



# The *OBSE*RVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Sacramento Audubon programs will be taking a break for the months of July and August. You can look forward to the next program in September. Our Program chair Sally Riggs has more exciting programs lined up for us including presentations on the condor and hiking and birding in the Sierras.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month. The public is welcome. Visit our website [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org) for further information.

## Thanks Bill & Jan

Long time Board members, Bill and Jan Clark recently resigned and Sacramento Audubon would dearly like to thank them for their many years of service as board members. Fortunately however, they will continue their dedication to SAS by spending large amounts of time managing Bobelaine, and Chairing Electronic Communications (our website) and Membership Committees. Because of their wonderful dedication and work for SAS they were previously honored with Audubon Camperships. Now maybe they will have more time to pursue their activities in the Camera Club and to take more trips in the desert and mountains doing nature photography.

Just a note that Lea Landry and Sheila Deaner are the newest members on our Board, having been elected in April. Joe Ferreira is no longer on the board.

## Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

September 24 and 25, 2005

It's time again to prepare for one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting adventures! This year's two-day trip will take place Saturday and Sunday, September 24 and 25.

Normally protected from heavy sea swells, yet geographically situated to capture an amazing diversity of ocean-going birds, Monterey Bay is an exceptional place to visit. We will have a fast-paced tour of landbird hot spots and a day cruise on Monterey Bay.

Led by Mark Cudney, Saturday's boat excursion on the 71 foot fishing cruiser Magnum Force will highlight the weekend. This is the same comfortable boat as in the past several years. Monterey Bay is perhaps one of the most accessible and productive areas to learn about and enjoy pelagic avifauna and marine mammals. Several species of shearwaters are usually present, not to mention the possibility of close-ups of marine mammals. On Sunday, we will visit the key landbird and shoreline habitats on the Monterey Peninsula that may yield many migratory and vagrant surprises. Jeff Mangum will coordinate Sunday's itinerary and lead the group.

Space is limited to approximately sixty (60) passengers on the boat, so send in the registration form as soon as possible. This trip fills up fast! Reservations will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. No telephone reservations will be accepted.

Special notice to campers: A group campsite (\$4.00 per person per night) is available for Friday night, September 23, and Saturday night, September 24, at Veterans Memorial Campground. Motels and hotels are numerous in the Monterey area but make reservations early. Please fill out the reservations form included below.

### Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip Reservation Form

September 24 and 25, 2005 • Trip price: \$75 per person

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons \_\_\_\_\_ Total Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve me \_\_\_\_\_ space(s) for Friday night September 23 and \_\_\_\_\_ space(s) for Saturday night September 24 at Veterans Memorial Park Campground. \$4.00 per night per person in group site. NOTE: You will pay the camping fee separately when you arrive. For bookkeeping reasons please do not include camping fees in your check for the trip.

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

Jeff Mangum, 5917 Rich Hill Drive, Orangevale, CA 95662

# Field Trip Findings

**Yolo Basin and nearby roads** (6/12) – “We had nice looks at Ruddy Ducks in breeding plumage and several flying American Bitterns at Yolo Basin,” leader Maureen Geiger reported. “Then with Howard Edwards’ help, off-refuge we found Burrowing Owls, followed by Swainson’s Hawks, juvenile Black-necked Stilts, and many Cattle, Great and Snowy Egrets and Black-crowned Night-Herons at the rookery on Road 103.”

**Evening Beaver Walk** (6/10) – Although Beavers are about four feet long and weigh 35 pounds, they don’t appear overly large when swimming. But when leader Jack Hiehle pointed out a Beaver on shore, he showed his group that it is about the size of a medium-sized dog. At least three others were observed swimming. Bird sightings included Ash-throated Flycatcher, Tree and Rough-winged Swallows, Green Heron and an off-course House Sparrow.

**Upper Sunrise, American River Parkway** (6/5) – Mark Martucci reported: “Our group of eight birders had perfect weather while recording 41 species. We had great views of nesting Great Blue Herons, Western Bluebirds, Cliff Swallows and Black Phoebes. Included in our walk were a male and female Bullock’s Oriole, a female Black-headed Grosbeak, and we heard a Green Heron calling as it flew above us.”

**Bodega Bay** (6/4) – Leader Dan Brown reported: “Best sighting of the day was an Osprey catching a huge ocean perch of some kind right in front of us at the Tides snack bar deck. The fish was so big the Osprey could barely get out of the water with it. We were able to scope the Osprey from about 200 feet. As we watched the Osprey tearing the fish apart, a very brave adult Western Gull began to attack it. The gull pulled at the Osprey’s tail a few times and jumped on top of it at least once. At one point, the gull and the Osprey were perched on the same rock together. The gull was actually eating the fish right out from under the Osprey. The Osprey finally flew off with the gull in hot pursuit. I guess the two of them had eaten enough of the fish that it was light enough for the Osprey to flee.”

