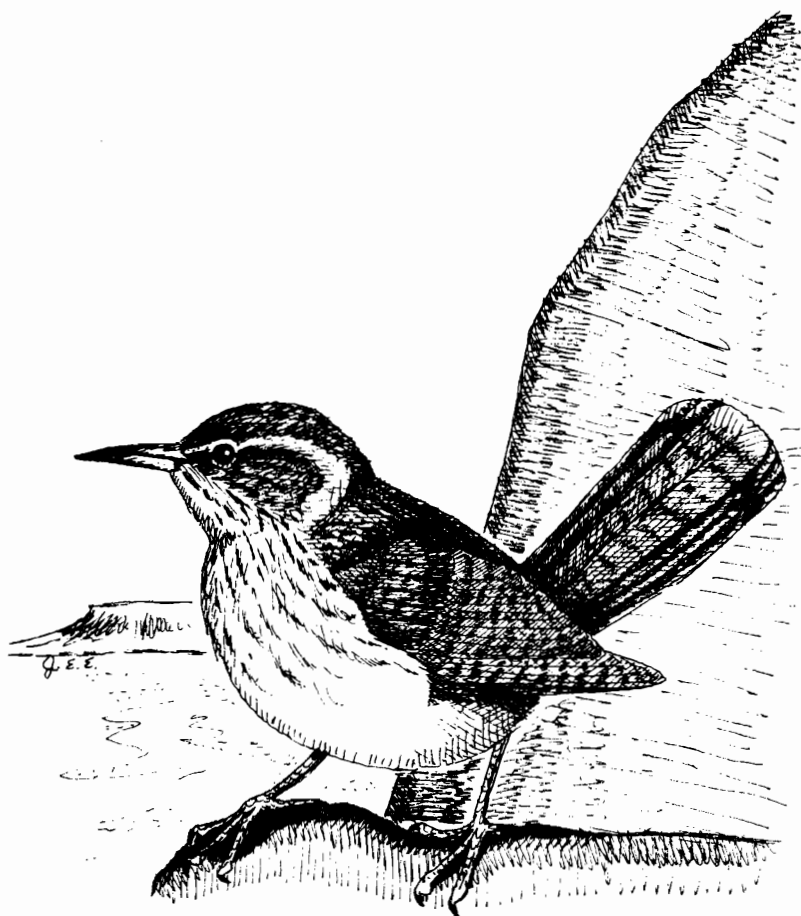


# Oregon Birds

Vol. 5, No. 5 — 1979



—Rock Wren—

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Cover illustration, Rock Wren, by Joe Evanich; other illustrations by Steve Gordon and Joe Evanich.

## Observations of a Rock Wren Nest; Spencer Butte, Lane County

Kathryn J. Holbo

My first observation of the Rock Wren (*Salpinctes obsoletus*) was June 25, 1979 in the southern Willamette Valley, Oregon. The nesting site was discovered during an ornithological field study class at the University of Oregon. The first sighting was simply a quick observation that served as a stimulus for further observations.

Observations independent of the ornithology class began July 4 and ended September 8, 1979. Trips usually lasted four hours, although not all time was devoted to studying Rock Wrens on the butte. The nest was located in a crevice formed by a rock sitting on another rock. The site was near the summit of Spencer Butte, a prominent butte south of Eugene. Most of the summit area was covered with basaltic rocks and tall grasses. The area has the appearance of being generally above timberline of this particular butte; there were a few very sparse, deciduous and coniferous trees on the summit. The nest was located approximately 2,000 feet above mean sea level.

Inside the nest was an arrangement of small rocks, 0.5 to 0.75 inches in diameter. Mixed with the rocks were stems from the local growth of grasses. A few of the small stones extended outside the nest but there was no evidence of the paved entrance referred to in A. C. Bent's article of 1948.

Bent suggested the "stone walk" served to identify the crevice containing the nest from other crevices in the area. Since there was no walkway to the nest, I looked for other identifiable features around the nest that could serve as substitutes for Bent's walkway suggestion.

Other features were the upright pointed rock that served as the "roof" of the nest and a large, single sprout of poison oak on the right-hand side of the entrance.

As I watched the nest, two adults were present, coming and going from the nest frequently and quickly. The male usually arrived at the nest first. He usually perched atop the rock to survey the area, and then whistled in a basic monotone with a slight upshot at the end. The female arrived shortly after his whistle and they both entered the nest with food. After several trips, one of the parents carried a fecal sack out of the nest and flew south away from the nest. The fecal sack appeared to be almost as large as the pebbles in the nest. The parents were timed in their round-trip flights away from and back to the nest. Each return was approximately four minutes apart and food was brought each time.

While the parents were out, I observed three offspring in the nest. Their estimated age was two weeks. Their size was noticeably smaller than the adults and they were still fuzzy rather than feathered. When the offspring saw me they moved back farther in the nest. The nest cavity was estimated to be 10 inches from front to back, 8 inches from side to side, and 3 inches from floor to roof. The offspring could move almost all the way to the back of the nest but could not get out of my sight. Before a four minute time period elapsed, I retreated from the nest and waited for the adults to return on schedule.

Upon return to the nest, both adults were carrying food, usually a grasshopper. Both entered the nest to feed the young. The male emerged first, appeared to scout the area from atop the pointed outlook, and whistled to the female what appeared to be an all clear signal. The female emerged and the process was repeated over and over again.

On subsequent visits to the nest site, I found the nest empty and none of the Rock Wrens around it. After searching the area I found them at the opposite end of the summit and the three young were moving around the area under the guidance of the adults. The three offspring spent their time grooming themselves while the parents gathered food. The parents gathered food from a very localized area when compared to the food gathering area utilized when the young were in the nest. They maintained the family group as they frequently moved short distances. This occurred whether I was close or observed from a distance. As indicated by Bent, the Rock Wren is not a shy bird and will let an observer approach quite closely (3 to 5 feet).

The birds abandoned the nest site and moved down slope into a new, larger crevice. Located within a crevice occupied by the dead root system of an old tree stump, the new roosting site was more isolated from the mainstream of human activity on the top of the butte. Even after the nest site was abandoned by the family group, the male would return early in the morning to a perch near the original nest site to begin singing before joining the family group.

