

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



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MARCH 2019

General Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2019

Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Assembly Room, 7pm

Bald Eagles in the Wild-A Visual Essay of America's National Bird

Jeffrey Rich

The majestic Bald Eagle was adopted in 1782 as America's official bird. It has historically been a symbol of freedom and patriotism in the United States of America, and for good reason. The bird is associated with authority and has a fierce beauty that speaks to those who look upon it. Once on the brink of extinction, it is currently enjoying a comeback. Today, the Bald Eagle is no longer an endangered species.



Bald Eagle
Jeffrey Rich

Wildlife and bird photonaturalist, Jeffrey Rich, will present this story with his glorious storytelling photography. He will share insights into the birds' habitat, feeding habits, mating patterns, the care of their

young, and more. You will marvel over images of birds in flight, in nests with their young, at rest, preening, and capturing prey. Rich has chronicled the daily lives, in detail, of America's favorite bird. Jeffrey will share the story of many people who have helped and been inspired by nature and eagles.

This presentation is definitely a wildlife-lover, good news, feel good state of things. You should leave knowing what is right with the world.

Jeffrey Rich graduated from Humboldt State University in 1983 with a BS in Wildlife biology, in 1985 with a BS in Biology, and a life science teaching credential in 1986. In 2012 Jeff completed his master's degree

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Sac Audubon Extends Its Thanks

As Sacramento Audubon members, we wish to extend our appreciation to Linda Pittman for her years of service in performing the Pelagic Trip Chairperson duties. Since 2011 Linda has coordinated and lead the Farallons trips; and the Monterey trips after 2017.

She did an excellent job in advertising and handling reservations over the years. We are also grateful for her contribution as past President, field trip leader and her help with Christmas counts for several years. Linda is one of those great valuable members that we are so lucky to have. Oh, and she is also a photographer whose wonderful photos we have sometimes used in the *Observer*. Thank you Linda!

Pelagic Trip Coordinator

We are also pleased to announce that Harriet Saeck, who is also our Treasurer, will be taking over the coordination of the Pelagic Trip reservations. Thank you Harriet.

BIRD AND BREAKFAST EVENTS AT EFFIE YEAW

Traditional Event – Saturday, March 16 at 8am

Family-Friendly Event – Saturday, March 23 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 16 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 23 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 often sell out. Reservations are required. Call 916-489-4918 for information, questions and to make reservations, or register online at www.sacnaturecenter.net/events/bird-breakfast-weekend/.

Field Trip Findings

Sacramento NWR (2/10) — Leader John York reported: “13 people braved the near-perfect weather to sample the finest of Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. The day started off with spotting the Vermilion Flycatcher in the Maxwell Cemetery as we arrived at the gate. The bird must be more embarrassed about his location as he seems to be getting redder. Could just be the great morning light. A raven harassing a Golden Eagle, four Bald Eagles in different stages of maturity, Peregrine Falcon, and Cooper’s Hawk were raptor highlights. Best predator of the day was a mature Northern Shrike that landed a few feet from the lead car window for good looks and photographs. Eurasian Wigeon were seen and photographed by one car’s occupants. Lots of ducks, but unusually low numbers of white geese on the refuge and only two Cinnamon Teal. The white geese were in numbers in the air north of the refuge and in fields to the south. Tim Fitzer was remarkably well behaved, probably because Ann was along. A truly great birding day at the refuge.”

Beginning Birder Walk (2/10) — 6 beginners joined 4 SAS trip leaders for this sunny walk. Highlights were an Anna’s Hummingbird on a nest, 2 Red-breasted Sapsuckers in an almond tree, a vigorously displaying Common Goldeneye, and colorful Chipping and Lark Sparrows. The heron/egret rookery was active.

William Pond Park (2/6) — Leader Larry Hickey reported: “6 of us enjoyed a cold morning birding. Although there was frost on the ground the birds were active. We had excellent looks at some brilliant Western Bluebirds and California Quail. Several Red-shouldered Hawks were calling and perching close to the trails and one was briefly on a nest. At least 19 Great Blue Herons were also on nests. Other highlights included Lark Sparrows, a single Chipping Sparrow and a group of river otters fishing and playing in the open water close to the shore.”

