



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 when Jack Barclay of Santa Cruz will be here to speak about Burrowing Owls. Our Program Chair Sally Riggs has more informative programs lined up for us for the rest of the year too! John Trochet has rescheduled his Ivory-billed Woodpecker presentation for January, 2007.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Art Center in McKinley Park. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org for further information, including directions.

JUST A SHORT NOTE FROM PRESIDENT KEITH WAGNER

As Sacramento Audubon Society's representative to the Environmental Council of Sacramento ("ECOS"), I have represented the chapter regarding a variety of current, local growth and conservation issues. More recently, I have also served as the liaison to ECOS for Habitat 2020.

It is, indeed, an honor to serve as your president and to continue the Sacramento Audubon Society's work on these important issues in the coming year.

Keith Wagner

In the September issue of *The Observer* we will feature Keith's full *Message from the President*.

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

September 30 and October 1, 2006

It's time again to prepare for one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting field trips! This year's 2-day coastal and pelagic trip will take place on September 30 and October 1.

Normally protected from heavy sea swells, yet geographically situated to capture an amazing diversity of ocean-going birds, Monterey Bay and the surrounding area is an exceptional place to visit.

Led by Mark Cudney, Saturday's boat excursion will highlight the trip. We'll be on a different boat this year, identical to the one we use for the trip to the Farallon Islands. It has the capacity for 49 intrepid birders! 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 seen, 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 49 participants. Your check for \$80 per person, made out to Sacramento Audubon, will reserve your spot. This trip fills up fast, so get your reservation form and check mailed early.

Special notice to campers: A group campsite (\$4 per person per night) is available for Friday night, September 30, and Saturday night, October 1, at Veterans Memorial Campground. Motels and hotels are numerous in the Monterey area but make reservations early. Please fill out the reservation form included below.

Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip Reservation Form September 30 & October 1, 2006 • Trip price: \$80 per person

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email (for reservation confirmation) _____

Number of persons _____ Total Payment \$ _____

Please reserve _____ space(s) for Friday night September 30 and _____ space(s) for Saturday night October 1 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:
Ken Hashagen, 11375 Buckeye Hill Ct., Gold River, CA 95670

Field Trip Findings

Yolo Wildlife Area and nearby roads (6/11) – “It started out cold and windy but we still managed 52 species,” leader Maureen Geiger reported. “Best birds probably were several male Blue Grosbeaks, singing back and forth to each other; four Caspian Terns; several Common Ravens; about eight Burrowing Owls and four owlets in east Yolo; and the continuing wonder of the egret/heron rookery on Road 103 which is in full swing.”

Cosumnes River Preserve (6/10) John Trochet, assisting leader John Schick, reported: “Best birds that one can’t really expect to find in June but that would be expected at other times were an American Wigeon, a Blue-winged Teal, a Northern Shoveler, a Northern Pintail, a Peregrine Falcon, and two Greater Yellowlegs.” Others: Great-tailed Grackle, Yellow Warblers and Allen’s Hummingbird.

Goethe Park (6/7) – “Good views of a Northern Flicker were nice at this time of year, as well as Western Bluebirds, Ash-throated Flycatchers, Wild Turkeys with young, Common Mergansers and Tree and Northern Rough-winged Swallows,” leader Cathie LaZier said. “Northern Tussock Moth and Pipevine Swallowtail caterpillars were viewed in various stages of metamorphosis, and Elegant Clarkia, Purple Penstemon and St John’s Wort were blooming.”

Bobelaine Sanctuary (6/4) – Leader Carla Barbaro reported: “We had a great walk. We saw Western Bluebirds, Bullock’s Orioles, an Osprey, a pair of Swainson’s Hawks, a pair of Red-tailed Hawks near a nest, White-breasted Nuthatch, Western Kingbirds, Downy and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers and lots of Ash throated Flycatchers. We heard a Great Horned Owl and saw an Ash-throated Flycatcher in a nest box on the trail. There were Green Herons and Black-crowned Night-Herons in the slough as well as Great Egrets and Great Blue Herons.” Non-avian species: Western Pond Turtle, “a few bunnies,” and a snake about four feet long that two birders, looking skyward, barely avoided stepping on.

Crystal Basin (6/3) – Leader Frank Gray reported: “Fifteen birders enjoyed great weather and birding at this area in the mountains of north El Dorado County. Much birding was in areas burned in the 1992 Cleveland fire. Possibly the most

significant sighting was of a Black-throated Sparrow singing on an exposed perch in an area where this species has been seen in prior years. Other species seen included Calliope Hummingbird, Hermit and MacGillivray’s Warblers, Green-tailed Towhee and Common Nighthawk.”

Dragonfly Trip (5/28) – Leader Tim Manolis, Sac Audubon’s resident dragonfly authority, reported these species were found along Miner’s Ravine in Sculpture Park, Roseville: American Rubyspot, Black Spreadwing, Vivid Dancer, Emma’s Dancer, Familiar Bluet, Pacific Forktail, Western Forktail, Black-fronted Forktail, Blue-eyed Darner, Western Pondhawk, Common Whitetail, Flame Skimmer, Twelve-spotted Skimmer, Black Saddlebags. A self-described “satisfied participant” (Cathie LaZier) added this report: “Tim shared much interesting information about dragonfly behavior, breeding, and migration. Netting several individuals and examining them with a hand-lens, and observing a Twelve-spotted Skimmer ovipositing in a pond gave participants a look into the brief lives of these fascinating dragon and damselflies.”

