



# The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, April 17, 2014

Effie Yeaw Nature Center  
Assembly Room, 7pm

### The Colorful Birds of Borneo

Susan Myers

Susan Myers has always had an eye for the world around her and a desire to explore it - both visually and physically. She'll share her discoveries in Borneo with us at April's general meeting. This desire led Susan to her current profession as a Nature Guide throughout Asia. When Susan isn't lurking behind a tree in a forest in some remote corner of the globe, she usually has a camera in her hand and an eye on the people and places which surround her.

After completing studies in biological sciences, she moved to Japan for several years, where she became fluent in the language and studied the natural history and culture. She's had many careers including being a nurse (which didn't last long!), a biologist, a scuba instructor and a Japanese translator/interpreter. For more than 15 years Susan has led tours throughout Asia, including countless trips to the Malay Peninsula, Borneo and Indonesia, over twenty tours to Vietnam, and many tours of India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Japan, Thailand, China, Cambodia, Burma and the Philippines, as well as Madagascar, West Papua, the Pacific islands and, of course, Australia, where she resides. She has published many papers and articles on ornithology and general ecology in a variety of respected magazines, scientific journals and books. She is the author of a recent field guide, "The Birds of Borneo", published in 2009.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael.

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## Farallon Islands Boat Trip

**SAVE THIS DATE! SUNDAY, JULY 13, 2014**

Sacramento Audubon Society is sponsoring our annual pelagic trip off the coast of San Francisco to the Farallon Islands. This will be the 24th year SAS has sponsored this trip, and every year is different! We'll travel out the Golden Gate and cruise around Southeast Farallon Island, one of San Francisco's "desert islands" and part of the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary.

This a great trip to see new birds to add to your life list. We'll have several experts on board to help spot and identify birds. We should see many species that are usually only seen offshore or as a tiny speck in your scope from the shore! Highlights from previous trips include Tufted Puffin, Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets, Pigeon Guillemot, Black-Footed Albatross, Brown Booby, Sooty Shearwater, three species of cormorants, and Northern Fulmar. What will we see this year? Join us and discover for yourself!

A naturalist will give a brief pre-departure lecture and will be with us all day to answer questions and provide information on the Islands and the wildlife. We'll be on

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## In Memorium

### JACK HIELE

Jack Hiele, an Audubon legacy dear to us all, passed away recently. He had been in declining health since he fell cross country skiing about 3 years ago—and especially since the passing of his wife, Zelpha, last fall.

Many of you knew Jack, you went on his nature walks, and you know what a loss this is for the nature loving community of this area.

For those of you who did not know Jack, he was 93 years old and for decades led birders and nature lovers of all kinds on walks along the American River Parkway including the Effie Yeaw Nature Center preserve. He also organized the birders for our yearly Bird and Breakfast and he led the Annual ARNHA Wildlife Count. He was very active with the Sacramento Audubon, leading birding field trips which always included wildflower identification. A specialty of his was leading the evening beaver walks along the American River.

The Sacramento Board of Supervisors twice honored him as Outstanding Volunteer in service to county parks and recreation and to county residents. He volunteered thousands of hours on behalf of habitat restoration at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Other awards included SAS's 1992 Conservation award and SAS 1993 Field Activities Award. Even at 90 years old he could out-walk most of us and he had a terrific memory for plants' names (Latin and common) and the interesting facts about them. He could spot birds and their nests in trees half a football field away, and could talk forever about their habits and traits and what made them interesting. So many of us owe much of what we know about this region's natural history to Jack. We will always be grateful for his passion for nature that he shared with us so eagerly.

## Field Trip Findings

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center (3/12)**—Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Nine birders joined me on this warm spring morning, and their sharp eyes spotted nuthatches and wrens carrying nesting materials to cavities. More signs of spring were turkeys displaying, Bushtits, Oak Titmice and kingfishers in pairs, and redbuds in bloom. Dianne Alperin, visiting from Massachusetts, scored some life birds, including Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers.”

**Cosumnes River Preserve (3/9)**—Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Thirteen birders saw 70 species of birds on a very pleasant, overcast day at Cosumnes River Preserve. Highlights included Long-billed Dowitcher, Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Ring-necked Duck, Wrentit, Greater White-fronted Goose, Snow Goose, White-faced Ibis and Bonaparte’s Gull.”

