

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



VOLUME 67 • NO. 5

MAY-JUNE 2015

General Meeting

Thursday, May 21, 2015
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

Wetlands and Waterbirds

Loss and Recovery in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys

Philip Garone

California's Great Central Valley once contained approximately four million acres of permanent and seasonal wetlands, which supported enormous numbers of waterfowl and other waterbirds. After statehood in 1850, Californians began to drain or "reclaim" these wetlands throughout the entire valley, primarily for conversion of the land to agriculture. During the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, we have been protecting and restoring—rather than destroying—valley wetlands. This presentation will focus on both the Sacramento Valley and the San Joaquin Valley, telling the quite different stories of the history of wetlands in each place. We will address the often surprising reasons why the positive change of fortune for our wetlands has come about, as well as some of the challenges facing Central Valley wetlands and wildlife today.



Philip Garone

Philip Garone is Associate Professor of History and Director of the History M.A. Program at California State University Stanislaus, where he teaches California, *General Meeting* continued on page 7

WALK ON THE WILDSIDE – SATURDAY, MAY 16

Walk on the Wildside highlights local efforts to protect and restore Central Valley habitats and it is one of the best family events in our area. This FREE family-oriented event includes hiking tours of local wetlands and forests, presentations, a live animal show by Wildthings, Inc, music by Horse Sense, children's hands-on activities, informational exhibits and more! Running from 10am to 4pm, the event and the parking are both free. Check it out at www.wowsacramento.com. Come early (8am) and you can join Sacramento Audubon leader, John Huls, and Beach Lake Docent, Ray Mendonsa, for a 2-hour birding walk through the forest, across Morrison Creek and onto the Stone Lakes Refuge. After the walk you can enjoy the rest of the event.

Directions: Exit I-5 at Pocket Road and head east. At Freeport Blvd. turn south. Continue 2 miles through the town of Freeport and past the golf course. Turn left at the signs (just opposite Cliff's Marina) and continue until you reach the Beach Lake event parking area.

Farallon Islands Boat Trip

SAVE THIS DATE! SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2015

Sacramento Audubon Society is sponsoring our annual pelagic trip off the coast of San Francisco to the Farallon Islands. This will be the 25th year SAS has sponsored this trip, and every year is different! We'll travel out the Golden Gate and cruise around Southeast Farallon Island, one of San Francisco's "desert islands" and part of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.

This a great trip to see new birds to add to your life list. We'll have several experts on board to help spot and identify birds. We should see many species that are usually only seen offshore or as a tiny speck in your scope from the shore! Highlights from previous trips include Tufted Puffin, Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets, Pigeon Guillemot, Black-Footed Albatross, Brown Booby, Sooty Shearwater, three species of cormorants, and Northern Fulmar. Will the Northern Gannet be there this year? Join us and discover for yourself!

A naturalist will give a brief pre-departure lecture and will be with us all day to answer questions and provide information on the Islands and the wildlife. We'll be on the same boat we've chartered many times in the past. The trip will last approximately 8 hours, departing out of Sausalito promptly at 8am and returning about 3:30pm. The pre-trip lecture starts promptly at 7:30am. This trip is limited to the first 30 people that sign up to ensure everyone has plenty of room, so send your reservation and check early to reserve your spot. The trip cost is \$90 per person and the sign up deadline is June 15.

Your space will be confirmed by email after the reservation form and your check is received. Detailed instructions, maps, and pre-trip information will be provided after the June reservation deadline. Please use the reservation form provided on page 7. Contact Linda Pittman, pittmanl@frontiernet.net, (email preferred) or phone 715-1876 for any further information.

Field Trip Findings

Mather Field Park (4/8) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “A sunny, though slightly cool, morning greeted 12 birders at Mather Lake. Fifty-one species were spotted by the group. The first bird seen by this observer was a Swainson’s Hawk on a pole on the north border of the lake. Another was seen being harassed by a White-tailed Kite over the field on the south side of the lake. Highlight was a Violet-green Swallow seen by all. Mute Swans seemed to have paired up and there were numerous Canada Geese pairs with either young or sitting on nests. Excellent looks at a Hermit Thrush, a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and a Downy Woodpecker were pleasant surprises.”

Folsom Lake SRA (4/5) — Scott Hoppe, co-leader with Mark Martucci, reported: “With a tiny group of just 3 of us, we set out on a morning that was supposed to be rainy, but turned out to be just fine. It was overcast and a bit breezy to start, but the birding was great. Highlights included a beautiful male Rufous Hummingbird that we all got great looks at, Ash-throated Flycatcher, a single Steller’s Jay, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Rock Wren. With a tally of 58 species, we were all glad that we made lemonade out of what could have been lemons, weather-wise.”

