The Klamath Bird

Newsletter of the Klamath Bird Observatory, Summer 2008



Wings & Wine Celebrate bird & habitat conservation with
Klamath Bird Observatory
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Bird populations continue to decline, facing increasing conservation challenges and the greatest unknown yet—global climate change. At KBO we know we have much work to do to help species at risk and, at the same time, keep common birds common.

In our eight years as a nonprofit organization dedicated to bird and habitat conservation, we have had many conservation successes through our science and education efforts. Yet, rarely do we take the time to stop and celebrate. And these successes would not be possible without you—our supporters, community, partner organizations, friends, and families. Celebrate with us!

On September 19, 2008 we invite you to join us in a celebration at our first Wings & Wine gala at Eden Vale Winery. At sunset, Vaux's Swifts, a bird population in decline that is reliant on conservation efforts to protect migration roosts such as Eden Vale's chimney, will swirl into their roost. Marvel at the spectacle with us and help us garner the support we need.

Recapture Data Shows Value of Riparian Corridor

By Bob Frey, KBO Banding Project Leader

While stories of lengthy migrations capture our fascination, KBO biologists were recently surprised by a much shorter journey made by a Rogue Valley resident bird. On April 4, 2008, the inaugural day of our new Jefferson Nature Center banding station in Medford, Oregon (see Klamath Bird Spring 2008 issue), we captured an adult Black-capped Chickadee, which had been banded already! Upon checking the band number in the KBO banding database we discovered that it had been captured and banded at KBO's Willow Wind banding station in Ashland, Oregon on August 29, 2005. At the time of its banding, it was an immature bird, hatched earlier that year.

The two banding stations are both located along the banks of Bear Creek. This Black-capped Chickadee had dispersed approximately 15 miles downstream following a riparian corridor through three southern Oregon towns where the Bear Creek Greenway protects riparian habitats. This small bird's recapture is just one demonstration from KBO's banding data of the importance of conservation of riparian habitats and wildlife corridors.



Black-capped Chickadee; Photo Jim Livaudais

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President's Perch

By Dick Ashford, KBO Board President

Dear Friends,

In our first newsletter of the year, I mentioned that 2008 looked to be even more promising than 2007. As we approach mid-year, it appears my fortune-telling was correct. Not content to rest on our laurels, the KBO board and staff continue to embark upon new undertakings. This issue of the *Klamath Bird* outlines some of the new initiatives that will allow our science and education programs to continue to grow; more importantly, these new endeavors will help advance the cause of bird and habitat conservation. That is what we do, and we know that is why you continue to support us.

Speaking of new initiatives, and speaking of your support, we are planning the first-ever KBO "Wings and Wine" gala for September 19th. To ensure it has a KBO "feel", we're planning it to coincide with Vaux's Swift migration. It will be a truly unique opportunity. Where else can you enjoy good company, good food and good music while watching Vaux's Swifts swirl into their roost chimney? All this and you'll be helping KBO as well. (See page 6 for event details).

The event will benefit KBO's science and education programs AND will give us a chance to meet many (we hope) of you, our supporters. We are counting on seeing you there. This is so important that we have made arrangements for an agent of the federal government (i.e., a US Postal Service carrier) to deliver the invitation. Please check your mailbox for the announcement. Once you receive it, mark your calendars, purchase your ticket, and come help us grow!

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

Cheers,

Dick

Dick Ashford KBO Board President

Aquatic Bird Conservation through Coordinated Monitoring

By John Alexander, KBO Executive Director

This summer KBO will begin to include aquatic birds in our research and monitoring programs, expanding from our traditional focus on landbird monitoring and research. With support from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Charlotte Martin Foundation, KBO is working with many partners to establish an aquatic bird monitoring network throughout eastern Oregon. Our objectives include identifying and coordinating monitoring programs, identifying knowledge gaps that limit wetland bird conservation, and implementing new efforts that will measure the effectiveness of and inform future wetlands management. We are undertaking this project as part of the Intermountain West Joint Venture's larger scale efforts to conserve aquatic bird habitat throughout eleven western states.

Jaime Stephens, KBO Research and Monitoring Team Director, and Nick David, KBO Project Lead, are working with partners to complete descriptions for forty important aquatic bird sites in eastern Oregon. Each description includes key habitats and findings from surveys of Oregon's aquatic bird focal species. Additionally, at 15 sites, we will conduct secretive marsh bird surveys that

focus on American Bittern, Least Bittern, Virginia Rail, Yellow Rail, Sora and Pied-billed Grebe. This year our efforts will lay the groundwork for long-term, coordinated, aquatic bird monitoring in Oregon. A cost-effective monitoring program will depend on a network of partners who will cooperate to meet information needs of regional land managers and conservation organizations regarding

aquatic bird habitat.



