



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, except December, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. in Room 400 at Grants Pass High School, 830 NE 9th Street, Grants Pass. Refreshments and coffee and water, will be available. (In December we have a Christmas pot luck dinner, and in June it's a pot luck picnic.)

Chapter Meeting

Thursday, February 8, 2018, 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Program: 'Owls of the World' by John & Joy Taylor



Joy & John Taylor

Owls cannot move their eyes in their sockets. With their straight-on stares and nocturnal habits, owls are among the most intriguing and inscrutable creatures we have on the planet. Imagine what it would be like to be snatched by an owl and struggle to be free – futile as it may be, death is inevitable. Learn about these and other owl characteristics as Joy and John Taylor show 63 species of owls of the 236 that exist in the world today. They will show owls from 56 different countries, with maps of the places where owls live. A few owls are important because some of them are on the brink of extinction while others are so isolated on small islands as to be considered rare and possibly endangered.

John and Joy Taylor are Siskiyou Audubon Society members who have a life list of 959 species of birds world-wide. John is a graduate of Cornell University's Lab of Ornithology with a diploma in Bird Biology.

February Field Trip – Whitehorse County Park

Saturday, February 10, 9 a.m. to about Noon

Details on Page 7.

Nest Box Building Day for Adults

Saturday, March 3, 2018, 9 a.m. to about 2 p.m.

Hidden Valley High School Wood Shop

This year we are moving to Hidden Valley High, located on Murphy Creek Road south of Grants Pass. Members and friends of Audubon, please come out to help us build the nest boxes we sell, and the kits we provide for Kids' Nest Box Building days. Details inside on Page 7.

Chapter Meeting, Thursday, March 8, 2018

6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Program: "Birders' Paradise: A Voyage to New Guinea"

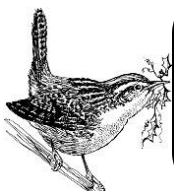
The island of New Guinea is home to some of the world's most exotic birds, including cassowaries, frogmouths, cockatoos, and, of course, the birds of paradise. Decked in incredible plumes, male birds of paradise perform displays that defy the imagination. Seeing these birds is a dream come true – so, join us to take a look!

Last November, Pepper Trail made a voyage through the exotic Spice Islands of eastern Indonesia, culminating with two weeks on New Guinea. During this trip, he was able to see eight species of birds of paradise. But that's not all – he also had unforgettable encounters with the people of Indonesia and New Guinea, including the little-visited Asmat region. Join us for this voyage to a region few people will ever see – and to birds to dream about.



Pepper Trail "going native" in the Asmat region of New Guinea

Pepper Trail is the ornithologist at the National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Lab in Ashland. He is also a well-known local writer and lecturer, and has been the long-time conservation co-chair of Rogue Valley Audubon Society. He also leads natural history tours around the world.



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 Board of Directors met at the home of Phil & Marsha Hicks on January 16, 2018. There was no Board meeting in December. The November minutes were accepted. Phil Hicks gave the treasurer's report, noting that we received \$680.00 as a grant from National Audubon, in addition to \$706.00 annual Chapter support from National. Compiler Margaret James submitted our Christmas Bird Count data to National Audubon on 24 December 2017. Lee Webb has prepared a spreadsheet of CBC data covering all 35 years that Siskiyou Audubon has been counting, which is available upon request. A summary of the 2017 count appears on Page 5.

We will hold our annual Nest Box Building Day for Adults at Hidden Valley High School this year, on Saturday March 3. Following that, we will hold Kids' Nest Box Building events in various places at various times, beginning (probably) March 17th at Grants Pass Growers' Market. March 24th we'll go to Wild Birds Unlimited in Medford, then back to Growers' Market in April. See Page 7 for details.

The Board decided that this issue of The Siskin should include a summary of our activities of 2017. When we look back, it is surprising how much we do accomplish with our relatively small membership. Here's

What We Did in 2017

January: (Lots of snow first half of month.)

Donated \$1,000 to Pacifica for the Caterpillar

Thu. 12: SAS Chapter Meeting. Program:[Scheduled speaker cancelled due to illness. John & Joy Taylor filled in.]

