



Salem Audubon Society

The Kestrel

November 2021
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Need to update your mailing address?

Please call or email Salem Audubon at (503) 588-7340 or laurie@salemaudubon.org

Mailing Address

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American Kestrel
Photo © Tom Ferron

President's Message

— *Tim Johnson*



Hi all,

First, I would like to thank the many of you who took a turn at watering the Nature Explore Area plantings at the Nature Center this summer. The Service planted several hundred native plants and shrubs in the NEA and around Gehlar Hall. It was a significant investment in the Nature Center. That watering helped those plants survive the summer heat and are now well established. Seeding of native grasses and weeding in the Nature Explore Area will continue this fall. There's a related article in this month's newsletter.

I have some great news from the Nature Center. Many of you know Pat and Bobbie Allaire. They are active in the refuge Friends group. They have offered to be volunteer coordinators for the Nature Center. There will be a variety of volunteer opportunities at the Nature Center, including helping with preparations for opening to the public, and supporting the Nature Center once it's open. We're targeting January for opening the Nature Center site to the public. We hope to see a significant improvement in the COVID situation by then. See a related article in this newsletter.

Preparations continue for the Salem Christmas Bird Count, scheduled for Saturday, December 18, with the Countdown on Sunday afternoon. Mike Unger and I will lead that effort again this year. There will be opportunities for all of you to participate in this great tradition. Again, there's a related article in this newsletter.

Please let me know if you have any related questions. You can reach me anytime at tim@salemaudubon.org.

Salem Audubon Society Online Birding Webinar for November 2021

Salem Audubon Society (SAS) will be offering the following birding related webinar in October. All webinars are one hour in length. You must register in advance to attend any of the webinars. Mike Unger is the instructor for the webinars. Check the SAS website, Facebook Events tab, or future Kestrels for further information on these webinars.

Where to Go Birding in December (Free) – Thursday, November 18 at 2:00 PM – One of the most common questions we get asked is “When is the best time and place to go birding in the Willamette Valley and Oregon?” Well, it is hard to say which month is the best, because there is something unique during every season! This month we will look ahead to December and discover some of the birds to look for, where to go around Salem and other areas of the state. To register, click [here](#).

NOTE: You must register in advance for these webinars. The registration links shown above are also on SAS’s website, salemaudubon.org, under “Upcoming Events.”

For more information or if you have any difficulty with registration, please email Mike at salemaudubonsociety@gmail.com.

Thank You to Our Volunteers!

A HUGE thank you goes out to everyone who volunteered to water new plantings of native plants at the Ankeny Hill Nature Center during a heat dome and our long, dry summer. Samantha Bartling, Visitor Services Manager, Willamette Valley Refuges reports that “The native plants are thriving!”

Thanks to our anonymous volunteers and those watering champions who signed up through Sign-up Genius:

Pat and Bobbie Allaire	Paul and Janet Hart	Mary Schmidgall
John Baer	Tim Johnson	Chris Shank
Jennifer Butler and her father	Amy and Don Leischman	Tony and Sandi Tanzi
Theresa Byrne	Hope Presley	Diane Young and husband Kerry
Cynthia Donald	Chris Quinn and sister Cathy	

Would you like to volunteer at the nature center? Check out the article in this newsletter about the new Ankeny Hill Nature Center Volunteer Coordinators and how to contact them in this issue (see page 4).

Upcoming Field Trips

— *compiled by Cynthia Donald*

As COVID-19 continues to mutate and toy with everyday life in ways we never imagined, Salem Audubon is reluctant to resume what for years has been our regular fall field trip schedule. We are only offering two field trips in December, and none in November. If hospitalization rates continue to trend downward, we are hopeful that State restrictions will lessen so we can schedule more trips beginning in 2022. Please continue to stay safe and well! Here’s the scoop on the December field trips.

Saturday, December 4, 2021 – [Baskett Slough National Wildlife Refuge](#)

Leader: Harry Fuller (971)312-1735

Established in 1965 as part of the Willamette Valley NWR Complex, Baskett Slough is primarily managed to provide wintering habitat for the Dusky Canada Goose, a subspecies of Canada Goose with very limited summer and winter ranges. This refuge also provides wetland and woodland sanctuary for migrant and resident wildlife, including Fender’s Blue Butterfly, once thought extinct but rediscovered here! Meet at the Rich Guadagno Trailhead parking area, just off Coville Road, near the center of the refuge. We will look for waterfowl and waders in Taverner and Cackler marshes, watch for raptors which frequent the area in all seasons. On our way back to town, we will drive along Livermore Road looking for Horned Lark, sparrows and other fall/winter migrants.

