



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, September 19
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

Birds of the Sierra Nevada

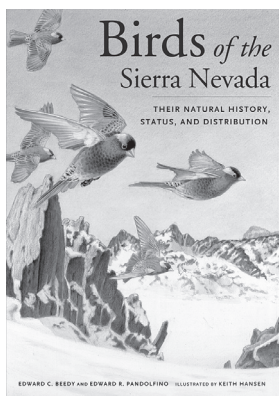
Ted Beedy and Ed Pandolfino

Ted and Ed will take you on a virtual transect of the Sierra Nevada range from the oak savanna in the west, through serene conifer forests of the west side, up into the majestic alpine regions, and down the steep eastern escarpment to the pinyon/juniper woodlands and open steppes of the Great Basin. Along the way we'll see and hear about the stunning diversity of birds that make the Sierra their home. We'll learn about which birds are in decline and which are expanding and increasing. Our speakers will address some mysteries surrounding some of those species and discuss how birders can help to solve them.

Ted Beedy co-authored *Discovering Sierra Birds* and has written numerous technical publications and articles on Sierra birds.

Ed Pandolfino is President of Western Field Ornithologists, a Regional Editor for Northern California for the *North American Birds*, and has published more than two dozen articles on status and distribution of western birds.

Ted and Ed co-authored a new book, *Birds of the Sierra Nevada: Their Natural History, Status, and Distribution*, illustrated by Keith Hansen and published by U.C. Press.



Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, September 28-29, 2013

Mark Cudney will lead this year's shore and pelagic birding weekend, one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting birding trips.

Normally protected from heavy sea swells, yet geographically situated to capture an amazing diversity of ocean-going birds, Monterey Bay and the surrounding area is an exceptional place for birding. Saturday's boat excursion will highlight the trip. Monterey Bay is perhaps one of the most accessible and productive areas to learn about and enjoy pelagic birds and marine mammals. Several species of shearwaters are usually

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip continued on page 7

General Meeting continued

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/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

Sally Walters, Program Chair

2014 SAS CALENDAR

The first ever calendar for the Sacramento Audubon Society is now on sale. The 2014 calendar features birds of the Sacramento Valley with photos taken by SAS photographers Dan Brown, Chris Conard, Ed Harper, Linda Pittman, Dan Tankersley, Keith Wagner and Lon Yarbrough. Conceived as a fundraiser by Jonilynn Okano and Cathie LaZier, it was designed by Sharon Wisecarver. The full-color calendar is now for sale on our website at sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/calendarorder.html, for \$10 plus shipping. It is also available at all our general meetings for \$10. Some local Wild Bird stores and booksellers are also carrying it.



White-tailed Kite
Cover Photo by Dan Brown

The calendar lists many local bird festivals and highlights a different bird each month. Proceeds from the calendar will be used to support the wildlife conservation work and education programs of the SAS. Look for the calendar now and please don't limit yourself to just one—think of friends and family, one in every room, and gifts for the holidays.

Field Trip Findings

Putah Creek Riparian Reserve (8/11)

— Leader Linda Pittman reported: “A total of 13 participants took a leisurely walk from Hopkins Road to Pedrick Road along Putah Creek on a cool August morning. We found some summer species that will be departing soon: Swainson’s Hawk, Ash-Throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, and Lazuli Buntings. Early migrants found included numerous Wilson’s Warblers, a Black-throated Gray Warbler, Warbling Vireo and several Western Tanagers. An agitated Northern Mockingbird alerted us to a perched Cooper’s Hawk eating a bird. Best find of the day was an adult American Mink working the far bank along the creek. We tallied approximately 40 species.”

Stone Lakes NWR and Cosumnes River Preserve (8/10)

— Leader Jane Taylor reported: “Eight of us met at Stone Lakes NWR to start our morning birding, staying briefly to search the only pond with water. On our way out, we encountered a Crawfish scuttling backwards across the sidewalk. On our approach, it reared up and spread its little claws menacingly while some took pictures.

At Cosumnes River Preserve, we walked the interior. Highlights included nearby a Wrenit calling, a Common Yellowthroat, and a Peregrine Falcon spotted by our youngest birder, a pre- or young teen fellow named Sam. We ran into John Trochet’s bird counters, who pointed out migrating Hermit, Black-throated Gray and Wilson’s Warblers. At the Visitors’ Center, we saw Rufous and possibly Allen’s Hummingbirds. We had Forster’s Tern at CRP and also along Desmond Road, our last stop to scope the ducks and shorebirds. Across all three venues, we had a total of 63 species.”

Sacramento Bar (8/4) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Fourteen birders saw 43 species of birds on a cool early August morning. Highlights included Wilson’s Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Hutton’s Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Western Tanager, Black-headed Grosbeak and Ash-throated Flycatcher.”

