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Oregon Birds is looking for material in these categories:

**Articles** deal with identification, distribution, ecology, management, conservation, taxonomy, behavior, biology, and historical aspects of ornithology and birding in Oregon. Articles cite references (if any) at the end of the article. Names and addresses of authors typically appear at the beginning of the article.

**Short Notes** are shorter contributions that deal with the same subjects as articles. Short Notes typically cite no references, or at most a few in parentheses in the text. Names and address of authors appear at the end of the Short Note.

**Bird Finding Guides** “where to find a _______ in Oregon” (for some of the rarer birds) and “where to find birds in the ____ area” (for some of the better spots).

Reviews for published material on Oregon birds or of interest to Oregon birders.

Photographs of birds, especially photos taken recently in Oregon. Digital files or color slide duplicates are preferred. Please label all photos with photographer’s name and address, bird identification, date and location of photo. Photos will be returned if requested.


Please send material directly to the Editor, Jeff Harding, oregonbirds@centurytel.net
The Fall/Winter birding season has started in a big way for Oregon birders. In fact, the whole nation looked with excitement as a Wood Sandpiper wandered the mud flats of Fern Ridge Reservoir, west of Eugene. That sighting may have dimmed some of the excitement for the variety of other shorebirds seen in this same location. If you have not yet been to Fern Ridge Reservoir, I highly recommend a trip sometime soon. This is an outstanding area for birding at any season but has especially good habitat for shorebirds passing through in fall migration.

As the excitement of the Wood Sandpiper subsided, we were offered another treat—a Pyrrhuloxia came for a visit to Peoria. And let’s not forget the longspurs and other exciting birds that have turned up elsewhere in the state. It does look to be a fun season for birds.

OFO begins a new season as well. I am beginning a term as President of OFO (thanks for your vote of confidence) and there are other changes on the board as well. I wish to say thank you for the many years of great service to Mary Anne Sohlstrom and Judy Meredith who are leaving their board positions. Both have offered their continued support of OFO in other capacities and we are very grateful for their help. I also wish to welcome two new board members, Shawneen Finnegan and Russ Namitz. They will each bring a fresh perspective to the board. We all have a common goal of helping OFO to be one of the premier resources for Oregon birders at all levels. Your input in this is equally valuable. It is, after all, your organization, and we want it to serve you in the best possible way.

We all know that birds provide us with many hours of enjoyment, but birding has many values beyond personal satisfaction. Our collective records provide valuable data that can be used to further our understanding of birds, the local environment and the state of the world as a whole.

Birders also provide a huge economic impact to our nation’s economy. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service recently published a report about the economic effects of wildlife-watching, of which birding plays a major role. It states that in 2006, 71 million people over the age of 16 participated in wildlife-watching. That’s 1/3 of the 2006 U.S. population! Those wildlife-watchers total more than four times the attendance of all 2006 NFL football game attendees and spent more than 45.7 billion dollars. Wildlife watching accounted for more than 1 million jobs, provided over 8.8 billion dollars in federal tax revenue and over 9.3 billion dollars in state and local taxes.

In Oregon, 1,484,000 people were wildlife-watching in 2006, contributing $776,414,000 in retail sales, 16,185 jobs and generated $123,668,107 of Oregon tax revenue. The report states that “Expenditures on wildlife watching are equivalent to the amount of revenue from all spectator sports (football, baseball, and other sports), all amusement parks and arcades, casinos (except casino hotels), bowling centers, and skiing facilities.”

So, as birders, we play a major role in this nation’s economy. Continue to enjoy the birds and the rewards that they offer us, but continue to promote good stewardship of the environment to help assure that we will all have a place to enjoy life in the future. Our activities can have a positive effect on the world and certainly have an important economic impact, including to many rural communities (food, lodging, etc.). Let’s all get out and enjoy Oregon birds, be they chickadees or the exceptional Wood Sandpiper.
A Guide to Oregon’s Christmas Bird Counts
Paul T. Sullivan, 4470 SE Murray Blvd. #26, Beaverton, OR 97005

History
The story of Christmas Bird Counts is well known. To counteract the 19th century tradition of shooting birds on Christmas, Frank Chapman initiated the idea of counting birds on Christmas in 1900. The first count took place in just a few eastern cities, but it was the beginning of an annual tradition which is about to see its 109th running. Today the event draws tens of thousands of participants to over 2,000 count circles and tallies over 57 million birds.

Rules
Over the years a set of rules has developed. The counts are done by volunteers on a single day between December 14 and January 5. Local counts are done in a circle with a 15-mile diameter, and the same circle is counted each year. Participants may count birds in their backyards or travel in parties to count some sector of the circle. They tally the number of species and the number of individual birds of each species. Beginners are teamed with more experienced counters. Each local count is organized by a compiler, who assigns teams and gathers the results. They keep track of the distance traveled and the time spent by each party of counters. The results from all counts are gathered and published.

Local counts
In Oregon, the idea of Christmas Bird Counts came to Portland in 1926, Klamath Falls in 1935, Malheur NWR and Medford in 1940, and to Baker City in 1952. Today there are some 50 Christmas Bird Count locations in Oregon. Some thrive with a rich local tradition, some struggle with imported help, some have been discontinued.

Science
What about the great body of data resulting from 100 years of Christmas Bird Counts? Is it citizen science, laymen contributing to the body of knowledge about bird populations? Or is it full of untrained observers’ errors, uneven observer skills, uneven observer effort, uneven weather, etc? This has been and will continue to be debated.

Competition
Christmas Bird Counts have an element of competition as each circle tries to better its total from last year, or to better the count circle down the road.
Dipper under the bridge and the Bald Eagle on its snag. They bundle up in their warm winter clothes and share hot drinks. On Oregon's west side they struggle with foggy optics and day-long rain. In eastern Oregon they deal with wind chill near zero and impassible roads. At the end of the day they usually gather—at a restaurant, a community building, or a private home—to turn in their results, share stories, brag about rare birds found, and enjoy camaraderie.

I have been a fan of Christmas Bird Counts since my first in 1978. Since then, I've participated in 140 CBCs. I've participated in all but one of Oregon's Christmas Bird Counts. I'd like to take you on a tour of Oregon's CBCs. We will proceed geographically, generally going north toward Idaho. Locations described can be found in the DeLorme Oregon Atlas and Gazetteer. Each description will swing around the circle clockwise. The average numbers reported below are for the years 1998-2007 unless stated otherwise.

## Coast

The CBC circles along the coast each include a slice of the ocean, but winter weather prohibits mounting pelagic trips. Most pelagic species are counted from a headland. Inland, observers count birds on estuaries, rivers, and lakes, in towns, and across pastureland. Coastal forests are usually difficult to access.

The **Columbia Estuary** CBC circle includes the north jetty of the Columbia River and some fields and forests in Washington over to Knappton. It takes in all of Astoria, including the sewage ponds, Wireless Road, Youngs Bay, the airport, Warrenton, Hammond, Ft. Stevens State Park, and the south jetty of the Columbia River. The count is well organized. It draws both local counters and out-of-town birders. The count has been run since 1979 and traditionally takes place on the first Sunday of the count period. The average number of participants is 15.1, the average number of species reported is 161.6.

Just east of Astoria a new count was initiated in 1998. It is named the **Wahkiakum** CBC and covers a slice of Wahkiakum County, WA, including the Julia Butler Hansen NWR and Puget Island. In Oregon the circle swings from the corner of Columbia County to Nicolai Mountain, and over to Mimaker Island. The average number of participants is 17.3; the average number of species reported is 106.7.

The **Tillamook Bay** CBC circle hits the coast at Manhattan Beach, north of Rockaway, swings around to include Kilchis County Park, Randall Hill, the north end of the airport, and the north end of Netarts Bay. The count is well organized and draws a number of counters from Portland. The count has been run since 1963 and traditionally takes place on the first Saturday of the count period. The average number of participants is 25.8; the average number of species reported is 135.0.

The **Yaquina Bay** CBC circle comes ashore just north of Yaquina Head, swings around to include Toledo, Beaver Creek, and Seal Rock. It draws many local counters. The count has been going since 1973, and is traditionally run after New Years. The average number of participants is 24.4; the average number of species reported is 124.0.

The **Florence** CBC was begun in 1983 and organized with precision for a number of years, setting records for the number of species seen on an Oregon CBC. The circle swings from Heceta Head inland past Minerva on the North Fork of the Siuslaw River, down to just north of Canary, and out to sea past the entrance to Honeyman State Park. This count draws Eugene birders as well as local folks. The average number of participants is 27.1; the average number of species reported is 157.2.

The **Coos Bay** CBC has been run since 1972 and draws an enthusiastic mix of local and out-of-town birders. The circle comes ashore past Sandpoint Lake, takes in most of Haynes Inlet and all of Coos Bay, swings down below Southport, and goes back out to sea below Cape Arago. The average number of participants is 36.2; the average number of species reported is 150.0.

The **Coquille Valley** CBC was begun with excellent organization in 1992, but discontinued in 2002. This count may be revived this year. The circle comes ashore below Whisky Run Road, swings past Chrome and through Coquille, just misses Norway, then swings on around to include Twomile Road and Bradley Lake. The average number of participants was 28.8; the average number of species reported was 136.1.

The **Port Orford** CBC is more of a local affair. It has been going since 1979. The circle comes ashore at Langlois and includes Grouseous Mountain, Plum Tree, and Grass Knob, before swinging out to sea south of Rocky Point. The average number of participants is 10.6; the average number of species reported is 136.1.

## Coast Range

The Coast Range mountains are generally forested, with limited roads, steep terrain, and a small set of birds.

