

# Oregon Birds

The Journal of Oregon Birding and Field Ornithology

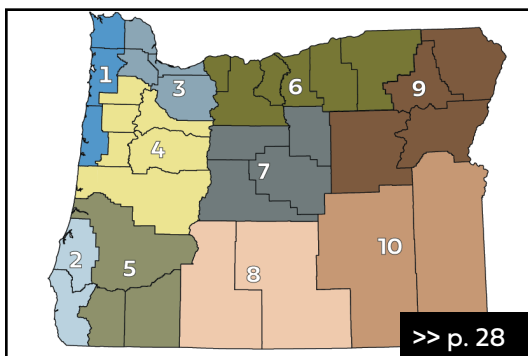
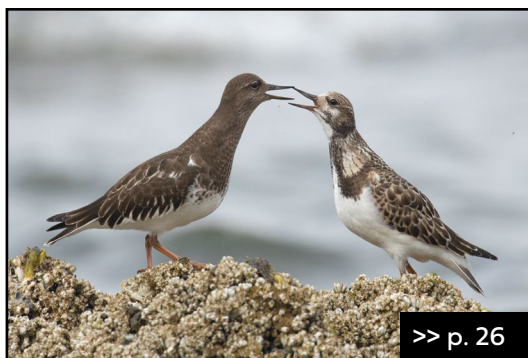
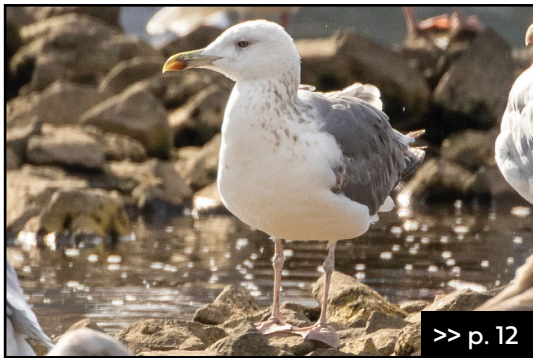
Volume 48 Number 1 Spring 2022



**Rarities Galore**  
2021 Field Notes  
and More

# Oregon Birds

The Journal of Oregon Birding and Field Ornithology  
Volume 48 Number 1 Spring 2022



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#### On the Cover

A male Brambling in non-breeding plumage.

Photo by Neil Bjorklund

# The Importance of Volunteers

## Efforts of Our Birding Community Make a Difference

**O**n a recent birding trip, we were exploring what can only be described as the expansive beauty of Oregon. Enjoying Clark's Grebes dancing on the Link River, Golden Eagles nesting on cliffs high over Lower Klamath NWR, and Williamson's Sapsuckers drumming on snags at Odessa campground is a small sampling of what makes Oregon so special for birders.

On the same trip we started chatting about local Audubon chapters, and the many volunteers that make them work. I mentioned the amazing "County Birding Locations" page on the East Cascades Audubon Society webpage, a perfect example of the tireless work Oregon birders undertake in order to share their love of birds with other birders, all in the spirit of volunteerism.

Of course, the pages of this journal represent much of that spirit—from the Field Notes, to the journal articles, to all of the photographs, donated for use at no charge.

The journal itself is published by the Oregon Birding Association, which is entirely volunteer-led. I joined the board three years ago, after my friend Ken suggested nominating me, not because of any birding ability I may claim to have, but most likely because he figured I might say, "yes."

Joining then, and staying engaged in the birding community since, has helped me realize that the amazing resources we have—boundless public information, countless volunteer-led walks, and multiple organizations dedicated to helping people enjoy birds—are not here by accident, but rather because of the many dedicated volunteers that have come before us.

Along the way, I've realized that what makes birding in Oregon so special is not just the grebes, eagles, and woodpeckers, but the people who work to help us enjoy them.

So especially to our newer birders, I hope that you're able to take advantage of and enjoy the resources this community has to offer, and feel empowered to contribute to the many projects and organizations across our state—for the good of the birds, and the next generation of those who admire them.



**Brodie Cass Talbott**  
OBA President

**Brodie -**

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## Save the Dates

# OBA Annual Meeting Planned for September

## New Format, Experiences

**T**he OBA Annual Meeting is a gathering point for the Oregon birding community. It is an opportunity to go birding in beautiful places, learn from charismatic guest speakers, and stay updated on OBA business.

In an effort to create an event that is less likely to be impacted by the COVID-19 landscape, and to include as many Oregon birders as possible, this year we are excited to announce a hybrid event: The Oregon Birding Weekend!

This statewide celebration of Oregon Birding starts **Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 10-11** with a variety of field trips (free for members of the OBA), followed **Tuesday evening, Sept. 13** by field trip highlights, our keynote speaker Dr. Kaeli Swift of the University of Washington, and our annual business meeting.

If you want to lead a full-day or half-day field trip anywhere across the state, please fill out the short form at (<https://bit.ly/OBAtripleader>) with a few details for the trip.

The OBA Annual Meeting Committee will try and ensure a wide variety of trips across different biomes and regions of Oregon. Field trip leaders will be rewarded with a free year's membership (or renewal) in the Oregon Birding Association.

Dr. Swift earned her PhD from the University of Washington where she studied American Crow behavior, with a special emphasis on behaviors around death. She is currently a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Washington, where she is studying the breeding ecology of the Tinian Monarch.



Bobolink

Photo by Don Sutherland



**Keynote speaker** - Dr. Kaeli Swift, Univ. of Washington



Photo by Jill Punches

Cassin's Vireo in Umatilla County.

## Taking Flight

# Another Edition of *Oregon Birds*

This edition of *Oregon Birds* is primarily a reflection of bird and birder activity in 2021. Many people contributed as field note compilers, documenting rare birds, and sharing Big Year experiences. As a new editor, I am grateful for the editorial team, including Brodie Cass Talbot, Claire Weiser, Jay Withgott, Nagi Aboulenein and Mike Williams. Mike, in particular, offered much guidance and patience as I navigated this new role. I hope you enjoy this Spring edition.

I expressed interest in this position because I wanted to give back to birding. Three years ago, I rediscovered birding, thanks to eBird and other apps that enabled me to ID birds in the field. I also joined field trips, took classes, and attended bird festivals. I have learned so much and have much more to learn. We are all lucky to have an interest that has allowed us to explore birds safely during COVID.

Meeting birders in the field or virtually via listservs and apps has added another element of learning and awareness. While most birders share the same passion for birding, there is more than one

pathway to learn about birds. Some of us have spark birds, others learned through photography while others were inspired by a teacher. Some researchers and artists do deep dives into a particular species while others are generalists.

There are also many ways to express our knowledge of birds. Listing, drawing, photographing, blogging, researching, and guiding are a few of those many ways. All those ways are valid and should serve as ways to bring people together.

I was also interested in becoming editor because I wanted to encourage new voices to share their knowledge, perspectives, and experience as a birder. If you have a topic you'd like to write about or would like to suggest a topic you'd like to see presented in *Oregon Birds*, please email me at [jpunch@oregonbirding.org](mailto:jpunch@oregonbirding.org).



**Jill Punches**  
Editor



# New Big Year Record For Lane County

Article by Alan Contreras

Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

Pygmy Nuthatch

## New Mark Established: 296 species

In late 2020 I decided that if I were ever to do a big year, I'd better get to it before I became too decrepit to get around. Lane County, where I live, was practical (though large), and a big year would get me outdoors and away from thoughts of COVID and book editing. I certainly recommend a county Big Year as a way of seeing corners of your local birding area that you may never have been to.

The previous Lane County Big Year record was 289 species, set by Dave Irons in 2008. Having now done my Big Year, I'm astonished that Dave managed such a number while working full-time and not having the freedom to pick days with civilized weather or the correct wind conditions in which to bird. I had a lot more flexibility and still found only seven more species. It is worth noting that Lane County as a whole had 311 species reported on eBird in 2021: I missed some birds despite getting out frequently and chasing what I could.

How many days did I go birding in 2021? I birded in Lane County away from my house for 150 days in 2021, which included a trip to Malheur, time at Summer Lake, and valley trips outside Lane County. The year effectively ended with snow

in Eugene on Dec. 25 to 28 and road closures in all directions.

The following graphic (next page, top left) shows when I was most active. The midsummer drop-off occurred for many reasons and cost me Cassin's Finch, probably Williamson's Sapsucker, and maybe Red-naped Sapsucker while saving about a thousand mosquito bites.

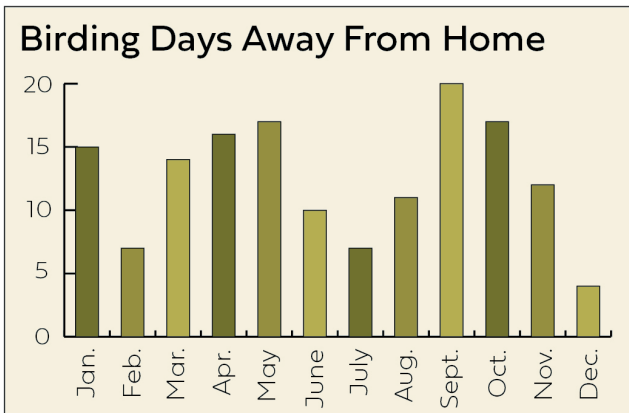


Photo by Tye Jeske

First time on a pelagic trip in forty years. Saw my life Skua and several Lane year birds. The Misty is a very comfortable boat, and the captain handled it just right for birding.

The other graphic (next page, left) answers the question 'How many places did I go?'. Lane County is large and has many worthwhile birding spots. The official tally from eBird ranks my visits of at least five times to 25 different sites as follows; some, mainly coastal and montane areas, were on the same trips.

In my Big Year, two other Lane County birders, Sally Hill and John Sullivan, were my chase cars—though, in fact, I was chasing Sally by one or two birds until mid-summer, and John, too, for a while. Both of them also beat the old record, with 292 species. We kept each other informed of good birds we found and often ended up running into each other at good birding spots like Royal Avenue, Perkins Peninsula, or the Florence jetties, and even in obscure spots like dead-end roads in the upper Cascades. As the year went by, unexpected birds fell



North Jetty Rd. sites, Florence	33	FRR: Perkins Peninsula Park	13
South Jetty Rd. sites, Florence*	28	Dexter Lake sites	11
Heceta Lighthouse area	27	Port of Siuslaw (semi-restricted)	11
Tokatee Klootchman seawatch site	22	Stonefield Wayside	11
Baker Beach swamp and camp	22	Big Creek gullwad site	10
Cantrell and Neilsen Rds	22	Skinner Butte Park	10
Bob Creek Wayside	21	Oakridge Industrial Park	9
FRR: Royal Avenue	17	Siltcoos River mouth	9
Scott Lake and nearby sites	15	FRR: South Marsh	8
Waldo Lake and Taylor Burn areas	14	Westlake and Darling's Resort (Silt. Lk.)	6
Heceta Beach	14	Meadowlark Prairie Park	6
		Waite Ranch (restricted)	6
		Salt Creek Falls area	5
		Hills Creek dam and pond	5

FRR=Fern Ridge Reservoir  
 \* The best part of South Jetty Road was closed for construction during part of September and October, which may have been a factor in missing Tropical Kingbird and not finding more shorebirds.

Graphics by Mike Williams

from the sky while “easy” birds put up unexpected resistance.

We benefited from a remarkably good January, in which a wintering Pygmy Nuthatch (found by Tom Cable), very rare in Lane County, was joined on our lists by a Mountain Plover (first county record, found by Daniel Farrar) at Siltcoos River beach and a wintering Pacific Golden-Plover at Fern Ridge.

That said, come autumn, it was the worst year in a while for Tropical Kingbird (a single one-minute wonder that none of us saw) and Clay-colored Sparrow (none), while Palm Warbler was very tough to find. There were no reports of Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Ruff, or Sharp-tailed Sandpiper in the county, all birds that occur every couple of years. Buff-breasted is almost annual—but not in 2021.

The three of us did not have identical lists at year’s end. A remarkable 32 species were reported in the county that at least one of us missed. Of the 32, two are OBRC species that have not yet been reviewed. I saw 13 species that at least one of the three

of us missed, while Sally and John each saw nine that one of us missed. Other observers found a remarkable ten species that the three of us missed. These were Black-chinned Hummingbird, Burrowing Owl, Eastern Kingbird, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Lark Sparrow, Long-eared Owl, Parakeet Auklet, Pomarine Jaeger, Tropical Kingbird, and Snowy Owl.

My worst misses among birds that did occur were Cassin’s Finch (probably seen twice but “probably” doesn’t count), Pomarine Jaeger (missed on the pelagic and no late-season blow-ins), White-tailed Kite (a ten-minute wonder—John was in the right place) and Long-eared Owl, which I just never quite looked for even though I knew a pair was around. I was out of the county at a writing residency (rescheduled from 2020) from October 28 to November 8 and missed a Snow Bunting and Brambling that Sally and John both saw.

In order to have a chance at the record, I went on a pelagic trip for the first time in forty years, a trip kindly scheduled by Tim Shelmerdine and stuffed with many Lane County birders eager to boost their lists.

In 2021, I found two first Lane County records: Dusky Warbler—new for Oregon—and Orchard Oriole also seen by Magnus Persmark and Diane Pettey. There were another eight species that I had never seen in the county before—astonishing given how long I have lived and birded in the county. The latter group included a couple of long-time jinx birds, Gray Flycatcher and Black-throated Sparrow (found by Diane Pettey), Least Flycatcher (found by Noah Strycker), South Polar Skua (a lifer), Great Gray Owl (courtesy of a private landowner), Black-footed Albatross, Mountain Plover (first Lane record, found by Daniel Farrar), and Brown Thrasher (found by Dona Albino on the property of another gracious private landowner).

Other birds of note that I found were a sixth county record Hudsonian Godwit at Fern Ridge (with Vjera Thompson), a Stilt Sandpiper also at Fern Ridge, Brewer’s Sparrows in McKenzie Pass (with Naomi Burns), and on the coast (with Tye Jeske), Leach’s Storm-Petrel at Klootchman (found by Tye), a second Black-throated Sparrow (with Josh Galpern), and a remarkable four additional Gray Flycatchers.

All birds during the year were seen except for three heard-only species, a Saw-whet Owl (with Rich Hoyer), Great Gray Owl (with Daniel Farrar), and Sandhill Crane, which Josh Galpern and I heard as flyovers bugling to each other while we were under some trees at Waldo Lake. In the world of owls, I was very fortunate to see a Spotted Owl for the first time in forty years. A good friend in the birding community encountered this owl during a camping trip and kindly showed it to me and a few others, including Sally and John. I don’t mention his name only

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Photo by Mike Williams

The Ankeny Hill Nature Center overlooks the Ankeny NWR. This view looks toward Peregrine Marsh (upper right).

## Ankeny Hill Nature Center Opens Near Salem

A new location for exploring the wildlife and habitats of the Central Willamette Valley opened its gates to the public in early February. The Ankeny Hill Nature Center is the newest feature — and first dedicated education space—at Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge south of Salem.

Its accessible facilities give visitors multiple ways to explore our natural environment and a new overlook provides a spectacular view of the Refuge and surrounding hills.

Created through a unique partnership among the US Fish & Wildlife

Service, Salem Audubon Society, and Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, the Center includes Gehlar Hall, named for Mark Gehlar, co-founder of Oregon Fruit Products Co. His gift of \$1.35 million to the Salem Audubon Society helped create the center.

Phase I of the Ankeny Hill Nature Center began in 2017 with the construction of the Mark Gehlar Hall and related trails and outdoor exploration areas. Gehlar Hall includes indoor and covered outdoor classrooms with lab space, and storage.

Gehlar Hall is near the site of the original Refuge overlook in the northeast area of the Wildlife Refuge along Ankeny Hill Road SE. The inside of Gehlar Hall will not open until COVID-19 protocols allow. Phase II starts later this year with the construction of an outdoor classroom structure at Peregrine Marsh near Buena Vista Road. The structure is dedicated to US Forest Service biologist David Marshall.

For more information visit:  
<https://www.ankenhillnaturecenter.org>

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because I don't want him to be nagged by other birders.

My travels were sometimes on my own but often involved other birders. I had multiple days birding with Tye Jeske, Diane Pettey, Daniel Farrar, Josh Galpern, Vjera Thompson, Rich Hoyer, and Magnus Persmark. They helped me find many birds during the year.

My total of 296 hangs a very large bait in front of the next person to go for a record in Lane County: 300 in a year is possible. What would it take? The two biggest factors would be to get out on the ocean from Florence more than once and to get into the Cascade high country that I did not fully cover.

Doing those things could add Pomarine Jaeger, Laysan Albatross, Flesh-footed Shearwater, Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Red-naped Sapsucker (most likely around Diamond Peak), and

possibly high-country rarities such as Pine Grosbeak, Boreal Owl, Poor-will, and Flammulated Owl. There were several reports of Williamson's Sapsucker in 2021. I chased them and failed on several occasions.

A county Big Year is ultimately a chance to get out and enjoy birding. At least three other active Lane County birders had personal record county years, part of a general flowering of activity.

It was a great year and had at least one side, benefit, I lost ten pounds, no doubt from walking the beaches and trails with friends. Try a Big Year in your county of choice or even your five-mile zone. Enjoy!



# Motus Tracking System Coming to Ankeny NWR

By Harry Fuller

Birding Author

Salem Audubon Society is working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service to put a Motus receiver on the Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge in Marion County. Currently, there are only six other Motus installations in Oregon.

## What is Motus?

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is an international collaborative research network that uses automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education for the conservation of migratory animals. A global network of receivers feeds into an online database used to study bird movement, range use, feeding, and roosting behavior.

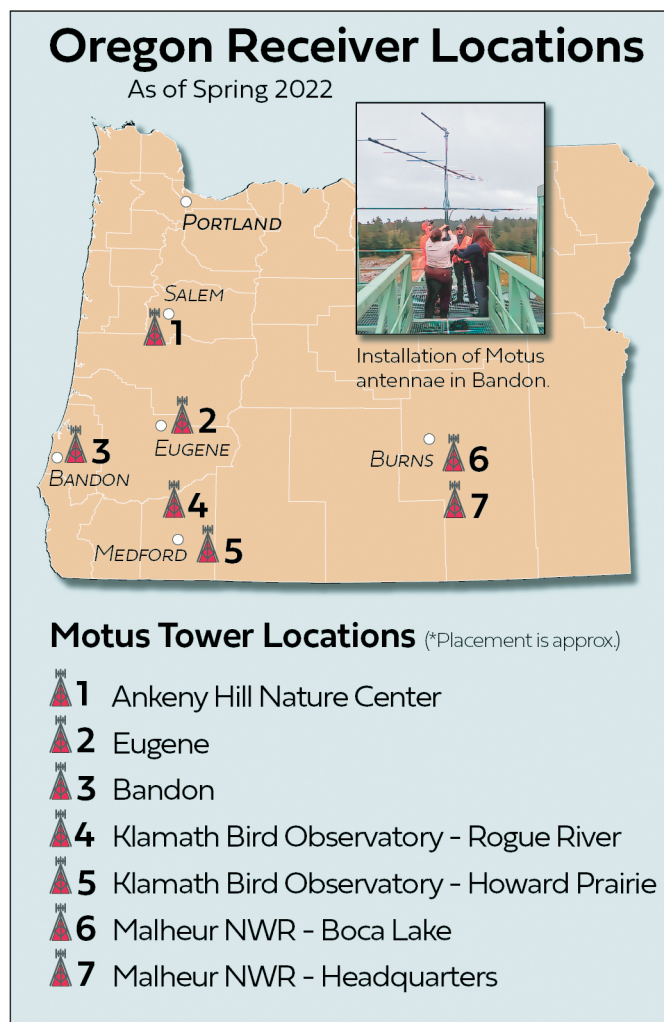
Over 1,350 Motus receivers are already positioned on five continents: North and South America, Europe, Asia (only 2), and Australia. The receivers are in 31 countries. To date, more than 31,000 birds and bats have been tagged.

Tagging a bird begins with capturing a bird carefully. A tiny transmitter is attached to the bird before it is released. Depending on the tag, each time a tagged bird comes within ten miles of a receiver, its presence and movements are recorded and tracked for twenty minutes, during endless months.

Motus receivers eliminate much of the fieldwork previously done to study migration, including visual proof or listening to migratory sounds at 3 a.m. Once the receiver is in place, digital tech does the work to track movements.

## Motus Locations in Oregon

The Motus receiver at Ankeny Hill Nature Center will be the first in the north Willamette Valley, a significant migration route and home to many wintering birds. There is a new tower up in Eugene. The Bandon tower is the only one on the Oregon Coast. Klamath Bird Observatory has two. One is north of Medford along the Rogue River. The second tower is east of Ashland in the Cascades at Howard Prairie. Two Motus towers have been installed at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. One is at Malheur Headquarters. The second is at Boca Lake, an area closed to the public.



Graphic by Mike Williams

Photo by Cheryl Horton

## What are we learning with Motus?

One study using Motus technology found that nearly all Black Terns spent some of their winters off the coast of Panama, something researchers did not know. In another example, a study of migratory Swainson's Thrushes in fall found those still molting would stay 45 days or more at a stopover, longer than any bird-banding data had suggested.

The BC Interior Thrushes project made other discoveries about Swainson Thrush migration. While researchers believed Swainson's Thrushes from Western Canada would migrate south along the Pacific Coast, the Motus tower in Bandon recorded a bird in September 2021. Later that year, another Motus site recorded the same bird at Mackay Island NWR in North Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

For more information visit: <https://motus.org/>

1) "Monitoring at Malheur Gets a Tech Upgrade," Teresa Wicks, Portland Audubon's Eastern Oregon Field Coordinator. December 2, 2021. [https://malheurfriends.org/2021/12/monitoring-at-malheur-gets-tech-upgrade/?utm\\_source=rss&utm\\_medium=rss&utm\\_campaign=monitoring-at-malheur-gets-tech-upgrade](https://malheurfriends.org/2021/12/monitoring-at-malheur-gets-tech-upgrade/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=monitoring-at-malheur-gets-tech-upgrade)

# Website to Share “Big Days” Info

By Jay Withgott

Oregon Bird Records Committee

Oregon has a rich history of big days — birding efforts held during a single 24-hour calendar day in which a birder or team of birders attempts to find and identify as many species of birds as possible within a given geographic area. A number of teams have surpassed 200 species in statewide Oregon big days, and birders have put forth solid big day efforts in most of our state’s 36 counties. Birders have also innovated variations on the big day theme, including big sits, regional birdathon outings, 48-hour adventures, and motorless big days.

For years, birders have reported the results of their big day efforts after completion, but this information has never been compiled and archived in a single place. As a result, it has been challenging to find information on what has been attempted and accomplished. Now, a new website addresses this gap by gathering all known information on big day efforts conducted within Oregon and presenting it in an easily searchable format.

The Oregon Big Day Website will serve as a repository for information including written accounts, itineraries, species lists, photos, etc. The web address for the newly launched site is: <https://www.oregonbigdays.org>

Jay Withgott gathered content for the site from the archives of Oregon Birders Online (OBOL), *Oregon Birds* back issues, and individual birders. The site was designed by Jay and by Teresa Hertzell. Tim Janzen assisted with content and design. Teresa will be maintaining the site, which will be linked to the Oregon Birding Association’s website.

Here is where you come in! We invite you to explore the site and contribute content of your own if you have run a big day. Despite our endeavors, we have, without a doubt, overlooked some past efforts, especially any not publicly reported at the time.

If you have participated in a big day already featured on the site but possess documents or photos you would like to add to help flesh out the entry, then please do so. And of course, as new big days are run in the future, we want each of them submitted so that the site remains a comprehensive portal.

The Oregon Big Day Website is divided into sections covering different types of efforts, as follows:



From <https://www.oregonbigdays.org>

A screen grab of the “Oregon Big Days” website planned to be live later this year.

**Statewide big days:** This section features accounts of all big day efforts within Oregon that have surpassed 200 species. To maximize habitat diversity, such big days generally cover multiple biogeographic regions, including areas of the coast, the Willamette Valley, the Cascades, and the eastern high desert.

Most routes have linked the seabird-rich Lincoln or Lane County coasts with Summer Lake NWR, Malheur NWR, or other eastern-Oregon wetland areas where birdlife is reliably bountiful and diverse.

**County big days:** This section features accounts of all big days that have surpassed 100 species within a particular county in Oregon. Each of Oregon’s 36 counties is given its own treatment, and the accounts offer glimpses of how birders use intimate knowledge of avifaunal distribution at regional scales to devise strategies for maximizing species diversity.

**Specialty big days:** This section showcases the burgeoning number of creative variations on the big day theme that birders are devising. Included are a variety of regional multi-county approaches of both 24 and 48 hours, many of them associated with birdathon events sponsored by Audubon chapters to raise funds for worthy conservation causes.

Also included are big sits, because remaining in one spot and counting species observed throughout the day can require just as much skill and endurance as a long-distance birding race. Perhaps most notable are environmentally sustainable “green” or “motorless” big days that minimize or eliminate the use of fossil fuels. In an age when birds and their habitats are increasingly threatened by climate change, big days run by bicycle, by mass transit, or on foot are gaining in popularity.

Whatever your interests are in birding, you will find many things in the numerous accounts on this website to entertain you and to learn from. We invite you to peruse the site and actively participate in its growth and development.



# First Oregon Record of Dusky Warbler

Article by Alan Contreras

Photo by Anne Heyerly

On Thursday, October 7, 2021, I was birding a place I routinely cover, Stonefield Beach State Wayside on the northern Lane County coast. It was a reasonably bright morning, with no rain and little wind. At about 10:30, I pished in three Fox Sparrows in the blackberry tangle north of the trail. One of them disturbed a smaller brown bird that came into the open. I recognized it as a Dusky Warbler (*Phylloscopus fuscatus*) from years of studying images in bird books.

Dusky Warbler is found throughout Asia and is an infrequent visitor to Europe. It is one of many “leaf warblers” species in the genus *Phylloscopus*, an Old-World group largely unrelated to our American “wood warblers.” Vagrant individuals of Dusky Warbler have occurred in Alaska and California, with 21 records accepted in California. Two photo-documented reports from the same time as my Stonefield Beach bird in October are currently under consideration by the California Bird Records Committee. The Oregon Bird Records Committee has recently accepted the Stonefield Beach sighting as the first record of Dusky Warbler for Oregon.

The bird was mostly brown and about the size and shape of a small wood warbler. It was chocolate-brown above, including the entirety of its wings, back, and tail. It had a dark cap and nape the same color as the back and showed no hint of wing bars. The wings were rather stubby, with short primary extension. The tail was a bit broad, short, and squared-off. The bird had a heavy white supercilium, rather like that of a Bewick’s Wren, above a dark brown line running through the eye, much like a Chipping Sparrow in eyeline structure.

Below the eye was a pale half-arc visible at certain angles, though not quite as apparent as on a MacGillivray’s Warbler, on a medium-brown face lighter than the cap. The throat was a tinted white tan. The belly was paler but not truly white, with definite dull golden tones on the lowest part of the belly and under the tail, about where a Palm Warbler or Say’s Phoebe would have some color but rather dull and primarily visible from behind. The bill was relatively small, slender, and pointed but rounded off, similar in structure between a North American wood-warbler and a vireo. It looked smaller than the bill on a similarly sized wood warbler. The upper mandible was dark, the lower (maxilla) paler. The legs looked medium brown but could seem lighter at some angles.

The warbler fed in dense blackberries and a small spruce tree and flew into willow scrub mixed with driftwood and small pines. When I saw it again two days later, the warbler was in the same area of willow scrub, giving rich chip notes in quick sequence. The call notes were like a lighter version of a Sooty Fox Sparrow’s notes and similar to those of a Lincoln’s Sparrow. Recordings are archived in eBird (Macaulay Library, Cornell University).

Several observers relocated the bird that afternoon, and again on October 9 and 10. On the tenth, the bird became increasingly skittish, and it was not seen or heard with certainty after the tenth. At least 61 people saw or heard the bird, but very few managed to get photos. Thanks to Daniel Farrar for comments on an earlier draft of this note.



