

The Chat

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A voice for education and conservation in the natural world

Rogue Valley Audubon Society

www.roguevalleyaudubon.org

Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month



CHAPTER PROGRAM MEETING TUESDAY, NOV. 27 - 7:00 PM

JOIN DICK ASHFORD AS HE PRESENTS A PROGRAM ON ANTARCTICA: THE EXPLORER'S ROUTE

Mysterious and vast, Antarctica—the “blue continent” at the bottom of the world, is like no other place on earth. A land of glittering ice, majestic peaks and dazzling beauty, it is the only continent with no indigenous population. Instead, it has for millions of years been a haven for migratory birds, whales, seals and other marine mammals that come each summer to feast in food-rich coastal waters. When you visit, you step into a world so removed from your own, you may feel you’ve landed on the moon, or stepped into a fairy tale.

Dick Ashford was fortunate to take this 'trip of a lifetime' via the Explorer's Route, encompassing the wildlife paradise of South Georgia, Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas) as well as the extraordinary beauty of the Antarctic Peninsula.

Dick's presentation will provide us with an overview

of the great diversity of these environments and landscapes, which provide unprecedented wildlife viewing opportunities.

Dick is the Board President of the Klamath Bird Observatory and a director (and former Board Chair) of the American Birding Association. A former Mayor of the city of Sonoma, CA, Dick has also served on the boards of RVAS and the Crater Lake Natural History Assoc.

On December 1, plan to attend the annual Holiday Potluck and Raffle/Auction/Virtual Trip to Peru. See details, raffle and auction items on page 8.



Chapter meetings are held at 7:00 PM on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Medford Congregational Church meeting hall, 1801 E. Jackson Street in East Medford. The meeting hall is located north of East Jackson Street between North Berkeley Way and North Barneburg Rd. It is most easily accessed from North Barneburg Rd. Just make a left turn into the church parking lot at the tree in the middle of the road.

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President's Page by Bill Hering

RVAS is well into our 2012-13 season. Already we've had two excellent programs—Harry Fuller on birding the I-5 corridor and Brendon Breen on vultures. Dick Ashford will present our November program, and then we take a break until January. But not much of a break. On December 1st we will hold our annual potluck, auction and raffle. Kate Cleland-Sipfle, Carol Palmer and Sooney Viani have a great evening planned. Be sure to mark your calendar, bring your holiday spirit, enjoy an evening with other RVAS members, and be prepared to win big!

There's more to do, especially in citizen science. As Denny Niebuhr explains in this issue, Project FeederWatch will begin this month at Ashland's North Mountain Park. There will be two Saturday morning sessions every month, November through March. It's a good opportunity to hone your birding skills and to share your experiences with other birders.

In December we will conduct two Christmas Bird Counts. The Medford count on December 15th will be chaired by Bob Hunter, and the Ashland count on December 27th will be co-chaired by Harry Fuller and John Bullock. It's a great time for birding in the Valley, for comparing results with other teams, and for an evening of pizza with friends. If you haven't done a CBC before, just let Bob Hunter or John Bullock (or both!) know, and they will help you find a team.

Last month 23 RVAS members took advantage of a wonderful field trip at the Ousterhout Farm, organized by Jeff Tufts and led by Bob Hunter. Birding in this special location was a great treat. After that trip we were discussing how much our members value our field trips, and how that keeps them connected with Audubon.

President's Column continued on page 7

Field Notes: The Changing Seasons

Compiled by Stewart Janes

It's been an interesting fall. We had no fall storms until the middle of October, long after most migrants had already reached the sunny beaches of Mexico or wherever they choose to spend the winter. This is also the fall where **Turkey Vultures** and **Violet-green Swallows** slipped out of the valley with little fanfare. This has also been the fall with few lingering warblers, tanagers and such. Storms tend to bunch up migrants sending them through in waves both immediately before a storm's arrival and again in the clearing skies after a storm has passed making them more visible. In some years, kettle after kettle of **Turkey Vultures** are noted, occasionally with a flock or two exceeding 1000 birds. Not so this fall. Modest kettles up to 30 birds or so were reported up through 10/7 (JB,HF,CH). A late kettle was seen in Medford on 10/15 (AC).

