



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, September 20, 2012
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room
7pm

We will start out fall programming at the September 20th meeting with a presentation by Glen Holstein, entitled Sacramento's Unique Ecosystems. Until then have a wonderful summer.

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 and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions.

Sally Walters, Program Chair

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, September 29-30, 2012

Mark Cudney will lead this year's shore and pelagic birding weekend, one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting birding trips.

Normally protected from heavy sea swells, yet geographically situated to capture an amazing diversity of ocean-going birds, Monterey Bay and the surrounding area is an exceptional place for birding. Saturday's boat excursion will highlight the trip. Monterey Bay is perhaps one of the most accessible and productive areas to learn about and enjoy pelagic birds and marine mammals. Several species of shearwaters are usually seen, not to mention the possibility of close-ups of a variety of marine mammals. On Sunday we will visit the key land and shoreline habitats on the Monterey peninsula that may yield many migratory and vagrant surprises.

Boat space is limited to 30 participants. The price this year is \$75 per person, if we fill the boat (25 people minimum). You do not need to be a member of Sacramento Audubon to participate.

Cancellation policy: In order to receive a refund you must cancel 2 weeks before the trip.

Contact Mark Cudney, email: mcudney@aol.com, phone: (916) 987-2422 with any questions.

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pealgic Trip Reservation Form

Saturday/Sunday, September 29-30, 2012 Trip price: \$75 per person

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address (with zip) _____

Email (for confirmation) _____

Number of people _____ Total Payment \$ _____

Return this form and your check made out to Sacramento Audubon to:

Mark Cudney, 102 Feather Falls Circle, Folsom, CA 95630

Phone: (916) 987-2422

Email: mcudney@aol.com

Field Trip Findings

Bushy Lake/Cal Expo Floodplain (6/10) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “On a nice clear and warm day, 10 people were ready to walk at 7am. There were plenty of House Finches to start with, then we started seeing Western Kingbirds and a couple of Pacific-slope Flycatchers. At Bushy Lake there were a pair of Wood Ducks. The vegetation has grown quite thick around the lake and we had difficulty seeing out into the water. The morning was fairly productive. We had a total of 34 species.”

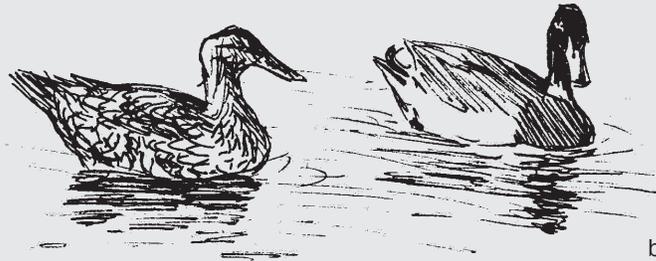
Granite Springs Road, Pine Hill, Ice House Reservoir (6/9) — Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Scott Hoppe, reported: “What a day to be away from the North Wind in the Valley, and in the beautiful Sierra. We were treated to full-on, in the sun, views of Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rump, MacGillivray’s, and Hermit warblers. Green-tailed Towhees and Lazuli Buntings were abundant as were Lewis’s, Hairy, and White-headed woodpeckers and Red-bellied Sapsuckers. Up at Pine Hill, Mountain Bluebird young and a Common Nighthawk flew around our group. It was a fun day in the beautiful Sierra.”

Mosquito Ridge, Placer County (6/3) — Leader Chris Conard reported: “On this gorgeous but slightly warm day, nine of us encountered a good sampling of the area’s birds. Highlights, in addition to the beauty of Grouse Falls and the Placer Big Trees Grove, included distant but satisfying looks at Black Swifts, a Golden Eagle, and Band-tailed Pigeons. Some members of our party had brief views of one of the two Pileated Woodpeckers we encountered. Both Pileateds were very noisy, calling and drumming. We also had White-headed Woodpeckers, great views of Olive-sided Flycatchers, singing Hammond’s Flycatchers allowing fairly good views, great views of Violet-green Swallows, a heard-only Canyon Wren, a singing Pacific Wren allowing good views, good views of a MacGillivray’s, Black-throated Gray, and Hermit warblers, and a Lazuli Bunting.”

Crystal Basin (6/2) — Leader Frank Gray reported: “The trip was cancelled in advance, which was possible because it was on a reservation only basis and did not have a large sign-up. Pre-trip scouting resulted in very few of the sought after species in those areas traditionally visited for this trip. Many of the species that

were easily found in prior years are now increasingly difficult to find, following a general trend for more than a decade. Whether this is due in part to habitat succession after the Cleveland fire of ‘92 and/or from other factors might not be established as fact currently. It appears that much additional scouting may be necessary for additional trips to this general area. These will hopefully determine “reliable” replacement locations for those traditionally visited.”

Dragonfly Trip (5/27) — Leader Tim Manolis reported: “I led a dragonfly watching walk along the American River and backwater lagoons behind Rio Americano High School. Nine participants enjoyed a nice, 2 1/2 hour walk in fine weather from around 10am to 12:30pm.



