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Drawings on pages 74, 88, 89 by Joe Evanich.
Editor's Note

SWOC TALK has been slowly evolving over the past few months. The goals I set were to find a clean, readable format, introduce regular features, provide 20-40 pages each issue and establish a publishing timetable—to provide an ornithological exchange.

Readers should expect to continue receiving a green-covered magazine on Oregon Birds, 20-40 pages (2 stamps worth) of information at two-month intervals. What are the regular ingredients? To date, they have been Taxonomic notes, Site Guides, Lister's Corner, Contents and Christmas Bird Count results and advance information. These will continue, and alone would be a bargain at $5.00 per year.

We are introducing new regular ingredients in this issue (regular implying about three times a year).

Field Reports, Details of unusual sightings, Season Highlights. C.D. Littlefield has agreed to contribute a regular report from Southeastern Oregon; we are seeking volunteers to do similar reports from other parts of the state: South Coast, North Coast, Willamette Valley, Central Oregon, Southern Oregon, the Northeast. If you're interested, write for details.

No one knows when they will find a rare bird. In the past, these sightings and details passed through rare bird alerts but often never reached print. If you find that rare bird, please follow the excellent outlines written for this issue so Oregon birders will have a record to draw on. Season Highlights will be hit & miss for a while, but again—unless you write us only a few will benefit from your sighting.

Other regular features are planned. The next issue will contain the first profile of a contributor to Oregon ornithology—the initial profile will be of Harry Nehls. Also planned is a regular feature on banding, Field Marks—those impossible clues that everyone seems to know but me—and whatever else members want and will write. Articles that are coming include Northern Spotted Owl, oil spills and Oregon birds, Trumpeter Swans, primary-secondary cavity nester relationships, local bird groups, nest identification, collecting and noting, bird taxidermy, caring for injured or abandoned birds—these and many more.

The key, of course, is member participation. I am not paid to do this, neither are any of the writers; the money goes into paper, ink and stamps. Articles, if you feel comfortable and reasonably knowledgeable, should be submitted. Ideas for articles, requests for information; bird books and equipment for sale or wanted to buy, unusual sightings. The newsletter goes out across the state; we hope there is something useful for everyone in each issue, and that a true exchange of information will occur.

Enough propaganda. There is one little detail, though; that is the publication's name. I believe that SWOC TALK, as a name for the entire issue, needs to be retired. It could be retained as a part of the publication that deals with S.W.O.C. business, but it does not really identify the contents of the magazine. Most members I've talked to agree. What should the name be? Oregon Bird Review, Notes on Oregon Birds, Oregon Bird Journal, Reports on Oregon Birds, Birding Oregon, just plain Oregon Birds; all are names that have been floated. Do you prefer one of these, do you favor SWOC TALK or do you have a good name. Let me know.

E.G. White-Swift

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P.O. Box 3082, Eugene, Oregon 97403

Published for the 70 members of the Southern Willamette Ornithological Club. 1977 Staff: Editor: E.G. White-Swift

Staff: Alan Contrera, Jean Dent, Phylis Larson Sue Motsinger

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SO YOU WANT TO FIND THE REDSTART AT DAVIS LAKE?
Nothing to it. Of course, your chances are much improved if you know how their song differs from the songs of Yellow Warblers which abound in the same areas, as the redstart is almost always located by tracing its song. Otherwise, be prepared to spend hours searching pine and willow thickets in mosquito-filled swamps.

It's not always that bad. This year the seasons provided no swamps and virtually no mosquitoes (at least, not yet), so take your chances while the going's good. And the going's good. A bright, singing male has already been found June 4, on territory along Odell Cr.

HERE'S HOW YOU GET TO DAVIS LAKE. The most direct way from Eugene is via Highway 58, the Willamette Pass. About 2.5 mi. beyond Crescent Lake (community), at Cafe 58, the sign to Davis Lake points to the left. This is also a cut-off to the town of Crescent on Highway 97. At about 3 mi. down this road is another Davis Lake sign pointing left. This road takes you directly to Davis Lake, but not before you find yet a third sign pointing left to the camping areas. Your destination is East Davis Camp, situated at the mouth of Odell Cr. Follow the signs and park in the first stall on the left if it is available. Here, at the creek is a stand of bare snags, always active with a variety of bird species, bathing, feeding, nesting, and just perching. Take the path upstream. (There are two paths, but the easiest one is on the dike which runs along the interface of the pine woods and the willow thicket. The other path is for fishermen.) At only about 50 yds, after stepping across a break in the dike, you may be hearing the redstart's song. The bird(s) can often be found around the snags near the creek. If a redstart is not singing, perhaps a taped song will bring a response. The song can be compared with that of a Yellow Warbler's, but the redstart's is thinner in quality and higher in pitch. Any unfamiliar warbler song should be investigated.

Male warblers on territory are persistent singers and redstarts are no exception. A redstart was timed to sing every five seconds during a morning at this site! You may discover that not every singing

redstart looks like a male. The male redstart is unique among warblers for retaining a plumage much like the female's through its first breeding season. If you find a singing "female", it will be a first-year male.

Redstarts have been observed in the Odell Cr. area as late as 17 Aug. A nest, 20 July 1974, and frequent immatures, are evidence of their breeding at this site. Three males, two females, and several immatures have been counted along the creek in this area in July, 1975. The actual breeding population may be surprisingly higher.

The species was first discovered in the Davis Lake area (and for that matter, in the Cascades), off West Davis Camp (see map) 24 June 72, by Larry McQueen and Randy Floyd. Then a male was found at Odell Cr. by Dan Gleason, 8 July 72. In 1973, Herb Wisner and his ornithology class located a nest at the West Davis site, which contained eggs, one of which was a Cowbird's. On 29 June 74, a nest with four young was found in the same area by Chip Jobanek, Aaron Skirvin, and Larry McQueen. The birds have not been found at this site in 1976, nor so far, this year. The West Davis site is along a discontinued road connecting West Davis to Ranger Creek. Incidentally, this road makes an excellent bird walk, in spite of marshy areas during wet years. The redstart nesting area is within the first stand of dense young pine to the right of the road (lake side).

