



The **OBSERVER**

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, April 17

Shepard Garden and Arts Center

7pm General Meeting

Sacramento's Purple Martins

SAS Sponsored Population Studies

Dan Airola will speak on Purple Martins of the Sacramento Region. Dan has been leading studies of a small population of Purple Martins that nests in selected bridge overpasses in Sacramento. This population is a remnant of a once-wide-spread Central Valley nesting population that was eliminated as a result of competition with the non-native European Starling. The population is in trouble, having declined by 40% over the last three years, and last year it supported only 106 pairs.

Sacramento Audubon recently agreed to serve as a major sponsor for this study, by funding expenses for participating volunteers. Dan has expanded initial studies assessing population size and habitat use, and will report on recent evaluations of survival rates (from color-banded birds) and reproductive success (using pole-mounted cameras). He also will report on efforts partnered with Sacramento Audubon, to ascertain the required assessment of the effects of many proposed development and construction projects occurring near Purple Martin nesting sites. Finally, he will report on a new effort to encourage Purple Martins to adapt to using nest boxes in the Yolo Basin.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions.

GBBC WRAP-UP

This year's Great Backyard Bird Count was another huge success! Over 85,725 checklists were submitted and 635 species were recorded. This amounted to 9,805,216 birds counted altogether. However, when compared to last year's data it continues to show population decline. While there were 5,000 more checklists submitted and 6 more species counted, the total of individual birds counted was fewer by more than 1,200,000 birds. Snow Geese appeared to be the most numerous species this year, beating out everybody's least favorite, the European Starling!

Other highlights: Sacramento (159) moved up to second place this year in California cities for number of checklists submitted - behind Redding again (181). We increased our number of checklists by almost 100! Quite a jump and our sincere thanks go out to our Education and Outreach volunteers for all their library and school presentations. It really paid off. Sacramento participants beat last year's total of 93 species with 100 species this year!

Texas (335) beat California (320) in the number of species this year by 15 species. (It was only 5 last year.) California was fourth behind New Jersey, Florida and Washington in the number of individual birds reported. Lakeport, CA was fourth nationwide with the most number of species (150)! In California it was the American Crow and the American Coot going neck and neck for the highest number of sightings but the ever clever Crow won the day with over 32,000 birds reported.

VOLUNTEERS FOR TRI-COLORED BLACKBIRD SURVEY

Volunteers are wanted for the April Tricolored Blackbird survey.

Volunteers are currently being sought to help on a statewide survey of Tricolored Blackbirds taking place April 25-27. Audubon California is coordinating the survey in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This citizen-based, statewide survey will provide critical information about the status of Tricolored Blackbird populations in California and will help future conservation strategies to protect this species. Anyone interested in participating should contact Rodd Kelsey at (530) 795-0660 or rkelsey@audubon.org.

DON'T FORGET OUR ANNUAL BOOK SALE MAY GENERAL MEETING, COME EARLY!

Details can be found on page 8. Donate your old books and find new ones!

Field Trip Findings

Folsom Lake, Beek's Bight Area (3/9)

Leader Chris Conard reported: "Twenty of us enjoyed a beautiful day walking through the oak woodlands, chaparral, and along the lake shore. The highlight was a singing Canyon Wren sitting up for good views. We also saw many singing Rock Wrens, had excellent views of a singing Rufous-crowned Sparrow at close range, and heard 8-10 singing Orange-crowned Warblers. Other highlights included both Western and Clark's Grebes, Violet-green Swallows, and good views of Phainopeplas. A few early flowers were blooming as well."

Effie Yeaw Nature Center, American River Parkway (3/6)

— "We watched a Red-tailed Hawk harass a mature Bald Eagle," leader Jack Hiehle reported: "The eagle would flinch as the hawk came in on him. It was quite a sight." Other sightings included Northern Harrier, Anna's Hummingbird on the nest, Lark Sparrow and Red-breasted Sapsucker and Wood Ducks.

Schollenberger Park and Petaluma Adobe State Park (3/2)

— Leader Mark Martucci reported: "Fifteen birders had 75 species on a very sunny day in Petaluma. Highlights included Greater Scaup, Canvasbacks, Marbled Godwits, Long-billed Curlews, Black-bellied Plovers, Chestnut-Backed Chickadees, and a Brown Creeper."

Bushy Lake/Cal Expo (3/1)

— Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "We had a nice trip this morning with about 15 of us walking around Bushy Lake. Best birds were a Phainopepla, a male Western Bluebird, a Downy Woodpecker who seemed to have brand new feathers, and an adult Sharp-shinned Hawk perched close by."

Solano Lake/Putah Creek Area

(2/24) — Rained out.

Mystery Trip (2/23)

— Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "Five of us braved the approach of severe weather to explore the wetlands and grasslands of western Placer County. Turns out we experienced the 'calm before the storm,' and had a wonderful time. Among the 76 species we saw, highlights were: Eurasian Wigeon, Rough-legged Hawk, Burrowing Owl and Lewis's Woodpecker. I would like to thank the attendees. Their enthusiasm made the trip truly pleasurable."