The same was true for **Violet-green Swallows**. They just sort of evaporated. The last report was on 10/24. Typically they are seen into the second week of October, often in large numbers as they outrun an approaching storm. Also, it's been many years since I failed to record a **Black-throated Gray Warbler** in the oaks on the hill behind my place in October. The oaks were silent this year.

That isn't to say that there weren't some lingering birds. **Townsend's** and **Hermit Warblers** were seen through 9/28 (DA,PT,SJ). The last **Rufous Hummingbird** was reported 9/23 (SJ), the last **Cassin's Vireo** and **Swainson's Thrush** on 10/2 (JT,HS), the last **Western Tanager** on 10/3 (SJ) and the last **Warbling Vireo** on 10/10 (FE).

The month saw the close of the shorebird migration with a rather late **Pectoral Sandpiper** on 10/5 (JT) plus a **Semipalmated Plover** and a few **Long-billed Dowitchers** at Agate Lake. On 10/21 Jeff had 40 or so **Long-billed Dowitchers** and a few **Western Sandpipers** along with a small flock of **Dunlin** at Agate Lake. Dunlin always bring up the rear of the shorebird migration.

Other waterbird sightings of note include a **Pacific Loon** on Lost Creek Reservoir on 10/12 (PT), a **Horned Grebe** on 10/22 and 5 **Surf Scoters** on 10/22 (NB). Surf Scoters are almost becoming an annual occurrence in the valley.

We have yet to see the major push of wintering waterfowl into the valley. **American Wigeon** and **Ring-necked Ducks** are still rather scarce and have yet to settle in to their normal ponds and golf greens. The major movement of **Greater White-fronted Goose** occurred right on schedule. Numerous sightings of sizable flocks were reported between 9/25 and 9/30 (DA,KM,FE,DA,HS,SJ, JB)

The invasion of birds from the north woods continues. Just about everyone who has looked into their backyard has seen **Red-breasted Nuthatches** (JT,RT,HS,SJ). Up until this column was submitted on 10/22, **Evening Grosbeaks**, **Pine Siskins**, and **Red Crossbills** were also being reported from around the valley (FE,SJ,PT).

Field Notes continued on page 7

The Conservation Column

By Pepper Trail

Many local conservation issues are rather small-scale - important, but without massive resources and financial interests at stake. But this time I will discuss two projects that are huge in scope and expense: the proposed Highway 62 bypass, and the proposed LNG (liquefied natural gas) pipeline from the Klamath Basin to Coos Bay. Both could negatively impact Jackson County's environment for decades.

Hwy 62 Bypass

As all Medford residents know, traffic congestion on Hwy 62 between I-5 and the VA Dom is a chronic problem. This is an entirely predictable consequence of all the "big-box" development that has been permitted along that stretch. Various solutions have been under discussion for years, and now ODOT has come up with a detailed proposal for public comment. The cost of the total project is projected to approach \$500 million. That's right, half a *billion* dollars.

There are a lot of issues that could be discussed with relation to this project in relation to sprawl, inadequate urban planning, skewed budgetary priorities, excessive dependence on automobiles, etc. However, I'll limit myself to the single impact of most direct concern to RVAS members: how the project could affect the Denman Wildlife Area.

ODOT has two "build alternatives," but the differences are in the area around I-5; north of Gregory Road, the same route is planned. The bypass would take the route of Agate Road along the edge of Denman. In the words of the ODOT draft environmental impact statement (DEIS),

"the bypass would follow the Agate Road right of way along the east side of the Denman Wildlife Area and into White City, displacing Agate Road between Gregory Road and Avenue G. North of the Denman Wildlife Area, the bypass would ascend onto a fill slope and cross over Antelope Road and Avenue G on overpasses. North of Avenue G, the bypass would be located on a structure ...After crossing Avenue H, the bypass would curve east, return to ground level, follow the Dutton Road right of way, and terminate in an interchange with existing OR 62... Dutton Road would be realigned and run parallel to the bypass" (DEIS, p. ES-29).

