



The Kingfisher

Volume 15, Issue 2

Winter 2020 / Spring 2021

The Impacts and Benefits of Fire Among Birds

by Halle Renn

Notes from dawn



Through adversity, we grow stronger... Our hearts go out to all Oregonians, especially those in Lincoln and Tillamook counties, who have been affected by the horrific wildfires. Our volunteers have been heavily involved in helping communities recover - donating our time and resources to the cleanup and recovery efforts. A heartfelt thanks to all of you who have stepped up during this time!

In addition to volunteering to aid in wildfire relief, we have continued to work on some important projects. One fun effort has been a joint project with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to create and install interpretive signs at Alder Island Loop Trail. Read about it in this issue!

Another effort is our Rocky Habitat Campaign. We have a strong team of volunteers, lead by Kent Doughty, whom we hired earlier this year to coordinate our campaign. With Kent's leadership and the help of numerous volunteers, partners, and experts; we're building a strong case for furthering Rocky Habitat protections in Lincoln and Tillamook counties.

We are grateful for the volunteers who have stepped up to help us with our campaign. By working together to propose new protective designations, we can create more awareness of rocky habitats, support important research to better understand our changing ocean, and keep these amazing areas safe while providing appropriate public access. Together we can ensure that Oregon's amazing coast continues to inspire future generations.

As always, we love hearing from you! Get out and enjoy the beauties of Lincoln and Tillamook counties and send us your photos and stories!

- dawn villaescusa, ASLC President



2020 has proven to be one of the most destructive wildfire seasons in history. As climate change becomes a bigger threat by the day, our wildfire seasons are growing longer and more intense. This season, that reality hit close to home for many of us as devastating fires roared through the state. As we take stock and survey the damage within and surrounding our communities, many of us wonder about the impacts to our wild neighbors.

When looking at the impacts of fire to birds, habitat loss is a primary concern. Species that benefit from mature, old-growth forest habitat, which is unique to the Pacific Northwest, may find that their habitat is unlivable during a severe fire event. This type of fire is called a stand replacement fire. Larger and mature trees, which are favored as nest trees for some species, have natural defenses to withstand a large-scale fire like the ones experienced this year. However, bird species may depend upon a forest mosaic of diverse ages for food and these forests may not support the needs of a species for several years or decades.

Even so, wildfire can benefit many species who depend on young forest for

habitat. New vegetation growth often bounces back quickly following a fire event. Many insectivorous birds, like flycatchers and bluebirds, take advantage of the diversity of insects that proliferate in new growth. Species such as the Black-backed Woodpecker, depend on insects quickly colonizing burn areas due to dead snags and downed wood. These burn areas also provide downed wood habitat for small mammals, and the more open canopy can benefit hunting birds of prey.

Fire benefits species when it is a patchwork within the landscape. Birds like the White-headed Woodpecker, nest in burned open areas near unburned forest patches to forage. A stand of old-growth may burn but, in the past, a Townsend's Warbler could find another area. Now, we are seeing larger and larger fires more frequently. The patchworks are becoming a spread and we are losing forest to large fires faster than nature can replace it. Fire can be an incredible benefit, but we have allowed fire to grow unnaturally. If we utilize fire in a productive way, our forests, and thereby our birds, will benefit for generations to come.

New Signage at the Alder Island Nature Trail

Joint project by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC)



Gentle breezes through the trees, a hint of ocean salt; lush, green views with dappled sunlight reaching the ground here and there; little birds chirping softly in the brush and bigger birds calling loudly on the water. Just a sweet, little walk in the park, a stroll on a flat trail, an easy path ... a perfect, mellow outing to immerse in nature, take in the sights, get some fresh air, all in an easily accessed but amazing wildlife refuge. The Alder Island Nature Trail, just south of Lincoln City, is off Highway 101 and nested inside the incredible Siletz National Wildlife Refuge.

ASLC was approached early this summer by Newport-based Dawn Harris, Visitor Services Manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about the possibility of collaborating on eight permanent interpretive trail signs to be placed along the Alder Island trail. With our core mission of encouraging residents and visitors to protect and enjoy birds and other wildlife in this area, we were enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute.

The project team included local science illustrator and nature artist Nora Sherwood, graphic designer Ernie Rose and conservation writer Peter Pearsall. Working with Harris and local Audubon president Dawn Villaescusa, a list of appropriate plants, mammals, fish, birds and invertebrates, was developed and the team set to work.

"I appreciated being able to work on a project so close to home. I was able to visit the trail while I was working on it to get inspiration," said Sherwood.

We hope you'll visit the trail soon — not only to see the signs, but to enjoy this gem of a place right in our backyards.

H is for Hawk

Book Review by Miracle Fingerson

Some books contain hidden power to teach us about grief and help us navigate loss and death through unexpected means. Some books weave together various genres while also taking us on a highly personal journey. Helen MacDonald's "H is for Hawk" is a surprisingly beautiful blend of both nature writing and memoir.

