



Eagle Eye

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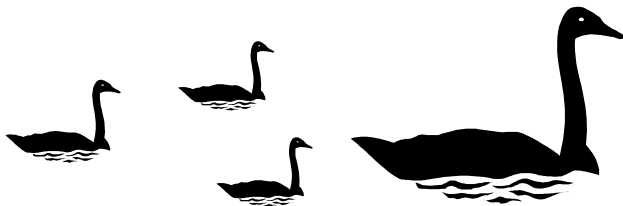
Newsletter of the Central Oregon Audubon Society

Spring 2002

President's Message

Chris Carey

Did you hear the buzz from the March Evenings With Nature program? It silenced the room. Guest presenter Carol Nork, head animal keeper from the High Desert Museum, gave an informative program on living with wildlife. She brought some of the museum's live critters and when she started to show the difference between a gopher snake and a western rattlesnake things got exciting. It seems the rattler doesn't care much for the gopher snake and it showed its displeasure by suddenly coiling as if ready to strike and violently buzzing its tail. And the buzz was loud enough for everyone in the room to hear. It made me sit upright. Even the visiting red-tailed hawk took a step back on its perch. That snake had everyone's attention. Later that evening we heard past COAS Pres. Dave Ledder tell his story about searching for a grim reaper to dispatch a badly injured deer he had picked up and put in the back seat of his car. Yes siree, it was quite an evening. Join us at our next meeting – you never know what you're going to hear.



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www.audubon.org/chapter/or/centraloregon

Attracting Birds in Spring

Jen Lair

Now that spring is here, its time to get your yard ready for spring birds. The hummingbirds will be here any day now, so pull out the feeder and clean it with hot water and vinegar. Fill the feeder with one part table sugar to 4 parts water. Most people boil the solution to sterilize it and slow fermentation. Don't use red food coloring (which may be harmful to the little birds), instead hang little red ribbons or streamers near the feeder to catch a hummingbird's eye. Plan on planting some flowers to attract hummingbirds to your yard – native scarlet gilia, columbines, and penstemons are some of their favorites.

Don't put away your seed feeders! The wild seed crop was mostly eaten up over the winter, so birds appreciate your feeders in the spring more than ever. Birds are putting on a new coat of feathers, singing and defending territories, and gearing up to start laying eggs – all of this takes a lot of energy! Suet is a high-energy food that is enjoyed all spring and summer as well. Good quality rendered suet remains firm until the temperatures reach 100° F, and by summer you can switch to suet dough that remains firm until it is 150° F.



Birds are looking for a place to nest, so put up nesting boxes and pull out old nests from any boxes you can reach. Pulling out old nests from boxes encourages birds to move in this year, and keeps down parasite infestations. Place nesting material in your yard and watch the birds swoop in to grab it. Put out yarn, feathers, wool, or any type of animal hair (people hair too!). Avoid putting out dryer lint or cotton fiber, since these get matted down and cold if they get wet.

NAS State Office in Oregon

National Audubon Society will establish a state office in Portland by the end of this year. As part of National Audubon's 2020 Vision, state offices will be in every state within five years. Details are being coordinated with the Audubon Society of Portland on how to make a merger work. Goals for the 2020 plan include 1000 Audubon nature-education centers nationwide with overnight facilities with paid and volunteer staff, reach 1 in 4 school children with a direct nature experience, restore and protect 1,000,000 acres of fish and wildlife habitat, and grow NAS membership to 1% of the USA population. The only downside is that funding for local chapters will be reduced. We are hopeful that an Audubon Nature Center will be established in Central Oregon.

Request for an Equipment Donation

COAS is in need of a working personal computer. We need Windows/ Pentium 1 or higher processor capable of running a bookkeeping program. If you have such an item setting around in the garage, attic, or "junk room", let us help you clear that space. A donation to COAS would be tax deductible and a real help to our Treasurer.