Grizzly Island Wildlife Area and Robinson Road (2/21)

— Leader Sami LaRocca reported: "A combination of members of Yolo and Sacramento Audubon chapters took a trip south into Solano County. There

were 9 intrepid birders who were willing to risk the threatening weather to check out Mountain Plovers. A few were seen along Hwy 113 as noted in CV Bird list-serve, and raptors. Ferruginous, Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks were the

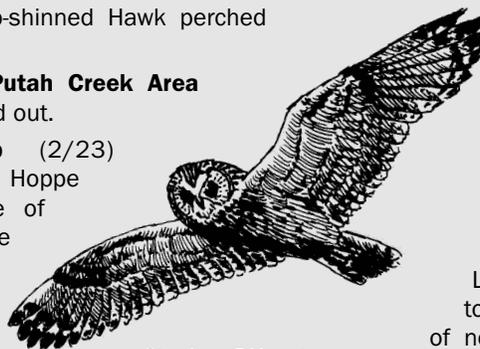
most noteworthy

seen. Along the entire trip numerous Loggerhead Shrikes were frequently seen. Once we arrived at Grizzly Island Road, we went to Rush Ranch, part of The Solano Land Trust.

Lunch was in the car due to rain, with no birding of note. Back on the road

south to Dept of Fish and Game Headquarters more birds were seen as weather conditions improved: ducks, kites, grebes, harriers and another Ferruginous Hawk.

"We saw one of this refuge's highlight attractions, Tule Elk, in a herd numbering about 40 animals. This is certainly a place to try again in another season/time with the intention of seeing more species. What was missed was Short-eared Owl, which can be seen here near the end of this road toward dusk. These were seen two weeks earlier on the scouting trip."



Stephen D'Amato

Findings continued on page 6

EDUCATION OUTREACH EVENTS AND NEWS

WILDFLOWER WEEKEND

Taking place on April 12th and 13th, at Crawford's Barn, 2715 Tiber Drive in Sacramento, is an annual showcase of native plants of the greater Sacramento region, in their natural habitats. A native plant sale, presentations on landscaping with natives, hiking wildflower trails, vernal pools, and native American uses of endemic plants are some of the presentations, and there will be displays highlighting the native plants of a variety of habitats including oak woodland, riparian woodland, marsh, chaparral, and others. Birds are an integral part of these habitats, and Sacramento Audubon will have its Outreach table at the festival, so stop by and say hello.

CREEK WEEK

Also of interest is the celebration of Creek Week on April 26th at the Discovery Museum Learning Center at 3615 Auburn Blvd. Sacramento Audubon will be represented there as well, so do

stop by and say hello. This festival is very suitable for families with children.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Outreach group are at both the International Migratory Bird Day at the Sacramento City Zoo, on May 4th, and Walk On The Wildside, at Beach Lake Preserve, on May 10th. We're still looking for volunteers to work at the Sacramento Audubon table at these two events, so if you have a few hours free on either of those days give Cathie LaZier a call at 457-6882, or email empid@earthlink.net.

CALIFORNIA RIVERS FESTIVAL

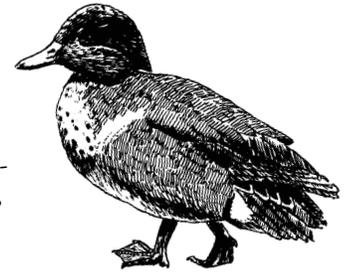
Sacramento Audubon had its Outreach Table at the California Rivers Festival put on by Friends of the River at the Waldorf School in Fair Oaks. Thanks to Lea Landry, Marlene Ishihara, June Persson and Cathie LaZier for working at the table.

Field Trips

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 833-6722, matuchbirdman@yahoo.com for trips through April 13. From April 14th on call the scheduler Carla Barbaro, 717-8808, cbarbaro@comcast.net. For Creek Week activities call Alta Tura, 454-4544, ucc@arcadecreekrecreation.com.

Consider car pooling and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on all trips. Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place. Try to arrive early, especially if you want driving directions or plan to carpool. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader.



Stephen D'Amato

Wednesday, April 2, 8am–noon Bannister Park

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Explore another beautiful area along the American River with Jack. As always, you can share in his knowledge of the natural history of the parkway. Meet Jack in the parking lot at the end of Bannister Road, south off Fair Oaks Blvd, west of Sunrise Blvd.

Saturday, April 5, 7am Caswell Memorial State Park **Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636** **calaveri@sbcglobal.net**

Caswell Memorial State Park is located in the Central Valley near the town of Ripon, about an hour south of Sacramento. The park's position along the meandering Stanislaus River affords a combination of water and riparian vegetation. Although now merely a remnant, the park's 258 acres are mostly wild, in stark contrast to the surrounding agricultural lands, and present a pristine example of the once extensive riparian corridor along the river. The habitat is primarily mature riparian valley oak woodland. Its multi-level canopy provides lush cover, nesting and feeding grounds and is a magnet for a variety of resident and migrant species. This habitat also harbors the endemic riparian brush rabbit, not known to occur elsewhere. For more information about the park, go to www.parks.ca.gov, click on "Find A Park" and use the drop-down menu to find Caswell.

