



# The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, February 17, 2011

Shepard Garden and Arts Center

7pm General Meeting

### Yellow-billed Magpie Studies

Scott Crosbie, who conducted his Ph.D. studies on the impact of West Nile virus on the Yellow-billed Magpie at UC Davis, will be our speaker this month. Scott is currently a Senior Staff Scientist for Entrix, an environmental consulting firm. He has published several papers on aspects of California's Yellow-billed Magpie.

The Yellow-billed Magpie's range is limited to the Central Valley and Southern Coast Ranges of California. This California endemic (meaning found only in California) bird species has suffered dramatic mortality from West Nile virus (WNV); since 2004 over 12,000 dead magpies have been reported to the California Department of Health Services, WNV Dead Bird Surveillance Program. The Yellow-billed Magpie has consistently had the highest proportion of WNV-positive carcasses of all California native bird species.

Through collaborations with members of the Yellow-billed Magpie Working Group; the public through Magpie Monitors at [www.magpiemonitor.com](http://www.magpiemonitor.com); CDFG, PRBO Conservation Science, The Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, and other agencies, organizations and ornithologists, studies were implemented to estimate and track population abundance and seasonal habitat-use patterns in 2007 and 2008, and examine loss of genetic diversity post-WNV establishment.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in

## THE 14TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT! FEBRUARY 18-21, 2011!

The Great Backyard Bird Count is coming up in just a couple of weeks. The Great Backyard Bird Count is a great way for people of all ages to connect with nature. Audubon and Cornell invite you to get involved, February 18-21—President's Day weekend. It's easy—just count the birds in your backyard, local park or another location and report what you see online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). Taking part in the GBBC helps give scientists important information about birds and the environment we share. When you volunteer to help you become part of a large team of Citizen Scientists across the country. You can see what birds are being reported in your own neighborhood and throughout the United States and Canada by visiting [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). You can count anywhere you choose—at a local park, a school yard, even a city garden.

### CONSIDER THE VALUE OF CITIZEN SCIENCE

Many of you probably participated in an Audubon Christmas Bird Count over the holidays. Perhaps you participated in several. What you may not know is that by getting out and counting birds, you also made a significant contribution to science. The results from each individual count are compiled by volunteers and then submitted to Audubon, and Audubon in turn makes this information available to the public on its website. In its 111th year, the Audubon Christmas Bird Count is the longest-running citizen science survey around.

Bird count information allows researchers, conservation biologists, and others to study the long-term health and status of bird populations across North America, to identify threats, and to promote broad awareness. In 2009, Audubon California used bird distribution information from Christmas Bird Counts and North America Breeding Bird Surveys to examine bird response to future climate change in California. CBC information has been tapped for multiple publications, including *Common Birds in Decline*, which revealed that some of America's most beloved and familiar birds have taken a nosedive over the past forty years, and *Watchlist 2007*, which identified 178 rarer species in the continental U.S. and 39 in Hawaii that are imperiled.

But the Christmas Bird Count is just the beginning. There are many other opportunities to contribute to science by counting birds. Over the past couple of years, Audubon California relied on citizen science volunteers for surveys of Tricolored Blackbirds, Long-billed Curlews, Yellow-Billed Magpies, Mountain Plovers, Purple Martins, and more. We also work closely with our chapters to monitor sensitive bird species. Your everyday observations can be submitted to eBird ([www.ebird.org/content/ca](http://www.ebird.org/content/ca)) to enrich the body of knowledge available to researchers (no observation is too small!).

For more information and to join our citizen science network, visit our website: [www.ca.audubon.org/citizen\\_science](http://www.ca.audubon.org/citizen_science)

Jordan Wellwood, Audubon California

McKinley Park. 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.

Sally Walters, Program Chair

## Field Trip Findings

**Sacramento National Wildlife Area (1/15)** — Leader John York reported: “Nine people made the trip to a very foggy Sacramento Wildlife Refuge. Best birds were Eurasian Wigeon and three Bald Eagles. Best view was of an American Bittern standing in an open area of a pond beside the road, posing for all to admire. The trip through Dunnigan Hills on the way home afforded good looks at very suspicious Burrowing Owls peeping over short grass and Horned Larks working a field. A fun trip despite the limited visibility in the a.m.”

**Colusa National Wildlife Area (1/11)** — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: “Our group of eight birders enjoyed 64 species on a very cold morning at the refuge. Approximately 4,000 Greater White-fronted Geese were grazing in the fields as we entered the refuge, providing good studies of adults, juveniles and interactions within the flocks. Other highlights included one drake Hooded Merganser, six Eurasian Wigeon, a Loggerhead Shrike and an adult Bald Eagle. Some of us also had an opportunity to compare differences between the Cackling and Aleutian subspecies of the Cackling Goose as we left the refuge. On this day, we detected only about 125 Snow Geese, down considerably from about two weeks before.”

**Salt Springs Valley (1/9)** — Leader Tim Fitzer reported: “It was a cold and overcast day, 33 degrees and oh, so cold! The day started off slow and picked up as we entered the valley. Best birds were 4 Bald Eagles, 4 Ferruginous Hawks, 2 Prairie Falcons, Merlin, Lewis’s Woodpeckers, 3 Burrowing Owls, Mountain Bluebird, and several Phainopeplas. It was a fun but cold day.”

**Beginning Birder’s Trip (1/8)** — Cathie LaZier reported: “Six beginning birders joined three Audubon leaders for a cold morning’s birding at William Pond Park. Dan Tankersley found a Red-breasted Sapsucker and new birder Jay Patel later sent us all photos he’d taken on the trip. We also enjoyed good scope looks at a Downy Woodpecker working on a willow gall, and watched the Great Blue Herons already active at their rookery. We totaled 38 species.”