# Lesser Black-backed Gull

By Nick Mrvelj

Oregon Bird Records Committee

It was a rainy October day, and Lavi, my one-year-old Australian Shepherd, had been pent up inside and desperately needed some time outdoors. So, we headed to one of our favorite spots in North Portland: Harbor View Park, an open grassland area tucked between the Willamette River and the Willamette Bluff. We go there regularly to enjoy the calm, quiet landscape and, especially in fall, to look at gulls. On this particular day (October 27, 2021), there were about 250 gulls along a rocky outcrop some 60-70 meters from the shoreline. Lavi and I quickly made our way closer, and I began my initial scan of the flock.

One darker-mantled gull stood out. I took a few quick photos of the bird before getting nearer. Could this be the day something rare shows up? This is the question every gull enthusiast surely has in their mind and one that lives rent-free in mine. As we got closer, my mind became electrified with

excitement. I was viewing a gull with a mantle darker than a California Gull. The bird was pretty large, nearly the same size as an average Glaucous-winged Gull. It had a relatively long, uniquely shaped bill, with a dull greenish wash toward the base. Its irises were somewhat speckled and came across as a pale mustard color.

It was unlike any gull I had ever seen before — and it would turn out to be a gull that did not belong anywhere near Oregon!

## Launching an Information Quest

So, what was the gull I found that evening? Answering that question turned out to be more difficult than I ever could have imagined. Weeks of research ensued. Experts were consulted from North America, Europe, and Asia. I poured over hundreds of images of gulls from around the world. Most of these images were of one species complex: the Lesser Black-backed Gull complex. Some wormholes exist when dealing with gulls, but

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### Pictured above

A *taimyrensis*/Heuglin's Lesser Black-backed Gull taken at Harbor View Park, Multnomah County.

Photo by Nick Mrvelj



# Identification Challenge

I was hardly prepared for the gigantic black hole into which I was about to plunge.

## Population Increasing

The Lesser Black-backed Gull (LBBG) is relatively new to North America. The first record of the species in the United States was in 1934 (Zawadzki et al., 2021). Numbers have significantly increased, and the species is now an uncommon winter resident throughout much of the eastern United States.

In December 2020, around 1,000 LBBGs were seen on a single day in North Carolina (eBird 2022)! As individuals of this species have made their way to the Pacific Northwest, Oregon has seen a marked increase in LBBG sightings over the past decade, with several birds documented each year.

The thing about Lesser Black-backed Gulls is that quite a few distinct populations, or subspecies, exist. The conventional wisdom is that the LBBGs in North America belong to the subspecies *Larus fuscus graellsii* (*L. f. graellsii*). The strange

thing about the gull I found that dreary autumn day is that it was not a member of that subspecies.

Three main features seemed off for a *graellsii* Lesser Black-backed Gull. First, the bird showed no significant streaking on the head. In looking through dozens of images of LBBGs taken in North America in October and November, none of them lacked such streaking. The second issue was the mantle color. Although *graellsii* LBBGs show a range of mantle shades, this gull would have been toward the extreme pale end for a *graellsii*. The third issue was the timing of the primary molt

This gull was still molting its outer 3-4 primaries. Although this molt timing occasionally occurs in *graellsii* LBBGs, it is rare. Of all subspecies of LBBG worldwide, generally, only high-Arctic breeders like *L. f. fuscus* and *L. f. heuglini* are expected to be molting this many outer primaries so late in the year. The reason for such late molt timing has a lot to do with when they can successfully return to their breeding grounds, flying in some cases up to 6,000 miles and not returning until late

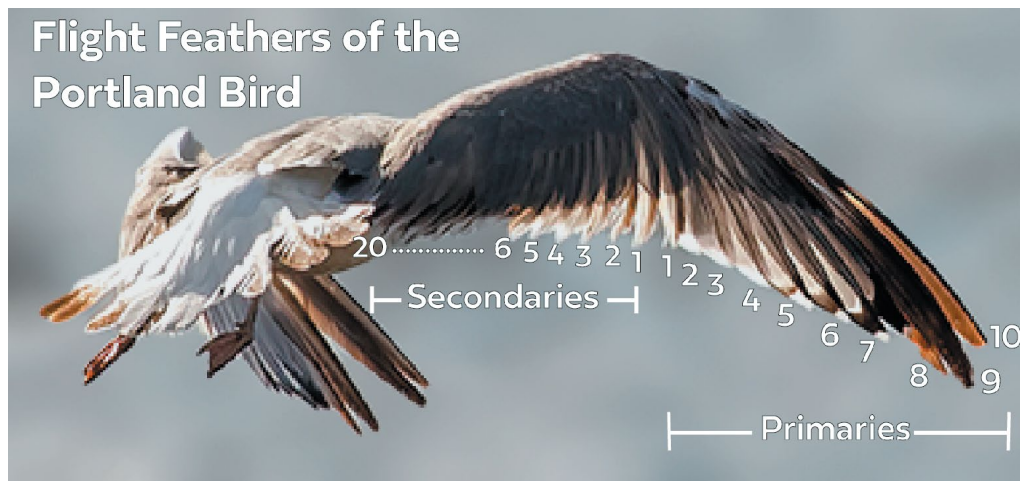
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## Pictured above

For comparison, a *graellsii* Lesser Black-backed Gull taken at Wireless Road, Clatsop County.

Photo by Mark Ludwick

## Flight Feathers of the Portland Bird



Graphic by Mike Williams

Photo by Philip Kline

The Lesser Black-backed Gull of the Heuglin's subspecies of *taimyrensis* form as identified by the author.

### Identification Points

Key indicators are the far outer primaries. The main focus is the delayed molt for the date. Most *Larus* species of that age class have already molted all of their outer primaries at that date (late October through mid-December).

June. This is also why these taxa have a long-winged, somewhat robust appearance.

So, if the Harbor View Park bird wasn't a *graellsii* Lesser Black-backed Gull, what was it? That was the question I pondered for several weeks, traveling deeper into the black hole. After eliminating all species and hybrid combinations of gulls native to North America, both expected and rare, I turned my gaze across the Pacific Ocean toward gulls regularly found in East Asia.

### Other Things to Consider

From the outset, the feedback I received, and my inclination, suggested that this mystifying gull was most likely a *taimyrensis* Lesser Black-backed Gull, a form of LBBG that occurs in Asia. There are only a tiny handful of occurrences of this taxon in North America (eBird 2022). However, our understanding of *taimyrensis* LBBG is incomplete, and the taxonomy is downright contentious.

Many authorities treat it as the eastern form of the subspecies *Larus fuscus heuglini*, which is sometimes treated as a whole species ("Heuglin's Gull"). To make matters worse, there has been speculation that *taimyrensis* is a hybrid swarm of *L. f. heuglini* and *Larus argentatus vegae* (the "Vega" Herring Gull, Yésou 2002). More research is needed before fully understanding what *taimyrensis* is, but for now, I will refer to it as a form of Heuglin's LBBG.

At this point in my research journey, I was well out of my comfort zone as I wrestled with some of the challenging gull complexes in Europe and Asia.

In examining the LBBG complex in eastern Asia, I found that vagrant Heuglin's LBBGs, especially paler adults, can pose quite the ID challenge when separating them from darker

*taimyrensis* LBBGs. Many of the (presumed) *taimyrensis* LBBGs of far-eastern Asia have been described as smaller, shorter-legged, shorter-billed, and paler-mantled than the average Heuglin's LBBG (van Dijk et al. 2011).

Yet I found conflicting accounts of the phenotypic limits of *taimyrensis* LBBG and an incomplete understanding of the wintering ranges of both Heuglin's and *taimyrensis* LBBGs. The gull I found looked somewhat long-legged to my eye and was decently large, even similar to a smaller Glaucous-winged Gull. From personal experience, I don't put a ton of stock in the relative sizes of various *Larus* species, especially when accounting for sex, individual variation, and posture.

Still, I found it interesting that this bird looked decently large and robust in the field.

### Fatigue Was Setting In

The Lesser Black-backed Gull landscape was more complicated than I had expected. Before moving forward with a label for my gull, I had to explore some even more exotic options from increasingly distant lands. One subspecies that I felt was a good contender, at least superficially, was *Larus fuscus barabensis*, or Steppe LBBG. I was reaching here, as this subspecies breeds in the steppes of central Asia and winters primarily in Southwest Asia! A Steppe LBBG on North American soil would be absurdly out of range. Beyond its extreme improbability, a sub-adult Steppe LBBG should not typically be molting so many outer primaries at this time of year. Furthermore, the average Steppe LBBG would not show so much dense, dark spotting and streaking on the nape and back of the neck (Panov and Monzиков 2000). I felt satisfied with eliminating Steppe LBBG from the running.

I had one more improbable candidate to eliminate, however.

It was a species that had never been documented in the ABA area. The weight of the audacity of even suggesting it was heavy, but I bravely journeyed on.

## One Last Possibility

The species was Caspian Gull, found in parts of Europe and western and central Asia. A Caspian Gull would need to undertake a staggeringly long journey to reach Portland, Oregon. Still, I had to make sure. I learned that Caspian Gulls should not be so dark-saddled, even those of the most easterly populations, and that Caspian Gulls shouldn't have such a delayed molt of the outer primaries at that age (Gibbins et al. 2010). And with that, I put the prospect of this being a Caspian Gull to bed.

At this point, the ID wrangling and general excitement began to wane. I had concluded that the gull was a Lesser Black-backed Gull of the Heuglin's subspecies or *taimyrensis* form.

Meanwhile, the gull was long gone from Portland, last seen on November 2. Life had officially returned to normal. Until the evening of November 28, when I checked my email and read the latest OBOL posts. Waiting in my inbox was a post from Dave Haupt, who had found a puzzling gull down in Klamath Falls earlier in the day. Upon inspecting his photos, I nearly jumped out of my seat. I recognized the gull immediately. It was the same gull I had found in Portland a month earlier!

## Same Gull - Different Location

The gull Dave Haupt found was on Lake Ewauna in Klamath Falls, roughly 230 miles away from Portland. Dave's gull stuck around until December 28, seen and documented by many during its month-long stay. After carefully examining all the images and videos obtained, I felt convinced that it was the same gull I had found. Similarities included: The same hue in the upperparts, identical shape and length of the bill; identical bill and iris coloration; identical streaking on the nape and back of the neck; the same leg color and overall size and proportions; the same age; a nearly identical pattern of wing molt; and a similar-looking rectrix, with a few seemingly replaced since being photographed in Portland.

Wow! The excitement came roaring back. So often in the birding world, rare or accidental species are discovered, linger briefly, and then disappear into the ether as quickly as they arrive. These individuals go somewhere, but where is seldom known. And yet here was a case of a rare gull being found not once but twice in Oregon across two months. A genuinely remarkable occurrence! Thus, the story finally comes to an end. It was a truly unique experience to find a shockingly rare gull at my local gull spot and to witness it relocated 230 miles away.



Photo by Dave Haupt

*Taimyrensis*/Heuglini, above, generally has streaking confined to the nape, usually has pale yellow irises with some brown flecking, and leg color that can present as yellow, orange, or pink. Shown is the gull as seen at Lake Ewauna, Klamath County.

This remarkable bird challenged me to broaden my birding knowledge and explore complex taxonomic groups from other parts of the world. In researching this gull, I attained a much better understanding of both the Lesser Black-backed Gull complex and the Herring Gull complex.

The taxonomy surrounding the Lesser Black-backed Gull complex will likely continue to evolve, and perhaps one day in the future, Heuglin's Gull will once more be recognized as a whole species in the ABA area. Until then, keep checking those gull flocks and have your cameras ready.

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## 2021 Summary

# Oregon Bird Records Committee

**By Hendrik Herlyn**

For the Oregon Bird Records Committee

**D**uring its 44<sup>th</sup> year of operation, the Oregon Bird Records Committee (OBRC) continued to pursue its mission of collecting and reviewing reports of rare birds in Oregon, curating the formal archive of records, and maintaining the official list of species confirmed for our state.

### The Review Process

Every 60 days, the Committee votes online on a new batch of rare bird records. If all nine members accept a record in the first round, it becomes part of the confirmed sightings for Oregon. If at least one member votes to “Not Accept,” the record goes into a second round of online voting.

Second-round records with no more than one dissenting vote will be accepted and entered into the state records list. However, if a record receives at least two “Not Accepted” votes, it will be discussed and voted on at the annual meeting. Ultimately, records receiving at least six “Accepted” votes will become part of the Oregon rare bird archives.

It is important to point out that a “Not Accepted” vote does not necessarily imply that the Committee does not believe the identification to be correct. It simply means that the documentation presented was not convincing enough to establish the identification beyond a reasonable doubt.

The OBRC applies a high standard of evidence, especially for extremely rare sightings (such as first or second state records). We encourage anyone who submits a rare bird sighting to present the best documentation possible (including a detailed description, information on how similar species were ruled out, and ideally good photos, videos, or sound recordings).

In 2021, the OBRC reviewed and voted on 48 records. The Committee accepted 35 of these and voted not to accept 13 records. Twelve of these records were discussed at the annual meeting. Details of all records can be found at the end of this article.

### New Oregon birds - 2021

Three species were accepted as new additions to the all-time Oregon state bird list in 2021, bringing the total to 546 species.

A mind-blowing **Oriental Greenfinch** was found by Torrey Gage-Tomlinson and Nolan Clements on Oct 17, 2020, at

the Port of Siuslaw in Florence, Lane County during a Big Day. Several lucky birders were able to see this amazing rarity in the following days.

On Feb 28, 2021, a **Winter Wren** was discovered in McDonald Forest near Corvallis, Benton County, by Caleb Centanni and Courtney Kelly Jett. Giving its distinctive call next to the resident Pacific Wrens, this little gem was photographed and recorded by scores of birders over more than a month.

The third new species, a long-overdue **Black Vulture**, was less accommodating. It was photographed by Mick Bressler in Gold Beach, Curry County, on May 17, 2021, but the photo didn't surface until days later, and the bird could not be relocated.

### OBRC Annual Meeting - Jul 17, 2021

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was again held remotely via ZOOM, with eight members, one alternate, and the secretary in attendance. In addition to discussing and voting on 12 third-round records, the Committee discussed several business items.

First, all of the old paper records dating back to the Committee's inception in 1978 have been scanned, and most are now available online, thanks to the tireless commitment of Tim Janzen. The storage of duplicate files was discussed. A subcommittee was formed to evaluate the list of subspecies for which the OBRC solicits reports.

Following the subcommittee's suggestions, the list was eventually reduced from 11 to 7 subspecies (“Atlantic” Brant, “Bewick's” Tundra Swan, “Eurasian” Whimbrel, “Vega” Herring Gull, “Siberian” American Pipit, “Timberline” Brewer's Sparrow, “White-winged” Dark-eyed Junco).

Jay Withgott agreed to give a presentation about the OBRC's recent accomplishments at the Western Field Ornithologists' conference in the fall of 2021. For greater transparency, the Committee decided to make votes and voting comments public for accepted and ‘species unresolved’ records while keeping members' names anonymous.

Finally, the Committee owes a debt of gratitude to Bob Lockett, who volunteered to help with the ongoing process of entering all OBRC records into eBird, and who finished the project before the end of the year. While a few minor issues still need to be ironed out, all OBRC records are now part of the eBird database and accessible online. Thank you, Bob!



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For additional information about the OBRC and its work, you can visit the Committee's website at: <https://www.oregonbirding.org/oregon-bird-records-committee>.

In addition, you can find the official state checklist, the complete list of species and subspecies for which reports are requested, and a PDF document summarizing all records ever reviewed by the OBRC, with active links to supporting documentation (photographs, videos, and audio files).

Also available are past annual reports published in *Oregon Birds* and the link to an online form for submitting reports to the OBRC.

## Records Reviewed in 2021

The species name is followed by the OBRC number, which consists of the four-letter banding code for the species followed by the year the species was observed and the cumulative number of records submitted to the OBRC.

## Accepted Records

### "Bewick's" Tundra Swan BESW-2021-09

One bird at Miller Island, Klamath Falls, Klamath Co., Feb 28, 2021. Details and photos Elijah Hayes.

### Garganey GARG-2021-06

Baskett Slough NWR, Polk Co., May 16, 2021. Details and photos Trent Bray, Andy Frank. Reported on eBird 15-16 May 2021.

### Lesser Nighthawk LENI-2021-04

Goose Point, Bay City, Tillamook Co., Apr 6, 2021. Details and photos Aaron Beerman.

### Mountain Plover MOPL-2021-16

Siltcoos River estuary, Lane Co., Jan 16, 2021. Details and photos Daniel Farrar. Reported on eBird from Jan 16 — Feb 9, 2021.

### Bar-tailed Godwit BTGO-2021-32

On the beach near 56th St. access, Newport, Lincoln Co., May 18, 2021. Details and photos Jon Dachenhaus, Kim Nelson.

### Hudsonian Godwit HUGO-2021-36

Fern Ridge WMA, Royal Unit (west end), Lane Co., Aug 8, 2021. Details and photos Vjera Thompson. Reported on eBird 8-11 August 2021.

### Red-necked Stint RNST-2021-24

DeLaura Beach access, Clatsop Co., 9 August 2021. Video by Owen Schmidt.

### White-rumped Sandpiper WRSA-2021-09

Eastside of the auto tour route, Summer Lake WMA, Lake Co., Jun 4, 2021. Details and photos Aaron Skirvin.

### Wood Sandpiper WOSA 2020-02

Eagle Marsh, Ankeny NWR, Marion Co., 15-17 October 2020. Details and photos Trent Bray, Nels Nelson, Roger Robb, Jack Williamson. Reported on eBird from Oct 14 — Oct 24, 2020.

### Ross's Gull ROGU-2021-06

South Jetty Way, Newport, Lincoln Co., Jan 30, 2021. Details Nolan Clements, Carter Strobe; photos Nolan Clements.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull LBBG-2020-17

Mouth of Deschutes River from Heritage Landing, Wasco Co., Feb 10, 2021. Details Jay Withgott, Susan Masta; photos Jay Withgott.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull LBBG-2017-18

McNary Dam at Spillway Park, Umatilla Co., Dec 2, 2017. Details and photos Christopher Lindsey.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull LBBG-2021-19

Veterans Park boat launch, Klamath Co., Feb 28 – Mar 1, 2021. Details and photos Dave Haupt, Kevin Spencer, Elijah Hayes.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull LBBG-2020-20

South of Stanfield Meadow Rd., Umatilla Co., Feb 20, 2020. Details and photos Dave Trochlell.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull BBG-2021-21

Wireless Rd., Clatsop Co., Feb 6, 2021. Details and photos Molly Sultany.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull LBBG-2020-22

D River beach wayside, Lincoln Co., Oct 8, 2020. Details and photos Phil Pickering.

### Lesser Black-backed Gull LBBG-2020-23

D River beach wayside, Lincoln Co., Oct 26, 2020. Details and photos Phil Pickering.

### Arctic Loon ARLO-2021-09

One bird flying with 3 Pacific Loons approximately 400 yards offshore, north of Pirate Cove in Depoe Bay, Lincoln Co., May 18, 2021. Details and photos Jerry Ting.

### Brown Booby BRBO-2017-23

Six miles off Cannon Beach, Clatsop Co., Sep 14, 2017. Bird came out of heavy fog to rest on mast of a commercial fishing boat. Details and photos John Alto.

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**Brown Booby** BRBO-2021-24

Bird perched on a navigation marker, north spit BLM boat launch, Coos Bay, Coos Co., Aug 24 — Dec 11 2021. Details and photos Sabine Berzins, Tim Rodenkirk, Vjera Thompson.

**Black Vulture** BLVU-2021-01

East harbor, Gold Beach, Curry Co., one flying overhead with Turkey Vultures, May 17, 2021. Details and photos Mick Bressler. First Oregon state record.

**Red-bellied Woodpecker** RBWO-2020-02

Row River Trail, Lane Co., Jul 18, 2020. Details and photo Wendy Marsigli.

**Eastern Phoebe** EAPH-2021-36

Off Happy Valley Rd. east of Diamond, Harney Co., May 24, 2021. Details and photos Gerry Meenaghan.

**Vermilion Flycatcher** VEFL-2021-07

Gerig Rd. at Laura Lane, rural Linn Co., Jan 23, 2021. Details and photos Hendrik Herlyn. Reported on eBird from Jan 20—Feb 1, 2021.

**Plumbeous Vireo** PLVI-2020-19

Steens Mtn., Harney Co., Jun 5, 2020. Details, photos, and audio recording Adrian Hinkle.

**Philadelphia Vireo** PHVI-2020-10

One adult bird at Doris Hassler Davis Memorial Park and Wetland in Manzanita, Tillamook Co., Sep 27, 2020. Details and photos Diana Byrne.

**Arctic Warbler** ARWA-2020-02

Accepted as Species Unresolved; candidate species Arctic Warbler / Kamchatka Leaf-Warbler / Japanese Leaf-Warbler. One bird was photographed on Salishan Nature Trail, Siletz Bay, Lincoln Co., Sept 26, 2020. Details and photos Phil Pickering.

**Winter Wren** WIWR-2021-01

McDonald Forest, Corvallis, Benton Co., Feb 28 – Mar 21, 2021. Details Courtney Kelly Jett, Caleb Centanni, Trent Bray, Jack Maynard; audio recordings Caleb Centanni, Trent Bray, Jack Maynard; photos Jack Maynard). Reported on eBird from 2/28/21 — 4/4/2021. First Oregon state record.

**Phainopepla** PHAI-2021-14

Bird photographed in a mistletoe-laden oak tree north of Central Point, Denman WMA, Jackson Co., May 23, 2021. Details and photos Tim Johnston.

**Oriental Greenfinch** OFGR-2020-01

Port of Siuslaw Campground, Lane Co., 17-20 October 2020. Probably female or young male. Details Torrey Gage-Tomlinson, Trent Bray; details and photos Nolan Clements; Tye Jeske. First Oregon state record.

**Cassin's Sparrow** CASP-2020-02

One bird observed along Bond Rd, West Eugene, Lane Co., 20-22 October 2020. Details Sally Hill, Ramiro Aragon, Tom Crabtree; photos Sally Hill, Tom Crabtree, Tye Jeske, Ramiro Aragon. Reported on eBird from Oct 20 — Oct 26, 2020.

**Orchard Oriole** OROR-2020-18

Female bird in a residential backyard, often visiting hummingbird feeder. Portland, Multnomah Co., 16-30 December 2020. Details Chris Hinkle, Bob Lockett, Jack Williamson, Trent Bray, Andy Frank, Owen Schmidt; photos Andy Frank, Jack Williamson, Owen Schmidt, Trent Bray. Reported on eBird from Dec 16, 2020 — Feb 6, 2021.

**Common Grackle** COGR-2021-45

Sunriver Resort, Deschutes Co., 3-10 March 2021, one bird on a golf cart path. Details and photos Milton Vine, Trent Bray; audio recording Trent Bray. Reported on eBird from 3/3/2021 — 3/12/2021.

**Canada Warbler** CAWA-2021-14

Malheur NWR HQ, Harney Co., 2 September 2021. Details and photos Trent Bray, Don Sutherland.

**Painted Bunting** PABU-2021-10

One male bird at a residential feeder in Salem, Marion Co., Feb 5, 2021. Details and photos Kristen Eisenman, Donna Hendricks, Nels Nelson. Reported on eBird from Jan 31 – Feb 11, 2021.

**Not Accepted****Red-breasted Goose** RBGO-2008-01

South of Newberg, Marion Co., Feb 6, 2008. Identity not in question, but origin unknown; could have been an escaped bird.

**“Bewick’s” Tundra Swan** BESW-2020-08

Pond off Meda Loop Rd, Hwy 101, Tillamook Co., Nov 4, 2020. The Committee felt the bird did not have enough yellow to rule out natural variation within “Whistling” Tundra Swan.

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**Common Gallinule** COGA-2020-16

One bird at Wastewater Treatment Ponds, Burns, Harney Co., Aug 14, 2020. The poor-quality photo did not prove that this was a gallinule and not a juvenile coot.

**“Vega” Herring Gull** HERG-1987-02

South Jetty Columbia River, Clatsop Co., Apr 22, 1987. The observer submitted four photos of this bird and no report. Committee felt the photos could be of two different birds. The vote was unanimous to not accept photos 1, 2, or 4, but divided on photo 3; the final decision was to not accept, as even that photo was not clear, was over 30 years old, and there were too many unknowns.

**“Vega” Herring Gull** HERG-2020-07

Netarts Bay, Tillamook Co., Oct 21, 2020. Excellent photos and detailed report; however, the Committee felt this bird’s plumage probably falls well within the broad spectrum of Herring Gull variability.

**“Kumlien’s” Iceland Gull** ICGU-2020-21

La Grande Wastewater Treatment Ponds, La Grande, Union Co., Dec 20, 2020. The photos were inconclusive, and some committee members felt they did not rule out a small Glaucous Gull.

**Black Storm-Petrel** BLSP-2020-07

One flying bird at Siltcoos Dunes overlook, Lane Co., Jul 10, 2020. Despite good reports, the Committee felt other similar species just could not be ruled out.

**Black-vented Shearwater** BVSH-2017-13

Oregon Island NWR, Table Rock overlook, Lincoln Co., Dec 30, 2017. The report was brief and did not provide enough details to rule out other similar species.

**Magnificent Frigatebird** MAFR-2021-11

Observed flying overhead, Dean Creek Elk Viewing Area east of Reedsport, Douglas Co., Jul 11, 2021. Without photos, information was insufficient to rule out other species.

**Blue-footed Booby** BFBO-2013-04

Partial carcass retrieved from beach 3 mi, south of Newport, Lincoln Co., Nov 6, 2013. Believed to be a booby (sp) but not enough evidence to verify.

**Plumbeous Vireo** PLVI-2021-21

East of visitor center, Malheur NWR, Harney Co., 11 May 2021. Details were insufficient and similar species such as Cassin’s Vireo were not ruled out.

**Bay-breasted Warbler** BBWA-2020-15

Jackson Bottom Wetlands, Hillsboro, Washington Co., Nov 1, 2020. There were no photos, and the Committee felt that the description was insufficient for clear identification.

**Summer Tanager** SUTA-2020-31

Kimberly Orchards, Grant Co., Aug 26, 2020. Reported as female accompanying the male from record SUTA-2020-30. The Committee felt the description of the female was incomplete, did not mention a lack of wingbars, and Western Tanager was not sufficiently ruled out.

**The 2021 Committee**

The OBRC consists of nine voting members who can serve two consecutive three-year terms; up to five alternates; and the secretary. The Committee included the following members:

**2021 Voting Members**

Bob Archer	Adrian Hinkle	Craig Miller
Hendrik Herlyn	Tim Janzen	Nick Mrvelj
Sally Hill	Philip Kline	Jay Withgott

**2021 Alternates**

Tom Crabtree	Wayne Hoffmann
Jeff Gilligan	Tom McNamara

**Secretary** Teresa Hertzell

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**Author Biography**

Hendrik Herlyn came to Oregon from his native Germany as an exchange student in 1988, fell in love with the Pacific Northwest, and is still living in Corvallis today.

An avid birder since the age of 13, he has birded on five continents, but most of his ornithological focus in the past couple of decades has been on Oregon. He is on his third stint on the OBRC since 1993, having served on the Committee for a total of 13 years now.

In addition, he has held positions on the board of the OBA (then the OFO) and the Audubon Society of Corvallis, is the co-author of the *Handbook of Oregon Birds* (with Alan Contreras) and is a former editor of the *Oregon Birds* journal (together with his husband, Oscar Harper), and one of the current Lincoln County eBird reviewers.

When he is not out birding for fun, he earns his living as a seasonal field ornithologist and freelance technical translator/editor/writer.

# A Big Year In Klamath County

Article by Elijah Hayes

Environmental Science Student

What distinguishes a Big Year from a regular year of birding? As I can gather, there are two main distinctions. The first is the time spent birding. The second is the focus on the goal. When you're trying for a Big Year, as opposed to a regular year, you don't have the option to say, "Oh hey, I'll look for that Hutton's Vireo tomorrow." No, you skip your Chemistry quiz, make the 20-minute drive, and hike out to see it now. You don't get to say, "I should probably go to bed now so I can wake up in time for work tomorrow." Nope, that's what coffee is for. During a Big Year, you stay up and go owling until 4 a.m.

