

A voice for education and conservation in the natural world
Rogue Valley Audubon Society
www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Deadline for the April 2026 issue is March 20



March IN PERSON AND ZOOM Program

Tuesday, Mar. 24, 2025 at 7:00 pm

Bird City Oregon

With Debbie Schlenoff

Join us to learn about Bird City Oregon, a recognition and education program designed to help communities create and enhance healthy ecosystems, raise awareness about the threats birds face, and connect people



with nature. Nearly 500 species of wild birds use Oregon lands for some portion of their life cycle, and many of these birds pass through our cities and towns. As our landscape becomes more developed, urban and suburban landscapes play an increasingly important role in the survival of wild birds. This program empowers people to come together as a community to take meaningful actions. We will discuss ways you can help your community be more bird-friendly. When you do good things for birds, you do good things for pollinators, other wildlife, and for people too!

About the Speaker

Debbie Schlenoff received her doctorate in zoology at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Along with her husband, children, and their Welsh Corgi (who happened to be the children's nanny), she moved to the northwest in 1999 and then settled in Eugene, Oregon. At that time, Debbie joined the Department of Biology at the University of Oregon where she taught several courses including conservation biology and animal behavior until her recent retirement. Debbie is the conservation chair at Coast to Cascades Bird Alliance (formerly Lane Audubon) and is the newly elected President of the CCBA board.

Location: Medford Congregational Church of Christ- Lidgate Hall, 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford
Time: 7:00 pm (coffee/tea/cookies will be served beginning at 6:30 pm)

Zoom instructions: The Zoom link will be posted on the Rogue Valley Audubon webpage the day of the meeting.

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Chapter Program meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month (unless otherwise noted), September through April, at 7:00 pm. Meetings take place at 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford, in Lidgate Hall of the Medford Congregational Church of Christ.

NOTE: Chapter programs are often available via Zoom. The Zoom link is posted the day of the meeting on the RVAS website.

2026 Birdathon is coming. Get ready.

By Carol Mockridge

The RVAS Birdathon returns May 1 - 2. Now is the time to form your teams and sign up. The Birdathon is an important fundraiser for RVAS. And it's fun!

The object of the Birdathon is for sponsored teams to count as many species as possible within a 24-hour period. Teams can range widely or stick close to home, so long as they stay in Jackson County. The event officially kicks off on Friday, May 1 at 6 pm, and goes to 6 pm on Saturday, May 2. Most teams include two to five birders, although a single individual may also comprise a team. For all the rules, and other info, and to find the pledge form, visit www.roguevalleyaudubon.org/birdathon/.

A task equally important as picking your all-star team is finding sponsors - that's the fundraiser part. A person can sponsor your team with either a fixed donation or an amount per species found. Get pledges and send in your money with the official form (located on the RVAS website). Donors can also use PayPal to send in their donations. Look for the "Donate" button at the top of the home page and choose "Birdathon" on the form. The team that raises the most money WINS and gets the famous Birdathon traveling trophy for a year. A celebratory dinner on Saturday night will follow. Location of the dinner will be announced in the April Chat.

If you've never participated in this annual event, why not make 2026 your year? To sign-up your team or for more info, contact Carol Mockridge at 360-829-7505.



Orange-crowned Warbler
Credit: Jim Livaudais

Status of upcoming events

Field trips: Denman Bird Walk - Apr. 1, May 6, Jun. 3

Chapter Meeting: Tues., Mar. 24 at 7pm

Earth Day: Sat. Apr. 18

Birdathon: Fri. & Sat., May 1 & 2

Jacksonville Feederwatch Update: December 2025

Hi, my name is Norah Pierson. I love birds, they are so fascinating! I love being the Ornithologist and doing birds counts and all of the things in Mr. Williams's Class at Jacksonville Elementary! This month has been very exciting with birds. We have seen lots of Juncos but also many other beautiful birds. We saw Cedar Waxwings at the berry bush near our feeder, and they were beautiful. We also have had deer eating the nut cluster, so we had to put it up higher, but the nut cluster is gone now. Luckily the deer don't come by very often anymore. Thank you so much for your help. I love birdwatching and reading by the window to look at the pretty birds.



Jacksonville Feederwatch Update: January 2026

Hi, my name is Liam C., and I am the class ornithologist. I love watching and identifying birds at Jacksonville Elementary. We went on a field trip, and when we got back to class, Norah spotted a Northern Flicker. After the weekend, a flicker came and perched on our feeder for at least one minute. Mr. Williams thought it was a red-shafted flicker, but it was actually a yellow-shafted flicker! We spotted the yellow under the wings when it flew away.