SAGE GROUSE FIELD TRIP

APRIL 20th

Central Oregon Audubon will be leading a trip to see and witness one of nature's truly amazing rituals, the strutting of the male Sage Grouse on their Lek. If you have never experienced this event, please join us for this early morning adventure and see for yourself something few have seen. Unfortunately, due to loss of habitat and human impact these birds are becoming more scarce and the opportunity to watch them in the wild is becoming more and more difficult. So if you would like to find out more about these great birds and be part of this annual event please let me know by e-mail at cdledder@bendnet.com or call me at 383-7646.

Dave Ledder
Field trip coordinator

CALLING ALL TEACHERS & STUDENTS

4-H Wildlife Stewards Program Brings Mother Nature to School Grounds

Gayle H. Parlato, Naturalist & Educator

Would you like to have your schoolyards come alive with the sights and sounds, and even smell of native plants and wildlife? You can, with a program developed by Portland's OSU extension agent Maureen Hosty. The program is part of OSU Extension's 4-H Youth Development program, in partnership with the National Wildlife Federation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It allows school officials, parents, volunteers and students to create natural study areas on the school grounds. Hosty said the school-based wildlife education and habitat restoration program is a success because it makes better use of often-neglected outdoor school grounds.

The 4-H Wildlife Stewards program recently trained ten local individuals (including the author of this article) who are now ready to help you create wildlife habitat on anything from a 3-foot-by-30-foot grass strip to a 14,000-square-foot lawn and transform it into a combination natural science laboratory and sensory delight.

To learn more about the 4-H Wildlife Stewards program, visit the OSU Extension Service website at <http://osu.orst.edu/extension/>.

If you are interested in creating habitat for native plants and wildlife at your school – and a learning laboratory for students, where these combination natural area/laboratories boast butterfly gardens, native woodlands, flowers, nesting boxes, nurseries, bogs or wetlands – please contact Aimee Van Vleck, Deschutes County 4-H Wildlife Stewards Coordinator, at the OSU Extension Service. Her telephone number is 541-548-6088 x19; or e-mail Aimee at aimee.vanvleck@orst.edu. Aimee will be able to put you in touch with one of the newly trained 4-H Wildlife Stewards in Central Oregon.

Appreciating Volunteers, Appreciating Nature

Holly Remer

April is volunteer appreciation month! In recognition of our many members who serve as volunteers, the Board would like to thank all of you who give of your time and energy in volunteer capacities. If you are looking for something new or interested in volunteering in areas that are consistent with your natural history interest may we suggest the following:

- Bend Metro Parks and Recreation will be offering some tree planting opportunities to celebrate Arbor Day. Call 389-7275 for more details.
- ODF&W has need for monitors of the water collectors, affectionately known as guzzlers. Call Chris Carey at 388-6444 for additional information.
- Native Plant Society will offer numerous opportunities to reduce the amount of noxious weeds on Pilot Butte. The dates for the weed pulls are May 14, 22, and 29 all scheduled for 6 p.m. Call Stu Garrett at 389-6981 for additional information.

These are just a few of the wonderful opportunities to help Central Oregon habitats and become involved. One can always help at the upcoming Earth Day Events or if you are looking for a long term commitment consider becoming involved at the Sunriver Nature Center or the High Desert Museum. Spring in Central Oregon is a great time to roll up your sleeves and join in. Volunteers do make the difference!

Species of the Month- *Larry Pecenka*

Greater Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*)

Order: Gruiformes

Family: Gruidae

State Status: Sensitive

Federal Status: None

Length: 44 in (112 cm)

Wingspread: 90 in (229 cm)



Global Range: Some Sandhill Cranes breed in eastern Siberia, but most are found in North America, from Alaska and northern Canada south to Oregon and the Great Lakes region.

Habitat: Sandhill Cranes will nest in marshes and wet meadows or in the drier grasslands and pastures, including irrigated hay meadows.

Reproduction: This crane arrives on its breeding grounds about March, and the young fledge by August. The nest is a depression in the soil, lined with grass and feathers, or merely a mass of vegetation in shallow water. Both sexes incubate the clutch of 2 (range 1-3) eggs for 28-30 days. The young remain with the parents over the winter.

