The Grebe

Klamath Basin Audubon Society
www.klamathaudubon.org
December/January 2014

KBAS General Meeting



Klamath Basin Audubon Society Holiday Party

Where: Old Towne Pizza, 722 Main Street

When: Thursday, December 11, 2014, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

What: Please join fellow birding enthusiasts in celebrating the Holiday Season. The chapter will be providing pizza for all in attendance, and you only pay for your drinks. Help boost our membership by inviting a friend, relative, or trusted stranger who might be interested in joining our chapter! All ages are welcome!

January 8, 2015, "Great Gray Owl," by Harry Fuller

Ashland birding guide and blogger Harry Fuller returns to present a fascinating program on Great Gray Owls [GGO].

According to Harry: "The Great Gray Owl is found in scattered forests across the Northern Hemisphere. Unlike the Barn or Great Horned Owl it avoids humans and settlement consistently. Thus it is rarely seen and has not been thoroughly studied.

The first GGO nest in Oregon was found near Fort Klamath in 1954. In Washington State the first nest was found in 1991! Our own population here in the southern Cascades is now separated by gaps of sagebrush and grasslands from the next nearest population in the northeastern Oregon mountains.

We will explore how and where the owls live and their survival chances here and on the Pacific Slope of Oregon, Washington, and California."
Note: photos by Brian Henry [top] and Dr. Edgar T. Jones [bottom]





KBAS General Meetings are held at 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month, except June, July and August at Oregon Tech [OIT], Mt. Thielsen Room in the College Union, Klamath Falls. **NOTE CHANGE IN LOCATION THIS YEAR**



President's Message *. . . Molly Russell*

This has been a great year for KBAS. We have had terrific programs at our general meetings and new exciting field trips with more planned in the coming year. We have given out grants to OIT for research at Lower and Tulelake National Wildlife Refuges, Klamath Downtown Association for utility boxes, Everett Veterinary Clinic for rehab and Badger Run for new equipment. We are always taking applications for the KBAS grants and will start taking applications for our school Scott grants this month. We are fortunate to have an excellent fund raiser in the Winter Wings Festival that lets us do amazing things for the community.

I want to thank Marilyn Christian for producing the Grebe. She will be moving on to other opportunities in the new year and this will be her last issue. That means we need another editor for our newsletter. If you are interested or know someone who may be able to fill this role, let one of our board members know. It would be a shame to not publish the Grebe in the future. This is one of our best sources for getting out information to our members.

Please feel free to contact me with your ideas and suggestions so we can continue to make KBAS a great organization.

Winter Wings Festival *. . . by Diana Samuels*

Online registration for the 2015 festival opens December 6, 2014 at 9:00 am. If we want to sign-up for the most popular events, we encourage you to register that day.

We are proud to announce our best raffle item ever! The Lodge at Pico Bonito, Honduras, one of the world's premier birding destinations, is donating **a gift certificate for a 6-night package for two people valued at over $3,500** to raffle off at the 2015 Winter Wings Festival.

The gift certificate includes all meals, accommodations, and unlimited guided birding on the Lodge property and the surrounding Pico Bonito National Park. The Lodge at Pico Bonito seamlessly combines nature and luxurious comfort. The luxury eco-lodge located on the Caribbean coast of Honduras near La Ceiba is a member of *Small Luxury Hotels of the World*. The Lodge offers the adventure of the outdoors, the beauty of the rainforest, and the personal service and luxury of a boutique hotel. For more details, see www.picobonito.com

In order to participate in the raffle, you need to purchase tickets at the Klamath Basin Audubon Society table near registration on Friday February 13 and Saturday February 14. Only 200 tickets will be sold at $20 each. The winner will be announced at the Saturday night keynote presentation. A few raffle tickets may be available at the January KBAS meeting.The certificate must be used between **April 30 and December 20, 2015 a**nd certain exclusions apply. We thank Anne Wenner so much for arranging this raffle item.

