



# The *OBSE*RVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, April 20

Shepard Garden and Art Center

7:30pm General Meeting

### Central Valley Grasslands

California's Highest Avian Conservation Priority?

Please join us this evening to hear Ed Pandolfino, Executive Committee member of the Sierra Club and board member of Sierra Foothills Audubon, discuss the current trends in habitat loss and its impact on bird species, as he outlines steps that can be taken to preserve this critical habitat.

The importance of the remaining Central Valley grasslands to bird conservation is grossly under-appreciated and the threats to this habitat are enormous. Grassland birds are in severe decline across North America and California is certainly no exception.

More bird species of conservation concern are supported by these Central Valley grasslands than by any other single habitat type in California. It is perhaps the single most important area for wintering raptors in the entire continent. The density and diversity of hawks alone, found in our area in winter, is truly phenomenal.

Ed's professional (non-birding) experiences have ranged from touring as a drummer for rock 'n roll bands, to postdoctoral research in biochemistry, to running divisions of a major medical device company.

Since retiring in 1999, he divides his time between local conservation work and birding across the state of California. He leads field trips and teaches bird watching classes for Sierra Foothills Audubon, and "tries to spend enough time away from home that his wife doesn't get sick of him, while being home just enough that she doesn't forget they're married."

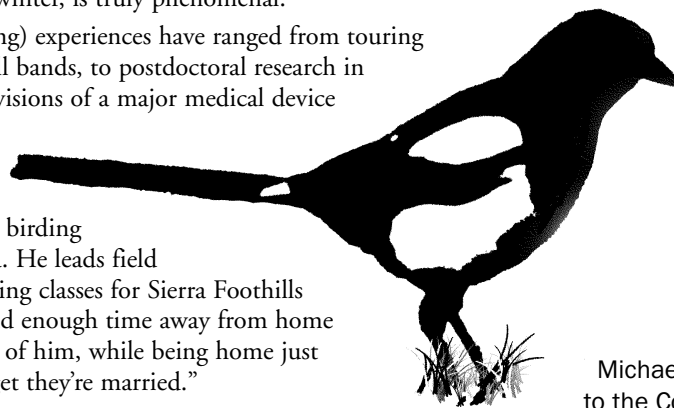
Please feel free to invite guests, friends, and family members to our Thursday evening speaking events at the Shepard Garden and Art Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd, across the street from McKinley Park in Sacramento. Map details can be found on our web site ([www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)) under general meeting information.

Sally Riggs  
Program Chair

## Bobelaine Birdathon Is Here

April and May are the months set for our annual Bobelaine Birdathon. Remember, monies raised during this Birdathon provide operating/maintenance funds for Bobelaine Sanctuary for the next year. We hope that you, as an individual or with a team, will enjoy a day of birding at your favorite place and then collect the pledges that you have gotten from your friends and colleagues. Direct donations for the sanctuary are always welcome and appreciated. It costs money to keep the sanctuary safely open to the public. Our volunteers need your help in the form of monies to make this possible. Please have checks made out to "Sacramento Audubon Society" and show "For Bobelaine Birdathon" in the lower left of the check. Send all monies to: Cathie LaZier, Treasurer, Sacramento Audubon Society, 5427 13th Ave., Sacramento, CA 95820-2319. Please address any questions regarding the Birdathon to Bill Clark at (916) 783-8305. Happy birding.

Bobelaine Management  
Bill Clark, Co-Manager



### THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS:

Michael Azevedo and Chris Conard for donations to the Conservation and Education Fund.

G. R. Swafford, Michael Azevedo, Carol Thomas and Arthur Watkins for donations to the Bobelaine Sanctuary. Candy Anasoff, Joann Kessel, Joann Anglin and Carole Anne Elzey for donations to the General Fund.

# Field Trip Findings

**ARNHA Bird and Breakfast, Effie Yeaw Nature Center** (3/11) – A group of Sac Audubon's ace birders were key to a successful American River Natural History Association fundraiser, leading 60 participants on a nature area walk that recorded 46 bird species. A couple of active Anna's Hummingbird and Bushtit nests were found, along with the nature area's mascot, a three-legged deer dubbed "Tripod," coordinator Jack Hiehle reported. Bird highlights included Black-throated Gray Warbler, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and Violet-green Swallow.

**Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills** (3/5) Maureen Geiger reported, "the trip was great in spite of the very cold, very windy conditions. Twelve intrepid birders walked the Serrano trail, and while we didn't see a large number of species, we watched a River Otter very close-by hunt until we had our fill of watching. We also had great looks at some of Serrano's 'specialties' such as lots of Common Moorhens and good numbers of American and Lesser Goldfinches and the crowned sparrows, especially Golden-crowned. We didn't do the New York Creek leg because it was beginning to rain by 10:30 so we called it a day."

**Bodega Bay** (3-4) – Leader Dan Brown reported White-winged Scoter, Brant, Red-necked Grebe, and a white blotched leucistic Brewer's Blackbird. Dan's research indicates that leucism is a condition that produces all white or

partly white animals that have colored eyes (unlike the all white body and pink eyes of an albino).

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center** (3/2) A Black-throated Gray Warbler and Cooper's Hawk on the nest highlighted leader Jack Hiehle's trip. Also, Red-shouldered Hawk and Snowy and Great Egrets.

**Solano Lake/Putah Creek Area** (2/26) – Leader Cliff Hawley reported, "highlights included 2 pairs of Hooded Mergansers and 7 Barrow's Goldeneye together along Highway 128 in Lake Solano. We also had at least a thousand American Robins and many large flocks of Cedar Waxwings. There was one early returning Northern Rough-winged Swallow below the dam and a Canyon Wren singing and calling above Monticello Dam. On the way back we stopped at Vesper Sparrow Corner on Highway 128 just outside of Winters and we had at least 3 Vesper Sparrows in with the flocks of Savannah Sparrows."

**Trip to North Bay** (2/25) – Leader Ron Storey said birders had good views of at least 10 Clapper Rails flying, swimming and walking along the edge of Corte Madera Marsh. At a nearby pond were Canvasback Ducks, Long-billed Curlews and Black-bellied Plovers. Las Gallinas yielded Cackling Geese, male and female Hooded Mergansers and Mew Gulls. "We finished the day at Shollenberger Park in Petaluma where everyone who had not already left got

good looks at a Sora, while one person saw a Virginia Rail," Ron said.

**Eureka/Arcata Area** (2/18-2/20) – A three-day weekend of coastal birding was graced by good weather and highlighted by observed Swamp Sparrow, 12-15 Red-necked Grebes, and Glaucous Gull. Joe Ceriani, longtime Sac Audubon trip leader who recently moved to the area, was co-leader with Dan Brown. "He's doing great," Dan reported.

**Parkway Walk/Estate Drive** (2/16) Jack Hiehle's group recorded California Quail, Common Goldeneye, Green Heron, Ring-billed Gull, Wood Duck, Snowy Egret, Yellowlegs, and American Pipit.

(The following is a repeat of the 1/29 Nimbus Fish Hatchery trip report, with additional information that I inadvertently omitted. My apologies to Frank Gray – PH)

**Nimbus Hatchery/Payen Road** (1/29) Gulls near Nimbus Hatchery were not abundant, but provided good opportunities to fulfill a trip goal of discussing ID features and life history. Birds seen there included Thayer's Gull, Osprey, Common Merganser, and Barrow's Goldeneye. Birds seen at Payen Road included a Ferruginous Hawk, Tricolored Blackbirds and a group of Common Snipes, reported leader Frank Gray, substituting for Jeff Mangum.

*Pete Hayes*

## SAS Donations for Study of Species of Special Interest

Two bird species endemic to the greater Sacramento/San Joaquin valley are of special interest to local bird watchers.

Many members have expressed concern about the effects of West Nile Virus on our endemic population of Yellow-billed Magpies. The Sacramento Audubon Society Board has voted to donate \$5000 to help support Magpie Monitoring and Research at the University of Davis Veterinary Genetics Laboratory. Their interesting and informative web site is [www.magpiemonitor.org](http://www.magpiemonitor.org).

The board has also voted to donate \$1000 to help support intensive monitoring surveys of Tri-colored Blackbirds, run by researchers from the University of Davis, and currently focusing on populations in the southern San Joaquin valley. This project to date has been critical to understanding Tri-colored Blackbirds and has played a key role in the "silage" buyouts that have protected large blackbird colonies on agricultural lands. This spring a mega-colony of close to 140,000 Tri-colored Blackbirds was saved thanks to the willingness of a Kern County farmer not to harvest 120 acres of silage in exchange for the buyout of his crop.