Mather Lake (2/3) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “The trip was canceled due to wind and rain.”

Merced and Mariposa Counties (2/2) — Leaders Dan Brown and Tim Fitzer reported: “After a morning of rain, we saw 46 species, including 10 Ferruginous Hawks, 5 Bald Eagles, 2 Golden Eagles, 2 Prairie Falcons, 2 Vesper Sparrows and 9 Mountain Bluebirds.”

Sailor Bar (2/1) — Leader Mark Sawyer. No trip report received, but highlights were Phainopepla, Lark Sparrows, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Barrow’s Goldeneye and a look at the White-winged Scoter. Mark spent some time pointing out the differences in the various gulls.

Gray Lodge SWR (1/31) — Leader Bill Bianco reported: “12 of us enjoyed views of Green Heron, Phainopepla, Orange-crowned Warbler, Common Yellowthroat and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers doing some excavating at a dead tree. At the platform we viewed ten Red-tails in two trees at the north end of the pond. Two Bald Eagles were spotted at the far west side of the pond. One provided great action by harassing the waterfowl on its way to a cottonwood tree. After giving us a good view, it flew north harassing the waterfowl again. Going out of view for a short time it returned with prey and lit back at the cottonwood tree, and proceeded with a mid morning meal. The eagle then flew to the pond, whereupon a Cooper’s Hawk came checking for leftovers. Also saw blue morph Snow Goose, White-faced Ibis, and the three Teal species. The road loop provided many waterfowl species to observe with Black-crowned Night-Heron, a third Bald Eagle, Eurasian Wigeon, and Hooded Merganser also viewed. All agreed it was a very enjoyable day to be out bird watching”

Bushy Lake (1/27) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “9 people started down the road from the parking area and birds were on both sides of the road. A flock of pipits flew in front of us and landed in the meadow. Wood Ducks were at the far end of Bushy Lake. A Red-shouldered Hawk flew by and tried to land on a flimsy branch that would not support its weight. At that point the bird was hanging upside down. Eventually the hawk was able to right itself. Along the south fence boundary for Cal Expo amongst the trees we encountered a pair of Great Horned Owls. We saw a total of 45 species. A good morning.”

Beginning Birder Walk(1/27) — 7 beginning birders joined 4 Audubon leaders for this morning walk. Highlights were Red-shouldered Hawks constructing nests, a Nuttall’s and Acorn Woodpecker contesting prime cavities and Great Blue Herons occupying prime rookery nest sites. Trip total was 45 species.

Sandhill Crane Trips (1/26 and 1/27) — “Mike Savino, Jackie Delu, Tina Suarez and Alan Kilgore, led the afternoon Sandhill Crane fly-in tours on Staten Island. We were graced with the presence of 14 and 19 participants on consecutive days, with multi-generational participation, and enthusiasm, interest, and keen observation by the youngest of birders. Both days had Sandhill Crane numbers in the hundreds. On each day, cranes with banding were observed. Saturday’s crane was determined to have been banded at Modoc NWR as a chick in 1998! Tour participants enjoyed capturing their own photographs through spotting scopes on their smart phones. In addition to Sandhill Cranes, we were delighted with fly-overs of thousands of geese, flocks of shorebirds, tundra swans, perching birds, a variety of raptors, and beautiful sunsets.”

Tonzi Road (1/26) — Leader Gary Fregien reported: “Seventeen enthusiastic birders ventured into western Amador County for a full day in search of raptors, passerines, shorebirds and waterfowl. We found some of each group. Raptors were well-represented with 10 species seen, including Osprey, White-tailed Kite, Bald Eagle, Cooper’s, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed and Ferruginous Hawks, Golden Eagle, American Kestrel and Merlin. Waterfowl was most well-represented by Canada Goose, which must be noted as the species most abundant, in terms of both volume and weight, with numbers approaching 200 birds. Other species of note include Common Loon, Pied-billed, Horned, Western and Clark’s Grebes, American White Pelican, Spotted and Least Sandpipers, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Black and Say’s Phoebe, Yellow-billed Magpie, Tree Swallow, Hermit Thrush, American Pipit, Cedar Waxwing and Phainopepla. The group tally was 77 species for the day.”