Tues. 18: SAS Board of Directors Meeting ("BoD")

Mon. 30: Siskin newsletter mailed (Feb/Mar)

February:"Tanagers of the Americas" by John & Joy Taylor

Purchase of SAS vests and magnetic signs. Began wearing vests at Audubon events.

Wed. 15: SAS BoD

Sat. 25: SAS Adult Nest Box Building Day at GPHS (46 Volunteers; 325 finished boxes; 327 kits.)

March:

Mon. 6: SAS Consultation with Wildlife Images regarding their native plant garden project. (LW, FT)

Thu. 9: Chapter Meeting. Program: "Coastal Conservation Issues & Strategies: The Land-Sea Connection" by Paul Englemeyer

Sat. 11: Kids' Nest Box Building at Wild Birds Unlimited in Medford. 16 kits built out, donations \$51. Also,

Lecture given by FT at Master Gardeners' Seeds of Spring Seminar. Topic: Attracting Birds to the Garden (20 students)

Tue. 14: SAS BoD. SAS "safety" vests & magnetic vehicle signs were approved.

Sat. 18: Kids' Nest Box Building ("KNBB") at Grants Pass Growers Market (with sales booth {"SB"}) 31 Kits built; 10 volunteers; \$156.08 donations/sales.

Thu. 30: Siskin newsletter mailed (Apr/May)

April:

Tues. 11: SAS BoD

Thu. 13: SAS Chapter Meeting. Program: "Identifying the Birds of the Josephine County" by Susan Bush & Fran Taylor

Sat. 15: KNBB at Grants Pass Growers Market - SB. 64 Kits built; 12 Volunteers helped; \$633.15 donations/sales.

May:

Sat. 6: KNBB at "Kids Care Fair & Pet Parade" in Cave Junction, Jubilee Park. 64 Kits built; 7 Volunteers; \$41.00 in donations/sales

Tue. 9: Nest Box kit making day at Hicks' home. 230 kits made.

Sat. 13 & Sun. 14: KNBB - SB at Galice Garden Faire - 2 days. 61 Kits built; 11 volunteers; \$142.85 donations/sales

Tue. 16: SAS BoD

Pop Quiz

~ by Fran Taylor

Hint 1. This bird is fairly common in ponderosa pine and fir tree habitat at high elevations.

Hint 2. It forages for insects on trunks and limbs of trees as well as in clusters of needles. It pecks and flakes bark, probes into cracks, and digs into unopened pine cones to eat the seeds, favoring trees with large cones such as Coulter, ponderosa, Jeffrey, and sugar pines.

Hint 3. Perhaps due to the high proportion of dry seeds in its diet, it often drinks at water's edge.

Hint 4. A silent bird that vocalizes only around its nest; it nests in tree cavities preferring dead trees, snags, stumps, and even leaning and fallen logs.

Hint 5. It typically lays 4-5 white eggs, often stained by pine pitch. Both male and female incubate the eggs, the male doing all the night work. Both parents feed the young, which fledge about 26 days after hatching.

Hint 6. This bird has a black body and a white head, with white wing-patches at the wrists. Males have a red patch on the back of the crown.

Hint 7. Scientific name: *Picoides albolarvatus*

Answer on Page 8

What We Did in 2017 (Cont'd.)

May: (cont'd.)

Thu. 11: SAS Lead kids birding walk at Siskiyou Field Institute. Teaching binocular use, bird watching. (LW) Also, SAS Chapter Annual Meeting & Elections. 20 People Program: "Birds of the South Pacific: Tahiti to Easter Island" by Pepper Trail.

Wed. 17: SAS Leaders took kids on a birding walk at Siskiyou Field Institute. (PH, LW)

Mon. 22: KNBB at Vineyard Christian School, Monument Drive. (PG, FT, LW) 15 Kits built by about 60 kids & teachers.

Wed. 24: SAS Leaders took kids on a birding walk at Siskiyou Field Institute. (FT) (22 species obs.)

Fri. 26: SAS Leaders took kids on a birding walk at Siskiyou Field Institute. (Bucky D, PH, AO, LW)

Wed. 31: Siskin newsletter mailing. (June/Summer)

June:

Sat. 3: SAS Leaders took kids on a birding walk at Siskiyou Field Institute "Birds & Brews" fund-raiser. 12 Kits built; 8 volunteers. 2 finished nest boxes from stock were donated to & installed at SFI/Deer Creek Center.

