

The Kingfisher

Volume 11, Issue 2

Central Oregon Coast - Garibaldi to Yachats

Winter 2017

Conservation Issues Facing Oregon and the ASLC

by Joseph Youren, Vice President, ASLC

THE KING'S CORNER



With our national political state being in a major transition, I thought I should write about something in which our chapter is succeeding. It's our education programs. In January of 2008, Caren Willoughby and Laura Doyle created an in-school classroom education program called "Audubon Adventures." They started by teaching 5th grade classes at Oceanlake and Taft elementary schools in Lincoln City. The program has expanded since then to include elementary schools in Tillamook, Newport, Siletz and Toledo. During that time Patty Sorensen volunteered to help out. Binoculars were purchased over the years so that now each student can have, usually for the first time, hands-on training on how to use them. This continues to be a highlight for most students. These classes do not happen automatically, each year letters are sent out to the principals of our area schools asking them if we can give these classes. Our success depend on teachers being interested and if they can make time in their busy schedules. Our most successful programs have been with schools that have returning teachers who are aware of the benefits the kids receive. The teachers in Tillamook have been outstanding in supporting this program.

In October of 2012 we were asked by the Oregon Coast Community College if we could teach a basic birding class. With the success of the "Audubon Adventures," it seemed natural that this program could be used as a foundation for an adult class. Caren, Laura and Patty once again came up with a four-day class suited for adults.

The mission statement we adopted exists to encourage residents and visitors to protect and enjoy the birds, wildlife and habitats found along the Central Oregon Coast. I think we have done pretty well helping one another enjoy our surroundings. Mark Elliot, Dawn Villaescusa and others lead a great many field trips and we provide binoculars and field trips to help new birders get actively involved in our pursuit of all things winged. Our education leaders, Caren Willoughby and Laura Doyle, are absolute jewels when it comes to teaching newcomers and school children about birds and birding. Our chapter has many things we can be proud of but, and this is a big but, we have done very little recently to protect and conserve the wildlife and habitats of our beautiful Oregon Coast. It goes without saying, we cannot continue to enjoy birds if they cannot eat, live, and breed in our local environment.

I am as guilty as anyone of paying too little attention to my responsibilities as a conservationist and an Audubon member. I must do more to help conserve and defend critical habitats for the creatures I love and I hereby swear to turn over a new leaf. I will engage more actively in our chapter's conservation efforts and in assist in the projects of other chapters in the Willamette Valley. To this end I would like to focus attention on three specific 2017 conservation goals outlined by the Oregon Audubon Council, a loose affiliation of Audubon chapters from western Oregon, Portland Audubon and representatives of the National Audubon Society. Their most

recent meeting on conservation issues identified many important priorities that deserve our complete attention and best efforts, but for now I will attend to these three:

Defense of Federal Environmental Regulations and Public Lands

National elections have shaken local conservationists to our core. Emotions range from deep cynicism to outright fear for the health and well-being of the environment and all things living. The Environmental Protection Agency, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act are all subject to attack by executive action and national legislation. Policy-makers have promised to cut regulations and dismantle environmental protections that interfere with corporate profits business interests. We need to communicate with our elected officials at the state and national level that we care about these protections and will fight to keep them in place. The future of conservation in general, and efforts to address climate change in particular, are murky at best.

Crystal clear, on the other hand, is the need to protect and defend our public lands. The armed take-over of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and the push to sell 82,000 acres of the Elliott State Forest are two examples of attacks on public lands. These attacks have been launched by people committed to the

(continues on back page)

Mark Elliott was added to teach about raptors for one of the days and act as the field guide for the final day field trip. This class has turned out to be highly successful and is the second most popular class at the college. It has been taught at least twice a year with a steady enrollment. One of our current

board members took the class and numerous students have joined our chapter as a result. Looking into the future, we need volunteers to step forward and be trained in order to carry on these programs.

- Jack Doyle, ASLC President

Basic Birding

Instructors: Laura Doyle and Caren Willoughby, with Mark Elliott and Patty Sorensen

Do you find yourself listening to an odd chirp while walking or gardening? Are you fascinated by the random rustlings in the bushes? Do you notice and enjoy the birds in your world, but wish you knew more about these clever and busy neighbors? This is just the class for you! Participants will learn how birds behave so it will be easier to find, watch, and identify the type you are seeing. Bird identification, adaptations, and habitat will be introduced. Birds of the Oregon Coast will be our focus during this 4-session class. Participants will have access to bird guides and binoculars and will learn how to use them. The final day of class will be a field trip to identify birds in the area.