Despite being a new birder, I have had the competitive drive burning for a while. I just lacked both the time and the skill to go anywhere with it. That is, until 2020. In 2020, I set a goal to see 200 species in Klamath County before the end of the year. I easily met that goal, and in the process, I gathered good information about the birds in the area, their distribution, and how to identify them.

While I fizzled out in the second half of 2020 due to COVID lockdowns and some upheaval in my personal life, I went into 2021 invigorated and ready to do some birding. My Environmental Science courses at Oregon Tech started off online, so I had more time.

By the end of January, I had tallied 113 species and six new county birds. February put me at 136 species, and while chasing a Lesser Black-backed Gull found by local birder Dave Haupt,



Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher

I was asked the question that planted a seed: "Are you doing a Big Year?" I wasn't then, but after reviewing some of my finds for the year, checking out the county record, and looking at the birds that were still possible, I quickly switched gears and started making plans to go for 259 species. I had already seen a few great birds for the county, including Wrentit, Lapland Longspur, Eurasian Wigeon, Wild Turkey, Great-tailed Grackle, and White-throated Sparrow. I just needed 124 more in the next ten months to tie the record and another after that to break it. It should be easy enough, right?

March started off great with the accidental find of a Great Gray Owl in broad daylight. It flushed from the trees while I was walking a trail, and my heart skipped a beat. When it landed, and I confirmed my suspicion, my heart stopped. Luckily, I survived.

I sprinted for my camera back to my car — which always seems to be the location of my camera when rare birds are present — and snapped a few pics before leaving it alone. After getting blessed by the birding gods with that sighting, the rest of March was fairly quiet.

I spent time with my family in Southern California at the beginning of April, but some good birds waited for me. I was able to find a Snowy Egret on my first day back and then got word from Steve Kornfeld a few days later that he had spotted a Hutton's Vireo while walking a forest road looking for Wild Turkey.

Yes, I skipped a Chemistry quiz to chase it. And no, I don't regret it. I arrived about an hour after the report and found the bird singing in approximately the same location it had been found. I was able to tick Blue-winged Teal near the end of the month, but a Whimbrel that was reported multiple times gave me some trouble. It seemed that every time I arrived, it had just disappeared, and I was afraid I would miss it entirely. Finally, while visiting the spot in the pouring rain and howling wind, I saw it among a few Long-billed Curlews, where its shorter bill and dark-striped head were easily visible.

A flyover Band-tailed Pigeon in Klamath River Canyon helped me end the month with over 200 species, with many migrants still to come.

Spring migration did not disappoint. By May 6th, I had already found 217 species in the county — as many as I'd seen in all of 2020. I picked up a Common Loon at Lake of the Woods and found Long-tailed Duck, Short-billed Dowitcher, and Brewer's Sparrow the same day.

A few days later, I stumbled across a Black-throated Sparrow while climbing Stukel Mountain and also added Green-tailed Towhee and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher to my county list.

I successfully chased a Northern Saw-whet Owl found by Kevin Spencer and got two Klamath County specialties — Yellow Rail and Northern Waterthrush. While hunting for the waterthrush, I also found a juvenile Northern Goshawk that I was able to photograph and record.

Inspired by these finds, I made a detour on the trip back to add Red-naped Sapsucker and American Crow to my list. Near the end of May, I joined Dave Haupt and Kevin Spencer for a Big Day. While we didn't break any records, it was a great experience—and humbling for me as the two of them narrowed down warbler species by the chip note alone and called out birds that I hadn't even seen. During the nocturnal portion of the day, I saw my first ever Common Poorwill.

I ended May with Red-necked Phalarope, American Three-toed Woodpecker, and Black-backed Woodpecker, putting me at a total of 238.

The next portion of the year is challenging, and you have to work harder for each new species. But sometimes, there are exceptions. At the end of May, I was wondering where I was going to find a Black-chinned Hummingbird — they occur in the county but in small numbers.

I set up feeders in preparation, but they weren't getting much attention. At the beginning of June, I decided to walk through Moore Park, a favorite local hotspot of mine, and spotted a hummingbird in a snag.



Photo by Nick Flanik

American Three-toed Woodpecker

The default hummingbird in Klamath County is Anna's, but I looked through my bins to be sure — and realized it was a male Black-chinned Hummingbird! That was easy. I found an Eastern Kingbird later in the month, though that one did require some work — a two-hour drive from town, followed by a four-mile hike over rough terrain to a known nesting location. Luckily, I was able to find and photograph a bird on only my second attempt, and I picked up Red-necked Grebe at the same time. Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch, Short-eared Owl, and a Least Flycatcher, found by Shiloh Rasmussen, finished off the month of June.

In July, I added only one species, Pinyon Jay. A two-hour drive and lots of searching paid off, and I was able to see and hear a flock of them flying from Oregon into California. Whew! Just in the nick of time. Literally, because right after that, a



Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

### Common Loon

warning light on my dash showed that my alternator was dying. I hurried home and pulled into my driveway as my car died, leaving me out of commission for the rest of the month.

The next few months were a blur of great birds — Solitary Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Pectoral Sandpiper, Sabine's Gull, Common Tern, Grasshopper Sparrow, Surf Scoter, Pacific Loon, Iceland Gull, and Red-breasted Merganser. One highlight was finding a group of six Sanderling at Davis Lake — and then a week later finding another at Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge.

I tied the record in November with a Trumpeter Swan, a bird that had evaded me all year. I had spent hours and hours chasing Trumpeter reports and scanning flocks of Tundras, so it was only fitting that this bird was the one to tie me up. I found a pair of Common Redpolls just a couple of weeks later to officially pass the record, and then in December, I had a great sparrow weekend, finding a Harris's Sparrow on Friday and a group of American Tree Sparrows on Saturday on the Klamath County Christmas Bird Count.

My final count for the year was 264 species, passing the previous Klamath County record by five species. Over the year, I completed a total of 647 eBird checklists and saw at least 100 species every month. Despite lots of good luck, I still missed quite a few species. Most of those were owls — I missed Spotted, Long-eared, Flammulated, and Western-Screech Owls. Yellow-breasted Chat and Northern Mockingbird were both painful misses, as they regularly occur in the county and were both seen by other birders. A White-winged Crossbill would've been nice, but unfortunately, when Carl Lundblad's

report from Klamath County said, "high-clearance four-wheel-drive vehicles only," it meant exactly that. I attempted to add a Chukar more than once — including on an eight-hour expedition into Klamath Hills on my unluckiest trip of the year.

The snow started a couple of hours into my attempt, and at one point, I had an inch accumulated on my binoculars. But I kept going, traveling 12 miles and summiting four hills before it got dark, all to find 13 species already on my year list. Oh well, it was a good adventure. I was pretty sure I heard a Chukar on an expedition up Stukel Mountain with some Deschutes County birders, but I removed it from my list later because I wasn't completely certain.

By the end of the year, I had added 31 birds to my life list while spending time in the field with at least 15 birders. Although only some birders were seen, most I was fortunate to interact with and even spend some time with in the field, and this year definitely would not have been possible without some of the great finds from local and visiting birders. All told, this was an excellent year during which I was able to see lots of birds and meet some great people. And maybe that's what sets a Big Year apart from a medium year — the amazing experiences along the way.

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### About the Author

Elijah Hayes discovered the world of birding through an ornithology class in 2019. Since then, he spends his free time out in the field, trying to see as many birds as possible. He is currently studying Environmental Science in hopes of getting a job in conservation or interpretation.

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# Knowledge Leads To Bird Identification

Preparation for trip produces special find in Philomath

**By Nolan Clements**

Oregon State University Student

I arrived at the Philomath Sewage Ponds outside Corvallis just after noon on March 13, 2022. It was overcast, blustery, and occasionally spitting light rain. Over the previous few days, I had been stuck inside studying for final exams, and despite the less-than-desirable weather, I was excited to be looking at birds instead of a screen.

As I drove up the first dike, I noticed a nice conglomeration of swallows over the pond. The inclement weather had presumably forced any flying insects down toward the water, and the swallows followed. I glassed the south pond for a moment, noting several scaup and other waterfowl that I would inspect after my first lap.

## A Surprise Awaits

Swallows continued to swoop over the dike and my car, and even though it was early for Cliff or Northern Rough-winged, I knew that one could easily be hiding among the many Trees and Violet-greens. After no more than five minutes, I was pulling past the first intersection when a tawny-rumped swallow flew right in front of my car. A Cliff Swallow!

This would be one of the first that had been reported in the state in 2022, and I was pleasantly surprised. I put my foot



Photo by Nolan Clements

Cave Swallow identified by author and confirmed by many.

---

on the brake and raised my binoculars as the swallow made another pass. Something felt off.

Over the previous week or two, I had been studying birds for an upcoming trip to South Texas. One of the species I was hoping to see was Cave Swallow. I knew they could be tricky to separate from Cliff, so I'd spent some extra time studying the subtle differences — the lighter, warmer orange throat of Cave versus the familiar, dark throat of Cliff; the orange forehead of Cave versus the whitish forehead of Cliff; the small structure of Cave versus the bulkier structure of Cliff.

Based on photos and illustrations, the identification seemed relatively straightforward but swallows rarely allow satisfying and extended looks at the diagnostic field marks, so I was prepared to put in some serious effort to get my Texas Cave Swallow.

### Is It What I Think?

Knowing that I might have something, I slammed the car into park, not even bothering to kill the engine, and jumped out. The swallow flew over the dike again. I noted a lighter, warmer, more orangey throat. Was I merely getting confused by seeing a Cliff Swallow for the first time in several months? Had my memory of their field marks and gestalt lapsed in their seasonal absence? I grabbed my camera and started snapping pictures. It couldn't hurt.

Barely two minutes later, Hendrik Herlyn pulled up behind me, wondering why I had been frantically jumping out of the car, taking pictures, and emphatically pointing at a swallow when stopped behind my car.

I mentioned that I had a weird Cliff-type swallow with an orange throat. The bird flew past again, providing decent views for Hendrik and me.

Could a Cliff Swallow look like this? We scratched our heads, and the bird made another pass. I hinted at the possibility of a Cave Swallow. The bird disappeared after another minute or two, and we reviewed the photos I had just taken. Seeing the pictures confirmed my suspicions — this bird sure looked like a Cave Swallow.

### Calling for Support

I sent out several brief, rare bird alerts, and within ten or fifteen minutes, other observers joined Hendrik and me to sleuth through the swallows.

Over the next five and a half hours, 29 birders would successfully chase the Philomath Sewage Ponds Cave Swallow. Despite significant effort over the ensuing two days, there were no additional confirmed reports. It is astonishing that the bird even stayed for the remainder of the day.

During its stay, it would make periodic passes over the ponds and then disappear, presumably foraging high where color and detail were indistinguishable due to poor light. We noted its small size and orangey forehead, nape, throat, and rump when it did descend. Photos also showed broken white stripes on the back and streaking on the flanks. The bird was similar to nearby Violet-greens in its slight structure and overall size.

As I watched it forage, it fluttered a lot, much like Violet-greens do; I have never seen Cliffs flutter like this bird, even in stormy conditions.

### Quick ID Confirmed

Although I was reasonably sure of the bird's identity within the first 15 minutes of observation, the nearly two hours I spent studying the bird solidified the identification beyond any doubt.

Additionally, this bird's primary feathers were incredibly worn. The bird

was easily picked out by the wear pattern alone, even when it was back-lit, and plumage detail was indistinguishable. Several photos also show new wing feathers growing in.

In *Identification Guide to North American Birds* (1997), Peter Pyle suggests that only second-year birds should be molting in March, which provides solid reasoning to conclude that this individual was likely in its second calendar year of life.

For a bird that does not undergo long-distance migration to and from its breeding grounds in southeastern New Mexico, Texas, northern Mexico, and southern Florida, Cave Swallow vagrancy is not an unheard-of phenomenon. Cave Swallow is a somewhat expected fall vagrant on the eastern coast of North America. Most of these records occur from August through November, but there are historical reports on the East Coast throughout the year.

### Rare to the Pacific Northwest

Despite the species' regular, albeit rare, appearance on the Eastern Seaboard, the Philomath individual marks only the second Cave Swallow ever reported in the Pacific Northwest.

The first occurred in Vancouver, British Columbia, in November 2012. Southern California and south-central Arizona have a smattering of records, mainly from the winter months and a handful of reports from late spring and early summer. A few of these winter and late-fall West Coast Cave Swallows stayed for several days. The Vancouver bird was present for nearly six days, and several Cave Swallows found near the Salton Sea in southern California were seen periodically from December 2012 through March 2013.

Many long-time Oregon birders have had their eyes set on one day finding





Photo by Nolan Clements

Cave Swallow flyby at the Philomath Sewage Ponds.

a Cave Swallow in the state, but most, including myself, assumed it would be found in the fall. So, what was this bird doing in Oregon in mid-March? I think one can only speculate, but I have come up with several possible scenarios.

A June record from Saint Pierre and Miquelon, northeast of Newfoundland, and other summer records from the East Coast suggest that wintering Cave Swallows sometimes overshoot their breeding sites during spring migration and end up much further north than anticipated.

### **A Swallow Tag Along**

It could be that this bird traveled north with other swallows, overshooting breeding grounds in Texas, New Mexico, and northern Mexico. It could also be that this bird wintered somewhere in California or elsewhere further west and north than expected. When other swallows began to move north, it simply went with them. Regardless of the origin of this individual and the cause of its wandering, its occurrence, both geographically and phenologically, is unprecedented in the Pacific Northwest.

With changing climate and potentially more observers on the lookout for odd “Cliff Swallows,” it will be interesting if vagrant Cave Swallow reports increase in the western half of the continent.

In addition to being an Oregon and Benton County first, this Cave Swallow also marks the first detection of a new Oregon species at the Philomath Sewage Ponds. This site is one of the most heavily birded hotspots in the state, with at least one or more birders visiting every day.

As of March 2022, nearly 7,100 eBird checklists have been submitted for the hotspot, and a whopping 253 species have been observed. However, despite comprehensive coverage and relatively decent habitat, the Philomath Sewage Ponds have never claimed their state before discovering the Cave Swallow. Please note that an entry permit is required to visit the Philomath Sewage Ponds. It can be requested via email from the Philomath Public Works Department at [pw@philomathoregon.gov](mailto:pw@philomathoregon.gov).

All rare birds are unique. Some remain pursuable for weeks in a Portland suburb, while others are seen far out at sea or are five-minute

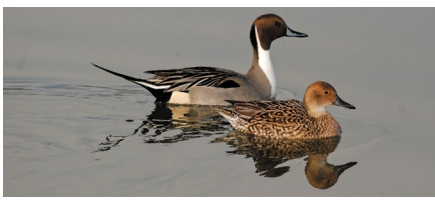
wonders never to be re-found after the initial observation. Some may be very accommodating and provide jaw-dropping views, while others require hours of patience just for a glimpse. Regardless of their nature, these rarities never cease to teach me lessons: expect the unexpected, be patient, and pay attention to detail.

The Cave Swallow at Philomath Sewage Ponds was undoubtedly a reminder of all these things for me, but it also provided some validation that sewage ponds are the best place for a study break.

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#### **About the Author**

Nolan Clements is an undergraduate student at Oregon State University, where he is majoring in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences with an emphasis in avian ecology. When he is not preoccupied with academics or engaged in formal bird study, Nolan is out birding as much as possible around Oregon and beyond.



Photograph by Andrew Vanderwall

**Third Place, Feb. 2022** – Northern Pintails, Baskett Slough NWR, Polk, County.



Photograph by Karl Schneck

**Third Place, Oct. 2021** – Golden Eagle, Ashland.



Photograph by Roy Lowe

**First Place, Oct. 2021** – Ruddy and Black Turnstones (juveniles), Seal Rock, Lincoln County.

Monthly Photo Competition

## OBA Contest Winners

There is little doubt that not a day goes by when several, if not many, Oregon birders are looking through a camera. Whether on a Big Day quest, or simply watching the backyard feeder, some of the best images of Oregon avian wildlife are captured by people just like those reading this magazine.

The Oregon Birding Association website conduct a monthly photo competition, each with a monthly theme and time frame during which the perfect shot was captured.

Submission is easy. Simply email a single high resolution image to the editors of the OBA website for consideration.

Winning images will be displayed on the website, [oregonbirding.org](http://oregonbirding.org). A selection of winning entries will also be published in Oregon Birds magazine.

If you have questions about the contest, please contact Zia Fukuda, the contest manager at [Zialeefukuda@gmail.com](mailto:Zialeefukuda@gmail.com). Rules are found at: [oregonbirding.org/oba-monthly-photo-contest/](http://oregonbirding.org/oba-monthly-photo-contest/).



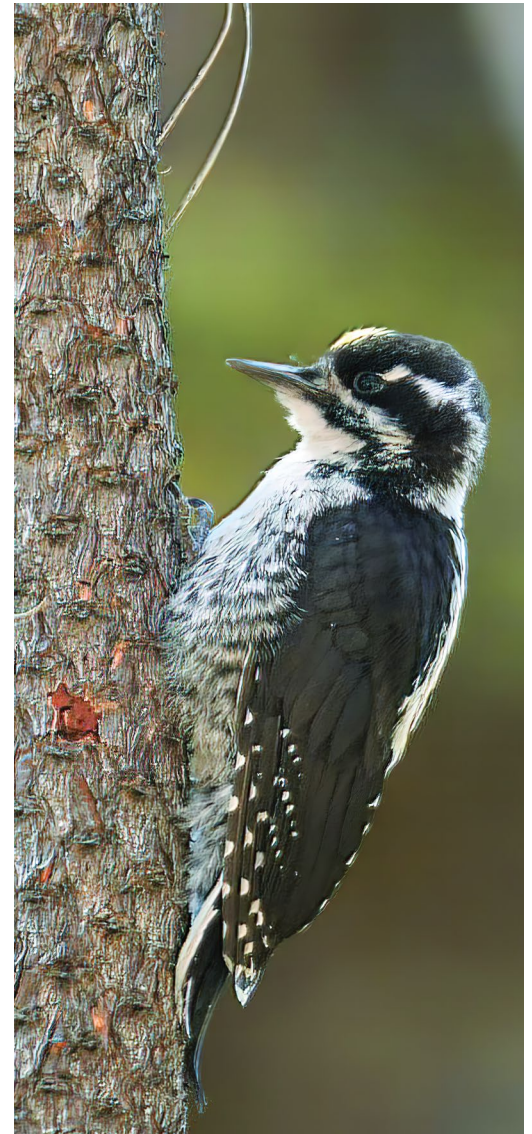
Photograph by Linda Fink

**Second Place, Nov. 2021** – Red-breasted Sapsucker, Yamhill, County.



Photograph by Bettina Ishimaru

**Second Place, Sept. 2021** – Pied-Billed Grebe, Oaks Bottoms Refuge.



Photograph by Elliott Bury

**First Place, Dec. 2021** – White-headed Woodpecker, Howard Prairie Lake, Jackson, County.



Photograph by Amy Williams

**First Place, Feb. 2022** – Northern Harrier male, Nestucca Bay NWR.



Photograph by Miles McLandrich

**Second Place, Feb. 2022** – Red-breasted Nuthatch in Beaverton.



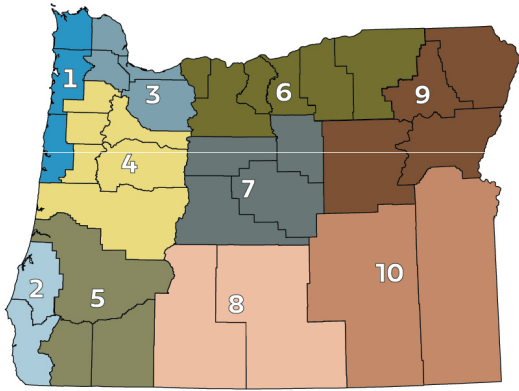
**First Place, Nov. 2021** – Hooded Mergansers, Oregon City.

Photograph by John Kistler



Photograph by Howard West








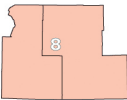


**Third Place, Dec., 2021** – Great Gray Owl, Jackson County.



# OREGON FIELD NOTES OVERVIEW

BRODIE CASS TALBOTT

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## A Busy Year for Oregon Birders

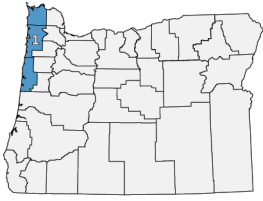
The spring issue of *Oregon Birds*, with its Field Notes, Big Year recaps, and long-form write-ups of exceptional finds, is in a way a celebration of the preceding year. 2021, while a challenging year for many Oregonians in other ways, was a great year for Oregon birding.

As detailed elsewhere in this issue, we added Winter Wren, Black Vulture, and Dusky Warbler to the state list, as well as one of the most far-flung gulls we have ever recorded, the Taimyr Lesser Black-backed Gull.

Although they are carefully recorded by Chuck Gates, county firsts are a little harder to tabulate. There were, however, 80 birds newly recorded on eBird across Oregon counties, with 33 out of 36 Oregon counties recording at least one new bird and Gilliam County recording an amazing seven new county birds, thanks mostly to the work of Linnaea Basden and Joshua Meyers.

Appropriately, many of our county firsts were in our least-birded counties — a great reason to visit our less-visited corners of the state!

And most importantly, but anecdotally, it seems like there were many new birders out there enjoying Oregon's birds with us! One of the few silver linings of the last two years has been the renewed interest in outdoor pursuits. Of all the trends we see, I hope this is the one that continues.



## NORTH COAST FIELD NOTES

CLATSOP, TILLAMOOK, LINCOLN COUNTIES

WINK GROSS

A male **Tufted Duck** photographed by Mike Patterson at Svensen Island (Clatsop) on Feb 18 remained through Mar 6.

A **White-winged Dove** was at Seaside Jul 12 and 13 (Diana Byrne). Annika Andersson photographed a **LESSER NIGHTHAWK** at Goose Point (Tillamook) on Apr 6. A “Nightjar sp.” was in the Cedar Creek area of Tillamook County’s Coast Range on Apr 29. Too early for Common Nighthawk, Common Poorwill has been suggested.

A **BAR-TAILED GODWIT** was photographed at 56th St Beach in Newport on May 18 (John Dachenhaus et al.) A **HUDSONIAN GODWIT** was at Trestle Bay (Clatsop) on May 16 (David Bailey). It was a very big year for Red Knots, with numbers peaking at 600 at Trestle Bay on May 18 (David Bailey). A **Ruff** was at Lincoln City Sewage Treatment Plant Sep 1-3. Owen Schmidt photographed a **RED-NECKED STINT** at DeLaura Beach Access (Clatsop) on Aug 9. It was refound at nearby Sunset Beach on Aug 16 (Lars Per Norgren).

Cliff Cordy photographed a **Horned Puffin** at Barview Jetty (Tillamook) on Feb 15. Thinking they were seeing a Little Gull at the South Jetty of Yaquina Bay on Jan 30, Nolan Clements and Carter Strope snapped off a bunch of photos. Good thing, because the wedge-shaped tail revealed it was actually a **ROSS’S GULL**! Molly Sultany photographed an adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Wireless Rd. (Clatsop) on Feb 6. Logan Kahle photographed a 2nd-cycle bird at the mouth of the Yachats River (Lincoln) Feb 25. Yet another **Lesser Black-backed** was at Wireless Rd. Dec 11 and remained until Dec 25.

A **Yellow-billed Loon** was at Sitka Sedge SNA (Tillamook) on May 22 (Allison Anholt). Multiple observers enjoyed a **SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS** during an Oregon Pelagic Tours trip out of Newport on Dec 5.

Strong onshore winds brought a major seabird spectacle witnessed by Phil Pickering at Boiler Bay (Lincoln) on Nov 15. Included were two **Mottled Petrels**. Inspired by Phil’s WhatsApp report, David Bailey went out to Silver Point (Clatsop) that same day and found two **Mottled Petrels** of his own.

A **MASKED BOOBY** arrived at Newport on a fishing boat on Dec 24. It was taken to the Oregon Coast Aquarium. A juvenile **Black-crowned Night-Heron** flew across Hwy 20 in front of Mike Wheeler at MP27 (Lincoln) on Aug 16.



Photo by Owen Schmidt

Red-necked Stint

An immature **Golden Eagle** was along Yaquina Bay Rd. near Toledo on Mar 17 (Richard Brainerd). Team Ona found an adult **Northern Goshawk** at Beaver Creek NA (Lincoln) on Oct 21. Mark Ludwick photographed a **Broad-winged Hawk** over the Cannon Beach STP Oct 30. Kevin Scaldeferri found a **Swainson’s Hawk** along Long Prairie Rd. (Tillamook) Dec 1. It remained into the new year.

The strangest record of all last year has to be the **Flammulated Owl** in a tidepool at Yaquina Head (Lincoln) on Jun 24! It was taken to Cascades Raptor Center and released unharmed in the Sisters area. A **Long-eared Owl** was heard along Lewis Creek above Neskowin Mar 11 (Ken Chamberlain). Another was at Bayocean (Tillamook) Sep 15 (Bob Sizoo et al.)

An immature **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** photographed by Mike Patterson at Brownsmead (Clatsop) on Jan 23 remained at least through Mar 13. Two problematic “Red-naped” Sapsuckers visited Tillamook County during the year: one was photographed on private land up Fall Creek on Apr 17 (Matt Gill). The other was on Long Prairie Rd. Dec 18 (Tim Janzen). It remained until Dec 23 but never completely revealed its ancestry.

A **Lewis’s Woodpecker** was at Beaver Creek Natural Area (Lincoln) Oct 7 (Team Ona). Evan Hayduk photographed an **Acorn Woodpecker** in Waldport on May 2. Another was along the Alsea River on Oct 14 (Elizabeth Laver-Holencik).



Photo by Kim Nelson

### Bar-tailed Godwit

A **Gyr Falcon** was on Haystack Rock, Cannon Beach, Apr 9 (iNaturalist). A **Prairie Falcon** was at Hoquarten Slough, Tillamook, Jan 23 (Gerry Ellis). Beverly Halberg saw it or another at Nehalem Bay SP (Tillamook) on Jan 28.

Russ Namitz heard an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at Siletz Bay NWR (Lincoln) on Jul 19. An **Eastern Kingbird** was at Sitka Sedge SNA (Tillamook) on Jun 16 (Nancy Stotz). A **Red-eyed Vireo** was on Sunnyridge Rd. (Lincoln) on Jul 19 (Elizabeth Laver-Holencik and Mike Wheeler). Steve Holzman found a **Black-billed Magpie** at South Beach (Lincoln) on Apr 10. In Manzanita, a **Mountain Chickadee** hung around Andrew Ferre's house during the first week of March. A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** was at Ona Beach SP (Lincoln) on May 9 (Rebecca Waterman).

Logan Searl photographed a **Gray Catbird** at Cannon Beach STP on Jul 2. David Mandell found a **Mountain Bluebird** on Goodspeed Rd. (Tillamook) on Apr 10.

On May 4, a **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch** was Patricia Teague's reward for her hike to the summit of Saddle Mountain (Clatsop). As in the rest of Western Oregon, **Common Redpolls** made a good showing: two at Neskowin Nov 25 (Nolan Clements), and singles in Lincoln County at Culver City Wetlands Nov 28 (Carl Lundblad), Siletz Bay Nov 30 (Susan Kirkbride), and North Beaver Creek boat ramp Dec 14 through the end of the month (Carolyn Featherston).

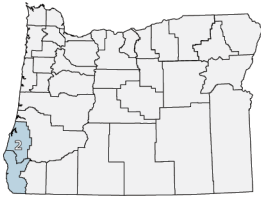
Phil Pickering found a **Clay-colored Sparrow** at the Salishan Nature Trail (Lincoln) on Oct 2. It remained at least through Oct 10. Phil Pickering photographed a juvenile **Brewer's Sparrow** on Euchre Mountain (Lincoln) on Aug 1.