The **Cowlitz-Columbia** CBC includes Longview-Kelso, WA, and the mouth of the Cowlitz River. The circle swings from Ostrander, WA, to Cottonwood Is., crosses into Oregon below the Trojan plant site, up through the hills below Alston and Delena, and leaves Oregon at Mayger. The count is traditionally run on New Years Day. It is a great way to get out in the woods to start the new year. The average number of participants is 15.1, but only a couple parties on the Oregon side; the average...
An historical guide to Oregon Christmas Bird Counts is being prepared by Paul Sullivan, with help needed from others to trace simplified Count Circle maps. A separate bulletin is planned in the coming year, but the maps shown here are examples of maps presently being used.

The number of species reported is 79.9.

The Upper Nestucca CBC was started in 1976 to look for Spotted Owls in the Coast Range, run for 20 years, then discontinued. It was revived in 2003 by a few dedicated observers who willingly tolerate the fog, rain, and limited birds. The potluck at the end of the day gets great reviews. The average number of participants is 14.8; the average number of species reported is 49.6.

The Alma-Upper Siuslaw CBC is an historic count that was run from 1977-1987. It took place in the hills southwest of Veneta. Beginning on the upper reaches of Wildcat Creek, it included High Point and Siuslaw Falls. It swung into Douglas County to take in Gunter and Esmond Lake, then back around to Wolf Creek. The average number of participants was 11; the average number of species reported was 48.8.

### East Slope of the Coast Range

These counts include portions of the Coast Range, but also reach the towns and agricultural areas at the foot of the hills. They include some bodies of water as well.

The Forest Grove CBC was begun in 1982 by the late Joe Evanich. This count draws birders from the Portland metro area and is scheduled to coordinate with the Portland and Sauvie Island counts. The circle begins at Greenville, swings around past Hillsboro, takes in Bald Peak, a slice of Yamhill County, Cheery Grove, all of Hagg Lake, and comes in just below Gales Creek. The average number of participants is 21.1; the average number of species reported is 106.5.

The Dallas CBC is traditionally run a few days after Christmas and draws a number of counters from outside the area. It has been run since 1969. The circle begins north of Salt Creek, takes in Basket Slough NWR, Rickreall, the Monmouth sewage ponds, and Falls City, then comes back down Mill Creek. The average number of participants is 15.1; the average number of species reported is 99.8.

The Corvallis CBC draws on a local base of skilled birders. It has been run since 1961 and is traditionally held the Tuesday before Christmas. The circle begins at Corvallis and swings through the agricultural areas in Linn County, south of Peoria, to take in Finley NWR, then swing into the hills, and come back around Philomath. The average number of participants is 45.5; the average number of species reported is 118.1.

### Interstate 5 Corridor

Many of these counts draw on the urban population centers of western Oregon. They are able to muster more counters and have long traditions.

The Sauvie Island CBC was begun in 1967. It draws counters from the Portland and Vancouver area. The circle begins at the mouth of the Lewis River above Ridgefield NWR, and swings past Good Hope and the NW half of Vancouver, WA. In Oregon it includes Kelly Point at the mouth of the Willamette River, all of Sauvie Island, and a slice of the hills west of Scappoose. The average number of participants is 41.0; the average number of species reported is 108.0.

The Portland CBC, begun in 1926, is a large urban count. It is organized around sector teams, each with their own team leader. The circle begins at the interstate bridge, swings past the airport, and barely reaches I-205. It includes Lake Oswego, then swings around to touch Aloha. It includes Germantown Road and the St. Johns area. The average number of participants is 76.4; the average number of species reported is 107.9.

The Salem CBC was begun in 1963 and is also organized in teams. The circle begins at Hopmere, swings around Hazel Green and Macleay, north of Ankeny Hill, to take in Humbug Lake and Oak Grove. The average number of participants is 32.5; the average number of species reported is 105.2.

The Airlie CBC is a new count, begun in 1998. It is strategically placed between the Salem and Corvallis circles. Participants rendezvous at E.E. Wilson wildlife area. The
The species reported is 131.5. The number of participants is 98.4; the average number of species reported is 115.5.

The Brownsville CBC was begun in 1994, drawing counters from nearby cities. The circle begins at Lone Pine Butte, swings around Cedar Butte, Crawfordsville, and Cougar Ridge. It crosses I-5 below Exit 209, misses Halsey, and comes back to Washburn Butte. The average number of participants is 10.9; the average number of species reported is 91.4.

The Eugene CBC is another well-organized urban count, divided into sector teams, which has been run since 1942. The circle begins at Sovereign Lane, swings around Coburg, cuts through Springfield, below Spencer Butte, and Spencer Creek. It takes in Ellmaker Road and most of Fern Ridge Reservoir, including the dam. The average number of participants is 98.4; the average number of species reported is 131.5.

The Cottage Grove CBC, a historic count run between 1971 and 1985, was known for its Mountain Quail. The circle began near Walker, swung past Prune Hills, Dorena Reservoir, Cottage Grove Reservoir, Ward Butte, and Royal. The average number of participants was 20.2; the average number of species reported was 85.8.

The Roseburg CBC has been run by local birders since 1974. The circle includes Sutherlin, Horseshoe Bend on the N.Umpqua River, the north half of Roseburg, Cleveland Rapids and Umpqua. The average number of participants is 22.5; the average number of species reported is 109.0.

The Grants Pass CBC was begun in 1983. The circle begins north of the Manzanita rest area on I-5, swings around to catch the Savage Rapids dam on the Rogue River, then includes Murphy, Wilderville, Griffin Park, and Merlin. The average number of participants is 28.1; the average number of species reported is 101.0.

The Medford CBC is among the oldest in Oregon, running since the 1940s and 1950s. The circle begins at Ball Road north of Eagle Point, swings past Brownsboro, around Roxy Ann Peak, Medford, misses Jacksonville, and includes both Lower and Upper Table Rock. The average number of participants is 45.9; the average number of species reported is 123.7.

The Illinois Valley CBC is a new count begun in 1998, centered at Cave Junction. The circle begins at Selma Lake, swings around Little Grayback Peak and Holland, includes Esterly Lake, Westside Road, and the south flank of Eight Dollar Mountain. The average number of participants is 12.7; the average number of species reported is 93.1.

The Little Applegate CBC was begun in 2000. It begins on Griffin Creek Road south of Medford, just misses Talent, swings through the hills west of Ashland, passes just north of Dutchman Peak, and misses Ruch. Aft named, it takes in the drainage of the Little Applegate River. The average number of participants is 7.8; the average number of species reported is 48.0.

West slope of the Cascades

These counts take in some of the Willamette Valley floor and extend up into the foothills of the Cascades.

The Silverton CBC has been going since 1985 with a mix of local and imported counters. The circle begins at Marquam, swings past Butte Creek to the north half of Silver Falls State Park, then around Walden Hills, and past 105th Avenue to include Silverton. The atmosphere is cordial. The average number of participants is 18.3; the average number of species reported is 87.6.

The Oakridge CBC is another historical count, which was run from 1971 to 1985. I remember a warm potluck at the countdown. The circle began at High Creek on the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River, swung around to include Cottonwood Spring north of Hwy 58, took in most of Hills Creek Reservoir, missed Holland Point but included Little Deception Rock, and crossed the Willamette River again above Hampton. The average number of participants was 23.4; the average number of species reported was 74.0.

Cascade Crest

The Santiam Pass CBC was begun in 1997 to see what birds might be found at the crest of the Cascades in the middle of the winter. Access to the circle is severely limited by snow and lack of roads. The circle begins at Jorn Lake north of Three Fingered Jack, swings around to include Suttle Lake, Mt. Washington, Clear Lake, and Lava Lake. The average number of participants is 8.9 hardy souls; the average number of species reported is 31.9.

East Slope of the Cascades

The counts on this side of the mountains deal with a colder climate, less rain and more sunshine. With the exception of the Klamath Falls CBC, the number of species reported falls below 100.

The Hood River CBC draws a number of counters from Portland, and can offer plenty of rain and juncos. The circle begins in the Columbia River north of town, swings upstream to Eightmile Island in Wasco County, and takes in the West Fork of Mosier Creek. It includes Toll Bridge County Park and Parkdale, swings west of Dee to include the Green Point Reservoirs, and returns to the Columbia River at Mitchell Point. The average number of participants is 19.0; the average number of species reported is 90.3.
The **Lyle, WA** CBC takes in a slice of Washington north of Lyle. It crosses the Columbia River above The Dalles dam, includes The Dalles and Wasco Butte, and crosses the river again at Mosier. The average number of participants is 27.1; the average number of species reported is 99.5.

The **Antelope** CBC was begun by a group of friends from Camp Hancock, the summer camp of the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). They meet annually for this count and are welcoming to visitors like myself. The circle begins north of Antelope, swings down into Jefferson County, crosses Hwy 97 at its junction with the Antelope Hwy, then barely misses the junction of Hwys 97 and 197. The average number of participants is 6.3; and the average number of species reported is 39.9.

The **Utopia** CBC was begun by the same OMSI group. The circle begins above Metolius, swings down Hwy 26 to include Rim Rock Springs, Gray Butte, Peter Skene Ogden wayside, Crooked River Ranch, and most of Lake Billy Chinook, excluding the Metolius Arm. The average number of participants is 8.2; the average number of species reported is 59.8.

The **Redmond** CBC is Oregon’s newest count, begun in 2001. The circle begins at Smith Rock State Park, swings around Houston Lakes and Powell Butte in Crook County, touches Morrill Road in Deschutes County, then crosses Hwy 97 and includes Cline Falls State Park and Terrebonne. The average number of participants is 13.0; the average number of species reported is 76.0.

