

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



General Meeting

Thursday, November 13, 2014

NOTE: November's meeting is being held on the second Thursday.

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm**

Migration Patterns of Northern Saw-whet Owls near Forest Ranch, CA

Dawn Garcia

The elusive Northern Saw-whet Owl migrates into the Sierra Nevada foothills predictably every autumn. Dawn Garcia will be sharing 9 years of migration data from one of the few Northern Saw-whet Owl banding stations in western North America. The banding effort, located at the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve, east of Chico, gives a glimpse into saw-whet annual migration demographics. The study revealed a few surprises, but leaves a lot of questions unanswered. Dawn encourages discussion about research possibilities that will enlighten the ecology of the secretive saw-whet in the Sierra Nevada.

Dawn Garcia is an avid birder, with an ear for birdsong and a passion for identifying seasonal changes as indicated by the presence/absence of birds. She has conducted monitoring and research-oriented field work with birds and other taxa since 1993 with her first bird banding position in Kansas. Dawn educates and shares her enthusiasm with communities to encourage individuals to cherish and conserve birds and wildlife.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael, except for the month of November when they are held the second Thursday. 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/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).



Northern Saw-whet Owls
Steve King

NATURE FEST 2014 A HUGE SUCCESS

Sacramento Audubon took part in this year's Effie Yeaw Nature Fest, not only with our \$500 sponsorship but also with the presence of our volunteers. Cathie LaZier organized everyone and Joanne Vinton helped her at the SAS information and education table, Sharon Wisecarver, helped with a nature walk, and Wendy Money, worked at the table AND led a nature walk.

We received the following letter from Betty Cooper thanking us for our sponsorship:

It's my pleasure to inform you that, thanks to the sponsorship from Sacramento Audubon Society and other organizations, Nature Fest 2014 was a

big success! Your contribution enabled us to provide a wonderful educational and entertaining event for our community and raise funds to support our environmental programs and visitor center.

The event day was rather unseasonably warm, but we still had about 1,200 people come to engage in activities, take guided walks, observe live animal programs, and learn about history, nature and healthy recreation resources in our community from demonstrators and participating organizations.

Your sponsorship was noted on promotional flyers, the event welcome banner and the program. It was also featured on the website which received over 2,000 hits. In addition, your sponsorship will be noted in the next ACORN newsletter mailed to 1,100 members and given out to the public at our visitor center and other busy locations.

Visitors were very pleased and excited about the event and visitor comments indicate a very high level of satisfaction. A slide show of the event will be posted on our website at www.sacnaturecenter.net

Thank you so much for sponsoring Nature Fest 2014!

Betty Cooper, Development Director, Effie Yeaw Nature Center, a community service of the American River Natural History Association



Field Trip Findings

Mather Lake (10/15) — Leader Sheila Green reported: “Nine of us walked around the south side of the lake under cloudy skies after a fresh rain. We were excited about the Belted Kingfishers, Western and Pied-billed Grebes, flickers, Common Gallinule, and a pair of American Bitterns. We had a lively conversation about native vs. non-native birds and habitat. We saw 35 species, and we had several first-time birders, so we enjoyed each new bird.”

Solano Lake/Putah Creek (10/12) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Eight birders saw 54 species of birds on a very windy day in Solano County. Highlights included Osprey, Brown Creeper, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Chestnut-backed Chickadee.”

Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek (10/5) — Leader Lea Landry reported: “Nine of us braved the hot, dry October weather to look for birds along the trails between Shadow Glen and the bluffs along Lake Natoma. Many runners and bicyclists and a few equestrians joined us on the trail, making it crowded at times. The parkway, itself, was the scene of some sort of competitive bicycle event which kept us hopping when we needed to cross the asphalt trail. Only 29 bird species were seen or heard during the 4 hours of trek. We were thrilled with sightings of a Belted Kingfisher and a pair of Phainopeplas. Missing were our usual sightings of Rufous-crowned Sparrows, California Quail, grebes, gulls, accipiters, warblers and turkeys.”

Mather Lake (10/4) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Forty-six eyeballs spent a splendid autumn morning spotting 51 species of birds at Mather Lake. A great mix of new eyes to birding plus well-seasoned eyes caught a Red-breasted Sapsucker, great looks at a Wilson’s Warbler, Green Heron, Greater Yellowlegs, Downy Woodpecker and an American Kestrel. “

Paradise Beach, American River Parkway (10/1) — Leader Sally Walters Schmoltdt reported: “Nine people joined me for a walk through a willow/cottonwood, sand and rock cobble shoreline. Highlights included very good looks at male and female Black-throated Gray Warblers, 2 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and 2 early female Common Goldeneyes. A total of 46 species were seen. It was a bit windy at first and warmed up.”

