

# The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



VOLUME 70 • NO. 3

MARCH 2018

## General Meeting

**Thursday, March 15, 2018**

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center**

**Assembly Room, 7pm**

**Come early to wander the grounds and bird or visit.**

**Birding Spots along I-5 North**

Harry Fuller

This presentation will describe some of the best birding spots along I-5 north of Redding. All locations are easily reached from a freeway interchange. We will pay particular attention to the high elevation section of freeway north of Dunsmuir where Mountain Chickadee and Bluebird, Green-tailed Towhee and Calliope



Great Gray Owl

Peter J. Thiemann

Hummingbird become accessible to the traveling birder. We will particularly focus on the Great Gray Owl which is found in the southern Cascades of Oregon and there may be more of this elusive species in one county than in all of California where the owl is endangered. Harry Fuller has been leading birding trips along the Pacific Coast for over twenty years. He has lived in San Francisco, southern Oregon and now near Portland, Oregon. He has written two birding books: *Freeway Birding, San Francisco to Seattle*, on all the birding stops along I-5 from Sacramento to Seattle, and *Great Gray Owls of California, Oregon and Washington* with over 100 photos by his co-author. There is also another book, *San Francisco's Natural History: Sand Dunes to Streetcars*, just out this month. He regularly guides trips for Golden Gate Audubon, Klamath Bird Observatory and Partnership for International Birding. His blog can be found at: [atowhee.wordpress.com](http://atowhee.wordpress.com).

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## BOBELAINE IS OPEN AGAIN! HEAD ON OUT

After many months of levee repairs, heavy equipment, and road blockage the Bobelaine Bird Sanctuary is finally open. Thank you all for your patience. A particular thanks should go to all the volunteers from SAS who worked to restore Bobelaine. The Sacramento Audubon Society was an active partner to protect Sutter County from future floods and preserve the Sanctuary for years to come.

It has not been without a cost and you are encouraged to help fund the restoration if possible. To donate to Bobelaine please go to: [www.sacramento-audubon.org/payments.html](http://www.sacramento-audubon.org/payments.html)

## BIRD AND BREAKFAST EVENTS AT EFFIE YEAW MARCH 17 and 24

**Traditional Event – Saturday, March 17 at 8am**

**Family-Friendly Event – Saturday, March 24 at 8am**

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and Sacramento Audubon are once again teaming up to offer two special weekend morning birding trips coupled with wonderful breakfast fare.

This event, held at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park in Carmichael, starts with bird walks guided by some of our best local birders. For weeks in advance, these guides scout the Nature Study Area so they will be able to point out nests and local rarities. After the walk, join fellow birders for wonderful food and hot coffee to help raise money for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. No extensive birding experience is necessary—this event caters to all levels.

On March 17 the bird walk will be approximately 90 minutes long, followed by the traditional casserole breakfast buffet provided by some of the best cooks among ARNHA Board members and Nature Center volunteers. Participants can also bid for attractive baskets and experiences in the silent auction.

On March 24 guests can choose to join either a family bird walk, a one hour walk appropriate for children 6 and older, or a longer, 90-minute adult bird walk open to those ages 12 and above. This event features a hot pancake breakfast, cooked and served by the Carmichael Kiwanis Club.

Bird and Breakfast is sponsored by Mendocino-based Out of This World Optics, which will be on-site Saturday, March 17 showcasing a wide range of binoculars and spotting scopes for sale. They feature over 25 styles of binoculars and scopes, made especially for birding, to compare and test. This event is the perfect time to shop for new birding equipment!

Bird and Breakfast often sells out. Reservations are required. Call 916-489-4918 for information, questions and to make reservations, or register online at [sacnaturecenter.net/events/bird-breakfast-weekend/](http://sacnaturecenter.net/events/bird-breakfast-weekend/).

# Field Trip Findings

**Wintering Raptors in the Central Valley (2/10)** — Leader Craig Swolgaard reported: “A large group of birders gathered for an excellent day of raptor viewing. A total of 12 raptor species were seen, including a dark morph Ferruginous Hawk, a Rough-legged Hawk, Prairie Falcón, Great Horned Owl, and both Bald and Golden Eagles. The weather was exceptionally clear and warm for mid-February, enabling us to see other species like Tundra Swan, Canvasback, Wood Duck, Phainopepla, Loggerhead Shrike, and Wilson’s Snipe.”

**Western Yolo County (2/8)** — Leaders Tim Fitzer and Ann Burris reported: “We birded a cemetery, park and some rural roads not often driven by the public. Some of the highlights were: Curved-billed Thrasher, a life bird for many on the trip, Ferruginous Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Say’s Phoebe, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and Barn Owls. Three people from Marin and Napa Counties and two from Placerville joined ten of us from the Sacramento area. Fun day with fun people.”

**Mather Lake (2/4)** — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Despite a slight chill and an overcast sky, 11 birders were able to cover the upper and lower portions of the lake because construction was complete. 55 species were identified with a Lesser Scaup, 3 Buffleheads, a Ruddy Duck, a Herring Gull, a Great Horned Owl on a nest, a Say’s Phoebe, an Orange-crowned Warbler, and 2 Common Ravens worthy of note.”

