

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

The Wild Arts Festival Goes Virtual

6

Reconnecting to the River

13

Vote Yes on 26-212 and 26-219

14

Swifts



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Two Honors We're Thankful For

Good news can be hard to come by...

by Nick Hardigg

Such a year 2020 has been...with COVID-19, forest fires, racial injustice, school closures, and political uncertainty...it's been enormously challenging for all of us. With the pandemic, we've adapted our programs and created new ways to engage our members. And we continue onward, engaging and protecting, and grateful to have work we care so deeply about. Fortunately, enjoying nature is one of the safest and healthiest activities we can do these days, providing exercise as well as mental-health benefits. Hiking and birding are a part of life that thankfully hasn't changed. You may even find fewer interruptions while hiking our trails thanks to one-way hiking signs we've put in place.

Good news is another health-promoting item that's in high demand, and we're happy to share ours. Portland Audubon has been awarded Portland Monthly's prestigious Light a Fire award. Member George Nicola nominated us after joining our Backyard Habitat Certification Program, a partnership with Columbia Land Trust. We presented the award to our Wildlife Care Center team, who've remained steadfast on the front lines—without their usual volunteer support—treating a record number of animals this year (more than 4,000!) free of charge. Our gratitude goes out to George, Portland Monthly, and everyone who made this award possible.

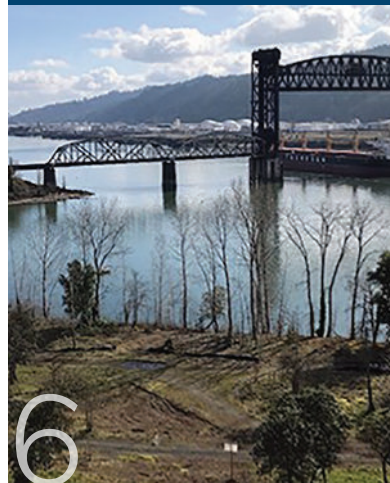
Second, Portland Audubon has been selected from among many applicants to be included in the Willamette Week Give!Guide, honoring top Oregon nonprofits and providing exposure and donations from thousands who care about conservation. See the back cover for details on how you can help make our Give!Guide fundraising a success!

This newsletter will reach most of us about November 1. We hope that these two pieces of positive news will be the first of many to greet you and our nation during this critical month of change.

IN THIS ISSUE



- 3 Wild Arts Festival Celebrates 40 Years
- 6 Reconnecting Community to the River at Willamette Cove
- 8 Field Notes & Sightings
- 9 The New School of Birding
- 10 Events & Board Election Announcement
- 12 Classes, Outings, and more
- 13 Elections: Yes on 26-213 and 26-219!
- 14 A Year of Challenges Doesn't Stop Chapman's Swifts
- 15 In Memory
- 16 It Should Not Be This Hard to Save Trees in Portland
- 17 Return of the Crows
- 19 Nature Store



6



9



14



16



PORTLAND AUDUBON'S
WILD ARTS
FESTIVAL

40 YEARS

Presented by



NOV. 14-22

ART AUTHORS AUCTION

WE'RE GOING VIRTUAL wildartsfestival.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Wild Arts Festival Celebrates 40 Years

Connecting you with the Northwest's greatest artists and authors from home

by Charles Milne, Director of Development, and Cindy Thompson, Wild Arts Festival Producer

As with many Portland Audubon programs and events this year, we will be exploring new territory by taking the 2020 Wild Arts Festival virtual! Join us this November to celebrate the 40th year of the Festival, featuring art, authors, and an auction. This year's free virtual event will highlight 50 artists, 20 authors, and a robust silent auction—all taking place at WildArtsFestival.org. Presented by Backyard Bird Shop, expect this year's Festival to be filled with the same warmth and delight you've become accustomed to only virtual and from the safety of your home!

We hope you'll join us at the Virtual 40th Celebration event on Saturday, November 14, at 5 p.m. This free live stream program will celebrate the incredible community that has shaped the Wild Arts Festival for more than four decades. Join us for a fun look back at those years. You'll have the opportunity to bid on unique art items in a "live auction" to show your support Portland Audubon and the Wild Arts Festival tradition. We have reimagined the Wild Arts Festival to not only raise the critical funds that Portland Audubon needs, but also to support the artists and authors who have always been key to the Festival's success. Please shop and spend generously if you can to support our local artists and authors.

Visit our online marketplace and enter to win a pair of Swarovski binoculars!

Starting November 14, you'll be able to enter our dedicated website—WildArtsFestival.org—to find art and books from your favorite artists and authors, all celebrating the beauty of the natural world.

One lucky attendee will win an amazing raffle item this year—a pair of Swarovski EL 10x42 "Swarobright" binoculars valued at \$1,600! Only 400 tickets at \$25 each will be available, so you have a very good chance to win these incredible optics!

Raffle tickets will be available November 14-22 or until all are sold.



Win Swarovski EL 10x42 "Swarobright" binoculars, valued at \$1,600!



Red-winged Blackbirds II 12/150 Y. Yamamoto
Yoshiko Yamamoto



Dean Crouser

Artist Marketplace

You are sure to discover something rare and wonderful at the online Artist Marketplace. A total of 50 premier Northwest artists will present a wide variety of work, from unique glass-and-metal insects by Sean Goddard to the block prints of Yoshiko Yamamoto and palm-sized felted wool birds by Claudia Paillao. You'll find something for every taste! In addition to these and other favorite Festival artists, the event will introduce 12 first-time exhibitors at the Festival.



Toby and Lauren Nolan

Artists have embraced the new virtual format and will appear in the online Artist Marketplace presenting a wide variety of work. As always, the jury worked hard to select a broad array of styles and media, include several new artists, and ensure that all art celebrates birds, wildlife, and/or the natural world.

