

Birders look skyward to study fowl

The warmth of the summer sun stimulates the desire to be outdoors, and the hectic rush of finals confirms the need for a stress-free pastime. Basking in the sun, you hear the song of a bird. Turning over, you spot a robin and watch it fly away.

Struck by its beauty, you become eager to find out more about it — this is how bird watching becomes a hobby.

"All they (bird watchers) need is a good eye and ear," says Herbert Wisner, a bird enthusiast and senior biology instructor at the University.

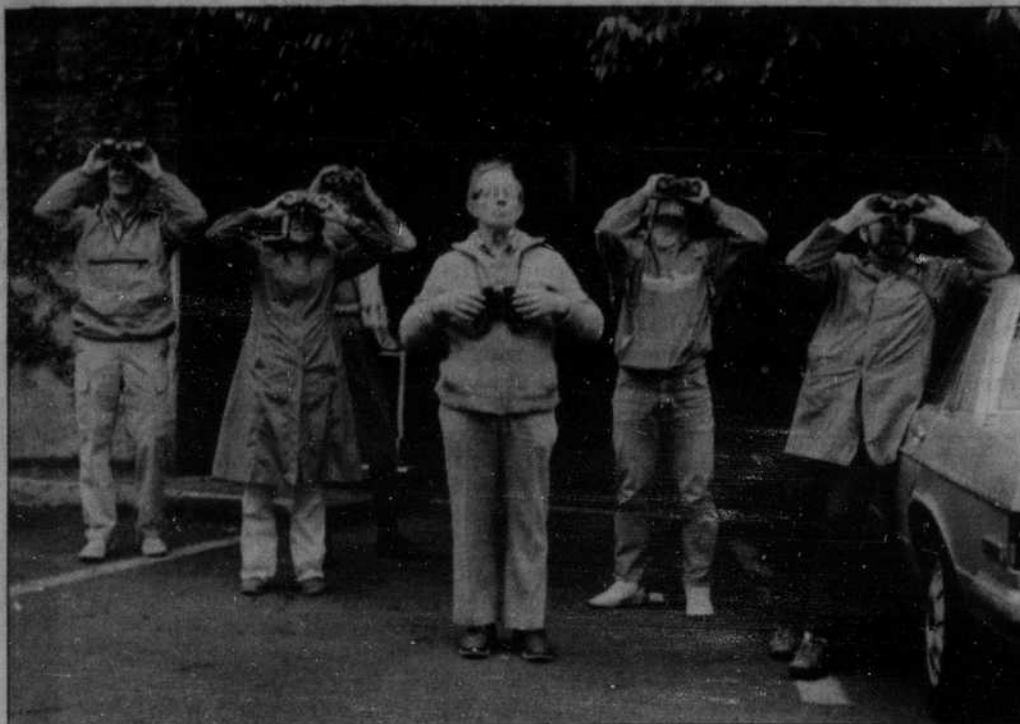
A field guide and binoculars are also mandatory, Wisner adds.

Wisner says the study of birds is an interesting field and a great pastime. "Birders," as bird watchers call themselves, sometimes go out every weekend to the birds' natural habitats — the coast, marshes and forests — and spend hour after hour observing the different species of birds and their interactions, Wisner says.

Studying and watching birds provides a better understanding of the environment as enthusiasts become aware of the needs and the habitats of other life forms in the world, Wisner says. He instructs a class on the natural history of birds (Biology 156).

"Birds act as indicators of trouble," Wisner says. "A drop in bird population can be due to human destruction, pollution or through natural causes."

Juan Ruiz, a junior psychology major and one of Wisner's students, says: "I began to appreciate something that I've always taken for granted. I have a



Is it a plane? Is it superman? No it's a bird. Members of Herbert Wisner's bird watching class gaze into the sky searching for some feathered friends.

hunter's interest in birds, and now I know exactly what kind of bird I'm shooting at, and if it's extinct or not."

Bird watching includes identifying birds through their markings and songs and learning about the different seeds that each kind eats and the types of trees it nests in.

Bird watching is rewarding, says Steven Erb, a senior economics major and another student in Wisner's class. "It's exciting. Going out, searching for and trying to identify the bird that you see gives you a better appreciation of birds and of their beauty," he says.

In December, a Christmas bird count is held in which 15-mile-diameter circular areas are observed, and the number of bird species in each of these areas are

counted and recorded for bird enthusiasts. In Eugene, an annual breeding survey for the Fish and Wildlife Services is conducted each June.

In addition, the Lane County Breeding Bird Atlas identifies all the breeding places of the different bird species in the county. The Southern Willamette Ornithological Club was established for local birders, and the Oregon Field Ornithologists is a state organization that publishes a journal, Oregon Birds, and conducts annual meetings for its members.

Wisner will instruct a field ornithology class at the University this summer for anyone interested in taking an indepth look at birds in the wild.

Story by Frale de Guzman
Photo by Kim Carlson

PNB rates respond to FCC order

In compliance with a Federal Communications Commission order, a \$1 "subscriber line charge" was added to Pacific Northwest Bell's monthly telephone bills for residence and single-line, business customers this month.

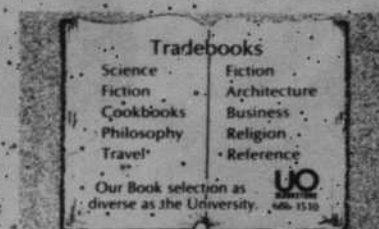
In addition, most long distance rates dropped 5.6 percent.

PNB's Oregon residence customers will pay an additional 45 cents per month to offset lowered fees paid by long distance companies connecting to the local network.

Measured line rates for businesses have increased \$4.10 in accordance with the Oregon Public Utility Commissioner's staff finding that previous rates were below cost.

Bruce Hall, PNB area manager for community affairs, said none of the changes will result in increased revenues for PNB.

"These changes reflect the pricing adjustments going on throughout our industry," he said.



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