**Bobelaine Sanctuary (2/3)** — Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Ken Poerner reported: “Great to be back in Bobelaine on a spring-like day after months of closure at the Preserve due to flooding and levee reconstruction. More than 40 species were seen by 18 birders on a 2.5 mile hike to the Feather River. Highlights included a Bald Eagle, amazing numbers of Ruby-crowned Kinglets, at least 3 Golden-crowned Kinglets, an Orange-crowned Warbler and a huge flock of Snow Geese flying over the newly reconstructed parking lot.”

**Auburn Canyon Owling, Family Trip (2/3)** — Wendy Money, co-leader with Sandra Steurer, reported: “Seven children/teens/young adults and fourteen young-at-hearts explored a piece of the Auburn Canyon rim on a balmy early

spring evening. We observed the wildlife changes through dusk into the dark. From diurnal birds getting in their last few morsels of food, to Little Brown Bats over our trail, to a few vocalizations from a Great Horned Owl and several Western Screech-Owls, and Pacific Chorus Frogs living up to their name, we experienced the rhythm of the season. Our hopes for four species of owls never materialized, but we know we were in their presence and they were doing what they needed to do to survive that night. 6 species of birds heard/seen. Hoo will show up next time?”

**Sailor Bar (2/2)** — Leader Ed Harper, substituting for Mark Sawyer reported: “It was a beautiful day for birding with conditions being nearly ideal. Nine of us were just starting out when we were joined by Mark Martucci who was birding in the area. Mark graciously added his skills and expertise to the field trip along with keeping the eBird list. We succeeded in finding one of our chief target species, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and everyone was able to enjoy extended views of this lovely sparrow through the spotting scope. Barrow’s Goldeneyes gave a fine performance and we were able to compare and discuss female Barrow’s with nearby female Common Goldeneyes. Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were another species that we enjoyed. We were able to leisurely view several species of gulls and go over key field marks. Swimming in the American River just downstream from the Nimbus Fish Hatchery, was an unexpected bonus; a California Sea Lion! Altogether some 60 species of birds filled out the trip, many viewed through the scope. Signs of Spring were everywhere with butterflies and spring flowers adding to a very pleasant morning in the field.”

**Robinson Road, Road 113 (1/31)** — Leader Bill Bianco reported: “Eight birders had a spring like day for January, and saw forty species. Standouts for the day were Burrowing Owls, also a pair of Great Horned Owls perched together, Tri-colored Blackbirds and Loggerhead Shrikes. We missed seeing Mountain Plovers and Horned Larks. Group had a good ID discussion concerning a pair of swans at Jepson Prairie.”

**Sandhill Crane Trips (1/27 and 1/28)** — Leader Mike Savino reported: “These were the last crane viewing trips of the

year and perhaps for that reason they were well attended. Both days about 21 people joined Sean Wirth and Mike Savino in enjoying wonderful sunsets and the appearance of hundreds (scores?) of cranes flying in to roost for the night. We also saw thousands of geese. As the sky darkened and more cranes arrived many of the geese flocks on the ground took off with thunderous sounds and flew over us; among those we could see well there were mostly Snow Geese (probably with Ross’s Geese among them), Greater White-fronts, Aleutians, and Canadas. Small numbers of Tundra Swans, ducks and shore birds were also present, but the geese almost stole the show. As usual, having spotting scopes available to our guests resulted in many ‘wow’s and smiling faces. It was a glorious end to the ‘crane season’.”

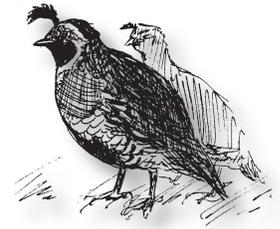
**Yolo/Solano Big Day (1/28)** — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Beautiful weather greeted 12 participants as we set out to find as many species as possible. We tallied 106 species for the day, a bit on the low side for this trip, but still a respectable count. Highlights included at least 4 Burrowing Owls at our first stop on Road 104 just off of Mace Blvd in Davis, a single Chestnut-backed Chickadee at Lake Solano County Park, a fairly rare bird for this location, 2 Hutton’s Vireos in the same area as the Chickadee, a heard-only Red-breasted Nuthatch and the continuing Swamp Sparrow at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (although, unfortunately, this bird was glimpsed by only a few of us). Yellow-headed Blackbirds were also seen at the Bypass. As we were losing our light, we discovered a pair of Blue-winged Teal a short distance off Lot C.”

**Bushy Lake (1/27)** — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “Hawks everywhere, on the towers and in the trees. A Cooper’s Hawk entertained the group by diving into dried star thistle and back up. It did this several times and did not come with any prey. Also in the same area a Peregrine Falcon was watching the activity. Redtail Hawks were abundant. As we moved to the upper end of Bushy Lake we saw a large number of Wood Ducks. All told we had 46 Species. 13 people enjoyed the morning.”