You'll also have a chance to visit some artists' studios virtually and see demonstrations of their creative process.

Online Silent Auction

Enjoy the Silent Auction from your own home this year as you browse enticing items at your leisure. You can bid from 10 a.m. on Saturday, November 14 until 4 p.m. on Sunday, November 22—nine days!—but don't wait, as items may go quickly with the "Buy It Now" option! As usual, the emphasis is on art, adventures, and high-quality merchandise. You'll find 100 items donated by supporters, including hiking and birding gear, retail gift certificates, foreign travel opportunities, weekend getaways, and, of course, beautiful art pieces donated by members and by artists appearing at the Festival.

Christopher
Moench



Ryan Berkley



Babette Harvey



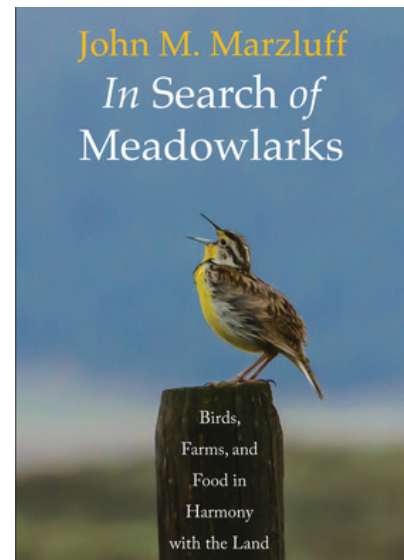
Author Marketplace

All of you book lovers will find your favorite authors (and future favorites) participating in the virtual Book Fair. This year, when you purchase your favorite author's books online, a bookplate with the author's signature will be packaged with the book and shipped to you after the event has ended. We're excited to bring you three virtual author panel discussions on Saturday, November 14, and Sunday, November 15. The following panels have been curated by our book fair committee:

- **Author Panel 1:** Colin Meloy, Carson Ellis, and Nikki McClure, moderated by Helen Raptis, Emmy award-winning host of KATU TV's AM Northwest
- **Author Panel 2:** John Marzluff, Dan Mathews, and Lee Van der Voo, moderated by Gloria D. Brown, author
- **Author Panel 3:** Molly Hashimoto and Zoe Burke in conversation

Visit **WildArtsFestival.org** for panel times and registration info. In addition, the Festival will feature virtual author readings and discussions where you can view your favorite authors discussing their works or reading from their favorite books. If you love to buy books for children, this is the place. New York Times best-selling children's author Nancy Tillman will be there, as well as Maggie Rudy, Roseanne Perry, and Pamela Slaughter! Plus, you'll find thought-provoking books about nature, conservation heroes, and environmental issues from favorite authors Kim Stafford, Bob Pyle, and Bill Sullivan. Twenty authors are participating in this year's virtual book fair, and you will want to be sure to check out their unique pages for videos, selected works, and opportunities to listen to their recorded readings or talks.

Find out more about the Festival, register for the virtual 40th anniversary celebration, and check out all the latest information at WildArtsFestival.org.



Spread the Word!

We hope you will join us in November to celebrate birds and nature and support Portland Audubon's education and conservation programs. Please tell your friends, family, coworkers, and social media network about this year's virtual Wild Arts Festival and encourage them to visit **WildArtsFestival.org** for more information and to easily import the event into their calendars.

Reconnecting Community to the River at Willamette Cove

by Bob Sallinger, Portland Audubon;
Cassie Cohen, Portland Harbor Community
Coalition; Michael Pouncil, Portland Harbor
Community Advisory Group; Travis Williams,
Willamette Riverkeeper

Willamette Cove is a 27-acre site owned by Metro, with approximately 3,000 linear feet of waterfront along the east bank of the Willamette River, just north of the Burlington Northern railroad bridge. It was purchased by Metro from the Port of Portland in 1996 for use as a natural area. However, nearly a quarter of a century has passed and the site remains posted as “No Trespassing” and fenced off from public use due to high levels of contamination with furans, dioxins, PCBs, lead, mercury, copper, hydrocarbons, and multiple other contaminants, which were released prior to Metro’s acquisition. Although Willamette Cove represents a relatively small portion of the approximately 20 miles of riverfront along the North Reach of the Willamette River that lie within the Portland Harbor Superfund Area, it looms particularly large as the Superfund cleanup process passes its twentieth year. In recent months, dozens of community groups including Portland Harbor Community Coalition, Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group, Portland Audubon and Willamette Riverkeeper have asked Metro to step up and make Willamette Cove a much higher priority. We have asked specifically that Metro initiate a community-based visioning and master planning process and advance a cleanup plan that maximizes human safety, ecological health, and future site use flexibility at Willamette Cove.

Despite the significant size of the Portland Harbor Superfund Area—spanning ten linear miles of the Willamette River and covering more than 2,000 acres—and its close proximity to multiple neighborhoods including St. Johns, Linnton, Cathedral Park, University Park, and Overlook, there is little public access to the river. For decades, our community has largely been cut off from the North Reach of the Willamette due to a combination of heavy industrial development and toxic pollution. In 2000, the North Reach of the Willamette River was listed as a federal Superfund site, a designation reserved for the most hazardous contaminated sites in the country. Even on that regrettable list, the Willamette River stands out for its size, complexity, vast array of toxic contaminants and massive list of more than 150 polluters responsible for the contamination. For the past twenty years, our community has waged a tireless battle to hold polluters



Willamette Cove, photo by Michael Pouncil.

accountable, restore the river to health, and reconnect the community to the river—twenty years of endless meetings, reviewing tens of thousands of pages of complex documents and plans, attending hearings, and writing comments—and today the community is no closer to the river than when the listing occurred two decades ago.

