

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



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NOVEMBER 2017

General Meeting

**Thursday, October 19, 2017 Second Thursday
of the month-early date!**

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

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area: history, habitat management, rice farming, grazing, access and birds of the State Wildlife Refuge

Robin Kulakow

The Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area is a 16,800-acre mosaic of wetlands, grasslands, streamside forest, pasture and rice land owned and managed by the State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Robin's presentation will cover the history of the grassroots effort that led to the creation of the Wildlife Area in the 1990s and how it is managed as part of the Yolo Bypass, the floodway that protects the Sacramento Region. Thousands of acres of productive rice land and pasture provide wildlife habitat and income for operations and maintenance of the Wildlife Area. Learn about how the wetlands are managed to provide high quality, diverse habitat for wetland birds, while balancing flood protection, agriculture, mosquito control and public use. The Foundation works in partnership with California Department of Fish and Wildlife and sponsors numerous programs fostering access to the Wildlife Area with activities such as Discover the Flyway program for schools, CA Duck Days, and Bat Walk and Talks. Volunteer opportunities will be described. Access for birding will also be discussed as well as future challenges.

Robin Kulakow served as the founding Executive Director of the Yolo Basin Foundation until 2015. Ms. Kulakow's vision, resource management background, and partnership building skills enabled her to facilitate the creation and management of the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, an effort that began with members of Yolo Audubon in 1989. In retirement, she facilitates the Yolo Bypass Working Group and manages grants for the Foundation for restoration projects in the Putah Creek watershed and on the Wildlife Area. She participates as an advisor for the Delta Conservancy, and facilitates stakeholder outreach in the Yolo Bypass for EcoRestore, a program of the California Natural Resources Agency. She helps administer a fel-
General Meeting continued on page 6

CALLING YOUNG BIRDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

SIXTH ANNUAL KIDS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, January 6, 2018 and Sunday, January 7, 2018

Mark your calendars for January 6 and 7, the first weekend of 2018! Please join the Effie Yeaw Nature Center (EYNC) and Sacramento Audubon Society for these family Bird Counts which provide an exciting opportunity for kids, young adults and their families to be outside looking at birds and enjoying nature. Participants will be joining citizen scientists all over the world and will gain practice finding, identifying and counting all the birds they see. Day 1 for the younger birders, aged 6 to 10, will be January 6 from 9 to Noon and will be followed by a companionable lunch with other birder families at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

This year we hope to have a second site for older birders 10 years and up and their families. This will occur on Sunday, January 7, with faster paced birding for more experienced young people. The location has yet to be determined and will be announced in the December *Observer*.

Space is limited for both days so children **must be pre-registered** to attend. Registration is first come, first served and opens on December 1, 2017.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES FOR 2017-2018

Saturday, December 2, Daybreak, ARNHA Wildlife Count

Coordinators: Paul Tebbel and Rachel Cowan
e-mail: rachaelc@sacnaturecenter.net

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

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON-SPONSORED CBC DATES

Thursday, December 21, Woodfords Christmas Count

Coordinator: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207, e-mail: spskua2@comcast.net
Compiler: Andi Salmi, 691-7216, e-mail: andisalmi@yahoo.com

Sunday, December 17, Sacramento Christmas Count

Compiler: Dan Williams, 714-943-1266
e-mail: jaegermaestro@yahoo.com

Sunday, December 31, 2016, Folsom Christmas Count

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

**Saturday-Sunday, January 6-7, 2018, 6th Annual
Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count**

Registration is required.

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

For locations and dates of additional Christmas Bird Counts,
visit natureali.org/cbcs.html

Field Trip Findings

Sand Creek Road (10/10) — Leader Bill Bianco reported: “This trip started with a treat, seeing a Peregrine at the top of the power transmission tower next to our meeting place. Six of us had a smoke filled day viewing 35 species. Going through the orchard and oak trees at the beginning, we saw a good quantity of Acorn Woodpeckers (40), Northern Flickers (50), Yellow-billed Magpies (50), and Eurasian Collared Doves (65). A first for some of us was the Bell’s Sparrow and Lawrence’s Goldfinch. Other good sightings were Purple Finch, Western Bluebirds, Loggerhead Shrike and a flock of Magpies harassing a Cooper’s Hawk. We also enjoyed watching various coveys of Valley Quail along the route. Great day for all, even with the hindrance of the smoke filled sky.”

Ancil Hoffman Park Fall Migration (10/8) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Eight birders saw fifty-seven species on a very windy morning along the American River Parkway. Highlights included Yellow, Black-throated Gray and Townsend’s Warblers, Western Tanager, Green Heron, Spotted Sandpiper and Fox Sparrow.”

Sacramento Bar (10/7) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “Nine people were ready to bird at 8am. As we went through the parking lot Acorn Woodpeckers and Cedar Waxwings were abundant. When we reached the river 7 Phainopeplas appeared in the tree tops. Everyone was awed by so many Phainopeplas in one place. We walked a short distance to see a Red-breasted Sapsucker. Also in the same tree was a Black-throated Grey Warbler. Our total number of species for the morning was 42. It was a good morning.”

