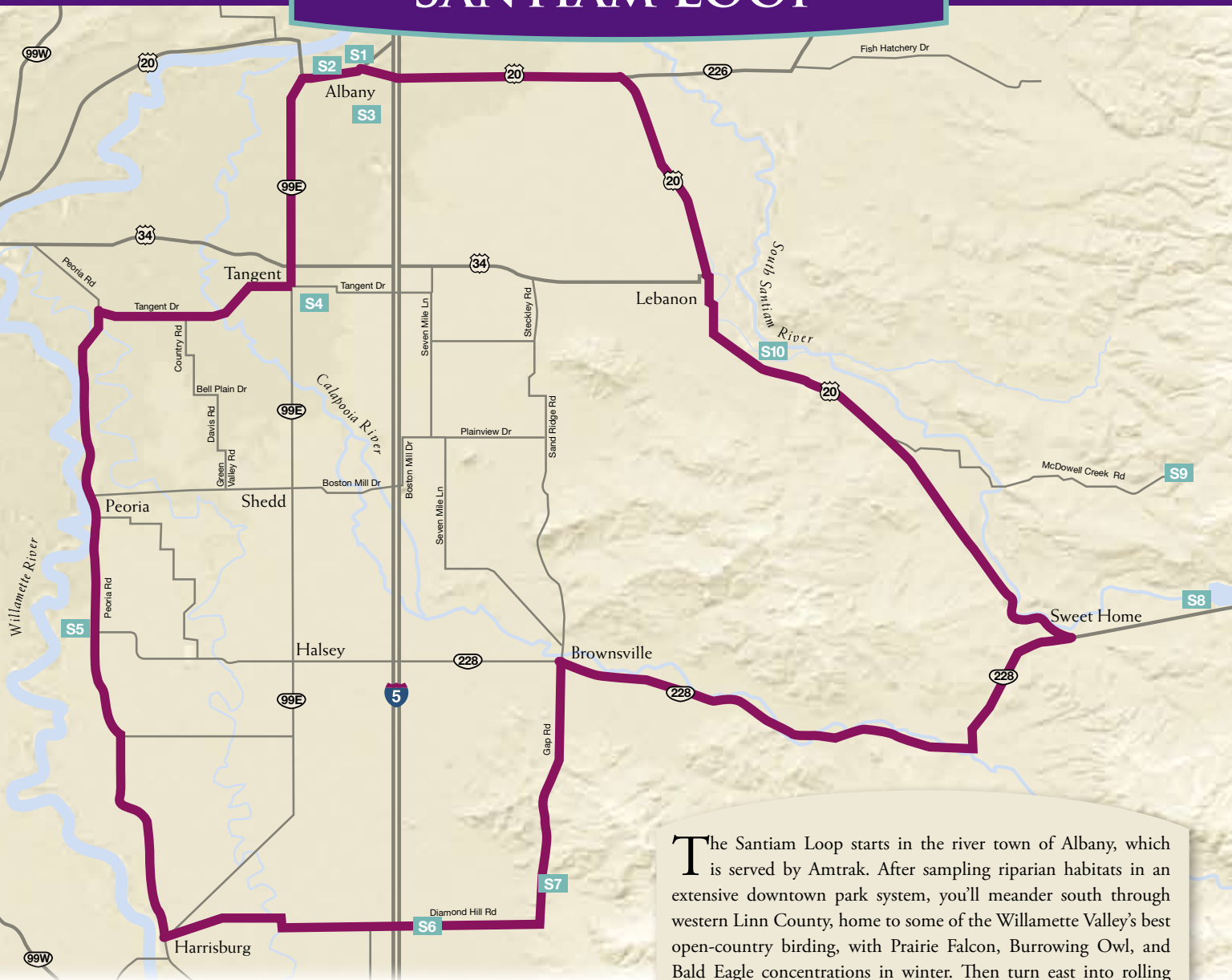


# SANTIAM LOOP



## S1. Albany Riverfront Parks & Dave Clark Riverfront Trail

**Montieth & Bryant Parks:** From US Hwy 20 S of Willamette River bridge in downtown Albany, go W on 1st Ave 0.3 mi and turn R into well-signed parking lot for Montieth Park, or go L two blocks on Calapooya St, then R on Bryant Dr and turn R into Bryant Park just across the Calapooya River bridge. GPS 44° 38.434' N, 123° 05.449' W.