As the two birds left the scene, a winter plumage Red-throated Loon swam up to the shore in front of the group, walked out of the water, plopped down 30 feet away

and began to preen. The bird lingered there from about 9:30am until after noon when the birders returned to the Tides for lunch. “After these two sightings, the rest of the day was rather dull,” Dan said.

**Mather Lake** (5/29) – A significant increase in the number of Yellow-headed Blackbirds over the whole lake compared to last year was noted, possibly because of the higher water level this season, leader Wayne Blunk said. Numerous Great-tailed Grackles, were noted, along with nesting Western Kingbirds with fledglings and fledged Western Bluebirds. At least two calling American Bitterns were heard. Cliff, Barn, Tree and Rough-winged Swallows were observed.

**Crystal Basin** (5/28) – “Fifteen birders enjoyed good weather and many resident and migratory birds,” leader Frank Gray reported. “Highlights included White-headed and Hairy woodpeckers, Calliope Hummingbirds, Lazuli Buntings, and excellent views of Mountain Quail.”

## **Sailor Bar, American River Parkway** (5/27)

Leader Jack Hiehle’s group saw nesting Western Kingbird and Mourning Dove, Wood Duck, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Wild Turkey, and Cowbird. Also Bullfrog and Slider Turtle. A rattlesnake was heard.

**Purple Martins in Old Sacramento** (5/25) Purple Martins and White-throated Swifts were wonderful as always, leader Maureen Geiger reported. “We also saw Red-shouldered Hawks, Cliff and Tree Swallows and American White Pelicans.”

**Goethe Park** (5/22) – Leader Cathie Lazier reported, “Our morning walk included looks at Bushtits nest-building, many House Wrens, some feeding young, and Western Bluebirds, Tree Swallows and Ash-throated Flycatchers at nest holes. Clusters of caterpillars were on the pipevine and clouds of Painted Lady butterflies were feeding on winter vetch.”

**Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve** (5/21) – With the river too high to get into the forest, leader John Trochet said about

the most interesting thing his group found was a Swainson’s Hawk sitting on a nest in a tree surrounded by water.

**Point Reyes** (5/21) – At Lighthouse Point, leader Gary Fregien’s group had excellent views of the large nesting colony of Common Murres, along with Pigeon Guillemots, Brandt’s and Pelagic Cormorants, and Western Gulls. The group also had a pair of Rock Wrens at the point, reported by veteran Marin birder Rich Stallcup who was met with his group along the path. The Sacramento group’s 33 sightings also included Osprey and male Northern Harrier (at the same time), and two fledgling Great-horned Owls on a pine limb, again pointed out by Stallcup, and male Rufous Hummingbird, both at the Fish Docks.

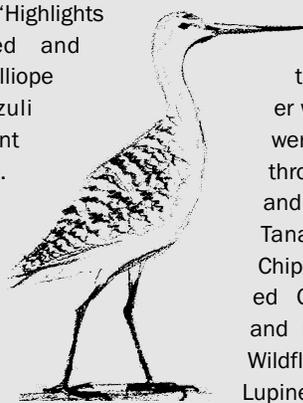
**Coloma, Starza Ranch** (5/15) – Bird of the day at this new area was a beautiful male Lazuli Bunting singing in the sun, said Valerie Phillips, co-leader with Dan Tankersley. Other highlights were a Pacific-Slope Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Black-throated Gray and Orange-crowned Warblers, Western Tanager, several Bullock’s Orioles, Chipping and Lark Sparrows, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Violet-green Swallows, and male and female California Quail. Wildflowers included Chinese Houses and Lupines. The site is off State Highway 49, four miles northwest of Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park at Coloma.

**Paradise Beach** (5/13) – This American River site yielded Black-crowned Night-Heron, numerous Green Herons, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Common Goldeneye, Wood Duck and Wilson’s Warbler, leader Jack Hiehle reported.

**Beeks Bight, Folsom Lake** (5/8) – Leader Tim Fitzer’s trip was rained out.

**Sweetwater Creek** (5/7) – Birders recorded Yellow-breasted Chat, Black-headed Grosbeak, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Wood-Pewee, Song Sparrow, Wrentit, Western Tanager, a Wild Turkey chick, and a pair of Hutton’s Vireos on a nest, leader Richard Barbieri reported.

**Spenceville Wildlife Area** (5/1) – Leader Richard Barbieri’s group recorded Wilson’s Snipes winnowing over fields, Whimbrel, Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis’s Woodpecker,



Kirsten Munson

Continued on page 7

# Field Trips



Stephen D'Amato

## Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he/she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Dan Brown, 362-2458, e-mail: naturestoc@aol.com, for trips through July 31. Call the scheduler Chris Conard, 362-5942, e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net, for trips August 5 through September 4. For trips from September 10 call the scheduler Mark Cudney, 987-2422.

