

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



VOLUME 67 • NO. 6

JULY AUGUST 2015

General Meeting

Thursday, September 17, 2015

Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

Our General Meetings will resume again on September 17, 2015. Enjoy the rest of your summer, travel, see some birds!

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. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Sacramento Audubon](https://facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

NEW OUTREACH CHAIRMAN

Hello all you great volunteers, we have a new Outreach Chair. It's Bill Bianco, who many of you know from the Board or field trips or Christmas Counts. His contact info is biancowm@yahoo.com, cell 889-4849, and home 372-3318. During this change-over period we'll both be active, and the upcoming summer events that you have volunteered for, (Walk On The Wild Side, Sacramento Start Laguna Creek Park, Wildlife Art Festival and Harvest Day Festival) will go exactly as previously scheduled. You may get reminders from both Bill and me!

But this autumn, (NatureFest, Lodi Crane Festival, Swan Festival, etc.), Bill will be the person in charge and I know you will volunteer and make the job easy for him, as you have always done for me. Thanks for all your help over the past years, and I'll be volunteering for those events myself, so I'll probably see you there.
Cathie LaZier

*Editor's note: Cathie did an outstanding job as our Outreach Chair. She always made sure SAS was represented at appropriate events. Many thanks to Cathie and her team of volunteers and a rousing welcome to Bill.

Farallon Islands Boat Trip

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2015

Sacramento Audubon Society's annual pelagic trip off the coast of San Francisco to the Farallon Islands is now full. Thank you to everyone who signed up as this is a good fund raiser for SAS. We hope everyone has a great time and we'll be looking forward to your reports and photos!



In Memorium

Harlin Jackson Perryman

Harlin was born in Zion, Arkansas August 13, 1927. He got his father's signature to enter the Navy the day after he graduated from Salem High School. The GI Bill meant he would be able to get his PhD. However, he got homesick and returned to the University of Arkansas to attend law school. He was elected to the State Assembly during the troubled mid 1950's.

He graduated law school and traveled the United States to find a place to live. He finally settled on California. Alaska was a very close second. In California he met and married a Betty Baldwin. She had children and the whole lot became a family. He bumped along through life and did the normal things of retiring, becoming a "Grandpa", and moving to Sacramento. It was in February 1997 that his step-daughter Melody Baldwin took him on a Sacramento Audubon trip. He fell in love with the birds and the whole process of watching and identifying birds. He met Tim Fitzer and an 11 year old boy named Dan Williams. They encouraged him to come on other trips. Over the next 28 years he would brag that he had gone on more trips than anyone else in one particular year. He created various lists. He finally settled on the life list and county list. He became the judge for knowing which county the group was currently birding. He spent 10 cents to get his first few birds and figures his last trip to Arizona cost him an average of \$400 a bird. He had over 720 birds on his North America Life List. Like everyone he had some bird sub-species he was waiting for the committee to split out so his number would increase by 3.

He would come home with tales of how much so and so had improved or how they had waited for him on the trail. After watching Cathie LaZier adopt a park area to get to know the birds of that area, he adopted Mather Field Park. He went there two to three times a week. He could see the seasonal birds and note the changes in the park. He really liked the hobby and his Audubon Friends.

Field Trip Findings

Sierra Valley/Yuba Pass (6/13-14) — Leader Gary Fregien reported: “This year’s birding in the Sierra Valley and Yuba Pass areas was marked by warm temperatures and dry conditions. Overall, the numbers of birds were lower than usual, though the species count remained similar to prior years. Well represented families were waterfowl, including Redhead, Cinnamon and Green-winged teals, raptors including Swainson’s Hawk, shorebirds, including Black-necked Stilt, American Avocet, Willet, and Wilson’s Snipe and Phalarope, owls, including Barn and Burrowing Owl, woodpeckers, including Lewis’s, White-headed, Black-backed and Pileated, 3 kinds of flycatchers, thrushes and warblers, seedeaters, including Green-tailed Towhee, Brewer’s and Vesper Sparrow, and Thick-billed Fox Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, Cassin’s Finch, Pine Siskin and Evening Grosbeak. Many other usual birds in the range were seen but perhaps the most unusual bird was a Vaux’s Swift flying in and out of a chimney in Sierra City. The group tally this year was 104 species.”

Mosquito Ridge, Placer County (6/7) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: “With the weather being on the hot side, we decided to make two quick stops before heading straight to French Meadows where the birding was great! We did see Canyon Wrens, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and Black-headed Grosbeaks during the stops. While at the basin below the dam we saw Green-tailed Towhee, Fox Sparrows, White-headed Woodpecker, Lazuli Bunting, Osprey, Pacific-slope, Western Wood Pewee, and Hammond’s Flycatchers. Yellow, Wilson’s, Yellow-rumped, Nashville, MacGillivray’s, and Black-throated Gray warblers, Warbling Vireo, and Chipping Sparrow. At Placer Big Trees we saw Hermit Warbler and Pacific Wren.”