Next Class to be held at Oregon Coast Community College - Lincoln City

Four sessions Tue & Thu, Feb 7-16, 1:30-3pm

\$25 Lincoln City Campus, Room 208

Materials Fee: \$10 paid to instructor at first class



October 2015 Basic Birding class field trip. Photo by Jack Seagrove.

A Message from new ASLC member, Debbie Bergeron

I always wanted to “try” bird watching. When I moved to the Oregon coast in 2015, I found the perfect opportunity to get started. The *Oregon Coast Today* free newspaper had an article about a bird walk near Devil’s lake. “Wow,” I thought, “Lincoln City has their own chapter of Audubon. Devil’s Lake is close -- I should check this out.”

I joined that bird walk and have enjoyed several more since then. I am directionally challenged so I relied on the detailed notes about where to meet the group to begin the walk.

I found it reassuring to get to the meeting point and find the Audubon sandwich board sign that let me know I had made it. The Lincoln City Audubon is a welcoming group of people. We start every walk by standing in a circle and introducing ourselves and where we are from. It is common to find members of the group who are from out of town or even out of state and interested in the local birding.

This group gives a complete beginner to bird watching, like me, the tools needed to actually see birds. I mean that literally. When I started they loaned me binoculars. Going further, they showed me how to look through the binoculars and adjust them. Next, they showed me where a bird was sitting in a tree – kindly explaining landmarks in the distance to use as reference to find the right tree. Finally, they offered a peek at their bird book with a picture and description of the bird I was trying to spot. All this careful coaching helped me see the same bird that the whole group was looking at. The bird walks include complete beginner bird watchers like me but also some people with years of experience.

Mark Elliott leads most of the bird walks. He has a keen eye and often knows where to find especially interesting birds. He has a wonderful spotting scope on a tripod that he shares so that everyone has the chance to see the same bird we are viewing through our binoculars – but with the scope the view is so close up you can almost count the feathers. Mark’s enthusiasm for birds is infectious. Rain or good weather, we always find something special to look at during the walk.

I struggle to remember the names of all the birds that the group identified during the walk. Luckily, one of the other more experienced birders keeps a list. The list is posted on the Lincoln City Audubon website after each walk. I can go back through the list to remind myself what that bird with the long red bill was. Oh yeah, that was the Black Oystercatcher.

I moved on to taking the Beginning Bird Watching class offered at the Oregon Coast Community College and purchasing my own very first bird watching binoculars. I can’t help wondering if I would still be just wanting to “try” bird watching if the Lincoln City Audubon had not made it so simple for me to get started.



Membership 2016 and Beyond

It has been a very good year for our chapter and we owe everything to you, our members. Our education program continues to offer "Birding Basics" through Oregon Coast Community College and have recently made new friends with Nestucca Valley Elementary. We are stepping up our game in the area of conservation after engaging with the Oregon Audubon Council and we are looking forward to a more meaningful partnership with the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex. We would like to recognize and thank our most recent new and renewing members:

Fran Recht
Thea Sanchez
Younga Hennessey
Stanley & Mary Crawley
Susanne Larsen
Sue Blumenthal
Michael & Bronwyn Alleman
Kimberly Ota
Lori Hollingsworth
David Jamieson

Jim Welch
Dawn Villaescusa
Bill Henderson
Dan Twitchell
Raymond Galli
Micky & Tom Willoughby
Anna & Jim Russo
Jane Boyden
Deborah Bergeron

Join Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC), and take part in the education and appreciation of the birds, wildlife, and their habitats along mid-coastal Oregon

As a Paid Member, your donation aids in supporting our environmental education in local schools and our citizen science programs. It enables us to participate in restoration and public advocacy projects along the central Oregon coast.

Be a Volunteer, and help implement the goals of our Society, including field trips, research, education and public events. To volunteer your time and service, call ASLC at 541-992-9720.

As a VIP Sponsor, you and your organization will be recognized as a tremendous help to Audubon Society of Lincoln City in presenting educational and rewarding Special Events to family members of all ages.