**William Pond Park (1/8)** — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “The weather at William Pond Park was absolutely arctic – 40 degrees, low fog and a little wind. In spite of that, 8 wonderful children with their adults marched around finding and studying birds for almost 2 hours. They had great looks at some of the park’s specialties like Common Goldeneyes, Red-shouldered Hawks, Great Blue Herons, Spotted Towhees, a posing Herring Gull and a batch of amazingly tame Golden-crowned Sparrows. All seemed to have a good time regardless of frozen faces and hands! Good training for future birding, I figure!”

**Hot Birding Spots in the North Bay (1/8)** — Coordinator Tim Fitzer reported: “On a cold and overcast day, 18 people met leader Ron Storey in Petaluma. We tallied 96 species, including Clapper Rail, Red-breasted Merganser, 7 species of gulls, Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Red-throated Loon, and Eared Grebe. It was a fun day for all.”

**Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary (1/1)** — Leader Brian Gilmore reported that three participants braved a rainy new year’s day in which downstream areas of the sanctuary were flooded by the

swollen Feather River. Sightings included Sharp-shinned Hawk, Hermit Thrush, Bushtits, Downy and Acorn woodpeckers, American Robins, Cedar Waxwing, Pied-billed Grebe, Tundra Swan, Snow Geese, Yellow-rumped Warbler, White-breasted Nuthatch, and California and Spotted towhees.

**Sandhill Cranes and other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley (12/25-26)** — Coordinator Mike Savino reported: “Christmas day we were totally rained out but about 21 people showed up the next day. We went down to Woodbridge Road and saw a few Sandhill cranes close up, a big bunch at a distance, and a variety of waterfowl. There were thousands of Tundra Swans out on the west end of Woodbridge Rd. With all the new rain-created wetlands, the cranes have dispersed. It is now difficult to find large numbers in a few spots. Staten Island still seems to be a favorite roosting spot for them, but they are at a distance from the road and hard to see well without a good scope. There were spectacular flyovers of Greater White fronts and other waterfowl as soon as it got dark.”

**East Lawn Cemetery (12/19)** — Rained out.

**Folsom Lake State Park near Beek’s Bight (11/13)** — Leader Sandra Beseler reported that her group of four children and six adults saw 22 species on a nice, cold, sunny day. The list: Acorn Woodpecker, Anna’s Hummingbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Northern Flicker, Spotted Towhee, White-crowned Sparrows, Dark-eyed Juncos, Red-shouldered Hawk, Phainopepla, Western Bluebirds, Lesser

*Findings* continued on page 8

## 2010-2011 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS BY AREA

### Folsom – January 2

Compiler Chris Conard reported: “Despite miserable weather, 65 participants braved a difficult day in a season with a lot of wet CBCs. Steady rain prevailed until about 2 p.m., but, hey, it wasn’t windy. Despite good numbers of birders in the field, conditions made for reduced numbers of species and individuals. We had few bad misses, but not a single “write-up bird,” leading to a total of 132 species within an historic range of 123 to 146 over the past 32 years. The total numbers of individuals have yet to be compiled, but the initial impression is

that numbers are down for most songbirds. “Several species of waterfowl expected on the Sacramento CBC are hard to come by on Folsom, so we were happy to record two Greater White-fronted Geese, a Snow Goose, and a Cackling Goose. Hooded Mergansers were found, as expected, but are always nice to see, as are Barrow’s Goldeneye, but six Cinnamon Teal were nice to find, as they can be easy to miss. We did miss Canvasback and Lesser Scaup. Four Common Loons on Folsom Lake was below average. Raptors were well represent-

ed, with five Bald Eagles, five Ferruginous Hawks, one Rough-legged Hawk, and the falcon grand slam (Kestrel, Merlin, Peregrine, and Prairie). Golden Eagle was an unfortunate miss. Shorebird numbers and species diversity were low, as it often is on this count, but 18,000 gulls (mostly California, but many too far away to identify) were recorded on the fly-in to Folsom Lake. The modestly rare Mew, Thayer’s, and Glaucous-winged Gulls were welcome finds along the American River.

“Considering the weather, two Western

Screech-Owls were an excellent pickup. Lewis's Woodpeckers are here in numbers this winter, and 56 was a nice total as were six Hairy Woodpeckers, a species we sometimes miss. A late report of three Loggerhead Shrikes saved us from missing this declining species. Common Ravens used to be a real rarity on this count, but were recorded this year and are becoming expected. Despite the big influx to Sacramento this fall and winter, we missed Red-breasted Nuthatch, but managed a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and a few Golden-crowned Kinglets. Phainopeplas were well represented, with 81. Perhaps the only bird that could really be considered a rarity for this count was a male Townsend's Warbler, surprisingly just the second in count history. We nearly missed Tricolored Blackbirds, but fortunately two were found."

### **Sacramento – December 26**

Compiler Mark Cudney reported: "Nice weather and dedicated area leaders produced the highest species count in the almost 60-year history of the Sacramento Christmas Count—166 species. This is one of the highest inland (non-coastal) totals recorded nationwide. First time birds included Hooded Oriole, MacGillivray's Warbler, Eastern Phoebe, Mountain Chickadee, and Barn Swallow. Other rarities seen only once or twice in the past included two Western Gulls, four Marbled Godwits and 26 Mountain Plovers. Considering the loss of habitat over the years and restricted access to good areas, e.g. Conaway Ranch, this year's total is amazing."

