

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



General Meeting

Thursday, January 16, 2020
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

The Return of California's Golden Beaver

Greg and Alex Kerekes

There is no general meeting in December but we look forward to January's meeting. The speakers will be Greg and Alex Kerekes and the title will be *The Return of California's Golden Beaver*.



Golden Beaver

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Sacramento Audubon](https://facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

Anthony Asay, Program Chair

DID YOU KNOW ?

On May 17, 1987 Bobelaine was dedicated as a state Ecological Reserve, providing added protection for the Sanctuary. But for many, the highlight of the ceremonies was the announcement of the naming of a beautiful mature stand of Valley Oaks in the preserve for two charter members, Lily B and Benjamin G Eizinger, better known as Willie and Ben.

Sacramento Audubon Society: Second Twenty-Five Years, page 22.

CALLING YOUNG BIRDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES 9TH ANNUAL KIDS CBC

Mark your calendars for January 4 and 5, the first weekend of 2020! Please join the Effie Yeaw Nature Center (EYNC) and Sacramento Audubon Society in the Ninth Annual Kids' Christmas Bird Count.

These family Bird Counts provide an exciting opportunity for kids, young adults and their families to be outside looking at birds and enjoying nature. Participants will be joining citizen scientists all over the world and will gain practice finding, identifying and counting all the birds they see. Day 1 for the younger birders aged 6 to 11 will be Saturday, January 4 from 9-12:30 and will be followed by a companionable lunch with other birder families at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Questions can be sent to Maureen Geiger at mkgeiger@comcast.net or texting/calling 916-281-6652.

A second site for older birders 12-18 years and up and their families will occur on Sunday, January 5 with faster paced birding for more experienced young people at William Pond Park. It will be followed by a Compilation Gathering at a nearby restaurant. Questions can be sent to Wendy Money at wendyjwbirds@outlook.com or by calling/texting 916-205-3914.

Space is limited for both days, and children must be pre-registered to attend. Registration is first come, first served and opens on December 1, 2019. To register go to effieyeaw.eventbrite.com.

SACRAMENTO AREA CBCS FOR 2019-2020

Here are the dates so please think about signing up for one, especially if you've never gone before. Further information will be in next month's *Observer*.

Woodfords: Wednesday, December 18, Dan Brown and Tim Fitzer

Coordinator: Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207, e-mail: spskua2@comcast.net
Compiler: Dan Brown, 916-704-0951, naturestoc@aol.com

Sacramento: Saturday, December 21

Compiler: Dan Williams, 714-943-1266, e-mail: jaegermaestro@yahoo.com

Folsom: Sunday, December 29

Compiler: Chris Conard, 916-203-1610, e-mail: conardc@gmail.com

Lincoln: Monday, December 30

Compiler: Ed Pandolfino, e-mail: erpfromca@ao.com

KIDS: You must register.

Kids: Saturday, January 4, 2020

Compiler: Maureen Geiger, 916-281-6652, e-mail: mkgeiger@comcast.net

Teens: Sunday, January 5, 2020

Compiler: Wendy Money, 916-205-3914, e-mail: wendyjwbirds@outlook.com

For locations and dates of additional Christmas Bird Counts, visit natureali.org/cbcs.htm

Field Trip Findings

Colusa WLR (11/12) — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: “The unseasonably warm weather continued this morning when our group of 7 met at the huge viewing platform. To our delight, we found the pond had substantial water that had attracted many ducks, geese and other wetland species. We spent just over an hour on the deck discussing the various plumage patterns the different duck species were displaying, their courtship behavior already in evidence, and how to tell the difference between Snow and Ross’s geese, as well as between Canada and Cackling Geese. Other species including Black-necked Stilt, Killdeer, Red-winged and Brewer’s Blackbirds kept us on our toes and the discussion vibrant. A Peregrine Falcon tried in vain to retrieve its prey (unknown bird species seen from a distance through scopes) from a host of hungry thieves including two Red-tailed Hawks, Turkey Vultures and a couple of Herring Gulls (they were not all there at the same time). Our walk on the adjacent riparian trail was extremely quiet, though a single Tricolored Blackbird was seen from the viewing platform located halfway down the trail. We finished our outing with a drive around the auto tour route. Here we saw many white geese of both species including one dark morph of each, Greater White-fronted Geese, and most all of the expected duck species. Non waterfowl birds of interest included Belted Kingfisher, American Kestrel, Wilson’s Snipe, Long-billed Curlew and an extremely beautiful Ring-necked Pheasant. In all, 52 species were seen.”

Cosumnes River Preserve (11/10) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “9 people joined me for a walk to the river. Highlights were an adult Bald Eagle, good scope views of Wilson’s Snipe, and a flurry of small passerines in extensive grape vine growth.”