Lincoln WWTP (1/24) — Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: “After a week of battering the Sacramento area with wind and rain, Mother Nature kindly rewarded us with a stunningly beautiful calm sunny winter’s day. With snow-covered Sierra in the background, we combed through the ponds and wooded areas of the Treatment Plant, logging over 65 bird species. Several thousand ducks were

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Field Trips



Ferruginous Hawk
Linda Pittman

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. For trips through March 11, contact the scheduler Sonja Sorbo, ssgasdoc@yahoo.com, 916-390-8463. For trips from March 12 through April 11, contact the scheduler Carla Barbaro, cbarbaro@comcast.net, 916-717-8808.

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.

Tuesday, February 26, 8am
Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: Craig DeMartini
916-599-3300
cloudwalk7@icloud.com

Meet Craig at the main CRP parking lot and we'll walk the boardwalk loop looking for Sandhill Cranes, geese and a wide variety of duck species. Yellowlegs and Wilson's Snipe will be in the shallower water, and other shorebirds are possible. Then we'll take the walking trail to the river looking for smaller passerines. This is a great trip for beginners. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, Exit #498; go left (east) to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the Preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

Saturday, March 2, 6:30am
Arrowhead Marsh and Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline
Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 916-835-8471, shoppe01@surewest.net
Mark Martucci, 916-833-6722, 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 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.

Sunday, March 3, 7:30am
Mather Lake
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 916-206-3767
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.

Wednesday, March 6, 8am
William Pond Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 916-502-2699
empid@earthlink.net

This park has a variety of habitats, river, pond, woods and mown grass. We'll walk down to some different spots on the river, then check out the heron rookery and look at the pond 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, just under 1 mile, and it runs into the park. Meet along the first parking area on your left, just after the kiosk. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. This is an excellent trip for beginners

Saturday, March 9, 8am
Tonzi Road and Western Amador County
Leader: Gary Fregien, 916-708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com

Join Gary on a trip featuring the waters and back-country roads of the Sierra foothills in western Amador County. There is a surprising variety and number of passerines and raptors in this area, with a possibility of Lewis's Woodpeckers, Hermit and Varied Thrushes, sparrows, Prairie Falcons and Ferruginous Hawks. This trip also includes stops for waterfowl and shorebirds at ponds near Sutter Creek and Ione. We may also stop at Lake Comanche, where a day-use fee is charged. There will be minimal hiking, but dress for winter conditions. Bring along hand held radios if you have them, food and water. Meet Gary at the Local Bean Cafe in the Rancho Murieta shopping center. Turn right at the 1st traffic light; junction of Hwy 16 (Jackson Rd) and Murieta Drive, and right again just past the fire station.

Sunday, March 10, 7:30-Noon
(Note: DST begins today)
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
Leader: Dan Murphy, 916-541-4213
dmmurpete@gmail.com

Join Dan in this great area 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. Depending on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl as well as raptors. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife

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Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A) on your left, at the beginning of the auto tour. FRS radios and scopes are helpful on this trip.

Tuesday, March 12, 8am
Bucks Creek Trail/Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills
Leaders: Jane Van Kessel
916-524-4157, jvankessel55@gmail.com
Sue Darst: 530-902-3427
sue.darst51@gmail.com

Join Sue and Jane for a leisurely walk through this riparian habitat to 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 light, make a U-turn and immediately park along the Parkway.