The **Bend** CBC was begun in 1969 and draws on a strong pool of local birders. The circle begins above Tumalo-Deschutes Hwy, crosses Hwy 97 at Deschutes Junction, takes in Hatfield Lake and the airport, swings past Arnold Market Road, includes Lava Island Falls, swings up through forest to Tumalo Reservoir, and back north of Tumalo. The average number of participants is 17.5; the average number of species reported is 88.6.

The **Sisters** CBC was begun in 1999. The circle begins on the south end of Green Ridge, swings around to catch McKenzie Canyon Reservoir, Plainview, Trout Creek Butte, the lower portion of the McKenzie Hwy, and comes back to the south face of Black Butte. The average number of participants is 23.9; the average number of species reported is 66.6.

The **Klamath Falls** CBC was first run in 1935. There are records from 1944, 1948-52, 1961-67, and continuously since 1978. The circle begins north of town, swings around to include Olene, Hosley, Captain Jack, Kern Swamp Road, and the lower end of Upper Klamath Lake below McCormack Point. The average number of participants is 15.7; the average number of species reported is 104.2. This is the only eastern Oregon count to average over 100 species.

### Central Oregon

These counts are mainly done by local groups who bravely get out in the snow to find birds.

The **Columbia Hills—Klickitat Valley** CBC begins north of Goldendale, WA, swings across the Columbia into Oregon to include the mouth of the John Day River, Rufus, and Biggs. The average number of participants is 14.3; the average number of species reported is 89.8.

The **Prineville** CBC draws some participants from Bend. It was begun in 1993. The circle starts at Green Mountain, north of town, swings below Steins Pillar, takes in Ochoco Reservoir, Combs Flat, Prineville, Elliot Lane, and Sharp Road. The average number of participants is 17.4; the average number of species reported is 84.3.

The **Summer Lake** CBC was begun in 1987 and is traditionally done on a Tuesday before Christmas. It also draws birders from Bend. The circle crosses Hwy 31 on the dry south end of Silver Lake, takes in Picture Rock Pass, and roads extending east from Ana Reservoir, including Thousand Springs Ranch. It includes all of the Summer Lake Wildlife Area and the north end of Summer Lake, then swings up onto Winter Rim and back to Silver Lake. Some years it is possible to get up to Winter Rim; other years it is not. The average number of participants is 12.3; the average number of species reported is 74.7.

The **Hart Mountain** CBC was begun in 1973 by the same friends who did the Antelope and Utopia CBCs, and has been carried on by others since then. The circle begins at Campbell Lake and includes the road up to the refuge headquarters on Hart Mountain. It includes the hot springs and Blue Sky Hotel, then swings down to catch the north end of Hart Lake and swings around to Flagstaff Lake. The average number of participants is 6.1; the average number of species reported is 34.4.

The **Adel** CBC was begun in 1984. The circle takes in the south end of Crump Lake, misses Fish Lake, takes in Greaser Lake and the Warner Valley south of Adel, Lucky...
Reservoir, then catches the lower end of Drake Creek before swinging back to Crum Lake. The average number of participants is 5.1; the average number of species reported is 39.0.

The Ruggs-Hardman CBC is another historic count. It was run between 1967 and 1992 by a dedicated high school teacher in Heppner. Students participated as part of their fall biology class. I remember a girl enthusiastically describing the bobbing of a Dipper to her teacher at the end of the day. The circle began at Rhea Creek, 10 miles west of Heppner, swung across Hwy 207 at Clarks Canyon Road, missed Balm Canyon, but included the ghost town of Hardman, upper Rock Creek, and Buttermilk Road, then up across Hwy 206, past John Road. The average number of participants was 27.8; the average number of species reported was 52.5.

The Antone CBC is another new count. Begun in 2000, it draws participants from out of the area. It sometimes claims the national high count of Mountain Quail. The circle begins north of Bull Canyon, crosses Hwy 19 below Cathedral Rock, takes in the headquarters of the John Day Fossil Beds, Sheep Rock, and Picture Gorge, swings south of Antone, back past the junction of Antone Road and Hwy 26, and misses Waterman. The average number of participants is 9.4; the average number of species reported is 49.3.

**Eastern Oregon—Blue Mountains**

These counts also draw on local counters and bird club members.

The Umatilla County CBC has been run since 1983. It has claimed the national high count for Pheasants. The circle begins north of Mission, swings through Cayuse, includes the top of Emigrant Hill on I-84, swings down the North Fork of McKay Creek, around McKay Reservoir, up across the west end of Pendleton, and takes in the lower portion of Wildhorse Creek. The average number of participants is 21.0; the average number of species reported is 68.5.

The John Day CBC, run by the Grant county bird club, is unique. The count area has been an irregular oval, not a circle, since its inception in 1981. The area includes the East Fork of Beech Creek over to Bear Creek, then south across Hwy 26 up Indian Creek to the boundary of the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness. It follows around the boundary, down across Hwy 395 to include Miller Mountain and Pleasant Hill, then takes in Mt. Vernon and the segment of Hwy 395 north to Beech Creek. The potluck dinner at the end is always a winner. The average number of participants is 15.2; the average number of species reported is 69.4.

The Burns CBC is another new count, begun in 1999.

It always has a high count of California Quail. The circle begins north of town, catches the junction of Poison Creek and Hwy 395, swings around the airport, then down below Greenhouse Lane. West of town it takes in the lower portions of the Hines Logging Road and Silvies River Road. The average number of participants is 13.4; the average number of species reported is 55.0.

The Sodhouse CBC was begun in 1979. The circle begins in Malheur Lake, takes in the headquarters of Malheur NWR, swings across Hwy 205 north of Buena Vista, then over to the hot springs on the shore of Haney Lake, and includes Mud Lake and the junction with the road to the OO Ranch. The average number of participants is 8.8; the average number of species reported is 47.0.

Malheur NWR—P Ranch CBC was begun in 1940. The circle begins at a kink in Hwy 205, swings around Krumbo Reservoir, lower Bridge Creek, Page Springs campground, takes in the hill southwest of Frenchglen, then swings west and back to Hwy 205. The average number of participants is 7.7; the average number of species reported is 57.4.

**Far Eastern Oregon**

These counts draw local birders and travelers looking for wintering northern species like Bohemian Waxwings and Common Redpolls.

The Wallowa County CBC remains my favorite. It was begun in 1977 and has a local atmosphere. Participants...
gather for lunch to report findings and see where more attention is needed. Folks can chase a good sighting if they so choose. The circle begins north of Enterprise, swings east to include the lower portion of the Zumwalt Road, then down to Little Sheep Canyon, up over Mt. Howard, below Wallowa Lake, over Chief Joseph Mountain, to take in Alder Slope and the fish hatchery. Reporting has been spotty in recent years. The average number of participants is 16.3; the average number of species reported is 74.7.

The **Union County** CBC is run by the Grande Ronde Bird Club since 1976. It also gathers for lunch to warm up and compare results. The circle begins at Conley Lake off Carter Lane, swings around Cove, High Valley, Union, Craig Mountain, Ladd Canyon, Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area, and the LaGrande sewage ponds. The average number of participants is 18.7; the average number of species reported is 66.2.

The **Baker** CBC was begun in 1952 and draws mainly on local birders. The circle begins where I-84 crosses the Powder River, takes in Magpie Peak, crosses Hwy 86, then includes Baker City, Pocahontas, and Haines. The average number of participants is 10.1; the average number of species reported is 52.0.

The **Baker County – Salisbury** CBC was initiated in 1960 when the compilers saw Western Bluebirds in the area. “And we haven’t seen them since.” The count draws from the same pool of birders as the previous count. The circle begins just south of Baker City, takes in I-84, Ebell Creek, Dooley Mountain, the lower end of Phillips Reservoir, Blue Canyon, and Elk Creek. The average number of participants is 8.0; the average number of species reported is 45.2.

The **Lower Owyhee** CBC was run from 1993 to 2005. The circle lay west of Adrian and was traversed by the Lower Owyhee River and Owyhee Lake Road. The average number of participants was 3.2; the average number of species reported was 43.8.

The **Future**

It is my intention to publish a booklet describing all of Oregon’s CBCs. We hope to develop maps showing the location of all the count circles, which will eliminate the need for a verbal description of the circle. This should allow more space to highlight notable species seen on each count, uncommon species that can predictably be found, and anecdotes about Christmas counts past. I invite counters and compilers to send their input to me at <ptsulliv@spiritone.com> or Paul T. Sullivan, 4470 SE Murray Blvd. #26, Beaverton, OR 97005.

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The 29th annual meeting of the membership of Oregon Field Ornithologists was held at the Malheur Field Station on September 13, 2008. President Dave Tracy presided over the meeting. MFS catered a dinner for us in the main cafeteria. About 40 members of OFO attended the meeting and enjoyed going on one of several field trips or birding on their own with friends.

David Smith, who did much of the planning for the meeting, welcomed members and guests and introduced the speakers. Dave Tracy opened the meeting and thanked the many volunteers for arrangements for the meeting and for help with OFO during the past year. The treasurer's report was distributed to the members and reviewed by Treasurer Mary Anne Sohlstrom. She summarized that OFO has had expenses similar to those from last year and runs at about break-even. She reported that OFO has current funds and inventory valued at about $32,000.

**Award**

An Award of Appreciation was presented to charter member and past officer Tom Winters for many years of volunteer time to OFO and the birding community. Tom has also done regional field notes for decades and coordinates the CBC for his area. Paul Sullivan presented the award to Tom at the meeting, to a hearty round of applause.