The appearance of the young birds differed from the adults in size, color and shape. The three offspring all appeared smaller than the adults. The young Rock Wrens were a buffy color--lighter than their parents. Downy plumage tended to obscure their darker markings. The young birds were plumper than the streamlined parents and their bills were noticeably shorter than the parents' long sleek bills. An exciting discovery was the distinguishing mark between the adult male and adult female. The mark was black bands underneath the adult male's tail-feathers. I could not find this difference in any field guide book.

The feeding habits of the group followed a routine that could be depended upon. The adults

went away from the young and most frequently caught a grasshopper. The adult brought the grasshopper back to one of the young and the young ate the entire bug.

The primary food resources gathered by the adults were grasshoppers. Most of the time an adult caught the grasshopper alive. While holding the grasshopper in its bill, the adult proceeded to beat the insect on a rock until the grasshopper submitted to be eaten. In cases of difficult submission, the adult held the grasshopper down with one foot and impaled the insect with its long pointed bill. This method was usually effective in subduing the victim.

Other than the observed grasshoppers and other small bugs, the only food attempted was a small lizard. The male adult spotted the lizard sunning on a rock, worked itself into position, and finally made an unsuccessful aerial attack on the lizard.

Food gathering activities went on for hours interspersed with resting, preening, and sunning. When eating became a secondary activity, the group of five Rock Wrens gradually worked their way from one end of the summit to the other end. During the course of the observations, I could see the offspring expand from a passive role through an active role of flying around the rock outcroppings under minimal supervision by the parents. As of August 10, 1979, most of the food gathering was still done by the adults. The family unit remained together through the end of August and during late August the young were gathering their own grasshoppers. By the end of the month, it was difficult to distinguish the young from the adults.

After heavy rains in early September, the birds left. They could not be located on the butte by the second weekend in September. Further studies are planned to determine if Rock Wrens return to Spencer Butte next spring.

## A Site Guide to Stewart and Gaddis Parks, Roseburg

*Meredith Jones and Steve Gordon*

Places in western Oregon such as Sauvie Island, Finley National Wildlife Refuge, and Fern Ridge Reservoir in the Willamette Valley, and Roxy Ann Butte in the Rogue Valley are well known to Oregon birders. Join us on a tour of one of several birding "hot spots" in the One Hundred Valleys of the Umpqua, Stewart and Gaddis Parks in Roseburg.

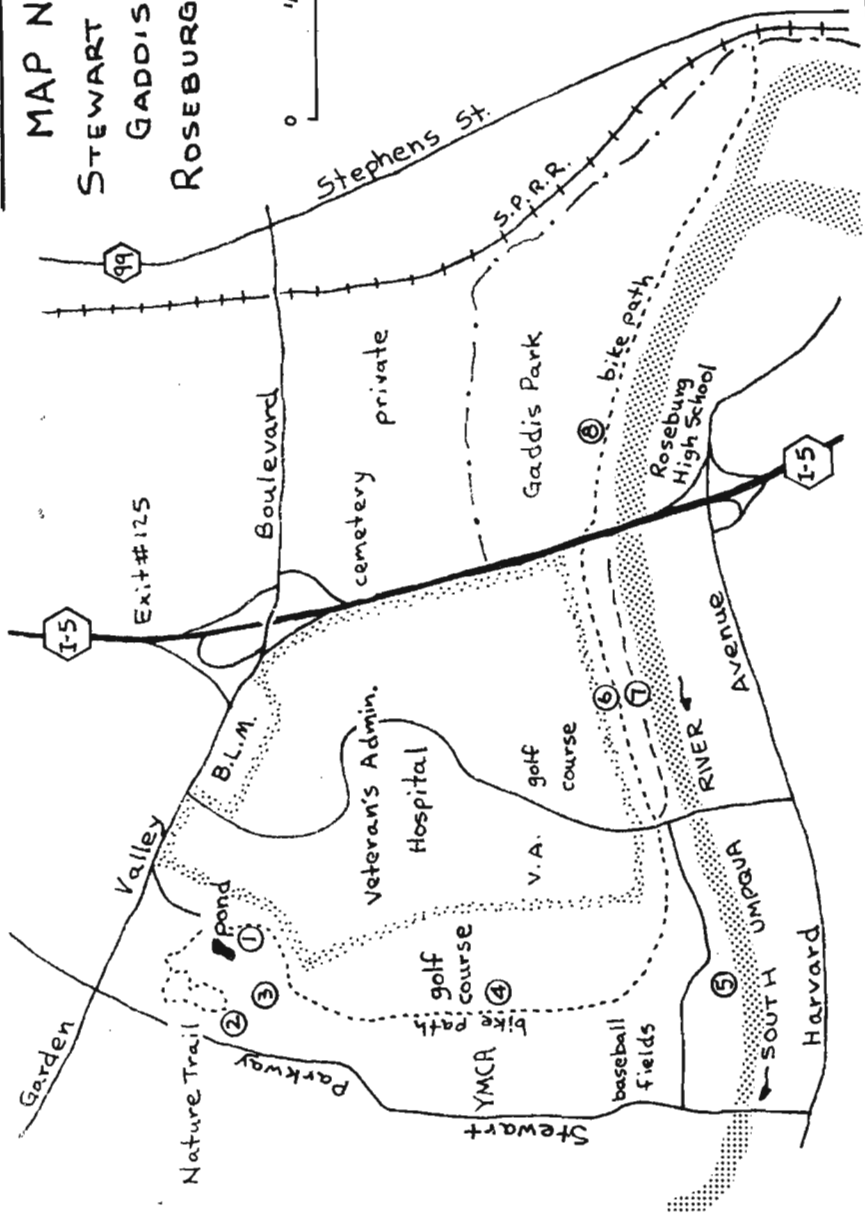
Roseburg is situated in the heart of the Umpqua Valley where the Klamath Mountains, the Coast Range and Western Cascade provinces merge. Birdwise, the Douglas County area is an area of transition between the drier "Little California" in southern Jackson County and the moister Willamette Valley in Lane County. Such birds as Acorn Woodpecker, Lewis' Woodpecker, Northern (Bullock's) Oriole and Lesser Goldfinch are more common in the Umpqua Valley region than they are to the north in Lane County. Summers in the Umpqua region tend to be drier than in Lane County and the poison oak more abundant and lush.