**Lincoln WWTP and Placer County Roads (1/25)** — Leader Sonja Sorbo reported:

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# Field Trips



California Quail  
Kirsten Munson

## 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, for trips through February 11, contact the scheduler Richard Barbieri, [offleash56@yahoo.com](mailto:offleash56@yahoo.com), 916-761-1124. For trips from March 12 through April 11, contact the scheduler Carla Barbaro, 916-717-8808, [cbarbaro@comcast.net](mailto:cbarbaro@comcast.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. 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.

**NOTE: Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place.**

### Saturday, March 3, 8am Bushy Lake

**Leader: Darrell Mohr, 916-225-3999**  
[mohrdd@gmail.com](mailto: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. He'll be looking for a variety of resident and wintering species. With most leaves fallen from the trees, there will be better views of the lake, and Wood Ducks are a good possibility. 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.

### Sunday, March 4, 6:30am Arrowhead Marsh and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline

**Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 916-835-8471**  
[shoppe01@surewest.net](mailto:shoppe01@surewest.net)  
**Mark Martucci, 916-833-6722**  
[matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com)

Arrowhead Marsh and MLK, Jr. Regional Shoreline, encompassing much of San Leandro Bay, is an extremely productive birding area. It is well known for Ridgway's Rails, lots of wintering ducks and hundreds of shorebirds during the falling tides. It has also produced rarities and hard to find species such as Nelson's (formerly Sharp-tailed) and Swamp Sparrows. We will likely spend most of the day there. However, time permitting, we may visit other nearby locations. Bring lunch and liquids, and dress for possible cold early morning temps. Meet Scott and Mark 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.

### Tuesday, March 6, 8am Lake Solano/Putah Creek

**Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207**  
[spskua2@comcast.net](mailto:spskua2@comcast.net)  
**Ann Burri, 916-947-7573**  
[burris.nellieann@gmail.com](mailto:burris.nellieann@gmail.com)

This is a great area to find a variety of woodpeckers, Phainopepla, Brown Creeper, Barrow's Goldeneye and many other late wintering birds. Meet Tim and Ann 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 exit 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, which will end in the late afternoon, so you may want to bring lunch and water.

### Saturday, March 10, 7am till noon Michigan Bar and vicinity

**Leader: Chris Conard, 916-203-1610**  
[conardc@gmail.com](mailto:conardc@gmail.com)

We will focus on Michigan Bar Road and may visit portions of Latrobe and Meiss Rds, though access will be partially dependent on road conditions and recent weather. Vast areas of open grassland and blue oak woodland interspersed with rocky outcrops and the Cosumnes River provide habitat for winter raptors, resident and winter songbirds, and perhaps a surprise or two. We'll have a mix of car birding (bring FRS radios if you have them) and short to moderate walks. Meet at the Park and Ride on Hwy 16 (Jackson Hwy) just west of Sunrise Blvd and the Folsom South Canal (7 miles east of Watt Ave). Steady rain will cancel the trip.

### Sunday, March 11, 7:30am Mather Lake

**Leader: Wayne Blunk, 916-876-0457**  
[Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com](mailto:Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com)

Mather Lake can be a hotspot for birding, with a variety of possibilities. Join Wayne to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron 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 and more experienced birders.

### Tuesday, March 13, 8am Bucks Creek Trail/Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills

**Leader: Maureen Geiger**  
**916-281-6652**  
[mkgeiger@comcast.net](mailto:mkgeiger@comcast.net)

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk through this riparian habitat and look for resident and migrating species such as woodpeckers, nuthatches, towhees, wrens, bluebirds, warblers, marsh birds and sparrows. In this varied habitat, there is always the possibility of unusual finds, and river otters are often seen. Meet at the southeast corner of the intersection of Silva Valley Parkway and Serrano Parkway. To reach this spot, exit Hwy 50 at Exit 31, Silva Valley Parkway, and turn left. Follow the Parkway about a mile to the first stop

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light, make a U-turn and immediately park along the Parkway.

**Saturday, March 17, 8am**  
**Family Friendly Trip**  
**North Natomas Regional Park**  
**Leader: Ben Graber, 916-844-8682**  
**Bgraber984@gmail.com**

Join Ben for a leisurely morning walk around the North Natomas Regional Park. We can expect to see a wide variety of grassland species including Meadowlarks, Ring-necked Pheasants, and Savannah Sparrows, along with herons, egrets, and waterfowl. Various wintering species of raptors, including falcons, are also possibilities. This trip will include approximately 2 to 3 miles of walking over flat terrain, and bringing liquids is recommended. Meet Ben at the parking lot on the North side of New Market Drive across from Inderkum High School. New Market Drive is off Truxel Road approximately a mile north of Interstate 80. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

**Sunday, March 18, 8am**  
**Ancil Hoffman Park**  
**Leader: Mark Martucci, 916-833-6722**  
**matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Mark will be looking for spring migrants, as well as returning nesting birds, and maybe something unexpected will turn up. This will be a 2 to 4 hour walk. A SAC County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. Meet Mark at the main parking lot across from the golf course. From California Ave in Fair Oaks take the Tarshes Drive entrance and follow it to the golf course area parking lot.