**Come, join us
as we explore and discover
the many splendors of
the natural world around us.
Your membership
makes the following
ASLC efforts possible:**

- Monthly Guided Bird Walks
- Kayak/Canoe Field Trips
- Special Guest Presentations
- Kids' Classroom Presentations
- Free Field Guides/Binoculars (loaned during field trips/walks and classroom presentations)
- Monthly meetings open to Public
- Semi-Annual Newsletter - (Summer and Winter issues)
- Website: lincolncityaudubon.org
- Staff attendance to quarterly state meetings to help co-ordinate legislative efforts in the protection of Oregon's wildlife and habitat
- Phone service for bird and animal hotline connection and information

**Give us your support today.
Visit
[lincolncityaudubon.org/
membership.html](http://lincolncityaudubon.org/membership.html).**



We rely on you and your support to keep up our efforts to improve birding opportunities on the Oregon Coast. We would also like to recognize and offer a very BIG "thank you" to our members who contribute at an even higher level of financial commitment:

Ann Werner ~ Lori Hollingsworth
Verena & Gray Snipes ~ Larry & Susie Gouz
Pearl Halsey ~ Patty Sorensen
John Hurt

Remember, all contributions to the ASLC are tax deductible. Our mailing address is:

ASLC
PO Box 38
Lincoln City, OR 97367

Phone: (541) 992-9720

Or we can be reached through the web at www.lincolncityaudubon.org or by e-mail at audubonlc@charter.net We are also on Facebook.

Let us know what you are interested in
or what you think we should be doing.
Happy Birding.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Winter and Spring Events



IAN 2017

Tuesday, Jan 10, 5:00pm ~ (ASLC) Board Meeting in Aces at Chinook Winds Golf Resort. Open to the public.

Saturday, January 14th, 9-11am - OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center Nature Trail and South Jetty. There will be an abundance of waterfowl, birds of prey, and 3 species of loons. Birds in the bush are always a surprise, like Western Meadowlarks and Savannah Sparrows. From Newport take the first exit south after crossing the Yaquina Bay Bridge and drive on SE OSU Drive following signs for the Center. Park at the east side of the Visitors Center.



FEB

Tues & Thurs, Feb 7-16, 1-3pm ~ "Basic Birding" is again taught by ASLC Volunteers at Lincoln City's Oregon Coast Community College (OCCC) campus. To sign-up visit www.oregoncoastcc.org.

Saturday, February 11th, 9-11am - Siletz Bay, Cutler City Wetlands and Salishan Nature Trails. Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser and Surf Scoter are usually seen with the possibility of an Eurasian Wigeon. Bald Eagles always put on a show. Meet at the dock beside Mo's Restaurant (860 SE 51st St.) in the Taft District of Lincoln City.

Tuesday, Feb 14, 5:00pm ~ (ASLC) Board Meeting in Aces at Chinook Winds Golf Resort. Open to the public.

Friday, Feb 17th - Monday, Feb 20th ~ The 2017 GBBC (Great Backyard Bird Count) will take place. Everyone is welcome--from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It's free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds. For more info, go to: www.birdsource.org/gbbc/whycount.html.

Most field trips are with Audubon trip leader Mark Elliott. No prior birding experience is required. Binoculars and guidebooks will be provided. Bring weather appropriate clothing and footwear.

MAR

Saturday, March 11th, 9-11am - Nestucca National Wildlife Refuge bird walk is led by Mark Elliott. The refuge supports 10% of the world population of dusky Canada geese. A multitude of habitat including pastures, grasslands, woodlands, tidal marsh and mudflats, as well as freshwater bogs and forest are found in this beautiful refuge. Turn left at the refuge entrance on Christensen Road and meet in the lower parking.

Tuesday, March 14th, 5:00pm ~ (ASLC) Board Meeting in Aces at Chinook Winds Golf Resort. Open to the public.

APR

Saturday, April 8th, 9-11am - Alder Island Loop Trail at Siletz National Wildlife Refuge. This is a brand new one mile trail that loops through riparian and wetland habitat along the Siletz River. Will look for birds of prey, a variety of ducks, warblers and early migrants. Will meet in the parking lot on the east side of Hwy 101 at the south end of the Siletz River Bridge. Call 541-992-9720 or visit our website for more information.

Tuesday, April 11, 5:00pm ~ (ASLC) Board Meeting in Aces at Chinook Winds Golf Resort. Open to the public.

