Contents of Oregon Birds Volume 44 (2)

The Best New Way to Bird—On Your Bike Noah Greenwald.................................................................53
A British Birder in Oregon Helen Berg..........................................................54
Fremont National Forest: A Site Guide Bob Archer......................................................55
Five Shy of a Century: Interview with Elsie Eltzroth James Billstine......................................................57
2018 OBA Patrons, Sustaining Members, and Donors..........................................................58
How Can We Increase the Number of Young Birders? Kai Frueh..........................................................59
Young Birders of Oregon—Interviews Kai Frueh..........................................................61
2018 OBA Annual Meeting..........................................................................................68
Judy Meredith: Field Trip Organization—An Interview Pamela Johnston......................................................69
Ulo Kiigemagi (1923-2018) Karan Fairchild..........................................................71
Bob Kindschy (1935-2017) Alan Contreras..........................................................71
Fund for Ornithology (FFO) Grant Recipients Report..............................................................72
Top Five Common Birds in Uncommon Places James Billstine......................................................73
The Painted Hills: A Site Guide Joel Geier..........................................................74

A Word from the Editors:
This is the final issue of OB magazine brought to you by the current editors. Starting in 2019, OBA will switch to a different format with two new editors, one for the Spring issue and one for the Fall. We would like to thank all of our readers and contributors for their support and interest in the magazine during our four-year tenure—it has been fun! — Hendrik Herlyn and Oscar Harper

Selena Deckelmann will serve as the new editor for the Spring issue. Please send any submissions, ideas for articles, and inquiries to her at selenamarie@gmail.com. The editor for the Fall issue will be announced at a later date. Diana Byrne will continue to serve as the Photo Editor. You can send your photo submissions directly to her at dbyrne@oregonbirding.org. The deadline for submissions for Oregon Birds Volume 45 (1) is January 31, 2019.

OBA Membership
Membership in Oregon Birding Association is open to anyone. Dues support events, publications, and occasional special projects. Members also receive Oregon Birds twice a year and are entitled to discounts on meetings and activities. Send renewals, new membership requests, and tax-deductible contributions to:

Oregon Birding Association
PO BOX 675
Lincoln City OR 97367-0675

$30 Individual
$35 Family
$50 Sustaining

Oregon Birds
The Journal of Oregon Birding and Field Ornithology

Oregon Birds is a publication of Oregon Birding Association, an Oregon not-for-profit corporation. Two issues are produced each year: A full-color Year-in-Review issue in the spring, and an issue with various articles in the fall.

Publication Committee:
Hendrik Herlyn—Editor
Oscar Harper—Associate Editor
Diana Byrne—Photo Editor
Treesa Hertzel—Layout and Design
Pamela Johnston—Content Editor

Address Change Reminder: In order to ensure the timely delivery of your copy of Oregon Birds, please remember to notify us at www.oregonbirding.org/join if your mailing address has changed. Thank you!

Oregon Birding Association and Oregon Birds are on the web at oregonbirding.org

All photographs appearing in Oregon Birds are held in copyright by the photographer unless otherwise noted.

ISSN 0890-2313
I turned 50 this year and as a present, I got a new, fast and fun bike and joined the ranks of middle-aged men stuffing my paunch into tight clothing. I got the bike to stay in shape, but quickly realized that I could combine my need for exercise with another of my passions — birding.

Biking has many advantages for birding. On a bike, I can cover an amazing amount of ground while at the same time seeing and hearing birds. Unlike a car, I can stop and seek out birds without blocking traffic to the ire of the un-bird-seeing masses. I can also access trails and habitat not available when driving. And unlike while running, I can wear binoculars.

On a recent morning in the fall of 2018, for example, I left my house in northeast Portland, and within 10 minutes was riding along the Columbia Slough, where I saw large groups of Common Mergansers, Pied-billed Grebes, and the season’s last Barn Swallows.

From there, I rode to Vanport Wetlands, where I saw a group of Lesser Yellowlegs and Lesser Goldfinches, among others, and then on to Smith and Bybee Lakes Wetlands (where I had to walk, since riding is not allowed), where I found Vaux’s Swifts, Great Egrets and a Red-breasted Sapsucker.

From there, I rode the Marine Drive trail, where I saw a perched Osprey at eye level, a Belted Kingfisher, and got nice views of a first-year, light-morph Red-tailed Hawk. Earlier in the season, I got some nice looks at the late Rough-legged Hawk at the Portland airport. The total ride covered roughly 17 miles and took under 2.5 hours.

This is the great advantage of biking — a person can stop at multiple sites, visiting multiple habitats in the process, and ultimately see a lot more birds. At the same time, you can get some exercise and are outside the entire time.

My friend and colleague from the Center for Biological Diversity, Jeff Miller, has been biking and birding around Morro Bay in California and can visit 17 eBird hotspots in one ride, including upland, riparian, and coastal birding. I can’t quite catch that many hotspots (at least not on one ride) but I have biked several Portland birding hotspots, including the ones mentioned above, plus Sauvie Island, Oaks Bottom, Mt. Tabor, Forest Park and Whitaker Nature Park, capturing many of the habitats in the Portland metropolitan area.

I struggle a bit to find the right balance between getting my heart rate up and focused birding, but I’ll chalk that up to a first-world problem if there ever was one.

Whatever you ride, I strongly recommend wider tires. I ride a gravel bike (Niner RLT) with 38 millimeter tires. It’s fast on road stretches between birding, but also allows travel on gravel roads or trails. Birding in Portland can get a bit industrial in places, with a lot of debris (nails, staples, glass, etc.). I’ve thus been glad for tubeless tires and have not yet had a flat — knock on wood. Jeff rides a mountain bike, which also seems like a great choice.

I’ve been riding solo so far and have not had any problems, as morning time is quiet time, but have found myself in parts of town where there’s not that many people around, that could potentially be sketchy.

Likewise, I did a ride around Cultus Lake in central Oregon, where there weren’t many people around and where a fall could be problematic. I’d recommend a partner for these types of situations, or be careful in any case.

I don’t have a setup for carrying a scope, but I think it could easily be done. Carrying food, water, and other sundries is no problem, allowing for longer excursions if you have the time and your priorities straightened out.

Portland has some great places to ride and see birds, as does much of the rest of Oregon, and I look forward to continuing to explore. I hope to see some of you fellow birders out there on your bikes. It’s emission free.

Noah Greenwald is the Endangered Species Director at the Center for Biological Diversity and loves to bird.
A British Birder in Oregon
by Helen Berg

Helen Berg visited Oregon from the UK in late June, hoping to add several species to her extensive world list. What she recounts below is not only what she saw, but experienced, via the incredible hospitality that Oregon birders extended to her.

I'm a UK resident, living in the eastern county of Norfolk for the past 16 years, and have been an avid birder for about 20 years. I've traveled fairly extensively around the world, having visited around 35 countries. Despite all that, I'm by no means an expert, as I'm hampered by a full-time job, which means I don't get as much time as I'd like to spend doing what I love best.

I've always had a fascination for North America, though I'm not sure exactly why. It's something to do with the wide open, dramatic landscapes of desert, mountain, and forest, which is so different to anything we have back home, juxtaposed with the familiarity of a shared language and culture. I've also read a lot of books about traveling and birding around the USA, which have certainly influenced my thinking. I have a romantic notion that one day I'd like to experience my own road trip around America. Whatever the reason, I found myself with two weeks of holiday leave, so I decided to spend eight days of it in Portland, Oregon.

Why Portland? Well, for a start, I don't drive, so for a short trip I always choose to stay in cities with a good public transport network. A quick search on Google showed me that Portland has the excellent TriMet system of buses and trains, plus plenty of interesting green spaces within easy reach.

This trip was all very last-minute, so I didn't have a lot of time to make plans. I decided that my best bet to optimize my time in Portland in order to see as many birds as possible was to try to make contact with some BirdingPals. To those of you not familiar with this organisation, it's a bird-watching club for world travelers. All you do is send a message to a Pal via the website, BirdingPal. org, and arrange to meet up. I was lucky enough to make contact with two Pals, David Lantz and Misty Hampton. I couldn't have hoped to meet two more helpful, generous people.

I hit the ground running - I arrived at my motel around 10:30 pm, and met David the following morning, Sunday, June 10 at 7:30 am. He picked me up outside my motel, and we headed out to Mount Tabor Park next, which was actually quite close to the motel I was staying at. It was a good choice, because there were several hirundines hunting over the lake, and I got superb views of Violet-green, Tree and Barn swallows. The weather was deteriorating quite badly by then, so we called it a day, as the rain showed no signs of letting up. Still, it had been a great start to my trip!

The next morning, I met David at the Quatama TriMet station. While I was waiting for him, I was treated to yet another Red-breasted Sapsucker in the station's parking lot! We were headed out to Jackson Bottom, but first we had a quick look around the grounds of a large library where we saw an engaging gang of Acorn Woodpeckers. At Jackson Bottom, we watched Black-headed Grosbeaks on the feeders (a first for me), plus Anna's Hummingbirds, and a super-cute little Townsend's Chipmunk was scampering about. We met another birder, Steve Nord, on the trail, and walked with him for a while. A Lazuli Bunting was a very nice new bird for me there.

We continued to our next stop at the Fern Hill Water Treatment wetlands. Walking round the pools, we heard Sora and Virginia Rail several times, but I know how difficult they can be to actually see, so imagine how pleased I was when a Virginia Rail popped right out into the open next to the path! Now try to imagine how I felt when, just 10 minutes later, a Sora did the same thing! Wonderful! All of a sudden, I didn't feel tired or hungry any more. It's amazing how seeing a good bird will do that for you!

Our final destination for the day was the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. David knew a reliable spot to find Yellow-breasted Chat, one of my target species, and sure enough, one showed well, but only after a tantalizingly long game of hide-and-seek! It was a very productive spot, and we saw Willow Flycatcher (at last!), another Lazuli Bunting and, a little further on, a Western Wood-Peevess.

The next day, David had arranged to meet Misty for the day. Misty picked me up from my motel, and her plan was to take me to Ridgefield, but we arrived there to find that the reserve was closed for maintenance work! Not to worry, we went for a riverside walk through woodlands and saw Brown creepers and chickadees. We went back to Misty's house, then went for a walk around Camassia Natural Area. I didn't see any new birds there, but it was a very pleasant place for a stroll.

David had arranged for us to go to Baskett Slough and meet a friend of his there, Paul Sullivan. Paul turned out to be a very knowledgeable birder and great company for the day. I loved our day at Baskett Slough. For a start, I found the landscape of rolling hills and grasslands beautiful. The birding was great, too!

First we gave our attention to the marshy grasslands beside the road, and I was delighted to see several Wilson's Phalaropes in their beautiful breeding plumage - I'd only ever seen them in their drab winter gear before. There were a few other birders present, and pretty soon someone noticed a couple of Sora chicks foraging nearby, which was lovely. Also conspicuous were the relatively tame Yellow-headed Blackbirds, which were feeding by the roadside, presumably on seed that people had put out for them.