**Discovery Park (3/8)**—Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Larry Hickey, reported: “This trip was really great with birds everywhere acting like spring was here. Several pairs of Bushtits were working on their nests and we watched for some time, with other birds flying about with nesting materials. Some wintering sparrows were still present, plus Common Goldeneyes on the American River, while Northern Rough-winged Swallows were present as well as Tree Swallows actively and noisily scouting nest holes in dead snags. Altogether, 10 of us had 47 species on a warm, sunny morning.”

**Shollenberger Park, Petaluma (3/2)**—Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Sixteen birders saw 78 species of birds on a cool and rainy day along Highway 37 and the Petaluma area. Highlights included Bald Eagle, Great Horned Owl, Bonaparte’s Gull, Peregrine Falcon, American Avocet, Greater and Lesser Scaup, Marbled Godwit and Dunlin.”

**North Natomas Regional Park (3/1)**—Leader Ben Graber reported: “The threat of rain scared off most people, but for the three who did show up, it was a very quaint and peaceful walk with fairly cooperative weather and a decent variety of birds. We saw 43 species in all. The two introduced species worth mentioning, Eurasian Collared Doves and Ring-necked Pheasants, were both well represented, the latter being a declining species and the former being a new arrival in the area. Other highlights included a

pair of Cinnamon Teals, lots of Common Gallinules, two Northern Harriers, a Marsh Wren, a Green Heron, and a Say’s Phoebe that was seen well by the whole group.”

**Upper Lake Natoma and Folsom Lake (2/23)**—Leader Chris Conard reported: “We had a nice trip with a dozen people and beautiful spring-like weather. We started the morning with a visit to upper Lake Natoma. We began near the Folsom Zoo and walked trails down to the lake and along the old Folsom Powerhouse channel as far as the Folsom Prison boundary. Highlights included an Osprey seen briefly, mating Red-shouldered Hawks, several Hutton’s Vireos, a pair of Bushtits building a nest, a well-seen and singing Orange-crowned Warbler, a pair of Rufous-crowned Sparrows, and several Fox Sparrows, with one singing. On the drive to Folsom Lake, we stopped for soaring adult Bald Eagles near the dam, and at the Mormon Island access, we saw two Common Loons (one trying to eat a fish it caught while two California Gulls were trying to steal it), three Horned Grebes, and two Phainopeplas.”

**Sacramento Bar (2/22)**—Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “Eight people gathered on a cool morning, and right off we had birds everywhere as we moved along the American River shore. Perhaps the most interesting bird of the morning was a Cooper’s Hawk that was perched approximately 50 feet away and gave everyone a close look at its profile and colors. We all warmed up as the morning progressed, and a total of 50 species were counted. A good morning was had by all.”

**Sandhill Crane trips (2/22 and 2/23)**—Leader Mike Savino reported: “These were the last two Sacramento Audubon Society-Save Our Sandhill Cranes birding tours of the ‘crane season’. On February 22 we again had over 50 people join us. Happily, we had six members of SOS Cranes as assistant leaders. After a talk delivered on the deck of the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center (the crowd was too large to be accommodated inside the Visitor Center) we did a short hike on the Wetlands Walk on the west side of Franklin Blvd. There we saw the usual suspects such as Black-necked Stilts, Northern Shovelers, Pintails, and yellowlegs, American Coot, Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Marsh Wren, Red-winged Blackbirds, Sandhill Cranes,

Greater White-fronted Geese and White-tailed Kites, but also a couple of unusual finds—a Wilson’s Snipe and a Virginia Rail. After the hike we caravanned down to the Woodbridge Ecological Reserve. There we saw a glorious sunset fly-in of hundreds of Sandhill Cranes as well as fly-overs of hundreds of ducks and geese (Cackling, Greater White-fronted, Canada, and Snow) as it got dark. Many cranes landed close enough to provide our visitors excellent close-up views through our spotting scopes. Once again we learned that while the craniacs among us want to see hundreds of cranes, many of our visitors are thrilled to clearly see even one Sandhill Crane close up.

Sunday was almost a duplicate of Saturday with about 40 visitors. The fly-in was wonderful. The cranes did not disappoint us on our last crane tour until September when they return.”

**Beginning Birding Trip, William Pond Park (3/23)**—Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “Today there were eight new birders ready to find birds. Along with three experienced birders we covered the William Pond area. There were plenty of birds. Although the American River was running quite low, we had Yellowlegs and a Hooded Merganser. As we moved along the River a Cooper’s Hawk was seen nesting in a tree across the river. And right next to the trail was a Bushtit nest with a bird inside. Needless to say everyone was satisfied with the walk.”

