

THESE ARE NOTES FROM OBSERVERS FROM PREVIOUS YEARS

OCEAN BOAT

We haven't gotten out on the ocean yet, so we have no notes from the first two years. Following are my suggestions if one does get out. #1 Safety is first. Only go out if it is safe. If you have a cell phone, and can load the Count Circle app, you will be able to monitor your position relative to the count circle. I would just suggest a loop, perhaps clockwise, around the area, but you will need to assess currents, wind, and bird locations. Some popcorn or other "chum" would be great.

ESTUARY BOAT

We didn't get out on the estuary the first two years, so we have no notes from the first two years. Following are my suggestions. #1 Safety is first. Only go out if it is safe. If the river is brown with whole trees floating down, don't go out. Another safety consideration is the tide. If you want to venture into shallow water areas, only do so on an incoming tide. That way, if you get stuck, the tide will rescue you. If you get stuck on an outgoing tide, it will be a long day.

S JETTY

So you've been given the task of covering the South Jetty for the Reedsport CBC. You're excited: Wow! What a great area to cover! And you are correct. It is a great area to cover, but it is also a challenging area, and an intimate knowledge of roads in the area is necessary to cover it. It would also be a good idea to borrow/purchase both a Douglas County Parks Pass and a NF Pass, so that you don't have to worry about where you park, as most of this area is a fee area for one or the other agency.

It is also important to avoid pulling off on restricted OHV pathways along the roads. There will likely be many people recreating on the sand dunes, and they are as rule very responsible. I have only been "revved at" once in the scores of weekends I have spent birding the area (and that "revver" was promptly ticketed by a Ranger), and though they make a lot of noise on the dunes, they are cautious and courteous along the roadways.

Finally, you should check to see if the roads leading down to the OHV staging area are flooded. If they are, you can still walk the beach if you wish, but you need to either plan on walking back on the beach, or be able to deal with knee-deep water crossings, either with a dry change of clothes, or waders. There are many bathrooms in this area but no water fountains or stores. Come prepared with snacks, water, and of course rain gear!

The first thing that you must plan is how you are going to handle sea-watches. These should be done in the early morning. There is no better, easily accessible

place on the Douglas County Coast to perform a sea-watch than this area. There are two locations in this area that are gangbusters for scoping. The first is here: 43.666897, -124.206506, on the dune in front of the coast guard tower. To access it you must first turn off Salmon Harbor Drive here: 43.668184, -124.197603. Drive down a quarter mile and turn right here: 43.665745, -124.202067, past the No Trespassing sign (This sign doesn't mean anything no one has ever been arrested or kicked out). Park on the side of the road on a gravel patch, the soft sand can trap some vehicles. Walk past the tower, and BAM! You are at sea-watch location one. This is also a very important area for scanning the Triangle Basin, as many interesting species have been found perching on the barrels, like Brown Pelicans, Black-Legged Kittiwakes, Glaucous Gull, and Brant. There are often scoters, mergansers, and loon sp. in the water around the barrels as well. It is also important to scan across the mouth of the jetty and in the jetty itself, as the North Spit group does not have nearly as easy a way of access as you do. It may be up to you to find Eared, Horned, and Red-Necked Grebe for the count, as well as the aforementioned Black-Legged Kittiwake.

If you have a partner for the area that is capable of doing some walking, you can leave one person scoping at the South Jetty, and the other can walk and explore the South Jetty by foot. I would recommend walking east along the jetty wall, then walking back up the road. There is a small pond on the right with some willows that should not be missed. Continue walking past the turnoff to the Coast Guard Tower to the sand dunes. Turn north on one of the footpaths, and then meander along the outer trails that have shorter vegetation, back to the Coast Guard Area. There is at least one small clearing on the outer area of the Jetty that is usually harboring a group of passerines, if you can find it.

From here, one member can drive back to Salmon Harbor Drive, and then head south for about 1.5 miles before turning right into the NF Parking Lot. There is a wooden Observation deck near the parking lot, but if you follow the southwest trail just a few yards down you can get closer to the ocean with just as high a vantage point from the dune. This is the other excellent sea-watch location. I have almost always found a pair of Marbled Murrelets from this location, as well as mixed scoter flocks. While team member one is scoping from the jetty, team member two can scope from this location. Once the movement has slowed down, the South Jetty Scoper can walk south along the beach to where team member two is scoping. Keep your eye out for Savannah Sparrows, American Pipits, Snow Buntings, and Horned Larks, as well as Sanderlings, Dunlin, and Semipalmated Sandpipers. It is also possible that you may come across a Snowy Plover on the beach.

From here the two can leapfrog one more time down the beach, with one member continuing to walk south along the beach to the OHV Staging area, while another continues to scope. One member could scope from the dunes at the OHV area, or could begin walking back along the road. There are several

excellent patches of willows between along Salmon Harbor Drive. All of them should be checked while driving back to the South Jetty Parking Lot.

From here you have several options. There are a few more places that should be explored, and can be explored by foot if you are up to it. The first, and most important, would be the feeders at the Umpqua River Lighthouse. The Lighthouse hosts live there many months of the year, and are sympathetic to birders. There is a nice picnic table that you could sit at and eat lunch while watching the feeders. Be prepared for hordes of Eurasian Collared-Doves, but possibly Mourning Doves as well. Anything could show up at these feeders, and it would be a good spot to check multiple times throughout the day. It would also be a good idea to walk around the neighborhood of the lighthouse; a Palm Warbler was seen here once.

The other places that should be checked, in slight order-of-importance, are:

The Sunset Drive and Glen Dee Lane Neighborhoods: If your legs have the energy you can walk this, or do a car leapfrog with your partner. Not a lot of walking.

The overgrown clearcut along Lighthouse Road: Park here: 43.665745, -124.202067 in front of the for sale sign where there is a wide shoulder. (Unless it has sold since the time I have written this.) Get out and pish, there is usually a small horde of sparrows in the clearcut.

Lake Marie Trails: Walk along the trails listening/calling for Red Crossbill, GC Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Downy/Hairy Woodpecker, Pacific Wren, and other coast range species.