**Sunday, March 18**  
**Beginning Birding Field Trip for Adults**  
**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 common birds in a vari-

ety of habitats, with an emphasis on looking and listening. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net), 916-502-2699.

**Wednesday, March 21**  
**Leaving at 7:30am**  
**Gray Lodge SWR**  
**Leader: Bill Bianco, 916-889-4849**  
**biancowm@yahoo.com**

Join Bill to check out this State Wildlife Refuge. Bill will take the vehicle driving route and also walk one of the trails. Bring snacks and water, and meet Bill at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd before the 7:30 departure time. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd; go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Road, 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. Note that there is a \$4.32 per person charge at the refuge.

**Saturday, March 24, 7:30am**  
**Sutter's Landing Park**  
**Leader: Lily Douglas, 916-524-9340**  
**ldouglas14@gmail.com**

Join Lily at her neighborhood patch along the American River Parkway. Some winter birds will still be lingering, local breeders will be singing, and we may encounter some early spring arrivals, such as Swainson's Hawk, Western Kingbird, and a diversity of swallows.

Meet in the parking lot by the skate park. We'll walk up to 2 miles, and the lower trail may be

muddy depending on conditions, so wear appropriate footwear. There is no charge to park at this location on the Parkway. From Business 80 heading east (towards Cal-Expo), exit on H Street, continue down to E St and turn left, and then right on 28th Street which dead ends at the Park. Heading west on Business 80, take the E Street exit; turn

right onto E Street, then right again onto 28th and proceed to the Park.

**Sunday, March 25, 8am**  
**Teal Bend**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri**  
**916-761-1124, [offleash56@yahoo.com](mailto:offleash56@yahoo.com)**

Join Richard to explore the rich habitat at Teal Bend Golf Course. Meet at the Raley's Shopping Center on Arena Blvd at 8am. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Road, 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.

**Friday, March 30, 8am**  
**Mather Lake**  
**Leader: Mark Sawyer, 916-968-1661**  
**Marksawyer3383@yahoo.com**

Mather Lake is a hotspot birding location and Mark will be looking for a nice variety of resident birds. Targeted birds will be Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey and Green Heron. Meet 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.

**Saturday March 31, 7:30am**  
**Lake Natoma-East Side**  
**Leader: Craig Swolgaard**  
**530-334-3023, [cswol@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cswol@sbcglobal.net)**

Lake Natoma, a reservoir created on the American River, is located in Sacramento County near the town of Folsom. Though not as popular as some locations downstream, it still hosts a good representation of valley and foothill birds. In the twenty-five years Craig has birded along its shores, he's recorded a list of about 140 birds. It is a good area to look for Phainopepla, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, grebe and loon species, nesting Bald Eagle, and many migrating species. Hutton's Vireo can be found in the oak woodland as well as



*Meadowlark*  
Stephen D'Amato

Cooper's Hawk. Hairy Woodpecker has been found during the breeding season. This is a good trip for beginners. We will meet at Young Wo Circle, near the access to the bike trail at the bottom of the hill, at 7:30am Sharp. Young Wo Circle is in Folsom, off Forrest Street, accessed from Folsom Blvd. We will be walking on level footpaths and along the bike trail, covering about a two-mile length of the lake. The trip should conclude before noon, but bringing water and a snack might be a good idea.

**Sunday, April 1, 8am**

**Sacramento Bar**

**Leader: Darrell Mohr, 916-225-3999  
mohrdd@gmail.com**

On this morning walk along the American River, you will see, and hear, a nice variety of resident birds and maybe a few early spring migrants. Possibilities include Phainopepla and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. 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 then take the first left onto Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$8 (holiday charge) entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Wednesday, April 4, 8:45am**

**Ancil Hoffman Park**

**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 916-502-2699  
empid@earthlink.net**

Meet at the main picnic area parking lot across from the golf course. From California Ave in Fair Oaks take the Tarshes Drive entrance and follow it to the end. We'll check out the river trails upstream and downstream looking for resident and migrating birds. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. This is a good trip for beginners.

**Saturday, April 7, 7am**

**Point Reyes National Seashore**

**Leader: John York, 916-409-9276  
Johnyork157@yahoo.com**

John plans to bird the usual places at Point Reyes, including the Fish Docks, Lighthouse and Abbott's Lagoon if the weather is good. If it's too foggy at the

coastal spots, he'll bird the onshore locations. Meet John at 7am 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. Bring fluids and dress for changeable weather. John is planning to stop for lunch in Inverness.

**Sunday, April 8, 7am — noon**

**Pine Hill Preserve Birding**

**Leader: Chris Conard**

**Pre-registration is required through**

**Pine Hill Preserve**

**Contact: Graciela Hinshaw**

**ghinshaw@blm.gov**

**www.pinehillpreserve.org**

The preserve was established to protect rare native plants in El Dorado County that occur only on the specialized soils of the Pine Hill area. It stretches from Folsom Lake in the north to Hwy 50 in the south and contains more than 4,000 acres. We plan to visit Kanaka Valley and the adjacent Salmon Falls area, which has a mix of oak woodland and chaparral. We'll look for California Thrashers, Sage Sparrows, migrating warblers, and, on a clear day, great views of the Sierra and the surrounding geography. Be prepared for three miles of moderate walking.