Fremont Weir/Sacramento River (6/6) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “The trip was intended to take place at the Fremont Weir. But Fish and Game had closed access and the detour given was inaccessible due to Cal-Trans road closures. After this rocky start, the Cache Creek Conservancy offered to provide access to their property which is not normally accessible on the weekend. Fred Vanderwold, their Education Specialist, was there to let us in, show us around, and provide good info on this area. Twelve of us toured about, seeing 40 species in

just over 2 hours. Especially nice were the owls—Great Horned and Barn—and the Swainson’s Hawks, in all plumages were frequently found overhead. Nice place to visit during the week in the future.”

River Bend Park (6/3) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Seven people joined me for this morning walk. Birds were very co-operative and we had great views of towhees, goldfinches and wrens. Cooper’s Hawks were active, and we had a pair of Spotted Sandpipers in breeding plumage. E-bird showed a total of 32 species. California Broom, Elegant Clarkia and Blue Elderberry were all in bloom.”

Crystal Basin (5/31) Wendy Money, co-leader with Phyllis Wilburn, reported: “On a mild spring day, 20 birders ventured into the Crystal Basin. We were thrilled to start with a fleeting view of a Pine Grosbeak at the meeting spot. In general, the birds were a bit stealthy this time, so it was a perfect time to focus on vocalizations. The meadow, however, didn’t disappoint and we had a very dapper male Calliope Hummingbird showing us all his best sides. Dashing about in the woods were numerous Green-tailed Towhees, McGillivray’s and Hermit warblers. An elusive Mountain Quail vocalized at length in the meadow, but was never found. Both Ash-throated Flycatchers and Western Wood Pewees were easily observed. Still hoping for a White-headed Woodpecker at the dam, we finally were rewarded with good looks. By the end of the lovely day we had enjoyed seeing and hearing 49 species of birds.”

Alpine County into Nevada (5/30) — Jane Taylor, co-leader with Scott Hoppe, reported: “Nine of us, including beginning birders Jane and Sue, left Sacramento early on a warm day. We tallied 54 bird species over a variety of habitats. Highlights included Cassin’s Finch near Luther Pass; American Dipper on the Carson River’s West Fork; nesting Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-breasted Nuthatch and White-headed Woodpecker and Bullock’s Oriole and Yellow Warbler adjacent to Woodford’s Store. Red-tailed Hawk chicks in a nest greeted us as we made our way to Mud Lake. On the lake, we scoped Gadwall, Northern Pintail, Lesser Scaup and Ruddy Ducks, and showy Eared Grebes along with

Western and Clark’s grebes. Avocets, a Willet and a mature Bald Eagle plied the shore, and a den of Coyotes barked, from over a hill. Cliff Swallow chicks peered at us from mud nests over a barn door. Indian Lake Reservoir yielded two White Pelicans, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Chipping Sparrow and good comparisons of Western and Clark’s grebe as well as Pied-billed Grebe. In Markleeville, we saw Wood Ducks and heard Downy Woodpecker.”

Sierra Valley (5/24) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “I watched the weather forecast for Sierra Valley all week with apprehension—it called for rain and thunder showers day after day. But on the day of the trip, the weather broke and it couldn’t have been better for almost all day. We tallied 78 species. Highlights included Golden Eagle, Calliope Hummingbird, Gray Flycatcher, Pygmy Nuthatch, Mountain Bluebird, Sage Thrasher, Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Brewer’s, Chipping and Vesper sparrows, and Cassin’s Finch. In the late afternoon, clouds moved in and we encountered rain squalls, but overall, it was a great day for 14 participants.”

Dragonfly trip (5/23) — Leader Tim Manolis reported: “Here is a summary of Dragonfly and Damselfly species seen with 9 folks, besides me, a good group. The trip was to the American River Parkway behind Rio American High School. We also had nice looks at Spotted Sandpiper in splendid breeding plumage, a beaver, a rattlesnake, and a couple of



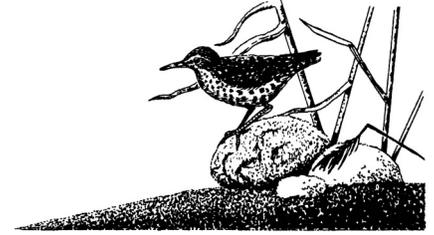
Rosemary Bell

nests of jumping spiders in dragonfly exuviae. Seen were 2 species each of Bluets and Forktails, 2 species of Darners and 3 of Skimmers, among others.

Mosquito Ridge Road, Placer County (5/17) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “While the weather presented occasional challenges (showers at times, and even hail at one point), 11 participants had a great time with some awesome birding. Highlights included a pair of very cooperative Canyon Wren at the first stop, Sooty Grouse, good close-up views of a

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Field Trips



Spotted Sandpiper
Stephen D'Amato

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, contact the scheduler Dan Brown, naturestoc@aol.com for trips through July 19. For trips July 22-August 23 contact the scheduler Dan Tankersley, dtankers@winfirst.com, 662-1290. For trips after August 24 contact the scheduler Scott Hoppe, shoppe01@surewest.net, 835-8471.