MAY

Tuesday, May 9th, 5:00pm ~ (ASLC) Board Meeting in Aces at Chinook Winds Golf Resort. Open to the public.

Saturday, May 13th, 9-11am, - The Villages at Cascade Head. View Anna's Hummingbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Wilson's Warblers, sandpipers, gulls and Surf Scoters as we walk through mixed woodlands, forest, marsh and coastline. We will meet at the west end of West Devil's Lake Road (just past the golf course).

JUN

Saturday, June 10th, 9-11am - Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area (Yaquina Lighthouse). Yaquina Head is known for its easy viewing of nesting seabird colonies of Common Murres, Pelagic and Brandt's Cormorants, Pigeon Guillemots, Western Gulls and Black Oystercatchers. The highlight for some are the Peregrine Falcons which have nested on the cliff face beside the Interpretive Center for the last 4 years. Yaquina Head Lighthouse is located north of Newport off Hwy 101. Turn west at the traffic signal onto Lighthouse Drive. Follow road to toll booth (requires recreation pass or vehicle entrance fee of \$7.00) and continue on to Interpretive Center parking lot.

Annual ASLC Meeting (date and time to be determined) in the River House at Cascade Head Ranch in Otis. Election of officers, followed by a potluck dinner.

JUL

Saturday, July 8th, 9-11am - Buell County Park and Mill Creek Park in Polk County. Enjoy a hot day along beautiful Mill Creek while looking for flycatchers, warblers, birds of prey and possibly a Western Tanager. Located 35 miles east of Lincoln City off Hwy 22, turn left at Mill Creek Road. In a half mile turn right into Buell County Park.

Tuesday, July 11, 5:00pm ~ (ASLC) Board Meeting in Aces at Chinook Winds Golf Resort. Open to the public.



Visit www.lincolncityaudubon.org for more calendar details and for ASLC news updates!

Varied Thrush by Patty Sorensen



Photo: Eugene Beckes/Flickr Creative Commons

Several years ago in February I was surprised by a flock of what I thought were small woodpeckers in some tree tops in Gleneden Beach. This really puzzled me since I'd never seen woodpeckers exhibiting a flocking behavior. A closer look and a check in my guidebook identified them as Varied Thrush. When seen in groups, it is called a hermitage or muta-

tion of thrushes. They are members of the Thrush family who migrate into our coastal area after spending their summers in higher elevations and north into western Canada.

About the size of a Robin but with behaviors similar to Flickers, these birds will be found in tree tops and bushes eating berries or on the ground foraging for insects by scratching the leaves aside. The males have burnt orange/yellow eyebrows, necks and chests that are very noticeable next to their black, grey bodies. They also have a black breast band, black cheeks and a white rump. The females lack the gray black contrast. All their colors are more subdued. They are lighter grey, olive brown, orange and less noticeable like most females in order to blend into the forest. The juveniles have muted colors of brown and white. All of them, however; do have the distinctive yellow-orange eyebrow. You may also notice them due to their songs echoing through the quiet dense forests.

(https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Varied_Thrush/sounds)

They lay two to five eggs in a tree nest during the breeding season. During this time they are very secretive and prefer hiding in thickets. Keep an eye out for them this winter. I hope you are fortunate to be serenaded by a flock while they are in our area.

Birding Lincoln City's Spring Lake Open Space

by Dawn V

Spring Lake Open Space is a hidden treasure within the city limits about a quarter mile from Highway 101 on NE 14th Street. The original 15 acres were acquired by Lincoln City in 1996, with an additional 9.7 acres added in 2000.

Friends of Wildwoods and Trails created at least some of the trails that went through the property. At the top, off the Port Ave. parking area, a short paved trail edges the space while another rougher trail leads down to the lake. A rough one mile trail loops around the lake, and others venture up into an old clear cut.

Except the paved trail at the top, most trails are muddy and uneven, not an easy walk, but well worth it. The lake trail follows the lake edge closely most of the way, where the silty lake bottom is clearly visible through the water. At the north end of the lake, a wooden "bridge" provides narrow access to the other side. Skunk cabbage and other wetland plants fill the marshy area. There's usually a Song Sparrow or two to serenade you as you cross.

In the spring, the trees and bushes are full of songbirds (see Checklist at the right).

Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers nest in the tall trees and Black-headed Grosbeaks, warblers, and other species nest in the growing clear-cut. On the water, you might see Mallards, Wood Ducks, or Hooded Mergansers. Occasionally, a Great Egret or Great Blue Heron might visit. In the winter, your walk will be quieter, a peaceful stroll just minutes from the busy highway.

Getting to the Spring Lake Open Space

There are at least two ways to access the Spring Lake Open Space. There is a pull-out area on 14th Street (West Devils Lake Road), next to the lake. Or you can use a small parking area on Port Avenue. From 101, turn east on NE 14th, follow it to Port, and turn left. Parking lot is clearly visible on the right.

If you start from the parking area and need an easy walk, you'll have to stay on the concrete path, where you will enjoy good birds and beautiful views, but you will miss seeing the lake. If you venture onto the other paths, don't be fooled by the apparent wide welcome -- they are narrow and winding most of the time, rising

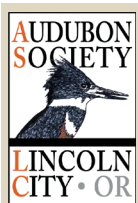
Spring Lake Open Space Bird Checklist

<input type="checkbox"/> American Crow	<input type="checkbox"/> Eurasian Collared-Dove	<input type="checkbox"/> Red-tailed Hawk
<input type="checkbox"/> American Goldfinch	<input type="checkbox"/> European Starling	<input type="checkbox"/> Red-winged Blackbird
<input type="checkbox"/> American Robin	<input type="checkbox"/> Golden-crowned Kinglet	<input type="checkbox"/> Rock Pigeon
<input type="checkbox"/> Anna's Hummingbird	<input type="checkbox"/> Great Blue Heron	<input type="checkbox"/> Rufous Hummingbird
<input type="checkbox"/> Bald Eagle	<input type="checkbox"/> Green Heron	<input type="checkbox"/> Savannah Sparrow
<input type="checkbox"/> Band-tailed Pigeon	<input type="checkbox"/> Hairy Woodpecker	<input type="checkbox"/> Song Sparrow
<input type="checkbox"/> Barn Swallow	<input type="checkbox"/> Hermit Thrush	<input type="checkbox"/> Spotted Towhee
<input type="checkbox"/> Belted Kingfisher	<input type="checkbox"/> Hermit Warbler	<input type="checkbox"/> Steller's Jay
<input type="checkbox"/> Bewick's Wren	<input type="checkbox"/> Hooded Merganser	<input type="checkbox"/> Swainson's Thrush
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Phoebe	<input type="checkbox"/> Hutton's Vireo	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Swallow
<input type="checkbox"/> Black Swift	<input type="checkbox"/> Killdeer	<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Vulture
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-capped Chickadee	<input type="checkbox"/> Mallard	<input type="checkbox"/> Violet-green Swallow
<input type="checkbox"/> Black-headed Grosbeak	<input type="checkbox"/> Marsh Wren	<input type="checkbox"/> Virginia Rail
<input type="checkbox"/> Brewer's Blackbird	<input type="checkbox"/> Northern Flicker	<input type="checkbox"/> Warbling Vireo
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown Creeper	<input type="checkbox"/> Olive-sided Flycatcher	<input type="checkbox"/> Western Tanager
<input type="checkbox"/> Brown-headed Cowbird	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange-crowned Warbler	<input type="checkbox"/> Western Wood-pewee
<input type="checkbox"/> Bushtit	<input type="checkbox"/> Osprey	<input type="checkbox"/> White-crowned Sparrow
<input type="checkbox"/> Canada Goose	<input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Wren	<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Snipe
<input type="checkbox"/> Cedar Waxwing	<input type="checkbox"/> Pacific-slope Flycatcher	<input type="checkbox"/> Wilson's Warbler
<input type="checkbox"/> Chestnut-backed Chickadee	<input type="checkbox"/> Pileated Woodpecker	<input type="checkbox"/> Wood Duck
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Raven	<input type="checkbox"/> Purple Finch	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow Warbler
<input type="checkbox"/> Common Yellowthroat	<input type="checkbox"/> Red Crossbill	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow-rumped Warbler
<input type="checkbox"/> Downy Woodpecker	<input type="checkbox"/> Red-breasted Nuthatch	

and falling with the rough terrain, and can be muddy when damp. (Note that the Open Space crews have done a lot of work in the past year laying barkdust and adding wooden steps to ease the way).