Glen Hall Park, Paradise Beach, American River Parkway (4/1) — Leader Sally Walters Schmoltdt reported: “Fourteen folks found 30 species of birds in 3 hours. Many singing territorial House Wrens, singing White-crowned Sparrows getting ready to migrate, good looks at male and female Common Mergansers, and Tree Swallows, Audubon Warblers at Paradise Beach.”

Mather Lake (3/29) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Fifteen birders enjoyed discovering 50 species of birds on a beautiful spring morning. There were numerous highlights all morning. Paired Bushtits, bluebirds, Tree Sparrows, Western Kingbirds, Downy Woodpeckers, and Mute Swans were noticeable. Numerous American Bitterns were heard and a possible sighting on the south side of the lake prompted spirited conversation about whether bitterns or green herons flew. Raptors seemed the entree as White-tailed Kites were numer-

ous all around the lake, early in the walk a rarely seen female Northern Harrier provided outstanding looks close up, several Swainson’s Hawks, a Cooper’s Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, a Red-tailed Hawk, Turkey Vultures and, as a finale, a male Northern Harrier. All the troops saw the single male Yellow-headed Blackbird and most heard or saw a Common Yellowthroat. Outstanding morning of birding.”

Upper Sunrise Park (3/25) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “This morning’s walk produced an interesting assortment of observations. An active Barn Owl nest was observed on a cliff-side cavity across from the Nimbus Fish Hatchery. At least one young owl was seen. Nearby on the same cliffside was a Canada Goose mother incubating her eggs. Finally a Black Phoebe nest was seen with at least one youngster. Birds seen along the hatchery trail were Rock Wren, Barrow’s Goldeneye, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Spotted Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs, White-throated Swifts, and Lincoln’s Sparrow. Other birds seen on the parkway trail were Phainopepla, singing Bewick’s Wrens, singing Ruby-crowned Kinglets, many Orange-crowned Warblers, a Red-shouldered Hawk, and a Peregrine Falcon. This was a very productive spring morning.”

Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway (3/22) — Leader Paul Cordero reports: “A dozen intrepid birders set out, intent on learning the local bird songs. Bird calls identified included: Bewick’s and House wrens, Oak Titmouse, Killdeer, Spotted and California towhees, Acorn and Nuttall’s woodpeckers, Bushtit, White-breasted Nuthatches, and Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped warblers. Great views of Great Blue Herons nesting as well as the nests of Bushtits and Red-shouldered Hawk were seen.”

Bufferlands Rookery Tour (3/21) — Leader Roger Jones reported: “A group of 35 birders spent the morning in the Bufferlands’ riparian forests. The group was treated to views of nesting herons, egrets, and Double-crested Cormorants in full breeding plumage. This vibrant rookery hosts more than 150 nests. In addition, the group saw Swainson’s Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, White-tailed Kites, and American White Pelicans, and

River Otters.”

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway (3/21) — Leader Ben Graber reported: “The highlights would be some looks at an unusually cooperative Red-breasted Sapsucker, Orange-crowned Warblers, a Lincoln’s Sparrow, Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kite, Cedar Waxwings, White-throated Swifts, Tree and Violet-green swallows, Belted Kingfisher, and a pair of Phainopeplas. We had a very big group of people, many of whom were brand new to birding and got multiple lifers. Great trip overall.”

Effie Yeaw Nature Center (3/18) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Seven people joined me for this Springtime morning walk, both accomplished birders and beginners. I immediately established my lack of credentials by trying to morph a Northern Flicker’s call into a hawk’s call. However, the remainder of the trip went well. We were never away from the sound of singing House Wrens, and wrens and nuthatches were coming and going from nest holes. Cooper’s and Red-shouldered Hawks were active at their nest sites, and Wood Ducks were pairing up on the pond. There were the usual Acorn Woodpeckers, displaying turkeys, and deer. All in all, a good morning of birding.”

SAS-SOS Cranes Co-sponsored Trip (2/28, 3/1) — Alan Kilgore reported: “On Saturday, February 28, about 25 people showed up at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center for the evening Sandhill Crane fly-in viewing. Mike Savino, Alan Kilgore, and Juan Carlos Beus provided an introduction to Sandhill Crane biology, migration, behavior, and conservation importance. The group caravanned to the Phil and Marilyn Isenberg Woodbridge Ecological Reserve, where we could observe several hundred cranes a couple of hundred yards away in pastures adjacent to the preserve. Cranes were loafing, and some dancing and unison calls were observed. Two coyotes circled the loafing Sandhill cranes, perhaps hoping to get dinner. A group of cranes were a formidable presence, and not caught off guard. About sundown, participants were treated to a very spectacular fly-in of Sandhill Cranes and a gorgeous, brilliant red sunset capped the aesthetics of the evening.

