



# The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, February 20, 2014  
Effie Yeaw Nature Center  
Assembly Room, 7pm

**Bats: Working the Night Shift**  
Dave Wyatt

Bats are in trouble! And, no...I'm not discussing the difference between maple and aluminum either. I'm talking about those little guys with wings that fly around at night gobbling up insects. While we may not think of these little guys too often—after all, they are active at night and the old adage of “out of sight, out of mind” springs into many of our brains...they do perform very valuable services to ecosystems and to human economies. And, we don't thank them enough for being such important components of the health of humans and our planet.

So, what is the trouble that bats are in? First of all, it's not all bat species that are in trouble. Here in North America, it's only the hibernating kind (which accounts for half of the bat species we have). Many of these species are being killed

by a wildlife disease called White-nose Syndrome (WNS). Actually “killed” doesn't convey the impact very well, a better word would be “decimated”. In the past seven years, over six million bats have died due to White-nose Syndrome. And it looks like the death toll will continue climbing.



Bat with White-nose Syndrome

*General Meeting* continued on page 8

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

From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, bird watchers from more than 100 countries are expected to participate in the 17th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), February 14–17. Anyone, anywhere in the world can count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count and enter their sightings at [www.BirdCount.org](http://www.BirdCount.org). The information gathered by tens of thousands of volunteers helps track the health of bird populations at a scale that would not otherwise be possible. This opportunity for citizen science to contribute to our knowledge of bird species' survival and population has now spread worldwide. Plus, it's a great opportunity for some healthy city, county, and state, even country, competition in compiling those checklists. For all the

**GBBC** continued on page 9

## THIRD ANNUAL KIDS CBC A WONDERFUL FAMILY BIRDING EVENT!

A gray day with threatening showers did not dampen the spirits or enthusiasm of participants in the SAS Third Annual Kids' Christmas Bird Count. About 30 birders, including 22 children, formed into 4 teams and walked the trails at Effie Yeaw Nature Center to tally every bird they saw and to enjoy other species such as squirrels and deer. With the help of SAS volunteers and EYNC docents, everyone had a great time and returned to the Center to share brown bag lunches brought from home; a compilation indicating that 46 species were seen; and a raffle where all participating children were able to choose 2 bird and/or nature-related gifts from a wonderful array of choices. Prizes included several Audubon Pocket Bird Guides, field guides, bird feeders and bird seed (and other items donated by Wild Birds Unlimited in Loehman's Plaza) and two birdhouses donated by Richard Barbieri. SAS and EYNC volunteers made sure everyone had drinks and snacks to keep them going.



Intrepid birders Bella and Maliya with everyone's favorite leader, Dave Rosen

Counting highlights included excellent spotting scope looks at a Merlin; many turkeys strutting about with males displaying their beautiful tails; and deer napping and strolling about not much bothered by all the activity.

Everyone had a good time and will surely be back next year. We thank Effie Yeaw for their participation and sharing of their wonderful facility and the surrounding park with SAS.

## Field Trip Findings

**Colusa NWR (1/13)** – Leader Dan Tankersley reported: “Six of us enjoyed the continuing unseasonably warm weather at Colusa NWR. It was pitch perfect without a hint of wind on the viewing platform. The problem was that the species count was down from normal for this time of year, but we managed 52 in all. There were many white geese of both species and many Greater White-fronted as well. The highlights were scope views of two Great Horned Owls along the riparian walk near the viewing platform. Other raptors seen were several Red-tailed Hawks, including a beautiful dark morph bird, Red-shouldered Hawk, Cooper’s Hawk, and a distant Bald Eagle.”

**Nimbus Fish Hatchery (1/12)** – Leader Dan Williams reported: “We found 7 species of gulls and 62 species overall on our Nimbus Fish Hatchery walk this morning. In order of abundance it went California, Ring-billed, Herring, Glaucous-winged, and Thayer’s, with only one adult Mew gull, and our rarest find—a 1st cycle Western gull which we didn’t discover until our walk back toward the parking lot. A nice male Hooded Merganser and several Barrow’s Goldeneye were a treat below the weir, as was the regularly occurring Peregrine Falcon on the wire near Hazel Bridge.

Down the river trail we were able to get good looks at Phainopeplas, Western Bluebirds, Golden-crowned Sparrows, and all manner of our regular Central Valley winter residents.”

**William Pond Park (1/12)** – Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “We began this Beginning Birders’ trip in a damp cold fog, and ended it in high wind, but in between we managed to find 40 spe-

cies. Co-leader Darrell Mohr spotted the first bird, a White-breasted Nuthatch, and co-leader Mary Beth Metcalf found a Spotted Towhee for scope views. A favorite for everyone was a male Hooded Merganser. Common Goldeneye were already bobbing heads and giving their mating calls, and some Great Blue Herons were already in the rookery refurbishing their nests.”

**American River Parkway, Spanos Ct (1/11)** – Leader Dan Kopp reported: “I had approximately 15 folks join me for my inaugural trip at this location. It was overcast with a chilly light breeze and a few sprinkles near the end; in stark contrast to the clear, sunny and unseasonably warm days we have been experiencing all this winter. It was a slow start but we eventually found a nice mixed flock with Fox and Lincoln sparrows, a Hermit Thrush, an Orange-crowned Warbler and many Yellow-rumped Warblers foraging on the insect-rich, recently exposed, mud along a rockbar. There was a swarm of Tree Swallows foraging over the river most of the morning and we noted an Osprey hover several times over the river in search of a meal. There were a few Common Mergansers mixed in with the many Common Goldeneyes, Mallards and Canada Geese. We also enjoyed several active Spotted Sandpipers and a few Greater Yellowlegs on our way to tallying 50 species for the morning.