Plan to pool cars and share gas expenses with the driver. Walkie-talkies can be helpful on non-local trips. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader.

**Saturday, July 2, 6:30am**  
**Martis Valley and Vicinity**  
**Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942**  
**e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net**

Martis Valley near Truckee is a mix of the Sierra and the Great Basin. We'll explore sagebrush flats, open water, coniferous and riparian forests in search of the area's breeding bird species. Meet at the Park and Ride of the Hwy 80 Horseshoe Bar Rd exit in Loomis. Bring water and lunch and be prepared for several short to moderate walks.

**Wednesday, July 6**  
**Evening Beaver Walk**  
**American River Parkway**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Jack will lead us on an evening walk along the American River, looking for beavers and muskrats. This trip is limited to 8 participants, with a minimum age of 7 years. Call Jack ahead of time to arrange meeting time and place.

**Saturday, July 9, 9am**  
**Mt Judah & Roller Pass**  
**Sierran Wildflowers and Birds**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Join Jack and members of the California Native Plant Society on this hike in the Donner Summit area. He will point out all of the flora and fauna of the area, with plants as his specialty. This is a fairly strenuous hike at high elevation, with a 1000 ft-plus elevation gain on the 4 1/2 to 5 mile round trip. Meet Jack at the trailhead to start the hike at 9am sharp. To reach the trailhead take I-80 east to the Soda Springs exit, then take the main road to the Summit, then follow the road to the right for about 1/4 mile. Bring lunch, water, and clothes appropriate for changeable weather.

**Saturday, July 9**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**River Walk Bird Count**  
**Leader: John Schick**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Info: 684-2816, ext. 5**  
**or www.cosumnes.org**

John conducts bird census walks through this excellent habitat on a monthly basis. The walk covers about four miles and, at a leisurely pace, should take approximately five hours, so be sure to bring a lunch and liquids. Meet John at the visitor center. To get there, take I-5 south to Twin Cities, and go right on Franklin Blvd. for about 1 mile. Please call the Preserve or check the website a few days prior for the meeting time and location.

**Sunday, July 10**  
**Farralon Islands Boat Trip**

Check the front page of last month's Observer for details and page 7 of this Observer for added information. Call Jeff Mangum, 988-2802 to sign up.

**Thursday, July 14, 6:45pm**  
**Bats at the Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area**  
**Contact: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**Email: mkgeiger@comcast.net**

Take this rare opportunity to view thousands of bats emerging from the Yolo Causeway at dusk. Fish and Game staff will lead you to a portion of the wildlife area normally closed to the public. Wading birds and owls are also an excellent possibility. The number of participants is limited, so contact Maureen for details and to reserve a space.

**Saturday, July 16, Sunrise**  
**Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Leader: John Schick**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Info: 684-2816 ext. 5**  
**or www.cosumnes.org**

John makes a monthly census of this spectacular forested area on the Cosumnes River Preserve. A variety of birds and mammals can be expected on this morning walk.. From Sacramento, take I-5 south, exit on Twin Cities Road, go east to Bruceville Rd, then south to Desmond Rd. Meet John at the Farm Center gate, at the intersection of Desmond and Bruceville Roads. Please call the Cosumnes River Preserve number or check the website (refer to the schedules section) a few days prior to confirm the meeting time and location. In the past, the trip has been canceled due to floods

**Sunday, July 17, 7am**  
**Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area**  
**Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 961-5871**  
**Dan Brown, 362-2458**

Join Tim and Dan for an early morning tour of the wildlife area. This should be a great time for the resident nesting birds of the area and maybe some early shorebird migrants. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, then take the first exit at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, take a left onto the levee road, and down into the first parking lot on your left in the Wildlife Area.

**Tuesday, July 19**  
**Evening Beaver walk**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Jack will lead us on an evening walk along the American River, looking for beavers and muskrats. This trip is limited to 8 participants, with a minimum age of 7 years. Call

Jack ahead of time to arrange meeting time and place.

**Saturday, July 23**

**Carson Pass**

**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

This trip is limited to 10 participants to help preserve the habitat in this high foot traffic area. Join Jack on this high elevation, 4 to 5 mile hike in search of Clark's Nutcracker, Rufous Hummingbird, Green-tailed Towhee and with luck Blue Grouse and Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. At peak wildflower time, there are fields of flowers in dazzling variety. Call Jack for reservations, meeting time and place. Bring lunch and liquids, wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for changeable Sierra weather.

**Sunday, July 24, 8am**

**Mather Field Park**

**Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457**

Mather Lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Wayne knows this area well. This is a good trip for beginners and enjoyable for all. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road. There is a parking fee.