**William Pond Park (2/16)**—Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Five people joined me on this morning walk. Highlights were a Hooded Merganser and a Red-breasted Sapsucker busily working on an almond tree. Interestingly, the sapsucker was missing the white wing patches. We also had a great view of a female Downy Woodpecker, found by Larry Hickey, and Lark Sparrows found by Valerie Phillips. The merganser and woodpecker were ‘year birds’ for Harlin Perryman.”

**Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk (2/15)**—Maureen Geiger reported: “SAS is partnering with Effie Yeaw Nature Center on monthly nature walks at the Nature Center. Reservations are not needed and children are welcome. EYNC provides docents and SAS provides birders for a walk of about an hour and a half—although everyone has such a

*Findings* continued on page 6

# 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, contact the scheduler Mark Martucci, [matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com), 833-6722, for trips through April 6. For trips beginning April 9 through May 17, contact the scheduler Carla Barbaro, 717-8808, [cbarbaro@comcast.net](mailto:cbarbaro@comcast.net).

Due to insurance requirements, Sacramento Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize ridesharing/carpools. Participants are, however, encouraged to voluntarily share rides. Any carpool arrangements are private agreements between the driver and the passengers. Drivers must carry adequate insurance coverage. Please be courteous and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on all trips. Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place. Try to arrive early, especially if you want driving directions or plan to carpool. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader. In case of INCLEMENT WEATHER contact the trip leader for trip status.



Great-horned Owl  
Stephen D'Amato

### **Saturday, April 5, 7am Caswell Memorial State Park Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636 [calaveri.gary@gmail.com](mailto:calaveri.gary@gmail.com)**

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, mature cottonwood riparian and valley oak woodland vegetation. Its multi-level tall tree canopy, low scrubs and vines provide lush cover, nesting and foraging habitat, and is a magnet for a variety of resident and migrant bird species. For more information about the park, go to [www.parks.ca.gov](http://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. The park is surrounded by ag lands, so Swainson's Hawks are seen regularly here this time of year. California Thrasher and Wrentit, not that common on the valley floor except in riparian areas, are also here.

There is a day-use fee per vehicle to enter the park. Plan to spend several hours in the park along some of the numerous nature trails, so bring food and water. The trails are generally 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 near the Sheldon Rd exit. Take Hwy 99 south from Sacramento to the Sheldon Road exit. The new off ramp here cloverleaf's and then crosses

over the freeway. After crossing, proceed to the second signal light; turn right on East Stockton Blvd and proceed about a ¼ mile to the lot.

### **Saturday, April 5, 8:30am-10:30am Creek Week-Birds and Blooms Tour**

The Fishhead Lake mitigation wetland is a nice example of wetlands created as mitigation for earlier wetland losses. The wetland has both a permanent and seasonal component as well as a surrounding upland buffer. Thousands of waterfowl winter at the wetland and many remain year-round to nest and raise young. Much of the area is planted to native wildflowers that bloom in early spring. California poppies, lupines, owl's clover, baby blue-eyes, and many others can be seen spreading about the uplands and wetland edges. Visitors will receive a packet of native flower seeds to start their own native garden. The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at (916) 875-9174 or [jonesro@sacsewer.com](mailto:jonesro@sacsewer.com) the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

### **Sunday, April 6, 8am Mather Field Park Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457 [wayne.blunk@gmail.com](mailto:wayne.blunk@gmail.com)**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Great-tailed Grackle and Yellow-headed Blackbirds both nest at the lake. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel for this morning trip. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

### **Wednesday, April 9, 7:30am Mather Lake**

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

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Great-tailed Grackle and Yellow-headed Blackbirds both nest at the lake. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel for this morning trip. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

### **Saturday, April 12, 8am Granite Regional Park Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682 [Bgraber984@gmail.com](mailto:Bgraber984@gmail.com)**

Ben will be leading this trip to a relatively newly established and often overlooked birding hotspot. In the springtime, this park is a good area for a variety of resident species and migrants. Previous visits have yielded everything from the usual wrens and sparrows to Bullock's Orioles, Lazuli Buntings, and Phainopeplas. Since this is the migration season, we may find some surprises. This is a great trip for both beginners and more experienced birders. This trip will finish mid to late morning. To reach the park, take Exit #9 from Hwy. 50 for Howe Avenue/Power Inn; go south on Howe Avenue as it becomes Power Inn; go under the overpass, and turn left on Cucamonga Road. Take the first left once you are in the park and can see the grassy lawn area ahead of you. Park in the large parking area near the levee.