Stay tuned for an announcement of an exciting new exhibit at the Favell Museum in conjuction with the 2015 Festival.

The Lodge at PICO BONITO Honduras

Field Trips . . . *by Mary Ellen Sargent*

Sunday, December 14: Klamath Falls Christmas Bird Count [CBC]. This winter's Klamath Falls Christmas Bird Count will be on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14th, 2014.

It is an all day count, but you can participate however long you want. The count circle has 7 areas, including Moore Park/Link River, City of Klamath Falls, Spring Lake area, Lost River area, Green Springs area, Miller Island area, and Lake Ewauna area. The amount of driving and walking varies between each area with some areas being mostly driven, while some areas are mostly walked. Lake Ewauna has a great deal of scoping usually required.

The count has been averaging 105-110 species seen during the one day, however, last year it was below that average. The Klamath Falls count has the highest species count for counts on the eastside of the Cascades for both Oregon and Washington. Weather can be from a nice winter day, to cold, windy, and maybe even some precipitation, so be prepared for a variety of conditions.

At the end of the count, around 4:30 to 5:00 p.m. most make their way to Julie Van Moorhem's home, 3510 Pine Tree Drive, east of Klamath Falls, off of Hwy 140, past Shieldcrest Golf Course. There you can warm up, eat a potluck dinner, and join in on the compilation of the day and share stories of what was encountered.

If you are interested in participating, let me know. Tell me who you would like to go with, and if you prefer driving or walking. I will place you in a group and you can make arrangements with the group leader. Also, let me know if you plan on going to the COMPILATION POTLUCK, and what you will likely be bringing.Check with me if you just want to count birds at your home feeders. I'll tell you if your home is within the count circle and if so, just submit your yard count. If interested in participating, contact Kevin Spencer at 541-880-8015 (cell) or by email - rriparia@charter.net

Sunday, January 4: The Tule Lake CBC. That part of the Basin has harsher weather, but can also be pleasant for a winter day. The area has four areas covered by groups, and almost all of it is covered by car or truck. A potluck and compilation at Tulelake Elementary occurs at the end of the day. If interested contact Kevin Spencer at 541-880-8015 or rriparia@charter.net

Saturday, January, 24: Cabin Fever Break! Join Mary Ellen Sargent on a car birding trip to some areas around KFalls to see what we can find (hopefully there will be open water). This will be a carpooling trip with some short walks (depending on ice conditions). If KBBN posts any rarities or irruptions, we'll try to find them. Meet at Veteran's Memorial Park at 9 a.m. Carpooling encouraged.

Thursday – Sunday, February 12-15: Winter Wings Festival [WWF]. Attend and/or volunteer!

Saturday, February 21, 2015: Post WWF bird finding trip. Join WWF Bird Central point man, Rick Hardy to find the species WWF volunteers/leaders observed and perhaps others not seen at WWF. More details coming.

March [mid-late, TBD: Touring Malin and Merrill field and streams. Spring is coming and the birds are starting to migrate in! Cy Phillips will show us Malin City Park, the Lost River near Merrill, fields and perhaps White Lake Unit to showcase early migrants and late winter birds.

April [TBD]: Eagle gawking and more at LKNWR. Join Steve Rooker of FWS. This is a reprise of last year's popular tour to the Bald Eagle nest.

April/May [TBD]: Skillet Handle at Running Y. Join Darrel Samuels and Jim Rooks to look for all the migrating birds coming in. More details to follow.

Saturday, May 2: Sycan Marsh. Craig Bienz of The Nature Conservancy [TNC] will show how Sycan Marsh looks in the spring. More details to follow.

Saturday, May 9: International Migratory Bird Day. Lots of stuff going on this weekend!

June [TBD]: Nuss Lake, Lost River and Poe Valley. Join Bob and Cary Kincaid at their property on Nuss Lake and tour the surrounding fields and streams. More details to follow.

Saturday, June 6: Link River Festival. Volunteer/attend!

