



Pine Siskin

The Siskin

Newsletter of Siskiyou Audubon Society, Josephine County, Oregon

Siskiyou Audubon Society meets on the second Thursday each month from September through May, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Room 400 at Grants Pass High School, 830 NE 9th Street, Grants Pass. Room 400 is in the northernmost building on campus. Come in either 8th or 9th Streets to the parking lot, then enter the north door and go down the hall to the left. In December we hold a holiday Potluck Dinner, and in June a Potluck Picnic. Coffee and refreshments are served at our informal meetings. We hope to see you there!

Please bring your own cup to help conserve resources and reduce waste.

☞ Chapter Elections ☞

Members! Be Prepared for April Nominations & May Elections!

Our Society is governed by four Officers and three Directors: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, plus a three-member Board of Directors. Current incumbents are: President, Susan Bush; *Vice-President, Shirley Bredahl; *Secretary, Pat Etchells, and Treasurer, Phil Hicks. Current Directors are *Margaret James, *Lee Webb and Marsha Hicks. Terms are expiring for those marked *.' Each year new people are elected for a two-year term during the Society's Annual Meeting held in May. The terms are staggered, so that the entire Board of Directors is not replaced at the same time.

Directors guide the Society in its programs and business dealings. The Secretary records and distributes to the Board the minutes of each Board meeting, and keeps the current records of the Society. The Board generally meets once a month, except December, June and July. Nominations are open, and Fran Taylor was named Nominating Committee Chair this year. Nominations will be taken from the floor at both the April and May Chapter meetings. See Chapter News inside for the candidates nominated so far. If you are interested in holding any of these offices, or if you have someone to nominate, please email Fran at avnwmn@budget.net, or at sisquaudubon@gmail.com, or phone her at 541-955-2934.

Chapter Meeting, Thursday, April 14, 2016, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Program: Argentina from Top to Bottom and North to South: a Naturalist's View by Stewart Janes, Professor of Biology, Southern Oregon University

Stewart Janes is a native Oregonian who has worked at SOU for the last 22 years teaching various biology courses and training both classroom and informal science teachers. As an ornithologist he studies both raptor ecology and the complex song culture of our local warblers. As a naturalist he enjoys putting on a pair of boots and exploring just about anything in the out-of-doors. He contributes a monthly column to the (Medford) Mail-Tribune regarding the natural history of birds.

Argentina is the most diverse country in South America with habitats ranging from tropical rainforests to deserts, the Altiplano high in the Andes to the extensive Iberá wetlands. And this is all before heading south to the shrubsteppe, southern beech forests, and alpine of Patagonia. As you might expect, the birds are equally diverse with species like Strange-tailed Tyrants, Giant Coots, and Puna Rhea. Stewart spent two months of his sabbatical exploring this diverse landscape and is eager to share his experiences in this fascinating country.



☞ Chapter Annual Meeting with Election of Officers & Directors ☞

Thursday, May 12, 2016, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Program by Pepper Trail, PhD

Birding Adventures in South America: Brazil, Machu Picchu, and Galapagos

Pepper Trail is the ornithologist at the National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Lab in Ashland. Well-known as a writer and speaker on natural history topics, he has led birding trips on all seven continents, and enjoys sharing his adventures with diverse audiences.

This program will present highlights from three of Pepper's favorite South American trips, with birds as spectacular (and as spectacularly different) as Blue-footed Boobies and Brazilian Tanagers, Swallow-tailed Gulls and Saffron

Toucanets, Sword-billed Hummingbirds and Darwin's Finches. This is sure to be an entertaining and educational evening – don't miss it!



Our Mission . . .

is to promote the welfare of birds and other wildlife through habitat enhancement and education. Our primary focus is on our local community, our local schools, and issues of the Pacific Northwest.

Chapter News

Siskiyou Audubon Society members installed Memorial Nest Boxes in Whitehorse County Park, BLM area, on March 1st. The boxes honored the memory of dearly departed members Jeff Bush, Lynn Foley, and Ray Menagazzi. Pictured are installation crew members Susan Bush, Margaret James, Phil Hicks and Fran Taylor. Photo by Alan Ome.

Afterward, these five folks had lunch at Whitehorse Country Store and prepared for the March 5 bird identification class given at the Master Gardeners' Seeds of Spring Seminar.

Election of officers and directors is coming up in May. At the Chapter Meeting in April, the slate of candidates will be presented. They are: Vice-President - Shirley Bredahl is willing to serve again. Secretary - Margaret James is willing. Directors: Lee Webb, Alan Ome and Susi Perry have agreed to be candidates. If you would like to become more involved in Audubon by serving on the Board, please phone or email Fran Taylor. See the Directory on page 9.

Our **Kids' Nest Box Building** events are coming up! Next is April 16 at Grants Pass Growers Market. At our first event there on March 19, 52 nest boxes were built by kids. We also sold some finished boxes and other structures for wildlife. We wish to thank Grants Pass Growers' Market for giving us this opportunity!

