

FRIENDS OF DOUGLAS-FIR NATIONAL MONUMENT

GROUSING ABOUT IN THE MONUMENT

As a birder, it is always exciting for me when I see a bird in the proposed Monument. But there is little that is more exciting than hiking along a trail in the proposed Monument and having a family of grouse explode from under your feet and fly off into the woods. This only happens in the Spring, before the young grouse go off on their own.

There are two species of grouse in the proposed monument: the Sooty Grouse and the Ruffed Grouse. The Sooty Grouse pictured here is a recently named bird.



Until relatively recently, the Sooty Grouse and the Dusky Grouse were both named Blue Grouse, but the two species were determined to be unique so the Blue Grouse in the eastern portion of its range became the Dusky Grouse, while the Blue Grouse in the western portion of its range became the Sooty Grouse. They still look as they did before the split, of course, and the two species do look very much the same. The male Sooty Grouse has a mating display of a bare yellow sack, not as large as the Sage Grouse or the Prairie Chicken, but is the only bird in the proposed Monument that does this.

Unfortunately, I do not have a picture of the male displaying.

But I do have some pictures of a Ruffed Grouse.



The Ruffed Grouse is slightly smaller (17 inches long instead of around 20) and looks very different.

Both of these birds can be found at places in the Monument. At times they are very approachable, at other times they can surprise you by being very cautious. At all times they are part of the wonder of the proposed Monument.

If you are interested in birding in the proposed National Monument, you might start with our web site. <https://www.douglasfirnationalmonument.org/birds.html> It has several lists of birds, including a geographically based list, and another list with links to pages with pictures of several of the birds of the proposed monument. Now that spring is definitely here, you might go out into the proposed monument looking for birds, or just looking for trees. If you get any photos that you like, send them to me info@douglasfirnationalmonument.org and tell me where you took the picture, if you give me permission, we will post them and give you credit.

Milo Mecham, President

KEEP THE FAITH

From time to time, when I observe the goings on in Washington, D.C. I start to think the first lines of Thomas Paine's *The Crisis*: "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands by it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman." But, although the natural world is definitely in a crisis and under a persistent and malicious attack, there has been no fading away of the friends of the natural world. The resistance to what the Trump Administration is trying to do has not lessened at all. We have been monitoring and participating in the resistance, and letting you, our Friends, know the most important ways you can let your voices be heard. Right now, for example, an Act has been introduced to change the O & C Lands act, which will endanger areas like the Crabtree Valley, with some of the largest and oldest Douglas-fir trees in Oregon. You can find out more and how to get involved at the Oregon Wild page <https://oregonwild.org/our-work/defending-forests-public-lands/fighting-for-backyard-forests/> .

One of those important areas, the attack designed to end the roadless rule, is still pending. We keep hearing rumors that the proposed new rule is coming, but so far those have been rumors. When it does happen we will send out an ALERT as soon as possible. The other rumor is that there will be a very short period for comments.

To be sure, the hope that we might change any minds through our comments and objections is not why it needs to be done. The three years until there will be a change will be long and hard. We will definitely be taking three steps backwards. But even though negative comments won't help now, there are many who are paying attention. When you tell your member of Congress, House or Senate, that you don't approve of what is being done, that, for example, you don't think the BLM should be encouraged to cut down more old growth, you are telling them (1) that you care about the environment and don't buy into the Trump Republican lies about the forest, and (2) you are telling them that you are paying attention.

So, when it is time to start trying to undo and repair the damage that has been done, our elected officials may have the courage to follow their constituents and start right away to undo and repair the damage. To advance this cause, please continue to let your voice be heard, and support those who are fighting the good fight, especially those who have been fighting or will be fighting in court to hold off the disasters.

Milo Mecham, President