



Tales from a
Sisters Naturalist
by Jim Anderson

All white –
but not quite

It’s tough enough to come up with the correct ID for the varied finches that gang up around my feeder every morning, noon and late afternoon. When you have a leucistic one show up, the whole day gets disrupted. Which is what my pal Brent McGregor ran into in his backyard the other day.

The first thing that usually happens when a white, speckled bird comes by that you know shouldn’t be that devoid of coloration, someone calls it an albino. Wrong. An albino is always pure white, devoid of any coloration, even the eyes, which are always pink to red.

All the others with weirdo coloration are leucistic. The usual lack of coloring in plumage of leucistic birds is combined with little splashes

of what the bird looks like in normal plumage, and — if one looks carefully — has normal dark eyes, not blood red or pink. That’s a bird with screwed-up genes, which have lost the ability to carry the normal coloring on to the next generation.

This is a wonderful time of the year to get about birding, looking for that unusual plumage, and especially strangers. A leucistic bird stands out like a sore thumb, and so do strangers from a foreign land, especially a Mexican jay; they really stand out!

Every once in a while, non-US-of-A species get blown off course so badly in winter they end up in our western flyway, bewildered, not knowing where they are, who their friends or foes are, or what to eat.

I can recall that happening while I was with a bunch of wildlife biologists who were on a BLM “show-me” tour out on the high desert looking at playas modified for water storage for cows. (Several of the bios thought a better term for the modification was “destroyed...”)

Anyway, we were at a huge modified playa south of Brothers on the Great Sandy Desert, and as we dismounted from our pickups we could see a rather large group of black-and-white water birds scuttling along on the surface to avoid us. I thought they looked like ocean birds, surf scoters to be exact, but I didn’t say so — and neither did anyone

else — until a more daring USFW bio said, “Say aren’t those surf scoters...?” Then everyone jumped in: “Yeah, they sure look like it.”

Through some act of weather, they were blown away from the Pacific Ocean and ended up on the playa — perhaps thinking, “water is water,” but wondering why it tasted so funny.

Therefore, if you see a bird in your backyard that you either don’t know, or looks like something you saw in a Japanese bird book, first, do your utmost to get a voucher photo, then put it on the birder’s hot line.

Over my long and wonderfully happy years of birding I have seen some beautiful strangers who have flown off-course and made it to the local park or my backyard, and among them have been a wonderful variety of leucistic robins, swallows, red-tailed hawks, and infernal finches I can never identify.

Leucism is the term for the type of patchy coloring resulting from defects in genes that control color cells of skin, hair, or feathers during development. This results in either the entire surface (if all pigment cells fail to develop) or patches of body surface (if only a few are defective) having a lack of cells capable of making normal color — but not the eyes.

Therefore, the noticeable difference between albinism and leucism is in eye color. Due to the lack of melanin production in both the retina and iris, those affected by albinism typically have red eyes due to the underlying



PHOTO BY BRENT MCGREGOR

A common, everyday, male house finch from Brent McGregor’s backyard in Sisters Country...



PHOTO BY BRENT MCGREGOR

...and a not-so-common leucistic.



PHOTO BY BRENT MCGREGOR

A leucistic robin.

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CITY OF SISTERS NOTICE OF SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET HEARING			
For supplemental budgets proposing a change in any fund's expenditures by more than 10 percent.			
A public hearing on a proposed supplemental budget for <u>CITY OF SISTERS</u> (District Name)			
for the current fiscal year will be held at <u>520 E. Cascade Ave., Sisters, OR 97759</u> (Location)			
The hearing will take place on <u>January, 12 2017</u> at <u>7:00</u> ☐ AM ☒ PM (Date) (Time)			
The purpose of the hearing is to discuss the supplemental budget with interested persons.			
A copy of the supplemental budget document may be inspected or obtained on or after <u>January 3, 2017</u> at (Date)			
<u>520 E. Cascade Ave.</u> , between the hours of <u>8:00</u> ☒ AM ☐ PM and <u>5:00</u> ☐ AM ☒ PM (Location) (Time) (Time)			
SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET CHANGES			
AMOUNTS SHOWN ARE REVISED TOTALS IN THOSE FUNDS BEING MODIFIED			
FUND: GENERAL FUND			
Resource	Amount	Requirement	Amount
1 OPRD Grant	75,000	1 Parks - Capital Outlay	150,000
2 CIS Non-occupational risk prevention Grant	5,000	2 City Manager - Recruitment	12,700
		3 Small Tools and Equipment	5,000
		4 Strategic Reserve	(75,000)
		5 Operating Contingency	(12,700)
Revised Total Fund Resources	3,525,812	Revised Total Fund Requirements	3,525,812
Comments: Increase in Capital Outlay for Creekside Restroom and increase in Recruitment for City Manager recruiting services			
FUND: WATER FUND			
Resource	Amount	Requirement	Amount
		1 Contract Services	15,000
		2 Reserve for Future Expenditures	(15,000)
Revised Total Fund Resources	1,357,173	Revised Total Fund Requirements	1,357,173
Comments: Increase in Contract Services for Water/Sewer rate study			
FUND: STREET FUND			
Resource	Amount	Requirement	Amount
		1 Capital Outlay	32,000
		2 Capital Replacement Reserve	(16,000)
		3 Reserve for Future Expenditures	(16,000)
Revised Total Fund Resources	1,106,653	Revised Total Fund Requirements	1,106,653
Comments: Increase Capital Outlay for Snow plow procurement and real estate acquisition			
FUND: SEWER FUND			
Resource	Amount	Requirement	Amount
		1 Contract Services	15,000
		2 Capital Outlay	16,000
		3 Reserve for Future Expenditures	(31,000)
Revised Total Fund Resources	1,960,839	Revised Total Fund Requirements	1,960,839
Comments: Increase in Contract Services for Water/Sewer rate study and real estate acquisition			
FUND: PARK SDC FUND			
Resource	Amount	Requirement	Amount
1 OPRD Grant	75,000	1 Capital Outlay	167,000
		2 Reserve for Future Expenditures	(92,000)
Revised Total Fund Resources	211,475	Revised Total Fund Requirements	211,475
Comments: Increase Capital Outlay for Clemens Park Restroom and Creekside Campground Restroom			