

# The Klamath Bird

Newsletter of the Klamath Bird Observatory, Winter/Spring 2013



## The President's Perch

Dick Ashford, KBO Board President

On behalf of the Klamath Bird Observatory, I am pleased to share with you our annual year-in-review. I am (as always) impressed with the scope of KBO's work and, more importantly, the results of that work. Please read the articles in this newsletter, and I am certain you will be pleased as well.

Since KBO is a science organization, many of the articles contain terms such as "datasets," "informatics," "distribution models," and "biodiversity." Exciting, huh? But read closer and you will find more practical language like "help land managers" and "Decision Support Tools." Simply stated, our science is being put to work. Our research is performed not in an ivory tower, but in what a dear friend of mine called "the field of wonder." Our goal is simple: to keep common

In this Year-in-Review Issue we summarize achievements from 2012

birds common and to help ensure there is a field of wonder for future generations. I am happy to be a small part of that effort and I hope you will continue to be part of it as well.

Last year seems a long time ago because we are so busy today building on the accomplishments of 2012. The challenges facing bird populations are great, but by working with our partners—and with your help—we can continue to make a difference.

Thank you for your support—the birds need it, and deserve it.

DICK

## Note from the Executive Director: Improving Ecosystem Management

John Alexander, KBO Executive Director

As KBO continues to advance bird and habitat conservation through science, education, and partnerships, our efforts are beginning to be used to meet broader ecosystem conservation objectives. Over the years we have worked with our partners to develop a strategy that links a multispecies conservation approach with natural resource management through management- and policy-relevant science. The strategy involves collaborating with resource managers to assure our science is relevant and that our results are applied during initial phases of management planning and implementation. Through this strategy we are using our science-based tools to improve our partners' efforts to implement ecosystem management. Ecosystem management is a process that takes a scaled, landscape approach to maintaining biological diversity as a critical component of ecosystem function and resilience.

We are now working to support broad-scaled ecosystem management efforts with results from decades of monitoring, new regional bird conservation plans, and the Avian Knowledge Northwest data node and state of the art decision support system, all at our fingertips. This integration of avian science into natural resource management planning will allow us to apply the knowledge we gain from studying birds to describe desired conditions using measurable habitat and population objectives. These desired conditions can then be used in broad-scaled management plans that apply our science to restoring and maintaining healthy ecosystems. By integrating our science-based bird conservation tools into broad-scaled natural resource planning we are seeking to improve ecosystem management, and as a result, bird conservation.

## 2012 Year in Review

In this newsletter you will find synopses of KBO's major achievements in 2012 by focus area. Enjoy!

### Leadership in Bird Conservation

Klamath Bird Observatory personnel continue to serve in leadership roles throughout the bird conservation community. Currently our staff participate as leaders within the California and Oregon-Washington Partners in Flight (PIF) chapters, and serve as chairs for the PIF Western Working Group and International Steering Committee. KBO is active within the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) serving on the committee that is responsible for producing the United States' State of the Birds reports as well as NABCI's monitoring subcommittee. KBO staff members serve to co-chair the Avian Knowledge Alliance, an international group of organizations dedicated to amassing, archiving, and communicating knowledge gained from the study of birds. In addition, our staff chair the North American Banding Council and take lead roles on Council committees. KBOers serve on the Western Hummingbird Partnership steering committee, the International Migratory Bird Day Art Committee, in Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Education Leaders, and also participate in or lead several multi-party monitoring projects. Bird conservation requires strong leadership, and KBO is rising to the challenge thanks to dedicated staff, strategic partnerships, and outstanding supporters.



KBO's Jaime Stephens and Felicity Newell received recognition for their collaborative work on oak habitat conservation

### International Capacity Building

With support from the US Forest Service International Programs and the Rotary Club of Ashland, KBO works to expand international capacities for monitoring and conservation. Our efforts are twofold. First, advanced training is offered at KBO for select international student interns. Second, sustained support for former international interns who are developing monitoring programs in their home countries is offered through mentorship and logistical backing. Ongoing efforts involve collaborations in western Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Costa Rica, Colombia, and Perú.