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley

(8/3) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Fifteen participants enjoyed a very productive day searching for shorebirds at several locations. We tallied 14 species of shorebirds, and about 60 species over all. We started the day at the

Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant and Wetlands. Highlights here included 14 Semipalmated Plovers; many American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts; Long-billed Curlew; many Western and Least Sandpipers; and about 120 Wilson’s Phalaropes. We also had a Loggerhead Shrike and Swainson’s Hawk, and hundreds of swallows, including Tree, Cliff and Barn. Our second stop was the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Highlights here, in addition to several of the species mentioned above, were a Marbled Godwit (unfortunately the bird had a broken leg); a couple of Lesser Yellowlegs in with the Greater; several Cattle Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons in addition to the many Great and Snowy Egrets and a few Great Blue Herons. At one point all the birds flushed, and we searched the sky for the culprit.

Finally, a Peregrine Falcon came swooping in, made several passes at the birds, then came flying toward us and soared overhead giving great views to all. We also searched through the many White-face Ibises for the Glossy Ibis that had been seen here during the week, but distance and heat waves made it too difficult to distinguish any of the subtle differences between the two species. We also had several Yellow-headed Blackbirds at Lot B. We then proceeded down Highway 5 to the Lodi Wastewater Treatment Plant. Highlights here included Caspian and Forster’s Terns side by side (we had Caspians at the other locations, but no Forster’s). The shorebird species here were almost all the same as before, including many Wilson’s Phalaropes swimming around out in the water. But, just as we were getting ready to leave, we spotted a single Red-necked Phalarope. Most of the group at this point decided to call it a day. But 6 of us decided to stop at Cosumnes River Preserve on the way back toward Sacramento. There were a couple of flooded fields along Desmond Rd., and we added American Wigeon (2); Northern Pintail (2); Green-winged Teal (1); American Coot; and a single Snow Goose (!) to our list for the day.”

Radio Road, Redwood Shores, Redwood City (7/28)

— Leader Linda Pittman reported: “It was a beautiful and mild, sunny day for a field trip by the bay for 12 participants. Three Black Skimmers, a Radio Road specialty, were present when we arrived. The skimmers put on a

nice show and we got to see them close up, as well as in flight. Good numbers of American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts and dowitchers allowed close study near the shore. A nice suite of waders was present: Great Blue Heron, Great and Snowy Egrets, Green Heron and Black-crowned Night-heron. We also walked along the nearby slough both from Radio Road and the Nob Hill pond access. We saw a nice variety of shorebirds in the mud flats along the slough: Long-billed Curlew, Western and Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Plover, Marbled Godwits and Willets. A Peregrine Falcon rested on a tower across the slough. Our fun non-bird sighting was a Harbor Seal hauled out right next to the dog park. Seemed like a strange place for a seal! A total of 58 species were tallied for the trip.”

Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca

(7/27) — Scott Hoppe and Dan Brown (subbing for Gary Fregien) led a great group of 12 birders on a 5-mile hike from Carson Pass to Lake Winnemucca, Alpine County. We observed 26 species. Highlights included many Clark’s Nutcrackers at close range, Green-tailed Towhee, Osprey, Cassin’s Finch, many Rufous (Selasphorus) Hummingbirds and of course a spectacular wildflower display.”

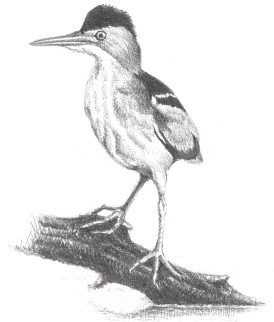
Wright’s Lake (7/21)

— Tim Fitzer and Mark Martucci reported leading about 12 Sacramento birders on a great trip to Wright’s Lake on the edge of Desolation Wilderness. “Highlights were: a Bald Eagle chasing an Osprey, trying to steal his fish. After an aerial dance for several minutes, the Osprey dropped the fish and neither bird got to eat it. A series of 10 photos of the chase are in the album linked below. While not a life bird, I got the most satisfying looks of a Pine Grosbeak; no pictures, but we also saw several families of Mountain Quail with lots of chicks. Other birds seen included White-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Lazuli Bunting, Mountain Chickadee, Hermit Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Western Tanager, Common Merganser, Bufflehead, and more. Lots of wildflowers and even a snake (Sierra Garter snake ???) were seen.

Some photos are at bit.ly/WrightsLk2013. If you are interested in Sierra wildflowers,

Findings continued on page 6

Field Trips



American Bittern
Daniel Kilby

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 Scott Hoppe, 835-8471, shoppe01@surewest.net for trips through September 29. From September 30-October 20 contact the scheduler Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, empid@earthlink.net.

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.

