

# The Klamath Bird

Newsletter of the Klamath Bird Observatory, Spring 2016



## Migratory Bird Treaty Centennial!

Robert Frey, KBO Biologist

August 16, 2016 marks the centennial of the Convention between the United States and Great Britain (for Canada) for the Protection of Migratory Birds – more commonly known as the Migratory Bird Treaty. This and three others that followed – with Mexico (1936), Japan (1972), and Russia (then Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; 1976) – form the cornerstones of our efforts to conserve birds that migrate across international borders. The Migratory Bird Treaty prohibited the take, possession, importation or exportation, transport, sale, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase, or barter, any migratory bird, or the parts, nests, or eggs of such a bird except under the strict terms of a valid permit. The bird species protected by the Treaty include all species native to the signatory nations and their territories.

The Treaty today, following several amendments and Presidential Executive Orders here in the U.S., has fostered engagement and cooperation by many levels of government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and

private industry. It connects the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service with our federal, state, private, tribal, non-governmental organizations, and international partners who share a long, successful history of conserving, protecting, and managing migratory bird populations and their habitats. By design, it laid the groundwork for both legal protections and conservation efforts going forward and led to models of cooperation and partnership seen in action groups such as North American Bird Conservation Initiative, Ducks Unlimited, Partners in Flight, and a broad spectrum of Migratory Bird Joint Ventures.

Of all the legislated agreements people have made in the interest of wildlife and habitat conservation, and while all have

*In This Issue: We celebrate the Migratory Bird Treaty and National Park Service centennials (and why we can **be happy about it**), **KBO's part in it all ... plus a 100-year-young poem!***

played important roles in where we are today, perhaps none has been of greater importance for wild birds than the Migratory Bird Treaty – and it is 100 years in action this year!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created a webpage dedicated to the Treaty Centennial Celebration (see <http://www.fws.gov/birds/MBTreaty100/>) ... check it out for more information, programs, and opportunities to get involved. For all the good this cooperative **agreement has done, let's celebrate with a big Happy Birthday!**



## One Hundred Years With Our National Park Service—Let's Celebrate!

Robert Frey, KBO Biologist

The year 1916 was a dramatic and in many ways pivotal one. It saw most of **the world's nations engaged in the Great War** or other violent political turmoil. In the US, the first woman (Jeanette Rankin of Montana) was elected to **Congress ... Chicago's Wrigley Field (then Weeghman Park) opened ... the first-ever supermarket opened – a Piggly Wiggly!** And the National Park Service was established.



NPS manages 410 units nationwide – including 59 parks.

On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the National Park Service Organic Act creating the new agency and **mandating "... it conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."**

*Continued Page 4—NPS Centennial*

## Note from the Executive Director—Breaking News: A Call to Action!

John Alexander

To mark the Migratory Bird Treaty Centennial, the North American Bird Conservation Initiative has published the **State of North America's Birds report**. Through a groundbreaking collaboration between the US, Mexico, and Canada this report evaluates birds across nine ecosystems across the continent. The report highlights two key aspects of bird conservation that are core to Klamath Bird Observatory's science, education, and partnership efforts. **First, science driven conservation works, and second, our continent's birds once again need our help.**

Where we invest in healthy habitats, birds are doing well and healthy birds mean healthy ecosystems. The report provides examples, including a vignette about the Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network collaboration. This network has leveraged \$4.5 million of combined federal and non-federal resources to restore over 3,000 acres of oak woodlands, with another 3,000 acres to be restored by 2020. This work is being guided by and evaluated with KBO research and monitoring.

**The Report presents a Watch List that identifies one third of North America's bird species as high risk, including the Olive-sided Flycatcher.** KBO research shows that, in our region, the Olive-sided Flycatcher is associated with fire and related forest conditions. This is just one example of the many indicator species that we study, with results informing forest management. The **State of North America's Birds report emphasizes the importance of such studies, because quality, not just quantity, of our temperate forests is critical for forest birds.** We are using science to integrate bird conservation priorities with pressing forest management challenges with an intention to protect and restore our forests, and thereby stop the steepening declines of our western forest birds.

