

February/March 2008



# The Grebe

Klamath Basin Audubon Society

## KBAS General Meetings...

**Thursday, February 14, 2008: 7:00 p.m.**  
**Bats, Bats, and more Bats!**

A lively discussion on bats of Oregon and northern California will be the focus of our February 14 program. The presentation will cover a full array of topics that include bat ecology, population trends, protection measures, and a “how to” discussion with participants on managing and promoting bat populations around the home. Come prepared to discuss your observations and experiences with bats and bat houses. David Larson, Chief of Resources at Lava Beds National Monument, will lead this program and will provide his observations and experiences with bats around the basin. Printed information on bats will be available during the presentation and bat boxes will also be for sale with proceeds going to the Winter Wings Festival.

This is a program that you will not want to miss! After learning from Dave’s vast knowledge and experience, you will go home encouraging your friends and family to attend Dave’s presentations at the Winter Wings Festival 2008!



**Thursday, March 13, 2008: 7:00 p.m.**  
**Klamath Restoration Act, a.k.a. Water Settlement Agreement!**

We are privileged to welcome Ron Cole, Refuge Manager for the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuges speaking on the water settlement agreement and the specific provisions impacting the refuges. Ron has been directly involved in the settlement talks and is well suited to provide clarity to these complex issues. Since we have the on-going privilege of enjoying the magnificent refuges and the wildlife they support in the area, their long term health is of direct interest. Do attend this important presentation and discussion and do bring your friends and family. You will not be disappointed! Please see a summary of the impacts on the refuges on page 8 in preparation for the discussion. See you March 13!

**Thursday, April 10, 2008: 7:00 p.m.**  
**Crater Lake Diving Program with details on new underwater studies**

KBAS general meetings: Klamath County Courthouse, Lower Level Meeting Room, 316 Main Street, Klamath Falls, OR.

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## President's Message...Darrel Samuels

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Last week I had the pleasure of working with Jerry Ingram (AKA "Ralph the Eagle") in some of our local schools. As "Ralph" explains the important adaptations of bald eagles, I get to dress a volunteer student in an eagle's costume. We are always enthusiastically received by the students; who wouldn't enjoy a six foot eagle in their classroom? It's great fun for all, but the students get to learn about a resource we all hope they will honor and preserve in the years to come. By the way, in honor of our national bird, the U.S. Mint is releasing a beautiful set of bald eagle commemorative coins. Check out at [www.usmint.gov](http://www.usmint.gov)

In this issue of the Grebe you will find a survey entitled "Let's get involved!" I believe our chapter could do some worthwhile projects in Klamath Falls and gain some positive publicity in the process, but we need to find out your interest level. Tom Essex and I met with Lanny Fujishin at the Klamath Refuge to discuss projects at Miller Island. We have several ideas, but we welcome your help in bringing them to reality. Coming up on February 9 is a goose nest survey and maintenance project at Miller Island. Look for more information in the *Herald and News*. Please look over the survey and send it back to me (by mail or email) with your ideas. Our chapter is still looking for an Education Chair, someone who perhaps could help interface with the local schools. Give me a call if you might be interested!

Speaking of involvement, I hope you all either attend this year's Winter Wings Festival or mention it to your friends. Many volunteers have invested hundreds of collective hours working to make it an outstanding showcase of our basin's birding resources as well as a community event. Visit [www.winterwingsfest.org](http://www.winterwingsfest.org). If you need a program brochure, let me know. We're hoping for a great turnout from local residents as well as visitors to our area!

Our Klamath Basin Audubon Society will host the spring Oregon Audubon Council meeting on April 11-13. I've attended O.A.C. meetings in Eugene and Salem and invited the Council to visit our area to see first hand the outstanding birding resources of the Klamath Basin and help celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of our national refuges. Ron Cole is planning a special field trip for council participants as well as KBAS members.

One feature of the *Herald and News* I enjoy is the weekly "Thumbs Up/Thumbs Down." I'll end this message with my own Thumbs Up:

**Thumbs up** to Lee Juillerat of the *Herald and News* for his great coverage of last year's Winter Wings Festival and to the features he's doing this year in advance of the festival. His recent article featuring Ralph Opp and our eagle population was great!

**Thumbs up** to Ron Cole, Klamath Refuge Manager and KBAS board member, for the hundreds of hours he has spent working on the Water Settlement. Ron has shared some of the process with the Board, and he may do a presentation for the general membership. Hopefully the Settlement will become reality as it promises the refuges and their abundant wildlife with a predictable water supply.

**Thumbs up** to Gordon Ross, *Herald and News* editorial cartoonist, who held a sale in January of his framed cartoons and pledged 25% of the sales to Winter Wings. We appreciate his support!

**Thumbs up** to Taldi Walter, national Audubon's Alaska Outreach Coordinator, for visiting our chapter and presenting an outstanding program at the January meeting. She helped us realize what a precious resource the NWR is and why it needs continued support and monitoring. For more details about Teshekpuk Lake and other critical Alaskan issues see: [http://audubonalaska.org/IssuesAction\\_WesternArctic\\_NPR-A.html](http://audubonalaska.org/IssuesAction_WesternArctic_NPR-A.html).