To reach the starting point of the walking tour, the duck pond in Stewart Park (1) on Map No. 1, travel west 1/4 mile from Interstate 5 on Garden Valley Boulevard. The duck pond, where there is adequate parking, and the Stewart Park Nature Trail are illustrated in more detail on Map No. 2. In the winter, a variety of ducks are mixed in with the resident Mallard crosses and geese. Pied-billed Grebe, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon, Wood Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Ruddy Duck and American Coot are present on the pond. In addition to nesting Wood Duck, Cinnamon Teal and Mallard, Green Heron nest in the area of the pond and nature trail.

# MAP NO. 1

STEWART PARK &  
GADDIS PARK  
ROSEBURG, OREGON

0 1/4 1/2 mi.

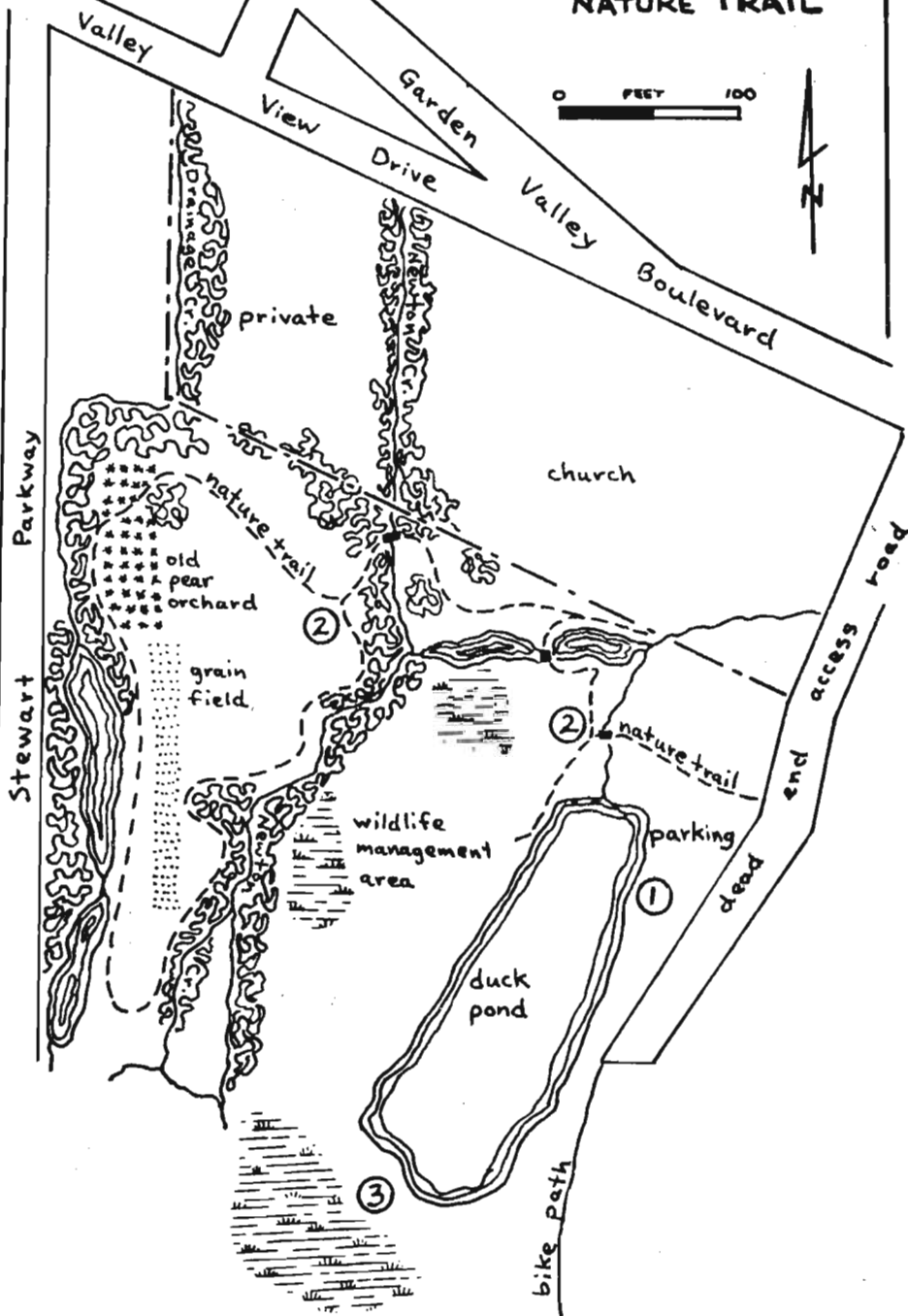


6

# MAP NO. 2

## STEWART PARK NATURE TRAIL

0 FEET 100



7

Along the nature trail (2), three species of wrens, Bewick's, House and Marsh may be seen, while California Quail, Common Flicker, Downy Woodpecker, Western Bluebird, Red-winged Blackbird and a variety of finches and sparrows can often be found in the surrounding marshes and brush. Common Snipe inhabit the wet fields and swamp areas (3) and the common Red-tailed Hawk and American Kestrel are occasionally joined overhead by a soaring Osprey.

Members of the Umpqua Valley Audubon Society and other conservation-minded people in Douglas County were successful in lobbying the City of Roseburg to create the Stewart Park Nature Trail. The three-quarter mile long trail is well described in a guide book which may be borrowed from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 3140 N.E. Stephens, Roseburg; the Douglas County Library; or the Umpqua Valley Audubon Society Library, P. O. Box 381, Roseburg, 97470. Creation of this trail, a cooperative effort involving the Audubon Society, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Roseburg Park Department, is an excellent example of what can be done to display a natural setting in a busy urban park.

One of the most interesting facets of the self-guided trail is the visible activity of beaver. Dams, a lodge, muddy trails, and gnawed ash and willows provide evidence of the presence of these interesting mammals. In fact, a newly constructed ditch connecting two waterways and additions to a dam have caused flooding to the southern end of the nature trail loop . . . rubber boots are advised.