The most direct impact would be the relocation of the existing parking area and hunters check station at the ponds along Agate Road: "Although neither alternative would require any land in the Denman Wildlife Area for roadway use, the displacement of Agate Road would require closing an existing Denman parking lot on the west side of Agate Road. To mitigate for this parking lot closure, ODOT would build a new parking lot off of 11th Street and provide directional signage to guide visitors to the new parking lot. ODOT would also restore the site of the existing parking lot for wildlife habitat. There would be no net loss of habitat and the new parking lot would provide similar access to the ponds and hunting areas in the eastern portion of the Denman Wildlife Area." (DEIS, p. ES-48).

The bypass, with its associated heavy traffic, would run along the east border of the Hall Tract, and swing to the right just before the gated access point at Touvelle Road. In the words of the DEIS, "The project footprint, at its closest, comes within approximately 90 feet of the southeastern corner of the Military Slough Tract but the project footprint would not directly impact the Military Slough tract". (DEIS, p. 3-159). Having stated that Military Slough would not be impacted, ODOT does not discuss this area further. However, ODOT estimates that average traffic on the bypass segment north of Agate Road will be over 20,000 vehicles per day by 2015 (DEIS, Table 3.1-4).

ODOT considers that all the impacts to Denman will be *de minimis*. "*De minimis* impacts on publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife refuges are defined as those that do not "adversely affect the activities, features and attributes" of the resource." (DEIS, p. 3-170).

It is hard to accept the flat assertion that 20,000 vehicles per day - with their noise, emissions, and lights at night - passing along the edge of the Hall Tract and less than 100 feet from the Military Slough Tract would have no impact on Denman. Finally, it must be noted that the bypass will terminate on a realigned Dutton Road, which the project maps show as cutting immediately adjacent to Dutton Pond. Although Dutton Pond is not part of Denman, RVAS birders know it as excellent habitat for aquatic and marsh birds, and this would almost certainly be degraded by this project.

It is unlikely, to put it mildly, that concerns about wildlife impacts have much chance to halt the Hwy 62 bypass. This project has tremendous momentum and many powerful forces behind it. Nevertheless, we will be submitting comments by the October 29 deadline, and will remain engaged with this issue. Perhaps we may be able to gain some changes that will prevent the worst impacts on Denman.

LNG Pipeline

This multi-billion dollar project would build the "Pacific Connector" pipeline between Malin in the Klamath Basin (terminus of the Ruby Pipeline from the natural gas fields in the Rocky Mountains) all the way to Coos Bay, where the Jordan Cove terminal would load it onto ships for export to Asia. This was originally proposed as a gas *import* pipeline, but the boom in natural gas produced by hydraulic fracturing (fracking) has led to abundant and cheap (by world standards) domestic supplies.

The pipeline would cross about 80 miles of BLM and Forest Service land and 150 miles of private land. The private land is subject to "taking" by eminent domain, which has generated tremendous resistance on the part of landowners. It is an obvious question why eminent domain - which is supposedly reserved for projects of general public benefit - would be justified in this case. Economic analyses have concluded that exporting natural gas would inevitably drive up domestic gas prices, and potentially cripple the promising recovery of U.S. manufacturing jobs that is being fueled by cheap energy. As Congressman Peter DeFazio asks: "What's the public use benefit? It doesn't make sense to me that the government of the United States wants to enable the taking of private property for private profit to export a limited resource that will drive up domestic prices" (quote from the *Eugene Register-Guard* newspaper).

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The pipeline right-of-way would be at least 90 feet wide, and involve 400 stream crossings, including the Coos, Coquille, Umpqua, and Rogue Rivers. The Rogue River crossing is near Shady Cove. The potential that pipeline construction would cause sedimentation and other damage to aquatic habitats in these rivers - so vital for salmon, wildlife, and recreation in our region - is obvious.

The regulatory hurdles for pipeline approval are great, and the process is a long one. Even if all goes as the pipeline company hopes, construction is not planned to begin until 2015. There will be numerous opportunities to weigh in on this project. In the meantime, I encourage you to watch a new video about the proposed pipeline by Rogue Riverkeeper. You can view the video at this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CexT5eljv6c>

So, our little corner of the world is the site of some huge project proposals. There is a saying that all politics is local. All conservation is local too - and nothing is too big to escape our attention.