June [TBD]: Stukel Mountain. Any volunteer[s] to lead? Call Mary Ellen at 541-850-3926.



For all field information, contact: Mary Ellen Sargent, Field Trip Chair, 850-3926, sargentme5@aol.com to register, ask questions, have suggestions or can lead a field trip. **NOTE:** Please check the KBAS website for updates on additional field trip information: **www.klamathaudubon.org**

Field Trip Reports

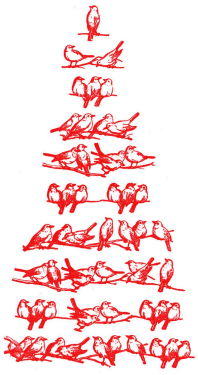
September 26-30: Point Reyes National Seashore and Hawk Hill . . . *by Charlotte Ann Kisling*

On Saturday, Sept. 27, Mary Ellen Sargent, Mary Kelly and myself joined Mt Diablo Audubon for their field trip to Point Reyes. While waiting for that group to arrive at the Bear Valley Visitor Center, we had good looks at California Towhees and Acorn Woodpeckers. The day was a bit windy and the very outer point was deemed to be slow, so the group birded only as far as the fish docks. A Philadelphia Vireo was seen a couple of days before and we looked for that with no success, but we did see three Great Horned and three Barn Owls.

We birded around the residence near the fish docks and found at least eleven Fox Sparrows in one group. Three Palm Warblers were seen just before we got to one area, but by the time we arrived, the wind was such that all of the birds headed for cover. One was seen by some members of the group. The fish docks are off limits now, but a fair number of northern elephant seals could be seen from the overlook. At Drake's Beach, a Black-throated Gray Warbler provided excellent views.

After the group broke up for the day, the three basin birders located a herd of Tule Elk, the smallest subspecies of elk, but the one with the largest racks in proportion to size.

On Sunday, we were at Hawk Hill in time for the peak of the raptor migration, but again, the wind presented a bit of a problem. Sharp-shinned and Cooper's gave us some good looks, but the other two basin birders decided to call it a day before the Merlins and Broad-winged Hawks finally made their appearance. By 1 PM, I too, quit for the day. Overall, the weather could have been better, but it was a fun experience, none the less.



Mary Ellen Sargent adds: Many thanks to Charlotte Ann Kisling and to the Mt. Diablo Audubon for a great weekend of birding. Great weather, great views, great birds, among which were Band-tailed Pigeon, White-throated Swift, Wrentit, Philadelphia Vireo, plus many others. The hawk watchers were very efficient and professional. We could really study the difference between Cooper's and Sharp-shinned hawks. Altogether, it was an enjoyable trip!

Saturday, October 18: Fall Changing of the (Bird) Guard on the Williamson Delta . . . *by Dave Hewitt*

On October 18th, Klamath Basin Audubon members and a couple guests enjoyed a tour of the northern section of the Williamson River Delta that has been restored by The Nature Conservancy. Mel Schroeder was our guide.



Figure 1 Daniel S. Kilby.

Our first stop along the willows on the far north end produced good looks at both a Prairie Falcon and a Peregrine Falcon, which were hunting the waterfowl flocks that had been forced onto the farm fields by hunters out on the water. In fact, in the one hour walk in this area we recorded 9 species of raptors, including a recently arrived Ferruginous Hawk. At least three Tricolored Blackbirds were with the other blackbirds and starlings in this area.

In the cottonwoods along the Williamson River we had a good time watching a few late Lewis's Woodpeckers flying about. We also spent some time with a large group of Northern Flickers that were moving through the area, as the group included at least a couple intergrade Yellow-shafted x Red-shafted individuals.

We concluded the tour at the "cul-de-sac" area overlooking the open water of the lake. Diligent scanning of the ducks, some at considerable distance, produced an impressive list of species including Canvasback, Redhead, and Ring-necked Duck among the usual suspects. A single Black-capped Chickadee was calling from the few solitary willows; this species is regular on the Delta property similar to other riparian parcels around Upper Klamath Lake. A small group of American Pipits flew in and perched on the rocks around the cul-de-sac, providing nice scope views.

