



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, February 21
Shepard Garden and Arts Center
7pm General Meeting

Kirtland's Warbler and Other Michigan Birds

Bob Steele

A late May trip to central and northern Michigan is rewarded with many bird sightings and numerous photo opportunities. This evening, you will enjoy photographs of some of the varied species seen in this unique habitat by award winning professional bird photographer Bob Steele.

The Kirtland's Warbler, a federally listed endangered species, is one of the world's rarest birds. A special emphasis during Bob's presentation will be to share the unique life history and special habitat needs of the Kirtland's Warbler. Once on the brink of extinction, the species has made a remarkable comeback in the last 20 years due to proper habitat management.

Bob's professional bird photography credits include the magazines *Birder's World*, *Birding*, and *Wild Bird*; and National Geographic Books, including the *Complete Birds of North America* and *Birding Essentials*, for which he was both a major contributor and photo editor. Bob lives in Inyokern, California.

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.

Sally Riggs, Program Chair

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

IT'S A FUN AND EASY WAY TO HELP THE BIRDS

Don't forget that this month is the Great Backyard Bird Count. Led by Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology the count takes place during "Presidents' Day" weekend, February 15-18. Anyone can count birds from wherever they are and enter their tallies online at www.birdcount.org. These reports create an exciting real-time picture of where the birds are across the continent and contribute valuable information for science and conservation. Each tally helps biologists learn more about how North American birds are doing, and what that says about the health and the future of the environment.

GBBC Continued on page 7



In Memoriam, Bill Grenfell

Bill Grenfell, a former Sacramento Audubon president who made one of those mid-life career changes many people only dream of, died January 16 in Sutter Roseville Hospital after a decade-long fight against cancer. He was 79.

Grenfell, an avid birder and gifted photographer, was employed by United Parcel Service in the early 1960s when he turned down promotions to enroll at California State University, Sacramento, earning a master's degree in biological sciences. He served as director of the Sacramento Junior Museum (now the Discovery Museum, Science and Space Center) and taught science at CSUS before starting a long, productive career as a wildlife biologist with the state Department of Fish and Game.

Early on he worked with Howard Leach, another former SAS president, at the DFG Wildlife Investigations Laboratory at CSUS, studying diseases and food habits of black bears, bobcats and birds. He championed the protection of river otters from trapping.

President of Sacramento Audubon from 1964 through 1966, he was especially active leading field trips and organizing Christmas Bird Counts, joining with Jack Wilburn and Walt Luke to start the Woodfords Count in the Sierras. He strongly believed that bird-watching and Christmas count compilations could play an important role in the scientific study of wildlife.

Former SAS presidents Elmer Aldrich and Ed Harper agreed that Grenfell was a good teacher. "He knew a lot about wildlife, was very patient with people, and had an infectious enthusiasm that made everything fun," Harper said.

Besides his brother Gregory (Gary), he is survived by his wife, Eleanor; daughters Marlice Morrill and Carin Steffens, five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Asked if the family suggested any memorials, Gary Grenfell said one of his brother's favorite environmental groups was the Nature Conservancy.

Field Trip Findings

Pleasants Valley Road/Putah Creek (Solano County) (1/9) — Leader Gary Fregien reported a trip total of 61 birds including an unusual duck on Lake Solano that was probably a hybrid Bufflehead X Goldeneye as features of both were observed. The lake and picnic grounds yielded many Buffleheads, Common Goldeneyes, a drake Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Mergansers, and Common Mergansers. In the trees, the group spotted Phainopepla, many Ruby-crowned Kinglets and, their attention drawn by noisy jays and mockingbirds, a Barn Owl on a pine tree branch. Others: Brown Creepers, Say's Phoebe, Wild Turkeys, Osprey, Rock Wren, American Raven, White-throated Swift and on Lake Berryessa, Western and Horned Grebes.

Coastal Birding Trip (1/6) — Rained out.

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area (1-5) — Gray Lodge officials turned away the six birders who joined this trip because three power poles had fallen in the preserve during the violent wind and rain storm that buffeted the region the day before. But leader Doug O'Bannion said the group at least saw a Loggerhead Shrike at the outset of the trip at the Park and Ride at Elkhorn Blvd and Hwy 99.

Goethe Park (1/2) — Leader Jack Hiehle reported these highlights: Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Downy Woodpecker, California Quail, Western Bluebird, Cedar Waxwing, Spotted Sandpiper, and Greater Yellowlegs. Also a River Otter on a nearby island.

Bobelaine Sanctuary (1/1) — Leader Brian Gilmore reported: "Flyovers of Greater White-fronted Geese, Tundra Swans, and Snow Geese were seen for

most of the morning. A Great Horned Owl and several Red-tailed Hawks were also seen. A Wrenit was heard. Golden and White-crowned Sparrows were abundant as well as five or six Lincoln's Sparrows. A river otter was a treat to see in Lake Crandall, and a Great and Snowy Egret that seemed to have bonded as friends flew off together."

Lincoln Grasslands (12/29)
Leader Tim Fitzer said the group recorded Rough-legged Hawk, Prairie Falcon, Bald Eagle, Clark's Grebe, Eared Grebe, Barn Owl and Horned Lark.