Mallard pair
Kirsten Munson

Odonates seen were:
Aroyo Bluet — 4 were netted in and viewed by all in-hand, the most interesting a tandem pair that were nabbed by a female Western Pondhawk. We followed the flight of the pondhawk, prey in tow, to a perch where it sat and gobbled down the head and thorax of the male. At that point it lost its grip on the bluets and, perhaps because of our close approach and attention, it flew off and left the female perched with the male’s abdomen still attached to its prothorax and thorax. We chased her around a bit and finally caught her. A gentle tug removed the attached abdomen, and the female was released none-too-worse for wear; *Familiar Bluet* — Fairly common, a number netted and examined in hand. (*Tule Bluet* — none definitely examined in hand, but a number of “typical” males (turquoise colors, very reduced pale bands on middle abdominal segments seen); *Exclamation Damsel* — about 20 seen, good looks had in the hand; *Pacific Forktail* — very common; *Western Forktail* — a few females seen, one examined in-hand; *Common Green Darner* — About 20 seen, mostly patrolling males, and

2-3 exuviae found. (*Blue-eyed Darner* — a few, probably this species, seen in flight); *Sinuuous Snaketail* — About 8-10 seen, most of these teneral or fairly recent emergers; *Western Pondhawk* — 6-8 seen, patrolling males for the most part (but see above under Arroyo Bluet); *Blue Dasher* — one teneral female seen; *Twelve-spotted Skimmer* — Fairly common, about 20 seen, including one ovipositing female; *Widow Skimmer* — the remains (mostly wings) of a teneral one were found by a sharp-eyed observer; *Common Whitetail* — about 6-8 seen, including a nice view of a pair of dueling males over the lagoon; *Black Saddlebags* — about 10 seen, including one recent emerger, and at least 3 exuviae found. Thanks to all who attended!”

Sierra Valley (5/26)

— Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Sometimes the most challenging of weather conditions can bring out the best of birding trips, not only for the birds seen, but also

for the feeling of accomplishment and camaraderie. Fourteen birders set out toward the cloudy skies of the Sierra to experience all types of weather, first freezing cold and snow flurries, then squalls of rain, sleet, hail and wind, interspersed with periods of relative calm and sun. Luckily, the calmer periods seem to coincide with our major stops. Tops among these was when we took a side street out of Sierraville (thanks to Daniel and Pam for the suggestion). At one point we stopped and all got out, and were viewing a male Calliope Hummingbird doing an amazing display. The property owner there soon came down and asked us what we were looking at. When we told him, he said they had lots of hummingbirds coming to their feeders up at the house, and invited us to come up and see. So, we all trundled up and into their living room/dining area where there were 2 feeders just outside the windows with numerous Calliope Hummingbirds coming to them. Within just a couple of minutes, who should appear but a beautiful male Costa’s Hummingbird. Of course,

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Field Trips



White-faced Ibis
Daniel Kilby

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 Dan Brown, 362-2458, naturestoc@aol.com for trips through July 22nd. For trips through August 26th call the scheduler Dan Tankersley, 662-1290, dtankers@winfirst.com. For trips from August 28th through September 9th contact the scheduler Scott Hoppe, 835-8471, shoppe01@surewest.net

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

Saturday, June 30, 8am

Swainson's Hawk trip

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457

wayne.blunk@gmail.com

Nesting Swainson's Hawks are the focus of this morning trip, in conjunction with "Friends of the Swainson's Hawk" (FOSH), a group organized to encourage habitat protection. Our local population of Swainson's Hawks differs from others of that species in their migration patterns and wintering grounds. Members of FOSH will be on hand to share information about these interesting birds. Wayne will also help you identify other birds in the area. Meet Wayne and Jude 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 left again into the Park and Ride lot. FRS radios and spotting scopes will be helpful, if you have them.

Sunday, July 1, 6am

Loney Meadow

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

Come join Scott for this July trip. Loney Meadows is a beautiful mountain meadow north of Grouse Ridge near Bowman Lake at about 6000' elevation. The area can have some excellent birding. Scott has seen 8 species of woodpecker there (including Pileated, Black-backed and Williamson's Sapsucker); also Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher, 7 species of warbler and previous trips have produced Bald Eagles. We will be hiking about 2-3 miles over fairly level terrain with only short, moderate inclines. Meet Scott at 6am at the Horseshoe Bar Road Park and Ride in Loomis, Exit 110 off I-80. The

meadow is about an hour and half's drive from there. Bring water and lunch or a snack.

Saturday, July 7, 7am

Ice House Road and Crystal Basin area

Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870- 5207

Richard Barbieri, 761-1124

Tim, spskua2@comcast.net

Richard, offleash56@yahoo.com

This area is about 70 miles east of Sacramento and is good for Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Mountain Bluebird, flycatchers, warblers and other surprises. Mountain wildflowers are a possibility so bring your flower field guides. Several stops will be made along Ice House Road and side roads for short walks. Bring lunch, liquids, and footwear suitable for hiking and wet meadows. Meet Tim and Mark at the Bella Bru Cafe at the south end of the Raley's parking in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right.

