



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, March 18, 2010

Shepard Garden and Arts Center
7pm General Meeting

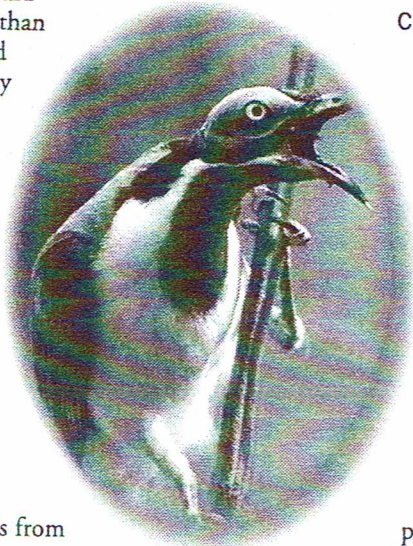
**Birding (Nearly) Every Day—
A First Visit to Australia**

Chris Conard

Chris is one of our many excellent local field trip leaders. Chris is a Natural Resource Specialist at the Bufferlands of the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District. His focus there is on habitat restoration and wildlife monitoring. He serves as the Sacramento County editor for *North American Birds* and is a Central Valley Bird Club Board Member. Additionally, he is a volunteer at the Cosumnes River Preserve, and leads field trips and writes the Seasonal Observations column for Sacramento Audubon Society.

While all of this would keep most of us more than busy, Chris has entered an eBird checklist every day since October 2007 until losing October 10, 2009 to the International Dateline. He will very briefly discuss the benefits—both personal and scientific—of birding every day, before moving to the main program: Australia.

In October Chris and his wife, Kimya Lambert, joined friends from Sacramento Audubon on a tour of Sydney and eastern Queensland. Australia exceeded Chris and Kimya's



Bluefaced Honeyeater
Chris Conard

WE MADE IT! WE'RE IN THE TOP TEN NATIONWIDE IN GBBC CHECKLISTS SUBMITTED

Thanks to the SAS Education Committee and the many events they planned that generated lots of participation, our Sacramento area checklist numbers are currently in fourth place, nationwide! We currently stand at 348 checklists. We're way ahead of any other city in California, more than twice as many as second place Redding. Oh yes, and the birds—we recorded 127 species.

CHECK THE RESULTS AT BIRDSOURCE.ORG

Now have some fun checking the results for the Great Backyard Bird Count, 2010. At press time, California was second in the nation with the number of checklists submitted and also second in the number of species. Florida led the nation with a whopping 1,770,000 birds reported. California, by comparison, had barely 500,000. This year it was San Diego leading the state among localities reporting the most species. Sacramento was fourth in the state for the number of species (ninth last year.)

All the hard work by Julie Serences, with her dedicated crew of volunteers going out to schools and libraries, really paid off—for Sacramento Audubon and for the birds. See page 3 for her notes and for the Field Trip Findings from the GBBC field trips led by Julie, Cathie LaZier, Wayne Blunk, Marlene Ishihara, Lea Landry and John Huls. Bill Dillinger also did a great job with press releases to the *Sacramento Bee* and the *Sacramento News and Review*, both of which ran articles urging people to get out and participate.

Check all the results online at www.birdsource.org/gbbc. Then click on "Explore the Results" at the top of the page. You can look for maps, Top 10 and state tally lists. As of press time 79,238 checklists had been submitted. This is about 20,000 more than last year! There was a total individual bird count of 9,254,105 which naturally, with the increase in checklists, is about 3,000,000 more than 2009. The species count remained about the same at 579. Hope you participated but, if not, you can still join Project Feederwatch and contribute to ongoing research. Just click on the link to Project Feederwatch if you want to get involved.

high expectations, with wonderful birds and wildlife, many of which were very approachable. The highlight of the trip was seeing two cassowaries and a platypus on the same day. They can't wait to go back! Chris's presentation will include photos and short videos of the brilliant, beautiful, and unusual wildlife of Australia.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions.

Lea Landry, Program Chair

Field Trip Findings

President's Day Weekend (2/13-15)

— Dan Brown reported: "Our trip to the north coast was quite a success! 10 of us tallied 113 species. Highlights were: Bald Eagle, Eurasian Green-winged Teal, Swamp Sparrow, 5 Peregrine Falcons, Red-necked Grebe, White-winged Scoter, Rock Sandpiper, Wandering Tattler, Harlequin Duck, Gray Jay, Crested Caracara and our leader Joe Ceriani spotted a Virginia's Warbler that has been present in the Arcata area for about a month! We witnessed a feeding frenzy in the Crescent City Harbor. Thousands of birds (gulls, scoters, ducks and shorebirds) were feasting on some kind of spawning consisting of tiny eggs that were covering the rocks after the tide went out. This was only at the southwest corner of the harbor as far as we could tell. Quite a spectacle! Also seen by Dan and Jan Tankersley in Orick was a continuing Harris's Sparrow."

Rush Ranch and Grizzly Island, Solano County (2/14)

— Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "We had a great day on Grizzly Island! 12 happy birders and 70 species of birds on a day of sun and warm weather. It was especially good for raptors, with Merlin, White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, Kestrel, Ferruginous and Red-tailed Hawks, Great Horned and Burrowing Owls and Golden Eagle. A long, close look at an American Bittern was also nice."

Yolo Wildlife Area (2/11) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported that the trip was canceled because the area was closed by flooding.