I got chatting with one of the other birders, Frank, and he offered to take me in his car to some private property nearby, where he had been erecting nest boxes for Western Bluebirds, with the land-owner's consent. Apparently Frank has been helping the bluebirds for some years, and we saw maybe 5 or 6 of these azure beauties, together with a very obliging Chipping Sparrow, another very welcome lifer for me! Once again, I was simply amazed at the kindness shown to me by a complete stranger who just wanted me to enjoy 'his' bluebirds. I thanked Frank profusely, and he took me back down the road, where I re-joined David and Paul. In the drier grassland areas we saw Western Meadowlarks and Horned Larks. After lunch, Paul suggested going up a small road near Amity, and it proved to be a very productive spot. I got a much-wanted (by me!) Red-breasted Nuthatch and an Olive-sided Flycatcher, as well as a Swainson's Thrush and a Hutton's Vireo that was calling close by but stubbornly refused to show itself. A bit further up the road, we were treated to perfect views of a Western Tanager.

I didn't do too much the following day, just enjoyed a bit of a lie- (continued on page 56)
The high volcanic plateau west of Summer Lake is part of the Fremont and Winema National Forest. It is characterized by deep volcanic soils, springs, and spring-fed seasonal creeks. Ponderosa Pine, Lodgepole Pine, and true firs dominate the landscape. Elevations range from the mid-4,000s to over 8,000 feet. Grazing cattle can be encountered from spring through fall. Summer Lake is located in Lake County, approximately 77 miles south on Hwy. 31 from La Pine, Oregon.

The three access roads discussed here all are good-quality paved or gravel roads. The first is East Bay Road in Silver Lake; this gravel road turns into the paved FR 28. It runs the entire length of the area covered by this site guide. The next option is the graveled FR 29, which hits Hwy. 31 about 4.6 miles north of Summer Lake and eventually connects to FR 28. The third option is to turn west on Mill St. in the town of Paisley. Turn to the right on the graveled FR 3315 and head up into the forest. In general, the seasons discussed here are mid-May through the summer. Snow levels and road conditions should be considered at other times. Distances are approximate.

Heading down East Bay Rd. from Silver Lake, you enter the forest after 5.2 miles. The first area to explore is FR 2916, about 6.1 miles south of Silver Lake. Take a moment and drive or walk the area. White-headed Woodpeckers, Calliope Hummingbirds, and Dusky Flycatchers are all treats for the effort. Want a challenge? Try to call in all three nuthatches to the same tree.

At 13 miles in from Silver Lake, turn right down the road to East Bay Campground. This site is nestled next to Thompson Reservoir. The shorelines should be scanned carefully for shorebirds in all seasons. The lake itself can be full of migrating and nesting waterfowl. Franklin's Gulls, Ring-billed Gulls, Caspian, Black, and Forster's terns can all be found here. Ospreys nest in the surrounding trees. With care, you should be able to walk the shorelines to explore the lake. A scope might help with distant waterfowl.

Continuing down FR 28, you will see numerous spots to pull over and look for birds. It is often well worth the effort to pull over and walk down a dirt road to see what can be found. As you travel FR 28, you will soon catch glimpses off to your right of a large marsh. This is the Nature Conservancy's Sycan Marsh. There are limited access points and when visiting the area, you are asked to stay on the roads; however, the Fremont NF does border the marsh, and there are a few points where you can walk down to the marsh and stay on Forest Service land. The easiest of these is located 9.7 miles past the turn to East Bay Campground. The rocky old road here leads down to the border of the marsh, where all the typical birds such as Mountain Bluebirds, Cassin's Finches, and Chipping Sparrows will keep you busy while you walk down to an overlook of the marsh.

About 27 miles past East Bay Campground, you will cross the Sycan River; on your left there will be a small fenced trailhead for the Hanan Trail. This is the Sycan River end of this very ancient trail that passes over the divide between the Pacific and Great Basin.
In Oregon, the trail up the Sycan River passes through diseased forest and wetland marshes. “Western-type” flycatchers, Red-naped Sapsuckers, Hairy Woodpeckers, White-crowned Sparrows (oriathia), Green-tailed Towhees, and Mountain Bluebirds are a few of the many species encountered here. MacGillivray’s, Yellow-rumped, and Townsend’s warblers complement the array of passerines.

Another 5.8 miles past the Hanan Trail brings you to a large marsh area (stay on paved road), which marks the confluence of numerous creeks. North, Elder, and Pole creeks all join up here. Red-shouldered Hawks are known to nest in the area, and the brush along these creeks is well worth checking for sparrows and warblers. Areas just past this confluence are not covered in this guide, but Campbell and Dead Horse lakes are nearby, and Lee Thomas Campground and the marsh along the North Fork Sprague River are not too far away and worthwhile, although the road is bumpy.

Just before you arrive at the above confluence, you pass a gravel road (FR 3315) that takes you down to the town of Paisley. Driving along this road, go slowly and listen for woodpeckers in the woods. Several clearcut areas have enough trees remaining to be a good spot for the birds. The other end of the Hanan Trail is located 3.25 miles down FR 3315, where there is a small spring that could attract thirsty birds (Coffeepot Springs). At mile 7, you cross Bear Creek; there is little data available as to the birds found there. Someone needs to bird up here. Wandering the woods. Several clearcut areas have enough trees remaining to yield forest birds such as Northern Goshawk, among others. At mile 10.8 down the road, there is a dirt logging road off to the left; pull over and park here and wander the road off to the left down to the clearcut. A short walk through the trees will bring you to a spectacular view down into the Summer Lake basin. Sooty Grouse, Western Tanagers, and Clark’s Nutcrackers are all in this area.

Farther down FR 3315, you leave the forest and find yourself in scrub grasslands. Sagebrush Sparrows, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and Lark Sparrows can be found here.

If you did not turn at East Bay Rd. up in Silver Lake, you can also enter forest at FR 29, which is 4.6 mi north of Summer Lake. This smooth gravel road is best birded by simply stopping along the way and listening, or by wandering a bit. On your way up, be sure to listen for Fox Sparrows in the shrubs. The stretch between about one to 2.5 miles up the road is a great area for Blue-gray Gnatcatchers. Once you enter the Ponderosa Pines, find a nice pull-out and listen for Clark’s Nutcrackers and woodpeckers. You will pass by several areas of aspen that contain MacGillivray’s Warblers in the associated brush. Lewis’s Woodpeckers, Williamson’s and Red-naped sapsuckers, Cassin’s Vireos, Common Poorwills, Townsend’s and Black-throated Gray warblers, Northern Goshawk, all three nuthatches, and Clark’s Nutcrackers can all be found by birding quietly along this road. A short spur road takes you over to the Fremont Point and a view of the valley below.

The next time you are heading down to Summer Lake or over to Malheur, set aside an extra day to explore this remote and beautiful forest.

A British Birder in Oregon (continued from page 54)

in, as David had planned us another busy day for Friday, my penultimate day. He had arranged for us a day at the coast. I was really looking forward to this as a chance to see some great new birds. I had also heard that the Oregon coastline is very beautiful, and I wanted to see it for myself.

The day started well — David pulled over at a bridge that crossed a small river, saying, ‘This looks like it might be a good place for a Dipper,’ knowing that that was a bird I had tried, and failed, to find previously. We scrambled down the bank to the water’s edge, and sure enough, it wasn’t long before a Dipper appeared, as if by magic! We watched as it hopped from rock to rock and ‘snorkeled’ in the shallow water. I found it very difficult to tear myself away! When we finally did meet James, we found Hermit Warbler, Wrentit, Heermann’s Gull, and best of all, Tufted Puffin! The puffins were on Haystack Rock at Cannon Beach. Several passers-by stopped to ask what we were looking at, and I was only too happy to show them with my telescope. I’m always glad to share a good bird, and who doesn’t love a puffin? There were also several Harlequin Ducks resting on Haystack Rock, which were an added bonus. It was a fantastic day, and the scenery was just gorgeous. You lucky, lucky people who live in Oregon!

Back in Portland, I said my goodbyes to David, who had been a great companion for the week, and wished him well.

Saturday was my final day, and I had arranged to meet Misty. She knew I wanted to see Wilson’s Snipe, so she took me out to Ridgefield. We drove, then walked around the reserve, and although we heard several snipe, we just couldn’t see any. Misty told me that ‘going on a snipe hunt’ meant looking for something that didn’t exist. How apt! There were more Yellow-headed Blackbirds here, and I became convinced that they were saying ‘Allo!’ in a deep raucous voice, and once I commented on this, Misty heard it too, which gave us both the giggles. It was more than a little bit distracting! We also heard, but didn’t see, a Bittern. Funnily enough, I had already seen an American Bittern recently, but it was back home in England, not in America!

As we walked back towards the parking lot, a huge Great Horned Owl swooped past and settled in a nearby tree, so at least we saw something good! Misty still wanted to find me a new bird, so she checked OBOL to see what was about. One guy had posted directions for finding Wild Turkeys in the small town of Dallas, about an hour-and-a-half drive away. Misty called her husband Jesse, who was keen to see them too, and offered to drive us there. So, after going on a snipe hunt, we were now going on a wild turkey chase!

When we arrived in the appropriate place in Dallas, we were all rather dubious about our chances — we were in a suburban street. But the directions were very clear, so we kept looking. All of a sudden, I stopped and looked more closely at what I had initially assumed to be a large brown dog in front of a house. The ‘dog’ was actually three turkeys! If I hadn’t heard about them, I would have just assumed they were escaped, but these were clearly wild birds, as they were very wary of us. Further along we saw more, including a rather handsome male. Our wild turkey chase had been a success!

It had been great fun, and a wonderful way to end a hugely successful and enjoyable week. Once again, I’d like to thank David, Misty, Jesse, Paul, Frank, and James for making my short trip to Oregon so memorable. I saw a total of 109 species (not counting heard-onlys), 29 of which were lifers.
Five Shy of a Century

Interview with Elsie Eltzroth
by James Billstine

Author’s Note: While perusing back copies of Oregon Birds from 1980, I stumbled across a familiar name: Elsie Eltzroth. She had responded personally to a member email and I had learned that she and her husband were founding members of what is now the Oregon Birding Association. While I initially reached out to Elsie to honor the contributions that my forebirders have made, I ended up discovering how birds and birding have impacted her life, and I found that even through the changing generations, we share more in common than we do differences.

Elsie Eltzroth’s interest in nature spans back to the late 1930s, where she found herself becoming drawn to the outdoors. Hiking, camping and canoeing were all offered through a club at her high school, where she enjoyed spending time with her friend and friend’s father, who split his time teaching chemistry and running the outdoor club. Being a “city girl,” Elsie was especially drawn to these new experiences the outdoors provided her.