**Program**

David Smith introduced our main speakers, Field Station Director Duncan Evered and staff archeologist Carla Burnside. Duncan’s program, “What Not to Miss while Birding at Malheur National Wildlife Refuge,” was accompanied by photos showing the beauty of the refuge and surrounding areas. Carla spoke about the “History of Management of the Refuge” and celebrating MNWR’s 100th birthday.

**Officers**

Nominations for officers and directors were received before the meeting and also during the meeting, following the programs. Secretary Judy Meredith explained that a letter and ballots go out to members after the meeting and mail-in postcard ballots would be due postmarked by Oct 6, 2008.

**OFO Future**

A question was asked about how many members OFO currently has. The answer was approximately 280 and that the challenge is for OFO to remain viable in the future. OFO is working on this with a major effort to improve the website and provide more resources for members. Some past field notes and issues of OB have already been placed on the website.

**Birds of the Weekend**

The verbal checklist of birds seen over the 2 days was led by Harry Nehls and recorded by Craig Miller. The full list can be seen on Birdnotes for Harney County Sept 13, 2008. The members tallied a total of 177 birds seen.

**Next OFO Meeting**

David Smith announced the next OFO Annual Meeting which will be held on the last weekend in August, joining with The Shorebird PLUS

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**CALL FOR SHORT NOTES**

**Circle Birding**

In Oregon Birds 33(3) we announced a new category for bird listing in Oregon--birds found within a circle having a diameter of up to 15 miles. This circle approach allows birders to enjoy annual bird listing without doing as much car driving as is necessary with the traditional bigger targets—county, state, etc. Many birders have become more concerned about reducing car travel, and this is a way for those birders to create a new type of challenge while acting on their added concern about driving.

We hope that some of you who gave Circle Birding a try in 2008 will contribute short notes (up to 300 words or so???) describing your experience with it this year.

Suggested format: (1) location and general description of your circle, (2) highlights and interesting observations, great birds, interesting misses (3) advantages and disadvantages, you found in this form of birding, (4) number of species you have listed for 2008 in your circle.

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Presented September 13, 2008; OFO Annual Meeting, Malheur Field Station.

At the end of Fiscal Year 2007, Oregon Field Ornithologists total bank balances were $26,865.45 with an additional $7073.88 inventory for a total of $33,939.33.

As of Sept. 11, 2008 total bank balances are $25,753.80. In addition we show $6,359.38 as inventory (Rogue Valley Guide) for a total of $31,933.18.

Total income for 2007 was $12,027.59, expense was $11,846.08, resulting in a modest increase of $181.51. The current fiscal year reflects a shortfall of $2,006.15, however, much of our annual income is received near year end in the form of Membership Renewals.

Over the past few years our income and expenses have remained fairly consistent, usually reaching nearly a break even point. The value of the Rogue Valley Guide inventory, plus the income generated from the sales of the Breeding Bird Atlas account for most of our surplus funds. There is also a temporary surplus in the Oregon Birds account as the publication is behind schedule. This will be absorbed as the publication schedule is corrected.

Overall Oregon Field Ornithologists remains reasonably sound considering the size of the organization. As always, retaining and expanding our membership base remains our most important challenge. The existence of “instant information” reflected by OBOL and other on-line resources challenges the board of directors to strive to make OFO relevant to the Oregon Birding community.

Personal Note: It has been my pleasure to serve on the Oregon Field Ornithologists Board of Directors since 1997. As I step down from the Board I want to issue a challenge to each and every member of OFO.

As you wander around Oregon, or your favorite county or local wetland and meet other birders - be sure to mention Oregon Field Ornithologists. Invite others to join OFO. Carry a few extra copies of our “Field Checking Card” which has membership information. Or take along a few back issues of Oregon Birds to share. If each of us recruits one or two new members a year our organization will thrive and grow. And as OFO grows our ability to continue to publish and provide information about the birds of Oregon and all of the marvelous birding locations we share will continue. And—please—Volunteer! (I double-dog dare you!)

Thanks, Mary Anne Sohlstrom, Treasurer


Festival in Charleston, Oregon.

There will be equal “helpings” of land, shore and pelagic birding available, with Saturday and Sunday pelagic trips, already on Greg Gilson’s The Bird Guide 2009 schedule, as well as land-based field trips. There are multiple presentations planned each night.

So, mark your calendars for August 29-30 and plan to attend the next annual OFO meeting. Details of speakers, workshops, etc. will be forthcoming in later issues of OB.

The Origin of Barn Swallows in western Oregon during Winter

W. Douglas Robinson, Oak Creek Lab of Biology, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon 97331; Douglas.robinson@oregonstate.edu

Barn Swallows are a familiar breeding species and migrant throughout Oregon and most of the northern hemisphere. The species has one of the widest distributions of any bird species, breeding extensively across North America, Europe, and Asia, and wintering in Central America, South America, southern Africa, and southern Asia (Turner and Rose 1989). Each spring Barn Swallows typically arrive in Oregon by late March to early April. After breeding, they begin drifting southward, often staging in a few large nocturnal roosts that are present until mid- to late October. From November to early April, Barn Swallows have historically been very rare in Oregon; most observations during winter have occurred in western Oregon.

Typically, North American Barn Swallows spend the winter in Central and South America, far south of Oregon (Brown and Brown 1999). They have been casual in California during winter, but some appear in southern California by late January (Small 1994). Since 2002, Barn Swallows have been detected each winter in Oregon, usually during December and January. These birds rarely remain present into February, and there are very few sightings from mid-February until the typical arrival dates of spring migrants. At the same time, small numbers of Barn Swallows have become regular in parts of California. The recent increases in detections during mid-winter have raised questions about where these birds are coming from. Here, I suggest some hypotheses concerning the origin of these winter Barn Swallows and how Oregon birders might be able to help gather information to reject the incorrect hypotheses.

Hypotheses for Winter Barn Swallow origins

Four hypotheses for the origin of Barn Swallows include:

The California origin hypothesis: Barn Swallows in Oregon during winter are birds that were wintering in California and have been departing that state earlier than they did in the past. Although Barn Swallows have historically been rare during winter in California, numbers there have increased over the last couple of decades. Thus, it is possible that numbers have increased enough that some individuals from California have begun to drift northward earlier each year.

The Advanced migration hypothesis: Barn Swallows in Oregon during winter are birds leaving their normal winter range in the tropics earlier than they did in the past. Although Barn Swallows have historically been rare during winter in California, numbers there have increased over the last couple of decades. Thus, it is possible that numbers have increased enough that some individuals from California have begun to drift northward earlier each year.

The Asian straggler hypothesis: Barn Swallows in Oregon during winter are very late fall migrants from populations in Asia that have strayed to North America. Barn Swallows breed across Asia. Those populations migrate south to southeastern Asia for the winter. Some individuals could be straying east and migrating down the west coast of North America. Since they are straying off course, the route they are taking could be longer, thus causing an arrival date in December or January.

The Austral migrant hypothesis: Barn Swallows in Oregon during winter are individuals from the newly established breeding populations in Argentina and Bolivia that have migrated north to spend their non-breeding season here in Oregon. Barn Swallows began breeding in Argentina in 1980 (Martinez 1983).
Origin of Wintering Barn Swallows

Since then, their numbers have increased greatly. It is possible that the birds here in winter have come several thousand miles after breeding (adults), or being born (juveniles), in Argentina and then arrived here to spend the winter. The lack of February records may simply indicate that few of the birds arriving in December and January find conditions here suitable enough to survive very long. They either head back south, perhaps to California, for better foraging, or die. 

As is the case with most hypotheses in biology, more than one could hold true. It is possible that Barn Swallows in Oregon during winter represent birds of several different origins. This would also be very interesting to understand.

**How can Oregon birders help solve this mystery?**

We could help gather information that might allow us to reject some of these hypotheses. By rejecting the explanations that are wrong, we can begin to understand what may be the right explanation. Some of these hypotheses can be evaluated by gathering detailed observations on the plumages or molt status of Oregon Barn Swallows. If the origin is South American breeding populations, then the Barn Swallows in Oregon during winter should show signs of molt. Most Barn Swallows molt their flight feathers (wing and tail feathers) when they reach their winter range (Pyle 1997). If Oregon is the winter range of these birds, then we should see evidence of molt. If birds are not molting, then it is unlikely they are coming from South American breeding populations.

**What to look at on Barn Swallows during winter:**

Is there any molt of wing or tail feathers occurring? Remember that true molt is symmetrical, so if a bird is molting its wing feathers, there will be a missing feather in the same position on both wings. Good views should allow us to see if any feathers are missing or partially grown on the wings of swallows. If we find no evidence of molt in any Oregon birds, then we can probably reject the Austral migrant hypothesis. However, additional data are needed (see below about feather analyses).

What color are the underparts and how complete is the breast band? Are the swallows pale or rusty orange on the belly? Color varies with age of the birds in the North American subspecies. Young of the year have pale bellies, whereas adults have darker orange underparts. In North American birds, the breast band is dark blue, but narrow and often broken in the middle. In contrast, Asian birds have a strong dark blue breast band that is complete and they usually have pale underparts, even as adults. So a pale-bellied bird with a distinct, complete blue breast band and also a tail longer than that of our North American birds could be an Asian bird. So, details on plumage can help us age and identify whether a bird is likely to be of Asian origin or not. Note that there is a race of Barn Swallows in the Baikal region of Asia that has orange underparts, too.

If we obtain information to reject the Austral Migrant and Asian Straggler hypotheses, that leaves us with the two hypotheses involving North American birds that are just appearing in Oregon during mid-winter for some reason. Understanding why that might be occurring will be a difficult challenge.