On March 26, we went to Wild Birds Unlimited in Medford, where 14 were built. Other events are coming up – on **Mothers' Day Weekend at the Galice Garden Fair**, at **Siskiyou Field Institute's 'Birds & Brews' Festival May 28**, June 6 at Ashland Middle School, some time in June at Pacifica and also at Shady Cove Library, plus **June 18-19, Fathers' Day Weekend at the Antique Tractor Festival in Pottsville**, near Merlin. We also plan to attend the Saturday Parkways festival in Grants Pass in September.

In other actions, the Society will again contribute to Pacifica's mobile natural history classroom 'The Caterpillar,' to help them go to the schools. We will again pay for Wildlife Images to bring birds to the 'Birds & Brews' festival. We also voted to give a donation to support Josephine County Fairgrounds.

Thank you, Siskiyou Audubon Society Members, for your support of and participation in, our activities.



The Nature Conservancy – Restoration Work Parties

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. We rely on volunteers to help us restore Oregon's land and water.

Join us during a volunteer work party! Register online at www.nature.org, or click [here](#).

Whetstone Savanna (Medford)

Saturday, April 16 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon

Join The Nature Conservancy & SOLVE on this family-friendly restoration event. We will remove curly dock from vernal pools.

Rough and Ready Creek Preserve (Southwest Oregon)

Saturday, May 14 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Hand-pull Alyssum, a State A-listed noxious weed. After the work, join Conservancy staff on a hike to view spring wildflowers.

Table Rocks Preserve (Medford)

Saturday, June 25 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Pull star thistle on top of Upper Table Rock, overlooking the Rogue River Valley.

Popcorn Swale Preserve (Roseburg)

Saturday, July 16 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon

Remove invasive teasel in this Umpqua Valley wet prairie.

A Little Quiz!

Have you improved your woodpecker ID skills since our last Chapter meeting? See if you can tell which of two look-alike species native to North America this bird is.

Hint: She's a female.

Answer on page 8.



Photo by Ella Clem,
Kentucky
2016 GBBC

2016 GBBC: That's a Wrap!

Another Great Backyard Bird Count is behind us, and we're looking ahead to February 2017 when the count will return for its 20th year! In the meantime, you can look back at the 2016 event at gbbc.birdcount.org and be proud of what you've accomplished. We had the biggest GBBC ever, with more species than ever reported. Compare this year's stats to last year:

Total checklists:	162,052	(up 14,787)
Total species:	5,689	(up 599)
Estimated participants:	163,763	(up 19,822)

Birds Making History The Wisconsin War Eagle – “Old Abe”

“The Civil War story of “Old Abe,” the Wisconsin war eagle, has been frequently told. The eagle was taken from his nest by an Indian in upper Wisconsin in the summer of 1861. Having been sold by his captor, he was finally presented to Company C, Eighth Wisconsin. A standard was made for him, and he was carried beside the regimental flag. For three years he was in all the marches of the regiment, taking part in twenty-two battles and thirty skirmishes, and was wounded in three of them.

“When the regiment was engaged in battle, “Old Abe” manifested delight. At such a time, he would always be found in his proper place, at the head of Company C. When enveloped in the smoke of battle, he spread his pinions, jumped up and down on his perch, uttering such wild and fearful screams as only an eagle can. The fiercer and louder the storm of battle, the fiercer and louder his screams. He seemed always to understand army movements, such as dress parade, and preparation for the march. Before he had been a year in the service, he would give heed directly to “Attention! Battalion!” With his head obliquely to the front, his right eye turned upon the commander, he would listen and obey orders, noting time carefully. After parade had been dismissed, and the ranks were being closed by the sergeant, he would lay aside his soldierly manner, flap his wings, loll about, and make himself at home generally.

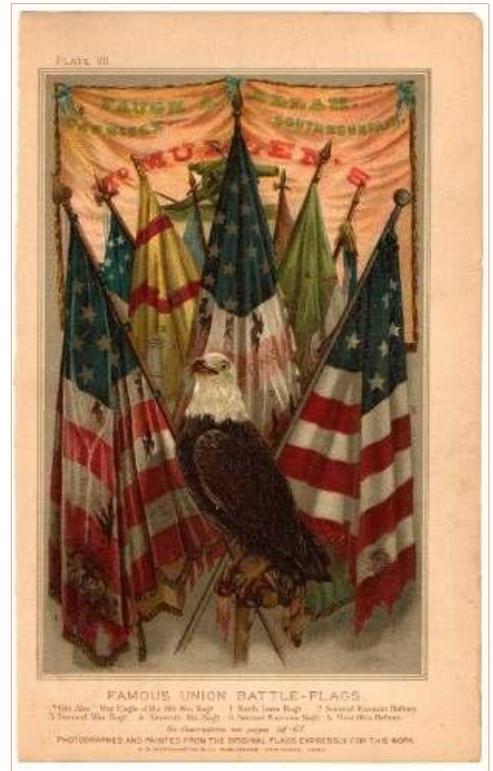
“When there was an order to form for battle, he and the colors were the first upon the line. His actions upon those occasions were uneasy. He would turn his head anxiously from right to left, looking to see when the line was completed. As soon as the regiment got ready, faced, and began to march, he would assume a steady and quiet demeanor. He could always be seen a little above the heads of the soldiers, close by the flag. That position of honor was never disallowed him.