However, that is about to change. The Superfund process has now entered the remedial design phase in which responsible parties are required to develop detailed cleanup plans for individual sites. Once those plans are approved, actual cleanup will finally begin. While every site is important, Willamette Cove stands out as one of the only public sites within the Superfund area where the public could gain new direct access to the river. For communities that have borne the burdens of a contaminated river for generations, Willamette Cove embodies the need to redress harms through renewed access, reclamation, and restoration. That will only happen if the Metro Council steps up.

The cleanup of Willamette Cove is overseen by an alphabet soup of agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) oversees the in-water portions of the site while the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) oversees the uplands. While design of the in-water cleanup is just beginning, DEQ recently released a draft cleanup plan for the uplands that proposes to leave as much as 23,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil exceeding human health-based risk levels onsite by consolidating it and burying it underground beneath caps that will require monitoring into the unforeseeable future.

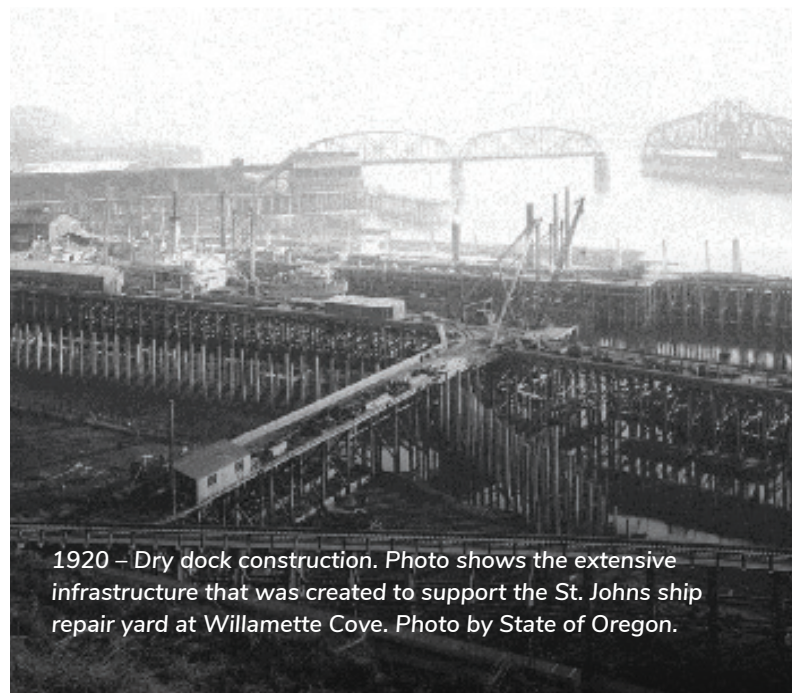


The plan is predicated on an over-20-year-old Metro vision that included minimal community input and anticipated that the only public access at Willamette Cove would be restricted to the Willamette Greenway Trail on the outer edge of the property, disconnected from the river. The retention of toxic waste on the site would result in a situation where use of the site would be limited, activities such as picnic areas and children's play areas might not be allowed, and permanent institutional controls including signage, fences, and other barriers may be required to restrict human activity. This plan is inadequate to meet community needs in general and places our most vulnerable populations, including the houseless community and people who rely on the Willamette River for subsistence, at particular risk. After decades of anticipation, our community deserves far better from Metro.

The DEQ proposal has been met with fierce community opposition. Instead, the community has advocated for an alternative that would remove all contaminated soils from the uplands and place them in appropriate landfills while preserving native trees onsite. The difference in cost between DEQ's preference and the more protective approach is estimated to be \$2.8 million, not an insignificant sum of money, but also hardly unreasonable to restore this unique site in a manner that is safe for people and the environment for generations to come. The ongoing cost of monitoring would be nonexistent.

In August, our groups had the opportunity to present a more inclusive, inspirational, equitable, and just vision for Willamette Cove before the Metro Council. At the time, Metro Council seemed enthusiastic but since August has taken no action even as DEQ moves rapidly toward adoption of an inadequate final cleanup plan. We appreciate the ongoing efforts of Metro councilors Sam Chase and Bob Stacey to champion community priorities for Willamette Cove. It is now time for the entire Council to take action.

As the property owner, Metro needs to own responsibility for this process. It must pull together all the entities responsible for Willamette Cove, including the Port, City, and state and let the oversight agencies know that it intends to pursue a complete cleanup of this site. It should immediately initiate a community-based visioning and master planning process that allows this site to achieve its fullest potential for ecological and community health. Healing from the ongoing harmful exposure and exclusion from river access will require that Metro adopt inclusive procurement tools, including a community benefits agreement to ensure that every aspect of this process moving forward fulfills Metro's commitment to equity and inclusion. Polluters should bear the full cost of cleanup, and Metro should invest whatever additional funds are necessary to truly achieve the community's vision. Last year, voters in the Metro region passed a \$475 million greenspace bond measure. Metro Council has already identified the Willamette Falls and Albina Vision sites as flagship projects for investment along the Willamette River as critical historical and cultural sites. Council should now add Willamette Cove to this string of pearls along the Willamette as a way to remediate long-standing inequities, honor first peoples, build community, and create sanctuary. It is time to propel forward a vision of restoration, renewal, and reconnection.



1920 – Dry dock construction. Photo shows the extensive infrastructure that was created to support the St. Johns ship repair yard at Willamette Cove. Photo by State of Oregon.

