

# The Klamath Bird

Newsletter of the Klamath Bird Observatory, Spring 2014



## The President's Perch

Harry Fuller, KBO Board President

The most important news from my perch is the election of a Vice President for Klamath Bird Observatory's Board of Directors. This past week we elected Shannon Rio to that post, which she will hold through the end of 2015. It is intended by the Board members that this puts into place a working succession plan. It is hoped that Ms Rio will be ready to become Board President when my term is completed.

Meanwhile, those of us involved in the planning of the Mountain Bird Festival can report great progress. The registration website is up and functioning and out-of-town birders are starting to sign-up. Also, we've received donations and grants for the festival totaling over \$12,000

## Note from the Executive Director

John Alexander, KBO Executive Director

In this newsletter we chronicle KBO's 2013 conservation accomplishments in the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion, the Pacific Northwest, and throughout the ranges of our migratory birds. Working with a worldwide bird conservation community, we stand upon these accomplishments and our rich history of applied conservation science to face the challenges of our future.

Our challenges are many. Western forest birds continue to decline. Funding our work continues to be an endeavor. Often, due to existing fiscal limitations, the attention of natural resource managers is drawn to crises and endangered species management, leaving less time for proactive learning and application of science for a broader and more adaptive approach to restoring our ecosystems. Never-the-less, our track record of effective partnerships, excellent science and science delivery, broad-based community education, and a growing family of supporters brings us confidence that our approach is sound and that we can shape a better future for birds and people.

Our opportunities are manifold. With a coalition of international partners we are taking a new, innovative approach to continentally-scaled conservation. We are identifying the most at-risk habitats, assessing threats, and

In this Year-in-Review Issue we summarize achievements from 2013

dollars. You can check out our festival website at [www.KlamathBird.org/Education/MountainBird](http://www.KlamathBird.org/Education/MountainBird). Tell your friends who live outside the area: May 31-June 1. Get your lifers right here.

Finally, we report that our End of Year Donation Drive in 2013 was the most successful ever. Although KBO's work was hit hard by government funding cuts last year, it is good to know our friends and donors are dedicated to helping Klamath Bird Observatory carry on its avian research programs so scientific work and conservation planning can continue in our region. My deep gratitude for all the donors. You know who you are.

*Harry A. Fuller*

developing ambitious, large-scaled projects to address these threats and turn the tides of conservation in the Western Hemisphere. We are forging new collaborations while maintaining valuable partnerships. We are now working with the Yurok Tribe to inform ongoing fisheries restoration on the Trinity River, and with NCASI to provide research that informs sustainable private forestry programs. Our long-running partnership with the US Forest Service Redwood Sciences Laboratory is strong, and together we will soon be bringing on a postdoctoral scholar to help us put out more high impact science.

My continued optimism is very much fueled by the growing support KBO receives from our community. During our 2013 end-of-year appeal, you gave more on average, and in total, than ever before, in support of the future I describe here – thank you.

In celebration of our community in support of conservation and science, we are hosting our inaugural Mountain Bird Festival, during which we will go into the field to be inspired by the birds that lighten our sprits – the birds that will help guide us towards a healthier future for the generations to come. We hope you will join us!

## 2013 Year in Review

In this newsletter you will find synopses of KBO's major achievements in 2013 by focus area. Enjoy!

### Science Programs

In 2013 KBO continued our long-term monitoring program which uses various field methods to track songbird and aquatic bird populations over time. KBO's long-term monitoring is rooted in our bird banding program which included 10 stations last year, located both east and west of the Cascade Mountains in southern Oregon and northern California. In addition, we continued our long-term monitoring of National Park Units in the Klamath Network, conducting point count surveys at Crater Lake National Park and Oregon Caves National Monument. We also revisited one of our newer long-term monitoring projects, tracking colonial nesting waterbird populations at Fern Ridge Reservoir, located west of Eugene, Oregon.