**This new State of North America's Birds report is a call to action.** Migratory birds connect people to nature and provide multiple benefits – ecological, economic, aesthetic, and recreational – to humans and the natural environment. The call is for our governments, industry, and the public to again come together to support migratory bird conservation.

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## Mountain Bird Festival — May 20, 21, and 22!

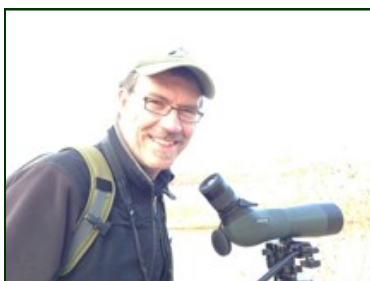
Marcella Sciotto, *KBO Assistant Director*

**The Mountain Bird Festival is back for 2016 and you don't have to be registered to** enjoy some of the benefits! Klamath Bird Observatory is once again hosting the Festival at ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum on East Main Street in Ashland. Friday and Saturday evening there will be an open social hour from 5-8 PM with local fine art galleries and food vendors, regional wines and microbrews, and a feel-good community atmosphere.

Everyone is welcome! If you are there on Friday evening you will still have the chance to register for the full Festival (\$120), if it is not sold out, or on Saturday you will have the opportunity to purchase a KBO conservation stamp collection (\$40), inclusive of the Mountain Birds Conservation Science Stamp and the Federal Duck Stamp, which will get you into the Saturday evening Keynote address. Also, on Saturday morning there will be a free kids-only field trip that leaves from the Northwest Nature Shop, so if you have young ones with you may want to consider that option. More information about the Festival, including current field trip availability, can be found at our website (<http://www.klamathbird.org/community/mountainbird>).



2016 Mountain Bird Festival Artwork  
by Gary Bloomfield



**The Festival's keynote address – Saturday at 7 PM – will be “Birding That Counts” presented by Dr. Doug Robinson, Professor of Wildlife & Fisheries, Oregon State University** Dr. Robinson will discuss how making relatively small changes in our usual birding activities can greatly improve the value of our daily observations and show how birding can leave a lasting legacy through large-scale projects such as eBird and Oregon 2020 – a statewide effort to create a benchmark of Oregon's birds at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## KBO's Part In It All John Alexander, KBO Executive Director

As spring arrives we have much to celebrate – the arrival of our shared migratory birds and the arrival of our field season, when we put into action the tradition that is core to Klamath Bird Observatory. This tradition, with deep roots in our conservation movement, is the study of natural history and the art of field biology.

Through this tradition, at the turn of the 20th Century, ornithologists were playing a critical role in building a foundation for conservation policy in the United States. Their scientific study of birds in the field had a profound influence on the **development of our country's conservation policies that were** beginning to reflect an environmental ethic growing in the United States. Ornithologists were leading the argument for ecosystem conservation with evidence that unsustainable exploitation of natural resources was putting many species at-risk of extinction, a sign that we were upsetting an ecological balance central to our national well-being. With their influence, Theodore Roosevelt started an ambitious conservation agenda resulting in a series of powerful conservation statutes and a momentum for conservation. In 1916, with this momentum as wind in the sails of conservation, the Migratory Bird Treaty was signed, representing the first of many bird-specific statutes. So this year we also have cause to celebrate more broadly the international conservation movement Klamath Bird Observatory **works within as we recognize the Treaty's centennial.**

Much of what Klamath Bird Observatory does today is driven in part by the Migratory Bird Treaty and the related Migratory Bird

Treaty Act of 1918. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act put into law our **nation's Treaty commitment to protect migratory birds.** We now have memoranda of understanding between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and various federal agencies specific to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. A high level Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds oversees these MOUs in order to **better fulfill our country's commitment to bird conservation.** The MOUs specifically emphasize interdisciplinary collaborations with non-federal partners in implementing migratory bird conservation. They also commit the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, key KBO partners, to 1) consider management objectives and recommendations from the bird conservation initiatives, 2) implement related conservation actions across multiple land ownerships, and 3) initiate and support collaborative inventory, monitoring, management studies, research, and information exchange. Science-based non-governmental organizations, like KBO, are identified as key partners for helping federal resource management agencies meet the intention of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

And thus we celebrate our birds, their conservation, and the role we all play in ensuring conservation through science, education, and partnerships. Part of this celebration will happen when we bring our community together for the 3rd Annual Mountain Bird Festival where we highlight the role of citizens and science in elevating bird conservation. This year we will be joined by the **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as we share in our nation's** celebration of the Migratory Bird Treaty centennial.