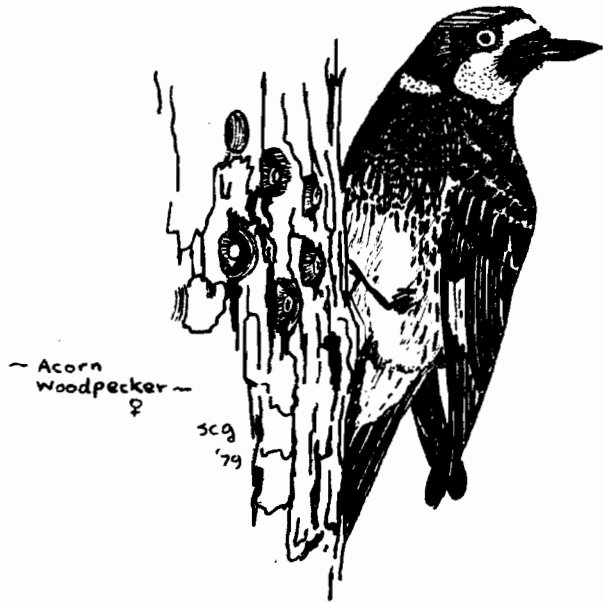
To continue the walking tour, return to the duck pond and continue south on the bicycle path (4). This path passes wet and grassy fields and

the golf course where Killdeer, Common Snipe and flocks of blackbirds and Brown-headed Cowbirds can be observed. Fence rows and small patches of willows attract many birds; one spring seven species of sparrows were observed in one small willow at one time: White-crowned, Golden-crowned, Chipping, Vesper, Savannah, Lincoln's and Song. The Common Nighthawk is active in the evening near the baseball fields and Western Kingbirds have nested on the light poles near the American Legion Baseball Stadium.

Near the southern portion of the park, you may wish to leave the bike path and parallel the South Umpqua River (5). Spotted Sandpiper and Belted Kingfisher can be observed near the river and in winter, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Lesser Scaup and Dipper should be looked for. Anna's Hummingbird can be found frequently during the winter; they seem to prefer the protection of dense blackberry thickets along the river's edge.

Just beyond the Veteran's Administration Hospital entrance, one may continue on the bicycle path into oak and fir woods (6) with its resident Great Horned Owl. These woods are a good spot to find migrating warblers and vireos, and other forest species such as chickadees, kinglets, nuthatches, Varied Thrush and Brown Creeper. In the underbrush, Bushtit, Bewick's and Winter Wrens, Hermit Thrush, Rufous-sided Towhee and Fox Sparrow can be found.

In the proper season in the oak and madrone woods, Cedar Waxwing, Black-headed Grosbeak, Northern (Bullock's) Oriole and Acorn Woodpecker can be observed. Healthy populations of Acorn Woodpeckers (at least 13) and Common Flicker (Red-shafted) frequent these woods and compete with Starlings for nesting cavities.

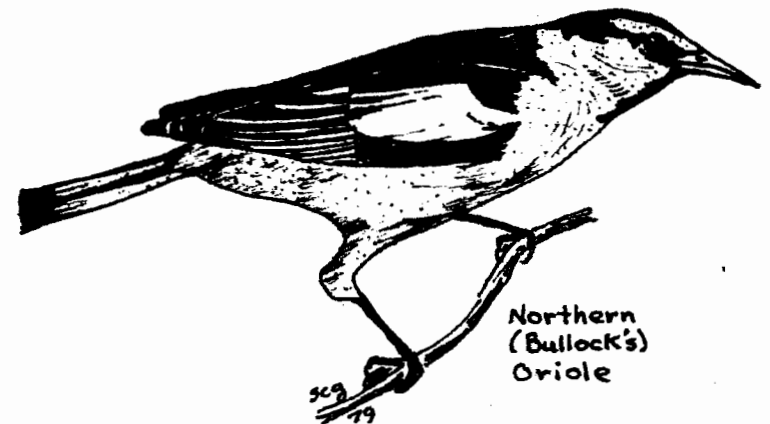


An alternate to the bicycle path through the woods is a dirt path (7) which parallels the river along a lower river terrace. Unless a birder is very agile, the dirt path deadends near the freeway, causing one to (i) scramble up a poison oak covered embankment, (ii) perform a tightrope act on a pipe which crosses a deep stream gulch, or (iii) reverse direction and rejoin the bike path through the woods. This lower path allows good views of the river where Pied-billed and Eared (during migration) Grebes, Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, Spotted Sandpiper and Belted Kingfisher can be obtained. One might be fortunate enough to see Osprey or Bald Eagle flying along the river and Western (Wood) Pewee and Mourning Dove are fairly common in trees on the lower terrace.

Continuing east along the bicycle path, one passes under the freeway into Gaddis Park (8). This section of the tour provides additional

birding along the river, but the east side of the freeway is best known for birds of grassy, weedy fields and brush. Western Meadowlark, Lazuli Bunting, House Finch, Pine Siskin, American and Lesser Goldfinches, Rufous-sided Towhee, Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco and a variety of sparrows including Lincoln's can be encountered along the bicycle path in Gaddis Park. If you have birded your way to the railroad tracks, you may now enjoy birding your way approximately two and one-half miles back to the duck pond.

With its mixture of open, weedy fields, oak and fir woodlands, Oregon ash groves, marsh, ponds, streams and river, blackberry thickets, stream side vegetation, manicured parklands and swampy wet meadows the Stewart Park/Gaddis Park area offers a wide variety of habitats. We hope you'll have an opportunity to visit this park in the center of Roseburg and view some of the birds of the Umpqua Valley region.



## A Proposal for a Statewide Organization

*Jim Carlson*

Circle the weekend of February 2-3 on your 1980 calendar. The organizational meeting of the proposed statewide bird organization will be held that weekend in Eugene. The main meetings will be held in the Erb Memorial Union on the University of Oregon campus. Local members will schedule field trips and other events for that weekend. An agenda and registration form will be sent to as many potential members as we can find, including, but certainly not limited to, all current Oregon Birds subscribers.

