

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



General Meeting

Thursday, April 15, 2021
Webex Meeting 7pm
See details below

In Search of Meadowlarks
Professor John Marzluff

How to join the meeting: The April meeting will be held online via Cisco Webex. To receive a link to join the meeting, email meetings@sacramentoaudubon.org. There is no cost to join the meeting and you do not have to be a member to attend. There is a cap of 100 attendees. For more information visit www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker.

Professor John Marzluff explains: As a wildlife scientist and birder, I think about our relationship with, and effects on, nature. As I searched for meadowlarks and other open country birds among farms and ranches, I learned how these species flee the plow and how many farmers adjust their actions to lessen this exodus. I birded and talked with farmers on their lands from Nebraska to California to Costa Rica. Here I bring news to you from these farms that show how some birds are extirpated while others evolve to live among the crops we need for our own sustenance. I focus on the actions of many farmers that coexist with nature because "it is the right thing to do." You'll learn about wine producers that welcome barn owls to their vineyards to help control rodents, organic producers that fal-



Bobolink

John Marzluff

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BIG DAY OF GIVING

Dear SAS Members and Friends,

Mark your calendars! The Big Day of Giving (BDOG) is on Thursday, May 6th. BDOG is an annual online event in which local non-profits can gain extra funds to support their missions! You can help SAS with its mission by going to: www.bigdayofgiving.org/sacramento-audubonsociety. There is a \$15 minimum donation. Starting April 22nd, you can schedule your donation prior to the event. Use the web address above.

The Golden 1 Credit Union match is back! Once again, when you use your Golden1 credit card or debit card, Golden 1 will match your donation! Longtime BDOG sponsor, Golden 1 Credit Union, is offering a \$50,000 proportional match to the donations its members support during Big Day of Giving. Gifts made both during the early giving period (April 22-May 5) and during Big Day of Giving on May 6 will count toward the proportional match.

This Month's Suggested Birding

APRIL 2021 Cathie LaZier, empid77@gmail.com

April is the birdiest month! Newer birders will find that the usually difficult to see wrens and towhees are sitting high and singing! Red-shouldered Hawks are loudly calling and trying out various nests, and Tree Swallows, White-breasted Nuthatches and Oak Titmice are actively investigating tree cavities. Bushtits are busy at their hanging sock-like nests. Larger tree cavity nesting birds such as Common Mergansers and Wood Ducks are sometimes seen circling the wooded areas looking for nesting sites. Almost anywhere along the American River Parkway is good birding in this season. Some suggested birding spots are as follows:

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. Park in the last parking lot on your

left, just before the boat launch parking area. Check the riverside trees for Bullock's Orioles. Upstream is a good area to find the elusive Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and you have a view across the river of the Nimbus Fish Hatchery. Downstream you may find Great Blue Herons nesting, and Phainopepla and California Quail are often found here. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Bucks Creek Trail/Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills

An easy walk along this riparian habitat will turn up resident and migrating species such as woodpeckers, wrens, bluebirds and warblers. Common Gallinules are usually easy to view here and in this varied habitat, there is always the possibility of unusual finds. Access is at the southeast corner of the intersection of Silva Valley Parkway and Serrano Parkway. To reach this spot, exit Hwy 50 at Exit 31, Silva Valley Parkway, and turn left. Follow the



Red-shouldered Hawk
Dan Brown

April Birding continued on page 2

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low some land each year to the benefit of yellowthroats, ranchers that employ intensive, rotational grazing to coexist with predators and trout, and a rancher that traded cows for tourists. One of humanity's grand challenges is to conserve nature while providing for a growing and increasingly affluent population. The lessons I've learned from agrarians and the scientific literature suggests strategies that we can each employ to help meet this challenge.