Thu. 8: SAS Chapter Potluck Picnic

Fri. 9: SAS Leaders took kids on a birding walk at Siskiyou Field Institute. (FT, MJ)

Sat. 17 & Sun. 18: KNBB - SB at Pottsville Antique Tractor Festival. 148 Kits built; 20 Volunteers; \$246.80 donations/sales.

July:

Sat. 1: KNBB at Valley of the Rogue State Park (LW, KW) 12 Kits built +3 left for Park Ranger to use with kids. \$45 Park payment.

Sat. 29: KNBB at Stewart State Park. 18 Kits build (PH, LW) \$45 Park payment.

August: (the beginning of the smoke from fires)

Thu. 17: SAS BoD at Hicks

Sat. 26: KNBB at Valley of the Rogue State Park (SP, KW, LW, PW) 12 Kits built; 2 kits sold. \$42 Park payment.

Tue. 29: Siskin newsletter mailing. (Sept.)

September: (still smoky)

Thu. 14: SAS Chapter meeting. Program: "Climate Change: A Bird's Eye View" by John Alexander. 21 People came.

Fri. 15: SAS Bird Walk at Whitehorse County Park

Sat. 23: KNBB at Grants Pass "Saturday Parkways" festival on Hawthorne Drive. 78 Kits built; 10 volunteers.

Wed. 29: Siskin newsletter mailed. (Oct/Nov)

October:

Thu. 12: SAS Chapter meeting. Program: 'Mostly Penguins' by David Baker

Fri. 13: SAS Bird Walk at Indian Mary Park

Sun. 15: Trip to collect donated wood from Mr. Maplesden in Sam's Valley. (PW, LW, FT)

Tue. 17: SAS BoD

Thu. 19: Kit Making Day at Hicks

Tue. 24: KNBB at "Smile Night" at Lorna Byrne Middle School, Cave Junction. 52 boxes; 10 volunteers

November:

Thu. 9: SAS Chapter meeting. Program: 'Cardinals' & 'Birding by Train' by John & Joy Taylor

Fri. 10: SAS Bird Walk at Reinhart Volunteer Park

Tue. 28: Siskin newsletter mailing. (Dec/Jan)

December:

Sat. 2: KNBB at Pacifica Arts Guild "Winterfest", Williams. 27 Kits built; 8 volunteers; \$71 donations/sales.

Thu. 7: SAS Committee meeting on NAS Annual Report. (PH, FT, LW)

Thu. 14: SAS Chapter Christmas Potluck

Sat. 16: Audubon Christmas Bird Count (NAS 118th, SAS 35th): 91 Species, 93 including "Count Week" species; 29 volunteers.

It should be noted that this list doesn't enumerate all the background work that went into preparing for these activities.

Congratulations to all who participate for a job well done!

A Brief History of Siskiyou Audubon Society

Siskiyou Audubon Society ("SAS") Chapter was founded by Lee Webb in early 1982, and launched with a \$50 gift, plus a \$100 loan from the Rogue Valley Chapter. Lee rounded up interested people in the area, and eventually had the required number of 35+ members for chapter formation. Regular monthly meetings began with Lee as the first president. The chapter's purpose was to serve Josephine County and Rogue River residents interested in the conservation of wildlife and the natural environment.

Communities to be served included: Glendale, Sunny Valley, Wolf Creek, Cave Junction, Oregon Caves, Takilma, Grants Pass, Kerby, Merlin, Murphy, O'Brien, Rogue River, Selma, Wilderville and Williams. Provisional chapter status was received for the first year, and in March '84, full chapter certification was granted.

The first issue of the newsletter was published in September 1982. By November the name, "SISKIYOU SISKIN" was adopted. Fascinating wildlife stories and articles by members began to appear in "The Siskin." Attendance at general meetings was reportedly excellent, the names of 50 new members were listed in the September newsletter.