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## Finance Report...Tom Essex, Treasurer

Our general fund decreased to \$1,814 primarily due to a \$2,000 loan provided to the Winter Wings account for early needs as well as payment for the Scott Grants in the amount of \$2,020.

### ALEUTIAN GOOSE FESTIVAL MARCH 28-30, 2008

Celebrate Spring and the return of the once endangered Aleutian Geese to the extreme northern coast of California at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Aleutian Goose Festival, **March 28-30 2008** in Crescent City/Del Norte County, CA. The festival offers 60+ workshops/ fieldtrips, Native American Heritage, Pelagic trip, Smith River Drifts, Geology, Botany and more. Keynote speaker is Humboldt State University's Professor Stephen Sillett, the leading researcher in the study of the canopy of the towering redwoods. Recently featured in Richard Preston's best selling book "The Wild Trees." [www.aleutiangoosefestival.org](http://www.aleutiangoosefestival.org) or 1-707-465-0888

## Field Trips Schedule...Dave Potter, Chair

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**February 23, 2008:** Winter Wings Festival follow-up to hot birding spots. Leader is Rick Hardy. Meet at the Fish & Wildlife Office at 9:00 a.m. Bring water and lunch/snacks and plan to carpool.

**Early March, 2008:** Possible trip to the FWS Ashland Forensic Lab usually not open to the public. Leader: Ron Cole. Please send an e-mail to the Editor, Grebe at [mchristian1@charter.net](mailto:mchristian1@charter.net) if you wish to be notified of further details regarding this trip.

**Saturday, March 29, 2008:** Miller Island & Lower Klamath Refuge area. Leader is Dave Potter, 850-3808 Meet at the Fish & Wildlife Office, at 8:00 a.m.

**Sunday, April 13, 2008:** Tule Lake & L. Klamath Refuges. This trip will be part of the Oregon Audubon Council meeting with those attending as our guests (see President's message). Leader is Ron Cole. Meet at the Fish & Wildlife Office at 8:00 a.m. or 9 a.m. at Refuge Visitor Center, 4009 Hill Road, Tulelake, CA 530-667-2231.

**Saturday, May 3, 2008:** Canoe/kayak Upper Klamath Lake. Leader is Dave Potter, 850-3808. Meet at the Fish & Wildlife Office at 8:00 a.m. or 9 a.m. at Malone Springs Boat launch off West Side Highway north of Rocky Point about 4-5 miles [1/2 mile gravel road off east side of highway] Bring or rent your own kayak or canoe. Life jackets highly recommended as well as sun screen, lunch or snacks.

**Saturday, May 31, 2008:** Birding Wood River Wetlands. Leader is Kevin Spencer. Phone: 884-5739 or [rriparia@charter.net](mailto:rriparia@charter.net) Meet at the Fish & Wildlife Office, at 7:00 a.m. or 8 a.m. at Wood River Wetlands on northeast corner of Agency Lake

**Saturday, June 28, 2008:** Jean and Al Van Hulzen's Home at Rocky Pt. Potluck and great birding. Details and directions to be announced in a subsequent issue of the *Grebe*, but put this on your calendar!

Fish & Wildlife Office is located at 1936 California Ave., off the on-ramp to Hwy 97 South from Nevada/Oregon Ave

## Field Notes...By Julie Van Moorhem

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Report your sightings to me directly if you do not put them on the website: [jvanmoo@sisna.com](mailto:jvanmoo@sisna.com) or 882-4488. Please include your name, phone # (in case we need to contact you), location and date of sighting, bird/s and numbers if notable.

Thanks to all the contributors, both the new and regular contributors. Please continue to report your sightings.

December weather was extremely cold for about one week—temperatures in single digits or teens. Almost all water frozen. In late December and early January Klamath Falls was hit with a series of storms that produced snow depths of 7-10" plus in some places. Almost all water is frozen and many Bald Eagles and other raptors, swans, geese, and ducks are congregating along Stateline Rd.

**TURKEY VULTURE**, 1, Godowa Springs Rd. ~1/2 mi. N of Hwy 140 (W of Beatty), 12-23-07, (WS)

**WHITE-WINGED SCOTER**, female, near the bridge over the Klamath River, just north of Miller Island, near the Co-gen site, 12-15-07, (DL, DG, HF, KB)

**LONG-TAILED DUCK**, 1, Link River Dam, 12-9-07, 12-30&31-2008, and 1-1-08. (DM)

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER**, 1, Link River, S. side of Oregon Ave. at Putnam Pt. area, 1-18 & 19-08, (DM)

**RED-SHOULDERED HAWK**, 1, imm. at the corner of Cross Road and Lower Klamath Lake Road. Might be three in the area, 12-14-08, (DA)

**ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK**, 41, Lower Klamath Refuge & Township Rd., ~12-8-07, (DA, FL)

**FERRUGINOUS HAWK**, 4, (near Tingley and Cross Rds.), 12-15-07 CBC, (BJM, SP, ED, BD, GS); 2, Hill Rd near Nuss Pond, 1-21-08, (DP, JVM)

**PEREGRINE FALCON**, 1, near the Co-gen plant and

Collins Wood Products side of the Klamath River, 12-15-07 CBC, (DL, DG, HF, KB)

**MOUNTAIN QUAIL**, many, Moore Park along the main road in several locations—tennis courts, after the loop where the road comes back to Oregon Ave., 1-18-08 thru 1-20-08, (DM)

**LEAST SANDPIPER**, 8, Short Rd. 12-15-07 CBC, (DP, MC, JVM)

**MEW GULL**, 1 adult, Lake Ewauna, 12-15-07, (WS, RH)

**GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL**, 5, Lake Ewauna, 12-15-07 CBC, (RH, WS)

**WHITE-HEADED WOODPECKER**, 1, male, Running Y residence, December, (D & DS)

**PILEATED WOODPECKER**, 1, Rocky Point residence, 12-17-07 (MKK)

**WILLIAMSON'S SAPSUCKER**, 1, Lynnwood residence, 1-18-08, (DM)

## Field Notes...Continued

**RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER**, 1, Pine Grove residence, 12-27-07, (JVM)

**NORTHERN SHRIKE**, 1, Chen/Buesing Rd. area,, early December, (DA); 1, Miller Island boat launch area, 12-15-07 CBC, (DL, DG, HF, KB)

**CLARK'S NUTCRACKER**, 4, Rocky Point residence, 12-17-07, (MKK)

**HORNED LARK**, fields south of Cross Road and west of Lower Klamath Lake Rd, 12-15-07 CBC, (DL, DG, HF, KB)

**ROCK WREN**, 1, vocalizing in rim rock along Lower Klamath Lake Rd., 12-15-07, (DL, DG, HF, KB)

**AMERICAN PIPIT**, 1, ditch west of Klamath Irrigation District on Short Rd., 12-15-07 CBC, (JVM, MC, DP)

**LAPLAND LONGSPUR**, 16, from Lower Klamath tour route exit heading towards the entrance, take the second gravel road going north, 1-19-08, (CK)

**Contributors:** Dick Ashford (DA), Karl Bachman (KB), Marilyn Christian (MC), Elaine Deutschman (ED), Bill Deutschman (BD), Helen Fitting (HF), Daniel George (DG), Rick Hardy (RH), Mary Kay King (MKK), Charlotte Kisling (CK), Dave Larson (DL), Frank Lospalluto (FL), BJ Matzen (BJM), Dave Menke (DM), Ruth Olsen (RO), Sherry Perry (SP), Dave Potter (DP), Trisha Roninger (TR), Darrel & Diana Samuels (D & DS), Glenn Smith (GS), Wes Stone (WS), Julie Van Moorhem (JVM)



## The Klamath Falls Christmas Bird Count (CBC) December 15, 2007...Kevin Spencer

Weather on a Christmas Bird Count is always in question until the day begins. This year's count was spectacular. While the temperatures were in the thirties, there was little to no wind. All the areas were well covered by superb observers, and the results were well deserved. Almost 40,000 individual birds and 110 species were recorded. Long-tailed Duck and Yellow-rumped Warbler were missed, (they must have been hiding somewhere), but there were many unusual birds that were seen.

White-winged Scoter, a coastal duck was on the Klamath River. An amazingly optimistic Tree Swallow was zooming over the barren water zones, apparently still catching insects. Black Phoebe and Red-shouldered Hawk (5) are still making winter-time appearances. Two California Towhees, likely the same as last year, an American Pipet,



Drawing by Kirsten Munson

Peregrine Falcon, Horned Lark (missed for many years), Mew Gull, Ross's and Snow Geese, Wood Duck, Least Sandpiper, Rock Wren, and Mountain Bluebird were all

exceptional finds. These species are difficult to locate or not expected to winter in this area. All of the expected waterfowl and raptors were observed. The Morning Dove continues its population surge as it was not an easy bird to locate in the winter, or was completely absent in the Basin in past history. Although Eurasian collared-Dove is in the Basin year round, they have not yet made it onto the Christmas Bird Count list. Pine Siskin was absent from this year's count. Hopefully it is not a sign of a population crisis, but rather is further evidence of their erratic travel patterns.

