The Aves Compartidas or “Shared Birds”, which began in 2018, connects elementary school students internationally through shared migratory bird education, cultural exchanges, and the shared language of Spanish. This program is part of the larger Willamette Laja Twinning Partnership, which connects youth, educators, habitat restoration practitioners, and the birding community for cultural connections and sustained conservation of our shared migratory species and habitats. We have been fortunate to receive community support and donations, including a grant from the Oregon Birding Association. We are so grateful for this support, as it has enabled us to continue to expand our program into new schools and develop new community partnerships.

**Major Accomplishments in Schools:**

This year, our program engaged 10 elementary schools, five of which are dual-language immersion schools in the Willamette Valley. We engaged a total of 850 students in shared migratory bird education (459 students in the Willamette and 852 in the Laja basin, in Mexico). Throughout the school year, students learned about the characteristics of birds, how birds migrate, how to protect our watersheds, and how to make observations of birds using our eyes and ears. Students in both basins created artwork and wrote letters to exchange with one another. Students also exchanged photographs and videos.

- **South Shore Elementary, Albany:** Our program staff engaged 150 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students at South Shore Elementary in five classroom lessons throughout the school year and culminated the program with a on-campus field day, where students learned how to use binoculars and practiced identifying bird songs and calls.

- **Lincoln and Garfield, Corvallis:** Our program staff engaged 111 3rd graders at Lincoln and Garfield Elementary schools in five classroom lessons and a field trip in May 2022 to Bald Hill Farm (owned by Greenbelt Land Trust). During their field trip, students used binoculars, learned how to “read a landscape”, and identified terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates. We recruited several volunteers for this field trip, including a group of 15 high school students from College Hill High School. Our team has also been working with the Corvallis School District to become involved with school gardens in fall. We have obtained native plant seeds and plan to incorporate growing and studying native plants into next year’s curriculum.
• **Candy Lane Elementary School, Milwaukie:** Our program engaged 50 4th graders at Candy Lane Elementary School in 3 virtual lessons and 1 in person lesson this year. In March 2022, we partnered with North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District to take students on a walking field trip to a wetland restoration area only two blocks from their school. Students planted native sedge plants and learned how to use binoculars to identify birds.

• **River Road/El Camino del Río:** This is our second year working with University of Oregon’s Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) as a community partner. This year, one of our educators held a workshop in January to prepare 10 ELP students to work with 148 third, fourth, and fifth graders and River Road/El Camino del Río Elementary school in Eugene, Oregon. With the help of their professor Katie Lynch, and teaching assistant Katie Russell, these incredible students developed and taught 18 bilingual outdoor lessons during the spring with topics including habitats, bird diets, bird migration, and taking action for birds. The UO students had the opportunity to present their project results at the ELP Presentations Ceremony and by creating a [website](#) with their [curriculum available for free download](#).

**Student and teacher feedback:**

**Students:**

“I learned that the same bird can make different sounds.”

“I learned that birds are very interesting.”

“I learned how to protect water and if we protect water we can help birds.”

“I learned how to use our ears and eyes to look at birds.”

“I learned the different types of birds that live in Oregon.”

“My favorite part was using binoculars.”

“My favorite part was when we learned how different birds sound.”

“Some of the ways I will help birds is to make sure my garden is healthy.”

“Some of the ways I can help birds, plants, and other animals are watering dry plants, not throwing trash, and recycling. I will do this.”

“I will make sure that all of the lights are off at night, I will teach my family and friends about how to help save birds, and I will make sure that the birds have a way to go.”

**Teachers:**

“I had a wonderful experience! The instructors are always professional, friendly, and fun with the kids. The students learn a lot and enjoy it.”

“This program helps hit standards that I don’t otherwise have the chance to with our curriculum. It’s a good supplemental program for what the students need to learn. It also gives the students the chance to have a hands-on experience with science and art.”
“The students loved the binocular lesson and the listening to noise lesson the best! Many of them don’t have access to materials like that. Besides that, they liked the one with the compasses. Several of them remembered how birds can "see" the magnetic field to navigate on their migration.”

“This program has provided science content that is meaningful and relevant IN SPANISH!”

Community Events:

This year, we partnered with the USFWS to create several events in May to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day. Our event at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge featured several activities for families related to migratory birds. In Mexico, our partners held a birdwatching community event for families. In October 2022, we are planning to hold more events for World Migratory Bird Day, which is celebrated annually in May and October.

We also participated in World Water Day in May 2022. In both the Willamette and Laja we taught lessons about protecting water resources, and students created posters and artwork with this theme.

University Internships:

- This year, we partnered Oregon State University to create paid internships for students. In Fall 2021, Courtney McKinnon (Fisheries and Wildlife major) interned with our program and used her unique journalism skills to create a new page for our website, called Our Stories, to share the stories of individuals involved with our programs. She also developed 4 blogs for our website. Our second OSU intern, Anna Neilsen (Biology and Spanish major), has been developing ideas for community outreach, partnering with Peoria Gardens Nursery. In Fall 2022, we are planning to engage students in a field trip to the nursery to learn about native plants, careers in horticulture, and to paint a mural featuring native migratory birds.

- In addition to OSU interns, we also have an intern, Damiana Alcantarra (Business major), from LBCC who is helping us develop modify our strategic plan and business model.

- In Guanajuato, our intern Sandra Garcia Lona (Environmental Engineering major), is working with a rural school to upgrade their rainwater catchment system. Sandra is working on getting her visa to travel to Oregon in the fall to help develop a rainwater catchment system for the Corvallis Waldorf school, which has well water contamination issues. Sandra will also use her artistic skills to lead the mural painting as part of the elementary school field trip to Peoria Gardens Nursery.
Figure 1: Students wrote and illustrated the five characteristics of all birds.

Figure 2: Students wrote letters to their pen pal.
Figure 3: Students colored in range maps for several species of migratory birds.
Figure 4: Candy Lane elementary students learn to identify birds using binoculars.
Figure 5: College Hill high school students and adult volunteers pose for a picture after teaching lessons at the 3rd grade Bald Hill Farm field trip.

Figure 6: Garfield elementary 3rd graders using binoculars to identify birds on a rainy day.
Figure 7: South Shore elementary students make sound maps and use binoculars to identify birds.
Figure 9: Students at River Road elementary school made bird posters in a lesson taught by University of Oregon students.
Figure 10: University of Oregon students presenting their work at the end of the year.