~ Phil Hicks



1989 Nest Box Sales at Safeway, G.P.
Don Greenwood, Aimee Buckmaster,
Margaret James, et al

Audubon Christmas Bird Count – 16 December 2017

Two dozen folks in 10 different teams counted 95 separate species and 10,234 individual birds in the count area, which is a 15 mile-diameter circle, with the center point near the entrance to the Fairgrounds – this was the 35th consecutive Christmas Bird Count for the Siskiyou Audubon Society. Reasonably decent weather – fog in morning and partly cloudy in afternoon. Perhaps our “best bird” was a female Costa’s hummingbird observed in the Colonial Valley area – an unusual species for our area (our sixth time counted – photo attached). Birds which topped 1,000 individuals for the 2017 count were European starling (1,561), Canada goose (1,289), and Oregon junco (1,139). We recorded our most bald eagles ever, 11. Barn owls and ruddy ducks, 2 each. One northern mockingbird, first since 2001. Two peregrine falcon – most years we see one or two – always a treat. The invasive Eurasian Collared doves first showed up in 2007, and is still a significant presence in our count, at 88. We counted the most Western Bluebirds ever, at 279, a favorite for everyone.

In the 35 consecutive years we have conducted our Siskiyou Audubon Christmas Bird Count (started in 1983), we have identified 166 species (many of them rare), and slightly over 600,000 individuals. American robins and European starlings were the most common (combined 35 year total of 231,000), with robins taking the top spot by 3,000 over starlings.

Margaret James was the chief compiler for the count, and was assisted by a number of other members. Lee Webb prepared a spreadsheet which displays our count data for the last 35 years, in case you are interested.

~ Lee Webb



Costa's Hummingbird
Female
Photo by Ken Chamberlain



Great Egret
Photo by Lee Webb



Eurasian Collared Dove
PublicDomainPictures.net



Mourning Dove
Photo by Dave Menke, USFWS

January Field Trip Report

The field trip Friday, January 12th resulted in 42 species being observed. The trip started at Reinhart Volunteer Park and then headed west on Lower River Road to Rogue Lea Estates and then the Hunt Lane vicinity. What started out as a cool and dreary day turned into sunshine at mid-morning, giving excellent light for seeing the birds. At Rogue Lea, highlights were two Canvasback drakes, four Black-crowned Night Heron (roosting in trees on the lake's island). Also at Rogue Lea we found elusive Hermit Thrush. Along River Road, near the historical marker, we found Wilson's Snipe and a field full of Western Meadowlarks.

For a full tally of the birds seen, visit our website www.siskiyouaudubon.org.



Canvasback Drakes
Donna Dewhurst - USFWS file

Audubon Christmas Bird Count Tally
Grants Pass Circle – 16 December 2017

SPECIES	Count	SPECIES	Count	SPECIES	Count
Snow Goose	4	Killdeer	58	Hermit Thrush	4
Canada Goose (large form)	1289	Spotted Sandpiper	6	American Robin	220
Wood Duck	133	Wilson's Snipe	8	Wrentit	2
Gadwall	61	Rock Pigeon	278	Northern Mockingbird	1
Eurasian Wigeon	1	Eurasian Collared-Dove	88	European Starling	1561
American Wigeon	336	Mourning Dove	55	Cedar Waxwing	48
Mallard	596	Barn Owl	2	Yellow-rumped Warbler	33
Northern Shoveler	54	Anna's Hummingbird	31	Spotted Towhee	147
Green-winged Teal	59	Costa's Hummingbird	CW	California Towhee	5
Ring-necked Duck	165	Belted Kingfisher	14	Savannah Sparrow	11
Bufflehead	97	Acorn Woodpecker	138	Fox Sparrow	44
Hooded Merganser	73	Red-breasted Sapsucker	3	Song Sparrow	76
Common Merganser	30	Downy Woodpecker	30	Lincoln's Sparrow	1
Ruddy Duck	2	Hairy Woodpecker	11	White-throated Sparrow	3
Ring-necked Pheasant	CW	Northern Flicker	65	White-crowned Sparrow	35
Wild Turkey	198	Pileated Woodpecker	5	Golden-crowned Sparrow	549
California Quail	102	Black Phoebe	23	Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)	1139
Pied-billed Grebe	82	Hutton's Vireo	2	Dark-eyed Junco (Slate)	1
Western Grebe	1	Steller's Jay	62	Red-winged Blackbird	11
Double-crested Cormorant	21	Western Scrub-Jay	95	Western Meadowlark	11
Great Blue Heron	21	American Crow	374	Brewer's Blackbird	198
Great Egret	10	Common Raven	50	Purple Finch	4
Black-crowned Night-Heron	4	Black-capped Chickadee	144	House Finch	47
Bald Eagle	11	Chestnut-backed Chickadee	9	Pine Siskin	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	Oak Titmouse	17	Lesser Goldfinch	57
Cooper's Hawk	6	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	American Goldfinch	4
Red-shouldered Hawk	24	White-breasted Nuthatch	60	House Sparrow	34
Red-tailed Hawk	36	Brown Creeper	5		
American Kestrel	26	Pacific Wren	1	Total Individuals	10234
Merlin	1	Marsh Wren	1	Species Total	91
Peregrine Falcon	2	Golden-crowned Kinglet	9	Count Week Spp.	93
Virginia Rail	5	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	35		
American Coot	564	Western Bluebird	279		

