

The Klamath Bird

Newsletter of the Klamath Bird Observatory, Fall 2008



The Human Side of Bird Conservation

By Ashley Dayer, Education & Outreach Director

As KBO advances conservation through science, we are not limited to the science of ecology. We also believe in the value of social science—that is the study of people. While the bird conservation community has been focused on and successful in continually advancing knowledge of bird biology and ecology and the threats that impact bird conservation, we have emphasized less the social science aspects, or human dimensions, of bird conservation. With sound human dimensions knowledge, education and communications professionals can better create messages that 1) reach appropriate audiences, and 2) encourage people to think and act in ways that promote specific conservation outcomes.

KBO began undertaking social science work in 2005 when we invited land managers to a meeting to help us better understand their bird conservation related information needs and the tools that can most effectively meet these needs. Additionally we have conducted research on bird banding education providers and also evaluated our bird banding youth education program, *Songbirds, Science, and Schools*, utilizing multiple social science methods.

More recently, through KBO's involvement in the Bird Education Alliance for Conservation (BEAC) and Partners in Flight (PIF), we have led an innovative effort to integrate human dimensions with bird conservation efforts. With this work, PIF is now addressing a concern that bird conservation plans developed in the past have been crafted by



The *Partners in Flight North American Bird Conservation Plan* was created in 2004 for the US and Canada

biological scientists who lack human dimensions information and expertise. Previous plans only minimally addressed education and communications in brief sections that contained generic messages. But, in developing a new Mexico-US-Canada "trinational vision" for North American landbird conservation, PIF has actively sought to form interdisciplinary teams of social and biological scientists to collaborate on designing the most effective plan.

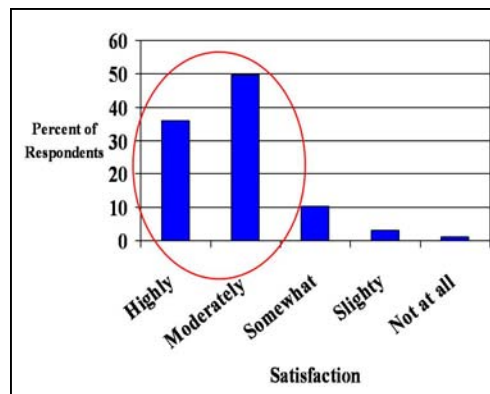
At the heart of this trinational vision is a rigorous biological assessment that was undertaken to identify continental conservation priorities for Mexico, the United States, and Canada. To ensure the most effective presentation of this high caliber biological content, a social science survey of past users of the PIF North American Landbird Conservation Plan was conducted by KBO. This research revealed information on how people are

Inside this Human Side of Bird Conservation issue:

President's Perch	2
Partnerships for Conservation Success	2
Park Flight	3
Intern Reflections on Conservation	3
Welcome New KBO Staff	4
Bird Bio: Tree Swallow	5
Educating Future Conservationists	5
Calendar of Events	6
Private Landowners' Restoration	7

currently using the plan and how future PIF publications could be improved to further their effectiveness in conservation implementation.

Under the leadership of BEAC, teams of biological science, social science, education, and communications professionals are considering how conservation needs outlined in the trinational vision will be linked with the most effective education and communications efforts for the appropriate audiences. This effort will surely serve as a model for bird conservation, demonstrating successful means for interdisciplinary collaboration.



Users of the PIF Landbird Plan indicated high levels of satisfaction with the plan

President's Perch

By Dick Ashford, Board President

Dear Friends,

I recently came across a couple of interesting quotations from a very famous person:

“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.”

“Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions.”

Who would you expect to be making such pronouncements? A famous artist? An author? An actor? Actually, it was Albert Einstein! At first, it surprised me that one of the greatest scientific minds in history had placed so much value on imagination. However, the more I thought about it, the more it made sense – as Einstein pondered the great questions of what makes the universe work, he created mental pictures of what that universe might look like.