John Marzluff is James W Ridgeway Professor of Wildlife Science at the University of Washington. His graduate and initial post-doctoral research focused on the social behavior and ecology of jays and ravens. He continues this theme investigating the intriguing behavior of crows, ravens, and jays. His current research focuses on the interactions of ravens and wolves in Yellowstone. He teaches Ornithology, Governance and Conservation of Rare Species, Field Research in Yellowstone, and Natural and Cultural History of Costa Rica. Professor Marzluff has written five books and edited several others. His *Welcome to Subirdia* (2014 Yale) discovers that moderately settled lands host a splendid array of biological diversity and suggests ways in which people can steward these riches to benefit birds and themselves. His most recent *In Search of Meadowlarks* (2020 Yale) connects our agriculture and diets to the conservation of birds and other wildlife.

Dr. Marzluff has mentored over 40 graduate students and authored over 140 scientific papers on various aspects of bird behavior and wildlife management. He is a member of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Recovery Team for the critically endangered Mariana Crow, a former member of the Washington Biodiversity Council, a Fellow of the American Ornithologist's Union, and a National Geographic Explorer.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are now held online the third Thursday of the month. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker for further information. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Sacramento Audubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

Anthony Asay, Program Chair

New To the Website: Past presentations from this year's on-line speakers are available on the SAS website. They can be viewed at www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker. You have to scroll down to the past presentations.

LOCKDOWN BIRDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY ADVENTURES DURING THIS COVID 19 NIGHTMARE!

On March 9th 2020, my wife, Kathy Moore, and I returned from a great trip to Tanzania just in time for the Covid lockdown to start here in California on March 16th. So, we started daily exercise walks around our Rosemont neighborhood that were basically our only birding, with the exception of a few local rarity chases.

Around April 1st, I started submitting daily Ebird lists and have continued this every day, with my streak being 323. And, of course I have had my camera with me and have compiled a nice collection of images. For the last 3 months or so, I have birded from our yard only, keeping close to home while a remodel project was in progress. As of this writing, I have recorded over 100 species in my neighborhood! Many of these species have been "flyovers", that I have ID'ed with photos. The highlights have been, Cackling Geese (a flock of 61), Hooded Mergansers, a pair, Canvasback, Iceland Gull, Cattle Egret, White-faced Ibis, Merlin (several times), Peregrine Falcon (twice), Tricolored Blackbird flocks (in spring), Phainopepla, Swainson's Thrush, Say's Phoebe, Common Raven and flocks of Pine Siskins, and most recently, a couple of Red-breasted Sapsuckers! It has been exciting to learn that all these species reside or fly over our neighborhood! The spring migration was good and as expected, summer was so-so. Winter was the most productive, with many species of waterfowl and gulls making almost daily appearances and now spring is here again. I look forward to every morning, standing in the front yard or walking a few blocks for about an hour or so with my camera at my side, recording the birds by sight, sounds and camera. A collection of the best images can be seen on my Smugmug photo sharing pages at naturestoc.smugmug.com/Birds/2020-Covid-neighborhood-bird-photography. This gallery is a work in progress and will be added to as Covid time goes on!"



Red-breasted Sapsucker
Dan Brown

Dan Brown

April Birding continued from page 1

Parkway about a mile to the first stop light, make a U-turn and immediately park along the Parkway.

Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach

The willow covered sand bars in this area are good for migrants and resident breeding birds, wrens, towhees, and other small passerines. Crossing the levee from the parking lot, you can follow several trails, all leading to the riverfront. Be aware that much of the area is very sandy. From H Street (north side of Sac State University), take Carlson Ave north till it crosses Sandburg and dead ends into the park.

Gibson Ranch, Elverta

This county park, a former ranch, has varied habitats. Drive to the very last parking lot and you can access the wooded trail along Dry Creek. Walking either way you should find a variety of birds. Elsewhere in the park there is also a small lake and several picnic areas with mown grassy areas and shady trees. This would be a good trip for families; you may want to take a lunch! It's located at 8556 Gibson Ranch Road in Elverta, just north off Elverta Road west of Watt Avenue. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.



