

TILLAMOOK COUNTY SPOTLIGHT

**Blitz
Dates**

Saturday, June 4 to
Sunday, June 5 in
Tillamook, OR

What is a Blitz? Birders from around the state gather in a single county to survey as many birds in as many places as possible in just one weekend. Multiple stationary counts within Oregon2020 Hotspot Squares are encouraged (click [here](#) for our protocol). Participation in Blitzes is free! To register, visit: <http://oregon2020.com/tillamook/>



Fast Facts

- All-Time Bird Species Total: **332**
- Breeding Season Bird Species Total: **264**
- Total number of eBird checklists: **9,996**



Photo: Alan D. Wilson

Tillamook County Species Highlights:

- Rhinoceros Auklet
- Whimbrel
- Tufted Puffin
- Wandering Tattler
- Caspian Tern

Top Birding Locations in Tillamook County:

- Bayocean Peninsula Park
- Neskowin Area
- Nestucca Bay

Overview of Tillamook County



Above: Tillamook County is located just west of Portland along Highway 101 and the Pacific Ocean.

Tillamook County covers the Oregon Coast cities from Manzanita (a famous surfing spot for the drysuit-equipped) to Neskowin, a small and sleepy beach town. Neskowin is known for its “ghost forest,” the remains of a Sitka Spruce forest drowned by an earthquake about 2000 years ago. From the center of this coastline juts Cape Lookout, where a trail takes visitors more than a mile out onto a spit of land with beautiful views and opportunities to spot whales.

Rhinoceros Auklet: Behind the Horn

As you look through the spotting scope out to sea, you observe birds with a white horn on the base of their bills floating on surface of the waves. They are Rhinoceros Auklets, or sometimes known as Rhinoceros Puffins. The function of this white growth on the bill remains unknown, but both sexes of breeding adults have it. Non-breeding adults, including immature adults, have a dusky bill and reduced horn. These Auklets commonly visit their colonies at night. They are the largest auklets to carrying fish to their breeding colonies. It is speculated they provision at night to avoid predation of gulls and raptors.

Gaston, A. J. and S. B. Dechesne. 1996. Rhinoceros Auklet (Cerorhinca monocerata), The Birds of North America Online (A. Poole, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology



Photo: Dick Daniels

Look for Rhinoceros Auklets and other marine birds from Tillamook County beaches on our Blitz.

THE HISTORY OF TILLAMOOK COUNTY



Tillamook county was established in 1853 by a Territorial Legislature. The county was created from an area previously part of Clatsop, Yamhill, and Polk counties. The Tillamook Burn, a series of forest

fires in the Coast Range on the east part of the county, was named the Tillamook State Forest by Governor Tom McCall after the state sold bonds to buy the burnt-over lands for rehabilitation. The name “Tillamook” comes from a local tribe, and is derived from a Chinook word for “The people of Nehalem”. Nehalem is a city, bay, and river located in the county.

LODGING FOR THE TILLAMOOK COUNTY BIRDING BLITZ

Our headquarters and daily meeting location for the Hood River County Blitz will be in Bay City, Oregon.

The areas around Bay City, Tillamook, and Nehalem offer plenty of places to “get away” while participating on our blitz. Volunteers can camp at Cape Lookout State Park and Barview Jetty Park – both on the beach – or inland at Kilchis County Park. Consider renting a



Cape Meares - Gary Halvorson

cozy yurt instead! Hotels are plentiful in Nehalem and Tillamook cities. There are also a number of ocean-side B&Bs in the county. For more, visit: <http://visittheoregoncoast.com/cities/tillamook/accommodations/>

The Oregon2020 Birding Blitz Protocol – How We Count Birds

Curious to know what we do on a Birding Blitz? Here’s our standard protocol for counting birds.

1. For each day of the blitz, you will be assigned 2-4 Oregon2020 Hotspots to visit. You can see a full map of Hotspots here: <http://goo.gl/P7ivxR>
2. Use the [free Oregon2020 Hotspot App](#) to navigate into a square.
3. Conduct multiple 5-10 minute stationary bird counts. Try to count birds in at least 4 and up to 8 points within the square.
4. For each stationary count: record the GPS coordinates, start and end time of the count, and the number of observers.
5. Repeat in each of your assigned Hotspots, and spend the rest of the day chasing rarities or birding interesting spots in the county.

What is a stationary count?

Stationary counting means you stand in one location and count all the birds you see or hear for 5-10 minutes. (You can move around to better see or hear birds as needed) *Obtaining actual counts for every bird species is very important – don’t estimate!*

What if I want to walk around?

You’re more than welcome to also count birds while travelling, but start a new list whenever you change habitats. We want to associate birds with the habitats in which you found them. If you can, try to conduct several non-travelling counts within the square as well.



Photo: Dominic Sherony

FUN FACT:

DID YOU KNOW... the most popular tourist attraction in this county is the Tillamook Cheese Factory. Visitors can take a self-guided tour to learn about the cheese-making processes. Downstairs in the lobby visitors can sample and buy cheese, ice cream, and fudge.

Don’t forget to register for the **Tillamook County Birding Blitz**, June 4-5! Free registration and more information available here: <http://oregon2020.com/tillamook/>