A **Black-throated Sparrow** visited Chris Fox's Nye Beach backyard Aug 12. It remained through Aug 16. A **Lark Sparrow** was at Nehalem STP on Apr 18 (Jules Evens). Another was at South Beach SP (Lincoln) on Sep 30 (Elizabeth Laver-Holencik and Mike Wheeler).

The continuing Cape Meares **American Tree Sparrow** was last reported on eBird Jan 22. Mike Patterson found one on Wireless Road (Clatsop) on Dec 5. It remained through Dec 25, at least. Once again, Tillamook's Boquist Rd. hosted a **Harris's Sparrow** found, appropriately, by Dave Harris on Jan 18. The continuing Nehalem **Hooded Oriole** lingered until Mar 2. He returned for his 4th year on Dec 19.

Christopher Hinkle recorded a **Northern Waterthrush** at Brownsmead (Clatsop) on Dec 19. A **Black-and-white Warbler** was at Garibaldi Nov 23 (Cliff Cordy). Jill Oertley reported a **Magnolia Warbler** at Waldport on Oct 19. Jay Withgott videoed a **BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER** at Cannon Beach STP on Oct 7. An immature **Blackpoll Warbler** was at Ona Beach SP (Lincoln) Aug 4 (Team Ona).

A female **SUMMER TANAGER** was coming to a feeder at a private residence in Depoe Bay on Dec 20 (fide Dawn Villaescusa). A "stunning" male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** visited Jen Sanford and Jacob Durrent's feeder in Lincoln City on Jul 4.



## SOUTH COAST FIELD NOTES

### COASTAL LANE COUNTY

TYE JESKE

At the beginning of the year, a **Mountain Plover** was found from Jan 16 to Feb 9 at the Siltcoos River Estuary and Beach Area (Daniel Farrar - DF), representing a first county record and the 16th record for Oregon. From Sep 2 to Sep 13, a pair of **American Avocet** was found hanging around the Siltcoos River Estuary (Daniel Farrar). This species is rare on the Oregon Coast.

On Apr 29, a Willet was seen from the Florence North Jetty Mudflats (Diane Pettey, Sally Hill). On Apr 5, a **Parakeet Auklet** was seen as a brief flyby from Florence North Jetty (Diane Pettey), making it the first shore sighting of the species in the county, as most other records come from cruise ships far offshore.

On Oct 27, a couple of **Leach's Storm Petrels** were seen from Tokatee Klootchman (Tye Jeske - TJ, Alan Contreras - AC), and another one was seen at the same location on Nov 9 (Roger Robb). This species is difficult in Lane, and especially from shore. One reason they were closer in was because of a late Oct storm. On Oct 25, during a large coastal storm, three Vaux's Swift were seen flying over the Lily Lake Pullout off Highway 101 (Tye Jeske, Sean Cozart). This is one of the latest records of this species in Oregon.

Only one Tropical Kingbird was reported in Lane this fall, on Oct 31 along the Siltcoos Lagoon Campground and Loop Trail (Lisa Wallace, Terry Danforth). On Sep 8, a fall plumaged Chestnut-sided Warbler was found along Gleneda Road (Daniel Farrar). This species is a vagrant anywhere in Oregon, and this represents only the 5th time one has been seen in the county.

This was a pretty slow year for Palm Warblers in Oregon, but a few were seen along the Lane Coast this fall. One was seen on Oct 7 at Baker Beach Campground (AC), two were seen from Oct 27 to Oct 28 along the South Jetty Deflation Plain (John Sullivan), one on Nov 10 at Siltcoos (Glenn Reubon), on Nov 20, one was at the South Jetty (Rich Hoyer), another on Nov 23 the Siuslaw Bridge Interpretive Center (John Kingeter), and on Nov 26 one was seen along Rhododendron Dr (Candice Johnson).

By far the rarest bird for not just Coastal Lane county but all of Oregon this year was a **DUSKY WARBLER** seen from Oct 7 to Oct 10 at Stonefield Beach and found by Alan Contreras (see article in this issue). The bird was difficult and skulky, often only allowing brief glimpses. This was the first time this species has ever been seen in Oregon. This species of Leaf-



Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

#### American Avocet

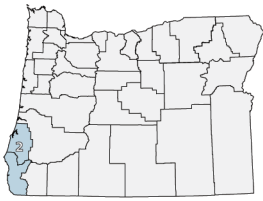
Warbler normally ranges in Asia but occasionally comes over as vagrants, mostly to the Aleutian Islands or California.

A **Brewer's Sparrow** was found on Oct 12 at Waite Ranch (AC, Tye Jeske), and while this species is regular inland in small numbers, this is only the second time this species has been recorded in Coastal Lane county. It is also one of the latest records of this species in Western Oregon.

On Oct 14, an **Orchard Oriole** was found at Waite Ranch (Magnus Persmark, AC, Diane Pettey). This represents the first time this species has been seen in Lane county and the 16th time in Oregon.

#### Abbreviations:

AC - Alan Contreras



## SOUTH COAST FIELD NOTES

### COOS AND CURRY COUNTIES

TIM RODENKIRK

**O**versummering Brant were reported into July in both counties where they have become regular (multiple observers - MO). Up to 40,000 Aleutian Cackling Geese were on a private ranch west of Langlois in the New River bottomlands of Coos & Curry Counties on Apr 12 (Rick McKenzie). 25 Aleutians were reported in Port Orford on Jun 5, a very late date (Matt Cahill). Blue-winged Teal bred again at the North Spit of Coos Bay; the only location they have been noted breeding on the south coast (Tim Rodenkirk - TR). There are no regular overwintering locations for Black Scoters in Coos County, so eight at Whiskey Run beach through at least January may prove to be the best location to find them on an annual basis (Don & Robyn Henise - DH and RH, Dave Lauten - DL, others). A male **Barrow's Goldeneye** overwintered for a second year in the Empire area of Coos Bay (MO).

Two breeding-plumaged Eared Grebes appeared at the old Weyerhaeuser settling pond site on NSCB on Jul 6, for the earliest ever "fall" record for this species- the birds lingered until early August (TR).

A **Common Poorwill** was found in the Coos County Coast Range on Jun 1. There are only three other records and none of which were during the breeding season (Mick Bressler - MB). Another poorwill was heard calling on Jun 14 at Babyfoot Lake in far southeast Curry County, where they have been reported before in the spring and may breed (Tony Kurz). The **Black Swift** migration peaked on May 23 when **292** were observed in the early morning at LFC (TR).

Six migrant Calliope Hummingbirds were found in the Eden Valley area of the Rogue River/Siskiyou NF in Coos County from 23-30 Apr (TR). The **COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD** that was found coming to a feeder in a neighborhood near the Winchuck River mouth near Brookings on Dec 22, 2020, was last reported on Feb 6 (Adrian Hinkle, Logan Kahle, others). A late Rufous/Allen's Hummingbird was at a feeder in Port Orford on the CBC on Dec 19 (Jim and Carrie Rogers).

A flyover **Black-necked Stilt** was photographed on Sep 12 at NSCB (Tanner Martin). An **American Avocet** was in Gold Beach on 22-23 Jun (Joseph Mooney and others), and another was at Bandon Marsh NWR from 14-16 Aug (TR, others). A rare adult Pacific Golden-plover in non-breeding plumage was photographed in Gold Beach on Oct 20 (Dave Irons, Shawneen Finnegan). Two golden-plovers were observed in windy, rainy

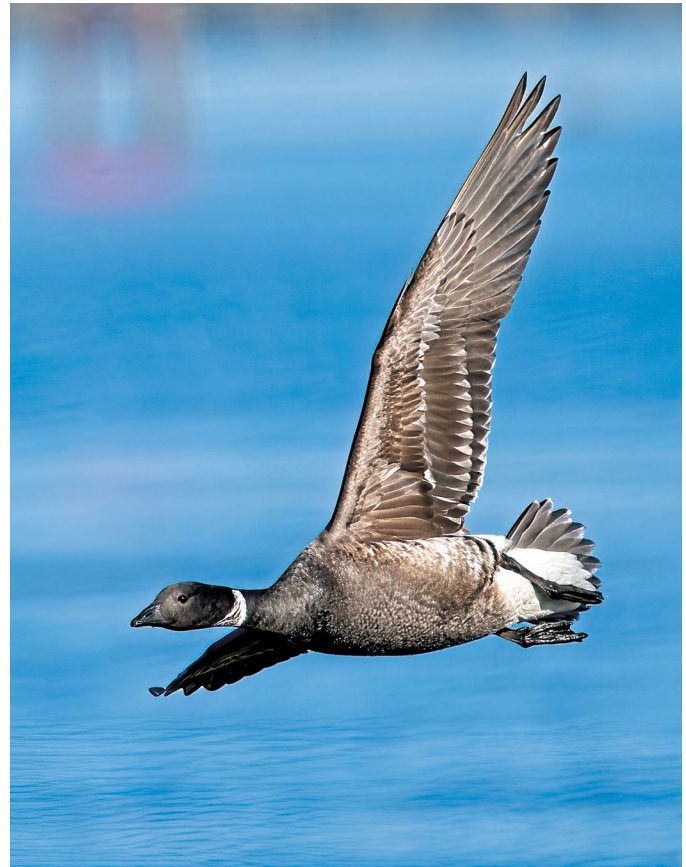


Photo by Mike Williams

#### Brant

conditions at the Bandon Dunes Golf Course complex near Bandon on Dec 11, likely Pacifics (DL). Nine Snowy Plovers were found on the beach at Port Orford on Nov 20, an unusual location for this species and a high number for Curry (Amy Deurfeldt).

A Ruddy Turnstone was reported from Gold Beach on Jan 28 (Mike Hansen - MH). A **Ruff** was along New River at LFC on 28-29 Aug (TR, others). Two **Buff-breasted Sandpipers** were at the same location on Aug 28 (TR).

The Red Knot spring migration was one of the best in memory, with up to **296** seen in Coos County with much greater numbers on the north coast (MO). A late Red Knot was at the mouth of Tenmile Creek, Coos, on Jul 1 (Joe Metzler). A Wandering Tattler overwintered again in Bandon and was last reported on Mar 2 (MO). Coos' latest ever spring Wandering Tattler was in Bandon on Jun 2 (DH & RH)..



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It was a good spring for migrant Wilson's Phalaropes, with two at the Coquille Valley Wildlife Area, Coos County, on May 14-15 (DH & RH; TR) and two at Lower Fourmile Creek on May 23 (TR). Two adult females and one male Wilson's Phalarope along New River at LFC on Jun 27 suggest the possibility of breeding (TR). Red-necked Phalaropes are mostly gone by mid-October, so five reports of six birds from Oct 29- Nov 4 in various south coast locations were unusual (MO). A **SOUTH POLAR SKUA** flew overhead on the beach at Floras Lake, Curry County, on Jun 20 (DL, Kathy Castelein - KC), and another was observed off Cape Arago, Coos County, chasing a Pomarine Jaeger on Oct 19 (TR). The high count of Ancient Murrelets was 43 off Cape Arago on Nov 19 (TR).

It was the best spring ever on the south coast for **Franklin's Gulls**, with 12 reported at seven locations- all from Coos County (where most observers are located on the south coast), almost doubling all previous sightings combined for Coos County (MO). There were about five Glaucous Gulls reported, three in Curry County and at least two in Coos County. There were ZERO Elegant Terns reported this year. Five Leach's Storm-petrels were observed off Cape Arago during a storm on Nov 16 (TR). The two **Black Terns** reports doubled the Coos County all-time total, with one at the North Spit of Coos Bay (NSCB) on May 14 (TR, others) and one near Coquille on May 16 (Sammie Peat).

Oregon's longest-ever visiting **BROWN BOOBY** found a temporary home in Coos Bay from Aug 24 through Dec 11 and was seen by many (Sabine Berzins, others).

An **American White Pelican** was in Coos Bay from Jun 30 to Jul 2 (DL, KC, others). Two other American White Pelicans were in Coos Bay off Millicoma Marsh on Jul 23 (David Cook). A Black-crowned Night-heron seen flying over Hwy 42 in Coquille on Jul 23 may have been an early arrival; there are no verified Coos County breeding records (TR). A Snowy Egret was at Redmond Pond in Bandon from Apr 11-25 (Norm & Karen Shorts, others). It was a sensational spring for **White-faced Ibis** also, with up to six in the Coquille Valley Wildlife Area on May 14-17 (DH & RH, others) and 26 in Bandon on May 17 (DH & RH) with 13 the same day in Coos Bay (DL, KC).

Oregon's first-ever **BLACK VULTURE** was photographed in Gold Beach on May 17 but did not linger for anyone but the original observers (MB, W. Michaelis - WM). A **Northern Goshawk** was reported up the Rogue from Gold Beach on Aug 25 (MB, WM).

A **Long-eared Owl** was seen flying around the edge of a meadow area at dusk high in the Siskiyou Mts. of Curry near Fishhook Peak on Jul 3, where this species has been observed before this time of year and probably breeds (TR & Holly

Rodenkirk). A rare spring Short-eared Owl was at the mouth of Tenmile Creek, Coos County, on Apr 13 (Joe Metzler).

An immature **Lewis's Woodpecker** was up Bethel Mtn, Coos County, and lingered from Sep 25-Oct 18 (TR, Jonah Gula). Up to three Acorn Woodpeckers were at Mt. Bolivar in very southeast Coos County from Apr 17-30 (TR) and again on Sep 26 (TR); this species has become regular at this location in migration but has yet to be documented breeding there (at least in the last 30 years).

A **Gyrfalcon** was in the New River bottomlands of Coos & Curry Counties from approximately Sep 30-Oct 23 (Rick McKenzie et al.); Gyrs often follow the Aleutian Cacklers down and have been seen at this location at this time of year for a couple of decades. A **Prairie Falcon** was in the Coquille Valley on Mar 26-27 (DH & RH et al.).

Six **Tropical Kingbirds** were reported, all in Curry County, with dates ranging from Oct 5 to Dec 5 (MO). The nesting Myrtle Point, Coos County Western Kingbirds were back, with the first bird arriving on Apr 15 and the second bird joining it on Apr 21 (DH & RH). A very late Western Kingbird was on the Wahl ranch near Cape Blanco on Nov 1-2 (Terry Wahl - TW).

A Hammond's Flycatcher was found at Johnson Mill Pond in Coquille on the unlikely date of **Jan 26** (TR). A well-documented **Least Flycatcher** was at a private ranch near Cape Blanco and lingered from Nov 24-Dec 13 (TW, CH, TR). Overwintering Say's Phoebes are regular in Curry County but more of a recent phenomenon in Coos County, where at least three overwintered (MO).

A singing Warbling Vireo was in the Powers area on Apr 17, a new earliest Coos County arrival date (TR). A very late Warbling Vireo was in Brookings on Oct 20 (Shawneen Finnegan, Dave Irons). Mid-winter Horned Larks were at the Tenmile Creek area of Coos County on Feb 7 (Erica Krygsman) and on the south end of NSCB from Feb 11-17 (TR). There were three fall migrant Horned Larks, two in Curry County and one in Coos County (MO).

Up to four **Bank Swallows** were observed along New River at LFC from Jun 12 to Aug 12, strongly suggesting birds were nesting somewhere in the area; there have been no documented breeding records in Coos County (MO).

Overwintering Tree Swallows appeared at Myrtle Point Marsh, Coos on Dec 11, 2020, with up to 14 on Dec 31, 2020, but none after Jan 4 until two were seen on Jan 26, this being a more normal time for the first migrants to arrive (DH & RH). Mid-winter Barn Swallows first appeared on Dec 12, 2020, with additional reports throughout Jan and into late Feb with nine Coos reports and one Curry report (MO).

A **White-breasted Nuthatch**, rare anywhere on the south coast, was found in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness, Curry County, on May 21 (Kent Coe). Two **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** were found in Curry: one in Gold Beach on Aug 12 (MB, WM) and an eastern subspecies at a private ranch near Cape Blanco, Curry, from Nov 27 to Dec 13 (TW, CH, TR). A singing **Canyon Wren** was discovered in Madstone Canyon — a rugged, rocky off-trail location in the Kalmiopsis Wilderness of Curry, on Aug 16 (Drew Meyers).

An out-of-place Rock Wren was found along a rocky section of the Pistol River close to the beach on Apr 23 (MH). There were two overwintering Northern Mockingbirds in Curry County and one in Coos County, with one spring migrant in Curry and three in Coos and two fall migrants each in both Coos and Curry (MO).

A male **Mountain Bluebird** was observed on a fence line on the road into Floras Lake, Curry County, on Apr 27 (TR). Lapland Longspurs are regular fall migrants on the south coast, and a few overwinter in the New River bottomlands of Curry County; they are, however, rare in spring migration- there were two Coos County reports in April and one Curry County report in early May (MO).

It was a banner year for **Snow Buntings** with up to four on the south end of NSCB from Jan 19 to Feb 28 (DL, KC, others), one at Floras Lake on Oct 10 (TR), one on the beach near Hunter Creek, Curry County on Oct 23 (Thomas Phillips), and one on the south end of the NSCB on Oct 31 (TR).

**Black-throated Sparrows** are very rare on the south coast, and there were two reports: one on May 15 in Bandon (Sammie Peat) and another along the road into LFC on May 23 (TR et al.) - there had only been three previous Coos County records. Coos' earliest ever spring Chipping Sparrow was in Bandon on Apr 4 (MaryAnne Clayton). A Clay-colored Sparrow overwintered in Gold Beach from Jan 17 through at least Feb 6 (Jason Vassallo et al.). There were six fall migrant Clay-colored, all in Curry County (MO).

A first-winter **Harris's Sparrow** was photographed in Brookings on Nov 17 (Bill Tice, Aaron Beerman). Eleven White-throated Sparrows were found at Bullard's Beach SP, Coos County, on Mar 13, including a flock of seven (DH & RH). A White-throated Sparrow lingered at a Coos Bay feeder until Jun 11, the latest spring date for Coos County (Bob Fields). There were three spring reports of Yellow-headed Blackbirds in Coos County with dates ranging from May 7-23 (MO) and one very early fall bird along New River near LFC on Aug 21 (TR).

It was a good fall for **Bobolinks** in Curry County with three reports: Sep 1 in Brookings (Tom Love), one photographed in Gold Beach on Sep 11-12 (Diane Pettet, Sally Hill, others), and

a flyover at Pistol River on Oct 3 (TR). One Bullock's Oriole overwintered in Coos County and two in Curry County (MO). A **COMMON GRACKLE** was at a feeder in Port Orford from Oct 23-26 (Jim and Carrie Rogers, others).

There were three **Northern Waterthrushes**: one in Brookings on Aug 27 (Logan Kahle); one at Lone Ranch Wayside north of Brookings on Sep 4 (TR); and one on the NSCB from Dec 3 into January of 2022—the latter being the first south coast overwintering record (CH, others).

A first-year male **Black-and-White Warbler** was along the South Fork of the Coquille River near Powers, Coos County, on Sep 26 (TR), and another was in Pistol River on Dec 28 (Trevor Hook), the latter of which could be overwintering in the area. A **Tennessee Warbler** was at Pistol River, Curry County, on Sep 11 (TR, Joshua Little).

A **Northern Parula** lingered LFC from Aug 18-Sep 4 (TR et al.). Two Nashville Warblers overwintered in Coos County and one overwintered in Curry County (MO), with December reports of singles in Langlois, Curry (Lars Per Norgren), Bandon (TR- seen into January 2022), and North Bend, Coos County (TR). Coos County's earliest ever spring MacGillivray's Warbler was found in Eden Valley on the Siskiyou NF on Apr 18 (TR).

A Common Yellowthroat was found near Coquille on Jan 5, where it overwintered (TR). It was a slow winter for Palm Warblers with no reports in Coos County, and all Curry County reports from private ranchlands in the Cape Blanco/Floras Lake area- their winter stronghold in Oregon (TWI).

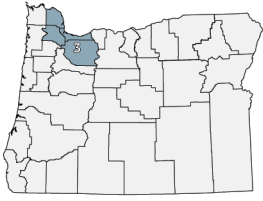
A **PRAIRIE WARBLER** was photographed in Gold Beach on Sep 7 (MB, WM). A late Wilson's Warbler was in Gold Beach on Dec 6 (CH). There was a convincing description of a male Scarlet Tanager on Jun 10 briefly seen visiting a wooded yard north of Brookings; however, there are no photos, no eBird report, and no report sent to OBRC.

A female **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was in the Eastside area of Coos Bay on the early date of Aug 4 (TR). A well-described **DICKCISSEL** was in Gold Beach on May 23 (Stewart Janes).

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#### Abbreviations

CH - Christopher Hinkle	MH - Mike Hansen
DH & RH - Don & Robyn Henise	MO - multiple observers
DL - Dave Lauten	NSCB - North Spit of Coos Bay
LFC - Lower Fourmile Creek, south of Bandon in Coos County	TR - Tim Rodenkirk
KC - Kathy Castelein	TW - Terry Wahl
MB - Mick Bressler	WM - W. Michaelis



## PORTLAND AREA FIELD NOTES

### COLUMBIA COUNTY

PHILIP KLINE

Columbia County is largely under-birded, at least outside of the northern half of Sauvie Island (SI), but still manages to turn up its fair share of interesting rarities. Three new species: **White-faced Ibis**, **Cassin's Finch**, and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak**, were added to the County list in 2021, the latter two visiting the same backyard!

Pixie Park on the Columbia City Waterfront continued to be a hotspot for some of the rarer wintering waterfowl that occasionally show up on the lower Columbia River. The highlight was a male **White-winged Scoter** discovered by Philip Kline (PK) on Nov 8. **Clark's Grebe** is infrequently reported in the County, and only two sightings were recorded in 2021, both on the River just south of Pixie Park, off Dalton Lake, on Jan 16 by Tim Shelmerdine and on Mar 25 by Tom Myers (TM). Red-necked Grebes are similarly quite rare in the region. One individual stayed for most of the fall off Pixie Park, and TM and PK found another on Oct 31 while kayaking around Sandy Island near Goble.

Mike and Karen Marble's home in the hills south of Rainier produced some rather remarkable birds in 2021, not least of which was a probable hybrid hummingbird first identified as a juvenile female **Costa's Hummingbird**. Noted hummingbird expert Sheri Williamson weighed in on eBird and concluded it was likely a hybrid with Anna's like one parent and probably Costa's, but possibly Calliope, as the other. Hopefully, it returns as an adult in 2022, when it will be easier to identify definitively.

Sauvie Island (SI) was, of course, the hotspot for rare shorebirds again in 2021. Ross Barnes-Rickett, Susan Kirkbride, and Karthik Murali discovered a **Black-necked Stilt** near the Narrows on Sept 23 that only stayed for a day. Adding to his kayak-found **Pacific Golden-plover** from 2020, TM struck again in his trusty orange 12-foot Dagger by finding and photographing an **American Golden-plover** on Sturgeon Lake in the Wash area on Sept 20, only the second or third County record.

A second Golden-plover, likely a Pacific, was found in the same area as the continuing American over the next couple of days but could not be definitively identified. **Whimbrel** is a tough bird to find in the County, usually in late spring, but two showed up this year with an unusually early bird reported on Apr 23 by Andrew Aldrich and Susan Kirkbride from Holman

Point and another at Racetrack Lake found by PK on Jun 4. The Apr 23 Whimbrel accompanied only the County's second **Long-billed Curlew**, found by TM on Apr 22.

Stefan Schlick spotted a **Parasitic Jaeger** from the Wash on Sept 19. This was likely the same bird discovered on Sep 17 by Kyle Landstra on the Multnomah-County portion of Sturgeon Lake to the south. The jaeger, as they are wont to do, harassed gulls over much of Sturgeon Lake over the next week and was last seen on the 24th. There was only one **Sabine's Gull** report in Columbia County last year, by Ed McVicker and Rob Lockett on Sep 22, again representing a foray north of the County line of a bird originally discovered to the south in Multnomah County several days prior.

Sturgeon Lake produced the usual smattering of **Franklin's Gull** reports in the fall, but a flock of 17 photographed by PK from the Wash on Jun 3 was most unusual. Several flocks were reported from atypical locations in Oregon during the same timeframe, possibly representing birds displaced by drought. Rounding out the larids, TM photographed a first-winter **Glaucous Gull** at Scappoose Bottoms on Jan 13. **Common Terns** were elusive in the fall. PK and Peyton Cook spotted two on Aug 30, and TM, Kate Atkins, and Thomas Magarian spied another on Sep 5.

Lona Pierce found the first County eBird report of a **Black-crowned Night-heron** in the wetlands along the Crown Zellerbach Trail in Scappoose on Sep 19; a very rare bird in the County, at least in recent years.

Mike Green discovered a small flock of **White-faced Ibis** on May 12 near the Reeder Road shelter on SI while conducting a green big day on his bike for an overdue County first. Unfortunately, the flock only stayed for a few minutes before flying off to the north. Incredibly, Mike also photographed a flyover White-faced Ibis at Vanport Wetlands in Portland later on the same big day!

The first documented **White-tailed Kite** in the County for several years was found by PK in the Marshland area on Oct 25 and stayed through mid-November. **Swainson's Hawks** were again present on their spring migration for the second year running, seen by PK on the CZ trail on Apr 26, TM in Scappoose Bottoms on May 11 (an attractive dark morph individual), and from the Warrior Point Trail on SI on May 12.

Young birder Kloe Cook discovered the second County



Photo by Mike Williams

### Black-necked Stilt

record of **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in her Scappoose backyard on Apr 7. Interestingly, the bird was an adult male and occurred very close to the area; the first County record, a juvenile male, was found three years prior. Perhaps this bird has been returning to winter undetected in the same area.

TM found a **Say's Phoebe** in Scappoose Bottoms on Mar 9. After the first County record of **Eastern Kingbird** the prior year, two were found on SI in 2021. One was photographed by TM at Grassy Lake on Jun 11 and another reported by Dena Turner near the Narrows on Aug 15.

**Cassin's Vireo** appears to be a rare bird in Columbia County most years and maybe a very local breeder but is seldom reported outside of migration. There was only one record in 2021, with two reported on SI by Carol Murdock on Aug 15.

**Red-eyed Vireos** were recorded in their usual breeding location along the Warrior Point Trail on SI. They are very rarely reported away from that location, but Dena Turner and Karen Chaivoe spied a likely migrant from the Wash area on Aug 31. **Townsend's Solitaire** is a rare spring migrant in the County, and a few isolated pairs may breed in some of the higher clearcuts. Individuals (or perhaps the same individual) were reported from along Pittsburg Road west of Scappoose on Apr 10, 23, and 25.

Mike and Karen Marble's yard rather incredibly struck twice for the County firsts of **Cassin's Finch** on Apr 16 and **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** on Jun 10. The Cassin's Finch was

nearly missed and only discovered after someone researching Purple Finches on eBird flagged a photo Mike had taken at his feeder!

The Snow Bunting discovered in late 2020 by TM near the Crown Zellerbach Trail in Scappoose lingered into the new year and was last seen on January 4. TM also found another with two Lapland Longspurs in a Horned Lark flock on Crims Island on January 9.

Sparrow alley (aka Rentenaar Road) on SI was again harboring rare sparrows. A Vesper Sparrow continued for its second winter, remaining faithful to its favored haunt near the end of the road and was spotted several times between February 9 and March 25. A Clay-colored Sparrow briefly showed for the second year in a row, photographed by TM on October 4. The very popular and seen-by-many Harris's Sparrow continued near the hunter-check station, occasionally serenading birders with its very simple, plaintive song. It stayed through March 29 and returned again for its third winter on November 17.

Finally, a Black-and-white Warbler was a nice find by Kyle Fuchs near the Narrows on SI on September 23 and a Common Yellowthroat was found along Rentenaar Road on the late date of November 26 by Linnaea Basden and Joshua Meyers.

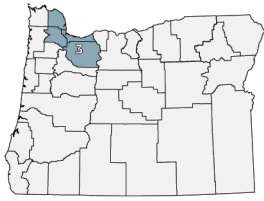
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#### Abbreviations:

PK - Philip Kline

SI - Sauvie Island

TM - Tom Myers



## PORTLAND AREA FIELD NOTES

MULTNOMAH, WASHINGTON, AND CLACKAMAS COUNTIES

EZRA COHEN

**D**ave Irons (DI) spotted an **EMPEROR GOOSE** within a cackler flock while driving by Murrayhill Lake in Washington County on Oct 10. After searching nearby ball fields and parks, it was refound at Southridge High School and subsequently seen by many observers until Oct 29.