The proposed bylaws of the organization, tentatively called Oregon Field Ornithologists, will be published in the final 1979 issue of Oregon Birds for everyone's review. The major responsibilities of the statewide organization will be the publication of Oregon Birds, the sponsorship of the official Oregon Bird Records Committee and the holding of an annual meeting somewhere in Oregon for all members.

The present proposal envisions a seven member board of directors and the offices of president, secretary and treasurer. The three officers will also be board members. All of these would be elected at large by the members present at the organizational meeting. If you, or anyone you know, would be interested in serving, please contact the Editor of Oregon Birds or Alan Contreras (609 East 14th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97403; 485-8783). It is hoped that broad geographical representation can be obtained to make this new organization truly statewide.

An additional proposal is to have the board appoint an editor of Oregon Birds and to give the editor the authority and responsibility

to designate a publications committee to help in the preparation and distribution of Oregon Birds.

In an attempt to ensure accountability of the Oregon Bird Records Committee, it is proposed that the board appoint the members, perhaps with consideration given to the recommendations of the committee.

Finally, in the Oregon Birds poll of subscribers (see Vol. 5, No. 3), an annual statewide meeting was given unanimous support. It will be the responsibility of the statewide organization to arrange for annual meetings, probably using local members in the selected location to help organize the meeting. It is hoped that the meeting would be rotated throughout Oregon and that it be accompanied by field trips, Records Committee meetings and special events. It would offer an opportunity for birders from throughout Oregon to get together and discuss issues relating to the birdlife of the state.

Which brings us back to the issue at hand. The first annual meeting of the Oregon Field Ornithologists will be held in Eugene, February 2-3, 1980. Eugene area birders are organizing the first meeting because through SWOC, and especially through Oregon Birds and the Oregon Bird Records Committee, we have been involved in statewide issues for a number of years. It is time to share the responsibility with all persons interested in birds throughout Oregon. We are willing to do our share, but we know there are a lot of you in the rest of the state who would like to participate more fully. Here's your chance. By February the Christmas Bird Counts are over and spring migration has not started. Come to Eugene and help the statewide bird organization get off to a good start. We will promise to show you a few interesting birds. Hope to see everyone in February.



## Highlights from the Field Notes; Summer 1979

Clarice Watson

Many thanks to those organizations sending copies of their newsletters for use in this report. These "highlights" were drawn from issues of the following: AUDUBON WARBLER (Audubon Society of Portland), THE CHAT (Corvallis Audubon Society), THE EAGLE EYE (Central Oregon Audubon Society), OREGON GRAPE LEAF (Salem Audubon Society), THE QUAIL (Lane County Audubon Society), THE RAV-ON (Grande Ronde Bird Club), THE TATTLER (Cape Arago Audubon Society) and WING TIPS (Umpqua Valley Audubon Society). In reading the field notes in the various newsletters, a number of "tentatively identified", "probably", "purported" or "possible" sightings were found, and these are being included in this report along with the qualifying words with the belief that such reports can be of value in alerting others to watch for these species. On occasion, a sighting may be questionable that is not so indicated in the original source--these items are included and reported as printed in the newsletters and individual birders can judge for themselves whether or not to accept them. All sightings of accidental, hypothetical or non-listed birds should be submitted to the Oregon Records Committee for evaluation (such birds can be identified by using the Checklist of the Birds of Oregon by Bertrand and Scott, third edition, M. S. Eltzroth and Fred Ramsay, Audubon Society of Corvallis, 1979). Reports from the Records Committee will be disseminated in Oregon Birds and at that time all of us can have the benefit of the decisions on the sightings by the highly qualified members of the Records Committee. If a report form is not readily available when you find such a bird (copies have been sent to birding groups and birders throughout the state), just

write a complete description of the bird and sighting conditions [see Detailing Field Observations: Fred Ramsay, Oregon Birds, October 1977] and mail it to the Committee at the Oregon Birds address.

For this season, the "highlights" of the Highlights are several very interesting coastal birds--Magnificent Frigatebird, Mongolian Plover, Rufous-necked Sandpiper, Hudsonian Godwit, Ruff, Little Gull and Tropical Kingbird, but Harris' Hawk, Magnificent (Rivoli's) Hummingbird, Scarlet Tanager, Summer Tanager and a "possible" Pine Warbler from the interior are equally exciting. In addition many other accidental and hypothetical (some of these may become "accidental" if appropriate verification is obtained) birds were found.

### NORTHEASTERN OREGON:

The birders in this corner of the state have launched a very commendable project--the compiling of a new checklist of the birds of Union, Wallowa and Baker Counties. As they keep their monthly records, we shall watch with interest for reports in the Rav-On. The coordination of such a project is a big undertaking and we wish them much success. When completed, the checklist will undoubtedly be of great benefit to all Oregon birders. This effort makes it especially important for birders from other areas to report unusual sightings in those counties to the Grande Ronde Bird Club--as listed on the last page of Oregon Birds.

Reports from this area for late May and early summer include a female and seven young Ring-necked Ducks June 24 on Little Morgan Lake near La Grande, a new nesting location (JB); an adult Green Heron near Gekeler Slough Bridge,

La Grande, May 26 (JE); also on May 26 a Whimbrel well observed with 5 Long-billed Curlews in the field where Burrowing Owls nest on Peach Lane, La Grande (JE); and two chicks successfully raised by 6 adult Sandhill Cranes at Ladd Marsh in Union County.

Sightings for Sep. include a Great Gray Owl on Sep. 3 near Hilgard State Park just west of La Grande, 2 more in Wallowa County, and a Barred Owl in the Green Mountain area of Umatilla County by a U.S. Forest Service employee.

Migration was noted when numerous Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks were seen during the week of Sep. 8; a Black and White Warbler was found at Cold Springs National Wildlife Refuge Sep. 22 (Portland Rare Bird Alert, hereafter PRBA); and a Tennessee Warbler was at Hat Point Aug. 26 (KF).

Contributors: Janette Buchan, Joe Evanich, Kathy Finnell and the Portland Rare Bird Alert.