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

Sunday, July 5, 7am
Bushy Lake/Cal Expo Floodplain
Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com

Meet Darrell in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. Darrell will be looking for a variety of resident species; Wood Ducks are a good possibility on the lake. This will be a 1 to 2 mile hike that will take 2 to 3 hours. Bring water and sunscreen.

Saturday, July 11
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 12
Farallon Pelagic Trip

This trip is full. Have a great time!

Saturday, July 18, 6am
Hidden Falls Regional Park,
near Auburn
Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682
bgraber984@gmail.com

Join Ben for this trip to one of his favorite birding spots. He has heard Yellow Breasted Chat, had several species of warblers and flycatchers and saw a whole flock of Lawrence's Goldfinches in the area this year. Be sure to wear good walking or hiking shoes and bring liquids. This will be a half day trip. Meet Ben at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

Sunday, July 19, 6:30am
Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca
Leaders: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com
Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net

Join Gary and Scott on this high elevation 3-mile hike in search of Clark's Nutcracker, Rufous Hummingbird, Green-tailed Towhee, Chipping Sparrow, Dusky Flycatcher, Pine Grosbeak, Cassin's Finch and, with luck, Sooty Grouse, Black-backed Woodpecker and Gray-crowned Rosy Finch. At peak wildflower time there are fields of flowers in dazzling variety. Bring lunch and plenty of liquids; wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for changeable Sierra weather. Carson Pass is a USFS fee area for day-use parking. This hike should be considered moderate to strenuous depending upon your physical condition. Meet at the Bella Bru 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.

Wednesday, July 22, 7am
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 in the cool of the morning, looking for our resident and summer nesting birds. Walk will end by 11am, and it's a great walk for beginners. From Folsom Blvd., between Bradshaw 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.

Saturday, July 25, 7am Sharp!
Wright's Lake
Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net
Ann Burris, 947-7573
burriss.nellieann@gmail.com

This high mountain lake near the edge of the Desolation Wilderness offers a good sample of high Sierran bird life. Ann and Tim will help you find many of the Sierran bird specialties including Black-backed and White-headed Woodpeckers, 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 Ann 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 26, evening trip
Bats and Swainson's Hawks

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Field Trips continued from page 3

Leader: Jude Lamare, 769-2857
judelam@sbcglobal.net

Join Jude along with bat expert, JoEllen Arnold to see 60,000 Mexican Free-tailed bats emerge for their evening hunt while Swainson's Hawks and American Kestrels try their luck and skill at bat hunting! This trip is limited to 12 participants. Please contact Jude Lamare for meeting time and place.

Wednesday, July 29, 7am
Discovery Park

Leader: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

Discovery offers a good variety of species in the fall, winter and spring. This time, join Maureen to see what might be there in late July as the Park's location at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a great place for a walk in any season. Residents generally found in the park such as Yellow-billed Magpies, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, Red-shouldered Hawks, Western Bluebirds and White-tailed Kites should be evident. Other interesting species may show up also. This walking trip is mostly on a flat paved trail and will last to mid-morning. Generally, there is an unlocked restroom near the beginning of the trail. To reach Discovery from I-5, exit onto the Garden Highway and head east to the first traffic light. Turn right into the park. In the park, you need a Sacramento County Parks Annual Pass, or you must stop at the kiosk and register, paying the \$5 entrance fee. From the kiosk, turn left at your first opportunity and then left again, driving a short distance to the farthest parking lot at the south end of the archery range where we will meet.

Saturday, August 1, 630am
Point Reyes

Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com

Plan for a trip to the varied habitats of Point Reyes National Seashore. We should expect a good diversity of waterbirds, shorebirds, and songbirds. Depending on reports just prior to the trip, we may visit Abbott's Lagoon, which requires 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 2, 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.

Saturday, August 8, 6:15am
**South Lake Tahoe/
Upper Truckee Marsh**

Leader: Linda Pittman, 715-1876
Pittman@frontiernet.net

Located on the south shore of Lake Tahoe (elevation 6,225 ft) where the Upper Truckee River enters the lake, the Upper Truckee Marsh is a remainder of a much larger historic wetland. We'll be looking for migrants and residents along the south shore, at the edge of the marsh and on the lake. Some of the possible birds include ducks, shorebirds, Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Black-billed Magpie. If time allows, we'll also visit another nearby location. Expect to walk 2-4 miles on mostly level trails. Bring lunch and liquids and be prepared for an afternoon return. FRS radios and scopes will be helpful. Meet at Bella Bru 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, August 9, 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.

