

The Klamath Bird



Newsletter of the Klamath Bird Observatory, Fall 2004

Monitoring Bird Populations, Applying Science to Conservation

Fundraising Opportunity For the Klamath Bird Observatory!

John D. Alexander, Executive Director

As Executive Director, I would like to thank our members, partners, and friends for continuing to support the Klamath Bird Observatory. In the past 5 years we have grown to become an organization with an operating budget of over one-third of a million dollars. Our conservation contributions include providing science-based, non-advocacy recommendations on how to manage and protect our public lands for birds and other wildlife species. Our accomplishments towards bird conservation science in the Klamath Ecoregion and beyond have been recognized nationally by government agencies including the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. A recent award from the Joint Fire Sciences Program recognizes our excellent research (see below). The partnerships we have formed with public and private entities are strong and we look forward to continuing to build our partnerships in the name of bird conservation.

As a result of our strong commitment to science and conservation, KBO has been given the opportunity to raise much-needed private-sector funds in support of

our research and education programs. A KBO donor has generously pledged to match up to \$5,000 of 'new' private-sector contributions made to KBO before December 15th. This is an opportunity to turn \$5,000 of non-federal funds into \$10,000, which in-turn can be used to leverage an additional \$10,000 through government challenge cost-share partnerships. In other words, each new dollar contributed to KBO in the next month, will be turned into \$3 dollars through this unique opportunity.

Please help us take advantage of this generous offer!



Western Screech Owl

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To make a pledge supporting KBO, please send a check made payable to The Klamath Bird Observatory PO Box 758 Ashland, OR 97520. Thank you very much!

KBO Wins Joint Fire Sciences Award

Fire and Ecosystem Function: What can the birds tell us?

Nat Seavy, Research Associate

This field season, biologists from the Klamath Bird Observatory and the USFS Redwood Sciences Laboratory continued research that uses birds as ecological indicators of forest conditions in order to understand how wildfire and fire management influence ecosystem function. The Joint Fire Science Program (JFS), a national program that encourages partnerships be-

tween agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions, funds this exciting project. Each year, JFS researchers meet to present the results of their research. At this year's meeting, KBO's project was awarded the "Best Scientist-Manager Partnership". Results from our research were also presented at the 2004 Ecological Society of America meetings in Portland, Oregon, attended by more than 3,000 ecologists from the United States and abroad.



Rare Bird Update

Bob Frey, KBO Research Biologist

Occasionally, migratory birds are found outside of their typical range. Explanations for this phenomena include genetic programming and extreme weather events (storms, hurricanes). These “rare birds” provide bird enthusiasts with the chance to observe them in areas where they are otherwise not seen.

This fall, KBO biologists and interns encountered several out of range species. An **Ovenbird** was banded in Douglas County and a **Black-and-white Warbler** was banded in Klamath County. Both species normally occur from the Midwest to the East Coast. Two **American Redstarts**, normally found east of the Cascades and Sierras, were banded in Klamath Marsh. Two **Red-eyed Vireos** were banded in

August in Klamath County, one of the vireos already had a band on its leg, having been banded in July 2003 at the same site. It is amazing to think of this tiny bird flying to its winter home in South America and back again to the exact same spot! Lastly, a **Lawrence’s Goldfinch** was banded at the Trinity River in California on July 9. This small finch is a rare visitor to northern California.



Ovenbird, photo by Sarah Faegre

Snapshot of Bird Migration

Bob Frey, KBO Research Biologist

Klamath Bird Observatory interns and biologists recently joined birders and other biologists across the continent in counting migrating birds by participating in the North American Migration Count on September 18th. Similar to a Bird-A-Thon, observers count all birds seen and heard from dawn until dusk in order to obtain a snapshot of bird migration on that day. KBO biologists counted as many birds as possible in Jackson and Klamath Counties of southern Oregon.

We recorded 139 species for a total of 7,949 individual birds in just one day of counting. By county, that equaled

107 species and 5,276 individuals in Klamath County and 93 species and 2,673 individuals in Jackson County. The most abundant species encountered were European Starling (1010), American Coot (832), Brewer’s Blackbird (616), and Violet-green Swallow (570). Our count results will be compiled with all other North American counts for that day and published in the American Birding Association’s journal *North American Birds*.

We recorded 139 species for a total of 7,949 individual birds during the North American Migration Count.