"Count Week Spp." = Total species observed during the 7-day period containing the Count Day.



Lincoln's Sparrow
at Cokeville Meadows NWR
Wyoming
USFWS Photo



Wilson's Snipe
David Ward USFWS



White-throated Sparrow
Photo by Zia Fukuda 16 Dec 2017

Field Trips, Events, Festivals . . .

Siskiyou Audubon Society Field Trips

Our field trips include walking, sometimes over rough ground, so wear suitable shoes and dress by the weather forecast. Bring your binoculars (and a spotting scope if you use one). Bring water and a snack, and plan to walk a ways. For more details phone 541-955-2934 or email avnwmn@budget.net.

Saturday, February 10, 2018, 9 a.m. - about Noon Whitehorse County Park

Leader: Fran Taylor

We'll go back to Whitehorse County Park to see if we can find a Wrentit or Bushtit, or Western Bluebird, or ???; maybe a Bald Eagle.

Meet to car pool at 9 a.m. at the east side of Ray's Foods parking lot in Merlin, on Merlin-Galice Road just off Monument Drive. We will return by noon.

Pacifica, a Garden in the Siskiyou March 2018 - Date & Time to be Announced

Leader: Dennis Vroman

Come join us at Pacifica near Williams to look for spring migrants with one of our region's expert birders. A checklist of birds of Pacifica (97 species) includes Tree Swallows, Common Yellowthroat, & Nashville Warbler among the early birds. Meet at the south Rite Aid/Safeway parking lot to car pool.



GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

The GBBC is a joint project of:    Canadian partner: 

**Great Backyard Bird Count is Coming
February 16-19, 2018
Presidents' Day Weekend**

Greetings from the Great Backyard Bird Count team at Audubon, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Bird Studies Canada!

Remember to mark your calendars for the 21st GBBC, coming up February 16 through 19, 2018. Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are. Meanwhile, you can use your GBBC login information to record your sightings with eBird, any day of the year. gbbc.birdcount.org




**Save the Date for Birding the Olympic Peninsula
April 13-15, 2018**

**Grab your binoculars and join the
15th annual Olympic BirdFest 2018 celebration
at the Dungeness River Audubon Center,
Sequim, Washington**

Discover birds of coastal Pacific Northwest. Guided field trips, boat cruise in Strait of Juan de Fuca, gala banquet, Speaker: nature guide/photographer Claudio Vidal.

For more information, call 360-681-4076,
visit www.olympicbirdfest.org online,
or email: info@olympicbirdfest.org
Registration opened on January 1, 2018.



**February 15-18,
2018**

Keynoters
Stephen Shunk
Moose Peterson
Kevin McGowan

**Klamath Basin Audubon's
Winter Wings Festival**

Klamath Falls, Oregon
www.WinterWingsFest.org
1-877-541-BIRD (2473)

**23rd Annual
GODWIT
DAYS**

**SPRING MIGRATION
BIRD FESTIVAL**
April 18-24, 2018

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:
• Jack P. Dumbacher,
Curator of Birds and Mammals
California Academy of Sciences
• Sharon Stiteler
Author and founder of Birdsbick.com

**Aravats,
Humboldt County, California**
www.godwitdays.org



artwork © 2017 Patricia Sundgren Smith

Painting by Patricia Sundgren Smith



... Classes & Outings

Rogue Valley Audubon

First Wednesday Bird Walk at Denman Wildlife Area
Wednesdays, February 7 and March 7, 2018

8:30 a.m. to Noon

Leader: Murray Orr

On the first Wednesday of each month RVAS takes a bird count. On January 3, 2018, the First Wednesday Bird Walk returned to the Denman Wildlife Area and all future first Wednesday walks will take place there. Walks begin at 8:30 a.m. and end before noon. In this ongoing citizen science project, the numbers of different species observed by walk participants are entered in the Cornell Ornithological Laboratory's eBird database.