Yolo Bypass (11/9) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “We had a fairly large group of 18 enthusiastic, cooperative and thoroughly enjoyable birders for this trip. The weather was delightful and we tallied over 60 species. Who could ask for more? Highlights included American Bittern, Blue-winged Teal and thousands of geese (mostly Greater White-fronted and Snow, but we were able to pick out several Ross’s as well). The non-avian highlight was a group of 8 River Otters seen from a short distance, which everyone really enjoyed. At one point, we

changed direction in search of a reported Swamp Sparrow, which only a couple of people in the group got glimpses of, but everyone was intent on searching, and seemed to enjoy the thrill of the chase. A great trip and thanks to everyone who attended.”

Lincoln WWTP (11/7) — Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: “This gorgeous warm autumn day was perfect for a birding trip to the Lincoln WWTP. The number of duck species was not record-breaking, but we managed to find Hooded Mergansers, Canvasbacks, Shovelers, and Ruddy Ducks. Buffleheads were abundant and dominated one of the large ponds. A nice array of shorebirds was present, including Long-billed Dowitchers, Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, and Least Sandpipers. Almost a dozen Snowy Egrets crowded into one pond corner, apparently pursuing something yummy there. A wetland area visible from the levee around the settling ponds produced several calling Virginia Rails and one Sora. Nearby grasslands sported a cruising Harrier, a hovering Kestrel, and a slow-circling Red-tailed Hawk.”

Solano Lake/Putah Creek (11/5) — Ann Burris, co-leader with Tim Fitzer and Mark Martucci, reported: “9 birders enjoyed a walk around the lake and campground. Even though the Western Screech Owl eluded us it was a bird morning. Some of the highlights were; 5 species of woodpeckers, Sora and Virginia Rails, 2 species of Goldeneye, Phainopepla, Brown Creeper, Purple Finch and a flyover Bald Eagle. We tallied 60 species and had lots of laughs plus good time!”

William Pond Park (10/31) — Leader Larry Hickey reported: “Seven of us enjoyed a crisp fall morning at the William Pond part of the American River Parkway. Starting out we noticed a group of Yellow-billed Magpies energetically calling and watched as they chased off a Sharp-shinned hawk. Shortly after that we had good looks at a Townsend’s Warbler within a loose flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers. Coots have returned in large numbers on the open water and we enjoyed watching three otters who appeared to be following a Great Blue Heron foraging along the waters edge. Other highlights included a large, healthy looking coyote on one of the islands in the river and close looks at three cooperative Ruby-crowned Kinglets foraging in fennel at eye level just a few

feet from us. We had a total of 50 species for the morning.”

River Walk Park (10/27) — Leader Bill Bianco reported: “Trip was canceled because of high winds.”

Stone Lakes NWR Family Walk (10/26) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “The Blue Heron Trail at Stone Lakes NWR was a great site for 15 of us (including a 3 year old) who spent several hours walking the easy, paved trails finding 30 species. Many Sandhill Cranes and White Pelicans were present overhead, and the bushy shrubs were full of winter sparrows such as Song, White-crowned, Golden-crowned and Lincoln’s. Best bird was probably the Sora which flew by close from one side of the pond to the other and a posing but well camouflaged Green Heron. All in all, a very nice morning.”

Bodega Bay (10/26) — Scott Hoppe, co-leader with Mark Martucci, reported: “We started out with a beautiful, calm morning. Smoke from the Kincaid Fire had been a concern, as we saw quite a bit on the way down, but there was very little in the area of Bodega Bay. As the day progressed into the afternoon, the wind picked up a bit and there were even some evacuation warnings which we couldn’t figure out why exactly, as Bodega is quite a distance from the fire. But we persevered and we ended up tallying 90 species. Highlights included Rhinoceros Auklet, Pigeon Guillemot, all of our grebe species including at least 2 Red-necked, a large fly-over flock of Cackling Geese, 7 Brant (a little on the early side for this species of goose) and 16 species of shorebirds. We even had a good showing of passerines along a side road that we walked, including Red-breasted Nuthatch, Townsend’s Warbler, Pine Siskin and many calling Hermit Thrushes. It was a great day of birding with a really great group of 9 participants.”

Nimbus Fish Hatchery (10/22) — Leader Craig DeMartini reported: “We had a lovely day at the American River as the annual salmon migration continued. We watched dozens of Cedar Waxwings fly-catching over the river. A Cooper’s Hawk attempted to catch White-throated Swifts under the Sunrise bridge. A Merlin flew over twice. A Glaucous-winged Gull allowed us time to properly identify it. A Great Egret entertained us by posing at

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Field Trips

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. For trips through December 11, contact the scheduler Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207, spskua2@comcast.net. For trips from December 12 through January 11, 2020, contact the scheduler Maureen Geiger, mkgeiger@comcast.net, 916-281-6652

Due to insurance requirements, Sacramento Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize ridesharing/carpools. Participants are, however, encouraged to voluntarily share rides. Any carpool arrangements are private agreements between the driver and the passengers. Drivers must carry adequate insurance coverage. Please be courteous and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on all trips. Try to arrive early, especially if you want driving directions or plan to carpool. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader. In case of INCLEMENT WEATHER contact the trip leader for trip status.