“At the battle of Farmington, May 9, 1862, the men were ordered to lie down on the ground. The instant they did so, “Old Abe” flew from his perch. He insisted on being protected as well as they, and flattened himself on the ground, remaining there until the men rose, when, with outspread wings, he flew back to his place of peril, and held it until the close of the contest. At the battle of Corinth the rebel general Price discovered him, and ordered his men to take him if they could not kill him, adding that “he would rather capture that bird than the whole brigade.” The bird was never so excited as during that battle. Flying from his perch to the length of his chain, flapping his wings, with wide-open mouth, his screams could be heard in every lull in the battle.

“At the close of the war “Old Abe” became the pensioner of the state, and a room was appointed him in the State House, at Madison, Wis. An appropriation was made for his care, and for the salary of his attendant, who took great pride in the warlike bird, between whom and himself there sprang up an affection that lasted during “Old Abe’s” life. In charge of this attendant, the eagle visited soldiers’ re-unions, became an object of interest and profit at Grand Army fairs, was borne in procession at the dedication of soldiers’ monuments, and figured at the consecration of memorial halls. One of these occasions brought him to Boston, where he excited unusual interest.

He held immense receptions in the “Old South Meeting-house,” where children, as well as adults, paid him court, all eager to see the imperial bird, which had been through the fire of scores of battles, sharing their excitement and danger with the men. So great was the interest his visit awakened, that Mrs. Hemmenway, the eminent woman philanthropist of the city, who has assisted in the preservation of the “Old South” as a historic museum, commissioned an artist to paint “Old Abe’s” portrait, which hangs on the walls, with other pictures of historic worth.”

~From Chapter XXXIII of *My Story of the War* by Mary A. Livermore, Hartford, Conn.; A. D. Worthington and Co., 1888
~ Submitted by Susan Bush



“Old Abe”
spreading its wings

“Mr. President and the First Lady”

Nowadays, you can watch Bald Eagles making history at dceaglecam.eagles.org, the Washington, DC Eagle Nest Cam.

In 2014, a pair of mated Bald Eagles chose the most idyllic of nest sites within the United States’ National Capitol in Washington, DC, nestled high in a Tulip Poplar tree amongst the Azalea Collection at the U.S. National Arboretum, operated by the United States Department of Agriculture. The two Eagles, named “Mr. President” and “The First Lady,” are the first Bald Eagle pair to nest in this location since 1947.

“Mr. President” and “The First Lady” raised one eaglet successfully in 2015. Afterward, the 501(c)3 American Eagle Foundation partnered with the National Arboretum to install and operate two high definition video cameras from the top of the nest tree. The cameras are powered by a large mobile solar array designed and built by Alfred State College, SUNY College of Technology, and funded in part by the Department of Energy and Environment.

“The First Lady” laid her first egg of 2016 on February 10th, and her second on February 14th early in the morning. Both parents incubated the eggs, which began to hatch 37 days after being laid. “DC2” hatched at 8:27 a.m. March 18, followed by “DC3” on March 20th at about 3:00 a.m.

[Editor’s Note: When watching the Eagle Cam, remember all times are Eastern time.]



“Mr. President” and “First Lady” have returned for another season. Photo: Sue Greeley.

New Remedy Helps Bats Survive White Nose Syndrome

If you like organic produce and hate mosquitoes, you should care about White Nose Syndrome, a disease affecting hibernating bats. Named for the white fungus, *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, that appears on the muzzle and other body parts of hibernating bats, the “WNS” epidemic has killed about 6 million bats in 26 U.S. states and 5 Canadian provinces since 2006, pushing several species to the brink of extinction. The fungus has been detected as far south as Mississippi and as far west as Oklahoma. It is now believed to have been brought to the U.S. from Europe in the clothing and gear of spelunkers.



Small bat with WNS
Photo:

www.whitenosesyndrome.org

Losing any species is bad, but bats are especially helpful to humans. One Little Brown Bat can eat hundreds of mosquitoes per hour on summer nights, and insect-eating bats overall save U.S. farmers an estimated \$23 billion per year by eating crop pests like moths and beetles. Many insects simply avoid areas where they hear bat calls.

The disease often wipes out entire bat colonies in a single winter, and it has long defied our best efforts to control it. But while the outlook is still bleak for North America’s bats, there is finally some hope. In one of the brightest glimmers yet, scientists released several dozen bats in Missouri on May 19, 2015, after successfully ridding them of WNS.

“We are very, very optimistic” about this new treatment, says U.S. Forest Service researcher Sybill Amelon, one of the scientists who helped heal the infected bats. “Cautious, but optimistic.”