A week before that, we saw a Cooper's Hawk trying to attack a bird. Did you know that during breeding season, Cooper's Hawks have regular feeding routes where they hunt for common medium-sized birds such as mourning doves, jays, and starlings?

We love the bird feeders because we get to see so many new birds.

Volunteers Needed for Bird Surveys at Rogue River Preserve with Southern Oregon Land Conservancy

Monthly bird surveys will take place at the beginning of each month to help us better understand current breeding behaviors, migration, and population declines or successes. Whether you are an avid birder or still learning how to focus binoculars, all experience levels are welcome! If you would like to band together with other birders, contact Myco at myco@landconserve.org to join our team of volunteers.



Courtesy: Southern Oregon Land Conservancy

January/February Field Notes 2026

*These birds. Cutting up often dreary
life and letting joy seep through.
Jim Harrison, 'Songs of Unreason'*

The first two months of the year are off to a good start in Jackson County. According to eBird data, 170 species have been reported so far in 2026, which is slightly above average for the last five years. This may very well represent the ever-growing use of eBird and Merlin amongst birders. It also may reflect the refuge birding offers from the assault of our time. It is one activity available to anyone and everyone.

A **TRUMPETER SWAN** was found by Gary Shaffer on the private pond that is adjacent to the Denman unit off Modoc Rd. Jan 30. We often get one or two sightings in Jackson County in the winter. Trumpeters have become regular in the winter over in the Klamath Basin.



A few **Cinnamon Teal** have been reported regularly the last two months at White City Lagoons and on Denman ponds. A single **Canvasback** was on a pond off Tolo Rd. Jan 27 (GS, JK) and another single was on Emigrant Lake Feb 23 (AG, BH). Two **Redhead** were found in a pond near Brophy Rd. during the Medford CBC Jan 3 (MM). A **LONG-TAILED DUCK** was found on Howard Prairie Lake Jan 25 by Elijah Hayes. Unusual to have open water out there in January, and the choppy waters and windy viewing conditions certainly made the sighting challenging and special.

Band-tailed Pigeon are back, with reports of small flocks from numerous observers.

A first of the year male **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported by Maggie Rackley up Sardine Creek in Gold Hill Feb 21. Maggie is always one of the first to have them return to her feeders every year.

A flock of **Sandhill Cranes** pushed by strong winds swept over Siskiyou Summit Feb 18. Late February and early March are usually the time flocks of Sandhills move north from the central valley in California over the Rogue Valley.

A **Bonaparte's Gull** was observed on Lost Creek Lake Feb 12 (JK). Unusual as there are few if any records for February in our area. Mild winter conditions this year may be a factor.

A **Clark's Grebe** was on Howard Prairie Lake Feb 1. (AC) An **American White Pelican** was reported on the Medford CBC Jan 3 (GP). A few have been overwintering in Klamath Falls this year.

Turkey Vultures are returning with many reports as the birds begin their lazy drift northward.

There has been one, or maybe two, overwintering **Osprey** this year mainly being observed near Whetstone Pond - doing some bass fishing from one report (BH).

The Brophy Ranch **Burrowing Owl** continues after disappearing for a couple of weeks (HS). **Barred Owl** has been noted in a few locations around the valley; its presence is quite normal and regular during the winters. One even attempted to pass as a Barn Owl (an identity crisis) on the Ousterhout Farm in January (GO).

The **RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER** found during the Ashland CBC along Henry St. near SOU was refound close to an SOU building just down the block from its original location Feb 19 (NH).

A female **Black-backed Woodpecker** was reported from Thousand Springs Sno-park Feb 5 (AG, BH). Hint: If you are new to the area or a county lister, this is the location many local birders go to 'tick' that species.

Field Notes continued on page 5

Field Notes continued from page 4

Two **Horned Lark** were out on the Medco A flat Feb 12 (JK). They are often observed at this location out of breeding season.

Tree Swallow observations have been growing in February from the Little Applegate to along Bear Creek, at many Denman locations at the ponds, and along Little Butte Creek and the Rogue River.

Oak Titmice and **White-breasted Nuthatches** are beginning to engage in more singing bouts as the days lengthen and breeding season is just up ahead. White-breasted Nuthatch song is a fun one to learn and be able to recognize. And of course, the beautiful tree worshipping **Brown Creeper** can be heard singing on warm days as well.



Rufous Hummingbird
Credit: Frank Lospalluto

A fourth record **BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER** was observed at Ashland Ponds Feb 20th by Scott Blair. This species acts more like a creeper or nuthatch in its foraging style. Other records are all older; one is from 1963 and two are from 1981. A few overwintering **Townsend's Warbler** have been reported, which is quite normal. (NT, JL).