Observers for this year's count included: Karl Bachman and Helen Fitting (Crater Lake), Bill and Elaine Deutschman, Marliyn Christian, Carol Fields (Lava Beds), Daniel George (Sebastopol), Rick Hardy, Dave Haupt, Charlotte Ann Kisling, Dave Larson (Lava Beds), BJ Matzen, Ruth

Olsen, Sherry Ann Perry, Lois Phillips (our count's reliable feeder watcher), Dave Potter, Trish Roninger, Mary Ellen Sargent, Glenn Smith, Wes Stone (Chiloquin), Jean Van Hulzen (Rocky Point), Julie Van Moorhem (our gracious host of the post-count dinner and compilation), and Kevin Spencer

Rounding out the rest of the entire list of all 110 species observed during the day included: Greater White-fronted Goose, Canada Goose, Tundra Swan, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Barrows Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, California Quail, Pied-billed Grebe, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night Heron, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-

## The Klamath Falls Christmas Bird Count (CBC) December 15, 2007...Continued

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shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel, Merlin, Prairie Falcon, American Coot, Killdeer, Greater Yellowlegs, Wilson's Snipe, Ring-billed Gull, California Gull, Herring Gull, Glaucous-winged Gull, Rock Pigeon, Barn Owl, Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-shafted Flicker, Northern Shrike, Steller's Jay, Western Scrub-jay, Black-billed Magpie, Common Raven, Horned

Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, titmouse sp., Bushtit, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Western Bluebird, Townsend's Solitaire, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, Spotted Towhee, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Oregon Junco, (Slate-colored Junco), Red-winged Blackbird, Western Meadowlark, Yellow-headed

Blackbird, Brewer's Blackbird, Brown-headed Blackbird, Purple Finch, House Finch, Red Crossbill, Lesser Goldfinch, American Goldfinch, and House Sparrow.

Thanks to all the participants. It's good to get out, and it's worth the effort to keep some local data on the ups and downs of our local area's bird populations.

Kevin Spencer  
[rriparia@charter.net](mailto:rriparia@charter.net)

## THE WINTER TOUGH GUY AWARD...By Kevin Spencer

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Ruby-crowned Kinglet at suet feeder, a rich source of energy for birds in the winter season. Photo by Jim Floyd, Winter, 2007-08.

With winter's severe storms, ferocious winds, short days, and very cold temperatures, it always amazes me that small birds ever make it through wintertime at all. But through my many winters in the Klamath Basin I have been truly impressed at one particular specie's hardiness. A recent conversation with a home photographer, Jim Floyd, caused me to recall that of all the small birds, the Ruby-crowned Kinglet is the champion "Winter Tough Guy".

I recall one Christmas Bird Count many years ago, and it was the coldest one recorded, twenty below zero. It was early morning and I saw a fluttering around a rose bush next to a home. It was a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, moving somewhat slow compared to its normal speed, but it was out, making a living, and I recall thinking at the time, what a tough individual. They don't have the bare ground under vegetation to scrape for the seeds or full feeders of seeds left by homeowners. No, they are out there gleaning frozen bugs, halted in stride on stems, stalks, branches and leaves of plants. They are quite active, moving quickly through the vegetation, constantly looking, but with keen eyes, they sometimes hover to pick off a hibernating insect from a branch or behind a leaf. Living off of insect populations in the winter is a risky situation.

They are not even uncommon in the Basin during the winter months, with maybe several to a handful seen in one day of being out. They are most often detected by their short chattering call. With some attention in that direction, one may be able to observe it. Sometimes, if agitated, the male may

raise its crown, revealing a bright ruby red tuft of feathers, and so from that comes its name. About the size of a Lesser Goldfinch, they appear to be like a flycatcher, with a bright olive green back and a faint yellowish-green breast. They have two distinct white wing-bars; and somewhat blackish in-between them. They have a whitish eye-ring; narrow at the top and bottom of the eye, giving it an oval appearance.

Sometime in late March, their numbers begin to increase. They begin to sing portions of their songs. In late April and May, they may burst out with their entire breeding song; a long variable song, quite loud for their size. In fact, when they are singing high in the crowns of the Lodgepole forests of the Upper Sycan River on their breeding grounds in the Fremont National Forest, its just flabbergasting that such a small bird can produce the volume of sound it does. Maybe it's their way of announcing, "Hey, I'm Here! I made it through that last bitter winter, and I'm feeling great now, now, now!" Their song is about that long, and I wouldn't be surprised if it actually means what it sounds like.

## A New Audubon WatchList Identifies Birds at Risk

At the end of November, the National Audubon Society and the American Bird Conservancy released their WatchList 2007. This uses the latest and most comprehensive data to identify the U.S. birds that are facing a significant risk of extinction, either because of severe population declines, or because of restricted range and/or small population sizes. Fifty-four of the birds on the WatchList spend at least part of their year in Oregon. This represents 11% of the total number of Oregon bird species. For many of these birds, conservation efforts in Oregon as well as nationally will play a critical role in determining their future health and survival.

The continental WatchList is based on a comprehensive analysis of population size and trends, distribution, and environmental threats, informed and improved by extensive scientific review. The 59 species on its "Red List" are those of greatest concern, while the additional 119 merit their spots on the "Yellow List" due to a combination of rarity and/or seriously declining numbers. Species found on either part of the WatchList need immediate help.