Wednesday, August 12, 7:30am
William Pond Park
Leader: Larry Hickey, 962-0387
Larryhickey1@gmail.com

Meet Larry along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk. He'll walk down to some different spots on the river looking for various herons, egrets and other waterbirds. California Quail, Western Bluebirds, Western Kingbirds and Ash-throated Flycatchers are possible. Trip will end by noon. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners

Saturday, August 15, 7am
Granite Springs Road
Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net
Ann Burris, 947-7573
burris.nellieann@gmail.com

Join Ann and Tim for a full day of fun and birding. Granite Springs Road runs from Crystal Basin Road to Wrights Lake We should find Mountain Quail with young, MacGillivray's Warblers, and Calliope Hummingbird. Also possible are Green-tailed Towhee, Black-chinned Sparrow, Lazuli Bunting, and Hairy and Lewis' Woodpeckers. Around Wright's Lake we expect to find Osprey and a variety of woodpeckers, vireos and warblers. The trip will last into the afternoon so bring liquids, lunch, snacks and warm clothes in case of chilly weather. FRS Radios are helpful. Since Granite Springs Road is dirt, we will scout its condition to determine its drivability. Meet at Bella Bru 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, August 16, 6am
Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area
Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net

This Wildlife Area encompasses a large swath of land north of San Pablo Bay. The target bird for this trip will be Least Tern, which has nested in the Huichica Creek Unit. Shorebirds should also be in abundance, and we will keep our eyes open for rare, early fall migrants. The trip should end early to mid afternoon, depending on conditions. Bring lunch and liquids, and some layers of clothing as Bay Area weather can be cool even in August. Meet Scott 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 22, 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 23, 7:30am

Cosumnes River Preserve

Leader: Jane Taylor, 444-0429

jg.taylor@att.net

Depending on water and weather conditions, we will enjoy a morning walk at Cosumnes River Preserve searching for resident and early migrating birds. Meet at the parking lot at the visitor center and plan on a late morning conclusion, perhaps along Desmond Road. Bring binoculars and liquids and, if desired, snacks. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, (Exit #498); go left (east) about 1 mile to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

Saturday, August 29, 7am

Riverbend Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland and down to the river looking for the resident birds of the parkway, as well as possible migrants. This is a good trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, August 30, 6:30am

Alpine County

Leader: Jane Taylor, 444-0429

jg.taylor@att.net

Plan on a series of short walks in a variety of habitats like coniferous forest, sagebrush, lake shore and riparian, which may have benefited from late spring showers. We will look for a number of bird species, both resident and migrant, including passerines, woodpeckers, water fowl and raptors. Please bring FRS radios if you have them and lunch and liquids, planning for a mid-afternoon wrap-up. Meet at the south side of the Bella Bru parking lot, accessed off Highway 50, exit #30B, El Dorado Hills Blvd, at the south end of the Raley's shopping center.

Saturday, September 5, 7am

North Bay Hotspots

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

The vast area to the north of San Francisco Bay, known as the "North Bay", has many great birding locations, especially during fall migration. Join Scott as he explores some of these hotspots. Possible stops include American Canyon Wetlands, the wetlands along Highway 37, Schollenberger Park and maybe a coastal location, time permitting. This will be a full day of birding, so bring lunch and liquids. Meet Scott 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, September 6, 8am

Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway

Leader: Paul Cordero

pkcordero@gmail.com

On this morning walk along the American River, you will see, and hear, a nice variety of resident birds and maybe a few early migrants. Paul will focus on finding and identifying birds by ear. 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, September 12, 8am

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682

Bgraber984@gmail.com

Join Ben for a morning walk checking out the resident birds and looking for early

migrants. Meet him at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. This is a good trip for beginners. 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.

Sunday, September 13, 7am-11:30am
SRWTP Bufferlands

Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610

conardc@gmail.com

The Bufferlands are 2,500 acres surrounding the wastewater treatment plant between Sacramento and Elk Grove and not typically open to the public. Habitats include riparian forest, seasonal wetlands, grasslands, wildlife-friendly agricultural lands, and many habitat restoration sites. This is a good time of year to look for migrating songbirds. Be prepared for 3 miles of easy walking. From I-5 south of Sacramento, exit at the new Cosumnes River Blvd exit (Freeport Blvd will be temporarily closed between Meadowview and Cosumnes River Blvd. This is the first exit north of Laguna Blvd, and the first exit south of Meadowview/Pocket Rd). Go west toward Freeport Blvd and then turn left (south) toward the town of Freeport. We'll meet in the large gravel lot on the right side of Freeport Blvd at the north edge of the town. This is a new meeting location made necessary because of major road construction.

KIDS PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 12, 2015

Oh Migration!

Leader: Craig Swolgaard

Where: Stay tuned

When: 8-11am

Ages: 10-13 year olds

Join Craig for a morning walk along the American River to look for migrating birds. Sacramento is located within the Pacific Flyway, which is a route nearly a billion birds take to fly between their spring and winter homes. Do you know many of the birds we see locally in spring and summer spend their fall and winter in South America? Kids will learn why birds migrate, more about where they migrate to, and what birds need along their migratory path to successfully make their long journey twice a year. To register and get exact meeting location, please email Jenner Junghans at writeningbug@yahoo.com.