**Beal’s Point, Folsom Lake (1/7)** – Leader Margaret Martin reported: “Nine people of all experience levels searched the woodland areas rather than focusing on the lake, which appeared to be a distant river. That was a good decision, as Kate Riley spotted a Merlin, which gave us an

unobstructed view as it perched facing us, as well as a nice view in flight. Other birds of interest included a Hermit Thrush by the parking lot and a Bufflehead that was diving in a small body of water left far behind by the receding lake. We observed a total of 29 species.”

**Sacramento NWR (1/5)** – Leader John York reported: “Four of us spent most of the day at SAC NWR with excellent weather. First highlight was a first year Bald Eagle flyover as we were walking the visitor center area. We saw two Peregrine Falcons (or the same bird twice) and thousands of geese. Duck numbers, except for Shovelers were low, but we did see most of the usual suspects. We ended the day with good views of an American Bittern. A very pleasant day and good for the three novice birders on the trip.”

**Western Amador Co (1/4)** – Leader Gary Fregien reported: “A group of 22 birders gathered at the rendezvous in Rancho Murieta for the trip to W Amador Co. on a clear morning. We changed the route a little this year by taking Vaira Ranch Rd. just south of Dry Town from Hwy 49. We were glad that we did; we saw 5 Yellow-billed Magpies soon after getting on this road. We also had numerous passerines at our first stop, including two Varied Thrushes, believing they may be the ‘bird of the day’. Very common birds were Canada Goose, American White Pelican, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Acorn Woodpecker, Say’s Phoebe, Western Bluebird, Spotted Towhee, and White- and Golden-crowned Sparrows. We also saw good numbers of Gadwall,

*Findings* continued on page 9

## 2013-2014 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT RESULTS BY AREA

### Woodfords, December 14

Compiler Dan Brown reported: “20 of us started the sunny, 17 degree morning at the Woodford’s Store in Alpine county and proceeded to have a great day of birding as it warmed up to the high 30’s! 90% of the water in the count circle was frozen, so not much in the way of waterfowl were found but we made up for that with 12 species of raptors, the highlight being a Northern Goshawk. Other highlights were a group of Red Crossbills and 150 or so Pinyon Jays! Our total species count is unofficially 67.

### Auburn, December 16

Robin Leong reported: “With some results still out, I can say so far we have 166 species with one on count week and the numbers look low. We had a new species for the Benicia CBC and that was a Western Tanager.

### Sacramento, December 22

Compiler Mark Cudney reported: “The results are finally in. Apparently good area leaders are also good procrastinators. Spectacular sunny skies were a portent

of a record setting count. Unfortunately, the nice weather kept the montane species away as well as greatly diminished our numbers of water and shorebirds. Total species were 156—well short of our record setting performance of 166 in 2010. The count has exceeded 160 on four prior occasions. Overall species numbers were way down except for one subarea that reported 505,000 Brewer’s Blackbirds.

Nice finds were single Semi-palmated Plover, Western Tanager, Glaucous Gull, Pacific Wren, Greater Scaup, and

Plumbeous Vireo (only the second time on the count—way to go Jeri and Cliff). Other good sightings included several Townsend's Warblers, Lesser Yellowlegs, Black-throated Gray Warblers, Eurasian Wigeons, Rock Wrens, Chipping Sparrows, Yellow-Headed Blackbirds, and Barrow's Goldeneye.

Bad misses included Common Loon, Horned, Western, and Clarke's Grebe, Bonaparte's Gull, Osprey, Forster's Tern, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, Brown Creeper and Phainopepla. All 54 participants preferred birding in the sunshine as opposed to the horizontal rain and high winds of last year.

### **Folsom, December 29**

Compiler Chris Conard reported: "The Folsom CBC was run on a calm and clear day with drier conditions than any of the participants can remember; the parched brown grass and dry ponds looked more like August than December. A respectable 141 species were recorded within an historic range of 123 to 146 since 1978, with a total of 39,406 individual birds. With a few regular counters unavailable this year, 59 participants in 28 field parties is about 10 below the recent average.

This count is always relatively low in waterfowl diversity compared to count circles on the Valley floor. We were lucky to record a couple of Snow Geese, but missed the other goose species except for Canada, and missed Tundra Swan as well. We would have rather missed the two invasive Mute Swans recorded and many of the 1,574 Canada Geese are probably less than fully wild. We missed Cinnamon Teal, had one Northern Shoveler, two Northern Pintails, five Green-winged Teal, and two Canvasbacks, but an impressive 414 Common Goldeneyes, 31 Barrow's Goldeneyes, 15 Hooded Mergansers, and 389 Common Mergansers. A Red-breasted Merganser was found on Folsom Lake during count week. Only 50 Wild Turkeys were reported this year, and from only three of eight areas, while the recent average has been over 300. California Quail (158) were near recent totals. A Pacific Loon was a nice addition (Beal's Point) along with seven Common Loons. There were three Ferruginous Hawks and 12 Bald Eagles, though Rough-legged Hawk was missed (but found count week), and Golden Eagle was also missed. Raptor numbers of most species were low this year. Shorebird numbers and species diversity were low, as is often the case on this count,

with a single Dunlin the highlight (surprisingly, only the third count record). Of the nearly 11,000 gulls, a single Mew Gull and a single Western Gull were most notable.

Limited owling produced a Western Screech-Owl and two Burrowing Owls were found along and beyond Payen Rd. Lewis's Woodpeckers were in good numbers (45), and a single Hairy Woodpecker was recorded. Three Loggerhead Shrikes along Scott Rd saved us from missing this declining species. A single Steller's Jay was a nice find near Brown's Ravine. Only 23 Yellow-billed Magpies is the lowest ever recorded (and well below the average of 69 since West Nile Virus arrived in 2004).



