

THE KESTREL

Salem Audubon Society

March 2024 Volume 57 Number 7

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SAVE THE DATE - SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1:00 PM

Public Invited to Ribbon Cutting for David B. Marshall Outdoor Classroom

By Tim Johnson

Salem Audubon Society President

Construction of the David B. Marshall Outdoor Classroom will be completed in March. The new, approximately 1,000-square-foot structure, perched at the edge of Peregrine Marsh, will add significantly to the capacity of Ankeny Hill Nature Center, supporting nature and wildlife education. When not used as a classroom, it will also serve as a wildlife viewing and photography blind.

The classroom is named for David B. Marshall, a renowned naturalist, wildlife biologist, bird expert, and author. Among his many significant achievements, in the 1960s, Mr. Marshall was instrumental in establishing the Baskett Slough, Finley, and Ankeny National Wildlife Refuges and



Tim Johnson

President's Message

served as a regional wildlife biologist. In the 1970s, he was chief biologist for the birds and mammals in the federal endangered species program. He was also co-author and editor of "Birds of Oregon: A General Reference," a reference guide on 500 species known to occur in Oregon.

On March 16 at 1:00 pm, we will celebrate the opening of the David B. Marshall Outdoor Classroom with a ribbon-cutting ceremony as part of the month-long Winter Wildlife Field Days festivities at the three refuges that Mr. Marshall helped to establish. The event is open to the public. If you choose join us, please carpool if possible. We anticipate a pretty big turnout for this event. Parking at the Nature Center is limited.

The Ankeny Hill Nature Center, of which the Mark Gehlar Hall and David B. Marshall Outdoor Classroom are each part, was made possible by the generous support of many to fulfill a dream first envisioned by Salem businessman and nature lover Mark Gehlar

Major financial contributors include: Mark Gehlar, Dick and Beth Aften , Lowell Spring, David Harrison, Georgia Marshall, Chris Shank, Hugh Morrison Family Foundation, Ray Temple and Stephanie Hazen, Carolyn and Tom Homan, and Salem

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Email: laurie@salemaudubon.org Website: www.salemaudubon.org

Wildlife Emergencies

Contact: Chintimini Wildlife Center

(541) 745-5324 chintiminiwildlife.org

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Audubon Society's partners, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex. In all, well over 100 people and organizations have donated time, funds, and other resources to make the Ankeny Hill Nature Center a vital place of nature education, which now includes the David B. Marshall Outdoor Classroom.

The Nature Center is only one of many significant nature and environmental education activities in which Salem Audubon leads our community. We also have a beautiful Nature Reserve in West Salem, an active traveling education program, interesting Birder's Night speaker programs, adventurous field trips and bird walks, and involvement in many community events, including the Silver Falls State Park Winter Festival, where hundreds of families enjoy learning about and building a bird nest box.

Tim Johnson (tim@salemaudubon.org)

Winter Wildlife Field Days

The Nature Center celebration and Dave Marshall Classroom ribbon cutting will be part of the Winter Wildlife Field Days. Some of these activities will take place at the Nature Center. Click the link for the calendar of activities. https://bit.ly/2024-wwfd.



Salem Audubon Society Volunteers Needed At Yard, Garden and Home Show



To make the most of the land around your home to create an enjoyable outdoor living space with productive gardens and plantings that support and attract visiting wildlife, plan to attend the annual Yard, Garden, and Home Show at the Oregon Fairgrounds. It is, as always, being put on by the Home Builders Association of Marion and Polk Counties. The show opens Friday, March 22, at the Oregon State Fairgrounds and runs through Sunday, March 24, 2024.

Salem Audubon Society is again among the many organizations and businesses sponsoring booths at this informative event. This is our chance to encourage people to consider wildlife when deciding what to do with their home properties. Attendees are often open to making a bird-friendly yard, learning about wildlife, obtaining nestboxes, and discovering birding opportunities.

