to begin with. Without addressing these things, some rodents will die, but the remainder of the rodent colony will continue to reproduce, and other rodents will move into the area, drawn by available resources. And while in some cases it may be necessary to decrease the population of a rodent colony through lethal means in conjunction with other control measures, snap and electric traps are a more humane option, with fewer risks to non-target species and the ecosystem as a whole. Never use glue or sticky traps, as these are extremely inhumane and dangerous to non-target species.

Many people were curious why a Northern Spotted Owl would be found so far outside of its normal range. While we can't know how the owl ended up in Mt. Tabor Park, it's possible that this hatch-year bird dispersed in the wrong direction. The species relies on old-growth forest, and less than 10% of Oregon's old-growth forest remains.





## Extreme Measures to Protect the Northern Spotted Owl

by Joe Liebezeit, Assistant Director of Statewide Conservation; and Quinn Read, Conservation Director

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has proposed a controversial plan to kill hundreds of thousands of Barred Owls to protect rapidly declining Northern Spotted Owls. Barred Owls are a nonnative species that outcompetes Northern Spotted Owls for resources. Make no mistake, it is the unchecked logging of forest habitat that pushed Northern Spotted Owls to the brink of extinction. But the best available science tells us that Barred Owls present an immediate threat to the survival of their critically imperiled cousins.

Bird Alliance of Oregon has therefore taken the incredibly difficult position that this emergency situation warrants a temporary and targeted "lethal removal" of Barred Owls *only* in conjunction with new and expanded efforts to protect, restore, and increase old-growth habitat. We did not come to this decision lightly. Without action, we condemn the Northern Spotted Owl to extinction in vast portions of its range. But killing Barred Owls is a temporary solution—and a cruel one at that.

We struggle to square this decision with our previous positions decrying the killing of one species to save another. We have fought against the killing of cormorants and sea lions in the name of salmon conservation. We've likewise fought against the killing of corvids in the name of sage-grouse or Marbled Murrelet conservation. The humane treatment of wildlife is a core tenet of our advocacy. Yet, here we are, supporting an inherently inhumane action.

The Barred Owl has become an effective bogeyman for both the timber industry and the federal agencies overseeing forest management in the Pacific Northwest. It's important that we remember that it's the destruction of forest habitat that caused Northern Spotted Owl populations to plummet. And it's the destruction of forest habitat that allowed Barred Owls to vastly expand their range and outcompete Northern Spotted Owls.

Bird Alliance of Oregon has worked for decades to protect the Northern Spotted Owl. In fact, it was a result of a petition filed by Bird Alliance of Oregon, Birds Connect Seattle, and others that led to the listing of the Northern Spotted Owl as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 1990 and to the first significant protections of old-growth ecosystems under the Northwest Forest Plan in 1994. So now we must ask ourselves if we've done all we can to save this species. We believe the answer is still no.

What differentiates this case from others is that the best available science does support killing Barred Owls as a necessary—although insufficient—emergency measure to give Northern Spotted Owls a chance to recover. Another factor we considered is that we lose important tools under the ESA if Northern Spotted Owls are no longer on the landscape. The ESA prohibits "take"—which includes actions like habitat destruction that lead to harm or death of a listed species. If there are no Northern Spotted Owls, there is nothing to trigger this protection.

To make this emergency measure effective, our focus must remain on protecting the old-growth forest habitat that Northern Spotted Owls need to roost, forage and disperse—especially as the U.S. Forest Service is undertaking its own process to amend the Northwest Forest Plan this year. We must also push the USFWS to increase ESA protections for the species by uplisting their status from threatened to endangered. And we must closely monitor how the USFWS implements its Barred Owl plan and be prepared to intercede if it is not working as intended.

As more species rush toward extinction, we will face more of these moral and ethical dilemmas. Some say it's time to let nature take its course. But what does it mean to let nature take its course when we have fundamentally harmed and altered nature as we know it? We are in the midst of an extinction crisis of our own making. And this crisis—in which Northern Spotted Owls and Barred Owls are pitted against each other—is also of our own making. There are no easy or satisfactory answers here. Science guided our position, but we will be wrestling with the ethical implications of that position long into the future.

