



# THE KLAMATH BIRD

www.KlamathBird.org

The Official Newsletter for the Klamath Bird Observatory

December 2002



## KBO 2002 Field Season

As 2002 draws to a close the Klamath Bird Observatory is finishing up another successful year of growth and accomplishment. This year we had a great field crew involved in various bird census and demographic monitoring projects. Along with our coastal counterpart, the Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory, and the USDA Forest Service's Redwood Sciences Laboratory, we continued to build the Klamath Demographic Monitoring Network, one of the world's most comprehensive bird monitoring networks of its kind.

James Lawrence returned to head up our census projects, running a field crew of 6 contractors conducting point counts throughout the Klamath Province of northern California and southern Oregon. They maintained our network of census routes that we visit annually to monitor population trends over time. In addition, we continued with our Joint Fire Sciences projects monitoring the effects of wildfire and fuels management on bird distribution. The Klamath and Rogue National Forests, Crater Lake National Park, Lava Beds National Monument, and the Medford and Lakeview Bureau of Land ...

*Continued on page 2*



## Joint Fire Sciences Program

The Klamath Bird Observatory, along with various research and management partners from the USDA Forest Service, USDI Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service, non-



government organizations, and universities, has begun to investigate the ecological effects of fire management by implementing a comprehensive study of bird distribution as it relates to fire suppression, fuels treatment, and wildfire rehabilitation in the Klamath Ecoregion of southern Oregon and northern California. The inter-agency **Joint Fire Sciences Program** has made funding for this project available, and the main

objectives of the effort are as follows:

- Investigate how bird distribution and abundance has been influenced by fire, fire suppression and habitat management;
- Implement studies to investigate the effects of various fuels treatments on bird distribution and abundance; and
- Develop and implement 3 to 5-year monitoring plans to investigate the influence of intensive wildfires and recovering habitats on bird distribution and abundance.



KBO is building new projects and continuing fire-related work with the Klamath, Rogue River, Six Rivers, and Mendocino National Forests, Lakeview and Medford BLM Districts, Crater Lake National Park, and Lava Beds National Monument. Studies involve monitoring bird distribution as it relates to the reintroduction of fire in true fir, mixed conifer, and Ponderosa Pine habitats as well as mechanical thinning in oak woodlands. Additional work is focusing on the influence of juniper removal and brush conversion on shrub-steppe bird abundance and distribution. Funding from the Joint Fire Sciences Program is going towards the analysis of existing Klamath Demographic Monitoring Network data, which will provide insight into the effects of fire history on bird distribution.

*-Ben Wieland, KBO Program Leader*



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### KBO 2002 ... (Continued)

...Management Districts were all participants in this effort. The World Wildlife Fund provided the Klamath Bird Observatory with an opportunity to begin a long-term study of the influence of grazing in the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument, and during this first season we conducted a comprehensive bird and habitat inventory of riparian and adjacent upland habitats in the Monument. We also began a two year effort working with the US National Park Service's Monitoring and Inventory Program, conducting bird censuses in Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, Lava Beds National Monument, and Crater Lake National Park. In addition to breeding season censuses we conducted fall surveys to determine habitat use during this critical time for resident and migrant songbirds.

Sherri Kies and Jim Field returned to the Klamath Bird Observatory to supervise our banding operation. Our banding crew was made up of interns who included recent college graduates, international students, and other volunteers. We continued to work with the Lakeview BLM, Winema and Fremont National Forests, US Fish and Wildlife Service's Klamath Basin Refuges, and PacifiCorp to operate a comprehensive network of constant effort mist netting stations in the Upper Klamath Basin. Working with Southern Oregon University and the Medford BLM District, we also continued our mist netting effort in the Rogue Valley. In 2002 we started a new constant effort banding station at Oregon Caves National Monument. An additional demographic monitoring project was started by Southern Oregon University graduate student Jaime Heinzelmann, who worked with Boise Cascade to study bird use in a variety of harvest units, employing spot mapping and nest monitoring techniques. We also are continuing year round operation of a mist netting station at our Willow Wind Headquarters.

The Klamath Bird Observatory and our partners continued to work on other exciting monitoring projects that included conducting Rapid Ornithological Inventories (two day intensive census and netting bird surveys), banding small

owls, surveying Black Tern colonies, monitoring sudden oak death and bird populations, and taking part in the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Project Feeder Watch and Birds in Forested Landscape projects.

After a very successful field season we are proud to present this issue of the *Klamath Bird*, our official newsletter. We hope you enjoy learning more about the various aspects of the Klamath Bird Observatory's program and hope you consider our open invitation to visit us during the coming year. The board and staff of the Klamath Bird Observatory extend our gratitude to the KBO members; membership plays a key role in demonstrating the importance of promoting bird conservation through scientifically informed land management.

-John Alexander, KBO Director



### Coniferous Forest Bird Conservation Plan



The Hermit Warbler is a focal species in the *California Partners In Flight Coniferous Forest Bird Conservation Plan*

Version 1.0 of the California Partners In Flight Coniferous Forest Bird Conservation Plan has been completed, and is now available for downloading at the Point Reyes Bird Observatory's website (<http://www.prbo.org>). Many individuals, through a unique partnership between the Klamath and Point Reyes Bird Observatories and the Forest Service Pacific Southwest Regional Office, put this plan

together. John Robinson from the Forest Service, and KBO's John Alexander are the lead authors. The Conservation Plan has been developed to help guide conservation policy and action on behalf of coniferous habitats and associated landbirds throughout California.