Fast forward to 1963, and Elsie and her husband Merlin (Elzy) were in Alexandria, Virginia. After putting up bird feeders in their backyard, they were introduced to their first comprehensive bird book by friends - one written by none other than Roger Tory Peterson. This set in motion a passion for avian conservation. Elsie stated, “We were invited by a local ornithologist to go out on the Potomac River where we found one of the most recent sightings of breeding Bald Eagles! The birds had been placed on the endangered list; they hadn’t nested near Mount Vernon for years!”

The seed was planted, and after 29 years of service in the US Air Force, Elsie’s husband retired in 1971 after his last tour in Germany, and she and her family relocated to Corvallis. There, they became involved in the Audubon Society of Corvallis and managed two areas of the count circle until they couldn’t keep up with its strenuous schedule.

They also began rehabilitating orphaned birds, and Elsie began the Western Bluebird Nest Box Trail, which she managed for 30+ years. It was through this program that Elsie’s passion and perseverance were able to take flight. She became nationally recognized for her meticulous gathering of data on the Western Bluebirds via banding and other research methods. Her observations of nesting behavior, weather, geographical data, and species interaction, as well as necropsies and preparation of study skins, among many other aspects, helped scientists gain a much deeper comprehension of the species. She also reached out to local organizations and tirelessly advocated for the bluebirds, earning her an award from the Corvallis Audubon Society.

In this pursuit, Elsie also encountered her two greatest moments in birding. In 1981, she found an “incomplete albinistic” bluebird, one of the first documented. She also helped document an 8-year-old banded male bluebird, which was a USFWS record age for the species. While she is proud of her contributions Elsie is quick to give credit to the hundreds of volunteers who helped her collect data on the Western Bluebird Nest Box Trail Project.

Elsie enjoyed birding Finley NWR, as well as the Oregon Coast and especially Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Today, she still birds in her backyard. At 95 years of age, she is not as mobile as she once was, but still is able to help monitor nests. Furthermore, she says, “I am fortunate at this age because I can enjoy bluebirds up close the year round at a feeder on my patio. Now bluebirds visit me.” Elsie describes the impact the hobby has made on her life:

“I could go on forever to tell you how birds made a difference in my life! It was a not too expensive a hobby that we could do alone, with family, or with friends. Perfect!

“It was also educational! What we learned we could also teach others. In addition to being a mother of three and introducing them to the beauty of birds and the values of the entire natural world, I did quite a bit of that with the bluebirds as my main subject. I spoke and presented slide shows at service and social clubs, in elementary schools and at bluebird workshops that ASC sponsored.

“Later, during the last years of my being actively involved, it gave me comfort and pleasure to know that I had done something worthwhile with my life. I had helped to bring the Bluebird of Happiness back to the Willamette Valley in Oregon.”

Elsie’s life and contributions to bird conservation and birding serve as an inspiration to the real work that citizen scientists can do to further the education and enjoyment of birds in Oregon.

Thank You, Linda!

The Oregon Birding Association Board of Directors would like to extend a Special Thank You to Linda Zercher for her continued commitment to supporting birds and birding in Oregon, and especially that which supports the interest and recruitment of young birders in our state.
2018 OBA Patrons,
Sustaining Members, and Donors

2018 OBA Patrons

Bryce Butler
Selena & Scott Deckelmann
Paul & Roxy Evans
Michael & Kathleen Krall
Paradise Birding LLC, Steve Shunk
Bing Wong

2018 Sustaining Members

Nagi Aboulenein & Taghrid Elmeligui
Paul Adams
Range Bayer
Bill Bradford & Lora Minty
Ken & Jeanne Chamberlain
Tom Gilg & Donna Dimski Gilg
Dick Lamster & Maeve Sowles
Wendy & Robert G Lee
Timothy Kadlacek
Glenn Marquardt

Ed McVicker
Ruth Morton & Hal Busch
Delores Porch
Caryn Stoess
Jim Regali
Anne Sammis & Eric Gropp
Patricia Tilley
John Sullivan & Laura Johnson
Jack & Jill Williamson
Jay Withgott

2017/2018 OBA Donors

General Donations
Char Corkran
Anonymous donors

$100 or More
Pamela Johnston
Ann McMann

Fund for Ornithology (FFO) Donors
Barbara Taylor
John Pendleton
Jim Platt
Anonymous donors

$100 or More (FFO)
Wayne & Patty Bowers
Barry McKenzie
Jay Withgott
I live in Corvallis, Oregon. I have been birding for three years, and from the beginning, I had friends my age who were also birders. But once I got more involved in the birding community, I realized I was lucky to have so many young birders around me. In Oregon, there are very few active birders under the age of 20 – at this point, I only know of 16 in the whole state. For quite some time now, I have been wondering how I could encourage more young people to bird, as birding is a very fun hobby that gets me outside a lot, among many other benefits. When I was asked to give a presentation at the Willamette Valley Bird Symposium, I decided this was the perfect time to look more deeply into this topic.

I decided the best way to do so was to write a survey and send it to young birders, as well as people who started birding at a young age but are older now. In the end, 35 people responded to my survey, who were spread out all over the US!

The first thing I decided to look at was the age at which people started birding. As you can see in the graph, the starting age is very close to a bell curve, with the majority of the people starting around age 11. I also found that people who started younger tended to have family members – especially parents or grandparents – who were interested in birds.

The age at which young birders start birding is helpful in understanding how we can encourage more young people to bird, but what I was really curious about was what specific things or experiences got people hooked on birding. For me, it was a combination of having my best friend be really into birds and getting my first camera. It was very interesting to find out how others became interested in birding. While this included a wide range of things that contributed to it, the following topics kept coming up.

Having a feeder set up in their yard helped a lot. A good number of people said that watching birds come to their feeder sparked their interest in birds. As most birdwatchers know, feeder birds are usually fairly tame, interesting, and easy to watch.

Many said having a bird book helped a lot with sparking their interest in birds.

Some people also said that having binoculars helped them get started with birding.

However, the thing that most people brought up was having a mentor of some kind; this could have been a parent (having parents get them into birding was particularly common) but it could also have been a friend, a grandparent, or even a teacher. I know for myself that having my best friend be very interested in birding really helped me get into birds, and I have passed it on by getting another friend of mine into birding – now we are all avid birders.

I also wondered why people continued birding, and how they benefited from this pastime.

What many people said was that they found friends – and still meet new people – who are of all ages, some younger and many older. Many of them become lifelong friends. Some of them said that they enjoyed being able to talk to people who have been birding for 30, 40, or 50 years and hearing how birding has changed over the years.

As you probably know, birding gets you outside into nature a lot – and it makes you pay attention to it! Many young birders really like and appreciate that birding gets them outside in nature – I sure do! All the people who participated in the survey said they were at least somewhat into nature before they started birding. I think this is true for most birders – it kind of describes the type of people who start birding.

Since birds are very widespread, there are always new species, behaviors, and variations to discover. Many young birders said that birding makes them want to travel – or rather gives them an excuse to travel. Birding gets them to experience new places, and hopefully, new countries and cultures, that they might not otherwise see. All in all, birding is a great excuse to travel and see the world!

Many also said that birding helped them better understand and appreciate the natural world and brought their understanding of nature to a deeper level - not just about birds, but also about other animals, plants, and life in general.

With so many benefits from birding, I was curious how many of the people who filled out my survey that are in college or beyond (a total of 20) actually went into bird-related jobs. Not too surprisingly, three fourths of them planned on going into bird/wildlife careers, while another fifth (4) have done work with birds over the years, but not as a main career. The remaining fifth went into jobs that were not bird-related.

Wouldn’t it be nice for more young people to have these kinds of opportunities? There are so many benefits to birding – and the ones I have mentioned are just the ones that were brought up by 10 or more people in the survey; there are many, many more benefits! Yet, of a total of over 700,000 youth between the ages of 5-19 in Oregon, less than 20 actively bird. That means that one in 35,000, or .003% of young people in Oregon, actively bird. For comparison, 37%, or roughly 12 in 35, of youth play sports. If you think about it, most people stop playing sports after high school or college, but birding can be done for the rest of your life.

There are so many great things about birding. You can bird...
regardless of age and most disabilities. Birds are everywhere on earth and they are easy to watch. There are over 10,000 species of birds in the world! And they can be found on every continent and in pretty much any type of habitat you can think of – you can find birds in cities, forests, deserts, open ocean, grasslands, on beaches, and many, many more habitats – one can watch birds from pretty much any place on earth. Birding can also be done while engaged in other activities or hobbies – which I love! – such as hiking, biking, drawing, and photography, or just waiting for the bus. Heck, I have gotten lifers at airports, and I know others who have, too! You can even bird from your couch – that is, if you can see out a window.

Wouldn’t it be nice to have more young birders in the birding community? That wouldn’t just mean more birders, it would also mean that there would be a higher conservation awareness among youth, more volunteers, and a lot more youthful enthusiasm! In my experience with the young birders that I have gotten to know, many of them are involved in the birding community and are very dedicated to the conservation of birds. Many of them dedicate numerous hours of their free time – on top of school – to help write for magazines, organize events (and even run them), and help with data collection – through eBird, the Great Backyard Bird Count, Christmas Bird Counts, Project FeederWatch, NestWatch, and many more!

And of course, young birders are an investment into the future of bird conservation and the love of nature!

Unfortunately, becoming a young birder is not always easy. A large number of young people don’t really know that there is such a thing as actively looking for birds, or how much fun and rewarding it is. They would rather spend time on social media and video games – the average teen spends 8 hours a day consuming media such as social media, video games, and music. Some young people also think that birding is very uncool, only for old people – which I would say is very untrue. Some young birders get discouraged because they are the only birder in their age group in their entire county or surrounding counties. Finally, getting equipment can also be a problem, especially in lower-income families.

You can spark someone’s interest in birds by giving them a feeder – and making a feeder with them would probably be even more effective! Giving them a bird book and/or binoculars is another good way to spark someone’s interest.

There are a lot of people who would like to mentor young birders, but the problem is connecting the youth who are interested in birding with birders who are fun and knowledgeable. Therefore, I encourage you to reach out and take someone young (or even older) out in the field and show them whatever you know. I especially encourage young birders to reach out to other youth and take them birding, as getting exposed to birding by someone their own age will probably help them get started – I don’t think I would be birding if it weren’t for my friend. Take them out to a local place where you can show them fascinating and easy-to-watch birds – such as hawks, swans, or swallows.

If we work on getting young people into birding, we can make this world a much better place for both birds and future generations of birders.

I would like to thank everyone who participated in my survey. I really appreciate that so many took the time to fill it out and it was very nice to connect with people from all over the states! Without them, I could not have written this article. I would also like to thank Dave Peterman for helping me sort through my thoughts and get to communicate them clearly. And last but not least, the editors of this Oregon Birds magazine – Hendrik Herlyn and Oscar Harper – for their time, giving me feedback, and proofreading the article.