**Monday, April 9, 8am**

**Falcon Crest, El Dorado Hills**

**Leader: Craig DeMartini**

**916-599-3300**

**cloudwalk7@icloud.com**

We will be scouting the oak woodlands and floodplains of Folsom Lake for falcons, eagles and osprey as well as passerines, woodpeckers and water birds. Early nest builders should be active; last year a Bald Eagle nest was found. Meet at the Falcon Crest turnout parking lot, off Salmon Falls road. From Sacramento head east on Highway 50 towards Placerville. Take the El Dorado Hills Blvd, exit #30B, and go north on El Dorado Hills Blvd for approximately 4 miles to Green Valley Road. Go straight across Green Valley Road where El Dorado Hills Blvd becomes Salmon Falls Road. Continue on Salmon Falls

Road for 3 miles to a large dirt parking lot on the left with a large wooden sign that reads "Falcon Crest". Use caution when crossing oncoming traffic to enter the parking lot. This trip may last into early afternoon; you may want to bring snacks and water. There are no bathrooms.

## **BUFFERLANDS ROOKERY TOUR**

**DATE: March 17, 9am-Noon**

Come and experience an up-close view of a nesting colony of herons, egrets and double-crested cormorants. These beautiful birds nest in communal groups, high in the riparian forest. This area has more than 150 nests.

The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at 916-875-9174 or jonesro@sacsewer.com to confirm your reservation and meeting location. Please note, we can only take reservations the week preceding the event.

No Pets, Please! For all Bufferlands events, we respectfully request that you please leave your dogs and other pets at home.

## **SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY**

### **FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS**

**Location:** William Pond Park, American River Parkway

**Dates:** Sundays, March 18, and  
April 15, 2018

\*Trips limited to 10 adult participants, and require a minimum of 3 participants: Registration required.

These outings are geared toward people who aren't yet entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders. It is not necessary to be an Audubon member to participate. The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on looking and listening. This walk, covering about a mile and a half, will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. You can sign up for just one session, or for more than one.

Register via email to Cathie at [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net), (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 502-2699, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

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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](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org) and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Sacramento Audubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

*Sally Walters Schmoldt*

## OPEN CALL FOR A SAS WEBSITE MANAGER

Sacramento Audubon is looking for a website manager with website experience. This is a volunteer position. If you have any interest or questions please contact Sally Walters at [president@sacramentoaudubon.org](mailto:president@sacramentoaudubon.org).

## LANDS PASS UPDATE

As many of you have heard, Cal Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has started charging day use fees for use of many of their properties which were not previously covered under their Lands Pass Program dating back to 1988. The program aims to broaden funding for conservation and habitat improvements. They are daily, per person fees for persons over 16 years old visiting many state managed ecological reserves and wildlife areas which include areas frequented by Sac Audubon members such as the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, Gray Lodge, Woodbridge Ecological Reserve and the Hope Valley Wildlife Area. (Of these four, Yolo Bypass is the only one removed from the list temporarily.) One can buy a permit for a specific day for \$4.32 or buy an annual pass at \$25.10 or purchase a fishing or hunting license which are accepted as a Lands Pass. At the same time CDFW is no longer accepting cash payments for day use so one is forced to pay over the internet or go to one of their offices or go to a vendor who sells fishing and hunting licenses (they now sell Lands Passes also).

To find more information about the areas covered and to find out how to buy a Lands Pass please visit these sites: [www.wildlife.ca.gov/licensing/lands-pass](http://www.wildlife.ca.gov/licensing/lands-pass) and [cdfgnews.wordpress.com/2018/02/01/cdfw-postpones-lands-pass-implementation-on-specific-properties/](http://cdfgnews.wordpress.com/2018/02/01/cdfw-postpones-lands-pass-implementation-on-specific-properties/) You may also contact the revenue branch via email at [LRB@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:LRB@wildlife.ca.gov) or by phone at 916-928-5805 or the CDFW Lands Program, Wildlife Branch at 916-445-3418.

*Findings* continued from page 2

"Despite an ominous dark sky threatening rain, we ventured over to the Lincoln WTP and were rewarded with over 60 bird species including a rich variety of ducks on the northeast ponds. Hundreds of American Wigeon were present, with a Eurasian Wigeon trying to blend into the crowd. The other rarity present was a Redhead paddling amongst several dozen Canvasbacks. Present in smaller numbers were Bufflehead, Ring-necked Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, Green-winged Teal, and Mallards. At one point, our attention was diverted from the ducks by three Red-tailed Hawks who began fighting over a fresh kill. Elsewhere on the grounds, we noted a Loggerhead Shrike, Say's Phoebe, Horned Larks, White-tailed Kite, and Virginia Rail. Numerous White- and Golden-crowned Sparrows, pipits, and Savannah Sparrows flushed as we drove by. Before ending our morning, we did a quick drive down Moore road and were awed by thousands of Snow and Greater White-fronted Geese rising up from nearby fields and flying overhead. What a spectacle!!"