### North American Ornithological Conference

The Fifth North American Ornithological Conference, held this year in Vancouver, British Columbia, attracted nearly 1,500 participants, making it the largest ornithological meeting ever held in the US or Canada. KBO made a strong presence at the meeting as staff and affiliates presented posters on (1) Black Tern population trends and associated hydrological conditions, (2) effects of fire on avian communities, (3) long-term monitoring in National Parks, and (4) avian communities in oak woodlands. KBO also had an information booth at the conference and put on a 4-day North American Banding Council workshop where we trained participants from Canada, the US, Mexico, Colombia, and Puerto Rico about bird identification, ageing and sexing techniques, safe handling procedures, and safe mist net use. Nine KBO staff, interns, and affiliates attended the conference.



Ian Ausprey demonstrates the identification, ageing, and sexing of a hummingbird to workshop participants. Photo © Laura Cardenas.

## Conservation & Restoration

### Central Umpqua-Mid-Klamath Oak Habitat Conservation Project

To continue KBO's work to better understand bird-habitat relationships in oak woodlands, including the response of birds to oak restoration, KBO has been collaborating with a diverse group of partners through a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) funded Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative. We are working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Lomakatsi Restoration Project to implement and monitor oak restoration on private lands in Douglas and Jackson Counties in Oregon, as well as in Siskiyou County, California. To date, 1,138 acres have been restored and we completed pre-restoration monitoring in 2012. The US Department of the Interior honored this collaborative project with the *Partners in Conservation* award.



### Quercus and Aves

KBO contributed to a new publication on birds and oaks as part of our role in the American Bird Conservancy's *Quercus and Aves* project. The well-received *Land Manager's Guide to Bird Habitat and Populations in Oak Ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest* is available on our website ([www.klamathbird.org/resources/professional/197-dst](http://www.klamathbird.org/resources/professional/197-dst)). We also coordinated a private landowner field day during which landowners spent the morning outside with restoration practitioners, agency managers, and wildlife biologists, discussing oak restoration in the Rogue Basin, opportunities for private lands restoration, and the benefits of restoration to birds and other wildlife. Also, KBO continues to work with Oregon State University in support on a Master's student who is using data collected from this project for her thesis.

### Western Hummingbird Partnership

In 2012 KBO worked with the Western Hummingbird Partnership to revise content on the program's website. The mission of the Partnership is to maintain thriving populations of hummingbirds in western North America through habitat restoration and enhancement, population monitoring, research, and education and outreach projects. KBO works with the Partnership's coordinator and Steering Committee to identify priority website needs and update the website accordingly. The website ([www.westernhummingbird.org](http://www.westernhummingbird.org)) is a clearinghouse for hummingbird information and includes a species database, a forage plants database, maps, outreach materials, and lists of threats, research needs, and ongoing hummingbird projects.



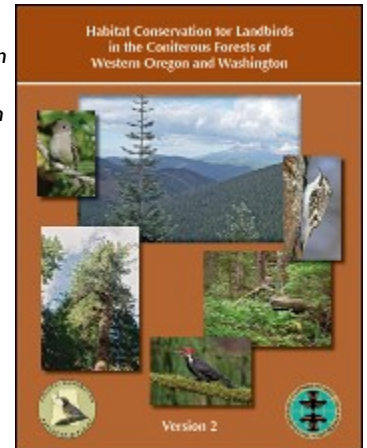
Anna's Hummingbird © Jim Livaudais 2013.

The new coniferous conservation plan can be accessed at the Oregon/Washington *Partners in Flight* website: [www.orwapif.org](http://www.orwapif.org)

### Coniferous Forest Conservation

In collaboration with the American Bird Conservancy and Oregon-Washington

Partners in Flight, KBO published *Habitat Conservation for Landbirds in Coniferous Forests of Western Oregon and Washington, Version 2.0*. Recommendations included in this document are intended to guide planning efforts and the habitat management actions of land managers, direct expenditures of government and non-government organizations, and stimulate monitoring and research to support landbird conservation. The recommendations also are expected to be the biological foundation for developing and implementing integrated conservation strategies for multiple species at multiple geographic scales to ensure functioning ecosystems as indicated by healthy populations of landbirds.