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## Introductions Are In Order ...

Ellie Armstrong, Kate Halstead, and Robert Frey, *KBO Biologists*

With the spring comes our fieldwork season and several new, and a few familiar, faces in our KBO family. The long-term monitoring banding project has six student volunteer interns joining us. Luiza Figueira and Pedro Martins are returning from our 2015 team and their home country Brazil, both recent MSc degree recipients from the National Institute for Amazonian Research. Luiza will be our banding field crew leader. We also have returning Eva Leach from Washington, an Evergreen State College graduate, just returned from our partner Navopatia Field Station in Sonora, Mexico. Jaclyn Tolchin from Michigan and graduate of the University of Michigan, also returns from the 2015 team. Ingrid Tello López and Jorge González Pelayo, just arrived from Jalisco, Mexico, are both biology students at Universidad de Guadalajara who work with ornithologist Dr. Sarahy Contreras Martinez.

Our long-term monitoring point count projects will be completed by three field technicians and two contractors. Nate Trimble, raised in Arkansas and Texas and a KBO Trinity River program intern in 2013, returns after earning his MSc degree at Texas State University earlier this year. Mike Fuss, a Washington native, has worked with a variety of wildlife research projects in Asia and South America, and most recently closer to home with Idaho Bird Observatory. Rebecca Loeb, of Massachusetts and graduate of Warren Wilson College in North Carolina, has traveled, volunteered, or studied in Asia, Europe, and Latin America. They will be joined by local expert point count contractors and long-time KBO collaborators Frank Lospalluto and Jim DeStabler.

Our Trinity River bird monitoring program has five interns who began their field work in early April. Katie Temple is a returning KBO intern; she and accompanying new intern Tyler Winter both graduated from Evergreen State College and just completed winter banding internships at Point Blue Conservation Science. Florence Masson, graduate of Vanier College in Montréal, recently worked in **Costa Rica.** Armand Cann is from Ohio and attended Xavier University, recently an intern with the Chicago Botanic Garden's Chihuahuan Desert program. Kim Geissler recently worked as a songbird bander for the University of Montana Bird Ecology Lab and has experience working with birds in California and Massachusetts. **Boas vindos a todos! ¡todos bienvenidos! ... welcome all!**



## National Park Service Centennial—Continued from Page 1

Previously, national parks were individually managed which was both inefficient and ineffective. The drive for an independent agency to better oversee these lands was spearheaded by business and civic leaders and conservationists. A publicity campaign promoted the idea that the scenic qualities of the parks and their possibilities for education, inspiration, and recreation were a benefit to the nation – then a very new idea. The congressional debate over national park management went on for four years but did ultimately result in the creation of a National Park Service.

The importance of these preserved lands – a concept in practice found uncommonly in the world – should not be understated for its value to the conservation of wildlife and their habitats. At the direst times of wildlife exploitation, it has been these preserved lands, and other protected areas managed with wildlife as a priority, that have provided refuge for recovering populations. Beginning in 1992, the Park Service embarked upon a quest for knowledge, at a very detailed scale, about what natural and historic resources were present on lands they manage for the nation. The Inventory

and Monitoring Program was established to collect, organize, analyze, and synthesize natural resource condition data and information, and to provide the results in useful formats.

