

# The Observer

## Sacramento Audubon Society



### MONTHLY SPEAKER PRESENTATIONS CAN BE WATCHED AGAIN!

Our Monthly Speaker Presentations are on hiatus for the summer. If you missed any of our fantastic online speakers or would like to watch the presentations again, they are available at <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker/#past-speakers>.

Presentations will resume on September 17, 2021. We don't yet know whether future presentations will be in-person, online, or some combination of the two. Check for information on future Monthly Speaker programs in the August Observer and on the website.

### Call for Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers who can help with the technology aspects of future online or hybrid meetings. To volunteer your technological expertise or experience, please contact [meetings@sacramentoaudubon.org](mailto:meetings@sacramentoaudubon.org). 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](http://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).



## In Memoriam

One of Sacramento Audubon's charter members, Bruce Swinehart, passed away recently. He also served as president of SAS and was very well known in the birding and environmental community. He taught at American River College where he inspired many students with a love of nature. We will have more on his life in next month's *Observer*,

### BIG DAY OF GIVING

#### Thank You for Making This Year's Big Day of Giving a Success!

Big Day of Giving (BDOG) is an annual, online fundraising event that enables local non-profits to raise needed funds to help carry out their missions. Even though our bird walks and other activities are suspended during this difficult time, Sacramento Audubon is still working to protect birds and preserve their habitats. Because of you we raised a record-setting total of \$6,578!

Thank you very much for your support of the Sacramento Audubon Society!

## This Month's Suggested Birding

**JUNE-JULY 2021 Dan Brown, [naturestoc@aol.com](mailto:naturestoc@aol.com)**

As the Summer in the Central Valley is a little warm and spring migration is past, it is time to head east for better birding. Or if you don't want to travel, try some of our local nature areas in early morning when it's cool! Below are some suggestions.

### Loney Meadows

A beautiful mountain meadow north of Grouse Ridge near Bowman Lake at about 6000' elevation. The area can have some excellent birding. 8 species of woodpecker, (including Pileated, Black-backed and Williamson's Sapsucker); also Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher, 7 species of warbler and previous trips have produced Bald Eagles. This area requires a hike of about 2-3 miles over mostly level terrain,



Williamson's Sapsucker  
Dan Brown

however, there is one short, fairly steep incline, and a creek crossing on stepping stones. Directions to Loney Meadows can be found here: [www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/regions/Pacific\\_Southwest/LoneyMeadow/index.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/regions/Pacific_Southwest/LoneyMeadow/index.shtml)

### Mather Lake

A great local birding location, and usually turns up quite a list of bird species. You can expect a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron and Common Yellowthroat. To reach Mather Regional Park, from Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles. After crossing Douglas Boulevard, take the first left into the park area. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

### River Bend Park

Always a very nice morning walk through the oak woodland to the American River, looking for our summer birds on nests or in cavities, singing and feeding young. Some wildflowers should still be blooming. This is

**JUNE-JULY Birding** continued on page 2

**JUNE–JULY Birding** continued from page 1  
 a good trip for beginning birders. Morning is best. 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.

**Indian Grinding Rocks State Park, Amador County**

The birdlife in this area varies depending on the season, but many species are seen year round, including Turkey Vultures, Scrub and Steller's Jays, California Quail, Acorn and Hairy Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, Hermit Thrushes, Wild Turkeys (non-native), and California Thrashers. In summer, the bright colors of the Western Tanager, Bullock's Oriole, Calliope and Anna's Hummingbirds can be seen in the woods around the meadow. Some light to moderate walking is required. The park is north-east of Stockton in the lower foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains. Take State Highway 88 East through Jackson to the town of Pine Grove. Take a left turn on Pine Grove-Volcano Road and approximately 1.5 miles later you will arrive at the park. The SECOND turnoff is the main entrance to the day use area while the first turn off is to the campground.