American Bittern; Photo Jim Livaudais

We are looking for volunteers who have expertise and interest in aquatic birds and associated habitats in Oregon. To participate, please contact Jaime and Nick at Aquatic@KlamathBird.org.

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Science

Mapping Bird Territories to Verify Shrubsteppe Bird Populations

By Jaime Stephens, KBO Research and Monitoring Director and Barb Bresson, Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management Avian Program Manager

Estimating the size of songbird populations has become an important component of bird conservation efforts. Such estimates are used to establish population objectives, a benchmark for measuring the success of international bird conservation efforts. Population estimates have been established for a suite of priority sagebrush bird species, including Brewer's Sparrow, Sage Sparrow, and Sage Thrasher, using existing data from the Sagebrush Bird Conservation Network (www.sagebrushbird.org).

verify these population estimates by mapping bird territories in eastern Oregon and Washington to estimate population densities in sagebrush habitats. This effort is supported through the Service First Working Together Partnership, an interagency collaboration coordinated by the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service. This project will result in management of shrubsteppe rangelands that meets bird conservation objectives set by Partners in Flight and the Intermountain West Joint Venture.

Welcome 2008 Banding Interns

By Bob Frey, KBO Banding Project Leader

Each year, from May to October, KBO continues long-term monitoring efforts at over fifteen ecological monitoring stations in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion. At these stations we mist net and band songbirds, while completing comprehensive area surveys. Much of this work is conducted by interns who receive training in specialized methods of bird monitoring and advanced-level ornithological topics. This year our team of interns has come from near and far to learn about and contribute to KBO's bird conservation efforts.



KBO's Banding Interns and Project Leader Bob Frey (4th from right): Photo KBO

Colombian biologist Hernan Arias, who interned with KBO in 2007, has returned as field crew leader to assist with training and fieldwork coordination. Two additional interns hail from Colombia. Miguel Moreno, graduate of Universidad del Tolima, joins us as an intern with the National Park Service's Park Flight Program, in partnership with Oregon Caves National Monument. Laura Cadenas is a graduate of Universidad INCCA de Colombia. Priscilla Lai

and Ayden Sherritt, both of Ontario, Canada, are nearing completion of undergraduate studies at Guelph University. Bruktawit Abdu, a biologist from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia is an associate of the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society. Her position is supported through the U.S. Forest Service International Program and the Ashland Rotary Club's Word Community Service Committee. Anne Seiler is on summer break during her undergraduate studies at

University of Pittsburgh. Karl Fairchild is completing a field study internship through Oregon State University, and Adrienne Levoy recently completed her undergraduate studies at University of California, Berkeley.

KBO could not accomplish such a great amount of bird monitoring without the hard work of these bright, enthusiastic, and dedicated individuals.

Welcome 2008 Field Interns

By Jaime Stephens, KBO Research and Monitoring Director

This is the third and final year of the riparian fuels reduction study in the Applegate Valley. KBO has two excellent interns working on this project. Kate Halstead came to KBO from The Evergreen State College where she recently graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Ecology. Graham Ray received his Bachelors of Science in Biology from Davidson College in North Carolina. Both interns started at KBO in the beginning of April and spent much of the first

month processing insects that were collected in previous years.

Once May came the interns were eager to get into the field and have been working full time on spot mapping and gathering behavioral observation data to assess the reproductive success of songbirds. These interns are making a substantial contribution to our science program through their dedication and hard work.

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Education

KBO Education Intern Completes Thesis and Masters Degree

By Ashley Dayer, Education and Outreach Director

In June 2008, KBO Education Intern Amy Busch completed her Masters degree with Southern Oregon University, defending her thesis which she conducted with KBO. Amy joined KBO in May 2006 to complete an internship for her Environmental Education Masters degree. After her first season of interning, Amy approached KBO about conducting an evaluation of our Songbirds, Science, and Schools program, for her graduate thesis research. Songbirds, Science, and Schools is KBO's bird banding based science education program for Jackson County Schools. While numerous bird observatories throughout the nation conduct bird banding education programs, none have previously undertaken a comprehensive evaluation.