Jacob Lane Area, American River Parkway (2/10)

— Leader Jack Hiehle reported that sightings included Common Goldeneye, Lark Sparrow, Pied-billed Grebe, Great and Snowy egrets, a Mute Swan, and a River Otter.

Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley (2/7)

— Coordinator Mike Savino reported: "Super Bowl Sunday did not stop about 25 guests from joining us for our last "Save Our Sandhill Cranes" tour of the season. Blue skies and sunshine probably helped bring the good turnout. After the usual, well-received and informative talk by Paul Tebbel, Sean Wirth and Paul led the group to Desmond Rd. and Bruceville Rd, where good views of a dozen or so cranes were had at each location. We also saw Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers, Peregrine Falcons, Great Egret,

Northern Shovelers, Pintails, American Coots, and Merlin. After a while the group caravanned to Woodbridge Road and the Isenberg Preserve where Tundra Swans, Black-Necked Stilts, Meadowlarks, Great Horned Owls, Red Tailed Hawks, many ducks, Northern Harriers and various other avian species were observed. For the fly-in, the sky was filled with hundreds, if not a couple of thousand, Sandhill Cranes returning to roost.

"We hope that SAS will partner with us again next year on two "crane tours" per month from October through January or February. We are considering some changes to our procedures and choice of days, but we definitely want to continue to satisfy what appears to be an insatiable appetite on the part of the public for docent-led tours to see the Sandhill Cranes."

Yuba County Wetlands (2/7)

— Leader Richard Barbieri reported: "A small group of us traveled north on the back roads west of Hwy 65. Waterfowl was scattered throughout our trip as was expected. Highlights of the trip included several Say's Phoebes, two Bald Eagles, endless numbers of Red-tailed Hawks, and several Loggerhead Shrikes. At our final destination we saw two very active Great Horned Owls, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, Gadwall, Common Moorhen, Snipe, Long-billed Dowitcher, Dunlin, and the resident pair of Mute Swans. Another highlight of the day was a leucistic White-crowned Sparrow that had an all-snowy cap, missing the heavy black stripes on its head. Dan Brown took a great picture and posted it on www.cvbirds.org."

Lincoln Grasslands (2/6)

— Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "The forecast called for rain, and it was raining on the way to the meeting place. However, 3 people showed up, so we decided to give it a shot and we were not disappointed. By the time we were at our first stop, the rains let up. We tallied 81 species for the day, with highlights including nearly 20 Lewis's Woodpeckers, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Loggerhead Shrike, thousands of White-fronted, Snow and Ross's Geese in fields along East Catlett Rd., and for the last bird of the day we got great, scope-filling views of a Ferruginous Hawk perched in a nearby field. As we left our last stop, rain showers started up again. We felt fortunate that we had caught a window in the storm for our entire trip."

Hansen Ranch Park Preserve (1/31)

— Leader Jonilynn Okana reported: "The trip began with a mixup on the time that did not seem to have an effect on the 37 enthusiastic participants. As we headed towards the ranch, the fog was rolling in; however, by 9am most of it had cleared and we spotted 50 species in about 4 hours. The rookery was in sight with a few Great Blue Herons but maybe too early for much activity. Highlights of the trip were a Peregrine Falcon, Sora, Virginia Rail, Wilson's Snipe, 3 American Bittern, and 2 Green Heron. Mammal highlights were a Beaver swimming and a Coyote stalking Wild Turkey. We also had a good variety of waterfowl, sparrows, hawks, and Ring Necked Pheasant. I want to send a special "thank you" to all who shared their knowledge, assistance and their scopes with the large group."

Nimbus Fish Hatchery (1/30)

— Leader Dan Kopp reported: "We had a pretty good morning with a group of about 15 people and tallied 58 species. Although this was billed as a gull trip there were not many gulls to look at, with the majority being Californias, Ring-billed, two Glaucous-winged and one Herring. A young Peregrine Falcon that I saw the day before was in action again, perching on a hillside snag in between chasing swifts; although we didn't see it catch any on the trip, my friend and I saw it catch a swift the day before only to lose it and have the swift fly away; I returned the day after the trip and saw it successfully catch and eat a swift, however. We saw about three Barrow's Goldeneyes and many Commons, as well as dozens of Common Mergansers. There were lots of Tree Swallows foraging in with the swifts. We all got great scope views of a few cooperative male Phainopeplas that were near the westernmost parking area past the DFG office and hatchery. And as usual there was a Green Heron inside the nets with the young salmon."

Colusa National Wildlife Area (1/25)

— Rained out.

Road 113, Robinson Road and Birds Landing Area (1/24)

— Leaders Tim Fitzer and Mark Martucci reported: "With rain forecast, 17 people ventured out to the Robinson Rd. area. It started to rain as we finished our trip, lucky. Birds seen were Ferruginous Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Northern Harriers, 5 Burrowing, 1 Long-eared, and 1 Barn

Owl, Buffleheads, Lesser Scaup, and 5 Mute Swans (in Montezuma Slough). It was a fun day, the best days are always spent birding."

Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley (1/23)—

"There were only eight people attending but the payoff was wonderful. We started, as usual, with an excellent talk by Paul Tebbel on crane biology and behavior. We then did a short hike on the Wetlands Walk where we saw an assortment of ducks, some shore birds, and Canada geese. We then caravanned down to Staten Island where we had lots of good looks at Sandhill cranes, Tundra swans, probably thousands of Greater White-fronted Geese, and a few raptors. We had an excellent close up view of two Red tailed Hawks sitting next to each other on a silo. Perhaps most spectacularly of all, we got a fantastic close up view of one of two Great Horned Owls that appear to reside in an old, broken down water tower. Some of our guests were first-timers and they were so awestruck we may have made birders out of them."