*Field Trips* continued on page 4

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**Saturday, April 12, 10:30am**  
**Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk**

Spring means the birds are up and singing, establishing territory and nesting. Join Sacramento Audubon birders Ann Burriss and Tim Fitzer, with Nature Center docent Melanie DuBose for a family friendly nature walk at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists/birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. For directions, see [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net).

**Sunday, April 13, 8am**  
**Serrano Parkway**  
**John Ginn, 965-0830**  
**[therangedog@yahoo.com](mailto:therangedog@yahoo.com)**

Join John for an easy walk along this riparian area, looking for a variety of spring birds, including woodpeckers, nuthatches, towhees, wrens, bluebirds, warblers and marsh birds. Meet in the Raley's parking lot in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 going east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd. and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot. This is a half day trip; bring a light jacket and water. Only a down pour will cancel.

**Sunday, April 13**  
**Beginning Birding Field Trip for adults**  
**William Pond Park**  
**Limited to 10 people; registration required**

This field trip is for people who aren't entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders. A brief parking lot talk will focus on choice and use of binoculars and a brief overview of birding etiquette and ethics. The field trip will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats and will be led by two or more experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. Each trip is limited to 10 participants. Register via email to Cathie at [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net), (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), giving your name, phone number and email address, or by calling Cathie at (916) 457-6882 and leaving your name and phone

number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

**Wednesday, April 16, 8am**  
**Sweetwater Creek**  
**Leader: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207**  
**[spskua2@comcast.net](mailto:spskua2@comcast.net)**

At this favorite spring hotspot you should find wild flowers in bloom and hear the song of the Yellow-breasted Chat. Other possibilities are Lazuli Buntings, Wrentits, California Thrashers, migrating hummingbirds, and colorful warblers. Meet at the Bella Bru in the shopping center on the northeast corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd and Highway 50. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. This will be a half day trip and is a good one for beginners.



*Downey Woodpecker*  
Rosemary Gilbert Bell

**Saturday, April 19,**  
**7:30am**  
**Sweetwater Creek**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124**  
**[offleash56@yahoo.com](mailto:offleash56@yahoo.com)**

Another chance to bird this favorite. See write up for Wednesday, April 16th. Meet Richard at the Bella Bru as

described above, and again, this is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders, and an opportunity to see several good birds.

**Sunday, April 20, 7am-noon**  
**Pine Hill Preserve Birding**  
**Leader: Chris Conard**  
**Pre-registration is required through**  
**Pine Hill Preserve**  
**Contact Julie Wynia [jwynia@blm.gov](mailto:jwynia@blm.gov)**  
**[www.pinehillpreserve.org](http://www.pinehillpreserve.org)**

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

**Tuesday, April 22, 8-11am**  
**Earth Day on the Parkway**  
**Estates Drive - American River Parkway**  
**Leader: John Huls 396-5261**  
**[johnhulsnaturalist@gmail.com](mailto:johnhulsnaturalist@gmail.com)**

Join us as we bird and botanize a lushly forested section of the parkway. This is a repeat of the March 14th Arbor Day outing. Birders and non-birders welcomed. From Watt Ave take American River Drive east to Estates Dr. Turn south on Estates until it dead-ends at the levee.

**Saturday, April 26, 8am**  
**Bushy Lake, Cal Expo Floodplain**  
**Leader: Darrell Mohr, 973-9841**  
**[mohrdd@gmail.com](mailto:mohrdd@gmail.com)**

Meet Darrell in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. Darrell will be looking for a variety of resident species and Wood Ducks are a good possibility on the lake. This will be a 1 to 2 mile hike that will take 2 to 3 hours. Bring water and sunscreen. This is a great trip for beginners.

**Sunday, April 27, 7am**  
**Point Reyes National Seashore**  
**Leader: John York, 409-9276**  
**[Johnyork157@yahoo.com](mailto:Johnyork157@yahoo.com)**

John plans to bird the usual places at Point Reyes, including the Fish Docks, Lighthouse and Abbott's Lagoon if the weather is good. If it's too foggy at the coastal spots, he'll bird the onshore locations. Meet John at 7am at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Bring fluids and dress for changeable weather. John is planning to stop for lunch in Inverness.

**Wednesday, April 30, 7:30am**  
**Buck's Creek Trail/Serrano Parkway,**  
**El Dorado Hills**  
**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**Cell # that morning only: 281-6652**  
**[mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net)**

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

Dorado Hills Boulevard and turn right. Pass the large Raley's shopping complex and turn right onto Serrano Parkway, then turn right and park on Silva Valley Parkway.