### **Woodfords – January 4**

(Postponed from Dec. 18 by weather)

Dan Brown of coordinator/compiler team that included Tim Fitzer and Andi Salmi reported: "This count circle is in Alpine county, centered near the intersection of highway 88 and 89. Due to the rescheduling for a week day and the cold, we had lows in almost all categories! Only 16 participants braved the weather (which isn't bad considering). We recorded a low temp of minus 9 degrees F at Sorensen's Resort. Access to some areas was restricted by snow. Open fields and open water was limited. Lows were recorded in most species. We didn't record any grebes, gulls, warblers or blackbirds for a LOW 62 species total!

"But, we had 4 Bald Eagles, 9 Golden Eagles, 6 Slate-colored Juncos and 59 Cassin's Finches! Our best finds were 2 Northern Pygmy Owls, one heard only at Grover Hot Springs and another in downtown Markleeville. A flock of 80 Pinyon

jays was also in downtown Markleeville visiting feeders (spoon-fed to Mark Martucci as a lifer!) A species not reported on this count in about 40 years was 1 Northern Saw-whet Owl (heard only) by Al DeMartini in the early a.m. up near Grover Hot Springs! Finally, a possible first county record Nuttall's Woodpecker was also reported. Thanks again to all participants."

### **Lincoln – December 28**

Compiler Ed Pandolfino reported: "Our species total this year was 134 for the Count Day, and 136 Count Week (Great-tailed Grackle and Lewis's Woodpecker missed Count Day but found during Count Week). This total was almost right on our 9-year average of 135 species.

"Total number of individuals was a bit below average (101,000 vs. average of 115,000). We set new count highs for three ducks (Wood Duck—119; Mallard—1645; and Hooded Merganser—9). This was consistent with overall Central Valley trends for 'Woodies' and 'Hoodies' but not with Mallards. The 'chickens' were also out in good numbers and set new highs for Wild Turkey (483) and California Quail (229). Ten Sharp-shinned Hawks, 16 Ferruginous Hawks, and 5 Peregrine Falcons were all new highs for our count. The Peregrines were all spread out so that I am confident they were all different birds. 165 American Avocets in one rice field more than doubled our previous high count for the whole circle. 253 Greater Yellowlegs was also a new high count. In spite of the rainy day, we set a new record for White-throated Swifts with 15. Northern Flickers seem to be around in very high numbers in the Valley this winter so our new record (223) for this species is not a big surprise.

"The poor weather (which affects birders and birds alike) was probably responsible for the overall low numbers of passerines we found. We set NO new highs for any passerine species and recorded new lows for seven: only 25 Say's Phoebes, NO Golden-crowned Kinglets for the second time, 332 American Pipits, 112 Yellow-rumped Warblers, NO Vesper Sparrows (though we have never found more than 3, we had not missed this species on any previous Lincoln Count), 38 Lincoln's Sparrows, 10 Brown-headed Cowbirds (if only this represented a real trend...but it doesn't...) and 200 American Goldfinches.

"I can't blame the weather for our low gull numbers; they were just absent from their usual haunts. We found only 26 California Gulls (previous low was 483) and only 3

Herring Gulls. Overall gull total was also a new low (1,191). Most of these were Ring-billed Gulls found in flooded rice fields where Ring-bills and Herrings are the usual gulls present. The dump and Wastewater Treatment Plant normally host thousand of gulls (mostly California) but this year there were almost none. We also set a new low total for Northern Harrier (86) and we missed Burrowing Owl entirely for the first time (though we have yet to find more than one.)

"Overall we had 93 people participate in the count, just under last year's record of 96. Maybe a dry day will allow us to break 100 one of these days. Thanks to all."

### **Stockton – December 19**

Compiler Jim Roworth reported: "Forty-six determined birders (including 15 members of Sacramento Audubon) set out to conduct the 43rd annual Stockton CBC, despite stiff morning wind and steady rain. At least there was no fog! Given these conditions, teams struggled to complete their assigned areas. We tallied 134 species and 110,531 individuals, plus two otters, one mink, one sea lion, and two very large salmon. We conducted two other counts this decade amid heavy winds and rain (i.e., 2002 and 2005), during which we tallied a mere 130 species each of those years, so all in all, I guess we did pretty well this year.

"We had record highs for American Avocets, Eurasian Collared-Doves, White-throated Swifts, and Great-tailed Grackles. And during a lull between squawks, the White Slough team was able to detect a distant Black Rail calling. Big (painful) misses this year were: Western Sandpiper, Rough-legged Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, American Bittern, Cinnamon Teal, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Townsend's Warbler, and Tricolored Blackbird.

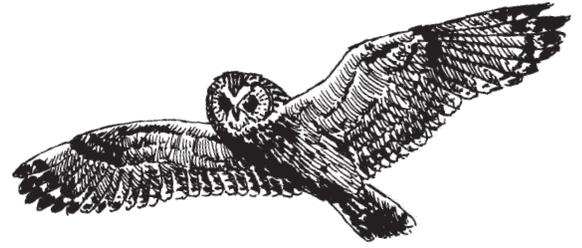
"Thanks to all who participated, and for those of you who missed out, be sure to pencil us in for Sunday, December 18, 2011. The weather is bound to be better next year!"