**Saturday, July 30, 7am**

**Loney Meadow**

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 652-5409**

Come join Scott for this late July trip. Loney Meadows is a beautiful mountain meadow north of Grouse Ridge near Bowman Lake at about 6000 foot elevation. The area can have some excellent birding. Scott has seen 7 species of woodpecker there including Pileated and Williamson's Sapsucker; also Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher and 7 species of warbler. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis at 7am. The meadow is about an hour's drive from there. Bring water and lunch or a snack.

**Sunday, July 31, 5:30pm**

**Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area**

**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**

**Email: mkgeiger@comcast.net**

Join Maureen for this popular sunset tour of the wildlife area and witness the spectacle of White-fronted Ibis flocks coming in to roost. This is also a great time of year for resident birds, shorebirds and other early migrants. As the sun goes down, foraging owls are a possibility. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, then take the first exit at

the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, take a left onto the levee road, and down into the first parking lot on your left in the Wildlife Area.

**Friday, August 5**

**Evening Beaver Walk**

**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Join Jack on this evening search for beavers and other wildlife. Nobody knows more about the flora and fauna of the American River Parkway. The trip is limited to 8 people, with a minimum age of 7 years. Call ahead to reserve a place and arrange the time and meeting location.

**Saturday, August 6, 6:15am**

**Alpine County**

**Leader: Bill Hart**

**For details call 362-5942**

**e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net**

Bill lives in Markleeville and knows this area well. Expect to see resident montane species, migrating songbirds, hummingbirds, and perhaps a few surprises. We will carpool from the north end of the Raley's Shopping Center parking lot on El Dorado Hills Blvd on the north side of Hwy 50. Plan to meet Bill at 8:15 at the Woodfords store off of Hwy 88 just east of Hwy 89.

**Sunday, August 7**

**7am - 11am**

**Upper Sunrise,**

**American River Parkway**

**Leader: Mark Martucci, 722-6098**

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 a few early fall migrants. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd., turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd., and take the first left on Pennsylvania. There is a \$4 per car entrance fee. This is a good trip for beginners.

**Saturday, August 13, Daybreak**

**River Walk Trail,**

**Cosumnes River Preserve**

**Leader: John Schick**

**Cosumnes River Preserve**

**Info: 684-2816 ext. 5**

The River Walk Trail (formerly Willow Slough) offers a wide variety of habitat types with excellent opportunities for finding birds. You can join John on his monthly census of the trail, where many rarities have been found. This is an excellent time of year for migrant songbirds. Call the number listed above for the exact time and location. Bring water, a snack, insect repellent and be prepared for 4 miles of easy to moderate walking.

**Saturday, August 13, 6am**

**Yuba Pass and Sierra Valley**

**Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942**

**e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net**

Get out of the Valley heat for a chance to see good numbers of montane birds. Yuba Pass is an excellent area to find several species of woodpeckers, along with other surprises. Sierra Valley should have ample water to make for a good mid-day tour. Be prepared for easy to moderate hiking at mid-elevation. Bring water and a lunch. From Hwy 80 we'll meet at the Park and Ride off Horseshoe Bar Rd exit in Loomis.

**Sunday, August 14, 7am**

**Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley**

**Leader: Steve Abbott, 225-0564**

**e-mail:**

**steve@papasula.com**

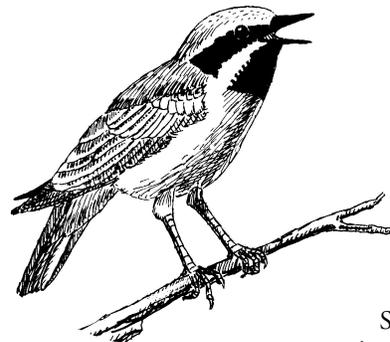
August is a great time to view shorebirds in the Sacramento Valley on migration from their Arctic breeding grounds. Since ideal conditions change depending on water levels, Steve will take you to the local areas with the best shorebird habitat. This may be in Yolo, Placer, or Sacramento County—or all 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. Turn left, and the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left.

**Friday, August 19**

**Evening Beaver Walk**

**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

See August 5 trip for details.



Stephen D'Amato

# Bobelaine

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR DIRECT DONATIONS

Thank you so much to the following for their direct donations in support of our Sacramento Audubon general fund and Bobelaine Sanctuary: Donna Dickey, Marilyn Lewis, Charles Conway, Kevin McRae, Gregory and Mernie Brott, and Charles Finley.

A large thanks also goes out to RBS Public Policy Strategy and Sergeant Major Associates, Inc. for their generous contribution of \$1,000 towards a tabletop kiosk for public education events.

## BOBELAINE NEWS

**Bobelaine Birdathon**—I want to thank those who spent a day birding for the Birdathon and then spent the necessary time and effort collecting pledged monies, as well as those who sent direct donations. Money raised will be used to maintain Bobelaine Sanctuary for the next fiscal year.