Passerines, including several species of swallows, sparrows, woodpeckers and warblers are park specialties in Spring and Summer, and resident Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, and Great Horned Owls nest here. There is a day-use fee per vehicle to enter the park. We plan to spend several hours

in the park along some of the numerous nature trails, so bring food and water. The trails are primarily level, but these paths and the vegetation along them may be damp. Dress appropriately. We will meet at the Park and Ride on the east side of Hwy 99 at the Sheldon Rd exit.

Sunday, April 6, 7:30am Mather Field Park **Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457** **wayne.blunk@worldnet.att.net**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road for this half day trip. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

Saturday, April 12, 8am Jepson Prairie and Yolo Bypass **Leader: Andi Salmi, 691-7216** **andisalmi@yahoo.com**

Jepson Prairie is an unusual area of bunch grass prairie and vernal pool habitats, harboring some fascinating native plant species. Wildflowers will be the main focus of the morning and we'll bird Yolo Bypass in the afternoon. Meet Andi at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento take West Capitol exit; turn left and then left again into the lot. Bring a lunch and water. The trip will last into mid-afternoon.

Saturday, April 12, 6am River Walk Bird Count **Cosumnes River Preserve** **Recorded Information, 684-2816**

Meet at the Visitor Center on Franklin Blvd south of Twin Cities Road, for this

monthly birding census trip. It's a great birding area, always full of surprises, and joining the group trip is a good way to find out what's happening at the preserve. This walk covers about four miles, and, at a leisurely pace, should take approximately five hours, so be sure to bring a lunch and liquids. You must check the recorded information a day or two before to confirm the exact meeting time and get any other updated details.

Sunday, April 13, 8am Cosumnes River Preserve **Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146**

Join Brian at this Nature Conservancy area 20 minutes south of Sacramento. He will search the ponds and fields on Desmond Rd and Franklin Rd for waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors. Walks along the boardwalk, bridge and trail areas should turn up other interesting species in this rich riparian area. Meet Brian at the visitor center on Franklin Blvd. Take Interstate 5 south to Twin Cities Road. Go east on Twin Cities Road until you reach Franklin Blvd. Go south on Franklin to reach the visitor center.

Tuesday, April 15, 9am–noon Phoenix Field **Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Join Jack at Phoenix Field (Jim David Park) for a walk around the beautiful vernal pools. This trip will feature rare plants and spring blooms in the vernal pools. Jack will lend his expertise in identifying these unusual plants. Phoenix Field is located on Sunset Blvd just east of Hazel Ave. Don't forget your binoculars to view the resident birds.

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

Saturday, April 19, 10am-1pm
Surveying Laguna Creek's
Riparian Ecosystem
Leader: Greg Suba, 772-3230
Creek Week Tour

Take a walk along Laguna Creek's trail system and stop by three trail stations to measure streamside trees, test water quality, and study changes along the Laguna Creek landscape. Volunteers from the Laguna Creek Watershed Council's Stream Stewards Program will be on hand at each station to lead you through the activities. Jack Hill Park (at Porto Rosa Drive and Monte Cresta Way), Elk Grove. Call or email gsuba@surewest.net for additional information.

Saturday April 19, 1:30pm-3:30pm
Bufferlands Birds and Blooms Tour
Leader: Roger Jones, 875-9174
Creek Week Tour

Thousands of waterfowl and other wetland birds winter at the Fishhead Lake wetlands, and many live year-round to nest and raise their young. California poppies, lupines, owl's clover, and baby blue-eyes grow around the uplands and wetland edges. Come enjoy the birds and flowers on a leisurely 1-mile walk with wildlife biologist Roger Jones. The meeting location is weather-dependent, so call Roger or email jonesro@saccounty.net the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

Saturday, April 19, 8am-noon
Bushy Lake/Cal Expo floodplain
Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458
Naturestoc@aol.com

Meet Dan in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. Dan will be looking for a variety of resident and early migrant species. This four mile hike will end before lunch. Bring water and appropriate footwear as it may be muddy. This is an interesting trip for both experienced and novice birders.

Saturday, April 19, 6am or earlier
Tall Forest Bird Count
Cosumnes River Preserve
Recorded Information, 684-2816

Meet at the farm center gate at the intersection of Desmond and Bruceville Roads, ON TIME to join this monthly bird count. Usually led by John Trochet, this area is normally closed, so this is your opportunity

to bird there, and this is a great time of year for birding. John has an appreciation of nature on many levels, and a trip with him is always exciting. You must check the recorded information a day or two previously to get the exact meeting time and any other updated details. Arrive a little early, as this trip always leaves promptly.

Sunday, April 20
Habitat Improvement Work Day
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Help Jack restore native vegetation along the American River Parkway. Tasks vary from month to month, so call Jack for details and meeting time, usually early morning.