Below: Killdeer in the Fall at Finley NWR. Photo by Matt Lee
Young Birders of Oregon
Interviews by Kai Frueh

Editor’s note: The young birder interviews were conducted and compiled by Kai Frueh and are a follow-up to the article “The Next Generation ...” in the OB 2017 Fall Issue (OB 43(2), pp 64-68).

Andrew Pratt

Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 11 years old and live in Corvallis. Our family enjoys being outdoors and exploring new areas. I am homeschooled and therefore I can go do stuff during school time.

How old were you when you started birding?
I've always gone birding, even when I was quite young. I probably got my first pair of binoculars when I was 4.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
Both of my parents grew up in bird watching families, so I naturally took it up.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?
It gets me outside and doing things like hiking, and gives me a lust to go all the places that I can to bird.

What is your favorite bird?
One of my favorite birds is the Canada Warbler, just because they are so cute.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?
This last winter I had a Chestnut-backed Chickadee land on my head (because I had sunflower seeds in my hands) and then it flew to my coat zipper, and it sat there looking up at me.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?
We found a Blackburnian Warbler and also saw a Black-and-white Warbler at the Fields Oasis.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?
My favorite birding spot in Oregon is Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?
I have birded in Canada, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, and Washington.

If you could bird anywhere in the world, where would you like to go?
I would love to go to Costa Rica.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding, trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding events, etc.)?
I have done the Corvallis Bio-Blitz and also use eBird. I have done a few bird walks around Corvallis with William Proebsting, Lisa Milbank, and Don Boucher.

What challenges of birding do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good pictures, ID, drawing, recording, etc.)?
I enjoy trying to identify birds as well as the challenge of it.

Have you gotten anyone else into birding? If so, were they your age, younger, or older?
Sadly, I have not gotten anyone else into birding.

What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music, etc.)?
I like to play soccer and the piano.

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?
I would like to do something involved with wildlife — or birds in particular.

Eric Pratt

Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 13 and I live in Corvallis. My brother and I are homeschooled, and so we have a lot more free time to bird than most other kids, which is nice.

How old were you when you started birding?
I have been birding all my life, ever since before I can remember!

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
Both sides of my family were birders and so I picked it up from them, although I have just always loved birding.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?
It gets me outside and doing things like hiking, and gives me a lust to go all the places that I can to bird.

What is your favorite bird?
My favorite bird, or one of my favorites, is the American Kestrel, because of its agility and awareness of where its prey is.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?
One of my most memorable birding experiences was in 2013 at Harts Cove Trail. We had gotten there later in the day and so it
was dark on the hike back. While we were hiking back (aided by flashlights) we came across a Spotted Owl directly above the trail. After that we then saw a Northern Pygmy-Owl. While we were watching the Pygmy-Owl, it flew down and caught a mouse, then flew back up to a perch and proceeded to eat in full view.

**What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?**
My most recent lifer in Oregon was a Blackburnian Warbler that we found at the Fields Oasis.

**Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?**
I have birded in Alberta, Canada as well as Hawaii, California, Washington, Idaho, and a few other places.

**If you could bird anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? Why?**
If I could bird anywhere in the world I would choose Costa Rica. Next spring we are (hopefully) going to Costa Rica to bird, but Europe would also be fun. I would love to travel a lot to different countries because of all the species diversity and just the fun of seeing all those birds.

**What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding, trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding events, etc.)?**
I have been on a few rarity chases like the Crested Caracara out at the Corvallis Airport or the Blue Jay at Bald Hill. I have also done bird walks with Lisa Millbank and Don Boucher as well as William Proebsting. I also use eBird and contribute (when I can) to the Global Big Days.

**What challenges of birding do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good pictures, ID, drawing, recording etc.)?**
I like the challenge of getting a good ID as well as recording birds on eBird.

**Have you gotten anyone else into birding? Were they your age, younger, or older?**
No.

**What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music, etc.)?**
I like to unicycle and play unicycle hockey with a group in town, but I am otherwise not a part of any organized sports.

**What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?**
I think it would be awesome to have a job that is bird-related just because I love to bird and study the birds themselves.

---

**Anika Fiske**

Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 16 years old and go to Tualatin High School. I live with my younger brother and parents in Tigard, Oregon.

How old were you when you started birding? I started birding when I was 14 years old.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
I got into birding after a family trip to the Galapagos Islands. The birds there were so cool and unique, with so many crazy adaptations, like the Great Frigatebird’s bright red gular sac and the Blue-footed Booby’s turquoise feet. After that, I spent a lot of time researching birds of Oregon and learned that the birds here are just as unique as those in the Galapagos Islands. My grandpa was also very big into birding and most of his field guides and bird books had been passed down to me, which inspire me every day to continue birding and learning about these wonderful animals.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?
I benefit from birding as it helps me continue to learn and grow as a person. The more I bird, the more I learn about how my actions affect the environment and what that means for the future of this planet. Another reason why I benefit from birding is it helps me when I am feeling down or stressed. Just getting outside cures me instantly. Not only that, but my love for birding has introduced me to a whole new community of people with the same passion.

What is your favorite bird?
My favorite bird is the Montezuma Oropendola. Their calls are my favorite of all birds, and I was lucky enough to hear them recently on a trip to Costa Rica. Not only that, but their beauty is so different from other birds. They are so unique and interesting, both in their looks and behavior.
Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live?
About your family/where you go to school.
I'm 13 years old, and I live in Beaverton, Oregon. I have an older
brother who is currently 18. I go
to Oregon Episcopal School in
Portland, Oregon, and am going
into 9th grade next year.

What started your interest in birds?
I was about seven years old
when I first became interested
in birds, but I didn't really
seriously bird until I was about
ten years old, in 2015, when I
joined eBird.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding,
trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding
events, etc.)?
I've participated in a couple of rarity chases (the Steller's Eider in
Seaside, for example), trips to hotspots like Lake Abert and Sauvie
Island and Oaks Bottom, and attended bird festivals such as the
Tualatin River Bird Festival.

Have you gotten anyone into birding? Were they your age, younger, or
older?
I have started a birding club at my high school, introducing a lot
of my peers into the world of birding. We do things such as build
bird houses, participate in citizen science, and learn about bird
biology and behavior. Also, as I continued birding, my dad had
really gotten into it as well. We go to a lot of cool places to bird
watch together and he makes the day more fun!

What challenges of birding do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good
pictures, ID, drawing, recording etc.)?
I enjoy finding rare birds and photographing them. I also really like
painting or drawing some of my favorite birds.

What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music,
etc.)?
I am on the Tualatin High School Dance Team and have been
playing the piano for 11 years. I also enjoy painting and drawing
(especially of birds), and am SCUBA certified!

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?
In the future, I plan on becoming an environmental scientist with a
focus on ornithology and avian behavior!
and found the scoter in a few minutes. After getting a few photos, the bird, along with some Buffleheads nearby, flew off towards the other end of the bay. So, we moved on to Boiler Bay, where many interesting seabirds had been seen. Unfortunately, it was raining sideway, muddy puddles were everywhere, and visibility was abysmal. Frustrated, we headed back to the car to wait for calm, but on the way, we saw three Red Phalaropes! We took many photos and soon the rain stopped, and the fog started to clear. We rushed to the seawatching point just in time to catch a parade of Surf and White-winged scoters, all three loon species, and a number of Bonaparte’s Gulls. Encouraged by the good weather, we headed back to Schooner Creek, where the Scoter had returned just in time. After awhile, we decided to return to D River and check on the kingbird. It took some time to find it, but after a little while we saw the kingbird Sally again, and this time it landed close enough for excellent photos. A Glaucous-winged X Herring Gull Hybrid in the parking lot was a perfect finish to the already fantastic day.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?
My most recent lifer was one of the most anticipated and overdue – the Hermit Warbler.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?
My favorite birding spot in Oregon is Haystack Rock at Cannon Beach. Home to my favorite bird - the Tufted Puffin.

Have you bailed anywhere outside of Oregon?
I have been lucky enough to have bailed in Costa Rica and India. Birding in the two countries was a completely different experience. Costa Rica is a worldwide model on how to preserve nature – the environment there is as pristine as is possible in the modern world, and the birding and wildlife watching proves it. Birding India was almost the opposite experience – barely a corner of the country remains untouched by humans. However, the avifauna there is just as plentiful, and every corner of land that isn’t paved over by concrete is brimming with birds.

If you could bailed anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? Why?
I would love to visit the Falklands and South Georgia, as well as the waters around them. This area has my two favorite kinds of bailing - watching nesting colonies and pelagic bailing.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard bailing, trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized bailing events, etc.)?
I maintain a number of feeders in my yard, though I spend more of my time bailing Hotspots - mostly in the Portland area. I partake in a lot of rarity chases, though I don’t think of it differently than normal bailing - before I go bailing, I check eBird and I prioritize the places with rarities or target birds. I have done 2 CBCs so far, and plan on doing many more in the future.

What challenges of bailing do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good pictures, ID, drawing, recording, etc.)?
I am very interested in bird migration and in particular the phenomenon of avian vagrancy, so I enjoy finding rarities and chasing ones that others have found. I also enjoy photography, as well as post-processing. In addition, I enjoy drawing birds, especially in their habitat context. Finally, I greatly enjoy the challenge of identifying gulls, and finding and studying hybrid gulls.

Have you gotten anyone else into bailing? Were they your age, younger, or older?
I have gotten my 10-year-old cousin into birdwatching.

What other hobbies/interests do you have, besides bailing (sports, music, etc.)?
I currently fence and have run cross-country in the past. I play classical piano and play trumpet in my school’s jazz band. I have a deep interest in geography as well.

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?
I would love to study biology in college, specifically ecology/evolutionary biology. I would like to go into an ornithology-related career, but it would also be great to study other wildlife or ecology in general or work in conservation/wildlife management.

Cooper Richter

Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 10 years old and live in Hillsboro. I go to Witch Hazel Elementary and am in 4th grade. I have a dog, Deego, a cat, Boo, and a bearded dragon named Rojo. I don’t have any siblings, and I’m still second youngest! Boo is 16, and Deego is anywhere between 11 and 14 (He was rescued from a puppy mill when he was already a few years old, so we don’t know for sure). Witch Hazel is a dual language school, so I also know a bit of Spanish.

How old were you when you started bailing?
I was 3, almost 4, when I started bailing. I have always had an interest in birds, but until then that was from home. In short, it was when I started to go places only for birds. My first bailing trip was when I was five, to La Grande for National Migratory Bird Day. That was one of my most memorable trips, although the loads of lifers are meaningless sightings these days after being at Malheur three times in as many years.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, bailing experience, teacher/mentor?
I’ve always been interested in birds, but when I was very young, my main interest was dinosaurs. I knew pretty much all of the names and read book after book about them even though I was only three. And then I read a book that said that birds and dinosaurs were closely related. I then thought, “Well, I can see birds and not dinosaurs, so let’s go look for birds!” So, I switched to know all the names of birds, plus names and ranges, and read book after book about them.