**Colusa NWR (1/23)** — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: "Our group of 8 experienced an enjoyable time on the viewing platform picking through the various ducks, geese and other wetland families present including shorebirds, egrets, marsh wrens, blackbirds and various other passerines. The auto tour provided the group good looks at White-faced Ibis, Red-shouldered Hawk, Long-billed Curlew and a fairly close Peregrine Falcon perched in a tree immediately across the canal from the tour route. Sharp eyes in the trailing vehicle spotted our only Great Horned Owl of the day. In all, we had 57 species at this fine National Wildlife Refuge on a beautiful winter day."

**Lincoln Grasslands/West Placer Co (1/21)** — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "It was a great group of 7 birders who set out on this incredible day. We tallied 105 species for the day, which may be a record for the many years myself and others have been leading trips to this area. Highlights included Lewis's Woodpecker, White-throated Sparrow (a first for this trip), Purple Finch and Pine Siskin. The area is known for raptors, and they did not disappoint. We had 11 species of diurnal raptors, including



*Short-eared Owl*  
Stephen D'Amato

2 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 2 Ferruginous Hawks, 4 Bald Eagles, 2 Merlin and 2 Prairie Falcons. We also had 2 Barn Owls, Short-eared Owl, Great Horned Owl and Burrowing Owl. White-face Ibis numbered in the hundreds. Also impressive were many shorebirds, including large flocks of Dunlin. But the greatest spectacle was the huge flocks of geese. In the area of Kempton Rd and North Brewer Rd, we started seeing skeins and skeins of mostly Snow Geese flying over going east. Later, along Brewer, we could

hear geese, sounding like a distant roar. Our last stop was on Waltz Rd. to look for Short-eared Owl. A couple of us got brief looks at one before it dropped into the grasses.

But, while we were there, a tremendous flock of mostly Snow Geese flushed up, to the northeast toward N Dowd. This was one of the most incredible sights I have ever seen. I have seen huge flocks at Sacramento NWR and other places, but they almost paled in comparison. It was like this white fog or mist surging up into the sky, so thick you couldn't see through it. We thought that there must have been 100,000 birds in that one flock. This will go down in my memory as one of the best trips to the area. And others exclaimed that it was a really great day."

**Teal Bend (1/20)** — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: "6 people joined me for the first winter walk at Teal Bend Golf Course. It was a nice morning but, due to the lack of rain the canals and ponds were dry which seem to slow the bird activity. Highlights included Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kite, Great-horned Owl, Western Bluebirds, Orange-crowned Warbler and Golden-crowned Kinglet."

**Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (1/15)** — Leader Craig DiMartini reported: "Twelve dedicated and observant participants spent a wintery day peering into the thin fog of Yolo Basin and were rewarded with spotting 70 avian species. American Bittern, Sora, Wilson's Snipe, Great Horned Owl, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, and Common Yellowthroat were some of the favorites. While Marsh Wrens sang all day long, we delighted in viewing hundreds of Snow Geese, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Long-billed Dowitchers, and nearly 100 Black-crowned Night-Herons."

*Cathie LaZier*

## SOME RESULTS FROM THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

### Great Job, Bird Watchers!

Here's a quick snapshot of where we stand in the 2018 Great Backyard Bird Count, once again on pace to break all previous count records for participation. As of today, February 19, the United States has contributed the most checklists, with 69,058. India and Canada are neck and neck for 2nd and 3rd in checklists, with 8,576 and 8,500 respectively.

### GBBC Numbers

Currently, GBBC checklists are up 2 percent, compared to the same time last year. Bird watchers have submitted about 111,000 checklists reporting more than 5,600 species from around the world.

Ranked by number of species, Brazil is outstripping everyone else with 814 species. Colombia follows with 772 species, then India with 763. Mexico has 726, and Ecuador is next with 675 species.

Totals as of noon Eastern Time, February 19.

### Counting Crossbills

Across the Northern Hemisphere, Red Crossbills are on the move because cone crops are scarce in many areas. The desert Southwest, Great Plains, eastern Canada, and parts of the northeastern United States are all reporting higher-than-average numbers

### Enjoy the View

There are two ways to enjoy photos of birds from around the world. See what's being attached to participant checklists in the eBird media catalog: ([ebird.org/media/catalog](http://ebird.org/media/catalog) then set the date to February 17-19) and visit the GBBC online photo gallery to see just a sampling of images submitted so far for the GBBC photo contest at [gbbc.birdcount.org/photo-subs-2018/](http://gbbc.birdcount.org/photo-subs-2018/).

Article compliments of Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society.

## SAS OUTREACH HELP WANTED

Upcoming 2018, Spring and Summer Outreach Events, where volunteer help will be needed. You do not have to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding and talking to people about our field trips and SAS. You would be working with an experienced volunteer. If you can work a 3 or 4 hour shift, please contact Bill Bianco at [biancowm@yahoo.com](mailto:biancowm@yahoo.com); or 916-372-3318.