A small group of folks finished the trip by visiting the Wood River Wetland to look for the reported Red-naped Sapsucker. No luck with that, but we did find a Red-naped x Red-breasted hybrid softly tapping on a tree. Other birds of note were a Varied Thrush and a somewhat late Common Yellowthroat near the Wood River bridge.

Field Trip Reports . . . *Continued*

Saturday, November 8: Miller Island Wildlife Management Area . . .*by Tom Essex*

Tom Essex, Audubon Society Board member and Jason Journey, Klamath Wildlife Area Manager led a small group to Miller Island on November 8. The large numbers of birds present in September had dissipated but still the group was able to observe Bald Eagles, Pheasants, Canada Geese, Red-tail and Harrier Hawks, White-fronted Geese, Eared Grebes, Wood Ducks, American Wigeons, buffleheads, robins and more.



Figure 2 Lee Juillerat, Herald & News

Journey, 38, has been at the Klamath Wildlife Area for four months; he transferred from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's district office in Hines. Because he spent nine years at the Summer Lake Wildlife Area in northern Lake County, he's not a stranger to southeastern Oregon.

The 3,400-acre Klamath Wildlife Area has several units with The Miller Island Unit, located south of Klamath Falls off Highway 97, is the largest at 2,400 acres. Journey said land for Miller Island was bought by the state in 1958 for the protection and enhancement of wildlife habitat. The Klamath Area's other 1,000 acres include the Gorr Island Unit south of Miller Island and the Sesti Tgawaals and Shoalwater Bay units on the west side of Upper Klamath Lake.

Helping out with Miller Island's history was tour participant Mike Smith, who grew up in nearby Midland and spent time at Miller Island, including winter ice skating on frozen ponds. "Every night in the wintertime, as soon as we got off the bus, we'd put on our ice skates and head out," he said. Mike also recalled times in the 1960s when he visited most of Miller Island's home-steads, including the Hooper and Delameter ranches.

70 acres were farmed this year, with the resulting wheat expected to provide feed for the hundreds of thousands of migrating waterfowl that should be arriving in February. Control methods for bullfrogs, which eat bird and other eggs, are also being studied. Regarding Miller Island, Journey said "It's great that we're able to have a place like this so close to Klamath Falls." *[From the H&N November 9, 2014 "Birding was for the birds" by Lee Juillerat]*

Saturday, November 15: Raptor Search [and more] *by Charlotte Ann Kisling*

The start of the day didn't look very promising as it was raining when we met in Worden. It didn't make any sense to try our luck around that area, so we went south through Dorris. The rain prevented me from seeking the Merlin that has been frequenting my neighborhood, so we proceeded past the bug station. There, all we could find were a couple of Bald Eagles and Red-tailed Hawks.

We turned on Shady Dell Road and it was still misting so instead of proceeding, we turned on Dorris Technoir Road past Sheep Mountain Road about a mile. The rain had stopped by that time. There we could see could see a perched Red-tailed Hawk on a utility pole and could see that is was about two insulators high. Behind that pole was another with an adult Bald Eagle that was about three insulators high. It gave us a better comparison of size when the red-tail flew to the same pole and landed on the same cross beam. One could see that the red-tail was slimmer than the pole but that the eagle was wider than the pole. We did get good identifying features of Red-tailed Hawks both facing us a with their backs to us.

Then, we had the good fortune to find six Ferruginous Hawks, one of them being an immature giving us good comparisons with the several red-tails in the area. We went back to Sheep Mountain Road where we found a Rough-legged Hawk and a Prairie Falcon. Where Shady Dell makes it first bend, we saw two or three Golden Eagles in flight and everyone could see that their heads were quite small. A little later, we had the good fortune to find two perched Golden Eagles close enough so that everyone could see how small their heads were in comparison to Bald Eagles.