How do you benefit from bailing (please list at least 3 things)?
One way I benefit from bailing is that it gets me out of the house. I love the outdoors, but my dog is old, my cat is indoors, and I don’t have siblings. That one has back-fired lately because nobody has wanted to bird for a while, but it usually is fine. Another reason is that it can take up a good part of a long day with nothing to do, which is very helpful.

What is your favorite bird?
(No answer given)
What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?
My most memorable birding experience was when I saw the Blue Grosbeak in Beaverton. It was a nice day, and my mom and I were out searching for it. We checked where it was last seen, the area around it, then farther around it. Over and over, with no sign of the grosbeak. Then, finally, we spotted a group of people looking at some bushes and small trees. We joined them and found out that they were fellow birders who had spotted the grosbeak there. We eventually picked it out and watched it for around 15 minutes. To be honest, nothing crazy or unusual happened, but the thought that it was the first Blue Grosbeak that far north in Oregon just stuck.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?
My most recent lifer was the Steller’s Eider at Seaside Cove. I saw it on April 1. That one was difficult. First of all, it was pouring rain. My dad and I, along with our dog Deego, were clambering over the slippery rocks. We probably went down about a half mile, constantly looking out, seeing something interesting just to find out it was a Surf Scoter or a Red-throated Loon. The rain had us in retreat, but then my dad called out, “Hey, there’s a duck that looks a bit different.” That triggered the thought, “Good gravy, this better be the eider, or I’m going to have a fit when I get to the car!” After nearly killing myself on the rocks, and getting stuck three times, I finally got to a favorable position. And then it dove. “There it is!” again, again, and yet again. I finally got a decent look and decided, “The moment I get to the car, I’m going to ask my mom if it’s a female, and if it is, this is it.” And when I got back to the car, my mom says, “It is a female.” Response? “YAAAAAAAYYYYY!”

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?
Probably Harney County. We’ve had some great trips there.

Have you banded anywhere outside of Oregon?
Hawaii, Washington, California, Idaho, and this year we went to Canada.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding, trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding events, etc.)?
My parents take me to at least one birding festival every year. We bird when we go to new places, even if we’re not there specifically for birding. I like to bird our local wildlife refuges. too. I go to the Portland Audubon Society’s Birders’ Night whenever it doesn’t conflict with sports practice.

Have you gotten anyone else into birding? Were they your age, younger, or older?
My parents and grandparents and some other family members - all older than me. A couple of friends, too. And I’ve started a “Green Team” at my school, which is a bird group I scraped together with some of my 4th grade friends. So far, we have put up two feeders and a birdbath.

What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music, etc.)?
I play soccer, flag football, and baseball. I like to read a lot.

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?
I want to be a conservationist.

Josh Galpern
Tell us a little bit about yourself.
How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 15 years old. I live in the south-east hills of Eugene and go to Roosevelt Middle School. I live with my parents, my sister (age 12), and my dog. I also have a Betta fish and two Budgerigars.

How old were you when you started birding?
I was about 9 years old when I started really getting interested in birding.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
Seeing the birds at my feeder, and hearing them around my house made me want to learn what they are, and ever since, I haven’t stopped watching birds.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?
1. Birding lets me connect with other birders, and gives me something to teach other people.
2. I was having some difficulties in elementary school, and birding gave me something to look forward to, and helped me understand other people better.
3. It gives me a sense of focus.
4. It transforms an otherwise boring mid-afternoon summer hike through a tall conifer forest into an opportunity to listen for Pygmy Owls.

What is your favorite bird?
That’s hard, but I would have to say either American Dipper or Spotted Owl.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?
About two years ago, on the first day of spring at Finley NWR, I remember a pair of harriers that scared a flock of at least 25,000 Cackling Geese, and seeing them blacken the sky was very cool. (Also cool was about 3 Ross’s Geese in the same flock.)

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?
My most recent lifer was a nice male American Redstart at Benson Pond (Malheur NWR) on Memorial Day Weekend.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?
My favorite birding spot in Oregon is Mt. Pisgah.

Have you banded anywhere outside of Oregon?

If you could bird anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? Why?
I really can’t say, anywhere would be nice. I would like to do a pelagic trip.
Rufus Mainwaring

Tell us a little bit about yourself.
How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 13 years old. I live between Blodgett and Summit Oregon, USA. I am homeschooled.

How old were you when you started birding?
I was 6 or 7 years old.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
My Aunt, Susan Haig, started my interest in birds. At one point I lost interest, but probably because of one of my best friends, Isaac Denzer, I kept birding.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?
It gets me outdoors more. It helps me to understand what’s going on inside their brains, and probably other animals, too. And my interest in birds has inspired me to read more, whether it’s bird books or other books.

What is your favorite bird?
My favorite bird is the Peregrine Falcon.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?
My first Short-eared Owl was at the south jetty dunes in Newport, a birding birthday party for a friend. At one point we had just come to the top of a dune, and we barely got enough time to all see the Short-eared Owl.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?
Not sure.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?
My favorite birding place in Oregon is Malheur NWR.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?
Yes, Lower Klamath wildlife refuge in California.

If you could bird anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? Why?
Well, if I could finance it, probably Broome, Western Australia.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding, trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding events, etc.)?
I have participated in the Winter Wings birding festival in Klamath. I have also done lots of different birding trips, and go to local hotspots.

What challenges of birding do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good pictures, ID, drawing, recording etc.)?
I love finding new “lifers,” and trying to get better at being able to identify bird calls/songs.

Have you gotten anyone else into birding? Were they your age, younger, or older?
Sort of, usually it was me and a couple of friends convincing someone.

What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music, etc.)?
I also like doing baseball, soccer, and car/truck identification.

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?
Too soon to tell.

Summit Moodie

Tell us a little bit about yourself.
How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.
I am 13 and live in Bend, Oregon. My family consists of me, my mom and my dad. I go to school at Cascade Middle School.

How old were you when you started birding?
My dad got me into birding when I was about 5 years old.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
My dad sparked my interest in birds and other wildlife and has been my main mentor since.

What is your favorite bird?
My favorite bird is the Peregrine Falcon.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?
My dad got me into birding when I was about 5 years old.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?
My dad sparked my interest in birds and other wildlife and has been my main mentor since.
Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.

I live in Pleasant Hill, Oregon which is a very small town just outside of Eugene. I'm 18 and graduated from Pleasant Hill High School last summer. PHHS is a very small school and I know just about all of its 350ish total students. I am an only child, my mom is a doctor who works for the county, my dad teaches guitar and goes birding with me a lot.

How old were you when you started birding?

I've been birding since I could walk/talk.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?

My dad got into birding in college and has been taking me birding since I could walk. Some of my earliest memories consist of driving through NWR auto loops, trekking through rainforests and getting countless mosquito bites, all in the pursuit of birds. A certain bird that vividly stands out in my memory is a stunningly beautiful hummingbird, the Violet-purple Coronet, which buzzed the red hat I was wearing on a trip to Ecuador when I was seven.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?

First, birding is the most stress-relieving activity. Getting outside and connecting not only with birds, but nature in general, is invaluable. It is certainly therapeutic to observe birds, rare and common alike, interact with nature.

Second, birds never cease to impress me in the way that they act, even the common ones. Observing birds interact with each other, or with other animals, is one of the most enjoyable things about birding.

Third, birding (listing) never fails to provide a competitive drive in me. One of my favorite things about birding is going to new places and observing birds I've never seen before.

What is your favorite bird?

That's like asking me my favorite song. I think (one of) my favorite birds, despite its abundance, would be Steller's Jay.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?

Texas and Central Park during spring migration. The sheer number of warblers and other migrants that pass through is jaw-dropping, not to mention the beauty of these birds.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?

My most recent lifer in Oregon was an Emperor Goose.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?

My favorite birding spot is probably the Yachats area.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?

I have birded in some places outside of Oregon, including California and Washington.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?

1. I get to hang out with my dad more.
2. I get to visit exotic places I would probably never visit otherwise.
3. I get to enjoy birds in general more.

What is your favorite bird?

My favorite bird is probably the Calliope Hummingbird.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?

One of my most memorable birding experiences was when I finished my Big Year.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?

My most recent lifer in Oregon was an Emperor Goose.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?

My favorite birding spot is probably the Yachats area.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?

I have birded in some places outside of Oregon, including California and Washington.

If you could bird anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? Why?

If I could bird anywhere in the world I would choose to go to England, because the big difference in climate between Central Oregon, which is very dry and hot, and England, which is wetter and more humid.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding, trips to hotspots, rarity chases, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding events, etc.)?

I haven't participated in many birding activities, though I have done a Big Year.

What challenges of birding do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good pictures, ID, drawing, recording etc.)?

Out of all the challenges of birding, my favorite is getting good pictures.

Have you gotten anyone else into birding? Were they your age, younger, or older?

I have not gotten anyone into birding that I know of.

What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music, etc.)?

Besides birding, I enjoy listening to music, playing video games, being outdoors, and anything art related.

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?

At the moment, my career plans consist of being a lawyer to help the environment and to be an artist as a side job.

If I could bird anywhere in the world I would choose to go to England, because the big difference in climate between Central Oregon, which is very dry and hot, and England, which is wetter and more humid.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?

My dad got into birding in college and has been taking me birding since I could walk. Some of my earliest memories consist of driving through NWR auto loops, trekking through rainforests and getting countless mosquito bites, all in the pursuit of birds. A certain bird that vividly stands out in my memory is a stunningly beautiful hummingbird, the Violet-purple Coronet, which buzzed the red hat I was wearing on a trip to Ecuador when I was seven.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?

First, birding is the most stress-relieving activity. Getting outside and connecting not only with birds, but nature in general, is invaluable. It is certainly therapeutic to observe birds, rare and common alike, interact with nature.

Second, birds never cease to impress me in the way that they act, even the common ones. Observing birds interact with each other, or with other animals, is one of the most enjoyable things about birding.

Third, birding (listing) never fails to provide a competitive drive in me. One of my favorite things about birding is going to new places and observing birds I’ve never seen before.

What is your favorite bird?

That’s like asking me my favorite song. I think (one of) my favorite birds, despite its abundance, would be Steller’s Jay.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?

Texas and Central Park during spring migration. The sheer number of warblers and other migrants that pass through is jaw-dropping, not to mention the beauty of these birds.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?

Steller’s Eider.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?

Hills Creek Pond, which is just south of Oakridge.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?

I have birded in Ecuador, the Yucatán, Panamá, Costa Rica, Perú, Jalisco, New York / New Jersey, Texas, Arizona, Canada, California and Paraguay / Argentina.

Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.