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### KBO Out and About

KBO continues to spread the word about our efforts to promote bird conservation through the science of bird monitoring and research. We continue to develop our environmental education and outreach program, participate in various training programs, and attend and present papers at various meetings throughout the United States.

In 2002 we continued working with the Ashland Public Schools, birding with students at our Willow Wind Headquarters in Ashland. We took part in three International Migratory Bird Day events this year. In Oregon we were at events in Ashland, with our city's Parks and Recreation Division, and in Klamath Falls working with the local Audubon Chapter and the Lakeview BLM District. We took part in events in Yreka and Scott Valley, California, working with the Klamath National Forest and the Shasta Valley Audubon Society.

KBO Biologists contributed to various training courses throughout the Region. Working with the Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory and Redwood Sciences Laboratory we offered our annual pre-season and mid-season bird monitoring workshops. We were invited to return to help instruct the Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region's annual training workshop on the Warm Springs Reservation. We also had our third annual Birds, Bed and Breakfast session in partnership with Buckhorn Springs and the Siskiyou Field Institute. This past fall KBO participated in the Rogue Valley Audubon Society's Fall Into Birding Workshop. At the end of our field season, in cooperation with the Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory and Redwood Sciences Laboratory, we put on a North American Banding Council certification for banders and trainers.

KBO attended several professional meetings in 2002. At the Third International Partners In

Flight Conference in Monterey, California, We presented a talk for the Migration Monitoring Network Workshop. In Ashland, we presented a paper discussing bird conservation and the migratory bird executive order at Headwater's Western Forest Activist Conference. At the Third North American Ornithological Conference in New Orleans we took a lead role at the North American Banding Council meeting. KBO was also present at the Western Bird Banding Association Meeting in Arizona, the Oregon Chapter of the Wildlife Society Meeting and the Siskiyou Fire Ecology and Restoration Conference, both in Oregon.

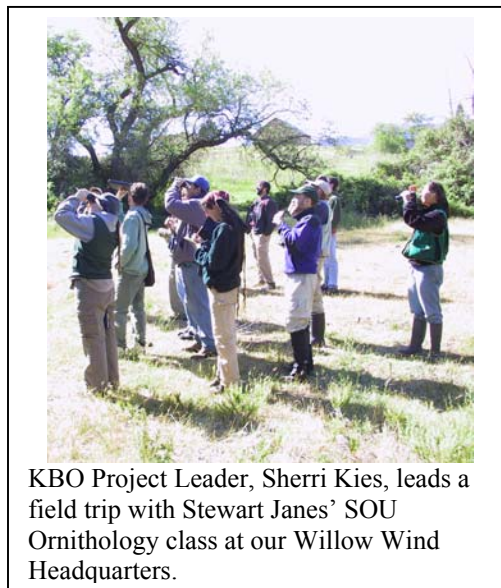


### Bird Conservation In The Pacific Northwest

The North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) is a coalition of more than 300 Canadian, U.S. and Mexican governmental agencies and private organizations whose goal is to facilitate the delivery of bird conservation through regionally-based, biologically-driven, landscape-oriented partnerships. Although bird conservation is already a major activity in the Pacific Northwest, it tends to be

driven by the goals of specific initiatives, programs, or projects. A goal of NABCI is to integrate the efforts of these initiatives into a broader picture that emphasizes "all-bird, all-habitat" conservation and more efficient use of resources. The NABCI geographic units that provide the framework within which bird conservation is to be coordinated and implemented are referred to as Bird Conservation Regions (BCRs).

Bob Altman, American Bird Conservancy, and former chair for Oregon-Washington...



KBO Project Leader, Sherri Kies, leads a field trip with Stewart Janes' SOU Ornithology class at our Willow Wind Headquarters.

*Continued on page 4*





## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Bird Conservation... (Continued)

... Partners in Flight, has recently taken the position as Coordinator for the Northern Pacific Rainforest BCR. The boundaries of this BCR include northwestern California and western Oregon, and extend up to southeast Alaska. Bob functions as the "point person" to facilitate all bird conservation within the BCR. This may include a variety of activities such as seeking funding for projects/programs, providing technical support for projects, working with agencies on policy and planning issues relative to bird conservation, assisting in proposal writing for projects or funding, and conducting workshops to inform and assist organizations/agencies in promoting bird conservation.

The Klamath Bird Observatory appreciates the assistance that Bob Altman has already provided and looks forward to continued involvement with NABCI. Contact Bob Altman (503/658-2537; alt8bird@aol.com) if you think he can provide assistance to you or your agency/organization on bird conservation projects.



For more information about North American Bird Conservation Initiative please visit:  
<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/nabci.html>

*-Bob Altman, American Bird Conservancy*

### Monitoring Birds In The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument



Gray Flycatchers were detected in patches of bitterbrush and juniper within the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. This habitat type, and this *Empidonax* flycatcher, generally occur on the east side of the Cascades. These flycatcher detections further demonstrate the biological diversity for which the Monument was recognized. This individual was banded at our Willow Wind Headquarters in Ashland, Oregon, during spring migration.