We will need people to staff the booth and help set up and take down. Please consider volunteering to help staff the SAS booth for a two-hour shift. Contact Michael Babbitt at *babbit.michael@salemaudubon.org* to volunteer or ask questions. The show is at the Oregon State Fairgrounds, 2330 17th St. NE. Exhibit hours will be 11 AM to 5 PM Friday, 10 AM to 5 PM. Saturday, and 10 AM to 5 PM Sunday. Admission and parking are free. Don't miss it

Birder's Night - March 12, 6:30 - 8:00 PM (Doors open at 6:00 PM - Scottish Rite Center)

Exploring the Variety and Beauty of Southeast Arizona Nature

During March's Birder's Night, Mike Unger will guide us through Southeast Arizona to explore the nature that abounds in the area. Mike says Arizona has the third most biodiversity in the United States. He will cover various topics, including geography, mammals, reptiles, plants, birds, and other nature observed in Southeast Arizona.

Mike will take us on a journey to many areas where you can enjoy nature at its best. He will provide all the information you need for an enjoyable visit during his presentation. He hopes his presentation will entice you to visit Southeast Arizona, one of the most beautiful scenic areas in the United States..

Mike spent four winters in Southeast Arizona, where he gained an interest in birdwatching in one of the premier birdwatching areas in the nation. He also makes at least two to

three yearly trips to Southeast Arizona. During his birdwatching trips, Mike became interested in all the other miracles of nature.

Mike has taken numerous nature-related courses from naturalists and nature experts in SE Arizona and other locales. He is a member of Salem and Tucson Audubon Societies. Other memberships include Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Nature Conservancy, and American Bird Conservancy.

Mike has taught birding and nature classes for the Salem Audubon Society for over eight years. He also leads bird walks and conducts bird surveys throughout the Willamette Valley. Mike's background is in administration and training.

To register on Zoom, click on the following link: https://bit.ly/birders-night-march-2024.

A Special Trip to Arizona

Go Birding With Two of Salem Audubon's Best

Join Salem Audubon Society President Tim Johnson and long-time member Mike Unger for an August escape to Southeastern Arizona, a haven for birding offering diverse habitats and various bird species. From the exciting specialty species to the alwayspleasing regulars such as the Vermilion Flycatcher, Gila Woodpecker, and Verdin, this trip will delight any level of birdwatcher.

This unique trip will give its participants the opportunity to explore the region's "Sky Islands," isolated mountain ranges renowned for their rich avian life. The tour will include visits to prominent locations such as the Santa Rita Mountains, Madera Canyon, Sierra Vista, Mt. Lemmon, and Patagonia. These areas are home to many species, including the elegant Trogon, Painted Redstart, warblers, and hummingbirds.

Biodiversity in this area is high in the summer, with the fall migration getting underway. Many summer specialties, such as flycatchers, Red-faced Warbler, Hooded Oriole, and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, may be observed. During this trip, we will let schedule flexibility maximize our chances for these birds and the more regularly rare summer birds. We will also explore



Photo by Pete Moulton

Vermillon Flycatcher

diverse habitats around Tucson, from desert to oak/juniper woods and pine forests.

Please join us for this birding tour in Southeast Arizona, which will be a rewarding experience for nature enthusiasts and birdwatchers. The region's unique ecosystems and abundant wildlife make it a prime destination for those seeking an unforgettable adventure.

For more detailed information and schedule of locations contact Mike Unger at salemaudubonsociety@gmail.com. Mike will give you full itinerary, policies, application, and payment details.

Trip Details:

- Dates: August 13 20, 2024 (Six days of birdwatching)
- Fee: \$450 SAS members / \$500 non-members
- Included: Ground transportation to/from birding locations and tour base, services of your skilled leaders
- Excluded: Airfare, lodging, meals, entrance fees, or ground transportation to/from airport and hotel
- Limited to 6 guests

Salem Audubon Society Field Trips

Compiled by Cynthia Donald

Salem Audubon Society (SAS) field trips are open to the public, and often include a mix of experienced and new birders. Our field trips are an excellent way to familiarize with Oregon birds, experience new places, and meet new friends. We don't charge for our trips, though a small fee, such as a parking pass, may exist depending on our destination. We encourage participants to be vaccinated. Some leaders ask for participants to 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 including expected species to be found and directions for carpooling (if applicable). Please let your leader know if you need to leave the trip earlier than the scheduled time!

