

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

Deadline for the October 2026 issue is September 20



September IN PERSON & ZOOM Program
Tuesday, Sept. 15, 2026 at 7:00 pm
with refreshments starting 6:30pm
Where The Wild Birds Are
With Noah Strycker

Take a whirlwind tour of the world from a birder's-eye view. Noah Strycker roams the many habitats that wild birds call home to bring you the ultimate guide to birding planet Earth. Birds have close relationships with their natural environments, from owls in boreal forests to hardy penguins in Antarctica, chattering parrots in the Amazon rainforest to showy birds-of-paradise in the jungles of New Guinea. This presentation—based on Noah's groundbreaking National Geographic book, *Birder's Atlas of the World*—will broaden your horizons and give you a fresh perspective on where the wild birds are.



About the Speaker

Called a "Travel Pioneer" by the BBC and "Birdman of Razzmatazz" by Newsweek, Noah Strycker is a writer and bird man based in Eugene, Oregon. In 2015, during a quest spanning 41 countries and all seven continents, he set a world record by finding 6,042 species of birds in one calendar year, as recounted in his popular book, "Birding Without Borders." He is Associate Editor of Birding magazine, and has guided nearly 100 trips to Antarctica and the Arctic—literally spreading the joy of birds from pole to pole! Noah's latest book, published by National Geographic, is the "Birder's Atlas of the World." While traveling the globe,

Noah also writes and illustrates monthly letters by mail, available at www.LettersFromNoah.com.

Location: UCC Church, 1801 E. Jackson St., Medford, OR 97504 in Lidgate Hall
Time: 7:00 pm (doors will be open beginning at 6:30 pm)

This meeting will be in-person, with a Zoom option. Zoom link will be posted on RVAS webpage on Sept. 15.

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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.

Volunteers needed for raptor surveys!

Volunteers are needed for the Rogue River & Shady Cove area "Raptor Run" surveys. Two raptor survey routes are available this winter in our area: The Rogue River Valley and Rogue River – Shady Cove areas. A survey involves driving a specified route once a month, spotting and identifying raptors along the way, and completing an online report afterward. Don't worry if you miss an ID here and there — there's even an "Unidentified" category for the tricky ones.

Time commitment: Surveys take most of a day and are done once a month. Three surveys are required (December, January, February), with November and March optional. Anyone interested in joining can email Gretchen Ousterhout at gretchen435@gmail.com, or phone 541-613-5940.

Drumroll for this year's Birdathon winners....

By Carol Mockridge, Birdathon coordinator
The Black-capped Chickadees are the Birdathon winner again! For the third year in a row, the team raised the most money - \$5,219 - to win the famous traveling owl trophy. The Great Grays placed second with \$2,500. The other teams, No-Playback Woodpeckers, Birding Bud-dies, Binosaur, and Nate Trimble's one-man bike team, the Biking Bushtit, all raised significant funds from their supporters. Over 75 donors contributed, and the 2026 total was \$10,061.

It's not too early to plan to put together a new team for next year and join in the fun! You can read highlights from the two-day birding extravaganza in the 2026 June/July issue of *The Chat*.



Status of upcoming events

Field trips: Denman Bird Walk - Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Dec. 2

Chapter Meeting: Tues., Sept. 15 at 7pm

RVAS Financial Summary for July 2025 to June 2026

Kay Simmons, Treasurer

Total income of \$18,406 for the fiscal year, July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, came from these sources:

Dues	\$1,395
Donations	1,326
Birdathon donations (PayPal costs subtracted)	9,773
Chat advertising	200
National Audubon Society	1,875
Sale of 2025 Birds of Jackson County	638
Interest from savings, CDs	3,199

Total expenses of \$17,349 for the fiscal year 2025-2026 included:

Mission-related expenses	\$13,224
Administrative expenses	4,125

Administrative expenses included: RVAS meeting programs, website, *Chat* newsletter, bird conservation conference attendance, Zoom, MailChimp, storage unit, USPS PO Box, insurance, and business taxes.

Mission expenses included: 2025 Update of Birds of Jackson County, Project FeederWatch, White City Library, Jacksonville School Birding in Schools, N. Mountain Park Bird Day, SOU Earth Day, reprinting of Birding Hotspots in Jackson County, contribution to Malheur Field Station visitor entrance improvement, and Bear Creek birding surveys – data analysis.

Thank you, Rogue Valley Audubon Society members, for your generous contributions.

***The Chat* needs a new editor...could it be you?**

The RVAS monthly newsletter needs an editor! Help us tell our story about bird events, sightings, conservation, and education in the Rogue Valley. Responsibilities include editing and curating submitted content once a month. Writing skills are an asset, but technical expertise with publication software is not required. What is needed is a strong interest in wild birds and the desire to communicate bird-focused events, bird conservation issues, and Rogue Valley bird education. Consider this special opportunity to help birds. For more information contact Kay Simmons, RVAS Board Member, email: mwsimmons1@verizon.net.