The establishment of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument has been a hot news topic in our region for the past few years, and KBO is stepping up to help monitor birds in this incredible natural area. The World Wildlife Fund provided funding for KBO to conduct bird and habitat surveys at over 500 stations in the Monument. Rapid Ornithological Inventories were also conducted at Keene and Jenny Creeks during migration, adding to the overall effort. This season's effort builds on 3 years of KBO bird monitoring in the Monument.

KBO is working with the World Wildlife Fund to develop a multi-taxa study for measuring the effects of grazing on the birds, butterflies, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, mollusks and rare plants that the Monument was designated to protect. We are working with the BLM's Monument staff to coordinate efforts. John Alexander (KBO), Brian Barr (WWF), Aaron Holmes (Point Reyes Bird Observatory), Paul Hosten (BLM), John Menke (University of California at Davis, KBO), Robert Anthony (Oregon State University), Erick Runquist (University of California at Davis), Stewart Janes (Southern Oregon University, KBO), Michael Parker (Southern Oregon University), Pepper Trail (Rogue Valley Audubon), and Even Frost (Siskiyou Project) are all at the table as members of our Monument research team.



## KBO Begins Work At Oregon Caves National Monument

The Klamath Bird Observatory has entered into a partnership with the Oregon Caves National Monument to establish and operate a constant-effort mist-netting station within the Monument. Our objectives for monitoring birds at Oregon Caves are two-fold. First, we will use various monitoring techniques to track the abundance and demographic patterns of conservation plan focal species that are likely to utilize riparian habitats protected within the Monument. Secondly, through environmental outreach, we will showcase important bird habitats and related monitoring efforts associated with lands protected within our National Parks and Monuments.

This past spring KBO began a 6-month effort operating an intensive monitoring station at the Monument. The banding station is located in a beautiful forest of large Douglas-firs and Port Orford Cedars, including one Doug-fir (known as the "Big Tree") that is 13 feet in diameter. The site offers incredible views of the Siskiyou Mountains and great birding.

KBO biologists captured many Oregon species of conservation including: Pacific Slope Flycatcher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Rufous Hummingbird, Winter Wren, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Nashville Warbler, Hermit Warbler, MacGillivray's Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, and Lazuli Bunting. Numerous other conservation status species were detected during area search and point count census efforts, including Pileated Woodpecker and Varied Thrush. Banding crews were visited by a Black Bear one morning near the Big Tree; the bear kept its distance giving us a good safe look. The Klamath Bird Observatory looks forward to continued landbird monitoring efforts at Oregon Caves National Monument, and invites our members to join us at this amazingly scenic study site.

*-Ben Wieland, KBO Program Leader*

## Continued Partnership With The Klamath National Forest

In its 11th year, the Klamath National Forest's Objective Driven Bird Monitoring Program has become a national model for integrating regional bird conservation and monitoring plans with forest ecosystem management programs.

KBO and the Klamath National Forest have been working with the Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region's Partners In Flight Steering Committee to implement conservation program objectives in the Klamath Province. In 2002 we continued with the third year of a 5-year investigation into how bird distribution is influenced by fire in mixed-conifer habitats, testing the hypothesis that bird distribution and community composition differs in burned and unburned habitats. As fire is introduced into mixed-conifer habitats, bird monitoring is being used to track changes in bird distribution and community composition. We are collecting census data in and around areas where the Forest Service is implementing controlled burning projects in cooperation with the Klamath National Forest's fire management program and the Joint Fire Sciences Program.

We are also continuing to contribute toward Region 5's role in the California Riparian Joint Venture by monitoring bird demographics in riparian areas during the breeding and migration seasons. We have completed a tenth season of running a constant effort mist netting station on the Klamath River in Seiad Valley. Sam Cuenca (Klamath National Forest) led a team of banders that included Cliff Oakley and Laura Finley (US Fish and Wildlife Service Yreka Field Office), and Brian Helsaple (Jefferson Chamber).



The brood patch of this female Willow Flycatcher indicates that she was likely breeding near the Seiad Valley monitoring station where she was banded. This *Empidonax* flycatcher is of conservation concern in California.

*-Photo by Brian Helsaple*



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Teaming Up In Eastern Oregon

Silver Creek, located in Harney County, meanders through forest, sagebrush steppe, and agricultural areas. Sections of this watershed are seldom visited, as much of it is only accessible by foot. The Creek's upper reach travels through a steep canyon wooded with large ponderosa pines. Songs of Hammond's Flycatchers and MacGillivray's Warblers punctuate the constantly singing House and Canyon Wrens. Prairie Falcons nest in a steep side-canyon. The surrounding uplands contain healthy stands of native bunchgrass and sagebrush that support nesting Vesper and Lark Sparrows among other species. The lower reach supports a different suite of riparian birds such as Song Sparrow, Yellow Warbler, and Black-headed Grosbeak. Three square miles, both riparian and surrounding upland habitats, are protected from livestock grazing since being designated a Research Natural Area, and recovery from decades of use by cattle is evident.