Ancil Hoffman Park — Effie Yeaw Nature Center (10/4) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Four people joined me for this morning walk. Best bird was probably a Red-breasted Sapsucker, and we had returning kinglets and crowned sparrows, as well as resident birds. Migrants included Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Gray and Orange-crowned Warblers.”

Putah Creek Preserve (10/1) — Leader Ben Graber reported: “The trip was outstanding. Despite the wind, we saw a total of 70 species. At the Putah Creek Preserve, we had 5 species of warblers (Yellow-rumped, Townsend’s, Yellow, Wilson’s, Nashville, and Black-throated Gray), 7 species of sparrows (White-

crowned, Golden-crowned, Song, Fox, Lincoln’s, Chipping, and Lark), Western Tanagers, and a stunning look at a Great Horned Owl. At Solano Lake, we added Phainopepla, Osprey, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Warbling Vireo, Brown Creeper, Wood Duck, Green Heron, and Hermit Thrush. On top of all the birds, we saw a coyote and had a close encounter with a young bobcat!”

Point Reyes (9/30) — Leader Dan Williams reported: “A dozen of us had what turned out to be a classic day at the Point after a start that seemed all but promising. We arrived at Nunes Ranch first, and upon opening our car doors were greeted by 15-20 mph gusts. Nunes produced only a snoozing Great horned Owl, a handful of White and Golden-crowned Sparrows, one Townsend’s Warbler, and an Allen’s/Rufous-type Hummingbird. We headed to the Lighthouse next and were greeted by retreating birders who mostly told us not to bother. We took the walk up the hill anyway and were rewarded with a Peregrine Falcon dining on a seabird on the seacliffs below. Next we headed to the Fish Docks and that’s when the real fun started! The winds continued, but there was just enough shelter in the cypresses and pines near the ranger house, and perseverance yielded us two continuing rarities: a young Blackburnian Warbler, and a young Prairie Warbler. We also had fleeting views of a windblown Palm Warbler there as well as the much more common Yellow-rumped, Wilson’s, and Yellow Warblers. A brief stop at Mendoza Ranch gave us quick glimpses of the continuing Magnolia Warbler in the cypresses there, as well as two more Great-horned and one Barn Owl. Lunch at Drakes Beach Visitor Center allowed us a sheltered vantage point to scope the bay, upon which we saw all three of our common loon species (mostly pacific), and a few arriving Horned Grebes. The real treat there turned out to be a much more accommodating Palm Warbler. We wrapped up our day at Inverness Tennis Club on Vision Road which has been a real hotspot this fall. The first bird we saw there was a second, much brighter marked Prairie Warbler, followed by multitudes of Warbling and Hutton’s Vireos, Chestnut-backed Chickadees, and Orange-crowned, Wilson’s, and Yellow Warblers. We had a total of 86 species for the day, and it was definitely one to remember!”

Monterey Coastal Land Birding (10/1) — Leader Linda Pittman reported: “Seventeen participants stayed over for land birding on Sunday. We started in Pacific Grove at El Carmelo Cemetery looking for some of the recently reported migrants. Unfortunately, it appeared most of the migrants had moved out overnight with favorable weather and wind, but we saw lots of Yellow and Yellow-rumped warblers and a late Western Tanager. We stopped briefly at Pt Pinos to see some of the shorebirds we missed on Saturday, then headed to Moonglow Dairy. A Peregrine Falcon made multiple passes through the Rock Pigeon flocks before perching and giving everyone good looks. The migrants had also moved out at Moonglow, but we were able to see shorebirds, ducks, grebes and huge numbers of Elegant Terns. The combined pelagic and land birding total was about 100 species.”

Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip (9/30) — Leader Linda Pittman reported: “Our pelagic trip was nearly cancelled due to a forecast for high winds and waves, but forecast improved enough to go for at least half a day. With a full boat (25 participants), we zipped past the rocky shorebirds to spend time in the bay before the wind picked up. It was a good decision and one of our first sightings was a Blue Shark! The sun came out and we saw Pink-footed, Sooty and Buller’s (over 200!) Shearwaters steadily throughout the day. In Santa Cruz County, we found a pod of about 12 Humpback Whales and up to 100 sea lions feeding on fish. Before leaving Santa Cruz County, we saw two Flesh-footed Shearwater and a Tufted Puffin. We then headed out to deeper water where we saw a few Ashy Storm-Petrels. During our trip, we also saw all three jaegers, Black-footed Albatrosses, Northern Fulmar, Cassin’s Auklets, Red-necked Phalaropes, Rhinoceros Auklets and one passerine that was probably a sparrow. Although the water was getting a little rough towards the end, we were able to stay out for the whole 8-hour trip. We had a great captain and team of spotters to find and identify the birds and marine animals encountered.”