### Hummingbirds and Fire

Working in collaboration with the US Forest Service, KBO completed a literature review summarizing the effects of fire and restoration on habitats and populations of western hummingbird species. While little is known about the response of hummingbirds to fire or restoration in many western US habitats, studies indicate that most western hummingbird species respond positively to wild or prescribed fire in forested habitats of the western United States. Restoration practices that eradicate exotic plants, encourage the regeneration of native shrubs and flowering plants, and promote early successional habitats in forested landscapes are also likely to benefit hummingbirds.

## Conservation & Restoration (cont.)

### **Trinity River Restoration Program**

Since 2002, the Bureau of Reclamation has been working to restore salmonid populations that have been impacted by dams on the Trinity River in northern California. Restoration involves constructing riparian habitat that benefits both fish and birds. KBO is continuing the bird monitoring work originally started by the US Forest Service Redwood Sciences laboratory. Drawing on ten years of data, KBO completed a 2012 report examining how bird abundance varied between restoration sites and remnant riparian habitat. We have also expanded the bird monitoring project by implementing two additional methodologies that will provide more intensive measures of restoration response, such as whether birds are nesting in the recently restored riparian habitat and, if so, whether or not they are successfully fledging young. Results will be used within the adaptive management framework to assess the program's success in creating ecologically viable riparian habitat.



*In 2012 KBO Monitored 42 Song Sparrow nests throughout the Trinity River Restoration Program area. Photo © Jim Livaudais 2013.*

### **Fourmile Creek Restoration**

The Fourmile Creek and Harriman Springs Restoration Project is restoring aquatic habitat in the Upper Klamath Basin by enhancing a seasonal wet meadow and increasing the abundance of riparian hardwoods. In 2012 KBO completed the second year of post-restoration monitoring during the breeding and fall migration seasons. Several bird species associated with montane meadows are expected to respond positively, including Lincoln's Sparrow, Song Sparrow, and Common Yellowthroat.



*The restoration of Fourmile Creek will return the wet meadow to its natural hydrology*

### **Gold Ray Dam Bird Monitoring**

The removal of the Gold Ray Dam along the Rogue River in August 2010 resulted in changes to the river and the adjacent upland habitats. KBO completed a second year of post-dam removal bird surveys in 2012. KBO is monitoring riparian-associated focal species like Yellow Warbler and Song Sparrow along the river corridor as part of a collaborative effort to assess the effects of dam removal and to evaluate the effectiveness of riparian re-vegetation efforts. Results will aid future restoration efforts that follow dam removals.

## Long-term Monitoring

### **Breeding and Migration Season Banding**

KBO and Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory biologists continued our long-term monitoring program at 16 sites in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion, respectively. We captured 11,904 birds of over 90 species in 2012. The most frequently captured birds included Song Sparrow, Oregon Junco, and Swainson's Thrush. These efforts track population abundance, reproductive success, and survival of birds in the region. Twelve student volunteer interns from the US and abroad received training in banding techniques and other bird monitoring methods. Of these, ten were tested and certified by the North American Banding Council at the Bander level and three were also certified at the Bander Trainer level.

### **Landbird Monitoring in the National Parks**

In 2012 KBO continued long-term monitoring of bird populations at national parks in the Klamath Network, completing surveys in mixed-hardwood habitat at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area and high elevation riparian and mixed-coniferous forest at Lassen Volcanic National Park. This project includes surveying six national parks on a three year rotation, with two parks being surveyed each year. Other parks include Crater Lake National Park, Redwood National and State Parks, Lava Beds National Monument, and Oregon Caves National Monument. Monitoring at Oregon Caves also includes a long-term banding station.