In the words of Audubon Society of Portland Conservation Director Bob Sallinger: "The species on the Watchlist extend from Oregon's oceans to its mountains to its deserts; and some pass through our own backyards. We need conservation action now, while there is still time – and WatchList helps focus that action where we need it most."

### Notable Oregon Species on the WatchList include the following:

**Northern Spotted Owl:** (WatchList Red) It comes as no surprise that the Northern Spotted Owl has made the 2007 WatchList. The Northern Spotted Owl was listed as

"Threatened" under the Federal Endangered Species Act in 1990 due to "loss and adverse modification" of the old growth habitat on which it depends. In spite of habitat protections in place since the Northwest Forest Plan was adopted in 1994, the Spotted Owl has continued to decline across its range. Despite this situation, the current administration has attempted to roll back protections for the old growth habitat on which Spotted Owls and hundreds of other species depend. Audubon is actively opposing reductions in existing old growth protections that are currently proposed in the US Fish and Wildlife Service Draft Spotted Owl Recovery Plan and the Bureau of Land Managements Western Oregon Plan Revisions.

**Marbled Murrelet:** (WatchList Yellow) Currently listed as "Threatened" under the Federal Endangered Species Act, the Marbled Murrelet is a small seabird that nests in natural mossy depressions high up in the limbs of coastal old growth trees. Murrelet declines are directly connected to loss of old growth nesting habitat. However the murrelet also faces significant threats in its marine environment including oil spills, declines in prey base and gill netting. Audubon is working to restore Marbled Murrelet populations through its efforts to protect old growth habitat, establish permanent Marine Protected Areas and by working to prevent rollbacks of existing protections afforded under the Endangered Species Act.

**Lewis's Woodpecker:** (WatchList Red) Once considered "abundant" across Oregon, this woodpecker has seen dramatic populations decline and has been nearly extirpated from portions of its historic range including the Willamette and Rogue Valleys. Breeding Bird Surveys indicate a 75%

reduction in populations over the past 40 years. Causes for its decline include loss of lowland oak habitat and competition for nest holes from introduced European starlings.

**Greater Sage Grouse:** (WatchList Yellow) Known for their elaborate courtship displays, the Greater Sage Grouse is found in shrub-steppe habitat across much of eastern Oregon. The species depends on large expanses of shrub-steppe habitat for breeding. Declines are associated with loss of shrub-steppe habitat, habitat fragmentation and human disturbance.

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** (WatchList Yellow) The Olive-sided Flycatcher breeds in the coniferous forests of Oregon. Breeding Bird Survey data shows a >80% population decline in Oregon over the past 40 years. Population declines are believed to be associated with habitat alteration due to clear-cutting and fire suppression and loss of wintering grounds. Olive-sided Flycatchers can still be found breeding in the conifer forests of Jackson County.

**Varied Thrush:** (WatchList Yellow) This familiar relative of the Robin breeds in conifer forests of the Coast Range and the Cascades and winters in low elevation woodlands and forests. They are a common winter visitor to the Rogue Valley in some years – such as last winter – and almost absent in other years, such as this winter. Breeding Bird Surveys indicate a 24% decline in breeding populations in Oregon during the past 40 years. Oregon declines are believed to be associated with forest fragmentation. More significant declines are associated with habitat loss and fragmentation in the Northern Boreal Forests of Canada.

Other familiar Jackson Country birds on the high-threat Red List are the

## Conservation Column...Continued

Sooty Grouse (formerly called Blue Grouse), and the Tricolored Blackbird.

A partial listing of additional southern Oregon birds on the Yellow List includes:

- Mountain Quail
- Clark's Grebe
- Swainson's Hawk
- Western Sandpiper
- Calliope Hummingbird
- Williamson's Sapsucker
- White-headed Woodpecker
- Oak Titmouse
- Wrentit
- Hermit Warbler

On the positive side, several Oregon birds have improved their status enough since the last WatchList in 2002 that they are no longer considered at high risk of extinction. These species are: Bald Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, and Brown Pelican. It is no accident that the Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Brown Pelican recovered following their listing on the Endangered Species Act and vigorous action to save them, notably the banning of DDT. The Endangered Species Act works – but hopefully the WatchList will lead to enough early action to make ESA listing unnecessary for most of these species.

For the complete WatchList, and information on how to help, visit [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org). (Re-printed with permission)



Greater Sage Grouse

## The Kisling Theory Of Relativity...By Charlotte Ann Kisling

When Albert Einstein came up with his general theory, he wasn't talking about his family reunion when he said, "It's all relative." He was referring to things relative to their surroundings. I too have my own theory of relativity, but of course it only concerns raptors, not quantum physics.

Raptors come in various sizes and it is useful if one has something of a known size with which to compare them. A flying bird will look larger if it is closer to you than would one of the same species seen from a greater distance. It is difficult to judge the size of a flying bird without having something of a known size with which to compare it. You don't need to be an Einstein to realize that. That gets us down to the object of a known size. Telephone poles have insulators on them and except for a very small percent of them, they are the same size.