Saturday, March 16, 8am
Family Friendly Trip
Sailor Bar, American River Parkway
Leader: Ben Graber, 916-844-8682
Bgrab984@gmail.com

Join Ben for a morning walk checking out the local birds. Possible birds include Phainopepla and California Quail. This is a good trip for both beginners and experienced birders. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, March 17, 8am
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
Leader: Scott Hoppe, 916-835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net

Join Scott at this great birding area between Sacramento and Davis. Depending on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl as well as raptors. From Sacramento on I-80 west, take the first exit at the west end of the Yolo Causeway, East Chiles/Rd 32A, Exit #78. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee; then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first

parking lot, Lot A, on your left. FRS radios can be helpful on this trip.

Tuesday, March 19, 7:30am
Bobelaine Sanctuary
Leaders: Maureen Geiger
916-281-6652, mkgeiger@comcast.net
Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277
kenpoe@sbcglobal.net

Bobelaine is a 430-acre National Audubon Sanctuary on the Feather River, managed by Sacramento Audubon. This riparian forest of cottonwoods, sycamores and willows is home to a wide variety of birds and wildlife. Join Maureen and Ken for about a 2.5 mile walk along the trails looking for resident and migrating birds and enjoy this lush habitat along the Feather River. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, Exit #524; 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. Or meet at Bobelaine at 8am. From Sacramento take Hwy 99 north toward Yuba City; about 2 miles north of the Feather River Bridge, turn right on Laurel Avenue. Follow Laurel to the dead end at the Bobelaine parking lot. This trip will end late morning.

Friday, March 22, 8am
Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach
Leader: Mark Sawyer, 916-968-1661
Marksawyer3383@yahoo.com

Join Mark for a morning bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. Mark will be looking for migrants and resident breeding birds, wrens, towhees, and other small passerine birds. From H Street, (north side of Sac State University), take Carlson Ave north till it crosses Sandburg and dead ends into the park.

Saturday, March 23, 8am
Cosumnes River Preserve
Mike Heacox, 916-972-1809
mikezots@gmail.com

Waterfowl will be migrating north shortly, so take this opportunity to check out the wide variety of ducks and geese who winter at the preserve. Yellowlegs, Wilson's Snipe and other shorebirds are possible depending on the seasonal pond levels and Marsh

Wrens, Black Phoebes and Yellow-rumped Warblers should be active. Mike will walk the Wetlands Walk loop, 1-1/2 to 2 miles. This is a great trip for beginners. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, Exit #498; go left (east) to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the Preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org. Rain cancels the trip.

Sunday, March 24, 7:30am
Lake Natoma-East Side
Leader: Craig Swolgaard
530-334-3023, 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.



Savannah Sparrow
Stephen D'Amato

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 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. 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.

Thursday, March 28, 8am
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
Leader: Craig DeMartini
916-599-3300
cloudwalk7@icloud.com

This great seasonal floodplain is only 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. A variety of ducks, geese and shorebirds frequent the flooded fields, and American

Bitterns and White-faced Ibis are often seen. Raptors and owls are also a possibility. From Sacramento on I-80 west, take the first exit at the west end of the Yolo Causeway, East Chiles/Rd 32A, Exit #78. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee; then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot, Lot A, on your left. This trip sometimes runs into early afternoon, so you may wish to bring water and snacks. FRS radios can be helpful.

Saturday, March 30, 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 take the first left on Pennsylvania and follow it into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, March 31, 7:30am
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. Meet in the picnic parking lot across from the golf course parking lot. From California Ave in Fair Oaks take the Tarshes Drive entrance and follow it all the way to the last parking lot on your left. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Tuesday, April 2, 8am
Mormon Island to Brown's Ravine,
Folsom Lake @ Sophia Pkwy
Leader: Rich Howard, 916-203-0952
rhowarda@gmail.com

On this half day trip Rich will explore Folsom Lake for both woodland and water birds. A known pair of nesting Bald Eagles may be present. Other possibilities are Hairy Woodpecker, Audubon's and Myrtle Yellow-rumped Warblers and Rufous-crowned Sparrows. Park on Sophia Parkway down from the Arco Station at 300 Green Valley Road. Meet Rich at the Arco Station.