**General News**—Minor flood water this spring caused some additional work cleaning debris off the main entrance trail. However at the present time all trails are open and mowed. Be sure to schedule your trip to the sanctuary early in the day this summer as the heat tends to slow down the birds as well as the birders .

*Bill Clark, Co-Manager*  
916-783-8305

**Saturday, August 20, Daybreak**  
**Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Leader: John Trochet**  
**Info: 684-2816 ext. 5**

The Tall Forest is perhaps the best remaining example of riparian forest in the Central Valley. John has found excellent rarities, in addition to large numbers of migrants and resident species. This is an excellent time of year to see migrant songbirds. John's tours are the only regular public access to the Tall Forest. Call the number listed above for the exact time and location. Bring water, a snack, insect repellent and be prepared for 4-5 miles of moderate hiking.

**Saturday, August 20, 6:15am**  
**Lake Tahoe**  
**Leader: Nancy Bittner, (530) 525-7373**  
**For carpool info: 362-5942**  
**e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net**

Join Nancy as she explores her favorite places to find birds around Lake Tahoe. Enjoy a full day in the forest and along the lakeshore. Bring water and a lunch. We will carpool from the north end of the Raley's Shopping Center parking lot on El Dorado Hills Blvd on the north side of Hwy 50. The trip will begin at the Tahoe Keys at 8:15am. For Tahoe directions and details, call Nancy.

**Sunday, August 21, 7am**  
**Bobelaine Sanctuary Walk**  
**Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146**  
**e-mail: razorbill35@comcast.net**

Join Brian on this early morning hike through the riparian habitat of Bobelaine Sanctuary. Be prepared for a walk of two to three miles. Expect resident species along with a good chance for an influx of early fall migrants. Bring water and snacks. Take I-5 north to Hwy 99 toward Yuba City. Two miles after 99 crosses the Feather River, turn right on Laurel Ave. Follow it to the end and meet at the parking area.

**Saturday, August 27, 7:30am**  
**Bodega Bay**  
**Leader: Andi Salmi, 691-7216**  
**e-mail: andisalmi@yahoo.com**

Join Andi for a full day of birding, exploring the many habitats around Bodega Bay. Plan to see many waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, raptors, and migrating songbirds. Bring lunch, water, and warm clothes. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave exit. Turn left, and the

Park and Ride will be on your immediate left.

**Sunday, August 28, 7am-10:30am**  
**Migration at the SRCSD Bufferlands**  
**Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942**  
**e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net**

August mornings are a good time to view migrating songbirds—especially warblers and flycatchers. We will tour several sites that have produced good numbers of migrants in past years. From Sacramento, take I-5 south. Take the Meadowview/Pocket exit and turn left (east). Turn south on Freeport Blvd. Just before the town of Freeport, turn left on Stonecrest and follow it over the freeway to a locked gate.

**Saturday, September 3, 6:30am**  
**Point Reyes**  
**Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942**  
**e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net**

This is a great time of year for migrating shorebirds and songbirds. Rarities are always possible. Be prepared for a full day with moderate hiking, and changeable weather. Bring water and a lunch. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave exit. Turn left, and the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left.

**Sunday, September 4, 5:30pm**  
**Yolo Basin Wildlife Area, Evening**  
**Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**e-mail: mkgeiger@comcast.net and empid@sbcglobal.net**

Maureen and Cathie hope to see good numbers of White-faced Ibis flocks coming in to roost. There should be several species of wading birds, and if water conditions warrant, this is a great time of year for shorebirds. Foraging owls sometimes make an appearance in the late evening. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, and take the first exit (Exit 78) at the west end of the

Continued on page 6



*Kirsten Munson*

Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left onto the levee, and drop down into the wildlife area. The trip will begin at the first parking lot (on your left) at the beginning of the auto tour.

**Wednesday, September 10, 9:30am**  
**Sonoma – Mendocino Birding**  
**Healdsburg Vaux's Swifts**  
**Leader: Ron Storey (707) 762-5276**  
**e-mail: ronstorey@ronstorey.com**

Come and bird the vineyards of Sonoma and Mendocino Counties with Ron and Phyllis Storey. Last year Ron arranged a tour of the organic gardens at Fetzer Winery in Hopland. There we were able to eat our way through the garden, sampling various varieties of tomatoes, apples and figs. We sampled many herbs, including garlic, chives and fresh basil.

We will end the day late, near dark in Healdsburg to watch the Vaux's Swifts stage and descend into a chimney as if a huge vacuum was sucking them in. Last year we watched as many as a thousand Swifts descend into the chimney in a five-minute period. This is an event that happens every year in Healdsburg and an event you should experience at least once. It is a party atmosphere with many people bringing picnic suppers and lawn chairs.