Palo Alto Baylands/Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline/Arrowhead Marsh (12/23) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported, "At Arrowhead Marsh (part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland), we studied the differences between Greater and Lesser Scaup, and Western and Clark's Grebe. By the boardwalk/viewing platform we saw numerous Marsh Wren and Common Yellowthroat that were being pushed out into the open by the rising tide. Shortly, the group enjoyed good views of Clapper Rails and some saw Virginia Rail. As we were preparing to leave, we spotted an unexpected Swamp Sparrow.

"At Palo Alto Baylands we found 30 to 40 birders staking out a spot where Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow had been seen. After perhaps 15 minutes, the bird



Stephen D'Amato

popped into view. Later, some of the group were out on the boardwalk behind the interpretive center and had a very inquisitive Clapper Rail practically walk across their feet. The last few die-hards of us stopped at Lake Merritt in Oakland on the way back to try and find a reported Tufted Duck. We didn't find it but did see all five of the other ducks of the Aythya genus.

Plus a couple of Black-crowned Night-Herons perched in a tree overhead, and two urban Wild Turkeys. I tallied 72 species for the day, including 5 species of grebe, 6 species of gull and 17 species of duck. The weather could not have been better, it was a beautiful day."

Wetlands and Waterfowl Tour II (12/8)
Leader Roger Jones reported, "About a dozen people took a 2-mile walking tour around the man-made Fishhead Lake wetlands in the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands in Elk Grove. Although the seasonal wetlands are just being flooded, we did see many shorebirds, including Wilson's Snipes, Long-billed Dowitchers, Greater Yellowlegs, Black-necked Stilts and others along with all of the waterfowl common to the area. A Prairie Falcon made a pass through the wetlands and Red-tailed Hawks, Red-shouldered Hawks and American Kestrels were common around the riparian areas. Two Barn Owls were observed roosting in one of the nest boxes. Hundreds of Tundra Swans and 50+ Sandhill Cranes flew over the area."

Pete Hayes

2007-2008 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS BY AREA

FOLSOM

Sacramento County (12/30) — Compiler Chris Conard reported: "With 144 species, we beat the previous record by one. We also had an impressive 70 participants—the third most in the count's history, stretching back to 1978, when there were 79 participants in the first year. The morning had a little drizzle and thick fog in some locales, but generally it was very good CBC weather. There were few rarities, but an excellent showing of all the likely geese (all but Canada Goose can be missed on Folsom)

plus Tundra Swan, and very few misses of expected species led to the excellent total. This was only the second time Ross's Goose has been recorded.

"Highlights included the continuing Red-necked Grebe on Lake Natoma, Peregrine Falcon (often missed in the past, but is becoming more regular as it is everywhere), American Avocet (a count first), Western Gull (another count first—a near-adult at Nimbus), a Red-naped Sapsucker, Northern Rough-winged Swallow (a count first), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Western Tanager (two years in a row—last year was

the count first). Bruce Webb counted over 70,000 gulls on Folsom Lake. On 1/1 he reported a Pacific Loon for count week (the three days before and after count day).

"There was a good showing of raptors, with seven Bald Eagles, seven Ferruginous Hawks, and also seven Rough-legged Hawks—the latter after being missed for the previous two years. There were two Golden Eagles after being missed for the last two years. Five Western Screech-Owls was a nice total.

“Yellow-billed Magpie numbers may have stabilized, but data for the next few years will be telling. After dropping from an average of over 150, the past three counts recorded 67, 41, and, this year, 47. Hopefully this is a bottoming out of the sharp decline

“Misses included Canvasback, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Canyon Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Varied Thrush, Common Yellowthroat (recorded only four times!), White-throated Sparrow, and Pine Siskin.

“Thanks to all for their help. Thanks especially to Dan Brown who created web-viewable maps for the Sacramento Audubon sponsored CBCs. See <http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/christmas-birdcount.html>.”

SACRAMENTO

(12/29) — Compiler Mark Cudney reported: “Because of great weather conditions and well-organized area leaders, we had 163 species. This is the highest total in Sacramento Christmas count history. We also set the record for most individual birds seen. Great birds included Orchard Oriole, (Kumlien’s) Iceland Gull, Pacific-Slope Flycatcher, Eurasian Wigeon, Blue-winged Teal, Swainson’s Hawk, Western Gull, Eurasian Collared Dove, Townsend’s Warbler, and White-throated Sparrow.”

PUTAH CREEK

Yolo County 12/16) — Compiler Steve Hampton reported: “Under clear and cold skies, the 2007 Putah Creek Christmas Bird Count set records for both birds and birders. Most significantly, 73 birders combined to set a new record with 207.5 party hours, breaking a 30-year-old record by 30 minutes. Birders traveled 111 miles on foot, 412 miles by car or ATV, and 10 miles by boat.