I live in Pleasant Hill, Oregon which is a very small town just outside of Eugene. I’m 18 and graduated from Pleasant Hill High School last summer. PHHS is a very small school and I know just about all of its 350ish total students. I am an only child, my mom is a doctor who works for the county, my dad teaches guitar and goes birding with me a lot.

How old were you when you started birding?

I've been birding since I could walk/talk.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?

My dad got into birding in college and has been taking me birding since I could walk. Some of my earliest memories consist of driving through NWR auto loops, trekking through rainforests and getting countless mosquito bites, all in the pursuit of birds. A certain bird that vividly stands out in my memory is a stunningly beautiful hummingbird, the Violet-purple Coronet, which buzzed the red hat I was wearing on a trip to Ecuador when I was seven.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?

First, birding is the most stress-relieving activity. Getting outside and connecting not only with birds, but nature in general, is invaluable. It is certainly therapeutic to observe birds, rare and common alike, interact with nature.

Second, birds never cease to impress me in the way that they act, even the common ones. Observing birds interact with each other, or with other animals, is one of the most enjoyable things about birding.

Third, birding (listing) never fails to provide a competitive drive in me. One of my favorite things about birding is going to new places and observing birds I’ve never seen before.

What is your favorite bird?

That’s like asking me my favorite song. I think (one of) my favorite birds, despite its abundance, would be Steller’s Jay.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?

Texas and Central Park during spring migration. The sheer number of warblers and other migrants that pass through is jaw-dropping, not to mention the beauty of these birds.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?

Steller’s Eider.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?

Hills Creek Pond, which is just south of Oakridge.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?

I have birded in Ecuador, the Yucatán, Panamá, Costa Rica, Perú, Jalisco, New York / New Jersey, Texas, Arizona, Canada, California and Paraguay / Argentina.

Tell us a little bit about yourself. How old are you? Where do you live? About your family/where you go to school.

I live in Pleasant Hill, Oregon which is a very small town just outside of Eugene. I’m 18 and graduated from Pleasant Hill High School last summer. PHHS is a very small school and I know just about all of its 350ish total students. I am an only child, my mom is a doctor who works for the county, my dad teaches guitar and goes birding with me a lot.

How old were you when you started birding?

I've been birding since I could walk/talk.

What started your interest in birds? Was there a particular species, birding experience, teacher/mentor?

My dad got into birding in college and has been taking me birding since I could walk. Some of my earliest memories consist of driving through NWR auto loops, trekking through rainforests and getting countless mosquito bites, all in the pursuit of birds. A certain bird that vividly stands out in my memory is a stunningly beautiful hummingbird, the Violet-purple Coronet, which buzzed the red hat I was wearing on a trip to Ecuador when I was seven.

How do you benefit from birding (please list at least 3 things)?

First, birding is the most stress-relieving activity. Getting outside and connecting not only with birds, but nature in general, is invaluable. It is certainly therapeutic to observe birds, rare and common alike, interact with nature.

Second, birds never cease to impress me in the way that they act, even the common ones. Observing birds interact with each other, or with other animals, is one of the most enjoyable things about birding.

Third, birding (listing) never fails to provide a competitive drive in me. One of my favorite things about birding is going to new places and observing birds I’ve never seen before.

What is your favorite bird?

That’s like asking me my favorite song. I think (one of) my favorite birds, despite its abundance, would be Steller’s Jay.

What is one of your most memorable birding experiences?

Texas and Central Park during spring migration. The sheer number of warblers and other migrants that pass through is jaw-dropping, not to mention the beauty of these birds.

What was your most recent lifer in Oregon?

Steller’s Eider.

What is your favorite birding spot in Oregon?

Hills Creek Pond, which is just south of Oakridge.

Have you birded anywhere outside of Oregon?

I have birded in Ecuador, the Yucatán, Panamá, Costa Rica, Perú, Jalisco, New York / New Jersey, Texas, Arizona, Canada, California and Paraguay / Argentina.
If you could bird anywhere in the world, where would you like to go? Why?

I would go to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There is such a massive diversity of species there and relatively little exploration. There are bound to be species that have yet to be discovered there. The OBA was proud to offer their second year of scholarships, which included lodging, meals, and registration. This year’s recipients were Kai and Ben Frueh of Corvallis, as well Ezra Cohen of Portland. Kai and Ben relayed that, “(At the festival) We enjoyed meeting a lot of Oregon’s birders, many of which we hadn’t met before. The speakers were very enjoyable, and the field trips were really fun.”

The September 28-30 meeting kicked off on Friday night with photographer, ornithologist and world traveler Kendrick Moholt presenting “ISLANDS: Put the Watching Back into Birding.”

Saturday’s field trips explored Tillamook County from Sitka Sedge in southern Tillamook County north to Nehalem Bay State Park in Northern Tillamook County. Oregon Pelagic Tours also provided Pelagic Birding Trips leaving from the Garibaldi Marina for the day.

Saturday night’s festivities kicked off with the countdown — where members reported seeing 144 total species! After the business meeting, which included a report by Tim Janzen on updates from the Oregon Birds Record Committee, as well as a “Volunteer of the Year Award” to the Oregon Birding Association’s tireless Secretary, Dawn Villaescusa, Dr. Pepper Trail presented: “Fighting Crime with Feathers: The Casebook of a Forensic Ornithologist” on his experiences as a solver of crimes against wildlife at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Forensics Laboratory in Ashland, Oregon.

OBA would like to extend a special thank you to Tim Shelmerdine of Oregon Pelagic Tours, to Parkside Restaurant for their excellent catering, and to the Tillamook Chamber of Commerce, the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership, and the Tillamook State Forest for the brochures and pamphlets that they provided.

What type of birding activities have you participated in (backyard birding, trips to hotspots, CBCs, surveys, other organized birding events, etc.)?

I spent a month at Rancho Naturalista, a lodge in Costa Rica, serving as an intern to become a guide, I’ve done several different CBCs and bird surveys, and the eBird Global Big Day.

What challenges of birding do you enjoy (finding rare birds, getting good pictures, ID, drawing, recording etc.)?

I really enjoy going new places and learning new birds that I have never heard of before. I also enjoy photographing birds, even though I’m not very good at it. Finding rare birds is always a thrill, but it doesn’t happen very often.

Have you gotten anyone into birding? Were they your age, younger, or older?

I’ve definitely seen people out in the field who were not birders and shown them birds with which they were impressed. I’d like to think they got into birding after this, but I don’t know for sure.

What other hobbies/interests do you have besides birding (sports, music, etc.)?

I play baseball, soccer, chess, a bunch of different instruments, love mountain and road biking, exploring the outdoors, hanging out with friends, traveling, and just about anything outdoors.

What are your career plans? Do they involve birds/nature?

I’m going to Cal Poly with a major in Biological Sciences, which could definitely lead to a career in ornithology. At this point, I don’t have a great idea as to what I want to do with my life.
Judy Meredith: Field Trip Organization
Interviewed by Pamela Johnston for Oregon Birds

Judy Meredith, with the help of the East Cascades Audubon Society, has built an extremely successful field trip program over the past 10 years. Oregon Birds reached out to her to poach some ideas for any other people looking to begin a successful program in their area.

Oregon Birds:
How did you begin the Central Oregon weekday birding group?

Judy Meredith:
When I set out to start a weekday birding group, I started by asking Larry McQueen if he would share the method of the Eugene weekday birding group with me. That didn’t work for us in Central Oregon, because in Eugene they meet in the morning at a coffee shop and decide where to go when they are all together. Because we have birders spread out over Bend, Sisters, Redmond, and Prineville, I don’t want anyone to waste fuel driving to a coffee shop in Bend only to find out that we are going birding back where they started. This marks the end the 10th year of doing it this way, and I think it still works just fine.

Oregon Birds:
Aside from bringing a group together to have some sociable birding, what did you want to accomplish?

Judy Meredith:
Our goals are:
1. To welcome birders new to the area.
2. To visit varied habitats and introduce people to top local birding sites.
3. To have fun, while improving all our skills and building a group of determined conservationists and birders.
4. To help introduce new birders to the locals so they get to know others in their neighborhoods, make carpool buddies, and meet new birding friends.
5. To build group excitement about helping new birders to learn skills, and ultimately to GROW BIRDING!

Oregon Birds:
How do you organize your trips?

Judy Meredith:
I work out a schedule months ahead so people have a chance to decide in advance whether they want to go on the field trip on any given day. Here is a link to the current schedule: http://www.ecaudubon.org/wednesday-birders.

I asked our Audubon Society for permission to call the Wednesdays an East Cascades Audubon Society trip, so the schedule has been listed on their website from the start. Also, at most ECAS Birders’ Nights, I stand up and welcome people to come out on Wednesdays and let them know the plan for the next few trips, I find that out-of-towners seem to search for activities and trips by trying Audubon websites first.

Oregon Birds:
That gets the word out. You’re also relying on local knowledge, aren’t you?

Judy Meredith:
I write out the schedule based on where the good birds show up seasonally, trying to introduce people new to the area to the good places. I choose a variety of sites, so that even if a certain place is the best for shorebirds for a month, we don’t go to there every week of the month, but move around Central Oregon.

Oregon Birds:
What kinds of things can someone expect when they come along?

Judy Meredith:
We always introduce ourselves when the group gathers. We celebrate lifers. We ask if anyone wants to find certain birds, and then the group can be on alert for Pinyon Jays, for example. Out of town birders often hope for the jays or some woodpeckers or empids that we are familiar with, so it is good to know what they want and we can help them. Nearly every week, someone from out of the area is joining us and it makes it more fun for us, getting a little excitement about our more usual birds.

Oregon Birds:
Aside from reading the ECAS link, what other ways can people learn about the current week’s trip?

Judy Meredith:
I send a note to COBOL (Central Oregon Birders Online) on Sunday, with the plan for carpooling and where we are going, including how far we will be walking, whether scope is needed, and how long we will be birding, to give an idea of when they will be back at their vehicle. I try to work out the carpooling times from the 3 or 4 towns so people can meet up at the birding place at the same time.

I don’t expect people to tell me if they are coming, they can just show up and we go from there. Depending on the weather and the bird activity, we have had as few as one carload or as many as over 30 birders.

Oregon Birds:
Do you have any expectations about the birding skills of the participants?

Judy Meredith:
I try to have people learn listening and observation, not to just get out of the car and play a tape immediately. David Tracy does a series of bird song walks for about 8 weeks in the spring, teaching birding by ear so people have an additional way to learn bird songs and calls.

I tell people that I don’t put a bird on the trip list if only one person sees it. The incentive should be for everyone to share with the group and help others to get on a bird. A “group” birding is not a group if someone wanders off and comes back to say that they saw something super. If they do that, as sometimes photographers do, I tell them that it is a group trip and a list for the group that won’t include their bird. I can’t enforce rules but I can be clear about what group birding is, and what birding ethics are, and try to encourage people to try to always help others and avoid disturbing birds.