NOTE: Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place.



Least Sandpipers
Chris Conard

Saturday, November 30, 7:30am
Gray Lodge SWR and Colusa NWR
Leaders: Daniel and Pam Thompson
916-769-4476
keiran247@hotmail.com

Join Pam and Daniel for a tour of this prime wintering area for ducks and geese. After Gray Lodge, they'll take the route back around the west side of the Sutter Buttes, looking for Sandhill Cranes, raptors and grassland birds, and then stop at the Colusa NWR viewing platform. Bring lunch, liquids, and warm clothing for this all-day trip. FRS radios and scopes are helpful if you have them. Meet in the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. There is a \$4.25 per person charge at Gray Lodge, and it's wise to bring the exact amount for the Iron Ranger.

Sunday, December 1, 8am
Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge
Leader: John York, 530-320-4751
Johnyork157@yahoo.com

John will be looking for the enormous flocks of ducks, geese and swans that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way south. This is also a good place for raptors, and Bald Eagles are a possibility. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well. This trip will last into early afternoon. Bring lunch, snacks and hydration as the refuge has no restaurants and birds poop in the water. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd,

go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. Meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. Please note there is a \$6 day use fee for each vehicle at the refuge, or buy a Duck Stamp and support all our national refuges. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

Wednesday, December 4, 8am
Sailor Bar, American River Parkway
Leader: Mark Martucci, 916-833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Mark for a morning walk checking out the resident and wintering birds. This is a good trip for beginners and experienced birders too, with Mark sharing his expertise on identification of the birds and their vocalizations. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, December 7, 8am
Tonzi Road and
Western Amador County
Leader: Gary Fregien, 916-708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com

Join Gary on a trip featuring the waters and back-country roads of the Sierra foothills in western Amador County. There is a surprising variety and number of passerines and raptors in this area, with a possibility of Lewis's Woodpeckers, Hermit and Varied Thrushes, sparrows, Prairie Falcons and Ferruginous Hawks. This trip also includes stops for waterfowl and shorebirds at ponds near Sutter Creek and Ione. We may also stop at Lake Comanche, where a day-use

fee is charged. There will be minimal hiking, but dress for winter conditions. Bring along hand held radios if you have them, food and water. Meet Gary at the Local Bean Cafe in the Rancho Murieta shopping center. Turn right at the 1st traffic light; junction of Hwy 16 (Jackson Rd) and Murieta Drive, and right again just past the fire station.

Sunday, December 8
Beginning Birding Field Trip
William Pond Park

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. On this winter trip we'll talk about habitat, field marks, and look for some of our returning winter birds, as well as residents. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid77@gmail.com; put Beginning Birder in the subject line.

Sunday, December 8
Gull ID trip on the American River
Leader: Ed Harper

Join Ed for an informative walk along the American River and a chance to sharpen your identification skills. Ed is a great birder who will be looking for any interesting or unusual birds, with emphasis on tricky identification of the many gulls that winter on the river. Herring, "Thayer's" (which is now considered a race of Iceland Gull), Glaucous-winged, California, Ring-billed and Mew Gulls are all possibilities. Spotting scopes will be very useful, and be sure to bring your field guides and bird apps for this intensive study. Trip will end at

Field Trips continued on page 4

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noon and is limited to 15 people to ensure quality learning opportunity. To register for the trip contact Cathie LaZier, empid77@gmail.com, (put Gull Trip in the subject line), or phone 916-502-2699, to register and find meeting time and place.

Thursday, December 12, 8am

Salt Springs Valley

Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207

spskua2@comcast.net

Ann Burris, 916-947-7573

burris.nellieann@gmail.com

This area is located in western Calaveras County about an hour and a half drive from Sacramento. The open valley and its lake are home to many wintering ducks, hawks, eagles, owls and grassland birds. The trip will last into the late afternoon so bring lunch, liquids and warm clothing. Bring FRS radios and scopes if you have them. Meet at "It's a Grind" coffee shop, 19420 Twin Cities Road in Galt. From Sacramento take Hwy 99 south to Twin Cities Road/ Hwy 104, Exit #277. Turn left (east) on Twin Cities; cross the freeway and continue east to the shopping center on your right.

Saturday, December 14, 8am

Sailor Bar

Leader: Darrell Mohr, 916-225-3999

mohrdd@gmail.com

Join Darrell for a morning walk checking out the resident birds. Meet him at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. Phainopepla, California Quail, mergansers and golden-eye may be seen. This is a good trip for beginners. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, near the boat launch area. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, December 15, 8:30am

Cosumnes River Preserve

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 916-502-2699

empid77@gmail.com

Walking the 1-1/2 mile boardwalk loop, we'll check out the wintering waterfowl, including a variety of duck species, Greater White-fronted Geese, and Sandhill Cranes. Dowitchers, Wilson's Snipe and yellowlegs should be present, and there are always some passerines and raptors. Spotting scopes are helpful if you have them. This is a great trip for beginning birders. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, Exit #498; go left (east) to the stop

sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the Preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org. Heavy rain cancels.