### Mission Statement

#### Sacramento Audubon Society

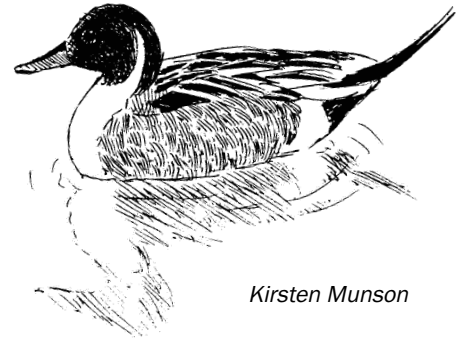
As a Chapter of the National Audubon Society, we will focus on conservation and environmental education to ensure that the Sacramento region's natural ecosystems and diverse bird populations are preserved, restored, and made available for study and enjoyment.

# 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/she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 722-6098, for trips through April 16. For trips from April 22 through May 27 please call the scheduler Carla Barbaro, 717-8818. For Creek Week trips please call Alta Tura at 454-4544.

Plan to pool cars and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on non-local 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.



Kirsten Munson

### **Saturday, April 1, 8am**

#### **Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary**

**Leader: Mark Martucci, 722-6098**

Wolf Ranch is a 60 acre wetland created by Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. We will be looking for waterfowl, shorebirds and early migrants. Meet at the Ueda Parkway staging area at Elkhorn Blvd. and Sorrento Road, 2.6 miles east of Hwy 99.

### **Sunday, April 2, 8am**

**(Note: Daylight Savings Time)**

#### **Goethe Park**

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

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland and along the river, looking for spring wildflowers and nesting birds. Trip will end before noon. This is a good trip for beginners. There is a \$4 per car entrance fee to the park; if you wish to carpool in meet Cathie at 7:50am on Rod Beaudry Drive just off Folsom Blvd.

### **Wednesday, April 5, 8am – Noon**

#### **Bannister Park**

**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Explore another beautiful area along the American River with Jack. As always, you can share in his knowledge of the natural history of the parkway. Meet Jack in the parking lot at the end of Bannister Road, south off Fair Oaks Blvd., west of Sunrise Blvd.

### **Saturday, April 8, 8am**

#### **Yolo Wildlife Area**

**Leader: Dave Feliz**

**Contact: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804,**  
**email: mkgeiger@comcast.net**

This is a great opportunity to explore the south end of the Yolo Wildlife Area with Dave Feliz who manages this huge, complicated and evolving area so well. The Tule Ranch, acquired in 2001 and not generally open to the public, consists of grasslands and native forb communities with vernal pools which will be in bloom if the timing is right. In addition to shorebirds and the many resident species to be found there, Grasshopper Sparrows and Burrowing Owls are a good possibility. Meet Dave and Maureen at the Wildlife Area headquarters at 45211 Chiles Road, (officially known as County Road 32B). The headquarters is about half way between the entrance to the Wildlife Area and Mace Blvd., on the south side of I-80. Call Maureen for additional directions if needed. This trip will last till about noon.

### **Saturday, April 8**

#### **Cosumnes River Preserve River Walk Bird Count**

**Leader: John Schick**  
**Info: 684-2816, ext 5, or**  
**www.cosumnes.org**

John conducts bird census walks through this excellent habitat on a monthly basis. The walk covers about four miles and, at a leisurely pace, should take approximately five hours, so be sure to bring a lunch and liquids. Meet John at the visitor center. To get there, take I-5 south to Twin Cities, and go right on Franklin Blvd. for about 1 mile. Please call the Preserve or check the website a few days prior to the trip for the exact meeting place and time.

### **Sunday, April 9, 8am – noon**

#### **Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek**

**Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141**  
**llandry@softcom.net**

Meet Lea in the parking lot of the Snowberry Creek Equestrian Staging Area where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale, (1/4 mile east on Main), for a morning walk which will include some riparian habitat, some ridge trails, and a good view of Lake Natoma. Possible sightings include Cooper's Hawk, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and an assortment of waterfowl and warblers. There may be some short steep climbs on trails, so wear comfortable hiking footwear. Bring liquids and a snack if you wish.

### **Saturday, April 15, 7:30am**

#### **Mather Field**

**Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road for this half day trip. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

### **Saturday, April 15, 8:30am – 11am**

#### **Beale Air Force Base**

**Leaders: Ed Pandolfino**  
**ERPfromCA@aol.com**  
**Deren Ross, (530) 885-9740**  
**derenross@sbcglobal.net**

Department of Defense facilities throughout the country protect some of North America's best and most pristine wildlife habitats still in existence. Beale Air Force Base near Marysville is certainly no exception. There are extensive grasslands and outstanding riparian areas that harbor species now difficult to find in other parts of Yuba County. We very rarely have the opportunity to bird this area so don't miss this chance.