A third location for redstarts is at the Crescent Creek crossing on Crescent Road, only about half-mile beyond the Davis Lake turn-off. Here is excellent riparian growth for warblers. Redstarts were found here in 1976. Colleen Sweeny located a Bay-breasted Warbler here 13 Aug 76, confirmed by Dan Gleason 22 Aug. Two Northern Waterthrushes were well studied from the bridge 4 June 77, by Sayre Greenfield, Mark Egger, and Alan Contreras. Practically every species of warbler breeding in the state has been seen at this site in August, many in great abundance. An ornithological expedition along the total length of Crescent Creek (and the Deschutes River) would be most rewarding.

HOW PREVALENT IS THE AMERICAN REDSTART IN CENTRAL OREGON? The only known records in the Cascades are those from the Davis Lake - Crescent Creek area. A nest had also been found near Medford, 2 July 70. Investigation of wet, brushy areas may reveal a population much more widespread, at least on the eastern
slopes of the Cascades, and apparent absence of the species in migration in Western Oregon would seem to indicate lack of breeding on the west sides, but the possibility of breeding ought not be totally disregarded.

PLEASE SEND YOUR OBSERVATIONS TO LARRY MCQUEEN. He would be most grateful to receive any information at all that has to do with the bird life of the Cascade Lakes area, no matter how trivial it may appear to be. His address: 2175 Agate St., Eugene, Or. 97403.

GOOD LUCK ON YOUR QUEST FOR REDSTARTS.

ADDENDUM. Since this article was written, additional trips into the area revealed some changes. The forest service is making "improvements" on the path by Odell Creek, and aside from being overzealous with a chain saw, they filled the breaks in the dike path and added a bridge over the creek, which so far leads nowhere. A male redstart has consistently been found in the area of this new bridge.

As for the Crescent Creek site, a pair of redstarts had been found at the bridge, and at least another pair plus another male, farther down the creek. A road through the forest parallels the creek for some distance, which provides perfect access to the meadows and willow thickets along the creek. It starts from the main Crescent road just beyond (east of) the Crescent bridge. More redstarts can be found with careful searching, and who knows what else! Goshawks are seen in this area and are probably nesting in the woods.

Elsewhere this season, redstarts have also been found in the Coast Range (Mark Egger), and at Indian Ford (Dan Gleason).

The Northern Waterthrushes seem to have taken up residence at the Crescent Bridge, having been seen there by numerous observers. On the weekend of June 18, I found a singing male there at every visit. I found another singing waterthrush on the Little Deschutes River just north of Gilchrist. This site can be approached by turning west from highway 97, at mile post 180, onto a road which crosses the river. Extensive willow thickets can be met at the bridge, and there is little chance in finding the waterthrush unless it is singing - then, it is liable to be in the open. They can also be attracted by tape at this time of year. This is excellent habitat that is full of surprises!
Field Report: Southeastern Oregon
C.D. LITTLEFIELD

Drought conditions persisted in southeast Oregon during spring migration. By the end of May many areas that normally have water were completely dry. This was especially true in the native meadows south and east of Burns. Malheur Lake had dropped from 45,000 acres in late March to 30,000 acres by the end of May. Although the Blitzen Valley was in better shape than the other regions in the Malheur-Harney Lakes Basin, considerable portions of the valley remained dry. The Double O area of Malheur NWR had substantial water from the numerous springs there, but the portions that were dependent on Silver Creek for water remained dry. Silver Creek had no flow from 5 mi. northwest of Riley, southward to the refuge. Moon Reservoir was nearly dry and Chickahominy Reservoir is expected to be dry by mid-July.

Precipitation was above normal in May, but had little influence on stream flows except to reduce evaporation.

Dry conditions had a drastic influence on the peak numbers of waterfowl that used the basin. Normally migrants linger for about 2 wks., but in 1977 they continued northward with little delay. Representative waterfowl species and their peak numbers in 1975, 1976, and 1977 are presented in Table 1.

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<th>SPECIES</th>
<th>1975</th>
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<td>Whistling Swan</td>
<td>22,160</td>
<td>12,825</td>
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<td>193,165</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Coot</td>
<td>86,345</td>
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</table>

Noteworthy among waterfowl was a Black Duck seen on 5 May. This was the first record for the refuge since 14 Nov. 1930. Biologists Dick Sjostrom and Caryn Talbot observed the bird within 20 ft. at Benson Boat Landing, 1 mi. NE of headquarters, before it flew north toward Malheur Lake.

Although many species of waterfowl were reduced in numbers from previous years, Blue-winged Teal have increased substantially in 1977 on the refuge; however, total pair numbers will not be available until mid-June.

Like waterfowl, some nesting shorebirds and marsh-birds are being affected by the dry conditions. Long-billed Curlews dropped from 1180 in 1976 to 770 in 1977. Willets remained the same: 1631 (1976) and 1655 (1977). Wilson's Phalaropes had not reached their peak at the close of the period, but for a comparable period (11-22 May) in 1976 and 1977 their numbers were 2780 and 1585 respectively. American Avocets were down from 3965 to 1220. One species that has shown an increase in numbers on Malheur NWR this year is the Black-necked Stilt. About 105 were on the refuge 13 May compared with 15 in 1976. Their principle nesting area in the basin is the flood plain south and east of Burns, which has remained dry. In addition, reports from Stillwater NWR near Fallon, Nevada indicate that the drought is more severe there and some Nevada birds could be moving north to nest at Malheur. One nest containing 4 eggs was located at Double O on 27 May.

No appreciable change has been noted among migrant shorebirds. Arrival dates were normal: Long-billed Dowitcher 25 May; Dunlin 30 April; Semipalmated Plover 11 May; Least Sandpiper 11 April; Western Sandpiper 7 April; Black-bellied Plover 23 April; Spotted Sandpiper 5 May; Greater Yellowlegs 17 March; Marbled Godwit 27 April; and Northern Phalarope 10 May.