### **Putah Creek – December 19**

Compiler Steve Hampton reported: "The 40th annual Putah Creek Christmas Bird Count had 65 participants who braved rain and even hail to count birds. By mid-morning, the teams on the valley floor got some breaks in the weather, but all still came home pretty wet. We logged 152 party hours and traveled 80 miles on foot, 482

**CBCs** continued on page 6

# Field Trips



Short-eared Owl  
Stephen D'Amato

## 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](mailto:offleash56@yahoo.com) for trips through March 5th. For trips from March 6th on call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 833-6722 [matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com).

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.

### Saturday, February 5, 7:30am

#### Lincoln Grasslands

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**  
[shoppe01@earthlink.net](mailto:shoppe01@earthlink.net)

We will search the back roads of western Placer County for raptors, waterfowl, Tri-colored Blackbirds and Lewis' Woodpeckers. This area is known for high concentrations of wintering raptors (up to 12 species can be seen in a day), and is also a magnet for wintering ducks and geese. Meet Scott at the Brookfield's Restaurant parking lot, 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. Brookfield's is behind Shell. Bring lunch, scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

### Sunday, February 6, 7:30am

#### Yuba County Wetlands

**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603**  
[offleash56@yahoo.com](mailto:offleash56@yahoo.com)

Streams and rivers draining from the foothills to the valley and farmers' irrigation help to create these wetlands and winter habitat on surrounding properties. Join Richard on a trip to one of his favorite places to bird while he looks for ducks, geese, shorebirds, and birds of prey. Meet Richard at the Brookfield's Restaurant parking lot, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road exit (105A) and follow straight through the first stop light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Brookfield's will be on your left behind the Shell gas station. Bring lunch, layered clothes, and scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

### Saturday, February 12, 7:30am

#### Lake Solano and Monticello Dam

**Leader: Dan Williams, (714) 943-1266**  
[jaegermaestro@yahoo.com](mailto:jaegermaestro@yahoo.com)

Join Dan for a day of birding that will last into mid-afternoon. Lake Solano is situated at the base of the Coast Range just past the town of Winters and below Lake Berryessa. It is one of the closest spots from Sacramento to see a variety of higher elevation species, including Pileated Woodpecker, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and American Dipper. A great diversity of waterfowl winter on the lake itself including Barrow's Goldeneye and Hooded Merganser. We will enjoy a picnic at Lake Solano Park, then finish the day at Monticello Dam where we will hope to see Bald Eagle, Common Loon, and Rock and Canyon Wren. Bring lunch and layered clothes and meet Dan at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

### Sunday, February 13, 8am

#### Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge

**Leader: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207**  
[spskua2@comcast.net](mailto:spskua2@comcast.net)

Tim will be looking for the great flocks of ducks and geese that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way further south. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well. This trip will last into early afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. We'll return through the Dunnigan Hills, a good area for raptors, Burrowing Owls and wintering sparrows. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet Tim 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. Please note that at the refuge there is a fee for each vehicle: either \$3 for a day pass, or a \$12 Refuge Annual Pass or a Duck Stamp.

### Tuesday, February 15, 8am

#### Isenberg Crane Preserve/Cosumnes River Preserve Boardwalk

**Leader: Dan Tankersley, 606-6518**  
[dtankers@winfirst.com](mailto:dtankers@winfirst.com)

Join Dan for an end of season look at our wintering Sandhill Cranes before they take off on their migration to nesting areas. He'll also look for wintering geese and ducks, including Gadwall, Northern Shovelers, teal and wigeon. In shallow water there may be shorebirds, such as dowitchers, sandpipers, yellowlegs, Dunlin, and maybe some surprises. After Woodbridge Road Dan will stop at the Cosumnes Preserve boardwalk, a good place to look for the noisy but hard-to-see Marsh Wren, and the cryptic Wilson's Snipe. Meet Dan at the Nugget Market at 8am. Going south on I-5, take the Florin Road West exit; go west to the first signal light, (Greenhaven Drive), and make a U-turn. The parking area for the market will be on the right. This trip will end by noon. Bring FRS radios and spotting scopes if you have them. This is a great trip for both beginners and more experienced birders. Thick fog cancels this trip.

### February 19, 20 and 21, President's Day Weekend Eureka/Arcata area

**Leaders, Dan Brown 362-2458**  
[naturestoc@aol.com](mailto:naturestoc@aol.com)

**Joe Ceriani, [joeceriani@usmessage.net](mailto: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.

**Family Friendly Trip!!!**  
**Sunday, February 20, 8:30-11am**  
**Yolo Basin Wildlife Area**  
**Leader: Ann Burris, 947-7573**  
**naburris@sbcglobal.net**

Children aged 6-12 are invited to spend the morning on a guided tour of the Yolo Basin Wildlife Area. This is an exciting opportunity to watch ducks, geese and swans that migrate to this area each Fall, and learn more about them and the habitat they come to visit. A parent or other responsible adult must accompany all children attending. There is no charge for this trip, and binoculars will be provided for children who need them. Please dress in layers and bring water and snacks, and wear shoes that can get muddy. Meet Ann in Parking Lot A by the kiosk. From Sacramento, take I-80 west. At the west end of the Yolo Causeway bridge, take the first exit (County Road 32A, East Chiles Road). Turn right at the end of the off-ramp and go under the freeway. Turn left onto the gravel road that leads up the levee and enter the Wildlife Area on the left. Continue on the road to the first parking lot, Parking Lot A.