Sunday, September 1, 6:30am to mid-afternoon

Alpine County

Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458
naturestoc@aol.com

The county with the smallest human population in the state has a lot to offer in terms of birds and scenery. We'll visit a mix of habitats, including coniferous forests, lake shores, and sagebrush flats, looking for migrating and lingering songbirds, woodpeckers, raptors and waterbirds. Expect several short walks at mid-elevation. FRS radios could be especially helpful on this trip. Meet in the Raley's parking lot 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. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot.

Saturday, September 7, 7am

North Bay Hotspots

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

The vast area to the north of San Francisco Bay, known as the "North Bay", has many great birding locations, especially during fall migration. Join Scott as he explores some of these hotspots. Possible stops include American Canyon Wetlands, the wetlands along Highway 37, Schollenberger Park and maybe a coastal location, time permitting. This will be a full day of birding, so bring lunch and liquids. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Sunday, September 8, 8am

Sacramento Bar

American River Parkway

Leader: Paul Cordero, email preferred
pkcordero@gmail.com, 454-4061

Paul will lead you on a morning walk along the American River. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe a few early fall surprises. This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, September 14, 7:30am

Discovery Park

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

This park at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a great place for a walk in any season. Join Scott to look for migrants, early 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. 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, drive east on the Garden Highway, turning right into the park at the first traffic light. Once 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. Then 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.

Sunday, September 15, 7am-11am

SRCS District Bufferlands

Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com

The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands are 2,650 acres surrounding the wastewater treatment plant between Sacramento and Elk Grove. They are not typically open to the public. Habitat types include riparian forest, seasonal wetlands, grasslands, wildlife-friendly agricultural lands, and many habitat restoration sites. This is a good time of year to look for migrating songbirds. Be prepared for 2 miles of easy walking. From I-5 south of Sacramento, exit at the Meadowview/Pocket Rd exit (the first exit north of Laguna Blvd, and the first exit south of Florin Rd). Head east on Meadowview, then turn right (south) on Freeport Blvd. In one mile, just before the town of Freeport, turn left on Stonecrest and follow it over the freeway and south to a locked gate.

Saturday, September 21, 7am

Point Reyes for Vagrants

Leader: Mark Cudney, 987-2422
mcudney@aol.com

Join Mark on this annual trip to the coast for rare fall migrants. With fall migration in full swing, who knows what will appear. The geography of Point Reyes Peninsula makes it a magnet for warblers and shorebirds migrating south. Bring lunch and liquids for a full day of birding. Meet Mark at the Park and Ride in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

Saturday, September 21, 10:30am
Family Friendly Nature Walk
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Ancil Hoffman Park
www.sacnaturecenter.net

Everyone is welcome to this joint Effie Yeaw/Sacramento Audubon nature and birding walk. Meet in front of the Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman County Park, at California Avenue and Tarshes Drive. There is a \$5 entrance fee to the park, or you can use your Parkway Pass or Nature Center membership card.

Sunday, September 22, 7am
Fall Migration "Wild Card"
Leaders: Scott Hoppe and Dan Tankersley
Scott, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net
Dan, 662-1290
dtankers@winfirst.com

Join Scott and Dan in pursuit of fall migrants. But this trip has a twist: the destinations will be a mystery until the day of the trip. Scott and Dan will be watching the posts for rarities, and scouting locations. Depending on where the birding has been best recently, the agenda might likely include coastal or Bay Area locations, or something more local. So be prepared for a fun and adventurous full day in the field. Bring a lunch, plenty of water, dress for possible cooler coastal weather and be prepared for a fair amount of easy to moderate hiking. 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 left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Saturday/Sunday, September 28-29
Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

The best land and ocean birding of the year – you don't want to miss this trip. See registration information on the front page of this issue and sign up before it fills up.

Wednesday, October 2, 8am
Bushy Lake
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 and wintering 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. You may want to bring water. This is a good trip for beginners and more experienced birders.

Saturday, October 5, 8am–11am
Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach
American River Parkway
Leaders: Sally Walters and Don Schmoltdt, 739-6465
dschmoltdt25@gmail.com

Join Don and Sally for a morning bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. From Highway 50 take Howe Ave north to Fair Oaks Blvd. Turn left onto Fair Oaks and cross over the American River. Turn right on Carlson Ave, which is the first stop light past the American River bridge. Continue on Carlson Ave to its end, at Glenn Hall Park. Meet on top of the levee. This will be a fairly easy walk, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. We hope to see returning wintering sparrows and waterfowl, and resident birds including wrens, towhees, Yellow-billed Magpies and kinglets. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Sunday, October 6, 8am–noon
Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek
Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141
llandry46@comcast.net

This morning walk will include riparian habitat, ridge trails and a good view of Lake Natoma. Lea will be looking for both woodland birds and waterfowl. There may be some short steep climbs on the trail, and if the rains come it may be muddy, so wear appropriate footwear. Bring liquids and snacks if you wish. Lea usually finds a nice variety of birds on this trip, which is suitable for both beginning and experienced birders. Meet Lea in the parking lot of the Snowberry Creek Equestrian Staging area, (Shadow Glen Stables), about ¼ mile east on Main, from where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale.