Carpooling is part of the cooperation. Drivers are responsible for telling passengers what they owe, splitting fuel expenses evenly among them. Ideally from week to week, people would...
take turns driving, but a few people have small or low-clearance vehicles which won’t work on some of our rougher roads. There are also new people who don’t know the roads. We use FRS radios or cell phones to keep in touch. We try to wait for the group to catch up at major intersections or confusing turns.

Carpooling can also promote a general consciousness of the environment. A couple of the trips per year that I schedule are for service, such as litter pick-up or invasive plant removal, like removing knapweed infestations.

Oregon Birds: What happens to the results?

Judy Meredith: I always post a list online after birding as many people want one. There is usually someone posting to ebird as we go, so that becomes available with sharing, or just exploring ebird later for whoever wants to follow it.

Oregon Birds: Does your group bird outside Central Oregon?

Judy Meredith: I plan 3 or 4 longer trips per year when we go out of the area. There are seasons when it is not exciting here and we can expect interesting birds elsewhere. Some of our trips involve camping, some are motel-based.

In January, we have spent 4 or 5 days going to the Wallowas for 6 or 7 years in a row, and we usually have 4 or 5 carloads. We bird on the way there, around Umatilla, La Grande, and other places. We visit Malheur in early summer and again in fall. We have camped a night at Page Springs and spent the next night farther south. This year, on a 3 day trip, some of us camped and others got motel rooms, but we birded together on the Steens and around the refuge.

We always go to the coast, most often in October, once in February. I'm thinking about trying November next year, to find the birds we've missed the last couple of years and would never see here in Central Oregon, like Rock Sandpiper. The coast trips had always been based on the central coast, at Yachats, Newport, Depoe Bay, or Lincoln City, because I know those areas best, until this year when we tried the north coast, Astoria and nearby. We stay at the same motel, bird all day after breakfast, and most have dinner together at a pub or casual restaurant where we do our checklist while waiting for food.

Oregon Birds: Are the Wednesday trips the only field trips available in Central Oregon?

Judy Meredith: Our club, ECAS, also does a few field trips on weekend days. They are run similarly, and there are as many of them as we can get volunteers to organize. We have done them in the spring and fall. They are convenient for people who work full time, to get out with a group for birding on a Saturday or Sunday. It is often 8 or 10 participants out for a full day, to Summer Lake, Wickiup, or a similar destination. I usually organize one of them in the spring and fall. Since they are mainly for people who work weekdays and can’t do Wednesdays, it is fine to go to the same places we go to on Wednesdays.

Oregon Birds: You have created a core group of local birders. Has it gone beyond the Wednesdays and the out-of-area trips?

Judy Meredith: I have also promoted Christmas Bird Counts, and we have several now that are scheduled on Wednesdays so that our bird group is there to help with CBCs that never used to have enough birders. Tygh Valley only got 5 or 6 birders until they changed it to Wednesdays, and now they always get 15 to 20 birders. We also do the Madras and Redmond CBCs on Wednesdays.

Oregon Birds: Are you still doing all of the organizing after 10 years?

Judy Meredith: There are other people who are willing to help out when I am out of town, to post the list of birds, etc. But the schedule is posted so there is always some idea of what will happen, and the ECAS “birding locations” is an excellent resource if someone doesn’t know a place or the directions to get there.

Oregon Birds: If someone wanted to start a group like you have done, without access to a local Audubon Society such as ECAS, do you have any advice for getting the news to birders?

Judy Meredith: If there are any other nature-related clubs, like mushroom hunters, or Native Plant Society of Oregon in your area, going to one of their meetings and announcing your trips can be a good way to find people interested in birds. We have had home-schooilers who need some outdoor learning that the parent cannot offer for their student. Sometimes we have had the entire family of the home-schooler attend.

Some local newspapers have free event calendars for meetings of non-profits, but fewer and fewer people read newspapers for that type of listing now. If there is a paper in your town, an online news source, local radio or TV, maybe a few repetitions announcing that a birding group is beginning would help. You can also ask someone to announce it at Audubon Society of Portland Birders’ Night.

Cedar Waxwing in the Fall at Klamath Falls. Photo by Howard West
Bob Kindschy (1935—2017)

Robert R. Kindschy Jr. was born May 28, 1935 in Puyallup, Washington. He was best known to the Oregon birding community as co-author with me of Birds of Malheur County (OFO 1996). Bob was remarkably knowledgeable about the Malheur River and Owyhee regions of Oregon, a detailed knowledge that fills the pages of the OFO publication. Working with him on that project was a lot of fun and I learned quite a bit.

Bob attended the University of Idaho, graduating with degrees in range and wildlife biology. During college, he worked summers for the Forest Service in Montana and the Bureau of Land Management in Burns, Oregon and on the Aleutian Island chain of Alaska. He especially loved the Aleutian Islands and had many fond memories of his time there.

Upon graduation from college, he took a job in Range Management with the B.L.M. in Vale, Oregon in 1958. He retired in 1994. He is survived by his wife Ann, daughter Maria, son Rob and grandchildren.

— Alan Contreras

Ülo Kiigemägi (1923-2018)

Ülo was born in Nõmme, Estonia. He left his home and studies in the winter of 1944 during World War II, hoping to avoid being taken to an internment camp in Siberia, or forced into the Soviet or Nazi German armies. Ülo fled alone to, and then across, Germany for many horrendous months, until he reached a displaced persons camp in Hamburg, Germany. There he met and later married Virve Öunapuu.

In October 1949, they emigrated to the United States and settled in Portland. After surviving with several menial jobs in the Portland area, Ülo became a student at Lewis and Clark College, graduating at the top of his class in chemistry in 1952.

In 1954, he secured a research position in the Chemistry Department at Oregon State College. The family moved to Corvallis, where he worked for the next 30 years, completing his career as a Senior Instructor Emeritus in 1985.

Once their four children were raised, Ülo and Virve began taking classes in photography, botany, and the natural history of Oregon, and traveling widely around the state.

After his retirement, they took several international trips, until Virve’s passing in 1989. Ülo continued to travel extensively with art, music, and natural history groups, visiting 48 countries and six continents, eventually returning to visit the newly independent Estonia and his childhood home.

Birding was a focus of many of Ülo’s trips. He was a member of Audubon Society of Corvallis and attended many of their field trips with Fred Ramsey, as well as field trips with the Oregon Birding Association and others. Many people appreciated his dry sense of humor and quiet presence on these trips. He was a fixture at the Oregon Shorebird Festival, attending all festivals in the event’s first 31 years. Ülo is even pictured on an information board at the Simpson Reef overlook!

His bird lists include 404 species for the state of Oregon, over 200 species in each of eight counties, and over 100 species in 18 counties.

One of his favorite birding experiences in later years was traveling with his grandson, Karl Fairchild, on a cold and foggy winter’s day to view a Yellow-throated Warbler near Ankeny NWR, his 400th Oregon bird.

Asked for words of wisdom for the next generation, he said, “Be kind and help one another.”

— Karan Fairchild
As members of the Oregon Birding Association, we are proud to continue our support of projects that promote education about birds, and to further the knowledge, enjoyment, and science of birds and birding in Oregon. This year, we are happy to announce that we are extending our efforts by approving a motion to change the maximum amount offered from $500 to $750 dollars!

Some of the things our Fall 2017 recipients have been up to are:

**The Oregon Institute of Marine Biology** in Charleston, Oregon built new taxidermy display cases in their observation room. These new cases showcase mounts of Buffleheads, a Brandt’s Cormorant, a Brown Pelican, a Western Grebe, and a Common Loon.

**Barbara Webb of the Ryan Ranch MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) Project** in the Deschutes National Forest was able to buy new nets, a new scale, and some replacement poles in their 5th year of running this station.

**Dave Oleyar of Hawkwatch International at Bonney Butte** (south of Mount Hood) was able to build new lure-bird aviaries and provided us with photos of their efforts.

Our 2018 Award Winners include:

**The Kalmiopsis Audubon Society** for support of the Little Birder’s Club.

**The Crooked River Wetlands Volunteers** for a project constructing a shed to hold a golf cart for handicapped mobility to the sites at the Wetlands.

**Friends of Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area** (La Grande) for establishing a Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survival (MAPS) station.

The FFO’s application deadlines for the two grant cycles are February 1 and August 1 each year. Applications will be reviewed and selections made at the OBA Board meeting that follows each application deadline (typically in March and September). You can apply at [http://orbirds.org/fund.html](http://orbirds.org/fund.html)
Top Five Common Birds in Uncommon Places

With the influx of rarities that we get in our wonderful state, we often take for granted more common birds that are only found in very specific habitats. After a general call for stories, five Oregon Birders’ finds were picked for a list of common birds (in the appropriate habitat) found in uncommon places.

5 GREAT BLUE HERON, Juntura (Honorable Inclusion)

On one summer trip over toward Juntura, a hot day with the windows open, my father was coming around a sharp bend into an irrigated valley when a loud crash happened in the back seat. He pulled over and there was a Great Blue Heron laying on the back seat, stunned and knocked out, which had exactly flown through the open window… He carefully lifted the bird out and laid it on the side of the road. After a few minutes the bird came to and lumbered off. He was lucky it hadn’t come to sooner or he might have had his eyes poked out! This must have been about 1963 or so…

— Tom Love

4 ROCK WREN, Coos Bay

I had a singing Rock Wren in my wooded Coos Bay backyard for two days a couple years ago.

— Tim Rodenkirk

3 WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH, Steens Mountain

On Sep. 20, 2015, myself and the Centanni gang (Jim, Evan, and Caleb) found both White-breasted and Red-breasted Nuthatches on the East Rim of Steens Mountain. That has to be at around 9,000 feet in elevation, with the summit at 9,734 ft.

— Jamie Simmons

2 COMMON POORWILL, Fred Meyer’s, Florence

I worked there at the time. Just after I identified it, I called Bill and Zanah Stotz. We three enjoyed a daytime view of a nighttime species. I recall watching it walk - with a strange rocking motion. Really cool!

— Diane Pettey

1 WANDERING TATTLER, Dallas

You’ll have to try hard to beat Mitch Ratzlaff in Dallas, who some years ago found a Wandering Tattler coming down his city sidewalk. It went into his driveway and was photographed walking past him.

— Alan Contreras
The Painted Hills in southwestern Wheeler County are recognized as one of the “Seven Wonders of Oregon.” Each year, this unit of John Day Fossil Beds National Monument draws thousands of photographers from around the world, who seek to capture the subtle curvature and striking colors of the desert landscape.

The same harsh conditions and nearly barren landscape make this a unique birding destination, hosting desert species that can otherwise be hard to find within a four- or five-hour drive from western Oregon. Black-throated Sparrows have been found singing in these harsh badlands several times in the past 15 years. Regular nesting species include Chukar, Common Poorwill, Long-eared Owl, Say’s Phoebe, Ash-throated, Gray, and Dusky flycatchers, Loggerhead Shrike, Rock and Canyon wrens, Sage Thrasher, and Lark Sparrow.