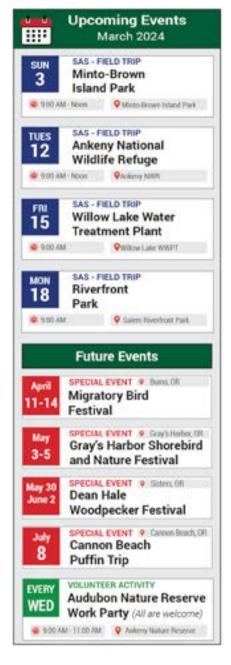
SAS MARCH FIELD TRIPS AND CLASSES

Sunday, March 3, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM - Minto-Brown Island Park

(Upcoming – Monday, April 8 at 8:00 AM and Wednesday, May 8 at 8:00 AM Note time change!)

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

This large Salem City Park provides access to various habitats attracting birds and wildlife. The connection of the Peter Courtney Bridge from downtown Salem to the north conservation basin of Minto-Brown Park gives more opportunity for winter wildlife to be viewed from the water areas. Various birding loops begin in the park proper, from parking lot #3. Leafless woodland trees allow good viewing of winter birds, and we will see signs of spring budding in Indian Plum, Service Berry, and Fringecup. Cavity openings in the many snags provide homes for owls, American Kestrels, five woodpecker species, chickadees, and nuthatches. Western Screech-Owl and Great Horned Owls have been recorded on evening walks, with Barred Owl and Northern Pygmy Owl recorded occasionally in the day hours. Wintering warblers, sparrows, and kinglets have joined the resident birds and will begin more spring songs as migration starts. Into March, hummingbirds, Brown Creepers, Bushtit, chickadees, American Robin, Bewick's and Pacific Wrens, Song Sparrows, and towhees will announce with more elaborate songs and displays. Join us for seasonal change.



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

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

Tuesday, March 12, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM - Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge

(Upcoming – Sunday, April 21 at 8:00 AM and Sunday, May 19 at 8:00 AM. Note time change!) Leaders: Mike Unger (503) 930-8998, Tim Johnson (503) 507-8552

This upcoming spring has an excellent opportunity to view waterfowl, woodpeckers, Bald Eagle, and other raptors from late winter. While Dusky and Cackling Geese leave for their breeding grounds, herons, American Bittern, American Kestrel, Wilson Snipe, and Bald Eagle can be seen finding habitat here to nest. The reedy marsh areas are excellent for Sora, Virginia Rail, and Wilson's

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Phalarope, which use the refuge to raise fledglings. The interior berms and ponds will not open until April 1. We will carpool or caravan to prominent pullouts to enjoy birding and scoping the refuge loop field ponds and grassy terrain, looking for shorebirds, American Pipit, and possibly Sandhill Cranes. If time allows, we can also visit one of the two woodland stand boardwalk areas to look for migrating warblers, flycatchers, vireos, singing resident sparrows, towhees, Bushtit, and woodpeckers. We will finish by noon.

Meet at the Ankeny Hill Nature Center (AHNC) Parking Lot at 9:00 AM. There are facilities at this location, and the trails are now open! We will start here before visiting Pintail Marsh and other places. Bring water, binoculars, and a snack. Trails can be uneven, so please wear footwear. We expect to finish by noon. Loaner binoculars are available.

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) about 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.

Friday, March 15, 9:00 AM - Willow Lake WWTP

Leader: Dominic Valenti (503) 507-7008

This bird walk has so much to offer in a relatively small area: ducks (Mallard, Hooded Merganser, Green-winged Teal, and American Wigeon), Glaucous-winged and Short-billed gulls, sparrows (Song, Fox, Golden-crowned, White-crowned, White-throated, and Lincoln's), raptors (Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Cooper's, and Sharp-shinned Hawks), and both Virginia Rail and Sora have all been seen taking up residence here during the winter months. We also will probably see some of this area's earliest (almost spring!) migrants, such as Rufous Hummingbirds, Turkey Vulture, and both Tree and Violet-green Swallows. We will walk 1.32 miles on the gravel and dirt paths surrounding the ponds, and this trip should take about 1.5 hours to complete. Come and see for yourself what makes this often-overlooked birding hotspot so unique!

Meet at the public parking lot off Windsor Island Road in Keizer. This lot is about 1/3 mile north of the intersection of Windsor Island Road and Lockhaven Drive. Turn left off Windsor Island Road and, just before the main entrance to the treatment plant (which is closed to the public), turn right into the parking lot. There are no facilities, so please plan. We hope to see you there!