Amy built on past research on environmental education evaluation and banding education programs, conducted by Melissa Pitkin, (past KBO Education and Outreach

Coordinator and Southern Oregon University student who is now with PRBO Conservation Science). Amy developed and implemented evaluation tools for her research project. While her results demonstrate the utility of KBO's Songbirds, Science, and Schools, her innovative recommendations will aid KBO in further enhancing our program. To learn more about the study and results, visit www.KlamathBird.org/Education/Eval

As Amy explained in her final evaluation meeting with KBO, "KBO enhanced my educational experience at Southern Oregon University, providing me with unparalleled research, analysis, conference presentation, and scientific writing experience and guidance." As Amy's moves on to pursue a career in environmental education we will miss her enthusiasm for education and conservation, as well as the many skills and ideas she brought to KBO.

Increasing Science and Conservation Education at Willow Wind

By Melissa Molzahn, KBO Education Specialist (AmeriCorps)

For several years, KBO has offered classes to students who attend the Ashland School District Willow Wind Community Learning Center, where our headquarters is located. Due to the popularity of these science and conservation education offerings demand was up and KBO provided two course options for the first time this spring: "Ecology and Conservation" for ages 11-14 and "Wild About Birds!" for ages 7-9.

Ecology and Conservation was the second in a year-long series designed to enhance students' science knowledge and skills and encourage their understanding of the link between science and conservation. As a primary component of the course, students conducted citizen science monitoring research in the Willow Wind Natural Area, including water quality

and bird monitoring. Bird monitoring data were entered into Klamath-Siskiyou eBird. They also took part in riparian restoration work along Paradise Creek, with KBO partner Lomakatsi, helping to restore riparian habitat for birds and other wildlife. The students gave end-of-semester presentations on their research efforts. One student commented on the presentations, "It was fun and I feel like I learned a lot."

In Wild About Birds, students immersed themselves twice a week in learning about birds through stories, games, art, and observation in the field. They also contributed to bird conservation, through such efforts as creating tail sheaths for raptors undergoing rehabilitation at southern Oregon's Wildlife Images.

Protecting Wetlands, Water, & Waterbirds of the Refuge

By Nala Cardillo, KBO Education & Outreach Intern

What better way to inspire students about "Protecting Wetlands, Water and Waterbirds" than to spend a day exploring Upper Klamath Lake National Wildlife Refuge? Students from the small, rural community of Chiloquin, Oregon, connected with their local habitat, wildlife, and wildlife refuge through field trips hosted by KBO on May 28th and June 3rd.

KBO educators, along with volunteers from Klamath Basin Audubon Society and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, led hands-on, inquiry-based activities with the 3rd through 5th grade students. Building on lessons that had been introduced previously in class, student scientists sketched maps of the area that included helpful and harmful human impacts to the wetlands; monitored water quality by collecting pH and temperature data and macro-invertebrate samples; and observed a variety of waterbird species and their behaviors through spotting scopes and individual binoculars.

Continued, see "Protecting Wetlands" on page 7

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Education

Bird Bio: Vaux's Swift

By Melissa Molzahn, KBO Education Specialist (AmeriCorps)

The Vaux's Swift is often seen flying swiftly overhead, in one direction, then another, at top speed. This small and agile bird rarely perches unless it is nesting or roosting. It can be observed busily hawking all sorts of tiny insects, especially when feeding young.

Generally a summer resident in Oregon, Vaux's Swifts arrive in late April or early May. They can be found breeding from Canada through California and begin to take off to their wintering grounds in mid-September, travelling as far south as Honduras. Vaux's Swifts prefer old-growth forest habitat and rely on large-diameter hollow snags for nesting and roosting. Like their eastern cousin, the Chimney Swift, the Vaux's Swift has been known to utilize brick chimneys in lieu of trees for roosting and nesting.

During migration, these birds stop over at various locations in Oregon and northern California where they roost in groups of over 10,000 birds for several weeks, often in chimneys. Each night they swirl into the chimneys at sunset. KBO will highlight such a location—Eden Valley Farms—at its Wings and Wine event (see page 1).

Vaux's Swift populations declined significantly in the 1980s and are believed to be in continued decline. Since oldgrowth forest habitat with hollow snags is so important for

this species, forest management practices retaining snags benefit this species. Nest boxes (3.5 m tall and 30 cm square) placed in trees 10-15 m above the ground provide a short-term alternative to large-diameter hollow trees. As



Vaux's Swift; Photo James Livaudais

their main source of food is aerial insects, limited pesticide spraying in known roosting locations can ensure that their food supply will not be depleted, especially during the breeding season. Given that large flocks of birds now use chimneys as their migratory roosting sites, maintaining open brick chimneys will also aid the conservation of Vaux's Swifts.