**Crystal Basin** is a great place for birding in late spring. Flycatchers, MacGillivray's Warblers, several species of woodpeckers, Mountain Bluebirds and Calliope Hummingbird are all good possibilities. If you are lucky, you can find Mountain Quail with young. Expect the trip to last into the afternoon so bring liquids, lunch, snacks and warm clothes in case of chilly weather. From Sacramento, take Highway



*Townsend's Solitaire*  
 Dan Brown

50 east to Ice House Road, about 60 miles. Take Ice House Road and explore any areas along the road that have safe parking.

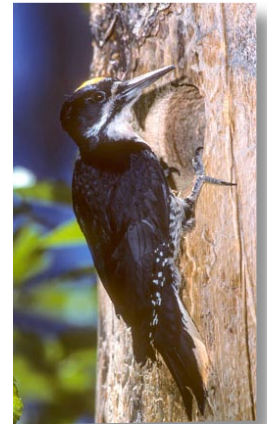
**Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca**

This is a great trip for mid-summer, after the snow has receded (timing varies depending on the previous winter snow levels). This is a high elevation 3-mile hike (8600 feet elevation) in search of Clark's Nutcracker, Rufous Hummingbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Dusky Flycatcher, Pine Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch and, with luck, Sooty Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker

and Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. At peak wildflower time there are fields of flowers in dazzling variety. Bring lunch and plenty of liquids; wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for changeable Sierra weather. Carson Pass is a USFS fee area for day-use parking. This hike should be considered moderate to strenuous depending upon your physical condition. Carson Pass is about 90 miles east of Sacramento via Highway 16 and Highway 88.

**Yuba Pass and Sierra Valley** is very good in June and early July with nesting and feeding activity and possibly some newly fledged young. At the pass look for Calliope Hummingbird, White-headed Woodpecker, Western Tanager and other montane species. In the valley, look for Sage Thrasher, Brewer's and Vesper Sparrows and water birds in the marsh such as Wilson's Snipe, Willets, Bitterns and Sandhill

Cranes. From Sacramento, it's approximately 2.5 hours to Yuba Pass. Head east on I-80; take exit 188B at Truckee and turn left (north) on 89; drive 25 miles to the intersection of highways 89 and 49 in Sierraville. Turn left on Hwy 49 and go about 11 miles to Yuba Pass.



*Black-backed Woodpecker*  
 Dan Brown

Follow signage for Yuba Pass campground. After birding the pass area, head back east on Highway 49 to Highway 89, turn north, then after several miles, turn east on Calpine Road, then North on Westside Road, which changes names to Beckwith/Calpine Road. Follow this road North to Marble Hot Springs Road and turn east. This will take you to the marsh area.

**SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY  
 SLATE OF OFFICERS AND BOARD FOR 2021-2022**

Voting on the slate will open on June 20th and close on July 16th, 2021. You can cast your vote in one of two ways: either using an online voting link or by sending in a mail-in ballot. Both will be found in the July issue of *The Observer*. The link to vote online will also be emailed to members. As per the SAS bylaws, one must be a dues-paying SAS member in order to vote.

- |                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| President               | Bill Bianco    |
| Vice President          | Daphne Reimer  |
| Treasurer               | Harriet Saeck  |
| Recording Secretary     | Mary Forrestal |
| Corresponding Secretary | Heather White  |
| Directors               | Kristen Dokter |
|                         | Nancy Gronert  |
|                         | Eric Johnson   |
|                         | Paul Miller    |
|                         | Jane VanKessel |

## VIRTUAL ADVOCACY DAY

Virtual Advocacy Day is Bding Held June 10, 2021

All Audubon members are invited to join California Audubon on June 10 for Virtual Advocacy Day. This is your opportunity to let our state legislators hear from you on the issues that matter.

According to California Audubon:

On Thursday, June 10th, participants in Virtual Advocacy Day will be invited to join video conferences with elected officials from their region. During these calls, we will talk about the issues and bills that are a top priority for Audubon, including equitable access to nature, conservation ranching, public lands, migratory birds, and climate resilience.

California Audubon will organize and facilitate the calls. In addition, Advocacy Training is available to all registered participants. Space is limited. Register to participate today!