Sunday, April 20
7:30am
Gibson Ranch
Leader:
Brian Gilmore
451-9146

Join Brian exploring the fields and trails of Gibson Ranch for spring migrants and residents including bluebirds, woodpeckers, phoebes, kingbirds, warblers and hawks. Meet at 7:30 inside the park at the Gibson Ranch Store parking lot. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee. From Sacramento take Bus. 80 (Capital Freeway) to the Watt Ave exit. Go north approximately 5.2 miles; turn left on Elverta Road, and cross Dry Creek Bridge. Gibson Ranch will be on the right.

Kirsten Munson



Wednesday, April 23, noon-2pm
Local Fish Fauna
Leader: Steve Scott, 875-9307
Creek Week Tour

What lurks in the murky depths of Sacramento's urban creeks? Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) Bufferlands staff will demonstrate fish sampling techniques, help with hands-on fish identification, and discuss the natural history of California's diverse fish communities. This tour includes a ½ mile walk and an opportunity to see some of the Bufferlands riparian and wetland habitat restoration projects within the Morrison and Laguna Creek floodplains. The meeting location is weather dependent, call or email scotts@saccounty.net the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

Wednesday, April 23, 6:30pm
Steelhead Creek Beaver Pond Walk
Leader: Mary Tappel, 925-1933
Creek Week Tour

Early evening is the best time to see beaver activity and lots of other local wildlife. Take a stroll with Mary through Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary. Meet at the Ueda Parkway Staging area parking lot on Elkhorn Blvd and Sorrento Rd east of Steelhead Creek. Call or email marye.tappel@jps.net before April 23 for further information or directions. NOTE: this event will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain.

Wednesday
April 23, 8am
Sailor Bar

Leader:
Dan Tankersley, 359-2829
dtankers@winfirst.com

This is a wonderful time of year to enjoy the American River and view a wide variety of species including waterfowl, resident and migrant birds and possibly beaver. This walk will include some moderately steep and uneven paths to provide great views. Bring water and snacks to last through late morning. Meet Dan at 8am in the lower parking area of Sailor Bar. From Hazel take Winding Way west; then Illinois south into the park. There is a \$5 parking fee. This is a great trip for newer birders.

Saturday, April 26, 8:15am
Pine Hill, El Dorado County
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Walk with Jack up to a Fire Lookout and explore till early afternoon, with a focus on the rare and endangered plants found in this special area. Jack will not ignore the birds, so bring your binoculars as well. Meet at 8:15am at the north end of the parking lot of the Raley's shopping center on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd and Highway 50. Alternate meeting place is at 9am at the gate on Pine Hill Road. Hwy 50 to Bass Lake Road; north on Bass Lake Road to Green Valley Road; right on Green Valley (watch for a school on your right) and then turn left on Ulenkamp Rd; follow Ulenkamp to Pine Hill Road; turn left on Pine Hill and follow it to the gate and meet Jack there. This trip will last till early afternoon so bring a lunch and liquids.

Saturday, April 26, 7:30am

Sweetwater Creek

Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603
Offleash56@yahoo.com

At this favorite spring hotspot you should find wild flowers in bloom and hear the song of the Yellow-breasted Chat. Richard will scout for Lazuli Buntings, Wrentits, California Thrashers, migrating hummingbirds, and colorful warblers. Meet Richard at the Bella Bru in the shopping center on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd and Highway 50. This will be a half day trip and is a good one for beginners.

Sunday, April 27, 7am–11:30am

Spring Migration at the SRCSD Bufferlands

Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942
conardc@gmail.com

This morning tour of the Bufferlands will focus on finding migrant songbirds, resident breeders, and lingering winter residents. The heron, egret, and cormorant rookery will be in full swing and if water levels are right we could have excellent shore birding conditions. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands contain 2,650 acres of wetlands, riparian forest, grasslands, vernal pools, and restored habitats. From Sacramento take I-5 south. Exit at Meadowview/Pocket Road (just south of Florin) and turn left (east) over the freeway. Turn right (south) on Freeport Blvd (the third light). After one mile, just before the town of Freeport, turn left on Stonecrest, and follow it over the freeway and south to the locked gate. Be prepared for potentially muddy trails and up to 3 miles of walking.

Sunday, April 27, 2008, 7am SHARP Mines Rd. /Del Puerto Canyon

Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
calaveri@sbcglobal.net

This is a full day outing. Mines Road and Del Puerto Canyon are located southeast of Livermore, about an hour and a half south of Sacramento. This is primarily a road trip, but with several stops and short walks, encompassing three counties along the birding route: Alameda, Santa Clara and Stanislaus. The trip's timing and varied habitats typical of the coastal mountains and canyons should produce numerous spring migrants as well as resident birds. Expect Phainopepla, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Lewis's Woodpecker, Bald Eagle, Bullock's Oriole and many more. We will visit one regional park, Lake del Valle, where there will be a day-use fee to enter the park. Meet Gary at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West

Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Ave exit; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Car pooling is strongly advised, due to limited access at stops and the distance traveled. When we DEPART the lot at 7am sharp, we will back-track to I-5 and proceed south and west to the Livermore area. Bring along hand held radios, food and water.