Search for Fall Rarities (9/28) — Leader Chris Conard reported: “There were only six of us on our visit to Pt. Reyes with a focus on finding rarities. Having to detour around the closed Hwy 37 was mitigated by finding a Connecticut Warbler at the fish docks. The bird activity was at times slow, but other nice finds included a Ferruginous Hawk, a Merlin, a Least Flycatcher, a Tennessee Warbler, and a Palm Warbler. From the Lighthouse, distant Sooty Shearwaters coursed over the water, but they were too far away to really enjoy, even with a scope. Closer at hand, a feeding frenzy on Drake’s Bay included over 45 Pacific Loons, 500 Brandt’s Cormorants, and 60 Elegant Terns. Mammal highlights included elk, a coyote, and elephant seals.”

Discovery Park (9/27) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “There were 8 of us on a fresh, cool morning following a nice rainstorm in the night. We had almost 40 species, wrens, woodpeckers, sparrows and more. Best was long looks at a gorgeous Western Tanager.”

Yolo Basin Bypass (9/25) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “Due to road closures, the trip was canceled.”

Fall Migration “Wild Card” (9/21) — Dan Tankersley, co-leader with Scott Hoppe, reported: “At the meeting location, Scott suggested our group of 12 birders go to Pt. Reyes, based on the success of yesterday’s trip to that beautiful area. Everyone was in favor, so off we went. We experienced superb weather and

great birding where everyone got to see Philadelphia Vireos, Blackpoll and Cape May warblers and an American Redstart among other more expected fall species. At the platform overlooking the lighthouse, we were treated to hundreds of Sooty Shearwaters streaming past the point. Our last stop of the day was at Five Brooks, where a couple of Pileated Woodpeckers were seen after first being heard. For a full day of birding, the group recorded a very nice tally of 75 species.”

Point Reyes for Vagrants (9/20) — Leader Dan Williams reported: “A glorious day for 21 of us out at the point started at Bear Valley where we were treated to stupendous views of a Pileated Woodpecker along the Earthquake Trail. There were lots of rarity targets out on the outer point from the previous day, so from the visitor center we made a beeline for the lighthouse and were not disappointed. Shortly after our arrival a Blackpoll Warbler (the first of several, it would turn out) and a Cape May Warbler popped out of the cypresses. Then an American Redstart and a Chestnut-sided Warbler appeared closer to the intern housing.

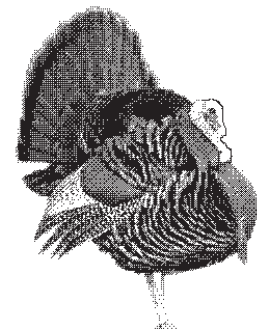
Tearing ourselves away from that scene was not easy, but the fish docks at Chimney Rock Trailhead were also quite productive, with at least 4 more Blackpoll Warblers and 3 more Redstarts, as well as several Elegant Terns, loons, and Red-necked Grebes on Drake’s Bay.

After lunch we stopped at Mendoza Ranch where we had heard that a Philadelphia Vireo had just been found. We were able to get gorgeous eye-level views of the bird, which was a treat for all and a lifer for many. There were also Barn and Great Horned owls in those cypresses as well as Pectoral Sandpipers and Red-necked Phalaropes in the pond below the road. An outstanding day!”

Pete Hayes

NOVEMBER’S ELECTION AND THE PROPOSITION 1 WATER BOND

The environmental community, both local and state, has strong divisions and disagreements about this Proposition and what it would mean for California’s environmental future. Readers are urged to make their own efforts to carefully and independently educate themselves about a very complex and controversial proposal. One respected source with information on both sides of the issue is: [ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_1,_Water_Bond_\(2014\)](http://ballotpedia.org/California_Proposition_1,_Water_Bond_(2014))



Field Trips

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 Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net.

Due to insurance requirements, Sacramento Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize ride-sharing/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.



Pileated Woodpecker
Stephen D'Amato

**Saturday, November 1, 7am SHARP
Calaveras Big Trees State Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net**

We'll take a leisurely walk on the 1-1/2 mile loop trail through the North Grove of Giant Sequoias, enjoying dogwood, hazelnut, and big leaf maple in fall color. Hoped-for birds include White-headed Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Winter Wren, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Stellar's Jay and Douglas Squirrel are a certainty. Afterwards we'll picnic at the meadow, so bring a lunch and liquids, and we'll make a short stop at the visitor center before an optional short afternoon hike. Meet Cathie at the Starbucks in the Raley's Shopping Center in the 8300 block of Folsom Blvd. (between Watt and Howe), to LEAVE at 7am SHARP. Or meet in the large visitor's day parking lot at Calaveras around 9am. There is an entrance fee to this State Park. This trip is good for beginners.