## A TASTE OF AMADOR

Sacramento County has been my birding focus for the past twenty years—and more so this past year. There have been good excuses to travel, and many taken, but having a home focus has been a great learning experience. Even within the relatively circumscribed area of a moderately-sized county, my visits have only constituted a sampling of habitats rather than a thorough exploration. About six years ago, Ed Pandolfino initiated a careful study of Sacramento County's breeding birds, which, along with Lily Douglas and Tim Manolis,

I've helped work into a book-level treatment. It should be ready for publication in the next few months. Among the questions that grew out of this effort was, "What's going on just to the east?"

With an excuse to venture outside of Sacramento's borders to discover where a notable transition occurs between eastern Sacramento County, the foothills, and the Sierra proper, Kimya and I have made several trips this spring to Tonzi and Electra roads in Amador County (it's a difficult assignment, but someone has to do it).

With the aim of comparing the birds of Michigan Bar and Deer Creek Hills with those to the east, we've had some enjoyable outings and can recommend these two sites to others for exploration. These

sites were picked because they are accessible and enjoyable to visit, and might indicate a transition in the birdlife toward the more montane.

Tonzi Road, the lower and nearer of the two sites, is much like Michigan Bar. It holds several of the characteristic species of that site, only more so. Most notably, Lark Sparrows and Rufous-crowned Sparrows are more conspicuous. We had Lawrence's Goldfinches on two visits. There is a patch of chaparral (a habitat largely absent from Sacramento), but so far, the only characteristic species it has produced for us is a Wrentit. Sadly, we've

noted nearby patches of chaparral being removed by bulldozers for vineyards or other development. Twice, a portion of Tonzi Road was blocked by fallen trees. Electra Road, south of Jackson and along the Mokelumne River is more dramatic, with rocky cliffs, interesting flora, and, of course, the river. Compared with eastern Sacramento County, the most notable additions to the list have been Hairy Woodpecker, up to three soaring Bald Eagles, and abundant singing Song Sparrows, Orange-crowned

Warblers, and Yellow Warblers. On the most recent visit, an American Dipper was near the powerhouse and a Yellow-breasted Chat sang from streamside tangles. The results of this informal research project may end up as an article for Central Valley Birds, but, at the very least, are now in eBird and add to a personal store of knowledge and enjoyment.

Chris Conard



Lark Sparrow  
Chris Conard



Rufou-crowned Sparrow  
Chris Conard



American Dipper  
Chris Conard

## Governor Newsom Announces Plan to End Oil Extraction and Fracking in California

"This is a move of seismic importance," said Juan Altamirano, deputy policy director for Audubon California. "California's size, economic importance and significant petroleum industry mean that this will reverberate around the world. This will accelerate our state's journey towards net-zero emissions and make us a global example in slowing climate change."

## April Declared National Native Plants Month

Native plants are superstars: they help fight climate change, save water, and provide food and shelter for birds. That's why the U.S. Senate declared April 2021 as National Native Plants Month. Find out which plants are native in our area from our local California Native Plant Society. They are online at [www.sacvalleycnps.org](http://www.sacvalleycnps.org).

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR POSITION OPEN

*The Observer*, Sacramento Audubon's monthly newsletter, is seeking a new editor. Sharon Wisecarver, who has filled this position so well, will be retiring soon.

Our editor works 8–10 hours a month, putting the print and email newsletters together. The primary responsibility of the editor is formatting articles that have been submitted for inclusion in *The Observer*. Experience in page layout and formatting is beneficial.

The editor is also responsible for including annual events, their descriptions, and occasionally finding additional material to include in the newsletter. Most of these items are derived from reputable birding websites. Proficiency in preparing digital photos for publication is also a requirement. This includes using software for photo manipulation in regard to file size, file extension and color space.

Sacramento Audubon provides a stipend for performing *The Observer* editor's duties.

The *Observer* has been published by the Sacramento Audubon since November 1951. If you are interested in working on this venerable publication, please contact: [president@sacramentoaudubon.org](mailto:president@sacramentoaudubon.org) or *The Observer* editor, Sharon Wisecarver at: [sawise7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sawise7@sbcglobal.net).