Pete Hayes

Field Trips



Rough-legged Hawk
Photo Illustration

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, contact the scheduler Carla Barbaro, cbarbaro@comcast.net, 717-8808, for trips through May 10. For trips May 11–June 14 contact the scheduler Andi Salmi, andisalmi@yahoo.com. For trips June 15–July 19 contact the scheduler Dan Brown, naturestoc@aol.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. In case of INCLEMENT WEATHER contact the trip leader for trip status.

Saturday, May 2, 7am

Driver's Flat, Ruck-a-Chucky

Auburn State Recreation Area

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net

We will be exploring the beautiful canyon of the Middle Fork of the American River off Foresthill Road to look for spring migrants and resident breeding birds. This is Scott's favorite 'secret' birding spot. Possibilities include several species of flycatcher, including Gray, Hammond's and Pacific-slope; Hutton's, Cassin's and Warbling Vireos; up to 7 species of warbler; Black-headed Grosbeak; Lazuli Bunting and Bullock's Oriole. Walking will be up to a mile at a time with moderate inclines. This trip will end mid-day, but plan to lunch on the banks of the river. Meet at the Horseshoe Bar Road Park and Ride in Loomis, Exit 110 off I-80. NOTE: there is now a \$12 per car parking fee at Driver's Flat.

Sunday, May 3, 7am

Spenceville WLR

Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
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 over uneven terrain. Possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, warblers and more. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 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, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

Wednesday, May 6, 7:30am

Bobelaine Sanctuary

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

Join Cathie for a morning walk in this riparian woodland on the Feather River. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd at 7:30 for voluntary carpooling. (From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1.) If you wish to meet at Bobelaine about 8am, take Hwy 99 north toward Yuba City and about 2 miles north of the Feather River Bridge turn right on Laurel Avenue. Follow Laurel to the dead end at the Bobelaine parking lot. We'll be walking about 3 miles on level trails. Trip will end about noon. Bring snacks and water, and if you wish you can lunch at the picnic table near the cars at the end of the trip.

Saturday May 9, 7am

Beals Point

Leaders: Mara Weston, 208-3222

mara_weston@yahoo.com

Deb Weston: 337-2818

notsewbed@mac.com

Join Mara and Deb for a 1-2 mile morning walk at Beals Point. A variety of oak woodland birds should be seen. Phainopeplas, Rock Wrens, Lark Sparrows and Rufous-crowned Sparrows are possibilities. We'll scope the lake and shore, hopefully we'll see something interesting. Last trip a juvenile Bald Eagle was seen flying in and landed on a rock near the water. Bring plenty of

water and sun protection. The trip will end before noon. Meet in the parking lot of the Beals Point unit of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (turn left as you enter the parking lot, to park near the first row). The entrance to Beals Point is on Oak Hill Drive off Auburn-Folsom Rd, about 2 miles south of Douglas Blvd and about 3 miles north of Greenback Lane. This is a great trip for beginning birders. The entrance fee is \$12 per car, or you may use a state (not county) park pass.

Sunday, May 10, 6am

Sand Creek Road

Leaders: Tim Fitzer: 870-5207

spkua2@comcast.net

Mark Martucci: 833-6722

matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Tim and Mark for a trip to Arbuckle and then up Sand Creek Road. Target birds include Sage Sparrow, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Western Kingbird, Roadrunner, Western Screech Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Mountain Quail, and other migrants. The road can be rough and all wheel drive is recommended. Bring a lunch and liquids and be prepared for an afternoon return. We will meet at the Woodland Jack-in-the-Box. Take 1-5 north toward Woodland; exit at County Road 102 (#536); turn right (north) on 102 and turn right into the Jack-in-the-Box parking lot. FRS radios are helpful on this trip.

Wednesday, May 13, 8am

William Pond Park

Leader: Larry Hickey, 415-305-0651

larryhickey1@gmail.com

This area of the American River Parkway offers a variety of habitats and can turn up

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

some surprises. The trip will start with a walk through the native plant garden, through the park and then through the riparian habitat. This beautiful section of the parkway opens up to the backwaters of the river and a lake. We will find our beautiful resident birds and look for late spring migrants. Meet Larry just past the entrance kiosk for this half day trip. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

Saturday, May 16, 7:30am

Mather Field

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457

wayne.blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. Join Wayne to look for a nice variety of resident birds. 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; from Douglas Road turn south on Zinfandel Dr, then turn left into the park for this morning trip. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders. Parking is \$5; your Sac County Park Pass is good here.