Field Trips continued page 3

Field Trips

Meet at the Rich Guadagno Trailhead Parking Lot on Coville Road at 9:30 AM. Restroom and picnic facilities are available. Bring water, binoculars, a snack and dress for the weather. Trails may be uneven so please use appropriate footwear. We will finish around noon.

Directions: From Salem, take Hwy 22 west to 99W. Proceed north to Coville Road and turn west (left). Continue to the trailhead which will be on your right. Restroom and picnic facilities are available.

NOTE: All participants must be fully vaccinated to participate in the bird walk. You are considered fully vaccinated two-weeks after your second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two-weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine. In addition, we will be following all the CDC and state COVID-19 guidelines in effect at the time of the walk.

Wednesday, December 15, 8:00 AM – Minto-Brown Island Park

Leader: Mike Unger (503) 930-8998

This is the first of three winter months for bird census, and it is the signature time for the Christmas Bird Count. This specific date and Minto-Brown Field Trip is a day of effort to canvas the species just prior to the Count Day, this year to be held on Saturday, December 18. Minto-Brown is the #4 Sector of our Salem Audubon Circle, which has 10 Sectors in and around Salem with the State Capitol as the center. This Field Trip date begins what is termed as Count Week, which is a window of time lasting through the following Tuesday. It is an important event, as it begins the census identification of species present in the winter months and relevant for the defined Salem Circle of the Salem Christmas Count. It is a snapshot of population, weather, and habitat that birds are seeking, and a time for teams to count each bird. It is important because Minto-Brown is an area of 1200 plus acres substantially in Sector 4 that is usually accessible. The access, and the number of loops to be covered, make it a remarkable park for birders. Plan to join this field trip for the opportunity to count our feathered friends for the upcoming Count. Expect a wide variety of resident and wintering migrant species.

Meet at 8:00 AM at parking lot #3 (the last parking lot in the park). Dress for the weather and bring snacks and water to keep energized. Wear appropriate footwear for uneven trails and plan for considerable walking. We will plan to finish by Noon.

NOTE: All participants must be fully vaccinated to participate in the bird walk. You are considered fully vaccinated two-weeks after your second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two-weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine. In addition, we will be following all the CDC and state COVID-19 guidelines in effect at the time of the walk.

The Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for Saturday, December 18, 2021. Please see the article on page 4. We hope everyone can participate safely!

Salem Environmental Education's Zoom to Sustainability – Wednesday, December 8

How to Go Solar – Zach Snyder

In this [presentation](#), Zach Snyder will answer your questions about how solar works, share information about incentives available, and help you take the first step to adding solar on your home or business. In addition, at each presentation we discuss one of three special topics: solar + storage, community solar, and the Solar Within Reach incentive. This is made possible with support from Energy Trust of Oregon

Zach Snyder co-leads Solar Oregon's educational programming, clean energy campaigns, and advocacy work. With a background in earth science, education, and Oregon's solar industry, he works to promote all forms of clean and equitable energy in communities across Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

You can register for this free Zoom program [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar – Saturday, December 18, 2021 – Salem Christmas Bird Count

— *Co-compiled by Tim Johnson and Mike Unger*

The Christmas Bird Count is carried out each year throughout the Americas, with a total of around 2,500 count circles. The Salem Christmas Bird Count is one of fifty-four count circles in Oregon. The upcoming bird count will be the 59th held in Salem.

Information gained from these bird censuses contribute significantly to our understanding of long-term trends in bird populations and the effects of climate change. For example, Christmas Bird Count data was the basis in part for the recent article in Science entitled, “Decline of North American avifauna.”

The number of COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations appear to be dropping. However, we still do not know how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the count. We are monitoring the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Governor’s directives regarding COVID-19 protocols to determine how to conduct this year’s count. The health and safety of our members and participants is our utmost concern.

If you participated in last year’s Salem Christmas Bird Count, you should be hearing from your sector leader in the next few weeks. If you have participated in past years by counting birds at your feeders, you will receive a packet with the current feeder count checklist. If this will be the first year you participate in the feeder count, please contact Tim using the contact methods listed below.

Note: This will be my 11th year organizing the Salem Christmas Bird Count. With my increased duties as Salem Audubon lead for the new Nature Center, I would like to train someone to take over the count. If this is something of interest, please let me know. Call (503) 507-8552 or email me at tim@salemaudubon.org.