Following the sudden and tragic death of her father, Helen begins to withdraw from the world in order to cope with her devastating loss. She is an experienced falconer, and decides, as a way to distract and heal, to train a captive-bred goshawk chick. She also becomes deeply interested in the biographical account of a famous author and falconer named T.H. White.

Throughout the book, Helen weaves her navigation of grief while recounting the life and experiences of TH White. The hawk, whom she names Mabel, becomes a symbol of Helen's desire to forget about the pain of her father's death and view the world as a hawk does, "The hawk was everything I wanted to be: solitary, self-possessed, free from grief and numb to the hurts of human life."

The book is beautifully written, richly descriptive, and explores themes of intense emotion while also moving Helen and the reader forward in healing and grace.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

▼ Winter and Spring Events



All ASLC field trips are free and open to public, no pre-registration is required. Most field trips are with Audubon field trip leader Mark Elliott. No prior birding experience is required. Binoculars and guide books are provided, unless Covid-19 is still active. Our field trips are held rain or shine, so dress appropriately for coastal weather. Follow us on Facebook (@audubonlincolncity), check our website (lincolncityaudubon.org) for details, or call 541-992-9720.

IAN 2021

Saturday, January 9, 9-11am
OSU Hatfield Marine Science Center Nature Trail and Yaquina Bay South Jetty. There will be an abundance of waterfowl, birds of prey, and wintering sparrows.
Location: meet in the Hatfield Marine Science Center parking lot.

FEB

Saturday, February 13, 9-11am
Alder Island Loop Trail at Siletz National Wildlife Refuge. This easy one mile trail loops through riparian and wetland habitat along the Siletz River. Will look for sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl.
Location: meet in the parking lot on the east side of Hwy 101 at the south end of the Siletz River Bridge.

Friday-Monday, Feb 12-15, all day
Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). Everyone is welcome to participate - from beginners 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. More details to come.

MAR

Saturday, March 13, 9-11am - Hostetler Park (D River) and Devil's Lake State Park. Join us for a walk through diverse habitat including river, wetlands, lake, and woods. We will look for wintering sparrows, raptors, and waterfowl.
Location: meet at the NE 1st street parking area on the east side of Hwy 101 in Lincoln City.

APR

Saturday, April 10, 10-Noon
Tillamook Bay/Bayocean spit. Bayocean spit offers a freshwater lake, scenic Tillamook Bay, and ocean habitats. We will see migrating shorebirds and resident birds.
Please note start time is 10am due to tides.
Location: meet in the parking lot 1.5 miles off of Bayocean Road.

MAY

Saturday, May 8, 9-11am
Boiler Bay State Scenic Viewpoint to Devil's Punchbowl State Natural Area. Excellent offshore seabird watching. With several stops along the way, we may see turnstones, oystercatchers, and Harlequin Ducks.
Location: meet in parking lot at Boiler Bay.

MAY (cont'd)
TBD - World Migratory Bird Day festival in Lincoln City. Kids activities, art projects, bird walks, speakers, and more. Details will be posted on our website and on Facebook.

If Covid-19 is still active, wearing a face mask is required.

JUN

Saturday, June 12, 9-11am
Yaquina Head Outstanding Natural Area (Yaquina Lighthouse). Known for easy viewing of nesting seabird colonies of Common Murres, cormorants, and Black Oystercatchers. The highlight for some are the Peregrine Falcons nesting by the Interpretive Center.
Location: meet in the Interpretive Center parking lot. Vehicle entrance fee will be waived for ASLC birdwalk participants.

TBD - Annual ASLC Meeting (date and location to be determined). Potluck dinner followed by a brief business meeting, election of officers, and our "Year in Review" presentation.

Please help support our birding, education, and conservation programs!

YES! I'd like to support ASLC by becoming a member:

| | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$20 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Western Meadowlark |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Family | <input type="checkbox"/> \$300 Red-tailed Hawk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Wood Duck | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Bald Eagle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Osprey | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In support of your programs, I submit a donation of \$_____ | |

Please mail your check payable to:
Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC)
PO Box 38, Lincoln City OR 97367

Or Join, Renew, or Donate online at:
lincolncityaudubon.org/membership.html

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State, Zip _____
Email _____

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



P.O. Box 38
Lincoln City
Oregon 97367

541-992-9720



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 Priorities in Lincoln and Tillamook Counties



The clock is ticking on our Rocky Habitat Management campaign, with site designations proposals due at the end of the year. As you know, we have been working on our Campaign for a little over a year. During this time, we have conducted research, engaged coastal partners, reached out to our communities, and studied various sites in Lincoln and Tillamook counties. We are excited to share with you that we have selected Cape Lookout and the Cape Foulweather Complex as the two sites we will be proposing for added Rocky Habitat management protections.

These proposals are possible because, for the first time in 25 years, the state of Oregon has provided the opportunity for individuals and community groups to submit proposals requesting rocky habitat designations for special places like Cape Foulweather -- places that both visitors and coastal residents treasure. The designations will become part of Oregon's Rocky Habitat Management Strategy, which is being updated for the first time since 1994. Many protected sites were re-approved, but some were not, and there are many others with little to no protection in place.