Pleasants Valley Rd/Putah Creek (1/23) — Leader Gary Fregien reported: "Eight birders left Sacramento on a rainy morning for birding in Solano County,

arriving there to some broken clouds and sunshine. Between our first and second stops along Pleasants Valley Road near Vacaville, we observed a raptor, of the Falco genus, at the top of a snag. After considerable observation, and some debate, the leader had to concede that, even though there was a fairly wide terminal band on the tail, the bird finally turned for a more favorable look and removed all doubt that it was a Prairie Falcon, rather than a Merlin; a very nice start to the day. Most of the target species were found during the day, including Phainopepla, Western Bluebird, Say's Phoebe, Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser and American Dipper. We also saw Wood Duck and the presumed Bufflehead-Goldeneye hybrid. Other highlights include two forms of Fox Sparrow; Sooty and Red. The birding day ended with the beginning of rain at the east end of Lake Solano while we viewed a pair of Common Moorhen and a Red-breasted Sapsucker. The group tallied 67 identifiable species on the day."

Yolo Wildlife Area (1/19) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported the trip was canceled because the area was closed by flooding.

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area (1/17) — Cathie LaZier, co-leader with Ken Hashagen, reported: "Six birders braved a misty morning (never believe those weather forecasts!) for a trip to Gray Lodge. The driving tour produced a wide variety of waterfowl, and Gail Janke spotted the first of two adult Bald Eagles. From the blind, Tim Fitzer spotted our target Eurasian Wigeon preening on an island, giving us all great views. After walking the nature trail, which produced two bitterns, we drove home around the Sutter Buttes where we added Sandhill Cranes and Loggerhead Shrike. Harry Janke refused to go home till he had an owl, so Tim Fitzer found him a Great Horned. We ended the day with a total of 64 species."

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (1/16) — Leader John York reported: "Our small group met in the fog, but we had nice weather at the refuge. We were greeted by an adult Bald Eagle in a tree behind the visitor center. Other good birds were Peregrine Falcons and blue morph Snow Geese. Eagles bounced up thousands of geese for some spectacular flock behavior in the afternoon. We also discovered that the squirrel across from the viewing platform likes carrots."

Pete Hayes

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FIELD TRIPS

A total of 315 (counting the Folsom Event over 360), people attended the GBBC workshops this year! I can't thank enough the folks who helped at these workshops. The puppet show is a real winner with kids! We received over \$300 worth of donations for SAS books and checklists.

Audiences seemed pleased with the workshops and I, of course, had a ball. I built a listserv of over 175 e-mails made up

of folks who would like information about beginner field trips and future Audubon workshops. Cathie LaZier and Maureen Geiger scheduled two such trips in February. Everyone attending was invited to join SAS or at least come to our meetings. Thanks again everyone, for all your support.

Julie Serences, Education Chair

Mather Lake (2/15) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "Six participants started in the fog at Mather Regional Park for the Great Backyard Bird Count. With experienced eyes the group tallied 40 species in two hours. Highlights included 30 Double-crested Cormorants on the lake and in the trees on the east shore of the lake. The berry patch at the south end of the levee produced Song Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Spotted Towhee, Hermit Thrush and Bewick's Wren. Wild Turkeys grazed the golf course and a White-tailed Kite flew into a nest on the NE corner of the lake. Numerous Tree Swallows have arrived and both White-crowned and Golden-crowned sparrows were spotted. Great-tailed Grackles were definitely present. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were still around and a Cooper's Hawk

was sighted. Buffleheads and Common Goldeneyes were diving in the center of the lake. All in all, an excellent count for a late winter outing."

American River Bike Trail near the Fish Hatchery (2/14) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: "Six participants enjoyed a casual one hour stroll along the bike trail in Upper Sunrise Park. We saw 19 species for a total of 45 birds. Highlights included a male Barrow's Goldeneye accompanied by five females, a single White-tailed Kite hovering or kiting over the trail, and close views of two White-breasted Nuthatches."

Sutter's Landing, American River (2/13) — Leader Julie Serences reported: "Fourteen participants, including 3-month-old twins, counted 29 species of birds on this morning's walk. By far, the biggest highlight was

the Belted Kingfisher nest found by the father and son team of Mathew and Max McGregor. We had excellent views with Robert Sewell's scope and watched the nest excavation process on the far bank."

William Pond Park on the American River Parkway (2/12) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "Eight participants counted 52 species of birds on this morning's walk. Highlights were 2 pairs of Hooded Mergansers, a Red-shouldered Hawk busily and noisily constructing a nest, Lark Sparrows, and California Quail feeding in the grass, and a Great Blue Heron rookery. A brief look at cavorting otters was also a treat. As I had laryngitis, Lea Landry and John Huls helped with finding and talking about the birds."

Field Trips

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Richard Barbieri, 966-4603, offleash56@yahoo.com for trips through March 7th. After March 8th call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 833-6722, matuchbirdman@yahoo.com.

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. Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place. Try to arrive early, especially if you want driving directions or plan to carpool. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader.