Last, winter can be tough on Barn Swallows and other insect-eating birds. That means we may find some of them dead. If you do, please contact me by email so we can try to get the specimen deposited at the Oregon State University bird collection. From specimens, we can analyze the chemical components of the feathers that could tell us where the body feathers were grown. Those kinds of analyses could provide the definitive answers we are looking for, although careful study of plumages and presence or absence of molt will certainly be helpful as well.

**Acknowledgments.** Thanks to R. Moore and S. Billerman for discussions.

**References**


The 109th Christmas Bird Count Schedule for Oregon
December 14, 2008—January 4, 2009

Information compiled by:
Don Albright, (503) 538-8890, <donalbri@teleport.com>, 17820 NE Hillsboro Hwy, Newberg, OR 97132

The Christmas Bird Count season is fast approaching and there are dozens of counts scheduled throughout the state in December and January. Observers with all skill levels are needed and welcome, and counters can certainly choose to join more than one count! You will be participating in a 109 year-old tradition when you join a group, and the results are a long citizen-science project that has contributed to our understandings about bird population trends continent-wide.

For more information about the CBC program, visit the Audubon website at: <www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/index.html>. Any updated information to that shown here will be posted on our website: <www.oregonbirds.org>.

Sunday, Dec. 14

Burns—Hines
Rick Vetter
(541) 573-5601 (h); 573-4369 (w); <rvetter@fs.fed.us>
Meet 7 am, USFS office in Hines. Please contact the compiler in advance.

Columbia Estuary
Mike Patterson
(503) 325-1365
<celata@pacifier.com>
Meet 7 am at Pig-n-Pancake Restaurant in Astoria.

Coos Bay
Tim Rodenkirk
(541) 269-4696
<brrobb@comcast.net>
Contact compiler.

Illinois Valley
Romain Cooper
(541) 592-2311
<romain@frontiernet.net>
Meet 7 am at refuge head quarter's parking lot.

Lyle, WA
Includes The Dalles, Rowena, and Mosier, OR
Bob Hansen
(509) 637-2736
<bobhansen@gorge.net>
Contact the compiler.

Redmond
Kimdel Owen
(541) 771-6668
<kimdelo@yahoo.com>
Meet 7 am at Black Bear Diner, North 5th Street.

Wallowa County
Andie Lueders
(541) 426-5740
<andielue@gmail.com>
Meet at 7 am (earlier if you want breakfast) at Friends Restaurant in Enterprise.

Monday, Dec. 15

Upper Nestucca
Don Albright
(503) 538-8890; <donalbri@teleport.com>
Contact the compiler.

Baker County—Salisbury
Joanne Britton
(541) 523-5666
<jjobr@oregontrail.net>
Meet 8 am, Hwy 7 weigh station 1 mile south of Baker City. Contact compiler beforehand; weather conditions may close some roads in count circle.

Corvallis
Marcia F. Cutler
(541) 752-4313
<marcia.cutler@comcast.net>
Contact compiler. Post-count gathering at Tunison Community Room (365 SW Tunison).

Summer Lake
Marty St. Louis
(541) 943-3152
<brrobb@comcast.net>
Contact compiler. Post-count gathering at Tunison Community Room (365 SW Tunison).

Thur., December 18

Hart Mountain
Marla Bennett
<marla.bennett@fws.gov>
Craig & Marilyn Miller
(541) 389-9115
<goosemiller@msn.com>
Meet 7 am at refuge headquarters. Free lodging for count participants. Contact the compiler in advance.

Friday, Dec. 19

Antone
Joel Geier
(541) 745-5020 (home); (541) 745-5821 (work)
<joel.geier@peak.org>
Contact compiler. Post-count gathering at Thomas Condon Visitor Center, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument.

Antelope
Pete Weigel
(541) 489-3280 / (206) 819-3821
<antelope@oregonvos.net>
Meet at compiler’s house, corner of Maupin & College Sts. in Antelope.

Baker Co.—Baker Valley
Joanne Britton
(541) 523-5666; <jjobr@oregontrail.net>
Meet 8 am (7:30 if want breakfast), Sumpter Jct.

Bend
Tom Crabtree
(541) 388-2462
<tc@empnet.com>
Meet at compiler's house, 680 N. Main St., Bend.

Florence
Roger Robb
(541) 343-6557
<rriparia@charter.net>
Meet 7 am (earlier if you want breakfast) at Friends Restaurant in Enterprise.

Grants Pass
Dennis Vroman
(541) 479-4619
<dpvroman@budget.net>
Contact the compiler.

John Day
Tom Winters
(541) 542-2006;
<ducksouptom@ortelco.net>
Meet 7 am (earlier if want breakfast), Outpost Restaurant, 201 W. Main St. Compilation dinner afterward at Gagnon’s home. Contact compiler for directions.

Klamath Falls
Kevin Spencer
(541) 884-5739
<owlhooter@aol.com>
Contact the compiler.

Medford
Joe Shelton
(541) 772-4490
Contact the compiler.

P Ranch–Malheur NWR
Steve Dowlan
(541) 573-2238 (h); (541) 573-4409 (w)
<wlhoote@aol.com>
Areas assigned in advance. Contact compiler (before Dec. 2 or after Dec. 16) for French-glen meeting time & place.

Roseburg
Ron Maertz
(541) 496-3847
<owlhooter@aol.com>
Contact the compiler.

Salem
Glen Lindeman
(503) 364-6968
<gdalindy@msn.com>
Contact the compiler; teams arranged in advance.

Oregon Birds 34:2 Insert i
Tillamook Bay
Owen Schmidt
(503) 282-9403; <oschmidt@att.net>
Meet at 7 am, Fern Restaurant, 1000 N. Hwy. 101, Tillamook.

Sunday, December 21
Sauvie Island
Oregon contact: Karen Bachman
<konion6@comcast.net or>
<karen@tonkon.com>
(503) 289-3605 or (503) 802-2057
Washington contact:
Tammy Bjorkman
<bjorkman@columbialandtrust.org>
Contact the compilers.

Sisters
Steve Shunk
(541) 408-1753
<steve@paradisebirding.com>
Contact the compiler.

Sodhouse—Malheur NWR
Duncan Evered and Lyla Messick
(541) 493-2629; <mfs@highdesertair.com>
Meet at Malheur Field Station. Free lodging for count volunteers.

Union County (Cove and Union area)
Trent Bray
(541) 963-2888; <avitours@aol.com>
Contact the compiler.

Utopia (Culver area)
Pete Weigel
(541) 489-3280 or (206) 819-3821
<antelope@oregonvos.net>
Contact the compiler.

Monday, December 22
Little Applegate
Shelley Elkovich
(541) 821-0935
or Laurel Sutherlin,
<laurel@kswild.org>. Contact compilers.

Friday, December 26
Brownsville
Barbara Combs
(541) 689-6660;
<bcombs232@gmail.com>
Meet 7 am at Pioneer Villa Restaurant (Brownsville exit off Interstate 5).

Saturday, December 27
Forest Grove
Mary Anne Sohlstrom
(503) 463-9540; <masohlstrom@msn.com>
Meet 7 am (earlier for breakfast), Elmer’s Pancake House, 390 SW Adams, Hillsboro.

Port Orford
Jim Rogers
(541) 332-2555; <chlaparl@wildblue.net>
Meet 7:15 am, north side of Driftwood Elementary School on Hwy 101.

Sunday, December 28
Hood River
Catherine Flick
(509) 493-1195; <stewart@gorge.net>
Meet 6:30 am at the Best Western in Hood River (exit 64 off Interstate 84).

Tuesday, December 30
Dallas
Roy Gerg
(503) 589-4636; <roygerig@hotmail.com>
Meet 7:15 am at Bert’s Family Restaurant, 165 Orchard Drive, Dallas.

Wahkiakum, WA
(includes Knappa and Brownsmead, OR)
Andrew Emlen
(360) 795-8009; <aceasp@pacific.com>
OR counters meet 7 am at The Logger Restaurant, Knappa. WA counters meet 7 am at Skamokawa Center, Skamokawa.

Wednesday, December 31
Prineville
Charles Gates
(541) 923-1320
<cgates@webformixair.com>
Meet 7 am at McDonalds in Prineville.

Thursday, January 1
Cowlitz/Columbia
Bob Reistroff
(360) 636-5125; <breistrof@aol.com>
Contact the compiler.

Santiam Pass
Steve Shunk
(541) 408-1753;
<steve@paradisebirding.com>
Contact the compiler.

Sunday, January 4
Eugene
Dick Lamster
(541) 343-8664
<maeve@uoregon.edu>
Barbara Gleason (volunteer coordinator)
(541) 345-0450
<brlg@aol.com>
Contact the compiler. Post-count gathering at the Eugene Garden Club, 1645 High St.
2008 Oregon Listing Report Form
Return by February 15, 2009

Please join in and send in your results. The more the merrier. Thanks, Paul

Circle species total for 2008:
_____ species in _______ county and centered at:

As announced in OB 33:2, the new CIRCLE listing category is an opportunity to list and report total species seen in a personally selected birding area, a circle (diameter of up to approx. 15 miles). Usual ABA listing rules apply. The smaller scale of the listing territory allows many of us to bird without the need for so much driving.

Please indicate in which county your circle lies. Please indicate briefly the center of your circle. (We’ll try to find a way to report this new listing category so that your results will be interesting to readers of Oregon Birds.)

For those who wish to enter this data online, there will an announcement made on OBOL to tell people how to complete it in that manner, once the system is in place.

Note: since this category begins with the 2008 year total, the “life list” Circle totals will be published beginning after the 2009 year.