*Barrow's Goldeneye*  
Linda Pittman

Common Ravens used to be a rarity on this count, but 11 were recorded this year and they are now expected. Unlike last year, montane birds did not invade the Valley, so it was no surprise that we missed Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, and Pine Siskin. A Pacific Wren at upper Lake Natoma was a rare find for this count, with only two previous reports. We also managed to find three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and just a single Golden-crowned Kinglet. Other highlights included a Chipping Sparrow at Folsom City Park (near the zoo), a Bell's (aka Sage) Sparrow at Sweetwater Creek, a White-throated Sparrow along the Humbug Creek Parkway, and five Lawrence's Goldfinches, also near Sweetwater Creek. Tricolored Blackbird was a sad miss; the very dry range lands south of Hwy 50 didn't support the typical large flocks of blackbirds. Generally speaking, perhaps owing to good weather and access, sparrow numbers of many species were up from recent years.

Thanks to all who participated in the count, but especially to the area leaders who do a lot of extra work organizing their teams.

### **Lincoln, December 30**

Compiler Ed Pandolfino reported: "This year we had 84 people in the field and, as with nearly all CBCs this season, they enjoyed great weather. Diversity was good (141 species, our second-highest total and only the second time we have broken 140 in the 12-year history of this count), but abundance was not (87,000 birds was well below our average of 112,000 and our third lowest total). Low numbers were mainly the result of low waterfowl and raptor numbers. The very dry conditions (almost NONE of the rice fields had water this year) may well explain the low waterfowl numbers and perhaps the low raptor numbers as well.

Total numbers were below average for 60% of our regularly-occurring species and we set new lows for Ross's Goose, Northern Pintail, Northern Harrier, Common Gallinule, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Western Meadowlark (this count has recorded the largest number of any CBC for this species in 10 of our first 11 years), House Finch, and House Sparrow (no tears shed over that one...). In spite of the fair weather, we missed Tree Swallow and White-throated Swift, two birds we usually find on sunny days.

Best bird was our second Northern Shrike. Very nearly had a NEW species, but the Red-naped Sapsucker turned out to have some signs of hybridization with Red-breasted (as so many do) so was relegated to a Red-naped X Red-breasted Sapsucker. Other good finds included Eurasian Wigeon, Sandhill Crane, Western Sandpiper, Glaucous-winged Gull, Western Screech-Owl, Lewis's Woodpecker, Vesper Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch.

We did set new highs for some species, including Canada Goose (ugh!), Canvasback, Bald Eagle (conservative estimate of 11 birds), Greater Yellowlegs, Barn Owl, Nuttall's Woodpecker, and Brown-headed Cowbird (double ugh!).

Thanks to all who participated.

### **Angwin, January 1**

Compiler Murray Berner reported: "The Angwin CBC found 139 species, give or take depending on documentation. A photographed Sandhill Crane is new to the count. Mountain Bluebird and Red-naped Sapsucker were also photographed. Waterfowl and raptors were low, except a most ever 12 Bald Eagles, and the ubiquitous Ruddy Duck in rafts at available water. We had 55 participants, our recent average.

# Field Trips



Short-eared Owl  
Stephen D'Amato

## Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, contact the scheduler Richard Barbieri, [offleash56@yahoo.com](mailto:offleash56@yahoo.com), 761-1124, for trips through March 2. For trips beginning March 3, contact the scheduler Mark Martucci, [matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com), 833-6722.

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

### Saturday, February 1, 7am

#### Yolo/Solano Big Day

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**

**[shoppe01@surewest.net](mailto:shoppe01@surewest.net)**

Get set for a full day of birding "hot spots" of Yolo and Solano Counties to see how many species we can tally. Last year's trip totaled 107 species. We will begin at Lake Solano Park and Putah Creek for unique passerines and waterfowl, then head down Highway 113 to the Robinson Road area for raptors and possibly Mountain Plover. From there, we will proceed to the Yolo Bypass and the Davis Landfill and WWTP for more waterfowl, shorebirds and gulls. The itinerary can change depending on conditions and reports. For those interested, Scott would like to have a casual dinner nearby to tally up species and talk about what was seen. Scopes and FRS radios are helpful. Bring lunch, snacks, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Scott at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride at 7am. From Sacramento, take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right at the light, then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride entrance, a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. Rain cancels.

### Sunday, February 2, 7:30am

#### Lincoln Grasslands

**Leaders: Tim Fitzer and Mark Martucci**

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

**Mark, 833-6722,**

**[matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com)**

We will search the back roads of western Placer County for raptors, waterfowl, Tricolored 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. We'll also look for winter rarities that flock with Horned

Larks and sparrows in the Brewer Road area. Lunch at the Chamberlain Cemetery will be followed by more birding along the rural roads on the way to Camp Far West Reservoir. Bring lunch, liquids and scopes and FRS radios if you have them, and be prepared for a full day of birding. Meet at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

### Sunday, February 2

#### Beginning Birding Field Trip

#### William Pond Park

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

### Monday, February 3, 12 noon

#### Colusa National Wildlife Refuge

**Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1290**

**[dtankers@winfirst.com](mailto:dtankers@winfirst.com)**

Join Dan for an afternoon of birding at this wonderful NWR. This time of year the majority of white geese are Ross's, and the afternoon "fly-in" can be spectacular if the weather cooperates. There will be many duck species as well as other wetland birds. Eurasian Wigeon is often seen here and we can expect many raptors with the possibility of Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. The outing will consist of time spent on the viewing platform, a drive around the tour route, and an easy walk along the

riparian trail. Be prepared for cold and damp weather. Weather permitting, there should be ample photo ops. Scopes and FRS radios will be helpful on this trip. Meet Dan at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento, take I-80 west to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again to the Park and Ride behind Ikeda's Market. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Rain, strong wind, or thick fog cancels. You may want to bring snacks and liquids as the trip will end around 4pm.