**NPS's Klamath Inventory & Monitoring Network is comprised of Crater Lake National Park, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Lava Beds National Monument, Oregon Caves National Monument, Redwood National & State Parks, and Whiskeytown National Recreation Area.**

One might well wonder where the treasures – our national parks, monuments, recreation areas, lakeshores, seashores, preserves, and historic places – would be without the NPS and its mandate delivered by Congress and President Wilson 100 years ago: "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and wildlife therein, and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Let us celebrate 100 years of that best idea and the National Park Service.

The NPS has created a webpage devoted to the centennial (see <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm>) – with a Find Your Park search tool, Upcoming Celebratory Events, News, Partners, and Programs – check it out!

**KBO has played an important role in our regional NPS Klamath Network Inventory & Monitoring effort. We completed the Network's bird inventory over three years and developed a monitoring protocol we now implement in the Network's six parks.**

### MEET WISDOM - THE OLDEST KNOWN - ALBATROSS



- 1956 Biologist Chandler Robbins bands Wisdom
- 1959 Hawaii becomes a state
- 1969 Moon landing
- 1976 Bicentennial of the U.S.
- 1981 MTV premieres
- 1997 First Harry Potter book released
- 2007 iPhone debuts
- 2016 Centennial of the Migratory Bird Treaty

EVERY BIRD SHOULD LIVE THIS LONG  
PROTECT THEIR HABITAT — PROTECT BIRDS

[HTTP://WWW.FWS.GOV/BIRDS/MBTREATY100/](http://www.fws.gov/birds/mbtreaty100/)



## Words On the Wind

### *A celebration of birds in literature*

*We offer a worn-well Frost classic – also in its centennial.*

The Oven-Bird by Robert Frost

There is a singer everyone has heard,  
Loud, a mid-summer and a mid-wood bird,  
Who makes the solid tree trunks sound again.  
He says that leaves are old and that for flowers  
Mid-summer is to spring as one to ten.  
He says the early petal-fall is past  
When pear and cherry bloom went down in showers  
On sunny days a moment overcast;  
And comes that other fall we name the fall.  
He says the highway dust is over all.  
The bird would cease and be as other birds  
But that he knows in singing not to sing.  
The question that he frames in all but words  
Is what to make of a diminished thing.

Public Domain—first published in Frost's 1916 collection *Mountain Interval*

## President's Perch: Mindful Birding

Shannon Rio, KBO Board of Directors President

It is easy to look back 100+ years ago, before any concerted efforts were made to conserve birds and their habitats, and be judgmental about how people wantonly killed them for inexpensive food and for fashion. However, we should be mindful of how our activities, as birders and bird lovers, even today can result in bird and habitat disturbance.

KBO has adopted ethical birding guidelines (see [http://klamathbird.org/images/kbo/MTBF/MTBF\\_ethics.pdf](http://klamathbird.org/images/kbo/MTBF/MTBF_ethics.pdf)) that served as a foundation for a new Mindful Birding program (see <http://www.mindfulbirding.org/>). Our guidelines help to create awareness and a deeper level of consciousness about how we impact the life of birds. These guidelines include recommendations to not broadcast bird recordings during nesting season, to avoid getting "too close" for the sake of

photography, to adopt a patient and observant approach to bird watching, and to always keep the welfare of the birds first and foremost. Mindful birding is something good we each can do as individuals.

Of course a bigger perspective and a cooperative conservation effort will have even greater beneficial impacts on bird populations. This is where supporting Klamath Bird Observatory, and our science-based approach to providing information needed to protect the nature we so love, can be so important. I intend to continue to explore my relationship with the natural world with a profound sense of joy and curiosity, to support KBO in their conservation efforts, and to practice the journey of mindfulness in connection with the wild world of nature. This is something good we can all do together.

We would like to hear from you about the Klamath Bird Newsletter. Do you have a suggestion, comment, or complaint (oh no!)? Did we get right, or get it wrong? Tell us all about it at [kbo@klamathbird.org](mailto:kbo@klamathbird.org).



