

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



Thirty-six-year-old Sandhill Crane

On November 3, 2022 Paul Miller photographed this Sandhill Crane at Cosumnes River Preserve. Incredibly, he was able to identify the number on the band and submitted it to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory online. The bird was banded at Alturas Ranches in Modoc CA in 1986 making this bird 36 years old. Betty Cooper helped him reach out via email and he received this additional confirmation.

“That bird was marked by Modoc Refuge staff. The oldest crane I am aware of was banded by Rod Drewien and was last seen in the San Luis Valley at 40 years old.” Gary Ivey, Ph.D., Research Associate - Pacific Flyway Program - INTERNATIONAL CRANE FOUNDATION.

If you notice a banded bird and are able to get the band numbers and band colors you can submit the information to the USGS Bird Banding Laboratory. A link to their website is located on the Sacramento Audubon website, <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/news/thirty-six-year-old-sandhill-crane>.



Banded Sandhill Crane, photo by Paul Miller

Bird Banding Laboratory

Dear Paul Miller,

Thank you for reporting Band #: 0599-36535

A confirmation email has been sent to you.

See below for the banding information for the reported bird:

Date	06/20/1986
Species	Sandhill Crane
Age	WAS TOO YOUNG TO FLY WHEN BANDED IN 1986
Sex	UNKNOWN
Location	ALTURAS RANCHES, WEST SIDE OF HWY. 395, 2 S ALTURAS, MODOC COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, USA

Problems were detected with this report:

This bird was given a color marker, please indicate if the band number was determined via the color marker.

This bird or band is unusually old.

If possible, please upload photos of the band and bird using the tools below and include any important remarks that you may have left out of your report.



Field Trips: Field Trips December 1 – January 15, 2022

Sacramento Audubon has returned to volunteer-led field trips.

Precautions are still in place for everyone's safety. Unless otherwise noted, field trips are geared towards adults and those over age 13. With wildfires on the rise, smoky conditions may occur. Please note that a forecast of bad air quality (AQI of 100 or higher) will result in trip cancellation. If you are unsure, please contact the trip leader.

For questions regarding the trip, or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please contact the trip leader. Due to insurance requirements, Sacramento Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize ride-sharing/carpools. 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 may be helpful. Please arrive early if you need driving directions or plan to carpool as starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place.

COVID-19 Protocols

- Some trips may require advance registration. For those trips, please only sign up if you are committed to attending as field trips have a limited number of participants.
- All participants, including children 5 and up and field trip leaders, must be vaccinated.
- Additional restrictions may be required, such as proof of vaccine or face masks. It varies with each field trip. Please read the description of the field trip carefully. Do not register for a field trip if you are unwilling to comply with the stated COVID precautions.

To Register for a Field Trip, follow the instructions in the trip description or visit <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/field-trips>. If you have questions or need help, email our Registration Coordinator at sacramentoaudubonfieldtrips@gmail.com.

Family Friendly Trip to Mather Regional Park

Saturday, December 3, 9 AM
Expected length: 2-2 ½ hours
Leader: Nicole Barden (530)304-5461
nicolembarden@gmail.com

Join Environmental Educator Nicole to explore what this popular birding location has to offer! We will be on the lookout for resident and wintering migrant birds, including White-tailed Kites, American Bittern, Green Heron, Pied-billed Grebe, and Common Yellowthroat.

This trip is open to all birding levels and ages and will be slow paced. We will be listening for birds as much as looking for them and keep an eBird list as we go. Beginning birders and young birders are encouraged to join. The trail is mostly flat and un-paved, and there are benches and bathrooms available.

Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park.

From Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles. After crossing Douglas Blvd. take the first left into the park area. A Sacramento County Park Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Beginning Birder Walk William Pond Park

Sunday, December 4
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Contact Cathie LaZier at empid77@gmail.com and put Beginning Birder in the subject line.

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 trip we'll talk about habitat, field marks and bird behavior as we look at individual birds. Registration is required.

Registrants will be sent the meeting time and exact location, along with other information.