Along State Line Road, we found a group of Sandhill Cranes. There was a perched immature Bald Eagle on a far pole. Even without being able to make out much in the way of plumage, its large head was all we needed to identify it. We went over to the Chin Buesing Cheyne area and found more Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks.

[Continued on Page 6]



Continued from "Raptor Search" Field Trip . . .

Along Cheyne, a Prairie Falcon posed for us while it cleaned itself up after its meal. Township Road gave us looks at more Rough-legged Hawks, but by that time it was cold and very windy, so we called it a day. I am sure that everyone who attended enjoyed themselves and learned a bit more about raptors.



Name: Olympic BirdFest 2015
Dates: April 10-12, 2015
Location: Sequim, WA

Description: The festival with the most spectacular setting! Visit the rain shadow of the ***Olympic Peninsula*** to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest—Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, dippers, Black Oystercatchers, Long-tailed Ducks, and more. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, silent auction, and a gala banquet. Our featured speaker is Lynsy Smithson Stanley: "Climate change as a 'Bird Issue'." Join the **Birdfest Pre-trip on April 8-9, 2015**, two days exploring northwest coastal Washington, a region rarely seen by birders.
Immediately following BirdFest, join us for a three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2014. Cruise registration: separately at www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon .
Birdfest website address: www.olympicbirdfest.org
E-mail address: info@olympicbirdfest.org
Contact name: Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, 360-681-4076





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	*Mary Ellen Sargent	850-3926	Sargentme5@aol.com

ALL AREA CODES ARE 541 UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

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KBAS MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION

Local Membership Dues

☐ Individual: $20 ..... Date _____

☐ Student and Senior (62 and over): $15

☐ Family: $25

☐ Here is my tax deductible extra contribution for $_____

Total Enclosed $_____

☐ Check here if you are a current member of national Audubon

☐ Not sure of national membership status

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ ZIP_____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

NOTE: You will receive *The Grebe* at this email address

☐ I do not have an email address. Please mail my copy

Please contact me regarding:

☐ Gift memberships

☐ Volunteering for KBAS Committee activities

Make your check payable to KBAS and mail with this form to: KBAS, P.O. 354, Klamath Falls, OR. 97601

The Grebe

Is published 6 times a year by the **Klamath Basin Audubon Society (KBAS)**

Mission: The Klamath Basin Audubon Society will provide the opportunity for all to experience and appreciate our region's wildlife, focusing on birds and other natural resources.

- KBAS is a chartered chapter of the National Audubon Society.
- **KBAS general meetings** are held at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month except June, July and August Oregon Tech [OIT] Mt. Thielson Room in the College Union.
- **The Board of Directors** meets 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Chamber of Commerce offices, 205 Riverside, Klamath Falls. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- For address changes please contact both National Audubon Society and KBAS, Attn. Sue Romig, P.O Box 354, Klamath Falls, OR. 97601
- Comments and information to The Grebe Editor are welcomed and encouraged. Send to Grebe Editor, 6749 Coopers Hawk Rd. Klamath Falls, OR. 97601 or mchristian1@charter.net.
- Check our website at www.klamathaudubon.org
- KBAS e-mail address: klamathauduboninfo@gmail.com



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P.O. Box 354
Klamath Falls OR 97601
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Or Current Occupant

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Klamath Basin Audubon Society Holiday Party

See Page one for details

- **Klamath Basin Bird News [KBBN]** Reminder: Klamath Basin Bird News is an informal email network (a mailing list) of over 100 bird enthusiasts in the Basin and elsewhere. You can learn more about the group at its web site (https://sites.google.com/site/klamathbasinbirdnews), and it is linked from the 'Birds' section of the KBAS web site. Please participate! Sign up online or contact Dave Hewitt at dhewitt37@gmail.com

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Happy Holidays and Best Wishes for the New Year!