“We found 143 species, the fourth highest ever. Record high counts were set for 18 species and tied for 6 others. New high counts were established for *American White Pelican*, *Common Goldeneye*, Bufflehead, Merlin, Mourning Dove, *Anna’s Hummingbird*, Acorn Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, *Pileated Woodpecker*, *Black Phoebe*, Brown Creeper, Western Bluebird, *Wrentit*, *Phainopepla*, Yellow-rumped (Audubon’s) Warbler, *Lincoln’s Sparrow*, *Golden-crowned Sparrow*, and Cassin’s Finch. Species in *italics* enjoyed high counts for the second year in a row, suggesting a recent upward trend. Audubon’s Warblers smashed their old record of 1,269 with 4,602 individuals, a number that will compete for the national high. Record highs were tied for Greater Scaup (the first on

the count since 1972), Peregrine Falcon, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Orange-crowned Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler (sixth time on the count), and Fox Sparrow. The only record low count was for Ring-necked Pheasant, which was missed for the first time ever.

“Both Yellow-billed Magpie and Oak Titmouse, the two species apparently most impacted by West Nile Virus, climbed slightly but remain well below historical averages.”

LINCOLN

Placer County (12/27) — Compiler Ed Pandolfino reported: “We got our first good weather for this count since year one (2002) and that, plus a great turnout of excellent birders (over 50 total participants) allowed us to shatter the previous high species total. We recorded 146 species compared to our previous high of 137. Seven new species were added to the list: Eurasian Wigeon, Redhead, Greater Scaup, Horned Grebe, Western Screech and Long-eared Owl and Lawrence’s Goldfinch.

“Other good finds included Western Sandpiper, numerous Short-eared Owls in various locations, Blue-winged Teal, Cattle Egret, many Rough-legged Hawks, White-throated Swift, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Brown Creeper and Lapland Longspursur.”

STOCKTON

(12/16) — Compiler Jim Rowoth reported: “The Stockton CBC started out cold and foggy but by late morning, the fog had mostly cleared. The remainder of the day was quite pleasant. We tallied 153 species for the day, the best we have done in 10 years.

“Species of particular interest for the day were: Common Loon, Horned Grebe, American White Pelican, Cattle Egret, American Avocet (Lodi Sewage Ponds), Golden Eagle (Terminus Tract), Rock Wren (Staten Island), Phainopepla, Black Rail (voice only—White Slough), Red-necked Grebe (1st winter plumage, White Slough; photographed), Nashville Warbler (Lodi Lake), Black and White Warbler (Lodi Lake).

“Nearly all species of waterfowl were down, probably due to the mild weather in the days leading up to count day. New to the count was Eurasian Collared Dove, found by two teams, and Great-tailed Grackle appears to have become an unfortunate, regular species on this count. Our biggest misses were Varied Thrush, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson’s Hawk, Yellow-headed Blackbird, and Common Merganser.

“Thanks to Sacramento Audubon for putting forth a seasoned team of counters once again who came up with 106 species all on their own. We couldn’t do as well without your help.”

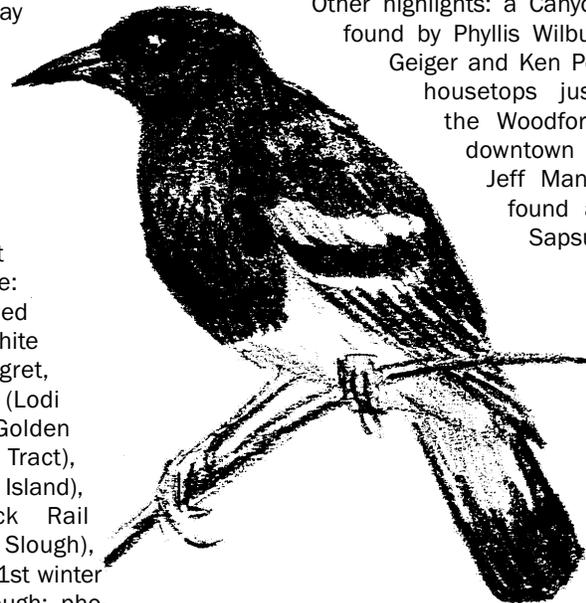
GROVELAND

Tuolumne County (12/29) — Compiler Bill Zachman reported that 28 participants on foot, in cars and in two boats observed 99 species and just over 9,800 birds. Highlights were Smew on Priest-Coulterville Road, 16 Bald Eagles on Lake Don Pedro circle section; White-headed Woodpecker in Pine Mountain Lake area; 2,300 robins, mostly in the Deer Flat Area; 10 Red Crossbills in old Highway 120 area, and 10 Evening Grosbeaks in Pine Mountain Lake area.

WOODFORDS

Alpine County (12/15) — Dan Brown reported that, in clear and cold weather in the Sierra, 76 species were recorded (2006 total was 85) and almost all individual species totals were much lower than last year. Exceptions were eagles (9 Bald Eagles and 12 Goldens) and Rough-legged Hawks (18).

Other highlights: a Canyon Wren was found by Phyllis Wilburn, Maureen Geiger and Ken Poener on the housetops just south of the Woodfords store. In downtown Markleeville, Jeff Mangum’s group found a Red-naped Sapsucker.



Kirsten Munson

Field Trips



Daniel Kilby

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 Richard Barbieri, 966-4603, offleash56@yahoo.com for trips through March 9. From March 10th on call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 722-6098, matuchbirdman@yahoo.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.