### Saturday, February 8, 8am

#### Yolo Bypass

**Leaders: Dan and Pam Thompson**

**359-3777, [keiran@surewest.net](mailto:keiran@surewest.net)**

Join Dan and Pam for a morning of birding this wetland area just minutes from Sacramento. Dan and Pam are gearing this trip for beginners, although birders of any ability are welcome. Some of the birds you may expect are waterfowl, raptors, sparrows, Horned Larks and pipits. FRS radios and spotting scopes are helpful if you have them. Meet Dan and Pam in the first parking lot (Lot A) on your left at the beginning of the auto tour. To get to the area 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.

### Sunday, February 9, 8am

#### William Pond Park

**Leader: Craig DeMartini, 418-4263**

**[cloudwalk7@aol.com](mailto:cloudwalk7@aol.com)**

Meet Craig along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk, for this morning

walk looking for returning migrants and resident birds. Along the river mergansers and goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. California Quail, Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows may be found in the park area. Trip will end before noon. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners

**Tuesday, February 11, 8:30am**

**Yolo Bypass 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 as well as raptors. 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, at the beginning of the auto tour. FRS radios and scopes are helpful on this trip, which is a good trip for both beginners and more experienced birders. Trip will end before noon. If the bypass is closed due to flooding, the trip is canceled.

**February 14 through 17**

**Great Backyard Bird Count  
www.birdsource.org/gbbc**

Count birds for 15 minutes or more in your backyard or other favorite birding locale; then post your results online and see what's happening in your area and across the country. It's fun for all ages and skill levels. See the article on page 1 and check the website for more information.

**Saturday, February 15, 8am**

**Gray Lodge WLR and adjacent areas  
NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING PLACE  
AND LEADER**

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471  
shoppe01@surewest.net**

This trip will focus on wintering raptors and wintering waterfowl at Gray Lodge and the surrounding area. Gray Lodge requires a fee of \$4 per person, payable with exact change, no checks accepted, at the Iron Ranger. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd,

and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. You'll want to bring liquids, lunch, warm clothes, and also spotting scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

**Saturday, February 15, 10:30am**

**Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk**

Counting birds for the Great Backyard Bird Count will be easy in this area. Join Maureen Geiger of Sac Audubon and a Nature Center docent for a family friendly nature walk at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists/birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. For directions, see [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net)

**February 15, 16 and 17,  
President's Day Weekend  
Eureka/Arcata area**

**Leaders, Tim Fitzer, 870-5207  
spskua2@comcast.net  
Joe Ceriani, 707-476-9127  
joeceriani@usmessage.net**

Please mark your calendars and join Tim 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 Tim or Joe for further details.

**Sunday, February 16, 7:30am**

**Yuba County Wetlands**

**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603  
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 Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station, and park on the right in the Park and Ride. Bring lunch, layered clothes, and scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

**Monday, February 17, 8am**

**William Pond Park**

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

Let's count birds for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Cathie will post our results on the GBBC website. Meet her at 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. A Sac County Park Pass or a \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

**Saturday, February 22, 8am**

**Sacramento Bar**

**American River Parkway**

**Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999  
mohrdd@gmail.com**

Join Darrell for this morning walk along the American River. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe some surprises. This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, February 22, 3:30pm**

**Sandhill Cranes and Other**

**Wintering Birds of the**

**Sacramento Valley**

**A Save Our Sandhill Cranes  
and Sacramento Audubon  
trip**

**Coordinator: Mike Savino,  
446-1392**

Our Sandhill Cranes will be leaving soon to migrate to their nesting grounds. Don't miss this opportunity to see them, as well as a variety of ducks, swans, geese, and shorebirds. Meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center deck at 3:30pm to hear a brief presentation of Sandhill Crane behavior, biology and status. Then we'll stroll the boardwalk in the Lost Slough Wetlands, enjoying views of the



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cranes, wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. Afterwards, we'll drive along Desmond Road and possibly to Woodbridge Road or Staten Island, to see flocks of cranes fly in to roost for the night. Dress for changeable weather and bring binoculars. Scopes are helpful. 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. Further directions and maps are available at [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org). This is a great trip for beginners and for families

**Sunday, February 23, 7:30am**  
**Upper Lake Natoma and Folsom Lake**  
**Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610**  
**[conardc@gmail.com](mailto: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 23, 8am**  
**Beginning Birding Field Trip**  
**William Pond Park**

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

**Sunday, February 23, 3:30pm**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley**  
**A Save Our Sandhill Cranes and Sacramento Audubon trip**  
**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

See write up for February 22.

**Saturday, March 1, 8am**  
**North Natomas Regional Park**  
**Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682**  
**[Bgraber984@gmail.com](mailto:Bgraber984@gmail.com)**

Join Ben for a leisurely morning walk around the North Natomas Regional Park. We can expect to see a wide variety of grassland species including Meadowlarks, Ring-necked Pheasants, and Savannah Sparrows, along with herons, egrets, and waterfowl. Various wintering species of raptors, including falcons, are also possibilities. This trip will include approximately 2 to 3 miles of walking over flat terrain, and bringing liquids is recommended. Meet Ben at the parking lot on the North side of New Market Drive across from Inderkum High School. New Market Drive is off Truxel Road approximately a mile north of Interstate 80. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

**Sunday, March 2, 7am**  
**Highway 37 and Schollenberger Park, Petaluma**  
**Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722**  
**[matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto: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 the Petaluma area, 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 7 a.m. 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 8, 7:30am**  
**Discovery Park**  
**Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**Or 281-6652**  
**[mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net)**  
**Larry Hickey, 415-305-0651**  
**[Larryhickey1@gmail.com](mailto:Larryhickey1@gmail.com)**