Through a collaborative efforts the avifauna of this unique place was inventoried during the 2001 breeding season, as part of a monitoring program launched in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management. The Point Reyes Bird Observatory and Wildlife Conservation Society documented breeding season use with a series of point count surveys, and in July, a KBO field crew joined the forces to sample vegetation and conduct a Rapid Ornithological Inventory (ROI). By teaming up on this effort we were able to take advantage of each organization's expertise while documenting the importance of this protected area; and we had a lot of fun doing it!

2002 has seen further work accomplished in eastern Oregon through KBO's partnerships with PRBO and the BLM. The Donner und Blitzen River flows down the west side of Steens Mountain, and is a designated national wild and scenic river system. Much like Silver Creek, portions of the watershed have been protected from livestock for some time, as evidenced by a healthy riparian zone close to the BLM's Page Springs campground. KBO biologists conducted a ROI there this past September, further complementing PRBO's comprehensive east-side monitoring efforts. The breeding season was over, and evidence of the fall migration abounded. Huge flocks of American Robin could be seen passing through the junipers at the canyon rim, and the mist nets were catching plenty of migrating White-crowned Sparrows and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Some other birds seen and/or captured included Audubon's Warbler, Varied Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Spotted



KBO and PRBO interns work together to monitor dispersing and migrating birds on Silver Creek in eastern Oregon.



Collaborative efforts allow Klamath Bird Observatory and Point Reyes Bird Observatory staff and interns to interact promoting standard bird monitoring techniques and Partners In Flight.

Towhee, Townsend's Solitaire, Belted Kingfisher, Hammond's Flycatcher, Red-shafted Flicker, Canyon Wren, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Song Sparrow, and Western Screech Owl. Two Western Screech Owls, a male and a female, were captured the first evening at the site. The pair was found at the same time in the same net, and a few interested parties from the campground watched as the birds were removed and studied by KBO banders.

The Page Springs and Silver Creek ROIs represent the type of collaborative efforts that are key to the success of the Partners In Flight International Landbird Conservation Programs. By working together the Klamath and Point Reyes Bird Observatories', and the Wildlife Conservation Society's field crews interact, gaining additional training opportunities, broader perspectives of PIF associated bird monitoring efforts, and enriched working experiences. Fall census efforts such as these are critical in establishing a solid information base regarding bird habitat use during dispersal and migration, and KBO looks forward to continuing such efforts in the coming years. KBO also looks forward to continued partnerships and opportunities to promote bird conservation through science in Eastern Oregon.

*-Aaron Holmes, Point Reyes Bird Observatory and Ben Wieland, KBO Program Leader*

*-Photos by Aaron Holmes*





## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Klamath Canyon ROIs

The last week of August, 2002 will be remembered by folks at KBO as "Rapid Ornithological Inventory Week". Over the course of 7 days, KBO field biologists conducted 5 separate ROIs along the Klamath River in southern Oregon and northern California. The effort was funded by PacifiCorp as part of a multi-taxa study related to the relicensing of their Klamath Hydro-Electric Project.

ROIs, which involve 2 solid days of banding and censusing, were conducted at 4 sites near the Iron Gate and Copco reservoirs in California, and 1 site on the Link River in Klamath Falls, Oregon. During the effort KBO crews banded over 400 individual birds of 49 species, and detected (by banding and census) a total of 103 species. Highlights included several species that KBO does not usually catch, including Acorn Woodpecker, Belted Kingfisher, and Lark Sparrow, as well as an even more unexpected Chestnut-sided Warbler. The warbler, normally found in brushy edge habitat in the eastern United States and Canada, is a rare vagrant in our area. Of note is the fact that this is

the second year in a row that a Chestnut-sided Warbler has been trapped by KBO, as an individual was caught in August 2001 at our 7-mile Creek banding station on the Upper Klamath Lake.

Data from Rapid Ornithological Inventories are compared with data collected at other constant effort netting stations in the Klamath Province, providing a more complete picture of population demographic patterns across the landscape. As a part of this Pacificorp effort, the Klamath River Canyon Frain Ranch constant effort site was operated for its 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year.

The work that KBO completed for Pacificorp this past season was unique in that it focused specifically on birds during the migration/dispersal season. Land managers typically focus their survey efforts on breeding birds. Patty Buetner (Klamath Falls Bureau of Land Management Resource Area), and Mike Ichisaka (Pacificorp), are to be commended for recognizing the importance of studying birds as they move throughout the landscape.



### Monitoring The Effects Of Wildfire And Fire Hazard Reduction In The Applegate Valley, Southern Oregon

As part of our regional fire monitoring program we are studying the effects of wildfire and fire hazard reduction in the Applegate Valley. During the 2001 spring season, as part of the Applegate Adaptive Management Area Upper Glade Project, KBO surveyed over 1,000 point count census stations in the Little Applegate Watershed. The purpose of this effort was to collect and analyze baseline data for developing bird conservation plan-based management recommendations and effectiveness monitoring strategies. Later that season the Quartz Fire burned through many of these study sites. In 2002...