Trinity River field site

Additional research focused on answering ecological questions related to the effects of wildfires and restoration activities on bird populations. Many of these shorter term studies use point count methods to measure bird numbers, but several apply more intensive field methodologies, including spot-mapping and nest searching, that allow us to determine the habitat features birds prefer during the breeding season and whether birds are successfully producing young. Last year we continued field surveys to investigate which aspects of restoration projects are most successful; we looked at oak woodland restoration on private lands in southern Oregon and northern California, riparian restoration along the Trinity River in California, and a meadow restoration project in the Upper Klamath Basin. We also contributed data for two regional inventory studies led by American Bird Conservancy; the first focused on Vesper Sparrows and the second on bird abundance in riparian habitats.

We provided experiential learning opportunities for 12 Student Volunteer Interns in 2013. Our intern crews included international participants from Belize, Brazil, and Colombia. To facilitate learning for our own interns and staff, as well as for the broader ornithological community, we continued to develop a series of training and curriculum materials through the North American Banding Council. In addition, we provided four bird banding training and certification sessions, one each in Arizona, Brazil, California, and Canada.

KBO staff members contributed to *The State of the Birds 2013*, a national report highlighting the importance of private lands for bird conservation. The report brought national recognition to a KBO partnership that is implementing and monitoring oak restoration on private lands. KBO staff members continue to be active participants and leaders in a number of local, regional, and national networks. We participated last year in the fifth international meeting of Partners in Flight in Snowbird, Utah. We took a lead role during this conference in the development of a business conservation plan for bird conservation in western coniferous forests, emphasizing the important connections to cloud and oak/pine forests of western Mexico where many of our Neotropical migratory songbirds spend the winter.

### 2013 By The Numbers

#### Point Count Summary

**Number of monitoring locations:** 1,152

**Total number of birds counted:** 25,950

**Total number of bird species counted:** 164

**Top five most abundant bird species:** Song Sparrow, Tree Swallow, Western Wood Pewee, Yellow Warbler, and Spotted Towhee and Black-headed Grosbeak tied for 5th.

#### KBO Banding Summary

**Number of banding sites:** 10

**Total birds captured:** 7,497

**Total number of species captured:** 97

**Top five most captured species:** Song Sparrow, Orange-crowned Warbler, Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco, Yellow Warbler, and Wilson's Warbler.

#### Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory (HBBO) Banding Summary

**Number of banding sites:** 4

**Total birds captured:** 3,255

**Total number of species captured:** 79

**Top five most captured species:** Swainson's Thrush, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco, and Golden-crowned Sparrow.

#### Nest Searching Summary

**Total territories mapped:** 404

**Total nests found:** 60

**Focal Species:** Song Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, Tree Swallow, Yellow Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat

#### Internships Summary

**Number of KBO Inters:** 12

**Total trainee & primary HBBO volunteers:** 28

**Countries interns came from:** Belize, Brazil, Colombia, and USA

## Science Delivery

KBO strives to quickly deliver scientific findings to those best able to advance bird conservation. In 2013 we made two major advancements with Avian Knowledge Northwest, a regional data center that consolidates historic and current data to meet our most pressing conservation challenges. First, Avian Knowledge Northwest now contains readily-accessible visualizations displaying current bird distributions as well as future distributions under different climate change scenarios. Second, we added nearly 50,000 historic hummingbird records from Canada and Mexico to the data center, a task completed in partnership with the Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas and the Western Hummingbird Partnership. In addition, we wrote 20 reports summarizing our ongoing and past projects and created two written format Decision Support Tools. We published 1 manuscript, 4 peer-reviewed technical reports, and a KBO master's student completed her thesis at Oregon State University.



[www.AvianKnowledgeNorthwest.net](http://www.AvianKnowledgeNorthwest.net)

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## Outreach and Community Education

In 2013, KBO connected hundreds of community members to birds and conservation through a variety of avenues. KBO led bird walks and conservation outings to several locations in and around the Rogue and Shasta Valleys and the Klamath Basin, as well as to a few renowned birding locations farther afield, including Malheur National Wildlife Refuge.