Thank you to everyone who contributed their observations including: Janet Kelly, Gary Shaffer, Howard Sands, Jim Livaudais, Tanner Martin, Elijah Hayes, Shannon Rio, Liam Ehrman, John Vial, Jim Hostick, Barry Harris, Jeff Miller, Ryan Terrill, Kristi Mergenthaler, Kay Simmons, Gretchen Ousterhout, Terence Phillippe, Marion Hadden Bob Hunter, Anne Goff, Andres Carvalhaes, Jonathan Pope, Nate Trimble Carol Mockridge, Shane Jimerfield, Martin Lopez Aguilar, Laura Lovrien, Gary Porter, Brian Barr, Leslie Hart, Vicki Fox, Mary Wells, Max McClarnon, Myco Schroeder, George Peterson, Brice Powers, and Nora Honkomp.

Note: Last month the photo by Janet Kelly was of a Pacific Loon.

Some readers may have noted our initial mislabeling as a Common which it certainly was not. We were able to correct that mid-stream....

All errors and omissions are my own. Peace.

The Great Blue Heron: Witness at the Water's Edge

By Sepala Weliwitigoda

A Great Blue Heron standing motionless in shallow water slows the world around it. Poised between patience and movement, it creates a rare moment of quiet attention. Because its life depends on healthy wetlands - shorelines, estuaries, and floodplains rich with fish and amphibians - the heron has long been read as a sign of ecological balance. Where it thrives, waters endure; where it vanishes, disruption often follows.

Long before modern science, cultures recognized this presence. Indigenous traditions associated herons with patience and self-reliance; in ancient Egypt they symbolized passage between worlds; in East Asian art they stood for harmony among water, earth, and air. Such reverence arose from observation rather than data.

Today science explains the heron's dependence on wetlands, yet care still depends on attention. The bird reveals change quietly—often through absence. To notice the heron clearly is to notice the health of the land itself. Care, like balance, often begins with attention.



Great Blue Heron
Credit: Jim Livaudais

BIRDCENTRIC EVENTS FROM AROUND THE REGION

RVAS

First Wednesday Bird Walks: April 1, May 6, June 3

Join RVAS for our monthly outing to Denman Wildlife Area. Walks begin at 8:30 am and end before noon, and are led by Jim Hostick. The gate will be open from 8:00 - 8:20 am. Participants need to purchase an ODFW Area Parking Permit at the ODFW Office, Sportsman's Warehouse on Delta Waters and Highway 62 in Medford, or at Bi-Mart.

Directions to meeting spot: We will meet at the entrance off Agate Rd. between 1/4 and 1/2 mile past the fire station on the left side of the road. Coming out Table Rock Rd., turn right on Antelope Rd. and go to the light on Agate Rd. and turn left. The fire station will be on your left at the corner of Ave. G and Agate Rd. Go 1/4 to 1/2 mile past the fire station and the gate will be on your left. Coming out on Highway 62 to Antelope Rd., turn left and go to the next light. Turn right and continue to the gate on Agate Rd.

Earth Day 2026

One of our favorite events of the year is back! Join us in celebrating Earth Day 2026 at the ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum! RVAS will be there with lots of family-friendly bird activities. Come support us to work together to inspire curiosity, celebrate our planet, and connect with our community. For more information, visit <https://www.scienceworksmuseum.org/earth-day>.

DATE: Saturday, April 18

TIME: 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

LOCATION: ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum, Ashland

COST: Free

Wild Birds Unlimited

"Creating a Backyard Habitat", presented by Laura Fleming

Laura will be giving a talk about "Creating a Backyard Habitat" at the Siskiyou Audubon meeting in Grants Pass this Thursday. The talk will discuss the necessary elements for a well-rounded habitat, as well as problems that may arise and how to solve them.

DATE: Thursday, March 12

TIME: 6:30 pm

LOCATION: Unitarian Universalist Church, 129 NW 'E' St., Grants Pass

COST: Free



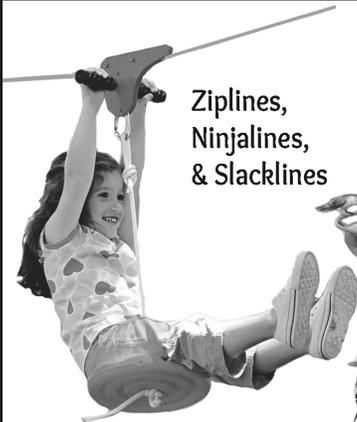
Dr Sarah Rockwell spoke about her research results on migratory tracking of Vesper Sparrows and Purple Martins at the RVAS program on Jan 27, 2026.

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A little spillover from Field Notes...enjoy this handsome Barred Owl captured by Janet Kelly.



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ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE CHAT

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