**Thursday, February 24, 8am**  
**William Pond Park**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**empid@earthlink.net**

Meet Cathie along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk down to some different spots on the river, where mergansers and goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. We'll check out the heron rookery, then look at the pond area for Red-winged Blackbirds and Green Heron. California Quail, Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows may be found in the park area. Trip will end before noon, and there is a park entrance fee of \$5 per car if you don't have a County Parks Pass. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

**Saturday, February 26, 7:30am**  
**Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills**  
**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net**

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk through this riparian habitat and look for resident birds such as woodpeckers, nuthatches, towhees, wrens, bluebirds and marsh birds, as well as possible winter warblers and sparrows. River otters are a possibility. Meet for coffee at 7:30 at the coffee shop on the right side of the Raley's shopping center on El Dorado Hills Boulevard just off Highway 50; the group will leave for birding by 8am sharp. This trip lasts into late morning. The trail may be muddy.

**Saturday, February 26, 3:30 pm (last weekend for this trip!)**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley**  
**An SOS-sponsored trip**  
**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

This is the last weekend for the SOS sponsored trips—don't miss it! All information is the same as the January 22nd trip.

**Sunday, February 27, 7am**  
**Upper Lake Natoma and Folsom Lake**  
**Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610**  
**conardc@gmail.com**

The sheltered canyon of upper Lake Natoma near the Folsom Rodeo Grounds is usually quite productive and Mormon Island to Brown's Ravine is one of the best sites for Phainopeplas. We'll also look for loons, grebes and other waterbirds on the lakes. The woods should be alive with the songs of Bewick's Wrens and other resident breeders. From Hwy 50, exit at Folsom Blvd and go north. After 2.7 miles, turn right on Natoma Street. In 1.0 mile, turn left on Stafford St and park between the library and the entrance to the Folsom Zoo. Be prepared for about three miles of walking. Trip will end by noon. Steady rain cancels.

**Sunday, February 27, 3:30pm**  
**Last SOS trip of the season**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley**  
**An SOS-sponsored trip**  
**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

All information is the same as the January 22nd trip. This is a great trip for beginners, and the last time you can go out with the SOS organization, as the cranes will be leaving for their nesting areas soon.

**Thursday, March 3, 8:30am**  
**Yolo Wildlife Area**  
**Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758**  
**IshiM2000@comcast.net**

Join Marlene in this great area 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. Depending on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl and possible raptors such as Peregrine Falcon. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A), on your left. Scopes are helpful on this trip which is good for both beginners and more experienced birders. Note: trip will be canceled if bypass is closed due to flooding.

**Saturday, March 5, 8am**  
**North Fork Pleasant Grove Creek (Roseville area)**  
**Leader: Scott Dietrich, 208-4976**  
**sed25@csus.edu**

The North Fork Pleasant Grove open space area is a river flood plain area scattered with old growth Valley Oaks, riparian habitat and a small wetlands area. It's usually a great place to see raptors such as Barn Owl, American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk, White-tailed Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk and Cooper's Hawk. Also present are some waterfowl including Wood Duck, Mallard, and often Hooded and Common Merganser. Also seen here are Great Egret, Great Blue Heron and Green Heron. Of course there will still be many winter birds, Northern Flicker, sparrows and finches as well as the resident oak habitat birds, Acorn and Nuttall's Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch, Oak Titmouse and Western Bluebird.

Meet Scott at Paul Dugan Park in the northeast part of Roseville. In Roseville drive north on Woodcreek Oaks Blvd past Blue Oaks Blvd; then turn right onto Diamond Woods Circle and drive a short distance; Paul Dugan Park will be on your right. Or, coming from Sacramento, take I-80 east to Hwy 65; take 65 north to Blue Oaks Blvd; take Blue Oaks Blvd west to Woodcreek Oaks Blvd, and go north on Woodcreek Oaks to Diamond Woods, then right to Paul Dugan Park. (Thomas Bros Map 219 D1, for those without Internet!) This newer area for Sacramento Audubon trips will be of interest to beginning and more experienced birders.

**Sunday, March 6, 7am**  
**Highway 37 and Ellis Creek, Petaluma**

*Field Trips* continued on page 6

*Field Trips* continued from page 5

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

From the West Sacramento Park and Ride, Mark will lead the group towards Petaluma, with various birding stops along Hwy 37. Moving on to Ellis Creek (near Schollenberger Park), he'll look for Blue-winged Teal and a variety of other waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, Common Yellowthroat and the occasional rail and possibly a Peregrine Falcon. Bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. Meet Mark 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. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

**Saturday, March 12  
ARNHA Bird and Breakfast Fund  
Raiser**

**Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 489-4918**

Join Sacramento Audubon leaders for a birding walk followed by a delicious breakfast. This fund raiser for the American River Natural History Association is an annual event, and the leaders usually find nesting Anna's Hummingbirds and Bush-tits. Various woodpeckers and other small woodland birds, as well as herons, egrets and waterfowl on the river, will also be seen. Red-shouldered Hawks are frequently found in the oak woodland. This fund

raiser supports ARNHA's educational work. For sign-up information and price phone the Nature Center at 489-4918. See further information on page 8.

**Saturday, March 12  
Beginning Birding Field Trip  
William Pond Park**

Limited to 10 people and with 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. A \$5 donation is requested to cover the costs of hand-out materials.

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.

**Sunday, March 13, 8am  
(Daylight Savings Time begins today.)  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center**

**Cathie LaZier, 457-6882  
empid@earthlink.net**

This area of the parkway is excellent for birding and Cathie will be looking for early nesting birds and returning migrants, as well as blooming wildflowers. 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 in Fair Oaks. The trip will end by noon.

**FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIP!!!**

**Saturday, March 19, 9-11am  
Hagan Park, Rancho Cordova  
Leader: Sheila Green, 813-1470  
raeshei@aol.com**

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

Join Sheila at the duck pond at Hagan Park in Rancho Cordova for a bird walk geared towards children, families and beginners. Bring water and snacks, and dress in layers for variable weather. You may bring your own binoculars or use the ones provided by Sacramento Audubon. Space for this trip is limited, so be sure to contact Maureen Geiger ahead of time to reserve a space. To reach Hagan Park (2197 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova), from Hwy 50, take Mather Field Road exit and go north; then right on Folsom Boulevard, left on Coloma Drive, and left on Chase Drive which leads to the Park. There is free parking in the lot on the right just before you enter the Park, near the duck pond.

**CBCs** continued from page 3

miles by car, 8 miles by boat, and 6 miles by bike. Owling was reduced to only 2.5 hours due to steady rain during the early morning darkness.

"We found 133 species, a bit below our recent average due to the weather. It was a good year for riparian species and mountain irruptives. We added three new species to the count, the most since 2003 (when we added five). They included a total surprise, Warbling Vireo, an expected expanding species, Great-tailed Grackle, and this winter's most notable irruptive, Evening Grosbeak. Record high counts were set for nine species: Wild Turkey, (breaking 1000 for the first time), Red-shouldered Hawk (for the third time in the past five years), Eurasian Collared-Dove (whose numbers only doubled this year, to 249), Belted Kingfisher, Black Phoebe (for the third time in the past five years), Red-breasted Nuthatch, House Wren (almost doubling the old record), and Western Bluebird.

"The only record low count was for Great Horned Owl, which was a function of the rain. Rock Wren tied a record low (1 bird). Data for Yellow-billed Magpie, Western Scrub-Jay, American Crow, and Oak Titmouse were consistent with continued recovery from the effects of West Nile Virus, now six years on.

"Thanks to all the area leaders, potluck organizers, and others who helped make this a great CBC!"

#### **Auburn - December 18**

Compiler Deren Ross reported: "This was the 30th Auburn Area CBC and one of three sponsored by the Sierra Foothills Audubon Society. The others are Lincoln and Grass Valley. The heavy wind and rain made for a challenging day but with 50 participants in the field, we managed to record 113 species and 27,327 individual birds. With just above average numbers, it was a good count, especially consider-

ing the weather. Unusual birds included a Loggerhead Shrike (C.Hawley) on Crosby-Herold Road east of Lincoln and three Evening Grosbeaks (Jim and Harriet Wilson) feeding in a Pepper Tree at the Newcastle Elementary School in Newcastle. A leucistic Blackbird was reported by Mark Fowler.

"There were high counts for: Hooded Merganser (88), Wild Turkey (669), Greater Yellow Legs (3), Rock Pigeon (228), Loggerhead Shrike (1), Golden-crowned Sparrow (1554), and Red-winged Blackbird (2015).

"Additional information is available at the National Audubon Website: <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count> or you can find further count details in the next issue of the Sierra Foothill Audubon Society Newsletter (The Phoebe).

"Thanks to everyone for the good effort and continuing to support Auburn Area CBC."

## THE BEST FESTIVAL YOU NEVER HEARD OF

Held in Vallejo, the 15th Annual **San Francisco Bay Flyway Festival**, is taking place **February 11-13**, and promises more guided hikes and outings, tours and workshops on Mare Island than ever before. With over 70 events on the schedule, you'll have many field trips and locations to choose from. You will find that one of the most unique aspects of this birding festival is the chance to soak up history on Mare Island and view an amazing array of birdlife all at the same time. The Mare Island Shoreline Heritage Preserve is not well known in Sacramento but offers a self-guided walking trail with 13 stops and plenty of chances to view wildlife. The Preserve will be open Saturday and Sunday during the Flyway Festival. Additional field trips include the Antioch Dunes NWR, San Pablo Bay NWR, boat tours of Napa's marsh, wetland walks at Sonoma Baylands and Hudeman Slough, and birding in the American Canyon. Visit [www.sfbayflyway-festival.com](http://www.sfbayflyway-festival.com) for more information on this fascinating area and great festival so close to home.

## ANIMAL HOUSE ART SHOW

The Sacramento Fine Arts Center (SFAC) is privileged to welcome the Sacramento Audubon Society as a co-sponsor of its sixth annual Animal House Show. Sacramento Audubon joins the Sacramento SPCA and the Carmichael Recreation and Parks District in sponsoring this acclaimed and juried animal themed art show. The show will begin February 22 and continue through March 12th. A gala reception will be held at the Center's galleries, 5330-B Gibbons Drive in Carmichael, on March 5th from 5 to 8 p.m. Audubon will have an information booth at the gala. All Audubon members are encouraged to attend...and be thrilled by the fabulous art.

The SFAC is a 25 year old non-profit art outreach organization that provides hands on art classes to adults and children, hosts a wide variety of art exhibits and is a community resource for the arts and art education. For those of you birders who are also artists, please consider entering the show. Paintings, sculpture, photography, and mixed media will all be featured. Receiving for the show will be on February 4th (1-5pm) and February 5th (11am to 4 pm) at the Center.

SFAC thanks the Sacramento Audubon Society for helping to sustain the arts in the Sacramento region by honoring our feathered friends as vital subjects for the creative efforts of artists everywhere.

## BIRDING MONTANA: THE EASTERN PRAIRIES AND WETLANDS

Ed Harper will be offering one of his popular Montana tours this summer during the height of the bird migration in the eastern portions of the state, May 23-31, 2011. This tour will feature many of the birds of the prairies and wetlands, keying in on the migration of both eastern and western species. Sharp-tailed Grouse, White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sparrow, Sprague's Pipit and Mourning Warbler are some of the many specialty birds. Tour size is being kept small to simplify logistics and to maximize the outdoor experience. For the full itinerary and price, contact Sandpiper Journeys via [calidris@surewest.net](mailto:calidris@surewest.net) or call Ed at 916-704-7954.