Monday, March 18, 9:00 AM - Riverfront Park

Leader. Harry Fuller (791) 312-1735

Riverfront Park is Salem's premier urban event park along the Willamette River and near businesses, restaurants, entertainment, other parks and trails. The park is also home to many of Salem's annual events, including The World Beat Festival, 4th of July Celebration, Summer Movies in The Park, Holiday Tree Lighting, and many walk/run events.

The 26 acres of existing parkland resulted from industrial land conversion. Paper, flour, and woolen mills, a coal gasification plant, and an auto junkyard formerly occupied the site. Today, it features large grassy areas, an amphitheater, play equipment, a splash pad, and a covered Rotary Pavilion. A dock provides access to the Willamette River and the Willamette Queen Sternwheeler.

Riverfront Park is also home to the Riverfront Carousel, A.C. Gilbert Discovery Village, and the EcoEarth Globe. It connects to Minto-Brown Island Park by the Peter Courtney Bridge and Wallace Marine Park by the Union Street Railroad Bridge.

We will spy on the Bald Eagle nest site and look for waterfowl and shorebirds as we explore this urban park.

Meet at the south edge of the children's playground next to the carousel. Restroom and picnic facilities are available. Bring water, binoculars, a snack, and dress for the weather. Trails may be uneven, so please use footwear. We will finish by noon.

Directions: The park is at 200 Water Street NE in Salem, and their parking is available on-site and nearby.

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UPCOMING BIRD FESTIVALS AND SPECIAL SAS TRIPS!

Thursday, April 11 to Sunday, April 14 – Migratory Bird Festival, Burns, OR

From the website https://migratorybirdfestival.com.

Registration opened on February 14! Follow us on social media for updates and information. We're looking forward to your participation! Thank you for supporting the Harney County Migratory Bird Festival and our community!

Spend an amazing weekend seeing the spectacular spring migration in the Harney Basin of Southeast Oregon. View thousands of migratory birds as they rest and feed in the open spaces of Oregon's high desert. Harney Basin is one of the three most essential areas left in the western United States for spring migratory birds stopping on their way north.

Over 300 bird species use the refuge each year, making Harney Basin a birdwatcher's paradise. In April, we continue to celebrate the migratory birds" return each year with guided tours led by experts, workshops, and fun activities for youth and adults.

The Harney County Migratory Bird Festival was first held in 1981 to celebrate the annual migration of birds passing through Harney Basin on the Pacific Flyway. Festivals are held yearly in April.

Friday, May 3 to Sunday, May 5 —Gray's Harbor Shorebird and Nature Festival, Gray's Harbor NWR, Hoguiam, WA

From the website: www.shorebirdfestival.com. Registration is open online!

Each spring, hundreds of thousands of shorebirds stop to rest and feed along the Washington Coast and in the Grays Harbor estuary during their migration northward. Coming from as far south as Argentina, these Arctic-bound shorebirds are among the world's most significant migrants. Some birds travel over 15,000 miles round trip! The concentration of birds during spring migration offers people a great chance to view multiple shorebird species. With luck, you will also see the birds fly together in beautiful formations while trying to escape a Peregrine Falcon.

Shorebird is the name given to birds usually found along the shoreline. They include plovers, turnstones, sandpipers, dowitchers, and others. Some shorebirds can be seen in Grays Harbor County yearly; others only during migration.

The shorebird spectacle happens yearly at Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge and other parts of the County. People from around the world come to view this event of hemispheric importance. The Festival works to bring people together for this incredible natural phenomenon.

Check our website for more specific information. Grays Harbor National Wildlife Refuge is open Sunrise to Sunset, 7 Days a week, and we invite you to enjoy our year-round trail. If you have questions, concerns, or comments, please contact us at shorebirdfest@gmail.com.

Thursday, May 30 to Sunday, June 2 - Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival, Sisters, OR

From the website Dean Hale Woodpecker Festival | All About Birds All About Birds

The Festival takes place May 30 to June 2, 2024. Online registration opens in April.

You can choose from a variety of tours over four days to see 11 different species of woodpeckers as well as 200 other bird species who make their homes in the spectacular forests, burn areas, and diverse habitat in the Sisters and Central Oregon's Cascade Mountains and high desert region. Tours are limited to ten participants and typically fill quickly. Burned areas left behind by Central Oregon's recent forest fires attract bugs, which attract woodpeckers. So participants can see common woodpeckers like Hairy and Downy and much rarer species like White-headed, American Three-toed, and Black-backed Woodpeckers. Few places in the United States are as rich in this variety of woodpeckers as this area of central Oregon.