The best time to visit is late April through mid-June, when breeding birds arrive and sing on territory. Visits later in summer can be rewarding, but plan to start very early in the day. Once the sun rises above the hills, topography concentrates its rays, so local temperatures rise quickly to 90°F or higher, and birds tend to hunker down for the rest of the day.

Most visits to the Painted Hills will start by heading east from Prineville on U.S. Hwy. 26, following it over the Ochoco Summit and then down the long grade toward Mitchell. About 45 miles from Prineville or 4 miles west of Mitchell, as you come through a narrow gorge, watch for signs for the Painted Hills turnoff on the north side of the highway. This road is shown as Bridge Creek Rd. on some maps but is signed as Burnt Ranch Rd.

The geology and the riparian growth where Bridge Creek flows under the highway at this junction are worth a quick stop. The cobbly cliffs that constitute the canyon walls are part of the Gable Creek conglomerates, formed 88 million years ago when this area was part of an ancient coastline with large, swift rivers carrying cobbles north toward an embayment of the Pacific Ocean. Now, they provide good habitat for Canyon Wrens and Rock Wrens. In the riparian shrubs along the creek, you can expect Yellow Warblers, Lazuli Buntings, and Bullock’s Orioles. Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was found here once.

Burnt Ranch Road to Painted Hills

As you head north on Burnt Ranch Rd., the road follows Bridge Creek as it winds its way down toward the John Day River. About 1.5 miles from the highway you’ll pass a dirt road on the right that leads into Meyers Canyon (no sign), a detour worth checking on your way back. Bank Swallows often nest in the cut bank across from the mouth of the canyon.

A quarter mile farther, the road curves left as it wraps around a horseshoe-shaped meander in the creek. Stop at the roadside here for more riparian birds, including Ash-throated Flycatchers that nest in cavities in junipers above the creek. You might notice wicker-like weirs in the streambed. These were placed as part of a “beaver-assisted” restoration project to restore salmon habitat (for more information see https://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/research/divisions/fe/wpg/beaver-assist-stld.cfm). This work has created habitat for Yellow-breasted Chat and Common Yellowthroat along the creek, both species that were formerly hard to find in southern Wheeler County.

At 3.1 miles from the highway, you’ll notice rounded, reddish hills with alternating light and darker red layers. These are known as the Barberpole Hills and belong to the same geological formation as the Painted Hills, which you’ll encounter inside the National Monument. The Barberpole Hills are on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land, so this can be a good place to get out of the car for a short hike. A wide gravel area on the east side of the road gives access to an alluvial fan with an ephemeral stream that runs down between the hills. The big sagebrush habitat with scattered junipers frequently hosts a nesting pair of Loggerhead Shrikes, as well as Lark Sparrow close to the road. Longer hikes into the backcountry in spring may yield Black-chinned Hummingbird, Gray Flycatcher, and Sage Thrasher.

As you continue north past the Barberpole Hills, you’ll pass irrigated hay fields on your left. Among the Brewer’s and Red-winged Blackbirds, check for Tricolored and Yellow-headed Blackbirds, especially in summer months. A marsh where both
Oregon Birds in which these true desert sparrows thrive. Listen for their song landscape here focuses the sun’s heat, creating the xeric conditions most frequently been found. The bowl-like configuration of the Cove junction is the stretch where Black-throated Sparrows have less frustration, you can enjoy Say’s Phoebes hover-hunting over of luck to get a scope view of any of these birds in flight from the monument became more popular in recent years, the landowners waterfowl, rails, terns, shorebirds, and terns. However as the Cove Reservoir, which was the site of many county records for Cove. In past years, this road was open all the way to Painted Painted Hills National Monument The first part of the entrance road passes between private, irrigated fields. Watch for Northern Harriers hunting over the fields. Scan Carroll Rim straight ahead for Prairie Falcons and Golden Eagles. When you come to the concrete bridge over Bridge Creek, pause to check the swallow flock; Cliff Swallows nest under the bridge. Northern Rough-winged Swallows nest in the creek banks; Barn, Violet-green and Tree Swallows are also often present. Just past the bridge, a short side road leads to an interpretive kiosk and a well-watered picnic area with shade trees, restrooms, and a drinking fountain. This little oasis draws migrant warblers and tanagers during migration. Yellow Warblers and Song Sparrows abound in the willows along the creek, and Black-crowned Night-Heron has been found once. Back on the main road heading into the monument (labeled Bear Creek Road on some maps), you can start to look for the real specialties of the Painted Hills. Rock Wrens and Lark Sparrows are common along the first stretch as the road climbs through rock-strewn slopes. You may spot a covey of Chukars scooting across the road, or more likely hear them calling across the valleys as you continue in. At 1.1 miles from the entrance, a side road leads south to Inspiration Point. This is by far the most popular spot for photographers, and also the most crowded place in the monument. The trail leading south from the overlook leads through suitable habitat for Black-throated Sparrow, but if visitors are thick, you’re better off continuing deeper into the monument. At 1.8 miles in, you reach a junction with the road to Painted Cove. In past years, this road was open all the way to Painted Cove Reservoir, which was the site of many county records for waterfowl, rails, terns, shorebirds, and terns. However as the monument became more popular in recent years, the landowners closed access to the last section of road. It would take a good bit of luck to get a scope view of any of these birds in flight from the nearest approach at the parking area for the Painted Cove Trail. For less frustration, you can enjoy Say’s Phoebes hover-hunting over the desert scrub and listen to the song of Western Meadowlarks. Back on the main monument road, 0.3 to 0.4 miles past the Painted Cove junction is the stretch where Black-throated Sparrows have most frequently been found. The bowl-like configuration of the landscape here focuses the sun’s heat, creating the xeric conditions in which these true desert sparrows thrive. Listen for their song and their contact notes. Singing males tend to perch slightly down inside the tops of bushes, rather than out in plain view. They seem to move around within large territories up to 200 yards wide and deep, so often they can be quite far back from the road. In good years, up to five males have been found in this area, but one or two is more typical, and in some years there may be none. Other birds to watch and listen for in this area and the next half mile include Sage Thrasher and Loggerhead Shrike. Northern Mockingbird has shown up once in nesting season. At 2.9 miles, the Leaf Hill Trail offers a chance for a stroll along a short interpretive trail, or an easy place to turn around. Beyond this, the road continues another 0.7 miles to the boundary of the monument, which may be gated. Just before you reach the boundary, you’ll come to another parking area for the Red Hill Trail. The service road leading south from there offers better birding than the trail, leading through more big sagebrush and juniper with potential for both Gray and Dusky Flycatchers. Other Destinations After your visit to the monument, you could explore northward on Burnt Ranch Road. This road comes to an end after about 8 miles, among ranches along the John Day River. There are several ponds along this road with potential to draw waterfowl, but views are limited to long-range scoping, and some birders have reported negative interactions with locals who did not want people scanning their pond. ODFW maintains a small wildlife habitat area with grain plantings about four miles past the Painted Hills entrance; sometimes, Mountain Quail can be encountered there as they come downslope to drink at the creek. If you want to make a loop route, the Twickenham Cutoff road (3.4 miles north of the monument entrance) makes an interesting, somewhat rugged drive, winding through badlands along the north side of Sutton Mountain (with access to hiking routes), then along the rim of the John Day River canyon until it comes out into agricultural lands at Twickenham (the most reliable place to see American Crow in southern Wheeler County). From there, you can either take Rowe Creek Rd. north toward Shelton State Wayside and on to Fossil, or loop back south toward Hwy 26 by way of Girds Creek Rd. and Hwy 207, which brings you into downtown Mitchell. But the simplest route is to return the way you came, along Burnt Ranch Rd. back to Hwy 26. If you didn’t check out the mouth of Meyers Canyon as you passed it on your inbound trip, now is a good time to do so. This canyon could be described as a “gully on steroids,” formed by deep incision within sediments laid down by an earlier meandering stream. One of the best birding spots in Meyers Canyon requires only a short drive in from the main road to where the stream emerges from the mouth of this gully and flows across the access road. In summer, you may see families of Black-throated Gray Warblers coming down out of the junipers to drink. Butterflies also gather at this spot. Beyond there, the primitive road is gullied and rocky in spots, and can be very treacherous when wet, as the red dirt turns to grease.
Even with four-wheel drive you may find yourself unable to brake or steer on downhill runs, once the red mud fills the treads on your tires. It can sometimes feel like a luge run, with only the ruts keeping you on track. Therefore I strongly recommend not venturing up this road when it’s wet, or when the skies are threatening rain. But if conditions are dry, and if your vehicle has a reasonable amount of clearance, it can be interesting to explore.

Standing on the rim of this gully (not too close; it might not be stable!) you can watch birds in the riparian growth 20 or 30 feet below you. Great Horned Owls and Barn Owls can occasionally be spotted roosting in cavities in the steep walls, where the Mazama ash is clearly visible as a light-colored layer a few feet below the rim. Big sagebrush grows in the flats along the rim. The surrounding cliffs and hillsides host Rock and Canyon Wrens. Side valleys lead northward into the Sutton Mountain Research Natural Area, part of a larger complex of wilderness areas around the Painted Hills.
Officers and Board of Directors
(showing term expiration dates):

**PRESIDENT**
Diana Byrne - Portland (2019)
dbyrne@oregonbirding.org

**PRESIDENT-ELECT**
Nagi Aboulenein - Portland (2019)
nagi.aboulenein@gmail.com

**PAST PRESIDENT**
James Billstine - Tillamook (2019)
billstinj@gmail.com

**SECRETARY**
Caryn Stoess - Corvallis (2019)
caryn.stoess@gmail.com

**Treasurer & Bookkeeper**
Jeff Harding - Lebanon (2019)
jeffharding@centurytel.net

**Directors**
Diane Cavaness - Brookings (2019)
scrapbird@gmail.com

Ken Chamberlain - Portland (2019)
kjchamberlain@comcast.net

Jeff Dillon - Gladstone (2020)
hirundorustica@comcast.net

Kathleen Krall - Portland (2019)
krallfamily@comcast.net

**Committees**

Oregon Bird Records Committee
Secretary: Treesa Hertzel
autumn207@comcast.net

Membership: Dawn Villaescusa
dawnv@birdlover.com

OBA Archivist: Barbara Combs
bcombs232@gmail.com

Oregon Birds Publication Committee
see inside front cover

An Owl Trifecta (from top to bottom):
Great Gray Owl, Ochoco NF. Photo by David Drake
Northern Pygmy-Owl, Trout Creek Mts. Photo by Rick Vetter
Western Screech-Owl, Fields Oasis. Photo by Jamie Simmons
Oregon Birds
Oregon Birding Association
PO Box 675
Lincoln City OR 97367-0675

Return Service Requested