Saturday, April 6, 7:30am
Point Reyes National Seashore
Leader: John York, 916-409-9276
Cell, 520-320-4751
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 7:30am 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 7
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 birds. On this spring trip we'll talk about habitat, field marks, and look for some of our returning migrants and nesting birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, put Beginning Birder in the subject line.

Sunday, April 7, 7am-Noon
Pine Hill Preserve Birding
Leader: Chris Conard
Pre-registration is required through
Pine Hill Preserve
Contact Graciela Hinshaw at
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 newly acquired land in Kanaka Valley, with 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.

Wednesday, April 10, 8am
William Pond Park
Leader: Larry Hickey, 415-305-0651
Larryhickey1@gmail.com

This park has varied habitats and a variety of birds may be found. Larry will be looking for early spring migrants as well as resident wrens, towhees and other small passerines. He'll check out the heron rookery and the pond area. Trip will end before noon. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east, just under 1 mile, and it runs into the park. Meet along the first parking area on your left, just after the kiosk. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

BUFFERLANDS EVENTS

ROOKERY TOUR

Saturday, March 16, 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!

FIELD TRIPS FOR **BEGINNING BIRDERS 2019**

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sundays, April 7 and May 5

*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, (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.

Environmental Education Program (EEP) For Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps (SRCC)

Classroom Session is Launched

January 18, 2019

SAS member Sheila Green volunteered to conduct 2019 classroom sessions of the EEP which will run through May. The first session focused on connectivity. Sheila led the students through a discussion about their work and its importance in helping to maintain a healthy habitat for birds and other creatures and organisms in nature. Sheila demonstrates this through an interactive activity with the students and their instructor, David Rodriguez.

Gesna Clarke
Education Chair



Field Trip to Cosumnes River Preserve

January 25, 2019

We had a nice morning with 6 participants from the Sacramento Region Conservation Corps walking the loop at Cosumnes River Preserve. Talk and questions ranged from the birds we saw as well as many we didn't, why habitat determines which birds are present, and why it all matters. The young people seemed interested and connected and in addition to asking lots of questions were eagle-eyed in finding bushtits nests (2) and a multitude of squirrel nests. Sandhill Cranes and Greater White-fronted Geese flashed overhead and called during much of the walk, and the students seemed to enjoy that. After a foggy beginning, the sky cleared as the morning progressed, and it was sunny and almost warm when we returned to the parking lot.

Maureen Geiger and Sue Darst

SRCC Corps members at CRP with SAS trip co-leader, Sue Darst (2nd from r)



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present in the ponds, including almost every species expected in this area. Paddling amongst the more common species were three Eurasian Wigeons and three Redhead. Despite an impressive parade of ducks, raptors stole the show for the day. Hawk species sighted included Ferruginous, Red-shouldered, Red-tailed and Cooper's. Also present were a White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, three harriers, several kestrels, and a Great Horned Owl. One amusing sight in the woodland area involved dozens of Western Meadowlarks who decided to perch in two adjacent trees, giving the illusion of yellow Christmas ornaments! On backroads in the grasslands, one flooded field supported dozens of Dunlin, Long-tailed Dowitchers, and Greater Yellowlegs. A second field yielded Tundra Swans and scores of gulls (California, Herring, Ring-billed). They kept a watchful eye on three (yes, three!) Bald Eagles who loitered nearby . . . farther down the road we stopped at a dairy which sported far more blackbirds than cows—Brewer's, Redwinged, and Tri-colored were all present."

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (1/22) — Leader Craig DeMartini reported: "44 species, 4 hours, 8 miles driving, one mile walking, 13 participants. A cold north wind made for inclement birding. The YBWA was closed due to flooding, so we looked in from the adjacent levee.

Next, we visited the Davis Waste Water Treatment facility where we picked up a few more species of ducks who were braving the whitecaps on the ponds, and a Say's Phoebe. Next we warmed up in the vehicles while driving Road 104, where we saw Sandhill Cranes, Tundra Swans, Ravens, and a large group of gulls so hunkered down that they appeared to be a pile of grey stones out in the field."