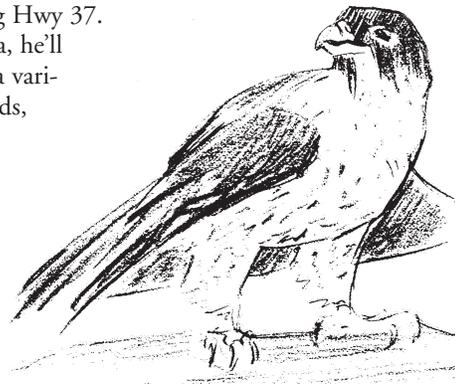
This park at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a great place for a walk in any season with open lawns, revegetated sections and dense riparian stands. Join Maureen and Larry to look for resident species such as red-shouldered hawks, white-tailed kites and yellow-billed magpies plus still wintering sparrows. Woodpeckers, towhees and white-breasted nuthatches are usually found in March, and hermit thrush-

es can be common. This is an easy walking trip for beginners and experienced birders and will last until late morning.

To reach Discovery from I-5, drive east on the Garden Highway, turning right into the park at the first traffic light. Once in the park, you need a Sacramento County Parks Annual Pass, or you must stop at the kiosk and register, paying the \$5 entrance fee. Then turn left at your first opportunity and then left again, driving a short distance to the farthest parking lot at the archery range where we will meet.

**Sunday, March 9, 8am (Note: Daylight Savings Time begins today.)**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722**  
**[matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com)**

Join Mark at this Nature Conservancy area 20 minutes south of Sacramento. He will search the ponds and fields on Desmond and Franklin Roads for waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors. Walks along the board-



*Peregrine Falcon*  
Kirsten Munson

walk, bridge and trail areas should turn up other interesting species in this rich riparian area. Meet Mark at the Visitor Center parking lot on Franklin Blvd. From Sacramento,

take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, (Exit #498); go left (east) about 1 mile 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. Further directions and maps are available at [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org).

**Wednesday, March 12, 9am**  
**Effie Yeaw Nature Center**  
**Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**[empid@earthlink.net](mailto: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. An

ARNHA membership card, Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, March 15, 8am**  
**Lake Solano/Putah Creek**  
**Leader: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207**  
**spskua2@comcast.net**

This is a great area to find Pileated Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Brown Creeper, Barrow's Goldeneye and many other late wintering birds. Meet Tim 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.

**Saturday, March 15, 10:30am**  
**Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk**

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

## FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2014

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

**Dates:** Sundays, February 2, February 23, March 30

**Time:** 8am

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

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

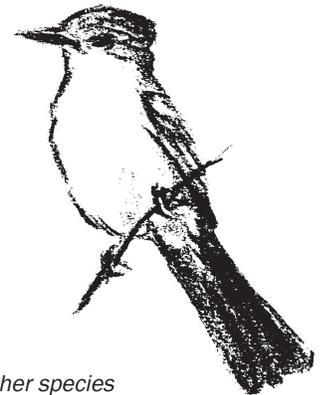
The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on where to look and what important field marks to look for. This walk will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. An optional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

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

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIP DATES FOR 2014

Sacramento Audubon is merging education activities with Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael as a way of maximizing efforts to serve families with children who would like to be out of doors and enjoy nature walks. The next date is **Saturday, February 15**. Following dates are March 15 and April 12. February's walk begins at 8:30am.

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



*Flycatcher species*  
Kirsten Munson

## CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDS YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

The Central Valley Bird Club is once again offering scholarships for young birders to attend birding camps or classes. Camp opportunities include the Sierra Nevada Field Campus near Yuba Pass sponsored by San Francisco State University, Victor Emanuel Nature Tours' Camp Chiricahua, Seattle Audubon Society's Cascades Bird Banding Camp, and other ABA Sponsored Birding Camps.

For further information on this scholarship and links to various camps, please check the website: [www.cvbirds.org/Scholarship.htm](http://www.cvbirds.org/Scholarship.htm) Application deadline is February 15, 2014. An essay and letter of recommendation are required. The scholarship is available to ages 10-18 (be sure to check specific camp requirements.) The scholarship will cover the cost of the registration only.

For questions, contact:

John Sterling—[jsterling@wavecable.com](mailto:jsterling@wavecable.com)

Maureen Geiger—[mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net)

Carolyn Woodruff—[dewoodruff@comcast.net](mailto:dewoodruff@comcast.net)



## DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

During the waterfowl season the Cosumnes River Preserve hosts a wide variety of birds, including some of the most colorful ducks such as Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, and Bufflehead, as well as geese, swans, herons and egrets, and Sandhill Cranes. On various dates docents from the preserve will have a row of scopes set up near the boardwalk, some set lower to accommodate children, and they'll focus on giving you good views of these birds. In addition there are often hawks overhead, and some of the more interesting shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts and Common Snipe are often seen. On one recent day there was a Bald Eagle, on another a Sora. A table display features "Duck Soup", dishes of water dipped from the pond full of sand

fleas, dragonfly nymphs, and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on. A microscope and hand lens provide close-up looks.

The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento—south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd; the viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve.

The time is 11am to 2pm, and it's a great day trip for families. Scheduled dates are:

Saturday, February 1

Sunday, February 9

Saturday, February 15

Sunday, February 23

Saturday, March 1

## General Meeting

continued from page 1

It was in February 2006 when a group of winter cavers in New York noticed a curious fuzzy white growth around the noses of a group of hibernating bats and took pictures of it. Later that year, they showed those pictures to a bat biologist but a site visit did not reveal anything out of the ordinary. It wasn't until winter 2007 when the first signs of the impending catastrophe were noticed in a visit to that cave where dead bats now littered the floor and many of the hibernating bats had the fuzzy white growth on their noses. Since that time, this disease has spread to ten bat species, 22 states, 5 Canadian provinces and as far west as western Oklahoma (a distance of 2,000 miles in seven years!).