Devil's Elbow State Park trails: similar species to Lake Marie.

Umpqua Lighthouse Campground and Zioulkouski/Half Moon Bay Campgrounds: Not a lot of plant diversity but some open spaces that may attract other species.

Half Moon Bay: The river on the east end of your area may hold some more ducks or grebes.

If you have time at the end of the day check the South Jetty Triangle, the small pond, and the feeders again. Birds may be coming in late to roost on the South Jetty. To avoid glare while scoping, you can walk up to the triangle basin from the South Jetty Parking area and scope from the rocks next to the sand dunes. Don't go out too far, it is very slippery and the waves break over the jetty much more often than they do at other locations, say Bandon, or Tillamook.

Have fun and stay dry!

N SPIT /SPARROW PARK ROAD

I'll offer up some details for you, Matt. We started out with not a lot of enthusiasm for owling so, after driving from Coos Bay, we only had maybe an hour of full darkness (arriving sometime around 6am?). We started at the top of Sparrow Park Road and it was quiet wind-wise but some traffic noise. By the time we got to the lower reaches of the road it was full dawn and we got the pygmy owl along with a couple of Virginia rails in the wetlands. For this sector of the count this is probably a good place to be at dawn. Most of the upland/forest habitat is, of course clear cut and reprod. Not very nice to my way of thinking. I hate it actually – but never mind that.

The snowy was on the wave slope north of the entrance road but before Tahkenitch Creek.

Some other thoughts:

- Whoever drives the beach should bring large bags and be prepared to pick-up plastic from the beach – it was abundant
- As you travel north from Sparrow Park Rd there is a year-round vehicle restriction about .5 mile before the creek (but the year-round restriction is for the “dry” sand, it is open in winter on the “wet” sand).
- Sanderling counts are fun at 30 mph
- Creek crossings can be dangerous – Russ is an awesome driver
- There are some very deep and soft sand holes behind the foredune to get stuck in
- Sea watches with spotting scope are easily done with shelter from the wind on the foredune and should be done in the morning hours with sun at your back

The pygmy owl and Virginia Rails were about here.
43.749833, -124.158455

If possible and if there is time, this road (along Threemile Creek) should be walked and could be good owling once you get up into the forest.
43.757114, -124.139792

We drove up the beach to Tahkenitch Creek. We initially found the Snowy Plover up closer to the mouth of Tahkenitch Creek, but then refound presumably the same one down at the mouth of Threemile Creek.

Also, I didn't realize the curve in the road here (43.750096, -124.144783) was so close to the river. It might be worth a walk to the river to scope for ducks and shorebirds on the

far bank at lower tides. [I, Matt, walked there. Trail goes down eventually to water and road to mill, but trail needs brushing.]

Trails to Threemile lake:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5427036.pdf

Sparrow Park Road (notes from Millers)

Although not in the area we covered, we scouted part of the road the day before the count. We had Pileated Woodpecker and Black Phoebe at the first pond from the turnoff from Hwy 101 (about a mile down the road).

REEDSPORT E and SMITH RIVER N

Alan Contreras: A few notes on the areas:

Reedsport

Very birdy in general. The neighborhoods look pretty dubious but there is a lot of action.

It took us two hours to walk the levee and back to the car. We were pretty thorough and slow. We went back to the car via the line of trees behind Price N Pride. If we had been a little less inclined to have lunch I might have suggested a longer loop via Elm Ave. We drove Elm twice and it was very birdy but we did not walk it and I think we undercounted it slightly.

The river from the Discovery Center and boat ramp was pretty empty. Maybe too muddy this year? We made no effort to go into the dubious industrial area NW of the bridge.

We did check the slough by the sewage plant twice - pretty good.

We tried to get at the slough via the manufactured home park along Riverbend Rd. The place to get into is the open area that people keep their RVs, but it is gated and marked NT so when we went through there late in the day we just said foey and came out again.

But with permission, that corner could be very good back up against the hillside with a view of the slough. Definitely worth asking for permission ahead of time.

We did Crestview very late and pretty much went in and out. We stopped and pished at the gate (Hairy WPs) but did not walk in. It was a little windy and chilly up there in the afternoon. The gate is NOT marked NT that I saw.

Bolon Island

A fine brief stop. We went there about 11:30 and poked around in the bushes on the north side between 101 and the Smith road. NOTE: there is significant evidence of a low-grade homeless camp and maybe even some illicit storage of unknown objects close to the bridge. Don't send anyone in there alone. I checked it out a little bit because I was,

er, prepared, but it's not a great idea. The area east of the entrance road is pretty good and not nasty, unless Thomas found any surprises. The county parking area has a porta potty and really good views across to Stables. That was a good mudflat at low tide but no shorebirds.

We did not go in the south side trail at all.

SMITH RIVER N

Stables road as far as the nw end of the pond is very good. We walked it once and drove it once - some change.

Except for the first mile or so, there are quite a few small pullouts. We were able to stop and scan at a number of places. Wet pastures were pretty active, roadsides had a lot of junco/sparrow action (including some odd flocks of Song Sparrows), but the forest as such was mostly a dry hole. One HUVI, basically no chickadees, GCKI, creeper, nuthatch.

Cozy Cattail was slow but looks really good. Had sapsucker. Might have been great in early morning. There was active logging up one-lane Kingfisher Rd and we face-planted into a log truck and had to back up twenty yards or so. Not a great place for two cars.

NOTE: Cozy Cattail could be a great pre-dawn owling spot. Could have almost anything except Barn. Next year if your weather is decent I'd station an owling team there. Very quiet, no road noise, semi-sheltered from wind, excellent acoustics in that small valley. Narrow metal bridge on Blue Heron Rd; my car was fine but a Suburban would scrape the rails.

We were only up the Smith maybe two hours and change. Off-road access is very limited. It is good habitat but not a full area even under good conditions - not enough side road access. Not sure how Gardiner worked out but I could see starting upriver in the morning and finishing at the Gardiner area. Just a possibility. Not sure how Sally's crew did on time.

That's it for now.