This trip is offered through Sierra Foothill Audubon. You must contact Ed or Deren to get info on the trip, including the morning meeting point. Names and driver's license numbers will be required for all participants.

**Saturday, April 15, very very early  
Tall Forest Bird Count**

**Cosumnes River Preserve**

**Leader: John Trochet**

**Info: 684-2816, or [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org)**

Meet John at the Farm Center ON TIME to join him on this monthly bird count. John has an appreciation of nature on many levels, and a trip with him is always exciting. You must check the recorded information or the web site a day or two before to get the exact meeting time and other updated details.

**Sunday, April 16, 8am**

**Snipes Pershing Ravine**

**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603**

**Offleash56@yahoo.com**

Richard will lead you on a half day trip into this interesting area near Lake Natoma. A part of the State Park system along the American River parkway, this watershed with its deep ravines offers conducive habitat for a variety of bird species. Meet at the corner of Twin Lakes Avenue and Snipes Blvd. off Main Ave. in Orangevale. Wear sturdy footwear and be prepared for narrow paths and uneven terrain.

**CREEK WEEK TRIPS AND EVENTS**

A full description of each activity can be found in the March Observer or online at our website [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org).

**Saturday, April 22, 9am till noon**

**INVASIVE WEED REMOVAL**

**WORK PARTY**

**American River Parkway**

**Organizer: Frank Wallace, 427-5694**

Call Frank Wallace at 427-5694 to sign up and get directions.

**Saturday, April 22, 1:30 – 3:30pm**

**Bufferlands Birds and Blooms Tour**

**A Creek Week trip**

The meeting location is weather-dependant, so contact Roger Jones at 874-9174 or email: [jonesro@saccounty.net](mailto:jonesro@saccounty.net) the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

**Saturday, April 22, 2pm – 3:30pm**

**Creek Walk at Arcade Creek Park**

**A Creek Week Trip**

**Leader: Debra Bishop, 414-5800**

For additional information call 414-5800 and ask for Debra.

**Sunday, April 23, 10am OR 1pm**

**Mather Vernal Pools**

**A Creek Week Trip**

For more information and to sign up, call Bonnie at (916) 574-0372. To reserve space for the Saturday April 15 tours at 10am or 1pm call (916) 737-WILD.

**Sunday, April 23, Noon – 3pm**

**McClellan Nature Area Visit**

**A Creek Week Trip**

**Sunday, April 23, 1:30 – 3:30pm**

**Arcade Creek Park**

**A Creek Week Trip**

Call 482-8377 for more information.

**Wednesday, April 26, Noon – 2pm**

**Local Fish and Fauna**

**A Creek Week Trip**

The meeting location is weather dependent, so contact Steve Scott at 875-9307 or email [scottss@saccounty.net](mailto:scottss@saccounty.net) the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

**Wednesday, April 26, 6:30pm**

**Steelhead Creek Beaver Pond Walk**

**A Creek Week Trip**

Call 925-1933 or email [mtappel@waterboard.ca.gov](mailto:mtappel@waterboard.ca.gov) for further information or directions. NOTE: this event will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain.

**Thursday, April 27, 9am till 11am**

**Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary Tour**

**A Creek Week Trip**

Please call 874-6099 or email [rosssa@saccounty.net](mailto:rosssa@saccounty.net) for more information.

**Saturday, April 22, 7am**

**Sweetwater Creek**

**Leader: Carla Barbaro, 717-8808,**

**[cbarbaro@comcast.net](mailto:cbarbaro@comcast.net)**

This is a wonderful area for spring birding. Bring water for a half day exploration of the trails for migrants, wild flowers and nesting species. Past favorites are gold finches, orioles, blue birds, Yellow-breasted Chats, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Lazuli Buntings. Meet at the Bella Bru in the shopping center on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd. and Highway 50.

**Sunday April 23, 7am**

**Beeks Bight, Folsom Lake**

**Leader: Tim Fitzer, 961-5871**

**[spskua@aol.com](mailto:spskua@aol.com)**

Spring is a great time of year for nesting hummingbirds in this area. Gnatcatchers, Lazuli Buntings, California Thrashers, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, and possibly Yellow-breasted Chats can also be found. Wear your hiking boots for the 2 to 3 mile hike. Meet Tim in the shopping center parking lot next to the AM-PM on Douglas Blvd., just east of the intersection with Folsom - Auburn Road. Bring lunch and drink, as this trip will continue into the early afternoon.