Saturday, February 2, 8am Sun City, Lincoln Leader: Dave Pearson, 408-4273 firesparkbird@yahoo.com

Explore the varied habitat of the Lincoln hills with Dave who knows this area well. He will be checking the ponds and other nearby sites for ducks and shorebirds as well as the "grand canon of Lincoln Hills" otherwise known as the Canyon Oaks Trail for sparrows, other winter residents and raptors. Take Hwy 65 north, turn right on Twelve Bridges Drive, left on East Lincoln, right on Del Webb Blvd, and follow to the Meridians Restaurant. Meet Dave in front of the lodge in the parking lot. This trip will end late morning.

Sunday, February 3, 9am East Lawn Cemetery Leader: Mary Beth Metcalf, 456-7382

Meet Mary Beth at the corner of 43rd Street and Folsom Blvd; park on 43rd Street. The trees in the cemetery are a winter home to many species of birds. In past years Mary Beth has found Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and Black-throated Gray Warbler, in addition to the usual birds. This is a slow paced half day walk and excellent for beginners.

Wednesday, February 6, 8am Jacob Lane area, American River Parkway Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Join Jack on a 4 hour walk looking at native and non-native plant species, mammals and birds. This walk is great for beginning and more experienced nature lovers. Meet Jack at the end of Jacob Lane, which runs south off Fair Oaks Blvd, between Arden and Eastern.

Saturday, February 9, early 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.

Saturday, February 9, Sunset Trip 2pm until dark Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley A "Save Our Sandhill Cranes" sponsored trip Co-ordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392

Sandhill Cranes are the focus of this trip, but the experienced birding leaders will also help you identify the waterfowl and shorebirds that winter here. Ducks, swans and geese, as well as shorebirds, feed in the flooded fields and marshy areas of the delta, and hawks patrol overhead. Meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center parking lot, at 2pm, where we will stroll the boardwalk in the Lost Slough Wetlands, then drive out along Desmond Road and possibly further, searching for more cranes and other birds. Optional dinner afterwards with SOS Cranes board members for further discussions. Dress for changeable weather; bring scopes and FRS radios if you have them. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road; go left (east) to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd: turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the preserve, watch for the visitor center parking lot on your left. This is a great trip for beginners. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

Sunday, February 10, 7:30am Best Slough and Yuba County Wetlands Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603 offleash56@yahoo.com

Best Slough's drainage runs west out of the foothills and ends near Hwy 70 to meet with Algodon Slough which runs south and feeds into the Bear River. It's here at this confluence that Richard will lead you to see some of Yuba County's wetland habitat and surrounding properties. Meet Richard at the Park and Ride at Hwy 99 and Elkhorn Blvd. Take I-5 north from Sacramento; at the I-5/Hwy 99 split, take 99 and take the first exit after the split. Turn left over the freeway; the Park and Ride is on the southwest corner.

Wednesday, February 13, 8am Yolo Wildlife Area Leader: Dan Tankersley, 606-6518 dtankers@winfirst.com

This marshy area, just minutes from downtown Sacramento, is a winter refuge for a good variety of ducks and shorebirds, as well as the larger waterbirds and a variety of sparrows. Uncommon birds are frequently found here. Dan plans a longer stay at the first stop, with a scope set up to give you good views of the birds, so grab your cup of coffee (and a doughnut?) and plan to meet him at the first parking lot inside the wildlife area. This outing will last from 3 to 4 hours. From Sacramento take I-80 across the Yolo Causeway and turn right onto the frontage road just past the causeway. Turn right at the stop sign; circle under the freeway; then make a left up onto the levee and down into the wildlife area. This trip will end before noon. Beginners are encouraged to come.

February 15-16-17-18 Great Backyard Bird Count

Where ever you are, don't forget to count birds, for at least 15 minutes, on at least

one day, in an area of your choice (doesn't have to be your backyard), and record the results at www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

See the front page article for more information about this fun and easy way to contribute to more information on our nation's bird populations.

**February, 16, 17 and 18
(President's Day Holiday)**

Eureka/Arcata area

**Leaders: Dan Brown 362-2458
naturestoc@aol.com**

Joe Ceriani

joeceriani@usmessage.net

Please mark your calendars and join Dan and Joe for 3 days of birding along California's North coast. We will be birding some of the traditional spots in the Eureka and Arcata areas and possibly some of Joe's new favorite spots. Please contact Dan or Joe for further details.

**Saturday, February 16, very early
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.

**Sunday, February 17
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, and can include removing noxious weeds, pond clean-up, and other chores, so call Jack for details and meeting time and place.

**Wednesday, February 20, 8am
Estates Drive area,
American River Parkway
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

This morning walk along the river will be in an area just upstream from the Watt Ave Bridge at the end of Estates Drive in Carmichael. Join Jack on this stretch of the river as he shares with you his knowledge of plants, mammals, and of course, birds.

Meet Jack at the end of Estates Drive, which runs south off Fair Oaks Blvd, between Watt and Eastern Avenues.

**Thursday February 21, 8am
Grizzly Island Wildlife Area and
Robinson Road**

**Leader: Sami LaRocca
(530) 908-0288
sami182@charter.net**

Lets go to Solano County in late winter to see which hawks are still around on Robinson Road. We'll have a chance to see Prairie Falcon and Mountain Plovers which are often found in this area. Then on to Grizzly Island, where a \$2.50 day use fee is needed. Here we'll drive around and check the wetland and grassland habitats for lingering wintering birds.