### **Ashland Watershed**

The Ashland Forest Resiliency Stewardship Project is designed to reduce the risk of severe wildfire in the Ashland Watershed while protecting ecological integrity. KBO is studying the effects of density management (i.e., fuel reduction using commercial harvest techniques) on birds and their habitats as part of a multi-party monitoring project. KBO has been implementing monitoring in the Ashland Watershed since 2005 and baseline results show a diverse coniferous forest bird community. In 2012, we initiated a new study design and collected a single year of pre-treatment data. We will revisit the same sites following treatment to assess changes in the bird community and the effectiveness of density management in reaching desired ecological conditions.

## Connecting the Public with Bird Conservation

### Teacher Workshops: Environmental Literacy and Bird Conservation

KBO is committed to enabling educators to teach science literacy, bird conservation, and place-based education. KBO participated in two educator trainings in 2012 and initiated a process to make our extensive curriculum library free and available for educators on our website. With funds from the US Forest Service's *More Kids in the Woods* program we have begun designing three educator resource kits that will guide educators through science-based outdoor activities for their students in the Winema-Fremont, Rogue River-Siskiyou, and Klamath National Forests. In August, KBO participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Education Leaders' August Institute, a week-long workshop that introduced teachers to local natural resource professionals and demonstrated field trips and curricula that impart science literacy and ecological understanding. KBO also partnered with Crater Lake National Park to present our available curriculum resources to middle school educators at the Crater Lake Climate Change Educator Workshop.



Teachers at a workshop at Crater Lake. Photo by Jeanine Moy.

### Youth Education

In 2012 we delivered K-12 educational programs through key partnerships. KBO introduced students in the Ashland and Phoenix-Talent School Districts to the wonders of local birds through our flagship program, *Songbirds, Science, and Schools*. We also offered hands-on classroom activities under this program in Sam's Valley and Gold Hill elementary schools. We again partnered with the Siskiyou Field Institute to deliver the *Songbirds, Science, and Outdoor Schools* program for Jackson and Josephine County students at the Deer Creek Center in Selma, Oregon. We continued our relationship with the Willow Wind Community Learning Center in Ashland by teaching a semester-long course focused on birds, ecology, and conservation. In partnership with ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum, KBO held three week-long summer camps for Rogue Valley youth. Finally, we rounded out the year with a few select fall field trips in partnership with Lomakatsi Restoration Project; in these, we engaged Rogue Valley High School students about conservation issues and ecological restoration practices.



Ashland High School students look out over the Ashland watershed during a field trip. Photo by Jeanine Moy.

### Community Outreach

In 2012, KBO connected hundreds of community members to birds and conservation through bird walks, banding demonstrations, and public presentations, as well as through our attendance at festivals. We maintained our popular community bird walk program in which experienced volunteer bird walk leaders took participants to birdwatching hotspots such as Touvelle State Park, Roxy Ann Butte, Scott Valley, Emigrant Lake, and Hyatt Prairie. KBO staff gave conservation presentations for general audiences on topics including conservation birding and vulture conservation. Finally, KBO participated in birding festivals and other events across the region: Winter Wings in Klamath Falls; Godwit Days in Arcata; International Migratory Bird Day in Ashland and Yreka; the Oregon Country Fair in Veneta; the Rocky Point Barbeque on Upper Klamath Lake; the Greensprings Mountain Festival; and the Bear Creek Festival in Ashland.

### Conservation Outings

KBO launched a new program in 2012 called Conservation Outings. Here we combine a celebration of birds with the commitment needed to ensure their continued survival. Participants make tax-deductible donations in support of bird conservation and go on outings to witness some of the region's exceptional birdlife. Last year's trips included visits to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Oregon, a high country trip to search for mountain birds above the Rogue and Klamath River Valleys, and an excursion through the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument for *Birding by Ear*. Upcoming outings are listed at the bottom of the KBO homepage ([www.klamathbird.org](http://www.klamathbird.org)) under Trips and Events, and at the back of our newsletters.