A **Ross' Goose** was found among 6,000 Snow Geese on Sauvie Island on Nov 3 (Peyton Cook). A cooperative **Brant** was floating in the Columbia off Broughton Beach on Mar 29 (Ross Barnes Rickett - RBR).

That one was gone the next day, unlike another found by Colton Veltkamp at Fairview Lake just up the Columbia on Nov 7. It was reported in the area again on Nov 19. Hayden Island produced two Multnomah County records of Harlequin Duck in the fall. The first was at Columbia Point on Sep 16 (Andrea O) and the second at Gazebo Point on Dec 12 (Andy Frank - AF).

Three male **Black Scoters** were in a large Surf Scoter flock off Columbia Point on Oct 23 (Nick Mrvelj). Mayer Otto spotted another there on Nov 4; nine days later, another was seen (Anonymous). Jenny Jones and Patty Newland were rightly nicknamed the "**Long-tailed Duck** whisperers," as they found the species off Columbia Point on Nov 2 and again on Dec 29. And more common on the Columbia River, Clackamas had a **Red-breasted Merganser** at Clackamette Park from Nov 28 to Dec 22 (Dan van den Broek).

An exceptionally low-elevation migrant **Common Poorwill**, was at the Gresham-Fairview Trail in East Portland on May 3 (Colton Veltkamp). Another was on Larch Mountain Rd. on Aug 16 (Ken Pitts).

**Black Swifts** were in all three counties in spring and fall. One was at Portland's South Waterfront on May 8 (Anonymous); a day later, one was over Oak Island on Sauvie Island (RBR, Peter Barnes, AF). On May 23, Matt Cahill spotted one over Mt. Tabor; later that day, Patty Newland found one over Whitaker Ponds Nature Park.

Another was at Mt. Tabor on Jun 12 (Em Scatteregia). Joshua Meyers found one among a large migrating flock of swifts and swallows near the Plaza Trailhead on Mt. Hood on Sep 17. One was over a private residence near Washington Square Mall the next day (Dave Irons, Shawneen Finnegan).

Multnomah County's first **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was at a feeder in Northeast Portland on May 25 (Rebecca Heyer). Christopher Hinkle found an interesting hummer



Photo by Dave Irons

An **EMPEROR GOOSE** made visits throughout Washington County in October.

deemed an Anna's x Costa's hybrid at a feeder near Mt. Tabor on Dec 15. A Calliope Hummingbird was at Michael Fanuzzi's feeders in Portland's Grant Park neighborhood on Apr 19.

Rick Leinen found a pair of **Black-necked Stilts** at Fernhill Wetlands on Apr 28. Their fellow recurvirostridae, **American Avocet**, was found at Fernhill Wetlands on Jun 17 (Dwight Porter). Jay Withgott found another on Sep 5, viewed from the Corbett Viewpoint. Brodie Cass Talbott discovered a **Pacific Golden-Plover** at Smith and Bybee Wetlands on Aug 23. It continued out in Bybee Lake until Aug 27. Another was a one-day wonder at the outflow of the Sandy River on Sep 6 (RBR).

A **Whimbrel** flew over Bobby O at the Oak Island Boat Launch on Sauvie Island on Apr 24. Another was in that area on Sep 6 (Andrew Aldrich). A **Marbled Godwit** was seen from Oak Island Boat Launch on Sep 22 (Philip Kline). Ezra Cohen and RBR stumbled upon a **Stilt Sandpiper** in the back part of Bybee Lake on Aug 22. This foretold a banner year for the species. One was at Force Lake three days later (Grant

Canterbury), another at Fernhill Wetlands on Sep 3 (Ryan Downey), and one was seen from the J2 viewpoint on Sturgeon Lake on Sep 5 (Kyle Landstra - KL).

The only inland Sanderling of the year was at Hagg Lake on Sep 21 (Bill Bradford, Lora Minty). Amidst coastal storms, and many late Red-necked Phalaropes, Erik Bergman found a **Red Phalarope** at Fernhill Wetlands on Oct 27. One to four frequented Hagg Lake from Nov 8 to Nov 14. Hagg Lake held another on 1/13 (Ken Tweedt).

KL found a slew of good birds from the J2 viewpoint on Sturgeon Lake in fall, including a **Parasitic Jaeger** on Sep 17. It or a different bird was there five days later (Robert Lockett, Ed McVicker). One was on the Columbia off Broughton Beach on Sep 19 (Jen Sanford, Jacob Durrent).

Sabine's Gulls were found in Aug and Sep at Hagg Lake, Sturgeon Lake, and Broughton Beach, where there were, at one point, four birds. KL found both Multnomah County **Franklin's Gulls** during an invasion year in Western Oregon. One was a flyby at Broughton Beach on Aug 2, and the other was seen from the J2 viewpoint on Sep 17. A **Heerman's Gull** was near Happy Valley on Nov 21 (Andrew Karpenko). Tom Love found a **Black Tern** swooping over Bybee Lake at Smith and Bybee Wetlands on Jun 2. When it, and another, continued to be detected there until Aug 3, the general consensus was that the terns nested far back at an inaccessible part of the wetlands. A **Forster's Tern** was at Smith and Bybee Wetlands on Jun 1 (AF). Another was at the mouth of the Sandy River on Sep 18 (RBR).

To start off the year with a bang, Rick Bennett, and Julie and Connor Scotland found a **YELLOW-BILLED LOON** at Hagg Lake on Jan 1. It continued until Jan 6.

Another mega was Multnomah County's first **Brandt's Cormorant** off Columbia Point at Hayden Island on Jan 13 (Andrew Aldrich). It hung around on the Columbia between the mouth of the Sandy River and Hayden Island until Jan 20, allowing many observers to study it. A **Pelagic Cormorant** was at the mouth of the Sandy River on Jan 1 (Christopher Hinkle).

Eric Heisy found a **Brown Pelican** soaring over I-205 near the Columbia River on Aug 25. Another was high over Kelly Point Park on Oct 2 (Andrew Aldrich). And Lorin Wilkerson found one at Roehr City Park on Oct 25, delivering a Clackamas County first!

The **Snowy Egret** continued for another summer at Smith and Bybee Wetlands. It was seen from Aug 22 (Tara van Brommel) to Oct 12. Abnormally dry conditions in the East drove a multitude of **White-faced Ibis** to invade the valley in 2021. One flew over Vanport Wetlands on May 12 (Michael Green). Koll Center Wetlands hosted one on May 17 (Craig



Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

American Tree Sparrow

Tumer). Peter Barnes picked up on one flying over his yard near Gresham on Jun 3—a nice tick for the yard list! One flew over I-5 near the South Waterfront on Jun 9 (Jay Withgott). Karthik Murali spotted a flyover at Whitaker Ponds Nature Park the next day.

AF found a Northern Goshawk on Sauvie Island on Jan 9. **Swainson's Hawks** were reported from PDX, Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve, Powell Butte, Sauvie Island, and Cooper Mountain Nature Park, primarily in spring. A **Long-eared Owl** was heard at a private residence near Manning on Jul 18 (David Burton).

Clackamas County's second **YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER**, a juvenile, was at a private residence near Mulino on Dec 24. A Red-naped Sapsucker was detected on the Sandy River Trail near Sandy on May 15 (Mark Stern). Joseph Blowers found a Lewis' Woodpecker at his property near Molalla on Sep 11. One was further North at Mt. Talbert Nature Park on Oct 4 (Larry Butler). Although relatively small in reality, the Tualatin Mountains are a formidable barrier for **Acorn Woodpeckers** to pass. One, however, reached the suitable habitat on Sauvie Island at Oak Island on May 4. It was detected for the next eight days.

A **Prairie Falcon** flew over Stephen Greenwood at Tualatin River NWR on Mar 17 and was identified because of the quick hands of a photographer nearby!

An exceptionally late Pacific-slope Flycatcher was at Nadaka Nature Park on Nov 10 (DVDB). It was another good year for **Ash-throated Flycatchers**. One was at Gabriel Park in Southwest Portland on May 16 (Max Merrill). Another was at Canemah Bluffs in Clackamas County on May 23. Joshua Meyers and Linnaea Basden found a cooperative individual at River Island Natural Area on Jun 11. An **Eastern Kingbird**,

Washington County's third, was at Fernhill Wetlands on Aug 20. Blaise Hammer detected two at Sandy River Delta Park in 2021: one on Jul 14 and one on Aug 13.

Michael Anderson heard a singing **Wrentit** in Southern Clackamas County on May 20. The westward expansion of **Canyon Wrens** through the gorge continued. Throughout the year, individuals were at Angel's Rest, Wahclella Falls, Wahkeena Falls, and Multnomah Falls.

The long-staying **Northern Mockingbird** continued on Pleasant Valley Rd. in Washington County. One was at Sandy River Delta Park on Oct 6 (Abby Haight). Mountain Bluebirds were at Sandy River Delta Park on Mar 15 (Blaise Hammer), Powell Butte Nature Park on Apr 5 (Andy Bauer), and near PCC Rock Creek on Apr 20 (Theodore Squires).

KL found a **Gray-crowned Rosy-finch** from Sherrard Point on Larch Mountain on Oct 30. Colby Neuman braved the winter temperatures at Larch Mountain more than a month later and was rewarded with some **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS** on Dec 3, overflowing into the county during an irruption year in Northeast Oregon. A **Lapland Longspur** was on the Paradise Park Trail on Mt. Hood on Oct 2 (Aaron Beerman). Rare sparrows were in abundance in 2021.

Amanda Klehr found a **Clay-colored Sparrow** on 66th Avenue near Foster Rd. on Jan 2. Stefan Schlick discovered one at Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve on Jan 5. Another found by Lars Per Norgren in 2020 continued in a lot in Southeast Portland's Brooklyn neighborhood.

Joseph Blowers found a **Black-throated Sparrow** at his property near Molalla on May 20. RBR pushed up one at Swigert Rd. in Troutdale on May 25. An **American Tree Sparrow** was at Tualatin River NWR on Nov 30 (Rick Bennett). Shawneen Finnegan found a **Vesper Sparrow** at Jackson Bottom Wetlands Preserve on Jan 7.

The **ORCHARD ORIOLE**, originally found by Robert Lockett on Dec 16, 2020, continued in Southeast Portland until Feb 6, 2021. Christopher Hinkle found a **RUSTY BLACKBIRD** near Dairy Creek, Washington County, on Jan 3. And the famous **Great-tailed Grackle**, "McGrackle," continued from Nov 19, 2020, to at least Apr 2, 2021, in a McDonald's parking lot in North Portland.

A **Northern Waterthrush** was at the boat launch at Smith and Bybee Wetlands on Sep 3 (Gwyn Case). Will Russell found a singing **AMERICAN REDSTART** at Sandy River Delta Park on Jul 5. A very late Black-throated Gray Warbler was at Milwaukie Riverfront Park near the sewage ponds on Nov 28 (Candace Larson, Dan van den Broek). It was apparently trying to winter, as it was reported until Dec 16.



Photo by Nagi Abouleinein

#### Eastern Kingbird

A **Palm Warbler** was at Tualatin River NWR on May 2 (Paul Runge). Audrey Addison caught up with a singing bird on Sauvie Island at the Oak Island Trail on May 7. An immature male **ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK** appeared at a feeder between Lake Oswego and Wilsonville on Dec 12. It remained for a few weeks until it molted into adult plumage and then wasn't seen again.

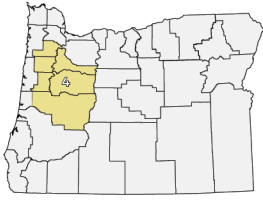
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#### Abbreviations:

AF - Andy Frank

KL - Kyle Landstra

RBR - Ross Barnes Rickett



# WILLAMETTE VALLEY FIELD NOTES

## BENTON AND LINN COUNTIES

PAUL ADAMUS

Despite the pandemic, 1,040 different birders submitted 245 observations to eBird in 2021 from Benton and Linn counties. Most remarkable were Yellow Rail, Winter Wren, and Painted Bunting. At the Philomath Sewage Ponds (PSP), many observed and photographed a Tufted Duck on Jan 9 through Feb 15. Also, at PSP, Oct 23, Hendrick Herlyn counted 15 **Surf Scoters**, the largest number yet for this county. May 1-2 Jamie Simmons found a **Long-tailed Duck** at Stuart Pond in Corvallis.

Kai Frueh photographed a **Barrow's Goldeneye** on Jan 2 at Willamette Park in Corvallis, and many observers saw the bird until at least Feb 7. Farther south on the Willamette River, Tyler Wilson spotted one at McCartney County Park Feb 27. Collin McElroy identified a **Red-breasted Merganser** at PSP on Nov 9. Many photographed it until at least Nov 13.

Tim Shelmerdine saw a **Pacific Loon**, at Foster Reservoir on Nov 6. Kaplan Yalcin found an even rarer **Yellow-billed Loon** at the same location on Feb 16. Several people photographed it until at least Feb 19. Kaplan also saw one at Clear Lake on Nov 13.

Kaplan Yalcin reported **Red-necked Grebe** from that location Nov 13. Others reported individuals from PSP Nov 26 (W. Douglas Robinson - WDR) and Foster Reservoir Jan 20 (Tom Gilg).

A county-record 135 **American White Pelicans** were at Cabell Marsh, Finley National Wildlife Refuge (FNWR) Oct 7 (counted by Bill Proebsting). **White-tailed Kite** is infrequently found east of the Willamette River, but Kaplin Yalcin found one Mar 9 along Seven Mile Lane in Albany.

One or more **Ferruginous Hawks** continued their 2021 influx into this region. There were frequent reports until at least Feb 8 southeast of Peoria and along Dawson Road south of Corvallis.

Kylie Meyer photographed a recently dead **YELLOW RAIL** found Oct 10 at Irish Bend County Park. The only other record from these two counties may be a dead one found over a century ago (Feb 1, 1900) near Scio (Marshall et al. 2001).

Duncan Evered photographed a county-record 90 **Black-bellied Plover** flying past Willamette Park on Apr 20. **Franklin's Gull**, normally uncommon in the region, appeared to have a major incursion in May. Johnny Westlund found 25 at Cabell Marsh FNWR on May 13, and a county-record 32 flew over WP on May 23 (Duncan Evered). Jan 27 Paul Adamus photographed a second-

year **Glaucous Gull** amid hundreds of gulls near the Coffin Butte landfill. Others reported it until at least Mar 7. A pair of **Forster's Tern** was seen at PSP on Jun 5 (WDR and others).

**Black Swift** is a difficult-to-notice migrant but on May 29, Bruce Pratt and others counted a county-record 29 over Fitton Green Natural Area south of Corvallis. WDR heard a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in his neighborhood on Jan 8 in Corvallis. It stayed until at least Feb 13. Along the Duffy Lake trail near Three Fingering Jack in the Cascades, multiple observers reported both **American Three-toed Woodpecker** (2) and a **Black-backed Woodpecker** on Oct 2.

An immature male **VERMILION FLYCATCHER** was reported to Russ Morgan by a resident on Gerig Road near Albany. Many observed it from Jan 20 to at least Feb 11. WDR found a **Rock Wren** at PSP on Sep 6. Bill Proebsting found one on Pigeon Butte at FNWR Sep 23. It remained until at least Sep 29.

On Feb 28, in McDonald State Forest west of Corvallis, Caleb Centanni and Courtney Kelly Jett skillfully identified what may be western Oregon's first **WINTER WREN** on Feb 28 by initially noticing that a call note they were hearing differed slightly from that of the abundant (in this region) Pacific Wren. Many observed and recorded the bird until at least Apr 4.

Duncan Evered found a **Tennessee Warbler** at Willamette Park on Apr 26. Will Wright found a **Brewer's Sparrow** on Jun 25 on Marys Peak, but saw no evidence of breeding. On Aug 18, WDR and WDR also saw one there and Hendrick Herlyn found one at PSP. A **Lark Sparrow** was at PSP on Apr 20 (Bruce Pratt et al.).

On Jun 22, Paul Adamus found a singing **Green-tailed Towhee** in Linn County east of Lost Lake. A Corvallis resident reported a **PAINTED BUNTING** to WDR in December 2020. Dr. Robinson photographed it while it remained until Jan 7, 2021. He heard a **Bobolink** at PSP on Sep 19. Jamie Simmons discovered a female **Rusty Blackbird** amid blackbirds southeast of Peoria. Many photographed the bird until at Mar 5.

Dylan Winkler reported 2 **Pine Grosbeak** on Marys Peak, Mar 27. An influx of **Common Redpoll**, individuals in these two counties were first noted by DR Nov 23 in north Corvallis (WDR), and Matt Cahill found one Dec 4 at Luckiamute State Natural Area.

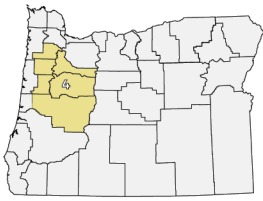
### Literature cited:

Marshall, D.B., M.G. Hunter, and A. Contreras. 2003. *Birds of Oregon: a general reference*. Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press.

### Abbreviations:

FNWR- William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge  
PSP - Philomath Sewage Ponds  
WDR - W. Douglas Robinson





# WILLAMETTE VALLEY FIELD NOTES

## MARION, POLK, AND YAMHILL COUNTIES

PAMELA JOHNSTON



Photo by Mike Williams

A Rough-legged Hawk hovers over possible prey in Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge.

The year 2021 was one of weather extremes. Heavy rain repeatedly created standing water in winter and spring, spring was cold, and summer brought extreme heat with extended dry periods. Linda Fink (LF) noted on Jan 13 that “raptors were looking for rodents driven out of the ground by floodwaters.” Heat led to the loss of young in some species.

On Apr 3, Roy Gerig (RG) and Paul Sullivan (PS) both reported three **Ross’s Geese** at ANWR. On Mar 8, Aaron Beerman and Susan Kirkbride (SK) each got photos of a **Brant** at BSNWR (Polk).

Apr 22, two flocks of Greater White-fronted Geese flew above Pamela Johnston’s (PJ) yard, 5 miles NW of McMinnville, and Grant Hoyt’s place a few miles north. A flock flew over LF’s farm at Grand Ronde Agency on Apr 25. An estimated 80-90 were at BSNWR (Polk) on May 7, per RG.

Jan 3 Jim Kopitzke and Tim Johnson found a Trumpeter Swan at ANWR on Wintel Rd. On Dec 1, Clay Crofton and Dominic Valenti had one at Skookum Lake, and on Dec 17, Clay Crofton had another at Labish Bottoms (all Marion).

On May 14, a male **GARGANEY** appeared at BSNWR (Polk), where Whit Bronaugh and Tom Hall got “excellent scope views.” Present through May 16, m. obs saw the duck. On Jun 8, there were six Blue-winged Teal at BSNWR (Polk) for Harry Fuller

(HF). PS got one male Eurasian Wigeon among 750 American Wigeon on a flooded field at Livermore Rd (Polk) on Jan 13.

A Greater Scaup came to SSTP (Yamhill) on Oct 27, noted by PS. Dec 28, he saw a male White-winged Scoter there. A **Red-breasted Merganser** was at Van Duzer Vineyard pond on Smithfield Rd where Brandon Wagner (BW), Bill Tice (BT), and Don Berg saw it Nov 11. Caleb Centanni and Courtney Kelly Jett found one at Monmouth STP on Nov 25 (both Polk).

Many **Golden Eagle** sightings at BSNWR (Polk) started with a juvenile Frank Kolwicz saw on Baskett Butte on Jan 6. RG had one Mar 9, as did Leslie Schweitzer Nov 13, and Lars Norgren Nov 28. Then, on Dec 1, BW got a photo at BSNWR, and SK saw the last Dec 22.

Sharp-shinned Hawk is not frequent, but on Nov 17, PJ saw one 5 mi. NW of McMinnville (Yamhill), RG saw another at ANWR on Nov 19, and HF had one on Nov 21 at Minto – Brown Island Park (both Marion).

Most White-tailed Kites were seen near the Polk - Yamhill county line, near Willamina. LF found three in one field at Allen Rd Jan 15, remaining Feb 7 - Mar 15. In early March, they were seen along La Chance Rd (Polk). Karen Chavoie also found one at BSNWR (Polk) on Apr 6. On Nov 6, LF and Johnny Fink were pleased by two juveniles around Allen Rd, and on Dec 1,

they saw three Kites near Fendall Rd.

Swainson's Hawk first appeared May 6 when RG saw one from Ankeny Hill, ANWR; on May 9. John Coffman had one at Woodmansee Pk, Salem (both Marion). Nancy Stotz (NS) sighted one Sep 10 near Suver Rd along 99W (Polk). A **Ferruginous Hawk** first seen in 2020 was at Hoffman Rd, Independence (Polk) on Jan 1. Noah Strycker, BT, and BW had the last look.

A flock of eight to ten Sandhill Cranes flew northbound over Chehalem Mtn (Yamhill) on Feb 15, seen by Don Albright. Greater numbers passed over Silverton: Feb 28, 90 to 100 flew over Roger Freeman's house, Grant Canterbury had 65 over his place on Mar 2, and on May 3, John Thomas (JT) heard them call from his Silverton home. RG saw a lingering one at Duckflat Rd (all Marion) on Dec 2.

Jul 14 Georges Kleinbaum found an American Avocet at Livermore Rd (Polk), present on Jul 15. **Pacific Golden-Plover** is rare in Yamhill Co; Ken Chamberlain and PS found the third record on Aug 30 at SSTP. Previous sightings were in 1998 and 1988. A **Whimbrel** spent May 16 at BSNWR (Polk), reported by Gerry Ellis, Erik Knight (EK), and M. Shane Pruett. May 17 was the last report. A **Long-billed Curlew** was viewed there by NS on Apr 6.

An immature **Ruff** was first spotted by PS on Sep 19 at ANWR (Marion). Many reports followed. Mark Miller noted an immature Oct 2. Oct 20, PS found a bird, unlike his Sep bird. We conclude there were two or more, seen singly, till Nov 28.

On Sep 25, Georges Kleinbaum saw a **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** at ANWR, as did Viviana Wolinsky and Steve Hunter. Sep 29 Kelsie Theilen had one along Buena Vista Rd, as did Ezra Cohen and Brandon Reishus at ANWR Oct 19 (all Marion). The Sanderling PS identified at SSTP Sep 15 was the first recorded in Yamhill Co since 1985.

On Apr 26, HF got a Solitary Sandpiper at Fairview Wetlands (Marion), as did Tanner Martin May 16 at BSNWR (Polk) and Scott Bond Jun 18 at ANWR (Marion). On Jan 16, Mitch Ratzlaff reported a Red Phalarope there, also seen on Jan 17. A Bonaparte's Gull, found by EK at BSNWR (Polk) Apr 4, seen again Apr 5.

Roger Robb and Dennis Arendt noted three **Franklin's Gulls** at BSNWR on May 16, and on Jun 2, Stephen Greenwood found one. NS saw a Caspian Tern at Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area (LSNA) (Polk) on May 14. On May 21, BW reported two **Black Terns** at BSNWR (Polk). Common Loons were reported at Turner Lake in Marion (RG, others) and McGuire Reservoir in Yamhill (PS).

Florence Hall saw a Snowy Egret on May 5 in SE Salem (Marion). Oct 12 Cole Pender rescued an injured bird that

was stuck at a water control device on a pond at North Valley Rd (Yamhill). The Portland Audubon Wildlife Care Center identified it as a Snowy Egret (per Mitch Ratzlaff) Jan 13. Grant Canterbury found a Black-crowned Night-heron in Silverton (Marion) on Jun 13.

A **White-faced Ibis** appeared at BSNWR (Polk) on May 18, seen by Karen Chavoie, Mary Ratcliff, and Dena Turner, continuing through Aug 20. PS found Mountain Quail along Agency Crk Apr 15, and Aug 9 PJ heard the chatter of young and adult quail 5 mi. NW of McMinnville (both Yamhill). Jun 2 PS saw a Western Grebe fishing at a Salt Crk Rd farm pond, and he saw two at the SSTP on Oct 23 (both Yamhill). The last report came from RG on Nov 17 at Turner Lake. Susan Richards reported a Clark's Grebe at Aumsville (both Marion) Oct 15.



Photo by Jack Maynard

#### Long-eared Owls

Eight **Long-eared Owls** were discovered day-roosting at ANWR (Marion) by Andy and Jody Vanderwall, who took photos; many observers took a peek. A **Black Swift** was seen flying with Violet-green Swallows over LSNA (Polk) on Aug 2 by Johnny Westland. RG saw another over Keizer Rapids Pk Aug 9. Sept 7, JT counted 2,500 Vaux's Swifts going to roost in the Mt Angel Abbey Post Office chimney, a new high. Sep 19 HF noted Vaux's entering a chimney at Marion and Liberty St, Salem. JT returned to Mt Angel Abbey on Sep 23, finding a colossal 4,520 Swifts crowding in (all Marion).

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** appeared on Apr 17 at Fishback Hill (Polk), seen by Caleb Centanni and Courtney Kelly Jett. An adult male Red-naped Sapsucker that Rachael Friese reported from Salem on Feb 1, seen through Feb 5, was the first Marion Co record. At Falls City (Polk), BT had a Red-naped Sapsucker, seen Apr 15 - Apr 19.

Mar 23 RG came upon the **Gyr Falcon** that spent winter 2020 - 2021 around BSNWR on Colville Rd (Polk). One or more

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Prairie Falcons were in Polk Co, starting Oct 24 at BSNWR, seen by RG, Nov 1 at De Armond Rd by Joel Geier, and Nov 14 along Livermore Rd by HF.

A Calliope Hummingbird visited JT's feeder at Silverton (Marion) on Apr 2. Another reached Fishback Hill (Polk) on Apr 17, seen by Caleb Centanni.

The first report of **Red-eyed Vireo** came on Jun 1 from Kaplan Yalcin at LSNA (Polk). Jun 4 Jay Withgott confirmed breeding at Willamette Greenway St Pk (WG) on Grand Island (Yamhill). Jun 14 Don Boucher had one across the river at Willamette Mission St Pk (Marion). Jun 30, Georges Kleinbaum found one at BSNWR (Polk), a new site for the bird.

A **Loggerhead Shrike** was at Ediger Boat Landing by Wheatland Ferry, seen by Kyle Waggener on Sep 25. Quinton Nice saw a Northern Shrike on Rock Creek Rd outside Sheridan (both Yamhill) on Jan 25 and Mar 15. Joy Jensen had one on Nov 29 at Duckflat Rd (Marion). On Dec 16, Margaret Stephens found another at Livermore Rd, and on Dec 27, Neil Bjorklund had one nearby on BSNWR. Horned Larks were noted during the nesting season by Rich Hoyer and Gavin Bieber on May 25 at Sauerkraut Rd and by HF on Jun 8 at BSNWR (all Polk).

The fall roosting of Barn Swallows began on Sep 8 when PS found them flying into cornfields on the bottomlands along Dorsey Ln. Numbers "grew from 500 to 5,000, then to 50,000." Sep 9 was cooler, with only 5,000 birds. Oct 4, PS found 300 Barn Swallows at the south end of Webfoot Rd (both Yamhill). Apr 1 RG saw "at least 5" Cliff Swallows investigating old nests south of Salem (Marion). They were building on LF's barn at Grand Ronde Agency (Yamhill) on May 29; none fledged.

Say's Phoebe was found Jan 12 in Polk Co, Jan 21 in Marion Co, Feb at two Yamhill Co sites, the last of spring seen on Apr 4. The first of fall was viewed Nov 11 at ANWR (Marion), and by Dec 19, they were in all three counties.

**Eastern Kingbird** got a few mentions; Jul 13 at ANWR by Ami Horowitz, and Jul 20 at Hennies Rd, Turner (both Marion), seen by Dave Budeau. Paul Davis found a Western Wood-Pewee flycatching at ANWR Sep 24, quite late. Willow Flycatcher appeared on Jun 12 at Palmer Crk (Yamhill) for PS. Apr 24 HF observed a Dusky Flycatcher at Clark Creek Pk, Salem (Marion). A Lapland Longspur was seen Nov 10, 2020, at Livermore Rd (Polk) was last noted Jan 15 by Andrew Aldrich.