Effie Yeaw Nature Center (9/25) — Leader Bob McCleary reported: “Great morning weather for birding but short on birds. With our huge group of 2 enthusiastic

Findings continued on page 7

Field Trips

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, for trips through November 11, contact the scheduler Maureen Geiger, mkgeiger@comcast.net, 281-6652. For trips from November 12 through December 12, contact the scheduler Tim Fitzer, 870-5207, spskua2@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.



Horned Lark
Linda Pittman

Saturday, November 4, 8am

Family Friendly Trip!

Sailor Bar

Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682
bgrab984@gmail.com

Join Ben for a morning walk checking out the resident birds and looking for wintering species as well. Meet Ben at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. This is a good trip for beginners and families, and everyone will benefit from Ben's expertise identifying birds. Loaner binoculars are available. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. A Sac Country park pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, November 5, 7:30am SHARP! Note Change from Daylight Savings Time

Lynch Canyon/King Ranch, Solano County

Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net
Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277
kenpoe@sbcglobal.net

Solano County has wonderful birding in a variety of habitats. Join Ken and Maureen in a 2.5 mile hike at Lynch Canyon searching for the large numbers of wintering raptors and ducks at the reservoir pond. From there, drive through the King Ranch, a Solano Land Trust property rarely open to the public, again in search of raptors and Burrowing Owls.

Lunch at the top of King provides a breathtaking view of the San Pablo Bay looking east and is a nice way to end the morning. This trip will last to early afternoon, so bring lunch and liquids. Scopes and FRS radios will be useful. There is a \$5 per car

parking fee at Lynch. Meet Maureen at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Avenue exit, turn left at the light, and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Second meeting place in Fairfield is the Safeway just east of the Waterman exit about 8am.

Tuesday, November 7, 9:30am Colusa National Wildlife Refuge Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1951

dantank1016@gmail.com

Approximately 1 hour north of Sacramento, the Colusa NWR is a great location to view large waterfowl concentrations. There will be plenty of ducks and geese, as well as other wetland species, passerines and raptors. We will spend a good amount of time on the viewing platform, and then take an easy walk on a level trail through riparian habitat next to the main viewing pond. We will finish our outing to this wonderful NWR by taking the short auto tour. Be prepared for cold and damp weather. Bring scopes and FRS radios if you have them. Meet Dan at the Colusa NWR in the parking area near the restrooms at 9:30. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Williams; take Exit 578, Hwy 20 east, and go approximately 6 miles to the refuge entrance on the right. Rain, strong winds, or thick fog cancels. No lunch break, but bring snacks and liquids. This trip will end around 1pm.

Saturday, November 11, 8am Sacramento Wildlife Refuge Leader: Andi Salmi, 508-7192

andisalmi@yahoo.com

Andi will be looking for the enormous flocks of ducks, geese and swans that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way south. This is also a good place for rap-

tors, and Bald Eagles can be found here regularly. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well. This trip will last into early afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd; go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn 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. There is a \$6 day use fee for each vehicle at the refuge. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

Sunday, November 12 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 variety of habitats, with an emphasis on looking and listening. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 502-2699.

Sunday, November 12, 7:30am Mather Lake Leader: Wayne Blunk, 206-3767

Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations, and he usually turns up quite a list of bird species. Join him to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron and Common Yellowthroat.

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park. From Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles and 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.

Tuesday, November 14, 7:30am

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 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, and has been a great place for field trips for many years. This last winter, the Feather River went on a rampage (assisted by the difficulties with the Oroville Dam) and torrential waters changed the riparian landscape dramatically. In addition, major levee work was responsible for closing public access. We are assured that early access will be available for this trip, so join Maureen and Ken for a 3 mile walk along the trails looking for resident and wintering birds. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd; go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Road, and then turn right into the parking area. Meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. NOTE: Due to the rehabbing of the levee, the access point for this trip may not be the usual entrance on Laurel. Please either contact Maureen or Ken or meet at the Arena Boulevard site.

Saturday, November 18, 7am

Gray Lodge SWR and Colusa NWR

Leaders: Daniel and Pam Thompson

359-3777, keiran@surewest.net

Join Pam and Daniel for a tour of this prime wintering area for ducks and geese. After Gray Lodge, they'll take the route back around the west side of the Sutter Buttes, looking for Sandhill Cranes, raptors and grassland birds, and then stop at the Colusa NWR viewing platform. Bring lunch, liquids, and warm clothing. FRS radios and scopes are helpful if you have them. Meet in the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. Meet on the north side of the parking lot

between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. There is a \$4.32 per person charge at Gray Lodge, and it's wise to bring the exact amount for the Iron Ranger.