Saturday, May 16, 10:30am

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

Join Mark Sawyer and Larry Hickey of Sac Audubon and Nature Center docent, Jaclyn, 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. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists/birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net.

Saturday, May 16

Walk On The Wild Side

A great event for the whole family, from 10am to 4pm at Beach Lake. (Directions at www.wowsacramento.com). Come early at 8am and join Audubon leader John Huls for a 2 hour birding walk through the forest, across Morrison Creek, and onto the Stone Lakes Refuge. After the walk you can enjoy the rest of the event. Please see more complete information on page 1.

Sunday, May 17, 6am

Mosquito Ridge Road, Placer County

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

Join Scott for this early season trip into the lower to mid elevation Sierra. While seemingly a bit early for this area, Scott has found it very productive in this time period. Previous trips have found 6 species of woodpecker including Pileated and White-headed, Olive-sided and Hammond's Flycatcher, Pacific and Canyon Wrens and several warbler species. Plan for an all day trip. Bring lunch and liquids. We will be walking 1-2 miles over moderate terrain. Meet at 6 am at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Rd in Loomis. Exit 110 off I-80.

Saturday, May 23

Dragonfly trip

Location: TBD

Leader: Tim Manolis, 485-9009

Ylightfoot@aol.com

Since the weather will affect the best location to see a variety of dragonfly species, Tim will scout his favorite haunts and choose the exact meeting location as the date approaches. Call or email Tim the week before the trip to get the time and meeting place. With his expertise as the author of a field guide to California dragonflies and damselflies, you can be sure that he will lead you to the best possible site. Bring your binoculars and wear shoes that can get wet—just in case!

Sunday May 24, 6am

Sierra Valley

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

The month of May can be a peak time for viewing breeding birds in Sierra Valley. This gem of the Sierra is unique in that it has characteristics of the Eastern Sierra and the Great Basin, yet is part of the western drainage. The Feather River flows out of the northwestern corner of Sierra Valley, through the Sierras and into the central valley, where it joins the Sacramento River. We will stop on the way at Kyburz Flat to look for nesting Mountain Bluebirds and other montane species, and Sandhill Cranes are possible here as well. Birding will be done mostly by car, with numerous stops along the way. Bring lunch and water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Scott at 6am at the Horseshoe Bar Road Park and Ride in Loomis, Exit 110 off I-80.

Saturday, May 30, 6am

Alpine and Douglas Counties

Leaders: Jane Taylor 444-0429

jg.taylor@att.net

Scott Hoppe: 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

We plan to visit Mud Lake, made accessible by the caretakers who host us generously on the Woodfords Christmas Count. Depending on conditions, reports and allowable time, other possible stops include fields and ponds (if any left) along Foothill Rd, Dressler Ln, Diamond Valley Rd; and Indian Creek Reservoir and Markleeville. Meet your trip leaders behind the Chevron station at Sunrise Blvd and Zinfandel Dr in Rancho Cordova in the old Kmart parking lot, now a Smart and Final. From there, we will head for Woodfords Store off of Highway 88 in Alpine County to regroup. Bring lunch and liquids and be prepared for birding until mid-afternoon. Heavy rain or high winds in the area cancel.

Sunday, May 31, 7am

Crystal Basin

Leaders: Phyllis Wilburn,

530-642-9942, abirder@aol.com

Wendy Money, 205-3194

wendydoug@msn.com

Phyllis and Wendy will visit a variety of sites along Icehouse Road and side roads. The group will be looking for Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Mountain Bluebird, warblers and vireos, and other birds of the area. They hope to see the beautiful Calliope Hummingbird again. Beautiful wildflowers may also be in bloom. Bring lunch, liquids, and footwear suitable for hiking. Both beginners and experienced birders are welcome. Meet Wendy at the Bella Bru in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit#30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. You can also meet Phyllis at 8am in the Crystal Basin area. Take Hwy 50 to the Riverton Rd (Crystal Basin) turnoff. Turn left and drive a short distance to the large pullout on the left side of the road.

Wednesday, June 3, 7:30am

River Bend Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

empid@earthlink.net

Join Cathie for a walk through the oak woodland to the river, looking for our summer birds on nests or in cavities, singing and feeding young. Some wildflowers should still be blooming. This is a good trip for beginning birders. The trip will end

before noon. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, June 6, 7:30am

Fremont Weir/Sacramento River

**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net**

This riparian stretch along the Sacramento River north of Woodland also features large expanses of meadow/grassland where Blue Grosbeaks, Lazuli Buntings and Western Kingbirds have nested in recent years. Swallows, bluebirds, orioles, wrens and Swainson's Hawks are usually present also. This easy walk will last until late morning and be mostly in the sun so hats, liquids and sunscreens are good. Meet Maureen at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1 for a departure at 7:30am sharp. Secondary meeting spot is the Jack in the Box in Woodland just off I-5 at the Road 102 exit. Take I-5 north toward Woodland; exit at County Road 102 (#536); turn right (north) on 102 and turn right into the Jack-in-the-Box parking lot. We will leave there by 7:45 (this is the last opportunity for a restroom break). Call Maureen if questions.

