

Siskiyou Audubon Society



PO Box 2223
Grants Pass
Oregon, 97528

**The Siskiyou Audubon Society
offers monthly program meetings
on 2nd Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.**

**The meetings are held in the
Senior Center at 3rd and B Streets
in Grants Pass.**

September through June

For more information call

541-476-9846

or

541-592-3261

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SISKIYOU AUDUBON SOCIETY

Siskiyou Audubon Chapter was founded by Lee Webb in early 1982, and launched with a \$50 gift, plus a \$100 loan, from the Rogue Valley Chapter. Lee rounded up interested people in the area, and eventually had the required number of 35+ members for chapter formation. Regular monthly meetings began with Lee presiding as the first president. The chapter's purpose was to serve Josephine County and Rogue River residents interested in the conservation of wildlife and the natural environment. Communities to be served included, Glendale, Sunny Valley, Wolf Creek, Cave Junction (Oregon Caves, Takilma), Grants Pass, Kerby, Merlin, Murphy, O'Brien, Rogue River, Selma, Wilderville and Williams. Provisional chapter status was received for the first year, and in March '84 full chapter certification was granted.

The first issue of the Newsletter was published in September 1982. By November the name, "SISKIYOU SISKIN" was adopted. Fascinating wildlife stories and articles by members began to appear in the SISKIN. Attendance at general meetings was reportedly excellent; the names of 50 new members were listed in the September newsletter.

The first fund raiser was a birdhouse building project in January 1983, when 56 bluebird houses were constructed and sold to members. Then, Siskiyou Audubon was contracted to build 250-300 nest boxes for the state (ODFW) at one dollar a box. They provided the lumber.

Later, SAS joined other chapters in bringing attention to conservation issues, such as curtailing the mining of laterite soils at Gasquet Mountain.

A bird identification course was conducted in 1983. The first Christmas Bird Count was scheduled for December 23rd, with maps being drawn up and team leaders chosen.

In 1984, Bill Ward began offering his bird song tapes for sale, with the proceeds, after expenses, being donated to the chapter.

Later, similar tapes were offered by Eleanor Pugh, as well as 'Birding-by-ear' classes, and an evening 'Owl prowl.' In the spring, Bob Mansfield led a wild flower identification class.

The same year, Siskiyou Audubon became involved in the "Adopt-a-Refuge" program; White Horse Park was adopted. Work projects entailed clearing the main trail all the way to the Beaver Dam on the main ponds. Birdhouses were also installed. By 1992, due to vandalism and escalating costs to the County, the park was in need of repairs. SAS funds were appropriated and, in cooperation with the County Parks department, new signs were installed, benches replaced, trails cleared, and new birdhouses hung. Brochures, with a map and trail guide, were printed. Since 1984, White Horse Park has been the site of the annual SAS potluck suppers in June.

Siskiyou Chapter participated in other cooperative ventures with state and county agencies. In 1985, County Parks granted permission to conduct a bird-banding project at Whitehorse Park. Osprey nests were installed in the Savage Rapids area, in conjunction with Fish and Wildlife. Chapter members assisted Oregon State Parks in an experimental effort to provide alternate nesting shelters for swallows, at Stewart Park. Through the years many birdhouses were installed and/or cleaned out at Stewart Park.

A Siskiyou Audubon banner was commissioned in 1985, and has hung over 6th street in Grants Pass in April of each year, in celebration of "Earth Day."

A free lecture series in Natural History has been offered to the community on several occasions.

In 1985, the board of directors approved the sponsorship of "Audubon Adventures" classes for 4th and 5th graders in the

Beginning with five classes, the number grew each year, and in 1992 sponsored 41 classes.

The Birdhouse building venture has evolved into an annual project, with the public invited to participate.

In recent years, chickadee houses, bat houses and feeders have been built. More than 800 items were offered for sale in 1991, and were completely sold out! Birdhouses are also sold through the year at the Grower's Market. Proceeds from the sales are a major source of funding for the Audubon Adventures classes.

During the years, Siskiyou delegates have attended Bald Eagle Conferences in Klamath Falls. Representatives have been sent to the annual Audubon Council meetings, as well as Regional gatherings at Asilomar, California.

Siskiyou Audubon has co-sponsored Conferences with the Grants Pass AAUW, Environmental Study Group.