Without getting too metaphysical, it dawns on me that a large portion of KBO's success can be traced to imagination. Simply stated, my thinking goes like this: KBO excels in science and education and both are creative, imaginative pursuits. Science helps us stay in touch with our child-like curiosity to wonder about our portion of the universe (bird migration, for example). Education relies upon the imagination of our teachers as well as our students. Without imagination, life at KBO would not be very interesting.

Partners: Key to Bird Conservation Success

By John Alexander, Executive Director

When incorporating KBO, the integration of the term ‘partnerships’ into our mission was by design, and our ability to build and maintain diverse partnerships has been the key to our success. In this edition of the *Klamath Bird* our readers will get a flavor of the array of partnerships that are fundamental to KBO's role in advancing bird and habitat conservation through science and education.

First, the in-house partnership between our science and education teams forms the foundation of everything we do at KBO. The design and implementation of our long-term monitoring efforts and our land management related research projects have a foundation in interdisciplinary collaboration. This collaboration assures that our endeavors are practical, and that our scientific results are not only useful, but are also properly translated to our various audiences who will use our information on-the-ground for the good of birds and their habitats .

In this issue of the *Klamath Bird*, there is much evidence of imagination at work. Read Nala Cardillo's article on summer camps to see how KBO inspires the imagination of young people. See how Ashley Dayer's article on social science provides an imaginative approach to bird conservation. Sarah Lemelin's thoughtful “Reflections” will stimulate your own imagination.

Finally, KBO's work is all about the future. By definition, we must imagine the future – googling won't do it for you. Long-term monitoring is required for accurate scientific results. Long-term education is required to develop a conservation ethic for future generations. So, in order for our science and education to work, it takes the ability to imagine. At KBO, we've got it. Just imagine.

As always, thank you for your continuing support. The birds need it and deserve it.

Cheers,



Dick Ashford
KBO Board President

In this newsletter you will see examples of our partnerships with the people who work on the land. It is these land managers that have the opportunity to help birds through their decisions and actions every day. Our partnership with Willow-Witt Ranch helps to demonstrate how private landowners can integrate conservation into their efforts to live off the land in a sustainable manor. It is becoming widely recognized that, through conservation, our lands become more productive, and more resilient in the face of global climate change.

Through our new role in Oregon's Coordinated Aquatic Bird Monitoring Program we are working with the state's Department of Fish and Game, to identify how private, state and federal land managers can better manage our inland wetland systems. The conservation of the wetland bird species that are indicators of healthy marshlands will ‘trickle down’ to the surrounding terrestrial systems, resulting in healthier natural and agricultural landscapes.

(continued on pg. 7)

Science

My Park Flight Migration to the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion

By Miguel Moreno Palacios, Banding Intern



Miguel Moreno with a Northern Flicker

My home country Colombia is truly the country of the birds—with 1,870 species—more than any other nation. This big number is attractive for researchers, birders, and others fond of these feathered vertebrates. At least 170 of them are migratory, wintering in Colombia and returning each spring to nest in North America.

Colombia's great diversity of birds and the wide variety of their

habitats present a challenge for research, monitoring, and conservation efforts. It is important to combine the efforts and interest of the scientific community, the government, and common people that day by day are in contact with birds. To achieve this, scientists need a lot of study and

training, elements that many Latin American biologists can find through different international experiences, supported by important initiatives like the Park Flight Migratory Bird Program. My internship with KBO is sponsored by this National Park Service program through Oregon Caves National Monument. My experience here been very enriching professionally and personally.

The Park Flight Migratory Bird Program is a dynamic partnership between the National Park Service, National Parks Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, U.S. Agency for International Development and the University of Arizona. Park Flight helps conserve shared migratory bird species and their habitats in U.S., Canadian, Latin American and Caribbean national parks and other protected areas through development of conservation and education projects and technical exchange. KBO and Oregon Caves National Monument co-hosted a Park Flight intern from Costa Rica in 2007 and Miguel from Colombia this year. To learn more about Park Flight, visit www.nps.gov/oia/topics/flight.htm

Bird Conservation Reflections of an Intern

By Sarah Lemelin, Banding Intern

At one point in my life, I considered waking up before sunrise incomprehensible, thought binoculars were for sailors, and would have likened the Spotted Towhee to a symptom of virulent bacteria. Then I fell in love with songbirds and the rest is history.