Bring a lunch, or plan on joining Ron and Phyllis who will be eating at one of the delis along the way. This is a full day of birding that will prove to be a delight for all who attend. Plan to carpool with friends as it is a long driving day. Meet Ron and Phyllis at 9:30am in Shollenberger Park in Petaluma (about 1-1/2 hours from Sacramento). Directions to Shollenberger Park are on the website at [www.petalumawetlandspark.org](http://www.petalumawetlandspark.org) or phone Ron.

**Sunday, September 11, 7:30am**  
**Goethe Park Morning Walk**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**e-mail: empid@sbcglobal.net**

Join Cathie for a morning walk in the parkway while it is still cool. Even at this time of year there are some interesting things along the river. Vinegar weed and tarweeds

should be blooming; California Buckeye Butterflies are active, the kites and Red-Shouldered Hawks are usually highly visible. The smaller passerine birds are active in the cool of the morning too, and early migrants are always a possibility. There is a \$4 per car park entrance fee. If you want to carpool in, meet Cathie at 7:15 on Rod Beaudry Drive just off Folsom Blvd. This walk will end before noon, and is a good trip for beginners.

**Saturday, September 17, 7:30am**  
**Reichmuth Park**  
**Leader: Tim Manolis 485-9009**

Join Tim at the park entrance on Gloria Drive and 43rd Avenue. In the past Tim has found many uncommon birds in Reichmuth Park. He'll be looking for fall migrants, warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. This is good chance to work on identifying birds in confusing fall plumage, and Tim has the expertise to do it.

**Saturday-Sunday**  
**September 24, and 25,**  
**Monterey Bay Coastal**  
**and Pelagic Trip**  
**Two-day Monterey Trip**  
**Reservations:**

**Jeff Mangum**  
**(916) 988-2802**

**Leader: Mark Cudney (916) 987-2422**

Please see the front page of this month's Observer for details.

Saturday: The best pelagic birding in North America - Monterey Bay.

Sunday: Visit several Monterey Peninsula and adjacent area hot spots for land and shore birds.

Please note that by popular demand the ocean trip will occur on Saturday.



*Daniel Kilby*

**Mission Statement**  
**Sacramento Audubon Society**

As a Chapter of the National Audubon Society, we will focus on conservation and environmental education to ensure that the Sacramento region's natural ecosystems and diverse bird populations are preserved, restored, and made available for study and enjoyment.

## Sacramento Audubon Needs YOUR Help!

Frequently, SAS is in need of volunteers to help spread the word about birds, conservation and wildlife care. These environmental advocates are needed to attend meetings, staff an information table at community events, help organize White Elephant sales and our wonderful pelagic trips to Monterey Bay and the Farallons, and for a variety of other situations.

Many volunteer needs are one-time; others would best be served by a commitment of one meeting a month for a certain time period. In addition to the volunteers, SAS really needs a volunteer coordinator, someone who could spend some energy organizing the current volunteers and helping sign up others. Each volunteer could decide how much time to offer and which situations would be of the most personal interest.

The need for increased exposure to Audubon and other conservation issues in and around Sacramento has never been greater. Come and help. Contact Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, or any of the other SAS Board members if you are interested.

## Did You Hear?

National Audubon Society, BirdLife International, and other conservationists around the globe announced in April that the Ivory-billed Woodpecker has been found in eastern Arkansas! The last accepted sightings of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker were in Cuba in 1987 and 1988, and the last fully documented United States sighting occurred in Louisiana in 1944. While there have been a number of reports of possible Ivory-billed Woodpecker sightings since then, none have been confirmed prior to April's announcement. More information, photos, and video can be found at these two web sites.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology  
<http://birds.cornell.edu/ivory/>

The Nature Conservancy  
<http://www.ivorybill.org/>

This is such an extraordinary event in light of the general trend of conservation efforts that you may want to consider the donation information also.

## Field Trip Findings Continued from page 2

Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Kingbirds, Yellow and Orange-crowned Warblers, Lawrence's, Lesser and American Goldfinches, Wood Ducks, Loggerhead Shrike, Rock Wren and Western Grebe.

**Rayhouse Road, West Yolo County (4/30)**  
The group found Mountain Quail, which leader Dan Brown said may be a very good sighting for this area, along with Sage Sparrow and California Thrasher. Wildflowers were in good form, especially Chinese Houses and Yellow Globe Lily.

**Phoenix Field (4/25)** – Jack Hiehle more or less led two field trips to the vernal pools in Fair Oaks. He led the first in person from 8am to 11am. After he got home he received a cell-phone call from several late arrivals at Phoenix Field who had misread the hours of the trip in the Observer. No, problem, they described the flowers they saw and Jack identified checkerbloom, among others, and directed them to the downingia. Jack, who knows the plants like the back of his hand, allows that it was the first time he had ever “phoned in” a field trip.