Saturday, November 18, 10:30am

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

This family friendly nature walk will be at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers and Wild Turkeys are abundant, but sharp eyes and ears may find Spotted Towhees or Bushtits as well. Reservations are not needed; families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists from the nature center and birders Lynne Tweten and Dan Williams from Audubon. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, November 19, 7am

Family Friendly Trip

Deer Creek Hills

Leader: Mara Weston, 208-3222

mara_weston@yahoo.com

Join Mara and SVC lead docent Lisa Couper for a 3 to 4-mile walk at Deer Creek Hills Preserve. We'll look for Lewis's Woodpeckers, Horned Larks, sparrows, and wintering raptors. Come prepared with sturdy shoes, water, and snacks or lunch. Trip should end by noon. The required liability form can be found at sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/resources.asp or you can email Mara for a copy. Meet at the corner of Stonehouse and Latrobe Roads; detailed directions at sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/admin/upload/Directions%20to%20Deer%20Creek%20Hills%20Preserve.pdf. We will carpool in high-clearance vehicles as needed per rain and road conditions. A donation of \$10 per family is suggested, but not required.

Tuesday, November 21 8am

Salt Springs Valley

Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207

spskua2@comcast.net

Ann Burris, 947-7573

burris.nellieann@gmail.com

This area is located in western Calaveras County about an hour and a half drive from Sacramento. The open valley and its lake are home to many wintering ducks, hawks, eagles, owls and grassland birds. The trip will last into the late afternoon so bring lunch, liquids and warm clothing. Bring FRS radios and scopes if you have them. Meet at "It's a Grind" coffee shop, 19420 Twin Cities Road in Galt. From

Sacramento take Hwy 99 south to Twin Cities Road/Hwy 104, (Exit 277). Turn left (east) on Twin Cities; cross the freeway and continue east to the shopping center on your right.

Friday, November 24, 8am

William Pond Park, Black Friday Trip!

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 502-2699

empid@earthlink.net

Want to do something non-commercial? Meet Cathie along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk down to some different spots on the river, where mergansers and goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. California Quail, Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows may be found in the park area. Trip will end before noon. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Lincoln Grasslands Trips #1 and #2!!

#1, Saturday, November 25, 8am

Leaders: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124

offleash56@yahoo.com

Tim Fitzer, 870-5207

spskua2@comcast.net

The grasslands and farmlands surrounding Lincoln provide some of the best winter birding in the Sacramento Valley. Because of the diversity and large area to be covered, back to back trips are being offered again this year. Once again, two teams of experienced field trip leaders will enter a friendly competition to show participants as many birds as possible. Richard and Tim will start Saturday, searching for the largest number of raptors and rarities; Scott and Mark will follow Sunday hoping to produce even better numbers. Both days, they will search the back roads of Placer County for a large variety of raptors, shorebirds, ducks, swans and sparrows plus specialty species such as Tri-colored Blackbirds and Lewis' Woodpeckers. These trips will last into the afternoon, so bring lunch and liquids as well as scopes and FRS radios if you have them. Meet in the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road off ramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight past the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station and park on the right in the Park and Ride area.

**#2, Sunday, November 26, 8am
Lincoln Grasslands Trip #2
Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net
Mark, Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

See write-up for Saturday, November 26.

**Saturday, November 25 and
Sunday, November 26, 3:15PM
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering
Birds, of the Cosumnes River and
Delta area
Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc.
Coordinator: Mike Savino
yogoombah@yahoo.com**

The cranes are back in big numbers. Meet at the Woodbridge Ecological Reserve parking lot on the south side of West Woodbridge Road, near the metal benches at the west end of the parking lot. For directions either contact Mike or use the following directions. The GPS address is 38°09'44.2"N 121°24'52.1"W. For Google mappers the street address is 11154 W Woodbridge Rd, Lodi, CA 95242. From Sacramento take Interstate 5 south to Peltier Road. At the bottom of the exit, turn left to Thornton Road where you will go right. Continue on Thornton until the stop sign at the corner of Woodbridge Road. At this point Woodbridge Road goes under the I-5 freeway. Make a right hand turn and travel west for approximately 2 miles to the turnout of the reserve on the left hand side of Woodbridge Road. From Stockton take Interstate 5 north to Turner Road. At the bottom of the exit, turn right to Thornton Road where you will turn left. Continue on Thornton until the stop sign at the corner of Woodbridge Road. Make a left hand turn and travel west for approximately 2 miles to the turn out of the reserve on the left hand side of Woodbridge Road.

**Saturday, December 2, 8am
Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge
Leader: John York, 409-9276
Johnyork157@yahoo.com**

John will be looking for the enormous flocks of ducks, geese and swans that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way south. This is also a good place for raptors, and Bald Eagles are a possibility. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well. This trip will last into early afternoon. Bring lunch, snacks and hydration as the refuge has no restaurants and birds poop in the water. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From

Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. Meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. Please note there is a \$6 day use fee for each vehicle at the refuge, or buy a Duck Stamp and support all our national refuges. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

**Saturday, December 2
ARNHA WILDLIFE COUNT
American River Parkway
rachaelc@sacnaturecenter.net**

Join a team counting birds, mammals and other wildlife on this annual event.