Arctic Tern
Credit: Noah Strycker



Kate Halstead retires as *Chat* editor

RVAS is grateful to Kate Halstead for her accomplishments for more than five years as the editor of *The Chat* newsletter. Kate started as Editor when she lived in the Rogue Valley, but remarkably continued to edit *The Chat* through moves to California and now the Portland area. One highlight of Kate's service was the production of the 500th issue of the *Chat* in 2024, with special photos and stories.

BIRDCENTRIC EVENTS FROM AROUND THE REGION

RVAS

First Wednesday Bird Walks: October 7, November 4, December 2

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.

Klamath Birth Observatory

Bird Photography Workshop

KBO is hosting a fund-raising bird photography field trip/workshop September 24-28, 2026. There will be five evenings of workshops and four days of field trips in and around Jackson and Klamath counties. Field trips will be led by all-stars Shannon Rio, Jim Livaudais, and others who are all volunteering their time. Workshops are facilitated by Marty Karlin with the all-stars available, since they're photo experts as well. Three small groups of five will go on the field trips accompanied by photography mentors Nick Viani, Keeley Kirkendall, and Marty. Martin Lopez-Aguilar, birder and bander for KBO, will also join field trips. Be prepared for long days. Field trips to Klamath County will begin at 6AM with local field trips at 8AM. Workshops are from 4-6PM.

Please visit the complete invitation and description at <https://klamathbird.org/callnote/take-your-bird-photography-to-the-next-level/>. A link to the complete 5-day syllabus is also available on that page.

DATE: Thursday September 24 - Monday September 28

TIME: Varies by day

LOCATION: Local portions in Ashland, and a variety of field trip locations

COST: Sliding scale from \$500 to \$ 1,000



Registration Open: Travel to Brazil with KBO and OAMa in 2027

From August 11–20, 2027, travelers will join KBO and Mantiqueira Bird Observatory (OAMa) for a 10-day adventure through the Atlantic Forest of southeastern Brazil. Participants will explore beautiful natural landscapes, hike through diverse habitats, observe tropical birds and other wildlife, experience local culture, and learn from the people advancing bird conservation in Brazil. This is more than a birding trip—it is an opportunity to support conservation beyond borders. Funds raised through the trip help sustain OAMa's work and support the continuation of long-term bird monitoring in a protected area of Brazil's Atlantic Forest. By traveling with KBO and OAMa, participants directly contribute to science, professional training, and international collaboration while experiencing one of the world's most remarkable regions for biodiversity. For more information, visit <https://klamathbird.org/callnote/registration-is-open-travel-to-brazil-with-kbo-and-oama-in-2027/>.

Wild Birds Unlimited

Cantrall Buckley County Park Bird Walk

Join Erin Ulrich for a bird walk to Cantrall Buckley County Park in Ruch this Saturday. This is a new location, just 8 miles west of Jacksonville via Hwy 238 along the Applegate River. It will be exciting to see what birds you'll find during this fall migration along the river. Come in or call the store at (541) 772-2107 to reserve your spot on this walk. Limited to 9 participants.

DATE: Saturday September 12

TIME: 9:00 am

LOCATION: Cantrall Buckley County Park

COST: Free

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Events continued from page 4

Wild Birds Unlimited, cont.

"Mason Bees: Fall Harvest" presented by Laura Fleming

Now that your bees laid eggs in your bee house...what do you do next? This class will demonstrate how to care for your bee cocoons during the winter and how to prepare your bee house for next spring. This class will also be great for those wanting to get started in raising solitary bees, such as our mason bees.

DATE: Sunday September 13

TIME: 2:00 - 3:00 pm

LOCATION: Wild Bird Unlimited, 961 Medford Center, Medford OR

COST: Free

The Conservation Column

by Pepper Trail

Proposed Repeal of the Roadless Rule

Since 2001, the US Forest Service's Roadless Rule has limited development for over 50 million acres of National Forests across the country. The premise behind the Roadless Rule is simple: to limit road-building and commercial logging in order to maintain wildlife connectivity and habitat.