**Saturday, May 3, 7am**  
**Driver's Flat, Ruck-a-Chucky**  
**Auburn State Recreation Area**  
**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**  
**shoppe01@surewest.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. Possibilities include several species of flycatcher, including Gray, Hammond's and Pacific-slope; Hutton's, Cassin's and Warbling Vireos; up to 7 species of warbler; Black-headed Grosbeak; Lazuli Bunting and Bullock's Oriole. 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, Exit 110 off I-80. NOTE: there is now a \$10 per car parking fee at Driver's Flat.

**Sunday, May 4, 7am**  
**Spenceville WLR**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124**  
**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 over uneven terrain. Possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, warblers and more. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight through 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.

**Saturday, May 10, 8am to noon**  
**Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek**  
**Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141**  
**llandry46@comcast.net.**

This morning walk will include riparian habitat, ridge trails and a good view of Lake Natoma. Lea will be looking for both woodland birds and waterfowl. There may be some short steep climbs on the trail, and if the rains come it may be muddy, so wear appropriate footwear. Bring liquids

and snacks if you wish. Lea usually finds a nice variety of birds on this trip, which is suitable for both beginning and experienced birders. Meet Lea in the parking lot of the Snowberry Creek Equestrian Staging area, (Shadow Glen Stables), about ¼ mile east on Main, from where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale.

**Sunday, May 11, 6am**  
**Sand Creek Road**  
**Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207**  
**spkua2@comcast.net**  
**Mark Martucci, 833-6722**  
**matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Join Tim and Mark for a trip to Arbuckle and then up Sand Creek Road. Target birds include Sage Sparrow, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Western Kingbird, Roadrunner, Western Screech Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Mountain Quail, and other migrants. The road can be rough and all wheel drive is recommended. Bring a lunch and liquids and be prepared for an afternoon return. We will meet at the Woodland Jack-in-the-Box. Take 1-5 north toward Woodland; exit at County Road 102 (#536); turn right (north) on 102 and turn right into the Jack-in-the-Box parking lot. FRS radios are helpful on this trip.

**Saturday, May 17, 10:30am**  
**Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk**

Spring means the birds are up and singing, establishing territory and beginning to construct nests. Join Sacramento Audubon birders Muriel Parker and Craig DeMartini and Nature Center docent Brena Seck for a family friendly nature walk at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists/birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. For directions, see [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net).



## FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIP DATES

Sacramento Audubon is merging education activities with Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael as a way of maximizing efforts to serve families with children who would like to be out of doors and enjoy nature walks. The next date is **Saturday, April 12**, followed by Saturday, May 17. The walks begin at 10:30am.

Reservations are not needed. Simply show up at Effie Yeaw Nature Center at the appropriate day and time and walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge.

## FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS

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

**Dates:** Sundays, March 30 and April 13

**Time:** 8am

**Each Trip:** Limited to 10 participants  
**Registration required.**

These outings are geared toward people who aren't entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders.

The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on where to look and what important field marks to look for. This walk will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. An optional brief session at a picnic table afterwards will cover field guides, smart phone applications and optical equipment.

Register via email to Cathie at [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net), (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number, email address and the field trip date of your choice, or by calling Cathie at (916) 457-6882 and leaving your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

*Black-necked Stilt*  
Daniel Kilby

## General Meeting

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

*Sally Walters, Program Chair*

## THE 17TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEBRUARY 14-17, 2014 CHECK THE RESULTS

It's time to put the exclamation point at the end of another exciting, record-breaking Great Backyard Bird Count with a look at how the February 14-17 GBBC stacked up by the numbers:

Number of checklists: 144,109

Species observed: 4,296

Countries participating: 135

Estimated number of participants:  
142,051

As we note some of our Top 10 lists, bear in mind that although global participation is growing, most checklists still came in from North America, explaining why the top 10 birds are from this region. The top 5 birds appearing on the most checklists were the Northern Cardinal, Dark-eyed Junco, Mourning Dove, Blue Jay, and the Downy Woodpecker. And the top 5 most numerous birds were the Red-winged Blackbird, Snow Goose, Canada Goose, European Starling and Mallard. Glad to see that the Mourning Dove is still so widespread and that the Starling, despite its YouTube murmuration fame, is still not our most numerous bird.

Head over to the GBBC website ([gbbc.birdcount.org](http://gbbc.birdcount.org)) to explore more results, including other Top 10 Lists. The photos are not too bad either.

