

## House Cleaning is for the Birds

by Jody Picconi



We all have heard of the term “spring cleaning.” Well it’s that time of year again. At least for birdhouses. I had the privilege this year to get this task. Salishan Spa and Golf Resort has over 30 birdhouses. Most of the birdhouses were made for Barn Swallows and Bluebirds. Of the 30 birdhouses I cleaned, 24 showed signs of activity.



As you can see, the Swallows use a variety of nesting material. Spruce needles, feathers, twigs, leaves and a little mud. Some of these birdhouses have not been cleaned out in a year or two. This birdhouse in the picture has not been cleaned in two years. That is why there is so much nesting material.

Part of being a responsible birdhouse landlord is your willingness to watch out for your tenants. Monitor your birdhouses every two

weeks or monthly and evict any unwanted creatures. Be careful when you inspect your bird boxes. You may find something other than a bird inside. Don’t be surprised to see squirrels, a mouse, a snake, or fleas, mites, larvae, and lice in the bottom of the box. The only things I found were fleas. It’s best to be safe and wear some type of neoprene gloves when cleaning out debris.

If you find insects and parasites, your first reaction may be to grab the nearest can of insect spray. If you do, use only insecticides known to be safe around birds: 1% rotenone powder or pyrethrin spray. At the Crowley Creek nesting sites we found a wasp nest in one of the bird boxes. If wasps or bees are a problem, coat the inside top of the box with bar soap. This will make it difficult for their hive to attach to the wood.

It’s a little early but we already have Swallows showing up at Crowley Creek.

Now that your birdhouses are clean, I am sure your new tenants will be very happy and have lots of new offspring.



P.O. Box 38  
Lincoln City  
Oregon 97367

Be sure to visit  
[www.lincolncityaudubon.com](http://www.lincolncityaudubon.com)  
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

## A Fix for Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Interviewed by Rebecca Welti



Barbara Fix has been on the job at Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge since early spring and already knows she’s found her promised land. A refugee from the rugged Minnesota weather of her childhood, and the confinements of secretarial jobs in her adult life, she is thrilled with the opportunity to work and live in the peaceful but vibrant environment of the Refuge. She says, “I feel so lucky and a little guilty. So many people would love to have this opportunity!”

Barbara’s duties at the Refuge involve communicating with visitors and pointing out the trails, birds, plant life and other features of the area. Part of her work will involve a U.S. Fish and Wildlife restoration project on Cannery Hill to restore native prairie flowers and grasses while removing invasive species. New to woodland birds, Barbara will learn about them on the fly while overseeing 19 nesting boxes installed at the Refuge as part of the Cornell NestWatch Program. The boxes were put in place on April 1st in the hopes that Western Bluebirds would eventually move in, but so far, tree swallows and violet greens are the happy inhabitants.

Barbara’s going to enjoy every day – bright and sunny or wet and stormy. It’s her perfect place. She would love to show you around. You can contact her at the Refuge at 541-867-4500.

## Citizen Science Opportunity in Neskowin

by Sue Gabriel



Do you have a burning desire to be a “citizen scientist?” If your answer is yes, read on.

COASST (Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team), a citizen science project of the University of Washington, uses volunteers to gather field data for baseline information about seabird mortality on beaches from Alaska to California. “Normal” baselines are important to have when measuring the effects of oil spills, disease, climate change, stressful breeding, and severe winters.

Two miles of Neskowin beach are currently being monitored once a month by teams of local residents. Each team of two is assigned one mile of beach. When we find a dead bird, or even a part of one, we attempt to identify the species, measure it, tag it, record our data and photograph it. Data and photos are then entered on the COASST website.

Over the past nine years Jane Boyden and I have done 102 surveys and have found 426 birds on the Neskowin beach. That represents 23 species, with Common

Murres, Northern Fulmars and large immature gulls at the top of the numbers list.