Thursday, October 10, 8am
Beal's Point, Folsom Lake
Leader: Margaret Martin, 599-0181
margaret.martin6@me.com

Meet Margaret in the parking lot of the Beal's 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 Beal's 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. We will look for Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Rock

Wren, and enjoy a variety of other birds including bluebirds, woodpeckers, sparrows, hawks, ducks, and grebes. Plan for a mile or two of walking. The trip will end by noon. This is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders. The entrance fee is \$12 per car, or you may use a state (not county) park pass.

Saturday, October 12, 8am
The Best of Both Sides
River Bend Park and
William Pond Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at the main River Bend parking lot near the bike bridge. (Follow the main road into the park; after you cross the bike trail (stop sign) go about ½ mile and turn left at the sign "rafting exit, main picnic area" and continue on the road to the large parking area). For the first half of the walk we'll bird across the bridge into William Pond Park, going downstream along the backwaters of the river and checking out the fishing pond. Then we'll recross the river and go upstream into the oak woodland area. We'll finish before noon, but you may want to bring water and/or snacks. As always, this is a great trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). If you come from the William Pond side look for us on the bridge. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, October 13, 7am SHARP!
Solano Lake/Putah Creek
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

The lake is a good area for wintering ducks including possible Barrow's Goldeneye and Hooded Mergansers. Phainopeplas are possible, and Pileated Woodpeckers have been found in the area several times during the last year. A drive up Putah Creek may turn up wintering passerines as well. There is a \$5 per car fee at the Lake Solano campground. Bring lunch and liquids and meet Mark at the Park and Ride in West Sacramento. From I-80 take the West Capitol Ave exit; turn left at the light; then left again into the lot. Plan on a trip lasting into the afternoon.

Wednesday, October 16, 8am
William Pond Park
Leader: Craig DeMartini, 418-4263
cloudwalk7@aol.com

Meet Craig along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk, for this morning walk looking for returning migrants and resident birds. Along the river mergansers and goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. California Quail, Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows may be found in the park area. Trip will end before noon. 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 an excellent trip for beginners

**Saturday, October 19, 7am SHARP!
Hope Valley – Alpine County
Fall Foliage Birding
Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458
naturestoc@aol.com**

Autumn color explodes in mid-October at Hope Valley. Join Dan to enjoy the fall foliage and to look for resident and specialty birds that include: Sooty (Blue) Grouse, Williamson's Sapsucker, Steller's Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Townsend's Solitaire, and Cassin's Finch. Some of the terrain is hilly, so wear sturdy shoes and dress in layers. A camera is a recommended addition to your pack. Bring water and lunch. FRS radios would also be helpful on this trip. Meet Dan at the north end of the Raley's parking lot 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. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot. We will leave at 7am sharp!

**Sunday, October 20, 1:30pm
Family Friendly Nature Walk
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Ancil Hoffman Park
www.sacnaturecenter.net**

Everyone is welcome to this joint Effie Yeaw/Sacramento Audubon nature and birding walk. Meet in front of the Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman County Park, at California Avenue and Tarshes Drive. There is a \$5 entrance fee to the park, or you can use your Parkway Pass or Nature Center membership card.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIP CHANGES FOR 2013-14

Sacramento Audubon is merging education activities with Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael as a way of maximizing efforts to serve families with children who would like to be out of doors and enjoy nature walks.

Beginning this fall, family friendly trips will be offered on Saturdays at 10:30am for odd months (such as September) and Sundays at 1:30pm for even months (such as October). Fall dates begin on **Saturday, September 21** and continue with **Sunday, October 20, Saturday, November 16,** and **Sunday, December 15.**

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.

HELP WANTED FOR OUTREACH

We need volunteers to work at our table at the many upcoming autumn events. 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. Please volunteer for one of the following events:

Sunday, October 6: Nature Fest at Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Saturday/Sunday, November 2-3: Lodi Crane Festival

Saturday/Sunday, November 9-10: Swan Festival in Yuba City

Saturday/Sunday, November 23/24: Central Valley Birding Symposium in Stockton

If you can work a 3 or 4 hour shift on one of the above days, please contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, or 916-457-6882.

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2013

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Saturday, October 27th and Sunday, December 8th

Time: 8am

Each Trip: Limited to 10 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, email address and the field trip date of your choice, or by calling Cathie at (916) 457-6882 and leaving your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SPEAKERS' BUREAU

May 27 Subhash Chand presented "Common Birds of Sacramento" at the Gardeners of the Grove Club in Elk Grove.