Pine Siskins recovered a bit from recent declines, with "40 to 50" Mar 13 at PS's McMinnville feeders. Red Crossbills came briefly: Apr 13 at Fairview Wetlands Scenic Trail (Marion) HF counted nine, Apr 16 Grant Canterbury saw some at Silverton (Marion), Apr 26 at Dayton, PJ had 10 in treetops, and May 15 Darlene Beta and Skip Russell noted them along the Trappist Abbey trail (both Yamhill).

Apr 2, BT saw four **Mountain Bluebirds** at BSNWR (Polk), present through Apr 4. Apr 19 Paul Adamus found four Townsend's Solitaires along Gold Creek Rd (Polk). On May 12, a Northern Mockingbird was at WG (Yamhill), seen by PS.

At Kingston Prairie near Silverton (Marion), Joel Geier saw a Grasshopper Sparrow pair displaying and copulating on May 17. PS found one at Baskett Butte, BSNWR (Polk), on Jun 24.

**American Tree Sparrow**, a periodic visitor, was reported by both Joe Blowers and Ken Pitts at ANWR (Marion) Nov 19; Aug 20, Joan Baker viewed a Brewer's Sparrow there, and Julian Hwa reported a **Swamp Sparrow** Nov 10. Joel Geier saw a color-banded "Oregon" Vesper Sparrow female displaying at a Polk study site on Apr 16.

Yellow-breasted Chat appeared in the three counties: Muddy Valley Rd (Yamhill) on May 10 by PS, May 14 at ANWR (Marion) by RG, and Livermore Rd (Polk) on Aug 12 by HF.

On Feb 21, Daniel Knapp counted 60 Western Meadowlarks at BSNWR (Polk). A Yellow-headed Blackbird was at BSNWR (Polk) for Jay Withgott on Mar 3, also seen Jun 23 and Jul 2. Apr 23 PS saw one male at Salt Creek Rd outside Amity (Yamhill). Paul Adamus found one **Tricolored Blackbird** on Jan 27 along Perrydale Rd (Polk), where RG had three on Jan 28. Numbers shifted till Mar 3, the last report.

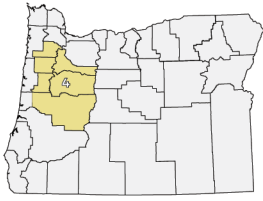
PS sighted a Nashville Warbler on Apr 16 at the WG on Grand Island (Yamhill). A female **Summer Tanager** spent five days in South Salem before Sophia and Opal Wood reported it to the OBA website Nov 15. A photo of this first Marion Co record went to the OBRC.

Matt Cahill saw a **Common Redpoll** on Dec 4 at LNSA (Polk). PS was home in McMinnville (Yamhill) for a **Cassin's Finch** on Apr 8. We end with a bright male **Painted Bunting** at a feeder in the Haysville area of Salem (Marion). "First reported to a Facebook group on Jan 31," per PS. Many observers saw it nearby through Feb 12. W. Douglas Robinson determined from photographs that this bird was previously observed near Corvallis Dec 18 - Jan 7, as he wrote in Vol. 47.

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#### Abbreviations:

HF - Harry Fuller	SAS - Salem Audubon Society field trip
HFP - Huddleston Fishing Pond, a public park in Willamina	SSTP - Sheridan Sewage Treatment Pond
SK - Susan Kirkbride	BT - Bill Tice
LF - Linda Fink	WG - Willamette Greenway St Pk, Grand Island
LSNA - Luckiamute Landing State Natural Area	BW - Brandon Wagner
PS - Paul Sullivan	
RG - Roy Gerig	



# WILLAMETTE VALLEY FIELD NOTES

## INLAND LANE COUNTY

TYE JESKE

It was a good year for Ross's Goose, which is typically a difficult species in Lane. One was seen from Mar 11 to Mar 12 on Goodman Rd (Ramiro Aragon). Another Ross's Goose was found later in the winter, Nov 18, through most of the winter on Cox Butte Rd (Sally Hill) and was seen off and on in the west Eugene area.

On May 9, a male **Black-chinned Hummingbird** was photographed at a feeder in the Hendricks Park Area (Joshua Galpern). This species is extremely rare in western Oregon, and this is only the fifth time one has been recorded in Lane; this particular one ended up being only a 5-minute wonder.

From Feb 3 to Feb 28, a **Pacific Golden-Plover** was found at Fern Ridge right in the large pond in the parking area off Hwy 126 (Martin Sheehan). While this species is regular in small numbers, often in Fall migration along the coast and often at Fern Ridge, seeing it in the middle of winter anywhere in Oregon is rare, and only the second time it has been seen in winter in Lane.

Sep 29 to Sep 30, an American Golden-Plover was found between Gibson Island and Shore Lane Park at Fern Ridge (John Sullivan - JS). In fall, we saw larger than normal numbers of Long-billed Curlew. Normally the species is rare but regular, but this Fall, there were as many as 8-9 around Fern Ridge.

The thought is the higher numbers have to do with the droughts in the East, causing more Eastern breeding birds to come to the West. The first was seen from Aug 15 to Aug 31 around Fern Ridge Royal Ave. area (Vjera Thompson - VT, Nancy Clogston). The bird continued around Perkin's and the South Marsh.

From Aug 19 to Aug 31, two Curlews were seen off and on

from Perkin's Peninsula (JS). On Sep 4, a remarkable five birds were seen flying S to N over Tern Island at the end of the Royal Ave gravel path (Ramiro Aragon and Nathan Aragon). Then on Sep 6, another was seen in the same area (Jon Cox), and on Sep 14, one was seen flying south over Shore Lane Park (Diane Pettey, Sally Hill). From Aug 8 to Aug 11, a **Hudsonian Godwit** was found at the West end of Fern Ridge Royal Ave Gravel Path (Alan Contreras - AC, VT). This is the 3rd Hudsonian Godwit for



Hudsonian Godwit

Photo by Neil Bjorklund

Fern Ridge since 2018.

A **Stilt Sandpiper** was found at Fern Ridge's South Marsh from Aug 25 to Aug 26 (AC). From Sep 6 to Sep 10, a Stilt Sandpiper was seen at Fern Ridge's ODFW HQ (John Sullivan) and at South Marsh. It is possible these were two different birds. A Willet was found from Jul 1 to Jul 5 at the Fern Ridge Royal Ave area (AC, VT).

On Sep 29, an adult **Parasitic Jaeger** was seen flying around Fern Ridge in the North part

of Gibson Island (John Sullivan). This species is rare inland but does show up at Fern Ridge occasionally. From Sep 12 to Sep 15, a breeding plumage adult **Sabine's Gull** was seen flying around Fern Ridge Lake (JS). A Sabine's was also seen from Perkin's Peninsula on Oct 10 (Sally Hill).

A group of 5 Franklin's were seen at Fern Ridge Royal Ave area on May 6 (Noah Strycker). From May 12 to May 28, 2-3 Franklin's were seen off and on in the same area (Vickie Buck). On May 13, a pair were even seen mating (AC, Tye Jeske, JS). On May 29, a group of 11 was seen at Fern Ridge (Daniel Farrar - DF, VT). On May 24, a huge flock of at least 140 was recorded in the Waterville Area (Vickie Buck). On May 25, a large flock was also heard on Cartwright Creek Rd (Jon Cox). Numbers like this have never been recorded in western Oregon.

At Fern Ridge, Franklin's gull is regular most years but usually only 1-2 birds. It is thought that because of the heat and drought in eastern Oregon, birds could not find anywhere to breed, which is why there is such a huge surge of this species in western Oregon.

The Snowy Egret, originally seen in Nov 2020 at the Fern Ridge Dam (Dan and Anne Heyerly), continued around Fern Ridge the entire year, being seen at just about all parts of it, including part of the Alvadore Area, and was observed by many birders. Also, a pair of Snowy Egrets were seen on Sep 12 from Perkin's Peninsula (JS). Interestingly a pair of Snowy Egrets were seen at Ankeny NWR to the North just two days before and were most likely the same birds.

A Burrowing Owl was reported around the Eugene Airport Oct 12 (Jon Cox). A Snowy Owl was photographed Dec 7 in Elmira (Pat McBride), the news didn't get out until later, and the bird was never refound.

Another exciting raptor seen in Lane was an immature **Gyr Falcon** found this winter from Nov 18 to Nov 24 on Dorsey Ln (Rich Hoyer). The bird was seen off and on by many in the West Eugene and Junction City Area. This is the first in Lane in several years, and it was quite a character, often chasing Cackling Geese around.

From Jun 12 to Jun 15 along Rodgers Rd in the Creswell area, a singing **Least Flycatcher** was found (Noah Strycker). This is only the third Least flycatcher that has been reported in the county. High Numbers of Gray Flycatchers were seen in Lane County this year, with the first one on Apr 2 at Oakridge's Industrial Park (AC, Joshua Galpern), on Apr 26 one was at Bloomberg Park (Randall Sinnott), and on May 2, two **Gray Flycatchers** were seen again at the Industrial Park (AC, DF, Nolan Clements, Rich Hoyer). On May 3, another one was found at Hills Creek Pond in Oakridge (JS, Sally Hill). May 7, yet another one at Mule Prairie at Salt Creek Falls (Noah Strycker), and the last one was found on May 8 again at Bloomberg Park (AC, DF).

From Jan 27 to Mar 2, a **Pygmy Nuthatch** was seen at a feeder around Glen Oak City Park (Thomas Cable). This species is very rare in western Oregon, and this is one of the only records for the Willamette Valley. Lane now has five records of this species.

One of the last major rarities seen in Lane county was from Dec 5 to Dec 22, when a **Brown Thrasher** was found in a residential neighborhood in Springfield (Donna Albino). This is only the third record of this species for the county, and it was very cooperative for a thrasher.

One of the rarest birds seen in Lane County in 2021 was a non-breeding plumage male **Brambling** found from Oct 29 to Nov 4 around Deadwood (Kaki Burris). This is only the 5th time a Brambling has been seen in Lane county and only the 15th time it has been seen in Oregon.

This ended up being a good year for finches in Oregon, and Lane got part of the irruption as big numbers of **White-winged Crossbill** were found in eastern Lane county in winter. On Dec 1, a small flock of 6 was seen at Gold Lake (JS, Laura Johnson). Large numbers were also seen in the Erma Bell Lake area from Dec 5 to Dec 7, including almost 200 (Courtney Kelly Jett, Caleb Centanni). Large numbers continued until heavy snowfall made the area inaccessible. Also, on Dec 5, multiple **Common Redpoll** were reported around Erma Bell Lakes (Courtney Kelly Jett, Caleb Centanni).

The only Snow Bunting seen in the county this year was at Jeans Park at Fern Ridge Oct 31 (Linda Gilbert). The species numbers vary in western Oregon year to year, but most Lane county sightings are on the coast, and they are rare inland.

During Spring Migration, a male **Black-and-white Warbler** was seen on Skinner's Butte on Apr 22 (JS). Another Black-and-white was also seen Oct 4 (Rakar West) in Eugene. These are only the 5th and 6th records of this species for the county.

A Lark Sparrow was recorded during Spring Migration on May 3 as a flyover in the River Road area (Rich Hoyer). A **Black-throated Sparrow** was seen along the Royal Ave Gravel Path at Fern Ridge from May 6 to May 8 (Diane Pettey). Another Black-throated Sparrow was found at Hills Creek Dam in Oakridge on May 12 (AC, Joshua Galpern). This species is normally extremely rare in western Oregon, but for unknown reasons, several showed up in the western part of the state this year. These represent only the seventh and eighth county records.



Black-throated Sparrow

Photo by Don Henise

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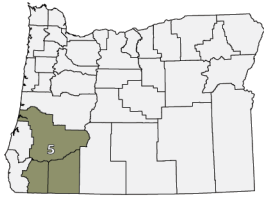
#### Abbreviations:

AC - Alan Contreras

JS - John Sullivan

DF - Daniel Farrar

VT - Vjera Thompson



## ROGUE-UMPQUA FIELD NOTES

### INTERIOR DOUGLAS COUNTY

MADRONE RUGGIERO

**A** **Common Poorwill** was observed on North Bank Rd. in Wilbur on Apr 29 (Janice Reid), and another was found along Calf Ridge on May 12 (Matt Hunter - MH). A lone Black Swift was photographed along the Umpqua River at Scottsburg Park on Jun 11 (Adrian Smith).

Unusual shorebirds included four Pectoral Sandpipers observed at Wildlife Safari Sep 11 (Jeffrey Vandervennet) and two Solitary Sandpipers found at Herbert's Pond Park Apr 24 (Alan Moss).

It was a good year for spotting terns and gulls in Sutherlin, with a flock of 22 **Franklin's Gulls** seen at Ford's Pond on May 5 (MH). Two **Black Terns** were reported at Plat-I Reservoir on May 3 (Leisyka Parrot, Russ Namitz). Russ Namitz also found an immature Common Tern at Ford's Pond Sep 24, and three **Forster's Terns** were found at Ford's Pond on Jun 2 (James Houseman).

A **Snowy Egret** was observed at Plat-I Reservoir Sep 7 (Madrone Ruggiero) and at Ford's Pond Sep 13 (JH) and continued in the area for several days. A Black-crowned Night Heron was photographed along the South Umpqua River Aug 23 (Pamela Moore).

Wintering Turkey Vultures were spotted several times this year in the Roseburg and Melrose areas well out of their normal season, with a sighting in early Jan and several sightings in Nov and Dec. Departing for migration very late was an Osprey seen in SW Roseburg Nov 3 (MH). A White-tailed Kite was seen at I-5 in Sutherlin on Apr 10 (Matt Dufort, Owen, and Theo Lindeloff) and observed at Plat I Reservoir on Jun 7 (Mikeal Jones.)

Two Lewis's Woodpeckers were found along North Bank Road Feb 10 (MH) and Nov 11 (Janice Reid), and four were found along Bachelor Creek north of Oakland Nov 21 (Brian Carlson).

A Northern Shrike was seen at Plat-I Reservoir Oct 9 (Cheryl Butler). Douglas County also had two unusual dry country wrens this year, with a Rock Wren observed in the Stouts Meadows area on Jun 3 (Alan Moss) and a **Canyon Wren** heard in the Archie Creek Fire area on Apr 2 (Elizabeth Gayner). To the south, a Northern Mockingbird was seen at Herbert's Pond Park on May 23 (Matt Dalessio).

Several Lark Sparrows were observed in Wilbur on Apr 23 (Elizabeth Gayner), and a single bird was spotted at Toketee Lake Campground on May 11 (Jeannie and Bob Pollock).



Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

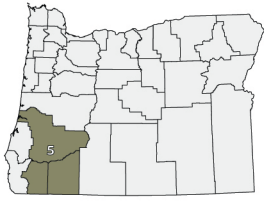
Franklin's Gull

There were two reports of Vesper Sparrows, with one located at Cross Lane in Stephens on Apr 9 (Kelli Van Norman, Jack Maynard) and three found at Ford's Pond on May 21 (Jenny Mosher). Nesting of California Towhees was confirmed in the Dixonville area with individuals seen all season and four individuals, including two immatures observed Aug 1 (Barbara Anderson). This location is at the northernmost edge of their range.

This year brought reports of three unusual blackbird species at Ford's Pond. Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds were present for about a week after they were first found on May 31 (Brian Carlson). A single Tricolored Blackbird was observed May 21 (Jenny Mosher), followed by two reported Jun 6 (James Houseman), and a Rusty Blackbird was found Nov 8 (Kayla McCurry).

#### Abbreviations:

MH - Matt Hunter



## ROGUE-UMPQUA FIELD NOTES

### ROGUE VALLEY - JACKSON AND JOSEPHINE COUNTIES

TANNER MARTIN

**F**rank Lospalluto (FL) heard a flock of **Ross's Geese** fly over his home near Mount Ashland (Jackson) on Apr 1. A single individual was later seen flying over Lower Table Rock (Jackson) on Apr 28 by James Livaudais.

**Surf Scoters** are uncommon but regular visitors to Jackson County in the eastern Rogue Valley; however, in Josephine County to the west, they are quite rare. During a stop at Lake Selmac, Russ Namitz found an astonishing nine Surf Scoters on Oct 31. Howard Sands visited Fish Lake (Jackson) on Nov 16 and photographed a female **White-winged Scoter**.

During a hike along the Peyton Bridge Trail just north of Lost Creek Lake (Jackson), Howard Sands discovered two Long-tailed Ducks swimming in the Rogue River. The ducks remained from Feb 16 to Feb 28 and were seen by many birders. One **Red-breasted Merganser** was present at the Bear Creek Greenway in Ashland (Jackson) on Jan 11 (FL). Later in the year, Janet Kelly (JK) found another at Agate Lake (Jackson) on Nov 1.

One **Red-necked Grebe** visited Lost Creek Lake (Jackson), where it was found by JK on Sep 28. A **Clark's Grebe** found by Dennis Vroman on Dec 1, 2020, was present until Jan 4, 2021, on the Rogue River west of Grants Pass (Josephine).

Two species of rare swift were recorded in the Rogue Valley this year. Doug Whitman spotted a lone **Black Swift** flying overhead near Prospect (Jackson) on May 18. The other rare swift was a **White-throated Swift**, which was found and photographed on Apr 6 at Lower Table Rock (Jackson) by James Livaudais, Gary Shaffer, and Norman Barrett. Howard Sands had a **Black-chinned Hummingbird** visit his home in Eagle Point (Jackson) on May 30. A second bird was found by FL at Pilot Rock (Jackson) on Jun 19.

Late in the year, residents of the Rogue Valley Manor (Jackson) noticed an unusual hummingbird that began to frequent the feeders in their penthouse gardens. L. Lee Purkenson recognized it as a **Costa's Hummingbird** and reported it on Nov 26. It continued to visit the garden through the end of the year and was seen by many, thanks to the hospitality of the Manor residents and staff.

A **Long-billed Curlew** spent several hours at Kirtland Ponds (Jackson) on Jun 13, where it was found by JK, Bob Hunter, and Norman Barrett. Two **Semipalmated Sandpipers** made appearances in Josephine County on the mudflats of Lake



Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

Solitary Sandpiper

Selmac. The first was found by Tanner Martin on Aug 12, and the second by Dennis Vroman on Aug 19. Josephine County also had unusually high numbers of **Solitary Sandpipers** this year. Zia Fukuda and Robert Wohlers found a pair at the Redwood Elementary School Wetlands on Apr 25, while another was present at Lake Selmac from Aug 12 to 14 (Tanner Martin).

**Franklin's Gulls** are a very rare sight in the valley, but this was a good year for them. Four individuals spent several hours at Agate Lake (Jackson County) on May 29 and were first discovered by Howard Sands, JK, Gary Shaffer, and James Livaudais. Another was found by John Vial at Emigrant Lake (Jackson) on Oct 31. Norman Barrett and James Livaudais found a **Herring Gull** at Lost Creek Lake (Jackson) on Oct 20, while Bob Hunter and Anne Goff spotted another at Emigrant Lake (Jackson) on Oct 31.

During a visit to Howard Prairie Lake (Jackson County) on May 24, Brodie Cass Talbott found and photographed a lone **Black Tern** flying over the lake. One **Forster's Tern** visited Agate Lake (Jackson) on May 27, where it was found by Norman Barrett.

**American White Pelicans** are surprisingly rare in Josephine County, but as many as six individuals remained at Lake Selmac from Sep 3 to Oct 9 (Tanner and Stephanie Martin). **Snowy Egrets** were reported in both Josephine and

Jackson Counties this year. Byron Kneller found one along the Rogue River in the general vicinity of the Robertson Bridge County Park (Josephine County) on Jun 9, while Jim Hostick found another at the Little Butte Creek unit of the Denman Wildlife Management Area (Jackson) on Jul 22. A female **Red-naped Sapsucker** found by Romain Cooper on Dec 1, 2020, at Riverside Park in Grants Pass (Josephine) continued until Jan 29, 2021. Tim Shelmerdine spotted an **Eastern Kingbird** in the meadows near Mount Ashland (Jackson) on Jul 25.

Reports of **Red-eyed Vireo** have increased since the discovery that they breed in Jackson County at the Rogue River Preserve, and Kristi Mergenthaler was the first to report a pair on Jun 5.

An unusual sighting for Josephine County was a **Black-billed Magpie** reported near Wolf Creek on Jan 18 by Tom Unsicker. An anonymous eBirder reported three **Bank Swallows** on a power line at Keene Creek Reservoir (Jackson) on Jul 20. Karl Schneck followed up on this report and found one at the same site on Jul 22. Tom Myers found a **Sage Thrasher** on Jun 28 along the Oak Savannah Loop trail at Lower Table Rock (Jackson).

One of the highlights of the year was a **PHAINOPEPLA**. It was first found and photographed by Tim Johnston at the Ave.G ponds of the Denman Wildlife Management Area (Jackson) on May 23. Although birders swarmed the area following his report, there was no sign of it until 12 days later, when he revisited the site and found it a second time on Jun 6. Several other local birders were able to see the elusive visitor, although unfortunately, it was never relocated after Jun 6.

Christiana Vojta found six **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** on Mount McLoughlin (Jackson) on Sep 24. Two others were

present at Mount Ashland (Jackson) on Oct 28 (FL). Dale Fisher found and photographed a **Lawrence's Goldfinch** visiting a feeder along Ashland Creek (Jackson) on Mar 23. Although many birders visited the area over the next couple of days, the only other sighting of the goldfinch was by Matt Cahill on

Mar 25. A few months later, Karl Schneck had one visit his home feeder northeast of Talent (Jackson), which he photographed on May 12.

**Lapland Longspurs** made appearances in both counties this year. Dennis Vroman found the first at Merlin Mill ponds (Josephine County) on Sep 7. Another was found at Lost Creek Lake in Jackson County on Oct 31 (JK) and a third at Kirtland Ponds (Jackson) on Oct 31 (FL).

Brewer's Sparrow, while still considered rare in the Rogue Valley, are numbers in Jackson County but are rare further west in Josephine County.

Two individuals were found at Bigelow Lakes (Josephine) by Tanner and Stephanie Martin on Aug 22. A lone **Black-throated Sparrow** showed up in the Rogue Valley this year. It was found by Dennis Vroman near the Grants Pass Airport



Lapland Longspur (non-breeding plumage)

Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

(Josephine) on Oct 9.

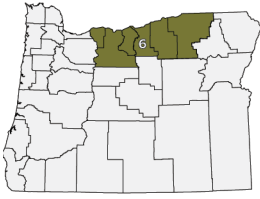
Marlowe Kissenger photographed a **Hooded Oriole** visiting her feeder in Grants Pass (Josephine) on May 27. One **Palm Warbler** also made an appearance at Kirtland Ponds on Oct 9 (JK).

#### Abbreviations:

FL - Frank Lospalluto

JK - Janet Kelly





## MID-COLUMBIA FIELD NOTES

HOOD RIVER, WASCO, SHERMAN, AND GILLIAM

JEFF HAYES

An estimated 240 Snow Geese were on the Columbia River east of Arlington (Gilliam) on Jan 25 (Mike and Merry Lynn Denny). Fall flocks were seen at Deschutes River State Park (DRSP; Audrey Addison, David Mandell (DM)); (JW1) and along Moody Rd, Wasco County (John Davis (JD)). A flock seen Nov 22 at DRSP contained a single **Ross's Goose** (Nolan Clements, Samantha Webb). In Gilliam County, 22 Greater White-fronted Geese were at Condon Sewage Ponds (CSP) Oct 1 (Linnaea Basden (LB), Joshua Meyers (JM)), while three lingered at Arlington Oct 8 through Dec. A high count of 95 was noted at The Hook, Hood River, Oct 2 (Isabel Brofsky).

Several observations were made of two to three Trumpeter Swans near Celilo (Wasco) from late Jan to mid-Feb. Up to seven Tundra Swans frequented CSP Mar 14–Apr 11, with small numbers also seen on the Columbia River from The Dalles eastward. Up to 12 birds were seen in Hood River in Nov.

Three records of Eurasian Wigeon were noted across the region Feb–Mar (Jen Sanford (JS), Silas Lewis (SL), Jay Withgott (JW)). At least four sightings occurred in Hood River and Wasco Counties Oct–Dec, with three birds at Viento State Park Dec 28 (Philip Kline, Nick Mrvelj (NM)). An adult male **TUFTED DUCK** was discovered Feb 4 at Viento SP (JD), while an immature male was seen at The Hook Nov 12 (Conor Scotland). Up to 15 **Surf Scoters** were observed along the Hood River waterfront Oct 10–24 (many observers). A few were also seen near The Dalles Dam, Oct–Nov. **Three White-winged Scoters** occurred on Dec 11 at Arlington (Christopher Hinkle (CH), Em Scatteregia (ES)), while a surprise **Black Scoter** was found Oct 31 on the Deschutes River near Maupin (SL). An immature male **Long-tailed Duck** was observed on Feb 5 and 22 at Arlington (LB, JM). A hybrid drake Common Goldeneye X Hooded Merganser was present at DRSP Mar 21–Apr 8 (DM, JS, David Bailey, JD). A female Red-breasted Merganser was at Mayer State Park (Wasco) on Jan 3 (Aaron Beerman (AB)); two were reported near Rufus (Sherman) on Dec 31 (Mason Sieges).

Red-necked Grebe has become increasingly regular in recent years, and birders made numerous sightings, Jan–early Apr, at Government Cove, Hood River waterfront, Mayer SP, and The Dalles, along with fall reports (Oct–mid-Nov) of single birds from Hood River east to the Deschutes River mouth. A few scattered Eared Grebes were noted along the Columbia River Jan–Mar., one was at Rock Creek Reservoir (Wasco) Apr

11 (SL, Brodie Cass Talbott (BCT)), 1–2 were at Hood River Oct 14–Dec 4, and two were at Viento SP Dec 28 (Philip Kline, NM). A Clark's Grebe graced The Dalles Marina Jan 15 (AB) and was seen through Mar 1, with other sightings at Hood River Marina May 10 (Jon Houghton) and The Hook Nov 14 (Andrew Solomon (AS)).

A lone **Black Swift** was reported over Hood River Meadow on the slopes of Mount Hood Aug 23 (Dan Cozart, Sean Cozart). **Anna's Hummingbirds** continue to increase throughout the region, with many winter reports from towns and even rural farms with feeders. **Two Virginia Rails** were heard on Jul 11 at the Powerdale Corridor marsh near Hood River (John Bishop (JB)), continuing through Sep 14. One was found Dec 26 at Biggs-Rufus frontage road ponds, Sherman County (Ken Hansen, Bill Tweit). A **Sora** appeared at the mouth of the Hood River (mHR) Aug 22 (JB, AS) for the first Hood River County occurrence since 2000. Two were found in Wasco County at Price Road Wetlands (PRW) on Dec 29 (Amy Hazel, SL, BCT), the second consecutive Tygh Valley CBC appearance for this species.

Black-necked Stilts were found in Gilliam and Sherman Counties in Apr, with 13 at CSP on Apr 17 (Gloria Beerman (GB)). Two were at Smock Rd May 5 (Bill Bradford, Lora Minty), the only Wasco County report. A single American Avocet was reported at The Dalles Riverfront Park (TDRP) Sep 9 (Stuart Johnston (SJ)), and a surprise **Marbled Godwit** appeared at mHR on May 6 (AS). The only spring migrant Sanderling was seen May 29–30 at mHR (JB, AS). This location hosted 1–2 birds Aug 17–Sep 17 (JB, AS, JS, JW), while one was at TDRP Sep 13 (SJ). Seven wintering Dunlin were reported from five locations (Cathy J. Flick (CJF), Stewart Fletcher, NM, Stefan Schlick (SS)).