In August, Department of Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins announced that the Trump Administration wants to rescind the 2001 Roadless Rule, claiming it is a burdensome regulation that prevents "responsible" management of our National Forests. However, it is clear that the new rule is designed to comply with President Trump's Executive Order 14225 to expand commercial logging on public lands. The rule is misguided and skews the reality of what they're trying to do:

- During last year's scoping comment period, the US Forest Service received over 600,000 public comments. More than 95% of submissions were in support of keeping the Roadless Rule intact. The agency also acknowledges that the vast majority of Tribes are supportive of keeping the Roadless Rule protections in place.
- The US Forest Service has a maintenance backlog of \$6 BILLION on its existing road network. At a time when this administration is cutting back on agency budgets and staffing, including the US Forest Service, it makes no sense to add more maintenance and upkeep expenses to a road system that seems destined to fail given extreme weather events like wildfire and floods.
- Building more roads under the guise of wildfire risk management could actually backfire. Research and analysis show that forested areas with heavier road densities will see more wildfire activity than unroaded/undeveloped areas. Humans are the leading cause of wildfire, with nearly 85% of ignitions and starts being human-caused.
- Roadless Areas are drinking water sources for many communities. Across the country, more than 60 million people rely on drinking water that originates or flows through National Forest lands. In places like Ashland, Oregon, roadless areas are located within watersheds that supply the community with fresh drinking water.
- Outdoor recreation is growing and becoming an important economic driver for many Western communities. According to the Outdoor Alliance, Roadless Areas across the country are home to 800 miles of whitewater paddling and 8,000 different climbing routes. There are more than 45,000 miles of hiking and mountain biking trails, in addition to numerous quiet recreation spots for birders, hunters and fishing enthusiasts.



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Conservation Column continued from page 5

- The fragmentation that will be caused by increased logging and road-building will degrade wildlife habitat and expose forests to greater impacts from climate change.

To submit your personal comment to the Forest Service:

- Visit the [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) webpage.
- Click on the blue “comment” button in the top left corner.
- Type your comment or upload a document. You can use [these talking points](#) from KS Wild as inspiration to write your comment.
- Submit!

Ashland is Selling the Imperatrice Property, Act Now to Insure the Sale Has Conservation Conditions

As reported in the May RVAS *Chat* (<https://tinyurl.com/mtf73zfs>), the Ashland City Council has decided to sell the 846-acre Imperatrice property, located east of I-5 above the ODOT weigh station. This ecologically precious grassland is home to rare and endangered plants, as well as one of the largest nesting colonies of Grasshopper Sparrows in Oregon.

The City Council is under pressure to sell the property to the highest bidder, regardless of their plans for the property. Although the land is zoned Exclusive Farm Use, that would not preclude a buyer dividing the property into a number of residential parcels as long as there is “farm income.” And EFU zoning would also allow placing solar arrays on the property.

Almost all the private land east of I-5 from Emigrant Lake to Medford has been chopped up into ranchettes, vineyards, and hemp farms. No one wants that to be the fate of this unique large intact grassland.

The Ashland City Council has fiscal responsibilities. But it also has responsibilities to honor the values which this town holds dear, including the preservation of open space, the protection of rare and threatened species, and community involvement in land use decisions.

The time is **NOW** to contact the Ashland City Council, before the sale terms are finalized. Advocate that conditions be placed on the sale of the Imperatrice, to keep it intact and preserve its ecological value. For example, livestock grazing should continue to be excluded from the large native grassland area above the Talent Irrigation Ditch. Ideally, a conservation organization such as the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy would take over the property and its management.

Insist that this irreplaceable grassland must not be sacrificed to subdivision and development! The link for comments to the Ashland City Council is: <https://ashlandoregon.gov/FormCenter/City-Council-16/Contact-City-Council-111>



Mallard pair
Credit: Jim
Livaudais

Botulism Outbreak in the Klamath Basin

Many of you will have heard that drastically low water levels and high temperatures have led to another deadly outbreak of botulism at the Klamath National Wildlife Refuges. While not as catastrophic as the outbreak in 2024, this has killed up to 14,000 birds, according to refuge biologists. As in previous years, a “Duck Hospital” set up by the group Bird Ally X is working to save as many birds as possible. Rogue Valley Audubon Society has donated funds to support this critical work.

Fortunately, the outbreak appears to be easing, thanks in part to an agreement between the Klamath Water Users Association, the irrigation districts, and the Bureau of Reclamation to move more water into the refuges. This has lowered water temperatures and provided more oxygen, making conditions less favorable for the botulism bacteria.

For more information, see this excellent OPB story by our own Juliet Grable: <https://www.opb.org/article/2026/09/01/klamath-basin-southern-oregon-bird-crisis-water-rivals-botulism/>

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Denman Wildlife Area First Wednesday Bird Walk, September 2, 2026. Jim Hostick (left) has led the Denman Bird Walks for 6 years.

Join the next RVAS Denman Walk on Wednesday, October 7!

Photo by Jim Hostick



**20% OFF One
Regularly-priced Item***

*Valid at the Medford, Oregon WBU store only. One discount per purchase. Not valid on bird food, previous purchases, optics, gift cards, DSC memberships, or sale items.

ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE CHAT

Newsletter of the
ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

Post Office Box 8597

Medford, OR 97501

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