Sunday, July 8th, 7:30am

Mather Lake

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457

Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Wayne will be looking for hawks, herons and hummingbirds, Yellow-headed Blackbirds, House Wrens, Pied-billed Grebes and many other species. This is a good trip for beginners and enjoyable for all. Bring water and insect repellent. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel. A Sac County

Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, July 14, time TBD

Dragonfly trip, Location: TBD

Leader: Tim Manolis, 485-9009

Ylightfoot@aol.com

Most likely Tim will try Bear Creek for Giant Darners etc, but since the weather will affect the best location to see a variety of dragonfly species he will scout his favorite haunts and choose the exact meeting location as the date approaches. Call or email Tim the week before the trip to get the time and meeting place. With his expertise as the author of a field guide to California dragonflies and damselflies, you can be sure that he will lead you to the best possible site. Bring your binoculars, water to drink and wear shoes that can get wet - just in case!

Sunday, July 15

Farallons Pelagic Trip

The boat is full, but if you want to be on the waiting list contact Linda Pittman @ pittmanl@frontiernet.net.

Saturday, July 21, 6am

Tahoe/Truckee

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

We will be exploring some of the birding hot spots between Lake Tahoe and Truckee, with varied habitat from mountain meadow and forest to lake shore and riparian zones. Past trips have included Williamson's Sapsucker, White-headed and Hairy Woodpeckers, Olive-sided, Pacific-slope and Dusky Flycatchers, several species of warbler and Evening Grosbeak in the uplands, and

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Virginia Rail and Spotted Sandpiper in the wetland areas. Hiking may be up to 2 miles at a time over moderate terrain. Bring lunch and liquids. Meet Scott at 6am at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis, Exit 110 off I-80.

Sunday, July 22, 6am Sharp!

Wright's Lake

Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870- 5207

Mark Martucci, 833-6722

Tim, spskua2@comcast.net

Mark, matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

This high mountain lake near the edge of the Desolation Wilderness offers a good sample of high Sierran bird life. Tim and Mark will help you find many of the Sierran bird specialties including Pine Grosbeak, Black-backed Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker and Cassin's Finch. Bring plenty of water and lunch for a full day of birding. Bring your FRS radios and be prepared for changeable weather. Meet Tim and Mark at the Bella Bru Cafe at the south end of the Raley's parking in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right.

**Thursday and Friday, July 26-27, 8am
Mono Lake Basin – east slope of the
Sierra**

Leaders: Linda Pittman and Dan

Tankersley

Linda, 715-1876

pittmanl@frontiernet.net

Dan, 662-1290

dtankers@winfirst.com

emails preferred: RSVP required!

Limited to 10 participants

The Mono Lake Basin is an Important Bird Area (IBA) located on the edge of the Great Basin and east slope of the Sierra Nevada. In addition to hosting the 2nd largest California Gull rookery in North America, the lake is an important stopover for both Wilson's and Red-necked phalaropes in the summer and over a million migrating Eared Grebes in fall. Join us for two very full days of spectacular scenery and birding in a variety of habitats around Mono Lake and Lee Vining. On Thursday, we'll start near Mono Lake birding the shores, marshes and sage, moving up into the canyons and pines in the afternoon. Near the lake, we'll be looking for shorebirds, Sage Sparrows, Sage Thrashers and nesting Osprey. We'll have dinner at Whoa Nellie Deli with an

optional evening trip for Common Poorwill and Common Nighthawk. Additional areas may include south of Mono Lake, Lake Crowley, Sherwin Creek and June Lake or north between Lee Vining and Bridgeport, depending on the birds and weather. Wherever we go, the east slope is always beautiful!

Meet on Thursday morning at 8am at the Mono Lake County Park about 4 miles north of Lee Vining (turn east on Cemetery Rd). Be prepared for driving dusty wash-board dirt roads and short hikes. There is a \$3.00 per person fee at South Tufa. Bring lunch and snacks, FRS radios, scopes, insect repellent and dress in layers for any kind of weather. Plan to overnight in Lee Vining, or camp nearby. Bring food and beverage as we will lunch in the field both days. Please contact Linda or Dan for further details, list of accommodations and to RSVP.

Saturday, July 28

Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca

Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636

calaveri.gary@gmail.com

This trip is limited to 10 participants to help preserve the habitat in this high foot traffic area. Join Gary on this high elevation 3-mile hike in search of Clark's Nutcracker, Rufous Hummingbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Cassin's Finch and, with luck, Sooty Grouse and Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. At peak wildflower time there are fields of flowers in dazzling variety. Contact Gary for reservations, meeting time and place. Bring lunch and plenty of liquids; wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for changeable Sierra weather. This hike should be considered moderate to strenuous depending upon your physical condition.