Bushy-tit
Dan Brown

Watt Avenue Access, American River Parkway

Entering the park, turn right and park in the last parking area on the left. Walking upriver along the foot-of-the-levee trail, you will find many small paths going down to the riverbank. Coyotes den in this area and you are quite likely to see one. The wooded area is good for all the small passerine birds and after about a mile the river widens and develops channels flowing around a couple of islands. A little further on, bear left across a small footbridge and keep left along the river channels. This is a good area for Wood Ducks. The park is located on the south side of the river off LaRiviera Blvd, under the Watt Avenue overpass. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Global Big Day - May 8, 2021

On 8 May, will you join birders from more than 175 countries and be a part of Global Big Day? You don't have to commit to birding for 24 hours—even 5 or 10 minutes of watching birds at home makes you part of the team. Last year, Global Big Day brought more birders together virtually than ever before.

Participating is easy—you can even be part of Global Big Day from home. If you can spare 5 or 10 minutes, report your bird observations to eBird online or with our free eBird Mobile app. If you have more time, submit checklists of birds throughout the day. You never know what you might spot. Your observations help us better understand global bird populations through products like the animated abundance maps brought to you by eBird Science.

Last year, Global Big Day brought more birders together virtually than ever before. More than 50,000 people from 175 countries submitted a staggering 120,000 checklists with eBird, setting a new world record for a single day of birding. Will you help us surpass last year's records? However you choose to participate, please continue to put safety first and follow your local guidelines.

How to participate

Get an eBird account: eBird is a worldwide bird checklist program used by millions of birders. It's what allows us to compile everyone's sightings into a single massive Global Big Day list—while at the same time collecting the data to help scientists better understand birds. It's 100% free from start to finish.

- Watch birds on 8 May: It's that simple. You don't need to be a bird expert or go out all day long, even 10 minutes of birding from home counts. Global Big Day runs from midnight to midnight in your local time zone. You can report what you find from anywhere in the world.

- Enter what you see and hear in eBird: You can enter your sightings via our website or download the free eBird Mobile app to make submitting lists even easier. Please enter your checklists before 11 May to be included in our initial results announcement.

Global Big Day Pro Tips

- If you're new to eBird or want to make your checklists more valuable for science and conservation, take our free eBird Essentials course.
- Get the Cornell Lab's Merlin Bird ID app for help identifying tricky species, then use eBird to report them so your sightings are part of the Global Big Day totals.
- Use eBird Mobile Explore to find recently reported species or new places to go birding nearby.
- Take photos and add them to your checklist—they might end up on the Global Big Day page!
- Make your sightings more valuable: submit complete checklists, keep counts of the birds that you see, and keep multiple checklists throughout the day.
- Share what you're seeing on social media with #globalbigday!

On 8 May, we hope you'll be a part of our global birding team. Have fun, enjoy the birds you find, stay safe, and share your sightings on eBird. Because in our world, every bird counts. Check it all out on ebird.org/globalbigday



Black-crowned Night Heron
John C Mittermeier

THE 2021 NATURE BOWL

Extraordinary times call for an extraordinary nature contest, going on now, March 15 through May14!

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is inviting families across our great state to participate in the fun and educational Nature Bowl competition.

Nature Bowl has been an exciting science event for teams of third through sixth grade students for more than 35 years. Students usually compete in person at natural resource sites throughout CDFW's North Central Region. Last year saw the event cancelled, along with everything else.

This year Nature Bowl is rolling with the challenging times by issuing this nature challenge to all California families with school age students.

Nature is Calling! Your California nature, that is...

Just like the spring before us, it's time for rejuvenation, time to emerge from lockdown hibernation, time to get outside and give your family a healthy dose of what we all need: Nature!

Your challenge is to work together as a family to compete in these five nature activities—and win cool nature prizes!

Here are the activities:

- Nature Relay—Scavenger Hunt Safari
- Nature Investigations—Discover and Become
- Bell Ringers—Create a Game
- Team Problem Solving—Nature Snapshots
- Environmercials—Film an Advertisement

The Nature Bowl Family Challenge is open from March 15 through May 14, 2021. Sign your family up today!