#### SOUTHEASTERN OREGON:

There aren't as many birders in SE Oregon during the summer and early fall as there are in the spring, but those that were there reported the following fine sightings: on Sep. 23 a Wandering Tattler, not seen in Klamath County since the 1800's, was at Klamath Falls as was a Solitary Sandpiper (SS); a Parasitic Jaeger at Stinking Lake on Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (hereafter MNWR) July 15 (SH et al); over 1,100 pairs of Franklin's Gulls nesting at MNWR; a Great Gray Owl at Fort Klamath; a Magnificent (Rivoli's) Hummingbird on Steens Mountain the last week in Aug., for another state record (CDL)--there was a previous unconfirmed report in Coos Bay Jan. 9, 1979. A day

or two later after the May 31 sighting of a Scarlet Tanager at MNWR, another Scarlet Tanager and a Summer Tanager were netted on Hart Mountain to add another first record to the state list (LRM); and "rare" warblers continued to be found with a Tennessee at MNWR June 2 and 3, a Northern Parula at Fields Sep. 22 (MS), a Magnolia at MNWR Headquarters (JG), a Blackpoll at Fields Sep. 22 (MS) and an Ovenbird on Hart Mountain July 10 (SH et al).

Contributors: Jeff Gilligan, Steve Herman, C. D. Littlefield, L. R. Mewaldt, Mark Smith and Steve Summers.

#### CENTRAL OREGON:

From this area, summer field notes contain two possible Oregon first sightings. The first of a hawk of the southern U.S. deserts which was described as follows: "a large dark hawk with brick-red shoulders and thighs, white around the beak, posed to be identified as a Harris'" (F & WWH) and an eastern warbler "tentatively identified" as a Pine Warbler at the northern end of Big Lake, Santiam Pass, on Aug. 1 (AP). Other sightings were of a Prairie Falcon near Three Creeks Lakes on Sep. 1 (CS); a Long-eared Owl seen by flashlight (F & WWH); a pair or two Black-chinned Hummingbirds at Camp Hancock near Antelope (SJ); an Anna's Hummingbird Aug. 29 (ME); Northern Waterthrushes at Crescent Creek Campground on the eastern slope of the Cascades near Davis Lake June 10; both Northern Waterthrushes and American Redstarts along the Little Deschutes River near Gilchrist; two "probable" Pine Grosbeaks at the Hoodoo Ski Bowl, Santiam Pass, July 4 (HN); and a pair or two Black-throated Sparrows near Camp Hancock all summer (SJ).

Contributors: M. Ettinger, Stewart Janes, Harry Nehls, Al Prigge, Christy Steck and F. and W. Van Hise.

#### WILLAMETTE VALLEY:

No sightings of birds new to Oregon were reported from this region, but a number of out-of-place birds were found including a Great Egret at Lookout Reservoir on the Willamette River Aug. 10 (JB) and another at Finley National Wildlife Refuge near Corvallis Aug. 5 (MSE); reports of Black-crowned Night Herons along Lower Pudding River near Canby all summer indicating a possible nesting area--a large Great Blue Heron colony is located nearby; a family of one adult and 7 young Mountain Quail in Hendricks Park, Eugene, Aug. 4 (CW); 2 Black-necked Stilts at Scappose Bottoms May 7 (SH) and another Aug. 17 along I-5 near Woodburn (PRBA); 2 Long-billed Curlews at the Finley NWR Aug. 8 (JA); 6 Black Terns seen all summer by canoeists along the Willamette River between Corvallis and Albany--this is especially interesting since there were 6 active nests located near Corvallis in 1963 (American Birds, Vol. 17, No. 5, p. 478); a Mockingbird in southwest Portland Sep. 22 (PRBA); a Palm Warbler in Scoggins Valley near Forest Grove July 6 (JR); and a male Indigo Bunting at Helmick State Park near Monmouth July 6 (JJ).

Contributors: John Annear, John Belcher, M. S. Eltzroth, Stanley Held, Jon Jonasik, Portland Rare Bird Alert, Jake Redlinger and Clarice Watson.

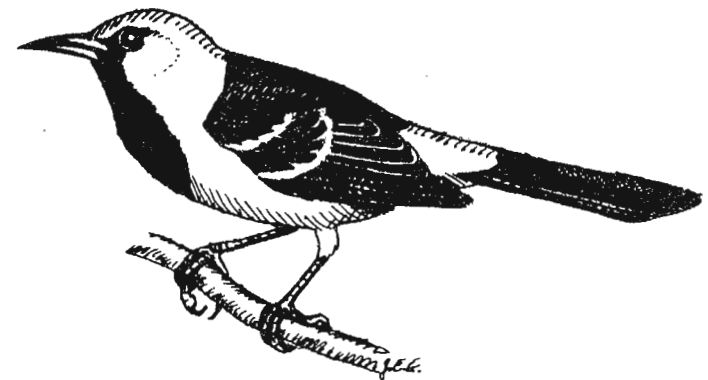
#### UMPQUA AND ROGUE RIVER VALLEYS:

From the Umpqua Valley come Sep. reports of a Canada Goose and a White-fronted Goose on the

North Umpqua at Glide; a Golden Eagle at Mud Hill and one at Whistler's Bend; 3 more out-of-place Black-necked Stilts on a pond along Highway 138; and a couple reports of 2-5 Lewis' Woodpeckers. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was found near the rest area at the I-5 Winston interchange on June 22 (RS); and on Aug. 28 a Chestnut-sided Warbler was seen in Roseburg (for the fourth 1979 sighting) along with many other migrants including Western Wood Pewee, Warbling Vireo, Orange-crowned, Black-throated Gray and Yellow Warblers (F & AP).

Rogue River Valley birders documented a good shorebird migration at Agate Lake near Medford with the most interesting sighting being a Golden Plover Sep. 8; Pectoral, Baird's, Stilt and 2 Buff-breasted Sandpipers Sep. 3; and a Northern Phalarope Sep. 8. Two Hooded Orioles spent the summer near Phoenix--an area where they have been found a number of times since the mid-sixties (American Birds).

Contributors: Fred and Alice Parker and Richard Smith.