## Thanks to Our 2012 Donors!

Donors listed by cumulative contribution to KBO

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## 2012 Volunteers

*Klamath Bird Observatory is deeply appreciative of our donors, volunteers, and partners.*

*We have tried our best to include everyone who helped us advance bird and habitat conservation in 2012, and we sincerely apologize for any oversights. If you are not listed here and should be, please let us know.*

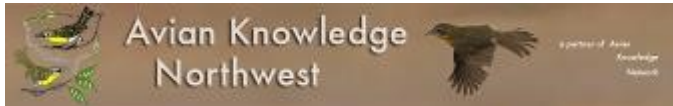
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American Bird Conservancy	Jefferson Nature Center	Rogue Valley Audubon Society
Anna May Family Foundation	JiJi Foundation	Rogue Valley Council of Governments
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Avian Knowledge Alliance	Klamath County	Sandra James Music Foundation
Avian Knowledge Network	Klamath Lake Land Trust	ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum
Bear Creek Watershed Education Partners	Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas	Siskiyou Field Institute and Deer Creek Center
Bird Studies Canada	Lomakatsi Restoration Project	Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Education Leaders
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Cornell Lab of Ornithology	North American Banding Council	University of California, Los Angeles
Costa Rica Bird Observatories	North American Bird Conservation Initiative	Center for Tropical Research
Coyote Trails School of Nature	North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperatives	US Army Corps of Engineers
Douglas County Parks Department	Northwest Nature Shop	US Department of Defense
Godwit Days	Northern California Resource Center	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Gray Family Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation	Oregon Oak Communities Working Group	US Geological Survey
Greensprings Mountain Festival	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	US Forest Service
Harriman Rural Fire District	Oregon State University	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory	Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board	Western Bird Banding Association
Humboldt Bay Initiative	Pacific Coast Joint Venture	Western Hummingbird Partnership
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Institute for Bird Populations	Portland Audubon	Winter Wings Festival
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## Informatics



### Avian Knowledge Northwest

In 2012 we unveiled Avian Knowledge Northwest, a powerful new node of the Avian Knowledge Network that provides information on birds and the environment for scientists, natural resource managers, and other individuals interested in conservation science in the northwestern United States. Avian Knowledge Northwest seeks to advance ecosystem conservation by providing knowledge about birds and their habitats from comprehensive historical and current datasets. Such information will increase our understanding of bird population distributions and trends and will help inform ecological planning. Avian Knowledge Northwest is hosted by the Klamath Bird Observatory, in partnership with PRBO Conservation Science and the US Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory.

[www.AvianKnowledgeNorthwest.net](http://www.AvianKnowledgeNorthwest.net)

### Processing Data for the Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas

LaMNA is a partnership that has created data tools to seek, archive, and visualize banding datasets. These compiled data are derived from a variety of bird banding sources and are ultimately archived in the Avian Knowledge Network. Klamath Bird Observatory, Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory, and the US Forest Service Redwood Science Laboratory are active partners of LaMNA and in 2012 we assisted with the archiving and compiling of approximately 75 banding datasets. A total of 370,000 records from the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion are now available in a single format for analysis.



### Klamath-Siskiyou eBird

Developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and partners, eBird is the fastest growing biodiversity database in existence. Birders throughout the world contribute their bird sightings to eBird, and scientists use these data to monitor changes in bird populations and distributions. In 2012 the Klamath Bird Observatory and Redwood Sciences Laboratory continued to host our local eBird node, Klamath-Siskiyou eBird. While this local node is integrated into the international eBird network, it contains news items relevant to the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion and offers bioregional data queries.