Initially, my fascination was marked by a burgeoning collection of bird books, umpteen walks around the woods of Massachusetts, and the rather obsessive-compulsive maintenance of a life list. However, I quickly came to understand the enormous conservation challenges that lie ahead in the effort to protect migratory songbird populations. It is easy to admire a bird's grace, to delight in the sighting of a new species, and to marvel at their existence in a realm humans will never know. Nevertheless, the reality that songbird populations are rapidly declining demands not only an appreciation for their existence, but a dedication to their future.

With global climate change, unprecedented habitat loss, and a growing list of species threatened to become relicts of the past, I often become disheartened by the obstacles ahead. However, the same winged miracles for which we put forth so much effort to protect, in turn provide me with

the inspiration to work on their behalf. As an intern for KBO, I have the unique opportunity to spend my mornings banding songbirds, many of which will soon embark on an inconceivable journey to their wintering grounds. Despite the odds, countless migratory birds will return to this area next spring, an accomplishment which ultimately dwarfs the conservation challenges we face. The conservation efforts undertaken by organizations such as KBO gives me hope that life in harmony with avian species is no longer a distant hope, but a forthcoming triumph. I know that if a Wilson's Warbler can travel to Central America and back, the least we can do is provide birds with the habitat they need to survive, reproduce, and delight us with their presence.



Sarah Lemelin holds a Sharp-shinned Hawk that she banded
Photo: Adam Elzinga, KBO

Science & Education

Welcome Back Jennifer Bruce: Research & Monitoring Program Manager

By Jaime Stephens, Research and Monitoring Director

Jennifer Bruce recently joined KBO's Research and Monitoring Team as a Program Manager. Jennifer's interest in birds began in high school, when she won a contest for identifying more birds than any of her schoolmates!

Jennifer grew up in Klamath Falls and became familiar with KBO in Fall 2005 as a Banding Intern. That winter she continued to work with KBO, in partnership with the Oregon State University Extension Service office in Klamath Falls, as an Education & Outreach Intern.

Jennifer joins KBO again after completing her Masters of Science degree in Wildlife Biology at Oregon State University. She studied the



Jennifer Bruce with a Sage Grouse
Photo: Neil Holocomb

winter movements and habitat usage of Greater Sage-Grouse in central Oregon. Through this graduate work, she has honed her field skills and academic knowledge.

Jennifer's primary focus at KBO will be taking the lead on our aquatic bird monitoring program and building new partnerships to expand our new Oregon Coordinated Aquatic Bird Monitoring Program. Jennifer is thrilled to be able to contribute to avian conservation through science and education while living in a place with such great outdoor recreation opportunities.

Welcome New Education & Outreach Team Members

By Ashley Dayer, Education and Outreach Director

KBO welcomes two dynamic new educators to our Education and Outreach team.



Annie Kilby greets visitors to Crater Lake National Park

In August Annie Kilby joined KBO in the new position of Youth Education Projects Lead. Passionate about working to inspire environmental stewardship, Annie has considerable experience delivering education programs, developing curriculum, serving as a naturalist interpreter, establishing partnerships and fundraising. She comes to Southern Oregon after spending the spring and summer on the Oregon Coast as a naturalist interpreter and environmental educator with US Fish and Wildlife Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex where she found her love of birds and bird watching. An alum of Northwest Service Academy AmeriCorps, Annie has also worked with Columbia Springs Environmental Education Center (Vancouver, WA),

Clark Public Utilities (Vancouver, WA), and Fund for Public Interest Research (Washington, DC). She has also been a part of research teams in Kenya; Turks and Caicos Islands;

the British West Indies and in the US for the National Institute of Health. Annie received a Bachelor's of Science from the University of Maryland, College Park. Her primary role at KBO will be to coordinate KBO's many kindergarten through 12th grade education programs. She is excited about adding to her life list and introducing students to KBO's research.