COASST continues to add beaches and participants throughout its geographic range, as well as expand through partner programs. They published a second field guide—to beached birds along the eastern seaboard of Canada and the U.S. in 2002 and are acting as a sister program to beached bird start-ups in Argentina and Russia.

In its second decade COASST plans to add data collection modules on marine mammals, beach debris, invasive species, and species indicative of climate change.

Executive Director, Julia Parrish, says “There are only two things you need to become a COASSTer: tell what’s in front of you on the beach is a bird, and know that it’s dead...” COASST participants do not have to have years of scientific education, nor do they need to be bird experts. They do need to care about what’s happening in the coastal environment.

For more information go to [www.coasst.org](http://www.coasst.org).



## The King’s Corner



Six years ago our Audubon chapter was started. Since then we have provided free field trips once a month along the Oregon coast, taught Audubon adventure classes in school rooms from Tillamook to Walport, attended Oregon Audubon state council meetings three times a year, maintained a state of the art website, published newsletters and held open monthly meetings. This does not happen with a paid staff but with an all-volunteer group of dedicated people. I want to thank and recognize the people that make this happen.

We have been fortunate over the years in having expert field trip leaders—Dick Demarest, Jack Hurt and current field trip chairperson, Mark Elliot.

Our Audubon adventure classes have been spearheaded by our outstanding education chairperson Caren Willoughby, with help from Patty Sorenson and Laura Doyle.

There are 463 Audubon chapters nationally but only 124 teach classes like our chapter does. Check out our website and marvel at how great it is. The person responsible for our website and newsletters is the amazing and talented Ernie Rose.

Our chapter officers, who keep us running are, vice president Rebecca Welti, treasurer Dave Smith and secretary Rich Hardman. The remaining members of our board are founding director Janice Redford and three-year veteran Jody Picconi. This group makes our chapter one of the best in the country. We have a wonderful list of field trips scheduled for the next 12 months, hope to see you at one or more.

– Jack Doyle, ASLC President

# The Kingfisher

Volume 6, Issue 1 Central Oregon Coast - Garibaldi to Yachats June 2011

## Beauty So Rarely Seen

by Al Rice

Although many people know that the Wood Duck is perhaps the most beautiful waterfowl in North America, relatively few Lincoln County residents are aware that we have a sizeable population of this regal bird right here on Devils Lake.

Unfortunately, the very secretive habits of the Wood Duck make observation very difficult, and it is only lately that we have been able to note this bird also has some rather strange habits and cultures. Some of these rather weird habits are: (1) they roost and nest in trees (a duck nesting in a tree?); (2) they take no outside material into their nests; (3) they allow other female Wood Ducks to share their nests; (4) the eggs, although they may have been laid over a period of 3 weeks, all hatch within about 2 hours; and, (5) all the newly hatched ducklings will leave the nest approximately 24 hours after hatching—never to return.

The natural nest sites for this species are abandoned woodpecker holes in old trees close to the water’s edge. These sites are rapidly disappearing and the “Woodies” will readily accept alternative housing in manmade nest boxes mounted on trees or posts along the shoreline.



Inspecting and cleaning Wood Duck boxes  
Photos by Jack Doyle and Jody Picconi

For the past eleven years many lakefront residents have faithfully installed and monitored Wood Duck nest boxes in their front yards with hopes of attracting these beautiful birds. Since 1998 there have been an average of 25 of these nest boxes installed along the shores of Devils Lake, and these have produced an average of 95 ducklings each year. The most successful year was 2010, with 174 ducklings jumping from their tree-mounted nests directly into the water. They leave the nest because they’re hungry! Their mothers can’t feed them, they have enough nutrient in their bodies from the egg to keep them alive for 48 hours, so they HAVE to leave or they will starve to death. They are helpless baby ducklings and need their mothers to teach them survival skills for helping them to become adults (ducklings are a target food for all sorts of animals, birds, fish, etc.). Granted, first year mortality is very high, approaching 80%. We can only hope a sufficient number of these tough and determined survivors will continue to return each year to allow our local population to slowly increase.