Meet at the Park and Ride lot off Mace Boulevard (NE of Hwy 80; behind Ikeda's) in Davis at 8am. Bring water, snacks and lunch. All levels of birders are welcome, some binoculars will be available. We'll plan on returning by early afternoon.

NOTE: High winds or a significant rain-storm cancels this trip.

**Saturday, February 23, 7am
Mystery Trip
Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@earthlink.net**

Join Scott for this mystery trip and be prepared for a full day of birding. Scott will be monitoring reports and planning an exciting day, with an interesting variety of birds. Bring lunch, liquids, layered clothing suitable to the season, and scopes and FRS radios if you have them. Meet Scott at 7am at the West Sacramento Park and Ride. Take the West Capitol exit off I-80; turn left at the light and left again into the Park and Ride lot.

**Sunday, February 24, 7:30am
Solano Lake/Putah Creek Area
Leader: Cliff Hawley, 300-2495
yellowhammerca@gmail.com**

Solano Lake is a great place to look for ducks this time of year and Cliff is an excellent birder who knows this area well. He will also lead the group along Putah Creek and up to Monticello Dam. Putah Creek is one of the most reliable areas to find



Kirsten Munson

Hooded Mergansers. Other possible species include Purple Finch, Common Merganser, Dipper, Barrow's Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Hairy Woodpecker, Phainopepla and Canyon Wren. This trip will last into early afternoon, so bring a lunch and liquids. Scopes will also be helpful. Meet Cliff at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Avenue exit; turn left at the light, then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

**Saturday, March 1, 8am-Noon
Bushy Lake/Cal Expo
Floodplain**

**Leader: Maureen Geiger
444-0804**

mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

Join Maureen in enjoying some of the birds that live along this section of the American River Parkway. River Otters and beavers are a possibility as well. This will be about a 4 mile walk and will end near lunch time. Bring water and appropriate footgear as

it may be muddy. Meet at the parking area at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo.

**Sunday, March 2, 8am
Schollenberger Park and Petaluma
Adobe State Park**

**Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

We'll start the morning at Schollenberger, where it's possible to find Blue-winged Teal, a variety of shorebirds, Common Yellowthroat, and the occasional rail. Then we'll drive a short distance to Petaluma Adobe, where we'll bird the fields, bushes and trees for a variety of passerine birds. Possibilities are Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Hutton's Vireo, among others. Bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. There is a minimal per person fee at Petaluma Adobe. Meet Mark at 8am at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Avenue exit; turn left at the light, then left again into the Park and Ride lot. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

**Thursday, March 6, 8am-noon
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Meet Jack in the nature center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park for a 4 hour walk

Field Trips continued on page 6

Field Trips continued from page 5

on the trails winding through the oak woodland and down to the river. This is an excellent birding area and Jack will be looking for nesting birds and early blooming plants.

**Saturday, March 8, early morning
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 date (it's sometimes changed) and get the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

**Sunday, March 9, 7am-Noon
Folsom Lake, Beek's Bight Area
Chris Conard, 362-5942
conardc@gmail.com**

Be prepared for a four-mile walk along a rolling trail in the oak-covered hills and granite outcrops of Folsom Lake. Among the rocks near the lake shore we should find many Rock Wrens and Rufous-crowned Sparrows. We'll have a fair chance at California Thrasher and Canyon Wren. Purple Finches can be numerous. On the lake, we'll look for loons, grebes and other waterbirds. The woods should be alive with the songs of Bewick's Wrens and other resident breeders. Meet across from the Folsom Outlets in the parking lot behind Burger King near the Circle K on Iron Point Rd.

From Hwy 50, exit at Folsom Blvd and go north. Make the first right on Iron Point, then a right into the parking lot. Steady rain cancels.

**Saturday, March 15
Bird and Breakfast Fund Raiser
Effie Yeaw Nature Center**

Join Sacramento Audubon leaders for a birding walk followed by a nice breakfast. This fund raiser is always fun and supports educational work by the American River Natural History Association. See sign-up information in the article on page 7 in this issue, or phone the Nature Center at 489-4918.

**Sunday, March 16, 8am
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Leaders: Carla Barbaro, 486-1198
cbarbaro@comcast.net
Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net**

This area of the parkway is excellent for birding and Cathie and Carla will be looking for early nesting birds and returning migrants, as well as early blooming wildflowers, on this morning walk. The trip will end by noon. This is a very good trip for beginners, as well as more experienced birders. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park.

