

Sisters Country birds – western tanager

By Douglas Beall
Correspondent

The western tanager [*Piranga ludoviciana*], can be seen in many environs. Around Sisters it frequents mostly pines, junipers, hemlock, and firs and can be viewed bathing and drinking by streams and occasionally in backyard birdbaths. The western tanager migrates at night to spend the winter months in Central America and returns in early May to Oregon and nests in the higher elevations.

While most red birds owe their redness to a variety of plant pigments known as carotenoids, the western tanager gets its scarlet head feathers from a rare pigment called rhodoxanthin.

Unable to make this substance in their own bodies, western tanagers probably obtain it from insects in their diet. Termites, beetles, grasshoppers, crane flies, dragonflies, ants, stinkbugs and wasps are the foods of choice during their breeding season. They also are fond of many fruits found in Sisters

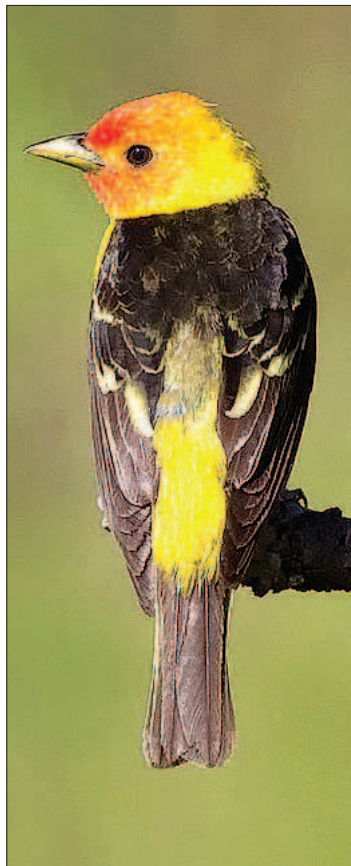


PHOTO BY DOUGLAS BEALL

Western Tanager.

Country: elderberries, blackberries, hawthorn, and serviceberries. Often you can enjoy watching the tanager flycatching his meal from a branch in the forest.

BBS hires new head teacher

Black Butte School has announced the hiring of Delaney Sharp to serve as the school's head teacher. Sharp will replace retiring head teacher, Carol Dixon.

Sharp grew up in Hood River. After graduating from Oregon State he lived and taught outdoor education and skiing in many beautiful places around the West. Most recently he has been living in Astoria and teaching Social Studies at Astoria High School. In a letter to the community, Sharp summed up his excitement about the upcoming school year: "I am eager to combine my skills and love for outdoor education with my classroom experience to carry out exciting place- and project-based programs at the Black Butte School."

The Sharp family plans to move to Camp Sherman once the current school year concludes.

The school also announced that beginning with the 2015-16 school year, the curriculum will include an integrated, hands-on, project- and place-based STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) curriculum. Dr. Michael Giamellaro, from OSU Cascades, has been



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Delaney Sharp and his family are headed to Black Butte School in Camp Sherman.

assisting the school's efforts in exploring contextualized STEM learning.

Sharp will partner with seven-year-veteran Black Butte School teacher Ethan Barrons to further refine the school's new enhanced curriculum over the summer.

"Camp Sherman and the Metolius basin offer so much in the way of experiential learning, and that has always been a big part of the student life at Black Butte School," said Marti Dale, school board chair, "but this new curriculum will be about leveraging those natural assets

and combining them with the latest educational thinking to truly differentiate the educational program for our students."

The historic Black Butte School is a public school located just steps away from the Metolius River in Camp Sherman. The present-day two-room schoolhouse, dedicated in September 1950, is home to 25 students in grades K-8 who are educated in two mixed-aged classrooms that allow for plenty of individualized educational opportunities, experiential projects, and mixed-age collaboration.

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