This spring, local ASLC members have refurbished and/or replaced all of the boxes around Devils Lake, as well as having added 3 new boxes at Salishan Golf Course. Results will be reported in the next newsletter.

## An Unexpected and Sad Sight to See

Shared by Corinne Newbegin

Friday, May 13th, on my birthday, I saw some strange activities on a sand bar in front of our house on Siletz Bay in Cutler City. A mature and immature bald eagle were flying around what looked like a dead animal. I could not tell from my house what it was, only that it had something very yellow next to it.

The eagles seemed to be very protective of it by not allowing the crows or gulls to get near it. When the tide was low enough, I took my camera and went across the small channel and found the dead eagle.

I took pictures and called the State Police who came over very fast and took the bird. We could not see

any sign of violence, the wings were not broken. It was sad. You could hear and see what we assume was the mate calling. There is a nest on the other side of the highway and it has been very active... today I saw 2 beautiful full grown adults flying over the spit at Salishan.



## ASLC had students going "Wild About Birds" at Tillamook County's East Elementary School

by Caren Willoughby and Laura Doyle

Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC) volunteers Caren Willoughby, Patty Sorensen, and Laura Doyle met with students from five classes at East Elementary School in Tillamook, Oregon, to present "Wild About Birds." Fifth grade teachers, Mrs. Rumage, Mrs. Hartford, Mr. Selzer, Mrs. Doty, and Mr. Hall, hosted the Audubon volunteers in their classrooms on April 4-5 and on April 12-13, 2011. The Lincoln City Chapter's "Wild About Birds" learning experience is based on the National Audubon Society's bird education program but has been customized for the schools in Oregon's Lincoln and Tillamook counties.

This year is the first time that volunteers have visited Tillamook schools, but it's the third year that Willoughby and Doyle have brought the "Wild About Birds" program to area classrooms. Last year over 200 students in the fourth, fifth or sixth grades in Lincoln County learned key elements necessary to identify birds and how to use field guides and binoculars through the Lincoln City Chapter's program. Caren Willoughby, education coordinator for the Audubon Society of Lincoln City, says, "We've put together a very interactive and hands-on experience that children get very involved with. They ask a lot of great questions and are able to take away some practical tips on how to watch birds on their own. Interest is high and children are eager learners."

Willoughby and Sorensen are both retired teachers who bring lots of enthusiasm about birds as well as years of classroom experience to "Wild About Birds." The Lincoln City Chapter's "Wild About Birds" program will also be presented in several more elementary schools in Lincoln County in April and May.

In addition to delivering two hours of instruction in each fifth grade classroom, Audubon Society of Lincoln City volunteers provide each student with the "Wild About Birds" activity book and provide each classroom with a copy of the birding field guide that the students have learned to use. ASLC provides schools with the "Wild About Birds" program at no charge. This effort is funded by Audubon Society of Lincoln City chapter membership and fundraising activities. Chapter goals are to increase children's awareness of the natural world and of the need to conserve and protect the environment.

### Children's questions we answered:

What is the fastest flying bird?  
Why do pelicans have such big beaks?  
How do birds fly?  
How many birds are there?  
How do birds fly in storms?  
Why do birds have feathers?  
Why don't birds turn grey?  
When birds go to the bathroom why is it white?



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## ▼ Summer and Fall Events

### JUN

**Saturday, Jun 11, 9-11am ~** Join Audubon trip leader, Mark Elliott, at the Yaquina Head Lighthouse in Newport, OR.

**Friday, Jun 17, 6pm ~** Annual Meeting at CHRA River House, on Salmon River in Otis, OR. Call 541-992-0440 for directions. Cocktails at 5:30pm.

### JUL

**Saturday, Jul 9, 9-11am ~** ASLC Whalen Island Bird Walk (visit [www.lincolncityaudubon.com](http://www.lincolncityaudubon.com) for more info)

**Tuesday, Jul 12, 5:30pm ~** Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC) Board Meeting at OCCC campus, behind Cinema Theaters. Because location can change, call 541-992-0440 for latest update on location. Open to the public.