### Thank You—A note from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology!

The Great Backyard Bird Count would not be possible without so many of you taking the time to watch birds and share what you are seeing during the four days of the count. Thank you for helping to create this year's historic snapshot of bird populations across the world. See you next year for the 18th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, February 13-16, 2015!

## Sacramento Events

### SACRAMENTO EARTH DAY CELEBRATIONS

**It's a Party for the Planet, Saturday, April 5, 9am**, at the Sacramento Zoo

The 78th Annual Earth Day Celebration It's a party for the planet! Learn how to protect and preserve the earth with environmental, wildlife and conservation organizations. During the day explore animal bio-artifacts; participate in storytelling and activities in the Discovery Room; come face-to-face with the outreach animals; or listen as keepers present enrichment talks in the afternoon.

**Save the Frogs Day, Saturday, April 26, 10:30am**, Effie Yeaw Nature Center, Ancil Hoffman County Park, Carmichael

Come celebrate Mother Earth by learning about some of her most precious creatures... FROGS! See our resident amphibians, learn how important they are in the web of life, and how they inform us about nature and the planet we live on.

### WALK ON THE WILDSIDE!, SATURDAY, MAY 17, 10AM-4PM

Join the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCS D) Bufferlands and the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge for a Walk on the Wildside, a celebration of International Migratory Bird Day. Walk on the Wildside highlights local efforts to protect and restore Central Valley habitats. This free, family-oriented event includes tours, presentations, live animals, music, hands-on activities, informational exhibits, and more. Guided and self-guided tours are offered throughout the day. Explore a pristine valley oak riparian forest in search of migratory songbirds. Visit numerous wetland and riparian restoration projects. Enjoy a unique opportunity to see one of approximately four heron rookeries in Sacramento County on a Bufferlands guided tour. This rookery contains over 120 active nests of great blue herons, great egrets and double crested cormorants. Spotting scopes will be available for optimum viewing of these fascinating and beautiful birds. For more information call 875-WILD.

*Findings* continued from page 2

great time, these could go much longer. The most recent walk was attended by about 40 people; 2 EYNC docents took the larger group which included children; Bea Pearson and I took 10 adults who walked to the American River and back. We enjoyed many deer lounging about, turkeys displaying everywhere, the Common Goldeneyes on the River, Greater Yellowlegs calling as they flew by, and many of the other usual suspects that winter and live along the River. Everyone enjoyed the walk."

**Presidents Day Weekend (Eureka, Arcata area)** (2/15-17)—Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Joe Ceriani, reported: "A storm was brewing but who cares, 12 participants had a fun time. Highlights were a Black-capped Chickadee, Gray Jay and White morph Gryfalcon (first record for Calif.). We endured wind, rain and high seas and recorded 98 species. A fun time despite the weather."

**Yuba County Wetlands** (2/16)—Leader Richard Barbieri reported; "My trip to

Yuba County was an enjoyable day with a small group of 5 people. We covered a lot of ground, with a decent variety of birds and a total species count of 74. Almost all were expected but some of our highlights were Prairie Falcon, Ring-necked Ducks, Willet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Tricolored Blackbirds."

**Gray Lodge WLR and adjacent areas** (2/15)—Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "There were only 3 of us on this trip, and it was a bit of a breezy, mostly overcast day. But we had a great time. Highlights included a Bald Eagle; good, relatively close, looks at a Peregrine Falcon; close, eye-level views of a Golden-crowned Kinglet; and a Slate-colored Fox Sparrow. After spending the first half of the day at Gray Lodge, we made our way around the west side of the Sutter Buttes and south to the Sutter Bypass National Wildlife Refuge. While we didn't add much to the species list here, we all enjoyed exploring parts of the refuge that we hadn't visited before."

*Pete Hayes.*

the same boat we've chartered many times in the past. The trip will last approximately 8 hours, departing out of Sausalito promptly at 8am and returning about 3:30pm. The pre-trip lecture starts promptly at 7:30am. This trip is limited to the first 30 people that sign up to ensure everyone has plenty of room, so send your reservation and check early to reserve your spot. The trip cost is \$90 per person. Sign up deadline is June 15.

Your space will be confirmed by email after the reservation form and your check is received. Detailed instructions, maps, and pre-trip information will be provided after the June reservation deadline. Please use the reservation form provided below. Contact Linda Pittman, pittmanl@frontiernet.net, (email preferred) or phone 715-1876 for further information.