Small numbers of **Baird's Sandpipers** were found mid-Aug–early Sep, as usual, while single Semipalmated Sandpipers were detected Aug 19 at TDRP (CJF, SJ), Aug 20 and 28 at CSP (LB, JM, Colby Neuman (CN); LB, JM), and Aug 21 at mHR (Andrew Aldrich). Two juvenile Short-billed Dowitchers were found along the Columbia River just east of Taylor Lake, The Dalles, Aug 17 (JW), and continued through Aug 22. A molting adult **Red Phalarope** was discovered Aug 17 at mHR (JW), photographed by many observers through Aug 23. A lone Spotted Sandpiper lingered at Hood River marina on Dec 31 (CJF). Solitary Sandpiper reports included one along Big Muddy Rd (Wasco) May 4 (Chase Birdsmore), one at Moro sewage



Green Heron

Photo by Nagi Aboulenein

ponds (Sherman) Sep 5 (DM), and two at Rutledge-Barnett ponds S of Grass Valley (Sherman) Sep 6 (Craig Miller). A Willet was found at the mouth of Chenowith Creek Aug 22 (Jeff Hayes), seen and seen and heard later that day (Jill Panches).

An adult **Parasitic Jaeger** appeared briefly at mHR Sep 18 (JB, DM). An adult **Sabine's Gull** was sighted at John Day Dam (JDD) spillway (Sherman) Sep 4–5 (LB, Ezra Cohen (EC), JM; DM), and a juvenile was located there Sep 16 (SS), continuing to Sep 21 (Samuel Holman (SH), DM, JS). A bird described as an adult appeared on Oct 1 at Arlington (LB, JM). A single Franklin's Gull was at CSP Apr 16 (LB, JM) for a possible (long overdue) first Gilliam County record. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** has become annual in winter along the greater Columbia River in recent years. In 2021, an adult and a second-cycle bird frequented the river at Lone Pine Drive, The Dalles, during late Feb. The second-cycle bird was discovered Feb 19 (Nolan Clements, Joshua Little). An adult was first seen on Feb 10 at the Deschutes River mouth (JW), and possibly the same bird was seen at The Dalles on Feb 20 (LB, JM, NM) and Feb 24 (Roger Robb). The younger bird was viewed again on Feb 21 (Jack Maynard, Kelli Van Norman, Patty Newland) and Feb 24 (Bob Lockett, Ed McVicker), while the adult was last seen on Feb 27 (Andrew Aldrich). An individual determined to be a third-cycle bird was seen Oct 24 at JDD (DM, JW). An adult was detected on Dec 3 at mHR (Lars Norgren). Another sighting of an adult bird occurred on Dec 26 at JDD (Ken Hansen, Bill Tweit).

An apparent first-cycle **Glaucous Gull** turned up at Port of Arlington on Feb 19 (LB, JM). Two Black Terns appeared at mHR on May 29 (AS), the only report for the year. One to six Common Terns frequented TDRP Aug 30–Sep 15 (Justin Cook, SJ, SS). Two were at mHR Sep 15 (AS; Karl Garrett), while three were

at Arlington Sep 19 (SH). A Forster's Tern was seen Aug 5 along I-84 E of Arlington (Quentin Nolan), and another was reported from the same general area Aug 16 (Carter Strobe), possibly the same bird. Likely the first Wasco County record, a juvenile **Arctic Tern** was spotted Sep 16 at TDRP (SS). A **Pacific Loon** found Jan 14 at TDRP (SS) remained in the area through Feb 5, seen by many birders. Late-fall reports involved at least six birds from four locations.

In what seems a now-annual occurrence, a small handful of American White Pelicans frequented the Columbia River from The Dalles Dam to near the mouth of the Deschutes River through the winter months. Unusual in January, two Great Egrets were seen east of The Dalles on Jan 12 (Clyde Moorhouse). December sightings included one near Mosier Dec 19 (Anne Tucker) and three birds at Taylor Lake Dec 19 (Jeff Hayes, Carolyn Wright). There were many reports of one or two Green Herons at Hood River from May 21–to Sep 20. Photos show both adult and immature birds. A late individual was seen Oct 30 at Stonegate Pond in residential Hood River (Tim Mayer).

A lingering Osprey was seen at least twice during the last week of Dec along the Deschutes River near Maupin (John Gambee, SL, Ken Hashagen). Juvenile Red-shouldered Hawks were seen on Jul 28 near Parkdale (Bob Lockett, Ed McVicker) and Aug 21 and Sep 2 at Juniper Flat and PRW, respectively (BCT). A Red-shouldered was heard repeatedly calling from deep cover at TDRP Sep 9 (SJ), while a juvenile passed over the Bonney Butte Hawk Watch Sep 16 (Isaac Grosner, Cassidy Ruge, Jesse Watson). Single **Broad-winged Hawks** appeared at Bonney Butte on five occasions between Sep 3 and Sep 20 (many observers). Only one Ferruginous Hawk was reported during

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the breeding season along Bakeoven Road in SE Wasco County on May 24 (Kate Atkins). One was west of Maupin Nov 3 (SL). An apparent wintering bird discovered in Tygh Valley on Dec 28 (BCT, Cindy Zalunardo, Judy Meredith) continued into Jan 2022. Another wintering bird found Dec 27 near Willow Creek Wildlife Area (Matt Cahill) continued into Jan 2022 across the line in Morrow County.

A single Burrowing Owl found just south of Grass Valley on Jun 6 (Jeff Dillon) was seen again on Jun 15 (Tom Myers). A Long-eared Owl was sighted Mar 21 in the John Day River canyon in S Sherman County (Marie Gaylord). Short-eared Owl records include one east of Wasco (Sherman) Jan 30 (AB, GB, Stan Beerman), one near Kent (Sherman) Jul 4 (Ryan Bart), and one near Tygh Valley Dec 29 (Amy Hazel, SL, BCT).

Up to nine Acorn Woodpeckers were noted throughout the year along Shadybrook Rd, Tygh Valley (John Gамbee, others). Acorns were also seen nearby along Badger Creek Rd (Bill Bradford, Lora Minty, Ryan Gallagher). There were also a few scattered reports from the Mosier area, across the Columbia River from the well-known population around Lyle, Washington. A juvenile Black Phoebe was discovered at mHR on Jul 26 (JB, AS). Another presumed juvenile appeared Sep 3 at Maupin (BCT). Apparent wintering Say's Phoebes were found in Maupin (SL, BCT) and at DRSP (many observers). A **Red-eyed Vireo** was found singing in the oak forest at the river access at Viento SP on Jul 19 (Russ Namitz, Leisyka Parrott).

Occasional in winter on the Columbia Plateau, a Loggerhead Shrike was found north of Condon on Jan 16 (Andrew Aldrich). A wandering Clark's Nutcracker appeared on Dec 28 at Willow Creek Rd in NE Gilliam County (Peter Feinberg). Purple Martins were found Apr–Aug along the Columbia River from Cascade Locks to The Dalles, with breeding noted by many observers at the mouth of Chenoweth Creek and at Mayer SP (BCT). Two very early Barn Swallows were at Lone Pine viewpoint in The Dalles on Jan 29 (CH), continuing a recent trend of wintertime swallows in the Pacific Northwest. A territorial Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was discovered in Wasco County on Jun 3 along Forest Rd 2710 north of Rock Creek Res. (Mike Clarke). Although many birders searched the area through Jun 24, only one bird was detected, and breeding status remained undetermined. A single **Bohemian Waxwing** was found amongst Cedar Waxwings in Arlington on Dec 11 (CH, ES), found again on Dec 24 (LB, CH, JM, ES).

A single **Pine Grosbeak** was reported: a singing and calling male along Badger Creek Rd May 26 (Don Berg). A flock of 508 **Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches** was found on Jan 15 on Lonerock Rd, Gilliam County (AB, Stan Beerman), and up to 120 were on Lost Valley Rd Nov 13–Dec 17 (LB, JM, CN, Patty Newland). Two

were found on the north slope of Mount Hood on Jul 10 (JB). A **Common Redpoll** was found in western Wasco County on Nov 24 (CN). Reports picked up in Dec, with five birds on Trail Fork Rd (Gilliam) Dec 5 (Craig Miller), up to 12 on Lost Valley Rd Dec 10-11 (LB, JD, JM, CN), one in Arlington Dec 22 (CH, ES), and a flock of 32 in the White River Game Management Area near Tygh Valley Dec 29 (Joseph Blowers). Single Lapland Longspurs were noted on Jan 28 (Scott Canyon Rd, Sherman; SS), Feb 16 (NW of Condon; Tom Myers), Dec 24 (E of Condon; LB, EC, JM), and Dec 29–30 (Tygh Valley; Judy Meredith, BCT, Cindy Zalunardo).

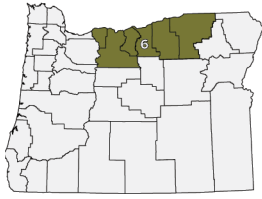
There was only one reliable report of **Grasshopper Sparrow** for the year, a single bird seen on Jun 18 on Lost Valley Rd (LB, EC, JM). A surprise winter Chipping Sparrow was encountered in Arlington on Jan 29 (CH). A **Harris's Sparrow** visited a feeder in Maupin on Dec 20 and 30 and continued intermittently into Jan 2022 (SL, BCT). Single White-throated Sparrows were noted at six locations during the year. Three reports of single Green-tailed Towhees came from Big Muddy Rd and environs in SE Wasco County May 5-14 (Chase Birdsmore, SH).

Widespread sightings of 30 or fewer Tricolored Blackbirds came from sites in N Sherman County and central Wasco County Jan–Mar (many observers). At least 60 were at the Hay Canyon silos in Sherman County on Mar 6 (AB). Known breeding locations in Wasco County hosted birds Mar-Jun, and there were sightings in Dec. The warbler highlight of the year was the **Northern Waterthrush** discovered Aug 28 near the parking area at Willow Creek Wildlife Area, Gilliam County (LB, JM). An apparent wintering Orange-crowned Warbler showed up in residential Hood River Jan 18 (SJ), and an early Townsend's Warbler was noted Mar 27 at Viento SP (GB).

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#### Abbreviations:

AB – Aaron Beerman	JB – John Bishop
AS – Andrew Solomon	JD – John Davis
BCT – Brodie Cass Talbott	JDD – John Day Dam
CH – Christopher Hinkle	JM – Joshua Meyers
CJF – Cathy J. Flick	JS – Jen Sanford
CN – Colby Neuman	JW – Jay Withgott
CSP – Condon Sewage Ponds	LB – Linnaea Basden
DM – David Mandell	mHR – Mouth of Hood River
DRSP – Deschutes River State Park	NM – Nick Mrvelj
EC – Ezra Cohen	SH – Samuel Holman
ES – Em Scatteregia	SJ – Stuart Johnston
GB – Gloria Beerman	SL – Silas Lewis
	SS – Stefan Schlick



## MID-COLUMBIA FIELD NOTES

### MORROW AND UMATILLA COUNTIES

NOLAN CLEMENTS

Several Ross's Geese were present among the large wintering flocks of Snow Geese in both Umatilla and Morrow Counties. Sean Cozart reported two Trumpeter Swans at McCormack Slough at Umatilla National Wildlife Refuge (Morrow) on Jan 31, and Mark Ludwick (ML) reported five more at the same location on Nov 28. Surf Scoters were reported five times in the fall of 2020 in the Eastern Columbia region, twice in Morrow, and three times in Umatilla.

ML found a **White-winged Scoter** at Hat Rock State Park (Umatilla) on Nov 8. Mike and MerryLynn Denny sighted a female **Black Scoter** with two **Long-tailed Ducks** at Warehouse Beach Recreation Area (Umatilla) on Nov 20. There were three reports of Red-breasted Merganser in Morrow Co. in 2020; four were reported by Pete Szasz (PS) at Quesna County Park on Feb 22, one was at Umatilla NWR on Feb 28 (Phil Bartley), and Neal Hinds (NH) found one at the Boardman Marina on Nov 7.

Aaron Skirvin (AS) heard a Mountain Quail vocalizing near Tower Burn (Umatilla) on May 25. This species is notoriously challenging to find in the northeastern portion of the Blue Mountains, and Aaron's bird was the only individual reported in the area in 2021.

White-throated Swifts returned to cliffs near the town of Reith (Umatilla,) where they nest most years.

Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge (CSNWR - Umatilla) hosted a large number of exceptionally rare shorebirds in 2020. An **American Golden-Plover** was found at CSNWR on Sep 29 by Trent Bray. ML found two Marbled Godwits at WBRA on Apr 29. A Marbled Godwit was seen at CSNWR on Aug 1 (M, L) and Aaron, Stan, and Gloria Beerman reported two from the same location on Aug 16. A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** was found by ML at CSNWR on Sep 28. Ian Davies found a Stilt Sandpiper at CSNWR on Sep 1. A Sanderling was also at CSNWR on Aug 7 (ML), and another was at the Boardman Marina on Aug 29 (NH). NH found a Willet at the Boardman Sewage Ponds (Morrow) on May 9.

The first Morrow Co. record of **Black-legged Kittiwake** was photographed by Benjamin Moore at the Irrigon Wildlife Viewing Area on Nov 26. Single Sabine's Gulls were seen at both the McNary Dam (Umatilla) on Sep 26 (ML) and at CSNWR on Sep 11 (ML). A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found by Dave Trochlell and Rebecca Hartman at Standfield Meadows



Adobe Stock Image

American Golden-Plover

(Umatilla) on Feb 20. This is one of fewer than five records for the county. The first Umatilla Co. record of **Heerman's Gull** was sighted just above McNary Dam on Dec 22 (Stefan Schlick). While chasing the Heerman's Gull, Christopher Lindsay found a **Glaucous Gull** at the same location on the same day. Two Black Terns were found by AS at McKay Creek National Wildlife Refuge (Umatilla) on May 19. AS also found two Common Terns at the same location on Aug 26. ML found an **Arctic Tern** accompanying 10 Common Terns at WBRA on Aug 12.

A Red-throated Loon was seen at the McNary Beach Recreation Area (Umatilla) on Feb 19 (Kent Coe). Chris Hinkle found a Pacific Loon at the McNary Dam on Nov 1, and Trent Bray (TB) saw two more on the Ukiah Sewage Ponds (Umatilla) on Nov 9.

A **Green Heron** was found at the River Parkway in Pendleton (Umatilla) on Jun 30 (Aaron Skirvin, Rocky, and Diana Dillenburg). White-faced Ibis were reported several times in both counties in late spring. NH found a **Red-shouldered Hawk** at the Irrigon Marina Park on Jan 4. This may be the first Morrow Co. record.

An American Three-toed Woodpecker was found along Skyline Rd. (Umatilla) by ML on Jun 20. This species is an



Adobe Stock Image

### Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches

uncommon breeder and is rarely found in the high spruce forests of the Blue Mountains.

Both counties had several reports of Gray Flycatchers in the fall. Single Ash-throated Flycatchers were reported at Anson Wright County Park (Morrow) on Jun 27 (Craig Bennett) and south of Athena on Jun 1 (Dena Turner).

Morrow Co.'s first record of **Hutton's Vireo**, found in 2019, continued into 2020 and was observed by PS at the Boardman Marina on Jan 3. Red-eyed Vireos bred along the Umatilla River east of Pendleton. There were seven individual Blue Jays in the Eastern Columbia region in 2020; six in Umatilla Co. and one in Morrow Co.

A pair of Bushtits were reported, presumably nesting, along the Texas Bar Rd. (Umatilla) by Diana LaSarge and AS (May 9).

This represents one of few nesting records for the county. A late Gray Catbird was found along Threemile Canyon Rd. (Morrow) on Nov 15 (PS). AS sighted one of Umatilla Co.'s only records of **Northern Mockingbird** east of McKay Reservoir on Sep 20.

A Bohemian Waxwing was seen in residential Pendleton on Feb 17 (Carolyn Featherston). Kent Coe had three Pine Grosbeaks while skiing near Meacham (Umatilla) on Jan 8. 100 Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches were found at the gravel pit along Hale Ridge Rd. (Morrow) on Dec 19 (Lora Minty and Bill Bradford). On Dec 5, Richard Laubach found two Purple Finches at McNary Wildlife Nature Area (Umatilla). Colby Neuman heard a White-winged Crossbill as it flew over Little Goodman Ridge (Umatilla) on Jul 16. This species disperses in small numbers into the Blue and Wallowa Mountains from mid-Jul to late Aug and is reported at least once a year during that time frame.

A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found at Umatilla NWR on

Aug 26 by Jon Isacoff. This represents one of only a handful of records for Morrow Co. Four American Tree Sparrows, a difficult species to locate in the Eastern Columbia region, were found at Umatilla NWR by Erik Ostrander and Hannah Buschert on Oct 19. Umatilla Co. only had one report of Harris's Sparrow in 2020 from WBRA on Nov 20 (Carolyn Featherston). Umatilla Co. had four total reports of White-throated Sparrow throughout the year. Trent Bray and ML found a Swamp Sparrow at WBRA on Mar 8, and Chris Hinkle found another at the McNary Dam Nature Trail on Nov 11. Green-tailed Towhees were found breeding in several places in the northern foothills of the Blue Mountains in Umatilla Co.

The Tricolored Blackbird colony along Tower Rd. (Morrow) has shrunk over the past several years. Where there once were 100 or more breeding individuals, in 2020, there was only one reported at the location (Tom Myers). However, six were seen south of the colony on Apr 2 (PS). This species occurs much less frequently in neighboring Umatilla Co. In 2020, one was reported at CSNWR on May 13 (Travis Chaney), and an adult male was found with a large mixed blackbird flock east of Helix on Dec 25 (Nolan Clements, Arlene Blumton, Steve Clements). Aaron Beerman found a **Great-tailed Grackle** at the Tower Rd. truck stop on Jul 31. This represents one of the county's first records.

In 2020, there were 216 species reported in Morrow Co. and 254 in Umatilla Co., according to eBird.

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#### Abbreviations:

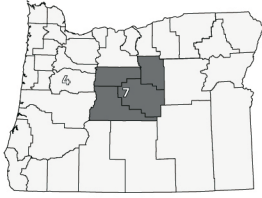
AS - Aaron Skirvin

CSNWR - Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge

ML - Mark Ludwick

NH - Neal Hinds

PS - Pete Szasz



## CENTRAL OREGON FIELD NOTES

CROOK, DESCHUTES, JEFFERSON, AND WHEELER COUNTIES

CHUCK GATES

It was a banner year for waterfowl in Central Oregon. **Ross's Geese** were found at six locations with a high count of seven birds seen at HL on Apr 4 by Chuck Gates (CG). A hybrid (EUWI X AMWI) wigeon was spotted at Hatfield Lake (HL) on Oct 24 by Peter Low (PL) and Mark Gonzalez (MG). **Black Scoters** were recorded at Suttle Lake (SL) on Oct 28 by Tom Crabtree (TC) and at Wickiup Reservoir (WR) by Matt Cahill (MC) on Nov 1. **White-winged Scoters** were tallied at a record five different locations, with SL producing the high count of three birds on Oct 27 by Howard Horvath and Mary Oppenheimer. **Long-tailed Ducks** were located at SL on Nov 22 by TC and on WR by PL on Nov 26. **Red-breasted Mergansers** were tallied by Wink Gross at Hatfield Lake - HL on May 19, Alec McDonnell on Sep 21 at SL, and at WR on Nov 27 by MC.

After the only publicly viewable Greater Sage-Grouse lek was abandoned, locals were happy to hear of a new location in the Millican Valley, discovered by Colby Neuman on Mar 26. Another group of Sage-Grouse was found at the Camp Creek Corrals on Aug 18 by Cindy Zalunardo. Other gamebird news included Kim Kathol's discovery of three Dusky Grouse found for the first time on the Prineville Christmas Bird Count and the only report of that species from our area in 2021. Chukars remain hard to find in Deschutes County, so a report of 12 birds by Mary Ellen Collentine on Oct 9 at Whychus Creek Canyon was a nice surprise. **Band-tailed Pigeons** were reported from a record 13 different locations.

The only unusual hummingbird seen this year was a **COSTA'S HUMMINGBIRD** found by CJ Carpenter in Terrebonne on Sep 21. It was later photographed and confirmed by TC.

Shorebirds often produce some of the most exciting news in our area because we tend to get good numbers coming through in spring and fall. **Black-bellied Plovers** are, somewhat surprisingly, unusual in Central Oregon, with only three sightings last year: One at Houston Lake on Jul 27 by MG and one at Ochoco Reservoir on Oct 27 by Judy Meredith (JM), and one at WR on Nov 6 by PL. The only **American Golden-Plover** report this year came from JM at the Crooked River Wetlands on May 12. **Snowy Plovers** turned up at HL on May 5 and were found by PL, at Camp Creek Corrals by JM and Diane Burgess on May 31, and twice at the CRW: on May 30 by Heidi Erland and Kari Freiboth and on Sep 4 by CG. A single **Whimbrel** was



Photo by Chuck Gates

A pair of Sanderlings wading in Prineville Reservoir.

heard calling on the Deschutes County side of Davis Lake by PL on Aug 8. One **Marbled Godwit** showed up at HL and was documented by PL on Jun 26.

A **Ruddy Turnstone** was found on HL by MC on Aug 18, and another was seen at Redmond Sewer Ponds on Aug 19 by David Vick. A first county record of a **RUFF** was found in Crook County's PR on Sep 6 by CG. For a second county record, PL found a **SHARP-TAILED SANDPIPER** at WR on Oct 30. Normally, **Sanderling** would be considered a rare bird, but over 20 sightings were reported this year, with a high count of nine on WR by MC on a canoe trip around the lake. On Sep 11. **Short-billed Dowitchers** were located at Tumalo Reservoir (May 1 by MC), at PR (Aug 22 by Steve Kornfeld), and twice at HL (May 6 by Vickie Buck and Aug 17 by Dean Angiola).

Jaegers are far from annual visitors to Central Oregon. A **Parasitic Jaeger** was seen at WR on Sep 18 by PL. The next day, a Parasitic Jaeger turned up at Crane Prairie (CP), just a few miles away. The second bird was discovered by MC. PL also found a **Long-tailed Jaeger** at CP Reservoir on Sep 18.

It's not often that Larids lead the rare bird parade locally, but 2021 showed unprecedented numbers in both species and individuals of rare species. Craig Miller (CM) found

two Sabine's Gulls (1 adult, one immature) on Sep 7 & 11, respectively, at PR. Two more Sabine's Gulls were seen on WR by Bill Tice on Sep 29 and by TC on Oct 31. Franklin's Gulls were reported on 19 different days, including a high count of 117 by PL at WR on May 16, which is also the all-time high count for this species in our area. On the other end of the spectrum, a

lone **Heerman's Gull** was photographed on Oct 19 in Bend by Don Sutherland. Until this year, there has never been a year when multiple **Short-billed Gulls** were found. 2021 produced at least five birds and possibly six, including Crook County's second record seen by CG at the Prineville Sewer Ponds on Apr 15. **Herring Gulls** were reported nine times from various locations. **Iceland Gulls** were found at HL on May 16 by TC and at SL by CM on Oct 23 and twice on SL: by TC on Oct 14 and by CM and Marilyn Miller on Oct 23. Before 2021, **Glaucous-winged Gull** had only been recorded in Central Oregon ten times. This species was found in 4 different locations just this year: a juvenile

found by PL at CP on Sep 18, an adult found by MG on Sep 19 at Davis Lake, at WR on Oct 31 by TC, and by PL at the Old Mill in Bend on Dec 27. **Common Terns** were spotted at WR on Sep 5 by PL, at HL on Sep 18 by CM, and at the CRW on Sep 24 by Jim Soupier.

While Common Loon is indeed common in Central Oregon, **Red-throated Loon** is not. A single Red-throated Loon was noted at WR on Oct 30 by PL.

On the heron front, a fly-by **Snowy Egret** was reported from the CRW on Oct 30, noting the black bill and yellow feet. The observer was Bob Authier, and this was the second county record. Green Herons were seen at Ryan Meadow in Bend by Milt Vine on Jul 7 and at Black Butte Ranch on Sep 9 by Jack Williamson. A rare Deschutes County **Black-crowned Night-heron** showed up in Bend along the Deschutes River on Jul

15 and was reported by Jaquiline Newbold. Only one diurnal raptor made this rare bird report. A single **BROAD-WINGED HAWK** was recorded by the East Cascades Audubon Green Ridge Hawkwatch team led on Oct 18 by John Kendall.

Nocturnal Raptors are under-reported due to their nighttime habits, and many people abhor any reference to them



Photo by James Greer

A Barred Owl casts a watchful eye from a pine perch in Sisters

in rare bird reports due to disturbance concerns. With that in mind, this summary of owls will be brief and non-specific. Great Gray Owl reports came in from southern Deschutes County on roughly ten occasions, with most regarding the same pair of birds. Crook County produced two different reports from different parts of the Ochoco Mountains. Barred Owls were spotted at over a dozen different locations throughout the area. Short-eared Owls have been turning up in Crook and Jefferson for quite a few years, but Deschutes has not often shared in this fortune. A rare summertime Deschutes report came in from Sunriver on Jun 27 by Kara Jakse and Diane Burgess. A wintering bird

was noted in Alfalfa on Dec 27 by PL.

American Three-toed Woodpecker sightings are always of interest to birders. This species was reported from ten separate locations in Deschutes County. That is much higher than the normal number. Even more unusual was a sighting in Crook County at Scott CG in the Ochoco NF by Wes Hoyer on May 5.

The Passerines comprise the largest bird order, with more than half of the bird species in the world under its umbrella. It should come as no surprise that Passerines fill the largest paragraph in a rare bird report. **Eastern Kingbirds** were found in Jefferson, Crook, and Deschutes counties, with about twice the normal number of reports. A **Least Flycatcher** was found by Joe Blowers at the Shady Grove Rest Area in Wheeler County on Jun 7 for a first county record. Once a very rare bird in our region, the **Black Pheobe** showed up in seven relatively

widespread locations. **Blue Jays** were seen in Crooked River Ranch on Oct 22 by Sue Holt, in LaPine on Oct 31 by Ondi Hibbs, and in Bend on Nov 16 by Kareese Rybarczyk. A **Pacific Wren** was seen at Borden Beck on Jan 16 by PL for a first Jan record. **Gray Catbird** reports numbered six and **Northern Mockingbirds** eight, which placed both data sets at the top of their historical column. A pair of breeding **Veery** was located at Black Butte Ranch on Jun 6 by Jeff Nordstrom.

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finches were found at seven locations with a high count of 35, seen by Lisa Cowan and Evan Thomas at SRSP on Jan 14. It was a big year for **Common Redpolls**, with birds reported at over a dozen locations, all but one in Deschutes County. **White-winged Crossbills** were also seen in near-record numbers, including a high count of 30 seen by Don Sutherland and Evan Thomas on the Many Lakes Trail on Dec 7 and a rare Jefferson County record from Suttle Lake. by Don Sutherland on Dec 2. Mike Mayer found a **Black-backed Lesser Goldfinch** on May 22 at his feeders in Bend.

**Lapland Longspurs** were spotted on Harmon Road near Hampton by PL on Jan 24 and at WR by TC on Nov 3. The SRSP **Black-throated Sparrows** appeared to have nested again this year, according to a sighting by Aaron Jenkins on May 14 and multiple others throughout the late spring. Crook County celebrated its second record of Black-throated Sparrow when a singing male was discovered by MG in Powell Butte on Jul 1. **American Tree Sparrows** were at WR on Oct 31, according to TC, and were photographed by Sevilla Rhoads at Tumalo State Park on Nov 3. **Harris's Sparrows** were noted in the Tumalo area by Loren Gard on Feb 14, in Bend by Diane Burgess and Kara Jakse on Oct 30, and at Wickiup Reservoir on Oct 31 by Caleb Centanni and Courtney Kelly Jetti. Jefferson County does not generate many **White-throated Sparrow** reports, so these were noteworthy: Crooked River CG on Oct 22 by CG, Suttle Lake on Oct 23 by CM and Marilyn Miller, and Camp Sherman on Dec 23 by Ron Sears. **Swamp**



Photo by Chuck Gates

Northern Mockingbird



Photo by Chuck Gates

Rusty Blackbird

**Sparrows** can sometimes be found in Deschutes County, but a bird is found at Suttle Lake. On Nov 28, gave Jim Moodie and many others a rare Jefferson County tick. Steve Dougill found another Swamp Sparrow at Crooked River Park in Prineville on Dec 28.