NAME

ADDRESS

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PHONE

EMAIL

Listing Thresholds:
Oregon State Life List:............300
The threshold for automatic carry-over of state life lists is 400.
2008 Oregon Year List:.............250
County Life Lists: .................100
2008 County Year Lists: ..........100
2008 Circle List........... no minimum

Send completed forms to:
Paul T. Sullivan
4470 SW Murray Blvd. #26
Beaverton, OR 97005
<ptsulliv@spiritone.com>

life 2008
Oregon _______-_______
Baker _______-_______
Benton _______-_______
Clackamas _______-_______
Clatsop _______-_______
Columbia _______-_______
Coos _______-_______
Crook _______-_______
Curry _______-_______
Deschutes _______-_______
Douglas _______-_______
Gilliam _______-_______
Grant _______-_______
Harney _______-_______
Hood River _______-_______
Jackson _______-_______
Jefferson _______-_______
Josephine _______-_______
Klamath _______-_______
Lake _______-_______
Lane _______-_______
Lincoln _______-_______
Linn _______-_______
Malheur _______-_______
Marion _______-_______
Morrow _______-_______
Multnomah _______-_______
Polk _______-_______
Sherman _______-_______
Tillamook _______-_______
Umatilla _______-_______
Union _______-_______
Wallowa _______-_______
Wasco _______-_______
Washington _______-_______
Wheeler _______-_______
Yamhill _______-_______
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La Nina Pays A Visit

By early Fall the state climatologist (www.ocs.orst.edu/winter_07-08/forecast) was predicting a cool wet winter and potential for record snowpack due to “La Nina” conditions. La Nina events are created by a strengthening of easterly tradewinds along the Equator, which push warm surface waters to the west and increase upwellings of colder water in the eastern Pacific Ocean off the west coast of South America. Generally speaking, La Nina events produce cooler and wetter winters in the Pacific Northwest, and such was the case this year. It is interesting to note that this season’s temperatures were only outside the norm (lower) when viewed in the context of recent years. When compared to long-term averages, mean temperatures were defined as normal <lwf.ncdc.noaa.gov>, thus one cannot presume this represents an abatement of the well-documented climate changes that are being driven by the atmospheric buildup of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. As predicted, mountain snowpacks reached depths that hadn’t been seen in at least a decade, with some accumulations hitting 200% of normal. Aside from one major December storm, impacts on birds seem to have been limited. There were no reported die-offs of alcids. Somewhat surprisingly, the cooler, wetter weather did not hinder semi-hardies or other species that typically winter far to the south, as they showed well.

A Very Loony Winter

The winter of 2007-08 saw an incredible assortment of inland loon sightings. In most years there is a discernable inland flight of Pacific, Common and Red-throated Loons during October and November. During the winter months we expect small numbers of Common Loons to spend the season along the Columbia River and on some of the larger reservoirs in western Oregon. A few Red-throated Loons are detected nearly every winter along the Columbia River, typically in the Portland area, where there is a lot of coverage, and in the large pools behind dams farther upstream. Pacific Loons are generally rare inland during the winter months (Dec-Feb). Red-throated Loons staged an unprecedented incursion into the Willamette Valley, most impressive of which was an assemblage of up to 10 at confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers in Portland Dec-Jan (Chris Warren et al.). Six Red-throateds found on the Portland CBC—where this species has only been detected on nine of 82 count (Audubon CBC Database)—topped that count’s previous record of four (1988). Another Red-throated found on the Eugene CBC was the first for that circle in more than a decade. Red-throateds continued off Sauvie I. through the season, with three there 24 Feb (Bob Lockett). Four others were reported in the Willamette Valley away from the Columbia R. 30 Dec-4 Jan. Pacific Loon is the rarest among the expected loons to occur inland. Thus, single birds at Fern Ridge Reservoir 2 Jan (Sylvia Mau ding, Don Schrouder, Paul Sherrell) and at Dexter Reservoir 19 Jan (John Sullivan, Bruce Dugger et al.) provided exceptional records for inland Lane.

Red-throated Loon, back left, and Arctic Loon, Brownsmead, January 20, 2008. Photo by Cheryl Whelchel
Though annual as late fall migrant inland, Pacific Loons are rare on the eastside away from the Columbia River after November, thus a single Pacific at Haystack Res. Crook on 8 Dec was exceptional (Chuck Gates). The star of the season was a highly cooperative Arctic Loon, Oregon’s 3rd, that was enjoyed by hundreds of birders during its stay at Brownsmead 9 Dec+ (Cheryl Whelchel photos). Though annual in winter coastally, an immature Yellow-billed Loon at Dexter Res. 12-16 Jan (Daniel Farrar, m.ob.), was a just the second for the W.V., only 60 miles inland. Another Yellow-billed appeared briefly at Brownsmead 16 Jan (Judy McIntyre photo).


**Waterfowl-Diurnal Raptors**

Emperor Goose made a typical showing with two singletons detected. One found 17 Dec, spent much of the winter at Dean Creek Meadows in coastal Douglas (Russ Namitz et al.) and another was found dead at Hammond, Clatsop on 20 Dec (Troy Guy). Over 1000 Snow Geese wintered on Sauvie I. (Bob Lockert). Elsewhere in the Willamette Valley, reports were limited to singles and small flocks. A Snow Goose at Roseburg 20 Jan (Linda Smith) was a rare find in the Umpqua Valley and three were unexpected at Tillamook 25 Jan (Michelle Simper). Approximating recent averages, six Ross’s Geese were detected in the Willamette Valley away from southern Polk., which has hosted a sizeable flock for decades. This winter Trumpeters turned up in no fewer than five valley counties, including three locations in Washington (fide Harry Nehls). Fifty Tundra Swans at New R., Coos was an exceptional coastal tally for this species.

Hybrid waterfowl abounded; single Wood Duck x Mallard and American x Eurasian Wigeon crosses wintered at Portland’s Crystal Springs Park (Craig Turner photos) and a probable hybrid female wigeon was photographed at Eugene (David Irons). Individual Common Teal x Green-winged Teal were noted at Ankeny 17 Jan (David Irons) and Brownsmead, Clatsop 30 Jan (Mike Patterson). Finally, a male Tufted Duck x Scaup (likely Greater) inhabited the Columbia R. at John Day Dam 6-29 Dec (Gary Fredrick, Craig Miller photos). Typically rare in mid-winter, Blue-winged Teal graced three locales; singletons were at Svenson I., Clatsop 1 Jan (Mike Patterson), Coquille, Coos 27 Jan (Tim Rodenkirk), and Eugene 30 Jan (David Irons, Larry McQueen et al). Away from Svenson I. Clatsop, which typically hosts a winter flock of 50+ birds, Cinnamon Teal are scarce during winter in western Oregon, thus this season’s 15 westside reports was exceptional. On 31 Dec, a hunter shot Oregon’s 2nd Baikal Teal at F.R.R, the day after the local CBC (photos, fide Daniel Farrar). Oregon’s first Baikal Teal, also shot by a hunter, was near Irish Bend, Benton on 12 Jan 1974. All six Eurasian Green-winged Teal were in western Oregon, with four in the Willamette Valley and two on the outer coast. Wintering numbers of Canvasbacks appear to be showing modest gains in w. Oregon. Meares Lake, Tillamook hosted a flock of 200 birds, double the high count from 2006, on 7 Dec (David Smith). Similarly, up to 61 were counted at Dexter Res., Lane during Jan and Feb, which compares to a high count of 20 during winter 2006-07 (David Irons). Flocks of 25+ Canvasbacks wintered at multiple W.V. sites, highlighted by 80 at Fernhill Wetlands 29 Feb (Blake Matheson). The lone Long-tailed Duck on the eastside was at Klamath Falls 9 Dec (Dave Menke). The only other inland report was Linn’s 1st, which enlivened the Brownsville sewage ponds 26 Dec-6 Jan (Barb Combs, m.ob.). The outflow of Fos-
Oregon Reservoir near Sweet Home, Linn continues to be the only westside location where one can expect to see numbers of Barrow’s Goldeneyes; 33 were tallied there on 4 Jan (Mark Nikas) and this site has hosted up to 65 birds in recent years. Four additional singletons provided the balance of the westside reports for this species. Single Red-breasted Mergansers at Corvallis 8 Dec and Philomath 5 Jan were just the 3rd and 4th Benton records (W. Douglas Robinson). Four Red-necked Grebes were reported inland 16 Dec-2 Jan, including one eastside bird at Mosier, Wasco 16 Dec (Donna Lusthoff).

The only shearwater of the season was a Short-tailed Shearwater off Cape Arago, Coos 4 Jan (Tim Rodenkirk). No fewer than three American White Pelicans spent all or part of the season in the Willamette Valley. One was noted from multiple Portland locations (probably the same bird) 4 Dec-7 Jan (Dave Helzer, E. Johnson). Another was at Baskett Slough 10 Jan+ (Bill Tice) and one wintered at F.R.R. (David Brown m.ob.). High numbers of Brown Pelicans lingered along the coast into early December; 100 were at Coos Bay 3 Dec (Russ Namitz) and 60 inhabited Seaside, Clatsop (David Bailey) the following day. An intense storm battered the Oregon coast with 100+ mph winds on 2-3 Dec, killing and injuring dozens of pelicans at Port Orford, Curry. At least 50 Brown Pelicans were seen hanging from trees and bushes, lying dead along roadways, and wandering about town with broken wings on 3 Dec (Russ Namitz). Twenty-five Brown Pelicans remained at nearby Pistol River on 12 Dec, and a few persisted in Lincoln, Coos, and Curry well into January.