**Bowman Park:** From US Hwy 20 S of Willamette River bridge in downtown Albany, go E on 2nd Ave 0.7 mi, jog one block R on Main St, then L on Geary St and go 0.3 mi to where street ends in the park. GPS 44° 38.582' N, 123° 05.018' W. **Tadena Landing Park:** From downtown Albany take US Hwy 20 over Willamette River bridge, then 0.4 mi and turn L at stoplight into park entrance. GPS 44° 38.492' N, 123° 06.789' W; River Mile 119.3.

The Santiam Loop starts in the river town of Albany, which is served by Amtrak. After sampling riparian habitats in an extensive downtown park system, you'll meander south through western Linn County, home to some of the Willamette Valley's best open-country birding, with Prairie Falcon, Burrowing Owl, and Bald Eagle concentrations in winter. Then turn east into rolling grasslands near Brownsville, one of the valley's last strongholds for Oregon Vesper Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, and Western Meadowlark. Continue east through big-leaf maple forest to the edge of the western Cascades, as you reach the logging town of Sweet Home. Here is your best chance to see wintering Barrow's Goldeneye, as well as loons, grebes, and diving ducks in migration. Turning north you'll descend along the South Santiam River to reach the town of Lebanon, where a restored mill pond is expected to offer more birding opportunities in the future.

**Loop sponsorship available**



Streaked Horned Lark pair  
PHOTO BY:  
RANDY MOORE

**Transit:** Albany Transit (541.917.7667 or [www.cityofalbany.net/ecodev/ats](http://www.cityofalbany.net/ecodev/ats)) runs numerous nearby bus routes.

These developed parks along Albany's riverfront offer views of wintering waterfowl and nesting Osprey, as well as canoe/kayak and boating access close to nearby shops. Monteith and Bowman Parks are connected by the Dave Clark Riverfront Trail, a paved bicycle and pedestrian trail through residential and commercial neighborhoods (partly along city streets with bicycle lanes and sidewalks), with pockets of riparian and streamside habitat. From Takena Landing, a gravel-surfaced trail leads through mature, mixed riparian woods with brushy understory along the north bank of the Willamette.



**Sponsor:** Albany Visitors Association

## S2. Simpson Park

From US Hwy 20 1.1 mi W of I-5 in Albany, go N on Geary St for 0.5 mi. Turn E on Front Ave and follow 0.3 mi to where it bends N and becomes Waverly Dr. Continue 0.2 mi and turn L into gravel parking area just past Cox Creek bridge. GPS 44° 38.680' N, 123° 04.442' W.

A bark-covered walking trail leads through riparian woods between the bank of the Willamette River and three oxbow sloughs that were once used as log ponds. Waterfowl, cormorants and Great Blue Heron are plentiful in winter,

with Green Heron in spring. Mixed Douglas-fir and deciduous riparian woods with a brushy understory host Red-breasted Sapsucker, four species of woodpeckers, and abundant songbirds, including wintering kinglet and chickadee flocks, and migrant vireos and warbler flocks. Along with high species diversity, this park provides a look at a historical sawmill and its log ponds.



**Sponsorship available**

## S3. Grand Prairie Park

From US Hwy 20 1.1 mi W of I-5 in Albany, go S on Geary St for 1.1 mi. Turn E on Grand Prairie Rd and go 0.4 mi to park entrance on R. GPS 44° 36.861' N, 123° 04.501' W. **Transit:** Albany Transit runs bus routes on nearby 34th Ave and Waverly Dr.

This small park with picnic tables and basketball courts attracts a few Eurasian Wigeons along with American Wigeon flocks in most winters, as well as scaup and gull flocks that regularly include Glaucous-winged, Herring, Thayer's, and California Gulls, with chance of Western or Glaucous Gulls. All of these birds become acclimated to humans, allowing for very close study. Songbird habitat is minimal, so this is a specialty stop.



**Sponsorship available**

## S4. Tangent and vicinity

Along Hwy 99E 5 mi S of Albany, 0.8 mi S of Hwy 34.