FIELD NOTES

by Harry Nehls

The California Quail

The natural range of the California Quail, or Valley Quail, as it is often called, is from southern Oregon and western Nevada southward through California. Being an excellent game bird, hunt clubs began introducing the species in many areas as early as 1880. Beginning in 1914 the Oregon Game Commission, now ODFW, released very large numbers in many parts of Oregon, including the Portland area.

The California Quail was first recorded on the 1927 Portland Christmas Count when 18 birds were noted. It is not found every year, but small numbers have been regularly recorded since then. Breeding birds are occasionally found in drier areas west of Portland. Most sightings, however, are escapees of birds that hunters use to train their dogs.



California Quail, photo by Mick Thompson.

Although the California Quail is prolific, there are limiting factors that affect populations and distribution. Rainfall during the nesting period decreases nesting success. Young birds foraging through wet vegetation quickly become wet, get cold, and die of exposure. Being a ground nester, this species suffers considerable predation from mammals. It is a favorite with Cooper's Hawks, and in many areas each covey is accompanied by a hungry accipiter.

SIGHTINGS

by Brodie Cass Talbott

Even with social distancing and the horrible fires and smoke that wracked much of Oregon, the fall season turned up a large number of rarities. The headlines were two state first records, reported a week apart, with the first being an apparent **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** at Fields in Harney County, followed by an **Arctic Warbler** (an Old World species) at Goose Lake in Klamath County, breaking an almost two-year drought of state firsts.

A number of other exceptional birds were reported: a **LeConte's Sparrow**, also at Fields; a **Yellow-throated Vireo** at Commonwealth Lake; a Philadelphia Vireo in Tillamook County; and a **Kentucky Warbler** at Philomath Sewage Ponds. Lane County hosted **Black-headed Gull** and **Yellow-throated Warbler** in September, while Tillamook County had its first **Canada Warbler**. Meanwhile **Summer Tanagers** were everywhere, with birds reported in four counties across the state. There were even two concurrent **Sharp-tailed Sandpipers**: one at Fernhill Wetlands, and another at Cold Springs.

In Portland, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found in the same location as last October's, in Oaks Bottom.

The same young birder also found a **Lewis's Woodpecker** above Oaks Bottom amidst the smoke, and a **Black-bellied Plover** at nearby Willamette Park, both in September.

At Broughton Beach, a pair of **Great-tailed Grackles** were reported in August, where chasers also found a **Marbled Godwit**. In September, **Sabine's Gull** and **Parasitic Jaeger** were reported there.

In August, Smith and Bybee hosted **Black-necked Stilt**, **Acorn Woodpecker**, and **Pacific Golden Plover**. Another was found on Sauvie Island, a Columbia County first. Also on Sauvie, a **Whimbrel** was seen at Raccoon Point.

A pair of **Black-crowned Night Herons**, a notoriously difficult bird in Portland, were reported at Heron Lakes golf course for one morning.

Those are only a few of the birds reported across the region. For corrections, tips, and reports, email Brodie Cass Talbott at bcasstalbott@portlandaudubon.org, and for a more detailed weekly report, visit portlandaudubon.org.



Palm Warbler, photo by Tara Lemezis.

The New School of Birding

by the Education Team

Birds are fascinating and amazingly diverse creatures, ranging in size from the 2.5-inch Bee Hummingbird to the Wandering Albatross with its 12-foot wingspan. And the birds found in our region are no exception! The temperate climate and myriad habitats of the Portland area provide for a rich variety of species that can be found in every season. There are about 230 species regularly detected in our area, including about 154 species that breed here, and each of them provides exciting opportunities to build our birding chops and dive more deeply into the interconnectedness of the natural world.

Back by popular demand is our School of Birding series, taught by Dan van den Broek and Candace Larson. Highly experienced birders and trip leaders, Dan and Candace have spent decades observing, surveying, and protecting birds across Oregon and beyond. They will take you on a riveting journey through the world of bird biology, field identification, and conservation.

The New School of Birding will help you get familiar with our neighborhood species as well as some of the amazing representatives that stretch over continents and tie our world together. In this program, we will help you build both birding skills and a deeper understanding of what is going on beneath all those feathers! Each series includes six virtual class sessions and three field trips, focusing on a different feature of bird biology, plus tips, tricks, and practice with field identification, all provided through a combination of lecture, online quizzes, helpful handouts, live interaction with your instructors, and extensive field time.

Our inaugural series will focus on some of the secrets that birds have on the inside. Birds are amazing flying machines, and the physiology that provides for this most famous of superpowers includes an impressive synergy between lightweight bone mass, powerful muscles, ultraefficient respiration, and many other unique adaptations. We hope you'll join us on this exciting journey!

CLASS

New School of Birding: 6 weeks of virtual classes, 3 field days

**Instructors: Dan van dan Broek
& Candace Larson**

VIRTUAL CLASSES

**Wednesdays, January 20-February 24
6 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.**

**Classes are limited to 18 participants and
will include instruction in both biology and
field identification.**

FIELD DAYS

January 30, February 13, and February 27.

**Field days are in person, beginning at 8
a.m. every other Saturday during the series.
They will run 5-7 hours, depending on
the destination. Field days will be divided
into two groups of 9 participants plus one
instructor, and each group will experience
both instructors during each outing.**

Fee: \$450 members / \$600 non-members

Register at
audubonportland.org





Artwork by Erica Beyer, Wild Arts Festival artist.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Nature Night: The Ground Between Us: A Digital Film Screening

November 10, 2020 | 7 p.m.

Public lands throughout America have faced unprecedented threats. Bears Ears National Monument was shrunk by 85%, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was opened to oil exploration, and the Elliott State Forest in Oregon was nearly privatized. The Ground Between Us presents these public lands debates. Update on status of Elliott State forest will follow the film.