Saturday, May 3, 7am

Auburn State Recreation Area/Drivers Flat and Ruck-a-Chucky

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
Shoppe01@earthlink.net

We will be exploring the beautiful canyon of the Middle Fork of the American River off Foresthill Road to look for spring migrants and resident breeding birds. This is Scott's favorite 'secret' birding spot. Among the great birds to be found are Calliope Hummingbird, Willow and Pacific-slope Flycatchers, Hutton's, Cassin's and Warbling Vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and numerous warblers such as Nashville, Yellow, Townsend's, Black-throated Gray and Yellow-breasted Chat. Walking will be up to a mile at a time with moderate inclines. This trip will end mid-day, but plan to lunch on the banks of the river. Meet at the Horseshoe Bar Road Park and Ride in Loomis off I-80 at 7am.

Sunday, May 4, 7:30am–noon

Cronan Ranch, Coloma Area
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

Come on a hike with Maureen through beautiful rolling, oak-studded hills off Hwy 49 near Coloma. This BLM property is intersected with many hiking trails and is home to a large variety of foothill habitat birds. Several species of raptor nest here or may be seen, such as White-tailed Kite, Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawk and Northern Harrier. Other specialties include Rufous-crowned Sparrows and other sparrows, woodpeckers, flycatchers, goldfinches, towhees, swallows, meadowlarks, wild turkey and migrating warblers. This trip will include several miles of easy hiking; trails may be muddy. Meet Maureen at 7:30 in El Dorado Hills at El Dorado Hills Blvd and Hwy 50. at the Bella Bru Coffee Shop in the Raley's shopping center parking lot. The trip concludes at noon; however, there are

numerous sites in the Coloma area to enjoy a picnic lunch.

Tuesday, May 6, 8am–noon

Sailor Bar Area

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Meet Jack at the end of Emperor Street to explore the plants, birds and animals of this riparian corridor along the American River Parkway. From Winding Way, turn south on Kenneth, then east on Emperor Street to the end.

Wednesday, May 7, 7:30am

Sacramento Old City Cemetery Broadway and Riverside Blvd

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

Discover the variety of birds that live in and migrate through this historic city cemetery near the heart of downtown Sacramento.

This walking tour is perfect for



Kirsten Munson

beginning birders. Meet Maureen at the cemetery's main gate at Broadway and 10th Street. Visitors may park in the lot across from the 10th Street gate and meet inside the cemetery entrance. This will be a short walk, 1–2 hours. The tour is a public service of the Old City Cemetery Committee and is offered under the auspices of the Division of History and Science of the City of Sacramento. Call Maureen or email if you have questions.

Saturday, May 10, 5:30am or earlier
River Walk Bird Count

Cosumnes River Preserve
Recorded Information, 684-2816

Meet at the Visitor Center on Franklin Blvd south of Twin Cities Road, for this monthly birding census trip. It's a great birding area, always full of surprises, and joining the group trip is a good way to find out what's happening at the preserve. This walk covers about four miles, and, at a leisurely pace, should take approximately five hours, so be sure to bring a lunch and liquids. You must check the recorded information a day or two before to get the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

Field Trips continued on page 6

Field Trips continued from page 5

Saturday, May 10, 7am

Sweetwater Creek

Leader: Carla Barbaro, 717-8808

cbarbaro@comcast.net

This is a wonderful area for spring birding. Bring water for a half day exploration of the trails looking for migrants, wild flowers and nesting birds. Past favorites are goldfinches, orioles, bluebirds, Yellow-breasted Chats, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and Lazuli Buntings. Meet at the Bella Bru in the shopping center on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd and Highway 50. This is a fun trip for all levels of birder.

Sunday, May 11, 7:30am

Spenceville Wildlife Area

Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603

Offleash56@yahoo.com

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. This trip will include several short hikes and one optional 5 mile hike over uneven terrain. Possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, rails, warblers, and more. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at Brookfield's restaurant in Roseville (NOT Madison location). Take Eureka Road exit off I-80; go right on Eureka and first left at the stoplight (Taylor Road). The restaurant is located behind the Shell gas station.

Wednesday, May 14, 11:45am – 1pm

Purple Martins in Old Sacramento

Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804

mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

Enjoy wonderful close looks at Purple Martins, where they nest in Old Sacramento. You will also see nesting White-Throated Swifts and probably Cliff and Tree Swallows. Previous years have turned up other interesting species as well. Meet Maureen on the east side of the Railroad Museum along Second Street.

Saturday, May 17, 5:30am or earlier

Tall Forest Bird Count

Cosumnes River Preserve

Recorded Information, 684-2816

Meet at the farm center gate at the intersection of Desmond and Bruceville Roads, ON TIME to join this monthly bird count. Usually led by John Trochet, this area is normally closed, so this is your opportunity to bird there. John has an appreciation of nature on many levels, and a trip with him is always exciting. You must check the recorded information a day or two previously to get the exact meeting time and any other updated details. Arrive a little early, as this trip always leaves promptly.

Saturday, May 17, 7:30am

Goethe Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

empid@earthlink.net

Some young birds may still be in the nest; others traveling with parents begging for food, and some wildflowers will still be blooming. We'll walk the oak woodlands to the river and see what we find. This is a good trip for novice birders. There is a park entrance fee of \$5 per car; if you want to carpool in, meet Cathie at 7:20 on Rod Beaudry Drive just off Folsom Blvd. This trip will end by noon.