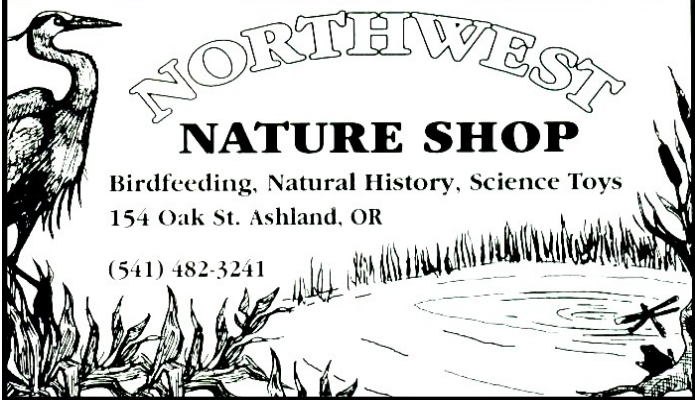
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FIELD TRIP LEADERS NEEDED

The RVAS Field Trip season has begun, and we need local birders to volunteer as trip leaders. Field Trip Chairman Jeff Tufts coordinates the events, but leaders have the option of choosing their destinations. Please contact Jeff at tallahto@aol.com to volunteer, or to get further information. Thank you

President's Column—continued from page 1

That causes me to mention benefits that are not so obvious, such as our educational slide show that is shown in third grade classes across the valley, or the very useful Birds of Jackson County guide and frequency charts, or the grants to SOU students to enhance their research efforts in the Rogue Valley.

Your support also allows RVAS to be represented at the Oregon Audubon Council, where the bird conservation legislative priorities are established. There are significant areas of concern here in our valley and in other parts of our state. We have much to do; and thanks to your dues and donations, and your volunteer efforts, we're getting it done!

Thanks, and Good Birding!

Field Notes continued from page 3

Varied Thrushes show every indication of being common this winter (JT,FL), but I have been fooled before. A few sometimes show up early and then disappear. **Cedar Waxwing** and **American Robin** numbers swelled a bit and then quickly faded. It's still too early to say whether big numbers will be with us through the winter. Has anyone checked on the madrone berry crop?

Sizable numbers of **Band-tailed Pigeons** were reported up through 10/20 which seems rather late. A late **Osprey** was seen at Fish Lake on 9/29 (AM).

Other raptor sightings of note include **Northern Goshawks** along Dead Indian Memorial Road on 10/11 and one at Hobart Bluff on 9/23 (SJ).

A **Prairie Falcon** was on the Ousterhaut farm on 10/20 (JT). Of special note was the **Barred Owl** at Ashland Pond on 10/10 (FE). I expect this bird to hang around, possibly through the winter. Other sightings of note include a **Horned Lark** on the mudflats at Lost Creek Reservoir on 10/22 (NB), **White-throated Sparrows** at the feeder of Edith Lindner and in my backyard, and **Clark's Nutcrackers** on Mount Ashland on 9/28 (PT).

This last sighting goes onto the "almost" list. On 10/5 I had a very pale sapsucker in my yard being chased relentlessly by the resident **Red-breasted Sapsucker**. The bird toughed it out for about an hour before it took off. It was in juvenile plumage. It's getting pretty late for a Red-naped Sapsucker to be in juvenile plumage. I suspect a young **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, but it got away before it could be confirmed.

Thanks to this month's contributors including Dick Ashford, Norm Barrett, John Bullock, Alan Contreras, Forrest English, Harry Fuller, Carol Hannah, Edith Lindner, Frnak Lospalutto, Alex Maksymowicz, Kate McKenzie, Howard Sands, Roxanna Tessman, Pepper Trail, and Jeff Tufts. Deadline for contributions to the Field Notes in the next issue of The Chat is November 20.