**Sunday, December 3
Beginning Birding Field Trip
William Pond Park**

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

**Sunday, December 3, 8am
Robinson Road, Road 113
and Bird's Landing
Leaders: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com
Paul Cordero, pkcordero@gmail.com**

This is a great area for wintering Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Merlins, curlews, possible Mountain Plovers, shrikes and other interesting birds. Bring liquids, lunch, warm clothes, spotting scopes, and FRS radios if possible. Meet at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd, (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride exit a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. 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.

**Thursday, December 7, 8am
Lincoln WWTP and
Placer County Roads
Leader: Sonja Sorbo, 390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com**

In this morning trip we will start by birding the Lincoln water treatment plant. There are several large ponds which can hold a variety of ducks. From the plant,

we will drive some nearby backroads of Placer county, searching flooded fields for wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. We will search a small riparian area for sparrows, woodpeckers, and other resident species. Several open dry fields may provide hunting grounds for raptors. Meet at the parking lot of Dry Creek Community Park at 9235 Walerga Road in Roseville at 8am. FRS radios will be helpful.

**Saturday, December 9, 8am
Wintering Raptors in the Central Valley
Leader: Craig Swolgaard
530-334-3023, cswol@sbcglobal.net**

A published study found that California's Central Valley is one of the richest wintering areas for raptors in the country. The trip will begin at Meiss and Dillard Roads and end at Clay Station and Dillard Roads following a 33 mile loop used as a survey route in a past study. Many species of raptors have been found along this productive drive during the winter months, including Golden Eagle, Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, and Burrowing Owl. This is also a good area to find Mountain Bluebirds in winter and has potential for other vagrants. Meet at the small public parking lot on Highway 16 and Sunrise Blvd at 8am. We will try to car pool to keep the car numbers down, as some of the route uses pullouts on a busy highway. Bring a spotting scope if possible. Trip may go into early afternoon so water and food may be a good idea.

**Sunday, December 10
Gull ID trip on the American River
Leader: Ed Harper**

Join Ed for an informative walk along the American River and a chance to sharpen your identification skills. Ed is a great birder who will be looking for any interesting or unusual birds, with emphasis on tricky identification of the many gulls that winter on the river. Herring, "Thayer's" (which is now considered a race of Iceland Gull), Glaucous-winged, California, Ring-billed and Mew Gulls are all possibilities. Spotting scopes will be very useful, and be sure to bring your field guides and bird apps for this intensive study. Trip will end before noon and is limited to 15 people to ensure quality learning opportunity. To register for the trip contact Cathie LaZier, empid@earthlink.net (put Gull Trip in the subject line), or phone 502-2699 to find meeting time and place.

BOBELAINE SANCTUARY WILL BE OPEN DECEMBER 1ST

Tree fall and trail damage to Bobelaine Sanctuary from heavy rains and the Oroville Dam spillway failure, along with planned levee repairs, have kept this wonderful local birding site closed for most of the year. Thanks to a tremendous amount of extraordinary volunteer work by Ken Poerner, with Maureen Geiger and Bill Bianco also helping, trails are being restored. Mary Schiedt, John Huls, Gary Fregien, Kate Howard, and Larry Hickey also helped out with the completion of the levee repair work by the Sutter Butte Flood Control Agency contractor and Bobelaine will be opening on December 1 of this year. Most of the trails will be open, but we will post an update on the SAS website showing which trails are still closed. We are still seeking donations to help repair and restore Bobelaine. If you can help, send checks to SAS, PO Box 160694, Sacramento CA 95816. You can also donate online starting at sacramento-audubon.org/payments.html.

DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

It's Autumn again, and the wintering waterfowl, shorebirds and cranes are back. This is an opportunity to work on duck and other wetland bird identification, and is a great trip for families, youth groups and newer birders.

Stop by the Cosumnes River Preserve and check out "Ducks In Scopes", where docents have a row of scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you good views of the many colorful ducks (up to 10 different species!) and other wetland birds.

Microscopes and hand lens provide close-up looks at "Duck Soup", dishes of water dipped from the pond full of sand fleas, dragonfly nymphs, and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on.

The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento – south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve. Steady rain or flooding cancels event. Check www.cosumnes.org for updated schedule.

Come any time between 10am and 2pm on the following dates:

Saturdays: 11/4, 11/11, 11/18, 12/2,
12/16, 12/23

Sundays: 11/26, 12/10

Monday: January 1, New Year's Day

General Meeting continued from page 1

lowship program to support graduate students at UC Davis and Sacramento State doing wildlife-related research in the Yolo Bypass, funded by her family. She also took President Clinton birdwatching when he came to dedicate the Wildlife Area in 1997.