Sunday June 7, 6am

Mosquito Ridge, Placer County

**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
offleash56@yahoo.com**

Richard will explore several productive areas outside of Foresthill along Mosquito Ridge Rd, including the Placer Big Trees Grove. Expect good numbers of mid-elevation breeding birds. There are no services, so bring all of the food and liquids you will need for the day. The trip will end by mid-afternoon. We will be walking about 2-3 miles over easy to moderate terrain at a comfortable pace. Meet at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 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, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

Saturday and Sunday, June 13-14,

8AM onsite both days

**Sierra Valley/Antelope Valley/
Yuba Pass**

**Leader: Gary Fregien 708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com**

This trip offering is designed to accommodate both those who want to do an over-nighter and those wanting to bird either the Sierra/Antelope Valleys or the Yuba Pass area as a day trip. Antelope Valley is located at the southern end of Sierra Valley near Loyalton/Sierra Brooks, and includes a very productive riparian stream zone adjacent to a previous wildfire. We will bird the Sierra/Antelope Valleys area by car on Saturday, a full day's excursion, and the Yuba Pass area on Sunday until early afternoon. Lodging is available in Truckee, Sierraville, Portola, Calpine and Sierra City. U.S. Forest Service campgrounds are located between Truckee and Sierraville on Hwy 89, and between Yuba Pass and Sierra City on Hwy 49. Gary plans to travel to the area on the Friday preceding the field trips; thus, he will not be reachable by email or phone after mid-afternoon Thursday, 6/11. Meet Gary at the junction of Hwys 89 and 49 in Sierraville on Saturday, and/or at the Yuba Pass Sno-Park parking lot, at the summit, on Hwy 49 west of Sierra Valley on Sunday. Car pooling is encouraged. Bring along hand held radios, food and water, and dress for probable cool mornings and warm afternoons.

Saturday, June 20, 6am

Granite Springs Road

**Leaders: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
offleash56@yahoo.com,
Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spkua2@comcast.net**

Join Richard and Tim for a full day of fun and birding. Granite Springs Road runs from Crystal Basin Road to Wrights Lake Road, a distance of about 8 miles. We should find Mountain Quail with young, and possibly Evening Grosbeaks, flycatchers, MacGillivray's Warblers, and Calliope Hummingbird. Around Wright's Lake we expect to find Pine Grosbeak, Osprey and a variety of woodpeckers, vireos and warblers. The trip will last into the afternoon so bring liquids, lunch, snacks and warm clothes in case of chilly weather. FRS Radios are helpful. Since Granite Springs Road is dirt, we will scout its condition to determine its drivability. Meet at Bella Bru in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right.

Sunday, June 21, 7:30am

Mather Lake

**Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
wayne.blunk@gmail.com**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. Join Wayne to look for a nice variety of resident birds. Targeted birds will be Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Blackheaded Grosbeaks, White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey and Green Heron. Meet Wayne 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. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

Saturday, June 27, 7:30am

Indian Grinding Rocks State Park

**Leader: Cliff Hawley, 300-2495
yellowhammerCA@gmail.com**

Join Cliff for a day of birding at this State Park. The birdlife varies depending on the season, but many species are seen year round, including Turkey Vultures, Scrub and Steller's Jays, California Quail, Acorn and Hairy Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, Hermit Thrushes, Wild Turkeys (non-native), and California Thrashers. In summer, the bright colors of the Western Tanager, Northern Oriole, Calliope and Anna's Hummingbirds can be seen in the woods around the meadow. A bird list is available at the museum. Meet Cliff at the Starbucks parking area in the College Greens Shopping Center in the 8300 block of Folsom Blvd (near Florin-Perkins, between Watt and Howe) at 7:30am. Trip goes till 2 or 3pm so bring water and lunch. Some light to moderate walking.

Sunday, June 28, 6am

Loney Meadow

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net**

Come join Scott for this July trip. Loney Meadows is a beautiful mountain meadow north of Grouse Ridge near Bowman Lake at about 6000' elevation. The area can have some excellent birding. Scott has seen 8 species of woodpecker there (including Pileated, Black-backed and Williamson's Sapsucker); also Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher, 7 species of warbler and previous trips have produced Bald Eagles. We will be hiking about 2-3 miles over fairly level terrain with only short, moderate inclines. Meet

Field Trips continued on page 6

Field Trips continued from page 5

Scott at 6am at the Horseshoe Bar Road Park and Ride in Loomis, Exit 110 off I-80. The meadow is about an hour and half's drive from there. Bring water and lunch or a snack.