DEAN CREEK ELK VIEWING AREA

We met Jeannie at the public viewing area a little after 7 and birded the WMA, the "island", and that stretch of the river until around 3 – which I would say was more than enough time to cover the area, but it was nice to have the time to really cover an area. Most of the CBC's I do, the areas are so large that there's no way you can cover them – I'm just able to hit the high lights or what I think they might be.

We spent an hour and a half to two hours looking for Short-eared Owls from the public viewing area and birding along the paved road/parking areas. We didn't see any owls, but had both Sora

and Virginia Rail call at first light without any calling on our part. When the sun came up over the ridge to the south we drove the dike to the back of the area and walked the road west until we ran into a bedded down herd of elk and turned around to not bother them. The road along the back is mostly in the hardwoods at the edge of the hill, so you don't have much of any view into the fields/meadows and it's in the shadow of the ridge so the bird activity was slow. We then went over to the "island" and had lots of birds in the garden area – a very nice area to bird! After lunch we drove the dike to the back and walked the road to the east, again it was slow birding with the shadow of the ridge. We walked through the trees to the edge of the fields/meadows a couple times and had a little increase in activity with the sunshine. We then drove to the edge of the circle and scoped the fields/meadows from the highway before driving to the western edge of our area to scope the river, but with the hardwoods along the river it's difficult to find places to see much of the river. We then stopped at the very western gate to the back road for the WMA and walked it, but again found the bird activity low with the shadow of the ridge. We didn't get to the marsh between the highway and the river at the western end of the WMA – it looked like you would have to make a long walk along the highway shoulder to be able to bird that area and have to deal with all the highway noise. The highway noise was a problem when birding the public viewing area and the "island" – it made it difficult to hear birds and I think to get birds to respond to pishing/owl calls. There was pretty much a constant string of cars, trucks, and RV's on the highway and maybe some of that was caused the closure of highway 42. Having Jeannie along was great! If you didn't have access to the back of the WMA or to the "island", you could bird the area in a couple hours max.

I think that covers it, if you have any questions let me know.

REEDSPORT W

Tim Rodenkirk: The ranch was fun, we spent three hours there. Jack's knowledge of the area and people was invaluable. If I had been there longer than 1PM we would have spent the rest of the day in neighborhoods. I think that that ranch is good enough for birds that it takes away time from being in the neighborhoods, but not sure how else you would split it. I would be sure to have folks who don't mind walking neighborhoods there though. Schofield appeared good for owling. I drove it beforehand and found 10 spots to stop where I wouldn't be near houses and get dogs barking. I also owled behind Dean's Creek which was VERY noisy from early car traffic- even at 3AM. Not very productive but I did see two owl species.

Two things important to note about Leeds Island are:

(1) permission needs to be granted by Rod Hague who lives at the end of the road. Mark Holliday can facilitate obtaining that permission but ultimately you have to get Rod's buy-in. Rod will not unlock the gate, so you have to be able to climb over it to gain access. It is very important that the parked car(s) do not block the road or the gate; and

(2) you are NOT able to make a complete loop of the island via the dike trail as was reported to me by Mark, we attempted a counter-clockwise loop and had to back track at about 3/4 of the way around which cost us a lot of time. I do, however, still recommend the out and back walk - we lost a lot of time trying to find a way through / around the breach in the dike trail.

TAHKENITCH DUNES TRAIL

We started at Tahkenitch creek trailhead first thing in the morning. A few sparrows, flickers and bushtits around the parking lot. We hiked out the northern part of the loop counting birds all the way. We continued on the trail out to the beach. It was very wet on this part of the trail. We used trash bags as hip waders but they tore and we got wet. If others are going to use this strategy they need to use heavier duty bags. We counted and slogged our way out to the creek. We bushwhacked to the creek and counted next to the creek out into the beach. There was a good congregation of gulls, mostly mew, at the mouth along with a small flock of sanderlings. We were not able to cross the creek and count the beach on the north side of the creek because of the high water and incoming tide. We scoped the ocean from the foredune and found a flock of white winged scoters with a couple surfs. We then proceeded to hike up the south bank of the creek counting in new areas. Here we found our only golden crowned sparrow and marsh wrens. We worked our way east until we ran out of real estate. We were able to bushwhack our way back to the trail and we hiked and waded back to the southern route of the loop. We then counted and waded back to the parking lot. We went down to Tahkenitch campground around dusk and counted there, ending our day. We found mixed flocks of small passerines all along the tahkenitch creek trail. It is a very large large area to thoroughly cover as one team. We didn't access any area north of the creek though we scoped the area as best as possible. Not walking the tahkenitch campground trail was a casualty of a lack of time. If the water was lower we would have been able to cross the creek. I would recommend splitting the area in half. It is just too big to cover on foot in one day. Also, we had a number of passerines in the driftwood on the beach.

OREGON DUNES LOOP TRAIL

As to the Snowy Plovers. When we first got to the beach at the south end of the Oregon Dunes Loop Trail, what we saw in large numbers were Sanderlings, groups of 25 or so back and forth at the surf line. Eventually we spotted 3 snowies, which ran back and forth up in the dry sand area, tempting us to count them again, but I held the group firm to three. We hiked perhaps a mile south from the beach trailhead towards Tahkenitch Creek before we turned around. After passing back past the south trailhead, at about halfway between the south and the north trail head we came up on an area that was just crawling with snowies. The recent storms had washed a lot of debris up on the beach and the scattering of small pieces of wood, shell, and other products made perfect habitat for the snowies to do their hide and seek style of feeding. At first it just looked like debris scattered everywhere, but as we focused closer it looked like the whole mess was alive. Glenn spotted them first and counter 37. He and Jeanette both made two counts (I was busy trying to get some photos.) They both agreed on 43. We later saw an additional 3 a

little further up the beach, so our 43 total may be on the conservative side. I was just lamenting today that I hadn't taken a non zoomed photo, and then tried to make a count blown up on the computer at home. But I was trying to get different individuals, which the three I posted on eBird all have different banding combinations. It was pretty amazing, I have never seen that many snowies together. Glenn has been seeing large numbers on his daily censuses further north on the Silcoos Beach, so was not as surprised and Jeanette and I.