Contact genelle.treaster@wildlife.ca.gov to register.



Nuttall's Woodpecker
Dan Brown

This Nuttall's Woodpecker is another of the many outstanding, and some surprising birds in the Rosemont neighborhood taken by Dan Brown, which can be found at: naturestoc.smugmug.com/Birds/2020-Covid-neighborhood-bird-photography.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

So what is the difference between a bird call and a bird song?

They are both ways for birds to communicate. Humans, however, have put bird vocalizations into two main groups because birds use calls and songs on different occasions and for different purposes. You can find more at sacramentoaudubon.org/kids-corner/what-is-the-difference-between-a-bird-call-and-a-bird-song.

Calls are used to share a bird's location with others in their species or to warn them of suspected danger. Calls are usually short in duration and are made up of just a few notes. Both male and female birds use calls. Birds' calls are frequently heard throughout the year. This is not the case with songs. Calls are sometimes used to notify other birds in their flock, or family group, that a newly discovered food source is nearby. Young birds use begging calls to tell their parents that they wish to be fed.

Songs are used when birds are claiming or protecting their territory or to attract a mate. Songs are also used for family bonding. They are frequently heard in the spring months and are more complex and musical than calls are. It was previously thought that male songbirds did most of the singing; but we now realize that many females also sing. The female Northern Cardinal is a good example of this and is extremely vocal. Birds that sing songs are usually inhabitants of dense areas or areas of low visibility, such as in forests, jungles, dense scrubland, or areas with tall

grass. Birds that inhabit open areas, such as lakes, don't have as much need for songs because they are more easily seen. Some

species of birds have many different songs and some species only have one song. Odd as it may seem, there are songbirds that do not sing songs at all, like jays and Cedar Waxwings.

Starlings and Mockingbirds imitate songs of other songbirds and may imitate other sounds as well.

There are some birds that do not have either calls or songs. These include storks, pelicans, and some species of vultures. However, most birds do have calls and many have both calls and songs.



Cedar Waxwing
Chris Conard



Northern Mockingbird
Chris Conard

AMERICAN RIVER PARKWAY NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Sacramento County Regional Parks Department is currently preparing an update of the American River Parkway Natural Resources Management Plan. The County states that the plan will provide information for managing, maintaining, and enhancing Parkway resources. It will describe existing Parkway resources, the effects of disturbances such as flood, fire, invasive species, and human impacts, and resource protection and enhancement opportunities. It will advise resource management to promote healthy ecosystems and resource protections, while balancing other Parkway goals of flood control, recreation, and public safety.

The public draft of the NRMP was released March 15, 2021 and will be open for public review and comment for a 60-day period. The Department hosted four virtual workshops to receive public comments on the plan over March 19-26.

A group of local ornithologists, ecologists, and scientists, including SAS' Chris Conard, Jeri Langham, Ed Pandolfino, Dan Airola, and others provided extensive input on the plan. Comments recommended protection for key parkway resources, including open aquatic pond habitats. We advocated restoration of areas dominated by invasive nonnative species to grassland, riparian, and woodland habitats, and for maintaining certain areas of nonnative species, such as black locust trees, where they provide high wildlife value.

The letter also recommended maintaining island habitats that are protected from human disturbance, some of which support heron rookeries and Swainson's Hawk nest sites, and nesting and foraging areas for Yellow-billed Magpies. We advocated for broader enactment of humane and effective measures addressing homelessness to reduce damage to Parkway resources, as well as control of feral cat feeding stations and unauthorized mountain bike use. Finally, we advocated for robust funding needed to implement effective resource protection and management programs.

Many of you have probably seen that Parkway use has increased dramatically during the pandemic, with associated damage from trampling, creations of unauthorized trails, and human disturbance of key wildlife habitats. The plan offers an opportunity to use increased public use and support for the Parkway to garner more resources for resource protection and enhancement.

Our team has not reviewed the plan yet. We encourage all Sacramento Audubon members to review the plan and offer support for a plan that protects and enhances the Parkway's habitats for birds, other wildlife, and natural resources.