Western Oregon now represents the northern extreme of Turkey Vulture’s wintering range. At least eight wintered again at Eugene (Bill Evans et al.) and 1-5 birds soared over five other Willamette Valley sites during January. A lone vulture just east of the Cascades at Sisters 5 Jan (Steve Shunk) was most unusual; this species is extremely rare on the eastside Dec-Jan. Single vultures at Prineville, Crook 14 Feb (Nancy MacDonald) and Hampton, Deschutes 25 Feb (Jim Moodie), were presumed to be early migrants. A Red-shouldered Hawk at Summer Lake W.M.A., Lake 18 Dec (Kim Boddie, Andy Frank) yields an extremely rare eastside winter record. A Swainson’s Hawk, discovered 23 Dec, wintered near Tangent, Linn (Cheryl Whelchel photo, m.ob.). Five Golden Eagles were reported from west of the Cascades; three inhabited the Willamette Valley where they are annual in winter, while two observed in the Sixes River bottoms in northern Curry 19 Jan (fide Jim Rogers) were likely the same two seen at the mouth of the New R., in southern Coos 11 Feb (Jim Heaney). This species is quite unusual for the outer coast. It was the first winter in many years with no confirmed Gyrfalcon reports from Oregon. Similarly, just two Prairie Falcons were detected in the southern Willamette Valley, which typically hosts the bulk of the westside wintering birds. However, singles that wintered at Brownsmead, Clatsop (Sylvia Maulding, Don Schrouder, m.ob.), Roy, Washington (Lars Norgren), and Sauvie I. (Chris Warren photo), enriched areas where they are far less expected.

Rails-Alcids
A visually impressive assemblage of 13,000 American Coots carpeted the Columbia R. at Mosier, Wasco 16 Dec (Donna Lusthoff). Two Sandhill Cranes lingered to 18 Dec at Summer Lake (Steve Dougill, Dean Hale, Howard Horvath); cranes are less than annual during winter on the
eastside. A count of 14 **Semipalmated Plovers** at Tillamook 17 Feb (Em Scatteregia, Adrian and Christopher Hinkle), was high for the northern Oregon coast in winter. Given that Oregon has just ten previous records, the well-documented reports of at least three **Mountain Plovers** in the state during a single season is astounding; a one-day wonder e. of Harrisburg, Linn (Mark Nikas photo) was the 5th for the Willamette Valley. Two more appeared at the New River mouth 24 Jan, remaining there until 17 Feb (Tim Rodenkirk, Russ Namitz photos, m.ob.). Interestingly, an uncorroborated report of two Mountain Plovers came from nearby Coos Bay 12 Jan (fide Tim Rodenkirk). Large flocks of **Greater Yellowlegs** included 45 through the season at Eugene (Daniel Farrar) and 38 at Scappoose 5 Jan (John Gatchet). A **Lesser Yellowlegs** at Coos Bay 16 Dec (Russ Namitz, Joe Fontaine) was the only one of the season; for the first time in at least three years Lesser Yellowlegs was not found wintering at Eugene. Coos Bay remains the only Oregon estuary that consistently hosts wintering **Willets**; five spent the season there (Tim Rodenkirk). An out of season **Wandering Tattler** graced the Lane coast n. of Florence on 8 Feb (David Irons); tattlers are rare in Oregon Nov-Mar. Single **Whimbrels**, were at Siletz Bay 6 Dec (Patrick Gallagher), Newport 5 Jan (Rebecca Cheek) and Bandon 25 Jan (Tim Rodenkirk); this species is scarce in winter along the Oregon coast. Forty **Marbled Godwits** at Coos Bay 16 Dec (fide Tim Rodenkirk) was an excellent seasonal tally; winter high counts rarely exceed one-third this number. The only **Ruddy Turnstone** was at Coos Bay 12 Jan (Tim Rodenkirk). Similarly lonely, a Red Phalarope at Seaside 1 Dec (David Bailey) was season’s sole report.

Single unidentified jaegers visited Bandon 3 Dec (Dave Lauten, Kathy Castelein) and Coos Bay 16 Dec (fide Tim Rodenkirk). Flocks of 40+ **Bonaparte’s Gulls** lingered in Clatsop to 6 Dec (David Bailey, Mike Patterson). Fifteen **Glaucous Gulls** was less than half the record haul witnessed during the winter of 2006-07. Four ventured into the Willamette Valley. As is the norm, nearly three-quarters of these gulls first appeared after 1 January. A presumed storm-driven **Black-legged Kittiwake** showed up 130 km inland at a small duck pond in Roseburg, Douglas 5 Jan (Jim Hein). The bird of the season in Oregon was the Region’s first **Black Skimmer**, which was found resting on the open beach near Pistol River, Curry 26 Jan (Bob Hunter written description). With two recent records in Humboldt, California and a small wintering population in San Francisco Bay, this species has been a much-predicted addition to the Oregon list over the past decade. In a truly bizarre incident, a **Parakeet Auklet** apparently collided with a mast before coming to rest on the deck of a fishing boat two miles off Yachats, Lincoln. 3 Jan. It was captured and taken to rehab (fide Rebecca Cheek). This is just the 5th live Parakeet Auklet ever seen in Oregon waters, though there are a dozen or more records of beached carcasses. A **Horned Puffin** at Yachats 21 Jan (Wayne Hoffman), represented the only report of the season.

**Doves-Warblers**

Northbound **Band-tailed Pigeons** appeared along the coast 12-18 Feb (fide Nehls). As if there was any doubt, **Eurasian Collared-Doves** appear to be here to stay. The flock
at Brookings, Curry, was up to 31 birds this season (Don Munson), and in Florence, where this species first appeared in 2007, a flock of eight was noted 26 Feb (Diane Pettrey). Another flock of nine was at Scappoose through the season (John Gatchet et al.). On the eastside, five were found at Summer Lake (Judy Meredith), where this species was also first reported in May 2007. Large flocks continue to grow at Burns and Madras and have now reached the point of no longer being newsworthy. Oregon hosted three Snowy Owls, all eastside; one was seen briefly near Milton-Freewater, Umatilla 9 Jan (Mike and Merry Lynn Denny), and two wintered northeast of Ione, Morrow 3 Jan+ (Eric Henze, Khanh Tran). As has come to be expected, two Burrowing Owls spent the season in the Willamette Valley with singles in both Benton and Linn. Another Burrowing Owl was observed at Newport 20 Feb (Bob Bender). For the second consecutive year an extremely hearty Costa’s Hummingbird braved the winter at Bend, elev. 3623’ (Dave Tracy). A Lewis’s Woodpecker at Finley 7 Jan (Noah Strycker) was the only one detected in the Willamette Valley.

The challenge of sapsucker identification remains underestimated by many birders, as the possibility of Red-naped Sapsucker x Red-breasted Sapsucker apparently goes un-considered when out-of-range sapsuckers are seen away from known hybrid zones. This season, westside sapsuckers at Warrenton, Clatsop 16 Dec and Dexter Res., Lane 13 Jan were initially reported as Red-naped. The Dexter bird was subsequently seen and “confirmed” as a Red-naped by dozens of observers who visited this site to see the aforementioned Yellow-billed Loon. About a week after the initial report Craig Tumer raised questions about the identity of the Dexter bird. Examination of photos of both the Warrenton and Dexter birds revealed that they exhibited red feathers extending into and below the black breast band (sometimes referred to as “breast shield”) and also showed red extending through the auricular patch into the supercilium and the white moustachial stripe, which should not occur in a “pure” Red-naped (Johnson and Johnson 1985, Auk 105:1-15). Given these difficulties, prevalence of hybridization in the Cascades, great care should be taken to properly document apparent Red-naped Sapsuckers found west of the Cascade crest.

A Red-breasted Sapsucker at Hines, Harney 19 Jan+ (Larry Hammond) was far to the east of this species’ normal haunts on the eastside; Red-breasted Sapsucker breed in the Klamath Basin, but are somewhat rare further east. A Black Phoebe at Brownsmead, Clatsop through the season was in one of the few corners of northwest Oregon where this species is still less than expected. There were at least eight Say’s Phoebes recorded westside, six of which were in either Coos or Curry; up to four over-wintered around Cape Blanco (Tim Rodenkirk, Terry Wahl). Northern Shrike numbers were somewhat low generally on the westside and this species was nearly unreported along the outer coast. Continued removal has dramatically reduced the number of hedgerows at the margins of grass seed fields in the Willamette Valley. This is a disturbing trend as wintering shrikes are dependent on this vegetation for both cover and hunting perches. Oregon’s only Blue Jay made brief appearances at a Bend feeder in mid-Dec and 15 Jan (Susan Doran).

Tree Swallows were widely noted along the coast and in the Willamette Valley during December and January. Fifteen were at F.R.R. 19 Dec (Larry
McQueen et al.) and up to six were seen throughout the season at Myrtle Point, Coos (Mike Wihler, Tim Rodenkirk). Up to five were seen regularly at Seal Rock, Lincoln 18 Dec-20 Jan (Laemons Osis, Rebecca Cheek). For the fifth time in the past six years Barn Swallows made a mid-winter incursion into the state. The reports, which came mostly from the westside, occurred 19-27 Jan. Along the coast, seven Barns were at Lincoln City 20 Jan (Greg Gillson), 3-6 frequented N.S.C.B. 21-27 Jan (Tim Rodenkirk), and nine inhabited a Myrtle Point log pond 27 Jan (Tim Rodenkirk). In the W.V., four were at Peoria, Linn 22 Jan (Randy Campbell) and two were at Eugene 23 Jan (Sylvia Maulding). Most unexpected was an eastside singleton at Upper Klamath L. 19 Jan (Wes Stone), though this marks the 2nd consecutive year that a Barn Swallow has been detected during January east of the Cascades.