Meet at the entrance to Denman, off Agate Rd. between ¼ and ½ mile past the fire station on the left side of the road. For directions to the meeting spot and for more information, visit the RVAS website: roguevalleyaudubon.org.

Birders will need to purchase a ODFW Area Parking Permit at the ODFW Office, Sportsman Warehouse on Delta Waters and Highway 62 in Medford or at Bi-Mart. (At Bi-Mart, buy a 2018 Habitat Conservation Stamp for \$20, which also includes the Annual Wildlife Area Parking Permit.)

Siskiyou Field Institute

Siskiyou Field Institute ("SFI") is where people come to learn about and explore the Klamath-Siskiyou bioregion, a land of steep mountains, wild rivers and unusual diversity of species and habitats. It's where the region's leading scientists and naturalists converge to share their knowledge with the public through field courses and SFI Youth Education Programs.

SFI offers youth education via place-based programs for pre-K through grade 12 students at our Deer Creek Center in Selma. The classes are aligned to 'Next Generation Science Standards' and are designed to bring abstract science concepts to life in an outdoor setting. For detailed descriptions of the field trips available, contact Youth Education Programs Coordinator by phone at 541-597-8530 or email at youthprograms@thesfi.org.

Siskiyou Audubon Society members receive a 10% discount off tuition. Josephine County educators may receive a scholarship for part or all of their tuition, through a grant from Siskiyou Audubon Society. The SFI 2018 field course catalog will be ready in late February. Visit SFI's website: thesfi.org for further information.

Birding Class: Sunday, March 4, 2018

"2018 Raptors and Shorebirds of the Klamath Basin" with Instructor: Bud Widdowson

Meet at Lower Klamath Wildlife Refuge, Tulelake, CA

Tuition: \$60 Maximum enrollment is 15

In the mighty Klamath Basin, we hope to glimpse eagles, hawks, owls, shorebirds and other migrants as they forage and start to exhibit breeding behaviors. We'll focus on field identification and natural history in the Lower Klamath Lake area, visit the petroglyphs area at Lava Beds and possibly roam into the Butte Valley in search of raptors. This will be a car trip with many stops along the way.



Bald Eagles
Photo by K.M. Pyle

Siskiyou Audubon Society Nest Box Building Days

Adult Building Day –
Hidden Valley High School Wood Shop

Saturday, 3 March 2018

9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Siskiyou Audubon's adult Nest Box Building Day is returning to Hidden Valley High School. This is our major production day, when we build houses for sale and kits for kids' events.

This event is for adults, and youngsters twelve and older who come with an adult. Kids' Nest Box Building days will follow at a later date. If you can lift 5 pounds, you can help.

Please bring your own hammer and perhaps your other hand tools. The boxes will be built assembly-line fashion. There are six pieces to each box, and specific steps to hammer them together. SAS will supply hammers, nails, and cut wooden parts.

Besides the actual building jobs, people are needed to check quality, to insert our "Guidelines" page into each box, and to stamp our name & address on them, as well as to carry parts from work station to work station, and finished boxes to the loading area.

We'll take breaks, and SAS will provide some drinks and snacks, but be sure to bring your own sack lunch, gloves, & hearing protection.

Come and work for as long or as little as you like. SAS will be glad of your help!

Questions? Phone Lee Webb or Phil Hicks. (See Page 9.)

Kids' Nest Box Building Events

Saturday, 17 March 2018, at

Grants Pass Growers' Market, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This is the first of two events at Growers' Market. SAS members, come and supervise children at work, and help us sell finished boxes. We'll also hand out information and talk with folks about birds, wildlife and habitat. Plus you can walk through the Market and buy your veggies. Sign up at Chapter Meeting March 8th to help out.