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Pacific Wren and Hermit Warbler. The biggest highlight was our last stop below the dam at French Meadows. Birds were everywhere. While viewing a very close Green-tailed Towhee and a Nashville Warbler (at one point in the same binocular view), a flock of Pine Siskins flew in nearby. A Hairy Woodpecker flew in to a nest hole. We had 2 Chipping Sparrows, 2 Yellow Warblers and a Yellow-rumped Warbler in the same willow. Great scope views were had of a calling Dusky Flycatcher (thanks go to Chuck Dotson, who was the only one to bring a scope and carry it along, even in the rain). Several Wilson's Warblers and a couple of MacGillivray's Warblers were also seen. Over all of this, Fox Sparrows were singing everywhere and a Pileated Woodpecker was heard calling. Everyone agreed it was a great trip, despite the weather."

Walk on the Wild Side, Stone Lakes Refuge (5/16) — Leader John Huls reported: "A biting morning wind had our group of 7 searching our cars for more layers but the chill did not dim the magnificence of the old Valley Oak forest. Birds of note included Black-headed Grosbeaks, a male Western Tanager, Yellow and Wilson's warblers (heard), White-tailed Kite, Swainson's Hawk and overhead, a flock of majestic White Pelicans. We watched as a very large beaver swam down Morrison Creek then took to land, crossing over a water control dam before swimming past us just 30 feet away! He showed no fear—we did not even get a tail splash from him."

Mather Field (5/16) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "A small group of five enjoyed identifying 42 species of birds. The usual for May were species with fledglings. Observed were families of Cliff Swallows, Bushtits, Black Phoebes, Wild Turkeys, House Wrens, Common Gallinule, and Canada Geese. Two pairs of Mute Swans, again this year had 7 cygnets each. The Yellow-headed Blackbirds were present in small numbers and a pair of Swainson's Hawks were noted

for the second month in a row. American Bitterns were heard or seen in all parts of the lake. All in all, another enjoyable morning of birding."

William Pond Park (5/13) — Leader Larry Hickey reported: "On a cool and breezy morning, seven of us met at the William Pond section of the American River Parkway. Our group included two zoology students from American River College (both transferring to pre-med studies at the University of California in the fall) and a visitor from Atlanta, Ga who helped us compare and contrast our western species (Western Scrub-Jays and Spotted Towhees, for example) to their eastern counterparts. Highlights included Tree Swallows in their nesting cavities, Cliff Swallows nesting under the bridge, Western Kingbirds nesting at the top of a power pole, young Wild Turkeys and

Pileated Woodpecker
Stephen D'Amato



Mallards following their mothers and seven very young Common Merganser ducklings paddling behind their mom. Good looks at a Spotted Sandpiper in breeding plumage and Wood Duck pairs rounded out a delightful spring morning."

Sand Creek Road (5/10) — Nellieann Burris reported: "It was an early start for the eight birders that joined trip leaders Mark Martucci and Tim Fitzer for a trip up Sand Creek Road but by the end of the day the group agreed it was well worth it. Although the area appears very dry there are a good variety of birds to see. Thanks to Dan Murphy for sharing his photos of a few of the birds we saw including a photo of one of the day's target birds, a Bell's Sparrow. The group ended the day with 54 species. Details can be found on eBird. Photos can be found on Sacramento Audubon Facebook."

Beal's Point, Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (5/9) — Mara Weston, co-leader with Deb Weston, reported: "Six of us birded Beal's Point on a chilly morning that warmed nicely by the trip's end. We observed a total of 37 species, with highlights including great looks at a pair of Rufous-crowned Sparrows, an Anna's Hummingbird on a nest, one cooperative Violet-green Swallow, and two recently

fledged Bushtits snuggled together on a branch! It was a great morning of birding with a really fun group."

Bobelaine Sanctuary (5/6) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "Nine people joined me for a walk through this lush riparian forest, full of massive oaks and sycamores and festooned with wild grape. In one old cottonwood full of nesting cavities we observed Acorn Woodpeckers, Tree Swallows, House Wren, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and, unfortunately, Starlings. We had good looks at Bullock's Oriole and Forster's Terns and quick looks at a Wrentit. We also met Robert Thomas mowing the trails through the sanctuary and were able to thank him for all his efforts in keeping the various trails accessible."

Spenceville WLR (5/3) — Canceled.

Driver's Flat, Ruck-a-Chucky Auburn State Recreation Area (5/2) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "A rather large group of 24 participants enjoyed a beautiful day of birding. Highlights included an unexpected and cooperative female Costa's Hummingbird, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher going to and from a nest, Lazuli Bunting and good looks at Yellow, Black-throated Gray and Wilson's warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Two or three people in the group had at least two life list birds. A very good day at an awesome location."