Cost: Free, donation suggested



40th Wild Arts Festival Anniversary Celebration

November 14 | 5-6 p.m.

Join us to celebrate the 40th Wild Arts Festival! We'll look back at the 40-year history of the Festival and you'll have the opportunity to bid on unique art items in a "live auction." RSVP online.

Cost: Free, donation suggested



Wild Arts Festival

November 14-22

Join us November 14-22 to celebrate the 40th year of the Festival, featuring art, authors, and an auction. This year's free virtual event will highlight 50 artists, 20 authors, and a robust silent auction—all taking place online.

Cost: Free



Cost Involved



Public Transit Available



Free



Family Friendly



Wheelchair Accessible



Virtual Event or Program



Sandhill Cranes on Sauvie Island, photo by Mick Thompson.

ONLINE CLASSES FOR ADULTS

We are excited to share new online opportunities that can help us learn and grow from our homes.

Understanding Waterfowl

November 5 | 6-7 p.m.

In this introduction we'll take a look at the evolution, anatomy, and behavior of waterfowl.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Brodie Cass Talbott



Winter Sparrows

November 9 | 6-7 p.m.

While all these little brown birds may look alike at first glance, this class will show you the differences in size, shape, color, and behavior that enable you to identify the different species.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: John Rakestraw



November Virtual Birding on Sauvie Island

November 10 | 6-7 p.m.

Greg Baker documents a day birding Sauvie Island in November. Hone the essential skills of identifying birds by sight, sound, behavior, and habitat in this fun, interactive class.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Greg Baker



Beginning Waterfowl Identification

November 12 | 6-7 p.m.

From geese to ducks and swans and beyond, there are a lot of birds swimming in our waters! This identification class gives you the tools you need to identify them with confidence.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members

Instructor: Brodie Cass Talbott





Steller's Jay, photo by Mick Thompson.



ONLINE CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Birding Oregon Hotspots: Columbia Estuary

November 17 | 6-7 p.m.

This class will explore sites from the massive Fort Stevens State Park east through Hammond and Warrenton to the Youngs River. This area includes a great range of habitats.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members
Instructor: John Rakestraw



Birding for Beginners: Introduction to Birding

November 24 | 6-7 p.m.

New to birding? In this introduction for beginners, the what, how, and why of one of the fastest-growing hobbies in the world will be explained.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members
Instructor: Brodie Cass Talbott



Birding Oregon Hotspots: Washington County Wetlands

December 10 | 6-7 p.m.

This class will explore the best wetland sites from Hillsboro to the edge of the Coast Range. We will cover well-known sites but also out-of-the-way wetlands that most birders miss.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members
Instructor: John Rakestraw



The Ecology of Feathers

December 16 | 6-7 p.m.

Join Portland Audubon field biologist Candace Larson on a journey into the form and function of one of nature's most versatile adaptations.

Fee: \$20 members / \$30 non-members
Instructor: Candace Larson



BOARD ELECTIONS

Nominations Welcomed for March 18 Board Election

Each year in March, our board elects its new directors from a slate of candidates. Directors are limited to serving two consecutive three-year terms, with committee chairs allowed to extend service for additional one-year terms. The Board Affairs Committee welcomes recommendations for candidates sent by email to Volunteer Manager Vicky Medley (vmedley@audubonportland.org) on or before January 15, 2021.

Additionally, members may directly nominate a candidate by submitting a petition signed by 10 or more members to the Board Affairs Committee also by January 15. Candidates nominated by petition will automatically be placed on the election ballot. Please note: qualified candidates must be current Portland Audubon members. Petitions may be sent to Executive Director Nick Hardigg by mail or email nhardigg@audubonportland.org

For background on our elections and bylaws, please see the March 2019 issue of the Warbler, available on our website. Thank you.



Common Murre, photo by Scott Carpenter.

IN-PERSON PROGRAMS FOR ADULTS

Our in-person programs are held outdoors and require masks. Participants must follow all physical distancing and safety protocols dictated by the Oregon Health Authority. Visit audubonportland.org for details.

Audubon Birding Day: Newport and Seawatch

November 7 | 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

In favorable conditions, we will chase for alcids and tubenoses at Boiler Bay State Wayside. Then we will hit various spots around Newport for rarities, storm birds, and winter visitors.

Fee: \$85 members / \$115 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick | Limited to 10 participants



Field Trip: Lolo Pass Road

November 8 | 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

We will make various stops through changing habitats as this road climbs the flanks of Mt. Hood. Red Crossbill, Evening Grosbeak, Sooty Grouse, and Horned Lark are possibilities.

Fee: \$65 members / \$85 non-members

Leader: Dan van den Broek | Limited to 10 participants



Field Trip: Clackamas County Hotspots

November 13 | 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Discover the birding patches near Canby and Molalla. We will search for Western Meadowlark, herons and egrets, Northern Harrier, Peregrine Falcon, and Acorn Woodpecker.

Fee: \$65 members / \$85 non-members

Leader: Dan van den Broek | Limited to 10 participants



Short-eared Owl, photo by Scott Carpenter.

Field Trip: Coffee Lake Wetland and Coffee Creek

November 15 | 8-10 a.m.

These Wilsonville-area wetlands and the surrounding marshy area hold ducks, occasionally swans, and wrens. Unusual finds have included Northern Shrike and Swamp Sparrow.

Fee: \$45 members / \$65 non-members

Leader: Dan van den Broek | Limited to 10 participants

Audubon Birding Day: Finley National Wildlife Refuge

November 22 | 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

We will bird the different habitats of Finley focusing on winter birds, waterfowl, and rarities hoping for Northern Shrike, Rough-legged Hawk, Western Bluebird, and Short-eared Owl.