June 12 Jerry Towner presented "Common Birds of Sacramento" at the Presbyterian Church Seniors Group in Sacramento.

June 27 Subhash Chand presented "Cool Things That Birds Do" at the Sun City Garden Club in Lincoln.

July 17 Julie Serences presented "Schoolyard Birds" at the teacher seminar at Soil Born Farms for the USFW Schoolyard Habitat Program.

The Speakers' Bureau will be happy to schedule a presentation on birds for either kids or adult groups. If you know of any school, club or group looking for an interesting presentation, please contact Subhash Chand at subhashc@aol.com.

Findings continued from page 2

you can check out photos from other recent trips at bit.ly/SWF2013.”

Tahoe/Truckee (7/20) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “A small group of 5 birders enjoyed a beautiful day in the Sierra, tallying 52 species. Our principal stops were Page Meadows, Lake Forest, Brockway Summit and Martis Creek Lake. Highlights were many: Common Merganser at Lake Forest, along Tahoe’s north shore; Vaux’s Swift; Red-breasted Sapsucker; Hairy and White-headed Woodpeckers; Dusky Flycatcher; Warbling and Cassin’s Vireos; Red-breasted and White-breasted Nuthatches; several Brown Creepers; Townsend’s Solitaire; Mountain Bluebird; Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow and Yellow-rumped Warblers; Chipping Sparrow and Cassin’s Finch. Another highlight was not a bird but the weather. At our last stop at Martis Creek, a large cloud built up overhead, and just as we were leaving it opened up into quite a downpour. A dramatic end to a great day.”

Farallon Islands Boat Trip (7/14) — Leader Linda Pittman reported: “The seas were kind to us again this year and with high overcast, visibility was good for our trip out to the Farallon Islands on the Salty Lady. This was the first pelagic trip and/or first trip to the Farallon Islands for about half of the participants. It was a shearwater show on the way out: good numbers of Sooty Shearwaters, a surprising number of Pink-footed Shearwaters and one very early Buller’s Shearwater. We also counted 15 Black-footed Albatrosses, which is a high number for this date. Northern Fulmar, Red-necked Phalaropes and a few Red Phalaropes were other early birds seen on this trip. At the islands, our naturalist Susan Sherman picked the continuing Northern Gannet out of thousands of roosting Common Murres, cormorants and Western Gulls on Sugarloaf. Skipper Thomas put the boat in a good position for viewing and photographing the Northern Gannet, a life bird for many on board. At the islands, there was an amazing amount of bird activity everywhere: in the sky, on the water and on the island. Close to the islands, we saw several Tufted Puffins, Rhinoceros and Cassin’s Auklets, and Pigeon Guillemots. We also saw a nice variety of pinnipeds and several Blue Whales and Humpback Whales. Spotters Tim Fitzer, Mark Martucci, Dan Brown, Cliff Hawley, Todd Easterla, and

Fritz Steurer (chummer) did a great job of identifying birds and getting participants on them. About 20 bird species were seen.”

Dragonfly Trip (7/13) — Leader Tim Manolis reported: “Six participants joined me for a few hours in the late morning, checking stretches of Bear Creek north of the intersection of highways 20 and 16 in Colusa County. Habitat quality has declined in recent years at some spots along the creek, but we eventually found a nice stretch and ended up tallying 20 species of dragonflies and damselflies. Highlights included nice, close views of Giant Darners and Western River Cruisers flying along the creek. Other highlights included White-belted Ringtails, Sooty Dancers and Desert Firetails, and observations of a bright, male-like-colored female Flame Skimmer and a female Giant Darner laying eggs. We also saw a number of interesting butterflies, including a Sandhill Skipper.”

Loney Meadow (7/7) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Sixteen participants enjoyed a great, birdy day, tallying about 42 species. Highlights included 6 species of woodpecker, including Pileated; 6 species of warbler, including great views of MacGillivray’s; several Lazuli Bunting; and a Tricolored Blackbird, very rare for this location (near Bowman Lake at about 6,000’). Among non-avian species, was a hand-held Rubber Boa. A very interesting snake that took us a bit to identify.”

Mather Lake (6/30) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Ten veterans braved the looming heat to identify 39 species despite how quiet it seemed to all. There were very few calling birds. There was evidence of breeding American Bitterns, Western Kingbirds, and Bullock’s Orioles. Highlights included Ash-throated Flycatcher, Song Sparrow, Common Yellowthroat, and Black-crowned Night-Heron.”