Saturday, 24 March 2018, at

Wild Birds Unlimited, Medford Center, 10 to 2

Members, come help us help kids to build their own bird house. We will car pool to Medford, details to be worked out at the Chapter Meeting March 8th.

Saturday, 7 April 2018 at

Northwest Nature Shop, Ashland

Saturday in April – date to be announced
Grants Pass Growers' Market, 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, 12 & 13 May, at
Galice Garden Faire

Come down the Rogue River to the Galice Community Center for Mother's Day Weekend, and let your kids build a bird house while you shop at the Galice Garden Faire. This is a major regional plant sale, and there are also crafts, refreshments, & a raffle. Sign up to help at these at a SAS Chapter Meeting.



Western Bluebird
feeding a chick
in a "SAS Basic Nest Box"

Let's Talk Birds

Pacific Northwest Crossbills in a Year of No Cones

eBird News 12 January 2018

“When a bird’s pastures are the tree tops, it is possible for it to live a quite secluded life here in Washington” – Red Crossbill

“To tell the truth, no one hereabouts appears to know much about the ...” White-winged Crossbill

Both quotes from The Birds of Washington, ©1909, by W.L. Dawson and J. H. Bowles.

Some things don’t change much. A century later, basic questions remain about the lives of cone-dependent species, typified by crossbills, particularly at times when their preferred conifers fail to produce cones. In a typical year in the conifer-rich Northwest, most species of conifers produce some cones, and it appears that crossbills of the Northwest make minor movements within the region to areas with greater cone concentrations or they switch from their preferred cone type to those from other trees. As a result, it seems that there are always some crossbills around somewhere in the region, and we don’t get a great deal of insight into what happens when neither of those options are available.

It is a very rare year when there are no cones to be found anywhere in the region, so 2017, which was notable for an almost region-wide dearth of cones, provides an opportunity to learn more about their movements in response to a lack of food. In 2017, almost all of the native conifers failed to produce cones in any abundance; no matter whether they were growing in the lowlands or in the mountains, in dry zones or wet zones. As a consequence, crossbill numbers have been at very low levels across the region, as would be expected for cone dependent species. Large numbers appear to have left the region, as other parts of the continent are experiencing notable incursions of Red Crossbills.



Red Crossbill
Photo by Dave Menke, USFWS

Article by: Bill Tweit, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Read the full article at [eBird/Northwest](http://ebird.org/content/nw/news/pacific-northwest-crossbills-in-a-year-of-no-cones/); [http://ebird.org/content/nw/news/pacific-northwest-crossbills-in-a-year-of-no-cones/]

Dippers Didn't Disappoint

Annual American Dipper Count Reported by Bob Quaccia

The 19th Annual American Dipper Count on Ashland Creek January 6th yielded a slightly above average total of 5 Dippers. A lucky number of 13 observers hugged both sides of the creek for 1.75 miles, stopping at every bridge to compare notes. The mild weather was a great improvement over last year’s snow and ice.



American Dipper
Photo by Glen Riley

These aquatic songbirds were observed singing and busily foraging. The most remarkable sighting of the day was the pair of banded birds working their way up stream together. The colored leg bands yielded the identities of this twosome. Both birds were banded on the same day almost 2 years ago. On that day the birds were located at least one mile apart and had different mates.

If these birds stay together and have a brood, it will be the third known partner for both birds. Nesting can start as early as March.

The annual American Dipper count on Ashland Creek is always on the first Saturday of January. Since next year will be the 20th, we should meet for coffee or breakfast at a local diner beforehand. Don’t miss it!

~ Bob Quaccia

Book Review – “Fastest Things on Wings”

Terry Masear, author of “Fastest Things on Wings” is a woman who wears two vastly different hats. She has a Ph.D. in English from UCLA and teaches there. However, when the hummingbird nesting season arrives in the Los Angeles area, she dons very different garb and devotes long days and nights to the rescue and rehabilitation of hummingbirds. They arrive at her door in various ways, in the hands of a rescuer, in the soft mouth of a dog, and one brought in by cat.