**Sunday, November 2, 8am
NOTE: Daylight Savings Time Ends
Spenceville Wildlife Area
Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
offleash56@yahoo.com**

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. Join Richard as he searches this foothill area for wintering waterfowl, raptors and passerine species. The trip involves moderate hiking; wear appropriate footwear and layered clothing. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at Brookfield's restaurant parking lot in

Roseville. 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.

**Wednesday, November 5, 8am
Cosumnes River Preserve Boardwalk
and Woodbridge Road
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net**

Our Sandhill Cranes are back for the winter, joining swans, geese and a wide variety of duck species. Yellowlegs and Wilson's Snipe will be in the shallower water, and other shorebirds are possible. We'll walk the CRP boardwalk loop first; then drive along Desmond Road for more views of waterfowl. Then we'll drive to Woodbridge Road, making a couple of birding stops. Meet Cathie at the Nugget Market at 8am. Going south on I-5, take the Florin Road West exit; go west to the first signal light, (Greenhaven Drive), and make a U-turn. The parking area for the market will be on the right. Secondary meeting place is the CRP Visitor Center parking lot about 8:30am. Bring water and snacks and dress for changeable weather. FRS radios and spotting scopes are helpful if you have them. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

**Saturday, November 8, 8am
Gray Lodge Wildlife Area
Leader: Frank Gray, 723-5249
Fgray4birds@aol.com**

This 9,200 acre state wildlife preserve, about 60 miles north of Sacramento, contains many marshland and riparian habitats. Located along the Pacific Flyway, it provides spectacles of hundreds of waterfowl, includ-

ing thousands of Snow and White-fronted Geese, as well many duck species. Eurasian Wigeon is a possibility. Wintering raptors are also expected. We will drive along the auto tour loop and walk at some designated areas. After touring the wildlife area, we will likely visit other nearby areas depending upon water availability and other factors. A day pass for \$4.32 per person is available at the wildlife area. Bring liquids, lunch, and clothing and footwear suitable for changeable weather. Frank will bring one scope, bring more scopes and 2-way radios if you have them. This is a good trip for beginning and intermediate birders, as Frank will point out various bird identification features, and more experienced birders will also enjoy the trip. "Pouring" rain and or high wind cancels the trip. No "taping in" birds and not a "rarities chase." We will likely be back at the Park and Ride by 3 pm. Voluntary car-pooling is encouraged. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave (Exit #81); turn left at the light and then an immediate left again into the Park and Ride lot.

**Sunday, November 9, 7:30am
King Ranch/Lynch Canyon/American
Canyon Wetlands
Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
or 281-6652
Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net
kenpoe@sbcglobal.net**

Solano County has wonderful birding in a variety of habitats. Join Ken and Maureen as they drive through the King Ranch looking for eagles and other raptors, bur-

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

rowing owls and rock wrens; Lynch Canyon for lunch and a short hike into the valley looking for species similar to those at King plus ducks and grebes at the reservoir pond. A possible add on, depending on the tide, will be driving west to the American Canyon Wetlands to see myriad shorebirds and ducks which may be close enough for very good looks. This trip will last to mid-afternoon, so bring lunch and liquids. FRS radios will be useful. Meet Maureen at the Park and Ride in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave exit. Turn left and the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left. Second meeting place in Fairfield at the Safeway just east of the Waterman exit by 7:45-7:50am.

Saturday and Sunday, November 7-9 Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

Learn more about the event on page 7 and register for tours at www.cranefestival.com or call 800-581-6150.

Thursday, November 13, 8:30am Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

**Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758
IshIM2000@comcast.net**

Join Marlene in this great area 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. Depending on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl as well as raptors. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A) on your left, at the beginning of the auto tour. FRS radios and scopes are helpful on this trip, which is a good trip for both beginners and more experienced birders. Trip will end before noon. If the bypass is closed due to flooding, the trip is canceled.