- Creek Week, Carmichael Park  
Saturday, April 14, Outdoors
- Return of Swainson's Hawk,  
Sutter's Landing  
Saturday, April 14, Outdoors
- Walk on the Wildside  
Beach Lake Park  
Saturday, May 19, Outdoors
- Wildlife Art Festival  
Double Tree Hotel, Sacramento  
Saturday, July 21 and  
Sunday, July 22. Indoors
- Harvest Day, Fair Oaks Park  
Saturday, August 4, Outdoors

## *Birding and Nature Events*

### OLYMPIC BIRDFEST 2018, SEQUIM, WASHINGTON

From **April 13-15** the 15th annual Olympic Birdfest will take place in **Sequim, WA**. The festival offers a most spectacular setting where you can visit the rain shadow of the Olympic Peninsula to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest. Pre and post-festival trips are also offered in this fascinating area. More information can be found at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org).

### GODWIT DAYS, ARCATA

The 23rd annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held **April 18-24** in Arcata, CA. Godwit Days is a week long, spring migration bird festival celebrating California's North Coast. The northern coast of California offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats on Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where over 270 species of birds have been sighted. Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover and even whale watching. Further information can be found at [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org) or call 1-800-908-WING.

### POINT REYES BIRDING AND NATURE FESTIVAL

Save the dates of **April 27-29** for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Enjoy birding at the height of spring migration with some of the best naturalists around. For more information and to sign up for their email newsletter, visit [pointreyesbirdingfestival.org](http://pointreyesbirdingfestival.org). Tickets are scheduled to go on sale on February 20, and all proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

### 150 Frequently Seen Birds of California's Great Valley

A great new book arrived at the Effie Yeaw store. It's a pocket birding field guide just for California's Great Valley! This beautiful, 300+ page book features full color images and detailed descriptions of the many bird species found in the valley. Small enough to fit in a pocket or waist pack, yet loaded with helpful information, this book is sure to become a hit among California's nature-lovers and beginning birders alike! It is only 4.5 x 6" spiral bound, has 320 pages, and 323 color photographs. The price is \$14.95 and it can be purchased online at [sacnature-center.net/arnha/shop-books/](http://sacnature-center.net/arnha/shop-books/).

The new little field guide is truly a community effort. Sacramento Audubon was one of nine community groups who contributed to the cost of printing the guide.

The book is published by the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and all profits fund environmental education programs coordinated with state science standards for school classes, nature camps, programs about nature for families and programs about nature for adults.

**SAC AUDUBON HOSTS NATURE BOWL COACHES' WORKSHOP  
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR APRIL 26 FINAL EVENT**



Some coaches check in with each other after the workshop

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
GENEROUS DONATIONS!**

Jon Beck, Peggy Cranston, Winifred Detwiler, Carol Edwards, Thomas and Carol Murphey, Brian Rhodes, Sonja Sorbo, Steve and Tracy Wetzels and Patrick Wagner made donations to the **General Fund**.

Karen Brookhyser, Robert and Maureen Burness' Alice C Corley, Peggy Cranston, Winifred Detwiler, Carol Edwards, Jared Fassler, Peggy Gerick, Tom Graham, Kathryn M Griffin, Ray and Patricia Missman, Anne Rhea, Alison Rood, Sonja Sorbo' and Jane Taylor made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Donations to **Bobelaine** were made by Linda Hax and Linda Krasnow. A donation to Bobelaine was also made by Marti Ikehara and her hiking group, after their day hike at the sanctuary.

Thank you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community. Donations to the Bobelaine Sanctuary are encouraged to help defray the cost of continuing restoration after last winter's flooding.

**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.

Camp Pollock lodge was the site for Sacramento Audubon Society's first Nature Bowl Coaches' Workshop held on January 23, 2018. 12 coaches from 9 public, private and charter elementary schools attended the workshop convened by Joanie Cahill of the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The workshop was held to prep teacher-parent coaches for the April 26 Nature Bowl semi-finals.

Sac Audubon Education Committee members; Gesna Clarke, Cathie Lazier, Bill Bianco and Sue Darst organized the event.

Committee members are looking for volunteers to help with a variety of tasks including signage and parking; set up and registration, activities assistance and judging, site cleanup, and other tasks as needed. Volunteers may work a morning, afternoon or a full day shift, and meals will be provided.

Please contact Cathie Lazier, (empid@earthlink.net or 916-502-2699) for more information if you are interested in volunteering at the April 26 Nature Bowl semi-finals at Camp Pollock.

*Join Us For Family Friendly Field Trips!*

**Saturday, March 17, North Natomas Walk**

Join leader Ben Graber looking for birds in North Natomas. Trip information will be in next month's Observer or email Ben at Bgraber984@gmail.com.

**Saturday, April 21, 10:30am, Family Nature Walk**

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael**

These events at Effie Yeaw are held the third Saturday of almost every month and no registration is needed. Just show up and enjoy! Their website address for other outdoor, family friendly, weekend events is [sacnaturecenter.net/events/weekend-programs/](http://sacnaturecenter.net/events/weekend-programs/).