Learn more about the conservation of Vaux's Swifts at KBO's Wings and Wine celebration!

References: <u>Birds of Oregon</u>, first edition 2003, edited by D.B. Marshall, M.G. Hunter, & A.L. Contreras; <u>The Birds of North America</u>, first edition 2005, edited by Dr. Alan Poole and Dr. Frank Gill.

KBO Plays Key Role in Bird Education Alliance for Conservation

By John Alexander, KBO Executive Director

In 2007, KBO and a host of partner organizations, created the Bird Education Alliance for Conservation (BEAC) to address a lack of coordination among bird-related education efforts that are critical to successful implementation of bird conservation needs. Partner organizations included US Fish and Wildlife Service, PRBO Conservation Science, Sonoran Joint Venture, National Parks Service, National Audubon Society, and Environment for Americas. BEAC first developed its strategic plan and charter. When its Executive Committee was elected this winter, Ashley Dayer, KBO's Education and Outreach Director, was appointed as the alliance's Chair.

BEAC is a coalition of educators and others who value education (defined broadly) as a conservation tool. BEAC promotes bird conservation education, engages new audiences in conservation action, develops the tools necessary to improve bird conservation messages and education materials, and promotes incorporation of

education into conservation efforts.

Additionally, BEAC will function in the roles of the Partners in Flight Education Working Group and Communications Working Group. These Partners in Flight working groups were established along with the more active Science and Implementation Committees to address land bird conservation issues at an international level.

KBO is pleased to play a key role in this effort to address critical bird conservation needs. KBO was founded on the approach of science and education partnering closely to accomplish bird conservation. Through involvement in BEAC's strategic efforts, KBO looks forward to contributing our ideas, learning from others, and enhancing the role of education in bird and habitat conservation. To learn more about BEAC, visit www.birdedalliance.org.

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Calendar—Join KBO for Summer and Fall Events

Wings & Wine Gala on September 19, 2008

At sunset, Vaux's Swifts will swirl into the chimney of the Voorhies Mansion at Eden Vale Winery. Join KBO in experiencing this spectacle while celebrating bird and habitat conservation. Enjoy wine, seasonal organic food, a not-so-silent auction, and lively music. 6-10pm. Donate swiftly to KBO. \$45 ticket (\$55 at the door); \$400 for a flock of ten. To purchase tickets, contact Klamath Bird Observatory (KBO@KlamathBird.org or 541-201-0866) or visit Northwest Nature Shop. (Ashland).

August 2: KBO Birdwalk to Mount Ashland.

View the bird life on the highest peak of the Siskiyou Mountains. Mountain Bluebirds, Green-tailed Towhees, White-headed Woodpeckers, Red-breasted Sapsuckers, and Gray Jays may be viewed. Meet at 8am at Northwest Nature Shop (Ashland). Bring water and be prepared for cooler temperatures. Leader: Harry Fuller, KBO Birdwalk Leader. To register, call 541-482-3241.

August 9: KBO Birdwalk to Wagner Butte.

Follow the Wagner Butte trail through conifer forest and mountain meadows. Sagebrush and plentiful wildflowers surrounding the trail will add to the bird sightings. Meet at 8am at Wild Birds Unlimited (Medford). Bring lunch, water, and sturdy shoes for a full day of hiking. Leader: Frank Lospalluto, KBO Associate. To register, call 541-770-1104.

August 9: Early Birders: Family Bird Activities.

Children ages 5-12 and their parents, join us for a funfilled morning of learning about birds. Try out binoculars and field guides and learn about our local feathered friends. 10am-noon. Leader: KBO Staff To register, call 541-482-3241.

September 6: KBO Birdwalk to Emigrant Lake.

Spot waterfowl, waders, raptors, and songbirds at this Ashland area lake. Oak woodland and aquatic species prevail. Bring your scope. Meet at 8am at Northwest Nature Shop (Ashland). Leader: Dick Ashford, KBO Board President. To register, call 541-482-3241.

September 13: 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 Wild Birds Unlimited (Medford). Leader: Harry Fuller, KBO Birdwalk Leader. To register, call 541-770-1104.

September 19: Wings and Wine Gala.

See above to learn more about this celebration.