Lauren Kemple took the role of KBO's third Education Specialist through AmeriCorps Northwest Service Academy in October. Lauren brings to KBO eight seasons of experience as an educator at a nature camp on an organic farm in Portland. She also has experience in outreach and volunteer recruitment. She received a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from The Evergreen State College. Lauren will be involved in our youth education program as well as managing Klamath-Siskiyou eBird, and aiding us in continuing to achieve conservation outcomes from our education and outreach efforts.



Lauren Kemple pauses on the trail with a young friend and a snail they found

Education

Bird Bio: Tree Swallow

By Anne Seiler, Banding Intern

The Tree Swallow is commonly encountered in natural open areas near trees and water throughout much of North America during the summer months. They are recognizable from afar by their dark upperparts and white belly, sloped triangular wings, and distinctive swooping flight. A closer look at these aerial insectivores reveals brilliant iridescent purple and teal plumage. Tree Swallows are very social, often congregating in large mixed flocks with the closely-related Violet-green Swallow and other swallow species.

Tree swallows are found primarily in open spaces near water, avoiding dense woodlands and busy residential areas. Arriving in southern Oregon and northern California in late-winter to early spring from their wintering areas that range from the southern U.S. to Central America and the Caribbean, this swallow begins its search for a suitable cavity (or, hollowed out hole) nesting site. After one, or possibly two broods, they begin to gather into flocks often a thousand birds strong in July and August to begin their fall migration southward.

Tree Swallow populations are limited by the availability of cavity nesting sites, as their name suggests, in trees, or nest

boxes. Placement of nest boxes has helped mitigate the loss of natural nest cavities due to habitat loss and declining woodpecker populations, which initially create cavities used by Tree Swallows and many other species. Although increasing slightly in North America as a whole since 1966, this swallow's numbers have declined in Oregon during the same period according to Breeding Bird Survey data.



Tree Swallow
Photo: James Livaudais

References: [Birds of Oregon](#), first edition 2003, edited by D.B. Marshall, M.G. Hunter, & A.L. Contreras; [Complete Birds of North America](#), 2006, edited by Jonathan Alderfer Sauer, J. R., J. E. Hines, and J. Fallon. *The North American Breeding Bird Survey, Results and Analysis 1966 - 2007, 2008*, USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

Educating Future Generations of Conservationists

By Nala Cardillo, Education and Outreach Intern

"I never want it to end!", exclaimed one student as we walked from ScienceWorks to KBO's Willow Wind Banding Station on the last day of Radical Raptors Camp. "The walk?" I asked. "No! THE CAMP!" she replied, "I just LOVE IT!"

Such is the reward for teaching week-long summer camps to local 7-10 year olds, on behalf of KBO's mission to advance bird and habitat conservation through science, education and partnerships. I was fortunate to teach two camps this summer – Radical Raptors; and Baby Birds and The Art of Nesting. We had 27 local and visiting students enrolled.

Campers investigated science-based topics through outdoor games, indoor crafts, guest speakers, and hands-on activities. Following the ScienceWorks motto to Be Safe, Respectful and Curious, campers explored museum exhibits and contemplated how physical science principles at work might also apply to birds' lives. Finally, campers took a field trip to KBO's banding station where they saw raptors flying overhead (Red-tailed Hawks and Turkey Vultures), as well as juvenile and adult birds up close, in the hand. Very exciting!

As camp wrapped up, students shared what they had liked most: "dissecting owl pellets... making nests... learning about my bird... playing games." In return, they were asked how they will help protect birds in the future: "I will keep my dog or cat on a leash or inside... not be mean to birds... put nesting boxes out... go to college to learn about birds."

My parting comments concurred, "I just love it! I don't ever want it to end!"