Saturday, February 27, 8am – Noon
Bufferlands Wetlands and Waterfowl Tour
Leader: Kevin Cassady, 875-9196
cassadyk@sacsewer.com

Tour a managed seasonal and permanent wetland area within the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands in Elk Grove. The wetlands and waterfowl tour offers a chance to see many bird and mammal species including waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, beavers and coyotes. Tour participants will enjoy a 2 mile walk guided by a Bufferlands staff biologist who will explain current management and restoration techniques. Space is limited. For more information on this tour please contact Kevin Cassady.

Sunday, February 28
7am – early afternoon
Northern San Joaquin County
Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com

We'll visit a diversity of habitats in northern San Joaquin County. The Mokelumne River fish hatchery below Camanche Dam is a mix of oak woodland, riverine, and riparian habitat. It has recently hosted Lewis's Woodpeckers and two American Dippers—perhaps they'll stick around for us. Flood and Waverly Rds are excellent for raptors and other open country birds. If time and conditions warrant, we'll make stops at Lake Camanche and Woodbridge Rd. Be prepared for about two miles of walking and dress for variable weather. Meet at the Park and Ride in Galt at the southeast corner of Hwy 99 and Twin Cities Rd. This trip is good for both beginners and more experienced birders.

Saturday, March 6, 8am
North Fork Pleasant Grove Creek (Roseville area)
Leader: Scott Dietrich, 208-4976
sed25@csus.edu

The North Fork Pleasant Grove open space area is a river flood plain area scattered with old growth Valley Oaks, riparian habitat and a small wetlands area. It's usually a great place to see raptors such as Barn Owl, American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk, White-tailed Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk and Cooper's Hawk. Also present are some waterfowl including Wood Duck, Mallard, and often Hooded and Common Merganser. Also seen here are Great Egret, Great Blue Heron and Green Heron. Of course there will still be many winter birds, Northern Flicker, sparrows and finches as well as the resident oak habitat birds, Acorn and Nuttall's Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Oak Titmouse and Western Bluebird.

Meet Scott at Paul Dugan Park in the northeast part of Roseville. In Roseville drive north on Woodcreek Oaks Blvd past Blue Oaks Blvd; then turn right onto Diamond Woods Circle and drive a short distance; Paul Dugan Park will be on your right. Or, coming from Sacramento, take I-80 east to Hwy 65; take 65 north to Blue Oaks Blvd; take Blue Oaks Blvd west to Woodcreek Oaks Blvd, and go north on Woodcreek Oaks to Diamond Woods, then right to Paul Dugan Park. (Thomas Bros Map 219 D1, for those without Internet!) This new area will be of interest to beginning and more experienced birders.

Sunday, March 7, 7am
Highway 37 and Schollenberger Park

Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

From the West Sacramento Park and Ride, Mark will lead the group towards Petaluma, with various birding stops along Hwy 37. Moving on to Schollenberger, he'll look for Blue-winged Teal, a variety of shorebirds, Common Yellowthroat and the occasional rail. Bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. Meet Mark at 7am at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave. Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot, on the north side of the freeway. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

Saturday, March 13
ARNHA Bird and Breakfast Fund Raiser
Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 489-4918

Join Sacramento Audubon leaders for a birding walk followed by a delicious breakfast. This fund raiser for the American River Natural History Association is an annual event, and the leaders usually find nesting Anna's Hummingbirds and Bushtits. Various woodpeckers and other small woodland birds, as well as herons, egrets and waterfowl on the river, will also be seen. Red-shouldered Hawks are frequently found in the oak woodland. This fund raiser supports ARNHA's educational work. For sign-up information and price phone the Nature Center at 489-4918. See the complete write-up on page 6.

Sunday, March 14, 8am (Note: Daylight Savings Time begins today.)
Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

This area of the parkway is excellent for birding and Cathie will be looking for early nesting birds and returning migrants, as well as blooming wildflowers. This is a very good trip for beginners, as well as more experienced birders. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park in Fair Oaks. The trip will end by noon.

Saturday, March 20, 7:30am or 9:30am in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Leader: Ron Storey, (707) 479-0171
ronstorey@ronstorey.com
Coordinator: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at 7:30 at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Or meet at 9:30 am at the boat house on Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park. We will bird this area until lunch time and then we will eat lunch here. After lunch we will move on to another section of the park and then end the day at the Cliff House/Sutro Baths area on the ocean. Typical birds that we have seen the past are Allen's Hummingbirds, Pygmy Nuthatches, Townsend's Warblers, Brown Creepers, Chestnut-backed Chickadees, both species of Turnstones, and Wandering Tattler. The pace of the trip is slow and suitable for beginners. Bring a lunch, dress in layers, and plan on joining Ron for dinner somewhere in San Francisco.

Note: Rain will cancel this trip. Questions: Call or email Ron or Cathie; for email be sure to put Golden Gate Field Trip in the subject line.

Sunday, March 21, 7am
Bodega Bay

Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146

Join Brian for a full day of birding, exploring the many habitats around Bodega Bay. Gulls, loons and migrating shorebirds are just a few of the species that are possible on this trip. Meet Brian at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Be sure to bring lunch, snacks, water and layered clothing for varied weather. Scopes and FRS radios will be helpful.

Sunday, March 21
Habitat Improvement Work Day

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Help Jack restore native vegetation along the American River Parkway. Tasks vary from month to month, so call Jack for details and meeting time, usually early morning.

Wednesday, March 24, 8:30am
Yolo Wildlife Area

Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758
ishiM2000@comcast.net

Meet Marlene in the first parking lot on your left as you enter the wildlife area. Depending on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of migrating shorebirds, American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts. Tri-colored and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are also possible. This is a good trip for both beginners and experienced birders. Bring scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78, E. Chiles/Rd 32A) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A), on your left.