Most recently, support has been given to the Ancient Forest campaign in the form of implementing the "Audubon Sister Chapter Network."

Lee Webb has very nicely summed up the service of Siskiyou Audubon Chapter, in the following words:

"Conservation efforts are not just one paper push after another. During it's short history, Siskiyou Audubon has rolled up it's sleeves and banded birds, built birdhouses, cleared trails, sustained a Christmas Bird count, adopted White Horse Park, and generally catalogued many natural phenomena in the Rogue Valley...."

-- September 1992

HISTORY & TRADITION OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Since the late 1800s Audubon members have shared an interest in the preservation of birds. Widespread need for citizen action to stop the slaughter of birds led to the founding of the first Audubon Society in 1886 by George Grinnell, editor of *Forest and Stream*. Grinnell appealed to his readership to unite under the auspices of the magazine for the common goal of bird preservation. Within a year, 39,000 individuals had joined the group which Grinnell named the Audubon Society after John James Audubon, the distinguished naturalist and painter.

By 1905, 35 state organizations had been formed, their basic concern being "to discourage the buying and wearing for ornamental purposes the feathers of any wild birds except ducks and game birds, and to otherwise further the protection of native birds." Later the same year, the groups were incorporated into the National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals. Furthering education about birds and other wildlife was the organization's first priority, and the Junior Audubon Club program was its first educational initiative. Roger Tory Peterson was an early Junior Audubon Club member who later went on to publish his famed bird identification field guides. 4

In addition to advancing knowledge of birds and other wildlife, National Audubon Society was instrumental in the passage of many of the country's earliest conservation laws, including New York State's "Audubon Plumage Law," which banned the sale of plumes of all native birds in the state; and the 1919 federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. National Audubon encouraged the government to establish national refuges to protect vital wildlife areas. Theodore Roosevelt established the first such refuge in 1903 on Pelican Island, Florida, at the uraia of the Society.

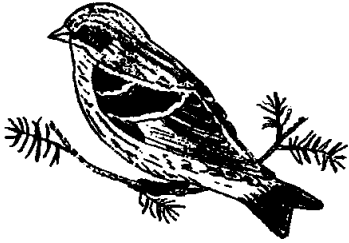
By the 1950s, population growth and technological advances presented National Audubon and its chapters with new and more complex threats to wildlife than the market hunting of the early days. To address these new challenges, the Society expanded its scientific research programs, particularly on endangered species of birds and other wildlife. In the '60s and '70s, National Audubon became heavily involved in developing major new environmental protection policies and laws. They helped legislators draft and pass the national legislation for clean air and water, wild and scenic rivers, and endangered species.

This period of intense environmental activism spurred rapid growth in National Audubon's membership and in the chapter and regional network. In the early 1960s, there were less than 50,000 members in 91 branches. By 1970 the burgeoning growth of membership more than doubled the number of chapters, and by 1980, 453 chapters had formed.

Today, The National Audubon Society (NAS) embraces nearly 550,000 members, more than 514 chapters, 26 state offices, and a growing number of state councils, and staff members nationwide. The evolution and careful coordination of National Audubon's fields of expertise – science, land management, education and activism – have made the Audubon Society a powerful and credible voice for the conservation of wildlife and natural resources.

The National Office, April, 2001

Siskiyou Audubon



In Defense of Sustainable Biological and Social Diversity

Goals and Purposes

- Provide programs and activities that involve and educate our membership and the community.
- Coordinate efforts with other organizations and individuals
- Strive to maintain the quality of life by wise use and conservation of our natural resources
- Field trips
- Conservation activism

Activities

- Monthly program meetings on 2nd Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. In the Senior Center at 3rd and B Streets September thru June
- Audubon Adventures in public school curriculum
- Birdhouse and feeder construction and sales
- Classes in birding by ear, identification, and ecology courses
- Site-specific improvement projects
- Monthly newsletter

SISKIYOU AUDUBON SOCIETY COMMITTEES

As a volunteer organization, we need the help of every member! Here's a list of active committees and a line or two about what each one does. If any committee's work appeals to you, please call the contact us at 541-476-9846

Conservation

The Conservation Committee works to protect the natural environment of our part of southwestern Oregon. We monitor the condition and use of our public lands and alert the membership to local, regional, and national issues, which may need their attention.