Sunday, July 29, 7:30am

Mather Lake

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457

Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake and the surrounding grasslands host a variety of birds and it's one of Wayne's favorite birding spots. Join him to explore the area on this morning trip. This is a good trip for beginners and enjoyable for all. Bring water and insect repellent. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, August 4, 7am

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley

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

August is a great time to view shorebirds in the Sacramento Valley on migration from their Arctic breeding grounds. Since ideal conditions change depending on water levels, we will visit areas with the best shorebird habitat. This may be in Yolo, Placer, or Sacramento County—or all three. This is a good chance to brush up on the common species and possibly find something unexpected. If you have a spotting scope, bring it, along with water and a snack. Meet 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, August 5, 7am

Sailor Bar

Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722

matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Mark for an early morning walk while it's still moderately cool, and find what birds stay with us through the hot summer. This walk will end by 11am, or possibly earlier depending on the heat. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Wednesday, August 8, 7:30am

Sacramento Bar

American River Parkway

Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999

mohrdd@gmail.com

Darrell will lead you on a morning walk along the American River, to 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, August 11, 7:30am

The Best of Both Sides!

River Bend Park and

William Pond Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at the main River Bend parking lot near the bike bridge. (Follow the main road into the park; after you cross the bike trail (stop sign) go about ½ mile and turn left at the sign "rafting exit, main

picnic area" and continue on the road to the large parking area). For the first half of the walk we'll bird across the bicycle bridge into William Pond Park, going downstream along the backwaters of the river and checking out the fishing pond. Then we'll recross the river and go upstream into the oak woodland area. We'll finish before noon. As always, this is a great trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). If you come from the William Pond side look for us on the bridge. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, August 12, 7am
Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area
Leader: Linda Pittman, 715-1876
pittmanl@frontiernet.net
(email preferred)

Join Linda for this trip to one or more of the varied units in the Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area for shorebirds, rails, waders, raptors and possibly Least Terns. This area, located on the north side of San Pablo Bay, has grasslands and varied wetland habitats: tidal mudflats, historic marshes, and abandoned salt evaporation ponds. Possible locations include American Canyon Wetlands, Huichica Creek unit, and Hudeman Slough, depending on conditions and bird reports leading up to the trip date. Expect to walk about 2 to 3 miles mostly on gravel roads. This trip will last until early afternoon; bring snacks and lunch. Meet 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, August 18, 7:30am
Bodega Bay
Leader: Andi Salmi, 508-7192
andisalmi@yahoo.com

Join Andi for a day of birding, exploring the many habitats around Bodega Bay. This is a fun coastal birding area, with many gulls, waterfowl, songbirds and raptors to see, in addition to possible shorebirds returning from their breeding grounds. Meet Andi at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Bring food, water and warm clothes.

Sunday, August 19, 7:30am and 9am
Point Pinole Regional Shoreline

Contra Costa County
Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
Cell # that morning only: 281-6652
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net
Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277
kenpoe@sbcglobal.net

This large park, at the confluence of the San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, is a good place to hike in the summer as its proximity to the Bay tends to keep it cool. Join Maureen and Ken on a four mile, fairly level hike through the park, through eucalyptus stands and meadows, past the historical munitions areas, and to the shoreline and 1,250' fishing pier. They will look for resident species, but will concentrate on shorebirds. Return to the parking area may be on foot, but there is also the option of taking a shuttle back to the cars from the pier, especially nice for people carrying scopes. There is a \$3 parking fee; restroom facilities are available in several park locations. This trip will last until late morning. Weather can be very different from Sacramento, so dress for the possibility of cold, windy and/or foggy weather. Meet Maureen at the West Sacramento Park and Ride by 7:30 am. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. A secondary meeting place is the Safeway Market on Waterman Boulevard in Fairfield – call for details. To meet the group at the Park BY 9am, from Sacramento, take I-80 West to Richmond. Take Exit #20 onto the Richmond Parkway (also says to I-580) and continue on the Parkway to the Giant Highway. Turn right on the Highway and continue into the Park.

Wednesday, August 22, 7:30am
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758
ishim2000@comcast.net

Join Marlene for a morning of birding in this wonderful area close to Sacramento. You could see shorebirds, hawks, White-faced Ibis, a variety of swallows and more. 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. Bring liquids, and if you have one, bring your spotting scope and FRS radio. If habitat conditions at the bypass area are not conducive to birding, Marlene may go over to the Davis Wetlands. Both beginners and experienced

birders will enjoy this trip, which will finish before noon.

Saturday, August 25, 7am
Marin County Shorebirds and Other Surprises
Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com

Plan for a trip to the varied wetlands of Marin County in search of shorebirds. Possible locations include Novato Airport Ponds, Bolinas Lagoon, and/or Abbott's Lagoon at Point Reyes, depending on conditions and bird reports leading up to the trip date; we'll also be flexible and follow up on interesting reports of other species in the area. Be aware, a visit to Abbott's Lagoon involves a 2.5 to 3 mile hike. Bring lunch and liquids and be prepared for a full day of birding. Meet 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, August 26, 7:30am
Paradise Beach/American River
Leader: Dan Kopp, 213-2791
rey_ality@hotmail.com

Dan lives near the American river, birds here often, and knows this area well. Join him in exploring the rich riparian habitat along the Parkway. This area is dominated by cottonwoods, alder, box elder and willows, with a few oaks, a combination which often results in excellent birding. Dan will be looking for the usual residents as well as late nesters and possible early migrants. Dan is a great birder and is good with beginners and experienced birders alike. This trip will involve walking on well-defined trails and will last until late morning. Meet Dan at Glen Hall Park at the corner of Carlson Drive and Sandburg.

