

Sisters Country birds

By Douglas Beall
Correspondent

The black-headed grosbeak [Pheucticus melanocephalus] has returned to the forests and backyards around Sisters and Central Oregon. Its melodious trills can be heard as the males sing to begin marking breeding territories. The females also sing similar songs to maintain the family group.

The black-headed grosbeak is a common visitor to our black sunflower feeders as it uses its strong beak to open the hard shells. Hard shell beetles and insects, many fruits and seeds are the mainstays of their diets.

Nest-building will begin soon as the female constructs the nest using twigs, rootlets, and pine needles with a final lining of hairs and fine plant

materials. Both males and females incubate the 2-5 greenish blue eggs with brown spots for 12-14 days. They tend the hatchlings for 10-14 days and then feed them in trees until they are able to feed themselves.

The black-headed grosbeak spends the winters in Mexico and Central America, where it dines on the monarch butterfly. It is one of only a few bird species that can digest the toxins which the monarch obtains from its milkweed diet.

A collection of grosbeaks are referred to as a "gross" or "parliament," and their name originates from the French grosbec, "gros" meaning thick and "bec" meaning beak.

For more black-headed grosbeak photos visit <http://abirdsingsbecauseithasasong.com/recent-journeys>.



Black-headed grosbeak.

PHOTO BY DOUGLAS BEALL

TRACK: Outlaws earned some special honors at meet

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Lewis picked up points with a mark of 5 feet 5 inches in the high jump to place seventh.

In perhaps the most exhilarating race of the day, Keegan Greaney blasted out of the blocks and shocked the field with a wire-to-wire win in the 300-meter hurdles, finishing in 40.28 seconds, the fourth-fastest time among 4A athletes this season and within .1 seconds of the Sisters School record.

Earlier in the meet Greaney placed fifth in the 110 hurdles in 16.34 seconds.

Greaney joined Garbrecht, Mannhalter, and Bachtold in the 4x400-meter relay to conclude the meet and the foursome not only won, but established a season best of 3:28.81, which ranks second among 4A teams behind Henley's 3:25.84.

"I am very proud of the boys team," said Larson. "Last year we only scored 53 points and I challenged them to score 120. They nearly met that goal with 117, which is quite a turnaround."

Cottage Grove won the meet with 180 points, followed by Junction City



PHOTO BY JERRY BALDOCK

Dyut Fetrow ties for second at District with a PR jump of 12'4".

(145), Sisters (117), Elmira (104), Sweet Home (83) and Sutherlin (22).

Special honors were bestowed on the Outlaws at the conclusion of the meet. Sabrina Reifschneider was named the Female Track Athlete of the Meet for her wins in the hurdles and both relays, while Erynn Ricker won the Female Field Athlete of the Meet for her wins in the long jump and pole

vault. The Sisters coaching staff of Larson, Wes Cook, Jim Anderson, Carlos Garcia and Eden Miller was named "Coaching Staff of the Year" for the girls team.

The 4A/5A/6A OSAA State Track and Field Championships take place Friday, May 20 and Saturday, May 21 at historic Hayward Field on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene.

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