### AUG

**Tuesday, Aug 9, 5:30pm ~** Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC) Board Meeting at OCCC campus, behind Cinema Theaters. Because location can change, call 541-992-0440 for latest update on location. Open to the public.

**Saturday, Aug 13 ~** ASLC Bayocean Bird Walk in Tillamook (more info to come)

### SEP

**Saturday, Sep 10, 9-11am ~** ASLC Bird Walk at Beaver Creek (more info to come)

**Tuesday, Sep 13, 5:30pm ~** Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC) Board Meeting at OCCC campus, behind Cinema Theaters. Because location can change, call 541-992-0440 for latest update on location. Open to the public.

### OCT

**Saturday, Oct 8, 9-11am ~** ASLC Bird Walk at Boiler Bay (more info to come)

**Tuesday, Oct 11, 5:30pm ~** Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC) Board Meeting at OCCC campus, behind Cinema Theaters. Because location can change, call 541-992-0440 for latest update on location. Open to the public.

### NOV

**Tuesday, Jan 10, 5:30pm ~** Audubon Society of Lincoln City (ASLC) Board Meeting at OCCC campus, behind Cinema Theaters. Because location can change, call 541-992-0440 for latest update on location. Open to the public.

**Saturday, Jan 14, 9-11am ~** ASLC Bird Walk at Yaquina Head (more info to come)

Visit [www.lincolncityaudubon.com](http://www.lincolncityaudubon.com) for more information and to see what else is in the ASLC news!

## Ready, Set . . . umm, Maybe Not! (A Morning Adventure in the Life of Jody Picconi)

I was at Knight Park at about 5:15am. It was such a beautiful morning, mostly clear, just a little low fog off to the east. The moon was almost full and bright. My morning started out by scanning the area for eagles. Across the river, I saw two bald eagles and 4 immature eagles. They were too far away to get a good shot. So I took a photo of the moon and the fog.

I then drove to the end of Savage Road hoping to get a better look at the eagles. It's then when I noticed that my battery was low. I can't believe that I didn't charge it up the night before, especially knowing I was going out the next morning. What a knuckle head. While there, I saw a White-crowned Sparrow, about 16 Common Mergansers, a pair of Kingfishers, Robins, a Brandt's Cormorant, various gulls, 4 seals, one cottontail rabbit and a Turkey Vulture. I returned to Knight Park and went to the other dead end road to see if I could get a better look at the eagles. But they had flown off. While there, though, I saw 3 raccoons foraging in

the mud. Back at Knight Park I still hoped to see the eagles. What I saw instead were Canada Geese with goslings. Now my battery's really low after taking about 30 pictures. While walking back to the car which is parked by the boat dock, I looked up into the spruce near the dock. I saw the immature eagle sitting on a branch. Sooo, I set up the camera. Just as I got the camera set up it flew off . . . right at the moon. With the moon directly behind the bird, I couldn't have photoshopped a better picture. Before I could snap the shot, YEP, you guessed it . . . the camera went dead. So I decided to head home. It's now about 6:45am.

I got home, made omelets for Holli and myself and recharge my camera's battery. I ask Holli if she wanted to go back down and see if we could spot any wildlife. "Let's go," she said. So off we went, back to Knight Park. Along the way we saw about 15 elk, and 3 deer. At the park we didn't see anything too exciting, so we drove to the end of Savage Road again. We got out



of the car and I started scanning the area. We aren't there one minute and what flies directly overhead, and I mean directly overhead, maybe 30' above us . . . a bald eagle! I saw it flying at us from about 75 yards away... and where was the camera with the charged battery? In the car!!! And what did someone just tell me last Saturday, "Always, always, always, have your camera at the ready." I guess I'm a slow learner.

On that note we headed home. Yet, even with the battery problems it was still a great morning—lots of wildlife and lots of sun . . . a beautiful day on the Oregon coast.