Heron and egrets have remained stable as the basin carp population continues to flourish. Estimates for herons and egrets will not be available until late June. Cattle Egrets continue to increase since they were first seen in the area in August 1974. One was seen on 30 April near refuge headquarters and remained in the same general area until 7 May. A Least Bittern was seen 3 mi. SW of headquarters on 29 April. American Bitterns were

Canada Goose nesting pairs were down 31.2% off the refuge and 17% on the refuge. Off the refuge duck pairs were down from 9060 pairs to 1752 pairs in 1977, an 80% reduction. Duck pair data from Malheur NWR was not available at reporting time.

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more common on the refuge this year. Normally many nest in the native meadows south and east of Burns, but because that area has received little water, these birds have moved onto the refuge where nesting conditions are more favorable. The White-faced Ibis has shown an increase over past years after their arrival on 24 April. Visitors to the refuge have had an opportunity to see large numbers near headquarters. Flocks numbering over 90 have been seen regularly throughout May. Dry conditions at Nevada nesting locations may be responsible for the pronounced increase. On 5 May two flocks consisting of about 60 birds were seen 20 mi. south of refuge headquarters, flying rapidly north. These were probably birds arriving from western Nevada where an estimated 6000 have nested in past years.

About 2100 Eared Grebes were on Stinking Lake through April and were on territory at scattered localities throughout the refuge by mid-May. Horned Grebes were first seen on 16 May, 3 mi. southwest of refuge headquarters. Western Grebes have not built up to their usual numbers. In 1976, 1700 were on Malheur Lake in mid-May, but in 1977 only 730 were using the lake. Nesting was in progress by late May at Derrick Lake and a few pairs were present on Boca Lake and Krumbo Reservoir.

A new record for Malheur NWR was a Herring Gull on 26 March. David Fix, et. al., located the adult bird at the Narrows. Caryn Talbot and I obtained photographs on the same day. On 27 March, two adults were at the same site. Franklin's Gulls were below normal throughout the period after their arrival on 20 April. There were two records for the Bonaparte's Gull. Surprisingly, the California and Ring-billed Gull colony, 4 mi. SE of Burns, was active. The colony is in an empty hay corral that is normally surrounded by water. This year the area is completely dry. About 400 pairs are presently nesting, compared with 500 pairs in 1976. About 70% of these were California Gulls.

Short-eared Owls were in high numbers, especially in areas where grazing has been eliminated on the refuge. Rodent densities have increased in the deferred areas, which probably accounts for the owls' higher densities. Late water runoff from the Steens Mountain has resulted in several nests being flooded. A Long-eared Owl nest with 5 young was found in a grove of western junipers, approximately 12 mi. north of Frenchglen. Three of the young had fledged on 14 May.

An increase in rodents, related to a decrease in cattle grazing, has had an influence on hawks at Malheur NWR. American Kestrels were nesting in larger numbers and Marsh Hawks have not been as abundant for at least 11 years. In addition, black-tailed jackrabbits were at high densities. Numbers of jackrabbits influence the number of active Golden Eagle nests. All known eagle nests were active in 1977, including one reported by the BLM in a juniper tree west of Wright's Point. A Ferruginous Hawk was nesting near Weaver Lake and another NW of Riley. A Merlin, being pursued by swallows, was seen near Buena Vista Pond, 21 mi. south of refuge headquarters, on 30 April.

Three Band-tailed Pigeons were seen on 21 May near Page Springs by Fred Ramsey of Corvallis. This species is increasing as a migrant in southeast Oregon, corresponding with an increase in nesting in northeast Oregon.

On 6 May, biologist Sherry Horton observed a Black Swift 4 mi. south of Burns. The Bird passed within 10 ft. of the observer and was watched for about 1 minute before disappearing eastward. A Vaux's Swift was seen at refuge headquarters on 11 May for the fifth refuge record.

A pair of Black-chinned Hummingbirds has been at headquarters since 21 May (Corvallis Audubon Society). On 28 May the male was performing a territorial flight over the headquarters lawn. First seen in May 1969, the species has been increasing ever since. A male Calliope Hummingbird was on territory at Call Meadows, 25 mi. NE of Burns, on 2 June.

A Common Nighthawk was seen at Malheur Field Station by Denzel and Nancy Ferguson on 20 May, one day earlier than previous records in SE Oregon.

Passeriformes migration was normal, with most species arriving on schedule. There were two exceptions: the Green-tailed Towhee arrived on 1 May, 4 days earlier than ever recorded; and the Bobolink arrived on 29 April, 2 weeks earlier than the previous record of 13 May.

April was mild and dry and migration started early, while May was wet and cool, which delayed the arrival of many species. The most unusual aspect of spring migration was the lack of unusual migrants. As of 5 June no eastern species had been verified, although numerous observers were afield; however, there was an unconfirmed report of a Hooded Warbler on 20 May. Noteworthy records
were American Redstarts at headquarters on 22 May and 3-5 June, and a Red-eyed Vireo at headquarters on 3-5 June. On 1 June a Red Crosbill was found dead at headquarters, which was the fourth record for the refuge; however the species is common in the Blue Mts. north of Burns. Arrival dates for common passeriformes are presented in Table 2.

### TABLE 2

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<tr>
<td>Sage Thrasher</td>
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<td>White-crowned Sparrow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rough-winged Swallow</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Yellow-headed Blackbird</td>
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<td>Savannah Sparrow</td>
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<td>Varied Thrush</td>
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<td>Townsend's Warbler</td>
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### Bluejay: Shorebirds info sought

At the request of SWOC TALK, Beaverton member David Fix has begun an investigation of literature, museum collections and individual, unpublished sight records of extralimital and rare shorebirds in Oregon. This project is expected to take upwards of three months, and needs the cooperation of all members in providing information they retain or are aware of. This work is being undertaken to provide a more thorough and accurate body of knowledge about species rare in Oregon, and therefore specific details of records are necessary. Any members who would be willing to undertake similar research with another group or family, please contact the Editor.