It took me some time to realize that a perched kestrel was always a bit shorter than one insulator tall. A prairie Falcon is just about an insulator and a half tall. Buteos, with the red-tailed Hawk being the most common, are almost two insulators tall. Sometimes a buteo will appear to be a bit shorter than that, but generally, this works quite well. Eagles are always taller than two insulators high, usually appearing to be at least two and a half insulators high.

The other known size connected with telephone poles is the diameter of the pole itself. Here you do have to use a bit of judgment since they do vary in diameter. A bird the size of a Prairie Falcon almost never appears to be as much as half the diameter of a telephone pole while a buteo approaches being fully the diameter of the pole. An eagle, if perched at the

top of a pole, resembles the shape of a Q-tip, which is larger than the diameter of the pole itself.

I am sometimes asked why I stopped for a certain bird on a telephone pole when I have driven right past many other raptors and did not stop. My answer usually has to do with my theory of relativity. The bird was seen with an object of known size and that was what triggered my attention.

Give this a try and eventually, you will come up with the same conclusion as Einstein did when he said, "It's all relative". My next installment will be quite a bit shorter than this one. I will talk you through identifying adult Bald Eagles with over a ninety percent degree of certainty.

## Board Schedule/Location

Please call the host/hostess for directions (phone numbers on page 11). All members are welcomed at Board meetings (first Wednesday of the month).

Date	Location/Home
February	Beth Phillips
March	Darrel Samuels
April	Rick Hardy
May	Tom Essex

## Refuge Issues within the Klamath Restoration Act

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Refuges would be a recognized purpose of the Klamath Reclamation Project equal to Agriculture. Before KRA, refuges were not a purpose of the project and the Project was not obligated to provide the refuges water.

Refuges would have certainty of a delivered amount of water. Before KRA, the refuge only received water after fish, Tribes and agriculture needs were already met. Instead of suffering drought conditions 80% of years, refuges will have sufficient water to meet refuge purposes 90% of years.

Refuges would receive 20% of the lease land revenues that will be dedicated to wildlife purposes on the refuges. That could amount to about \$200K-\$300K per year. Before KRA refuges received no lease land revenue, though 22,000 acres of the refuges are commercially farmed.

Refuges would be part of the project purposes and would receive a bill for the cost of pumping water through D-plant that reflects the proportion of D-plant pumping that the refuges will actually use on wildlife habitat. Before KRA (but not related to KRA), rates were so low that TID paid all costs of pumping. With rates increasing in the future, refuge costs will increase and the BOR will begin paying as well. It is hoped that federal rates will be applied. If they are, pumping costs will be minimal.

Refuges would continue to be managed with the Kuchel Act as one of the refuge purposes. The Kuchel Act would not be changed or altered. The positive conservation efforts that have been demonstrated on the lease lands over the past few years have been recognized by parties within the KRA as good and worthy of continued support.

### Specific Refuge KRA Issues:

The following summarize the main points of general agreement that have been reached by all parties at the Klamath Settlement relating to Tule Lake and Lower Klamath NWR's.

- Lower Klamath NWR allocation (Apr-Oct): 48 taf in dry years increasing incrementally to 60 taf in wet years.
- Lower Klamath NWR allocation (Nov-Mar): 35 taf. This is similar to historic use. The refuge would also have the ability to increase winter use up to 60 taf; however, the increase in use beyond 35 taf would be deducted from the subsequent spring-summer allocation. Deduction from the summer allocation would not occur if the KBCC (a group of technical experts overseeing water use) determines such additional water for the refuge would not harm fisheries and watershed health. This provision allows the refuge flexibility in the future to manage wetland habitats for migratory birds.

- Modification of Klamath Project Purpose: Refuge purposes would be added to current project purposes to assure that the refuge water allocation is equal in priority to the irrigator's allocation. This provision would allow the Refuge to enter into contracts with irrigation districts and/or the Bureau of Reclamation for the delivery of Refuge water through Project facilities.
- Tule Lake NWR "Allocation": Tule Lake NWR's water needs would be met within the Project irrigator's allocation. This includes water to maintain elevations within the Sumps (13,000 acres of wetland habitats), consistent with current operating rules and regulations and Biological Opinions, as well as water needed to serve the agricultural lease lands. Within the On-Project Water Plan, Tule Lake NWR would be dealt with equitably and provisions within the Plan that relate to Tule Lake NWR must be approved by the Refuge Manager. This would ensure that any reductions in allocation are not imposed disproportionately to Tule Lake NWR. If water elevations within the sumps are intentionally lowered, under the direction of the Service for wildlife management purposes, water to reflood those areas would be subtracted from the Lower Klamath allocation.
- Water for "Walking Wetlands": "Walking Wetlands", the practice whereby wetlands are inserted into commercial crop rotations, would receive its water from both the Lower Klamath allocation (1 af/acre) and the irrigator's allocation (2 to 2.5 af/acre). The refuge would gain additional wetland habitat for a relatively minor cost, in terms of water allocation, and the Project irrigators would not be penalized for using additional water to provide wetlands on private lands. This provision applies to "walking wetlands" on both private lands and lease lands on Tule Lake NWR. Any walking wetlands utilizing the Lower Klamath allocation would be approved by the Refuge Manager.
- Refuges and Electrical Power: Management of wetland habitats for wildlife on Lower Klamath NWR requires the timely delivery of water in the quantities needed. This water management requires use of Project pumping facilities including D-Plant and several pumping plants on the Straits Drain. The Refuges and irrigators would pay for 31.25% of the costs, respectively. BOR would pay 37.5% of the costs. We believe this a fair proportion. If federal rates are negotiated (BPA), the cost would be quite reasonable. If not, the KRA requests \$1mil/year to cover D-plant pumping.
- Leased Agricultural Lands: Management of Refuge lease lands would remain consistent with the current Kuchel Act. The parties agree to pursue collaborative conservation measures on the lease