Education

The Education Committee promotes environmental education for the schoolchildren of southwestern Oregon. We provide the --Audubon Adventures" series for local fourth grade classrooms, and make slide presentations, lead outings and hikes, and help with environmental projects like tree plantings and wetlands studies.

Field Trips

SAS sponsors birdwatching expeditions, hikes and outings around our region to encourage people to get out and enjoy the beauties of nature. Outings include the annual Christmas Bird Count.

Fundraising

One of our most important committees! We need people to solicit ads for "The Siskin" and prizes for our monthly raffle from local merchants; and we always need ideas for new projects.

Growers Market/Construction

Volunteers, build birdhouses, feeders, plus bat houses and butterfly roosts on their time, in their own workshops.

Growers Market/Sales

We sell our birdhouses and feeders at the weekly Josephine County Growers Market in downtown Grants Pass, and at local fairs, bazaars, and community events. Volunteer salespeople are needed!

Bluebird House Construction

We hold an annual "Birdhouse Construction Day", (usually in February) when members get together and build as many Blue bird boxes as possible. This is a fun and essential part of our activities—even if you have no carpentry skills, you can help!

Hospitality

The Hospitality Committee provides refreshments at monthly program meetings at the Grants Pass Senior Center. This is one of the most appreciated of our committees.

Newsletter

"The Siskin" is published monthly, September through June. Articles and notices of upcoming events are always needed. The deadline is the 15th of the month.

Parks

We cooperate with the Josephine County Parks Department in monitoring the use and condition county parks. We also provide nesting boxes at Stewart State Park, and make an annual expedition there for cleaning and monitoring

Programs

Each month we have a different speaker or presentation on birds or natural history at our general meeting. Suggestions are always welcome.

Publicity

The Audubon Society publicizes all programs, outings, and projects in the local media, at the Visitor Center, the Chambers of Commerce, and area libraries. Help is needed with this!

NESTING BOXES AND FEEDERS

Our nesting boxes and feeders are all hand-made by volunteers. Each structure is built to the specifications of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, from material donated by individuals and businesses in southwestern Oregon.

Nesting boxes and feeders are treated with non-toxic stains or paints, externally only, so that birds will not be exposed to harmful chemicals or fumes. Over a few months, your Siskiyou Nesting Box will weather and darken, becoming a natural part of your yard.

Our Siskiyou Nesting Boxes and feeders are sold at our booth at the Josephine County Growers Market and at selected businesses in the area. Proceeds from these sales help support the activities of the Siskiyou Audubon Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the welfare of birds and other wildlife through education and habitat enhancement.

For information on the Siskiyou Audubon Society, find our booth at the Growers Market, or write to us at the address below.

Bat House Information

Volunteers make all our bat houses. Bats are very important residents of the mountains and valleys of southwestern Oregon.

They can eat up to 600 mosquitoes and other flying insects every hour! And they are highly sensitive to changes in air quality-where bats thrive, people will too.

Bats are warm-blooded mammals that hunt at night and sleep during the day. They do not make nests, but you can provide a safe, dry resting-place for the bats in your neighborhood with a Siskiyou Bat House.

A Siskiyou Bat House should be mounted 10-20 feet from the ground, on the side of a building or on a bare tree trunk. Bats like a warm, protected location, but should be kept out of hot afternoon sun. Be sure no branches, vegetation, or structures obstruct the entrance.

Bats are picky about where they sleep. Your Bat House may be occupied in a day--or still empty in a year. Try several Bat Houses in different locations. In time they will weather nicely and be a part of your (insect-free!) back yard.

Nesting Box Information

The Siskiyou Nest Box should be placed 5 to 15 feet from the ground, on bare tree trunks that are free of branches or other vegetation. The nest box should not face the hot afternoon sun. tip the top slightly forward so that young birds can get out when they're ready to fly.

Siskiyou Nest Boxes are made without perches, which tend to make eggs and nestlings easy prey for jays, owls, or other predators.

Install more than one nest box, but keep them well spaced. Birds need private territory when rearing young.

Nest boxes should be emptied of old nests and debris at the end of the nesting season, so that they're ready for next year's eggs.

Birds known to have nested in Siskiyou nest boxes include Mountain and Western Bluebirds, Black-capped and Chestnut-backed Chickadees, Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches, House Wrens, Bewick's Wrens, Plain Titmice, Tree Swallows, House Finches, & Ash-throated Flycatchers.



John James Audubon