*Continued on page 8*



KBO operated our constant effort mist netting station at the base of Topsy Grade in the Klamath River Canyon for a 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive season. This effort to monitor birds during the breeding, dispersal and migration seasons is part of our Upper Klamath Bird Monitoring Program, a cooperative effort of KBO, the Bureaus of Land Management and Reclamation, the Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacificorp, and others.



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Fire in the Applegate...(Continued)

...we began to revisit census stations in and around the Quartz Fire. Continued monitoring during the next 2 years will provide invaluable information regarding the effects of wildfire and rehabilitation on local bird populations. These data, combined with similar data collected in and around the Megram fire, and other recently burned areas, will provide insight about fire effects from a broader regional perspective.



The Klamath Bird Observatory is involved in the active study of wildland fire, fire history, and fuels treatment as they relate to bird distribution. As useful indicators of ecosystem condition, landbird populations are, and will continue to be, important study subjects for fire and fuel-related investigations throughout our region.

Additionally, KBO has established monitoring stations in and around oak woodland fuels treatment sites in the Sterling Creek drainage. We are studying areas where manual fuels reduction treatments have occurred, and adjacent untreated areas, to measure the effects of fire hazard reduction on bird and plant communities. Partners working with KBO to implement our fire related studies in

the Applegate include the Joint Fire Sciences Interagency Program, the Bureau of Land Management Medford District, the Rogue National Forest, the Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station Redwood Sciences Laboratory, the Applegate Watershed Council, Cantrall Buckley Park, Dakubetede Environmental Education Programs, and many private land owners.



### Monitoring Birds At Wildlife Images

The Klamath Bird Observatory, Southern Oregon University, the Bureau of Land Management Medford District, and the Rogue Valley Audubon Society are in partnership with Wildlife Images continuing long-term efforts to monitor songbird populations on the Rogue River below their wildlife rehabilitation center. This project fulfills objectives that include integrating comprehensive bird monitoring efforts into national land management agency activities, maintaining long-term bird monitoring efforts for tracking population trends, obtaining baseline data on species diversity and abundance in riparian habitats in and around the Rogue Valley, and evaluating the reproductive success and population health of neotropical migratory birds in the Rogue Valley as compared to populations in the Upper Klamath Basin and along the lower Klamath River. Constant-effort mist-netting and bird census monitoring techniques are used to track bird populations from May through October, annually.

The Wildlife Images Station continues to be one of the most active in the Klamath Demographic Monitoring Network. During the 2002...

*Continued on page 9*





## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Wildlife Images... (Continued)

... monitoring season, we collected demographic information on bird populations by identifying the species, age and sex of over 1,500 birds captured, banded and released. Many of these birds are long-distant migrants returning to their North American breeding grounds wearing bands that they were fitted with when captured during previous years. This Wildlife Images monitoring site provides essential breeding grounds for Yellow-breasted Chats, a Partners In Flight conservation focal species, and important spring and fall migration habitat for Willow Flycatchers, among many other crucial species detected at this location.



The Klamath Bird Observatory completed the 9<sup>th</sup> year of monitoring birds at the Wildlife Images Constant Effort Mist Netting Station on the Rogue River near Merlin, Oregon.

The BLM's Bonnie Brown, Michael Bornstein, and Leslie Welch, and Southern Oregon University's Stewart Janes play critical roles in maintaining this important long-term bird monitoring program.

### Unusual Birds 2002

Each year the Klamath Bird Observatory bands and releases tens of thousands of migratory and resident songbirds, woodpeckers, and hummingbirds. Although our focus is clearly on these amazing and imperiled "little birds", we do get excited when other bird families show up in the nets. The following are some of our notable captures from this past season.

<b>Species (individuals), KBO Banders, Location</b>
<b>*Northern Harrier (1),</b> Sherri Kies, Williamson River (Klamath County, Oregon)
<b>*American Kestrel (1),</b> Trina Stauff, Katherine Miller Snow-Cow (Douglas Co., Oregon)
<b>Sharp-shinned Hawk (11),</b> Various sites in Upper Klamath & Rogue Valley (Josephine and Klamath Counties, Oregon)
<b>Belted Kingfisher (3),</b> Jim Lawrence, Ken Etzel, Copco ROI on the Klamath River (Siskiyou County, California)
<b>Common Snipe (1),</b> Lisa Fitzgerald, Daveka Boodram, Ashland Willow Wind Headquarters (Jackson County, Oregon)
<b>Northern Pygmy-Owl (2),</b> Sherri Kies, Trina Stauff, Katherine Miller, Odessa Creek and Klamath River Canyon (Klamath County, Oregon)
<b>Northern Saw-whet Owl (1),</b> Daveka Boodram, Katherine Miller, Antelope Creek (Modoc County, California)
<b>Black-billed Magpie (1),</b> Sherri Kies, Daveka Boodram, Wood River (Klamath County, Oregon)
<b>Northern Flying Squirrel (1),</b> James Lawrence and Anne Peterka, Crater Lake National Park (Klamath County)

\* - indicates 1<sup>st</sup> banding record for KBO



This juvenile male Sharp-shinned Hawk was banded in September, 2002, at the Wildlife Images mist netting station.