Yolo/Solano Big Day (1/20) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "Although the forecast called for rain, I went to the meeting place anyway in case anyone showed up. 2 people did, and we spent a full day in the field, only getting rained on a couple of times. Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, one of the key locations for this trip, was closed due to flooding. Despite these setbacks, we tallied 99 species for the day. Highlights included Barrow's Goldeneye, Redhead, several Ferruginous Hawks, Rough-legged Hawk, Merlin, Burrowing Owl (at least 3 in the field right next to the Park and Ride where we met in the morning), Loggerhead Shrike and Tricolored Blackbird. Thanks to Rick Skehen and Sonja Sorbo for being real troopers and making this a really fun day."

Wintering Raptors (1/19) — Leader Craig Swolgaard reported: "On an overcast but dry day on Meiss and Michigan Bar Roads, we tallied about 55 species, including 10 raptor species. We were fortunate to see over 10 Ferruginous Hawks along with Burrowing Owls, Bald Eagles, Northern

Harriers, White-tailed Kites, Cooper's Hawk and Prairie Falcons. Waterfowl, including Tundra Swan, wigeon, gadwalls, pintails, Ruddy and Ring-necked Ducks, were in the ponds we passed. A stop by cottonwoods yielded a couple of Phainopeplas. The high number of birds kept us together well into mid-afternoon. This was an especially fun trip thanks to the people who stuck it out so late into the afternoon."

Colusa NWR (1/17) — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: "On arrival at our meeting location, it was readily apparent our visit was being controlled by MONA (Mother Nature), and not the government shutdown. A steady rain and stiff breeze joined us for our ride up, and immediately upon arrival we saw the gate to the auto tour route had been closed due to flooding. Luckily, the rain subsided within 20 minutes of our arrival, so we took advantage and birded from the viewing platform. All of the expected duck species were present including 6 Eurasian Wigeon. To our delight, many Greater White-fronted Geese alighted in the pond with much to do (apparently) about nothing. Our species count of 36 included several passerine, shorebird and raptor species as well as the waterfowl and other water oriented birds."

Cathie La Zier

SAS OUTREACH, HELP OUT AND HAVE FUN!

Bill Bianco, our hard working Outreach chair, has asked for volunteers for the following events this Spring. 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 at biancowm@yahoo.com; or at 916-372-3318. Note: All of these events are held outdoors.

Saturday, April 13: Creek Week, Carmichael Park

Saturday, April 13: Return of the Swainson's Hawk, Sutter's Landing

Sunday, April 21: Koobs Nature Area, Earth Day

Sunday, May 5: Sierra College Dino and Science Fest 2019

Sunday, May 12: Koobs Nature Area, Bird Day

Saturday, May 18: Walk on the Wildside, Beach Lake Park

Saturday, August 3: Harvest Day, UCCE Master Gardeners, Fair Oaks Park

Birding and Nature Events

OLYMPIC BIRDFEST, APRIL 12-14 IN SEQUIM, WASHINGTON

Grab your binoculars and join the 16th annual Olympic BirdFest 2019, celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, **April 12-14**. 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.

The important dates are:

The festival, April 12-14, for guided birding trips, boat tours, live auction and raffle, the gala banquet, and more. The featured speaker will be John Marzluff, wildlife science professor and author.

There is also a three-day pre-festival birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 9-11.

Or stay on for their Neah Bay post-trip on April 14-16 which is two days of birding the coast.

Program information and registration can be found at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

GODWIT DAYS, ARCATA

The 24th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held **April 17-23** 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 or call 1-800-908-WING.

10TH ANNUAL POINT REYES BIRDING AND NATURE FESTIVAL

Save the dates of **April 26-28** for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Held over the last weekend of April, the three day festival attendees choose from 50+ educational field outings and classroom-based events based in Marin and Sonoma counties, and focused on birds, wildlife, plants and marine life, plus hiking, biking, kayaking, art and field photography, and led by some of the Bay Area's award-winning naturalists and birders. Kenn Kaufmann is the keynote speaker. For more information and to sign up for their email newsletter, visit pointreyesbirdingfestival.org. Tickets are already on sale, and all proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

General Meeting

continued from page 1

in science teaching and education at the University of Texas. Jeff has been teaching science and photography, while photographing nature, professionally since 1987. For more information about Jeff including, photo tours and books www.jeffrichphoto.com.