**Saturday, November 15, 8am
Flood and Waverly Roads,
San Joaquin County**
**Leaders: Linda Pittman, 715-1876
and Dan Tankersley, 662-1290
pittmanl@frontiernet.net
dtankers@winfirst.com**

The Flood/Waverly rolling grasslands in eastern San Joaquin County are excellent for wintering raptors. We'll be looking for eagles, Ferruginous and Rough-legged hawks, falcons and other open country birds. Meet at the Galt Park and Ride. From Sacramento, take Hwy 99 south to

the Twin Cities Rd/Hwy 104 exit (#277); turn left (east) on Twin Cities Rd, cross the freeway and turn right (south) on Stockton Blvd. The Park and Ride is just south of Twin Cities Rd. Bring snacks, lunch and liquids as the trip will last into the afternoon. FRS Radios and scopes are helpful.

Saturday, November 15, 10:30am Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

This family friendly nature walk will be at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers and Wild Turkeys are abundant, but sharp eyes and ears may find Spotted Towhees or Bushtits as well. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalist Jaclyn from the nature center and birders Sheila Green and Carla Barbaro from Audubon. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net.

Sunday, November 16, 7:30am Sacramento Parks and Cemeteries Leader: Cliff Hawley, 300-2495 yellowhammerCA@gmail.com

Sacramento has some excellent city parks and cemeteries that are great for birds. Mountain species like Mountain Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, and sapsuckers are attracted to the islands of ornamental conifers and huge trees. Our local wintering species will be found with a chance to find some rarities. Possible stops include East Lawn Cemetery, Sutter's Fort, Capitol Park, Southside Park and Old City Cemetery. This trip will last until late morning. Meet Cliff at the Save Mart shopping center at 5600 Folsom Blvd. From Hwy 50, take the 65th Street Exit and turn left or south onto Folsom Boulevard. The Save Mart will be about 10 blocks further

Sunday, November 16 Beginning Birding Field Trip William Pond Park

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. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

**Wednesday, November 19, 8am
Mather Lake**
**Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations, and he usually turns

up quite a list of bird species. Join him to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron, Pied-billed Grebe and Common Yellowthroat. 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. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

Thursday-Monday, November 20-23 Central Valley Birding Symposium

This birding festival is considered one of the best festivals in the country. Birders flock from near and far to enjoy the company of other birders as well as great birders and naturalists in a variety of field trips and workshops. Enjoy the ever popular "stump the experts" bird ID panel which is always fun and interesting. Field trips visit surrounding hot spots to celebrate the diversity of birds wintering in the Central Valley. For more information see page 7 and to register, go to www.2013cvbs.org/. (Yes, 2013 for the 2014 event).

**Saturday, November 22, 8am
Sutter's Landing Regional Park
Ben Graber, 844-8682
bgraber984@gmail.com**

Join Ben to visit a new birding destination for SAS. He will lead a low-key trip along the American River Parkway to find the common and resident species of this landmark area of Sacramento. This time of year, many species are possible with wintering raptors, shorebirds and songbirds. This is a great trip for beginners and experienced birders as well. The trip will end before noon and is located close to downtown Sacramento. Bring liquids and be prepared to walk several miles in the Parkway. From Business 80 heading east (towards Cal-Expo), exit on H Street, then turn left onto E and then right on 28th Street which dead ends at the Park. Heading west on Bus. 80, also take the E Street exit; turn right onto E Street, then right again onto 28th and proceed to the Park

**Saturday, November 22, 3:30pm
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering
Birds of the Sacramento Valley
Sponsored by Save Our Sandhill Cranes
Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

Our Sandhill Cranes are back! They, as well as a variety of ducks, swans, geese, and

shorebirds, feed in the flooded fields and marshy areas of the delta, and hawks patrol overhead. Meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center deck at 3:30pm to hear a brief presentation of Sandhill Crane behavior, biology and status. Then we'll stroll the boardwalk in the Lost Slough Wetlands, enjoying views of the cranes, wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. Afterwards, we'll drive along Desmond Road and possibly to Woodbridge Road or Staten Island, to see flocks of cranes fly in to roost for the night. Dress for changeable weather and bring binoculars. Scopes are helpful. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road; go left (east) to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the Preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org. This is a great trip for beginners.

**Sunday, November 23, 8am
Sacramento Wildlife Refuge
Leader: Andi Salmi, 691-7216
andisalmi@yahoo.com**

Andi will be looking for 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 early afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet 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. Please note there is a fee for each vehicle at the refuge: \$6 for a day pass, or a \$12 Refuge Annual Pass. Or for \$3 more purchase a Duck Stamp and support all national wildlife refuges. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

**Sunday, November 23, 3:30pm
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering
Birds of the Sacramento Valley**

See information for November 22nd trip.