*RVAS Holiday Pot-Luck Party with Raffle and Auction
Pepper Trail, Emcee, with bird images by Jim Livaudais
Medford Congregational Church, 1801 Jackson St., Medford
Saturday, December 1, 2012, Dinner at 6 pm*

*Raffle winners not need be present to win
Buy tickets at Nov. chapter meeting, at the Holiday Party,
or ahead of time at Wild Birds Unlimited, on Crater Lake Ave. Medford*

PARTIAL LISTING OF RAFFLE ITEMS

GIFT CERTIFICATE FROM WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED NATURE SHOP
SCIENCE WORKS HANDS-ON MUSEUM PASSES
COMING ATTRACTIONS THEATER MOVIE PASSES
NIMBUS GIFT CERTIFICATE
CRATER ROCK MUSEUM PASSES
BLOOMSBURY BOOKS GIFT CERTIFICATE
FOUR & TWENTY BLACKBIRDS GIFT CERTIFICATE
ASHLAND FOOD COOP GIFT CARD
DAGOBA CHOCOLATE COLLECTION
GRANGE CO-OP GIFT CERTIFICATE
WINTER AND SPRING SISKIYOU SINGERS CONCERT TICKETS
SISKIYOU FIELD INSTITUTE TUITION GIFT CERTIFICATE
WOOD CARVINGS: MEADOWLARK AND WOLF, FROM MIKE GUEST
NON-FICTION BOOKS ABOUT BIRDING FROM CHERRY GREGORY
BIRD GREETING CARDS FROM THE SIMONSENS
ART GREETING CARDS FROM AUGUSTA LUCAS ANDRAE
SUNDAY AFTERNOONS ITEM
GENEROUS GIFT CERTIFICATE FROM GOGI'S RESTAURANT
BOTTLES OF WINE (EACH A PRIZE) FROM TRIUM, PASCHAL, AND EDENVALE WINERIES

PARTIAL LISTING OF AUCTION ITEMS

JIM LIVAUDAIS BIRD PHOTOS
LARGE BEAD NECKLACE FROM ALAN DRESHER (SOUND FAMILIAR?)
TWO FINE WINES FROM SOUTH STAGE CELLARS IN TOTE BAG
ADVANCED POLE SYSTEM FOR BIRD FEEDERS FROM BILL HERING
ANTIQUE TAWNY PIPIT PRINT FROM JOAN SPEAR
BIRD-THEMED GIFT BASKET FROM THE UNICORN GIFTS & TOYS
FRAMED OWL PHOTO BY GARY PALMER FROM LYNDA STEVENSON
BOTANICAL WALK, MT. ASHLAND, WITH ALEX MAKSYMOWICZ
MATTED BROWN PELICAN AND MARBLED GODWIT PRINTS FROM KATRINA MEISTER
TWO 18-HOLE GOLF ROUNDS WITH CART AT RUNNING Y, KLAMATH FALLS
ADMISSIONS TO WILDLIFE IMAGES AND VIEWING OF WILD ANIMAL RELEASE
SPRING BIRDING, NORTH MOUNTAIN PARK, WITH VINCE ZAUSKEY
TWO NIGHTS AT SHELLEY TANQUARY'S LANGLOIS COTTAGE
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BIRDING TRIP WITH FRANK LOSPALLUTO
TWO NIGHTS AT ROCKY POINT CABIN FROM KATHY UHTOFF OF NORTHWEST NATURE SHOP
BIRDING ALONG I-5 WITH HARRY FULLER
KLAMATH BIRDING TRIP WITH HARRY FULLER

Questions? Items to donate? Contact

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Carol Palmer carol.p.charter.net; 541-245-9815 (potluck)*

Birding at Sea by Jeanine Moy

Over a weekend in October, I was fortunate to participate in a Siskiyou Field Institute adventure, also referred to by some as the Pelagic Seabirding Trip with Professor Stewart Janes.

Setting out to sea from the Brookings harbor by 9am may be considered a late start by some birders, but time is difficult to sense under a coastal fog blanket. As we motor away from the convergence of land and water, Double-crested Cormorants and Brown Pelicans are left behind, passing through the coastal to the pelagic zone and we find ourselves in another domain.