Gristmill Recreation Area

Wednesday, December 7, 8 AM
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Nancy Gronert (279) 346-4790
sacauduboncorsec@gmail.com

This trip will focus on birding by ear skills and best practices with the Merlin Sound app in good habitat. We'll check out the trails, river, and trees of Gristmill for the calls of wintering sparrows, kinglets and thrush, year-round birds like woodpeckers, towhees, wrens, and whatever else we can detect. Meet Nancy in the parking area by the entrance. Heavy rain cancels.

From Hwy 50, go north on Bradshaw Rd. Turn left on Folsom Blvd, then

right onto Butterfield Way. Turn right on Linda Rio Dr and right again on Mira Del Rio Dr. In about 50 yards, turn left into the Gristmill Recreation Area. A Sacramento County Parks Pass or a \$6 day use fee is required.

Gray Lodge

Saturday, December 10, 10 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Paul Miller, (916) 768-7503
paul@pjmiller.com
Registration is required for this trip, and it will be limited to 12 participants. Proof of vaccination is required.
Please email Paul to register for this trip.

This is a collaborative mindful birding trip lead by Jonelle Mason from UC Davis Project Learning Tree and Paul Miller. The trip will begin with short presentations by Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, UC Davis Raptor Center, Shasta Wildlife Rescue, and Project Learning Tree. Following the presentations, Jonelle will lead a mindful birding trip along the ADA accessible Wetland Discovery Trail.

Directions, fees, and meeting location will be provided upon registration.

Nimbus Fish Hatchery

Saturday, December 10, 7:45 AM
Expected Length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Max Brodie (510) 418-3044
brodiemax@gmail.com
Registration is required for this trip. It is limited to 8 participants.
Please email Max to register.

The winter salmon run attracts large numbers of birds, especially gulls, to the area of the American River around the fish hatchery. This trip will focus on the subtle and tricky identification of these often underappreciated birds. We will cover the basics of separating adults, as well as diving into the intricacies of aging and identifying sub-adults and hybrids. Additionally, we hope to see large numbers of mergansers and both species of goldeneye. This trip will be primarily stationary as we observe the birds on the river below from the paved path behind the hatchery. If you own a spotting scope, this is a great trip to bring it as we will not be walking long distances and it will help to get detailed views of distant birds.

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge

Sunday, December 11, 8 AM
Expected length: Until late afternoon
Leader: John York, (530) 320-4751
johnyork157@yahoo.com
A \$6 per car entrance pass is required at Sacramento NWR.

We will visit the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, with a stop at Colusa and other points in the area given time. This is a great place to view 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 can be found here regularly. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well. This trip will last into the afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike. An RSVP to John is helpful so we know to look for you.

Meet John at the Jack in the Box parking lot, Road 102 exit in Woodland. Take I-5 north to Road 102, Exit 536; turn right (north) on 102 and take the next right turn onto East Main St, and turn right into the Jack In The Box parking lot.

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

Saturday, December 17, 10:30 AM
Paid registration is required through Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Please see www.sacnaturecenter.net or call (916) 876-4918 for registration and other details.

Join Audubon birding leaders Lynn Tweten and Dan Williams, and Nature Center docents for a family friendly nature walk at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers, Wild Turkeys, and other resident birds such as towhees and Bushtits will be active. Families and individuals are encouraged to enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists and birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge.

Sailor Bar

Thursday, December 29, 8 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Darrell Mohr, (916) 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com
Sacramento County Parks Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Join Darrell for a morning walk checking out the local birds. Possible birds include Phainopepla and California Quail. This is a good trip for both beginners and experienced birders.

Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Ave, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area.

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Field Trips: continued

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area

Saturday, January 7, 8 AM
Expected length: 6 hours
Leader: Sonja Sorbo, (916) 390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Sonja if you would like to attend.
A Lands Pass is required for entry to Gray Lodge Wildlife Area.