If you want to see the lake but not take a hike, continue on 14th to West Devil's Lake Road and park in the turnout by the lake. On the west side of the lake is a small path that takes you a short distance to a wooden bench, where you can sit and watch the lake and the birds without moving!

The City provides a map of the trails here: http://www.lincolncity.org/vertical/sites/%7BD5C39B4D-9F7A-4251-AEA0-F594E7F89DDB%7D/uploads/Simplified_Spring_Lake.pdf



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*Be sure to visit
www.lincolncityaudubon.org
for more news and activities of the
Audubon Society of Lincoln City*

Audubon Society of Lincoln City is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tax-exempt #20-3795649

Conservation *(continued from Page 1)*

disposal of public lands to private interest for private gain. Again, national election results project a deep and chilling shadow over the future of our public lands. The OAC calls on all of us to loudly and clearly speak up for important bird areas under direct threat. The Malheur NWR must be restored to its full functionality. As a direct result of the occupation, all four full-time biologists have quit their jobs at the refuge and moved away, fearing for the safety of their families. Six million dollars have been allocated to clean-up the mess and restore the site but tremendous damage has been done to the atmosphere of trust and cooperation that had been so carefully built between the refuge and local citizens. The occupiers tried to sensationalize what they called a “war on local ranchers” perpetuated by the federal government and refuge staff. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Federal workers, local elected officials, ranchers and residents were neighbors, living and working together to protect and conserve the local wildlife and the habitat critical to its survival.

Our chapter sits in the very heart of the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Our area of responsibility takes in the Nestucca Bay NWR, Siletz Bay NWR, the Cascade Head National Scenic and Research Area, Oregon Islands NWR, and the Siuslaw National Forest. These federal lands and the protection they provide to wildlife and the environment are subject to the same kind of attack we witness in central Oregon. We absolutely must work hard to develop a mutual understanding and sense of cooperation with citizens, local governments, and our

federal managers. The refuges need our involvement, support and protection, now more than ever.

Critical Habitat and Important Bird Areas

Other areas to receive OAC attention were the Klamath Basin to the south and the terminal lakes in Oregon’s central plateau. Oregon’s severe drought has lasted for years and critical wildlife habitat is drying up. Competing with commercial interests for precious water is an on-going struggle. The Klamath Basin Restoration Agreement and the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement both require Congressional action which is now uncertain, if not unlikely. Lake Abert is Oregon’s only saltwater lake and is an oasis in the high desert for thousands of birds. Drought and increased pumping of groundwater for agriculture has resulted in extremely low water levels and there is a very real chance that the lake will dry up completely. Conservation efforts focused on insuring adequate water for areas such as these are critical and worthy of our attention and efforts.

Endangered and Threatened Species

The Marbled murrelet, described as “a strange, mysterious little seabird,” in the Audubon Field Guide actually nests in old growth forests like the Elliott. The Oregon Audubon Council is calling for protection of this nesting habitat and up-listing the Marbled murrelet from “threatened” to “endangered.” The Streaked horned lark is also listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act and needs

to be up-listed. Efforts are needed in the Willamette Valley to survey its range and this is a project that deserves our attention. Coastal Coho salmon and steelhead need cold, clean water in which to spawn. To provide this now and in the future we need to reform the Oregon Forest Practices Act to require wider riparian area buffers to shade streams of all sizes in an era of global warming and increasing temperatures. Seabirds need continued protection from depletion of the forage fish upon which they depend. While a great deal of progress has been made to limit the taking of forage fish in coastal waters much more work is needed and the Pacific Ocean is, after all, our own backyard.

A Wide Range of Priorities

The OAC has a much longer list of conservation priorities that touch on three important parts of our physical landscape: our oceans, grasslands, and forests. They recognize the need to draw attention to the dangers of lead in our watersheds, and of course the critical issue of climate change. They pledge to support an exciting new proposal coming from the Legislative Task Force on Funding for Fish, Wildlife and Related Outdoor Recreation and Education. This proposal has the potential to change the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife from a hunting and fishing management agency to a true State Conservation Department. Expect to hear more in the coming months about this proposal and other conservation issues important to us and to our members. Please join me in more active engagement with conservation efforts in our region. Let’s make 2017 a watershed year for wildlife on the Oregon Coast.