September 20: KBO Bird Banding at Jefferson Nature Center.

Visit KBO's newest ecological monitoring station where we mist net and band birds. View a variety of songbirds up close and learn about bird research and conservation with KBO biologists. Meet at 9am at Jefferson Nature Center (at Medford Sports and Community Park). Leader: KBO Staff. No registration necessary. \$5 donation suggested.

October 4: Salmon Festival.

Salmon Fest at North Mountain Park in Ashland, OR. 11 am—4pm. Celebrate the connection between people and salmon of the Bear Creek Watershed. Join KBO to learn about birds that rely on healthy riparian habitat along with salmon. For more information, www.bearcreeksalmonfestival.org

October 4: KBO Birdwalk to Bear Creek Sites.

Explore resident and migratory birds of Bear Creek in Ashland. Learn about the importance of riparian habitats for birds and the related conservation challenges and needs. Birds, like salmon, depend on healthy riparian habitats along Bear Creek. Meet at 8am at Northwest Nature Shop (Ashland) and end at North Mountain Park for Salmon Festival. Leader: KBO Staff. To register, call 541-482-3241.

October 11: KBO Birdwalk to Tou Velle State Park.

Join us for fall birds and fall colors. We'll look for migrants such as shorebirds, waterfowl, warblers, sparrows, and other raptors plus resident birds at Tou Velle State Park and along Kirkland Road. Bring a lunch to enjoy at the end of our trip at the Denman Game Management area on E. Gregory Rd. Meet at 8am at Wild Birds Unlimited (Medford). Leader: Vince Zauskey, KBO Birdwalk Leader. To register, call 541-770-1104.

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

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Partnerships

Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge Centennial Celebration

By Dave Menke, Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex Outdoor Recreation Planner

One hundred years ago President Theodore Roosevelt established Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge on the California and Oregon border near Klamath Falls, south of Upper Klamath Lake. This land was set aside to protect valuable habitat for waterfowl and became our nation's first waterfowl refuge. Since then, five additional Refuges have been created in the vicinity, composing the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex, a long-time KBO partner for science, education, and conservation.

Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge covers 46,900 acres of shallow freshwater marshes, open water, grassy uplands, and croplands. This area is managed to provide feeding, resting, nesting, and brood rearing habitat for waterfowl and other water birds. A 10-mile auto tour route provides visitors, including those on KBO's Hawk Trips, to view wildlife year-round.

Klamath Basin Refuge staff invites you to enjoy a monthly series of special events to celebrate the Refuge's centennial. Two of these events include:

August 8 Centennial Celebration: Enjoy bus tours of the Refuge, an old fashioned picnic and ice cream social, and collect a special stamped envelope highlighting the Refuge Centennial.

October 19 Visitor Center Open House: Expert birdwatchers, a world renowned taxidermist and a nature photography equipment specialist will demonstrate their skills, equipment and techniques in a series of short talks at the Tule Lake Refuge visitor center.

For additional information, reservations and updates contact the Refuge at (530) 667-2231 or at fws.gov/klamathbasinrefuges.

Protecting Wetlands (Continued from page 4)

4th and 5th grade students boarded canoes—many for their first time-and explored a Black Tern nesting colony on the Refuge. One fourth grade student remarked, as she paused from paddling, "This is my favorite day of school this year. I have been waiting for it all month!"

This education project is funded through June 2009 by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's "The Nature of Learning" grant, which was



Students canoe with Dave Menke (USFWS) in the Upper Klamath Lake National Wildlife Refuge; Photo KBO

awarded to KBO in partnership with Upper Klamath Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

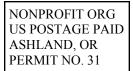
The goals of the project at to increase student knowledge and appreciation of birds and wetland habitats; enhance teachers' abilities to teach about science and the natural world; and provide conservation-relevant data about aquatic birds in this important habitat.

Membership	& (Con	tribu	ıtions
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Your contributions help KBO advance bird and habitat conservation. Additionally, we are able to leverage dollars from matching grants and demonstrate public support when applying for new grants. Check out www.KlamathBird.org/donate to see how you can contribute through an in-kind donation, endowment donation, or planned giving.

Name	Address
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Please select one and make your tax-deductible Send to KBO, PO Box 758, Ashland, OR 975	ole donation payable to: Klamath Bird Observatory or "KBO". 520.
Regular Annual Membership \$35	Student Membership \$15
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 $\hfill \square$ Please contact me with more information regarding planned giving or endowment donations.





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