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Startup: Portland Birdwatching Experiences

by Jonathan Brinckman, The Oregonian
 Saturday September 05, 2009, 7:00 AM

Startup: Vital signs of a young regional company

Portland Birdwatching Experiences Portland Formed in March 2009

The product: Customized birdwatching tours in the Portland area.

What stage: About 50 tours so far.

Price: \$30 an hour for one to five people. Meals are extra.

The founder: Laurretta Young, 55, was born in Wyoming and moved to Portland with her family at age 14. She has a bachelor's from Oregon State University, a medical degree from Oregon Health & Science University and worked for Kaiser Permanente for 25 years -- the last 15 as chief of psychiatry.

Employees: Just Young, though she may hire another guide.

Her favorite place for tours: Sauvie Island, because of its diversity of birds, followed closely by Mount Tabor.

The idea source: Young took a bird tour in Hawaii and found it one of the most rewarding tourist experiences of her life. When she returned to Portland, she found no private birding tours and decided to start her own.

The money: \$1,000 to create a Web site.

Young's dream: To offer tours all over Oregon, including coastal estuaries such as Bandon Marsh, the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge and national wildlife refuges near Corvallis and Eugene.

Her favorite bird: The meadowlark. "There aren't many around. I like their song. It's very melodious and uplifting and reminds me of summer."

Web site: www.portlandbirdwatching.com

Know a startup? Send ideas for business startups to profile to Jonathan Brinckman: 503-221-8190; jbrinckman@news.oregonian.com



A bird-watching tour in Hawaii prompted Laurretta Young to form her own company in Portland.

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Posted by **mailslot** on [09/05/09 at 8:47AM](#)

Dumbest thing I've ever heard of. Ms. Young-you need to have your head examined.

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Posted by **blackotter1** on [09/05/09 at 9:08AM](#)

well, mailslot locked up just like your mind. this is the guy who when they invented the ignition key was want to protest as to the plight of the buggy whip manufacturers. great idea. there are birding tours all over the state, nation and world. why not one here with a great population base to draw from and great interest as well. can't help but feel that a brochure in local hotels and motels for things to do would be a great idea for tourists. tourists can shop anywhere but what is there to do in the portland area.

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Posted by **karstenpdx** on [09/08/09 at 10:14PM](#)

Great idea. So much amazing stuff all around us and we don't even notice it or know what we are looking at.

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