**Saturday, April 29, 6:30am SHARP**

**Arbuckle, Sandcreek Road and**

**County Road 40**

**Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207**

**[spskua@aol.com](mailto:spskua@aol.com)**

**Dan Brown, 362-2458**

**[naturestoc@aol.com](mailto:naturestoc@aol.com)**

Join Tim and Dan for an early morning start looking for Black-chinned and Sage Sparrows, and Mountain Quail. We must start early while they are active. There are many migrating birds in the area and who knows what will be moving across the range. This is a new area in chamise chaparral habitat, on top of the coast range overlooking the Capay Valley. There may be a variety of wild flowers not seen on the valley floor. Bring lunch, liquids, and personal band radios. We will meet at I-5 and Road 102, the Woodland exit, in the Jack-in-the-Box parking lot. Get there early for a fun day.

**Saturday, April 29, 7am – 3pm**

**Spring Migration at the Bufferlands**

Would you enjoy a fast-paced day in the field, searching diverse habitat types for a wide variety of bird species? If so join members of the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's (SRCSD) Bufferlands staff for a day in search of 100 species or more. Expect to see waterfowl, shorebirds, raptors, migrating songbirds, and lingering winter residents. The SRCSD's Bufferlands contain 2,650 acres of seasonal and permanent wetlands, riparian forest, grasslands, vernal pools, and restored habitats. Group size is limited, so be sure to reserve a place in advance. For more information call 875-9309 ext.1, or e-mail: [conardc@saccounty.net](mailto:conardc@saccounty.net)

**Sunday April 30, 7:30am**  
**Spenceville Wildlife Area**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603**  
**Offleash56@yahoo.com**

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. This trip will include several short hikes and one optional 5 mile hike over uneven terrain. A short steep climb to Fairytale Falls may provide a look at a Dipper. Other possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, rails, warblers, and more. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at Brookfield's restaurant in Roseville (NOT Madison location). Take Eureka Road exit off I-80; go right on Eureka and first left at the stoplight (Taylor Road). The restaurant is located behind the Shell gas station.

**Tuesday, May 2, 8 - 11am**  
**Phoenix Field**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Join Jack at Phoenix Field (Jim David Park) for a beautiful walk around the vernal pools. This trip will feature rare plants and spring blooms in the vernal pools. Jack will lend his expertise in identifying these rare plants. Phoenix Field is located on Sunset Blvd. just east of Hazel Ave. Do not forget your binoculars to view the resident birds.

**Saturday, May 6, 7:30am**  
**Sweetwater Creek**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603**  
**Offleash56@yahoo.com**

At this favorite spring hotspot you should find wild flowers in bloom and the song of the Yellow-breasted Chat. Richard will scout for Lazuli Buntings, Wrentits, California Thrashers, migrating hummingbirds, and colorful warblers. Meet Richard at the Bella Bru in the shopping center on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd. and Highway 50. This will be a half day trip.

**Sunday, May 7, 7:30am - noon**  
**Cronan Ranch, Coloma Area**  
**Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458**  
**naturestoc@aol.com**

Hike with Dan in beautiful rolling, oak-studded hills off Hwy. 49 near Coloma. This recently acquired BLM property is intersected with many hiking trails and is home to a large variety of foothill habitat birds. Several species of raptor nest here, or may be seen, such as White-tailed Kite, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawk and Northern Harrier. Other specialties may include Rufous-crowned Sparrows and

## Events & Announcements

### 13TH ANNUAL HERON FESTIVAL, APRIL 21-23

The 13th annual Heron Festival and Wildflower Brunch will be held at Clear Lake State Park in Kelseyville, Lake County. There are many events including birding tours on land, by pontoon boat and by kayak. Some events require reservations and a donation. For more information on all festival events, call (800) 525-3743 or visit the website [www.redbudaudubon.org](http://www.redbudaudubon.org).

### SAVE THOSE BOOKS FOR THE SALE IN MAY

Clean out those shelves and bring your books to the Book Sale in May. Anything with a natural history theme is welcome, including of course birding books, CDs, and videos. This year's proceeds will be donated to the Birder's Exchange ([www.americanbirding.org/bex](http://www.americanbirding.org/bex)), a group administered by the American Birding Association to provide equipment and funds to scientists, conservationists and educators in Latin America and the Caribbean. Used binoculars and scopes in **good working order** can also be brought for donation to Birder's Exchange. John Ginn will arrive early to price all the books so just bring them to the May meeting. For any questions please call Tim Fitzer at 870-5207.