Saturday, March 27, 7am
Caswell Memorial State Park

Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
calaveri@sbcglobal.net

Caswell Memorial State Park is located in the Central Valley near the town of Ripon, about an hour south of Sacramento. The park's position along the meandering Stanislaus River affords a combination of water, mature cottonwood riparian and valley oak woodland vegetation. Its multi-level tall tree canopy, low scrubs and vines provide lush cover, nesting and foraging habitat, and is a magnet for a variety of resident and migrant bird species. For more information about the park, go to www.parks.ca.gov, click on "Find A Park" and use the drop-down menu to find Caswell.

Passerines, including several species of swallows, sparrows, woodpeckers and warblers are park specialties in Spring and Summer, and resident Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, and Great Horned Owls nest here. The park is surrounded by agricultural lands, so Swainson's Hawks are seen regularly here this time of year. California Thrasher and Wrentit, not that common on the valley floor except in riparian areas, are also here.

There is a day-use fee per vehicle to enter the park. Plan to spend several hours in the

park along some of the numerous nature trails, so bring food and water. The trails are generally level, but these paths and the vegetation along them may be damp. Dress appropriately.

We will meet at the Park and Ride on the east side of Hwy 99 near the Sheldon Rd. exit. Take Hwy 99 south from Sacramento to the Sheldon Road exit. Turn left and cross over the freeway to the second signal light; turn right on East Stockton Blvd and proceed about a ¼ mile to the lot.

Sunday, March 28, 7am
Lincoln Grasslands

Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

We will search the back roads of Placer County for raptors, Tri-colored Blackbirds, Lewis' Woodpeckers and Western Kingbirds. We will end the day along the shores of Camp Far West looking for Bald Eagles and Rock Wren. Bring lunch, liquids and FRS radios. Meet Mark at Brookfield's Restaurant parking lot, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station. Brookfield's is behind Shell.

Wednesday, March 31, 8am
River Bend Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right, just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland, looking for wrens, nuthatches and other small birds with young, also nesting Red-shouldered Hawks and possibly some other birds still in nests. We should also find some spring wildflowers and Pipevine Swallowtail butterflies. This is a good trip for beginners, and will end before noon. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). Without a County Park Pass there is a \$5 per car park entrance fee.

Saturday, April 3, 8am
American River between Howe and Watt

Leader: Dan Kopp, 213-2791
rey-ality@hotmail.com

Join Dan on his favorite spot along the Parkway in search of our late wintering, migrant and breeding birds, and get to

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Field Trips continued from page 5

know an area he knows well. Although he birds this spot almost daily, he has rarely seen other birders and is eager to share his knowledge of this oasis behind his home. In the last two years this area has produced a Palm and Chestnut-sided warbler and a California Thrasher. He will work the area well to locate any goodies in hopes of finding them for the group. There are well worn trails and some that require a little more work, so depending on everyone's ability, he will decide how strenuous the walk will be in the morning. The trip will last until lunch time. From Hwy 50, take the Howe Avenue exit and head north; from Howe, take the first exit before the bridge. To do this, you will need to be in the right-most lane. Cross La Riviera Drive and enter the Howe Avenue access to the American River. Without a County Park Pass there is a \$5 fee to park in the lot, or parking is available on La Riviera Drive.

Sunday, April 4, 8am
Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway
Leader: Mark Martucci 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Mark for an Easter morning walk along the American River Parkway. We will see a nice variety of resident birds and hopefully some migrating songbirds. From the intersection of Sunrise and Fair Oaks Blvd, go west on Fair Oaks, then make an immediate left turn onto Pennsylvania Avenue and follow it into the park. Without a County Park Pass there is a \$5 parking fee. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Friday, April 9, 8am
Davis Wetlands and Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
Leader: Dan Tankersley, 359-2829
dtankers@winfirst.com

Meet Dan at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento, take I-80 to west to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again to the Park and Ride behind Ikeda's Market. Dan will be looking for shorebirds, Swainson's Hawk, Western Kingbird and other spring migrants. Trip will end around noon. Scopes and FRS radios are helpful on this trip.

Saturday, April 10, 8am
Jepson Prairie and Yolo Bypass
Leader: Andi Salmi, 691-7216
andisalmi@yahoo.com

Jepson Prairie is an unusual area of bunch grass prairie and vernal pool habitats, har-

boring some fascinating native plant species. Wildflowers will be the main focus of the morning and we will bird the Yolo Bypass in the afternoon. Bring a lunch and liquids as this trip will last into mid-afternoon. Meet Andi at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Sunday, April 11, 7:30am
Mather Field Park
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
wayne.blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Great-tailed Grackle and Yellow-headed Blackbirds both nest at the lake. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road. Without a County Park Pass there is a \$5 per car entrance fee. This is a great trip for beginning birders.



Kirsten Munson

AUDUBON OUTREACH

The **Galt Winter Bird Festival** was our latest activity. Darrell Mohr, Jonilyn Okano, Bonnie Breeze and Gail Janke talked with people and passed out literature.

Our next events include the **Animal House Art-Show** reception at the Sacramento Fine Arts Center on the evening of March 13th; **Return of the Swainson's Hawk** celebration at Sutter's Landing on the American River on April 10th; **Creek Week Clean Up Celebration** at Carmichael Park on Saturday, April 17th; various **Earth Day** celebrations; **Walk On The Wildside**, Saturday, May 15th at Beach Lake Preserve; and **Fair Oaks Harvest Day** on Saturday, August 7th.