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

Sally Walters Schmoldt, President and Program Chair

Birding and Nature Events

LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

The 22nd annual Sandhill Crane Festival will be held **November 3-5**, at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi. The event is free. Long before Lodi existed, Sandhill Cranes descended into the rich delta wetlands at the end of a long migratory journey, some from nesting grounds as far away as Siberia. In awe-inspiring numbers, and with a prehistoric call, stately gait, and elegant choreography, the Sandhill Crane continues to attract and inspire visitors. We have tours designed to appeal to everyone, led by experienced guides and experts in their field. The choices are many: crane fly-out and fly-in tours; kayaking and cruise tours; birding field trips; expert-led photography field trips; and winery tours. In between the tours, you can check out informative presentations and workshops. Learn more about the event and register for tours at www.cranefestival.com or call (800) 581-6150. Tours fill up quickly so register online or call early!

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 21st annual Central Valley Birding Symposium, November 16-19, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in Stockton, CA. The Great Central Valley, in the heart of California and the Pacific Flyway, is uniquely situated for excellent birding. Please join us as the CVBS again celebrates the best of birding in the Central Valley! Come meet the board and staff members! Reconnect with old friends and meet new ones!

New this year, is a Thursday field trip with Jon Dunn, then the CVBS kicks off with a scrumptious hors d'oeuvres buffet and no host bar on Thursday night, followed by one of our favorite keynotes, outstanding photographer and presenter, Ed Harper. Friday night's keynote program *Bank Swallow Colonies on the Upper Sacramento River* will be presented by Dawn Garcia.

Saturday night's keynote program, *Birding Without Borders: An Epic World Big Year* will be presented by Noah Strycker. This humorous and inspiring presentation about Strycker's epic World Big Year, in which he set a world record by seeing 6,042 birds in one calendar year, will give you a real appreciation for the birds and birders of the world. His newest book, *Birding Without Borders*, about his around-the-world Big Year, is due out in fall 2017.

Informative and entertaining workshops include: *Wintering Burrowing Owls in the Central Valley* with Lynne Trulio, *Neotropic Migrants* with Joe Morlan, *Winter Waterfowl in the Central Valley* by Jon Dunn. Build your skills at workshops: Image Editing (Bob Steele), Bird Sketching (Keith Hansen), Beginning Birding (Sal Salerno) and Carving (Jim Burcio).

Field trips, offered Friday, Saturday and Sunday, always turn up exciting birds. Add in the entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful selection of optics, art and gifts at the Birder's Market plus the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time!

To look over the schedule of events, go to: www.cvbirds.org/events/symposium/info/. Registration has begun, so sign up now for their popular trips.

Findings continued from page 2

participants we had a nice morning. Some of the sightings included a beautiful male Phainopepla, Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Red-tailed Hawk and Northern Flicker. All in all a beautiful morning to be engaged in nature with friends.”

American River between Watt and Howe (9/24) — Leader Dan Kopp reported: “14 birders joined me on a gorgeous early fall morning to see recently arrived and what still remained from a very warbler-filled southward/summer migration. We found six species of warbler, Black-throated Grays, Wilson’s, Orange-crowned and Audubon’s Yellow-rumped Warblers, Yellow Warblers, and one McGillivray’s Warbler, mostly heard only, seen by a few participants. This area is a very reliable spot to find Wood Ducks, if you know where to look, though we did see/hear several vocal flyovers before getting to their stronghold. Pied-billed Grebes were seen in their cove as well. Two right place right time highlights were 4 low, though silent, flyover Sandhill Cranes and an Osprey hovering over and plunging into the river near Watt. Surprisingly, we heard several dependent Spotted Towhees, and saw attentive adults. And in the Scrub-jay corner, this is the time of year they fly around with acorns in their bills, taking advantage of the good harvest. House and Bewick’s Wrens continued to be very audible in each of their various ways, in addition to Oak Titmice and White-breasted Nuthatches. Recent returns were several cooperative Lincoln’s, Golden-crowned and White-crowned Sparrows. Another recent return was very cooperative, and I believe everyone was able to see the Red-breasted Sapsucker spotted by Mark Martucci. We had some hits and some definite misses but still managed to report 58 species.”

Bodega Bay (9/23) — Leader John York reported: “I led a good group of much better birders to Bodega Bay on a really nice, not too windy until late in the day, day. Ed Harper found some Red Knots, one of which was in view for an extended period of time. Young Least and Western Sandpipers were very trusting and Ed got great close pictures of those. Susan Scott found the Wandering Tattler at Bodega Head, not really wandering, but messing around in a very limited area of beach. Shorebirds were pretty scarce, but the group was able to scare up some Wilson’s Warblers, Western Tanagers and Swainson’s Thrushes at owl-less Owl Canyon. Andi Salmi kept herself busy with

the windsurfers at Doran Beach, corrupting some of the other women on the trip by getting them to join in her lecherous ogling. Lilly was a particularly enthusiastic ogler.”

Mather Lake (9/20) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Three souls found wonderful weather and 36 species on an abbreviated walk because of construction work on the levee, Fairly unusual for Mather were three Common Ravens and four Eurasian Collared Doves. First of the season White-crowned Sparrows and a number of raptors provided interest—the usual plus two Kestrels and three Swainson’s Hawks off the end of the runway were spotted. Good morning of birding for a short trip.”