This winter trip offers fantastic opportunities to view waterfowl, and it is one of the more reliable places near Sacramento to see Blue-winged Teal. Sometimes thousands of geese take flight over the water, to the delight of birders. Other species to expect for the day include passerines, wetland birds, and raptors. We will spend some time walking the trails, which are all well graded and on level ground. After lunch, we'll take a drive around the auto loop. If there's time and if the group agrees, we'll drive home to Sacramento via a different route looking for Sandhill Cranes, grassland birds, and raptors.

NOTE: A Lands Pass is required for entry to Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. (Anglers or hunters possessing a CA license are free.) You may purchase a day pass three ways:

1. By paying \$4.50 cash at the "iron ranger" at the parking lot.
2. By phone (800) 565-1458. (Bring the temporary authorization number provided to you by the salesperson.)
3. Online, go to CDFW's website at ca.wildlifelicenses.com and "continue as a guest". Select 2023 Lands Pass.

Paying by phone or online, the fee is \$4.89 for a 1-day pass.

Meeting place, directions, and other details will be provided upon registration.

Beginning Birder Walk Cosumnes River Preserve

Sunday, January 8
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Contact Cathie LaZier at empid77@gmail.com and put Beginning Birder in the subject line.

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. On this trip we will focus on waterfowl and easy shorebirds. We should see at least 6 species of ducks, plus dowitchers, sandpipers, possibly snipe, cranes, egrets, herons, and harriers. Scope views will make identification easier. With 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to birding and identifying birds.

Registrants will be sent the meeting time and exact location, along with other information.

Cosumnes River Preserve

Thursday, January 12, 9 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Paul Miller, (916) 768-7503
pjmill1962@me.com
Maximum number of participants: 6
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Paul if you would like to attend.

Cosumnes River Preserve is a wonderful venue for those with mobility challenges. Within a few hundred feet of the main parking lot there is a wooden easily accessible viewing platform. The flooded fields attract a wide range of dabbling ducks. Greater White-fronted Geese, Sandhill Cranes, dowitchers, Wilson's Snipe, and yellowlegs should be present. There are always some passerines and raptors.

Specific meeting place and directions will be provided at the time of registration.

North Natomas Regional Park

Saturday, January 14, 8 AM
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Ben Graber, (916) 844-8682
bgraber984@protonmail.com

Join Ben for a leisurely morning walk. We can expect to see a wide variety of grassland species including Meadowlarks, Ring-necked Pheasants, and Savannah Sparrows, along with herons, egrets, and waterfowl. Various wintering species of raptors, including falcons, are also possibilities. This trip will include approximately 2 to 3 miles of walking over flat terrain, and bringing liquids is recommended. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

Meet Ben at North Natomas Regional Park, 2501 New Market Dr, Sacramento 95835. From Sacramento, take I-5 North to Del Paso Rd, Exit 525A. Go right/east on Del Paso Road. In 0.5 miles turn left onto Town Center Dr.

Teal Bend Golf Course

Sunday, January 15, 8 AM
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Richard Barbieri, (916) 761-1124
offleash227@gmail.com

Join Richard in exploring the rich habitat of Teal Bend Golf Course. There are a variety of habitats, including wooded and riparian areas, supporting resident birds and attracting wintering and resident birds. Easy walking around the golf course. Bring water and snacks.

Meet Richard at the parking lot at Teal Bend Golf Course. The address is 7200 Garden Hwy, Sacramento 95837. From Sacramento, take I-5 north, then when I-5 splits into Highway 99, take Hwy 99 north. Take Exit 309 at Elverta Road and turn left (west). Drive about three miles, then turn left onto Garden Hwy. After about a mile, turn left into the golf course. Proceed to the parking lot.