Flammulated Owl Banding in Plumas County (6/28) — Leader Linda Pittman reported: “Prior to meeting for the main focus of the trip, Flammulated Owls, five of us birded various locations in and around Sierra Valley during the day, finding about 60 species. Highlights included a pair of Black-backed Woodpeckers

gathering insects for a nest hole with young. On Marble Hot Springs Road, we saw three Bald Eagles and a close view of an American Bittern. After dinner, 12 of us met David Arsenault, who is doing a study of Flammulated Owls around Lake Davis. It was too early in the season for banding as originally planned because the Flammulated Owls had not yet hatched young, so we headed into the mountains and visited a few other sites of interest instead. Using a camera on a pole, we saw a flying squirrel nest inside an owl nest box. We then went to a Common Nighthawk nest where we were able to see the female and her two eggs on the ground while numerous Common Nighthawks flew overhead calling and booming. On the way to an occupied Flammulated Owl nest box, we found a surprise highlight for many, a Legless Lizard! At sunset, we gathered around a nest box and swatted mosquitoes while waiting for the female to emerge. Soon the male Flammulated Owl called softly, and then the female peeked out of the nest box and quickly flew out. Using the camera on a pole, we were able to see her three eggs in the nest box. Later in the evening, we heard three other Flammulated Owls calling and a female Long-eared Owl. It was an exciting and informative evening for all participants.”



Savannah Sparrow
Stephen D’Amato

Lynch Canyon, Solano County (6/23) — Maureen Geiger, co-

leader with Ken Poerner, reported: “The day began very cold, windy and overcast but warmed up a bit as the six hardy birders walked to the reservoir and back. Ken led the way as I was sidelined by an ankle injury. Almost 40 species were seen in spite of the blustery weather. Best sightings were of the seven White-tailed Kites which had nested near the beginning of the trail and were out and about prominently, calling, soaring and hovering nearby. The rust-colored necklace and head markings of the five juveniles were very easy to see.”

Sierra Valley/Antelope Valley/Yuba Pass (6/15-16) — Leader Gary Fregien reported: “On Saturday, the Sierra Valley welcomed 19 birders eager to see what the high Sierra nesting season had to offer. With the dry winter and spring, it appears the breeding bird populations are lower than normal for the area. Yellow-head-

Findings continued on page 8

THE DELTA CONSERVANCY

Autumn season means the return of the Sandhill Cranes and other majestic migrates to the Delta wetlands

Along the Pacific Flyway, migratory birds fly into the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as a major destination. Over 200 species of traveling birds stop in the Delta for its wet fields and foggy weather, adding a rewarding recreational feature to the Delta.

Flaunting a red forehead and a seven-foot wingspan, the legendary Sandhill Cranes visit countless but little known parts of the Delta for its marshes, grasslands and flooded fields. Although the Cosumnes River Preserve and Lodi's Isenberg Crane Reserve are best known for witnessing their beauty and dance, the cranes visit all corners of the Delta.

Cranes, swans, egrets, geese and other migrating species create a home in the Delta. The Yolo Bypass, Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Staten Island, Big Break Regional Shoreline, Lower Sherman Island Wildlife Area and the Delta Loop are the must-visit winter birding hot spots.

Part of the 'season of the Sandhill Cranes,' the graceful Tundra Swans come to the flooded fields of the Delta. The Cosumnes River Preserve is a birder's ideal location for observing their abundant flock.

The Delta ecosystem consists of native fish, resident and migratory birds, and other wildlife habitats that carry significant conservation value. The Delta Conservancy leads efforts to protect and restore Delta habitats, working with other government agencies and non-governmental organizations, including The Nature Conservancy and Audubon. Migratory birds and the impact on their habitat have major significance for the Conservancy and its partners. State and federal agencies have devel-

oped several habitat restoration projects to improve fish resources and reduce impact on waterfowl and shorebirds. For more information, visit the Delta Conservancy's website [deltaconservancy.ca.gov].

The Cosumnes River Preserve [cosumnes.org], the Yolo Basin Foundation [yolobasin.org] and Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge [fws.gov] organize various volunteer programs for education or restoration purposes. The Yolo Basin Foundation accepts member donations to guarantee that their programs maintain volunteer opportunities and wildlife conservation supporting the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area.



Tundra Swan
Ed Harper
January feature from
SAS 2014 Calendar

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip continued from page 1

seen, not to mention the possibility of close-ups of a variety of marine mammals. On Sunday we will visit the key land and shoreline habitats on the Monterey peninsula that may yield many migratory and vagrant surprises.

Boat space is limited to 30 participants. The price is still just \$75 per person, if we fill the boat (25 people minimum). You do not need to be a member of Sacramento Audubon to participate. The registration form below should be mailed to Mark Cudney.

Cancellation policy: In order to receive a refund you must cancel 2 weeks before the trip. Contact Mark Cudney, email: mcudney@aol.com, phone: 987-2422 with any questions.