**Saturday, November 29
Beginning Birding Field Trip
Cosumnes River Preserve**

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of bird-

ing. Limited to 10 adults per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. This trip will focus on wintering waterfowl and wetland birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

**Saturday, November 29, 3:30pm
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering
Birds of the Sacramento Valley**

See information for the November 22nd trip.

**Saturday, November 29, 8am and
Sunday, November 30, 8am
Lincoln Grasslands Trips #1 and #2!!
Leaders: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
offleash56@yahoo.com
Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net**

The grasslands and farmlands surrounding Lincoln provide some of the best winter birding in the Sacramento Valley. Because of the diversity and large area to be covered, back to back trips were offered last year. This year, once again, two teams of experienced field trip leaders will enter a friendly competition to show participants as many birds as possible. Richard and Tim will start Saturday, searching for the largest number of raptors and rarities; Scott and Mark will follow Sunday hoping to produce even better numbers. Both days, they will search the back roads of Placer County for a large variety of raptors, shorebirds, ducks, swans and sparrows plus specialty species such as Tri-colored Blackbirds and Lewis' Woodpeckers. These trips will last into the afternoon, so bring lunch and liquids as well as scopes and FRS radios if you have them. Meet in the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road off ramp (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 area.

**Sunday, November 30, 8am
Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471 and
Mark Martucci, 833-6722
shoppe01@surewest.net
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

See write-up, above.

Field Trips continued on page 6

FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIPS

Sacramento Audubon has joined with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael to offer birding/nature walks as a way of maximizing efforts to serve families with children who are looking for outdoor experiences.

The family friendly trips will be offered on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10:30am. The trips are listed with our regular field trips, and on the Effie Yeaw website, www.sacnaturecenter.net. Reservations are not needed. Simply show up at Effie Yeaw Nature Center at the appropriate day and time and walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. Our next trip takes place on November 15.

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sundays, **November 16**, December 7, and January 11

Location: Cosumnes River Preserve, (focusing on wintering waterfowl and wetland birds)

Date: Saturday, **November 29**

**Trips limited to 10 adult participants:
Registration required**

These outings are geared toward people who aren't entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders.

The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on where to look and what important field marks to look for. This walk will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. An optional brief session at a picnic table afterwards will cover field guides, smart phone applications and optical equipment.

Register via email to Cathie at empid@earthlink.net, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 457-6882, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

Field Trips continued from page 5

Sunday, November 30, 3:30pm
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley

See information for the November 22nd trip.

Saturday, December 6. ARNHA WILDLIFE COUNT

Join fellow birders for this annual census of birds and other wildlife on the American River Parkway. Contact compiler Bill Avery, averyw@csus.edu, (email preferred) or at 369-0750 or 769-3357.

Saturday, December 6, 9am
Nature and Birding Walk
Cosumnes River Preserve

Not an Audubon trip, but a great walk for beginning birders, this monthly First Saturday morning walk at the CRP is led by docents who will share information about the preserve, and help you identify the various birds and plant life. This time of year waterfowl are abundant, cranes are frequently overhead, and there's a chance to see snipe, yellowlegs, and stilts. Meet at the Visitor Center. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

Sunday, December 7
Beginning Birding Field Trip
William Pond Park

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. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

Sunday, December 7, 9:30am-12:30pm
Nimbus Fish Hatchery/American River
Leader: Ed Harper, 971-3311
calidris@surewest.net

Join Ed for an informative walk along the American River and a chance to sharpen your identification skills. Ed is a great birder who will be looking for any interesting or unusual birds, with emphasis on tricky identification of the many gulls that winter on the River near Nimbus Dam. Herring, Thayer's, Glaucous-winged, California, Ring-billed and Mew Gulls are all possibilities. Spotting scopes will be very useful, and be sure to bring your field guides for this intensive study. This trip will last until late morning. Meet at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery parking lot. From Hwy 50 go north on Hazel Avenue; turn left on Gold

Country Blvd and the Hatchery is on your right.

Wednesday, December 10, 8am
William Pond Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk down to some different spots on the river, where mergansers and goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. Then we'll check the pond area for Red-winged Blackbirds and Green Heron. California Quail, Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows may be found in the park area. Trip will end before noon. A Sacramento 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 an excellent trip for beginners.