KBO staff and board members also gave several community presentations on birds and conservation at local Audubon society meetings as well as libraries and other public venues. These presentations covered topics such as the history and future of bird conservation, the role of data in conservation, and the lifestyles and conservation challenges of vultures throughout the world. We were also excited to co-host Ashland's fifth PechaKucha Night at Standing Stone Brewing Company. PechaKucha Nights focus on the art of concise presentations, and three KBO staff and one board member gave presentations related to the theme "Taking Flight." This year, KBO also hosted a book signing fundraiser in celebration of KBO Board President Harry Fuller's first book, "Freeway Birding."

KBO increased awareness of the importance of bird conservation at several festivals in 2013. KBO participated in International Migratory Bird Day via local celebrations in Ashland, Klamath Falls, and Yreka; at the Ashland celebration, KBO gave a public banding demonstration showing how bird banding helps us understand bird population trends as well as factors that drive trends – annual survival and reproductive success. Last year, KBO also attended the Winter Wings Festival in Klamath Falls, Godwit Days in Arcata, Oregon Country Fair in Veneta, Rocky Point Barbeque on Upper Klamath Lake, the Greensprings Mountain Festival, and the Bear Creek Salmon Festival in Ashland.

In 2013 KBO received two significant community outreach grants – from the City of Ashland and the Kinsman Foundation – to host Ashland's first Mountain Bird Festival from May 30 to June 1, 2014. This community conservation event represents a tremendous opportunity to celebrate our region's spectacular birdlife while nurturing the conservation ethic necessary to ensure healthy lands for humans and wildlife. We have an exciting festival lineup of field trips and evening entertainment. Field trips are filling up fast so sign up today!

Finally, in 2013 KBO shared a range of interesting content and beautiful photos on our Facebook page as well as our blog, *The Klamath Call Note* ([www.KlamathBird.org/The-Klamath-Call-Note](http://www.KlamathBird.org/The-Klamath-Call-Note)). We have over one thousand Facebook followers and we're steadily amassing a list of subscribers to our blog. Follow us on both of these websites to stay up to date with events and news stories related to bird conservation in the Pacific Northwest and throughout the migratory ranges of the birds of our region.

## Thanks to Our 2013 Donors!

Donors listed by cumulative contribution to KBO

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## 2013 Volunteers

*Klamath Bird Observatory is deeply appreciative of our donors, volunteers, and partners.*

*We have tried our best to include everyone who helped us advance bird and habitat conservation in 2013, and we sincerely apologize for any oversights. If you are not listed here and should be, please let us know.*

*Thank you!*

Cristina Aguilar	Zia Fukuda	Sean MacDonald	David Schumaker
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Amon Armstrong	Holly Garrod	MJ Mazurik	Daniel Sherrill
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Nelson Edwards	Marcus Lorusso	Kachina Rowland	Andrew Wiegardt
Dan Elster	Frank Lospalluto	Ruby Rozell	Vince Zauskey
Ken Fukuda	David Lumpkin		

## 2013 Contributing Partners

*Our partners listed here made significant contributions of data and/or funds to KBO in 2013*