The researchers enlisted a common bacterium, *Rhodococcus rhodochrous* (strain DAP-96253), that’s native to an array of North American soils. Humans already use *R. rhodochrous* for a few industrial purposes like bio-remediation and food preservation. Microbiologist Chris Cornelison of Georgia State University found its bat-saving potential on a whim. “Originally, we were investigating the bacteria for various industrial activities,” Cornelison said. “In some of those earliest experiments, in addition to delaying the ripening of bananas, we noticed the bananas also had a lower fungal burden. I was just learning about White Nose Syndrome at the time. But I thought that if this bacterium could prevent mold from growing on a banana, perhaps it could prevent mold from growing on a bat.”

Apparently it could. And while another team of researchers also recently identified bat-wing bacteria that suppress WNS, Cornelison has shown that *R. rhodochrous* can help bats recover without even touching them. That’s because the bacteria produce certain volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that stop *P. destructans* from growing.

That’s a key detail, since applying any medicine directly to entire colonies of hibernating bats is inefficient at best. It’s also not easy to find a treatment that kills *P. destructans* without also killing harmless native fungi or otherwise disrupting the cave ecosystem.

Cornelison began studying *R. rhodochrous* and WNS in 2012, along with Amelon and wildlife biologist Dan Linder, also of the Forest Service. Backed by funding from Bat Conservation International, he published a study about *R. rhodochrous* in 2014, describing the discovery as “a major milestone in the development of viable biological control options” for WNS. Since then, he has worked at caves in northeastern Missouri with Amelon and Linder to investigate how these VOCs affect bats with WNS.

A wing and a prayer: “The bats were treated for 48 hours, and they were exposed in the same areas where they hibernate,” Amelon says. “We put the bats into small mesh containers where they’re comfortable. Then we put them inside a cooler, and placed volatiles in the cooler, but not in direct contact, so the volatiles filled the air.”

The researchers did this with 150 bats, about half of which were released May 19, 2015, at Mark Twain Cave in Hannibal, Missouri. Those survivors – mostly Little Brown Bats but also some Northern Long-eared Bats – are seemingly cured of WNS, with no detectable signs of the fungus or the disease, and they all took test flights before the release. Still, Amelon adds, it’s too soon to know if they’re really out of the woods. “It’s a complicated process with this disease,” she says. “These guys could certainly be considered survivors of this winter. But we are not sure if they have any long term benefits, or whether they could redevelop the disease next season. Prevention is much better than a cure in this case.”

The researchers decided to release half of the recovered bats at the time because May is when they would normally emerge from hibernation. Some of the treated bats have too much wing damage to be released, but some healthy ones are also being kept for further study of their long-term recovery. The released bats are wearing ID tags on their forearms (pictured at right), so researchers will be keeping an eye on their progress, too. “We still have a lot of data to analyze,” Amelon says.

There hasn’t been much good news about WNS in the past decade, so breakthroughs like this are cause for celebration. But the epidemic is still spreading ferociously across the continent, and with lots of physical and ecological variables at bat caves, it’s unlikely a silver bullet will be found. Instead, Cornelison says, we’ll need a deep arsenal of science to fend off this fungus. “It’s very promising, but what we need are a variety of tools to take an integrated disease-management approach,” he says. “They use a lot of diverse habitats and different hibernacula, so we may need to use a lot of different tools. And the more tools we have, the more flexibility we have.”

UPDATE: So far the results from the 2014-2015 field trials are the most promising sign yet that White Nose Syndrome can be fought and that America’s bats can be saved. Cornelison and Amelon are looking for other ways to test their experimental bacterial treatment and eventually move toward cost-effective, large-scale treatments. In the winter of 2015-2016 Cornelison and Amelon had hoped to conduct field trials with the bacteria treatment using the Conservancy’s artificial cave near Clarksville, Tennessee. However, they were not able to collect enough bats to do the experimental treatments.



Bat healed of WNS being released to the wild.

The Nature Conservancy

~ The Nature Conservancy www.nature.org, key word: bats



Rosemary G. Bell

Let's Talk Birds

It's the end of March as I write this, and it's beginning to be spring but it's still quite cool. Migration is on, and so far, Red-tail Hawk, Turkey Vulture and Osprey have been seen aloft. The Rufous Hummingbirds, first recorded in Hugo and Colonial Valley on February 24, are now becoming numerous. Tree Swallows and Violet-green Swallows were seen along the Rogue River on March 1, and then appeared over a pasture in Hugo on March 2. After wintering in Mexico, these insect-eaters are beginning to seriously check out the SAS 'Basic' Nest Boxes – once the food supply is sufficient, they'll be breeding. Closer to the Rogue River there may also be Northern Rough-winged Swallows, smallish, plain brown swallows that dig burrows for nesting, and like the Tree and Violet-greens, catch insects in flight. We may also see Cliff Swallows and Barn Swallows, both of which construct their nests from mud, often using human structures for nest support. The year-round Western Bluebirds are also beginning to select their cavities, as are the Red-breasted Sapsuckers which make their own.