Sunday, May 18, 7:30am

Mather Field

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457

Mather Lake area is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. Join Wayne to look for resident birds and spring migrants. Targeted birds will be Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey, and Green Heron. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road for this half day trip. There is a \$5 fee per car. This is a wonderful trip for beginner birders.

Sunday, May 18

Habitat Improvement Work Day

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Help Jack restore native vegetation along the American River Parkway. Tasks vary from month to month, so call Jack for details and meeting time, usually early morning.

Findings continued from page 2

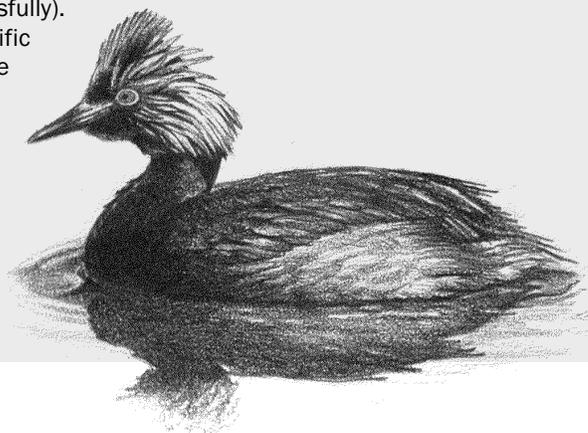
Eureka/Arcata Area (2/16-18) – Leader Dan Brown reported: "With a small group of 7, the trip started out Saturday with a failed attempt to see an Arctic Loon that was present at Stone Lagoon, north of Arcata. On Sunday Joe Ceriani led us up to Crescent City where we had much better luck. In the harbor we saw Surf, White-winged and Black Scoters, Long-tailed Duck, and Paul Cordero spotted a Rock Sandpiper. On to the Alexandria Dairy in the Fort Dick area north of Crescent City, where we saw Aleutian Geese, 2 Peregrine Falcons, 1 Prairie Falcon, 1 Merlin, 2 Bald Eagles and the resident Crested Caracara! Add to that list a Palm Warbler in a local farmyard and a 1st cycle Glaucous Gull on the Smith River, we thought that we had a very good day! We somehow missed the Slaty-backed Gull that was present in the

area of the Dairy.

"Monday found us at Arcata Marsh at high tide. Several thousand assorted shorebirds were attempting to roost on the islands in the pond and were continually being flushed by various interruptions including a Merlin, which gave us a great show as it attempted to catch a meal (unsuccessfully). Paul picked out a Pacific Golden Plover in with the Black-bellied Plovers and Marbled Godwits. From the marsh we headed for the North Jetty via what Joe called 'the V street loop'. The loop produced 2 more Peregrine Falcons and a Rough-legged

Hawk. The North Jetty yielded another 1st cycle Glaucous Gull, another Rock Sandpiper and Joe spotted a Red-necked Grebe. Even with our slow start, our species total for the weekend was 108."

Pete Hayes



Birding and Nature Festivals

SACRAMENTO SPLASH presents a **Nature in the Neighborhood** **Family Event** **Vernal Pool Flower Walk |** **at Mather Field**

Sunday, April 13th: 1pm – 3pm

Every year, Sacramento Splash teaches more than 2,000 elementary school students about the wonder of vernal pools. Splash is offering a special family field trip for the families of Splash students and we want you to come, too! The Vernal Pool Flower Walk will be led by trained guides with the help of junior vernal pool experts from across Sacramento County.

The Flower Walk will feature spectacular displays of vernal pool wildflowers, which form concentric rings and dense patches of yellow, white, pink, and purple flowers. This display changes from week to week, as each species gives way to the next, like a floral kaleidoscope. As temperatures rise in late-April, the flowers will die and the pools will go into their long, dry phase, so check out the pools before it's too late!

For more information visit www.sacsplash.org and click on "Nature in the Neighborhood." You may reserve a spot for this program (recommended) on our website or by calling Splash at 364-2437. The Splash Education Center is located at 4426 Excelsior Rd., Mather, CA 95655. For directions, click on "Find Us."

There is a recommended donation: \$5/ person. All children must be accompanied by an adult and strong pants and sturdy shoes are recommended.

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY TOURS

Mather vernal pool docents of the Sacramento Chapter of the California Native Plant Society will also be leading vernal pool flower walks. The 2 hour tours are on April 20th and 27th at 10am and 1pm each day.

See www.sacvalleyncps.org for directions. For more information and to sign up, call 737-WILD. Reservations are required. The tour is provided free of charge by trained CNPS docents, however donations are greatly appreciated.

GODWIT DAYS IN ARCATA COMING SOON!

The 13th annual Godwit Days spring migration bird festival is being held April 17-23. Godwit Days is a three-day spring migration bird festival celebrating the Marbled Godwit and all the birds of the coastal redwoods, bays, marshes, and mudflats of California's Redwood Coast. Choose from over 100 field trips, lectures, workshops, and boat excursions. Pre- and post-festival trips are available for an extended stay and opportunity to explore all the birds of the North Coast and Klamath Bioregion. For further information and registration visit www.godwitdays.com.