Harry Nehls has agreed to write an article on the past year's Blue Jay incursions into Oregon. Again, details of all sightings, including dates, locations, activities and observers are essential in order to present Oregon birders with a clear and accurate picture. Records should be sent to him soon, for the next issue of SWOC TALK.

C.D. Littlefield has two requests for Oregon birders. He is completing a book on Malheur Refuge and would like to receive details of any unusual sightings prior to July, 1977 that you have in your files. On future trips to the Malheur area any unusual sightings should warrant leaving details for Littlefield at the Field Station (with Denzel Ferguson or any other staff member). Information left with refuge personnel doesn't always get passed on.
Details: Common Grackle

STEVE SUMMERS

SPECIES: Common Grackle Quiscalus quiscula
LOCALITY: Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (Hdqtrs.) Harney, County, Oregon
DATE: 28 May 1977 TIME: 1200-1215
OBSERVERS: Steve Summers, Priscilla Summers
OPTICAL EQUIPMENT: Binoculars - 8.5 x 44, 8 x 40
OBSERVATION DISTANCE: 30 feet
HABITAT: lawns around refuge buildings and residences
LIGHTING CONDITIONS: sky clear, sunny, lighting very good

DESCRIPTION: General appearance - A large blackbird with a noticeably long wedge-shaped tail. Noticeably larger than Brewer's or Red-winged Blackbird. Head - Entire head was an iridescent blue-green. Back - a deep, shiny bronze sharply marked from the iridescence of the head. Underparts - appeared darkish, no iridescence or color noted. We didn’t pay much attention to underparts. Wings - dark. Eye - light yellow, noticeably standing out from head. Bill - similar to Brewer's Blackbird but noticeably longer in proportion to head than that of Brewer's. Also more massive appearing than Brewer's. Color silvery black. Tail - long and wedge-shaped. The folding upward from the center was easily seen in flight. It was one of the most notable aspects of the bird. No sounds were heard from the bird.

DETAILS OF OBSERVATION: I stepped out of the main museum door when I noticed a bird that had just taken flight from the lawn across the road from the museum. Priscilla was right behind and also saw the bird. My first reaction was that the bird was a Grackle as I followed it with my binoculars and watched it land on the lawn of one of the refuge residences. We then walked down to where it had landed and watched it as it fed on the lawn, working its way to the back of the house. We were within 30 feet of it and had excellent viewing for about 5 minutes. It then flew into the marsh behind the observation pond where we lost sight of it. We could not relocate it.

EXPERIENCE & CONCLUSIONS: I have seen Common Grackles in Colorado, Texas, and one in California. Priscilla has only seen one previous to this in California. We have both had much contact with Great-tailed Grackles. At no time did we doubt our initial identification of the Common Grackle. It was obviously too large to be any of the regular Blackbirds (Brewer's, Red-winged) and too iridescent, bronzy and small to be a Great-tailed Grackle.

REMARKS: According to field guides and other sources, the female Common Grackle is a little smaller and duller than the male. This bird was not dull at all so it was probably a male.

The Common Grackle breeds to northern British Columbia down the east side of the Rockies to NE New Mexico. There are casual or accidental records now for Washington, Idaho, Utah, Nevada and California. In Utah it is considered a "rare transient in northern Utah" (Behle, Perry, Utah Birds). Therefore, I think this species could have been predicted to show up in Oregon and I expect more records in the future. As far as I know, this constitutes the first State record for Oregon.

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**Publication Schedule**

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**SWOC MEETINGS SCHEDULE**

- July 11: All meetings begin
- Aug. 1: at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room of Science III on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene.
Northern Waterthrush
SAYRE GREENFIELD

On June 4th, Mark Egger, Alan Contreras, and Sayre Greenfield observed two Northern Waterthrushes at Crescent Creek Campground, south of Davis Lake, on the east side of the Cascades. To reach the campground, as you come from the west on route 58, continue on route 58 three miles past the turn-off to Crescent Lake, and turn left on the road to Crescent and Davis Lake. Proceed on this road until you have gone a couple of hundred yards past the road that goes north to Davis Lake. The campground is on the right side of the road. If you cross the bridge over Crescent Creek you have gone too far.

The area right around the campground supports a number of interesting species of birds during the summer: Pygmy Owl, Dipper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Yellow-breasted Chat, as well as the more ubiquitous Red-breasted Nuthatch, Warbling Vireo, Yellow Warbler, and Northern Yellowthroat. The vicinity also seems to attract vagrant eastern warblers. Last summer an American Redstart and a Bay-breasted Warbler were seen there.

The Northern Waterthrush, another vagrant warbler, migrates throughout the eastern half of the continent, and breeds, generally in swampy woods and on the swampy edges of streams, across the northern third of North America, from New England to Alaska. In the west, it breeds as far south as Montana and southern British Columbia. Recently, a nesting colony was discovered in north-eastern Washington (Western Birds, vol. 7, no. 1, p. 17). In Oregon, there are few records of this species, though what records there are, are scattered throughout the state, from Tillamook on the coast to Malheur in the east.

The two birds observed on this occasion were in dead willows along the edge of the stream, between the campground and the bridge over the creek. They came out of the rather dense brush on the other side of the creek in response to an imitation of a Pygmy Owl's hooting, probably searching for the owl to scold, as the Audubon's and Orange-crowned Warblers and Steller's Jays were doing. We observed the waterthrushes from 30 feet away, through seven- and eight-power binoculars for about a minute. We noted the size--slightly larger than a Warbling Vireo, the thin bill, and the flesh-colored legs. The back, wings, crown, and tail were solid brown. Both birds bobbed their tails as they sat. They had a dark stripe through the eye, with a yellowish-white stripe above the eye. The underparts were also yellowish-white, though paler than the eyestripe. The birds were streaked with brown underneath, though on one, the streaking was more confined to the upper breast and sides, while the other's streaking was on the sides, breast, and belly. In both birds the streaking extended up onto the throat, though the streaks were finer there. This last mark, along with the yellow tinge underneath, separates the Northern from the Louisiana Waterthrush.