Fall Migration Monitoring

Bob Frey, KBO Research Biologist

To track the amazing feat of migration, KBO conducts long-term fall migration monitoring. From late August through late October each year, we mist-net and band songbirds throughout the Klamath Basin. **This year in those three months we banded just over 5,000 birds!**

Some highlights and big days from our fall season included 46 Orange-crowned Warblers banded in just one morning on Antelope Creek (Klamath National Forest, Siskiyou County, California). Orange-crowned Warblers are a migratory songbird that breed in North America and winter in Central and South America (a neotropical migrant). Another amazing migration note was capturing 36 Fox Sparrows on September 28 and then 75 Fox Sparrows on October 5, just one week apart! (Odessa Marsh, Winema

National Forest, Klamath County Oregon). Fox Sparrows are a migratory songbird that breed in western Alaska and Canada and winter in Washington, Oregon, and California. Mist-netting allows us to collect population data that are difficult to collect on Fox Sparrows due to their remote breeding grounds.

KBO works in partnership with the Bureau of Land Management, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service, the Bureau of Reclamation and many other partners to monitor bird migration. The Klamath Bird Observatory helps coordinate the North American Migration Monitoring Network in cooperation with many partners including the US Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory, the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, PRBO Conservation Science, and the Bureau of Land Management.

September WBBA/WFO/OFO Meeting A Success!

This summer, the Klamath Bird Observatory hosted the successful joint annual meeting of the Western Bird Banding Association (WBBA), Western Field Ornithologists (WFO), and Oregon Field Ornithologists (OFO). The meeting was held in Ashland. Attendance included 55 WBBA, 85 WFO and 23 OFO members, plus many additional participants from southern Oregon and beyond. This meeting provided an amazing opportunity for KBO to get additional exposure, and to unite three organizations dedicated to conserving bird populations. Talks, workshops, and field trips focused on methods for studying and conserving birds, results from research being conducted throughout the west, and the identification of birds in the field. KBO Inters Laurel Genzoli (a Ford Family Foundation scholar) and Melissa Pitkin, KBO's Education and Out-

reach Coordinator took the lead in KBO's hosting role. Thanks to the participating organizations, this was a unique opportunity to bring many western ornithologists and bird enthusiasts together in the name of conservation. To view the complete program that includes workshop and scientific paper abstracts and field trip descriptions visit www.KlamathBird.org/septmeeting.htm



Conference Logo Artwork:
Gary Bloomfield

Sagebrush Bird Conservation Network

Aaron Holmes, PRBO Conservation Science

This past spring, the Klamath Bird Observatory joined the Sagebrush Bird Conservation Network (SBCN). The SBCN is a collaborative effort among several western bird observatories, universities, and state, federal, and international agencies committed to the preservation and enhancement of shrubsteppe bird populations and the sagebrush ecosystems they depend on. The network's goal is to improve coordination among individuals and institutions that conduct research or monitoring on sagebrush associated birds and provide science-based recommendations and tools for land managers. To that end we have established standardized approaches to measuring and comparing bird populations

across both space and time, are prioritizing research needs, and have developed an interactive map of study areas throughout the sagebrush biome.

For additional information contact Aaron Holmes (aholmes@prbo.org) or visit their website: www.sagebrushbird.org



Taking the Lead in Oregon-Washington Partners In Flight

Jaime Stephens, KBO Research Biologist



An exciting opportunity for KBO to further our mission of advancing bird conservation strategies is my newly acquired position as Chair of Oregon-Washington Partners In Flight. The position, previously held by Michael Green of USFWS, will now be shared amongst two co-chairs, Aaron Holmes of PRBO Conservation Science and Barb Kott of

US Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management and myself. We look forward to continuing a leadership role in Partners In Flight.

Partners In Flight combines resources of public and private organizations in North and South America to promote bird conservation. Partners In Flight focuses on improving bird monitoring and inventory, research, management and education related to birds and their habitats. The mission of Partners In Flight is to help species at risk, to keep common species common and to promote voluntary partnerships for birds, habitats and people.



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KBO's excellent science and education programs advance bird and habitat conservation at the local, national, and international levels through effective partnerships.

Visit us online at www.KlamathBird.org

KBO Staff and Board

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Bob Frey—*Research Biologist*

April Harding—*Research Biologist*

Melissa Pitkin—*Education and Outreach*

Nat Seavy, MS—*Research Associate*

Jaime Stephens—*Research Biologist*

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Intern Thomas Bodey with a Black-throated Gray Warbler