**Saturday, May 19, 10:30am, Family Nature Walk**

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael**

These events at Effie Yeaw are held the third Saturday of almost every month and no registration is needed. Just show up and enjoy! Their website address for other outdoor, family friendly, weekend events is [sacnaturecenter.net/events/weekend-programs/](http://sacnaturecenter.net/events/weekend-programs/).

*Seasonal Observations*

**January 1 to January 31**

**Rare and Unusual Bird Reports**

[www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm](http://www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm)

The first month of 2018 started off with some real surprises. Two of them were firsts for the Central Valley. A **Curve-billed Thrasher**, apparently of the eastern subspecies group, became widely known on 1/14 along Rominger Ct in Woodland, not far from the Woodland WTP. It was seen and photographed by many visiting a residential yard into February, but had first been detected by a resident on 1/8 and word got out when it was entered on eBird. The other amazing find was a **Worm-eating Warbler** at Reichmuth Park in Sacramento from 1/6-29. Despite being a secretive bird, often staying low and in dense vegetation, it was seen by approximately 150 birders. Both of these species are on the California Bird Records

Committee review list ([californiabirds.org](http://californiabirds.org)). Unpleasant surprises included a human body found by birders looking for the **Worm-eating Warbler** and a group of birders visiting the north Valley who had their car set on fire while only a short distance away.

Continuing from December were amazing flocks of over 100,000 **Snow Geese** roosting and foraging in the ricelands north of Lincoln. A male **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was photographed at Cosumnes River Preserve on 1/13. A **Snowy Plover** was a nice surprise at Folsom Lake near the Granite Bay boat launch on 1/9 and a **Stilt Sandpiper** southeast of the intersection of Lone Star Rd and Hwy 20 in Colusa County from 1/23-26 was a first for the county. A **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Beals Pt on 1/2 and Lake Natoma on 1/6 was probably the same bird continuing from December. One to two **Glaucous**

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome these new members:

Katherine Craig	Colene Rauh
Ellen Dutkiewicz	Mordechai Schramm
Roslyn Eliaser	Matthew Stone
Lee Embrey	John Sullivan
Che Geiser	Patrick Wagner
Vickie J Griffin	Daniel Wilson
Amy Guis	
Kathy Moroney	

### 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 March 27, at 7pm. Board meetings are held at the Lemon Grass Cafe Meeting Room, 601 Munroe St, Sacramento, 95825.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at [sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html](http://sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html). Scroll down to Board Minutes.



### SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

[facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](http://facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon)

### Observations continued

**Gulls** were at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area throughout much of the month and the continuing **Glaucous Gull** at Beals Point was found on 1/2.

An immature male **Costa's Hummingbird** was reported on 1/12 at Reichmuth Park but was not refound. Adding to the reports of wintering **Cassin's Vireos** this fall and winter was a bird found at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 1/22. A **Winter Wren** was heard calling and recorded on 1/28 from the same closed portion of CRP where one was found in November of 2011. Two **Pacific Wrens** were calling nearby for comparison. A **Northern Waterthrush** was an excellent find along Putah Creek on 1/4 near the Hwy 128 bridge over Putah Creek in the area that often hosts an **American Dipper**. The dipper was seen occasionally too, and the waterthrush continued through the

## 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

membership@sacramentoaudubon.org  
P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

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.

### *New Slate of Officers and Board of Directors*

Next month we will be publishing a slate of officers to be voted on in May. If you would like to step forward or nominate someone for any of the positions or to serve as one of the Board members please contact our President, Sally Walters at [bajaowl@gmail.com](mailto:bajaowl@gmail.com). Officer positions are President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Corresponding Secretary.

end of the month. The **Palm Warbler** first found at the Woodland WTP on 11/24 was reported into February. The **Swamp Sparrow** found just off the auto tour at YBWA on 11/25 continued into late January. The continuing **Harris's Sparrow** along S Meridian Rd in Sutter County was reported through at least 1/22. A **Red Fox Sparrow** was found along with two **Sooty Fox Sparrows** along the Sacramento River off of Riverside Blvd near 35th Ave on 1/13 and a male **Black-headed Grosbeak** was a real surprise for winter in Land Park on 1/18.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site ([sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html](http://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](http://cvbirds.org)) and in eBird ([ebird.org](http://ebird.org)).

It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Kelly Childress, Chris Dunford, Leo Edson, Gil Ewing, Frank Fogarty, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Jim Holmes, Scott Hoppe, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Tim Lenz, John Luther, Frances Oliver, Michael Perrone, Ron Pozzi, Jason Riggio, William Rockey, Ken Schneider, Steve Scott, Shannon Skalos, John Sterling, Kirk Swenson, John Trochet, Rick Williams, and Gary Woods.

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

*Chris Conard*

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[www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)



*White-tailed Kite* Dan Brown

### Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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Sacramento, CA 95826

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**Editor:** Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, [sawise7@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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 by the Sacramento Audubon Society, monthly, January through December, except June and August, when we publish abbreviated editions.

### ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

**Thursday, March 15**

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm

**March 15:** Harry Fuller, *Birding Spots  
Off I-5*



Author, Harry Fuller