Thanks to partner organizations and volunteers who contributed to our camps' success: Bear Creek Watershed Education Partners, Terre DeVilbiss, Leigh Hood, Jim Janousek, North Mountain Park, Loren Trottman, USFWS Forensics Lab, and Vince Zauskey.



A camper poses with his owl mask
Photo: ScienceWorks

Calendar—Join KBO for Summer and Fall Events

Hawks Field Trip with Dick Ashford – Saturday, November 22

Hawks and eagles have captured our imagination like few other birds. Easily seen, they push our primal poetic buttons. Want to observe them with an expert? Here's your chance: join Dick Ashford for a guided outing to Butte Valley (near Dorris, CA) to search for these majestic raptors. In late November, Butte Valley usually has better raptor viewing than its more famous neighbor to the north, the Lower Klamath NWR. We'll try to see as many hawks and eagles as we can. It's anyone's guess, but last year's trip produced Red-tailed Hawks in a variety of color morphs, Rough-legged Hawks, Ferruginous Hawks and Golden Eagle. We also observed Northern Harriers and Merlin. Throughout the day, we'll examine the natural history of hawks and their allies, including behavior, habitat and adaptations for survival. At the end of the outing, we'll be certified raptor enthusiasts! Meet at 7:45 am at Shop N Kart in Ashland to carpool. Return at 4:30pm. Advance registration required (limit: 15). 541-201-0866. \$25 nonmembers, \$15 members.

November 1: KBO Birdwalk to Agate Lake.

View raptors, waterfowl, shorebirds, and waders surrounding the lake and songbirds of the fields and oak woodlands. Bring your scope. Meet at 8am at Northwest Nature Shop (Ashland). Leader: KBO Staff. To register, call 541-482-3241.

November 8: KBO Birdwalk to Jefferson Nature Center.

Explore the site of Jefferson Nature Center and nearby locations along Bear Creek in south Medford. Visit KBO's new office and ecological monitoring station. Meet at 8am at Wild Birds Unlimited (Medford). Leader: KBO Staff. To register, call 541-770-1104.

November 15: Early Birders: Family Bird Activities.

Children ages 5-12 and their parents, join us for a fun-filled morning of learning about birds. Try out binoculars and field guides and learn about our local feathered friends. Meet at Northwest Nature Shop. 10am-noon. Leader: Annie Kilby, KBO Youth Education Projects Lead. To register, call 541-482-3241.

November 22: HAWK TRIP.

See information above. Leader: Dick Ashford, KBO Board President. To register, call 541-201-0866.

December 6: KBO Birdwalk to Emigrant Lake.

Spot water fowl, waders, raptors, and songbirds wintering at this Ashland lake. Bring your scope. Meet at 8am at Northwest Nature Shop (Ashland). Leader: Harry Fuller, KBO Birdwalk Leader. To register, call 541-482-3241.

December 13: KBO Birdwalk to Denman Wildlife Area & TouVelle Park.

View wintering birds of the Rogue River riparian habitat. Take a close look at an Acorn Woodpecker granary tree. Meet at 8am at Wild Birds Unlimited (Medford). Leader: KBO Staff. To register, call 541-770-1104.

December 14-January 5: Christmas Bird Counts.

Join your local Christmas Bird Count conducted by Audubon chapters in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion and beyond. This longest-running citizen science project in the world began on Christmas Day in 1900 and has been providing us with information on trends in bird populations ever since. Find a bird count near you: www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/getinvolved.html

January 7: Hawk Talk with Dick Ashford at North Mountain Park.

A visually-inspiring introduction to the lives of hawks. Excellent preparation for a spring Hawks! All-day field trip. 7pm-8:30pm. To register, call 541-488-6606.

February 13-15: Winter Wings Festival in Klamath Falls, Oregon. Celebrate the 30th anniversary of this festival along with KBO. Participate in workshops, field trips, talks, and hands-on activities for children. www.winterwingsfest.org

NOTE: School and community groups are invited to schedule a visit to a KBO Banding Station, a classroom visit, or a KBO presentation. Email KBO@KlamathBird.org or call 201-0866, ext 3.