This is an unfamiliar place, a seemingly barren landscape with few denizens. Those that can survive here, have bodies that have been shaped by millions of years to be incredibly efficient at remaining in salt water or gliding through the air for long periods of time. The obvious inadequacy of our human bodies in this environment is comical as we add on layers of clothing and are shaken around on a large metal vessel. A Parasitic Jaeger comfortably bobs along with the waves, and Sooty Shearwaters sail above the waters' surface with their wings to the vertical, making elegant, sweeping turns. People giggle at the scurrying Auklets and show awe for the flight of the immense Black-footed Albatross. And then, our attention gravitates toward a non-avian phenomenon, as we are surrounded by an active pod of Humpback Whales. They are gracing the surface with their arched backs, perhaps celebrating our journey to this other world. My eyes become watchful for spouting water, and my thoughts turn inward.

Often times, we distance ourselves from nature and thus we forget the intelligence that it beholds. If intelligence is defined by "ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills," then the term 'bird brain' is highly inaccurate. Seabirds have learned the subtleties of thermodynamics: applying the fact that air moves slower where it meets the water surface, and playfully creating something we call "dynamic soaring." They have observed climate patterns and aspects of geography that are applied through yearly or sometimes monthly migrations. This knowledge and skill set is put to the ultimate test of survival. Is this knowledge that humans can even begin to comprehend?

This foray into a new ecosystem left me feeling inspired. I had the same sort of experience that I seek to create for others in my career. In my current position as Education Program Lead at the Klamath Bird Observatory, I attempt to facilitate inspiring learning experiences for students in the outdoors. I aim to show others the beauty that I find in nature, for it is beauty that inspires humans. And it is beauty that inspires people to wonder, and question, and learn. In essence, it is nature's beauty that perpetuates a good life.

And so, I say thanks to the Rogue Valley Audubon for helping to renew my sense of wonder.

Remember to bring utensils, a plate and a potluck dish to share (hors d'oeuvres, main dish salad, side dish or dessert) to the Holiday Potluck, Raffle and Auction. Help is also needed with set up. If you can help, call Carol Potter at 541-245-9815 or e-mail Carol at carol_p@charter.net.

RVAS BIRD WALKS

LOST CREEK LAKE AND HOLY WATERS: SAT. NOV. 10

Lost Creek Lake and Holy Waters will be the destination for our monthly birding trip in November. Norm Barrett, former Forest Service biologist and accomplished bird photographer, will lead the group. Waterfowl are the main attraction at Holy Waters where the path just east of the water coming out of the dam affords great looks at such species as American Wigeon, scaup, teal, Ring-necked Duck, and Bufflehead. Bald Eagles are frequent visitors to this area, and an appearance by a Peregrine Falcon is always possible. Shorebirds, waterfowl, gulls and terns may be seen on the lake if we drive down the Medco A road to approach the lake shore. Easy walking. Duration 2-3 hours at the destination. Meet at the east end of the Dollar Tree parking lot (southeast corner of Crater Lake Hwy. and Hwy 140), and carpool from there.

FIRST WEDNESDAY BIRD WALKS OFFERED EVERY MONTH THROUGH 2013. SEE BACK PAGE

Rogue Valley Audubon Society Membership

Members of the National Audubon Society are automatically enrolled as members of RVAS. If you are not a member of NAS you can still be a member of Rogue Valley Audubon Society. To join, please send a check for \$20.00 annual dues to RVAS, P.O. Box 8597, Medford, OR 97501. Include your name, address, e-mail address and (optional) phone number. If you have any questions about membership, please contact membership chair Robert Mumby at 541-535-2934 or rdmumby@charter.net.

Do you have a favorite retailer or service provider?

Is there a restaurant you would like to support? You can help them succeed while supporting RVAS. Consider using your personal contact to suggest they buy an advertisement in *The Chat*. For as little as \$100. per year our members can be reminded that a retailer or restaurant supports RVAS every time they see *The Chat*. For details, contact our Treasurer, Kathy Simonsen at simonsen@mind.net.

