

The Kingfisher

Volume 1, Issue 2

Fall 2006

To help save our natural resources and reduce costs, we can provide our newsletter in electronic format. If you would prefer to receive the newsletter electronically, send an e-mail to audubonlc@charter.net

Breakfast & Birds

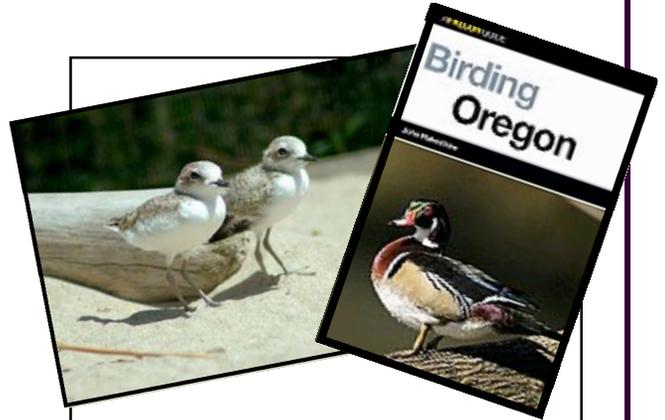
Calling all birders, nature enthusiasts and the like — join the Audubon Society of Lincoln City for our second annual Breakfast & Birds.

This year's event will feature two acclaimed speakers. John Rakestraw, author of the just-released book "Birding Oregon" will share his birding experiences in Oregon, photos from his new book, and his favorite birding sites. After the breakfast, he will be available to sign copies of his new book.

Karen Anderson, Curator of Birds from the Oregon Coast Aquarium will give a presentation on the Snowy Plover (shown at right in an OCA photo), its current status on the Oregon Coast and the success of the recovery program at the Aquarium.

An array of breakfast foods and beverages will be provided by local restaurants and cafes, and a silent auction featuring "nature-inspired" items will be obtainable to the highest bidder.

Following the breakfast, everyone is invited to participate in field trips to two new Coastal Birding Trail sites in Lincoln City, Josephine Young Park and Spring Lake Open Space.



November 18, 2006

9:00am—11:00am

Lincoln City Community Center

**Great Food, Silent Auction,
Birding Oregon Book Signing**

Field Trips to Spring Lake and Josephine Young Park begin at noon.

Inside this issue:

Snowy Plover 2

Fall and Winter Bird Feeding Tips 3

Field Trips for Everyone 3

Become a Member Today 4

Volunteers Needed

The Audubon Society of Lincoln City is currently seeking volunteers to help in several critical areas.

Board Members — Help us set the goals and future direction of Audubon on the Central Oregon Coast. Interested individuals from Tillamook and south Lincoln County are especially encouraged to get involved. Our regular board

meetings are the first Wednesday of each month at 5:30pm in Lincoln City.

Field Trip Leaders — Share your love of birds, other wildlife, and their habitats with coastal residents and visitors. We sponsor monthly Saturday field trips and would like to expand our offerings to more people and more locations.

Environmental Educators — Offer experiences in nature to the schoolchildren and adults in Lincoln and Tillamook counties. Create and present programs in local schools and at special "Environmental Evenings" throughout the year.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please call 541-921-4009 for more information.

Snowy Plover

When it comes to Western snowy plovers, the conservation community has been sending out one message for the past 15 years: keep out. Ever since 1990, when it was discovered that only 30 individuals remained of the Oregon coast population, naturalists have been warning — begging — the public to watch for these birds' open-beach nesting sites, and to stay away.

Now, thanks to a new exhibit at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport, birders are getting a welcome sign. The aquarium's Western Snowy Plover Exhibit opened July 11 with seven plovers, including four that had been collected as eggs around Summer Lake and hatched backstage at the OCA. They reside in a sunny sand-dune enclosure that is open on four sides, much like their preferred habitat on the beach, and have become accustomed to humans in their midst.

As a result, aquarium visitors can get up close and personal with this shy shorebird. Because their numbers have been dwindling, most people only know the snowy plover through photographs and by reputation, after the discovery of their nesting sites has made certain sections of the state's famously public beaches to be declared off limits. "They're not a bird that's easy to see, unless you are really looking for them," said Karen Anderson, the aquarium's curator of birds. "We felt like it was really important to show people what they are, so that we can ask them to share the beach."

Historically, western snowy plovers were found along the entire Oregon and Pacific Coast region. Over the last century, the number of known nesting or wintering sites declined dramatically from 21 to seven. Since 1990, when an estimated 30 birds were counted, recovery efforts have seen some success. In 2005, up to 158 western snowy plovers were found at 7 locations on the Oregon coast, the highest count since monitoring began. At least 104 plovers were known to have nested, producing a minimum of 77 young.

Although other plovers are migratory, wintering in Oregon before spending the summer in the Arctic, the snowy is a native shore bird that lives on the beach year-round. Because they need flat, continuous areas of sand with no grass, the Western snowy plover has been particularly vulnerable to coastal development, and its decline is largely due to loss of habitat. The Pacific coastal population is listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act, and all of Western snowy plovers Oregon are listed by the state as threatened.

Designed in partnership with state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, the exhibit is designed to serve as a rehabilitation facility for abandoned or injured plovers.

The staff there has successfully rehabilitated several birds in the last five years, including both adults and hatchlings. In 2002, a rescued hatchling was raised and returned to Bandon, where it was later seen nesting. In 2004, two adult birds were brought in with leg injuries, which both required amputation. They made quick recoveries and were released back into the wild, and one has since been seen tending a nest.