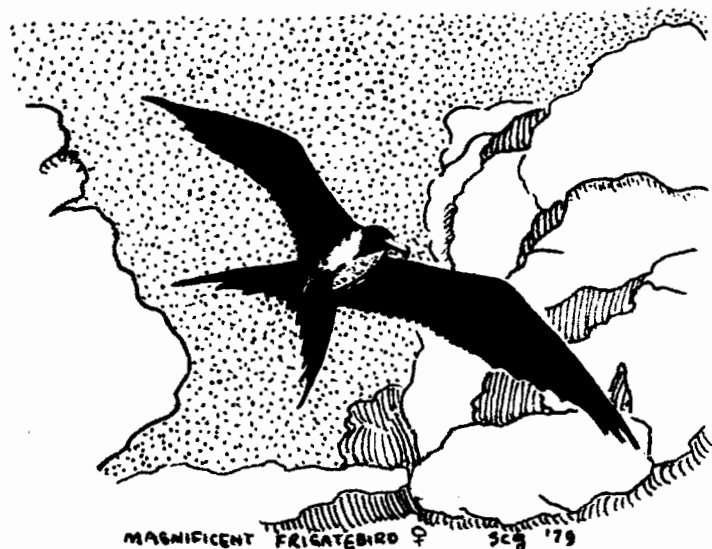


--Hooded Oriole--

## COAST:

As would be expected, there were numerous reports of "rare" and "unusual" birds from the coast. An impressive, long list of sightings could be made, but unfortunately space limits us, with one or two exceptions, to reporting only those with an "abundance" rating of "rare" or less in the Checklist of the Birds of Oregon.

Lucky birders found the following: 2 Yellow-billed Loons--one near Euchre Creek north of Gold Beach during the Coast Birding Weekend Aug. 26 (F & AP) and another Aug. 28 at Charleston (fide EGW); a Manx Shearwater with 3 Pink-footed and many Sooty Shearwaters at Necanicum River, Seaside, Sep. 12 (JG & DI); 2 Flesh-footed Shearwaters on the Sep. 29 pelagic trip out of Newport; a female Magnificent Frigatebird at the mouth of the Rogue River, Gold Beach, July 24, accepting food scraps from a woman feeding the gulls (CT, C & ES).

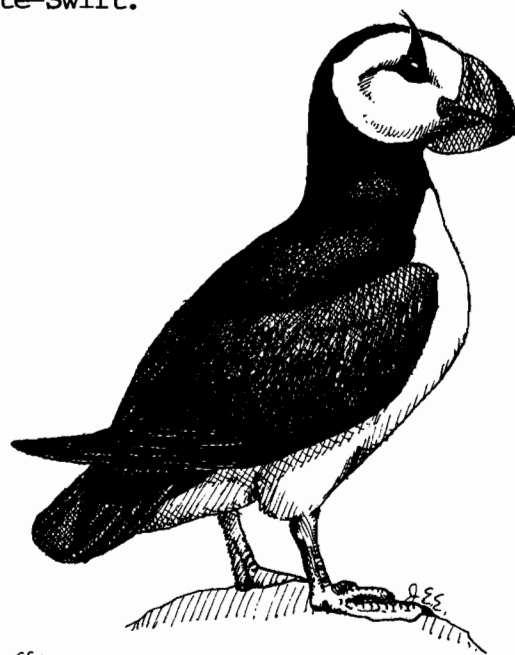


Among the often difficult to identify Charadriiformes were: 2 Snowy Plovers with downy young at the North Spit, Coos Bay, July 3 (BF); many reports of Golden Plover including sightings at Coos Bay July 14 (JEN), the North Bend airport Sep. 9 (BG,m.ob.), Bandon Aug. 11 (SG), Newport Aug. 11 (DG), Seaside Aug. 19 (JG), and the South Jetty of the Columbia River (hereafter SJCR) Aug. 25 (TC); a Long-billed Curlew at Pony Slough, Coos Bay, from July into Oct. (BF); small numbers of Knots along the coast in Aug. and early Sep.; an early Rock Sandpiper at Euchre Creek Aug. 26 (F & AP); a "probable" Rufous-necked Sandpiper photographed at Bayocean Spit for a possible first verified Oregon record, Sep. 7 (JG); Stilt Sandpipers at Yachats Sep. 8 and 9 (CW), at Coos Bay the same dates (JE,m.ob.) and at the Warrenton sewage pond Sep. 12; a Semipalmated Sandpiper was seen at Bayocean July 28 (HN & DF) and at the same area each week in Aug. (personal communication TF) (one bird or several different?), and one or two at the SJCR regularly through Sep.; an immature Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Tillamook Aug. 31 and another at Yaquina Bay, Newport, Sep. 1; a Ruff at the SJCR Sep. 8 (JE & DI) and 3 Ruffs there on Sep. 10--these are the first verified Oregon sightings and 2 of the birds stayed in the area a week or more for many observers to view; a Bar-tailed Godwit at Bayocean Spit Sep. 15 (fide TC) and at Yaquina Bay Sep. 14 (MS) to at least Sep. 22, and a "possible" at Coos Bay Sep. 16 (EGW); and a "purported" Hudsonian Godwit at Seaside Sep. 15.

A Little Gull, Oregon's first verified sighting, was found with Bonaparte's Gulls at Newport Aug. 11 (LN) and has since been seen by many observers at least into October--how we all appreciate these considerate birds that stay put awhile!!! The remainder of the

observations include: a Horned Puffin near Island Rock south of Port Orford (BP); White-throated Swifts at Cape Lookout near Tillamook May 8 (CR) and at Cape Meares, 10 miles further north, on May 12 (DanR); Ash-throated Flycatchers at Coos Bay Aug. 23 and at Yaquina Bay (ME) about the same date; a Mockingbird at Wedderburn, near Gold Beach, Aug. 25 (DR); several Palm Warblers at SJCR Sep. 22 (PRBA); a "possible" male Blue Grosbeak at Myrtle Point July 5 (FW, fide BF); and 2 Lark Buntings at Cape Blanco Campground Sep. 15 (DR, fide BF).