Rufous Hummingbird
Port Orford, OR, Feb. 2008
© Lois Miller

We'll soon be seeing the neo-tropical migrants, including the warblers – tiny (3" to 5") busy birds with bright colors. Not often found at feeders, they will be in the trees and shrubs, looking for insects. Look low for MacGillivray's Warbler (a 4" pale yellow bird with a gray head. MacGillivray's breeds across the Pacific Northwest and the Rocky Mountains and winters in and the Common Yellow-throat (a broad black mask mystique to the yellow and olive male). Find the both northeastern North America and here in bridge overlooking the river or a park pond, look Warblers. Wilson's Warbler and Yellow Warbler are side, usually in shrubs or aloft in the canopy. Few the Yellow Warbler. In summer, the males sing their Wilson's prefers willow thickets and cottonwood trees, jaunty black cap. Anywhere there's a stream or river, breasted Chat. Nearly as big as a Robin, the Chat gurgles. The Chat is a widespread breeder in shrubby Selma (Siskiyou Field Institute). It winters in Central



Yellow Warbler
©Jim McCree
allaboutbirds.org

Wild Birds Unlimited in Medford took a call on March 26 reporting a Black-headed Grosbeak – very early, their usual arrival time being mid-April. The flashy black, white, yellow and cinnamon males and the streaky brown females sing from perches in suburbs, thickets, and forests. At feeders they shuck sunflower seeds with their heavy bills.



Empidonax flycatcher
At Pacifica April 2009
Phil Hicks Photo

Spring also brings the flycatchers from their wintering grounds in Mexico or South America, notably the Empidonax family, Willow, Dusky, Hammond's and Pacific-slope Flycatchers among them. Small (5" to 6") greenish-to-gray birds with sharp bills and pale wing-bars, and often an eye-ring, the flycatchers breed in mature coniferous forests. Sitting on a perch and flying out to catch a bug, their behavior gives rise not only to their name but also to the behavior pattern. The Western Wood-Pee-wee, a little larger at 6", breeds in open woodlands, along forest edges, and in riparian woodlands, wintering in mature tropical forest. The Ash-throated Flycatcher and the Western Kingbird are larger flycatchers that begin arriving in April. The Ash-throated may use our SAS Basic Nest Box for its cavity nesting, and has a "playground whistle" call that's unmistakable. The migratory Wrens and the Blue-gray Gnatcatcher also arrive in April.

The year-round sparrows (Fox, White-crowned, Song and Lincoln's Sparrows) will soon be joined by the Chipping and Lark Sparrows, while the Golden-crowned will disappear to the north to breed. Chipping Sparrows, small with rufous crown and dark eye-line, come from Mexico and California to build lacy grass nests in deciduous tree branches.

A male Western Tanager looks like a flame: an orange-red head, brilliant yellow body, and coal-black wings, back and tail. Females and immatures are a dimmer yellow-green and gray. These birds come from southern Mexico to live in open woods, particularly among evergreens, where they often stay hidden in the canopy. A bird bath in summer will attract them; listen for their short, burry song and low, chuckling call.

I've run out of room, and so many more birds that will be arriving – the Lazuli Bunting (brilliant seed-eater), Bullock's Oriole (hanging nest weavers), and perhaps, just perhaps, even a Dicksissel. So check the eBird bar charts & find out what's coming to your yard.

~ Fran Taylor, with Thanks! to ebird.org and allaboutbirds.org



Tree Swallow in Flight
wikipedia.org



Male Western Tanager
Zia Fukuda 2011



The 2016 Siskiyou Field Institute Course Catalog is now available – Click [here](#), or phone 541-597-8530, or visit www.thesfi.org. Classes of interest to birders include 'Flora and Birds of the Whiskeytown Mix,' scheduled for May 20-22 near Redding, CA, led by Sean Smith and Bud Widdowson; and 'Birding Upper Klamath Lake and Wood River by Canoe' on June 18, with Kevin Spencer and Dave Haupt. Siskiyou Audubon Society members – ask for a 10% discount off tuition when registering for classes. And teachers and natural history educators may qualify for a scholarship for all or part of class tuition. [Siskiyou Audubon and Rogue Valley Audubon (Jackson County) fund this program.] To apply, contact Kathleen Pyle, SFI Program & Marketing Coordinator, email programcoord@thesfi.org.



Events, Field Trips, Festivals, . . .

Rogue Valley Audubon Society

Based in Medford, Jackson County's "RVAS" leads free bird walks open to the public. Bring your own binoculars, food and water. Folks are encouraged to car-pool and share fuel expenses. Please, no dogs. Prepare for the weather; wear sturdy shoes and expect some walking on most trips. Dates and times are subject to change, so check the web site www.roguevalleyaudubon.org or get in touch with Field Trip Chair Russ Namitz at 541-294-2063, or e-mail: namitzr@hotmail.com.

First Wednesday Bird Walk – Agate Lake Arrive Early – The Walk Starts at 8:30 a.m.

Wednesdays: April 6 and May 4, 2016

Every month on the first Wednesday, Rogue Valley Audubon Society counts birds at Agate Lake in Jackson County. Birders with any level of expertise are invited to join in this citizen science effort led by experienced organizers. The slow-paced walk begins at 8:30 a.m. and covers about 1-1/2 miles over about 2-1/2 hours. Meet at the main parking area on the East side of the lake (far side from the boat ramp). Bring binoculars, field guide, and spotting scope if you have one. Mud-proof boots are advisable.