## Refuge Issues within the Klamath Restoration Act...Continued

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lands including walking wetlands as well as other practices beneficial to wildlife. The Refuge lease lands can also function as an experimental area in which innovative farming and wildlife management practices can be developed for potential implementation on private lands. For example, several thousand acres of new "walking wetlands" acres are currently in place or are in the planning phase on private lands in the Upper Klamath Basin. "Walking wetlands provide valuable wildlife habitat, results in less pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer use, and is a key to an expanding an organic farming component in the Basin.

- Lease Land Administration: The lands would be managed consistent with the Kuchel Act. Directly, and without further authorization, the Refuge would receive 20% of net lease revenues (approximately \$200K-\$300K/year) for wildlife management purposes on the Refuge.

- Refuge Water Rights: Water rights for the Refuges would be held by the United States.
- Drought Plan: Providing that forbearance agreements have been entered on the Klamath Reclamation Project for the summer period, there would be no effect on delivery of the refuges summer allocation for the first 20 taf of deficit (if forbearance agreements are not in place, then the refuge allocation would be reduced to make up the deficit). If, after forbearance agreements have been implemented there is still a deficit, then the Lower Klamath allocation would be reduced from 48 taf to 24 taf. If additional allocation cuts are needed to address shortages beyond this point, then the refuge and the irrigators would share equal percentage reductions in their respective allocations until the need is met. It is anticipated that allocation shortages to Refuge and Project water users would occur in approximately 5% of future years.

## Let's Get Involved!

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At our KBAS planning retreat last July the KBAS Board brainstormed possible projects that our chapter could undertake this year. In our August/September Grebe we published those for the membership. If we are going to get involved, now is the time to pick a project (or several) and start planning! Please check those that interest you and mail your response (or send it electronically) to: Darrel Samuels, 11654 Kestrel Road, Klamath Falls, OR 97601 email: dsamuels@charter.net

- \_\_\_\_\_ Update the Audubon display board
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set up a KCC Senior Scholar Program offering instruction on beginning to \_\_\_\_\_ advance birding with field trips.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Offer classes or workshops to schools/scouts on bird ID, bird watching, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develop signage for popular birding areas (Moore Park, Veteran's Park, Putnam Point, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clean out and repair nest boxes at Miller Island
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare a bluebird trail on public property – build, maintain and monitor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Monitor IBA's
- \_\_\_\_\_ Offer classes to seniors or others in birding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Repair the fence at Cold Springs and Tamarack (combine with field trip?)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Others? If you have an idea for another project that could involve KBAS, please share it below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Join us in celebrating the largest concentration of wintering Bald Eagles in the lower 48 states  
and flocks of migrating waterfowl*



© John Muir Laws

## *2008 Winter Wings Festival*

*Presidents' Day Weekend  
February 15 – 17, 2008*

*Oregon Institute of Technology  
Klamath Falls*

### **Guided Field Trips**

Eagle Flyouts · Tulelake and Lower Klamath Lake Refuges · Raptor and Waterfowl ID · Photography with Refuge Naturalist · Beginning Birding · Extreme Birding · Snowshoeing at Crater Lake

### **Workshops and Mini-Sessions**

Canon Photography Workshop and Safari with Loaned New Equipment · Nature Sketching Class · Falconry Workshop · Avian CSI · Bats · Oregon Owls · Fluff and Feathers · Naturescaping · Xeriscaping · Optics · Digiscoping

### **Free Exhibits and Activities**

Hands-on Activities for Families · Live Birds · Photo and Art Contests

### **Special Events**

- Friday Night Reception and Keynote Speaker, Trish Nixon, Raptor Specialist, Peregrine Fund's World Center for the Birds of Prey
- Saturday Aerie Afternoon Reception and Bald Eagle Viewing
- Saturday Night Reception at Stefan Savide's Art and Taxidermy Studio
- Book Signing by Naturalist and Author, John Muir Laws

Visit [www.winterwingsfest.org](http://www.winterwingsfest.org) for updated registration and program information. Call Travel Klamath at 1-800-445-6728 for travel information or contact Todd Christian, Festival Registrar at [singingbear@charter.net](mailto:singingbear@charter.net) or 541-850-0084 for festival brochures and registration information.