Fee: \$85 members / \$115 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick | Limited to 10 participants

Audubon Birding Day: Baskett Slough & Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

December 5 | 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

We will search for Horned Lark, waterfowl, and Northern Shrike at Baskett Slough, then close the day at Ankeny searching for Short-eared Owl.

Fee: \$85 members / \$115 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick | Limited to 10 participants

Audubon Birding Day: Bring in the New Year in Washington County

January 1 | 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The day will start at Fernhill Wetlands, then we will bird a few other spots until the day ends near Forest Grove.

Fee: \$85 members / \$115 non-members

Leader: Stefan Schlick | Limited to 10 participants



Election: Vote YES on 26-213 and 26-219 to Protect Parks and Natural Areas in Portland

Portland Audubon urges you to VOTE YES on two important measures to protect our parks and natural areas: 26-219 (HydroParks) and 26-213 (Portlanders for Parks Levy). Both measures will help keep Portland green and equitable.

Portlanders for Parks Ballot Measure

The Portlanders for Parks Levy, 26-213, which was referred to the voters by the Portland City Council, will create an operating levy that will raise an average of \$48 million per year for five years to support critically important programs at Portland Parks and Recreation (PP&R). A YES vote will help ensure that Portland continues to create an amazing system of parks and natural areas that provide equitable access and programming for the community and protect and restore our natural environment. The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted just how important access to parks and natural areas is to our physical and mental health. At the same time, the pandemic has put unprecedented strain on funding for parks. Passing this measure is essential to restore recreational and community programs, keep community centers and other recreational facilities open, restore our natural areas, and maintain basic operations necessary to keep our parks clean and safe. The measure prioritizes increasing access to programming for underserved communities including communities of color, refugees and immigrants, and families experiencing poverty.

Portland HydroParks Ballot Measure

The Portland HydroParks Ballot Measure, 26-219, which was referred to the voters by the Portland City Council, allows the Portland Water Bureau to use its properties outside the protected Bull Run Watershed for secondary uses such as parks, community gardens, playgrounds, picnic areas, play fields, tree plantings, and naturescaping. The Portland Water Bureau owns a variety of sites across Portland that house essential water infrastructure such as water towers and pump stations. Often these sites contain significant amounts of unused land but have been fenced and unavailable to the public. In recent years, the Portland Water Bureau has pulled back the fences and opened many of these sites for public use. Picnic tables, community gardens, park benches, play equipment, and other amenities have replaced fenced-off, mostly empty lots. Many of these sites occur in underserved neighborhoods where these benefits are desperately needed. This common-sense measure would amend the Water Bureau Charter to more formally allow these secondary uses where appropriate on Water Bureau infrastructure sites and allow the Water Bureau to invest ratepayer funds to improve these sites for public use and ensure that they are safe and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A Year of Challenges Doesn't Stop Chapman's Swifts

by Joe Liebezeit, Staff Scientist & Avian Conservation Program Manager, and Candace Larson, Field Biologist

On October 1, 2020, a single Vaux's Swift spent the night in the Chapman Elementary School chimney, marking the end of another dramatic and successful migration of these tiny flying acrobats through the Portland Metro region. Each fall, thousands of Vaux's Swifts roost in Chapman's chimney on their southward journey from breeding areas in northwestern North America to wintering grounds in the Neotropics. The roost at Chapman is considered one of the most important stopover points on the Pacific Flyway for this species and can harbor over 15,000 swifts on a given night!

As with all of us, the swifts had a lot to contend with this year. This spring, Portland Public Schools moved ahead to replace the aging Chapman school roof and undertook a major renovation to the chimney itself. Portland Audubon worked closely with PPS and construction crews well in advance to come up with a plan to minimize impact to the birds. This included careful staging and work hour restrictions, and steps to ensure that the new chimney cap would closely match the original, including reinstalling original bricks in the cap interior, as we knew that any change to the physical structure could influence the behavior of finicky swifts. The contractor was able to install the carefully created topper on the stack by August 14—just in time for the early arrivals.

In a year without a global pandemic and crushing climate change-fueled wildfire smoke to contend with, people across the Portland Metro area and beyond come to enjoy this urban wildlife spectacle as part of Portland Audubon's Swift Watch program. But in 2020, we instead worked with Portland Public Schools and Portland Parks to cancel the event and discourage the public from visiting in order to respect state guidance on physical distancing to curb the spread of coronavirus. We were still able to recruit a small crew of experienced volunteers to conduct swift counts (following COVID safety protocols, of course), as we've done for over a decade. The count this year was especially critical since we were dealing with the newly designed chimney cap, and it was unknown how the swifts would respond.

Monitoring started on August 16, with small numbers of swifts visiting the chimney but not going in. This is not unusual early in the season, but with the new chimney cap we were starting to wonder if the swifts would adapt.



Photo by Tara Lemezis.

Our concerns quickly eased as swifts arrived in earnest on August 26, when just over 1,000 birds roosted in the Chapman chimney. From there, it was a quick ascent to over 9,000 birds, witnessed on September 8. For the safety of our volunteers, we suspended counts for 10 days during the dangerous air quality period, but staff made two counts during this window, documenting nearly 12,000 birds roosting on September 14 and over 13,000 on the 16th. After the smoke cleared, volunteers returned and documented the typical winding down of swift numbers by the end of the month.

Despite our concerns about the new chimney and mid-season smoke, the swifts appeared to follow their usual pattern. It's a relief to know the birds seem to have adapted to the renovated Chapman chimney with no issue. The impact of the west coast fires on swift migration, as well as on other birds and wildlife, is something we will be learning more about in the coming months and years as scientists investigate potential impacts. Meanwhile, look for our report on the state of the Portland swifts coming out later this year.