The only thing I would change about our day, would have been a later start. I choose to do the loop clock-wise so we would have the sun and wind at our back walking the beach section to the northerly direction. We started at 8:30 and the sun had not gotten over the trees to the east of us, so we walked for first section in the shade, which made for very little bird activity. In afterthought, it would possibly have been more productive to start at say 10:00. However on the other side of the coin, the northern section of the trail which we did at mid-day way almost completely devoid of birds. I guess you can't be everywhere at the prime moment.

TAHKENITCH LAKE BOAT

The Lake was more then we could handle with our small boat even with the good weather. If the weather had been bad we have frozen out in a few hours, The boat should have a canopy and some source of heat would be good and about a 10 gal supply of gas. It was longer then our five gallon tank could hold up for. We only managed about 2/3 of the lake and even then we were in a hurry so 2 boats would be better.

It was surprising how few species that we got. There were a lot of birds but they were mostly the same and in the same place the end of the arms. Coots, Buffleheads and Common Merganser comprised most the birds that we saw, so spending more time and resources on the lake would not drive up the species list very fast. The end of the arms were very shallow and made searching from the boat for other birds difficult because it was normally 30 to 50 yards from shore when the prop would start dragging on heavy weeds and shallow bottom. The banks were densely wooded right down to the shore so that there was little variability in shore line vegetation so less variability in species. I was surprised that with all the woods we never saw or heard a woodpecker.

It was beautiful. VERY thankful for no rain and temps we could deal with. The light East wind was not easy to work with in the afternoon on the middle arm of the lake. Our small fishing boat was ok... but we weren't set up to carry enough gas to power the big motor for the whole area out there. We had an electric motor that is quiet and nice for sneaking up on the ducks – but also very slow. We did about half with the electric motor only using the power motor to get us back to main lake and finish out, which is a good plan if you have enough time to do this. Our boat would not have protected us from rain. Light wind pushed us around.

Scoping was frustrating when we could use it due to boat drift or wind pushing us around. Had to get close enough to birds to identify them. Our experience with flying waterfowl increased a lot on this trip, but was not fully adequate for this area.

Getting back to areas where we could possibly hear/see rail or swamp sparrow was not possible with our equipment. We ran into weeds and the motors would not take us back there. We did get some good views along the lake ... but not some things that we expected like woodpeckers.

Eagles were magnificent Lots of loons. It was difficult to keep track of which waterfowl flew where. Experience doing this kind of birding would be helpful. We were cognizant of the double count and tried not to do so.

We were able to cover North Arm and the middle Arm pretty well. Mallard arm we had saved for last as sun was glaring on it when we started going out the arms. Sun glare bouncing off the lake is a problem – wondering if those yellow sun glasses might help there. We got just past the trestle on Mallard Arm. Headed back about 4:00 – sun was dropping rapidly – the shadows were COLD. Glad we went in when we did. About 7 hours on the lake. If it had rained I don't think we would have lasted more than a couple hours. Recommend boat with a cover. Also seriously consider two boats out there. Lots of birds and one could spend more time going along shoreline or trying to get back to the wetland areas.

So the birds – We started on land just around the boat launch area; then worked the main lake around the dock – both sides;

North arm had lots of waterfowl, eagles ... similar in the middle arm. We heard gun fire before we launched probably back of the middle arm. Most birds were along edges and at ends of the arms or in bays as expected. To end as far as we could go.

Mallard arm – the part we did had fewer birds as we did not get back to the end. Picked up some nice birds on shore along the way. Hopefully the 5 Mile Road people got to see the end back there. Northern Harrier there at the trestle. We got out as far as the trestle. Birds on land past island on left going out.

The area was just too big for us as a couple (getting older doesn't help!). We really should have had a 3rd person with us. One to drive, try to keep the boat steady, one to spot and one to record ...

If weather is bad – one would surely need a covered boat and warmer clothing. Preparation for this trip was quite time consuming with possibilities of rain/wind/cold/sun and equipment preparation. There was a boat launch fee.

WINCHESTER BAY

Things seem to work well according to my plans other than a few glitches. There were far fewer birds than I normally would expect on the bay and less gulls around. In the morning there were no large congregations of gulls. Where were the fisherman to clean some fish? When I threw bread near the boat ramps about noon I could only see about 2 gulls around. Throwing bread probably brought in about 30 gulls almost all Western or Hybrids, but finally a couple of Glaucous Wing Gulls.

In the afternoon there were a lot more gulls both at the rock outcropping where the dock is that people were crabbing off of. Unfortunately the end of that dock is now closed off. Looks like it is in need of repairs. Hopefully the county will find a way to get that done.

Anyway my plan was to leave the breakfast at 7:30 am and work my way up the docks to the Coast Guard Station. Then walk back up onto Riggs Hill lane, Appian way, and the Fishermans RV Park. It started out well with a Common Goldeneye near the Docs by the Coast Guard station and then pretty good returns on pishing around the cliffs by the Coast Guard Station. We next went to go to the RV Park but lights were off in the office so we ended up coming back here at the end of the day when I was more sure people would be up and around. It was a nice park to walk a round only took about 20 minutes. The lady who answered the phone posted on the office was very friendly and agreeable to us walking around when we got back to it at 3:30 pm. The highlight here was the hosts hummingbird feeder which had 8 anna's hummingbirds. The hosts said that was nothing compared to first thing in the morning or later in the evening. Habitat at back of RV park was a large lawn area surrounded by mixed forest. Popular for BCCH, NOFL, AMRO, EUST, Thrush, FOSP, etc.

We then attempted to climb Appian way, but a No Trespassing sign at the bottom of the hill made me nervous so we didn't make it up there. Not sure if it is a public or private rd and if we would have been ok to stay on the road, but the sign made it look like they didn't want anyone up there and I didn't want to upset the neighborhood.

Next on my plan was to head out to the end of our section where the rock outcropping is with the long dock and work my way back along the bay. I wanted the bay fairly early in the day since I felt it was our most important habitat and I wanted to be able to come back and check it again later in the afternoon to see what might have changed.