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**Please email or call Marilyn Christian, [mchristian1@charter.net](mailto:mchristian1@charter.net) or 850-0084 if  
you would enjoy volunteering!**

**Klamath Basin Audubon Society Officers & Board Members**

President	*Darrel Samuels	850-5832	<a href="mailto:dsamuels@charter.net">dsamuels@charter.net</a>
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	*Mary Ellen Sargent	850-3926	<a href="mailto:sargentme5@aol.com">sargentme5@aol.com</a>

**Klamath Basin Audubon Society Committee Chairs**

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	Julie Van Moorhem	882-4488	<a href="mailto:jvanmoo@sisna.com">jvanmoo@sisna.com</a>

**KBAS MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL APPLICATION**

**Local Membership Dues**

- Individual: \$20
- Student and Seniors (62 and over): \$15
- Family: \$25
- I want to do more. Here is my tax deductible contribution for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- Check here if you are a current member of national Audubon
- Not sure of national membership status

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Klamath Basin Audubon Society - **Chapter Code T 60**

**Should you be a first time member of National Audubon, please use the above Chapter Code on your form – we receive additional \$\$.**

**Please contact me regarding:**

- Gift memberships
- Volunteering for KBAS Committee activities

Make your check payable to KBAS and mail with this form to: KBAS, .O. Box 354, Klamath Falls, OR 97601

*The Grebe*

Is published 5 times a year by the  
**Klamath Basin Audubon Society**  
**(KBAS)**

**Mission:** *The Klamath Basin Audubon Society will provide the opportunity for all to experience and appreciate our region's wildlife and other natural resources.*

- KBAS is a chartered chapter of the National Audubon Society
- KBAS general meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month except June, July and August at the Klamath County Courthouse, Lower Level Meeting Room, 316 Main Street, Klamath Falls, OR.
- The Board of Directors meets at 7:00 p.m. the Wednesday preceding the General Meeting; locations to be announced. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- For address changes please contact both National Audubon Society and KBAS, Attn. Jo Massey, P.O. Box 354, Klamath Falls, OR. 97601
- Comments and information to *The Grebe* Editor are welcomed and encouraged. Send to Grebe Editor, 6749 Coopers Hawk Rd. Klamath Falls, OR. 97601 or [mchristian1@charter.net](mailto:mchristian1@charter.net).
- Check our website at [www.klamathaudubon.org](http://www.klamathaudubon.org)



# The Grebe

Klamath Basin Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 354  
Klamath Falls OR 97601  
February/March 2008

Non-profit Organization  
Klamath Falls OR 97601  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit # 128

## Meetings

- ✓ **Thursday, February 14, 2008: 7:00 p.m. Bats, Bats, and more Bats!** See page 1
- ✓ **Thursday, March 13, 2008: 7:00 p.m. Klamath Restoration Act, a.k.a. Water Settlement Agreement!** See page 1
- ✓ **Thursday, April 10, 2008: 7:00 p.m. Crater Lake Diving Program with details on new underwater studies**

## Field Trips/Activities

- ✓ **Early March, 2008:** Possible trip to the FWS Ashland Forensic Lab usually not open to the public. See page 3
- ✓ **Saturday, March 29, 2008:** Miller Island & Lower Klamath Refuge area. See page 3
- ✓ **Sunday, April 13, 2008:** Tule Lake & L. Klamath Refuges See page 3
- ✓ **Saturday, May 3, 2008:** Canoe/kayak Upper Klamath Lake See page 3
- ✓ **Saturday, May 31, 2008:** Birding Wood River Wetlands. See page 3
- ✓ **Saturday, June 28, 2008:** Pot luck picnic and birding at a private home in the Rocky Pt. area. See page 3

## Other Events

- ✓ **Winter Wings February 15 – 17, 2008** [www.winterwingsfest.org](http://www.winterwingsfest.org) See Page 10
- ✓ **Aleutian Goose Festival March 28-30, 2008** [www.aleutiangoosefestival.org](http://www.aleutiangoosefestival.org) See Page 2
- ✓ **Olympic BirdFest 2008, Sequim, WA April 4-6, 2008** Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and a salmon banquet with our partner, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. **New this year:** A three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2008. Contact: Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382; 360-681-4076; [info@olympicbirdfest.org](mailto:info@olympicbirdfest.org) , [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org) .
- ✓ **Godwit Days April 18-20, 2008** at the Arcata Community Center in Arcata, CA. Pre-and post-festival events are offered. Choose from over 100 field trips and workshops and browse the vendors at the bird fair. An extraordinary birding adventure awaits you between the redwoods and Humboldt Bay! Go to [www.godwitdays.com](http://www.godwitdays.com) for more details and to register on-line.