BOB BLACK FUND PROGRESS

The Bob Black Fund was established with donations made to RVAS in memory of avid birder, Bob Black, who died in April of 2011. Bob kindled his previously moderate interest in birding by joining a small local group of like-minded friends and fellow retirees, all RVAS members, some five years before. He subsequently became a very active RVAS member, co-teaching with Harry Fuller a course for beginning birders. Bob served as Field Trip Coordinator for the chapter, expressing a desire to spread his discovery of the joy in birding to others.

After Bob's passing Midge Black, Bob's wife, and a group of Bob's other relatives and friends made contributions to RVAS in his name leading to the development of the Fund. With cooperation between the RVAS leadership and Bob's birding buddies, goals based on two of Bob's passions were identified - to encourage more people to discover the world of birding and birders, and to gather more information about bird life in Jackson County.

Currently, the focus of the Fund includes the awarding of grants to experienced birders, either professional or citizen scientists, for local research projects, to students from local high schools involved in senior projects in the field of birding and, to SOU students conducting activities in the field. ornithology These relatively small grants may be used for materials, travel expenses and the engaging of local professional aid in completing the project and in project publicity.

In its first year of existence, the Bob Black Fund grants have been awarded to Barbara Massey (2 grants) for portions of her Ashland Creek Dipper Study and to John Bullock for support in establishing a Summer Bird Count. Also receiving support were two SOU students, Teresa Wicks for a study of effects of audio playback as a means of attracting birds, and Sabra Comet for a study of habitat relations among wintering birds in the Bear Creek, Union Creek and Whetstone watersheds.

What Members Can Do;

Develop a grant proposal idea, including an estimate of expenses, and contact Bob's friends, Gwyneth Ragsine (541-552-1945) or Denny Niebuhr (541-482-6589) to discuss it.

Join Bob's friends and relatives by adding to the Fund by sending a check payable to RVAS indicating it is for the Bob Black Fund. Your name will be publicized in the Chat unless you request anonymity.

Come to a FeederWatch Near You

The Project FeederWatch program of the RVAS kicks off this month at North Mountain Park (NMP) in Ashland. It is part of the world's largest Citizen Science effort organized by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society and offers birders of all abilities a chance to collect data on Western Hemisphere bird populations. This will be the eleventh year that NMP and RVAS have combined to offer FeederWatch. The sessions on alternate Saturdays starting at 9 A.M. and are open to the RVAS membership and the public.

The free one hour watches provide novice birders the easiest possible identification practice since there are unobstructed, close up views of from ten to twenty species perched at feeders with the valley's top birder/educators available for help. Binoculars and field guides are available for use, though it is best to bring binos that are normally used if possible. More experienced birders often attend, jumping at the chance to show off their knowledge as well as to swap tall avian tales with their peers. There is shelter in case of inclement weather and young people are encouraged if accompanied by an adult companion. This is the eleventh year the partnership of North Mountain Park and RVAS have conducted Project FeederWatch.

The North Mountain Park sessions begin Saturday, November 10, at 9 A.M. and run until 10 A.M. the starting time common to all Saturdays. Additional sessions will be held on 11/24, 12/8, 12/22, 1/5, 1/19, 2/2, 2/16, 3/2, and 3/16. Contact Denny Niebuhr at roqueden@mind.net or North Mountain Park at 541-488-6606 for more information.

As of this writing, the plans for the companion program at the Jefferson Nature Center in Medford conducted in the past are not finalized due to a lack of a leader. Contact RVAS President Bill Hering at bh@ashlandnet.net if interested.

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM: NOV. 15-18

On November 15th-18th, 2012, the Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 16th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium at the Stockton Hilton Hotel, in Stockton, CA. To view the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips check out our website at: www.cvbs.org

ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION ACTIVITIES FOR NOVEMBER, 2012

Winter Birds of Ashland and Jackson County

Join us as we learn about birds that arrive here in the autumn and stay the winter, plus a few species that may or may not decide to over-winter around Ashland. The regulars include Golden-crowned Sparrows, Great Egrets and numerous ducks. Some possible birds include Cedar Waxwings, Lewis' Woodpeckers and Varied Thrush. Please register online at www.ashland.or.us/register or call the North Mountain Park Nature Center at 541-488-6606.