Woodfords/Markleeville area Family Friendly Trip (9/17) — Leaders Sandra Steurer and Wendy Money reported: “With the promise of lovely fall mountain weather, it was not difficult to lure eight eager participants on this Family-Friendly trip. The smallest aspen were turning yellow and copper and the willows had tasted cold nights and had that fall glow. While scanning a cattle ranch in Diamond Springs Valley, we just missed the birth of a calf by seconds but were enthralled to watch the mother’s after care and encouragement to get the calf up, standing, and walking. One participant caught it on video. Our bird list finished with 42 species, including fleeting looks at two Northern Goshawks. We easily found all three nuthatch species and four jays – Pinyon, California Scrub, Woodhouse’s, and Steller’s. Clark’s Nutcrackers chattered throughout the day. An old burn scar led us to a lovely female Williamson’s Sapsucker foraging. Seven Band-tailed Pigeons flew out of the forest near a pond hosting Pied-billed Grebes. It seems there is always something at Woodford’s and this time it was a juvenile Golden Eagle soaring around the ridges. Thanks to all the good spotters who contributed to a productive day.”

River Bend Park (9/17) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Eight people joined me for what began as a slow morning of birding. We looked at trees, at plants, at scat and tracks, and Joanne Vinton found a very interesting lizard track. Then birding got better and we spent some time discussing Merlin vs Kestrel, watching an immature Cooper’s Hawk attempting to hunt, and observing a pair of Lewis’ Woodpeckers. We ended the trip with Osprey and Sandhill Cranes.”

Fall Migration “Wild Card” (9/16) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “It was an

interesting trip from the start, as even I didn’t know where we would be going. I had been planning on a coastal location, either Point Reyes or Bodega Bay, when sharp-eyed Nancy Gronert noticed that there was a big Sears Point Raceway event that weekend and traffic would be heavy (putting it mildly) on Highway 37. So, I thought I would discuss it with the group and we would decide together on where to go. We decided on Putah Creek Reserve, as there had been a good report from the day before, and then on down to American Canyon Wetlands to round out the trip. We had a great time at Putah Creek, tallying over 50 species, including migrants such as Pacific-slope and Willow Flycatchers, Lazuli Bunting and 5 species of warbler. It was a bit slow at American Canyon, since we got there at high tide, and it was stubbornly unwilling to recede while we were there. But we did manage to spot 10 species of shorebirds, including Lesser Yellowlegs. Also, of note were several Blue-winged Teal, in dull non-breeding plumage, which made ID a challenge. It was a fun trip for 10 of us.”

Cathie La Zier

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sundays, November 12 and December 3

*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.

BIRD PRESENTATION AT SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Gesna Clarke, our energetic and productive Education Chair, would like some speakers for birding presentations at schools, local groups and organizations. The time commitment is less than 5 hours annually. The program is already prepared with a slide presentation and information sheet. You don't have to use the slide-shows and can use your personal experience and knowledge, but the visuals can make presentations interesting.

Contact Gesna Clarke at gesna_clarke@sbcglobal.net or 343-6303, if you are interested.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2018 NATURE BOWL PARTNER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Sacramento Audubon is the newest Nature Bowl partner with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Sacramento Audubon will host semi-finals at Camp Pollack, April 26, 2018. Nature Bowl is a science based program developed for 3-6th graders that "increases ecological knowledge and conservation literacy." Read more about Nature Bowl at wildlife.ca.gov/regions/2/nature-bowl Volunteers are needed in several areas, and a volunteere meeting has already been held but if you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please contact host coordinator, Gesna Clarke; gesna_clarke@sbcglobal.net or phone 343-6303.

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.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Michael J Harris and Ann Kohl made donations to the **General Fund**.

Ken and Janet Stites made a donation to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

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

SAS HOSPITALITY HELP NEEDED

The Board of Directors is requesting volunteers to help with the meeting hospitality. We hope to get enough volunteers, so we can make it a rotating service. Duties are basically making the coffee, lemon water, providing cookies or pastries; and setting up and clearing the hospitality table. Helpers will be reimbursed for their costs. If you have questions and/or want to help out contact Bill Bianco at biancowm@yahoo.com, or 372-3318.

Join Us For Family Friendly Field Trips!

Saturday, November 4, 8am, Sailor Bar

Join leader Ben Graber

Saturday, November 16, 10:30am, Family Nature Walk

Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael.

Sunday, December 10, Yolo Bypass, 9 am

Join Sandra and Wendy in this great seasonal floodplain 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. We will enjoy the returning ducks, geese, swans, pelicans, raptors, and watch for stealthy rails and owls. 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, and then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A) on your left, at the beginning of the auto tour. On this trip we stay in our vehicles, as blinds, most of the time, popping out for brief scope-aided views. The trip will end before noon, but bring water and snacks as needed. Loaner binoculars available. Questions? Contact Wendy Money 205-3194, wendydougmsn@msn.com or Sandra Steurer 580-8398 or sasteurer@yahoo.com

Saturday, January 20, 2018, 10:30am, Family Nature Walk

Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael.