Information on the plan and public input sessions is available at regionalparks.sac-county.net/Parks/Pages/NaturalResourcesManagement.aspx. Comments can be sent to Liz Bellas at County Parks (bellase@sacounty.net) until the end of April.

Birds do not have a good sense of smell and must depend on vision and hearing for their survival. Therefore, their calls and songs are extremely important for communication out in the wild. There are other kinds of sounds that some birds make that aid in communication, such as woodpeckers drumming on trees.

Other birds make sounds with their wings or tails that help them communicate with one another, like the sound the male Anna's Hummingbird makes with its tail feathers during an aerial dive display.

Want to learn more about Bird Songs? Check out these great resources:

- This video from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology: academy.allaboutbirds.org/bird-song-hero-video-quiz/
- The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has this interactive page of birds and their songs: www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/bird_songs_interactive/index.html
- This article from National Audubon has some fantastic owl sounds: www.audubon.org/news/owls-look-listen-mimic-measure

OPEN COUNTRY TO THE EAST

No one would mistake Sacramento for a wilderness, but we do have access to a surprising amount of open space in the east county. Some of it is under threat from development, but fortunately a lot is protected or relatively safe for the medium term. One could easily spend the better part of the day in the east county, avoiding the madding crowd. Starting in the northeast and moving south, Payen Rd is a little spur off White Rock Rd, 1.2 miles east of East Bidwell St, south of Hwy 50 and metastasizing Folsom. Easy to miss. It's only 1.7 miles to the turnaround point, but you pass along a lightly traveled road, with a chance for uncommon raptors, such as Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon. And Burrowing Owls, sometimes, especially along the old rail line. Look for Tricoloreds among the blackbirds.

Backtrack and head west along White Rock Rd, pass Bidwell, and go another 1.6 miles, turning south on Scott Rd. There's too much speeding traffic for a peaceful country drive, but the road winds through beautiful country. Raptors and Lewis's Woodpeckers are frequently found. Only a few spots to pull off the road, the best being just over four miles along on the wide shoulder before crossing Carson Creek. Lewis's Woodpeckers are often here from October to April.

In just under four more miles you'll reach the intersection with Latrobe Rd. Turn left and then go straight onto the often heavily potholed dirt portion of Latrobe Rd. Even if you have a car with low clearance, the first half-mile is passable. The lower, rocky section can have Rufous-crowned Sparrows along with typical oak woodland species. Lewis's vary from abundant to absent. If you have a vehicle with a little clearance, and the road isn't too muddy, you can continue four miles to Michigan Bar Rd. It's typically unsigned, but the only open road you'll encounter. Turn right. The last two miles of Latrobe and the first two of Michigan Bar are open, rocky grasslands, with great sightlines for raptors, views of the Sierra, Horned Larks and open country species.



Horned Lark
Chris Conard

It's best to avoid Latrobe Rd after midmorning on weekends because it gets a lot of traffic, some tearing up and down, where making dust and throwing mud is the point. Mornings and weekdays are thankfully quieter. You can also head straight to the less-visited Michigan Bar Rd, accessed from Hwy 16 just east of Rancho Murieta. Turn left. Nearly the first mile is paved, there's a narrow bridge across the Cosumnes River (avoid lingering near the residence on the south side of the river, but you can scan from the bridge and park on the north side and walk back—avoid blocking the road or gates). The road emerges from oak woodland in two miles from Hwy 16, and is usually passable in any car most of the way to Latrobe Rd (mentioned above). Great views are all around from the highpoints on clear days.

Back to Hwy 16, go east a half-mile to Lone Rd, and then south four miles to a right on Meiss Rd. It's typically drivable in any car, driven carefully, depending on recent rains. It's 7.7 miles to Dillard Rd and you'll pass through open country. Winter raptors abound. Mountain Bluebirds are occasional. The rare Vesper is a treat; Savannah Sparrows are abundant except for late spring and summer. In spring, a Grasshopper Sparrow may be singing near the first big rise if coming from the east (or the last, if coming the other way), and Lesser Nighthawks are consistent at dawn and dusk in spring and summer about three miles from Dillard Rd.