## 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 the school systems and our citizen science programs. It enables us to participate in restoration and public advocacy projects throughout 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 541-992-0440.

We are a non-profit organization. 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 \$20 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 (Jun, Dec)
- Website: [www.lincolncityaudubon.com](http://www.lincolncityaudubon.com)
- 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. Call ASLC at 541-992-0440**

## Help to elect ASLC Board of Directors members during this year's Annual Meeting



**Annual Meeting begins at 6pm on Friday, June 17, 2011 in the River House at Cascade Head Ranch in Otis, OR**

**Directions from Portland, Salem and Eugene:** take I-5 to Salem, then Highway 22 to Highway 18, finally turning north onto Highway 101. Travel about one mile to the junction of Highway 101 and Three Rocks Road North. You'll see blue signs for Sitka Center at the junction, turn left. Follow \*directions below:

**\* Directions to CHR River House from coastal Hwy 101:** At the junction of Hwy 101 and Three Rocks Road North, travel west toward the ocean for 2.3 miles. At the "Y" in the road, turn right on to Savage Road and follow it to the end. It'll bring you down to the mouth of the Salmon River and to the Cascade Head Ranch River House.

**All current (ASLC) Audubon Society of Lincoln City members are eligible to vote for the organization's Board of Directors. Our Board consists of four officers and no more than eight directors. Currently there are 4 three-year term positions open. The candidates for the director positions are as follows:**

Jody Picconi loves the outdoors and nature and enjoys fishing, birding, golf and photography. Jody has been a golf course superintendent for over 25 years. In 2000, he helped in a Bluebird restoration project in San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange counties in California. On his golf course, the bluebird population increased from 15 nesting sites to 130 nesting sites, and all but 4 sites produced fledglings — a very successful project. He would like to do a similar project with Purple Martins on the central Oregon coast.

Caren Willoughby is a retired teacher and currently Education Coordinator for ASLC. Along with two others she visits classrooms in Lincoln and Tillamook counties. Focus of visits include bird identification, adaptations, and use of guides and binoculars. Living close to water and the mountains, Caren is constantly re-minded of how fortunate we are and how great the need is to protect the environment in order to share it with others.

**From Lincoln City, and South:** take Highway 101 north toward Tillamook. After going under the Highway 18 overpass just north of Lincoln City, go 1.3 miles to the junction of Highway 101 and Three Rocks Road North. Look for blue Sitka Center signs and turn left. Follow \*directions to CHR River House.

**From Tillamook, and North:** Take Highway 101 south toward Lincoln City. After passing Neskowin, travel the road as it climbs up and over Cascade Head. At the bottom of the hill, you'll see a blue sign for Sitka Center. Turn right onto Three Rocks Road North. Follow \*directions to CHR River House.

Janice Redford has lived in Lincoln City for the past 18 years and joined Lincoln City Audubon at its inception over five years ago. An avid bird lover, Janice is the Building Coordinator at Oregon Coast Community College - No. County Center.

Rick Sorenson: my background includes 14 years as a high school science and math teacher, six years as an engineer in the oil industry, and 16 years with Vernier Software & Technology. Since 1998 I have been a senior partner with Vernier where I have been in charge of the development of science tools for Texas Instruments graphing calculators. I've been an avid birder since middle school. I especially enjoy photographing birds, whether it is small backyard birds, shorebirds, birds of prey, or you name it. I am a member of National Audubon Society, Audubon Society of Portland, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and The Nature Conservancy. Conservation of our natural resources and our understanding and appreciation of avian wildlife is extremely important to me.

### 2011 Board of Directors

Ballots must be received by June 17, 2011. Please mail to:

**Board Nominations Committee  
Audubon Society of Lincoln City  
PO Box 38,  
Lincoln City OR 97367**

Your name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Election Ballot

- Jody Picconi  
 Caren Willoughby  
 Janice Redford  
 Rick Sorenson  
 (write-in nominee)

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor during the Annual Meeting