### Bird Distributions in a Changing Climate

KBO, PRBO Conservation Science, and American Bird Conservancy have been working together throughout 2012 to create current and future avian distribution models for the Pacific Northwest. We worked with RSL to compile more than 900,000 records and input them into Avian Knowledge Northwest. Data contributors included City of Portland, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Park Service, Portland Audubon, The Nature Conservancy, US Department of Defense, US Forest Service, US Geological Survey, and US Fish & Wildlife Service, as well as individual researchers. The modeling effort resulted in interactive tools (available at the Avian Knowledge Northwest website) that help land managers and conservation professionals identify high priority locations for birds and their associated ecosystems, now and in the future. The project was funded by the North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperative.



*In the next 70 years, Western Wood-Pewee abundance in the Pacific Northwest is expected to increase across broad areas but decrease in areas of current high abundance, based on climate predictions. Photo © Jim Livaudais.*

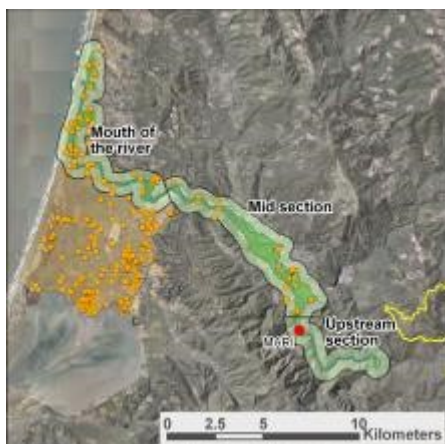
### Compiling Hummingbird Data

There is a critical need to find and make available data reflecting the life history and health of western hummingbird species in Canada, USA, and Mexico. Klamath Bird Observatory, Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory, Redwood Sciences Laboratory, and PRBO Conservation Science are working to recruit and archive such datasets, compiling data into the Avian Knowledge Network. The data are being made available on the Western Hummingbird Partnership website where partners can use tools to visualize hummingbird distributions. Historical datasets combined with current datasets will help us learn about our hummingbirds' population trends and inform management of their habitat needs.

[www.ebird.org/Klamath-Siskiyou](http://www.ebird.org/Klamath-Siskiyou)



# The Klamath Bird Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory



The coastal riparian study area along the Mad River, with eBird count locations

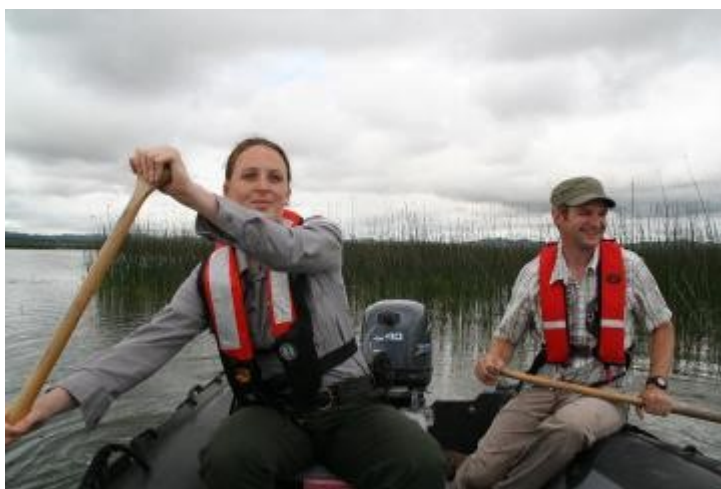
**Using eBird Data to Assess Coastal Riparian Habitat**  
 HBBO received funding from the Pacific Coast Joint Venture to assess the wildlife value of coastal riparian habitat in Humboldt County. For this project, eBird data were extracted along the Mad and Eel River corridors. Analyses included 3,144 surveys that detected 332 bird species between the years 1963 and 2010. The results will guide future habitat management and conservation actions related to these unique and imperiled coastal habitats.

**Revisiting the Redwood Experimental Forest**  
 In the 1980s, our partners at the US Forest Service Redwood Sciences Lab completed Marbled Murrelet and landbird monitoring surveys in the Redwood Experimental Forest. During this time period, sections of the forest experienced intensive management, including clear cuts. We received funding to revisit those sites and assess population trends, now almost 25 years after those initial surveys. We have already noticed changes: new vegetation has turned the formerly wide roads into narrower trails, and there appear to be temperature and rainfall differences. We have detected a total of 58 species and of these we suspect 33 are breeding in the forest. A second season of surveys will help separate long-term changes in bird populations from year-to-year variation.