Directions to Agate Lake: From the junction of Hwy. 62 and Hwy. 140 north of Medford, go 3.5 miles east on Hwy. 140 to East Antelope Road. Turn right and go 1.5 miles; turn right on Dry Creek Road and then go 0.5 mile to the entrance on the right. If any questions, contact Leader Murray Orr by phone 541-857-9050 or email mworr2@charter.net. Results of each count will be e-mailed to participants and logged into eBird. Links to previous months' sightings are available on the RVAS website. Links to the most recent count is Jan 6 2016: <http://ebird.org/ebird/klamath-siskiyou/view/checklist?subID=S26742243>

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www.godwitdays.org**

 Find us on
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Olympic Bird Fest
Sequim, Washington, April 15-17, 2016



Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction & raffle, gala banquet, and more. Our featured speaker: noted artist Tony Angell, "Revealing the Secret Lives of Owls."

Extend your festival with our Neah Bay post-trip on April 17-19, 2016: two days exploring northwest coastal Washington. BirdFest registration at www.olympicbirdfest.org. Precede your BirdFest weekend with a three-day, two night birding cruise April 12-14 of the spectacular San Juan Islands. Visit San Juan and Sucia Islands, and more. Stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort. Get cruise information and register online at: www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon.

Contact us by phone, at 360-681-4076, E-mail us at info@olympicbirdfest.org, or write to us at: Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382

. . . Classes & Outings

Kids' Nest Box Building with Siskiyou Audubon Society

Siskiyou Audubon Society members, please volunteer your time and energy to help with some of these events. Audubon members will be on hand to talk about birds, help identify birds, display books about birds and bird life, and sell ready-to-mount bird houses, feeders and other structures. As scheduled events draw near, details will be posted on our website. Siskiyou Audubon will not have a regular weekly market booth this year, so be sure to come to these events to buy your bird houses. Questions? Visit our website: www.siskiyouaudubon.org or telephone 541-479-6859, or email sisqaudubon@gmail.com.



Saturday, April 16, 2016

9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Grants Pass Growers' Market

Lee Webb will lead the Siskiyou Audubon Society ("SAS") team helping kids build bird houses. We'll be at the Grants Pass Growers' Market on April 16th, from 9 to 1. Kids can build and decorate their own nest box to take home and put up in their yard. These are practical houses for the cavity-nesting birds that migrate here from Central and South America each spring, like the Tree Swallow. There are also year-around birds such as Chickadees and Western Bluebirds that use old woodpecker holes or other hollows - including our "SAS Basic Nest Boxes" - for nesting and raising their young. Some half dozen or so species in our region use these cavities.

Saturday & Sunday, May 7 & 8

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the

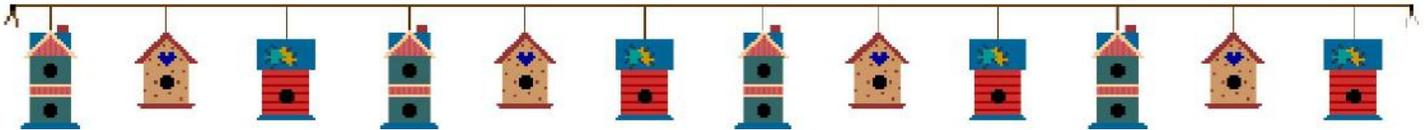
Galice Garden Fair

The Galice Garden Fair on Mother's Day weekend at the Galice Community Center will feature a plant sale and festival with other vendors including gem & minerals, garden art and more.

Father's Day Weekend, June 18 & 19

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Pottsville, near Merlin

The Early Day Gas Engine Branch 9 Festival is the "Antique Tractor Festival." We'll be there for kids to build nest boxes, while tractor pulls, swap meets and other events take place.



Klamath Bird Observatory Classes & Field Trips

Sign up for a Klamath Bird Observatory "Talk and Walk" classes. The Talks are held on Thursday evenings (except for the Woodland Birds of Jacksonville class) at the KBO headquarters, 320 Beach St, Ashland. The Walks are held on the following Saturday. To register send an email to Shannon Rio, Board President and coordinator of this program, at shannonrio@aol.com. Mail the registration fee of \$25 payable to "KBO" or each class (tax deductible) to Shannon at 610 Iowa Street, Ashland, OR 97520. Slots for these classes are limited by the space of the classroom and by the number of cars used to bird (a safety issue). Don't miss these fun and informative adventures in birding!

Woodland Birds of Jacksonville

Talk: Wednesday April 6, 2016, 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Presented by Shannon Rio at the KBO headquarters.

Walk: Saturday April 9, 2016, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Led by Dennis Vroman (Rogue Valley ornithologist and birding book author) an outing to Jacksonville Woodlands. Please bring lunch and drinks.