HERON FESTIVAL AND WILDFLOWER BRUNCH

Held in Kelseyville, CA on April 26 and 27, the Heron Festival is a celebration of the Great Blue Herons return to their nesting sites around Clear Lake. The festival, created by the local Redbud Audubon Society, includes activities such as pontoon boat rides to view the heronry and guided kayak trips to view birds on Kelsey Creek. Informative and interesting nature presentations are held at Clear Lake State Park along with informative booths, children's activities, and a Wildflower Brunch. Guided bird walks are available. More information, including event information, schedule and registration, can be found at www.heronfestival.org or call 800.525.3743

KERN RIVER VALLEY SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL

The 14th Annual Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival will take place April 30 through May 6, 2008. Audubon California's Kern River Preserve in Weldon, hosts numerous free events including bird walks led by Kerncrest Audubon Society volunteers, bird banding with the Southern Sierra Research Station, and information booths and exhibits located in the large, shaded front yard of Preserve Headquarters. Birding and natural history field trips with expert leaders are offered Wednesday-Tuesday, April 30-May 6. The Kern River Valley is one of nature's most diverse homes: 350 bird species (c. 233 species per Nature Fest and over 200 nesting species!), Spring bird migration creates an exciting time for birders visiting the Kern Valley Spring Nature Festival. The last five festivals have averaged 233 bird species!

There are 30 different field trip choices, weekend workshops and demonstrations. There will be children's activities at both Circle Park and the Kern River Preserve. For further information including activities, trip descriptions, accommodations, and a list of the birds seen last year visit <http://kern.audubon.org/bioregion.htm>.

SPRING WINGS BIRD FESTIVAL

The eleventh Annual Spring Wings Bird Festival takes place in Fallon, NV and coincides with International Migratory Bird Day and the height of spring migration in the Lahontan Valley wetlands. This year's festival is May 9-11. These internationally recognized wetlands are temporary home to over 260 species of birds, including thousands of White-faced ibis, Long-billed dowitcher, American white pelicans, Black-necked stilts, American avocets, and many other waterfowl and waterbirds. During the 2007 festival, 164 different species were logged - a new festival record! Save this date and we'll have more information in next month's *Observer* or go to www.springwings.org.

Other Events

PARADISE WEEKEND AT MORRISON'S LODGE

Morrison's Lodge in Merlin, Oregon is offering a birding package in collaboration with the Siskiyou Audubon Society April 25 through 27. The weekend will be filled with birdwatching alongside wildlife experts, spectacular gourmet dining, and nightly accommodation in spacious quiet cabins with spectacular views of the Rogue River. Participants can expect to see over 50 species of birds on the nature hikes including five species of Warblers, Pileated Woodpeckers, Ospreys and Bald Eagles. For more information see last month's *Observer* or contact Morrison's Lodge Event Manager, Mai-Lani Kaililaau at 800-826-1963, or go to www.morrisonlodge.com.

HIGH SIERRA CAMP AND WORKSHOPS

The historic Golden Trout Camp, at 10,000 ft, just south of Mt. Whitney, is a unique, 3-mile hike-in wilderness camp. Natural history and Black and White Photography sessions start on June 22, June 29, and July 6. The sessions are each one week long. The tuition includes all meals for the seven day session. The area is also a spectacular place for birding.

The facilities are "semi-primitive" with food and supplies brought in by mules. Sleeping tent cabins are dormitory style with 4-6 participants in each tent. Because of the high elevation participants are advised to be in good shape and consult with their doctor about any altitude problems that might be anticipated.

Golden Trout Camp was begun in the 1970's by members from three Audubon Chapters and became a separate nonprofit organization in 1994 when it took over responsibility for the educational sessions. Contact Paul Roark at 805-688-8344 or paul.roark@verizon.net for further information, a brochure or registration. Information can also be found at www.goldentroutworkshops.org.

THIS IS IT!

THE ANNUAL MAY BOOK SALE

Our May General Meeting will begin early with our annual Book Sale. Please go through your bookshelves and consider donating items to the sale. Anything with a natural history theme is welcome, including of course, birding books, CDs, and videos. Look for information in future issues of *The Observer* about where to bring your books prior to the sale. This is a great fundraiser for SAS and lots of fun as there are always great finds and bargains. See you there!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Melody Baldwin, Maurice H Getty, and G.R. Swafford to the **General Fund**.

Don Cable and Sara Gillespie to **Bobelaine Sanctuary**.

Don Cable, Melanie Compton, Ed Greaves, G.R. Swafford and Peter Watkins, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

The Sacramento Audubon Board voted to donate \$500 to the **Purple Martin Project** in memory of Bill Grenfell.

WE'RE STILL LOOKING FOR A HELPING HAND

Program Chair

We are still looking for a Program Chair to begin with the September 2008 program. The next program would not be until September, 2008. Just call Tim Fitzer if you have even a little interest so he can explain that the chair gets lots of help and we all work together planning programs with lots of ideas to make it fun interesting.