Seasonal Observations

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

Almost everyone looks forward to September with the promise of cooler temperatures, an increased chance of rare migrant songbirds, and **Sandhill Cranes** by mid-month. Waterfowl numbers began to build, and the most notable duck this month was a single **Greater Scaup** at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) on 9/30. Limited shorebird highlights included a **Baird's Sandpiper** on 9/26 at the Davis WTP, one to two **Pectoral Sandpipers** at the Sacramento Regional WTP (SRWTP) from 9/12-16, and up to three **Pectoral Sandpipers** at YBWA from 9/13-18. A juvenile **Sabine Gull** was a nice surprise for the second year in a row at the SRWTP from 9/26-29.

A **Common Poorwill** at Babel Slough on 9/28 was a nice find for the Valley floor,

as was a **Costa's Hummingbird** at Sailor Bar, along the American River Parkway (ARP), on 9/25. **Lewis's Woodpeckers** were seen on several occasions moving through the flats of the Valley, but hadn't established themselves in their typical wintering grounds in the oak woodlands ringing the Valley. A **Townsend's Solitaire** at Babel Slough on 9/14 was another good find.

There was a nice assortment of rare warblers in the region, including a **Tennessee Warbler** found along Cache Creek at Wild Wings Park west of Woodland on 9/6, and another along Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd on 9/16. Also near Pedrick Rd on 9/16 was a **Chestnut-sided Warbler**. Another **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was found on 9/26 at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) near the Tall Forest among large numbers of migrants, which included 40 **Black-throated Gray Warblers**. A **Blackpoll Warbler** was found along the east side of

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome these new members:

Cynthia Annand	Leticia Padilla
Linda Barth	Leanne Provost
William Hagen	Harriet Saeck
Ray Iaea	Carol Siu
Sheila Junge	Autumn Skimin
Linda Maack	Judith Spittler
Nancy Mackenzie	Amy Williamson
Marc Moehlman	Pamela Young

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. There are no meetings over the summer. The next meeting will be on November 28, 2017 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. 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

Mara Weston, Membership Chair, mara_weston@yahoo.com
7708 McClintock Way, Sacramento, CA 95828-4321

Date _____ *The Observer* Newsletter \$25 per address \$ _____

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

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

Observations continued

the Freemont Weir off of Rd 16 on 9/14, and another was found at Ancil Hoffman Park along the ARP on 9/27. An **American Redstart** was a nice find on private property near Winters on 9/28, as was a **Northern Waterthrush** along Putah Creek downstream of Winters on 9/25. The female **Hooded Warbler** in north Davis first reported on 8/16 continued into October.

Two Green-tailed Towhees were found along Babel Slough Rd near S River Rd from 9/1-15, with another along the ARP near Larchmont on 9/2, and yet another at YBWA from 9/16-17. **Clay-colored Sparrow** records are very rare in the Valley, so two reports were notable, with one at the YBWA on 9/9 and another along Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd on 9/24. **Brewer's Sparrow** records included one in a Davis backyard on 9/1, one at SRWTP on 9/13, another at the Davis Wetlands on 9/25, and yet another on

9/16 at Babel Slough along with an impressive 15 **Chipping Sparrows**. A **Black-throated Sparrow** at Michigan Bar from 9/24-26 was an excellent find, as was a **Lark Bunting** at Freemont Weir Wildlife Area from 9/12-13. A molting male **Indigo Bunting** was reported from Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd on 9/16 as were two **Evening Grosbeaks** in east Davis on 9/23. Finally, the report of a family group of six **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers** from 6/26-28 at the River Bend access to the ARP was accidentally omitted from a previous column; this is an exceedingly rare nesting record from the Valley floor.

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

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento

and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Keith Bailey, Brent Campos, Hugh Dingle, Chris Dunford, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Stephen Fettig, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Dan Kopp, Jesse Kramer, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Mark Martucci, Michael Perrone, Jason Riggio, Steve Scott, Kirk Swenson, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Amy and Daniel Welsh, and Ed Whisler.

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

Chris Conard

Sacramento Audubon Society
7708 McClintock Way
Sacramento, CA 95828-4321

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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

Correspondence: P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Mara Weston, 7708 McClintock Way,
Sacramento, CA 95828-4321
mara_weston@yahoo.com

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95826
203-1610, e-mail preferred: conardc@gmail.com

Editor: Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, sawise7@sbcglobal.net

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

The Observer is published 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, November 9
At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm
Please note the early date

Robin Kulakow: *Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area:
history, habitat management, rice
farming, grazing, access and birds of
the State Wildlife Refuge*

PROGRAMS 2018

January 18: Ed Harper, *Norway/Svalbard*