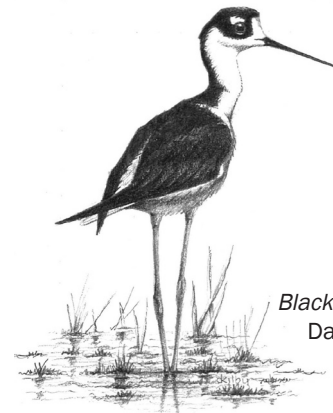
Saturday, December 13, 8am
Robinson Road Area
Leaders: Tim Fitzer 870-5207, and Ann Burris, 947-7573
Spskua2@comcast.net
Burris.nellieann@gmail.com

This is a great area for wintering Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Merlins, curlews, possible Mountain Plovers, shrikes, and other interesting birds. Bring liquids, lunch, warm clothes, spotting scopes, and FRS radios if possible. Meet at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento, take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride entrance a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Heavy rain or high winds cancel the trip.

Sunday, December 14, 8am
Discovery Park
Leader: Maureen Geiger
444-0804 or 281-6652
mkgeiger@swbcglobal.net

This park at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a great place for a walk in any season. Join Maureen to look for winter arrivals and resident species generally found in the park such as Yellow-billed Magpies, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, Red-shouldered Hawks and White-tailed Kites. This is a good area for winter sparrows; other possibilities include wrens, woodpeckers and bluebirds. Generally, there

is an unlocked restroom near the beginning of the walk. This walking trip will last until late morning. To reach Discovery from I-5, exit onto the Garden Highway and head east to the first traffic light. Turn right into the park. In the park, you need a Sacramento County Parks Annual Pass, or you must stop at the kiosk and register, paying the \$5 entrance fee. From the kiosk, turn left at your first opportunity and then left again, driving a short distance to the farthest parking lot at the south end of the archery range where we will meet.



Black-necked Stilt
Daniel Kilby

DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

A great trip for families, youth groups and beginning birders.

Don't forget to stop by the Cosumnes River Preserve and check out "Ducks In Scopes," where preserve docents have a row of scopes set up, some set lower to accommodate children. They'll focus on giving you good views of the many colorful ducks and geese, as well as some of the more interesting shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts and Common Snipe. A table display features "Duck Soup," dishes of water dipped from the pond full of sand fleas, dragonfly nymphs, and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on. A microscope and hand lens provide close-up looks. The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento—south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve. Come any time between 10am and 2pm, on the following dates.

November: Sunday 11/2,
Saturday 11/15 and Sunday
11/30.

December: Saturdays, 12/6,
12/13 and 12/20, and Sunday,
12/28.

Then, start the New Year off
right and join us on
Thursday, January 1, 2015.

GOT BIRDS? TELL FEEDERWATCH!

Don't let what happens at the feeder stay at the feeder

Chickadees, Bushtits, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and other feeder birds carry an important message about the health of bird populations and our environment. In order to decode that message, people just need to count their birds and report what they see to Project FeederWatch.

FeederWatch begins November 8, 2014, and continues through April 3, 2015. New and returning participants are urged to sign up now at www.FeederWatch.org to enjoy the full season. The project is easy to do and makes a great family activity! While many of us may have a hummingbird feeder, there are fascinating opportunities to see and study winter birds by putting out food and water. In fact, water is sometimes more attractive to birds than seeds. Who knows when a rarity might show up in your yard. This is a great way to teach your kids about birds and their migration habits while also helping scientists.

"We learn so much from the information people report to us," says project leader Emma Greig. "This is how we learned that Bushtits are increasing in the western part of the country and that more Yellow-rumped Warblers are appearing in the East."

A new tool on the FeederWatch website makes it easy for everyone to see the trends. You can look at reports for one species, compare two species, or compare trends in different parts of the country. The new trend graphs are in the Explore section of the FeederWatch website.

"One trend we'd like to see is more bird reports coming in from cities," Greig explains. Overall, we need to hear from people with feeders in cities to make sure we're getting a good sample of urban species."

To learn more about joining Project FeederWatch in the U.S. and to sign up, visit www.FeederWatch.org or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (866) 989-2473. In return for the \$18 fee, participants receive the FeederWatcher Handbook and Instructions with tips on how to successfully attract birds to your feeders, an identification poster of the most common feeder birds, and a calendar. Participants also receive Winter Bird Highlights, an annual summary of FeederWatch findings, as well as the Cornell Lab's printed newsletter, All About Birds News.

Birding and Nature Events

TONES OF FALL AT THE BUFFERLANDS

On **November 1**, from 9am until noon there will be a biologist led walk exploring the Bufferlands and it's environs. Each fall, the riparian forests and wetlands change colors from lush greens to the familiar shades of autumn. Many species of wildlife leave the area, while many others come into the valley to spend the winter. Come see and listen as our biologists explain the physiological and ecological reasons behind these changes. The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at 875-9174 or jonesro@sacsewer.com the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions. More information about the Bufferlands which is maintained by the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District as a buffer for the water treatment plant can be found at www.regionalsan.com/bufferlands.

LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

The 18th annual Sandhill Crane Festival will be held **November 7-9**, at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins Street, **Lodi**. Long before Lodi existed, Sandhill Cranes descended into the rich delta wetlands at the end of a long migratory journey, some from nesting grounds as far away as Siberia.

Admission is free and there will be the usual great wildlife tours, workshops and presentations, an art show, live animal displays, family activities, and an exhibit hall with vendors and displays. (Stop by the Sacramento Audubon table.) Learn more about the event and register for tours at www.cranefestival.com or call (800) 581-6150.

CALIFORNIA SWAN FESTIVAL

Celebrating the abundant local and migratory wildfowl of the Northern Sacramento Valley, the California Swan Festival, being held in **Marysville, November 7-9**, offers workshops, presentations, field trips and educational programs catering to bird and nature enthusiasts of all ages and levels of interest.

Parking and entry to the Swan Festival are free, as are a wide range of workshops and presentations on wildlife education, natural sciences, ecosystem management and photography. Vendors are on site, specializing in wildlife information and goods. More than 35 field trips are offered at affordable prices and hosted by experts in their respective fields. To find out more about the California Swan Festival and to register for tours, visit www.caswanfestival.com.

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 18th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium, **November 20-23**, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in **Stockton**. Thursday night's Keynote speaker is Ed Harper, Friday night's keynote program is presented by Nat Seavey and Saturday night's keynote program is presented by Joel Greenberg on *The Echoes of Their Wings: The Life and Legacy of the Passenger Pigeon*.

Workshops include: *Subspecies for Birders* by Joe Morlan, *What Birders Should Know About Taxonomy in Flux* by Jon Dunn and Kimball Garrett, and a photo workshop by Bob Steele, plus, informative talks by Monica Iglesia, Sara Kross, and Bob Meese. Andy Engilis and his UCD Museum crew will present the very popular Specimen Workshop.

The field trips always turn up exciting birds and there are workshops and vendors tailored to all levels of birders. To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips or register, check out the website at: www.2013cvbs.org/

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES FOR 2014-2015

Saturday, December 6, Daybreak, ARNHA Wildlife Count

Compiler: Bill Avery, 369-0750, 769-3357

e-mail: averyw@csus.edu (email preferred)

Annual census of birds and other wildlife on the American River Parkway.

Sunday, December 21, Woodfords Christmas Count

Coordinator: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207, e-mail: spskua2@comcast.net

Compiler: Andi Salmi, 691-7216, e-mail: andisalmi@yahoo.com

Saturday, December 27 Sacramento Christmas Count

Compiler: Mark Cudney, 987-2422, e-mail: mcudney@aol.com

Sunday, January 4, 2015 Folsom Christmas Count

Compiler: Chris Conard, 203-1610, e-mail: conardc@gmail.com

Saturday, January 10, 2015,

4th Annual Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count

Compiler: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

For locations and dates of additional Christmas Bird Counts, visit

<http://natureali.org/cbcs.htm>

OUTREACH HELP WANTED

Winter events are on the calendar and we need volunteers to work at our table. You do not need to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding, and talking to people about our field trips and you would work with an experienced volunteer. The following events have 2 people signed up for each shift, but it's great to have 3, as they are very busy events, and it's a good opportunity to experience what we do at the Outreach table.

Lodi Crane Festival, Saturday and Sunday, November 8 and 9, 2014

Galt Winter Bird Festival, Saturday, February 7, 2015

If you can work a morning or afternoon shift on one of the above days, please contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, or 457-6882.

Seasonal Observations

September 1 to September 30 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

In terms of rare and uncommon birds, this month was one of the most dynamic on record. Several county firsts led the way, while other notable reports included acorn eating birds outside their normal range. Many observers reported numbers of **Acorn Woodpeckers** where they are rarely found, but more impressive were up to twenty **Lewis's Woodpeckers** in oak woodlands on the Valley floor in places that they almost never occur. Three reports of **Band-tailed Pigeons** on 9/28 (American River Parkway (ARP), Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP), and William Land Park) hinted at more to come in October.