Wednesday, December 18

Woodfords Christmas Count

Saturday, December 21

Sacramento Christmas Count

Sunday, December 22

7:30am/8:30am

Lynch Canyon, Solano County

Leaders: Maureen Geiger

916-281-6652, mkgeiger@comcast.net

Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277

kenpoe@sbcglobal.net

This 1,039-acre park just off I-80 in Solano County consists of rolling hills with stands of native oak, buckeye and bay trees, small riparian corridors, panoramic vistas and a pond for wintering ducks, grebes and possible shorebirds. Other wintering and resident birds may include golden eagles plus harriers, hawks, kites and woodpeckers, Hermit Thrush and quail. This trip involves about a two mile walk on an easy trail and will end mid-day. Please note: this area is generally colder, wetter, foggier and windier than Sacramento, so dressing in layers is recommended. There is a \$5 parking fee. Meet Maureen at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride in Davis at 7:30am. From Sacramento take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd, Exit #75; turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride lot a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. Meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Or meet at the park at about 8:30am. From Sacramento on I-80 West, after Fairfield, take the Red Top Road exit. Go south (left) under the underpass. In less than 0.1 mile, turn right on McGary Road (parallels I-80) and follow for 1.8 miles. Turn right on Lynch Road, go under the I-80 overpass and through the gate into the gravel parking lot.

Saturday, December 28, 8am

River Walk Park, West Sacramento

Leader: Bill Bianco, 916-889-4849

biancowm@yahoo.com

This is a newer area for Sac Audubon and should turn up a variety of passerine species, sparrows, wrens, thrushes and more. We'll bird the river from the boat landing, then walk south past the I Street and Tower Bridges and up onto the levee. Walk should end by noon. Meet Bill at the Raley's park-

ing lot; from Hwy 50 take Jefferson Blvd north; go left on W Capitol Ave and left on Westacre Rd to the lot.

Sunday, December 29

Folsom Christmas Count

Wednesday, January 1, 9am

Family Friendly Trip

New Year's Day at the Cosumnes

River Preserve

Leader: Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207

spskua2@comcast.net

Start the New Year off right; go birding! Bring the family! Wintering Sandhill Cranes, Greater White-fronted Geese and a wide variety of duck species frequent the preserve. Yellowlegs and Wilson's Snipe will be in the shallower water, and other shorebirds are possible. Tim will walk along the wetland ponds, stopping at the "Ducks In Scopes" activity and then going out to the boardwalk viewing area. Meet at the CRP Visitor Center parking lot. Bring water and snacks and dress for changeable weather. This is an enjoyable trip for everyone, and beginners and families are welcome. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, Exit #498; go left (east) to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the Preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

Saturday, January 4, 8am

Yolo County Hotspots

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 916-835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

Join Scott for a trip to several Yolo hotspots. Yolo County always has great places to bird, and we will be visiting some of the most productive locations. Winter produces great numbers of water birds, and we will try to pick up some wintering raptors such as, Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk and Merlin. This will likely be an all day trip, so bring lunch and liquids. Meet at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd, Exit #75; turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride lot a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. Meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. FRS radios are helpful on this trip.

Sunday, January 5, 8am

River Bend Park

Leader: Dan Brown, 916-704-0951
naturestoc@aol.com

Meet at the 1st parking lot on your right, just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland and over to the river, looking for small woodland birds and woodpeckers. We sometimes have good looks at Red-shouldered Hawks or Great Horned Owls. Walk will end by noon, and it's a great walk for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Thursday, January 9, 8am

**Lincoln WWTP and
Placer County Roads**

Leader: Sonja Sorbo, 916-390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com

In this morning trip we will start by birding the Lincoln water treatment plant. There are several large ponds which can hold a variety of ducks. Some years there have been hundreds of Canvasbacks and Wigeons present, with an occasional Redhead or Eurasian Wigeon in their midst. Depending on the water level, we might see shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, Dowitchers, Dunlin, and Least Sandpipers. While driving on the levees around the ponds, we will search the adjacent trees, fields, and fenceposts for raptors, sparrows, woodpeckers, and other resident species. A small wetland area visible from the levees can hold rails, herons, egrets, gallinules, and Marsh Wrens. This trip will end around noon; if there is sufficient time we might drive some nearby backroads of Placer county, searching flooded fields for wintering geese. We will meet at the parking lot of Dry Creek Community Park at 9235 Walerga Road in Roseville at 8AM. FRS radios will be helpful. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Dress warmly as the weather on the levees can be cold and breezy.