Saturday, September 1, 7:30am
River Bend Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at the 1st parking lot on your right, just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland, looking for resident small woodland birds and woodpeckers as well as returning migrants. Vinegar Weed, an interesting native plant, may be in bloom. At the river we should see herons, yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpipers and possibly a kingfisher. Walk will end by noon, and it's a great walk for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw

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FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIPS

Family-friendly trips are on hiatus for the summer but will resume on September 15th. Subsequent trips will be the third Saturday of October and November. For more info, contact Maureen Geiger at mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net or 444-0804. Adults willing to help with the kids' program are always needed—this is a great volunteer opportunity!

Birding and Nature Events

14TH ANNUAL KERN RIVER VALLEY HUMMINGBIRD CELEBRATION

The Kern River Valley, "Hummingbird Viewing Capital of California", is hosting their 14th annual Hummingbird Celebration, August 11, from 8am to 2pm. Their feeders are up from March through mid-October and this celebration is a FREE, no host event held at the preserve. There will be bird walks, bird feeding workshops, t-shirt sales and an information booth. Come and enjoy a very low key event. Six hummingbird species are possible at the Kern River Preserve feeders in July, August, and early September with over one thousand hummingbirds present some days: Black-chinned (numbers decrease from July through early September), Anna's, Costa's (low numbers), Calliope (rarely), Rufous (peak numbers in late August and early September), and Allen's (virtually impossible to separate from Rufous, even adult males, except during banding sessions). More information plus photo galleries from previous years can be found at kern.audubon.org/hummer_fest.htm

EIGHTH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The eighth annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival, being held September 13-16, is home to one of the most spectacular birding and wildlife venues in North America. From soaring Golden Eagles to effortlessly gliding California Condors, cheeky Bushtits to gorgeous Townsend's Warblers, scampering Snowy Plovers to wheeling flocks of thousands of Sooty Shearwaters, few places can match the diversity of habitats in and around Monterey Bay.

The Monterey Bay Birding Festival is honored to present *The Big Year* birder Greg Miller as the keynote speaker Sept. 15 at the Watsonville Civic Plaza. Greg Miller is portrayed by actor Jack Black in the new comedy movie "The Big Year" about the world of competitive birding. All field trips for the festival, including pelagic and kayak tours are lead by top quality, friendly leaders. You'll be able to experience seeing seven species of owls, 200-plus species of birds, and select from 52 field trips.

Registration for each birding event is offered a la carte, so you can mix and match outings according to personal interests. More information and registration can be found at montereybaybirding.org

WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS CONFERENCE: PETALUMA, CA – SEPTEMBER 26-30, 2012

Each year WFO holds a multi-day conference with scientific papers, field trips, workshops, panels, a keynote address, the annual membership meeting, and other events. The location varies each year as WFO attempts to span its region of coverage while also making its conferences accessible to the bulk of its members. This year's Annual Conference will be held close to home in Petaluma, CA Sept 26-30, 2012. Mark your calendars and start planning now. Check the WFO website for more information from time to time. Registration is now open.

To register and see full details go to www.westernfieldornithologists.org and click on the 'Annual Conference' banner in the middle of the page. You will probably want to download the Conference Details document and review before you begin registration.

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and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. As it is the Labor Day weekend the entry fee may be higher.

Sunday, September 2, 6:30am to mid-afternoon

Alpine County

Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610

e-mail: conardc@gmail.com

The county with the smallest human population in the state has a lot to offer in terms of birds and scenery. We'll visit a mix of habitats, including coniferous forests, lake shores, and sagebrush flats, looking for migrating and lingering songbirds, woodpeckers, raptors and waterbirds. Expect several short walks at mid-elevation. FRS radios could be especially helpful on this trip. Meet in the Raley's parking lot in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot.

Saturday, September 8, 7am

Schollenberger Park/Ellis Creek, Petaluma

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

This area can be very productive for waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and other water-loving species. Many interesting birds can turn up in the fall. Last year, we had Pacific-golden Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper and Baird's Sandpiper among the many other birds attracted to this location. We will stop along the way at the wetlands on Highway 37. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride off of 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, September 9, 7:30am

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

Leader: Mark Martucci

matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Mark will lead you on a morning walk to one of his favorite spots along the American River Parkway. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe some surprises. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Findings continued from page 2

everyone was thrilled. Another highlight occurred later in the day when we were sitting on Marble Hot Springs Road eating lunch and a Virginia Rail walked across the road in front of us. Other highlights included 4 American Bitterns, with good views of all (including a very close view of one that must have thought he was being stealthy), 3 Bald Eagles, 2 to 3 Ospreys and, just before a heavy downpour of hail signaled end of the day, Lewis's Woodpecker, Yellow Warbler and Lazuli Bunting. We tallied about 76 species over all, and everyone had a great time."