## Farallon Islands Boat Trip Reservation Form

Sunday, July 13, 2014 Registration deadline: June 15, 2014

Tour departs from Harbor Drive, Sausalito. Trip price: \$90 per person

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address (with zip) \_\_\_\_\_

Email (for confirmation) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_\_ Total Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form and your check made out to Sacramento Audubon to:  
Linda Pittman, 9849 Alta Mesa Rd, Wilton, CA 95693



## RETURN OF THE SWAINSON'S HAWK EVENT

On **April 12th**, beginning at 9am at Sutter's Landing Park there will be a presentation on Swainson's Hawk with live Swainson's Hawks present. The presentation is given by the California Raptor Center and starts at 9am sharp. The event is free and there are information booths. This is an event for the whole family and there will be guided nature walks on the American River Parkway to see Swainson's in the wild and a Swainson's Hawk pair at a nesting site.

Sutter's Landing is at 20 28th Street, Sacramento (28th and C Streets, next to skate board park) The event is hosted by Friends of the Swainson's Hawk and co-sponsored by Sacramento Audubon Society, Friends of the River Bank, and Save the American River Association.

Directions: heading north on 28th Street from J Street, cross C and then the railroad tracks. Continue through the parking lots to the last parking lot where the park abuts the American River Parkway. There is no parking in the pavillion area.

## SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY NOMINATIONS FOR 2014-2015

The Sacramento Audubon Board recommends the following slate of officers for the 2014/15 fiscal year. The slate will be announced at the April general meeting; other nominations may be made from the floor. A vote will be held at the May general meeting.

President	Linda Pittman
Vice President	Subhash Chand
Treasurer	Marcia Ferkovich
Recording Secretary	Keith Wagner
Corresponding Secretary	Karen Zumwalt
Directors	Cathie LaZier
	Gary Fregein
	Darrell Mohr
	Larry Hickey
	Jonilynn Okano

## Birding and Nature Events

### GODWIT DAYS, ARCATA

The 19th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held **April 17-22** in Arcata, CA. Godwit Days is a week long, spring migration bird festival celebrating California's North Coast. The northern coast of California offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats on Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where over 270 species of birds have been sighted. Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover and even whale watching. This year's keynote speaker will be Keith Hansen, a wildlife artist who specializes in the inspirational and accurate portrayal of birds. He recently finished creating the images for a newly released book entitled *Birds of the Sierra Nevada, their Natural History, Status and Distribution*. Published by the UC Press and beautifully written by authors Ted Beedy and Sacramento's Ed Pandolfino, this 420+ page guide, showcases the entire Sierra Nevada and the birds that call it home.

The selection of over 100 small group field trips, lectures, workshops, boating excursions, and community activities are led by experienced local guides. For further information and registration visit [www.godwitdays.org](http://www.godwitdays.org) or call 1-800-908-WING.

### DON'T MISS THE 5TH ANNUAL POINT REYES BIRDING AND NATURE FESTIVAL!

Save the dates of **April 25-27** for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Enjoy birding at the height of spring migration with some of the best naturalists around. The Festival will once again be headquartered in Point Reyes Station and will include field trips in and around the Point Reyes National Seashore. The keynote speaker Saturday night will be David Sibley. He'll be on hand to sign copies of his new book also.

For more information, visit [www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org](http://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org). Registration is now open, and all proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

### 2014 HERON DAYS BIRDING BOAT TOURS CANCELLED

The Redbud Audubon Society has announced that its popular nature event, Heron Days, will be on hiatus for 2014 because of the low level of Clear Lake. Cancellation was based on concerns about the quality of the birding educational experience and boating safety. With boats unable to enter the shallows of Anderson Marsh and Shirley Slough at Corinthian Bay, guests cannot get close views of the heron rookeries and abundant bird life in these areas. Audubon's expert bird guides felt strongly that the educational purpose of the boat tours would be compromised, and guests would be disappointed.

### ANNUAL MONO BASIN BIRD CHAUTAUQUA

The 13th Annual Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua will take place this year from **June 20-22**. so make your plans now to attend. Held every year in the unique Mono Basin, festival headquarters are in Lee Vining, but field trips extend as far south as the White Mountains where bristlecone pines are found. Several surrounding lakes are visited, the ghost town of Bodie and neighboring wetlands, and an owling trip is planned. Besides field trips the festival offers music, art and science exhibits. Registration begins April 15th and more information can be found at [birdchautauqua.org](http://birdchautauqua.org). Many field trips fill up quickly, so register as soon as possible.