Like I mentioned earlier the bay was pretty dead. Only one variety of scoter detected, one variety of loon, no red necked grebes, only scoters and buffleheads for ducks. (other ducks were present in dock areas) I expected more to look at. So we spent time at the rock outcropping surveying, bay and all exposed rocks, looking at gulls, and grassy area behind bathrooms, which always seems to have some birds in it.

Then we drove back to Peninsula with Winchester Bay RV Resort on it. Stephen drove to the end and Judy and I walked the trail along the bay which did not turn out to be productive. At the end of the peninsula is where we found the Clarke's Grebe out in the bay with two Western Grebe's. After surveying all birds in bay and checking out rocks we spread out combing the grassy knoll. Nothing hoped for on the knoll, but there were some sparrows and a large group of finches all of which I identified were house finches.

We then drove to the next peninsula with the boat ramp at the end. The bays had nice looks at hooded grebes and red breasted merganser and another common goldeneye. Seemed like a lot of red breasted merganser this year. We worked are way to the end where I threw bread to the gulls and we also walked out onto the grassy point where the swings are. I kept hearing a warbler calling that I could not find so I suspected a palm warbler, but after ten minutes of chasing the call and pishing and playing recordings I found are lone yellow-rump for the count.

Judy and Stephen were ready for lunch so we found them a picnic table at the base of the peninsula and I walked through Orc Rock County Park. It was more birdy than I expected. And added are only kingfisher to our count in the backwater here. In one marshy area up against the cliff I believe I heard a swamp sparrow, but could get no confirmation so I did not count.

After leaving Orc Rock County Park we headed north on 101. We stopped in at the Surfwood Rv park and campground. The owner (Ron) was a bit reluctant to let us bird, but finally agreed. Might be good to call ahead next year. He has 18 acres of mixed deciduous and evergreen habitat. Gentle streams flow through and lots of thrush, fox and song sparrows, woodpeckers, etc. Didn't see anything unusual or any feeders, but it is a good spot. We probably spent 30-40 minutes walking here. Mostly avoided the areas with a lot of campers not wanting to disturb them or their dogs.

We then headed farther north on 101. The first good pulloff we found was quite birdy despite the traffic noise we were able to pick up maybe are only chestnut back chickadee's for our area.

We then headed up further and hit the gated road that goes up out of our area. The gate was closed but there was not a no trespassing sign. We walked a few yards up, not detecting much. It looked like it was mostly logged and replanted 20 years ago or so with crowded douglas fir.

Next we pulled off one more time before we got back to the Surfwood RV area. Judy had seen a hawk on the way up that we were able to get into position and identify as a rtha from this pullout. We also walked across the busy hwy here to some kind of swampy wetlands like area. I should of brought my speakers from the car since it was hard to project rails and swamp sparrow from my ipod over the traffic noise. We didn't get any marsh birds here but did have a hairy woodpecker fly in.

Next we took 101 south of Wincheter Bay as we did not see any other good places to stop along the way. (There was a storage unit place that may have had some accessible habitat. The long road behind Surfwood Campground was gated off with no trespassing signs. There was a small neighborhood on the east side of the road we went into, but didn't stop as it was full of occupied lots and a sign that said dead end no turn around.) We headed up the hill and saw a couple of places to pull off on the way back down. On the east side was a nice pull out. Not sure why it is there, but actually had views in one small spot and some nice birds. (ie. red crossbills, wrentit)

Next we went to my favorite spot of the day. We went to a small gated turnout on the west side of the road that did not have any no trespassing signs. We discovered it was a maintenance road for a cell phone tower. It was very birdy and we got to see lots of species that we saw no where else. It was mostly old growth spruce. I tried owls without success such as spotted, barred and pygmy. But we got our only creeper here and really enjoyed the birds and habitat. Hopefully they don't put up a no trespassing sign here in the future. For some reason I think I was the only person who answered yes to creeper at the end of day countdown?

Anyway we then returned to all the best bay outlooks and checked for new species. At the rock outcropping there were a lot more gulls then before including my highlight of the day a black legged kittiwake. I have never seen one that far into the bay before. Although it is not far to the triangle jetty from here where I have seen them before. Also a lot more mew gulls had moved in. We added a few other birds here and there along the bay, but nothing that I remembered that was significant.

Overall I thought the size and areas to cover for our area was great.

...

NORTH SPIT

<http://outandaboutoregonbirds.blogspot.com/>

Yes, area on line 2 was flooded around the hummocks. To get to the west side, I needed boots that came up over my knees. As it was, I wore rain boots that came up halfway to the knee. I tried to walk around the sides of the hummocks and wade the water, but water would be knee deep. So a combo of thick brush, deep water and areas of soft sand were the obstacles.

All soft areas I stepped into were in the pure sand area.

And yes water level increased on the Clam Bed Road during the day.

If you can cross the stream I marked at very bottom of map, access via the north jetty to those woods along river would be easiest for a CBC, ... if tide allowed you to get up the river edge. Problem is even that way, there is one spot that was halfway okay to get through brush to the interior along that river.

If the flats are good for shorebirds, I might check more of area out during migration when area is drier. Hard to say if brush would be too thick to bird west side of deflation plain effectively.

BOOTH ROAD (notes from Millers)

Although we did not cover this sector on the day of the count, we did check it out the day before the count. A large portion of the count sector (north half) is on private property, thereby limiting the amount of possible driving available. Furthermore, Booth Road was blocked by a fallen tree about 100 yards in from its junction with Hwy 101. In any case, this area is probably best covered by foot.

Locations I expect would be of interest include Booth Road to the private property boundary, and a primitive, possibly closed road leading east to the Deer Arm of Tahkenitch Lake. That road is just short of the private property boundary. There is also a 527 ft. peak south of Booth Road that might be interesting to hike, although the vegetation may be too dense to hike off-road.