We thank PPS, 2KG Contractors, Portland Parks, and the local community for their collaboration and communication. And of course we thank the swift count volunteers for their brave efforts to document swift migration at Chapman in this very unusual year.



Northern Flicker, photo by Mick Thompson.

IN MEMORY

Portland Audubon gratefully acknowledges these special gifts:

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It Should Not be this Hard to Save Trees in Portland

by Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director

Sabin is one of Portland's tree-deficient neighborhoods. In recent years, as infill has increased, many of the largest trees in Sabin and adjoining neighborhoods have been removed. In the summer, the neighborhood cooks under the glare of the sun. One tree in particular, however, still looms large over this neighborhood: a giant sequoia that is more than 100 feet tall and 10 feet in diameter.

The giant sequoia straddles two residential properties and therefore is jointly owned. In May of 2020, one of the owners, Shayan Rohani and Claire Bollinger, returned home to find a notice issued by the City of Portland Urban Forestry Program declaring the tree a hazard and ordering its removal. The sequoia's root system was compromising the foundation of the basement of the vacant rental house next door. At the request of the adjacent landowner, and without any attempt to mediate the situation or communicate with Shayan or Claire, the City simply ordered the tree to be cut down.

Despite repeated efforts to urge the City to withdraw the removal notice and mediate a solution that would save the tree, the notice still stands. Shayan and Claire recently lost their effort to challenge the order before a hearings officer, who found that, although the City failed to live up to its values, appeared to favor one owner over another, and failed to even contact one of the owners, it had not violated any ordinances and therefore the removal order was sustained. The only legal recourse left to Shayan and Claire is to take the case to Multnomah County Circuit Court.

It should not be this difficult to save a tree in Portland...

When the City adopted its Title 11 Tree Code in 2011, part of the promise of the code was that the City would increase its permitting staff in order to work with the public and find strategies to preserve trees. That clearly did not happen in this case. If a giant sequoia with a base bigger than a VW

Bus and located in a tree-deficient neighborhood did not trigger a more creative response from the City, one has to wonder what tree would.

While the City appears to have treated the removal of this sequoia as a routine bureaucratic procedure, the community has been less sanguine. Neighbors make COVID-safe pilgrimages to the tree to check on it. A GoFundMe page has raised more than \$9,000, and a Change.org petition has generated more than 6,000 signatures. Claire and Shayan continue to look for constructive solutions to save the tree. And perhaps there is hope on the horizon: Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who recently took over the urban forestry program, has signaled her hope that a solution can be facilitated.

In the short run, the City needs to withdraw the removal order and facilitate a solution that preserves this magnificent tree. In the longer run, this situation speaks to a glaring deficiency in our tree code that needs to be remedied: Certain trees in our community should trigger a higher level of review when they are proposed for removal. Trees over a certain size, especially in underserved neighborhoods, need an extra layer of protection biased toward preservation rather than removal. Some trees should simply not be removed and certainly not through routine bureaucratic processes. The City is currently moving through a multiphase review of the tree code, and we will be advocating for a new layer of protection for our most important neighborhood trees.

In the end it is very unlikely that this sequoia will come down—the City would have to remove Claire and Shayne from their own home, shut down the street to bring in heavy machinery, and cut the tree down itself. It is hard to see tree-hugging Portlanders allowing that to happen. However, this is a battle that never should have had to be fought in the first place. It should not be this hard to save a tree in Portland...

Return of the Crows

by Bob Sallinger, Conservation Director

Along with the steady drip of rain, one of the surest signs of approaching winter in Portland is the seasonal congregation of crows in downtown. For the better part of two decades, Portlanders have been treated to the spectacular sight of thousands of cacophonous crows converging on the downtown area in the late afternoon and early evening. The congregations increase throughout the fall and peak in the dead of winter when upwards of 15,000 crows can be found roosting downtown.

During the spring and summer, crows fan out across the landscape in small family groups to nest and raise their young. Parents are often aided by their offspring from the prior year in this effort. Most neighborhoods around Portland have a family of territorial nesting crows. In the winter, however, crows roam across the landscape to forage by day but form communal roosts in the evening. These roosts can range in size from a few dozen crows to hundreds of thousands. There are winter roosts in several locations in Portland, but by far the largest occurs in downtown.

Scientists believe that crows form winter roosts because there is safety in numbers, large numbers of birds provide warmth during the harsher winter months, and it allows for exchange of information among the crows. Roosts can occur on urban and rural landscapes. A variety of factors may attract crows to urban landscapes for roosting including warmer ambient temperatures, food subsidies provided by garbage cans and other accessible food sources, lighting, and reduced pressure from predators such as Great Horned Owls.

While the crows are fascinating and spectacular, a congregation of this size also produces copious quantities of crow poop, presenting a challenge in high-traffic human activity areas such as the downtown transit mall. By morning, fecal matter can cover much of the streetscape including sidewalks, benches, bus stops, outdoor furniture, and awnings. While we always encourage the community to "live with wildlife," we also work to develop ecologically responsible and humane solutions when real conflicts do occur.

Downtown Clean and Safe, which is responsible for keeping the downtown core area clean, has worked for many years to address challenges associated with accumulation of crow feces. Initially, they focused on sidewalk-cleaning strategies such as pressure washing and the purchase of the Poopmaster 6000, a Zamboni-like device to clean streets and sidewalks. When those strategies proved insufficient, they shifted to contracting with licensed falconers Integrated Avian Solutions to haze the crows away from a seven by ten block area as they congregate in the evening.