Sweetwater Creek (5/20) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: "Highlights were Yellow-breasted Chats, Wrentit, Townsend's Warbler, and Black-headed Grosbeak."

Mather Lake (5/19) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "The group numbered between 6 and 8 and was comprised of some very sharp-eyed birders. The total species count for the morning was around 44. The highlights included Wilson's and Townsend's warblers, Warbling Vireo, Western Tanager, and great looks at a very cooperative Bullock's Oriole. We had a very entertaining, singing California Towhee and were treated to a Common Gallinule hen feeding four of her babies. Several American Bitterns were sighted at various spots, encouraging signs of possible breeding. Three different wrens presented, Bewick's, Marsh and House. Black-crowned Night-Heron and an Ash-throated Flycatcher were spotted. The family of Mute Swans gave us good looks and Yellow-headed Blackbirds were seen in the southern portion of the lake. They seem less in number this year, likely due to significant numbers of Great-tailed Grackles."

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area (5/15) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: "Four participants enjoyed a short but productive tour through the bypass. We had good looks at a hovering White-tailed Kite, Cliff Swallows building their mud nests, a perched, male Northern Harrier, a Great-tailed Grackle, and a flock of American White Pelicans gracefully flying over the bypass. Also heard but not readily seen were the Yellow-headed Blackbirds and Common Yellowthroat. The Black-crowned Night-Herons appear to be establishing a nest site near the beginning of the auto tour loop. Several were seen as we began our tour. Very nice."

Sand Creek Road (5/13) — Tim Fitzer,

co-leader with Tim Martucci, reported: "Fifteen birders enjoyed a day that started off coolish and slow but turned out great. Highlights were: Sage, Rufus-crowned and Chipping Sparrows, Lazuli Buntings, Wilson's Warbler, Lesser Nighthawk, Warbling and Hutton's vireos, California Thrashers and, to end the afternoon, 3 Great Horned Owls and 3 Golden Eagles. A Greater Roadrunner was heard by Ed Harper. Fun time for all."

William Pond Park, American River Parkway (5/12) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "Seventeen birders joined me for a warm and sunny morning walk. We began with a very active American Crow nest, with at least 2 young visible. Red-

shouldered Hawks and White-tailed Kites were also nesting, and the heron/egret rookery was active. We had the usual assortment of wrens, finches, woodpeckers, blue-birds and swallows, and several sightings of Northern Orioles. Two Forster's Terns were at the pond, and flycatchers were represented by Western Kingbirds, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Black Phoebes, including one phoebe nest with young. We had a large flyover of White Pelicans and ended the morning back near the crows' nest, watching them harassing a Red-shouldered Hawk. Several good birders, too many to list, helped with spotting and identifying the 46 different species we saw."

Bushy Lake, Cal Expo Floodplain (5/9) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "The morning was sunny and warm. Eight people walked the trail around the Bushy Lake area. We had a total of 43 species, which included a number of Western Tanagers and an Ash-throated Flycatcher."

Driver's Flat, Auburn State Recreation Area (5/5) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "First of all I would like to say that, to my mind, there are few pleasures in life greater than going to a beautiful location with awesome scenery, with a group of individuals looking for cool birds.... and finding them. After scouting the location the week before, I was somewhat concerned (okay, a little stressed) that we might not see too much. As it turned out, my worries were unfounded. 13 birders

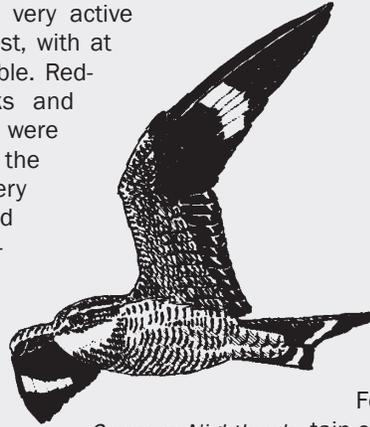
ended up having a wonderful time seeing lots of good birds.

"We tallied 50 species over all. Among the highlights were what was probably the bird of the day, Green-tailed Towhee (this bird is a fairly rare migrant in the lower Sierra elevations. Along with Spotted and California, this gave us a three-towhee day); a Cooper's Hawk on a nest; a Golden Eagle observed by two in the group; Gray Flycatcher (once considered a rare migrant west of the Sierra); 3 species of vireo, Warbling, Hutton's and Cassin's; Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, including a pair building a nest; 8 species of warbler; Western Tanager (normally common for this location, they were the first of the season for me. We saw several beautiful, bright males); and Purple Finch. It turned out to be a great birding day in a spectacular location."