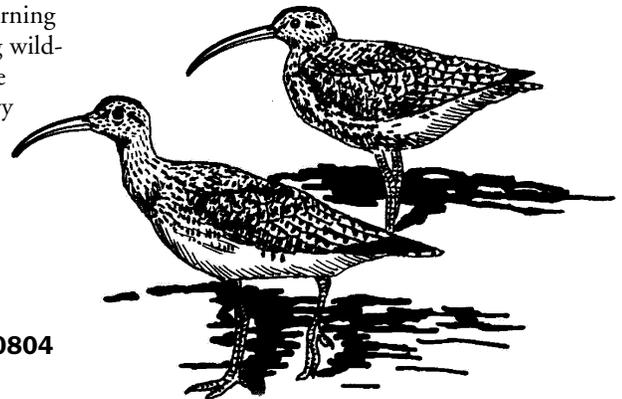
**Saturday, March 22, 7:30am
Lynch Canyon, Solano County
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net**

This newly-opened, 1,039-acre park off I-80 in Solano County, consists of rolling hills with stands of native oak, buckeye and bay trees, small riparian corridors and panoramic vistas. It's a great place to spend the morning. Join Maureen in looking for win-

tering raptors, sparrows and other passerines along the trail and ducks and shorebirds at the reservoir. Golden Eagles are regular visitors here. This trip, a new destination for Sacramento Audubon, will end mid-day with an optional picnic lunch at tables near the park entrance. Be prepared for muddy trails. Meet in the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol exit; turn left at the light, then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

**Sunday, March 23, 8am
Sailor Bar, American River Parkway
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Join Mark for a morning walk checking out the resident birds, and looking for early nesters and migrants. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. This is a great trip for beginning birders.



Stephen D'Amato

2008 VOLUNTEER DOCENT TRAINING AT THE BUFFERLANDS

WHEN: Four Tuesday nights beginning February 19th through March 11th, from 6-8pm. Plus one 4 hour field day on Saturday, March 15th.

The Bufferlands is a 2,650 acre wildlife area surrounding the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant in southern Sacramento County. It has a variety of habitats including seasonal and permanent wetlands, riparian forests, grasslands, vernal pools, and agricultural lands.

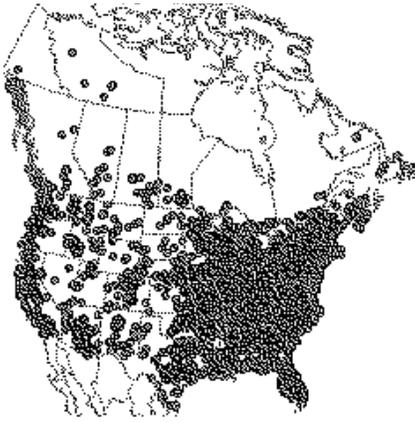
Please take this opportunity to join our knowledgeable natural resource staff and fellow community members and learn about Bufferlands history, local wildlife species and ecology, various Bufferlands habitats, and wildlife management principles used by our natural resource management team and more.

Upon completion of our four-week program, you will have the opportunity to help with and guide our tours, assist with wildlife surveys, restore habitat, and much more!

To register for the four-week training or for more information about becoming a Bufferlands volunteer, please call Lora Leerskov, 875-9309 ext. 2, or e-mail at leerskovl@SacCounty.net.

For information regarding the Bufferlands, visit www.bufferlands.com

Please RSVP for the docent training no later than February 14.



GBBC 2007 1st day

GBBC Continued from page 1

Anyone, of any age or experience level can take part. All you do is count the highest number of each species you see during at least 15 minutes on one or more of the count days. Enter the tallies on the Great Backyard Bird Count web site www.birdcount.org. The web site has some helpful hints for identifying birds if you need it. If you know children that you're trying to interest follow the links from 'What is the GBBC' to 'Visit Our Special Page for Kids.' There you'll find Puzzles, a Coloring Page that you can print out, Bird Facts from last year's count and an encouraging How To that explains how simple counting can be.

You can compare results from Sacramento with other towns and cities throughout California or the United States, as checklists pour in. There are also wonderful photos taken by participants so why not think about sending in some of your own?

Last year the Great Backyard Bird Count made history, breaking records for the number of birds reported, and the number of checklists. Participants sent in 81,203 checklists tallying 11,082,387 birds of 613 species.

Also, our Outreach Committee is making a special presentation concerning the GBBC on February 9th, at the Arden-Dimick Library at 2pm. The library is located at 891 Watt Ave. SAS presenters will be Maureen Geiger, Sheila Green, Subhash Chand, and Julie Serences. They are among others who have been going to schools and libraries to spread the word about the GBBC and to try and get as many people involved as possible.

So don't forget:

www.birdcount.org

Birding and Local Events

BIRD SONG CLASS CORRECTION

The Bird Song class being taught by Ed Harper and operated through Arcade Park and Recreation District as announced in the January *Observer* is starting to fill. A telephone number listed last month was in error, however. The correct number for Arcade Park and Recreation District is 482-8377. The first of three classes and associated field trips begins March 26.

"HOW TO BIRD" CLASS AT LEARNING EXCHANGE

If you are a beginning birder or know anyone who is, this is their chance to join local birder, Maureen Geiger, in a class that covers the basics of birding for new enthusiasts. Topics include: finding birds and other birders, increasing observational skills, dressing for success, birding by habitat and season, field trips and bird festivals, choosing optics, birder's code of ethics, and keeping notes and records. The class is offered on Howe Avenue March 5 and 12, from 7-8:30pm, followed by a field trip on March 15. Contact Maureen at 444-0804 or the Learning Exchange at 929-9200 for more information.