IMPORTANT ADVISORY — there is currently a huge bridge construction project underway on Walerga Road near the entrance to Dry Creek Community Park. Watch carefully for signs directing traffic to the park; the usual entrance is blocked and the new/temporary winding access road is not easily visible.

Saturday, January 11, 7:30am

Gray Lodge State Wildlife Refuge

Leader: Carla Barbaro, 916-717-8808
cbarbaro@comcast.net

Join Carla to check out this State Wildlife Refuge. She will take the vehicle driving route and also walk one of the trails. Bring snacks and water, and meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. before the 7:30 departure time. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd; go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Road, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. Note that there is a \$4.25 per person charge at the refuge.

CONSERVATION TIP OF THE MONTH

Carpool, take public transportation, or ride your bike instead of driving your car. This is a great way to lessen your carbon footprint. You could make new friends, save money and possibly qualify for employee benefits.

DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

Mid-winter can be the best time to see all the wintering waterfowl, plus Sandhill Cranes, shorebirds and raptors which use the seasonal wetlands at the Cosumnes Preserve. CRP docents have a row of spotting scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you excellent views of the many colorful ducks, other waterfowl, shorebirds and more.

Microscopes and hand lens provide close-up looks at "Duck Soup", dishes of water dipped from the pond full of water fleas, rat-tailed maggots, scuds and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on.

The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento—south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve. Steady rain or flooding cancels event.

Come any time between 10am and 2pm on the following dates:

Saturdays 2019: 11/30, 12/7, 12/14, and 12/28.

Saturdays 2020: 1/4, 1/11, 1/18, 1/25, and 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, and 2/29.

Sundays: 12/22 and New Year's Day, 1/1, 2020.

JANE TAYLOR—AN ADVOCATE FOR BIRD FRIENDLY BUILDINGS

Jane Taylor has been leading and co-leading Sacramento Audubon field trips for several years and has also served on the board of directors. Jane is a retired senior architect for the State of



California, who went on to receive a master's degree in environmental law.

While still employed at the State Jane recalls taking daily walks and observing that more and more birds had not survived flying into the reflective glass on buildings. This was the beginning of her campaign to do something to make a difference—and that could ultimately lead to prevention of bird deaths that now number into millions annually, according to the American Bird Conservancy website.

In early 2019, Jane petitioned the California Building Standards Commission to include bird-friendly building design language in the voluntary appendix section of the California Green Building Standards Code (CalGreen). This is a soft approach to a big problem and, if passed, will only affect commercial buildings. Jane hopes her approach will enlighten and sensitize more and more builders, so they use alternative designs and material to prevent and reduce the growing number of bird crashes into their building practices.

She hopes to know the outcome of the commission's vote by mid-year 2020.

Sacramento Audubon member Mary Forrestal joined Jane on one of her field trips and learned about her work to protect and save birds. She admires how "Jane is combining her love of birds with her legal expertise and experience working for the state". This is a testament that each person can make a difference. It only requires taking that first step, which Jane has done.

E-mail education@sacramentoaudubon.org if you would like to recommend someone for a future feature article.

BUFFERLANDS EVENTS

Wetlands and Waterfowl

Saturday, December 7, 9am–12pm

Come visit our Fishhead Lake mitigation wetlands as we look for waterfowl and other wetland birds and mammals. Hundreds of thousands of migrating ducks and geese fly into the Sacramento region each fall. Our small wetland is an important place for waterfowl to rest and forage. We typically see northern pintail, American wigeon, green-winged teal, mallards, northern shovellers, gadwall, and a host of other water birds.

The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at jonesro@sacsewer.com to confirm your reservation and meeting location.

No Pets, Please! For all Bufferlands events, we respectfully request that you please leave your dogs and other pets at home.



SWAN TOURS WITH THE CA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE (YUBA COUNTY)

Witness the sheer splendor of migratory birds of the Pacific Flyway on most Saturdays this December through January. Focal species include tundra swans, snow geese, ross's geese, white fronted geese, ibis and ducks, and an occasional bald eagle in the rice fields north of Marysville. Free guided tours, in caravan style, are through advance registration, and are led by a DFW naturalist at 9:30–11:30am and 1–3pm.

Registration is required and contact information is online at www.wildlife.ca.gov/regions/2/swan-tours.



SANDHILL CRANES AND OTHER WINTERING BIRDS

Free trips in the delta to view the Sandhill Cranes coming in to roost for the evening are run by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc. Of course they also look at the wintering waterfowl and other birds in that habitat. They begin at either Woodbridge Road or Staten Island and meet in the late afternoon on the last weekend of each month. Current information is at soscranes.org/visit-the-cranes/free-tours/. The Coordinator is Mike Savino, yogombah@yahoo.com.

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2019–2020

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sundays, December 8, 2019, January 12 and February 9, 2020

*Trips limited to 10 adult participants, and require a minimum of 3 participants: Registration required.

These outings are geared toward people who aren't yet entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders. It is not necessary to be an Audubon member to participate.