The yellowness, though, creates one problem. Of the two subspecies of the Northern Waterthrush, the western subspecies, Seiurus noveboracensis notabilis (Grinnell's Waterthrush), which breeds from Pennsylvania to western Canada, has "underparts usually white with little if any yellow tinge"(Ira Gabrielson and Stanley Jewett, Birds of the Pacific Northwest [Birds of Oregon], New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1970, p. 508). Both of the waterthrushes at Crescent Creek definitively had a yellow tinge, which is characteristic of the eastern subspecies, S. n. noveboracensis, which breeds only as far west as Ontario, New York state, and West Virginia. The two birds here were as yellow, if not yellower than the Northern Waterthrushes I have seen in migration in Upper New York state and Philadelphia. The lighting, while we watched the Crescent Creek waterthrushes, was excellent, and the yellowish color was certainly no trick of the light. Though as far as the range is concerned, it would be quite unlikely, on looks alone the birds would seemed to be of the yellower eastern race.

Several members have inquired after copies of Richard Pough's Audubon Western Bird Guide. If you know where copies of this book are available, let us know. If you see a copy, grab it and we will put you in touch with those who want it.
A Horned Puffin (Fratercula Corniculata) was found May 14, 1977 off Cape Lookout, Tillamook County, Oregon. It has been seen subsequently at least once, in mid-June by Jeff Gilligan; initial observer Craig Roberts sends this account of finding the bird: (edited for SWOC TALK)

"On the way back from the end of the cape, about five members of the George Fox College ornithology class stopped at a particularly panoramic viewpoint about \( \frac{1}{2} \) mile from the end. Good views were afforded of Guillemots and Puffins flying in to the cliffs below. Steve Duke, after comparing some swimming Puffins to illustrations in 'Peterson', announced that he saw a Horned Puffin.

"In studying the bird through my 7X binoculars I could see that:
A) It was slightly smaller than the two Tufteds it was with.
B) The head and breast were extensively white, separated by a black band.
C) The back was dark.
D) The feet were reddish. (Editorial note: this is a characteristic common to other North American Puffins, but not shared by such sea ducks as Oldsquaw, a male of which in non-breeding plumage was seen at the same spot in mid-June by Mark Egger)
E) The sides were white.
No bill color was visible through the 7X binoculars, and color on bills of the two nearby Tufted Puffins was only faintly visible.

"Steve noted a slight orange color on the bill and a dark stripe down the crown, using 14X zoom binoculars. The birds were in sight for about twenty minutes until they drifted out of sight, concealed by the overhang of the cliff. The next most similar species to consider, arbitrarily eliminating Common Puffin, a species of the north Atlantic, would be Bufflehead, which could be eliminated for several reasons.

Craig Roberts
3658 Old Military Rd.
Central Point, Ore.
97502

(Editorial note: Oldsquaw is a species worth considering in this circumstance also, but can be safely eliminated, though the species' propensity for odd plumages and unwillingness to conform to seasonal plumage data in the field guides is phenomenal---A.C.)

In recent years, the mountains of SE Oregon have become increasingly popular with birders during the summer months. They offer lush green sanctuary to birds and those who would seek and study them. However, little has been said about the what-and-where of their birds. Since some of us are now planning trips to include Hart Mountain or the Steens country, it might be well to outline, in a simple way, something of the general distribution of summer birds there.

The northern Great Basin ranges possess an avifauna that is rather distinct from those elsewhere in Oregon's mountains. Not only is species composition slightly different, but the birds are found in different habitats. A southern-interior situation is largely responsible for this. Rainfall tends to be low and infrequent, and consequently any extensive growth of coniferous timber is inhibited. Curiously, despite the lack of northwoods, some of the birds ordinarily preferring a spruce-fir habitat are fairly common on both Steens Mountain and Hart Mountain in straight aspen stands.

Throughout the two major desert ranges mentioned above (hereafter SM and HM), the ground cover, so vital to many ground- or shrub-nesting birds, is sagebrush, usually less than three feet in height. A simple sagebrush-dominated shrub layer, which today may be the climax form over much of both mountains, covers almost all of the lower slopes. When increased elevation and precipitation allow, a more complex association of tall and short sagebrush, plus Castellijja, Lupinus, Balsamorrhiza, Achillea, various Eriogonums and related forbs create a kind of arid Canadian "upland chaparral".
The increased diversity and abundance of food and nesting cover is apparent when Green-tailed Towhees are found on these exposed hillsides, far from the nearest trees.

Juniper woodland, consisting of more-or-less regularly-spaced junipers in a forest formation, is an important habitat on the west side of SM between four and seven thousand feet elevation, and locally on HM above about six thousand feet. It contains many berry- and seed-eating birds; Am. Robins, House Finches, Mountain Bluebirds, and Com. Goldfinches are often numerous. Where the junipers descend the slopes to the stream sides, Northern Orioles, Black-headed Grosbeaks, House Wrens, Western Wood Pewees, Lesser Goldfinches, Green-tailed Towhees, and even Dippers may be found. Other routine birds of the juniper woodlands are Dusky, and locally, Gray Flycatchers; Black-throated Gray Warblers, Chipping Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings, Com. Flickers, and, in the higher reaches, Western Tanagers. Bushtits, rather surprisingly, can be encountered far out into the sagebrush flats below the juniper belt if suitable nest trees are within their wide foraging range. Black-billed Magpies nest commonly at the edges of juniper groves, although they can be quite inconspicuous when feeding on the ground. Birds that sometimes attempt to pioneer this woodland and which may occasionally breed locally on SM and HM include Solitary Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Yellow Warbler, Plain Titmouse, Dark-eyed Junco, and Rufous Hummingbird. Some of the above occur regularly just outside the area where more preferred habitat is located.