### 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

### 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

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# Volunteer Resilience in a Year of Change

by Julia May, Volunteer Manager

It's no secret that 2023 brought many adjustments for all of us, and our Volunteer Program was no exception. Before we look forward to new horizons and all that 2024 offers for the incredible Bird Alliance of Oregon volunteers, I think it's important to take a look back with recognition and gratitude on all that our flock has traversed over the past year. Our organization went through some tremendous shifts in 2023. Nevertheless, our volunteers navigated them with grace, flexibility, and dedication to what has remained constant and eternal: our mission to inspire all people to protect and love birds, wildlife, and the natural environment upon which all life depends. Our mission is what brings us together, and our volunteers are what make our efforts possible.

Looking back, we can see that throughout the past several years—and especially through 2023—our volunteers demonstrated their talent, leadership, and passion during the hardest of times. They showed up throughout the height of the pandemic when campus was closed and so much was uncertain, remaining committed even though we were unable to see each other in person or engage in community building and bonding. Just as the restrictions started to lighten and campus began to open up, 2023 presented brand-new changes and challenges, which our flock took in stride. When the Wildlife Care Center reopened after a five-month closure and remodel due to a

burst pipe from an ice storm, volunteers returned to their positions, relearned the space, and fell back into their flow. When the organization went through multiple changes in staff, they stepped up, offering their time to ensure that crucial tasks were taken care of and programs did not lose traction.



As we look forward to 2024, there is so much to be excited about! With our new identity as Bird Alliance of Oregon, we celebrated the return of the Hawks & Hot Chocolate event, and we will be reviving the Community Outreach and Nature Guides programs, creating lots of volunteer opportunities at the beautiful Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, and welcoming a new location for the 44th annual Wild Arts Festival! Our Backyard Habitat Certification Program has now surpassed 12,000 participants, and BHCP volunteers completed 397 site certifications in 2023, with more growth and certifications to come.

The busiest season of the year at the Wildlife Care Center is also just around the corner, and we are expanding and building up our team of Wildlife Solutions Counselors! The WSCs are on the front line, helping guide and support Good Samaritans who are experiencing a wildlife conflict, be it an injured animal, a bird who has flown into their house, or a flock of swifts who have taken up residence in the caller's chimney. For those who enjoy connecting directly with members of the public and welcome opportunities for challenge and growth in your personal knowledge about wildlife issues, please consider becoming a Wildlife Solutions Counselor!

Bird Alliance of Oregon volunteers are the life force behind everything that we do. Without our incredible flock of individually unique and talented humans, our effectiveness

would not be possible. They are dedicated and thoughtful and care deeply for nature and the wildlife around them. They bring their exceptional knowledge, expertise, and creativity to the table as new endeavors are dreamed up and put into action.

If you have ever wondered about becoming a volunteer, now is a great time to sign up for an orientation and find the spot that is right for you. Whether you've got five days or five months, there are many possible areas of involvement, and we can work together to find the position that best aligns with your schedule, your skills, and where you want to learn and grow.

➡ **Contact Volunteer Manager Julia May at [jmay@birdallianceoregon.org](mailto:jmay@birdallianceoregon.org) for more information.**



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Bird Alliance of Oregon volunteers are the life force behind everything that we do. Without our incredible flock of individually unique and talented humans, our effectiveness would not be possible.

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Future generations deserve to experience Oregon's fish and wildlife.



Do your part by turning in poachers.  
Learn how at: [ProtectOregonsWildlife.com](https://ProtectOregonsWildlife.com)



# Results from the 98th Annual Portland Christmas Bird Count

by Candace Larson, Portland CBC Compiler

On December 30, 2023, Portland conducted our 98th annual Christmas Bird Count under mostly gloomy skies, though temperatures were mild and the rain light, if relentless. This year's totals are solid, with appearances from all the species we expect to see this time of year, and a few rarities as well. We had 247 field observers scouring the 15-mile radius count circle, and over 100 joined in from their feeders—a very respectable showing. Together, these dedicated volunteers tallied 119 species (3 less than the 10-year average) and an impressive 73,738 individual birds (about 10,000 less than last year's record, but well above the 10-year average.) As always, tremendous thanks are due to the area leaders—Brodie Cass Talbott, Joe Liebezeit, Lynn Herring, Lori Hennings, and Colleen McDaniel, who organized the mass of volunteers into dozens of field teams, led their own sectors, and collated the pile of data into a useable tally for the compiler.