## Aquatic Programs

### Waterbird Monitoring

In 2012 KBO's Aquatic Bird Program continued its partnership with US Army Corps of Engineers to monitor colonial waterbirds at Fern Ridge Reservoir and Fern Ridge Wildlife Management Area. Monitoring focused on the counting of breeding pairs of colonial nesting waterbird species, specifically Black Tern, Western Grebe, and Clark's Grebe. Fern Ridge Reservoir supports the only known breeding colonies of these three species west of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon.



US Army Corps of Engineers Wildlife Biologist Garrett Dorsey (right) and Natural Resource Specialist Jesse Brownlee (left) joined KBO Aquatic Bird Biologist Karen Hussey (behind the camera) for waterbird surveys at Fern Ridge Reservoir.

### Riverine Birds and Fish on the Trinity River

What can birds tell us about fish locations? KBO and US Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory analyzed eight years of riverine float survey data in conjunction with various fish parameters to assess temporal and spatial associations between the two taxonomic groups on the Trinity River in California. We found two fish-eating bird species, Green Heron and Belted Kingfisher, to be more abundant in areas likely to have abundant juvenile Chinook salmon, the primary salmonid on the river. Investigating these associations is helpful for evaluating riverine birds as ecological indicators in the context of salmonid restoration work on the Trinity River.



The cast of characters from KBO's recent bird-fish analysis on the Trinity River: (left to right from top) juvenile Chinook Salmon, Spotted Sandpiper, American Dipper, Common Merganser, Belted Kingfisher, Green Heron. Bird photos © Jim Livaudais.

## KBO Websites

### Klamath Bird Observatory

Last year we launched our new website, designed to better provide KBO services and products to community members and colleagues. Visit our site to learn about upcoming trips and events, conservation science programs, KBO in the news, and education and community resources. You can also navigate from our website to Avian Knowledge Northwest and our blog, Klamath Call Note.

[www.KlamathBird.org](http://www.KlamathBird.org)

### KBO Blog

The Klamath Call Note—named after the short, diverse, and relevant call notes of birds—went live in 2012 and delivers a range of informative articles related to birds, birding, conservation science, conservation history, and more. Visit the blog to join the conversation and stay up-to-date with advances and emerging issues in bird conservation.

[www.KlamathBird.org/  
the-Klamath-Call-Note](http://www.KlamathBird.org/the-Klamath-Call-Note)

### KBO on Facebook

KBO tripled our Facebook fan list in 2012 and we now have over 700 fans. Facebook allows us to share short communications and stunning photos with a wide audience. Our most popular post to date drew attention to the Klamath Basin as the preeminent wintering location for Bald Eagles in the contiguous United States. Like us on Facebook to stay connected with KBO through your Facebook newsfeed.

[Facebook.com/KlamathBird](https://Facebook.com/KlamathBird)

## Bird Bio: Black Phoebe

Teresa “Bird” Wicks, KBO Education Intern

The Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*) is the only black and white flycatcher found in North America. Thus, they are easily distinguished by their mostly black body and white belly. Eastern Kingbirds and Eastern Phoebes, similarly, are dark above and pale below, but are generally grayer and also have a pale throat and breast. Additionally, the range of the Black Phoebe barely overlaps the ranges of these two species. The range of the Say’s Phoebe, however, does overlap that of the Black Phoebe, but the gray-brown upper parts and rust-colored belly of the Say’s Phoebe make it difficult to mistake for a Black Phoebe. When Black Phoebes are perched they are often seen “wagging” their tails, a characteristic shared by both the Say’s and Eastern Phoebes.