Quaking aspen is the other forest-type tree found on the slopes of the desert ranges. It covers a considerable area over much of the west flank of SM, and is found in canyon-head valleys and the moister draws high on HM. It also grows to great size along most of the major watercourses, and with the willows and woody shrubs creates fertile riparian thickets. These thickets are most well-developed in the medium elevations where they line slow-moving streams, between five thousand five hundred feet and seven thousand five hundred feet, but occasionally higher on the west side of SM. Variation in height and density of the vegetation, combined with a rich and well-balanced insect and seed supply and many nesting places make this riparian habitat very important to most of the species occuring on SM and HM, either for breeding or during migration and post-breeding dispersal. Yellow, MacGillivray’s, and locally, Orange-crowned Warblers use this area in summer, as do House Wrens, Warbling Vireos, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Willow Flycatchers, Lazuli Buntings, Downy Woodpeckers, and many others. A few Lincoln’s Sparrow appear here, where false hellebore spreads into large bogs near water. The Sparrows are dependent only upon the shrubs and can be found away from the aspens in some places.

Up higher, above six thousand five hundred feet on HM and above about seven thousand feet on SM the aspens form actual forests wherever small valleys and sheltered pockets on the gentle slopes offer protection from winter winds. These high forests are cloned groups of aspens surrounded by thin corridors and clearings filled with windfall and deadwood. They have a decidedly boreal flavor, and many more typically Cascadian or Blue Mountain birds can be found here, birds which in the mountain systems to the north and west might be more numerous in a mixed conifer forest.
In the more undisturbed stands there are birds such as Goshawks, small Accipiters, Swainson's and Hermit Thrushes, Red-naped Sapsuckers, Mountain Bluebirds in fair numbers, and more Lincoln's Sparrows than are found below in the riparian belts. Found abundantly are "mountain" White-crowned Sparrows, Dusky Flycatchers, Fox Sparrows, and in the grassy openings, predictable Red-winged Blackbirds.

A few hardy Warbling Vireos persist through the aspen communities to "timberline", but not commonly. Frequently seen in the aspen woods are other birds as well, including Hairy Woodpecker, Wilson's Warblers, Common Nighthawks, Starlings (at forest's edge), Chipping Sparrows, Cowbirds, and Long-eared Owl. An infrequent vagrant Warbler sometimes appears, not always of the "eastern" type; however, Chestnut-sided, Tennessee, Prothonotary, and possibly others have shown up. American Kestrels hunt unceasingly about the margins of the aspen stands in the valleys, and Red-tailed Hawks nest very commonly in each of the major wooded areas on both SM and HM. In mid-summer, small bands of Sage Grouse regularly use the higher aspen woods, occurring well within the forest itself, taking the niche in part of the absent Ruffed Grouse. Once in awhile one wanders to the summit of SM or HM to take in the sights.

At the upper margin of the highest aspens, where the krummholz, sprawling shrubs and abundant flowers form a marked timberline effect, the birds show a slight, definite difference from those sticking to the forests. Here at the lower edge of the subalpine plateau there are many more Mountain Bluebirds, Vesper Sparrows, and small numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Willow Flycatchers, Am. Robins, and House Wrens. Very conspicuous and omnipresent above the upper limit of trees are the Horned Larks, which are obvious through their constant trick of sitting on large boulders. For many years, birders exploring the high meadows have glimpsed weird hummingbirds on both HM and SM. Most often these can be dismissed as young Calliope or Rufous Hummingbirds, but once in awhile a bona fide Blackchin or Broadtail pops up to delight the careful, stalking observer.
Several species of raptors move up-mountain to hunt over the sere alpine knolls of both SM and HM after their nesting is completed. The most frequently noted are Red-tailed Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Turkey Vultures, Marsh Hawks and Com. Ravens. Many of these birds are young-of-the-year and are tame. The great altitude seems not to bother them. I once watched a female Prairie Falcon spiral upward over the top of SM steadily for more than ten minutes, until it dwindled to an infinitesimal mote, and then disappeared, in powerful binoculars. Thus it may have gone as high as fifteen thousand feet, and was still climbing as it left my view.

As the summit scarp of SM or HM is approached, Violet-green Swallows become numerous. They apparently will nest as high as they can find snug niches in the rocky walls of the peaks, to eight thousand feet on HM and to nine thousand seven hundred feet on SM. Water Pipits may often be heard flying about the rims although it is difficult to actually see them. They may not be present through the breeding season in every year. A sharp-eyed birder will have a fine chance at seeing or hearing at least a few of the obscure White-throated Swifts, particularly on top of SM off the summit scarp. It is now known that all of the major gorges on the east side of SM have colonies of these Swifts, which disperse in mid-summer. They quite probably nest as well on the west side of HM on the great faces. SM plays host to Oregon's only population of phenotypically pure "Black" Rosy Finches. These rare birds may, with patience and luck be spotted as they feed along the lower edge of the hanging snowfields near the summit. No Sparrows reach the tops of the mountains except Vesper Sparrows, which breed in short sage nearly to the summit of HM.

Wilderness and Birds
STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF S.W.O.C. BY MARK EGGER IN SUPPORT OF THE ENDANGERED AMERICAN WILDERNESS BILL

Gentlemen: In opening my remarks in support of the Endangered American Wilderness Bill, I would like to express my gratitude to you for making it possible for Oregonians, the people most directly affected by this bill, to express personally to you their opinions concerning the crucial issue of protection for the remaining wilderness lands in Oregon.

I am here before you today to testify on behalf of the Southern Willamette Ornithological Club (S.W.O.C.), an organization of over 60 active birders and students of wildlife ecology from all parts of Oregon, with roughly half its membership residing in the Lane County area. I am also testifying for myself, as a forest worker, having planted trees, cleaned streams, and constructed fire trails in the Oregon woods for the last five years. I have gained therewith a first hand knowledge of many of the issues involved in the dynamics between the need for lumber and the need to preserve wilderness.