There is more. Clay Station Rd off Dillard. Rancho Seco park and the Howard Ranch trail. Into Amador County, there's Carbondale Rd. Tonzi Rd. Others.

You are welcome to view Chris's photo album here: www.flickr.com/photos/conardc/albums/72157718446524406

Chris Conard

Chris Conard is a Natural Resource Specialist at the SRWTP Bufferlands, having worked there since 1997 with a committed team to improve the habitat for Burrowing Owls and other wildlife. For more information on the Bufferlands, visit www.bufferlands.com.

Godwit Days Festival Returns, Goes Virtual

You may be among the people who've been wondering what is happening with Godwit Days in 2021. Will it again be postponed due to Covid-19?

Well, the suspense is over! The Godwit Days Spring Migration Birding Festival will be offering a free, virtual, three-day program **April 16 through 18**. It will highlight some favorite species and the spots where they occur.

Most sessions will be 60 to 90 minutes in length, with breaks in between. Some will be live streamed (and also recorded for future viewing) and others will be pre-recorded and posted online.

Participants will be asked to make donations to keep the festival going, both this year and beyond. (In 2020, the festival had to cancel a mere 6 weeks before the event, after money had been spent that couldn't be recouped.)

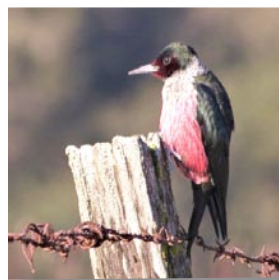
The complete program schedule will be posted soon at www.godwitdays.org, as will instructions on how to access the sessions. These are just a few among the sessions being planned:

- A Bird in the Hand: Banding at the Humboldt Bay Bird Observatory featuring HBBO staff and/or volunteers
- Curiosities & Oddities in the Humboldt State Wildlife Museum with Curator Tamar Danufsky
- Humboldt Birding: Past, Present & Future, A Birds & Beers Social Zoom
- Surveying Shorebirds of Humboldt Bay: Plenary Lecture by HSU wildlife professor Dr. Mark Colwell
- Bird Songs & Calls: An Identification Workshop with birder/biologist David Juliano
- Shorebird Fly-off: Facebook Live at the Arcata Marsh with Dr. Mark Colwell & Rob Fowler
- The Language of Birds: Keynote Lecture by Nathan Pieplow, blogger on recording, identifying, and interpreting bird sounds (www.earbirding.com)
- And many more!

Also to be posted online during the festival: announcement of the winner of Humboldt County's Bird of the Year for 2020, as well as winners in the 18th annual student bird art contest, cosponsored by Friends of the Arcata Marsh and Redwood Region Audubon Society (RRAS), and in the 16th annual student nature writing contest, sponsored by RRAS.



Pyramid Peak
Chris Conard



Lewis's Woodpecker
Chris Conard

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Please contact President, Bill Bianco, at biancowm@yahoo.com; or 916-372-3318 to find out how the Board Meeting is being held. Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting is April 27.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at sacramentoaudubon.org/board-minutes.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Wayne Blunk, Jean & Bob Bonar, Janna Buwalda, David & Maxine Clark, Jodie L Crandell, Mel & Donell Duvall, Mary L Flint, Stanley G Ford, Virginia Gardiner, Angelique Goodhue, Daniel Griffin, Georganna Griffin, Michael Gutierrez, David Harlow, Truman Holtzclaw, Jennifer House, Monte Ikemire, Carey A Johnson, Eric Johnson, Terrance & Marion Jones, Fred Klass & Peggy Platt, Len & Rita Marowitz, Lachlan McClenahan, Arla Mc Guire, Regina & R David Minister, Michael Nehl, Laura Nickerson, Lynn Saxelby, Katharine & Frank Severson, Jerry & Laura Simkins, Rick Skehen, Susan E Solarz, Jon Wato, Connie West and Your Cause-Npo Nonprofit made donations to the **General Fund**.