Ankeny Hill Nature Center: An Introduction to The Volunteer Coordinators

We are pleased to welcome Pat (he/him/his) and Bobbie (she/her/hers) Allaire as Volunteer Coordinators for the new Ankeny Hill Nature Center. They are members of and/or volunteers for the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex (WVNWRC), Friends of the WVNWRC, and Salem Audubon – all organizations that have invested in the Nature Center.

Pat shared their sentiments on this new role: “We love being connected with organizations that value our natural world and support the goals of the Nature Center! We look forward to meeting volunteers that are sure to make the Center a success.”

There are volunteer opportunities for people with a variety of interests at the Ankeny Hill Nature Center. You can be involved with educational programming, lead nature walks, attend outreach events and do habitat restoration. All this while giving back to your community, meeting new people, contributing to wildlife conservation, AND having fun! Have a special talent such as wood working or social media engagement? Let us know! We encourage people of all ages, skill levels, and schedules to volunteer.

To get started please contact Pat and Bobbie at volunteer@ankenhillnaturecenter.org.

Pat and Bobbie are long-time amateur astronomers, which led them to birding, which led them to being naturalists. Oregon State University Extension Service certified both Pat and Bobbie as Oregon Master Naturalists in 2015. Leading up to their certification and since they have each volunteered about 4,000 hours and interacted with about 11,000 people at presentations, tables, nature camps and other events. They first volunteered with WVNWRC assisting visitors at Baskett Slough NWR during the 2017 total eclipse.

Save the dates!

Klamath Basin Audubon's

Winter Wings Festival

February 18-20, 2022

3 days of field trips, workshops, & presentations in Klamath Falls, Oregon, for birders & photographers

www.WinterWingsFest.org

Registration opens in Dec. 2021 

Birder's Night

Tuesday, November 9, 2021 at 6:30 PM

Wandering the Earth with Nomadic finches: Lessons Learned About Flexible Migrations

— Dr. Jamie M. Cornelius



Birds are the harbingers of spring as migrants move north and begin singing. We know how swallows, swifts and some other migrants seem to go from one fixed territory to another, annually. These north-south waves of billions of birds are familiar to most people but there are many birds for whom north-south is not always the way. Nomadic and irruptive species live lives of flexibility - responding to less predictable fluctuations in food that can vary in timing or location. How do these birds cope with such uncertainty? What strategies in behavior or physiology do they have to survive when things go wrong? Dr. Jamie Cornelius will share some of what she's learned about life as a wanderer from members of the finch family--Red Crossbills, Pine Siskins, Goldfinches, Zebra Finches and more.

Dr. Cornelius is an Assistant Professor of Integrative Biology at Oregon State University. After earning her PhD at University of California Davis, she spent time at research institutions around the world, including the Max Planck Institute of Ornithology in Germany, St. Petersburg University in Russia, and the Organization for Tropical Studies in Costa Rica. She currently studies how birds adapt to unpredictable changes in the environment, including during food shortages, storms, and predation.

How to Join our ZOOM Webinar

1. As a participant, you do not need any special software or hardware. Participants will not require a microphone or camera. You will not need special ZOOM software.
2. All participants will need to "Pre-Register" in advance of the event by clicking on a link which will be provided in the Kestrel, on the Salem Audubon website, and on the SAS Facebook page. Click [here](#) to pre-register for November's Birder's Night.
3. Once registered, you will immediately receive a confirmation email which will include the link to use to join the meeting. You will receive a reminder email on the day of the program. At the start time for the program (or a few minutes before), you can click on the meeting link using a PC, Mac, or smart device to enter the Zoom session. It's that easy.
4. No special software or equipment is needed. Viewers will not need a camera or microphone. Communications from viewers to the Master of Ceremonies, Tim Johnson, will be through the "Chat" function: You will find the "chat button" on your computer screen, click on it, and then type in your question/comment, whether it be a technical problem you are having or a question for the speaker during the Q&A at the end of the talk. Tim will dispense advice on technical problems through "Chat" during the program. He will read the submitted questions to the presenter at the end of the program.
5. For any technical questions, please email Tim Johnson, tim.the.fisherman@gmail.com. For other questions, email Harry Fuller, Chair, Birder's Night Committee, atowhee@gmail.com.



Red Crossbill (female)

Turkeys!