Tours go to places such as Summer Lake, Shevlin Park, Trout Creek Butte, Three Creeks, Cold Springs, the Milli Burn, Abbot Creek, Calliope Crossing, Suttle Lake, and Green Ridge, as well as several other excellent birding areas. In addition to the birding tours, the festival offers native plants/birding tours and an opportunity to experience the bird banding of kestrels and bluebirds.

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Tours take place under a particular use permit with the Deschutes National Forest. Participants provide their transportation, and carpooling is required. Sponsored by the East Cascades Audubon Society (ECAS), this festival offers a fun, friendly, casual atmosphere about birds. The trips are affordable and guided by local field-trip leaders, with the proceeds supporting the many ECAS conservation projects.

Monday, July 8, 8:00 AM - Cannon Beach Puffin Trip

Leader. Tim Johnson (503) 507-8552

Tufted Puffins are pelagic birds that spend most of their lives in the open seas of the central North Pacific Ocean. This seabird strikes an impressive profile during the breeding season with a solid black body, contrasting white face, sizeable orange bill, and golden head plumes. Each year, up to 20 pair find their way to Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach to breed and raise their young. Puffins are cavity-nesting birds, and after cleaning out an old burrow on a steep edge, the female lays a single egg. Chicks typically emerge to fledge in late June. Join us for this field trip to Cannon Beach to see the Tufted Puffins of Haystack Rock. Please bring a scope if you have one.

Meet at 8:00 AM on the beach on the north side of Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach (look for all the scopes on the beach). There are a couple of parking options in Cannon Beach. Public parking can be found downtown across the street from Theresa's Market (1170 S Hemlock St, Cannon Beach). It's about a 15-20 minute walk to the Haystack Rock. There are public restrooms a block south of Theresa's Market. Tolovana Beach State Recreation Site also has public parking and restrooms. However, it is about a mile from Haystack Rock via the beach. No matter where you park, the sand can be wet and soft, so please wear footwear and dress for the weather. Cannon Beach is a two-hour drive from Salem, then a walk to Haystack Rock, depending on where you park. Please plan your departure time to get to the beach around 8:00 AM. Low tide occurs around 8:45 AM.

Bonus option. After seeing the puffins, those interested can caravan to Nehalem Beach State Park for a picnic lunch and additional birding (bring your food and beverage, as there are few options for buying anything nearby). An Oregon State Parks pass is required at Nehalem Beach State Park. You can purchase a \$5 day-use parking pass with a credit card at the pass vending machine on your way to the day-use area (right side of the road near the boat ramp turnoff).

Directions to Cannon Beach: From Salem, it's about 120 miles to Cannon Beach, about 2 hours and 15 minutes, depending on traffic. Take I-5 north to 217, northwest on 217 to 26, west on 26 to 101, and turn south to Cannon Beach. A GPS app or physical maps should get you to Theresa's Market or Tolovana Beach.

Ankeny Hill Nature Center Volunteer Report

New Volunteers Jump in at Ankeny Hill Nature Center

Five new volunteers attended the February 2024 New Volunteer Orientation and signed up to help with both indoor and outdoor activities at the Nature Center! Now more than 50 Ankeny Hill Nature Center volunteers come from communities throughout the Willamette Valley to join the volunteer community at the Nature Center.

The Nature Center gets busier each season. As more schools and groups discover that they can reserve the Gehlar Hall classrooms at no cost for nature and environmental education activities, the

more volunteers are needed to maintain native plants, prepare materials and greet visitors. Volunteers share 'nature notes' in this beautiful space and get behind the scenes looks at upcoming events.

If you missed the last orientation and would like to sign up for the next, no commitment orientation, please contact Bobbie Allaire, Volunteer Coordinator at *volunteer_manager@ankenyhillnaturecenter.* org or call (541) 760-3700.

To learn more about the Nature Center check out –

https://www.ankenyhillnaturecenter.org.



Contributed photo

Maintaining the trails is a regular way volunteers help at the Nature Center.



Salem Audubon Society PO Box 2084 Salem, OR 97308

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Cynthia Donald

Birder's Night

Birding Workshops Mike Unger

Harry Fuller

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Mike Williams

SAS Woodshop

SAS Nature Reserve

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Tim Johnson, Mike Unger, Gretchen Johnson



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