Contributors: Tom Crabtree, David Fix, Mark Egger, Joe Evanich, Jim England (JEN), Ben Fawver, Jeff Gilligan, Dan Gleason, Steve Gordon, Barbara Griffin, David Irons, Lars Norgren, Harry Nehls, Fred and Alice Parker, Bob Pitman, Portland Rare Bird Alert, Craig Roberts, Dan Rogers (DanR), Dennis Rogers, Carl and Elizabeth Sanders, Mark Smith, Carl Templeman, Clarice Watson, Frances Whitaker and E. G. White-Swift.



---Horned Puffin---

Additional sightings of special interest which have not yet appeared in the bulletins but which have been reported are a Mongolian Plover found Oct. 17 at the SJCR by Harry Nehls and a Tropical Kingbird seen at Bandon Oct. 27 by Larry Thornberg.

## 1979 CBC Dates

<u>COUNT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>COMPILER</u>
Alma - Upper Siuslaw		
Antelope		
Baker	Dec. 29 or 30	Larry Rounpf
Baker County	Dec. 15 or 16	Larry Rounpf
Bend		
Coos Bay		
Corvallis	Dec. 18	Fred Ramsey
Cottage Grove	Jan. 1	Al Winter
Dallas	Dec. 27	Herbert Hamann
Eugene	Dec. 30	Steve Gordon
Gold Beach		
Hart Mountain	Dec. 29	Ken Voget
Klamath Falls	Dec. 15	Steve Summers
Malheur NWR	Dec. 15	Steve Thompson
Medford	Dec. 29	Lois Smith
Oakridge		
Portland		
Port Orford	Dec. 22	Dennis Rogers
Roseburg - Sutherlin		
Ruggs - Hardman	Dec. 20	Stephen Brownfield
Salem	Dec. 22	Gerald Smith
Sauvie Island	Dec. 23	Jeff Gilligan
Sod House	Dec. 18	Steve Thompson
Tillamook Bay		
Union County	Dec. 15	Ron Rohweder
Upper Nestucca	Dec. 16	Larry Scofield
Utopia		
Wallowa County	Dec. 16	Frank Conley
Yaquina Bay	Dec. 29	Paul Reed

## Editor's Note

We are pleased to be able to publish Kate Holbo's study of nesting Rock Wrens on Spencer Butte. Her study was undertaken in conjunction with Herb Wisner's field ornithology class at the University of Oregon during the summer of 1979. While Kate is a relative newcomer to birding, we think you'll find her observations and article fascinating.

Elsewhere in this issue you will find a preliminary list of Christmas Bird Counts. Jim Carlson has contacted 29 of the possible Oregon counts and the list represents responses to date from CBC compilers. In the last issue for 1979, which we plan to publish in early December, we hope to provide a complete list of Oregon's CBC's. In that last 1979 issue, we will also provide a preview of at least three counts; Port Orford, Upper Nestucca and Alma. We encourage you to participate in one or more CBC's.

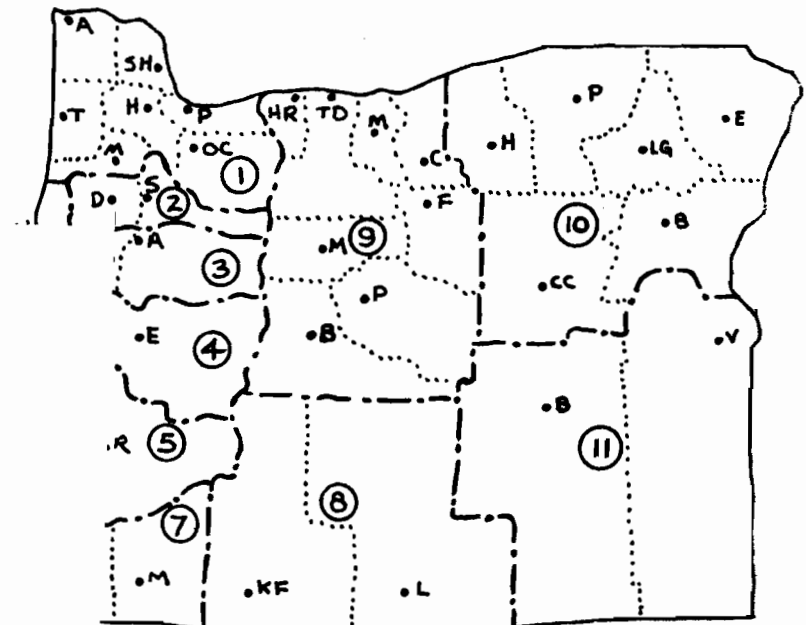
In December 1978, we mailed via Oregon Birds a questionnaire to the SWOC membership and the results of that poll were contained in Vol. 5, No. 3 of Oregon Birds. In that same issue, we promised to provide a proposal for change in response to the questionnaire results. True to our promise, we provide a proposal for creating a statewide birding group elsewhere in this issue. We will follow up with proposed bylaws in Vol. 5, No. 6. SWOC will, in all likelihood, revert to being an informal local bird club serving the needs of birders in the southern Willamette Valley region.

Enclosed in this issue is a Records Committee report form. If you find one of the species as indicated in Clarice Watson's "Field Notes" article, take careful notes and submit your sighting to the Records Committee.

## "Send Field Notes To..."

When afield in Oregon, please share your unusual or exciting finds with others. Cooperative communication with the individuals and groups listed below will help promote a better understanding of Oregon's birds. Many of the eleven reporting areas are generally represented by Audubon groups or other bird clubs who regularly publish field notes and are interested in observations "close to home".

1. Harry Nehls, 2736 S.E. 20th, Portland 97202
2. Salem Audubon Society, Box 2013, Salem 97308
3. Fred Ramsey, 2504 N.W. Mulkey, Corvallis 97330
4. Tad Finnell, 2412 Alder, Eugene 97405
5. Fred Parker, 313 W. Hickory, Roseburg 97470
6. Alan McGie, 3603 Edgewood Dr., North Bend 97459
7. Vince Zauskey, 945 E. Main, Ashland 97520
8. Steve Summers, 1009 Merryman, Klamath Falls 97601
9. Adele Rodriguez, 630 6th St., Madras 97741
10. Grande Ronde Bird Club, Box 29, La Grande 97850
11. C. D. Littlefield and Steve Thompson, Malheur N.W.R., Box 113, Burns 97720



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