If you'd like to help at any of these presentations, have questions, or know of another event we should table at, contact Cathie LaZier at 457-6882 or empid@earthlink.net. Audubon member Richard Turner did just that, adding the Animal House Art Show to our list of events.

POLLYWOGS, FROGS AND VERNAL POOLS

Sacramento Splash presents a Nature in the Neighborhood family event:

HOP TO IT!

Saturday, March 6: 1pm - 4pm
AND Sunday, March 7: 1pm - 4pm

When winter rains send humans indoors, frogs and toads climb out of their hidey-holes and hop to the biggest pool party of the year! Right now Pacific Chorus Frogs, Spadefoot Toads, and Western Toads are gathering around the Mather Field Vernal Pools where they sing, mate, and make the pollywogs that will become next year's chorus!

Pollywogs and frogs fascinate children and adults alike. Join us for this fun, interactive program to make or renew a friendship with these amiable amphibians.

The first half of the program will be held indoors at the Splash Education Center. Guests will have the opportunity to:

- Get "up close and personal" with live frogs and toads of four different species!
- Play "Name that Frog!" and learn to recognize our local croakers by their calls.
- Meet what they eat by peering through microscopes at the tiny creatures that live in the vernal pools.
- Meet other live animals that love to munch on frogs and toads. Discover the surprising ways that frogs and toads avoid becoming lunch!

After that, we'll walk to the vernal pools to search for wild frogs and pollywogs. Come prepared with boots or sturdy shoes, long pants, and outerwear to stay warm and dry. The program will be held rain or shine. Guests may depart at any time.

Important Information

- For more information visit www.sacsplash.org and click on the blue "Hop to It!" link on the homepage.
- Reservations are required. You may reserve a spot on our website or by calling Splash at (916) 364-2437.
- The Splash Education Center is located at 4426 Excelsior Rd., Mather, 95655. For directions, visit www.sacsplash.org and click on "Contact Us."
- Suggested donations are \$10.00/adult and \$5.00/child (5-18). Children must be accompanied by an adult.

IN MEMORY OF SAS CONSERVATION CHAIR ROY GREENAWAY (1929-2010)

Sacramento Audubon Conservation Chair Roy Greenaway passed away at age 80 on January 20, 2010, following a heart attack at his home. Roy was a past president of the Sacramento Audubon Society and served on the SAS Board until his death.

Roy was unique to the Sacramento conservation community. Once a top adviser to U.S. Sen. Alan Cranston of California, Roy brought his political and practical sensibilities to bear on important local environmental and open space protection and preservation issues.

Roy helped found Habitat 2020, a coalition of environmental groups that has grown to include Sacramento Audubon Society, California Native Plant Society, Urban Creeks Council, Friends of the Swainson's Hawk, Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Save the American River Association, Sierra Club, Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge Association. Habitat 2020 serves as the Conservation Committee for the Environmental Council of Sacramento ("ECOS"), and has also developed a county wide vision for conserving the County's remaining open spaces and agricultural lands known as the California Heartland Project.

Roy was born in 1929 in Takoma Park, Md. He married Carol Wagle in 1951 and served in the Army in Japan. Roy and Carol regularly attended SAS Board meetings together until just before his death.

As the current president of Sacramento Audubon Society and our representative to ECOS for the past several years, I had the good fortune to work with and learn from Roy. I enjoyed his wit, wisdom, and, yes, even occasional marching orders at Habitat 2020 and SAS Board meetings. The local conservation community has lost a great asset and ally with Roy's passing. The Board's best wishes go out to Roy's wife Carol, along with our thanks to her for sharing Roy with SAS and the larger Sacramento conservation community for all these years.

Keith G. Wagner, President
Sacramento Audubon Society

For more information about Roy Greenaway's life and accomplishments:
<http://www.sacbee.com/ourregion/story/2509258.html>

ANNUAL BIRD AND BREAKFAST AT EFFIE YEAW YOUR LAST CHANCE?

With Effie Yeaw on the budget chopping block this year, it is more important than ever that you attend the Bird and Breakfast, Saturday, March 13th. It is an Annual Spring Classic at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Explore the miracles of spring in the beautiful oak woodland and meadows of the Effie Yeaw Nature Area, in small groups guided by Audubon experts. Return to a hot, hearty breakfast (vegetarian option available) served in the new Assembly Building at the Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park, California Ave. and Tarshes Drive in Carmichael. Participants (not advised for children under 12) should wear comfortable walking shoes and bring binoculars. On this walk one can expect to see some 30 bird species among more than 100 that populate the lower American River's environs.

Sign-ups start in mid-January. Reservations are always necessary for the space-limited, \$35 per person fund-raiser for educational programs on the American River Parkway. Call the center at (916) 489-4918 for details. Checks payable to ARNHA may be mailed to PO Box 241, Carmichael, CA 95609. Be sure to include your telephone number.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION—HELP CLEAR THE AIR

All of us use fossil fuels every day — for heating and cooling our homes, driving our cars, generating the electricity to power our lights and appliances, and more. In the process we produce the greenhouse gases that are primarily responsible for air pollution and climate change. Fortunately, each of us also has the power to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. Here's a difference you can make that birds will enjoy too. Spring is a good time to plant and if you choose habitat friendly trees you'll be rewarded in many ways.