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Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. Photo by Carla Resnick

Field Trip Reports

William Pond Beginning Birder Walk, (11/13)

Larry Hickey, co-leader with Valerie Phillips and Cathie LaZier, reported:

On a cold and breezy November morning eight of us enjoyed birding at the William Pond section of the American River Parkway. We enjoyed seeing **Yellow-billed Magpies**, **Acorn Woodpeckers**, and quite a few **Northern Flickers**. Many of the species who commonly winter in the Sacramento area were seen, including many **American Coots**, **Bufflehead**, and **Common Goldeneye** ducks, and **Dark-eyed Juncos**—the first of the season for some of us. We were glad to see a **Ring-necked Duck** at the pond area. We heard and then saw a Coyote close by and we saw **White-crowned** and **Golden-crowned Sparrows** singing. We were surprised at some of the species we didn't see—there were no Nuttall's Woodpeckers, California Towhees, Great Blue Herons or Nuthatches for example, perhaps because of the cool, breezy conditions. Highlights, however, included a flock of **Sandhill Cranes** calling as they flew over and a group of **American Pipits** foraging in the grass.

Camp Pollock, (11/9)

Leader Bill Bianco reported:

Our group of nine enjoyed a cool fall day at Camp Pollock. Started at the parking area, then going to river, and then walking the perimeter of Camp Pollock. Total species count of 43. Some of the species observed were **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, **Acorn** and **Nuttall's Woodpeckers**, **Belted Kingfisher** (heard), **Red-tailed Hawks**, **American Kestrel**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, **White-breasted Nuthatch**, **California Quail**, and **Hermit Thrush** to name a few. We observed many **Double-crested Cormorants** on the pond which is on the adjacent property to Camp Pollock.

Garcia Bend Park, (11/5)

Leader Ben Graber reported:

On our trip today, we got some great looks at **Yellow-billed Magpies**, huge flocks of **Cedar Waxwings**, **Western Bluebirds**, and some flyovers of **Snow** and **Greater White-fronted Geese**. Other than that, the numbers and overall variety of birds were somewhat disappointing due to the windy weather. It was a great group of people with some good camaraderie though.

Bobelaine Sanctuary, (11/4)

Eight students and five parents joined SAS volunteer Mary Forrestal on a Homeschool Field Trip at Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary. The young people, who ranged in age from 7-14, were delighted by their first use of binoculars. One young man was particularly excited to see the **Great and Snowy Egrets**, remarking, "I never knew there were different kinds." Others found the strangled cat cry of the **Spotted Towhee** quite amusing and enjoyed demonstrating their newly acquired knowledge each time a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** chattered nearby. Around thirty species were observed and enjoyed on this trip. Hopefully, this will only be the beginning for a brand-new group of birders.

Cosumnes River Preserve, (11/3)

Leader Paul Miller reported:

We all love **Sandhill Cranes**, and Cosumnes River Preserve is the perfect location to experience these amazing birds. Handicapped parking, restrooms and easy wheelchair access to viewing locations makes this the ideal birding spot for those with physical challenges. During this time of year the fields are flooded to provide habitat for migrating water birds. Although a bit chilly and windy we had a wonderful day together surrounded by so many birds, both in the air and water. Of course the best bird was the giant yet graceful Sandhill Cranes, but the much smaller yet stunning **Green-winged** and **Cinnamon Teals** did not disappoint. We observed a total of 36 species and almost 1,000 birds!

Bridgeway Island Pond, (10/30)

Leader Maureen Geiger reported:

In addition to 58 species, this was the most interesting birding morning. We began in dense fog—could not see the pond—and ended in warm sun. We had at least 100 sheep wandering about on the west levee plus large numbers of Amazon trucks coming and going continuously from the huge warehouse across the pond. Not to mention that we started with 11 birders and ended up with 7. A few highlights were a **Marbled Godwit** fly-over, a pair of **Ring-necked Ducks** coming in, **Osprey** several times, **Soras** picking their way along the base of the reeds, a **Western Grebe**, several **Green Herons** ...and of course large numbers of **Cinnamon** and **Blue-winged Teal** as promised. The post-fog light was just incredible and there was great synergy all around.