A team of falconers roams the downtown area on intermittent evenings with trained Harris Hawks. The hawks make short flights to structures such as light posts and then return to the falconer's glove. There is no direct interaction with the crows, but the strategically deployed presence of these avian predators is enough to nudge the crows out of the streetscape and down to the trees of nearby Waterfront Park where their falling poop is absorbed more or less innocuously into the grass below.

The falconry mimics the pressures crows would face on more natural landscapes, and crow populations are doing quite well locally and nationwide. Partners in Flight estimates there are 28 million American Crows in North America and gives American Crows their lowest threat rating for both distribution and population levels. The crow roost remains in the downtown core, the roosting crow population continues to grow, and the people of Portland continue to enjoy a truly spectacular wildlife-watching event.

Nature Night: Dr. Kaeli Swift, Something to Crow About

December 8 | 7 p.m.

In celebration of the crows, we are excited that renowned crow researcher Dr. Kaeli Swift, one of our most popular speakers in recent years, will join us for our virtual Nature Night. All over the world, crows, ravens, and other corvids have infiltrated nearly every part of our lives. Join us as we host Dr. Swift in a discussion of what makes these birds so uniquely captivating.

BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Through their business practices and financial contributions, the following businesses are helping advance our mission and protect Oregon's birds, natural resources, and livability. If you would like to become a member of the Portland Audubon Business Alliance, please contact Charles Milne, Director of Development at **971-222-6117**.



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Support Portland Audubon's Education Animal program by sponsoring a "Wild Thing"! Your sponsorship goes toward the care and feeding of our resident animals who serve as ambassadors for their species, as well as the injured and orphaned native wild animals in the Wildlife Care Center.

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Welcome Back to the Nature Store!

We have been so happy to welcome customers back for in-store shopping. Thank you to all of our customers for following our safety protocols and understanding as we make adjustments to keep everyone safe. We appreciate your support!

- New hours: Tuesday-Sunday (closed Monday) 10 a.m.-4 p.m., COVID-19 protocols in place
- 503-292-9453 ext. 3 | store@audubonportland.org



Spotted Towhee, photo by Mick Thompson.

Optics Focus: NEW Optics in Stock

Both Zeiss and Swarovski have come out with great new products this year, and the Nature Store now has them in stock.

Zeiss's top-of-the-line Victory SF binoculars now come in a mid-sized option, both 8x32 and 10x32. With amazing clarity and brightness, and unmatched balance and weight distribution, the 32mm Victory SF binoculars will be easy to carry on any trip or adventure.



Swarovski's new NL Pure binocular is another game changer. With a huge field of view and a great feel in the hands, the new NL Pure 8x42 and 10x42 offer a whole new binocular experience. The Nature Store also has the new Swarovski dG Digital Guide in stock, and we will have the ATX spotting scope 115mm objective lens in November. Call or email for more information.



2021 Calendars

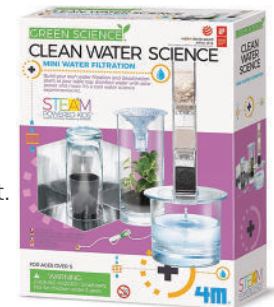
The Nature Store has a great selection of wall, engagement, page-a-day calendars, and more. Grab yours now and start planning for a great 2021!

Audubon Songbirds Wall Calendar - \$14.39 (member price)



Experiment and Learn at Home

The Nature Store has a whole new stock of 4M KidzLab science kits! These educational kits encourage creativity and exploration while also providing educational and learning content. From Clean Water Science to Crystal Mining to Survival Science, there is sure to be a kit for any kid!



Clean Water Science Kit - \$14.40 (member price)

PNW Picks

Sauvie Island Coffee

The Nature Store loves to carry products made by local artists and vendors! We are always sourcing new products made in the PNW, and love to support our local community.



This PNW pick goes out to Sauvie Island Coffee Co. Freshly roasted on Sauvie Island, their single origin or select blends have great flavor and are bird friendly, too! A bag of Sauvie Island Coffee makes a great gift for a friend, or a treat for yourself.

12oz. Bag - \$14.40 (member price)



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Portland Audubon inspires all people to love and protect birds, wildlife,
and the natural environment upon which life depends.



Northern Spotted Owl, photo by Scott Carpenter.

Willamette Week's Give!Guide

Portland Audubon is back in the Willamette Week Give!Guide. What a great way to expand our capacity to achieve our mission and welcome new members into our ever-growing community!

Starting on November 2, you can support Portland Audubon and be entered for a chance to win Big Give Day drawings as well as receive other perks. When you see our announcements about the Big Give Days, please consider a gift to help us meet our Give!Guide fundraising goal. We're hoping to raise \$40,000, all to be used on the ground right here in Oregon to connect people with nature and protect wildlife and their habitat.

GET IN TOUCH

Administration Offices

503-292-6855

Please call for updated hours

Wildlife Sanctuary

Dawn to dusk every day

Wildlife Care Center

503-292-0304

Open daily from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
with new COVID protocols

Nature Store & Interpretive Center

503-292-9453 ext. 3

Please call for updated hours

Portland Audubon staff are working remotely to slow the spread of COVID-19. All staff can still be reached by phone or email.

On the Cover: Dona Reed, hand-colored linocuts. Available at the Wild Arts Festival.

On the Inside Cover: Cedar Waxwings by Emilie Chen, Willamette Cove by Michael Pouncil, Lesser Goldfinch by Tara Lemezis, Trees by Wil C. Fry, Vaux's Swifts by Tara Lemezis.



Birdy Brain Buster!

Which woodpecker species lives in large family groups?

- A. Hairy Woodpecker
- B. Northern Flicker
- C. Acorn Woodpecker
- D. Lewis's Woodpecker



We are a member of Earth Share Oregon.
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Answer: Acorn Woodpecker