### HAPPENINGS AT BOBELAINE

As some of you know, the sanctuary has been flooded for most of the past two and a half months. As of March 10th it is currently closed due to flooding or because of debris that has floated over some of the trails. Please check our web page at [www.sacramentoaudubon.org/boblaire](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/boblaire) or call management at (916) 783-8305 for current conditions at the Sanctuary. Enjoy the first days of spring with some good birding at your favorite birding spot.

Bobelaine Management

other sparrows, woodpeckers, flycatchers, goldfinches, towhees, swallows, Western Meadowlarks, Wild Turkey, and migrating warblers. This trip will include several miles of easy hiking; trails may be muddy. Meet Dan at 7:30 in El Dorado Hills at the north end of the Raley's shopping center parking lot on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd. and Hwy 50. The trip concludes at noon; however, there are numerous sites in the Coloma area for a nice picnic lunch.

**Mono Lake, May 10 & 11**  
**Wednesday & Thursday**  
**Leader: Dan Tankersley, 359-2829**  
**dtankers@winfirst.com**

**Co-leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**empid@earthlink.net** (high spam alert, just type in Field Trip and I'll get right back to you).

There are two meeting places for the trip. If you drive up Wednesday morning, meet at the Mono Basin Visitor Center, on Highway 395, just north of Lee Vining, at 12:30pm, (having already lunched). If you choose to drive up on Tuesday, 5/9,

and stay overnight, then you can meet Dan at 8am Wednesday at the Mono Lake Committee Store for morning birding. Birding will include a walk along Lee Vining Creek, and a stop in town for Wednesday arrivals to check in at their motels. We'll go on to Navy Beach, (park entrance fee), looking for Eared Grebes in breeding plumage, nesting Osprey, Sage Thrashers and Sage Sparrows, then further up the road to a burn area, where there's a chance of Black-backed Woodpecker and Pinyon Jays. After an early dinner in town, we'll bird the city park at the north end of town, where we should see winnowing Common Snipe from the boardwalk, as well as waterfowl and possibly rails. On Thursday we'll leave very very early, (about 4am!) to arrive at the lek before sunrise. It's a short hike into the lek area, where we will set up scopes, and view the displaying Sage Grouse as the sun comes up. Dress in lots of layers; it's cold! After leaving the lek, we'll bird a spot on the way out where we have a good chance of Canyon Wren. Then

Continued on page 6

it's back to Sacramento, with an optional stop in Bridgeport for a late breakfast. There are several good motels and restaurants in Lee Vining. Call or email Cathie for a current list.

**Saturday, May 13, 7am SHARP Mines Rd. /Del Puerto Canyon  
Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636  
calaveri@sbcglobal.net**

This full day outing is a new trip offering for Sacramento Audubon, and is oriented toward the birder with adventure in the heart. Mines Road and Del Puerto Canyon are located southeast of Livermore, about an hour and a half south of Sacramento. This is primarily a road trip, but with several stops, encompassing three counties along the birding route: Alameda, Santa Clara and Stanislaus. The trip's timing and varied habitats typical of the coastal mountains and canyons should produce numerous spring migrants as well as resident birds. Expect Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Lewis's Woodpecker, Bald Eagle, Bullock's Oriole and many more. We will visit one regional park, Lake del Valle, where there will be a day-use fee to enter the park. Meet Gary at the Park & Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Ave. exit; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park & Ride lot. Car pooling is strongly advised, due to limited access at stops and the distance traveled. When we DEPART the lot at 7am sharp, we will back-track to I-5 and proceed south and west to the Livermore area. Bring along hand held radios, food and water.

**Sunday, May 14, 8am  
Goethe Park  
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882  
empid@earthlink.net** (high spam alert, just type in Field Trip and I'll get right back to you)

Birds are active and singing this time of year as nesting gets underway. We'll look for the resident wrens, towhees and hummingbirds, returning nesters such as Ash-throated Flycatcher, and possibly some migrating warblers. Some wildflowers should be blooming. This trip will end before lunch time, and is a good trip for beginners. Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right past the kiosk. There is a \$4 per car entrance fee. If you wish to carpool in meet Cathie at 7:50am on Rod Beaudry Drive, just north of Folsom Blvd.

**Tuesday, May 16, 8am – 12pm  
Paradise Beach  
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Meet Jack in Glen Hall Park at the end of Carlson Drive for this lovely morning hike along the American River. Jack will show his skills as an all-around naturalist by pointing out nesting birds, butterflies and wildflowers.