The invasion of Mountain Chickadees into the westside lowlands, first evident in the fall, persisted through much of the season with many reports from the Willamette Valley floor during December and January. At least five were detected in Coos 15 Dec-21 Jan. (Tim Rodenkirk). The Region’s 3rd Sedge Wren, discovered at E.E. Wilson W.M.A., Benton (W. Douglas Robinson), was less than 10 miles from where the 2nd was found by the same observer almost exactly a year earlier. An unexpected mid-winter Mountain Bluebird was noted along the Benton/Polk line 28-29 Jan (Roy Gerig); although nearly annual in the Willamette Valley during spring and fall migration they rarely occur there at other seasons. Four N. Mockingbirds included three on the westside, where annual in winter. A Mockingbird wintering at Terrebonne, Deschutes (Robin Jackson) was quite rare for the eastside, where most records occur during spring and summer. A flock of 56 American Pipits in northern Sherman 19 Feb was a high winter count for the eastside (Stuart Johnston). Bohemian Waxwings pushed far south and west of normal; incursions are typically limited to the extreme northeast corner of the state. Stray flocks included 14 at Summer Lake W.M.A., Lake on 8 Dec (Priscilla Christensen) and 26 at Page Springs, Harney on 12 Jan (Noah Strycker). The flock of 44 Bohemians near Pilot Rock, Jackson on 12 Jan (Frank Lospalluto) was decidedly out of range in far southwestern Oregon. Singles were reported from four additional sites away from northeast Oregon. The season produced an assortment of unexpected warblers. A Yellow Warbler was at Tillamook 31 Dec (Pat French photo) and a Black-throated Gray lingered at Sauvie I. until 5 Dec (Chris Warren); both species are less than annual during winter. All 12 Palm Warblers were along the coastal slope, mostly south. Ten of these Palms were in either Coos or Curry, including three together near Port Orford, Curry 23 Feb (Jim and Karen Fairchild). The only true vagrant of the season was the Black-and-white Warbler at North Bend 20 Feb (Barbara Griffin); this is about the 9th record for Coos and at least the 4th.
during winter. Rounding out the array of Parulids was a Common Yellowthroat at Finley 6 Jan (Noah Strycker).

Tanagers-Finches

A Western Tanager at Grants Pass 16 Dec (Phil Hicks) duplicates one in Portland last winter; this is only about the 5th winter record for Oregon, three of which have come in recent years. American Tree Sparrows wandered far and wide. On the eastside modest flocks made it as far south as Malheur and Burns, Harney. Further west, six were at Summer Lake 18 Dec (Jim Moodie) and a single was at Lower Klamath N.W.R. 23 Jan (Frank Losplalluto). Four reached western Oregon, with long-staying birds at Scappoose, Columbia (Jay Withgott) and N.S.C.B. (Tim Rodenkirk), and E.E. Wilson W.M.A. (Rich Armstrong, m.ob). Only three Chipping Sparrows were detected on the season. One was at the Corvallis Airport 18 Dec (Randy Moore), and two were near Perrydale, Polk 3 Feb (Carol Karlen, Paul Sullivan). The latter birds, as is often the case with Chipping Sparrows wintering in the Willamette Valley, inhabited a filbert orchard. Four Clay-colored Sparrows wintered in western Oregon, approximating recent seasonal averages. Two Red Fox Sparrows were reported; a bird that wintered in Gold Beach (Tim Rodenkirk written description) showed characteristics consistent with P. i. iliaca or P. i. zaboria, while the second at Tillamook 14 Dec (Jeff Harding) could not be assigned to subspecies. The season’s only Swamp Sparrow reports came from Coos’s Millcreek Marsh, where they are annual (Tim Rodenkirk) and Ankeny 4 Feb+ (Stefan Schlick et al.). Harris’s Sparrows made a modest showing with three birds noted east of the Cascades and four—all in the Willamette Valley—to the west. Three of the four in the Willamette Valley were in Benton. Several Christmas Bird Counts generated Oregon Dark-eyed Junco counts that were well above the norm. Coastally, Coos Bay tallied a record 976 juncos, nearly tripling the long-term average. Despite highly inclement weather, the Florence count (708) nearly doubled its average. One sector of the Eugene count found 904 juncos (David Irons). Embedded within these hordes were good numbers of Slate-colored Dark-eyed Juncos. Several observers reported having 2-3 wintering in their yards, and it seemed that any decent-sized junco flock in the Willamette Valley included one or more Slate-coloreds.

Peak counts of Lapland Longspurs included 32 in the New River bottomlands, Curry 30 Dec (Terry Wahl) and on the eastside up to 20 flocked with Horned Larks in the Straits Drain area of Lower Klamath N.W.R. 21 Jan+ (Charlotte Kisling, Kevin Spencer et al.). A single Lapland at Portland 5 Dec and one-two at the Corvallis Airport 18 Dec-24 Jan (Randy Moore) were rare winter finds in the Willamette Valley. Snow Buntings made a good showing along the outer coast with six birds reported from four sites. The only inland bird was a singleton at Sauvie I. 16 Feb (Dwight Porter). A male Black-headed Grosbeak that appeared at a Springfield, Lane feeder 6 Dec (Mike Higgins photo) was highly unexpected; this species generally vacates the state entirely by 1 Oct and there are less than ten Oregon records Dec-Mar. Two Yellow-headed Blackbirds spent the season on Sauvie I. (Stefan Schlick) and the 400 Brown-headed Cowbirds there on 30 Jan was an exceptional winter count for the Willamette Valley (Wink Gross). Flocks of 90 Gray-crowned and 6 Black Rosy-Finches were on the floor of the Alvord Desert, Harney 24 Feb (Joel Geier). The westside only Cassin’s Finch graced Portland 8 Dec (Andy Frank). On the heels of the 2006-07 flight, this year’s incursion of “northern” finches can only be described as poor. Pine Grosbeaks went undetected, Red Crossbills were generally scarce statewide, and three White-winged Crossbills e. of McKenzie Bridge, Lane 26 Feb (Craig and Marilyn Miller) constituted the only report for that species. Pine Siskins outperformed other finches, but still did not reach major invasion numbers. Flocks of 50-250 were reported from several sites along the Columbia River from Portland west towards Astoria, while numbers in the Willamette Valley were generally much lower. Lesser Goldfinches continue to increase in the Portland area, evidenced by the 50 there 6 Feb (Seth Reams); such numbers would have been unthinkable 25 years ago.
Reporting Rare Birds in Oregon

The OBRC needs your report of any review species observed in Oregon. Review species are indicated in the official state checklist by an asterisk (*) or double asterisk (**).

To report a review species, please e-mail the information listed below to: hnehls6@comcast.net

Note: OBRC encourages submission of supporting evidence in the form of photos or recordings (see item 6 below). If you wish to submit these or other evidence not suited to e-mail (e.g. field notes, sketches), please mail to:
Harry Nehls, OBRC
2736 SE 20th Ave.
Portland, OR 97202

This form is intended as a convenience and a guideline. It may be used flexibly and need not be used at all.

1. YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS.
   Postal address:
   E-mail address:
   Telephone (voice):

2. BIRD IDENTIFICATION.
   Write in the name of the species you have identified and information on numbers, sex, plumage, and age.

3. DATE(S). Month, day, and year. If there are multiple observations, each date.

4. LOCATION. Be specific; describe habitat.

5. DETAILS. Include only what was actually observed, not what should have been seen or heard. Stress field marks: bill, eye, wings, tail, legs, shape, proportions, “jizz”, etc. Include behavior: feeding, resting, flying, interactions with other species, etc. Describe voice—song, calls, or notes—if heard.

Describe your reasons for your identification: your familiarity with the species, field guides used, similar species that were eliminated, references that were consulted, etc.

Describe the circumstances of the observation: light conditions, positions of the sun, distance to the bird, duration of observation, equipment used, time of day, time of tide, etc.

Add the names (and address and phone numbers if known) of other observers who may have identified the bird.

6. PHOTOS, RECORDINGS. State whether photos were taken or video or sound recordings were made. OBRC will duplicate and return original slides and tapes promptly. Donations of slide duplicates (OBRC prefers a double set) and copies of recordings may be considered a tax-deductible expense!
Raptors watching birders...

Very cooperative Northern Pygmy-owl, photograph © Steve Dowlan, December 13, 2007

Back Cover:  
Brown phase Western Screech-owl  
—Dan Heyerly

On the back cover is a photo taken February 14, 2008, of the brown form of Western Screech-owl I spotted on Bearridge Rd., Creswell (actually approximately mid-way between Pleasant Hill and Creswell).

I think this is the only brown form of WESO I have ever seen. I asked Dave Irons if he had ever seen a brown form, and he said he had not.

I took this with my little Nikon Coolpix 5.0 with 3x zoom. It was not digiscoped. The bird was sitting on the ground beside a Douglas Fir tree approximately 40-feet away from the fence when I saw it as I came around a corner. I stopped the car and the bird flew towards me and landed on the fence approximately 20-feet away. I shot a group of photos and this is the one most in focus. My camera kept insisting on focusing on either the fence or the Fir boughs!

This Peregrine Falcon watched me at Cape Blanco State Park (I thought I might be considered for lunch the way he was watching me). Photographed by Lois Miller on February 6, 2008.
This photo was taken February 14, 2008, of the brown form of Western Screech-owl spotted by Dan Heyerly on Bearridge Rd., Creswell (approximately mid-way between Pleasant Hill and Creswell). See inside back cover for details.

Oregon Birds
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