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002



Monitoring efforts in Tortuguero, Costa Rica are providing data that are furthering our knowledge about the molting patterns of resident species such as this Red-capped Manakin. These data help to age and sex captured birds, providing better information about population demographics in these threatened habitats.

*Photo by Jim Field*

### Costa Rica Bird Monitoring; A KBO Intern's Perspective

The Tortuguero Landbird Monitoring Program in Tortuguero, Costa Rica provides KBO interns with a unique opportunity to participate in an effort to monitor resident and migrant bird species in Central America. The program is a cooperative effort involving KBO, the Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory, Caribbean Conservation Corporation, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Costa Rica National Parks, Canadian Organization for Tropical Education and Rainforest Conservation, and Costa Rica National University. During the spring and fall migration seasons 5 constant effort mist netting sites are operated and surveys are conducted using area searches, migration counts, and nocturnal ceilometer counts.

For a KBO intern, working in Costa Rica offers a different perspective to conducting field studies, as compared to working in the temperate Klamath Basin. Habitats include secondary tropical rainforests and coastal scrub. Amphibians and reptiles abound; Green Iguana, Common and Green Basilisk, House and Yellow-headed Gecko, Central American Whiptail, Vine Snake, Tink Frog, and Red-eyed Leaf Frog are some of the most common.

I arrived in Tortuguero in October and began banding with Bob Frey, from Redwood Science Laboratory and Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory in Arcata, California. For the first week or so I was the "wide-eyed guy from the states." Almost every bird was a new species to me. When I first arrived the thrushes were moving through. Gray-cheeked Thrush and Veery were exciting catches as I was used to handling only Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, which are common at KBO's Upper Klamath monitoring sites. Boy, did I have a lot to learn

and I had to continuously study *A Guide to the Birds of Costa Rica* by Gary Stiles and Alexander F. Skutch, an invaluable tool for birding in Costa Rica.

An additional source of information about the birds we catch in Costa Rica is a series of detailed descriptions of the more commonly encountered resident species. The Point Reyes Bird Observatory's Peter Pyle is compiling this specifically for the Tortuguero project. Further study is needed in several areas to develop complete species accounts. Generally, very little is known about the molt patterns of resident birds. We are collecting a lot of data on suspected juvenal plumage characteristics of resident species, and we are photographing each of the residents captured, with one wing spread to provide further documentation of plumage characteristics. Later, when we recapture a bird we can compare its subsequent plumages with the original photos of the same individual. It really is exciting being part of a project that is at the forefront of learning.

I quickly learned to identify the 3 more common hummingbirds: Bronzy Hermit, Long-tailed Hermit, and the Rufous-tailed Hummingbird. They are all much more high-strung than the Rufous Hummingbird of the Rogue and Klamath River Basins, and bigger too, weighing between 5.0-6.5 grams rather than the 3-plus grams of the Rufous Hummingbird. I also quickly became familiar with the White-collared Manakin, Variable Seedeater, Red-eyed Vireo, and Eastern Wood-Pewee.

The flycatchers become more abundant at Tortuguero as the fall season progresses. Eastern Wood-Pewee, Traill's Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher are among those captured. While already at least mildly confusing, the world of Empidonax flycatchers became much more complex in Costa Rica. In Oregon, most of the Empidonax species are relatively clear, but here, with many more species of the complex present, on a busy day identification is even more challenging. It requires taking many measurements to compare the relative lengths of various flight feathers.

Numerous different warbler species moved through during the course of our fall migration effort. In one week we captured ten species of warblers. Two of these species are regularly seen in the Klamath Basin (Yellow and Wilson's Warblers), and three have been captured as vagrants by KBO (Magnolia, Prothonotory, and Chestnut-sided Warblers). A particularly noteworthy bird, an adult male Golden-winged Warbler, was among those captured. Waves of migrating Gray Catbirds also moved through, between rain showers.

A group of birds I find interesting are the ant-associated species. These birds follow swarms of army ants, eating the insects and other small animals that are flushed out by the commotion. They include antthrushes, antshrikes, antwrens and antbirds. They are generally cryptic except for the Chestnut-backed and Bicolored Antbirds, which have bare blue skin around their eyes. The two birds that I find most beautiful are the brightly colored male Red-capped Manakin and male Violet-crowned Woodnymph.

In addition to the setting, climate, and species diversity, the biggest difference between banding at Tortuguero and in the Klamath Basin is that the longest commute to a Tortuguero banding site is about 30 minutes. In Costa Rica, we generally walk out our door or take a 5-10 minute boat ride, rather than the sometimes 4-6 hours of daily driving time logged in the Upper Klamath.

My experience at Tortuguero was nothing short of amazing, and I returned a more enlightened and competent bird bander. For further information on getting involved with our monitoring program in Tortuguero, Costa Rica contact C. J. Ralph at the US Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory (707/825-2992; [cjralph@humboldt1.com](mailto:cjralph@humboldt1.com)).

*-Jim Field, KBO Senior Intern*



## Monitoring Sudden Oak Death And Bird Populations

Sudden Oak Death is a newly discovered plant disease caused by the water mold *Phytophthora ramorum*, and a close relative of the Port-Orford-cedar root rot disease (*Phytophthora lateralis*). Sudden Oak Death has caused the mortality of tens of thousands of trees in 12 coastal California counties and in Curry County, Oregon. Some oaks in the red and black groups are fatally susceptible to the disease and 12 other plant species may act as hosts. However, much is still unknown about the disease and many new host species have been discovered in recent months, including coast redwood and Douglas-fir.