Ian Baldwin, Maxine Cornwell, Mike Cruikshank, Douglas & Mary Davy, Timothy D Fitzer, Mary L Flint, Stanley G Ford, Virginia Gardiner, Georganna Griffin, Monte Ikemire, Jane S Jackson, Carey A Johnson, Arla Mc Guire, Jim & Patricia Moses, Laura Nickerson, Jill Pease, Carmen Pereira, Lynn Saxelby, Rick Skehen and Jane Woehl & Michael O'Sullivan made donations to the **Education and Conservation Fund**.

Judith Bell, Janna Buwalda, Mike Cruikshank, Amber Degn, Mary L Flint, Stanley G Ford, Georganna Griffin, Norman E Hill, Monte Ikemire, Carey A Johnson, Arla Mc Guire, Laura Nickerson, David Rial, Lynn Saxelby, Rick Skehen, Susan Thrower and Arthur E Watkins made donations to the **Bobelaine Sanctuary**.

Many thanks to all of you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community. Donations to the Bobelaine Sanctuary are encouraged to help defray the cost of management.

Field Trip Information

Due to the continuing coronavirus threat, SAS is not offering field trips for the month of April. Suggested places to bird according to the month can be found on page 1.



SAS WEBSITE HAS A NEW BIRDING LOCATIONS RESOURCE

Sacramento Audubon Volunteers have been hard at work creating an interactive online birding locations guide. Working from the *Birding in the Sacramento Region* booklet, last published in 2008, they've updated and added information. Now this resource is available at your fingertips, whether on your smartphone, tablet, or computer.

We'd love to hear your feedback on this new resource. Check it out at www.sacramento-audubon.org/birding-locations. If you have corrections or recommended changes for a location, suggestions for a new location, or any other feedback, please email webmaster@sacramentoaudubon.org.

Special thanks to Nancy Kapellas for creating our fantastic maps. Thank you to Maureen Geiger, Chris Conard, Paul Miller, Dan Airola, and Ed Harper for providing updated information and to the entire website committee for their extraordinary efforts in putting this project together.



SAS EDUCATION CHAIR NEEDED

The Education Chair is a volunteer position that coordinates the efforts of lead volunteers on the Education Committee. The chair and lead volunteers are responsible for a variety of activities focused on reaching out to both adults and children. Examples of these activities include community outreach, beginning birder activities, and family friendly and youth activities. This committee has been operating with great success for several years and contacts and volunteers are already in place.

The Education Chair also serves as the primary contact to the general public, fielding inquiries and passing them on to the appropriate committee member. If you are interested in this position and helping Sacramento Audubon fulfill one of its primary missions, please contact Bill Bianco: president@sacramentoaudubon.org.

Seasonal Sightings

February 1 to February 28 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

After a few storms last month, February shaped up to be another largely dry period in this historically dry winter. Many of the highlights were of birds continuing from January, but more widely seen in February. Also continuing was the pattern of higher than usual winter finch numbers. A male **Redhead**, rare in Sacramento County, especially in publicly accessible spots, was first detected on Mather Lake on 2/20. It moved around between local water bodies, including Marilyn Evans Pond and the N Mather Dr Wetlands, continuing into March. A **Surf Scoter** was found on the San Joaquin River off Sherman Island on 2/21, where they show up fairly regularly, and the two **White-winged Scoters** continued near the Folsom Lake dam. A **Red-breasted Merganser** and one to two **Pacific Loons** were also reported continuing near the dam. The **Red-necked Grebe**

found at the Port of Sacramento continued from last month through 2/12, while another was on Lake Solano from 2/1-2.