The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on looking and listening. This walk, covering about a mile and a half, will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. You can sign up for just one session, or for more than one.

Register via email to Cathie at empid77@gmail.com, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 916-502-2699, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

Findings continued from page 2

the top of a tall pine. Double-crested Cormorants flashed their emerald green eyes in the morning light. A coyote made his way up the hillside across the river. 40 avian species, 12 participants."

Mather Lake (10/20) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "Beautiful weather greeted 6 birders and served up 41 species for the morning. Highlights were large number of Great-tailed Grackles, Pied-billed Grebes, Common Gallinule, and a very large flock of Cedar Waxwings. The rest were the usual fall cast of characters."

William Pond (10/20) — Seven beginning birders joined leaders Larry Hickey, Darrell Mohr and Cathie LaZier for this morning walk, which totaled 41 species. Scope views of Yellow-billed Magpies and Western Bluebirds were popular, as well as sightings of herons and egrets.

Bucks Creek/Serrano Pkwy (10/19) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "Bucks Creek produced about 45 species for the 11 of us who walked the trail, the library and covered bridge areas. Truly amazing numbers of Lesser Goldfinches and a nice number of California Quail, but many fewer Common Gallinules were found than in the past (possibly because the ponds are being slowly covered by an invasive weed (which may be called "Parrotweed"). But close looks at a cooperative Hermit Thrush and a preening Ruby-crowned Kinglet allowing many photos were much appreciated."

Willow Creek (10/15) — Leader Susan Thrower reported: "6 birders showed up. Unfortunately, very few birds did the same! Just a dozen or so of the local

expected species. Nothing special. The weather was good."

Sailor Bar (10/13) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "19 people were ready to enjoy a day of birding. First we walked up a hill and found a spot where we saw towhees and sparrows. Walking back the trail a Northern Flicker landed in a tree. At the boat ramp and out on the water were Common Mergansers, a Great Blue Heron and a Belted Kingfisher. Then we walked down the river bank. Overhead there appeared to be a large flock of Cedar Waxwings. As we made the turn in the road there were Phainopeplas in the oak trees. Farther down the road there were Ruby-crowned Kinglets, the first of the season. Overhead the Turkey Vultures were circling, along with a Red-tailed Hawk. The total number of species for the day was 43. All 19 people had a very good time."

Bushy Lake (10/12) — Leader Gibbe Parsons reported: "8 birders joined us for a walk around Bushy Lake behind Cal Expo. There were two photographers that got good shots and two scopes. We saw 42 species, 509 birds, and 19 species with photos. Highlights were a Peregrine Falcon on a tower, a Red-shouldered Hawk watching a flicker, a Western Meadowlark, 70+ Cedar Waxwings, and Wood Ducks—great lighting for photos. Our goal was to identify every bird we saw, and nine sets of eyes were very productive. There were perhaps two novice birders but everyone saw a large number of birds. Mary Forrestal kept our list and she and Dennis Eckhart had cameras. Thanks to all for a great morning."

Cathie LaZier

Birding and Nature Events

24TH ANNUAL MORRO BAY WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

Morro Bay's 24th Annual Winter Bird Festival will be held **January 17–20, 2020**. Every Martin Luther King weekend over 500 California bird festival lovers visit Morro Bay, a Globally Important Bird Area, to see, photograph, and learn more about birds. Morro Bay is located halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco on the Pacific Flyway. The area offers pristine beaches, beautiful state parks, an excellent natural history museum, panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and, best of all, thousands of birds. Over 200 species are usually sighted during the Festival weekend. Saturday's keynote speaker is Stephen Shunk speaking about *How Woodpecker's Can Save The World*. The Sunday keynote speaker will be Krisztina Scheeff, known as the 'Grebe Whisperer' to friends and colleagues presenting *Dancing With The Grebes*. Online registration will close Tuesday, January 7th at midnight. After that you can only register at the site (in the Community Center). Some events fill up fast so hurry to the Festival site at morrobaybirdfestival.org or call 805-234-1170.

SNOW GOOSE FESTIVAL OF THE PACIFIC FLYWAY

The 21st Annual Snow Goose Festival will be held in **Chico** on **January 22-26, 2020**. Choose from over 70 field trips and workshops that are sure to appeal to a wide variety of interests and ability levels. In addition to numerous bird-watching field trips for waterfowl, cranes, raptors and songbirds, you might choose to take a guided tour of a nature preserve, visit a local vineyard, or hike the scenic Sutter Buttes in search of lofty views and resident wildlife. The workshops offer something for everyone! Learn about nature photography, bird carving, how to record nature sounds, how to identify those backyard birds, and much more. Free nature activities are offered for youth as well as armchair adventures for all.

The Keynote Speaker will be Naturalist and Environmental Educator, Karen Amstutz. She's is an exceptionally gifted speaker and her programs are renowned in Yosemite National Park. Working as a naturalist for 30 years, Karen has lived her life with connection and attention to the natural world in professional and personal capacities. Her presentation is titled *The Gift of Watching Birds*.