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. Observations allow researchers, wildlife agencies, conservation biologists, and others to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across the count area. This was the 124th year for the CBC overall, making it one of the longest running large-scale data sets in existence. Hundreds of studies have been published using CBC data, and findings have been used to inform climate change science as well as important management and conservation decisions that help protect birds across their flyways.

On Portland's count, Ryan Gilpin found a Hermit Warbler skulking in the shrubbery near the west end of the Columbia Slough trail—only the third time this species has been recorded on a Portland CBC. This is an impressive discovery for December, and it earns Ryan the coveted Eagle Eye award, bestowed on the birder who finds the most unexpected species of the day. Congratulations, Ryan! Other notable finds included a Western Tanager in North Portland, and a Gray Catbird that had been hanging around the Koll Wetlands complex. Happily, this bird was re-found on count day, as it's a first record for Portland's CBC. Unfortunately, a few other rarities seen before or after the count stayed hidden on count day, including the Pygmy Nuthatch, Wilson's Warbler, and Black-and-white Warbler that had recently graced our count circle.

Cackling Geese and American Crows were, as usual and by far, the most abundant species on the count, though crow numbers fell again this year and were back near their 10-year average. A few species set new highs for our



Volunteers Leandro Casas (front), Mike Green (back left), and Jazelle Green (back right) have covered the neighborhoods of Northeast Portland for the last several counts. They have found some amazing birds and a lot of joy in the process.

count circle, including Greater Scaups, which smashed all previous totals at nearly 3,000, and both Tree and Barn Swallows, which were found in multiple locations this year. Golden-crowned Sparrow numbers also peaked, Hairy Woodpeckers had a great year, and for the second year running we recorded multiple Acorn Woodpeckers inside the count circle. Unusually low numbers included two Canvasbacks and three Brewer's Blackbirds detected on count day.

Heartfelt thanks to all the area leaders, field counters, and feeder watchers for making this year's Portland CBC another great success. We look forward to seeing you again next year. If you'd like to help out as a community scientist on the 2024 CBC or another project, please visit our website to check out all the exciting opportunities. We'd love to have you join us!

➡ [bit.ly/BAO-CommunityScience](https://bit.ly/BAO-CommunityScience)



## IN MEMORY

## IN HONOR

**Bird Alliance of Oregon gratefully acknowledges these special gifts:**

**Philippa Brunsman**

Mark Brunsman

**Don Bryan**

Barbara Bryan

**Charles Carney**

Rebecca Carney

**Daniel Cohen**

Martin & Marilyn Cohen

**Tina Cole**

Christine Wilson

**Virginia Covey**

Barbara Ann Covey

**Michael J. Cunningham**

Casey Cunningham

**Margaret Day**

Yvette Janssen & Ernest Janssen

**Joan Frances Feraco**

Melody Lyon  
Pam & Tim Szerlong  
Juanita & Kurt Urban

**Amy Frank**

Winthrop Gross &  
Rebecca Marsh

**Ruth Friedel**

Sharon Gross

**Richard Lawrence  
Ground**

Robert Gitelson

**Spencer Higgins**

Mary Bunn  
Sidney Friedman  
Chris Harrington &  
Stephen Smith  
Dawn Heutte  
Robert Tracey  
Marilyn Walster