A **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** was an excellent report for Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 9/22, along with six **Pectoral Sandpipers**; the latter species was also found at Lodi WTP on 9/11 and the Winters WTP from 9/21-23. A **jaeger** not identified to species was first seen at Folsom Lake on 9/16. Presumably the same bird was identified as a **Parasitic Jaeger** and seen by many from Folsom Point and Beals Point from 9/19-28. This is apparently the first **jaeger** found at Folsom Lake and a first for Sacramento County, though not for El Dorado and Placer Counties, where this typically pelagic species is sometimes

found in Sierran lakes. Observers seeking this bird found up to four **Sabine's Gulls** from 9/19-28 and up to four **Common Terns** from 9/21-28 (apparently the second **Sabine's Gull** record for Sacramento County and the first documented **Common Tern** for the county). Four **Common Terns** were also found at Camanche Reservoir on 9/21.

A **Chimney Swift** with six **Vaux's Swifts** was heard calling and was photographed along ARP west of Capital City Freeway on 9/8. The male **Costa's Hummingbird** continued at a south Sacramento yard from 5/31 to near the end of the month, and the **Costa's** banded a year ago along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters continued from August.

For the Sacramento Area, the list of rare warblers and other songbirds was outstanding. A **Yellow-throated Vireo** found at CRP's Tall Forest on 9/20-21 was a first for the county and a **Philadelphia Vireo** was reported at Lodi Lake Nature Area on 9/19-20. A flurry of excellent warbler finds began on 9/1, with a **Northern Waterthrush** along Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd (9/1-8) and a **Black-and-white Warbler** at Ancil Hoffman Park in the ARP from (9/1-6). Birders following up on these finds produced most of the additional rare warblers. Another **Black-and-white Warbler** was found in CRP's Tall Forest on 9/26. **Tennessee Warblers** were found

at a backyard water feature in Rosemont on 9/3, Ancil Hoffman Park on 9/11, and Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd from 9/16-22. A **Blackpoll Warbler** was along the same stretch of Putah Creek from 9/7-9, while another was in the same Rosemont water feature on 9/9. One of the most exciting finds for many was a **Canada Warbler** at Ancil Hoffman Park that continued from 9/11-26. Female/immature **American Redstarts** were found at Putah Creek and at CRP's Tall Forest in the same date range of 9/21-26, and a **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was found in the Arden Park neighborhood of Sacramento from 9/22-26.

There was a small influx of **Chestnut-backed Chickadees** around Davis and early **Pacific Wrens** were found at the UC Davis Arboretum on 9/21 and at CRP on 9/26. A **Sage Thrasher** was found along Latrobe Rd about one mile west of Michigan Bar Rd on 9/22, and **Vesper Sparrow** reports include two along South Shingle Rd in El Dorado County (beyond the junction of Michigan Bar and Latrobe Rd) on 9/17, one at Folsom Point on 9/23, and one along Payen Rd on 9/29.

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

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Grant and Gail Bakewell	Marcie Gregory- MacMillan
Elliot Chasin	Bonnie Hankins
Kelly Cohen	Arla McGuire
Betty Cooper	Aurelie Moinet
Mary Du Bose	Joan Moment
Mark and JoAnn Eidem	Jane Van Kessel Reanna Wights
Dick Laursen	

Observations continued from page 8



Canada Warbler
Stephen D'Amato

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:

Dan Airola, Dan Brown, Lyann Comrack, Chris Dunford, Todd Easterla, Bob Ellis, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Maureen Geiger, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Eric LoPresti, Mark Martucci, Sarah Mayhew, Roger Muscat, David Nelson, Michael Park, Michael Perrone, Linda Pittman, Ron Pozzi, Mark Sawyer, John Sterling, Michael Strom, Craig Swolgaard, Jim Thomas, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, C.V. Vick, Bruce Webb, Deb Weston, Nick Whelan, Dan Williams, Sharon Wisecarver, and David Yee.

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

Chris Conard

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 \$ _____

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Email _____

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Gina Bakewell, Wayne Blunk, Richard Turner and Dan Williams made donations to the **General Fund**.

Delmar Janson, Harry White and Dan Williams made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

A \$100 contribution was received for the **General Fund** as a thank you for a speaking engagement given by Subhash Chand.

Thank you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community.

YOUR DUES AND DONATIONS AT WORK

The Sacramento Audubon Board has voted to make the following donations

- \$500 each to Effie Yeaw Nature Center in the names of Tim Fitzer and Cathie LaZier in honor of their long and dedicated service on the SAS Board.
- \$500 to the city of Lodi in support of their Lodi Crane Festival.

SAS JANUARY PROGRAM

For our first general meeting of 2015 our speaker will be David Arsenault, with a presentation on Flammulated Owls. It'll be a hoo, hoo, hoo-hoot.

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.

Sacramento Audubon Society
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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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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

November 13 with Dawn Garcia:
Migration Patterns of Northern Saw-whet Owls
At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm



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SAS ACTION ON
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