Further information can be found at snowgoosefestival.org and if you have any questions, you can reach them at info@snowgoosefestival.org, or by calling the Festival Office at 530-592-9092. Registration will open soon, but since many of the trips fill up fast, it is best to get on their mailing or email list, available on their website, or stay in touch on their facebook page at facebook.com/SnowGooseFestival.

13TH ANNUAL WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

The **City of Galt**, in collaboration with the Cosumnes River Preserve and Galt Joint Union Elementary and High School Districts, is pleased to bring you the 13th Annual Winter Bird Festival, **Saturday, February 1, 2020**. The festival guests will enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the Cosumnes River Preserve and the incredible opportunity to catch sightings of waterfowl, shorebirds and wildlife in their winter habitat. Festival headquarters will provide a starting point for exclusive preserve tours, educational presentations, wildlife shows, art displays, wine walk, hometown history and hands-on activities. This is a winter celebration you'll always remember!

Registration for the annual festival will open in December so check online or call so you don't miss any of your favorite tours. Space for tours is limited, so sign up as soon as possible at the Galt city website below. Visit ci.galt.ca.us/about-galt/special-events/11th-annual-winter-bird-festival for registration and more information or call 209-366-7180, if you have any questions.

THE CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD CLUB'S YOUTH BIRDING CAMP AND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The David Yee Scholarship Fund will provide annual scholarships to birding camps for young birders. Please contact Cliff Hawley at his email, yellowhammerca@gmail.com, for further information.

SAVE FEBRUARY FOR THE GBBC

Greetings from the Great Backyard Bird Count team at Audubon, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Bird Studies Canada! We want to remind you to mark your calendars for the 23rd GBBC, coming up February 14 through 17, 2020. Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are. There's more information at gbbc.bird.org

Explore Species Tool

Begun last year, one of the coolest tools for anyone who participates in the GBBC or uses eBird is the Explore Species feature. You'll find it at ebird.org/explore. The eBird team rolled this out and its database includes ALL the species in the world (that we know about, anyway). Explore Species offers up lots of maps, media, and images and is mobile-friendly, too. Perfect for a trip somewhere. !

In Memorium

Mike Marsh, a previous member of Sacramento Audubon and still friends with many members passed away on October 11th. He participated in the Field Trips Committee and led many field trips before his move to Oregon.

His daughter Anna Marsh Fitzpatrick wrote, "He was wicked smart and highly educated—despite a poor and rocky childhood he got his Master's degree in English and loved reading and writing even publishing a few short pieces here and there and his own book of poetry. He also spoke French fluently after taking it upon himself to learn while stationed in France for the army. He loved music, played the harmonica with vigor, and would belt out Janis Joplin and Elvis Presley like none other. He was an adventurer, a skydiver, a traveler, was passionate about the great outdoors, and as many of you know—was an avid and enthusiastic birder."

In lieu of a more typical service, his children, Eric and Anna are hoping you will help to remember and celebrate his life by way of a memorial web page. Anna's email is annamarsh1@gmail.com, if you'd like to add your email to her contact list and contribute stories, photos or remembrances.

SAS OUTREACH HELP OUT AND HAVE FUN!

Bill Bianco, our hard working Outreach chair, has asked for volunteers for the Galt Winter Bird Festival on Saturday, February 1, 2020. You do not have to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding and talking to people about our field trips and SAS. You would be working with an experienced volunteer. If you can work a 3 or 4 hour shift, please contact Bill at biancowm@yahoo.com; or at 916-372-3318.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Martin D Bailey, Richard Deletetsky, Darryl Felix, Mary Forrestal, Melissa Gates, Judi and Stephen Green, Ann Kohl, Alice Krumenacher, Ken Lee, Lena O Lem, Gwenda Schoen, Jeffrey Shelton, Aimee Staats, Dan and Jan Tankersley, Peter Thomas, Susan Thrower, HB Tollette and Assoc, Steve and Tracy Wetzel and John Whitelaw made donations to the **General Fund**.

Martin D Bailey, Gesna Clarke, Melissa Gates, Connie Gehrt, Marya Liberty, Roseville Better Gardens Club, Jeffrey Shelton, Dan and Jan Tankersley, and Steve and Tracy Wetzel made donations to the **Education and Conservation Fund**.

Martin D Bailey, Kimberly Brown, Patricia Clark and Nancy Weagly, DVM 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 continuing restoration and management.

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.

VOLUNTEER AT BOBELAINE HELP IS NEEDED

To keep up with the trail and caretaker duties SAS is requesting some volunteer help. We will keep a list of helpers and when work load requires we will contact volunteers. We are designating the second and fourth Wednesday of each month as Bobelaine work days.

If you would like to help out, provide your contact info to: Bill Bianco; biancowm@yahoo.com; 916-372-3318. Bill will contact you for help as needed.