In testifying for S.W.O.C., I would like to bring up three main points, the first being our strong concern for preservation of a reasonable remnant of the old growth forest ecosystems in Oregon, as critical reproductive and feeding habitat for entire communities of wild plants and animals. The already existing Wilderness Areas are largely of an alpine or sub-alpine nature, and this may well be the last opportunity to preserve any large tracts of lower elevation forests in a virgin condition. Such areas as French Pete and the Middle Santiam are prime examples of just such forests.

In expressing concern for preservation of these habitats, it is pertinent to refer to several publications by various offices of the U.S. Forest Service. The Siuslaw National Forest this year published a document entitled, "Multiple Use Plan Resource Base" in which it was projected that 30 species of wildlife, including the bald eagle, the osprey, and the spotted owl, would be completely eliminated from the forest, along with heavy reductions in the populations of 55 other species if current forest practices are continued.
owl, which require large cavities or diseased trees for nesting, and which appear to have a strong preference for multilayered forests. It appears, therefore, that some modification of current forest management practices is desirable if viable populations of these species are to be preserved.

Existing federal land-use plans for the remaining lowland de facto wilderness areas are painfully inadequate. French Pete and Middle Santiam are good examples. The "Final Environmental Statement" plan of the Willamette National Forest gives only "undeveloped roadless area" status to the French Pete Creek drainage, a designation lacking the long-term, legal protection of a Wilderness Area, and projects the logging of the Walker Creek and Rebel Creek drainages contiguous with French Pete, effectively lopping off both its arms. The Middle Santiam area is given virtually no protection at all, with 23,000 acres out of 24,500 being proposed for general timber harvest. With the incredibly vast acres of public land already devoted entirely to management for timber harvest, it seems clear to us that the principle of multiple use mandates the preservation of the comparatively tiny areas such as French Pete and the Middle Santiam, both for human enjoyment and for the continued existence of old growth forest communities.

Another important justification for adding to our Wilderness Area system is the rapidly growing public interest in and use of the existing Wilderness Areas for recreation, study and aesthetic enjoyment. Much has been written of the need in humans for the experience of wilderness and untrampled natural forces, and more and more people each year find a need for this retreat from the life of the city. In addition, interest in non-game wildlife has increased exponentially in recent years, as evidenced by the fact that bird study is the fastest growing hobby in the nation. Many have also become active amateur botanists, and the experiences of such people have added significantly to the store of scientific knowledge of the natural history of the continent. All these activities have caused heavy user-pressure to be put on the wilderness areas, and signs point to an increase in this pressure. It, thus, behooves the government to respond to its citizens' interests by establishing additional, legally
protected wilderness areas for the use of future generations.

The last point we would put forward is an ethical one. As Aldo Leopold, the father of modern wildlife management, has written, "The practice of conservation must spring from a conviction of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. It is right only when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the community, and the community includes the soil, waters, fauna, and flora, as well as people. It cannot be right for someone to drain the last marsh, graze the last woods, or slash the last grove in his community, because in so doing he is evicting a fauna, a flora, and a landscape whose membership in the community is older than his own, and is equally entitled to respect. If we grant the premise that an ecological conscience is possible and needed, then its first tenet must be this: economic provocation is no longer a satisfactory excuse for ecological atrocities."

Indeed, we human beings, as stewards and trustees of the magnificent and vulnerable planet on which we live, have an obligation to protect and preserve the many life forms that share this world with us. This obligation extends to preserving and defending the homes, the habitats of these creatures from careless destruction. Too often man, in his brief time as manipulator of the earth, has chosen greed and immediate monetary gain above his responsibilities to the environment. Those with power, influence, and money will clamor to cut all the trees, without ever considering the natural systems they are destroying. A cedar grove or a bald eagle cannot lobby for their lives to be spared, but we can act to see that at least a remnant of the old ecosystems will survive.

In conclusion, we, the membership of S.W.O.C., urge you to press strongly for passage of the Endangered American Wilderness Bill, and to include in it the complete French Pete and Middle Santiam Proposed Wilderness Areas before these areas can be lost to us as havens of recreation, study, and appreciation.

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Quarterly Report: Lane Field Notes

STEVE GORDON

This is the first quarterly report on the results of the S.W.O.C. field notes for the Willamette Valley portion of Lane County. The period covered was January, February, and March of 1977.

Figure No. 1 illustrates the relationship between the six cell reporting form and the six subareas within the reporting area. A map showing these six subareas is attached to the reporting form.

Fig. 1

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<th>Junction City</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fern Ridge</td>
<td>Camp Creek</td>
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<td>Airport</td>
<td>Walterville</td>
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<td>Coburg</td>
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<td>Noti</td>
<td>Eugene/Springfield</td>
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<td>Jasper</td>
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<td>Spencer Creek</td>
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<td>Cottage Grove</td>
<td>Lowell</td>
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<td>Mosby Creek</td>
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<td>Big River</td>
<td>Creswell</td>
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Figure No. 2 illustrates the total number of species observed from the various subareas for each month and the cumulative total for the first quarter.

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<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
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Total: 104 105 114 131

Figure No. 3 shows the number of observer hours spent in each of the six subareas for each month and the cumulative total for the first quarter.
Bluebird Endoparasite Alert
ELSIE ELTZROTH

This is an urgent appeal for information from ornithologists working in the field of avian parasitology with regard to Western Bluebird infestation by Acanthocephalans. During the past three weeks the Oregon State University Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory has performed necropsies on two adult females, three adult males and nine nestlings. Two males and one female (each from different boxes located several miles apart) had large intestine infestations, severe enough to be the primary cause of death. One male had coccidiosis, the suspected cause of death, and ulcerative enteritis; one female was infected with tapeworm. One male and one female were never found; one female was still alive when last seen. All nestlings examined were free of internal parasites and died of starvation or hypothermia.