Pacific Wren
Photo by Jim Lividais

The Great Gray Owl

Talk: Thursday May 5, 2016 6:30 - 8 p.m.

at the KBO Headquarters, led by Lee French & Shannon Rio.

Walk: Saturday May 7, 2016 2 p.m. -.6 p.m.

An afternoon outing in search of a Great Gray Owl.



Save the Date for the Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival Sisters, Oregon June 2 - 5, 2016

Registration Opens April 1 at
www.ecaudubon.org

East Cascades Audubon Society sponsors this festival centered in Sisters, Oregon. Several new trips have been added and the Saturday Social will feature local author and birder Steve Shunk, whose book Peterson Reference Guide to Woodpeckers of North America, will be available on May 1st.

For more information Contact Sherrie Pierce at
DHWF16@gmail.com

2016 Mountain Bird Festival May 20, 21, & 22 Ashland, Oregon

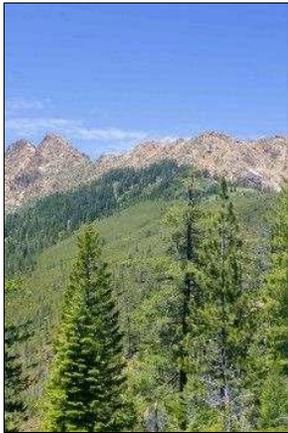
Registration is now open at
www.regonline.com/2016mountainbirdfestival
Get more information at www.klamathbird.org



Reflections of Journeying into the Cryptic Red Buttes Wilderness with Scott Loring

By Tyler V. Wauters

I have lived in the Applegate Valley since 2008 and consider myself a local. Not a local in the sense that I have roots here that travel back multiple generations, but a local in the sense that I am devoted to taking care of the land, creatures, and people that call this bioregion home. I have carved out a humble niche here over the years; I happily reside in the rural community of Williams, am a land owner/tender and a co-founder of a new local school, Hawthorn Institute. Programs at Hawthorn Institute focus on bio-regional medicine, clinical herbalism, and Ayurveda. I have also been teaching for the Herb Pharm's Herbaculture Intern Program now for 8 years and continue to be an adventurer of the Klamath-Siskiyou mountains and avid gardener at home.



The Red Buttes
pinimg.com

I have been exploring the Red Butte Wilderness for sometime now, enjoying the sub-alpine terrain and the sweet smelling azaleas. I am continually inspired by the luminous glow of the Siskiyou Crest and the unique plant diversity that this region holds. For me, a local amateur naturalist, the Siskiyou Field Institute's 'Cryptic Red Buttes' class gave me the chance to explore a favorite region of mine with an expert. In the class we identified and discussed, at length, lichens and bryophytes of the Red Buttes Wilderness. Our instructor Scott Loring brought us through this magnificent wilderness with ease and passion, generously sharing copious amounts of valuable information. I walked away gaining many insights into some of the little, and often unknown, organisms that we find in our backyards and in the wilderness. I came to the class knowing only a couple lichens and bryophytes; I walked away from the class with a sense of wonder at the sheer diversity of bryophytes and lichens in this area, and with practical skills for their identification.

Bryophytes – mosses, liverworts, and hornworts – are the most primitive group of land plants on the earth and have been on this planet at least 400 million years. Similar to all land plants, they evolved from slimy green alga, yet as a primitive group, bryophytes have retained their ancestors' dependency on a need for water to reproduce. So when out in the field looking for bryophyte species diversity, pay special attention to moist habitats including shady rock outcrops.

Lichens are symbiotic organisms made up of members of as many as three Kingdoms. The dominant partner is always a fungus. In general, most fungi lack the ability to produce their own food and provide for themselves by decomposing other organisms. In the case of lichens, the fungi cultivate partners that manufacture food through photosynthesis. It is almost as if fungi discovered how to farm! Sometimes the partners are algae (Kingdom Protista), sometimes cyanobacteria (Kingdom Monera, formerly called blue-green algae), and sometimes the fungus will partner with both simultaneously. One of the highlights of the class for me was going back to SFI and looking at the collected samples of lichens under the microscope. This allowed a view of the layers of fungal hyphae and algae together, which made this union all the more fascinating. Some lichen species we found on our walk include wolf lichen (*Letharia vulpina*), Dog lichen (*peltigera*), Red cap lichen (*Cladonia*), and *Usnea*.

Inevitably, many other plants became a part of the class. Some other highlights from our class include seeing Brewers Spruce (*Picea brewerana*), Knobcone Pine (*Pinus attenuata*), Alaskan Yellow Cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*), and Silktassel (*Garrya fremontii*). Some exciting understory plants include Pipsissewa (*Chimaphila umbellata*), Angelica (*Angelica argute*), and Osha (*Ligusticum greyii*). Since it was a dry fall that year, we did not see much fungi, but we still encountered a few specimens including Red Belt Fungus (*Fomotopsis pinicola*), Shrimp Russula (*Russula xerampelina*), and a few unique truffles hanging out in the duff layer.