BIRD AND BREAKFAST AT EFFIE YEAW

The Bird and Breakfast, Saturday, March 15th, is an Annual Spring Classic at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Is that a dirty sock hanging in that tree? No, it's a bushtit nest! And that tiny cup the size of a quarter, built with lichen and spider webs? A hummingbird nest! Explore the miracles of spring in the beautiful oak woodland and meadows of the Effie Yeaw Nature Area, in small groups guided by Audubon experts. Return to a hot, hearty breakfast (vegetarian option available) served in the new Assembly Building at the Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park, California Ave and Tarshes Drive in Carmichael.

Participants (not advised for children under 12) should wear comfortable walking shoes and bring binoculars. On this walk one can expect to see some 30 bird species among more than 100 that populate the lower American River's environs.

Reservations are always necessary for the space-limited, \$30 per person fundraiser for educational programs on the American River Parkway. Call the Center at 489-4918 for details. Checks payable to ARNHA may be mailed to P.O. Box 241, Carmichael, CA 95609. Be sure to include your telephone number.

CALIFORNIA DUCK DAYS IN DAVIS

This annual event is being held in Davis on February 22nd and 23rd. A gala reception for everyone interested in wetlands and wildlife will launch the festivities on Friday evening at the Davis Art Center. The reception will feature an outstanding wildlife art exhibit by Yolo County high school students and live music.

On Saturday, the festival will feature one full day of field trips and workshops at the Yolo Wildlife Area Headquarters facility in South Davis. Among the dozen field trips to be offered are Local Owling and Wildlife Friendly Farming at the Conaway Ranch. Workshops will be held throughout the day and include Waterfowl Drawing, Bird Dog Demonstrations, Duck Calling and Trout Fishing. The CA Raptor Center will do two presentations at 10:30 am and 1:45 pm. Besides seeing live birds, people will have a chance to get their questions about raptors answered by experts.

All participants should pre-register due to limited space on field trips and workshops. For more information and registration materials, please call the Yolo Basin Foundation at (530) 757-3780. A schedule and registration form can be found online at www.yolobasin.org.

More Events Local and National

EASTERN MONTANA TRIP WITH ED HARPER

Eastern Montana Prairies and Wetlands has a couple of openings. The dates are May 19-27. Contact Ed Harper at calidris@surewest.net for an itinerary.

VERNAL POOL CRITTER WALK AT MATHER FIELD

Sacramento Splash presents a "Nature in the Neighborhood" family event on Sunday, February 24th, from 1 to 3pm. The Vernal Pool Critter Walk will be led by trained guides with the help of junior vernal pool experts from across Sacramento County. The walk will showcase the tiny animals that spring to life when the vernal pools fill with water. You will see Fairy Shrimp, Tadpole Shrimp, pollywogs, flatworms, and dozens of other animals that live in the aquatic vernal pool ecosystem. These species are specially adapted to complete their life cycles before the pools dry down so meet these amazing little critters before it's too late!

For more information visit www.sacsplash.org and click on "Nature in the Neighborhood." It is recommended that you reserve a spot on their website or by calling Splash at 364-2437. The Splash Education Center is located at 4426 Excelsior Rd, Mather. For directions, click on "Find Us." Recommended donation: \$5/person. All children must be accompanied by an adult and strong pants and sturdy shoes are recommended.

SAN DIEGO AND SALTON SEA FESTIVALS

The San Diego Bird Festival will be held February 6 through 11. Besides wonderful speakers, including Kenn Kaufmann as the keynote speaker, and workshops, field trips include coastal, pelagic, desert and Ensinada/Baja areas. Other highlights are kayaking trips, and bird calls, digiscoping and butterfly workshops. Sorry for the late notification on this festival—if you'd like to attend go immediately for further information and registration to www.sandiegoaudubon.org/birdfest.htm.

This year's Salton Sea Festival runs from February 14 to 16 and includes the Burrowing Owl Consortium Statewide Meeting. There will be a focus on the Burrowing Owl and the ecology of the Salton Sea with workshops, demonstratins and field trips. Tours include sea, wetlands and desert habitats. For further information and registration please go to www.newriverwetlands.com/saltonsea.html.

OLYMPIC BIRD FESTIVAL, WASHINGTON

Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest 2008 celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, Sequim, Washington from April 4-6. You can enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, and a traditional salmon bake at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Center. You can really add to your life list with the special birds along the Washington coast, including Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, and Harlequin Ducks.

Check out the offerings by going online or calling for a brochure. This year there will be a three-day, two night birding cruise of the spectacular San Juan Islands following the BirdFest weekend.

Get program information and registration forms online at www.olympicbirdfest.org or contact them by phone, at (360) 681-4076. Their email is info@olympicbirdfest.org and their address is Dungeness River Audubon Center, P.O. Box 2450, Sequim, WA 98382.

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS STILL NEED VOLUNTEERS!

Program Chair

Our wonderfully hardworking Program Chair, Sally Riggs, has resigned after a move to southern California. Sally has provided the most wonderful programs for the past several years and has arranged the 2008 programs through April. So we are looking for a Program Chair to begin with the May 2008 program though we have several board members with a good idea for speakers. The next program would not be until September, 2008.