Typical duties will be cutting brush and overhead growth along the trails. Removing invasive plants, mowing weeds and cleanup around the equipment shed. Be aware that poison oak is prevalent in the sanctuary.

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON SHOP AT AMAZON AND SUPPORT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Sacramento Audubon every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping as at Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a percentage of the purchase price to Sacramento Audubon. You can use your current Amazon account including shopping cart, wish-list, registries, etc. Its very easy. Just remember to go to smile.amazon.com and select Sacramento Audubon Society as your favorite charity. Then add a bookmark so you return to the site whenever you shop at Amazon.

INCREASE IN ANNUAL DUES THE FIRST IN 18 YEARS!

On August 27, the Sacramento Audubon Society Board of Directors approved a \$10 increase in annual membership dues. Effective January 1, 2020 dues will increase from \$25 to \$35 annually. This increase will support the chapter's mission, programs and goals, and support ongoing service improvement. One example is the current project to rebuild and redesign the website by moving it to a more contemporary and user-friendly platform.

The Board is grateful to chapter members for generous donations beyond their dues, and we appreciate your support for this increase.

Seasonal Observations

October 1 to October 31 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

October represents a period of transition, with the long, exciting season of post-breeding migrant songbirds and shorebirds tapering off by mid-month, and the full compliment of wintering species in place by month's end, signaled by the arrival of **Tundra Swans** and **Snow Geese**. Numbers continue to build into November, but nearly all of the regulars are in place by late October. This October was characterized by dry, sunny days, and periods of high winds, driving devastating fires elsewhere in the state in a pattern that is becoming too familiar.

There were no obvious avian patterns, but rather a grab bag of interesting reports. A **Stilt Sandpiper** at the Woodland WTP from 10/13-16 was a nice surprise, and perhaps the same bird was found at the Davis WTP on 10/20. A **Black Rail** was reported at the Yolo Bypass on 10/28. Post-breeding **Common Poorwills** turn up in low num-

bers in the flats of the Valley, and this month there were singles found at the Sacramento Bypass on 10/8, Mace Rd at Putah Creek on 10/15, and Latrobe Rd on 10/28. More unexpected was a **Northern**



Vermillion Flycatcher
Dan Brown

Saw-whet Owl roosting at Slide Hill Park in Davis on 10/17; it is unclear how common these inconspicuous little owls are in migration and winter, though they are always a treat to encounter.

Just north of the area typically covered here, the male **Vermilion Flycatcher** returned to the

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members.

Vernon Brewer Alice Krumenacher
Cynthia Dragovich Molly and Peter Ross
Darryl Felix Christopher Smith
Micayla Jones Patricia Trimble
Lisa and Tom King

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. There is no meeting in December so the next meeting will be on January 28, 2020, at 7pm. This Board Meeting will be held at a new location, Turley Associates, 2431 Capital Ave, Sacramento, CA 95816.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html. Scroll down to Board Minutes.s

SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

You can enjoy the photos and commentary without joining Facebook



Observations continued

Maxwell Cemetery for the fifth straight year, as reported on 10/19. An immature male **Vermilion Flycatcher** was found at Tanzanite Park in Natomas on 10/30. It continued through press time, and accounts for just the fourth Sacramento County record, but the second this year, after the immature female that was found at Cosumnes River Presrve (CRP) last March. A **Townsend's Solitaire** was an excellent find at CRP on 10/4, and late **Swainson's Thrushes** were found at William Land Park on 10/3, and CRP on 10/4. A **Sage Thrasher** was a very nice find along Michigan Bar Rd on 10/6, as was a late **Grasshopper Sparrow** on Meiss Rd on 10/14. **Chipping Sparrows** were reported in impressive numbers along the upper American River Parkway, at Phoenix Field,

and in Fair Oaks. Is this species becoming more common locally, or are we just learning more through additional reports coming in via eBird? The biggest surprise of the month was a **Worm-eating Warbler** found in southeastern Davis on 10/27, between San Marino Park and Putah Creek. It was seen by many, continuing into November, and accounting for just the second Central Valley report after the January 2018 bird at Reichmuth Park.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent-sightings.html).

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 listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Stuart Angerer, Holly Coates, Suzanne Day, Konshau Duman, John Ehrenfeld, Gil Ewing, Stephen Fettig, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Terry Hodapp, James Holmes, Scott Hoppe, Emmett Iverson, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Mark Martucci, Michael Perrone, Zane Pickus, Steve Scott, Kirk Swenson, John Trochet, and Lynette Williams.

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

Chris Conard

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. Please include your email address if you would like to be added to our Action Alert List for letter/email writing on conservation issues.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

www.sacramentoaudubon.org
sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com
P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

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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 FIRST SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM IN 2020

**Thursday, January 16, 2020, at 7pm
At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center**

Greg and Alex Kerekes, *The Return of
California's Golden Beaver*