Sunday, July 5, 7am
Bushy Lake/Cal Expo Floodplain
Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com

Meet Darrell in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. Darrell will be looking for a variety of resident species; Wood Ducks are a good possibility on the lake. This will be a 1 to 2 mile hike that will take 2 to 3 hours. Bring water and sunscreen.

Saturday, July 11
Dragonfly trip
Location: TBD
Leader: Tim Manolis, 485-9009
Ylightfoot@aol.com

Most likely Tim will try Bear Creek for Giant Darners etc, but since the weather will affect the best location to see a variety of dragonfly species he will scout his favorite haunts and choose the exact meeting location as the date approaches. Call or email Tim the week before the trip to get the time and meeting place. With his expertise as the author of a field guide to California dragonflies and damselflies, you can be sure that he will lead you to the best possible site. Bring your binoculars,

water to drink and wear shoes that can get wet—just in case

Sunday, July 12
Farallon Pelagic Trip

All information is on page 1 and the registration form is below.

Saturday, July 18, 6am
Hidden Falls Regional Park,
near Auburn
Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682
bgraber984@gmail.com

Join Ben for this trip to one of his favorite birding spots. He has heard Yellow Breasted Chat, had several species of warblers and flycatchers and saw a whole flock of Lawrence's Goldfinches in the area this year. Be sure to wear good walking or hiking shoes and bring liquids. This will be a half day trip. Meet Ben at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 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, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

Sunday, July 19, 6:30am
Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca
Leaders: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com
Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net

Join Gary and Scott on this high elevation 3-mile hike in search of Clark's Nutcracker, Rufous Hummingbird, Green-

tailed Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Dusky Flycatcher, Pine Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch and, with luck, Sooty Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker and Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. At peak wildflower time there are fields of flowers in dazzling variety. Bring lunch and plenty of liquids; wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for changeable Sierra weather. Carson Pass is a USFS fee area for day-use parking. This hike should be considered moderate to strenuous depending upon your physical condition. Meet at the Bella Bru in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right.

RAPTOR TOUR FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Saturday, June 13, 2015, 9am-noon
Up Close with Raptors,
UC Davis Raptor Center
Leader: Jenner Junghans
For teens 13-17 years old

Join this tour of the UC Davis Raptor Center, where more than 350 raptors that are injured or sick are rehabilitated each year. Teens will get close-up looks at a variety of raptors, and will learn about these magnificent birds, their environment and conservation efforts to protect them. The tour will last until 10:30am. Following the tour, participants are welcome to tour the center on their own until noon. Each youth must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. To register, please email Jenner Junghans at writeningbug@yahoo.com.

Farallon Islands Boat Trip Reservation Form

Sunday, July 12, 2015 Registration deadline: June 15, 2015

Tour departs from Harbor Drive, Sausalito. Trip price: \$90 per person

Name _____

Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____

Address (with zip) _____

Email (for confirmation) _____

Number of people _____ Total Payment \$ _____

Return this form and your check made out to Sacramento Audubon to:
Linda Pittman, 9849 Alta Mesa Rd, Wilton, CA 95693



WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS CONFERENCE

Billings, Montana
June 10-14, 2015

The 40th annual conference of Western Field Ornithologists will take place in Montana for the first time. Field trips will visit a variety of habitats from the high mountains (Black Rosy-Finch) to the grasslands (Sprague's Pipits). There will be the usual wide ranging field trips, workshops and science sessions. Registration for the conference is now open. WFO members are able to register for the conferences at a reduced rate and have early access to registration. If you are not currently a WFO member, you can join at westernfieldornithologists.org/join.php.

Birding and Nature Events

ANNUAL MONO BASIN BIRD CHAUTAUQUA

The 14th Annual Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua will take place this year from **June 19-21**, so make your plans now to attend. Held every year in the unique Mono Basin, festival headquarters are in Lee Vining, but field trips extend as far south as the White Mountains where bristlecone pines are found. Several surrounding lakes are visited, the ghost town of Bodie and neighboring wetlands, and an owling trip is planned. Besides field trips the festival offers music, art and science exhibits. Registration begins April 15th and more information can be found at birdchautauqua.org. Many field trips fill up quickly, so register as soon as possible.

HERON DAYS RETURNS TO CLEAR LAKE, MAY 2-3

Thanks to the dedication of Redbud Audubon Society members, and enough rain this winter to bring the level of Clear Lake high enough for boat navigation, the popular Heron Days on the lake will take place this year on May 2 and 3. Boat rides last an hour and a half and tickets are \$25 per person. Redbud Audubon guides are on each boat.