While WNS is not yet in California (that we know), we can expect it to arrive here on the west coast in the fairly near future. If you would like to know more about this mysterious disease and a bit about bats in general, come to this picture-filled presentation by wildlife biologist David Wyatt and sponsored by the Sacramento Audubon Society on Thursday February 20. I hope to see you there!

Our speaker, David Wyatt, is a wildlife biologist who is a professor in the Field Ecology program at Sacramento City College. He specializes in mammal studies—in particular bats and ringtails (he will also give an update on the ringtail studies that Sacramento Audubon helped to fund in 2013). David also serves on the California Steering Committee on White-nose Syndrome and is helping to craft state policy regarding WNS.

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

*Sally Walters, Program Chair*



*Savannah Sparrow*  
Stephen D'Amato

## Birding and Nature Events

### OLYMPIC BIRDFEST 2014, SEQUIM, WASHINGTON

From April 4 through 6 in Sequim, WA the Olympic Birdfest will take place. It's the place for a bird watching vacation for beginners and experts, with leisurely strolls or active hikes, you can bird for a few hours or all day... from the dawn chorus to the evening owl prowling. Enjoy guided birding trips, boat tours, a silent auction, gala banquet, and the bird festival with the most spectacular setting! Visit the rain shadow of the Olympic Peninsula to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest—Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, dippers, Black Oystercatchers, Long-tailed Ducks, and more. Guided field trips, a boat cruise in the Strait of Juan de Fuca, vendors and artists are also featured. The keynote speaker this year will be Noah Strycker presenting "Bird World: the fascinating parallels between bird and human behavior."

Program information and registration can be found at [www.olympicbirdfest.org](http://www.olympicbirdfest.org). Their E-mail address is [opas.birdfest.info@gmail.com](mailto:opas.birdfest.info@gmail.com) or you can contact Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society at 360-681-4076.

Immediately following BirdFest, there is a three-day, two-night birding cruise of the San Juan Islands, April 6-8, 2014. Register separately at [www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon](http://www.pugetsoundexpress.com/audubon).

### GODWIT DAYS, ARCATA

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

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

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

Save the dates of **April 25-27** for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Enjoy birding at the height of spring migration with some of the best naturalists around. The Festival will once again be headquartered in Point Reyes Station and will include field trips in and around the Point Reyes National Seashore. The keynote speaker has not been announced yet.

For more information, visit [www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org](http://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org). Tickets are scheduled to go on sale February 19, and all proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

## *Findings* continued from page 2

American Wigeon, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye. We had American Kestrel and Phainopepla in several places. Other prized birds included Horned Grebe, Western and Clark's Grebe, Common Loon, Greater Yellowlegs, Belted Kingfisher, Rock Wren, Hermit Thrush, Lark Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow and Tri-colored Blackbird. The sentimental favorite moment of the day was witnessing the birth and, struggling, first steps of a newborn calf. The day also ended very well for us. Not only did the temperature rise into the mid-60s on this "winter" day, we also found 2 Ferruginous Hawks and a Prairie Falcon at our last stop on Carbondale Rd.; the new group-consensus best birds of the day. Our final tally was 77 species, breaking last year's record by 1."

**Bushy Lake (1/2)** – Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "The morning started off slow. Apparently the weather was too cold for the birds. After about an hour, birds started to move out into the sun. Bushy Lake had many Wood Ducks. Everyone was happy to see that many in one location. After seeing the Wood Ducks we started seeing many more species. Perhaps the highlight of the morning was a Great Horned Owl all ruffled up and sleeping. We had a total of 43 species. All five of us called it a successful morning."

**Robinson Road and Bird's Landing (12/28)** – Leader Linda Pittman reported: "Eleven birders headed out to the Robinson Road and Flannery Road area on a very cold morning. After warming up slightly, a north wind blew in. The area was very dry and needs rain. The Mountain Plovers were missed, but not for lack of trying! Raptors seen in the area included American Kestrels, Prairie and Peregrine Falcons (both eating prey), a Sharp-shinned Hawk, Ferruginous Hawks, and many Red-tailed Hawks. Other highlights were good numbers of Long-billed Curlew and Horned Larks, eight Loggerhead Shrikes, and two Burrowing Owls hunkered down out of the wind."

**Sandhill Crane Trips (12/28 and 12/29)** – Leader Mike Savino reported: "The December field trips were well attended. Saturday had over 50 people, so we broke into two groups, one led by Mike with Alison Ferkovich assisting, and one by Paul Tebbel. At Staten Island, at our regular stop at the old collapsed water

tower there was a decent crane fly-in and some nice fly overs of geese, ducks, and swans. This large crowd of visitors was in a holiday mood and seemed to enjoy the trip. On Sunday "only" about 40 visitors showed up. After a quick crane talk, Mike, with the help of Jackie Delu and Alan Kilgore, caravaned about fourteen cars to Desmond Rd where they got good views of cranes, ducks and geese, and about 30 swans settled in far to the north. We then went to Staten Island where for many visitors the highlight of the day was close-up scope views of a Great Horned Owl. Their delight in seeing this beautiful owl was the reward that makes these trips worthwhile."

**Gray Lodge SWR and Colusa NWR (12/21)** – Leaders Dan and Pam Thompson reported: "Our group of 9 birders spent a lovely, windless day birding the Gray Lodge and Colusa Wildlife Refuges. We tallied 86 species by late afternoon. Gray Lodge Wildlife refuge produced good looks at Eurasian Wigeon, Snow and Ross's geese. Low flying Northern Harriers scared up these geese in glorious thousands that whitened the sky. Another highlight of Gray Lodge was two dark morph Snow Geese. We were pleasantly surprised by a group of 9 Cackling Geese at Colusa Wildlife Refuge, which included one Aleutian sub-species. Colusa also produced one Eurasian Wigeon. Other great finds were an Orange-crowned Warbler, American Kestrel, Red-shouldered Hawk, Tundra Swans, several Belted Kingfishers, Eared Grebes, Ring-necked Ducks, a Loggerhead Shrike and dozens of Red-tailed Hawks."