We are especially interested in knowing more about this parasite relative to the thrush family, where it has been found, what the intermediate host is and how to reduce or eliminate it.

We began our bluebird project last year and had no active nest, but the incidence of nest failure has been too high to ignore this year. We have lost 4 out of 4 nests! Two broods were lost completely; we managed to save four 16-day-old birds which have been banded and released, and we are raising three others.

Based on the similarity of events leading up to these nest failures, we wonder if the diminished bluebird population, which began many years ago in the Willamette Valley, may be directly related to this debilitating parasite during the stress of brooding and feeding nestlings. Rainy, cool weather typical of our springtime would have contributed to the stress since insects have been scarce. The starling and house sparrow problem of nest competition is a more recent occurrence.

We are asking Bluebird Trail Groups and other people to save any dead western bluebirds they find. If you should find one, seal the dead bird in a plastic bag, attach a card giving the details causing death if known, date, place, name, address and phone number, and refrigerate (don't freeze). Call me or send it to Lloyd Cowley, O.S.U. Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Corvallis, OR 97331, for necropsy. Elsie Eltzroth, 3595 N.W. Roosevelt Dr., Corvallis OR 97330, (503) 752-0666.
Season Highlights: Spring

* A Common Grackle, the first we know of from Oregon, was found by Steve and Priscilla Summers at Malheur HQ on Memorial Day weekend. Details elsewhere in this issue.
* A Painted Redstart, also presumably Oregon's first, was found near Gateway on the Deschutes River in early June by Greg Roberts; details are available from SWOC.
* An imm. male Painted Bunting, Oregon's second on record, was located in early June at Malheur HQ by Harry Nehls and Mark Koninendyke.
* An "eastern" form Brant (Branta bernicla hrota) was found at the mouth of the Salmon River near Lincoln City by David Fix and Joe Evanich June 12.
* A Horned Puffin has been seen at least twice from Cape Lookout in May and June; first found by Craig Roberts and Steve Duke from the George Fox College ornithology class May 14. Details in this issue.
* American Redstarts have returned for the sixth consecutive year to nesting areas at Davis Lake in the Cascades.
* Black & White Warblers were found Mem. Day weekend at Malheur by Rogue Valley Audubon Society members, and at Hart Mtn. in June by L.R. Mewaldt.
* A Blackpoll Warbler was also caught at the Hart Mtn. banding site, as were 11 Flammulated Owls.
* Two Northern Waterthrush were found June 4 at Crescent Creek campground near Davis Lake, and both were still present June 24. Details in this issue.
* Up to ten Upland Sandpipers were on the Izee Rd. just west of Seneca in Central Oregon in early June; the birds were out in the fields, nests were found. (Nehls, Koninendyke)

The Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission will be considering regulations concerning falconry at its next meeting, July 28. They have asked for comments from SWOC members. If you have ideas or concerns, either for or against allowing falconry, they will accept both written and oral comments.

News and Notes

STATE RECORDS COMMITTEE

We have had a number of responses from members regarding the makeup and operation of an Oregon Records Committee, and hope to present a definite and carefully considered proposal to the state's birders by the end of the summer. All comments, ideas and questions are welcome, and should be sent to the SWOC mailbox soon.

STATE BIRD ORGANIZATION

Response from throughout the state in recent weeks has been so far in favor of SWOC assuming, officially, the role of Oregon's state bird organization, with attendant sponsorship of the records committee and other activities of interest to the state's birders.

If you have comments, either for or against such a proposition, please communicate with SWOC soon.

SECOND COAST BIRDING WEEKEND

All Oregon observers are encouraged to spend the weekend of August 27-28 on the coast as part of the annual Coast Birding Weekend. This year, contrary to last, observers are requested to count or estimate individuals as with a Christmas Count. Information gathered in this manner is much more valuable than straight species lists, and all results of the weekend will be made available to the Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, as well as being summarized in SWOC Talk. Copies of the summary issue of SWOC Talk may be purchased for $1 by non-members.

All lists, small or large, species or individual, from August 27 and/or 28 on the coast will be accepted and should be sent to the SWOC CBW Compiler at the regular mailing address.
S.W.O.C. FIELD TRIP TO THE KLAMATH BASIN

On April 30th and May 1st, 1977 the first organized (in a manner of speaking) S.W.O.C. field trip took place in the Klamath Basin. Twenty people, including eight S.W.O.C. members, participated with many of the group camping Friday night at Hagelstein County Park and Saturday night at the Lava Beds National Monument. A total of 160 species were recorded in the Basin for the trip. On Saturday, 132 species were recorded with 128 of those having been observed in Klamath county. Areas visited during the trip included: Klamath Forest NWR, Hagelstein Park/Algoma, Link River, Moore Park, Miller Island State Game Management Area, Upper Klamath NWR, the Fort Klamath vicinity, Lower Klamath NWR, Tule Lake NWR, and the Lava Beds NM. Birding highlights of the trip included the following: Red-necked Grebe, Green Heron, Ross Goose (at Miller Island), Bald Eagles on the nest, Prairie Falcons, Ruffed Grouse, Black-bellied Plover (196 in breeding plumage counted in one field), Solitary Sandpiper, Marbled Godwit, large numbers of Semipalmated Plover, Dunlin, Long-billed Dowitcher, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, and Wilson’s Phalarope, Northern Phalarope, Great Horned Owl (11), Barn Owl (6), Calliope and Anna’s Hummingbirds in Oregon, White-headed Woodpecker, Bank Swallow, Tricolored Blackbird in Oregon, Green-tailed Towhee, Lark, Brewer’s, and Vesper Sparrows at Lava Beds NM, and Lincoln’s Sparrow.

Steve Gordon is preparing a bird finding guide to the Klamath Basin and would welcome information or inquiries about the birds of the area.

S.G.
NIGHT-HAWK.

SWOC TALK
A Publication on Oregon Birds By the Southern Willamette Ornithological Club

FIRST CLASS MAIL