Ages: 13 years and up

Classes are comprised of both lecture and field trip

Lectures: Thursday, November 15, at 6:30 to 8:30 pm;

Field Trip: Saturday, November 17, 8 am to 3 pm

Location: North Mountain Park

Cost: \$15.00

Instructor: Harry Fuller is an Ashland-based bird guide and board member of Klamath Bird Observatory. His website is www.towhee.net. For birding updates in Oregon and Northern California, visit his blog at <http://atowhee.wordpress.com>

Climate Change and the Rogue Valley

This three-session course will explore the scientific basis for climate change and the physical and biological consequences, then focus on what is likely to happen in the Pacific Northwest and the Rogue Valley. The series will close with a discussion of steps we individually and collectively might take to address the issues and what is happening locally. While attendance at all three sessions is recommended, each can be considered a stand-alone class. Please register online at www.ashland.or.us/register or call the Nature Center at 541-488-6606.

Session 1: The Science of Climate Change and Its Physical Consequences

Session 2: The Biological Consequences of Climate Change

Sessions 3: Climate Change and the Pacific Northwest, Oregon and the Rogue Valley, and Reasonable Responses

Ages: 12 and up

Days, Dates and Times: Tuesdays, November 6, 13 and 20; at 7–9 pm

Location: North Mountain Park

Cost: \$6.00 per session or \$15.00 for the three sessions

Instructor: Alan Journet recently retired after teaching biology at Southeast Missouri State University for thirty years.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

This important event gives everybody an opportunity to be part of the biggest citizen science effort in the New World. From December 14 through January 5 tens of thousands of volunteers throughout the Americas take part in an adventure that has become a family tradition among generations. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action.

Audubon has announced two major changes to the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) this year. First, the CBC is now a free program. Audubon will no longer charge the \$5.00 fee of field participants. Second, to minimize the effects of the loss of fee income, *American Birds* will no longer be printed on paper and mailed to participants, and Audubon will move to an online delivery of the summary results of the CBC.

MEDFORD:

This year the Rogue Valley Audubon Society's Medford Christmas bird count will be on Saturday, December 15.

The area for the Medford Christmas Bird Count is a circle 15 miles in diameter, centered a mile or so west of the junction of Hwy 140 and Hwy 62 in White City. The circle has been carved up into 15 sections. Each section is entrusted to an experienced leader who makes the decisions as to times and routes. Some leaders welcome newcomers to their teams. Others may prefer to team up with experienced, hardy birders who can cope with difficult terrain and a fast pace. Hard core birders go from dawn to dark in all weather - which is sometimes wet, foggy, and cold.

If you are interested in participating contact Bob Hunter at: bobhunter@embarqmail.com or 541-826-5569.

ASHLAND:

The Rogue Valley Audubon Society's Ashland Christmas Bird Count will be on Thursday, December 27.

The co-leaders for this count are Harry Fuller, who will organize birding teams for the ten areas of the count circle, and John Bullock, who will be the compiler for the count. If you would like to participate, contact Harry by phone at [541 488-8077](tel:5414888077), or by email at anzatowhee@yahoo.com. John can be reached at [541 488-7962](tel:5414887962) or jas@opendoor.com.

The gala holiday compilation dinner will be held after the count, location to be announced, beginning at 6 p.m.

ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

THE CHAT

Newsletter of the ROGUE VALLEY AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Sign up to receive easy notification of Chapter activities

Your Audubon Chapter wants to be sure you are aware of upcoming field trips, chapter meetings, the most recent edition of *The Chat*, and other items we post on-line. Send an e-mail RogueValleyAudubon@gmail.com and ask to be added to the e-mail notification list. And be assured, we will never share your e-mail address with any other organizations.

MONTHLY BIRD WALK WITH MURRAY ORR

First Wednesday Each Month: Little Butte Creek Walk. For Nov. 7 meet at the Agate Road entrance gate of the Denman Wildlife Area at 8:00 and the walk will start at 8:30. (The gate is open between 8 and 8:30 only.) Please contact **Murray Orr, 541-857-9050** for details and if you are willing to join him in organizing these bird walks. He needs volunteers to help him open and close the gate and record observed species when he is not available. Walks will continue through 2012-2013.