Preliminary risk models show that the Klamath-Siskiyou bioregion has some of the highest likelihood of being infected with the disease if it continues to spread in a northerly direction. Because of the speed and the patchy nature of this epidemic, birds have been suspected of playing a role in the dispersal of the disease. Biologists working for the US Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station and the California Department of Forestry have begun to conduct experiments to see if birds may be able to transport the disease in their stomachs or externally on their feet or feathers. The Redwood Sciences Laboratory and its cooperators, including the Klamath Bird Observatory, will then provide the opportunity to sample the birds they capture to see if they are moving the disease in the wild.

Although the role of birds in the lifecycle of *P. ramorum* is still unknown, it is very likely that Sudden Oak Death will affect the lives of birds. The amount and availability of food in a habitat is critically important to the survival of any bird species. Sudden Oak Death can be fatal for black oak, coast live oak and tan oak. More than 30 bird species have been reported to consume acorns and some, like the Acorn Woodpecker, have shown population declines following years of low acorn production.

Sudden oak death may affect the ability of birds to nest by the loss of cavity nests and the fragmentation of hardwood forests. Oaks with broken limbs and wounds provide crucial nesting cavities for birds. More than 20 bird species in oak woodlands depend on cavity nests to raise their broods. Fragmentation from tree mortality may also allow brood parasites like Brown-headed Cowbirds to access the nests of songbirds in the interior of the forest. Jays and other predators may also increase with the amount of edge created by fragmented woodlands.

Monitoring the populations of birds in areas infected or at risk by Sudden Oak Death is critical if we are to understand the effects on bird populations. In 2002, six new Constant Effort Mist Netting stations were added to the Klamath Demographic Network specifically for Sudden Oak Death research. Long-term monitoring data from these and uninfected sites will be used inform land managers of any population declines so that their causes may be addressed. The enormous value of bird monitoring may provide the insight that will enable the protection of bird populations within forests affected by this epidemic.

*-Pablo A. Herrera, USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Redwood Sciences Laboratory*



It is likely that sudden oak death will affect the lives of birds like this Acorn Woodpecker who show population declines following years of low acorn production. For more information about monitoring sudden oak death and bird populations contact Pablo Herrera (707/8252994; paherrera@fs.fed.us) at the Redwood Sciences Laboratory.





## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Boise Songbird Study

The Klamath Bird Observatory has worked with Southern Oregon University and Boise Cascade independently on various projects. In 2002 we began working together on a 2 year project to provide information about Partners In Flight focal species. The project is intended to aid in Boise's forest management decisions.

Project leader, and SOU master's degree student, Jaime Heinzelmann, is studying the effectiveness of Wildlife Protection Areas (WPAs) for providing foraging and nesting habitat for songbirds. WPAs



KBO Project Leader and SOU graduate Student Jaime Heinzelmann searches for songbird nests in an old-growth Douglas-fir forest near Prospect, Oregon

are clumps of trees left as islands within timber harvest units. The objectives of the study are to compare breeding bird richness and abundance within WPAs, adjacent harvest units, and contiguous forests, and to determine whether WPA size influences the abundance, species richness, and nesting success of

songbirds.

We used multiple monitoring techniques, including point count census, nest searching, and spot mapping in regeneration harvest units, thinned harvest units, and contiguous forest habitats. During May and June 284 censuses were conducted on 95 points spread over 13 routes, and a total of 61 species were detected. Twelve intensive bird monitoring plots were established and visited once every 3 days. Breeding bird territories were mapped and nests were located and monitored, and vegetation data was collected at every monitoring station and at every nest. Fifty-five nests were found, and of the 52 that were monitored 30 were

deemed successful. Species for which nests were located and monitored include Brown Creeper, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Cassin's Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Winter Wren, House Wren, Dark-eyed Junco, Dusky Flycatcher, Lazuli Bunting and Townsend's Solitaire.

KBO looks forward to returning to the Boise field station in Prospect, Oregon, to continue this effort next spring.

*-Jaime Heinzelmann, KBO Project Leader*



Four Pacific-slope Flycatcher eggs can be seen through an extension mirror. The nest was built on a bark ledge more than five meters up the side of an old-growth incense cedar.



### Environmental Education With The Klamath Bird Observatory

The Klamath Bird Observatory continues to have a productive relationship with the Ashland Public School District, and our environmental education programs at the Willow Wind Headquarters keep expanding. Our goal, as always, is to share with students the fun and excitement of birding while teaching about the scientific and conservation principles on which our organization is based. Students do not have to go far to observe birds at Willow Wind, as the fields and riparian areas have been planted with native species and are populated by numerous songbirds and waterfowl.

This fall we welcomed many Ashland public school students during our bird banding sessions on Bear Creek, teaching observers about our monitoring techniques and talking about the...