The event will feature only pontoon boat rides; no craft or informational booths. On Saturday, the boats will venture along the shoreline of Clear Lake to the Corinthian Bay area where viewers are likely to see nesting Great Blue Herons along with a variety of other waterfowl and songbirds, including Western and Clark's Grebes.

On Sunday, boats will leave from Redbud Park in Clear Lake and head down Cache Creek and into Anderson Marsh. There is also a Heron nesting site that can be seen on this trip as well.

Redbud Audubon started Heron Days 20 years ago. It has gone from a small event at Anderson Marsh State Historic Park to a simplified version that includes only boat rides to view the birds on Clear Lake. Go to www.redbudaudubon.org for information and registration for boat rides.

MOUNTAIN BIRD FESTIVAL

The award winning Mountain Bird Festival is back, celebrating the natural wonders of southern Oregon and northern California. The 2015 Mountain Bird Festival will be held in **Ashland, Oregon, May 29-31**. Registration for the Festival will be available on the Klamath Bird Observatory website at www.klamathbird.org. The Mountain Bird Festival offers guided bird walks, a keynote presentation, fine art galleries, local wine, microbrew and food vendors, and a feel-good community atmosphere. Registration includes half-day or full-day field trips offered on both Saturday and Sunday.

General Meeting continued from page 1

Environmental, Western, and US history. His recent publications include *The Fall and Rise of the Wetlands of California's Great Central Valley* (University of California Press, 2011) and a *Forum on Climate Change and Environmental History* in the journal *Environmental History* (2014). He is a lead author of the "Wetlands" chapter in *Ecosystems of California*, forthcoming from the University of California Press. He is currently preparing a narrative of the environmental history of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as part of a collaborative grant from the California Delta Protection Commission.

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

HOW SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SUPPORTS CONSERVATION

Sacramento Audubon Society has supported avian research and conservation in the Northern California region for many years. The projects approved by the Board of Directors this year include the following:

Lake Davis Flammulated Owl conservation project: The study is a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). One of the objectives as an Audubon chapter is to provide the USFS information to help guide local management and conservation efforts. Owls were detected on over 50 territories a year in a 20 sq.km study area. Sacramento Audubon is providing \$1,500 for the survey and banding of the owls.

School courtyard for environmental classes: The Sacramento Audubon grant of \$530 to Casa Roble High School will be used to purchase and install a bird house, hummingbird feeder, general seed feeder, Nyjer seed feeder (feeders to hang from 8' tree posts), weather-proofing accessories, and enough seed for at least 6 months. It would also allow purchase of several birding reference books for students to use. This completed project will be available to all students taking Biology at Casa Roble High School. Casa Roble currently averages about 350 Biology students per year (First-year Biology students as well as AP Biology students).

Support continued on page 8

SHOP AT AMAZON AND SUPPORT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON

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

Just remember to go to smile.amazon.com and select Sacramento Audubon Society as your favorite charity. Then add a bookmark so you return to the site whenever you shop at Amazon.



American Robin
Stephen D'Amato

Support continued from page 7

Educational Film on Woodpeckers: *Searching for Gold Spot* is a film project chronicling current research efforts of Dr. Chad Hanson and seven field biologists investigating black-backed woodpeckers. According to the project proposal, the birds are native to montane forests within the Sierra Nevada-Cascades Region, where they are increasingly rare, and have recently been petitioned for special status species listing. The film is anticipated to draw appreciation and concern for other native fauna as well, and raises questions about the survival of our wild as we know it. The clear-cutting and harvesting of post-fire forests are shown towards the end. Yet the film concludes on an optimistic note, with strong visuals of woodpecker nestlings. Sacramento Audubon is providing \$1,700 for this film.

If you would like to support similar projects on an ongoing basis, please donate to the Sacramento Audubon Conservation Fund. Mail your contributions to PO Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 96816-0694.

LIVE EXCITEMENT

It's nest cam time again. Follow nest building, bird sex!, egg laying, hatching and fledging at some of these web cams. Pay close attention and you'll also see dead prey left in the nest, waiting to be devoured by hungry little chicks.

cams.allaboutbirds.org/live-cams/ which last year featured Ospreys in Montana and Great Blue Heron and Red-tail Hawk in Ithaca, New York, has added Barn Owls, Barred Owls and then there's the Laysan Albatross in Hawaii. He's getting bigger! He's treated to squid oil from mom and dad as they return from their treks out at sea.

For Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills and Common Terns from Seal Island, Maine go to explore.org and click on the Live Cams tab though it appears the season hasn't started quite yet. Also at explore.org/live-cams/player/live-osprey-cam are a pair of Ospreys. An Audubon blog says of them: Hog Island's best-loved (and most-watched) couple Rachel and Steve are nesting again having returned from South America in April! While there, you'll also see a link for the Short-eared Owl cam where 5-6 eggs hatched about April 19.

Seasonal Observations

March 1 to March 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports
www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

Spring-like and mostly dry weather characterized the period, exacerbating the regional drought, and appeared to cause several unusually early arrivals of Neotropical migrants. Perhaps the bird of the month was a **Black Rail** found at the Stone Lakes NWR Blue Heron Trails on 3/11, a fairly new managed emergent marsh wetland. As remarkable as the find was, it is equally remarkable that this secretive species was refound numerous times through 3/27, prompting one to wonder just how many individual **Black Rails** were involved. Movements between coastal/Delta populations and those in the Sierra foothills are not well understood or documented. Was this bird (or birds) moving to or from the foothills or looking for new breeding sites? A calling **Least Bittern** was reported from the same location starting on 3/11 and continued into April.

Notable waterfowl included a **Redhead** at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) from 3/4-6 and four **Surf Scoters** on the San Joaquin River from Staten Island on 3/1.

While **Rough-legged Hawks** were difficult to find this season, one was found on private land beyond the end of Payen Rd on 3/15-24. Single **Pacific Golden-Plovers** were reported at the Lodi Sewer Ponds on 3/12 and Colusa NWR on 3/29. A **Marbled Godwit** was found at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 3/24-26, and two were found along Abel Rd between Williams and the Colusa NWR on 3/30-31. An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was a nice surprise near the Granite Bay Boat Ramp of Folsom Lake on 3/12.

An early calling **Common Poorwill** along the lower portion of Latrobe Rd in Sacramento County was reported on 3/1. There were few reports of **Short-eared Owls** this winter, so one to two at Sherman Island on 3/1, and one on Waltz Rd in Lincoln on 3/4 are worth mentioning. A male **Calliope Hummingbird** visiting a feeder was photographed in Fair Oaks on 3/31, and the male and female **Hairy Woodpeckers** along Lake Natoma, downstream of Young Wo Circle, continued through at least 3/19.



Short-eared Owl
Daniel Kilby

One of the most intriguing reports of the month was an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** at River Bend Park along the American River Parkway, nearly a month early, on 3/3; a bird on 3/25 from the Tall Forest at CRP would be considered quite early in a typical year. A **Warbling Vireo** on 3/29

at CRP was the first report for the season. **Steller's Jay** reports continued to be widespread, including two in the town of Sutter on 3/9. A **Townsend's Solitaire** was reported near the Nimbus Hatchery on 3/16, and a **Wilson's Warbler** at CRP on 3/28 was on the early side.

Two **Brewer's Sparrows** were found on Meiss Rd on 3/29. An interesting bird that looked remarkably like a **Clay-colored Sparrow** was found nearby, but most who looked at the photos believe it is a very bright **Brewer's Sparrow**. A **Thick-billed Fox Sparrow** at Grasslands Regional Park in Yolo County from 3/5-19 was unusual for the Valley floor. An early **Bullock's Oriole** was found at Michigan Bar on 3/15, and a female **Evening**

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Kerry Abbott
Jean Kendall
Carolyn Lewis
Bob Slakey, Jr.

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento
Audubon Society is to:

- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds;
- Promote the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach;
- Provide, encourage and support environmental educational opportunities; and
- Provide proactive leadership in the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Your membership supports the SAS mission of conservation, environmental education and protection of the region's natural ecosystems and diverse wildlife populations. 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, llandry46@comcast.net
11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

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.

Grosbeak was heard and then seen in Carmichael on 3/12.

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

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Keith Bailey, Bruce Deuel, Leo Edson, Gil Ewing, Tim Fitzer, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Stanton Hunter, Logan Kahle, Afton Kern, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, John Luther, Frances Oliver, Ron Pozzi, Jim Rowth, Mark Sawyer, John Sterling, John Trochet, Amy and Daniel Welsh, and Dan Williams.

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



**SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION
ON FACEBOOK**

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SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS AND BOARD FOR 2015-2016

The 2015-2016 Sacramento Audubon Board was voted on at the April general meeting.

President	Larry Hickey
Vice President	Subhash Chand
Treasurer	Marcia Ferkovich
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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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203-1610, 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.

The Observer is published monthly January through December, except June and August, by the Sacramento Audubon Society.

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

May 21, 2015

with Philip Garone
Wetlands and Waterbirds

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm



American Avocet
Linda Pittman