We have notes on good, available programs already. The program speaker frequently has their own write-up prepared so you don't even have to write the program notes for every month. There are only 7 programs that need to be arranged each year because of months where we either have no meeting or have a previously arranged program, such as in November.

Tim's number is 870-5207 or email: spskua2@comcast.net. Don't miss this opportunity to get involved and have fun too. Many thanks and accolades will be yours.

NOMINATIONS FOR SAS BOARD FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2008/2009

The nominations committee presents the following slate of officers to be voted on at the April general meeting.

President	Keith Wagner
Vice President	Tim Fitzer
Treasurer	Cathie LaZier
Corresponding Secretary	Jan Tankersley
Recording Secretary	Lisa Seto
Past President	Peter Watkins
Directors	Sheila Deaner
	Roy Greenaway
	Ken Hashagen
	Lea Landry
	Darryl Moore



SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Bietz, Judith	Karnitz, Kathy J
Cable, Don	Liggett, Jim
Feletto, Nadine	Sansome, David and Yvonne
Gerwing, Kathryn	Shores, Shala D
Getty, Maurice H	

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento
Audubon Society is to:

- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds;
- Promote the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach;
- Provide, encourage and support environmental educational opportunities; and
- Provide proactive leadership in the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be April 27, 2008 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Your membership supports the SAS mission of conservation, environmental education and protection of the region's natural ecosystems and diverse wildlife populations. Please include your email address if you would like to be added to our Action Alert List for letter/email writing on conservation issues.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry@softcom.net (916) 638-1141

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Donation for maintenance Bobelaine Sanctuary \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

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

Observations continued from page 10

and continued through the end of the month. There have been excellent totals of this species throughout the region this winter. At least one **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was found on private land on Ryer Island for the second year in a row. This year it was first reported on 2/18. Other interesting reports include several **Bald Eagle** sightings on the upper portion of the American River Parkway, a **Greater Roadrunner** along Yolo County Rd 95 near Zamora on 2/15, up to 200 **Violet-green Swallows** foraging along the American River near the Nimbus Hatchery during a break in a storm on 2/24, at least two of the **Lapland Longspurs** continuing

through 2/9 near the corner of Brewer and Nicolaus Rds in Placer County, and a **Black-headed Grosbeak** found northeast of Davis on 1/21, continuing through at least 2/6, was determined to be an immature male. The male **Cassin's Finch** found near Slide Hill Park in Davis on 1/29 continued through at least 2/1, and **Lawrence's Goldfinches** were found coming to feeders in Rancho Cordova and Fair Oaks.

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit www.cvbirds.org and click "Listserv" for details. With over 150 reports, it is impossible to list everyone; however, I want to thank the following for reports on the

above species and for providing additional information:

Steve Abbott, Roger Adamson, Dan Brown, Paul Buchanan, Subhash Chand, Todd Easterla, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Maureen Geiger, Phil Gordon, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, David Johnson, Jeri Langham, Robin Leong, Shawn Lockwood, Ed Pandolfino, Jim Pearce, Deren Ross, Mary Schiedt, John Sterling, Dan Tankersley, John Trochet, and Bruce Webb.

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

Chris Conard

Seasonal Observations

February 1 to February 29
Rare and Unusual Bird Reports
www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

The report of the month came in the form of two **Glossy Ibis** in Placer County on 2/16 along Brewer Rd, just to the north of Nicolaus Rd. This species on the California Bird Records Committee review list has been reported locally several times in the past year. The first accepted record for the state was as recent as 2000. A few dedicated birders have been looking very carefully through **White-faced Ibis** flocks. The wider application of high quality spotting scopes—in the hands of skilled observers—is a big factor in the increased reports. There are also many more ibis to look through in recent years. Just in the past two decades **White-faced Ibis** have gone from rare to abundant in our area—a little good news for a change!

Continuing on the topic of state review species, presumably the same **Emperor Goose** reported at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) on 1/13, flying with a large flock of **Snow Geese**, was seen again on 2/12. Other waterfowl reports include at least five **Eurasian Wigeons** on 2/16 along Pleasant Grove Rd, south of Nicolaus Rd, in Sutter County. A **Eurasian Wigeon** at the Sacramento County Bufferlands on 2/20 added to the handful of records for that location, and two **Greater Scaup** were present there on 2/22.

Two **Ruff** (a male and a female) were first found at YWA on 2/27, and continued into March. This rare species has been

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amazingly regular at this location. On 2/7, an adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was reported from Beal's Point at Folsom Lake. This is a state review species, but has been reported more widely in the

state in recent years. It is still an outstanding find away from the coast or the Salton Sea. At least one first-year **Glaucous Gull** was found at the Davis Wetlands on 2/16 during the Central Valley Bird Club's winter gulls tour.

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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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 monthly January through December, except June and August, by the Sacramento Audubon Society.



Reports of up to ten **Short-eared Owls** along Yolo County Rd 28H and 103 (west of the land-fill) began on 2/10

Observations continued on page 9