Halloween Family Friendly Walk, North Davis (10/29)

Leader Nicole Barden reported:

Hoping for a spooky surprise, our birding group met in a North Davis neighborhood, ready for adventure. A few people had some costumes, but one person easily won the unofficial costume contest. Betty K. showed up in a great spooky costume and it was so good that she was unrecognizable at first! Starting down the trail, we were greeted by a chorus of **White-crowned** and **Golden-crowned Sparrows**. We also saw a few winter favorites like **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers**. We also had fly-overs of **White-faced Ibis** and **Long-billed Curlew**. Sadly, the owls must have been off trick-or-treating somewhere, because we did not see the resident Great Horned pair that I have seen in the area before. As the sun disappeared over the coastal range, the sunset was a beautiful painting of colors, including some green between the yellow horizon and blue sky. As the sky got dark, we started seeing planets and stars! We were able to see Saturn's rings and Jupiter's moons by looking through the spotting scope. Though our bird count was low, the sunset and astronomy made for a fun time and it was great to get outside for a crisp evening walk.

To see our full ebird list, please visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S122297457>

Earl J. Koobs Nature Area, (10/23)

Leader Cliff Hawley reported:

We had a lovely morning. I met a small but excited group just before 8 AM. Over the next two hours we explored the 4.4 acres of the Koobs Nature Area. Lots of the common residents and wintering birds of the oak woodlands were present with good numbers of **Northern Flickers** including an intergrade with a red nape, very golden wings and tail but a hint of a red malar. Another exciting find was a trio of minima **Cackling Geese** flying over with the second flock of **Greater White-fronted Geese** we saw. The Cacklers were new for the Koobs Nature Area as was a **Wilson's Snipe** that dropped in next to two participants at the back of the group. I was also eventually able to see it before it scooted off. The last nice bird of the day was a beautiful male **Purple Finch** feeding on cotoneaster fruits. We had 31 species observed with two new for the Koobs Nature Area.

Sacramento Bar, (10/20)

Leader Darrell Mohr reported:

At 8 AM on Thursday morning, nine people were ready to go birding. We started in the parking lot and the first species we heard was **California Quail**. As we walked a **Red-shouldered Hawk** flew by and landed on a branch in a nearby tree. From the parking lot we walked downstream on the trail along the north side of the American River. Almost immediately **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and **Cedar Waxwings** were flitting about in the trees. Along the river's edge a flock of **Wood Ducks** was moving around. Our total number of species for the day totaled 44. Everyone was happy that Sacramento Audubon has started having weekday tours. It was a good morning.

Point Reyes National Seashore, (10/16)

Leader John York reported:

A large group headed out to Point Reyes for some post-pandemic catch-up on a favorite spot. Earthquake Park Trail yielded a tree full of **Townsend's Warblers**, woodpeckers, a **Brown Creeper** and other goodies. Many in the group were able to find a **Prairie Warbler** at the Fish Docks, after it had been spooked by a **Peregrine Falcon** hanging around in the trees. We saw many **Common Loons**, all three **Cormorants** and a **Tropical Kingbird**. Abbott's Lagoon was also productive, lots of sparrows, **Common Yellowthroat** and **Osprey**, **Prairie** and **Peregrine Falcons** flying close together for comparison, and more grebes of the Horny and Eary variety. Highlight for two participants who managed to get all the way out the beach was a flock of **Snowy Plovers** and some **Semi-palmated Plovers**. Lifers were reported. Always nice. Huge mammal day, deer, elk, a very healthy, close and cooperative coyote, gophers, rabbits, voles, otters, sea lion, Harbor and Elephant Seals and even a skunk. We did not try to pet the skunk, or the coyote, or the seals. It was a long, very satisfying day, and everyone seemed to want to come back soon.

Field Trip Reports *continued from p. 4*

Gibson Ranch Regional Park, (10/15)

Leader Kevin Thomas reported:

Four participants showed up for this field trip. We started by parking in the lot on the north end of the pond and scanned for shorebirds and waterbirds. There were several **Killdeer** and **Canada Geese** along with the local domestic geese and ducks. We then walked east along the road to the riparian habitat that borders dry creek waiting for the sun to rise and warm the birds into movement. We picked up the normal woodpeckers, sparrows, and ever present **European Starlings** along this stretch while we discussed migration patterns and local breeding birds in the Sacramento area. The activity was relatively slow for overall numbers of birds but the diversity of species was pretty good. We circled the park back around to the pond and came across cooperative **Common Yellowthroat**, **Green Heron**, and **Marsh Wren**. We continued on to the northwest side of the park that is annual grassland and horse pasture. Here our best birds of the day were seen, a lone **White-faced Ibis** flew low around one of the pastures, a **Vesper Sparrow** perched in the fence just south of the cell phone tower, and a **Wilson's Snipe** circled around us near the dried wetland. Overall we had a fantastic morning with temperatures in the high 60s to low 70s with a slight breeze at times. We totaled 61 species on the 3.5 hour walk.



Wilson's Snipe, photo by Daniel Brown

Humbug Creek Wetlands, Family Friendly Walk, (10/15)

Nicole Barden, co-leader with Sandra Steurer, reported:

What a beautiful day! 13 birders met at the Cummings Family Skate and Bike Park in Folsom, for some laid-back and educational birding along the Humbug Creek Wetlands trail. Almost the whole journey we were serenaded by **White-crowned Sparrows** and other birds calling back and forth while they foraged. Almost as soon as we got on the trail we started hearing and seeing **Cedar Waxwings** in the treetops and flying overhead. Because the landscape slopes down into the wetland and forested habitat, the trail is the same height as some of the treetops and we got great looks at both adult and

juvenile waxwings. At one point a little farther down the path, at least 100 waxwings flushed into the air at once and we were amazed at how large the flock was! None of us had ever seen so many waxwings at one time! While looking at the waxwings, a **Red-shouldered Hawk** started calling and it was soon located across the wetland. Eventually, it flew in our direction and landed in a nearby tree. With a little maneuvering for a good angle between the branches, everyone got to see this beautiful bird before it flew off again. Continuing down the trail, we were glad to see both male and female **Downy Woodpeckers**, pecking into oak galls. This started a group discussion about the differences between Downy, Hairy, and Nuttall's Woodpeckers. As we were trying to get looks at a smaller bird in an oak tree ahead on the trail, two **Phainopepla** flew into the top of the tree and hung out in the tree for a few minutes. This was a highlight for many of the people in the group! When we got to the wooden bridges and were looking into the wetland area, several of us heard a **Marsh Wren** singing out in the tules. At one point a doe started quietly walking through the area where we were looking and some of us wondered if the rut has started and if she was alone. Moments later a buck followed her into the clearing, a clear sign that fall has fully arrived. We also saw evidence of otters, but sadly no otters themselves. We were glad to have seen 38 species and learn about a new area to go birding! To see a full list of the birds we saw and photos, please check out our eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S12074775>

Seasonal Sightings October 1 – 31

September 2022 produced a remarkable number of rarities and the trend continued into October. The Woodland WTP hosted a **Surf Scoter** on 10/6-10/10 as well as a showy **Long-tailed Duck** on 10/16-10/20. **Rufous Hummingbird** reports typically taper off by October, but one visiting a feeder in Wilton continued all month and into mid-November. Interesting shorebird reports included a **Snowy Plover** on 10/12, continuing through the end of the month at the Woodland WTP, a **Ruff** along West Sherman Island Rd on 10/14, as well as a **Ruff** at Staten Island on 10/18-10/26; this was a very good fall for Ruff reports. **Long-eared Owl** distribution is poorly understood. While uncommon and apparently declining, they are also easy to miss, so one found on 10/21 on private property near Esparto is notable. Also in the Capay Valley area, a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was found on 10/10 on private property near Guinda. A **Sage Thrasher** was a nice find along Latrobe Rd in eastern Sacramento County on 10/1, as was a **Townsend's Solitaire** on 10/10 near the intersection of Levee Rd and Hopkins Rd, west of UC Davis. A **Lapland Longspur** was reported as a calling flyover at Folsom Point on 10/18, and at least one **Chestnut-collared Longspur** was found