Birding Sutter Buttes (4/29)

— Leader Don Schmoltdt reported: "Through the auspices of the Middle Mountain Foundation (www.middlemountain.org), nine birders joined me on a wonderful day birding the center of the Sutter Buttes, near Yuba City. The weather was perfect and as a group we observed 59 species of birds. Highlights were 3 Lewis's Woodpeckers, 9 Lawrence's Goldfinches, and good numbers of spring residents and migrants including Cassin's, Warbling, and Hutton's vireos, Phainopepla, Orange-crowned, Audubon's, Black-throated Gray, Townsend's and Wilson's warblers, 9 Western Tanagers, and Lazuli Bunting. All in all a lovely day at a magical place."

Mather Field Park (4/28) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "A beautiful morning and a wonderful turnout (nearly 20 souls) prefaced a successful outing covering the western shores of Mather Lake. The parking lot produced a Western Meadowlark, Barn Swallow, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Blue Heron, Northern Mockingbird, Tree Swallow, Double-crested Cormorant, Great-tailed Grackle, Mallard and families of Canada Geese. Because of exceptionally high water levels, we birded the treeline to the left of the parking lot and found some surprises. An apparent family of Black-necked Stilts, a pair of Killdeers with a baby, a pair of Long-billed Dowitchers and



Common Nighthawk
Stephen D'Amato

Findings continued on page 8

CALIFORNIA BURROWING OWL CONSORTIUM MEETING

September 20, 2012, 10am to 2pm
45211 County Road 32B, Davis, CA 95618

Tentative speakers and topics include:

Sandra Menzel and Jack Barclay

Study design of artificial burrow longevity and selection of artificial versus natural burrows by banded owls

Jeff Lincer

Burrowing owl status in San Diego County

Tina Bartlett, CDFG

Revised Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation

Stephanie Parsons

Burrowing Owl Relocation at Sacramento Airport

Sara Lee Chandler

Burrowing Owls on the Farallon Islands

We advise that attendees bring their lunch as folks usually like to network during the break and the meeting room is about a mile from fast food. ESA has kindly offered to provide light snacks and drinks.

Thanks to Stephanie Parsons of ESA, Jack Barclay of Albion Environmental, Ann Brice of Yolo Basin Foundation and Catherine Portman of Burrowing Owl Preservation Society and CDFG for planning, organization and sponsorships for the Consortium meeting!

There is no fee to attend the Consortium meeting, but donations are welcome. Registration is required due to limited occupancy of the meeting room.

Register for the meeting with:

Stephanie Parsons, sparsons@esassoc.com, 916.564.4500

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Anne Bersinger, Bill Bianco, Jeanne Conry, Suzanne Covington, Winifred Detwiler, Nancy Fogle, Stu Husband and Kristin Nierne, to the **General Fund**.

Sonja Armour, Judith Bietz, Bill and Nancy Bittner, Aubrey Blue, Carolyn Broeren, Suzanne Covington, Margaret Dettling, Chuck Dotson, Marilyn Evans, Gary Fregien, Myles Goldfein, Pete Hayes, Stu Husband, Lori Miyasato, Karen Resch, Victoria Stoffers, Susan Stratton and Peter Watkins, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Lou Regenmorter made a farewell donation as he is moving to Saudi Arabia.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2012-2013 PROGRAMS

June-August	Summer Break
September 20	Glen Holstein, <i>Sacramento's Unique Ecosystems</i>
October 18	TBA
November 15	TBA
2013	
January 17	David Wyatt, <i>Ringtail Cat</i>
February 21	Brian Sullivan, <i>eBird</i>
March 21	Ed Harper, <i>Birding Montana</i>

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a single male Cinnamon Teal. We added White-tailed Kite, California Towhee, White-crowned Sparrow, Wrentit, Yellow-headed Blackbird, American Bittern, fly-over of White Pelicans, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwings, and Western Kingbird. Besides the usual suspects for Mather, we saw two Orange-crowned Warblers, House Wren, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and a Brown-headed Cowbird. Total species count was 41."

Michigan Bar/Latrobe Roads (4/21) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "Eight of us enjoyed this trip greatly, in spite of the early heat. We found our first target species, Lawrence's Goldfinch (2), but not the Grasshopper Sparrow we were hoping for. Other than that, we saw Swainson's Hawks, Horned Larks, Lark Sparrows, about 2 zillion Savannah Sparrows, Acorn Woodpeckers, Cliff, Tree and Violet-green Swallows and other grassland species, plus American White Pelicans, always nice to see. The roads were not good but passable, even in a passenger car."

Beek's Bight, Folsom Lake (4/19) — Leader Margaret Martin reported: "Five of us enjoyed over 40 species of birds, our favorites being a Caspian Tern standing in the boat launch parking lot, a MacGillivray's Warbler, and a Hooded Oriole. The chaparral area was beautiful with wildflowers including paintbrush, lupine, monkeyflower, wallflower, yerba santa, and snowdrop bush."