Photo: Jim Livaudais

## Bird Bio: Snowy Egret

Robert Frey, KBO Biologist

**What a bird of beauty and tragedy ... and hope. The Snowy Egret is grace in the air, in the water, and on this earth. American ornithologist Arthur Bent, in his classic series *Life Histories of North American Birds* described it as "... one of nature's daintiest and most exquisite creatures ... the most charming of all our marsh birds."**

This medium-sized egret is easily spotted by its gleaming white plumage; however it can disappear in dense vegetation. As an adult it has a black bill and legs with distinctive yellow feet. The immature has yellow on the legs. It can be found in most any watery habitat and pastures in coastal areas. It loves small fish, invertebrates, crustaceans, and juicy frogs. It is communal in its roosting and nesting habits, often mixing with Great Egrets in roost and nest colonies. Some Snowy Egret populations are migratory while most are year-round residents in the mild to very warm climates of Subtropical North America to vast areas of South America.

The Snowy Egret has suffered the worst the world could throw at it. This was one of the most-decimated birds that found protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty. In the United States of 1886, their long, wispy breeding plumes sold for \$32 per ounce – twice the price of gold at the time – for use in then fashionable women's hats. **Peak numbers were killed in 1903** by market hunting. But, with unmistakable depletion of this species and many others, and extinctions approaching, the

(1913) Weeks-McLean Act outlawed transportation of plumage in an effort to slow the commercial use of wild birds. Then in 1916, the Migratory Bird Treaty definitively protected these birds and their eggs. With these protections, and the establishment of wildlife refuges and other protected areas, its numbers rebounded. However, wetland loss, environmental contaminants, and competition from other species are now causing declines in regions of the northeastern United States, the Midwest, and California.



Photo Credit: Jim Livaudais

The oldest Snowy Egret on record was at least 17 years and 7 months old. It was banded in Colorado in 1970 and shot in Mexico in 1988 (something in the Migratory Bird Treaty apparently failed that poor old fellow). The recovery from the brink of extinction of this species carries with it hope and demonstrates the positive power of conservation efforts. But the recent declines show us there is still more to do.

## Legislating Bird Conservation—A Long Journey Away From the Abyss

Robert Frey, KBO Biologist

Where would our natural landscape and wildlife treasures be today without the collection of protective legislation previous generations created? Human population growth, habitat change at landscape levels, market hunting, and pollution of our air, water, and land have all created obstacles to the well-being of our natural resources. Market or commercial hunting of wildlife, and most so of birds, was most devastating. By the late 1800s, the hunting and shipment of birds and their feathers for the commercial meat market and the millinery trade had taken a heavy toll on many species. The Passenger Pigeon and Carolina Parakeet were nearing their extinctions. Populations of flocking shorebirds and songbirds had been decimated. The Snowy Egret and other colony-nesting wading birds had been reduced to mere remnants of their historical populations. At the arrival of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with approaching extinctions and lands with resources of commercial value being dramatically altered, calls for protections began a legislated conservation response that continues today.

The Lacey Act (1900) was created to prohibit interstate transportation of illegally taken wildlife. It proved to be ineffective, largely because of the huge profits enjoyed by the market hunters and the lack of officers to enforce the law. This led to a more expansive and national approach with the Weeks-McLean Law (1913), which made transportation of plumage illegal in an effort to slow the use of wild bird feathers in the millinery trade (i.e., manufacture of women's hats). This legislation proclaimed that "... migratory game and insectivorous birds which in their northern and southern migrations pass through ... within the borders of any State or Territory, shall be within the custody and protection of the Government of the United States, and shall not be destroyed or taken ...".

The Migratory Bird Treaty prohibited the possession, sale, trade, and/or purchase of birds and their eggs. In 1934, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act, aka the "Duck Stamp Act", required waterfowl hunters to purchase a Duck Stamp, with proceeds going directly to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund for critical habitat protection and restoration. The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (1940) prohibited the "take, possession, sale, purchase, barter, offer to sell, and transport of any Bald or Golden Eagle or any part, nest, or egg thereof". The Wetlands Loan Act (1969) merged appropriated funds with duck stamp receipts for the acquisition of migratory bird refuges under provisions of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act (1958). The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (1963) funded the purchase of habitats to preserve at-risk species. The Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (1986) authorized, among other things, the purchase of wetlands. The Endangered Species Act of 1973 implemented the national

obligations to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere. It provided for the conservation of ecosystems upon which threatened and endangered species of fish, wildlife, and plants depend. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (1980 – aka "Nongame Act") authorized federal assistance to the States for the development and implementation of conservation efforts for nongame fish and wildlife. The Wild Bird Conservation Act (1992) established a Federal system to limit or prohibit imports of exotic species.