### EAST AFRICA IN 2015

Ed Harper has announced there are still a few openings for the Tanzania safari he and Susan Scott are leading March 6-20, 2015. This date frame is an excellent time to observe masses of wildlife from the calving season and the throngs of wintering birds from Europe and Asia. Drawing on their many years of experience, Ed and Susan have designed a highly productive itinerary. Camps and lodges have been carefully chosen to maximize the wildlife viewing experience. This friendly and inviting country is very safe and has some of the best wildlife viewing opportunities in all of Africa.

For more information for prices and itineraries, contact Ed at [calidris@surewest.net](mailto:calidris@surewest.net) or call him at 916-971-3311 or 916-704-7954.



Cheetah  
Ed Harper

### Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on April 29, 2014 at 7pm, at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

### SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

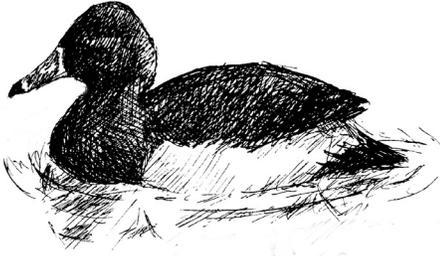
[facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon)



## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Lynn Brooks-Duarte  
Pat and Raylin Ferris  
Jim Forshey  
Connie Gehrt  
David Rial



*Ringneck Duck*  
Kirsten Munson

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Chris Conard, Loraine Holden, Judy Manhart, Bob Norris, Paul Thayer, Tim and Marie Treichelt and Nancy Weagley to the **General Fund**.

Carla Barbaro, Bruce Bostick, Chris Conard, Tim Fitzer, Loraine Holden, Carol Livingston, Andrea Salmi and Nancy Weagley to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

**Pioneer House Senior Retirement Center** made a donation to Sacramento Audubon in appreciation of a birding program given by Subhash Chand.

## YOUR DUES AND DONATIONS AT WORK

The Sacramento Audubon Society Board has voted to make the following donations:

- \$450 to ECOS, Environmental Council of Sacramento, as a sponsor of their Earth Day event and to support their environmental work.
- \$250 to the Burrowing Owl Preservation Society towards their 2014 breeding pair survey.
- \$1000 to the American River History Association to support the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, in memory of Jack Hiehle.

## JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

### Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair  
11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224  
llandry46@comcast.net

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP + 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

### 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.

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The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Justin Bosler, Chris Dunford, Leo Edson, Cory Gregory, Steve Hampton, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Joseph Morlan, Roger Muskat, John Sterling, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, and Chris and Teri Wills.

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

*Chris Conard*

# Seasonal Observations

February 1 to February 28

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

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

This was a fairly quiet month in terms of new bird reports. Multiple **Eurasian Wigeons** and **Blue-winged Teal** reports continued, and four **Surf Scoters** were found in the San Joaquin River off of Sherman Island, Sacramento County, on 2/23 where they are proving to be sporadic but somewhat expected in winter. A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was found on the American River near the Gristmill access on 2/22 and continued into March.

**Rough-legged Hawks** were found in low numbers in their regular grassland haunts. **Mountain Plovers** were harder to find than usual in Solano County south of Dixon this dry winter, so 40 off of Robinson Rd on 2/13 were notable for this year. A possible adult **Kumlien's Iceland Gull** (a state review species) was reported from the landfill south of Dixon at Hwy 113 and Hay Rd on 2/7 along with an adult **Slaty-backed Gull** (also a state review species). An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was at the same location on 2/13, along with a pale apparent second-cycle **Glaucous Gull**. A second-cycle **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was reported from the Yolo County Central Landfill on 2/15, and a first-cycle **Glaucous Gull** was at the Davis WTP on 2/14.

A **Red-naped Sapsucker** was reported along Yolo County Rd 20 near the entrance to the Cache Creek Nature

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Preserve on 2/23, but it was apparently not refund; until last winter, this

species had not been confirmed in Yolo County. A male **Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker** was a nice find at Cosumnes River Preserve on 2/11. A "probable" **Plumbeous Vireo** was seen and reported singing near North Davis Pond on 2/24. Up to 15 **Varied Thrushes** were regularly reported in William Land Park between Funderland and the golf course pro shop; and as many as four **Western Tanagers** were in the surrounding neighborhood. The continuing **Harris's Sparrow** in north Davis off of Cortez Ave was reported through at least 2/22, and an **Evening Grosbeak** was found along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters on 2/5.

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

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## 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.

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