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip Reservation Form

Saturday/Sunday, September 28-29, 2013 Trip price: \$75 per person

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address (with zip) _____

Email (for confirmation) _____

Number of people _____ Total Payment \$ _____

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

Mark Cudney, 102 Feather Falls Circle, Folsom, CA 95630

Phone: (916) 987-2422 Email: mcudney@aol.com



Birding and Nature Events

NINTH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

Registration is now open for the Monterey Bay Birding Festival, being held September 12-15, 2013. The Bay and its environs are home to one of the most spectacular birding and wildlife venues in North America. From soaring Golden Eagles to effortlessly gliding California Condors, cheeky Bushtits to gorgeous Townsend's Warblers, scampering Snowy Plovers to wheeling flocks of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters, few places can match the diversity of habitats in and around Monterey Bay.

Featured presentations will include keynote speaker, Sophie Webb—ornithologist, artist, and author; Bob Power, with a "Field Identification of Raptors" presentation and Cat Burns speaking about the Western Snowy Plover Recovery program. All field trips for the festival, including pelagic and kayak tours are lead by top quality, friendly leaders. Registration for each birding event is offered a la carte, so you can mix and match outings according to personal interests. More information and registration can be found at montereybaybirding.org

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

On November 21-24, 2013, the Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 17th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium at the Stockton Hilton Hotel, in Stockton. Please come and help us kick off this year's CVBS! Come meet the CVBS board and staff members! Reconnect with old friends and meet new ones! Take advantage of the delicious hors d'oeuvres buffet and No Host Bar on Thursday night.

This year the Thursday night keynote is double-Ed, with speakers Ed and Ed (Harper and Pandolfino) discussing trends in bird populations in the Central Valley. Friday night's keynote program is by Kimball Garrett on "Avian Invaders in California." Few areas of North America are as prone to the release and establishment of non-native bird species as California. Whether introduced purposefully or by accident, these avian immigrants include some of our most familiar bird species (think House Sparrow, European Starling and Rock Pigeon), a whole suite of additional species whose status is ever-changing, and a seemingly never-ending parade of escapees that send us running for our foreign field guides when we encounter them.

Don't miss the Saturday night keynote program "Birds of the Sierra Nevada" with Ted Beedy, Ed Pandolfino, and Keith Hansen! Ted, Ed, and Keith will take you on a virtual transect of the range from the oak savanna in the west, through serene conifer forests of the west side, up into the majestic alpine regions, and down the steep eastern escarpment to the pinyon/juniper woodlands and open steppes of the Great Basin. See and hear the stunning diversity of birds that make the Sierra their home and learn which birds are in decline and which are expanding and increasing.

Also on Saturday, Susan Schneider will present a fascinating program "No Birdbrains Here", exploring bird learning and intelligence, from everyday foraging, to learning through observing, to tool use. Dawn Garcia will share data about the secretive Northern Saw-Whet Owls in her program, "Migration Patterns of Northern Saw-Whet Owls near Forest Ranch, CA". Join Andy Engilis for an up close look at Central Valley birds at his specimen workshop.

Hands on events include Bob Steele's workshop for photographers, bird sketching with artist Keith Hansen, a carving seminar for beginners with Jim Burcio, and Beginning Birding with Jim Gain. Don't miss "Seeing Rare Birds in California: Why our state list is the largest in the US at 652 species and you can help find more" by Joe Morlan and a Flycatcher ID Workshop with Jon Dunn.

Our field trips always turn up exciting birds. Add in the always entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts for yourself or others at the Birder's Market and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time! There's something for everyone interested in birds. Come and join us to bird, learn, and just have fun! To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips or register, check out our symposium website at: www.2013cvbs.org/

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Lyla Burnor, Jeanne Conry, Suzanne Covington, Denise Gonzales, Georganna Griffin, Peggy Jenkins, Rosemary Mayfield, Kevin McRae, Patricia Morehead, Beverly Spencer, Robin Thompson and Salli Warinner, to the **General Fund**.

Alice Bauman, Lyla Burnor, Don Cable, Craig DeMartini, Winifred Detwiler, Norman Eade, Ruth Gay, Maureen Geiger, Denise Gonzales, Georganna Griffin, Julie Hass, Yoshino Hatanaka, Timothy Jackson, Peggy Kraus-Kennedy, Linday Melching, Mary Beth Metcalf, Lori Miyasato, Arlene Mose, Susan Oie, William Patterson, Sarah Phelan, Valerie Phillips, June Ritzman, Mike Savino, Victoria Stoffers, Robin Thompson and Christie Vallance, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

The Sun City Lincoln Hills Garden Group made a donation to Sacramento Audubon to be used for the **Effie Yeaw Nature Center Kid's Program**, in appreciation of the "Cool Things Birds Do" program given by Subhash Chand.

Dan and Jan Tankersley made a donation to the **Conservation and Education Fund** in memory of Ed Greaves.