**Elek Horvath**

Hollis Anne & Eric  
Lundeen

**Lucy Keating**

Jules & Kathleen Michel

**Ingrid Miller**

Andrew Delpapa

**River Otter**

Herman Migliore

**Terrence R. Pancoast**

Pamela Erickson

**Paul Perry**

Patricia Witherite

**Barbara Schaffner**

Shap Shapiro & Martha  
Moore

**Ron L. Spencer**

Cheryl & Adam  
Knobloch  
Esther Spencer  
Tammy Spencer

**Dr. Amanda Andersen,  
Jolene Hilfiker, Zazu  
Susan Andersen**

**Elizabeth Bailor**

Eleanore Gartner

**Jack & Careese Brunwin**

Janet Brunwin

**Andrea & Anton Clifford**

David Reid

**Zoe Eidenberg**

Peter Eidenberg

**Debbie & Mike Elliott**

Judith Burns

**Andy Falender**

Aditya Dave

**Lindsay & Jeff Farrer**

Dawn Lloyd

**Tami Fung**

Mary & Wayne Lei

**Anne Goetz**

James Goetz

**Lincoln Edison Graham**

Carol Graham

**Chuck & Kristine Helm**

Gregory & Candice Miller

**Emily Herbert**

Linda Hartling & Richard  
Slaven

**Alexander Herring**

Lawson Jenkins

**Dr. Don & Lynn Herring**

Lawson Jenkins

**Richard & Myrna Jansen**

Dawn Jansen & Alan  
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**David Kato**

Ken Kato

**Sonja B. Kindley**

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**Lena Matthews**

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**George Mercure**

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W. Evan & Rebecca  
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**Harvey Tucker & Linda  
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Honor a special person with a gift to Bird Alliance of Oregon. Your gift will help fund a future of inspiring people to love and protect nature. Make a tribute gift online at [birdallianceoregon.org](http://birdallianceoregon.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 our Business Alliance, please contact Matthew Hushbeck, Associate Director of Development at 971-222-6130. **We encourage you to support the businesses that support us!**



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**Visits are by appointment:**  
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## Spring into the Nature Store!

Spring is right around the corner, and now is a perfect time to get ready for migration and summer adventures. Whether you are looking to upgrade your binoculars, find a nest box for your backyard, or get outdoor adventure ideas for the kids, the Nature Store has you covered. We can help beginner and experienced birders alike find the perfect accessories and gear to get ready for spring.

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

**Questions? Email: [store@birdallianceoregon.org](mailto:store@birdallianceoregon.org)**

**Phone: 503-292-9453**

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



Common Yellowthroat / Adam Stunkel



## New Name, New Logo, New Merch!

We're thrilled to have a new name and a fresh new logo. Come visit the store for all your new logo needs: shirts, pins, stickers, notebooks, lens cloths, and more! We put our bird on everything!

**Member Prices:**

**T-Shirts: \$22.50**

**Mugs: \$10.80**

**Pins: \$3.60**

**Magnets: \$3.38**



## PNW Pick

### Garden Artworks



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.

If you're looking for a nest box, bat house, or hopper feeder to add to your yard, check out our selection from Garden Artworks. They're local and use red cedar and recycled plastic lumber to craft high-quality, long-lasting houses and feeders for our wild neighbors. The nest boxes follow species-specific guidelines for dimensions and hole size, ensuring that you're getting the right home for the right bird.

**Member Price: \$40-\$108 depending on style**

## Spring Optics Fair

**Saturday April 20 | 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**

Join us for the annual Nature Store Spring Optics Fair to prepare your optics kit for all of your 2024 birding adventures! Have you been eyeing a new high-end set of binoculars? Ready to take the next step to a spotting scope? You'll get a chance to try every piece we have in the store, see new products, and get all of your questions answered by expert company representatives. There are sure to be great deals and sales, giveaways, and more!

## New Book

**Piping Hot Bees and Boisterous Buzz-Runners:  
20 Mysteries of Honey  
Bee Behavior Solved by  
Thomas D Seeley**

Just in time for bee season, prolific honeybee author Thomas D. Seeley's new book hits the shelves on April 9! Have you ever wondered just what's going on in the privacy of the hive? Take a peek behind the honeycomb curtain with this fascinating and beautifully illustrated book!

**Member Price: \$26.96**







TOGETHER FOR NATURE

5151 NW Cornell Road  
Portland, OR 97210

Bird Alliance of Oregon inspires all people to love and protect birds, wildlife, and the natural environment upon which life depends.



## Give Your Middle Schooler a Summer They'll Never Forget

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### 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

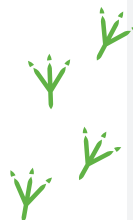
503-292-0304  
Open daily, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

#### 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!

How many gallons of water fit in an American White Pelican's pouch?

- A. 3
- B. 6
- C. 9
- D. 12



Answer: A



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