**Wednesday, May 17, 11:45am – 1pm  
Purple Martins in Old Sacramento  
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804  
mkgeiger@comcast.net**

Enjoy wonderful, close looks at Purple Martins, where they nest in Old Sacramento. You will also see nesting White-throated Swifts and probably Cliff and Tree Swallows. Previous years have turned up other interesting species as well. Meet Maureen on the east side of the Railroad Museum along Second Street.

**Thursday, May 18, 7:30am  
Vic Fazio Wetlands/Yolo Wildlife Area  
Leader: Dan Tankersley, 359-2829  
dtankers@winfirst.com**

Join Dan on the first of what is planned to be quarterly trips to the VFWA to observe how the avifauna and flora change with the seasons. Bring a picnic breakfast/snack and drink to start this half day trip. Dan will lead both a driving tour and short walks through this abundant wetland. Birds to be found include spring shorebirds, nesting Black-necked Stilts, Black-crowned Night Herons, Swainson's Hawks and other raptors. Meet in Parking Lot C at the wetlands. From Sacramento take I-80 across the Yolo Causeway; turn right onto the frontage road just past the causeway. Turn right at the stop sign; circle under the freeway; then make a left up onto the levee. FRS radios would be helpful.

**Saturday, May 20, 8am  
Sun City in Lincoln  
Leader: Dave Pearson, 408-4273  
captaindavid@gmail.com**

Come explore with David this relatively new location for Sacramento Audubon to discover both local and migrating birds of spring. The variety should be as diverse as the habitat. From Hwy 80, take Hwy 65 north, turn right on Twelve Bridges Drive, left on east Lincoln. Next, turn right on Del Webb Blvd., and follow to the Meridian's restaurant parking lot.

**Saturday May 20, 10am – 4pm  
Walk on the Wildside**

Join the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCS) Bufferlands and the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge for a Walk on the Wild side, a celebration of International Migratory Bird Day. Walk on the Wild side highlights local efforts to protect and restore central valley habitats. This free, family-oriented event includes tours, presentations, live animals, music, hands-on activities, informational exhibits, and more. Guided and self-guided tours are offered throughout the day. Explore a pristine valley oak riparian forest in search of migratory songbirds. Visit numerous wetland and riparian restoration projects. Enjoy a unique opportunity to see a large rookery with over 100 active nests of Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets and Double-crested Cormorants. Spotting scopes will be available for optimum viewing of these fascinating and beautiful birds. The event is held at Beach Lake Park, near the town of Freeport. Visit [www.bufferlands.com](http://www.bufferlands.com) for a map of the event site. For more information contact Kevin Cassidy at 875-9196 or [cassadyk@saccounty.net](mailto:cassadyk@saccounty.net)

**Sunday, May 21, 7:30am  
Mather Field  
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457**

Mather Lake area is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. Join Wayne to look for resident birds and spring migrants. Targeted birds will be Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey, and Green Heron. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park (fee area) at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagles Nest road for this half day trip. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

**Saturday, May 27  
Meet at 9:15am for trip at 10am  
Pine Hill  
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Walk up with Jack to a Fire Lookout and explore into the early afternoon, looking for endangered plants and resident birds. This is an interesting area, and Jack will share information about the area and the special plants that are found here. Meet at 9:15am at the El Dorado Park & Ride, (east on Hwy 50, take the first El Dorado offramp; go right to the second stop sign, and left into the Park & Ride.) Alternate meeting place is at 10am at Ulenkamp and Pine Hill Road. (Hwy 50 to Bass Lake Road; right on Green Valley Road; past a school on your right and then turn left on Ulenkamp Road to Pine Hill Road. This trip will last until early afternoon, so bring a lunch and liquids.

**SAS BOARD AND OFFICERS  
FISCAL YEAR 2005/2006**

President Peter Watkins  
 Vice President Dan Tankersley  
 Past President Roy Greenaway  
 Treasurer Cathie LaZier  
 Recording Secretary Lisa Seto  
 Corresponding Secretary Dorothy Harvey  
 Directors Tim Fitzer  
 Maureen Geiger  
 Lea Landry  
 Sheila Deaner  
 Jan Tankersley



**NOMINATIONS FOR SAS BOARD  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2006/2007**

The nominations committee presents the following slate of officers to be voted on at the April general meeting.