Food Habitats: Sandhill Cranes eat a fairly broad range of food items, but more of the diet consists of plants than animals. They eat waste grain in agriculture areas in the fall, as well as seeds, berries, tubers, roots, green leaves, and shoots. They eat animals caught in marshes or grasslands, including large insects, reptiles, frogs, small mammals, birds, and bird eggs.

Ecology: During breeding season, Sandhill Cranes are territorial and defend an area around the nest that varies from 3 to 168 acres in an Oregon study. In 1984, the breeding density at Sycan Marsh, Lake County, was one pair per 180 acres. Almost all of Oregon's Sandhill Cranes migrate to the Central Valley of California during the winter, but a small number may overwinter on Sauvie Island in some years.

Comments: About 1,000 pairs of Sandhill Cranes breed in Oregon, accompanied by another 500 nonbreeding individuals. In recent years the population has been stable in most areas, but eggs and young are often killed when hay fields are mowed early in the season. (*G. c. tabida*) is the subspecies nesting in Oregon.

References: Gilligan et al. 1994, Littlefield and Paullin 1990, Marshall 1992, Mullins and Bizeau 1978.

Information and drawing from: *Atlas of Oregon Wildlife, OSU Press*

OFO Your Statewide Birding Club

Oregon Field Ornithologists (OFO) is the only statewide birding organization in Oregon. Our mission is to further the knowledge, education, enjoyment and science of birds and birding in Oregon. As a member of OFO you receive:

Oregon Birds – OFO's quarterly journal provides information on the status and identification of Oregon's birds, bird finding guides to Oregon's hot birding locations, tips on finding rare species, short notes, Christmas Bird Count schedules and OFO field trips announcements. Members also receive information from the Oregon Birds Records Committee, a sure way to stay current on Oregon's rare and unusual birds.

Members are encouraged to attend the OFO Annual meeting, held each year at Oregon's top birding locations and an opportunity to meet birders from around the state.

OFO publishes useful checklists based on the records of the Oregon Birds Record Committee, as well as a series of special publications of particular interest to Oregon's Birders. New last year, OFO joined the Malheur Field Station and OFO members receive discounts on lodging and in the bookstore.

In Memory of

Janice P. Luelling

"Mom was an avid bird watcher, keeping a diary of her observations" says her daughter, Lynn Schmaltz. "She participated on bird counts in the Gilchrist area, taking me along when I was younger." Janice graciously opened her home to COAS members to view swifts that had taken up residence in a stone chimney built by Lynn's grandfather along the Deschutes River near Madras. Janice also served as librarian for the Jefferson County Library.

COAS would like to acknowledge the generous donations made by the family and friends of Janice.

Sandra Ackley, Bend
Helen B. Ambrose, Terrebonne
Ernest Easley, La Pine
Jan Hildreth & Dick Falxa, Bend
Carolyn & Boyce Innerarity, Prairieville, LA
Margie & Don Moe, Madras
Lynn Schmaltz, Madras
Susan Stackhouse, Terrebonne
Eleanor Watts, Bend

Thank you !

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COAS Calendar

April

5-7 John Sharff Waterfowl Festival Burns, OR
9 Prineville Bird Club, Crook Co High School,
call Chuck Gates 923-1320
17 Evenings With Nature – COEC 7 PM
18 Birder's Nite – COEC 7 PM
20 Field Trip, Millican Sage Grouse Lek. Call
Dave Ledder 383-7646
27 Audubon Society of Portland Centennial
Celebration, www.audubonportland.org for
info.

May

11 Field Trip, Deschutes River Bike and Birds
A Riverfest Event Call Chris Carey 388-
6363
11 Migratory Bird Count Day, Crook Co. call
Chuck Gates 923-13220, Deschutes Co.
call Steve Shunk 549-8826, Lake County
call Craig Miller 389-9115
14 Prineville Bird Club, Crook Co. High
School, call Chuck Gates
15 Evenings With Nature, COEC 7PM
16 Birders Nite – COEC 7 PM
25 Field Trip, Shevlin Park Birding 7 – 10
AM, A Riverfest Event, call Chris
Carey 388-6363