**Local Loop:** From Hwy 99E in Tangent, go E on Tangent Dr 3 mi, then S 4 mi on Seven Mile Ln (Glaser Dr and Ridge Dr are good side roads for birds). At T intersection with Plainview Dr jog W 0.5 mi, then S 1.5 mi and E under freeway. Thompson's Mill State Heritage Area offers a stopping point with restrooms and historical interest. Continue W 2 mi, to small town of Shedd with a drive-in restaurant as a possible lunch stop. Continue W 1.5 mi on Fayetteville Dr. Turn R and go 1 mi N on Green Valley Rd. Just past where this road turns W, turn N on to Davis Rd (gravel). Go 1.5 mi to Bell Plain Dr, jog W 0.7 mi, then N 2.5 mi on Country Rd (gravel) to Tangent Dr, then E 3 mi to return to Tangent.

This small town is a hub for Linn County's grass-seed farming industry, and hosts an Acorn Woodpecker colony just one block E of the highway on Tangent Dr. Surrounding agricultural lands offer open-country birding. Follow local loop directions to search for wintering Rough-legged Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Prairie Falcon, and American Pipit, with chance of Lapland Longspur or Snow Bunting. Scan the large Killdeer and Dunlin flocks for Black-bellied Plover or Pacific Golden-Plover. Bald Eagle is often seen in numbers. Nesting species include Streaked Horned Lark, Western Meadowlark, and Savannah Sparrow. To see and hear more of these, walk or

bicycle along quiet gravel roads. Note that land along these roads is private so you must bird from the road.



**Sponsor:** Cascade Pacific RC&D

## S5. Snag Boat Bend & vicinity

From Corvallis, travel 1 mi E on Hwy 34 and turn S on Peoria Rd for 9.5 mi. Go 1 mi S of Peoria. Refuge access is to the W across the bridge.

The Snag Boat Bend unit of William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge features backwater sloughs as well as cottonwood gallery forest. In the sloughs, look for wintering waterfowl and Black Phoebe, and Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Cinnamon Teal and Spotted Sandpiper in spring. In the forest look for nesting Western Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Wilson's Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Swainson's Thrush, and Pileated Woodpecker. The fully accessible boardwalk trail from the parking lot to an observation platform overlooking Beaver Pond is open year-round. Refuge trails beyond the boardwalk are closed Oct 1 – Jan 31. While you're in the area, you can search along back roads for wintering swan flocks, which are regular visitors to fields N and E of Halsey, along with Prairie and Peregrine Falcons, Rough-legged Hawk, Burrowing Owl, and rarely Snow Bunting or Lapland Longspur.



**Sponsor:** U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Division of Migratory Birds



Pacific Golden-Plover

PHOTO BY: MAFK NIKAS

## S6. Diamond Hill Wetlands

From Harrisburg go E 5 mi on Diamond Hill Rd (follow signs for I-5). After passing freeway (I-5 Exit 209), continue E on Diamond Hill Rd for 1 mi. Park on shoulder to view wetlands on N side of road.

Restoration of 350 ac of native prairie, 130 ac of marsh, and 100 ac of riparian forest began on this private property in 2007. The marshes support wintering Canada and Cackling Goose, Northern Pintail, Mallard, American Wigeon, and Green-winged Teal, as well as large flocks of Dunlin. Also check for Cinnamon Teal and Ring-necked Duck in the spring. Bald Eagle and occasionally Peregrine Falcon or Golden Eagle can be seen. The grasslands host Northern Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Western Meadowlark, and Streaked Horned Lark. Sandhill Crane, Black-bellied Plover, and even Mountain Plover (rare) have occurred here. Public access on this private restoration property is not permitted. However, you'll find good views from Diamond Hill Rd. While this is a straight country road, the shoulder is narrow, so use hazard lights while parked or slowly driving.