Alamos Wildlands Alliance, Mexico	Kinsman Foundation	San Pancho Bird Observatory, Mexico
American Bird Conservancy	Landbird Monitoring Network of the Americas	ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum
Ashland Parks & Recreation	Lomakatsi Restoration Project	Siskiyou Field Institute
Ashland School District	Mad River Biologists	Southern Oregon Regional Environmental Education Leaders
Avian Knowledge Alliance	Malheur Field Station	The Nature Conservancy
Avian Knowledge Network	National Audubon	Trinity River Restoration Program
Bureau of Land Management	National Park Service	University of West Indies
Bureau of Reclamation	North American Banding Council	US Army Corps of Engineers
City of Ashland	North American Bird Conservation Initiative	US Fish and Wildlife Service
City of Portland Environmental Services	North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperatives	US Geological Survey
Cornell Lab of Ornithology	Northwest Nature Shop	US Forest Service
Costa Rica Bird Observatories	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Department of Defense	Oregon State University	Washington Department of Fish and Game
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	Portland Audubon	Western Bird Banding Association
Environment Canada	PRBO Conservation Science	Western Hummingbird Partnership
Godwit Days	Rogue Valley Audubon Society	Wild Birds Unlimited, Medford
Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory	Rogue Valley Council of Governments	Wildlife Images
Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge	The Rotary Foundation	Winter Wings Festival
Humboldt State University	Rotary District 5110	Yurok Tribe
Institute for Bird Populations	Rotary Club of Ashland	
Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (INBIO), Costa Rica	Jaltamba Bay Rotary Club	
JiJi Foundation	Shasta Valley Rotary Club	
Klamath Basin Audubon Society	Bend High Desert Rotary Club	
Klamath County	Cottage Grove Rotary Club	

## Bird Bio: Pacific Wren

Ellie Armstrong, *Trinity River Field Technician*

The Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*) is North America's smallest wren, measuring only about four inches from the beak to the tip of its tail. This wren has a rich rufous-brown body, pale legs, dark bill, and a pale eyebrow, and the most remarkable attribute, perhaps, is its joyous and beautifully complex song, which can be heard near streams in moist coniferous forests throughout the Pacific Northwest.

In 2010 the Pacific Wren officially became its own species, having been formerly grouped with the Winter Wren (*T. hiemalis*) and what is now recognized as the Eurasian Wren (*T. troglodytes*). The Winter Wren occurs primarily in the eastern US and Canada, and the Eurasian Wren occurs throughout Europe and into parts of Asia. The split of the Winter Wren into three species occurred as a result of years of research that revealed, among other findings, that the eastern and western US populations are genetically distinct and hybridization is rare where their ranges overlap. Analyses of songs have shown that the Pacific Wren has a distinct and rapid song comprised of up to 36 notes per second, whereas the song of the Winter Wren is significantly slower and more similar to the song of the Eurasian Wren.

The Pacific Wren associates closely with moist coniferous forests. Important breeding season habitat contains old-growth trees, fallen logs, and woody debris, and they tend to occur near rivers and streams in areas with low levels of habitat fragmentation. That said, the Pacific Wren can also occasionally be found in deciduous forests, at elevations over 3,500 meters above sea level, and even on cliff faces.

Pacific Wrens have been called "nook and cranny" nesters due to their creative and secretive placement of nests in cavities of wood, rocks, and other materials. When cavities are not available, males will build their nests inside clumps of moss on tree branches, underneath root masses of overturned trees, or under stream banks within their territories. Females choose one of the available nests and complete nest construction by adding a soft lining of feathers or hair.

Males sing complex songs throughout the year; these songs last 5-10 seconds and in some populations the average male has a repertoire of 21 song variations. To attract a mate, a male may perch above a female and sing to her while fluttering his wings and moving his tail from side to side. A male will also show an interested female the nests he has built by flying through the territory and becoming louder and more excited when near a nest. Next, he will enter and exit the nest several times, often followed by the female.



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Populations that breed at high elevations tend to migrate to lowlands after the breeding season, especially during high snow years. Many populations, however, including those along the coast from the Aleutian Islands to central California, are resident year-round. For resident birds, territory boundaries are more or less consistent throughout the year, although they tend to shift and often decrease in size during winter.

The Pacific Wren is a Partners in Flight focal species for western Oregon and Washington, chosen because it is a good indicator of complex forest floors in coniferous forests. Populations in northwestern California's Douglas fir forests have declined by an estimated 47% from historic levels, due to logging of old-growth forests, increased forest simplification and fragmentation, and reductions in the number of snags and downed logs. Thus, there is some concern for the Pacific Wren. *The Partners in Flight Conservation Plan for Coniferous Forests of Western Oregon and Washington* contains management recommendations designed to benefit the Pacific Wren as well as a variety of forest birds that use similar habitat.

### Sources:

Marshall, David B. et al, eds. *Birds of Oregon: A General Reference*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2003.; Sly, Nick, and . "The Winter Wren is Multiple Species." *Biological Rambling*. 27 Jul 2008. Web. 4 Feb. 2014.; Toews, David P. L. and Darren E. Irwin. 2012. Pacific Wren (*Troglodytes pacificus*), *The Birds of North America Online* (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America Online: <http://bna.birds.cornell.edu/bna/species/720doi:10.2173/>

# Mountain Bird Festival

Citizens and Science Elevating Bird Conservation

Ashland, OR  
May 30th—June 1st

Sign up today! The first-ever Mountain Bird Festival is coming in less than two months. Klamath Bird Observatory will be hosting this community conservation event in partnership with the City of Ashland, Ashland Chamber of Commerce, ScienceWorks Hands-On Museum, and many other organizations.



The Mountain Bird Festival combines a celebration of the region's spectacular mountain birds with the stewardship ethic needed to ensure thriving landscapes for humans and wildlife. The festival offers guided field trips, keynote presentations, a fine art auction, cocktail parties, local foods, and more.

Every festival attendee will help us elevate bird conservation. A portion of each registration payment purchases a Mountain Bird Conservation Science Stamp and a Federal "Duck Stamp", providing funds for strategic land protection and targeted science delivery. We hope you join us!

### Mountain Bird Specialties:

Great Gray Owl, White-headed Woodpecker, Lazuli Bunting, Lewis's Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Calliope Hummingbird, Sandhill Crane, Vaux's Swift, Dusky and Hammond's Flycatcher, Prairie Falcon, Mountain Bluebird, Green-tailed Towhee, Hermit Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Cassin's Vireo, MacGillivray's Warbler, Black Tern, and many more!

### Keynote Presentations:

*The Mountains of Everywhere*  
By Pepper Trail  
*Shakespeare and the Corvids*  
By Barry Kraft

Register online today!

[www.KlamathBird.org/Education/MountainBird](http://www.KlamathBird.org/Education/MountainBird)

To volunteer, email Stephanie at:

[jas@opendoor.com](mailto:jas@opendoor.com)

**Support Klamath Bird Observatory While You Shop:** To participate in Amazon.com's Smile program, go to smile.amazon.com and select us as your charitable organization. Also, for those living in the Rogue Valley, you may register online with eScrip (<http://www.escrip.com/supporter/registration/indx.jsp>) and a percentage of your purchases at participating businesses will be donated to KBO. Thank you for your support!

## Support Klamath Bird Observatory

Your contributions help KBO advance bird and habitat conservation

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Give the gift of a healthy environment to future generations

Our membership levels below reflect our new spring migration membership drive. Please select one and make your tax-deductible donation payable to KBO.

- \$30 Student/Senior Membership
- \$75 Family Membership
- \$1000 Lifetime Membership
- \$40 Regular Annual Membership
- \$150 Supporting Membership
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**PO Box 758  
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## **KBO Staff**

John Alexander, PhD—*Executive Director*  
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Jaime Stephens, MS—*Research & Monitoring Director*  
Sarah Rockwell, PhD—*Research Biologist*  
Kate Halstead, MS—*Research & Monitoring Program Manager*  
Robert Frey—*Biologist & Banding Project Lead*  
Brandon Breen, MS—*Science Communications & Outreach*  
Ellie Armstrong—*Trinity River Field Technician*  
Josée Rousseau, MS—*HBBO Program Director*  
Kim Hollinger—*HBBO Banding Project Leader*

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C. John Ralph, ScD

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