Through the many classes I have been a part of at SFI, I continue to be grateful for the instructors and the unique places they have taken me to explore. I encourage anyone living in southern Oregon to support the programs at SFI. Learning about our surrounding bioregion is vital to creating strong relationships with nature and instills an ethic that supports the sustainable stewardship and love of these lands!

~ Wild Blessings! Tyler Wauters

[Editor's Note: Tyler Wauters is the third of the Siskiyou Audubon Scholarships to SFI to write of his experience for The Siskin. The Red Buttes Wilderness, located southeast of Cave Junction, was established by the United States Congress in 1984, and it now has a total of 19,940 acres. Oregon contains approximately 3,750 acres, California approx. 16,190. Managed by the USDA Forest Service, the Red Buttes Wilderness straddles the crest of the Siskiyou Mountains (i.e., the rugged Applegate River/Klamath River divide). The twin summits of Red Buttes (highest elev. 6,739' above sea level) anchor the southern extreme of the area in California, where reddish peridotite rock, nudged up from a 425-million-year-old sea floor by plate shifts in the earth's crust, now supports unusual plant communities.]



Map to
The Red Buttes Wilderness

Quiz Answer: Hairy Woodpecker

Note there are no spots on the outer tail feathers, and the beak is large relative to the size of her head.

Audubon Society Membership Enrollment Forms

Siskiyou Audubon is a nonprofit society under IRC §501(c)3, Tax ID #93-0866572. Subscriptions are tax-deductible. Send your application with dues payment to the address shown on the form – PLEASE CHOOSE ONLY ONE FORM.

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Pine Siskin

REQUIRED: E-mail Address _____

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National Audubon Society membership includes subscriptions to both *Audubon Magazine* and *The Siskin* newsletter.

Directory

The Siskin, newsletter of Siskiyou Audubon Society (“SAS”), is published six times per year. SAS is Chapter No. T61 of National Audubon Society. Address corrections, items for publication or letters to the Editor to Editor, P.O. Box 2223, Grants Pass, OR 97528; or phon or FAX to 541-955-2934; or e-mail avnwmn@budget.net. Siskiyou Audubon Society encourages submission of letters, articles and photos, which may be published at the discretion of the editor. Articles may be edited for size or clarity. Permission to reprint articles from this publication is granted unless the article is under copyright, and provided credit is given to both the author and the newsletter. SAS meets the second Thursday, September through June. The SAS Board of Directors meets monthly or at times determined by the Board. Members, Visitors and the Public are welcome to attend all meetings.

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Pine Siskin
by Joy Taylor

In this Issue:

Page:

April & May Chapter Meetings.....	1
Election of Officers & Directors.	1
Chapter News.	2
Birds Making History.	3
New Remedy for White Nose Syndrome in Bats. .	4
Let's Talk Birds.	5
Siskiyou Field Institute.	5
Events, Field Trips, Festivals.	6
Kids' Nest Box Building.	7
Classes & Outings.	7
The Cryptic Red Buttes Wilderness.	8
Membership Enrollment & SAS Directory.	9



Oregon Dark-eyed Juncos in the Spring Rain
Photo by Alan Ome

Date Book – April / May 2016

Wed. Apr. 6: Rogue Valley Audubon Society - First Wednesday Bird Walk at Agate Lake

Wed. Apr. 6 & Sat. Apr. 9: Klamath Bird Observatory 'Talk & Walk' Class - Woodland Birds of Jacksonville

Wed.-Tues. Apr. 13-19: 21st Annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival, Arcata, CA

Thurs. Apr. 14: **Siskiyou Audubon Society Chapter Meeting**; Program - Argentina by Stewart Janes

Fri.-Sun. Apr. 15-17: Olympic Bird Fest, Sequim, Washington

Sat. Apr. 16: **SAS Kids' Nest Box Building at Grants Pass Growers' Market**, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Also, Nature Conservancy Work Party - Whetstone Savanna - Pull curly dock from vernal pools.

Wed. May 4: RVAS - First Wednesday Bird Walk at Agate Lake

Thur. May 5 & Sat. May 7: KBO 'Talk & Walk' Class - The Great Gray Owl

Sat.-Sun. May 7-8: **SAS Kids' Nest Box Building at Galice Garden Fair**, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. each day

Thurs. May 12: **SAS Chapter Annual Meeting with Elections & Program** - South America by Pepper Trail

Sat. May 14: Nature Conservancy Work Party - Rough & Ready Creek Preserve - Pull Alyssum

Fri.-Sun. May 20-22: RVAS & KBO 2016 Mountain Bird Festival in Ashland

Sat. May 28: **Siskiyou Field Institute 'Birds & Brews' Festival, Deer Creek Center, Selma**

Save these June Dates:

Thur.-Sun. June 2-5: Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival, Sisters, Oregon

Sat.-Sun. June 18-19: **SAS Kids' Nest Box Building at the Antique Tractor Festival at Pottsville**, near Merlin

Sat. June 25: Nature Conservancy Work Party - Table Rocks Preserve - Pull star thistle on Upper Table Rock

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Pine Siskin
by Rosie Anderson