**Mather Lake (4/24)** – Spring migrants included Wilson's Warblers, Warbling Vireos, Orange-crowned Warblers and Western Wood-Pewees, leader Wayne Blunk said. Great-tailed Grackles were present in large numbers, nest-building along with Western Bluebirds and Yellow-headed Blackbirds. Five to six Black-headed Grosbeaks were also noted. A swan was an unusual sighting, a first

for Wayne in his many visits here. Since its significance wasn't noted until later, it wasn't identified as to species.

**Bufferlands Big Day (4/23)** – Despite rain and wind, 22 participants recorded 101 species on the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands Big Day. Leader Chris Conard said that over the past four years, SRCSD Big Days have counted a total of 137 species, with a high of 111 in 2002. This year's tally included two male Blue-winged Teals, good views of Virginia Rail, heard-only Sora, Semipalmated Plover (12), Wilson's Warbler (7), Western Tanager, White-throated Sparrow, Blue Grosbeak (4), and Great-tailed Grackle (3).

**Snipes Pershing Ravine (4/16)** – Warblers were plentiful, including Orange-crowned, Townsend's, Black-throated Gray, and Wilson's, leader Richard Barbieri reported. Also, Western Bluebirds, Ash-throated Flycatchers, and a great look at a perched Cooper's Hawk.

**Pine Hill Preserve, Cameron Park Unit (4/16)**  
– Highlights included stunning views of a singing Sage Sparrow, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and California Thrashers, leader Chris Conard reported. “As the group was departing, we observed a male Calliope Hummingbird forage and groom. Nothing, however, topped close views of a Coast Horned Lizard. On a scouting trip on 4/11, a Common Poorwill flew up from my feet along the trail.”

Pete Hayes

## Seasonal Observations continued from page 8

Additional highlights include a male **Red-breasted Merganser\*** from Comanche Reservoir on 4/22, **Pine Siskins** reports into late May, an early **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** report on 5/3 from Shanghai Bend along the Feather River near Yuba City, and a **Greater Roadrunner\*** seen heading north of the Sutter Buttes on 4/9. A **roadrunner** was seen later the same day at Greylodge Wildlife Area! This is only the second roadrunner record for Sutter County. **Mountain Quail, Sage Sparrows,** and **Black-chinned Sparrow\*** were reported from Rd 41/Sand Creek Road near the Yolo/Colusa County border. At Sweetwater Creek east of Folsom Lake, a **Steller's Jay** and **Hairy Woodpecker** were reported on 4/30. The **Hairy Woodpecker** was seen at a nest on 4/26. Perhaps the same **Common Black-Hawk\*\*** that spent the winter in Stockton was seen by many in Sonoma County in the latter half of May. On 5/1, the observation of a male **Allen's Hummingbird\*** displaying to a female **Black-chinned** was topped by a very vocal Mountain Lion seen crossing the access road north of the Tall Forest at CRP.

Documentation of species listed with an asterisk (\*) seen in the Sacramento area should be submitted to the Sacramento Bird Records Committee. Species with a double asterisk (\*\*) are on the California Review List.

Thanks to the following for their reports (the majority were taken from [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central\\_valley\\_birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central_valley_birds/) and [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sacramento\\_birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sacramento_birds/)): Roger Adamson, Steve Abbott, Peter Armstrong, Vicki Boffin, Lola Brocksen, Dan Brown, Ken Burton, Brent Campos, Mary Chambers, Janice Clark, Daryl Coldren, Bruce Deuel, Mike Eaton, Andrew Engilis, Gil Ewing, Rob Fowler, Neil Ganju, Maureen Geiger, Brian Gilmore, Steve Glover, Ed Greaves, Kevin Guse, Richard Hall, David Hamilton, Denise Hamilton, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Ray Hasey, Waldo Holt, Marcel Holyoak, Dave Johnson, Jon Katz, Deby Keller, Mary Kiernan, Jon King, Jeri Langham, Sami LaRocca, Laura Look, Calvin Lou, John Luther, Ron Melcer, Martin Meyers, Sharon Minnick, Kurt Mize, Barbara Mohr, Joseph Morlan, Frances Oliver, Ed Pandolfino, Jim Pearce, Anne Pellegrini, June Persson, Ryan Phillips, Don Roberson, Terry Ronneberg, Steve Rovell, Jim Rowoth, Jennifer Rycenga, Mary Schiedt, Don Schmoltd, John Sterling, Michele Swartout, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, Heath Wakelee, Charley Walker, Sally Walters, Judy Whitcombe, Chad Witco, Alan Wight, and Brian Williams.

