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## Birds

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chimney every fall. The spring showing is less dramatic, but still draws several thousand birds. Gleason has written several editions of a text describing bird behavior and anatomy, "Birds! From the Inside Out," with his wife, Barbara. He said depending on the weather, the swifts could arrive in early May.

"It's a spectacular showing," Gleason said of the swifts. "They are fast flyers and circle high overhead as they drop in."

The display of aerial acrobatics caps the return of many early spring migrants to northern climes, Gleason said. He recommended students grab a pair of binoculars and a field guide to search the sky, brush and trees in the next few weeks as more Tree Swallows, Violet-Green Swallows and Rufous Hummingbirds return to Eugene. The Evening Grosbeak also will return in mid to late April.

"I'm fascinated by them," Gleason said of the birds. "There's a lot to like. Their behavior, variety, color — their behavior is always interesting."

Joe Russin, a biology instructor at Lane Community College who also has watched the swifts gather at dusk around the Agate Hall chimney, has prepared a list of 28 species of birds that have or will soon return to the forest surrounding LCC. Russin teaches biology courses focusing on the winged and beaked creatures each spring.

"Students can admire their beauty and all the different varieties there are," Russin said. "I think most people lump birds into one group, the LGBs (Little Green Birds). But if they look closer and look at their behav-

ior, they'd be surprised."

Many have said the best way to learn to identify different birds is to travel with a group of more seasoned watchers. The Lane County Audubon Society sponsors a walk and a meeting each month and welcomes birders of all skill levels, said Alice Dugan, who handles all calls for the local Audubon chapter from her South Eugene home.

*"No self-respecting birder goes out in the middle of the day."*

Alice Dugan  
Audubon chapter member

Dugan said she keeps a log of all the birds she sees and those species reported to her by other birders. She said the Violet-Green Swallow, Tree Swallow and Rufous Hummingbird have returned earlier than usual this year. She said a Turkey Vulture, a nearly Eagle-sized bird with a red head and neck, has been spotted soaring in the area. The bird is recognizable by the way its wings look in flight — a shallow V-shape.

"I've twice gone out in the middle of the day" to search for early spring migrants and Turkey Vultures, Dugan said. "But no self-respecting birder goes out in the middle of the day."

She said birds are most active in the mornings and evenings, and recommended a premiere spot to observe the migrants as they return.

"Skinner Butte is the one piece of land around here they rest on as they move through," she said. "It's very productive and enjoyable" for viewing.

E-mail reporter Eric Martin  
at [ericmartin@dailyemerald.com](mailto:ericmartin@dailyemerald.com).

### Tips for birders

Novice, intermediate and advanced birders are welcome to attend Lane County Audubon Society birding trips and meetings each month. The next trip meets in the South Eugene High School parking lot on Saturday at 8 a.m. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Room 20 at the high school.

Several notable species have been here all winter or will soon arrive at the University and in forests surrounding Eugene:

**Violet-Green Swallow:** Half the size of an American Robin, this swallow is recognizable by white bands that nearly connect at its tail. It is a quick flier that can often be spotted darting overhead as it feeds on insects. Some have returned, but more will be on the way soon.

**Western Tanager:** Slightly smaller than an American Robin, this tanager is green and yellow with a black back and dark wing bars. It develops a boisterous mix of bright colors during spring. It should return in early May.

**Evening Grosbeak:** Close to the American Robin in size, this stocky finch resembles an overgrown Goldfinch. This grosbeak has black and white wings, a dull yellow body and a striking yellow eyebrow. It should return in mid to late April.

**Spotted Towhee:** Also near the American Robin in size, this towhee can be found in low-lying brush and often rummages in dead leaves. It is easily identifiable by its dark head and neck, with bands of reddish-orange running down its white breast. It stays in the Eugene area year-round.

SOURCE: Dan Gleason and Peterson Field Guides: A Guide to Western Birds



## WASHINGTON EDUCATOR CAREER FAIR 2002

Tacoma Dome-April 10 Spokane Center-April 23

April 10 at the Tacoma Dome, over 100 school districts/ESD's and 14 colleges/universities from Washington state will be in attendance. In addition, there will be approximately 70 representatives from Alaska, Arizona, California, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and the U.S. Peace Corps.

April 23 at the Spokane Center, over 90 school districts/ESD's and 7 colleges/universities from Washington will be represented. There will also be over 40 school districts attending from Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, and the U.S. Peace Corps.

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