Pete Hayes

THANK YOU SAS

Once again, thank you Sacramento Audubon for sponsoring our trip to Effie Yeaw. We were able to take 25 children and 5 parents, from our underserved Jed. Smith community into the lovely nature area and visitor center. I can say with certainty, that none of these children had ever been to a wildlife area hiking or to a nature center to appreciate the world around us. So you have opened up a new door in the vision for their lives. We don't know where this will take us in the life of a child, but I like to think that each one will remember this taste of nature forever and at some point this experience will guide them through a critical juncture in their lives.

Sincerely,

Wendy Money

Kindergarten Teacher

Jed. Smith Elementary School

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Samuel Davidson	Larry Landis
Robert and Cathy Farnsworth	Sonia Santa Anna Susie Stefanic
Carrie A Harris	Carol Taggart
Jeff Herrin	Keith Volkerts

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. No meetings are held in July and August. The next meeting will be on September 25, 2012 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

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

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Address _____

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Email _____

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

Observations continued from page 10

at the Yolo Landfill on 4/27, and a **Least Tern** found at the Sacramento Reg. WTP on 5/21 where they have nested for the past four years.

A calling **Northern Pygmy-Owl** at the Michigan Bar Bridge on 4/7 was one of few records for Sacramento County. A **Lesser Nighthawk** found on South Shingle Rd on 5/9, just east of Michigan Bar Rd, may be the first for El Dorado County, though they are regular on nearby Meiss Rd. Two **Steller's Jays** were found at Cold Canyon Reserve on 5/28, and a **Brown Creeper** was nest building downstream of Lake Solano on 5/16. A **Townsend's Solitaire** was found on Rayhouse Rd on 4/23 and impressive movements of **Swainson's Thrushes** were reported along Putah Creek and at CRP,

with a high of 50-60 just west of UC Davis along Putah Creek on 5/9. A **Northern Parula** was found along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters on 5/30.

Yellow-breasted Chats were reported at CRP on 5/11 and Michigan Bar on 5/12, but most interesting was apparent breeding by a pair at Sailor Bar along the American River, first detected on 5/30.

We feature photos of some of the high-light birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent sightings.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 are included. Many reports first appeared

on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Scott Dietrich, Chris Dunford, Jim Dunn, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Cory Gregory, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Dave Johnson, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, John Luther, Don Marsh, Mark Martucci, Harry Oakes, Frances Oliver, Ed Pandolfino, Michael Perrone, Linda Pittman, Ron Pozzi, William Rockey, Diane Rose, Jim Rowth, John Sterling, John Trochet, Bruce Webb, Magill Weber, and Ed Whisler.

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

Chris Conard

Seasonal Observations

April 1 to May 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports
www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

It is impossible to include all the notable reports from two of the most active months in the avian calendar, with lingering wintering birds, arrival of summering birds, and vast numbers of purely transitory migrants. Perhaps the most notable theme for this year's spring migration was the discovery of several sparrows rare to our area. Michigan Bar Rd in eastern Sacramento County produced reports of two **Brewer's Sparrows** on 4/29 and one on 5/12, plus a **Black-throated Sparrow** on 5/9 and a male **Lark Bunting** on 5/13. Nearby Meiss Rd produced up to four **Brewer's Sparrows** from 5/6-12, as well as another **Black-throated Sparrow** on 5/9. Meiss Rd also hosted at least two pairs of **Grasshopper Sparrows** for which the road is well known, and Michigan Bar Rd produced steady **Lawrence's Goldfinch** reports. Blue Ridge to the northwest of Vacaville hosted one or more **Black-chinned Sparrows** from 5/17-28. The **Harris's Sparrow** in north Davis continued through at least 4/7.

Most exciting were two finds that are first records for the Central Valley. The discovery of a **Crested Caracara** south-east of Davis along Mace Blvd on 4/16 was a major find for the area, with many observers seeing the bird through 4/17, and at least one report on 4/21. Perhaps even more out of place was a **Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel** found at the Yolo Landfill Pond on Rd 28H. It was seen by many on

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the afternoon and evening of 4/28.
Sacramento County's first breeding record

of **Hooded Mergansers** was documented last year at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) with the discovery of a female with young; this year a female was found incubating eggs in a Wood Duck box. For the third year in a row, **California Gulls** have attempted to nest at the Davis WTP, but this year only three pairs have been detected. Other interesting reports include a late **Common Loon** on the American River Parkway near Upper Sunrise that was found on 6/10 downstream by Howe Ave, a **Red-necked Grebe** at the Lincoln WTP on 5/9, the continuing **Brown Pelican** in West Sacramento into early June and another over Mather Lake in Rancho Cordova on 4/22, four **Willetts** at CRP on 4/30, a **Ruff** at CRP on 4/14-22 and another at the Yolo Wildlife Area on 4/23, the continuing **Lesser Black-backed Gull** at Folsom Lake (Granite Bay) on 4/3, a late near-adult **Glaucous Gull**

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

Correspondence: P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
638-1141, e-mail preferred: llandry46@earthlink.net

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95826
203 1610, e-mail preferred: conardc@gmail.com

Editor: Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, 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.

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

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