## BLACK RAIL STUDY

Over the past few years Sacramento Audubon has donated a total of \$6000 to the Black Rail Project run by the University of California, Berkeley. This recent letter from Professor Steven Beissinger to Sacramento Audubon and Sierra Foothills Audubon is another example of your Sac Audubon membership dues and donations at work.

"I want to thank you on behalf of my students, collaborators and myself for your support of our Black Rail Project: [nature.berkeley.edu/~beis/rail/index.html](http://nature.berkeley.edu/~beis/rail/index.html) over the years. The gifts from your chapters have been instrumental in our success and in helping us win a grant from the National Science Foundation that will allow us learn more about the ecology of these rare and cryptic birds.

Over the next four years, our work will follow the movements of rails (black and virginia) in the Sierra Foothills using radio telemetry, genetic measures and stable isotopes. It will also track the population fluctuations and the effects of West Nile Virus. We hope it will help to secure their future in the Foothills and in SF Bay.

The funding from your chapters was critical to jump-starting our project."



*Black Rail*  
Ed Harper

## 2011 CALIFORNIA BURROWING OWL CONSORTIUM

The winter California Burrowing Owl Consortium meeting is coming up on Thursday, February 24th and will be hosted by the SRCSD Bufferlands in Elk Grove.

**Thursday, February 24th, 2011; 8:45am to 4pm; Check-in begins at 8:30am**  
**8521 Laguna Station Rd, Elk Grove, CA**

**Lunch:** bringing a lunch is suggested. There are limited options on site and multiple options within three miles of the meeting location.

We will have talks in the morning and a panel discussion and site visit in the afternoon. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) Bufferlands has been monitoring and managing habitat for Burrowing Owls since the early 1990s. Topics will include Burrowing Owl management on the Bufferlands, the status of Burrowing Owls in Sacramento County and prospects for the future, flood control and Burrowing Owls, including levee maintenance mitigation, population dynamics, monitoring and current conservation efforts.

For full details: [http://burrowingowlpreservation.org/html/consortium\\_meeting.htm](http://burrowingowlpreservation.org/html/consortium_meeting.htm)

There is no charge, but you must RSVP, as we need to plan for the expected number of attendees. To reserve a spot and for directions and more information, please send an e-mail including your name and the number of people attending to [conardc@sacsewer.com](mailto:conardc@sacsewer.com) (phone number is 916-203-1610.)

## Birding and Nature Events

### BIRD AND BREAKFAST AT EFFIE YEAW

Please mark your calendar for **Saturday, March 12th**, when the American River Natural History Association will continue its Annual Spring Classic at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. 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. Then 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.

Sign-ups start in mid-January. Reservations are always necessary for the space-limited, \$35 per person, fund-raiser for educational programs on the American River Parkway. Call the Center at 489-4918 for details. Checks payable to ARNHA may be mailed to PO Box 241, Carmichael, CA 95609. Be sure to include your telephone number.

### KLAMATH FALLS, WINTER WINGS FESTIVAL

The 32nd annual Winter Wings Festival will offer three full days of activities, **February 18-20**. Located in both south central Oregon and northern California, the Basin is a key player on the Pacific Flyway, hosting 80% of the birds that use the Flyway. A total of six separate nearby refuges comprise the total National Wildlife Refuge complex spanning nearly 200,000 acres. A unique, strong cooperative partnership between farming, water resources, and the refuges provides an abundance of food and water that attracts vast numbers of waterfowl and raptors. Keynote speakers will be Jeffrey Gordon, field editor for *Birdwatcher's Digest* and Art Wolfe, famed wildlife photographer. Many field trips and photography workshops are planned. Check out the website at [www.WinterWingsFest.org](http://www.WinterWingsFest.org) for the latest in Festival planning information. On-line registration and brochures are now available.

### GODWIT DAYS

The 16th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held **April 11-17** in Arcata, CA. Godwit Days is a three-day spring migration bird festival celebrating California's North Coast which offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats of Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where 271 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. The area offers a wide array of habitats and species for your observation and enjoyment. 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.com](http://www.godwitdays.com) or call 1-800-908-WING. Registration is now open.

### *Findings* continued from page 2

Goldfinches, Turkey Vultures, Bushtits, Oak Titmouse, Hermit Thrush, Western Scrub-Jay, American Robin, Cooper's Hawk, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, House Finch, and Mallard. "One of the highlights was when we were on a large rock outcropping and the view of the lake as well as the birds was wonderful," Sandra said.

*Pete Hayes*

### BIRDS OF WINTER IN THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY

Popular instructor, Ed Harper, will again be offering an excellent birding class early this year. Classes will be given at Effie Yeaw Nature Center and field trips will take place on Saturdays at different locations.

The classes are held in the evening and begin on Thursday, February 24. Field trips will begin on Saturday, February 26. See last month's *Observer* for more information, including preparation, suggested materials and the complete schedule.

**Registration is \$80 and pre-registration is a must. Call or write Effie Yeaw Nature Center, American River Parkway, Carmichael, CA 95608, 489-4918**

**Ed Harper:** e-mail: [calidris@surewest.net](mailto:calidris@surewest.net)  
Home: 971-3311 Cell: 704-7954

### AUDUBON OUTREACH

The Galt Winter Bird Festival was our latest event; at the Outreach table were Darrell Mohr, Tim Fitzer, Cathie LaZier and Linda Pittman. Upcoming Outreach events are the Animal House Art Show in Carmichael, the Return of the Swainson's Hawks at Sutter's Landing, numerous Earth Day celebrations and Walk On The Wild Side at Beach Lake. If you'd like to come and help out at one of the functions, give Cathie a call or email, 457-6882 or [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net).