The Black Phoebe’s range extends north from western South America through most of Central America and Mexico, and into the United States. In the United States, they are predominantly found in the southwestern states, historically breeding and wintering along western California into the Rogue Valley in Oregon. In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Black Phoebe’s range expanded north to Curry County, where they are now considered year-round residents, and Coos County, where winter sightings are becoming more common. Due to their ability to cohabitate with humans, the Black Phoebe’s range continues to expand in Oregon, with irregular reports in the Umpqua and Willamette Valleys.

As with other flycatchers, Black Phoebes are primarily insectivorous. They feed by sallying from their perch and catching airborne insects, or by gleaning insects from plants. Small insects are consumed on the wing, while larger insects are carried back to a perch where they can be killed and then consumed. Occasionally, Black Phoebes will dive into the water to capture minnows and other small fish!

Black Phoebes are most often found along streams, ponds and marshes, typically perched on the lower branches of riparian trees or low-lying manmade structures. When it comes to nesting, male Black Phoebes hover near potential nest sites whereas females choose the final site and construct the nest. Their open-cup nests, made of mud and vegetation, are cemented to cliff faces, bridges, and other manmade structures, and resemble Barn Swallow nests.



The Black Phoebe is a nearly all black bird with a white belly. Photo © Jim Livaudais 2013.

Sources: Marshall, D.B., M.G. Hunter, and A.L. Contreras, Eds. 2003. *Birds of Oregon: A General Reference*. Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, OR. 768 Pp.; Wolf, B.O. 1997. Black Phoebe (*Sayornis nigricans*). In *The Birds of North America*, No. 268 (A. Poole and F. Gill, eds). The Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, PA, and The American Ornithologists’ Union, Washington, D.C.

## Join KBO on Upcoming Events



Great Horned Owl © Jim Livaudais

### Malheur for Photographers

April 19-22nd, 2013

Led by Harry Fuller and Dan Elster

Three Spaces Left!

Call Brandon to register 612-910-6502  
\*More details below\*

#### Saturday, April 13th KBO Bird Walk to Agate Lake

Join KBO Board Member and Bird Walk leader Harry Fuller for a bird watching outing to Agate Lake. We'll look for migrating ducks and shorebirds, Lewis's Woodpeckers, Golden and Bald Eagles, Osprey, Western Bluebirds, Lark and Savannah Sparrows, and Western Meadowlark. We expect to wrap up by noon. Meet at 8:00 am at Wild Birds Unlimited in Medford. This outing is limited to 15 participants and registration is required. To register, call 541-770-1104.

#### April 19-22, Malheur Trip for Photographers

Want to take spectacular wildlife photos? Here's your chance. Support bird conservation and improve your photography on this KBO outing for photographers to the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge. Bird guide Harry Fuller and photographer Dan Elster will lead this exceptional trip. Sage Grouse will be lekking and the flooded fields will be full of Ross's Geese. Bald and Golden Eagles, Prairie Falcons, Great Horned Owls, and Ferruginous Hawks will be nesting, while the first wave of eastern vagrants will be passing through. This special outing will include a maximum of 10 participants, so be sure to register soon! **Cost is \$345, includes lodging, two dinners, breakfasts, and \$200 tax-deductible donation.** Call Brandon for details and to register, (612) 910-6502.

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### Support Klamath Bird Observatory

Your contributions help KBO advance bird and habitat conservation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  Home  Work  Cell

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



Give the gift of a healthy environment to future generations.

Please select one and make your tax-deductible donation payable to KBO.

- \$35 Regular Annual Membership
- \$100 Supporting Membership
- \$50 Family Membership
- Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_



**PO Box 758  
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**Return Service Requested**

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Sarah Rockwell, PhD—*Research Biologist*  
Karen Hussey, MS—*Research & Monitoring Program Manager*  
Robert Frey—*Biologist & Banding Project Lead*  
Brandon Breen, MS—*Outreach & Communications Specialist*  
Jeanine Moy, MS—*Education Programs Lead*  
Josée Rousseau, MS—*HBBO Program Director*  
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University*

## **KBO Interns**

Teresa “Bird” Wicks