ELBOW LAKE (notes from Millers)

We did not cover this sector on the day of the count, but we were in the area on the day before the count. Of note is that half of Tahkenitch Campground is located at the northwest corner of the area, and half is in the Tahkenitch Creek/Dunes sector. As I discussed with you on the day of the count, it would seem to make the most sense to include the entire campground within the Tahkenitch Boat sector, (or if Elbow Lake sector is covered, include the entire campground in that sector). The campground portion was closed for the winter, but there was a day use area where cars could park. There were plenty of forest birds throughout the campground, including Pacific Wren, Varied Thrush, Fox Sparrow, Golden-crowned Kinglets, etc. I believe there was a trailhead, perhaps leading to Tahkenitch Creek, but we did not have a chance to check that out. It was located at the parking area at the south end of the campground.

Fivemile Creek is a beautiful sector, and has a good mix of driving and hiking opportunities. One could easily spend the entire day covering this area.

Wherever we noticed bird activity along the side of or over the road, we stopped, got out of the car, and counted everything we could hear or see. After about 1.5 miles there is a hairpin turn where the Mallard Arm of Tahkenitch Lake is visible. This is a good place to pull over and scope the water for waterfowl. From here on, we found it helpful to stop wherever we could get a good view of the water to count wherever wasn't visible from the previous stop. The most productive and interesting area in the entire sector was at the bottom of the hill where the road crosses Mallard Creek. On the south side of the road, many warblers (including Townsend's), Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and other passerines were actively feeding on insects. Waterfowl were present on both sides of the

road. Roads spur off to the south on both sides of Mallard Creek. It is possible to drive the west-side road, as it is not blocked by a gate, but it might be just as well to walk the entire length as it passes through various types of riparian and forest vegetation for about a mile. If you are driving, stop before the road begins a steep climb where it breaks out into a clear-cut. We did not find much of interest in the logged area, but we didn't get to it in the morning when it might have been more active. The east-side road is gated off, and we did not have time to walk it. From Mallard Creek on, it is a good idea to stop whenever the water in Mallard Arm can be viewed from the road. Besides the thousand + American Coots, there were numerous Pied-billed Grebes, a good selection of waterfowl, Belted Kingfisher, and Black Phoebes. Also lots of sparrows and forest passerines. Be sure to stop at the bridge where it crosses Mallard Arm/Leitel Creek and scope both directions for waterfowl and marsh birds. There is a gated road that parallels Leitel Creek east on the south side, but we did not have time to walk or explore. It is on private property, so I don't know if public access is allowed. There is also a gated road that parallels Mallard Arm west on the north side, but it explicitly forbids public entrance without a permit. I would have walked it if I had permission, because it looks like it could be very productive.

After crossing the bridge, the road goes over a rise and back down to Fivemile Creek. There were lots of Song Sparrows, Fox Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows, and Juncos along the sides of this portion of the road. We were hoping to find other types of sparrow species in these flocks, but did not. The road forks at Perkins Creek before the bridge, and it is worth driving or walking the half mile or so to the edge of the circle because it parallels the creek with good visibility. From the bridge, scope both directions. This is where I heard a Swamp Sparrow and also a Black Phoebe. After continuing on Fivemile Road, there is another bridge that crosses Fivemile Creek. Here again make sure to scope the water on both sides of the bridge. The road then heads uphill into 2nd growth forest for about a mile before coming to the edge of the circle. We did not find any birds of interest the two times we scouted this last part of the road. Unless everything else has been covered well, it is probably not worth going much beyond the bridge crossing.

GARDINER

Gardiner IP Paper Mill

The best area in the Gardiner sector is the old paper mill that lies along the estuary. We were fortunate enough to have permission to bird this mostly abandoned area that is up for sale. It will be a shame if it is sold to a private interest that forbids access or degrades the existing habitat. We spent 4 hours in just this area, and probably could have spent all day if we didn't have other areas to cover. We found 56 species in just 4 hours here. We were escorted the entire time by their security guard, Jeannie White, who was friendly, helpful, and showed us to the areas we requested.

I would recommend the west edge of the Gardiner sector include the east side of the entire Cannery/Steamboat Island. We were able to easily identify waterfowl there through the scope. We arrived during low tide, so there was an exposed shoreline on the island. That is where most of the 500+ Northern Pintails were resting. We were able to get our best look at the north end of the island from a ramp/dock that goes part way out into the

estuary. There was also a narrow margin of shoreline along the mill property, but it looked to wet and muddy to walk. With few exceptions, access to the mill property shoreline was blocked by thick vegetation including blackberry thickets. Most of the near shore, therefore, could not be covered for passerines or shorebirds.

Starting from the south end of the mill property, most of the area was paved with areas of short grassy vegetation. We found few birds here. Further north, the vegetation became taller and denser, but we did not have time to search the area on foot. A drainage ditch runs next to the ramp/dock area mentioned above. There were two Lincoln's Sparrows, and a lot of Song and crowned sparrows around this area, as well as a Yellow-rumped Warbler. It would probably be beneficial to hike along the entire drainage ditch for sparrows and Wilson's Snipe, two of which were in the ditch further east. North of the drainage ditch was tall grass where there were several Western Meadowlarks. We did not have a chance to cover this area very well.

North of this area are the vacant buildings. We looked through them all hoping to find Barn Owls, but to no avail. Probably a waste of time. To the west and north of the buildings is an area of dense trees and vegetation and a road running in a north-south direction. This is where we found a Northern Shrike.

Further north is a large treatment pond, but only a few birds, including Black Phoebe. Immediately north of the treatment pond is another pond system that contained cattails and other shallow water vegetation. There was an Eared Grebe as well as a fair selection of waterfowl. We were able to walk all the way around the entire pond. There were 2 or 3 Black Phoebes, a Swamp Sparrow, Spotted Towhees, and numerous other sparrows on the west side. On the east side is a steep incline where there were Hairy Woodpecker, and a good selection of forest passerines. We did not have time to follow the road further north to the end of the property, but it looked promising.

Gardiner Reservoir and Step Creek

Special permission was required to access this area. Our contact person and escort was Debra Yates. We only had time to scope the reservoir and bird along the road from the gate to the reservoir. We did not have permission to drive further up the road to the radio facility, but if we had had time, we could have walked the road. There were Hooded Mergansers on the reservoir, but little else. Debra told us that Wood Ducks are often present near the back of the reservoir, and that it might be good to put a kayak on the lake. A short distance north of the turnoff to Gardiner Reservoir is a turnout on the west side of the highway. This is a good place to access the north end of a walkway that crosses the river. Mud flats hosting waterfowl are visible to the south from here. Although the turnout is in the Gardiner sector, the mud flats are not. However, this may be the only location to view this part of the Umpqua River.