Eastern Crook County Bobolink numbers reported by CG and Ken Chamberlain were down to 3 birds on May 18 due to extremely dry conditions. Tricolored Blackbird reports came in from many areas, but a new breeding colony found by CG on Apr 27 near Metolius was exciting.

**RUSTY BLACKBIRDS** were found at Culver on Nov 16 by JM and at the Knott Landfill in Bend by CG on Dec 18. A **COMMON GRACKLE** was seen at Sunriver on Mar 3 by Milt Vine, and a **GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE** report came in from the Little Deschutes River by Wink Gross on May 15. Cindy Zalunardo reported seeing a **Northern Waterthrush** on her pond in Powell Butte on Sep 12, and Brian McDonald found a **MAGNOLIA WARBLER** along the Paulina Peak Trail on Jun 20 for a sixth Deschutes County record.

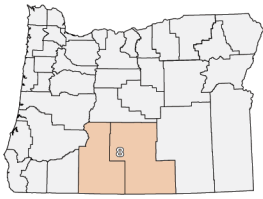
**AMERICAN REDSTARTS** were located at Glaze Meadow in Sisters by PL on Jun 7 and at Bend's Sawyer Park by Diane Burgess on Sep 30. Central Oregon's first record of **BAY-BREASTED WARBLER** was found near Sunriver and photographed by Sevilla Rhoads on Jun 15. A **Summer Tanager** showed briefly in southern Bend on Sep 20 and was documented by Jim Moodie.

#### Abbreviations:

CG - Chuck Gates  
 CM - Craig Miller  
 CP - Crane Prairie  
 HL - Hatfield Lake  
 JM - Judy Meredith  
 MC - Matt Cahill  
 MG - Mark Gonzalez

PL - Peter Low  
 PR - Prineville Reservoir  
 SL - Suttle Lake  
 SRSP - Smith Rock State Park  
 TC - Tom Crabtree  
 WR - Wickiup Reservoir





## SOUTH-CENTRAL OREGON FIELD NOTES

### KLAMATH AND LAKE COUNTIES

KEVIN SPENCER

The year 2021 was an unprecedented drought year. Many areas and locations were affected by the lack of water. Wetlands especially were limited or completely dry. Significantly large wildfires consumed huge tracts of forest, including the “Bootleg” fire, and the fires’ smoke also created hazardous air quality conditions. It was a very hot summer with very low humidity.

An early Surf Scoter was seen at Summer Lake WMA Sep 15 (Brandon Reishus and Andrea Mott). Other high Cascades Mountain Lakes also had October and November reports by numerous observers. One **White-winged Scoter** was with nine Surf Scoters at Odell Lake on Nov 19, reported by Matt Cahill.

**Long-tailed Duck** reports in Klamath included: one along the Klamath River Canyon near Keno, May 13, by Elijah Hayes (EH) and seen by others, and one on Nov 13, photographed by Mary Williams Hyde, at Putnam’s Point, which lingered for a month. A Red-breasted Merganser was seen by Noah Strycker on Apr 16, far inland at Summer Lake WMA, last reported on May 9.

Numerous Mountain Quail detections in Lake County show expanding populations: May 3, north end of 290 Road of Winter Rim (Craig Miller), and on Apr 23, Casey Storey recorded two below Government Harvey Pass on Winter Rim.

Over in the Warner Mountains, Mud Creek Campground, Cindy Zalunardo, and Colleen Pigeon saw a single on May 15.

A Costa’s Hummingbird was seen at a feeder on Apr 12 in Klamath Falls by Mike Neuman.

A **Red Knot** in breeding plumage was seen at Summer Lake WMA on May 15 (Kayla McCurry and Melia Tichenor). Solitary Sandpiper was seen at Summer Lake WMA, Lake County, on several dates: one on May 3 by Roger Robb, one on Jul 29, and two on Aug 14-15 by Craig Miller. Two at Jackson Kimball State Park, Klamath, were seen by Nolan Clemens on Aug 14. A Parasitic Jaeger at Summer Lake WMA was first seen by Craig Miller on Sep 19.

Sabine’s Gulls reported in Klamath included: one at Shoalwater Bay, Sep 27 by Julie Van Moorhem, and Oct 3, by Dave Haupt (DH). From Sep 29 to Oct 8, a Sabine’s Gull at Summer Lake WMA was first reported by Brandon Reihus. An immature Iceland Gull (Thayer’s), Dec 3, Lake Ewauna by EH, lingered into the next year.



Photo by Mary Williams Hyde

A Long-tailed Duck captured at Putnam’s Point.

Quite surprising was a rare gull by DH, a **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**, at Lake Ewauna (Klamath), from Feb 28 to Mar 22, and seen/photographed by many. Later in the year, another LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL was first seen by DH on Nov 28 and was highly suspected to be the same individual seen earlier in the fall near Portland.

There is speculation that it may be a *Larus fuscus heuglini/taimyrensis*. Seen and photographed by others until Dec 28. Four Common Terns, four , were at Hank’s Marsh, Klamath, on Sep 12 by Julie Van Moorhem, well after Forster’s Tern had departed the area. On Jun 1, a Green Heron was seen at Summer Lake WMA by W. Douglas Robinson.

A single Broad-winged Hawk flew over Modoc Point, Klamath, during a hawk watch on Sep 13, by DH and Kevin Spencer. At Wocus Bay, Klamath NWR, Klamath, a Red-naped Sapsucker, was photographed on May 15 by Jason Bishop.

Eastern Kingbirds showed up at a Klamath County location for the third known year, near Willow Valley Reservoir, first seen Jun 12 by EH, with two later seen by Kevin Spencer, but a nest was not found.

A willow patch had a Least Flycatcher calling away at Summer Lake WMA on May 30 (David Mandell). Shiloh Rasmussen heard, and audio recorded another at Klamath Marsh NWR on Jun 29. Black Phoebe reports in Lake included: by Milton Vine, Sep 29, Summer Lake WMA, and at Ana Reservoir, by Harold Erland, Sep 10, and Cherry Williams, Dec 14.



Photo by Mary Williams Hyde

A pair of Trumpeter Swans shares a marsh with a variety of geese.

A singing Hutton's Vireo was detected by Steve Kornfeld and observed later by others along a trail of mixed conifer containing Incense Cedar near Aspen Lake, Klamath, on Apr 9. Photographs by Nina Wolf provided support for interesting views of a probable Black-capped x Mountain Chickadee hybrid, also seen by a group led by Alex Lamoreaux, at the town of Fort Klamath, on Jun 30.

Northern Mockingbirds in Lake included: near Six Pack Reservoir #4, May 18 by Mark Sterns; Paisley, on May 29, by Carl Lundblad; North of Abert Lake, Jun 6, by Shawneen Finnegan and Dave Irons, and Plush Community Park had a continuing Northern Mockingbird (Nolan Clemens, Samantha Webb, Cindy Zalunardo), Oct 16 through Dec 14.

Swainson's Thrush was reported by Tom Mikel at Coyote Creek, Lake, on Jun 11. Two **COMMON REDPOLLS** were seen foraging on Rabbitbrush seeds on Dec 15, near Hart Mountain Refuge HQ, Lake (Cindy Zalunardo, Colleen Pidgeon, Linda St.-Cyr). In Klamath County, Common Redpolls were seen at Hagelstein Park, two, Nov 11 (EH), Harbor Isles golf course, two, Dec 18 (Dave Haupt), Klamath Falls Moyina neighborhood, 25, Dec 19 (Isaac and Caylen Kelsey), and Topsy Reservoir, two, Dec 20, (Frank Lospalluto).

One **WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL** was astutely recorded along Snell Lake Trail, Aug 28, by Carl Lundblad. Lapland Longspur, 1, was heard out along the Summer Lake playa on

Nov 5 ("ER"). A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was seen at Wood River Wetlands Oct 21 by Kevin Spencer. Summer Lake WMA had a Harris's Sparrow, Ap 4-18 (Chris Johnson), and chip calls of another was recorded at Wood River Wetlands by EH, Dec 17.

A Sagebrush Sparrow was Klamath County's second record, May 30, at Klamath Marsh NWR, by Kate Atkins, Thomas Magarian, and Jeremy Welch. A pair of Yellow-breasted Chat was at Goose Lake State Park, Lake, during the breeding season on Jun 19 (Gloria Beerman). A lone Tricolored Blackbird was recorded at Summer Lake WMA by Noah Strycker on Apr 16, and three males were seen on Jun 5 in Paisley (Shawneen Finnegan and Dave Irons).

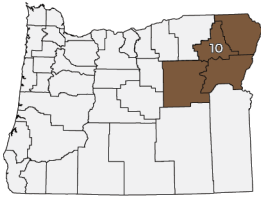
At Mud Creek Campground, a Northern Waterthrush was seen and heard by Mark Stevens on May 17. A Black and White Warbler was photographed and audio recorded at Silver Lake on May 17 by Carl Lundblad. An American Redstart was seen in Lakeview, Lake, on May 22, by Diane Thomas.

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**Abbreviations:**

EH - Elijah Hayes

DH - Dave Haupt



# NORTHEAST OREGON FIELD NOTES

## GRANT COUNTY

TOM WINTERS

**G**rant County, being primarily mountainous and forested, lacks large tracts of water and shoreline. And with limited north-south corridors in the county, waterfowl, and shorebirds common elsewhere are rare sightings here.

Unusual sightings in 2021 included a **Greater Scaup** reported at Clyde Holliday State Park in August by Anne Frost; two sightings of **Whimbrel** – the first from Fox Valley on Apr 4 (Barb Miller-Sohr) and the other from Logan Valley on Jun 12 (Tom Winters); and a Common Loon on Magone Lake on Jul 14 (Steve Quick).

Mountain Quail sightings were along Canyon Creek and in the Aldrich Mountains-South Fork John Day River area. Common Poorwills were reported from several locations, all from the southern third of the county. A Broad-tailed Hummingbird visited a feeder near John Day in late July and early August (Clarence and Marilyn O'Leary). An American Bittern was found in John Day on May 8 (Connor Langan - CL) and in Silvies Valley (SV) on Jun 4 (Joshua Little).

Eight species of owls were reported this year. Not only were Flammulated Owls found in the Starr Ridge-Fall Mountain area but also along Murderers Creek on May 27 (Ryan Rickman) and east of Seneca on Jun 8 (CL). There were several Great Gray Owl reports, but location details were sparse, except for the regular visitation to my front yard in the fall. One Short-eared Owl was reported from near Granite Oct 31 (Wayne Bowers).

There was also a single report of a Northern Saw-whet Owl from Starr Ridge Oct 27 (Andy Frank, Philip Kline, and Nick Mrvelj). Wayne Bowers found an American Three-toed Woodpecker north of Granite. Merlin sightings occurred in January, April, November, and December. There were five Peregrine Falcon sightings: John Day Fossil Beds on May 22 (Aaron Beerman and Gloria Beerman), Strawberry Wilderness on Jun 18 (Drew Meyer), north of Kimberly on Jul 12 (Tom Mickel), Picture Gorge on Jul 18 (Dan and Sean Cozart), and Bear Valley Jul 18 (Jill Punches).

The only Least Flycatcher report was from along the North River Road near Prairie City on Jun 19 (Dan Williams). There still seems to be some confusion separating the Western Flycatcher species, Pacific-slope and Cordilleran, as even eBird melds together Cordilleran/Western.

Over the years, most sightings have been from higher elevations in the county, but there was one report of a Pacific

slope in John Day, May 23 (Mike Bohannon). A **Red-eyed Vireo** from Clyde Holliday State Park was reported Sep 10 (Mark Gonzales).

The Blue Jays that arrived last fall stayed in Mount Vernon through April. There were scattered sightings of Bushtits in the winter, one in the spring in Dayville on May 22 (Aaron and Gloria Beerman), and some were found on the John Day Christmas Bird Count on Dec 18. Bohemian Waxwings also appeared in Prairie City and in John Day in December.

All Sage Thrasher sightings were in SV. A **Veery** was reported along the Middle Fork John Day River downstream from Bates State Park on Jul 14 (Kayla McCurry). American Pipits were along Dixie Creek in February (Karen Jacobs and Jim Soupier), on Snow Mountain in Sep (Maitreya 7), and along Murderers Creek Oct 18 (Char Corkran and CJ Flick). A Pine Grosbeak was found near Trout Creek Campground on Jul 22 (Mike Bohannon). Common Redpolls arrived in November with the first sighting by Mike Bohannon while doing a raptor count survey in Fox Valley. Reports continued through December in the John Day Valley.

The second Grant County report of a **Grasshopper Sparrow** was Jun 12 (David Griffin) along the South Fork John Day River. The first report for Grant County, a Black-throated Sparrow, was from Nancy Collins and Gary Wilson in Canyon City in late June or early July.

There were only three reports of Fox Sparrow – Vance Creek Jun 30 (CL), North Fork John Day River Jun 9 (Mark Ludwick and Dave Trochlell), and near Parish Cabin east of Seneca Aug 10 (Lindsey Wilcox). The first Grant County record of an **American Tree Sparrow** appeared in the yard of Jim Soupier in Prairie City on Dec 31. A Sagebrush Sparrow report came from Clyde Holliday State Park Aug 18 (Anne Frost).

A Baltimore Oriole was in the John Day area on May 26 (Clarence and Marilyn O'Leary). A Black-and-white Warbler was in John Day in late July-early August (Susan Church). A Black-throated Gray Warbler was found along the highway climbing to Starr Ridge on Jul 13 (CL).

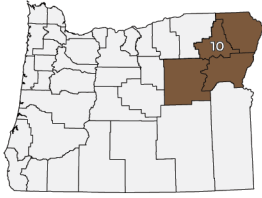
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### Abbreviations:

CL – Connor Langan

PCR – Poison Creek Reservoir

SV – Silvies Valley



## NORTHEAST OREGON FIELD NOTES

UNION, BAKER, AND WALLOWA COUNTIES

DAVE TROCHLELL

It was a slow year for rarities in Northeastern Oregon (NEOR), but November storms delivered several unusual water birds. The year saw large numbers of winter finches, and shorebird habitats due to dry summer conditions.

David Trochlell (DT) found a **White-winged Scoter** Nov 12 at the La Grande Sewage Treatment Plant (LGSTP) Union County, (UC). The county recorded fewer than ten. Red-breasted Mergansers were observed twice in the fall on water bodies of UC (DT and Trent Bray - TB).

Mountain Quail were reported twice in Baker Co. (BC) and once in Wallowa Co. (WC). Russ Morgan reported five Spruce Grouse below 5,500 feet in the western foothills of the Wallowa Mountains of UC in late Aug. This was one of the lowest elevations that Spruce Grouse have been observed Oregon.

On Sep 1, Matt Cahill observed a White-throated Swift in Enterprise; unusual away from the Snake River.

Anna's Hummingbirds wintered in (UC), surviving at a heated feeder. Scott O'Donnell reported five on Sep 13 at his private residence in WC.

Single Black-bellied Plovers were observed at Wilkinson Ln. (UC) on May 8 (Sean Cozart) and Thief Valley Reservoir on Aug 8 (Ross Hubbard). There were three fall reports of Marbled Godwits in UC. Maureen Leong-Kee and Nicholas Martens observed two Marbled Godwits at the Wallowa Lake Dam on Jul 5, representing WC's long overdue first record. DT found a **Stilt Sandpiper** on the east unit of Ladd Marsh Wildlife Management Area (LMWMA)(UC) on Aug 25. It was a great year for inland Sanderlings in NEOR. Up to nine were recorded at LGSTP, with another present here from Aug 16 to Sep 26. BC had scattered reports. A few Dunlin spent in spring across UC.

**Short-billed Dowitchers** were reported at the LGSTP on Jul 31 (DT) and at Kinney Lake (WC) on Aug 19 (TB). The Kinney Lake bird may represent WC's first record. DT discovered UC's first **Wandering Tattler** at the LGSTP on Aug 11. The bird stayed through Aug 16. UC's second Red Phalarope was found at the LGSTP on Aug 26 (Sean Cozart, Dan Cozart, and Wally Tomlinson). Additionally, BC's first **Red Phalarope** was found by DT at Lake Bob on Sep 29.

Possibly NEOR's best bird of the year was UC's first record of **Ancient Murrelet** found by DT at the LGSTP on Oct 6. The occurrence of this seabird inland follows an established but very uncommon pattern of vagrancy.

There were three reports of Sabine's Gulls in UC in the fall. Single Herring Gulls were reported at the LGSTP on Sep 27 (Russ Morgan) and Nov 11 (DT). Black Terns were reported in all three NEOR counties in 2021. Common Terns were observed in UC on Sep 5 and 15 (DT) and BC on Sep 3 (TB). TB found a **Pacific Loon** at the LGSTP on Nov 13. Fewer than ten records were made in the county. A Red-shouldered Hawk, was at LMWMA. By 2021, 12 species of owls were recorded in NEOR, including Barred, Boreal, and Burrowing. DT found UC's fourth **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at Thief Valley Reservoir on Aug 10. Timothy Preso found WC's second **Least Flycatcher** at Enterprise Wildlife Management Area on May 28. Gray Flycatchers were reported twice in UC, once in spring and in fall (both TB).

Two **Blue Jays** were seen through mid-May on the south side of (LG). California Scrub-Jays nested in Baker City, with several reported during late fall and winter in (LG). Bohemian Waxwings were reported in Nov and Dec with many reports from all three counties, including a flock of 500 plus in WC. A **Purple Finch** continued into 2021 on the south side of (LG). Up to 75 White-winged Crossbills were reported outside of (LG). WC and BC also had many reports. Flocks of 50 to 100 Common Redpolls were seen, with even more small flocks noted.

In June (DT), photographed and recorded a putative **TIMBERLINE BREWER'S SPARROW** south of (LG). It was an above-average year for Zonotrichia sparrows. Golden-crowned Sparrows increased in the region. UC had four reports, and BC had two. There were six Harris's Sparrows in 2021: three in UC, two in WC, and one in BC. Twelve White-throated Sparrows were reported in NEOR, seven in UC, three in WC, and one in BC. Kayla McCurry found two Sagebrush Sparrows in UC on Mar 2.

As many as five Bobolinks were found breeding in WC north of the town of Wallowa (multiple obs.). Throughout the year, there were 255 species reported in UC, 231 in BC, and 230 in WC. In 2021, UC and WC had two first records, and BC had one, bringing their totals to 317, 273, and 270, respectively, per eBird.

### Abbreviations:

BC – Baker County

DT – Dave Trochlell

NEOR – Northeastern Oregon

LG – La Grande

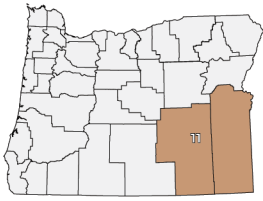
LGSTP – La Grande Sewage Treatment Plant

LMWMA – Ladd Marsh Wildlife Management Area

TB – Trent Bray

UC – Union County

WC – Wallowa County



# SOUTHEAST OREGON FIELD NOTES

## HARNEY AND MALHEUR COUNTIES

NOLAN CLEMENTS

**A Long-tailed Duck** was found by Barbara Bickel at the Burns Sewage Ponds (Harney) on May 25. Eric Heisey (EH) found a Red-breasted Merganser on Borax Lake (Harney) on Apr 27.

A Band-tailed Pigeon was found at Malheur NWR Headquarters (Harney) on Apr 30 (Kevin and Sarah Scaldeferri).

One or possibly two Whimbrels were present in Harney in late May. One was found just south of Burns on May 21 (Laura Mahrt), and another was seen west of Krumbo Reservoir on May 22 (Teri Martine). A **Ruff** was found on Marshall Pond at MHQ on Apr 28 (EH). A Short-billed Dowitcher was seen at the Substation Pond along Highway 205 on May 5 (EH).

Beth Wolff found a deceased **Long-tailed Jaeger** just south of the Narrows on the side of Highway 205 (Harney) on Aug 25.

Jay Withgott found Harney's first **Glaucous-winged Gull** on Jun 3 at the Burns Sewage Ponds. Common Terns were reported at Knox Pond (Harney) on Sep 10 (Noah Strycker), Antelope Reservoir (Malheur) on Apr 25 (Mike and MerryLynn Denny), and Beulah Reservoir (Malheur) on May 12 (Rebecca Hartman).

Ellen Cantor found two **Cattle Egrets** west of Diamond (Harney) on May 9. A **Green Heron** was observed at Page Springs Campground (Harney) on May 24 (Jeff Osmundson).

A Red-shouldered Hawk was found by Jay Withgott in McDermitt (Malheur) on Jul 25; Red-shouldered Hawks are still fairly rare in Malheur. Three **Broad-winged Hawks** were reported throughout the year in Harney; two in the spring and one in the fall.

Frenchglen (Harney) once again hosted Red-breasted Sapsuckers in early winter and fall.

Three total **Least Flycatchers** were observed in Harney in 2021; two in the spring at MHQ and one in the fall at Fields Oasis. EH recorded a possible **Cordilleran Flycatcher** in the Trout Creek Mountains (Harney). There were six total Black Phoebes in Harney in 2021. Gerry Meenaghan found an **Eastern Phoebe** east of Diamond (Harney) on May 24. There were three reports of Red-eyed Vireo in the spring in Harney.

Single Bohemian Waxwings were observed in Ontario (Malheur) on Mar 11 (Henry Lehman) and Dec 4 (Mike and MerryLynn Denny). Trask Colby found a Veery at Headquarters on May 30.

Six total Gray Catbirds were seen in Harney in 2021; one was seen in Malheur in Juntura on Jul 8 (Craig Bennett).

A **Common Redpoll** was observed north of Fields on Nov 27 (Raven Wing).

EH found a Lapland Longspur at Borax Lake on Oct 14. Teresa Wicks started the year off with a Harris's Sparrow at Frenchglen on Jan 1. There were ten total White-throated Sparrows in Harney, and Malheur had one.

Single **Tricolored Blackbirds** were found at Malheur Headquarters on Mar 6 (Teresa Wicks) and west of Jordan Valley (Malheur) on Apr 25 (Mike and MerryLynn Denny). This species is fairly rare in both Southeastern Oregon counties, and these reports represent one of only a handful of records for each.

It was a slow year for eastern warblers in Southeastern Oregon. Larry Hammond found a Northern Waterthrush in Burns (Harney) on Aug 30. A Black-and-white Warbler was at MHQ on Oct 8 (Susan Diederich). Single American Redstarts were seen at Roaring Springs Ranch (Harney) on May 23 (Jim Carlson) and along the southern portion of the Malheur NWR Center Patrol Road (Harney) on May 25 (David Robichaud). A **Magnolia Warbler** was found by Ross Barnes-Rickett and Karthik Murali at MHQ on Jun 8. William Hemstrom found a Chestnut-sided Warbler at MHQ on Sep 9. MHQ hosted a **CANADA WARBLER** on Sep 2 (Teresa Wicks).

Single Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were seen three times in the spring in Southeastern Oregon; two in Harney and one in Burns Junction (Malheur) on Jun 4 (Jay Withgott), representing Malheur's first record.

Throughout the year, there were a total of 266 species reported in Harney County and 217 in Malheur County. In 2021, Harney and Malheur both had one county first, bringing their all-time totals to 380 and 278, respectively, per eBird.

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### Abbreviations:

MHQ – Malheur NWR Headquarters

EH – Eric Heisey

# 2021 Oregon Listing Results Summary

When we began compiling Listing Results in 1980, 30 people participated, six counties weren't represented, and the birder with the highest list had seen 376 species in Oregon.

This year we welcome 15 new participants to our listing rolls. Thank you to the 141 people who submitted data to these 2021 Oregon Listing Results. To give context to this year's numbers, I have carried forward numbers from 206 other living birders, plus 32 deceased birding friends.

In total, these Oregon Listing Results include the efforts of 379 birders spanning the last 40 years (>4100 lines of individual birders' data).

I've been asked to include a new category next year: Species audio recorded. We hope to hear from even more of our friends next year.

Thank you to Ken Chamberlain for helping post the call for listing results. Thank you to Caryn Stoess for her help setting up the website and getting the results published. For the full results visit the OBA <https://oregonbirding.org/listing>.

Congratulations to everyone who participated!

Good birding, everyone,  
Paul T. Sullivan, McMinnville, OR

## Notable Oregon Statewide Achievements in 2021:

### Oregon State Life List (227 birders)

Top list: 511 Jeff Gilligan

### Western Oregon Life list (41 birders)

Top list: 415 Paul Sullivan

### Oregon State Life List > 400 (81 birders)

Vickie Buck, Nels Nelson, and Nolan Clements topped this milestone.

### Eastern Oregon Life list (35 birders)

Top list: 391 Tom Crabtree

### Oregon State Year Lists (72 birders)

Joshua Little leapt into second place in the all-time State Year List category.

### Motorless Life List (28 birders)

Top list: 306 John Sullivan

Two other birders new to these listing results, Mark Ludwick and Jeff Nordstrom, joined the top-ten year list category, as did Tom Myers.

### Motorless 2021 Year List (7 birders)

Top list: 213 Andy Frank

### Bird Species Photographed (86 birders)

Top list: 439 Tom Crabtree

## Listing 100 or more species in each Oregon county (36):

### 100 species in each county (34 birders)

Vickie Buck, Jill Panches, and Erik Bergman in 2021

### 125 species in each county (7 birders)

Stefan Schlick and Tom Love in 2021

### 150 species in each county (5 birders):

Gloria Beerman and Ken Chamberlain in 2021

## Notable County Listing Achievements:

There are 22 Oregon counties with >300 recorded species of birds. In 15 of these counties, a single birder has recorded 300 or more species.

In 2021, Hendrik Herlyn (Benton), Aaron Skirvin (Umatilla), and Trent Bray (Union) reached that mark in their counties.

## New County Life List Records:

Baker	246	Trent Bray	Josephine	260	Dennis Vroman
Benton	300	Hendrik Herlyn	Klamath	325	Kevin Spencer
Clackamas	250	Tim Janzen	Lane	365	Alan Contreras
Columbia	251	Don Cogswell	Lincoln	393	Darrel Faxon
Coos	361	Tim Rodenkirk	Linn	276	Mark Nikas
Crook	290	Chuck Gates	Multnomah	310	Andy Frank
Deschutes	343	Tom Crabtree	Polk	298	Bill Tice
Gilliam	212	Linnaea Basden	Umatilla	300	Aaron Skirvin
Grant	216	Jimi Soupier	Union	300	Trent Bray
Harney	320	Rick Vetter	Washington	258	Stefan Schlick
Jefferson	259	Chuck Gates			

## New County Year List Record in 2021:

<b>Klamath</b>		<b>Lane</b>		<b>Washington</b>	
Elijah Hayes	264	Alan Contreras	296	Rick Bennett	218

## Notable Local Listings:

### 15 Mile (15MD) Diameter Circle

#### Count Life List (36 birders)

Top list: 294 Tom Crabtree

### 15 Mile (15MD) Diameter Circle

#### Count 2021 year list (11 birders)

Top list: 220 Trent Bray

### 5 Mile (5MR) Radius Circle Count Around

#### Birder's Home Life list (47 birders)

Top list: 272 Hendrik Herlyn

### 5 Mile (5MR) Radius Circle Count Around

#### Birder's Home 2021 Year List (22 birders)

Top list: 201 Hendrik Herlyn

### Favorite Refuge (47 birders)

Top list: 287 Malheur NWR

### Favorite Spot (55 birders)

Top list: 232 Redmond sewage pond

**Yard Lists** (111 birders) represent a variety of sizes, habitats, and duration of observation. Everyone's yard list is noteworthy, just for the fact that it gets us paying attention, no matter the number of species. Backyard birds brought a lot of us some comfort and joy in this second COVID-19 year.

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# Oregon Birds

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Volume 48 Number 1 Spring 2022

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## On the Back Cover

Second Place, Dec. 2021 - OBA Monthly Photo Contest.  
House Finch (leucistic) in West Linn. Photo by Diantha Knott



## Our Mission Statement

OBA believes that birding is for everyone, and works to serve the Oregon birding community and promote the enjoyment, knowledge, and conservation of birds through education, science, and shared birding experiences.

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