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).

*Anthony Asay
Program Chair*

PRELIMINARY GBBC RESULTS

Count Update

The checklists are pouring in for the Great Backyard Bird Count and as of Sunday morning in the United States, more than 67,000 tallies have been entered. Those lists include more than half the bird species in the world with about 5,500 species reported!

There's a lot to explore. To get started, go to ebird.org/gbbc/explore. There you can search for a particular species you're curious about and see where it has been reported. You can also search by location. For a great overview of what's happening with the count worldwide, click on the "Major regions" link and choose "World." You can also explore "Yard Totals" and "Patch Totals." With "Patch" totals you can see what birds and how many were found at your favorite birding spot. The "Top 100" lets you compare with other counters in your region.

As of this writing, Colombia is in the lead for the number of species seen, with more than 800! Here are the top five species superstars:

Colombia 803
India 717
Ecuador 711
Costa Rica 638
United States 617

Data as of Feb. 17, 11:30am Eastern Time, U.S.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Elliot Chasin and Reanna Wights, David and Maxine Clark Family Fund, Daniel Griffin, Lois Harter, Arthur Hartwell, Charles and Debra Real, Alison Rood, and Andrea Salmi made donations to the **General Fund**.

Many thanks to all of 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 and management.

SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK



facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

You can enjoy the photos and commentary without joining Facebook

Programs for 2019

April: John Sterling, *Morocco*

May: Lindsay Wood, *Nesting Grebes in the High Lakes of Plumas County*

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 Us For Family Friendly Field Trips!

Saturday, March 16, 8am
Family Friendly Trip
Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

Join Ben Graber for a leisurely morning walk checking out the local birds. Possible birds include Phainopepla (look for his crest and red eyes) and California Quail. See page 4 of this month's *Observer* for meeting details including Ben's contact information.

Effie Yeaw and SAS Family Nature Walks 2019

Bring the family out for a birding and nature walk led by a Naturalist and our special guest guides from the Sacramento Audubon Society. Birdwatchers of all levels are welcome. No registration is necessary but you might want to arrive a little early.

These walks occur monthly at Effie Yeaw, all led by a Naturalist and 2 Sacramento Audubon leaders. The schedule through May of this year is as follows:

March: No walk because of Bird and Breakfast

April 20: With SAS leaders Cathie La Zier and Sue Darst

May 18: With SAS leaders Dan Williams and Larry Hickey

NOTE: Meeting location and other information for all trips is available in our Field Trips column, beginning on page 3, or at sacramentoaudubon.org under Field Trips.

CHOOSE TO RECEIVE THE OBSERVER BY EMAILED PDF

If you are interested in switching from a paper *Observer* to an emailed pdf version, please contact Jane Van Kessel at sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com and let her know. Please make sure you are emailing her from the address with which you want to receive your *Observer* pdf. The pdfs are usually between 1 and 2 MB each. The benefits of getting the *Observer* by email are several. You will help us save printing and mailing costs that we can otherwise use for our Mission; save tree resources; get the *Observer* earlier so you can plan your field trips sooner; and have a pdf version on your phone, tablet and/or pc! If you prefer to keep getting the printed *Observer* in the mail, you don't need to do anything.