Town of Gardiner

Further north along Hwy 101 is the town of Gardiner. There is a boat ramp across the highway from Pitt Street. This area should be visited at both low and high tide, as there were different birds visible on the Umpqua River each time we stopped there. This is also

a good place to scope the south half of Cannery Island. There were a good number of sparrows in the blackberry thickets at the boat ramp as well. Further north, at the south end of the IP papermill, sparrows and blackbirds abounded. The roads in the town of Gardiner should all be walked. There were good numbers of Varied Thrushes, Anna's Hummingbirds, and various sparrows and other passerines throughout the town. We did not get to cover this area during the count, but we scouted out a good portion of the town the day before.

SCHOLFIELD ROAD

OVERVIEW:

Scholfield Road is a very large, self-contained CBC count area with no real possibility of overlap with other count areas. List everything you see! The main constraints and restraints here are the sheer size of the area, limited legal access, and the need to be especially respectful of the privacy of rural residents who have gone to great lengths to **not** have strangers snooping around their properties and looking at them through binoculars. Safety-wise, this is a heavily logged area in summer, but there was no observed log truck activity the day of the 2015 count. Mountain Lions have been seen in the area, so take the appropriate precautions when birding on foot.¹ Also remember this is gun country where predator and furbearer species can be legally hunted in winter; wearing a fluorescent-type road-worker's vest at all times will enhance both backwoods and roadside birding safety.

SUGGESTED BIRDING APPROACHES AND ACCESS NOTES:

Going south on Scholfield Road from Hwy 38 (Umpqua Hwy) stop off at the Waste Transfer Site that comes up on the right. If there are open garbage bins, the area may be alive with crows, ravens, and gulls. Check the trees and brush around the site too. Heading south on Scholfield Road stop as often as you can along the lowland marshes and pastures. Look for Swamp Sparrow, other sparrows, Common Yellowthroat, Belted Kingfishers, rails, waterfowl, etc. At about 7/10th of a mile from Hwy 38, you can take Oar Creek Rd on the left. There is a "private road" sign, but it is a well-maintained road with many home sites. Staying in the vehicle would probably be most respectful of the residents' privacy. The road terminates awkwardly at two private driveways; turning around at the large driveway at about the 2-mile point is recommended. After returning to Scholfield Road, about 1/10th mile south of Oar Creek Road there is a gravel road to the left. This is a good place to park and walk around this rich riparian area. The gravel road running east up the hill is unmarked and unnamed, and has not yet been fully investigated. While the road

does not appear to serve any home sites, it appears to be all within a fairly homogenous second- or third-growth Douglas Fir mono-forest.

Returning to Scholfield Road, after about another mile you can turn right onto Thorton Oar Lane, which is another dead-end private roadway. There are only a few homes on this road, and staying in your vehicle might again be best. There is interesting habitat for about 4/10th of a mile. After that it gets pretty Deliverance-y, and the road ends abruptly at a private residence about 6/10th of a mile in. Cut your losses and turn around before you get to the old carpeting fastened to bushes along the road. Seriously.

About 1 mile south of Thorton Oar Lane, Walker Creek Road takes off on the left. This is another private road that dead-ends at two private driveways about a quarter-mile in. Getting turned around is awkward. Consider just walking the lower portion to get good looks at the creek and pasture. Or just bird this area from Scholfield Road. The pastures along both sides of this stretch of Scholfield Road are large and highly viewable, yielding Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, a Green Heron, and many other riparian and pasturetype birds in 2015.

Approximately 3/10th of mile after Walker Creek Road, turn left onto Scholfield Ridge Road. This road shadows Scholfield Creek, and is located entirely on private property. However, Oregon Department of Forestry apparently has right-of-way agreements allowing general use for logging access (road designated "SF5000" on some state documents). Watch the right (south) side for pastures and seasonal ponds, and left (north) side for wooded stands where woodpeckers and other arboreal-type birds are common.

At about 2-2/10th miles in from Scholfield Road, make a 90-degree right turn and head up over a wooden bridge for another 1/10th mile. Stop along here and scope the seasonal stock pond and pastures below on the north side of the road. In 2015 this area late in the day yielded several duck species, some not found elsewhere in the valley (Greenwinged Teal, American Wigeon, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck), Red-winged Blackbirds, Red-tailed Hawk, and Swamp and other Sparrows. From here you can walk or drive uphill another 1-2/10th miles to the perimeter of the count circle at about map coordinates [43.642685, -124.064592]. If time permits, a visit here at the beginning and at the end of the day may be productive.

After returning to Scholfield Road, continue heading south, stopping wherever pullouts permit. After about onequarter mile, JD Lane takes off on the left. This is another private road that dead-ends abruptly in several driveways about 2/10th of a mile in. Parking on Scholfield Road

and walking just the lower 200-300 yards may be the most respectful approach here.

Returning to Scholfield Road, the road turns to a mix of gravel and pavement after about another mile, but it remains a public roadway all the way to the edge of the CBC count circle. Continue heading south, stopping to check pastures and tree stands wherever pullouts safely permit. About 2 miles south of JD Lane there is a gated logging road on the left. This road crosses onto privately owned forestland, but it is probably okay to park (not blocking the gate!) and walk as much of the ridgeline as time permits. Long site lines and a good mix of terrain could yield upland species not found elsewhere. At about 1-1/2 mile in you are standing above the headwater of South Fork Wind Creek, which may be a good turnaround point.

Returning to Scholfield Road, continue south checking overlooks and tree stands wherever pullouts safely permit. After about 6/10th of a mile there is a gated forest road on the right. This is the southerly intersection of Thorton Oar and Scholfield Road. While some maps show Thorton Oar Road making a complete loop from here back to the northerly intersection with Scholfield Road, **it does not**. Moreover, this “road” is on private property where the general public has no legal right to pass.