# Field Trip Information

Due to continuing coronavirus restrictions, SAS is not offering field trips for the months of June or July. Suggested places to bird according to the month can be found on page 1.

## Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Please contact President, Bill Bianco, at [biancowm@yahoo.com](mailto: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 June 29.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at [sacramentoaudubon.org/board-minutes](http://sacramentoaudubon.org/board-minutes).

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Marion Ashe, Terry Atkinson, Bob & Cindy Austin, Dale & Theresa Blue, Gregory G Brott, Jan Schori & Case Butterman, Betty J Cooper, Christine Foote, Rowland Gaal, Pohlin Gillis, Sandra Graham, Susan Harbison, John & Lura Harding, James & Nancy Joye, Nancy Kapellas, Larry & Eileen Kay, Michael Kessler, Carol Livingston, Lisa Moraga, Susan R Oie, Judith & James Lamare & Pachi, Steven Phillips, Colene Rauh, Kathleen Schenck, Robert Schrupf, Patricia Schwartz, David Steele, Doctors J W & Patricia Wells, Joel Wiley, Theresa Johnson & Dan Williams and Vivian Yost made donations to the **General Fund**.

Terry Atkinson, Janet & John Carlson & Bailey, Dale & Theresa Blue, Marc & Natalie Fenner, Pohlin Gillis, Carole Girard, Deborah M Hopwood, Nancy Kapellas, Lisa Moraga, Judith & James Lamare & Pachi and Theresa Johnson & Dan Williams made donations to the **Education and Conservation Fund**.

Terry Atkinson, Dale & Theresa Blue, Pohlin Gillis, Nancy Kapellas, Jeffrey & Bunkie Mangum, Lisa Moraga and Theresa Johnson & Dan Williams 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.

## SACRAMENTO AUDUBON'S ACTION ALERT

Join our Action Alert subscriber list and receive monthly alerts on important local issues effecting birds, wildlife and habitat. [www.sacramentoaudubon.org/conservation-alerts](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/conservation-alerts). Speak up for those who cannot speak!



## CALIFORNIA CONDORS RETURN TO BIRD CAMS

After a yearlong hiatus, the California Condor cam is back streaming live from a small cave on a rock cliff in Ventura County, California. On April 10, condor pair #594 (female) and #374 (male) hatched a healthy chick. In this clip, that can be found on YouTube, Mom and Dad reinforce their bond by preening each other before tending to their 18-day-old nestling. Watch the video on YouTube. Enter "Family Time At The California Condor Nest- April 28, 2022" in the search box.

Also at [www.allaboutbirds.org/cams/](http://www.allaboutbirds.org/cams/) many other Condor clips can be found along with live cams of Condors and many other birds including Red-tail Hawks, Ospreys, American Kestrels, Royal Albatross and Bermuda Petrels. For a splash of color look for the Panama Fruit Feeder. There you can find, among many others, the chatty Chestnut-headed Oropendola, the Rufous Motmot and the Buff-throated Saltator.

## SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK



[facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon)

You can enjoy the photos and commentary without joining Facebook

## Seasonal Sightings

### April 1 to April 30 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports [www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm](http://www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm)

April showers were not forthcoming to ease the drought, and while many complained of a somewhat slow migration, bird activity was far more plentiful than the rain. Migration comes in fits and starts, and all of the regulars were accounted for, with a few days producing impressive numbers. Migrating flycatchers, including uncommon empids, were well-represented among reports. Lingering waterbirds and other wintering species, as well as migrant shorebirds rounded out the list for the month. On the heels of the past two winters with a male **Northern Shoveler x Blue-winged Teal** hybrid, a male **Northern Shoveler x Cinnamon Teal** was found and photographed in March, continuing into April



Semipalmated Plover-  
Linda Pittman

at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP). One of the two **White-winged Scoters** that had been present for several months on Folsom Lake near Folsom Point continued through 4/1.