Paradise Beach, River Park (4/29) - Leader Sally Walters-Schmoltdt reported: "Nine birders and 36 species. In addition Bob Greenleaf and Grant(?) added a Warbling Vireo! Next year we will start April's trip at 6:30, not 8am, to miss commute traffic and the heat. We still managed great looks at birds and stopped before it got too warm. Highlights: Ash-throated Flycatchers calling, California Quail, Osprey and copulating Red-shouldered Hawks. For the record, there were 4 non-native Red-earred Slider Turtles sunning themselves."

Point Reyes (4/26) — Leader John York reported: "We took a mix of newer birders with some veterans to Point Reyes. Though the day was beautiful if a bit windy, the birds were scarce and a lot of the usual suspects like warblers and flycatchers were not in evidence. We did see some Lincoln and Song sparrows. Best bird was a Great Horned Owl directly overhead in a tree at the Fish Docks. Seabird viewing was better, with scoters and Guillemots, loons and grebes in good view. We did have a lot of fun, but I am

THE SAGEBRUSH SEA

One of the biggest conservation challenges in the nation's history is coming to a head this year and it is resting on the shoulders of an increasingly rare bird—the Greater Sage-Grouse. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's film, *The Sagebrush Sea*, reveals the hidden world of this iconic species at a time when its fate is being decided in state houses, agencies, and courtrooms across the West and in the nation's capital.

It's been called The Big Empty—an immense sea of sagebrush that once stretched 500,000 square miles across North America. Yet it's far from empty, as those who look closely will discover. In this ecosystem anchored by the sage, eagles and antelope, badgers and lizards, rabbits, wrens, owls, prairie dogs, songbirds, hawks and migrating birds of all description make their homes. You can watch this remarkable film at vids.kvie.org/video/2365494065/. While you're at KVIE you can look at some of their other nature videos on birds and wildlife, including a 3-part series on *Animal Homes*.

Birding Festival

11TH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The 11th annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival will take place from **September 24-27**. The Monterey Bay area is home to one of the most spectacular birding and wildlife venues in North America. From soaring golden eagles, effortlessly gliding California condors, cheeky bushtits, gorgeous Townsend's warblers, scampering snowy plovers, to thousands of sooty shearwaters streaming along the ocean's surface, few places can match the diversity of species as the Monterey Bay region.

September marks the peak of fall migration, with wintering shorebirds arriving en masse. Warblers and other passerines are doing the same, and the first appearances of wintering ducks and other waterfowl is sometimes seen in September. Meanwhile, just a few miles offshore, jaegers, shearwaters, and alcid are present in good numbers. There's no better time to visit the Monterey Bay area to see the greatest number of species or to find a rarity.

This year's lineup, trips and registration have not been announced yet, but check the website montereybaybirding.org, for more detailed information.

afraid the drought has dried out the trees and killed off most of the food supply for the insect eaters."

Bushy Lake, Cal Expo Floodplain (4/25) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "The sun was shining and the birds were very active, although the grass was very wet. All seven of us had wet feet as soon as we started walking on the trail. At the start of the day, goldfinches were everywhere in the field. Bushy Lake had a few Wood Ducks. We also heard an Olive-sided Flycatcher. We had a total of 34 species. A great morning was had by everyone."

Earth Day and National Arbor Day Birding Estates Drive, American River Parkway (4/22) — Leader John Huls reported: "Our group of 14 was treated to great views of a Belted Kingfisher diving into the shallows and what must have been a dozen or so male Wood Ducks parading in front of us with a single female for added interest. We noted a gaggle of Canada Goose goslings, a lingering Common Goldeneye, Ash-throated flycatchers, a lone Double-crested Cormorant and Song Sparrow. The tree cavities were alive with Tree Swallows, House and Bewick's wrens, Acorn Woodpeckers, European Starlings, Oak Titmice and a female House Sparrow. We heard but were unable to spot Wilson's Warblers and a Bullock's Oriole. European honeybees had made a hive in a tree cavity just above ground level. Thanks to the other trip leaders and Audubon veterans who came along and added their expertise; Larry Hickey, Craig DeMartini, Valerie Phillips and Harlin Perryman."

Sweetwater Creek (4/19) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: "Four Yellow-breasted Chats found early along the trail, delighted Sunday's group. Other sightings included a nice Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Black-headed Grosbeak and Wrentits. The species total for the morning was 45. Details can be found on eBird. This was the second and last trip of the season to this great area that is off limits without permission of the property owner."

William Pond Park (4/18) — Leader Dan Williams reported: "About a dozen of us had a very pleasant spring morning at William Pond Park. Lingering and departing winter birds mixing with spring and summer arrivals was the theme.



Ash-throated Flycatcher
Kirsten Munson

The morning started with nice scope views of Cedar Waxwings and Western Bluebirds from the parking lot near the entrance kiosk, while a couple of skeins of Greater White-fronted Geese headed north above. Then things got more spring-like as an electric blue-headed Lazuli Bunting dropped into a cottonwood, and Wilson's Warblers began singing.