Returning to Scholfield Road, continue south checking overlooks and tree stands wherever pullouts safely permit. After about 8/10th mile past Thorton Oar Road there is what looks like a well maintained, un-gated forest road on the right. However, it quickly dead-ends in an impromptu shooting range and garbage dump. Not much to see here. Continuing south is Black’s Creek Meadow, the last great pasture and creek bottom of this count area, which opens up about 7-4/10th miles south of Hwy 38. Be mindful of the rancher whose house lies very close to the road. The usual presence of cattle here adds the possibility of livestock-related species along with the usual riparian and pasture-type birds.

Continuing south there is a railroad crossing with stop signs on each side. From this point, the southerly limit of the count circle intersects with Scholfield Road after about one mile. About 1/10th mile before you reach that point, however, there is a gated logging road that takes off to the north. This road does not appear to serve any home sites, and is probably okay for a walking survey. Backtracking north towards Hwy 38, continue looking for species missed on the way in, but don’t add to count of species already found. If time permits, consider a second trip up Scholfield Ridge Road as far as the seasonal stock pond and pastures. Other pastures and marshes along Scholfield Road may yield late-day species not already seen or heard.

SMITH RIVER S

The Butler Farm we spent two hours at I think you could easily spend 3 maybe 4 hours. We did the barn yard area which was the best birding. It also borders the main water way that goes through the marsh. We walked through the cows down to the river to the east and scoped that area. We walked south through the pasture to the river and scoped the ducks on the river. Not a whole lot to see in the pasture itself. We did not have time to walk the road going west that hugs the forested hillside and borders the marshland, that could be another hour at least. The road into the farm is a mile or do through marshy pasture which was also good birding.

We did not go up the FS rd off of Otter Slough Rd no time.

Baumgarters property only spent 45 minutes on. Nice mix of forest and marsh. They were conducting a logging operation on the western part of property so we avoided that area. We concentrated our time on the eastern portion that went through a conifer forest with some open marshy areas. We did not bird the mile road into property that borders the marsh. Could probably easily spend another hour or two on her property. She also said she has heard 5 species of owls there.

Not much on the South Smith Rd when you reach that final open marsh area that extends to both sides of the road.

...

We started at the bridge and recorded just a few River birds. Then parked just on the other side at the Dawson-Stowe Marsh, walking up one side to Dawson Section Rd and then back the other side. That was about 45 min. Lots of birds.

We had decided from our scout trip to just drive the Dawson Section Rd. Although there were a few birds, it was quiet compared to other areas.

As we headed up S Smith River Rd., we stopped at places where we could pull off and scan. There were areas of sparrows along here. We were mostly birding either from the car or getting out to scan (not much walking during this part).

Butler Creek Rd - not a lot of birds here, but a few. We did not do the roads at the ridge. One was completely covered with water. We were somewhat concerned with time and lack of birds, so we didn't do the other either.

Once we got in the gate, it was "magical." Right away we had 3 Townsend Warblers at our feet. We weren't yet to the farm. It is about a mile in. We parked by the barn which had some of the best action: 4 more Townsends Warblers, 2 B Phoebes, numerous sparrows, juncos, a YR Warbler, and others. We walked upriver and saw geese. However, the road was crossed by a creek so we turned around. After getting our boots, we met Kim- farm caretaker, etc. She was very interested in the birding and walked the rest of the way with us. We walked to another section of the river (slightly downriver

from the farm) and saw part of a slough/canal. We then walked a short ways back down the main road by the marsh. We were at the farm 1:55. I think 2 hours is a reasonable amount of time at the farm although it would be worth it to check out a road that runs parallel to the marsh going west. So maybe another half hour next year.

We then continued on the S Smith stopping when possible until we got to Elizabeth Baumgartner's home. She met us, and gave us an idea of where to go (she's a delightful person). We saw some birds on that property that we didn't see anywhere else: forest birds such as CB Chickadees and GC Kinglets. Also, it was a great place to see soaring birds. One part of her property was being logged as we were there, so we just did the part towards the slough. We were there just 35 minutes, but this piece of property could easily use an hour or more. Beautiful spot, and she mentioned owling.

We then continued onto the slough, and I believe this is where we had a major stop. Lots of ducks, sparrows, YR Warblers, kinglets, Phoebe, etc. At least a half hour is needed here. We drove up to NF-41, but did not go up that road.

Continued on S Smith, and had large numbers of waterfowl. It was fairly far up that the Cinnamon Teal was present with other waterfowl.

This is really a wonderful birding section. I would like to check out NF-41 sometime. It might be too much to add onto this section if more time is spent on Baumgartner's and Butler Farm.

OWLING

I have mileage from Hwy 38 up Schofield and the species I thought I might get. Only had two though.

0.1 miles, turnoff right. Good for Barred, WSOW, NSOW- had Barred here on count day.

0.5, turnoff right. NSOW, WSOW.

0.7, turnout right- mail boxes. Barn Owl.

1.4, turnout right. Barn, Barred, WSOW, NSOW.

2.4, turnout right. WSOW, NSOW.

3.6, road takes off on left- park there. NSOW, WSOW.

3.9, gravel pull-off. WSOW, NSOW.

4.2 (4 mile marker) pull off right (narrow)- had a WSOW here.

5.0, narrow turn off left. WSOW, NSOW.

5.2- pull off right. Barred Owl.

5.5, turn off right. WSOW.

After this (up top) the habitat was all very young plantations for what appeared miles, so I didn't bother going further.

I would suggest always trying to drive an owling route beforehand. Someone else's odometer might put them a tenth of a mile or two off and they would be hitting not so great spots. Also habitat changes year to year with tree cutting and such. Once I get an owl species (for instance the barred) I do not try for it again, I try for species I don't have. So I only taped Barreds at the very first spot, there could have been more. I taped Barreds there first because of the old growth habitat. I usually do WSOW where there is deciduous or a mix and NSOW in second growth patches. Barn I like large open areas. Great Horneds I never tape, they usually are just out there calling (on a good night).

The GHOW and Barn at Dean's Creek I saw while driving the back road. As I said very loud there, not a good owling spot but then again, I saw two species there!