President Keith Wagner  
 Vice President Tim Fitzer  
 Treasurer Cathie LaZier  
 Corresponding Secretary Jan Tankersley  
 Recording Secretary Lisa Seto  
 Past President Peter Watkins  
 Directors Maureen Geiger  
 Roy Greenaway  
 Dorothy Harvey  
 Lea Landry  
 Sheila Deaner

**JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY**

The membership fee is \$25, all of which goes to Sacramento Audubon Society. Also please send any questions regarding your membership to our new Membership Chairperson, Lea Landry in an e-mail to llandry@softcom.net. Note "SAS Membership" in the Subject. For renewals, don't forget to look for the month your SAS membership expires which is now included on *The Observer* address label.

**SAS NEW MEMBERS**

Welcome to all  
of these new members:

Joann M Anglin Kevin Kinsch  
 Katherine L. Darrell Mohr  
 Brawley Barbara R Pinelli  
 Robin G. Heard Sandra Schlechter  
 Joann Kessel

**Sacramento Audubon Society  
Membership Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gift Membership? \_\_\_\_\_ Total Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 Are you interested in volunteering? YES/NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 If yes, any particular areas of interest \_\_\_\_\_  
 Comments \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form and your check made out to  
Sacramento Audubon Society to:

Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670



*Stephen D'Amato*

**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 April 25 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

# Seasonal Observations

**February 1 to February 28  
Rare and Unusual Bird Reports  
783-2331**

Well, it couldn't last. With no amazing finds like last month's **Snowy Owl**, the pace slowed to a typical February in the Central Valley. By mid-month, large flocks of **Sandhill Cranes** were departing for destinations north and by the end of the month, migrant **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** had arrived and were scouting nest sites. Some of the resident nesters were also busy. **Bushtits** were seen constructing their impressive hanging nests. By the time you read this column in early April, **Western Kingbirds and Bullock's Orioles** will have arrived, and the bulk of spring migration will be just around the corner.

A few of the highlight birds did linger from January. The **Blue Jay**, first found on 12/19 in Fairfield, continued at the Iwama Market and in the adjacent neighborhood. The **Harlequin Duck** at the Stockton Sewage Ponds also continued through the month and molted into an obvious male. The continuing **Mountain Chickadee** was reported at Slide Hill Park in Davis on 2/20. **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** continued along Putah Creek, and one was found on 2/28 at Sacramento State—only a second record for Sacramento County.

Other local songbird highlights include a **Black-and-white Warbler** at the Shaw Forest portion of Cosumnes River Preserve on 2/23, and a **Wilson's Warbler** near the Tall Forest on 2/17. Five **Evening Grosbeaks** flew over Slide Hill Park on 2/9, and a **Grasshopper Sparrow** was found at the Deer Creek Hills Preserve in eastern Sacramento County on 2/5.

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A **Ruff** was seen and photographed at the Yolo Wildlife Area on 2/26, and an adult **Western Gull** was reported the same day from that location. Two adult **Western Gulls** were reported from the Nimbus Hatchery on 2/14. **Mountain Plover** reports continued in Solano County near the junction of Robinson and Flannery Rds, with up to 200 birds reported. A single **Pacific Golden-Plover** was found at the Lodi Sewage Ponds on 2/9.

Other interesting reports include the continuing male **Red-breasted Merganser** that was first reported on 12/15 at Sailor Bar, a pair of **Hooded Mergansers** seen nearby at the Illinois Ave Pond from 2/2 through at least 2/14, two **Common Loons** at Lake Natoma on 2/22, and a **Pileated Woodpecker** on 2/25 along Pleasants Valley Rd five miles southwest of Lake Solano. **Swainson's Hawk** reports were surprisingly regular from Cosumnes River Preserve and the surrounding area, with one or two reported at regular intervals through the winter months. On 2/28, a dark morph **Swainson's Hawk** was seen near the ski ponds on the south side of Yolo County Rd 29, along with a pair of **Redheads**. Hikes up Rayhouse Rd in Yolo County produced reports of two **Northern Pygmy-Owls**, 40 **Mountain Quail**, and 60+ **Sage Sparrows**. On 2/12, a visit to the same area produced several **Lawrence's Goldfinches**. Lastly, **Great-tailed Grackles** have been increasingly regular in the region, with consistent reports coming from the Bridgeway Island development in West Sacramento, and from Folsom, especially near the mall at East Bidwell north of Highway 50.

Thanks to the many observers for their reports (the majority were taken from [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central\\_valley\\_birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central_valley_birds/)).

## Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

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Chris Conard