At the river, the great cloud of Cliff Swallows and White-throated Swifts put on a good show darting in and out from under the bike bridge, while Greater Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Common Merganser, and Belted Kingfisher all checked in as expected. A little less expected were several different flights of Tricolored Blackbirds commuting over the park, several times low enough to see the milky white border on the male wing patches.

Other spring arrivals that we were able to observe and enjoy as the morning went on were Black-chinned and Rufous hummingbirds, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Chipping Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Bullock's Oriole. It was fun to see them mingling with the remaining Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and White and Golden-crowned sparrows. It turned out to be a perfect spring segue kind of morning."

Sweetwater Creek (4/16) — Ann Burris, co-leader with Tim Fitzer, reported: "Clear skies and cool temperatures greeted nine eager birders as they arrived at the Sweetwater Creek spring birding hotspot. One of the target birds, a Yellow-breasted Chat, was found early as it sang in clear view from the top of a streamside willow. The group also had good looks at Ash-throated Flycatcher, Wrentits, Black-headed Grosbeak, Black-throated Gray Warbler and an Anna's Hummingbird flying into her nest. A complete list of sightings has been posted on eBird."

Pete Hayes

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AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Sacramento Audubon every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping as at Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a percentage of the purchase price to Sacramento Audubon. You can use your current Amazon account including shopping cart, wish-list, registries, etc. Its very easy.

Just remember to go to smile.amazon.com and select Sacramento Audubon Society as your favorite charity. Then add a bookmark so you return to the site whenever you shop at Amazon.

LIVE EXCITEMENT

While many species have concluded their breeding, hatching and fledging season there is still some live action available.

Go to cams.allaboutbirds.org/live-cams/ and click on the Barn Owls. They've just fledged but are expected to roost in the vicinity which may also be on the cam.

This is a note from June 18, just at press time. **Owlets So Close to Branching:** When the Barn Owls leave the nest for the first time they may just stay on the porch just outside the entrance (branching), or attempt a few hopping flights, possibly on to the roof of the box or surrounding bars of the pavilion roof. As Barn Owl nestlings go straight from second down to adult plumage in the nest they are able to fly relatively soon after they leave the nest. First flights can occur around 50-55 days of age. Departure from the nest is extended; fledglings will return to their nest box to roost for several weeks and may roost in the vicinity of the nest for 7-8 weeks after flying. Departure from the nest occurs at night.

Also, at the **live-cams**, a quick click on the Laysan Albatross will show you the young and growing chick named Niau. He may be growing but most Albatross may not breed successfully until they are 9-10 years old! You may be lucky at this cam and spot other Hawaiian birds in the area.

For Atlantic Puffins, Razorbills and Common Terns from Seal Island, Maine go to explore.org and click on the Live Cams tab. A warning though, turn down your volume—those colonies are noisy.

Or a click on the Bella Hummingbird nest will show you two nestlings in California.

SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon



Seasonal Observations

April 1 to May 31

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

After a dry winter, we had an unusual spring, with mostly cool temperatures and a strong Delta Breeze. Aside from flycatchers, songbird migrant reports were below average, but there was good diversity of shorebirds and uncommon hummingbirds. A male **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was photographed at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) on 4/23 and a male **Red-breasted Merganser** was at Lake Camanche on 4/13. Single **Least Bitterns** were reported through 4/11 at Stone Lakes NWR, at the Barn Ponds of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 4/19, Mather Lake on 5/12, and Cache Creek near the Wild Wings County Park west of Woodland on 5/16. Presumably the same **Little Blue Heron** returned to the rookery in Natomas on 5/8, but it was only reported one day, courting a **Cattle Egret**, and didn't linger like it did last spring. Following on the numerous **Black Rail** reports at Stone Lakes last month, up to three were singing and calling along the River Walk at CRP from 5/23 into June; another was reported from Twitchell Island on 4/17.

In contrast with a slow songbird migrant season, shorebirds were particularly well represented. Lake Camanche had a good showing, with two **Snowy Plovers** on 4/13, four on 4/18, five on 4/21, plus a **Marbled Godwit** and **Baird's Sandpiper** on 4/25; the latter being quite unusual in spring. An impressive 215 **Semipalmated Plovers** were at CRP on 4/26 and an impressive 43 **Willetts** were at the Woodland WTP on 4/16. Abel Rd in Colusa County, east of Williams, had quite a list of species on 4/24, including **Snowy Plover** (cont. to 5/3), **Marbled Godwit** (continued to 5/3), a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** (regular but rare in fall, very rare in spring), and a **Baird's Sandpiper**. **Solitary Sandpiper** reports included the YBWA on 4/8, the Bufferlands on 4/21, the lone WTP on 4/25, and Mather Lake on 5/2. Four **Marbled Godwits** were at the Granite Bay Boat Launch at Folsom Lake on 4/27. Ostrom Rd southeast of Yuba City hosted two **Willetts** and four **Marbled Godwits** on 4/27 and the shorebird highlight of the season, a **Ruff** from 4/28-30.