— Harry Fuller



Got [Wild Turkeys](#)? If so, they are the largest birds walking around your farm, garden, and yard. They don't fly unless forced. When chicks are born each spring, mother turkey stays down until all can fly into the trees to roost at night.

I see turkeys regularly in southeast Salem. They are nonchalant about traffic, pedestrians, even dogs on leash. Our local gang of nine is led by an adult female, the sentinel while the others browse and feed.

The Wild Turkey is called many things—curious, omnivorous, impressive, aggressive, invasive. They are not native to Oregon. Wild Turkeys are native to the eastern and south-central U.S. Early transplant attempts failed. Then in 1961 some were successfully released east of the Cascades. They were all from the Merriam's subspecies trapped in Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico. After that over 200 turkeys were released in eastern Oregon.

The first successful release west of the Cascades was of the Rio Grande subspecies in 1975. That spring, 20 birds (15 hens and five gobblers) from California were released east of Medford.

I wondered, "What about the Willamette Valley?" There is nothing online beyond numbers released, dozens in each county along the Willamette. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) supplied more information. Lane County got its first birds in 1987-1988; Washington in 1989. Then in 1992-1993 ODFW began moving birds from Douglas County along the Willamette. From the start, ODFW's goal was establishing a turkey population to hunt. The turkeys wisely felt differently—moving into town where it's safer. Easier to dodge a truck than a shotgun.

Turkeys can be aggressive toward people. Advice: do NOT feed them. They eat nearly anything edible and can damage the environment say critics. I found one thesis written at Oregon State on the local turkey diet. That shows our Wild Turkeys eat more fruit in fall/winter and more leaves and flowers in the spring. Also, invertebrate consumption was generally higher in fall-winter. Members of the pea family had seeds that survived the turkey's intestines and would sprout after leaving the bird. Most seeds did not. One major diet item when it is available: acorns. That could prevent oak forest regeneration without human intervention. The Willamette Valley currently has little of what would have been widespread oak-dominated habitat 200 years ago.

Grasshoppers were the most abundant invertebrate consumed in fall-winter, while snails were the most common invertebrate snack in spring.

When and where turkeys become a nuisance, ODFW will relocate them. It's estimated that over 40,000 turkeys live in Oregon right now.

A little trivia – the turkey is the only native North American animal to become widely domesticated.

For further reading, see [Diet study](#) and [Police kill turkeys](#)



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SAS Office Information

Laurie Buswell, Administrator

Office hours by appointment only
 Monday-Tuesday, 8:00A – 4:30P
 Wednesday, 8:00 AM – 12 Noon

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Website: www.salemaudubon.org

Bird & Wildlife emergency contact:

Chintimini Wildlife Center
 (541) 745-5324
chintiminiwildlife.org

Upcoming Events for 2021

Many birding festivals have made the decision to cancel and/or suspend their events in 2021 due to COVID-19 (coronavirus). Events will be added once announced.

Salem Audubon Society's YouTube Channel

Salem Audubon Society (SAS) YouTube channel will host the Birder's Night presentations as well as some of the birding webinars.

To access the channel, go to [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and enter "Salem Audubon Society" in the search box then click search icon 🔍. This will bring you to the SAS YouTube channel. You can also subscribe to our YouTube channel by clicking on the "Subscribe" button on the page. Once you subscribe to our channel, any new videos it publishes will show up in your Subscriptions feed.

For more information or any questions about our YouTube channel, please email Mike at salemaudubonsociety@gmail.com.

Audubon Reserve Work Parties Every Wednesday 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Plant and nurture native trees and shrubs.
 Attack invasives and help keep our Reserve looking great.
 Maintain trails. Eliminate litter.

BYO work gloves; tools provided or bring your favorites.

FREE! No background check required! On-the-job training!
 Possibilities for advancement!

Coffee and conversation after at Urban Grange, on Edgewater St.

Call Lee Slattum, (503) 364-9325, with any questions.

[Audubon Nature Reserve](#)
 Eola Drive, off Edgewater, in West Salem

See our Facebook Page [here](#)



Salem Audubon Society

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Connecting people with birds + nature

Upcoming Events & Trips



Mark your
calendar!

Field Trips

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Online Birding Webinars

Thursday, November 18 at 2:00 PM

Where to Go Birding in December

See the link on page 2 to register

Birder's Night Webinar

Tuesday, November 9 at 6:30 PM

See the link on page 5 to register
and for the instructions to join the webinar

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