Allen's Hummingbirds are very rarely found in Sacramento County, but are somewhat consistent in the extreme southwestern portion of the county. A male photographed at Brannan Island SRA on 2/26 fit that pattern. The cooperative male **Broad-billed Hummingbird**, found on 1/29 in a private yard in central Davis, continued into March. A **Pacific Golden-Plover** was reported at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 2/16-20, and up to two **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** were found in the vicinity of the Yolo County Landfill Pond, north of Rd 28H, through most of the month; a first cycle **Glaucous Gull** was reported from the same location on 2/16. A **Least Bittern** reported on 2/13 from Cache Creek at Wild Wings County Park was intriguing for a species rarely found locally in winter. **Bald Eagles** began nesting for the second year in a row on the

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members.

Robin Aurelius	Karen Link
Beverly Braverman	Stephen Messenger
Janice Brial	Michael Nehl
Jeannette Crockwell	Joseph Samuel & Fern Cole Jordan
Brian Guth	Larry Stark
Eric Johnson	Debra & Joe Strunk
Janis Kukla	
Linda Lingelbach	

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:

- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds;
- Promote the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach;
- Provide, encourage and support environmental educational opportunities; and
- Provide proactive leadership in the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Your membership supports the SAS mission of conservation, environmental education and protection of the region's natural ecosystems and diverse wildlife populations. All new members will only receive our newsletter online so be sure to include your email address and check if you would like to be added to our Action Alert List.

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New members will receive The Observer, in color, via email. (Please provide your email address above.) If you would prefer a black and white paper copy mailed to you instead, please email: membership@sacramentoaudubon.org

Observations continued

lower Cosumnes River Preserve, continuing the trend of local expansion. A flock of 8-10 **Long-eared Owls** at a traditional roost site was found on 2/28 at a typically closed section of Cosumnes River Preserve. They had not been present there earlier this season (dependably unpredictable, this enigmatic species), though this makes three years in a row that they spent at least part of the winter near the same spot; a roost of four was also present on 2/14 on private property near Esparto.

A cooperative **Red-naped Sapsucker** found on 2/7 at Rollingwood Bluffs on the west side of Lake Natoma continued into March and was enjoyed by many. The **Eastern Phoebe**, first found on 1/24 along Cache Creek near Wild Wings County Park, continued to mid-month. The **Tropical Kingbird** found at Reichmuth Park on 1/31 was enjoyed by many as it continued, increasingly sporadically, through the end of the month. A **Sage**

Thrasher was photographed near the Bridgeway Island Pond on 2/6. A small flock of **Red Crossbills** was enjoyed by several observers from 2/6-12 at the Old City Cemetery, and a flock of 12 was found at Elk Grove Regional Park on 2/14. On 2/22, a **Harris's Sparrow** was with a crowned-sparrow flock adjacent to the Putah Creek Riparian Reserve, continuing into March near the junction of Levee and Hopkins Rds, where it was enjoyed by many.

To view photos of some of the highlights, visit www.sacramentoaudubon.org/bird-sightings, and then click on the highlighted eBird checklists.

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000-foot contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central

Valley Bird Club listserv (groups.io/g/centralvalleybirds) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Kathy Blankenship, Max Brodie, Aidan Brubaker, Konshau Duman, Chris Dunford, Andy Engilis, Stephen Fettig, Steve Hampton, John Harris, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Rich Howard, Emmett Iverson, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Chris McAllister, Michael Perrone, Dan Murphy, Nora Papian, Katie Rian, Jim Rowoth, Steve Scott, Gaven Stacey, Kirk Swenson, Eddie Tache, Simon Tache, John Trochet, Bobby Walsh, Rick Williams, and Lynette Williams.

Thanks to everyone for their reports--without them, this column would not be possible.

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Chris Conard

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White Tailed Kite Dan Brown

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Copy deadline is the 15th of the month. Send all copy to the Editor. Observations must reach the Seasonal Observations Editor by the 8th of the month.

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ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

7pm, April 15, 2021

Professor John Marzluff

In Search of Meadowlarks

The April meeting will be held online via Cisco Webex. To receive a link to join the meeting, email meetings@sacramentoaudubon.org.



John Marzluff