**Sponsorship available**

## S7. Gap Road/Belts Road Grasslands

**From I-5 Exit 209:** Go E on Diamond Hill Dr for 2.7 mi, to where Gap Rd comes in from the S. Stay to the L on what is now Gap Rd and continue 1.5 mi (Gap Rd will curve to N) to the intersection with Belts Rd. After scanning grasslands on private land to NW of intersection, you can take side loop described below, or continue N along Gap Rd to Brownsville. **Side loop directions:** From intersection



PHOTO BY: STEVE DOWLAN

Tundra Swan flock



Barrow's Goldeneye pair  
PHOTO BY: JIM LEONARD

of Gap and Belts Rds, go W 1.0 mi on Belts Rd (gravel), then N 1.3 mi where road becomes Tub Run Rd and curves to W. Continue W 1 mi to T intersection with Bond Butte Rd. Go S 0.7 mi to T intersection with Belts Rd. Turn L and return to start of loop at intersection with Gap Rd (2 mi).

These grasslands provide one of the best remaining examples of Willamette Valley savanna habitat, with a small colony of Grasshopper Sparrow plus nesting Vesper and Savannah Sparrows, Western Kingbird, Streaked Horned Lark, Western Meadowlark, and Lazuli Bunting. In winter watch for Prairie and Peregrine Falcons, Rough-legged Hawk, Short-eared Owl and Northern Shrike, with Northern Harrier and Red-tailed Hawk year-round. Golden Eagle nests in the Coburg Hills just E of here and occasionally soar over the grasslands. All of these lands are private ranch land, so stay to the public right-of-way along the roads.



**Sponsorship available**

## S8. Foster Dam & Reservoir

From US Hwy 20 at the E end of Sweet Home, take 60th Ave/Foster Dam Rd N to North River Dr. An informal lake overview is on the R shoulder. The lake can be circled using Foster Dam Rd, North River Dr, Quartzville Rd, and US Hwy 20. Viewing sites are at the boat ramps, roadsides, and a county park (closed in winter).

A flock of Barrow's Goldeneye regularly winters just below Foster Dam, sometimes with Common Goldeneye. Deep water above the dam draws migrant Common Loon and Horned, Eared, Western, Clark's and (rarely) Red-necked Grebes in migration, along with Pied-billed Grebe, American Coot, Common Merganser, and other diving ducks. Red-breasted Merganser, Surf Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, and migrant terns may drop in as rarities. In spring

you may hear Yellow-breasted Chat calling from brushy, logged slopes above the reservoir. The US Forest Service ranger station in Sweet Home is a portal for both the Willamette Valley and the Cascades Birding Trails.



**Sponsorship available**

## S9. McDowell Creek County Park

Approximately 4 mi E of Lebanon, turn N off US Hwy 20 and follow Fairview Rd E 0.9 mi to McDowell Creek Dr. Take McDowell Creek Dr N for 7.5 mi to the park's lower parking lot. A second parking lot (gravel, no restrooms) is another 0.2 mi up the road.

American Dippers are featured here at a relatively low elevation along McDowell Creek and near the falls. The park also features Majestic and Royal Terrace Falls along a 3-mi trail on McDowell Creek, a tributary of the S Santiam River. The falls have bridges and viewing decks. Look and listen for typical mixed forest species, including nesting Black-headed Grosbeak, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, and Black-throated Gray and Wilson's Warblers. The road leading to the parking areas is good for viewing butterflies in summer.



**Sponsorship available**

## S10. Cheadle Lake

From US Hwy 20 in S Lebanon, turn E on Russell Dr (not Russell St, just down the hwy) and go about 0.8 mi to the park entrance on the R as you come to a L-hand curve. Russell Dr becomes River Rd/Waterloo Rd/River Dr along the way.

Evening Grosbeak

PHOTO BY:  
BILL PROEBSTING



Prairie Falcon

PHOTO BY: KEVIN SMITH

An ambitious restoration is underway at this site, which as of 2009 has restricted access but will soon feature trails open to the public and made up of lake, marsh, riparian woods, and thicket habitats. Many tall snags provide platform and cavity nesting areas. Watch for Bewick's Wren, California Quail, Common Yellowthroat, Double-Crested Cormorant, Northern Flicker, Red-winged Blackbird, Osprey, Rufous Hummingbird, Western Scrub-Jay, and Song Sparrow. In the right season, Cheadle Lake is also a good spot to scan for migrant waterbirds, such as terns. An historic wagon trail is across US Hwy 20 from the lake. Ridgeway Butte towers over the site, and will eventually be included in the trail system.



**Sponsor:** National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program