*Continued on page 13*



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Environmental Education...(Continued)

...information we gather from individual birds captured in our mist-nets. We conducted a two-day, four class program for students learning about data collection. More than 100 learners came from Kristi Healy's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science classes at Ashland Middle School, and took actual data on several live birds that were trapped, banded, and released.

Two students from Andy Bayliss' Community Learning Center science class, Morgan Minor and Deborah O'Donnell, are also learning about the science of bird banding. They have joined our banding team to learn about the aspects of bird banding, from setting up nets to the fine details of determining the age and sex of local songbirds.

As a part of our educational outreach we are once again participating in the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Project Feeder Watch. Students and CLC staff that participate in counting birds at our farmhouse feeders will be contributing valuable data to this international study of wintering bird populations. The feeder station in front of the farmhouse, which was contributed to the program by Ashland's Northwest Nature Shop, attracts an impressive number of birds, including Golden-crowned and White-crowned Sparrows, Black-capped Chickadees, Spotted Towhees, Western Scrub Jays, Pine Siskins, American and Lesser Goldfinches, Song Sparrows, Fox Sparrows, House Sparrows, Brewer's Blackbirds, European Starlings, California Quail, American Robins, Northern Flickers, and Downy Woodpeckers.

We have enjoyed our time working with students and the public at Willow Wind and it is fulfilling to watch participants become more

observant and appreciative of the birds around them. We would like to re-extend our invitation to Ashland School District teachers, students and parents to participate in our environmental education program. Please contact Ben Wieland (541/201-0866; [bw@klamathbird.org](mailto:bw@klamathbird.org)) to discuss possible activities.

*-Sherri Kies, KBO Project Leader*



The Klamath Bird Observatory Environmental Education Program at Our Willow Wind Headquarters offers opportunities for students to participate in bird conservation and learn what it takes to be a professional field scientist.



### Citizen Science and Bird Conservation On National Forests

A new "citizen science" bird conservation partnership is underway on our National Forests, and KBO is helping out. The Birds In Forested Landscapes Recreation Study was developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the Forest Service to census thrushes in high use recreation sites. The data collected will help answer important scientific questions about birds and recreation impacts that can only be addressed through the collective efforts of thousands of volunteers across the nation.

The protocol was adapted from the Birds in Forested Landscapes study that was implemented in 1999 across forests nationwide. The study sites will be in high use recreation sites on Forest Service Ranger Districts. The project entails visiting these selected sites in forested patches and recreation areas to census for forest dwelling thrushes, and to record landscape and habitat characteristics about each site. We are looking for Varied, Swainson's, and Hermit Thrushes in our western National Forests.

KBO intern students conducted censuses at Odessa Creek and Williamson River, both Winema National Forest campgrounds in the...

*Continued on page 14*



## THE KLAMATH BIRD - December 2002

### Citizen Science... (Continued)

...Upper Klamath Basin. KBO also runs constant effort banding stations in close proximity to these locations, so the effort took place in familiar territory. This program is a great opportunity for local residents ("citizen scientists") to get involved in bird conservation activities going on nationwide.

The Forest Service is looking for interested volunteers who want to learn more about birds and help collect important data to be used in addressing declining population trends. Contact Barb Kott at the Hood National Forest (503/668-1414 or [bkott@fs.fed.us](mailto:bkott@fs.fed.us)) to learn about volunteer opportunities on your local Forest.



To learn more about how you can be a part of national citizens science programs visit Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology Website at: (<http://birds.cornell.edu/>).

*-Barb Kott, Hood National Forest and Oregon/Washington Partners In Flight*



### Klamath Bird Observatory Seeks Members

The Klamath Bird Observatory is seeking to build a network of members. Membership is extremely important for KBO during our start up phase, in that it helps to show public support as we seek funds from various foundations.

Donations made to KBO are tax deductible. Members will receive copies of our Newsletter, *The Klamath Bird*, and will be included on our internet mailing list through which we distribute reports, announcements and other news regarding the Klamath Bird Observatory.

#### Klamath Bird Observatory - 2003 Membership Sign-up Form

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

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

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

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

Check One:

\_\_\_\_\_ - Regular 2003 annual membership - \$35.

\_\_\_\_\_ - 2003 annual membership for students and seniors - \$15

\_\_\_\_\_ - 2003 Supporting Membership - \$100 (Receive an embroidered KBO hat).

\_\_\_\_\_ - Lifetime Membership - \$1,000 or more. (A donation of \$1000 provides enough funding for a KBO Intern Student's housing and stipend for one month. Receive an embroidered KBO hat and a collectors edition Klamath Demographic Monitoring Network T-shirt).

Donations made payable to KBO are tax deductible.

Please mail this Klamath Bird Observatory membership sign-up form, with annual dues to: Memberships, Klamath Bird Observatory, PO Box 758, Ashland, Oregon 97520

*The Klamath Bird - December 2002*

*The Klamath Bird* is the official news letter for the Klamath Bird Observatory, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. We can be reached by mail at PO Box 758, Ashland, Oregon 97520 or by email at [KBO@KlamathBird.org](mailto:KBO@KlamathBird.org). Our phone number is (541) 201-0866 and our home page is located at [www.KlamathBird.org](http://www.KlamathBird.org).

KBO's Project Feeder Watch Environmental Education Program is sponsored by:

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