along Michigan Bar Rd on 10/5-10/9. Michigan Bar also produced a **Grasshopper Sparrow** on 10/6-10/8, a **Clay-colored Sparrow** on 10/6-10/7, and reports of single **Brewer's Sparrows** on 10/1-10/7 from different locations along the road. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** was also found on private property in Amador County near Buena Vista on 10/10, and a **Swamp Sparrow** was a nice find on 10/18 at the Elkhorn Slough boat ramp. A **Bobolink**, with only a few previous Sacramento County records, was seen on 10/7-10/8 along Michigan Bar Rd just south of the Cosumnes River. If not following last month's amazing number of rare warblers, this month's list would be even more impressive. A **Black-and-white Warbler** was a very nice find in the Tall Forest of Cosumnes River Preserve on 10/1. The impressive run of **Tennessee Warblers** continued with one at the UC Davis Arboretum on 10/15-10/17. An **American Redstart** was found at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 10/9. **Chestnut-sided Warbler** reports included one at the William B. Pond access to the American River Parkway on 10/2, one on 10/13-10/15 at UC Davis, along La Rue Rd by Hutchinson Field, and, finally, one in residential Elk Grove on 10/31, continuing to 11/1.

To view photos of some of the highlights, visit www.sacramentoaudubon.org/bird-sightings, and then click on the highlighted eBird checklists. The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000-foot contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club listserv (groups.io/g/centralvalleybirds) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but we thank the following for their reports: Dan Airola, Max Brodie, Aidan Brubaker, Brent Campos, Lyann Comrack, Todd Easterla, Frank Fabbro, Robert Furrow, K. Gatejen, Joshua Greenfield, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Marcel Holyoak, Scott Hoppe, Logan Kahle, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Bruce Miller, Ethan Monk, Frances Oliver, Ed Pandolfino, Adam Panto, Nora Papian, Zane Pickus, Mark Sawyer, Elliot Schoenig, Steve Scott, Cameron Tescher, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Bart Wickel, Rick Williams, Violet Wu, Wentao Yang, and David Yee. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard

Bird Festivals

Morro Bay Bird Festival January 13–16, 2023

The four-day festival offers field trips, presentations, master classes, and special events. Keynote Speaker: David Allen Sibley.

<https://morrobaybirdfestival.org>



Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway, Chico January 26–29, 2023

The 2023 festival offers field trips, a banquet with Keynote Speaker Julie Rentner (President of River Partners), workshops, youth activities, and art exhibit.

Registration begins in early December. Contact: info@snowgoosefestival.org, 530-592-9092



Galt Winter Bird Festival Saturday, February 4, 2023

Events include bird tours, bird photography exhibit, free childrens' activities, live wild animal presentation, youth art contest, and more.

<https://www.cityofgalt.org/our-city/special-events/winter-bird-festival>



Save the Date Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival April 21–23rd, 2023

Point Reyes National Seashore provides the main backdrop for the festival, where the Pacific Flyway, Pacific Ocean, and other influences provide an ideal location for birding and wildlife viewing. <https://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org/>



CDFW Offering Free Swan Tours This Fall and Winter

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is offering free swan tours in Yuba County near Marysville on select Saturdays, November through early January.

Held in partnership with Mathews Rice farming operation, this area boasts one of the largest populations of overwintering tundra swans in the Central Valley as well as abundant geese, ducks, shorebirds and raptors.

These popular, naturalist-led tours last approximately two hours. In caravan fashion, the tours traverse flooded rice fields filled with migratory and resident birds, with periodic stops to watch and learn about the wildlife.

Upcoming swan tour dates are: December 3, 10, 17, 31 and January 7

Two tours are offered each day at 9:30 a.m. and at 1 p.m.

Pre-registration is required by contacting Genelle Treaster, CDFW North Central Region, at Genelle.Treaster@wildlife.ca.gov.



Tundra Swans. Photo from CDFW

Guided Sandhill Crane Tours

Cosumnes River Preserve and Save Our Sandhill Cranes offer guided Sandhill Crane tours.

Upcoming dates are:
December 10 & 24, and January 14 & 28.