Seasonal Observations

January 1 to January 31 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

January produced several good finds along with rarities continuing from December. A **Brant** at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) from 1/13-14 appears to be just the third Sacramento County record. It was found foraging and roosting with a large flock of **Greater White-fronted Geese**. While **Trumpeter Swan** has been removed from the California Bird Records Committee review list, identification is still very challenging. There were reports of singles from Yolo County near County Rds 27 and 104 from 1/12-18, while another was reported from E Levee Rd in Natomas on 1/30. A single **Surf Scoter** was found off of Sherman Island E Levee Rd on 1/2 and 1/23, while the cooperative male **White-winged Scoter** first found on 12/13 along

the American River near the Nimbus Hatchery continued well into February. A **Long-tailed Duck** was a nice surprise at Sherman Island County Park from 1/12-26. The **Pacific Loon** found near Folsom Point on 12/22 continued to the end of the month, and a **Red-necked Grebe** was an excellent find along Sherman Island E Levee Rd on 1/1 on the inaugural Sherman Island CBC.

Mountain Plovers have been absent most of the season from their typical haunts in Solano County south of Dixon. Finally, a single report of 18 birds photographed from Creed Rd came in on 1/12, while up to 60 continued to be found along Hwy 45 in Yolo County, just south of the Colusa County line, from 12/30 to at least 1/20. Single **Semipalmated Plover** reports came from the Yolo County Central Landfill on 1/12 and the Sacramento County Bufferlands on 1/22. An adult

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome these new members:

P Scott Clemons	Dana Miller-Blair
Dawn Furlong	Rakesh Parikh
Melissa Gatlin	Cynthia L Rogers
Jeff Grap	Nicole Shuman
Lois Harter	Lorraine Talbot
James Hurley	Thomas Vick
Joan Lamphier	Zane and Sara Vorhes

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 26, 2019, at 7pm. This Board Meeting will be held at Carmichael Library, 5605 Marconi Sacramento, 95608. Please NOTE the change in meeting place.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html. Scroll down to Board Minutes.

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

sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com
P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Date _____

The Observer Newsletter \$25 per address (1 Year) _____

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

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Email _____

Check if you would prefer to receive the Observer in PDF form by email []

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

Observations continued

Lesser Black-backed Gull was found at the Yolo County Central Landfill pond along County Rd 28H from 12/26 to at least 1/11. An immature **Glaucous Gull** was reported from the same location on 1/12. The winter roost of about ten **Long-eared Owls** in a closed portion of CRP first found on 12/29 continued through 1/7, but flooding prevented access later on a monthly survey. The report of 54 **Lewis's Woodpeckers** at a private ranch in southeastern Sacramento County on 1/26 was notable because of their scarcity this season at other typical wintering sites.

A **Hammond's Flycatcher** was found and photographed at the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery on 1/12 and continued through the end of the month. The **Northern Shrike** found near Yolo County Rds 25 and 103 on 11/15 continued in the general area through at least 1/21. A **Plumbeous Vireo** was a nice find in

Pioneer Park, Woodland, from 1/17-22, and a **Steller's Jay** was found on a private ranch in southeastern Sacramento County on 1/26. A **Lapland Longspur** was reported by a single observer along the shore of Folsom Lake at Folsom Pt on 1/14. Unfortunately it couldn't be photographed or refound. Perhaps the highlight of the month was a bright male **Tennessee Warbler** photographed in a north Davis yard on 1/25. It was seen by others in the surrounding greenbelt in the vicinity of Elk Place and Kestrel Place into February.

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 in eBird (ebird.org).

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

Stuart Angerer, Keith Bailey, Ralph Baker, Max Brodie, Holly Coates, Terry Colborn, Lyann Comrack, Matthew Dodder, Lily Douglas, Kris Dunlap, Leo Edson, Sid England, Gil Ewing, Stephen Fettig, Rob Fowler, Steve Hampton, John Harris, Cliff Hawley, Terry Hodapp, James Holmes, Eric Hopson, Emmett Iverson, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Sami LaRocca, Andrew Lee, Tim Ludwick, Mark Martucci, Nora Papian, Michael Perrone, Karen Richardson, Jason Riggio, Steve Scott, Judy Spitler, John Sterling, Michele Swartout, Kirk Swenson, and John Trochet.

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

Chris Conard

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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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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.

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 21, at 7pm

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Jeffrey Rich, *Bald Eagles in the Wild-A
Visual Essay of America's National Bird*



Jeffrey Rich