**Effie Yeaw Nature Walk (12/15)** – Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "A mixed age group of about 20 joined me for this afternoon walk, and Sac Audubon members Alan Kilgore and Susan Solarz pitched in and helped find the birds. Noisy Acorn Woodpeckers dominated the viewing, but we also had turkeys, and a huge kettle of Turkey Vultures swirling overhead. Participants also marveled at the tiny size of a Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The younger birders kept busy checking off the birds on the photo list provided by the EYNC docents, and also enjoyed identifying deer tracks, mugwort and valley oaks."

*Cathie LaZier  
substituting for Pete Hayes*

## **GBBC 2014** continued from page 1

information you need go to [birdcount.org](http://birdcount.org). Scientists and bird enthusiasts can learn a lot by knowing where the birds are. Bird populations are dynamic; they are constantly in flux. No single scientist or team of scientists could hope to document and understand the complex distribution and movements of so many species in such a short time. Your participation can really improve the quality of their results.

The GBBC website is quite interactive. You can also enter the photo contest or see last year's entrants and winners. Let's get everyone out counting this year and add to Sacramento's birdy reputation! The GBBC is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society with partner Bird Studies Canada.

## **POLLINATOR GARDENING WORKSHOP**

One of the programs from the California Center for Urban Horticulture is a Pollinator Gardening Workshop on Saturday, March 15th. Experts will be teaching how to attract pollinators to your garden. Class agenda and fees will be announced in early February.

Contact information is:

CCUH c/o Anne Schellman

1108 Environmental Horticulture

One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616

(530) 752-6642 office

(530) 312-4083 mobile

web: [ccuh.ucdavis.edu](http://ccuh.ucdavis.edu)

## **WHAT TO DO WITH THAT INJURED BIRD**

Ill or injured birds (as well as other wild animals) in Sacramento should be taken to Sacramento Wildlife Care Association. Details are below:

- They are located at 5211 Patrol Road, McClellan, CA 95652 (on the former McClellan Air Force Base.) They are just a few minutes off Hwy 80.
- Their phone is (916) 965-WILD (9453) - leave a voicemail and a volunteer will return your call within two hours.
- The facility is open 7 days a week/365 days a year, from 10am to 6pm.
- All ill/injured animals must be taken to the facility. Volunteers are not able to pick up animals.
- [www.wildlifecareassociation.com](http://www.wildlifecareassociation.com)

## Birding and Nature Events

### 7TH ANNUAL WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

The City of **Galt** in Collaboration with the Cosumnes River Preserve and Galt Joint Union Elementary School District are pleased to bring you the 7th Annual Winter Bird Festival, **Saturday, February 1, 2014**. Many migratory and resident birds call Galt their winter home. Guided tours offer an exciting opportunity to see the birds that spend their winters in the Central Valley! Wetlands, songbird and sandhill crane tours, led by Cosumnes River Preserve managers and biologists are included so sign up and have your binoculars ready! There will be two tours for photographers and one tour especially for children. There is also a birding tour at Heritage Oak Winery led by David Yee. Wine tasting and lunch are available—that one might be popular! Google Galt Birding Festival for more detailed information. Registration for the 7th annual festival is already open so check online or call so you don't miss any of your favorite tours. If you have any questions please call (209) 366-7115.

### 2014 KLAMATH FALLS WINTER WINGS FESTIVAL FOUR DAYS! FEBRUARY 13-16

The 35th Annual Winter Wings Festival will be held in Klamath Falls, Oregon. The 2014 festival is once again loaded with birding and nature photography talent. The speakers this year include Bill Thompson III, editor of *Bird Watcher's Digest*; Rick Sammon, Canon Explorer of Light photographer and author of 36 books about nature photography; Brian Sullivan, one of the country's leading raptor experts; and Sharon 'Birdchick' Stiteler, a recognized expert in digiscoping who runs the popular birding blog, Birdchick.com.

There are numerous photography workshops and field trips including some especially for youth; many raptor and owling trips, and Bald Eagle flyouts. Registration is required for all activities with an associated fee, including field trips, workshops, mini-sessions, receptions, and keynotes. Some free events also require registration. Register early to ensure your place; the field trips and photography workshops fill rapidly. Registrations will be processed in the order in which they are received and can be done online or by mail. The website with the complete schedule and registration information and forms is at: winterwingsfest.org. Further information is available at 877-541-BIRD (2473).

### MERLIN BIRD ID: A NEW KIND OF BIRDING APP

Cornell Lab of Ornithology has announced a new birding app: information overload is the bane of the beginning bird watcher—as anyone knows who has ever flipped through 40 species of sparrows in a field guide. What if an app could quickly tell you which birds are most likely based on your location, date, and a brief description? Not just which birds theoretically could occur near you, but which birds are actually reported most often by other birders. That's what Merlin Bird ID does. And it's free—because they want to make bird watching easier for everyone.

Merlin Bird ID covers 285 of the most common birds of North America (with more on the way). In addition to help with ID, it contains expert tips, more than 1,400 gorgeous photos, and sounds for each species. It's available now for iPhone and other iOS7 devices, and it's coming soon for Android.

You can download Merlin Bird ID from the Apple App Store or go to [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org) and type Merlin bird ID into the search bar. You'll find more information about the app and a video showing how it works. While you're at [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org) enjoy their many educational videos, birding tips or bird cams.