After last winter's influx, a few **Band-tailed Pigeons** lingered until late May. A migrant **Common Poorwill** along Pumphouse Slough near Babel Slough in Yolo County

was a nice find on 4/20. **Costa's Hummingbird** males were reported at Fair Oaks on 4/2 and Rancho Cordova on 4/20, while **Calliope Hummingbirds** were reported more widely than ever before, with a few dozen reports throughout the Sacramento Area from 4/1 to the last week in May. **Lewis's Woodpeckers** were widespread into early May. The last report was from Hwy 16 near Latrobe Rd in Amador County on 5/25, but probably the same bird was found dead on the highway on 5/31. The male and female **Hairy Woodpeckers** along Lake Natoma, downstream of Young Wo Circle, continued through at least 4/19, with the female reported in early June.

Amid a generally slow spring for songbirds, empids were well represented, with widespread reports of **Hammond's Flycatchers**, and reports of the less common **Gray Flycatcher** at CRP on 4/5, Meiss Rd on 4/13, Don Nottoli Park on 4/16, the Howard Ranch on 4/19, and Mather Lake on 4/30. **Dusky Flycatchers** were reported on 4/11 at Cache Creek Wild Wings Park, 4/16 near the Gristmill access to the American River Parkway, 4/19 at the Howard Ranch and at CRP, along Putah Creek near Stevenson's

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

John Alvernaz

Tia Davis

Tom and Christine Fernando

Barbara Gillogly

Larry and Eileen Kay

Joyce Tobi

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 apprecia-
tion of wild birds through commu-
nity outreach;

Provide, encourage and support envi-
ronmental educational opportuni-
ties; and

Provide proactive leadership in the
conservation of open space in the
Sacramento region.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Your membership supports the SAS mission of conservation, environmental educa-
tion and protection of the region's natural ecosystems and diverse wildlife popula-
tions. 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, llandry46@comcast.net
11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

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

Bridge on 4/22, Mather Lake on 4/30
and 5/19, and William Land Park on
5/20. A singing **Say's Phoebe** was at the
Sacramento Regional WTP on the late
date of 4/27.

Reports of bird-rich days were few and
far between this spring, though one with
good numbers and diversity, including two
Hermit Warblers, was along Rd 126 at
the Sacramento Bypass on 5/11. Another
such morning also produced good overall
numbers and a **Red-eyed Vireo** upstream
of Stevenson's Bridge on 5/18. **Steller's
Jays**, widespread last winter, continued
through the end of April. A **Red-breasted
Nuthatch** was found at CRP on 4/19 and
a female **Varied Thrush** on the late date
of 5/23 at the Davis Wetlands was quite
a surprise. There were several reports of
Yellow-breasted Chats, with most com-
ing from CRP, including two on 4/24. A
Clay-colored Sparrow was well-described
at YBWA on 4/27 and **Brewer's Sparrow**
reports in eastern Sacramento County
continued into early May. A very vocal
Baltimore Oriole (possibly with some

Bullock's traits) was found at Westgate
Landing Regional Park west of Lodi from
5/15 through at least 5/31; a female
Summer Tanager was reported there on
5/16. **Pine Siskin** reports continued into
early May, with an unusually late 5/20
report from the Bufferlands. A pair of
Lawrence's Goldfinches at CRP on 5/11
was unusual away from their known sites
on the margins of the Valley.

We feature photos of some of the highlight
birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web
site ([sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/
recentsightings.html](http://sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html)).

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined
as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy
12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to
the east and west, plus all of Sacramento
and Yolo Counties. Many reports first
appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club
Listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird. It is
impossible to list everyone, but I want to
thank the following for their reports:

Ben Abramovitz, Dan Airola, Stuart
Angerer, Breck Breckenridge, Paul
Buchanan, Brent Campos, Ashley

Casey, Lyann Comrack, Dave and Pat
Croft, Farley Cross, Iryna Dronova, Todd
Easterla, Leo Edson, Andy Engilis, Gil
Ewing, Claire Gallagher, Maureen Geiger,
Ian Gledhill, Cory Gregory, Gary Grenfell,
Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Afton Kern,
Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham,
Jim Lomax, Calvin Lou, Bunkie and Jeff
Mangum, Don Marsh, Mark Martucci,
Sarah Mayhew, Frances Oliver, Ron Pozzi,
Jim Rowoth, Mark Sawyer, Steve Scott,
Judy Spitler, John Sterling, Jim Thomas,
Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Amy and
Daniel Welsh, Dan Williams, and Julian
Wood.

Thanks to everyone for their reports—with-
out them, this column would not be pos-
sible.

Chris Conard

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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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

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

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

September 17, 2015

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm