



THE KESTREL

Salem Audubon Society

January 2024

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 (541) 745-5324 chintiminiwildlife.org

Nature Center Happenings

By Tim Johnson

Salem Audubon Society President

Happy New Year. In my New Year president's message two years ago, I announced that the Ankeny Hill Nature Center would open to the public for the first time on February 12. During that first week, volunteers and Refuge staff were on hand to greet visitors, including the new Volunteer Team Leaders Pat and Bobbie Allaire. Since then, the Volunteer Team at the Nature Center has grown to around 50. Pat and Bobbie would love to have you join their team. See the related article in this issue.



Tim Johnson

Since the opening, thousands of visitors have been welcomed to the Nature Center. Volunteers put out a welcoming table each Wednesday and Saturday and share information about the Nature Center. Visitors enjoy the Nature Explore Area, the self-guided Nature Story Walk, or the Pollinator Patch, which has information about our local pollinators, their role in the ecosystem, and how we can support them in our yards and gardens.

President's Message

We have also had many groups use Gehlar Hall for environmental education programs, from public schools, home school groups, and other nature-oriented organizations, delivering programs on nature, wildlife, habitat, etc. The Nature Center has undoubtedly lived up to and exceeded our initial hopes and dreams, and we're just getting started. A new full-time park ranger will join the team in 2024 to help support the mission and goals of the Nature Center.

The next exciting milestone at the Nature Center will be a Dave Marshall Classroom ribbon-cutting ceremony and Nature Center celebration scheduled for this coming spring. We will have more information on this event in the February Kestrel and the Ankeny Hill Nature Center website <https://www.ankenynaturecenter.org>.

The Nature Center is only one of many exciting things involving Salem Audubon. We also have our traveling education programs, Birder's Night programs,

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field trips and bird walks, and involvement in community events such as the Silver Falls State Park Winter Festival, where hundreds of families enjoyed learning about and building a bird nest box.

There's never been a more exciting time to get involved in Salem Audubon and its various programs and activities.

One of the best ways to get involved is to join our board of directors and help chart Salem Audubon's future. Thanks.

Questions? Email Tim Johnson at

tim.the.fisherman@gmail.com



USFWS photo

Work is progressing on the construction of the Dave Marshall Outdoor Classroom at the Ankeny Hill Nature Center. The foundational I-beam structure that will extend partially over Peregrine Marsh (at full level) is being prepared for the concrete flooring.

Ankeny Hill Nature Center Volunteer Report

Thank you for your efforts!

You continued weeding, cleaning, and greeting visitors at the Welcome and Education Table! Plus, the 'keystone' brick arrangement around the pollinator carousel is complete! All very much appreciated!

We hope you find time to give yourself and others the 'gift of nature' this season. Whether observing birds in your backyard, planting native plants for next year's blooms, or taking a trail walk with a family member or friend, may it give you a sense of wonder!

January schedules are now in Signup Genius at <https://bit.ly/volunteer-signup-genius>. Ongoing activities you may find interesting include preparing for Winter Wildlife Field Days in March, more restoration planting by Spring Creek, removing unwanted plants, moving more wood chips, and setting up for the Welcome and Education Table on Saturday and Wednesday from 10-12.

Is there something else you are interested in? Please let us know! We (Bobbie and Pat) are on winter hours now, 9-1 typically. We expect to be at the Center on Wednesdays and Saturdays in January.



SAS Membership Renewal Reminder

February marks the annual renewal date for your SAS membership. To renew your membership (or become a new member), complete the membership form on the back of this newsletter, then mail or use a credit card or PayPal account on Salem Audubon Society's website under the "Support Us" tab at salemaudubon.org.

The cost of membership is increasing slightly this year after nearly a decade of no change. We have simplified membership categories as all members now can access the E-Kestrel. The printed version of the monthly newsletter will still be available to those who wish to pay slightly more for the mailed version.

Please read about the reasons for the change in membership dues on the next page.

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

As 2023 draws to a close, the Salem Audubon Society, like other non-profit organizations, reviews the past year's success and imagines how to serve its members better. To plan upcoming activities and strategize ways to be a more inclusive group, the Board of Directors assesses chapter operations and financial needs to be sure we are meeting our mission goal of connecting people to nature through activities and education at little or no cost.

Unfortunately, inflation has affected us like everyone else. So, despite keeping dues unchanged for nearly a decade, we must now increase our 2024 annual membership dues by \$10.

Beginning with our February membership renewal period, **Individual membership dues will be \$45, and Family membership dues will be \$60.** All digital information we produce will be freely available online, and those who wish to receive a print version of The Kestrel will now pay **\$15 for the 11 issues** they will receive by mail.

We support our chapter work in many ways. Your membership dues represent an essential part of our annual budget, and say how many of you consider our efforts valuable in your life. Your increased participation in our activities, including recurring field trips, Birders' Night gatherings, the Christmas Bird Count, and other unique events, prove you believe your membership is worth the price.

Keeping you informed about our work and activities is essential, and the cost of production and delivery of The Kestrel newsletter – in print and online – is typically an increased expense we face.

The print edition of The Kestrel, mailed to members who pay a small premium for the service, makes chapter news available to those without a digital device. First-class postage costs have risen 43.5 percent since 2012, and printing costs, even with a non-profit discount, have shown similar increases.

Our website (<https://www.salemaudubon.org>) is our primary means of timely information sharing with our members. We average over 700 page views daily, helping us meet our mission by including content that improves nature exploration and birding activities. It also lets members read an interactive version of The Kestrel, download and print copies, and search back issues to re-read stories they value. Freely accessible to online readers, website production and publication costs are rising, too.

And, of course, the usual expenses of business operations, including rent for office and storage space, utilities, supplies, utilities, employee salary and benefits, like everything else, have also gone up.

We appreciate your understanding of the need for this change and look forward to continuing our exploration of nature together. If you have questions, please contact SAS President Tim Johnson at tim.the.fisherman@gmail.com.

Respectfully,



Mike Williams

Member - Salem Audubon Society Board
Editor - The Kestrel
Web Administrator - SalemAudubon.org

Birder's Night - January 9, 6:30 - 8:00 PM (Doors open at 6:00 PM – Scottish Rite Center)

An Evening of Photo Sharing

We kick off the new year with our annual show-and-tell event at the Scottish Rite Center, 4090 Commercial St SE, Salem, and on Zoom. To register on Zoom, click on the following link: <https://bit.ly/jan24-birders-night>

Alaska Adventure

Narration by Jim Kopitzke Photos by Jim Kopitzke, Jeff Harding, Lee Harding

Jeff, Lee, and Jim spent the second half of July, 2023 exploring and birding Alaska, including a boat ride into Kenai Fjords National Park. Join Jim as he shares their adventure. Before moving to Oregon in 2013, Jim lived and birded in Wisconsin, Florida, and Arizona, each for about 10 years.



Arctic Tern

Birds in Your Yard

Narration and photos by Stephanie Hazen

Stephanie Hazen's talk will show us some ways to attract birds to our back yards by providing foods they eat, shelter, and water. Stephanie Hazen, a retired veterinarian, has pursued interests in her retirement which include native plants, bees, birds and photography. She enjoys introducing others to these through sharing stories and photos.



American Goldfinch

Ecuador's Hummers

Narration and photos by Joan Baker

Joan and Dave Baker traveled to NW Ecuador in March 2023 for a 10-day "Spectacular Hummingbirds" tour. They visited around 20 feeder gardens and had up-close views of a dazzling array of hummingbirds, some even in the hand!

Colorful tanagers and normally skulky antpittas added to the excitement at these birding hotspots.



Wire-crested Thorntail

Colorful Costa Rica

Narration and photos by Rick Hafele

In November 2019 Rick spent two weeks in Costa Rica photographing birds and wildlife. Costa Rica is well known for its biodiversity and seeing it first-hand made him a true believer. With over 900 known species of birds, it's hard to go far without seeing another unusual and amazing bird, and a good thing he's not buying film anymore! In this short presentation he will give a quick overview of what one is likely to see on a trip to this wonderful area of the world.



Fiery-billed Aracari

Salem Audubon Society Field Trips

Compiled by Cynthia Donald

Salem Audubon Society (SAS) field trips are open to the public, and we have a mix of experienced and new birders. Our field trips are an excellent way to become familiar with Oregon birds, experience new places and meet new friends. We don't charge for our trips, but there may be a small fee involved, such as a parking pass, depending on our destination. We encourage participants to be vaccinated. Some leaders request participants carpool to reduce our carbon footprint so please contribute to your driver to help cover costs. Masking when inside the vehicle is up to individual drivers.

SAS field trips vary in both driving distance and walking length. Specific field trip descriptions will note trail conditions (uneven, paved, etc), meeting places and times, often include anticipated species to be encountered and directions for carpooling (if applicable). If you need to leave the trip earlier than the scheduled time, please let your leader know!

If you read this field trip intro, you may notice it is different than earlier versions. Beginning in 2024, all field trips will be listed as SAS Monthly Field Trips in order by date. Best wishes for a safe and happy holiday season!

SAS JANUARY FIELD TRIPS

Wednesday, January 3, 2024, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Minto-Brown Island Park

(Upcoming – Thursday, February 1 and Sunday March 3, both at 9:00 AM)

Leaders: Mike Unger (503) 930-8998, Tim Johnson (503) 507-8552

Celebrate the New Year with our regular walk the following Wednesday! This park is highly accessible with 29 miles of trails – both paved and soft. The access to habitat makes it a remarkable park for birders. Leaves are gone from shrubs and deciduous trees. Food, in berries, fallen apples, cherries and grass seeds are a main attraction, with hedges and woodland that provide cover for birds. Chickadee flocks with nuthatches and Brown Creeper, scavenge for insects in bark and lichen; thrushes, waxwings and Yellow-rumped Warblers will be in the trees and fallen fruit. Increased winter raptor species, including falcons, will perch for hunting, providing good views and study. The oxbows and fields attract Dusky Canada Geese, Greater White-fronted Geese and many other waterfowl which acquire their best plumage in winter. Fields and waterway edges offer shorebirds such as Killdeer and Wilson's Snipe. We will always look for the unusual in this park, such as Western Bluebird, American Pipit, Red Crossbill and Snow Goose.

Meet at 9:00 AM at Parking Lot #3 (the last parking lot in the park). Dress for weather, bring water, snacks and binoculars! Trails may be uneven so wear appropriate footwear and plan for considerable walking. We plan to be finished around noon.

Directions: From River Road South, turn west at the signal at Minto Island Road and proceed to the last parking lot. Please do not leave valuables in your vehicle and confirm anything inside is out of sight.

Upcoming Events
January 2024

- WED 3** SAS - FIELD TRIP
Minto-Brown Island Park
9:00 AM - Noon | Minto Brown Island Park
- TUES 9** SAS - BIRDER'S NIGHT
Birding In Ecuador
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM | Scottish Rite Temple
- SUN 14** SAS - FIELD TRIP
Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge
9:00 AM - Noon | Ankeny NWI
- WED 24** HARRY FULLER SPECIAL TRIP
Sauvie Island, Portland
9:00 AM at Seaside | Sauvie Island
- MON 29** **Champoeg State Park**
9:00 AM - 11:30 AM | Champoeg State Park
- EVERY WED** VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY
Audubon Nature Reserve Work Party (All are welcome)
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM | Ankeny Nature Reserve

FEBRUARY SPECIAL EVENTS

- 3** Willamette Valley Bird Symp.
- 10** Exploring Raptors
- 14** Baskett Slough - In Depth

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Sunday, January 14, 2024, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

(Upcoming – Sunday, February 18 and Tuesday, March 12 at 9:00 AM)

Leaders: Mike Unger (503) 930-8998, Tim Johnson (503) 507-8552

The Refuge berms and interior ponds are closed during winter to prevent disturbance of waterfowl. But we can visit the loop around the Refuge, including several pullouts and the parking areas at Pintail and Eagle marshes. We can expect migrating raptors during winter months and they will be more easily seen in snags and leafless trees. We will always look for visiting shorebirds on the mudflats, including peeps, dowitchers and Dunlin feeding and moving in large swarms above the water and field ponds. If we find American Pipit and Western Meadowlark, we will look for Horned Lark in the fields. Now is the time to look through flocks of visiting sparrows, ducks and geese and watch for swans when rains replenish the water levels. Because the travel perimeter includes ditches as well as hedgerows with fruit trees, we will search all sparrow flocks looking for nuthatches, winter warblers and rarities like Northern Shrike or Lewis's Woodpecker.

Meet at Ankeny Hill Nature Center (AHNC) Parking Lot 9:00 AM. There are facilities at this location. We will start here before visiting Pintail Marsh and other locations. Bring water, binoculars and a snack! Trails can be uneven so please wear appropriate footwear. We anticipate finishing by noon.

Directions: From Salem, take I-5 south to the Ankeny Hill Road exit (Exit 243) and turn right (west). At the Ankeny Hill Road/Wintel Road intersection bear right and continue on Ankeny Hill Road straight (west) approximately 2.2 miles to the AHNC Visitor Center entrance which will be on your left. An alternate route from Salem is to take Liberty Road south to Ankeny Hill Road, then turn left and continue about 0.4 miles to the AHNC Visitor Center entrance which will be on your right. Please do not leave valuables in your vehicle and confirm anything inside is out of sight.

Wednesday, January 24, 2024, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Sauvie Island

Leader: Harry Fuller (791) 312-1735

Join self-confessed "obsessive craniac" Harry Fuller on this Wednesday at Sauvie Island to listen and look for Sandhill Cranes and Trumpeter Swans among the myriads of smaller, quieter birds from raptors to ducks to sparrows! Bring lunch and water. We will bird until 3 PM or so.

Meet in the parking lot of the Cracker Barrel Grocery, 15005 NW Sauvie Island Road, Portland at 9:00 AM. A parking permit is required to park in all wildlife areas on the island. Daily permits are \$10.00, annual permits are \$30.00. Permits can be purchased at the Cracker Barrel Grocery or on-line from ODFW at [Buying an ODFW Wildlife Area parking permit | Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife \(myodfw.com\)](https://www.oregon.gov/ODFW/About-ODFW/Pages/Buying-an-ODFW-Wildlife-Area-parking-permit.aspx)

Directions: Sauvie Island is slightly over 1.5 hours from Salem. Once you cross the bridge stay on the main road, bear left and the grocery will be on your left.

Monday, January 29, 2024, 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM– Champoeg State Park

Leader: Dominic Valenti (503) 507-7008

If you like Acorn Woodpeckers and Western Bluebirds, this beautiful state park is one of the best spots in our area to find them any time of year! We'll walk about 2.5 miles through oak trees and a mixed deciduous/conifer forest where we can also expect to encounter Varied Thrush, Hermit Thrush, and various finch and sparrow species as well. This park also hosts a number of raptors during the winter months, including Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Merlin, Cooper's Hawk, and Sharp-shinned Hawk. This walk should last about 2.5 hours. Hope to see you there!

Meet in the Oak Grove Day Use Parking Lot. A valid Oregon State Parks Pass is required, a \$5.00 day pass can be purchased on site. Please bring water and binoculars! We should be finished by noon.

Directions: This historic State Park is about 23 miles north of Salem. From Salem, take I-5 north to the Brooks exit (exit 263) and turn left (west) on Brooklake Road NE, proceed to River Road NE and turn right (north), take French Prairie Road NE (straight ahead) and continue to the park entrance.

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UPCOMING BIRD FESTIVALS, CLASSES AND FIELD TRIPS!

Saturday, February 3, 2024, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM – Willamette Valley Bird Symposium

CH2M Hill Alumni Center, 725 SW 26th St, Corvallis, OR 97331

The WVBS is an annual, day-long symposium bringing together professionals, students and amateurs from the Willamette Valley to celebrate birds. After 2 years of Zooming, the 2024 Symposium will be held IN PERSON!

WVBS registration information is available online at <https://willamettevalleybirds.org>. Registration opened on December 15, 2023. Regular registration deadline is January 15, 2024. Regular registration includes admission and lunch.

Oregon State Extension Service strives to ensure that all educational publications, programs, services and activities are accessible. All announcements for programs, services and activities must include a statement describing how to request accessibility accommodations. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by January 13, 2024 to Douglas Robinson at douglas.robinson@orst.edu. Questions can be addressed to douglas.robinson@orst.edu.

Saturday, February 10, 2024, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM – Exploring Raptors: Birds of Prey!

Instructor: Mike Unger salemaudubonsociety@gmail.com

The most popular class (Raptor ID) that the Salem chapter of the Audubon Society holds locally is coming up on Saturday, February 10, 2024, and reservations are required. The workshop will be held at the Ankeny Hill Nature Center located at 130 Ankeny Hill Rd SE, Jefferson, OR. This will be an IN-PERSON CLASS and participants will learn about raptors that call Oregon home. Raptors discussed include hawks, eagles, vultures, osprey, falcons, and harriers. This workshop will highlight the best sites in the area to look for them and offer participants tips for identifying these birds of prey.

Participants will: learn to distinguish a Red-tailed Hawk from a Red-shouldered Hawk; find out how fast falcons can fly; discover why vultures never get sick when they ingest dead carcasses; and learn how to ID raptors by sight and sound.

The cost for the workshop is \$10 per person with all proceeds going to Salem Audubon Society. The class includes handouts for future reference. Register for this exciting workshop using this link (Note: The link is only to register for the class. As it is an IN-PERSON CLASS, there is no Zoom access): https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_d3X2sD14RB2hjRzQzRZHfw

If you have any difficulty registering for the workshop or have any questions, please email Mike at salemaudubonsociety@gmail.com

Wednesday, February 14, 2024, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM – Baskett Slough

Leader: Harry Fuller (791) 312-1735

Established in 1965 as part of the Willamette Valley NWR Complex, Baskett Slough is primarily managed to provide wintering habitat for the Dusky Canada Goose, a subspecies of Canada Goose with very limited summer and winter ranges. This refuge also provides wetland and woodland sanctuary for migrant and resident wildlife, including Fender's Blue Butterfly, once thought extinct but rediscovered here! We are meeting at the Rich Guadagno Trailhead, just off Coville Road, near the center of the refuge. Rich, a former manager at this NWR, perished in September 11, 2001 on United Flight 93. Walk and experience the flora and fauna who call this part of the refuge home. From the overlook you can see wetlands throughout the southern part of the refuge. We will drive to Cackler and Taverner marshes and check out the wintering migrants, some of whom come in huge numbers. Raptors frequent the area as well in all seasons. Come spend a Valentine's Day morning engaging in one of your favorite activities!

Meet at the Rich Guadagno Trailhead Parking Lot on Coville Road at 9:00 AM. Restroom and picnic facilities are available. Bring water, binoculars, a snack and dress for the weather. Trails may be uneven so please use appropriate footwear. We will finish around noon.

Directions: From Salem, take Hwy 22 west to 99W. Proceed north to Coville Road and turn west (left). Continue to the trailhead which will be on your right. Restroom and picnic facilities are available.



Salem Audubon Society
 PO Box 2084
 Salem, OR 97308

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

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**Salem Audubon Society
 Membership Form**

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City* _____ State* _____

Phone* _____ Zip* _____

Email* _____ *Required Information

Membership Options
 Membership valid Feb. 1, 2024 - Jan. 31, 2025

Please select one

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership \$45.00 Includes all digital content access	This Form Represents A <input type="checkbox"/> New Membership <input type="checkbox"/> Renewed Membership <small>Please select one</small>
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership \$60.00 Includes all digital content access	
<input type="checkbox"/> Add Print Kestrel + \$15.00 <small>Printed Kestrel mailed to your address</small>	

To pay by check, please complete this form and mail with payment to:
Salem Audubon Society PO Box 2084 Salem, OR 97308

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