Anna's Hummingbird
eBirdr.com

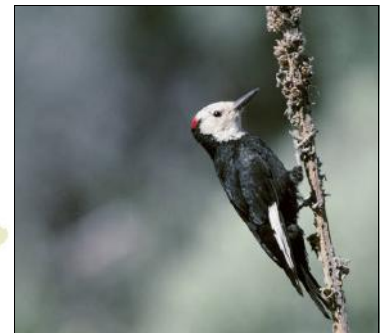
The Anna’s male she called Gabriel came to her as a grubby, badly injured bird that was snatched from a busy street by a parking attendant. During the 5 months that Gabriel needed for complete recovery, Terry treated 160 other injured or orphaned hummingbirds.

Between the stories of Gabriel, Pepper and the Brown Sugar Twins (don’t ever feed brown sugar to hummingbirds) there are interspersed sections of scientific information about hummingbirds. In addition to the “no, nos” in hummingbird care, Terry describes the benefits of fruit flies as an easy source of protein, and suggests overripe bananas as a source. The recovering birds in her care are introduced to and learn to catch fruit flies before they are released into the wilds of Southern California.

The 293 pages in this book, “Fastest Things on Wings,” are delightful reading. The book is available at the Grants Pass Library with the call number 598.764, Masear, Terry.

Reviewed by Marlene Brown

White-headed Woodpecker
Picoides albolarvatus




White-headed Woodpecker
Dave Menke, USFWS

Pop Quiz Answer: White-headed Woodpecker

Audubon Society Membership Applications

Siskiyou Audubon is a nonprofit society under IRC §501(c)3, Tax ID #93-0866572. Subscriptions are tax-deductible.
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Pine Siskin


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Directory

The Siskin, newsletter of Siskiyou Audubon Society (“SAS”), is published six times per year. SAS is Chapter No. T61 of National Audubon Society. Send address corrections, items for publication, or letters, to Editor, P.O. Box 2223, Grants Pass, OR 97528; or e-mail avnwmn@budget.net; or phone or FAX 541-955-2934. 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 monthly on 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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Revised August 26, 2017

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The Siskin

Siskiyou Audubon Society

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Pine Siskin
by Joy Taylor

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Great Blue Heron

Zia Fukuda December 16, 2017

Date Book – February / March 2018

Wed. Feb. 7: Rogue Valley Audubon Society (“RVAS”) 1st Wednesday Bird Walk at Denman Wildlife Management Area, 8:30 a.m.

Thurs. Feb. 8: Siskiyou Audubon Society (“SAS”) Chapter Meeting 6 p.m.

Sat. Feb. 10: SAS Field Trip to Whitehorse County Park, 9 a.m.

Thur.-Sun. Feb. 15-18: Winter Wings Festival, Klamath Falls, Oregon

Fri.-Mon. Feb. 16-19: Great Backyard Bird Count, 4 days.

Sat. Mar. 3: SAS Adult Nest Box Building Day, Hidden Valley High School, Murphy, 9 a.m.

Sun. Mar. 4: Siskiyou Field Institute Class: “2018 Raptors and Shorebirds of the Klamath Basin,”
Instructor: Bud Widdowson

Wed. Mar. 7: RVAS 1st Wednesday Bird Walk at Denman Wildlife Management Area, 8:30 a.m.

Thurs. Mar. 8: SAS Chapter Meeting 6 p.m.

Sat. Mar. 17: SAS Kids’ Nest Box Building at Grants Pass Growers’ Market, 4th & F Streets, GP, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Sat. Mar. 24: SAS Kids’ Nest Box Building at Wild Birds Unlimited, Medford Center, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

March Date & Time to be Announced: SAS Field Trip to Pacifica, A Garden in the Siskiyou

Save the Dates:

Sat. Apr. 14 (Tentative): SAS Kids’ Nest Box Building at Grants Pass Growers’ Market,
4th & F Streets, Grants Pass, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Fri.-Sun. April 13-15: Olympic Peninsula Bird Fest, Sequim, Washington

Sat.-Sun. May 12-13: SAS Kids Nest Box Building at Galice Garden Faire & Plant Sale, Galice Community Center
2 days, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Siskiyou Audubon Society is Independent Chapter No. T61
Affiliated with National Audubon Society, www.audubon.org



Pine Siskin
by Rosie Anderson