Chris Conard

## Farallon Islands Boat Trip

Sunday, July 10

As of press time there are still several openings for this great trip. Jeff Mangum leads the trip out of Sausalito aboard the “Salty Lady” and heads for the Point Reyes-Farallon Islands National Marine Sanctuary. If you're interested in marine mammals, pelagic birds and an exciting day give Jeff a call to reserve your space.

Jeff Mangum, (916) 988-2802

## Quiz on Birds Seen in California

By an Old Coot named Jack Hiehle  
(Jack's description)

1. What bird has the longest bill?
2. What four bird species have wing spans less than the length of the bird?
3. What is the smallest bird in length, wing span and weight?
4. Which bird stands the tallest?

Answers

(length, wing span and weight as compiled by Sibley)

1. White Pelican (and certainly the largest)
2. Western Grebe, Clark's Grebe, Greater Roadrunner, and Ring-necked Pheasant.
3. Calliope Hummingbird
4. Greater Sandhill Crane

# Seasonal Observations

Sacramento Audubon Society  
PO Box 160694  
Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Nonprofit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit #2310  
Sacramento, CA

## April 1 to May 31 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports 783-2331

Spring for many is the highlight of the birding year. Birds are in their best looking plumage and many are singing, territorial, and relatively easy to observe. And then there are the truly outstanding encounters. Just such a find was of a **Cassin's Sparrow\*\*** along Latrobe Rd in eastern Sacramento County. This species typically requires observers to visit southeastern Arizona, Texas, or a few of the short-grass prairie states. Many were able to see this bird as it skylarked and sang over our local prairie from 5/21 to at least 5/30. While the bird has fairly drab plumage, it has a beautiful song. This was the first record for the Central Valley, and only the fourth for mainland Northern California (it has also occurred on Southeast Farallon Island).

In addition to the flow of regular Western migrants, which in itself is a pleasure to watch and hear, a **Plumbeous Vireo\*** was reported from the UC Davis Campus Reserve on 4/22. Other vagrant songbirds came in the form of a **Northern Parula\*** from the Tall Forest of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 5/30 and a **Tennessee Warbler\*** that was briefly stunned by a collision with a window of a Rocklin residence on 5/16. The latter bird was photographed before it recovered and flew away on its off course migration. An **Indigo Bunting\*** was reported from the Sutter Bypass south of Yuba City on 5/21. The **Cassin's Sparrow** led directly or indirectly to many other reports from eastern Sacramento County. Nearby on Michigan Bar Rd, a **Brewer's Sparrow\*** was intermittently reported from 5/22 to 5/28. Along Meiss Rd, **Grasshopper Sparrows** were regularly reported about one mile west of the end

of the pavement coming from Lone Rd. On 5/24, a **Common Nighthawk\*** was seen and heard along Meiss Rd about three miles from Dillard Rd. Many were able to observe up to four of this locally rare species among the expected **Lesser Nighthawks** well into June.

In the shorebird department, a **Snowy Plover\*** seen at CRP along Desmond Rd on 4/3 showed the russet crown characteristic of the Old World races. Another **Snowy Plover\*** and a **Willet** were reported from the

same location on 4/8, with another **Willet** reported on 4/27. A **Baird's Sandpiper** was a rare spring find from the Woodland WWTP on 4/28. Nearly 200 **Black Terns** were seen at this location in late April and early May. Over 100 **Marbled Godwits** were reported near Galt on 4/26. A similar number were seen near the Davis WWTP on 4/23. Three **Pacific Golden-Plovers\*** were reported from the Woodland WWTP on 4/1. Two nearing breeding condition were reported from the same location on 4/27.

Other highlights include **Gray Flycatcher** reports from the Wood Duck Ponds south of West Sacramento on 4/23, Bobelaine on 4/24, Dry Creek in southern Placer County on 4/26, and the Putah Creek Sinks on 5/2. **Hammond's** and **Dusky Flycatchers** were reported from multiple locations, as were **Olive-sided Flycatchers**. The latter was especially conspicuous along the American River Parkway through May. **Grasshopper Sparrows** were reported from several grassland locations in Yolo County, as were two singing birds from Stone Lakes NWR. **Common Ravens** were found with three nestlings at the Valensin portion of CRP. A pair also lingered late in the period at Stone Lakes. A **Least Bittern** from CRP on 5/11 was the only report of the species for the season.

*Observations* continued on page 7

## Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

**Internet Address:** [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)

**Membership/Subscriptions:** Jan Clark, (916) 783-8305

**Seasonal Observations:** Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,  
Sacramento, CA 95826  
(916) 362-5942

e-mail preferred: [chris.conard@comcast.net](mailto:chris.conard@comcast.net)

**Editor:** Sharon Wisecarver, (916) 399-1660, e-mail: [sawelma@cwnet.com](mailto:sawelma@cwnet.com)

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.