Sally has kept her notes on good, available programs and speakers so there is quite a good folder of ideas ready to go to the new Chairperson. While the Chair is responsible for sending the program write-up each month to the *Observer*, the program speaker frequently has their own write-up prepared. The Chair also forwards the write-up to the Electronics Chair for the website. 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.

If this sounds like a wonderful opportunity to become involved in Sacramento Audubon or if you have any questions, please contact Tim Fitzer at 870-5207 or email: spskua2@comcast.net

Publicity Chair

We are also looking for someone to handle publicity for Sacramento Audubon. It's been a few years since we've had anyone doing this job, so it can be whatever you make of it. Basic requirements would be getting our general meeting information published in the events section of local newspapers, featuring a field trip or an education program in neighborhood publications, and publicizing the Christmas Counts and the Great Backyard Bird Count. Posting online of some meetings, programs, etc. would also be helpful. You would work with the Education, Program, and Field Activities representatives who would provide the information to be publicized. If you're interested in this volunteer position or have questions, please contact Keith Wagner at 709-2308, or k.wag@comcast.net for more information.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Joanne Abram	Paul Jones
Mary Claus	Alan Kilgore
Janet Didion	Steven Madrick
Andrew Harling	Michael Paine
Pamela Herlihy	Joan and Robert
Tomiko Ibser	Rusche

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento
Audubon Society is to:

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

J.R. Beck, Larry Gage, Sara Gillespie, Karen Irish, Alan Kilgore, Sheila Larkin, Paul Thayer and Kay Williams, to the **Bobelaine Sanctuary Fund**.

J.R. Beck, Alan Kilgore, Mary Morris, Shirley Poirier, Nancy Sporleder and Kay Williams, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Maria Nicholas Kelly to the **General Fund**.

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 February 26, 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.

SAS OUTREACH COMMITTEE REACHING OUT

Sacramento Audubon's Outreach table was at the 1st Annual Winter Bird Festival in Galt on January 12th.

Judy Denney, Marlene Ishihara, Gail Janke, Cathie LaZier, and Julie Serences all worked the booth, as well as enjoying the festival offerings. They'll definitely be back for the 2nd Annual Winter Bird Festival, so think about joining them and taking a turn meeting people and getting the Audubon message out.

If you have any questions, or to volunteer, contact Cathie LaZier at 457-6882 or empid@earthlink.net.

Observations continued from page 10

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:

Roger Adamson, Dan Brown, Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, David Johnson, Jeri Langham, Ed Pandolfino, Jim Rowth, Mary Schiedt, John Sterling, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, Bruce Webb, and David Yee.

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

Chris Conard

Seasonal Observations

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

Many of the highlights for the month were reported on the local Christmas Bird Counts (CBC). Good weather and few misses of expected species resulted in new high species totals for some counts. There is a detailed summary of each count beginning on page 2.

The **Red-necked Grebe** first found at Lake Natoma on 11/23 continued through at least the 12/30 Folsom CBC. A **Red-necked Grebe** was also found on the 12/16 Stockton CBC. A **Pacific Golden-Plover** was reported on 12/11 at the Woodland WTP. On the 12/22 Sacramento CBC, the Yolo County Landfill produced an impressive list of rare and uncommon gulls: a juvenile "**Kumlien's**" **Iceland Gull** (a state review species), two **Western Gulls**, and an amazing 250 **Thayer's Gulls**. At the nearby Conaway Ranch was an adult **Glaucous Gull**. A **Western Gull** was also found at the Nimbus Hatchery on 12/30.

On 12/24, a **Long-eared Owl** was found at the Orr Forest of Cosumnes River Preserve, with two found at the same location on 1/3. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was a very nice find in Winters on the 12/16 Putah Creek CBC. The **Red-naped Sapsucker** returning from last winter to Larchmont Park on 11/9 continued through at least 12/21. Single **Red-naped Sapsuckers** were also reported on the 12/22 Sacramento CBC (Lewis Park

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in south Sacramento through at least 12/25), and on the 12/30 Folsom CBC in Orangevale.

An **Empidonax** flycatcher, possibly a **Hammond's**, was reported in Land Park on 12/24 and 1/1. A **Northern Shrike**

was found on the 12/20 Marysville CBC. A **Northern Rough-winged Swallow** near the Nimbus Hatchery on 12/30 was an excellent find for the date. A **Northern Parula** was found at the Gristmill access to the American River Parkway on 12/1 through at least 12/14. It is likely the same bird was photographed at that location on 9/9/07. At Lodi Lake on 12/16, a **Nashville Warbler** and a **Black-and-white Warbler** were both excellent finds. Three **Western Tanagers** was an impressive total on the 12/22 Sacramento CBC. One was found in Orangevale on the 12/30 Folsom CBC. The **Green-tailed Towhee** found in a Rancho Cordova backyard on 11/25 continued through at least 12/27. Four **Lapland Longspurs** were found among **Horned Larks** on the 12/27 Lincoln CBC near the corner of Brewer and Nicolaus Rds. An oriole found on the 12/22 Sacramento CBC and again on 12/24 was either an **Orchard or Hooded Oriole**. Two pairs of **Cassin's Finches** were reported on the 12/16 Putah Creek CBC in Mix Canyon.

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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Observations continued on page 9