Sacramento County's third record of **White-winged Dove** was visiting seed in a backyard in Sacramento's Tahoe Park neighborhood from 4/14 (and possibly earlier) to at least 4/17. A **Common Poorwill** was photographed

on 4/3 along the Laguna Creek Parkway in Elk Grove, with another found on a private ranch in southeastern Sacramento County on 4/21, as well as "a few" from Rayhouse

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members.

Nancy Anderson	Tina Cardona
Marian Ashe	Cheryl Cobbs
Loretta Bailey	Christine Foote
Fil & Shirley Cardella	Michael Kessler
	Steven Phillips

### 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.

### Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

www.sacramentoaudubon.org  
membership@sacramentoaudubon.org  
P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*The Observer* Newsletter \$35 per address (1 Year) \_\_\_\_\_

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society or use your credit card  
or PayPal on our website at: [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP + 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Check for Action Alert \_\_\_\_\_

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](mailto:membership@sacramentoaudubon.org)

### Sightings continued

Rd on 4/30. A male **Allen's Hummingbird** was visiting a yard in rural Yolo County, southwest of Clarksburg, for much of the month. An impressive 12 **Pacific Golden-Plovers** were found in a field along Swan Rd, south of Dixon, on 4/19. A **Pectoral Sandpiper**, more expected in the late summer and fall, was a nice surprise on 4/19 in Yolo County near the "farmer's pond" along Rd 30; equally unexpected in spring was a reported **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at CRP on 4/24. Relatively few **Solitary Sandpiper** reports included singles at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 4/4 and 4/23, and one at CRP on 4/25.

**Bald Eagles** nested at CRP for the second year in a row. A **Hairy Woodpecker** at Mississippi Bar was a nice find on 4/28. The continuing **Eastern Phoebe** was last reported along Cache Creek at Wild Wings Park on 4/5. A **Varied Thrush** photographed on 4/29 at Reichmuth Park was

quite late for the species locally. A **Black-throated Sparrow** was found near the junction of Michigan Bar and Latrobe Rds on 4/18-20, and another was found along Meiss Rd on 4/19. There was a flurry of **Brewer's Sparrow** reports in eastern Sacramento County from 4/18-21, and the **Harris's Sparrow** found in February with a crowned-sparrow flock adjacent to the Putah Creek Riparian Reserve continued until at least 4/11.

To view photos of some of the highlights, visit [www.sacramentoaudubon.org/bird-sightings](http://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/cen-](http://groups.io/g/cen-)

[www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)) and in eBird ([ebird.org](http://ebird.org)).

It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Max Brodie, Aidan Brubaker, Lily Douglas, Konshau Duman, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Rob Furrow, Ed Harper, Jim Holmes, Scott Hoppe, Alvaro Jaramillo, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Stephanie Levins, Tim Ludwick, Mark Martucci, Michael Perrone, Nora Papian, Jim Rowoth, Scott Schlossberg, Steve Scott, Sean Smith, Gaven Stacey, John Trochet, Tom Uslan, and Lynette Williams.

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

Chris Conard

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SACRAMENTO  
AUDUBON SOCIETY

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*White Tailed Kite Dan Brown*

### Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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**Internet Address:** [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)

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P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

**Seasonal Observations:** Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,  
Sacramento, CA 95826

916-203-1610, e-mail preferred: [conardc@gmail.com](mailto:conardc@gmail.com)

**Program Chair:** Anthony Asay, e-mail, [cend86@gmail.com](mailto:cend86@gmail.com)

**Editor:** Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, [sawise7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sawise7@sbcglobal.net)

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.

*The Observer* is published by the Sacramento Audubon Society, monthly, January through December, except June and August, when we publish abbreviated editions.

### **ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM**

**7pm, September 17, 2021**

We're taking a break for the summer but the General Meetings and Speaker Programs will begin again on September 17. Until then, go to the SAS website at [sacramentoaudubon.org](http://sacramentoaudubon.org) and [facebook/SacramentoAudubon.com](https://facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon) for the latest news about birds and society information.

And don't forget to vote for our new slate of Officers and Board Members starting on June 20.