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Jon Beck, Bruce Bostick, Laverne Ireland, Beverly Moon, Alison Rood, Jerald Simkins and Flora Yen, to the **General Fund**.

Karen Brookhyser, A.C. Corley, Carole Elzey, J. B. Hervey, Truman Holtzclaw, Marc Irish, Judith LaMare, Rita Marowitz, Noreen Rademacher, Alison Rood, Jerald Simkins and Sonya Sorbo, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Brian Regan and Lynn Barbaria made a donation to the **General Fund** in the name of their sister-in-law, Cathy George, a long-time birder.

Eleanor Mitchell made a donation in honor of Lesley Kemp, "in appreciation of a lovely afternoon tea."

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Loy Baxter	Scott Peters
Doug Dempster	Becky
Sharon Earl	Rozumowicz
Tom Gomes	Sayuri Sakamoto
Larry Moore	Sandra Serpa

### Note from Our Membership Chair

If you think you are receiving mailings (either email or hard copy) from various birding, conservation, travel, or other organizations or interests as a result of your membership in either Sacramento Audubon Society (SAS) or National Audubon Society (NAS). . . please check it out! The Membership Chair of Sacramento Audubon Society is the only person who has access to contact information for SAS members. This information is not shared with, sold to, or traded to other organizations. Your email address is added to the California Audubon Alerts with your permission. If you want it removed, please let the Membership Chair know. Lea Landry, Membership Chair. llandry46@earthlink.net

### Please Note New Email Address

Lea Landry, our membership chair has a new email address: llandry46@earthlink.net.



Long-tailed Duck  
Stephen D'Amato

## 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@earthlink.net (916) 638-1141

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.

### 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 held on February 22, at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

*Observations* continued from page 10 reported in the first half of the month, and a **Swamp Sparrow** in Sacramento County on 12/27 along Herzog Rd southeast of Courtland

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

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit [www.cvbirds.org](http://www.cvbirds.org) and click "Listserv" for details. With nearly 100 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 Airola, Laura Davis, Bruce Deuel, Todd Easterla, Andy Engilis, Maureen Geiger, GariRae Gray, Steve Hampton, Jim Holmes, Dan Kopp, Lea Landry, Jeri Langham, John Luther, Mary Beth Metcalf, Ed Pandolfino, John Sterling, Jim Tietz, and Dan Williams.

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

Chris Conard

### 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.

# Seasonal Observations

December 1 to December 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

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

Several of the highlights from November continued into December, while the latter half of the month, as always, was dominated by the Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs). Unfortunately for counters this year, the weather did not cooperate and most of the local counts were run in partially or completely wet conditions. An exception, the Sacramento CBC on 12/26 had decent weather as well as some nice finds. Most notable was an **Eastern Phoebe** along Garden Hwy north of Radio Rd, only the second county record, which continued into January. A **MacGillivray's Warbler** at Reichmuth Park accounts for one of very few winter records for Northern California. The continuing **Steller's Jay** in Curtis Park became difficult to find by mid-month and was missed on the 12/26 CBC, but was found on 12/24 and 12/29 (the last known report). The **Mountain Chickadees** at East Lawn Cemetery were found on count day and into January, and another **Mountain Chickadee** visited a feeder in the Pocket area of south Sacramento from 11/30 to 12/6. Notable on the rainy 12/19 Putah Creek CBC was a **Warbling Vireo** and an **Evening Grosbeak**. Check the CBC summaries beginning on page 2 for a full report. The best reports from the 12/4 ARNHA Count include a **Red-breasted Merganser** and **Wilson's Warbler**.

For overall numbers and diversity, the best local gull watching is in Yolo County, espe-

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cially around the Landfill on 28H and the nearby Davis WTP. Most notable were one to two **Glaucous Gulls** (one 1st and one 2nd cycle) seen sporadically throughout the month and a 1st cycle **Franklin's Gull** on 12/3 along Rd 25 near the entrance

to the Conaway Ranch. Sherman Island in southwestern Sacramento County drew birders to see last month's **Brown Pelican**, last reported on 12/3, and produced a **Long-tailed Duck** on 12/1, only Sacramento County's second. Also seen on 12/3 were one adult and one near-adult **Western Gull** and a most impressive 150 **Mew Gulls**. Just to the northeast, 15 **Swainson's Hawks** were seen on 12/3 along Hwy 12 east of Hwy 160.

A **Western Kingbird** was found on private property in early December between Woodland and Davis for a very rare fall/winter record. The **Tropical Kingbird** from North Pond in Davis was refound on 12/19 at the Dos Pinos apartments a mile to the southwest. It was then found at North Davis Farms a half-mile to the north of Dos Pinos on 12/27 and into January. Other interesting reports included 16 **Mountain Plovers** near Cranmore Rd in Sutter County on 12/3, away from their well-known haunts in Solano and Yolo Counties, several **Evening Grosbeak** reports in Davis, with flocks of 15 and 25

*Observations* continued on page 9

## Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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Sacramento, CA 95826  
203 1610, e-mail preferred: [conardc@gmail.com](mailto:conardc@gmail.com)

**Editor:** Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, [sawise7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sawise7@sbcglobal.net)

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

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