Partnerships

Monitoring Private Landowners' Restoration at Willow-Witt Ranch

By Jaime Stephens, KBO Research & Monitoring Director

East of Ashland in the Cascade Mountains lies the Willow-Witt Ranch—440 acres of meadows, coniferous forest, oak woodlands, wetlands, and streams, which host a diverse bird community. Ranch owners Suzanne Willow and Lanita Witt are dedicated to the practice of holistic forest management, implementing forest restoration on their land for over 20 years. More recently, the property has undergone riparian restoration, including the installation of a perimeter fence to eliminate cattle grazing and the planting of 4500 willows. This restoration was partially supported through Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program funding for agriculture lands that are set aside for restoration in the Farm Bill.

The ranch, in conjunction with KBO, received funding this spring from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to monitor the recovery of native riparian vegetation and to document the flora and fauna on the ranch. KBO is



The presence of the Warbling Vireo can indicate restoration success
Photo James Livaudais

completing surveys in spring and fall to gather data about breeding, resident, and migratory bird communities. Monitoring birds during both the breeding and non-breeding season will provide a more complete picture of the bird communities on the ranch as species composition and habitat requirements vary by season.

The results from KBO's research will provide information to the Willow-Witt Ranch on the presence and abundance of birds, which will be incorporated into their innovative conservation education and land stewardship programs. In addition, they will provide baseline data to assess future ecological effects of restoration efforts. Such monitoring efforts on private lands offers an excellent example of how private landowners can contribute to bird conservation and the importance of monitoring the success of such projects.

Partners *(Continued from page 2)*

KBO's award-winning partnership model is transcending outward, into a tri-national effort to conserve bird populations throughout Mexico, the United States and Mexico. We are working with scientists and educators from these three countries to present a continent-wide assessment of bird populations. In this assessment we will identify opportunities for decision makers to work towards a more sustainable partnership between our human systems and a healthy and abundant ecosystem— within this type of large-scale stewardship partnership, we can imagine long-term sustainability. Through science and education, bird conservation is becoming a catalyst, and birds the indicators, for a new era in which we recognize that better stewardship is key to the success of human civilization in the face of global climate change.

Bringing it back home, our education specialists are working with local partners to educate the stewards of our future. With a greater appreciation of birds and habitats, and an understanding of how they will play a role in protecting birds, habitats and the ecosystems on which we all depend, the children of today will be better equipped to take on their challenging role as the decisions makers of tomorrow.

Last, but not least, it is the partnership we have with you that makes the KBO model possible. By showing strong community support we demonstrate the importance and relevance of our efforts to advance bird conservation to our community. KBO has had much success in leveraging private sector contributions to build the resources we need to conduct our conservation science and education programs. We thank you!



KBO partners and donors admiring silent auction items at KBO's Wings and Wine Gala where many community members joined KBO staff and board in celebrating bird conservation success

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KBO Staff

John Alexander, MS— *Executive Director*
Ashley Dayer, MS—*Education & Outreach Director*
Jaime Stephens, MS—*Research & Monitoring Director*
Jennifer Bruce, MS—*Research & Monitoring Program Manager*
Bob Frey—*Biologist & Banding Project Lead*
Annie Kilby—*Youth Education Project Lead*
Kate Halstead—*Field Technician*
Lisa Buttrey—*Administrative Assistant*
Lauren Kemple— *Education Specialist (AmeriCorps)*

KBO Interns

Education/Outreach

Jan Brotman
Nala Cardillo

Banding

Adam Elzinga
Isabel Varela Garrido
(Spain Integrant)
Judith Mateos Herrero
Sarah Lemelin

Banding (cont)

Adrienne Levoy
Joseph Micheal
Hernan Arias Moreno
Laura Cárdenas Ortiz
Miguel Moreno Palacios
(National Park Service, Park Flight)
Belén García Pérez
Anne Seiler
Ayden Sherritt

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Learn more about KBO: www.KlamathBird.org
Contact us: KBO@KlamathBird.org
(541) 201-0866