What can be designated? First, rocky intertidal zones from extreme high water to extreme low water. Second, rocky upland from the extreme high-water line to the vegetation line or, in unvegetated areas, to the sixteen-foot elevation mark. And third, offshore rocks and reefs.

Community groups may submit proposals requesting that a rocky habitat site be designated as a marine education area, a marine research area, or a marine conservation area.

A marine education area, also known as a marine garden, is for public enjoyment. Easily accessible, these sites are intended to protect rocky habitat resources so that the public can learn about tide-pool ecology and the creatures that inhabit them.

A marine research area is an intact ecosystem. The goal of this designation is to support scientific research and monitoring while maintaining the rocky habitat in its natural state. At these sites, scientists will be able to study the impact of climate change on ocean resources, including fish and invertebrate species our fishing economy depends on.

A marine conservation area has high ecological value. The goal of this designation is to conserve the natural ecosystem by limiting adverse impacts to habitat and wildlife. We will seek to have both Cape Lookout and the Cape Foulweather Complex designated as Marine Conservation Areas. Read the enclosed insert for more information about these two sites.

All of these designations will help achieve Oregon's Near-shore Strategy goal to protect rocky habitat resources in order to provide "long-term ecological, economic, and social benefits for current and future generations of Oregonians."

The newly adopted strategy includes the ability for individuals and communities to be an active part of designing and implementing new goals and management based on the best available information. And you can be involved! Join our *My Favorite Rocky Habitat* group on Facebook, sign up to receive regular updates, or email us with your support of our proposals. Contact us to learn more ways to become involved!

-- Steve Griffiths, Conservation Committee Chair

The Oregon Coast Rocks!

After looking at several important locations in Lincoln and Tillamook counties, we are proposing Cape Lookout and the area around Cape Foulweather (Cape Foulweather Complex) as Marine Conservation Areas.



Cape Foulweather, photo by Steve Griffiths

Cape Foulweather Complex: Nowhere is the wild spirit of the Central Oregon Coast captured better than at Cape Foulweather. Rising 500 feet above the ocean, Cape Foulweather provides sweeping views from Yaquina Lighthouse in the south to Cascade Head in the north. If you stand at the scenic viewpoint on a sunny summer day, you are likely to see gray whales cavorting and feeding in the kelp beds offshore, seabirds resting on the Cape's sheer cliffs, and waves rushing on to the rocks below. You'll feel the wind in your face and your lungs will fill with the freshest of air.



Cape Lookout, photo by Steve Griffiths

Cape Lookout: Extending nearly two miles into the ocean, Cape Lookout's breathtaking views, magnificent rock formations, and wildlife are a centerpiece for our community. Residents and tourists alike come to hike, observe wildlife,

view the scenery, take photos, and enjoy the outdoors. In 1994, Cape Lookout's south rocky habitat was designated as a Habitat Refuge, but that designation was never implemented. We propose to designate both the north and south rocky habitats at Cape Lookout as a Marine Conservation.

Why seek added protections?

Visitors matter: Our rocky habitats are one of the primary attractions of our tourist economy. Managing access and accountability will help to keep these areas pristine for years to come.

Residents matter: We live here in part because of the quality of life provided by our beloved coastal landscape. We have an opportunity to support the unique wildlife and scenery for our community's ongoing livability.



Cape Lookout, photo by Kent Doughty

Habitat matters: Visitors to this area can unintentionally cause damage if they don't know how to safely and respectfully interact with our tide pools and surrounding wildlife. A designation can provide greater levels of education to tourists to keep them from trampling over sensitive natural areas and disturbing wildlife.

Education matters: We will be able to offer educational opportunities for the local community, including our children for whom we can inspire a love of learning and understanding of local wildlife.

Wildlife matters: We can protect our wild neighbors like Black Oystercatchers, pelicans, sea lions, and seals that depend on our rocky coastal habitats.

Why Marine Conservation Areas?

The goal of the Marine Conservation Area (MCA) designation is to conserve the natural ecosystem of sites with high ecological value by limiting adverse impacts to habitat and wildlife. This designation offers a unique level of flexibility in management.



What protections are we considering?

- Increase community involvement through stewardship training and community science opportunities;
- Increase awareness of each site's rich resources through signage and interpretive education;
- Close some harvesting, such as kelp for personal use and certain invertebrates excepting clams, Dungeness crab, red rock crab, mussels, piddocks, scallops, and shrimp, which will remain available.
- Improve breeding seabird protections by encouraging watercraft to maintain a safe distance, drone-use education, and breeding bird education & monitoring

NOTE: we are not seeking any changes to coastwide commercial or recreational fish harvest regulations.

By working together to propose new protective designations, we can create more awareness of rocky habitats, support important research to better understand our changing ocean, and keep these amazing areas safe while providing equitable public access. Together we can ensure that Oregon's amazing coast continues to inspire future generations.

You can help! Join our *My Favorite Rocky Habitat* group on Facebook, sign up to receive regular updates, or email us with your support of our proposals. Contact us to learn more ways to become involved!

Lincoln City Tidepool, photo by Camden Bruner



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