Plant leafy trees around your house to provide windbreaks and summer shade. Each year, the average yard tree cleans 330 pounds of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. An average tree also absorbs ten pounds of pollutants from the air each year, including four pounds of ground level ozone and three pounds of particulates.

And on the technical side try an energy audit for your home or office. It's a great way of assessing where and how you use energy and how you can cut back. For sample instructions, go to www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/your_home/energy_audits/index.cfm/mytopic=11160.

More tips next month, but in the meantime check out: www.audubon.org/globalwarming/BePartSolution.php. There are many steps you can take to help clean the air.

ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The reality of climate change is no longer up for debate, and its effects are accelerating more rapidly than even climate scientists had predicted. Arctic sea ice is melting, sea level is rising, glaciers are shrinking, sea surface temperatures are rising, seawater is becoming more acidic, and ecosystems' and weather patterns are shifting. There is no longer any question of the need to act, and act quickly.

As we mobilize to address greenhouse gas emissions and the warming of our planet, however, we must recognize that even if we were able to end all carbon pollution today, the negative impacts of already-released pollutants would continue for decades. Wildlife has already been affected. Birds are responding to climate change by shifting their range poleward and upslope, altering the timing of their migration, redistributing into new communities, and perhaps even evolving new traits.

To mitigate for the change that cannot be avoided, we must employ a two-part agenda in our climate and energy policy. Carbon pollution must be capped at levels dictated by science to avoid climate change, and funding must be dedicated to implement strategies that address the inevitable impacts of global warming on wildlife and natural resources.

The investment required will be significant but the benefits of planning proactively will be invaluable. Each day that passes without conservation action increases long-term costs. More species move closer to extinction and ecosystems become further degraded, reducing the options for restoration.

The best means to accomplish these goals is to implement an economy-wide cap and invest system that is "clean, green, and fair." Through such a system, the state's biggest polluters would be required to promptly and steadily reduce their pollution levels. In addition, revenue generated from polluters paying for emission allowances could be directed to protect our natural resources from the impacts of a warming climate.

Jordan Wellwood
Central Valley/Sierra Nevada Conservation Coordinator, Audubon California

Birding Festivals

GODWIT DAYS

The 15th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held April 15-21. Godwit Days is a three-day spring migration bird festival celebrating California's North Coast which offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats of Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where 271 species of birds have been sighted. Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover. The area offers a wide array of habitats and species for your observation and enjoyment. The selection of over 100 small group field trips, lectures, workshops, boating excursions, and community activities are led by experienced local guides. For further information and registration visit www.godwitdays.com or call 1-800-908-WING. Registration is now open.

FIRST ANNUAL POINT REYES BIRDING FESTIVAL

Plan now to attend the first annual Point Reyes Birding Festival, April 23-26, 2010. The event is sponsored by the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

Point Reyes and the West Marin area are home to one of the most diverse bird populations in North America. April is a great time to see and hear breeding birds, and to admire shore birds and waterfowl (and many other species) on their way north.

Top bird experts like David Wimpfheimer, Keith Hansen, and Jules Evens will lead participants on trips to discover the best birding sites in the region. Displays and exhibits will expand your bird knowledge. The event will also feature other walks to see the West Marin natural world, including the famous wildflower displays, butterflies, and more. The Festival includes an on-line auction with such exciting items as birding trips to Peru, Ecuador, and South Africa; bed and breakfast stays in West Marin; high quality binoculars, and many other birding and related items. A very affordable boat trip to Cordell Bank to see pelagic birds and marine mammals will take place April 26 (weather permitting).

Those interested in attending the Festival should register soon, since many of the walks and presentations will fill up quickly. Go to www.eacmarin.org to learn more about this exciting event. We look forward to seeing you at the start of what we are sure will be a great annual tradition.

OLYMPIC BIRDFEST, SEQUIM, WASHINGTON

Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, Sequim, Washington, April 9-11, 2010.

The stage is set...quiet bays and estuaries, sandy beaches, a five-mile-long sand spit, and a protected island bird sanctuary on the Strait of Juan de Fuca; wetlands, tide pools, rainforests, and lush river valleys. The players are ready...Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, and Pygmy owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, and a traditional salmon bake at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center.

Also this year, it's possible to follow your BirdFest weekend with a three-day, two night birding cruise of the spectacular San Juan Islands on April 11-13, 2010. Visit San Juan and Sucia Islands, and more. Stay at the historic Roche Harbor Resort. Get program information and registration forms online at www.olympicbirdfest.org. Contact them by phone, at 360-681-4076, email at info@olympicbirdfest.org, or write Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382, for a brochure.

STATE PARKS INITIATIVE

After watching California State Parks fall victim to budget cuts year after year, we now have a real chance to return this magnificent system to its former glory. We need your help to get this important initiative on the ballot.

The State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010 would ensure a dedicated and reliable funding stream for state parks through an \$18 annual surcharge on most California vehicles. By law, the trust fund could only be spent on state parks, urban river parkways, wildlife, natural lands and ocean conservation programs. Vehicles subject to the surcharge would receive free, year-round admission to all state parks. Californians will no longer pay day-use fees at any state parks.

This issue is important for Audubon California because California State Parks provide some of our best bird and wildlife habitat. Fifty state parks are designated Important Bird Areas. Moreover, they offer invaluable opportunities for children and families to learn about birds and wildlife.

We need 475,000 signatures by April 15 to get the State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Fund Act of 2010 on the November ballot. Audubon California and the state's local chapters have risen to the occasion, but we need your help as well. Contact your chapter board or Audubon California to add your signature to the list or to volunteer to gather signatures.

Go to <http://ca.audubon.org> for further information.

PELAGIC COORDINATOR NEEDED

Ken Hashagen, who has been coordinating the two pelagic trips that Sacramento Audubon offers each year, is stepping down. He is looking for someone to take up the coordination activities. Coordination is easy - all contacts have been identified, annual dates selected, announcements drafted, and letters composed. The new Coordinator will be pretty well set up in a well-established system. In return, he or she will get two free boat trips each year - one to the Farallon Islands and one on Monterey Bay. Ken will be available to answer questions and help the new coordinator through the process. The ability to ID pelagic species is NOT needed (experts volunteer for that job in return for a free trip).

If you are interested, please contact Ken at (916) 316-8596.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Martin D Bailey	Daniel J Foley
Suzanne M Brown	Janet LaDue
Charles A Eubanks	Carol Livingston
Ellie Evans	Charles F Perrigo
Walter Floyd	Allison Rood

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Richard Begley, Karen Brookhyser, Meg Bryerton, Joan Clark, Michael Davis, Truman Holtzclaw, Robert Meager, John Payne, Bruce Swinehart, J. G. Tracy, Therese Valdez, Jim Waddell and Dee Warenycia, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Daniel Foley to the **National Audubon Society for Bobelaine**

Jon Beck, Suzanne Brown, Carol Livingston, Barbara Milton, Alison Rood, Carol Sughrue, Bruce Swinehart and J.G. Tracy, to the **General Fund**.

Tim Fitzer made a donation to the **Conservation and Education Fund** in memory of Sheila Martignetti Deaner.

Sacramento Audubon received a bequest from the estate of Dorothy Harvey, a long-time Audubon member, who served on the board, as our ECOS representative, and was active in conservation.



Daniel Kilby

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be held on March 30, 2010 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

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

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry@softcom.net (916) 638-1141

Date _____ *The Observer* Newsletter \$25 per address \$ _____

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

Send address changes to our Membership Chair to help keep down our costs.

SPEAKERS AND PROGRAMS FOR 2010

April 15 - Ed Harper, *Africa on Steroids*

May 20 - Subhash Chand, *Birding Delhi*

September 16 - Robert Meese, *Tricolor Blackbirds*

October 21 - Ron LeValley, *A Blue Whale Adventure*

November 18 - Jess Morton, *Audubon Partnerships in Baja California*

Observations continued from page 10

sible to list everyone; however, I want to thank the following for reports on the above species and for providing additional information:

Dan Brown, Chris Dunford, Todd Easterla, Andy Engilis, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Jeri Langham, Ed Pandolfino, Linda Pittman, Zack Smith, Brian Sullivan, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, Ed Whisler and Dan Williams.

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

Chris Conard

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.

Seasonal Observations

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

Several highlights from the local CBCs topped the list for January. A **Red-throated Loon** found on the 1/3 Folsom CBC was a first for the count, a first for the lake since 1999, and the first for Sacramento County in many years. The loon was reported through at least 1/10 at the Mormon Island access near the Sacramento/El Dorado County line and was found again in February. Another highlight from count day, a juvenile **Northern Shrike** at Beal's Point, was nicely photographed on 1/4. Standouts from the 1/5 Rio Cosumnes Count include a **Western Flycatcher** and a **Nashville Warbler** from the Tall Forest portion of Cosumnes River Preserve. A young male **Lark Bunting** (seen through 1/18 on Riley Rd, south of Dillard Rd) and a **Chestnut-collared Longspur** were found at the Valensin portion of CRP. Additional highlights were reported in last month's CBC summary.

Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks are getting more scrutiny from local birders, with the bird near Thornton continuing into January, and at least two reported in Yolo County: one north of Davis from 1/2 into February and another near Zamora on 1/8. A 1/15 raptor survey in southeastern Sacramento County produced a **Rough-legged Hawk**, five **Ferruginous Hawks**, a **Merlin**, and seven **Prairie Falcons**. A **Long-eared Owl** found on 1/16 at Yolo Grasslands Park south of Davis continued into February.

Other interesting finds include a male

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Tufted Duck at the Davis Wetlands on 1/16 and a 3rd-cycle **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at the nearby Yolo County Landfill. A **Common Loon**, rare for Yolo County, was found at the Port of Sacramento on 1/22 and continued through at least 1/25. An outing along

Putah Creek on 1/22 to the west of Winters produced some nice finds, including a **Hairy Woodpecker** and two **American Dippers**. A **Hammond's Flycatcher** found in N Davis on 1/2 continued into February. Two **Western Kingbirds** at the Prairie City State Vehicle Rec. Area were a big surprise for the early date of 1/21. A **McCown's Longspur** along County Line Rd in extreme northern Yolo County was an excellent find on 1/22. A **Western Tanager** was good for winter at CRP on 1/7. A **California Thrasher**, rare in Sacramento County, was heard singing across the river from the Gristmill access well into February.

We are now featuring photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (<http://sacramento-audubon.org/activities/recent sightings.html>).

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit www.cvbirds.org and click "Listserv" for details. With over 100 reports, it is impos-

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
(916) 638-1141, e-mail preferred: llandry@softcom.net

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95826
(916) 362-5942,
e-mail preferred: conardc@gmail.com

Editor: Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, 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.

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Observations continued on page 9