### SALES PERSON NEEDED WINGS NOT NECESSARY

Sacramento Audubon is looking for a volunteer to oversee sales of our Birding Book, Checklists and Calendars (seasonal) to a few local nature themed stores. These stores already carry our merchandise, and would re-order materials through you, either by email via our website or by phone. The volunteer would contact the store representatives monthly to check on their needs and coordinate with others to ensure the materials are delivered and invoiced in a timely manner. This volunteer position does not require too much time and can be scheduled at your convenience. If interested, contact Cathie LaZier, [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net), or 457-6882.

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Julia Andrews, Jon Beck, Jeanne Conry, A C Corley, Jon Courtway, Carole Gerard, Maria Nicholas Kelly, Fred Klass, Barbara Klocek, Ann Kohl, Lachlan McClenahan and Carolyn Woodruff to the **General Fund**.

Milton Briggs, Karen Brookhyser, A C Corley, John Davidson, Malcolm Ettin, Carole Gerard, Nancy Gilbert, Kathryn Griffin, John Hervey, Truman and Sandra Holzclaw, Fred Klass, Jude LaMar and Jim Pachel, Sandra Lane, Leonard Marowitz, Jim Middleton, Patricia Moses, John Payne, Don and Sally Schmoltdt, Julie Serences, Bruce Swinehart, Jane Taylor and Debra Wurgler to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Tim Fitzer made a donation to the **Education Fund** in memory of Sara Fitzer.

### SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

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



## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Dorrit Ahbel	Nancy J Sharp
Jim Coate	Jane Phillips
Edward Elmendorf	Widroe
Malcolm Ettin	Hathor Woods
Marilyn and Phil Isenberg	Alana M Wyatt

### Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on February 25, 2014 at 7pm, at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

### 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.

## JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

### Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry46@comcast.net

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

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

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

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Observations* continued from page 10

**Ash-throated Flycatcher** in Antelope from 12/5-17. A **Northern Shrike** was a nice find along William Lane (a dirt road west of Dowd Rd, south of Nicolaus Rd) in Placer County on 12/30. Other interesting reports include a **Plumbeous Vireo** along Old River Rd in Yolo County on the 12/22 Sacramento CBC, a **Steller's Jay** near Brown's Ravine, Folsom Lake, on 12/29, a (eastern) **Winter Wren** reported on the 12/15 Putah Creek CBC (a state review species), and a **Townsend's Solitaire** along Babel Slough Rd from 12/11-23. A **Red Fox Sparrow** was reported from CRP on 12/1 and at least three different **Red Fox Sparrows** were reported on the 12/7 ARNHA count. More surprising was a **Thick-billed Fox Sparrow** along Blue Ridge Rd near Mt Vaca on the 12/15 Putah Creek CBC, and a **Swamp Sparrow** was reported on 12/28 at Lagoon Valley. Five **Lawrence's Goldfinches**, rare in winter, were reported both on the east side of the Foresthill Bridge near Auburn on 12/14 and from Sweetwater Creek on 12/29.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site ([sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html](http://sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html)). The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve ([cvbirds.org](http://cvbirds.org)) and eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Dan Airola, David Diller, Chris Dunford, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Claire Gallagher, Frank Gray, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, John Luther, Dick Norton, Frances Oliver, Ed Pandolfino, William Rocky, Deren Ross, Jim Rowth, John Sterling, John Trochet, Dan Williams, and Bruce Webb.

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

With only one day of rain (0.36"), this December was consistent with what has been the driest year on record. What little water was available still held some highlights, including six **Trumpeter Swans** at Lagoon Valley in Solano County. They were tentatively identified on 12/22, and with solid confirmation by 12/24, they were seen by many into January. A dozen **Hooded Mergansers** found along the American River Parkway (ARP), where only recently quite rare, between Howe and Watt on 12/7 is further illustration of this species' expansion in the region. The "boat crew" on Lake Berryessa found four **Pacific Loons** on the 12/15 Putah Creek CBC, and a single **Pacific Loon** was reported off Beal's Point, Folsom Lake, on the 12/29 Folsom CBC. Unlike some recent winters, **Rough-legged Hawk** reports came in from many locations in the region. **Golden-crowned Kinglets** and **Varied Thrushes** were widely reported, but **Red-breasted Nuthatches**, **Brown Creepers**, and **Pine Siskins** were absent or nearly so.

Shorebird highlights included a **Semipalmated Plover** that continued through the month at the Farmers Central Rd Pond along Yolo County Rd 102 and **Western Sandpipers**, rare in winter, were present with up to five at the previous location, up to 22 at the Woodland WTP, with a single at Cosumnes River Preserve on 12/1, and two on the 12/30 Lincoln

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CBC. A **Glaucous Gull** at the Yolo County Landfill on 12/2 continued through much of the month along with a second-cycle **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at the same

location from 12/7-10. A **Long-eared Owl** was reported on Quail Ridge during the 12/15 Putah Creek CBC. A male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was a rare report for the region from Paradise Beach (ARP) on 12/7 and two **Red-naped Sapsuckers** were reported on the 12/15 Putah Creek CBC. Another **Red-naped Sapsucker** was reported on 12/15 at McBean Park in Lincoln. It was refound on 12/30, and photos may show some out of place red feathering indicative of some **Red-breasted Sapsucker** ancestry; prior to 1985 these three species were considered one, and there is considerable interbreeding at the contact zones. A **Hairy Woodpecker** was reported at Upper Lake Natoma, off of Young Wo Circle, on the 12/29 Folsom CBC.

Out of season flycatchers included a "**Western**" **Flycatcher** (probably **Pacific-slope**) at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 12/1 and a very rare wintering

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

*The Observer* is published monthly January through December, except June and August, by the Sacramento Audubon Society.