Findings continued from page 6

ed Blackbird, Willet, Sandhill Crane, White-faced Ibis and other shorebird and waterfowl numbers were much lower than last year. For many of these species, and others, it appears that nesting and fledging may have taken place earlier than usual.

At Yuba Pass on Sunday, the group of 13 birders was able to see nesting Brown Creeper and White-headed Woodpecker. This year we did not find American Dipper. We did, however, find the two sought-after Empidonax species, Dusky and Hammond's Flycatcher. Western Wood Pewees were numerous, and one Olive-sided Flycatcher was heard, and then seen. The seldom seen Mountain Quail had only a vocal presence. The highlight of the day was quite a long look at a Northern Goshawk, although it was high overhead. Still, some of the group's photographers got some nice pictures. The group tallied 101 species for the two-day trip."

Pete Hayes

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Clifford Anderson | Jill McConnen |
| Diane Arellano | Patricia McVicar |
| Doris Brown | Arlene Mose |
| Sandra Bryant | William D Patterson |
| Ann Burris | Jill Root |
| Don Cable | Joyce Strand |
| Stephanie Cyr | Debra Weston- Leiber |
| Robert L Garcia | Howard Whitaker |
| Pam Jenkins | Liz Williamson |

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAMS

October 17 Ron LeValley
May 15, 2014 Andrew Engilis

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on September 24, at 7pm, at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

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

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry46@comcast.net

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.

Observations continued from page 10

lar breeders in the eastern foothills of Sacramento County, as well as nearby portions of San Joaquin County near Staten Island and at the YBWA. **Brown Creepers** were once again confirmed nesting along Putah Creek to the west of Winters. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** at the Humbug/Willow Creek Parkway in Folsom on 7/9 was found where one was seen and heard earlier this spring. Several **Grasshopper Sparrows** were noted on territories in the Putah Creek Sinks (the southern portion of the Yolo Bypass). A lingering **White-crowned Sparrow** was found along the Garden Hwy in Natomas on the very late date of 6/22, and an impressive 30 **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were at Sweetwater Creek and Folsom Lake on 7/17.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.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 eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Steve Abbott, Andy Engilis, Ron Cole, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Cory Gregory, Kevin Guse, Steve Hampton, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Mark Martucci, Linda Melching, Ed Pandolfino, Michael Perrone, Linda Pittman, William Rockey, Jim Rowoth, Sonia Santa Anna, John Sterling, Michael Strom, Kirk Swenson, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, and Daniel Welsh.

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

Chris Conard

Seasonal Observations

June 1 to July 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

This is one of the most important periods for our local nesting birds, but, as a rule, it is the slowest time of year for birding in the Sacramento Area. Often a songbird rarity or two will spice things up, like the Putah Creek **Gray Catbird** (see below), and by mid-July shorebird migration is in full swing. An impressive list of summering waterfowl was noted at the Davis Wetlands on 7/12, including **Greater White-fronted Goose, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal**, and **Canvasback**. A **Snow Goose** spent the summer in the wetlands along Desmond Rd at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) and a female **Hooded Merganser** with three fully grown young was found at the Valensin portion of CRP on 6/16. An adult **Glossy Ibis** was seen by many observers at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) on 7/28-30. A **Prairie Falcon** was reported near Esparto on 6/10, not far from where the species has been documented nesting in the Capay Valley.

Interesting shorebird reports included an **American Golden-Plover** at YBWA on 7/21, very rare for the Central Valley, a **Snowy Plover** at CRP on 7/18-20, a **Solitary Sandpiper** at Davis WTP on 7/22, a **Willet** at the Sacramento Reg. WTP on 7/29, a high of 14 **Marbled Godwits** at Davis WTP on 7/17, a **Marbled Godwit** at CRP on 7/14, where they are much rarer

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than in Yolo County, and a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at Davis Wetlands on 7/25. A first-cycle **Heermann's Gull**, extremely

rare for the Central Valley, was found at the Davis WTP on 7/21-22. Once again **Least Terns** visited the Sacramento Reg. WTP, with four adults on 6/28 and one continuing on 6/29. For the first time in six years, they did not attempt to nest.

An adult male **Costa's Hummingbird** was seen by many from 6/23-7/25 in residential Natomas. Visitors were graciously hosted by Kevin Guse as the bird visited his yard and hummingbird feeders. A **Hairy Woodpecker** on 7/16 at Sailor Bar, American River Parkway, was an excellent find for Sacramento County. Songbird migration trickled into June, including a **Warbling Vireo** in West Sacramento on 6/7. A **Gray Catbird** was an excellent find along Putah Creek east of Pedrick Rd on 6/9 and is perhaps a first for Solano County. **Horned Larks** were confirmed nesting for the first time at Lower CRP, with newly fledged young found at the Twin Cities Unit on 6/6. They are regu-

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

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Observations continued on page 9