In August, two chicks that were hatched in June at the OCA were released by U.S. Fish and Wildlife biologists. One was set free near the location it was found, just north of Florence. When it was discovered, one of its siblings was dead and there were no adults present, a sign of a "predation event." "Before we released it, we color banded it so it could be identified in the future," said David Lauten, Oregon State University faculty research assistant and staffer at the Oregon Natural Heritage Information Center. "This is not the first one we've done, but it's always good to see a bird make it to fledgling and get released." Two more are set for release later this fall, when they have matured sufficiently.

Compiled by Niki Price, with assistance from Cindy Hanson, director of public relations at the Oregon Coast Aquarium



Photo Courtesy of Oregon Coast Aquarium

What you can do:

- Keep your distance from signed nesting areas.
- Leave your pets at home or keep them on a leash.
- Carry your trash from the beach. Garbage attracts predators, like raccoons and crows that may prey on adults, eggs, and chicks.
- Keep kites, balls and frisbees away from nesting areas. These items may frighten birds off their nests and separate the adults from the chicks.
- Don't camp or build fires near nesting areas.
- If you find a plover nest in an unprotected area notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at

Feeding Birds in Fall and Winter Q&A

Where are all the birds? Many people discover that their bird feeders are not very busy in early autumn. This is because fruits, berries and seeds are so plentiful at this time of year. Insects and other small invertebrates are also numerous. Nevertheless, chickadees and other permanent residents usually continue daily visits to the feeder, so it is wise to keep your feeders full.

Does feeding birds prevent them from migrating on time?

Seasonal changes in the length of day, rather than an abundance of food, determines when birds will begin to migrate. Migration begins in the fall as days shorten (when natural food is still abundant), and commences again in the spring as days lengthen.

Will birds suffer if feeders go empty? Natural food supplies decline drastically during winter, so this is when supplemental feeding is of greatest value to all birds. If backyard feeders go empty while homeowners are on vacation, birds will look elsewhere for food. Since feeders only supplement natural foods, most species will not suffer if feeders go empty for days or even weeks at a time.



Gray Jay—Photo by Jack Doyle

Does backyard feeding create a population of "dependent" birds?

While research in this area is limited, so far studies suggest that backyard feeders are not creating a population of dependent wintering birds.

What birds will I see at my feeders during the Fall and Winter?

Chickadees, Juncos, Steller's Jays and both White-crowned and Song Sparrows will visit your feeders or ground feed below your feeders this time of year. Anna's Hummingbirds do not migrate and may also be found along the coast all year-round. Nesting as

early as December, it is important to provide necessary food for the Anna's throughout the fall and winter months.

The Gray Jay, shown above, is one bird that may move to the lower elevations of the Oregon coast during the fall and winter. They will eat small rodents, invertebrates, berries, fruit and human food scraps—a great use for that stale bread!

Field Trips for the Entire Family

Audubon Field Trips

The second Saturday of the month is the selected day for Audubon's monthly field trips. Bring binoculars and a field guide to enjoy these upcoming trips:

Saturday, October 14

"Birds of the Bays" - Join field trip leader Dick Demarest for a trip to Siletz Bay, Boiler Bay and Depoe Bay. Meet at 8am at the SW 51st St. covered area in Lincoln City. Expect to see over 30 species!

Saturday, November 18th

Breakfast & Birds—first join us for breakfast at the Lincoln City Community Center as part of our second annual Breakfast & Birds event. Then, join us on a field trip to either Josephine Young Park or Spring Lake Open Space. Both of these sites are sponsored by Audubon Society of Lincoln City as part of the new Coastal Birding Trail.

Saturday, December 10

"Wintering Waterfowl" - Join your fellow Auduboner's for a

look at the birds of Siletz Bay in December. This will be a wonderful preview of what you will see if you participate in this year's Christmas Bird Count in Newport or Tillamook.. Meet at 9am at the SW 51st St. covered area in Lincoln City.

For more information contact Field Trip coordinator Dick Demarest at 541-765-2241 or email marets@cablespeed.com.



PO Box 38
Lincoln City, OR 97367

Phone: 541-921-4009
E-mail: audubonlc@charter.net
www.lincolncityaudubon.com

We're on the web
www.lincolncityaudubon.com

Audubon Society of Lincoln City Board of Directors

- President, Kathleen Nickerson
- Vice-President, Lenny Nelson
- Treasurer, Jack Doyle
- Secretary, Peggy Hawker
- Director, Lori Hollingsworth
- Director, Raylene Erickson
- Director, Patrick O'Connor
- Director, Janice Redford
- Director, Sandy Pfaff
- Director, Jack Nickerson
- Field Trip Leader, Dick Demarest

Stamp

**Audubon Society of Lincoln City
Mission Statement**

The Audubon Society of Lincoln City's mission is to encourage residents and visitors to protect and enjoy the native birds, other wildlife, and their habitats found on the Central Oregon Coast.

Become a Member Today

Your donation to the Audubon Society of Lincoln City supports our environmental education and citizen science programs, and enables us to participate in restoration and public advocacy projects throughout the Central Oregon Coast.

\$20 Individual
 \$30 Family
 \$100 Contributor
 \$250 Supporter
 \$500 Patron
 \$Other

Name _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Audubon Society of Lincoln City is a nonprofit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. Please return this slip with your check payable to Audubon Society of Lincoln City. Member information is confidential. We do not sell or share our membership list.