Registration is required via eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/cosumnes-river-preserve-10868733267>

Join experienced docents and members of the Save Our Sandhill Cranes advocacy group for a 90-minute guided tour of the Sandhill Cranes at the Cosumnes River Preserve. This tour will

begin at the visitor center, rain or shine, and you will get the opportunity to learn about the features, behavior, and anatomy of Sandhill Cranes. After your short Crane introduction, you will either walk or drive to see the cranes, depending on where they are expected to be roosting that night.

During the tour, there will be a few opportunities to look through a scope that will be provided by the preserve docents. But it is recommended that you bring your own binoculars to view the cranes and a variety of shore birds, ducks, geese, swans, and raptors.

Most Sandhill Cranes in the Pacific Flyway spend their fall and winters with us in California and then spend their spring summers in Alaska and Canada where they nest.

For more information visit: <http://soscranes.org/visit-the-cranes/free-tours/>



Sandhill Crane, photo by Daniel Brown

Save the Date for the Great Backyard Bird Count February 17-20, 2023

Each February, for four days, the world comes together for the love of birds. Over these four days we invite people to spend time in their favorite places watching and counting as many birds as they can find and reporting them to us. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before one of their annual migrations.

Learn more about next year's Great Backyard Bird Count at <https://www.birdcount.org/>

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members:

Lorraine Barnes
Jason Cullison
Jessica DiLorenzo
Lynn Fujikawa
The Mitchell Family
Joseph Goodrich
Karen Marriott
S. Rivers
Rupert Sharras
Lenora McKay-Weathersbee
Donna Yee

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:



- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds.
- Foster the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach.
- Encourage, support, and provide environmental educational opportunities.
- Advocate for the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Please contact President, Paul Miller, at sacaudubonpresident@gmail.com 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, except for June, July, and December when no meetings are held.

The next board meeting is:

Tuesday, January 31, 2023.

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

Thank You For Your Generous Donations!

General Fund

Martin D. Bailey, Steven Cates, Betty J. Cooper, Jason Cullison, Sharon M. Dori, Judith Foddrill, Melissa Gates, K. Globus & B. Klass, Judi & Stephen Green, Ray Gundlach, Lea Landry, Paul Miller, Robert & Muriel Parker, Peter & Lisa Perrine, S. Rivers, Jeffrey Shelton, Dan & Jan Tankersley, Nancy Weagly, DVM, Lenora Weathersbee

Education and Conservation Fund

Martin D. Bailey, Lucy Boehm, Melissa Gates, Maureen Knowlton & Greg Einhorn, Marya Liberty, Paul Miller, Robert & Muriel Parker, Dan & Jan Tankersley, Patricia Trimble, Nancy Weagly, DVM

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Martin D. Bailey, Kristin Dockter, Melissa Gates, Brian Guth, Paul Miller, Robert & Muriel Parker, Dan & Jan Tankersley

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.

See the Latest SAS Action on Facebook

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

You can enjoy the photos and commentary without joining Facebook

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. Members receive our online newsletter, *The Observer*; so be sure to include your email address.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

www.sacramentoaudubon.org

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

SAS Membership per address/household (for 12 months): \$ 35

I want to add an extra Donation of: \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Mail this form with your check payable to Sacramento Audubon Society to the address shown above. You can also use your credit card or PayPal account on SAS website:

<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/join-renew>

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel _____

Email _____

New members will receive *The Observer* in color via email. Please provide your email address above. If you would prefer a black & white, paper copy mailed to you instead, please email sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com.

If you would like to be added to the SAS Action Alert list, check here _____.

Sacramento Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit. #94-1615830

Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Sacramento Audubon Society
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White-tailed Kite Daniel Brown

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

The Observer is published by the Sacramento Audubon Society, monthly, January through December.

Monthly Program Returns in January

There is no monthly speaker presentation in December, but you can watch the presentations from this year and last year online. If you missed any of our fantastic online speakers, or would like to watch the presentations again, they are available on our website at General Meeting / Monthly Speaker > Past Speaker Presentations.

<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker/#past-speakers>

Presentations will resume on Thursday, January 19, 2023.