Additional international agreements include the Ramsar Convention of 1971 which maintains a list of wetlands of international importance and works to encourage the wise use of all wetlands (especially for marshbirds and shorebirds) from which wetland values derive. The Antarctic Treaty (1961) set protections for the native birds, mammals, and plants of internationally-managed Antarctica.



Photo: <https://commons.wikimedia.org>—market hunters in Wisconsin ca. 1910.

Federal agency-managed lands were created in a variety of ways and means. The Weeks Law (1911) permitted the federal government to purchase private land in order to protect the headwaters of rivers and watersheds in the eastern United States – these became national forests. Western forests were created from lands already in possession of the federal government. The Bureau of Land Management, which oversees large areas, was created in its current form and function by the Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1946, although it had functioned in a

variety of ways since the nation's earliest days. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in its current form was created in 1956 by the Fish and Wildlife Act, although it dates back to 1871 in earlier functions. The National Park Service was created in 1916. Several other federal government agencies, and of course all the state and territory land and resource management agencies, serve the public interest in lands they are responsible for. Within a variety of missions and mandates, all these public lands provide some measure of wild bird and habitat security.

That is quite a register of an evolving response to threats that have and continue to place populations of birds and other wildlife in peril. Each of these protective endeavors brought us closer to keeping some of what we had and restoring some of what we had lost. While the idea of protecting wildlife and their habitats was not new in the world, the great scale of what has and can be accomplished does feel very American. The wildlife and public lands and everything that they encompass are America – in our culture and memories, but more so for our common experience now and for future generations. It is our collection of legal protections and the efforts of so many that make it so.



# Join KBO on Upcoming Events

## *Fall Birds of Malheur September 16th through the 19th*

*Led by Harry Fuller and Shannon Rio*

*Registration now live!*

Register by emailing [admin@KlamathBird.org](mailto:admin@KlamathBird.org)  
\*More details below\*

FALL BIRDS OF MALHEUR  
September 16 - 19, 2016

Join professional birding guide and KBO Board Member, Harry Fuller, and KBO Board President, Shannon Rio, for a trip to this world-renowned birding destination and the largest wetland in eastern Oregon. This is truly an unforgettable trip. We should see Trumpeter Swan, migrant shorebirds and vagrant warblers, Red-naped Sapsucker, Sagebrush Sparrow, Sage Thrasher and Loggerhead Shrike, and the area provides important breeding grounds for Sandhill Cranes, Swainson's and Ferruginous Hawks, Prairie Falcons and more! This special outing will include a maximum of 20 participants, so be sure to register soon! *This years trip features an extra day of fantastic birding!* Cost is \$600 which includes: lodging, three dinners, three breakfasts, a bird presentation, and a \$300 tax deductible donation.

Email [admin@KlamathBird.org](mailto:admin@KlamathBird.org) to register today!



It is not too late to come to the  
**MOUNTAIN BIRD FESTIVAL**  
Only 30 spots remaining!

May 20 – 22, 2016  
ScienceWorks in Ashland, Oregon

Register for this boutique Festival **before it's too late.** Your registration includes 2 field trips, keynote presentation, tote bag and an exclusive screening of *The Messenger* (limited seating). You can also enjoy local food trucks, regional wines and microbrews, beer tastings and workshops. You will not want to miss this unique event!



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



## **Klamath Bird Observatory** Conservation Donation



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

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

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

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Please select one and make your tax-deductible donation payable to Klamath Bird Observatory or KBO:

- Individual \$50     Supporter \$250     Benefactor \$1,000
- Friend \$100     Patron \$500     Champion \$5,000     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

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