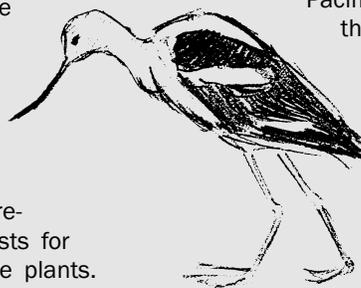
Pine Hill (5/27) – A showy, low-growing shrub that is pollinated mostly by two tiny wasp species and a Western Bluebird that burst from a nest box on a tree trunk were high points for leader Jack Hiehle’s group. Aglow with burnt-orange blossoms, the shrub, Pine Hill Flannelbush, grew next to the road on this western El Dorado County preserve famous among botanists for its rare and numerous native plants. Jack found four of the eight rarities that thrive in the reddish soil rich in iron, magnesium and chromium: Layne’s Butterweed, Red Hills Soaproot, Pine Hill Ceanothus and the flannelbush, which is federally listed as endangered. Other bird species pointed out by Sami LaRocca and Jack included Wild Turkeys, Bullock’s Oriole, Ash-throated Flycatcher and Red-shouldered Hawk.

Mather Field (5/21) – Only one Yellow-headed Blackbird was found, while Great-tailed Grackles seemed to be taking over the pond at Mather Regional Park, Harlin Perryman, subbing for leader Wayne Blunk, reported. However, a Burrowing Owl was found near the end of the run-

way of the former Air Force base. Other sightings included Bullock’s Oriole and Northern Harrier.

Yolo Wildlife Area (5/20) – Dave Feliz, manager of this State Department of Fish and Game area, and Sacramento Audubon’s Maureen Geiger led 25 people on a rewarding visit to the normally closed Tule Ranch in the south section. The recently-flooded grasslands, which are leased by the DFG for cattle grazing, featured large numbers of Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets in nesting mode. The birders paused briefly to inspect a nest discovered by Tom Callahan on the ground with four tan, speckled eggs, apparently those of a nearby stilt. In a panoply of wildflowers, the DFG’s Mary Schiedt pointed out Goldfields, Tidy Tips, Downingia and Navaretia, among others. En route back to the refuge driving route, at least one car’s occupants observed a Burrowing Owl perched on a fence. On the driving route, two or three stilts and avocets were on nests on the shoulder of the road. But the highlight was the pair of nesting Snowy Plovers that had been reported a week or so previously. They were observed interacting with stilts and avocets about 30 feet from the road. They were believed to be from the threatened

Pacific Coast population of the species. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service listed them in 1993 because of loss of nesting habitat, human disturbance, predation and encroachment of European beach grass on nesting grounds. Chris Conard of Sac Audubon says they



Kirsten Munson

are recorded minimally just about every year in Sacramento and Yolo counties.

Sun City in Lincoln (5/20) – Leader Dave Pearson reported: “We had a good trip. There were three Bitterns at the pond behind Angler’s Cove. Also, a Green Heron as well as looks at nesting Great-tailed Grackles, a nesting Pied-billed Grebe, and many, many ducklings. Our total count was 41 species. Favorite mammal was two beavers at two locations.”

Trip Findings

continued on page 8

Field Trips

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, Naturestoc@aol.com, for trips through July 30. For trips from August 2 through September 3 call the scheduler Chris Conard, 362-5942, chris.conard@comcast.net. For trips from September 4 on, please call the scheduler Mark Cudney, 987-2422, mcudney@aol.com.

Plan to pool cars and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on non-local 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.



Stephen D'Amato

Saturday, July 1, 7am
Ice House Road and Crystal Basin Area
Co-Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 961-5871
spskua@aol.com

Phyllis Wilburn, (530) 642-9942

This area is about 70 miles east of Sacramento and is good for Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Mountain Bluebird, flycatchers and warblers. Spring wildflowers are a possibility. Several stops will be made along Ice House Road and side roads for short walks. Bring lunch, liquids, and footwear suitable for hiking and wet meadows. Meet Tim at the north end of the Raley's shopping center parking lot on El Dorado Hills Blvd. just off Highway 50.

Sunday, July 2, 7:30am
Goethe Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right, (just past the kiosk), for a morning walk. White-tailed Kites, Red-shouldered Hawks, Ash-throated Flycatchers and Western Bluebirds should be easily found, along with various wrens, hummingbirds, towhees and woodpeckers. Some wildflowers should still be blooming. We'll probably finish about 10:30am, or when it gets too hot. This is a very good trip for beginners.

Wednesday, July 5
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 8, 7am
Wright's Lake
Co-Leaders: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777
Phyllis Wilburn, (530) 642-9942

This high mountain lake near the edge of the Desolation Wilderness offers a good sample of high Sierra flora and fauna. Jack will concentrate on the plants and Phyllis will try to locate some of the hard to find bird species. This trip may need to be rescheduled depending on how much snow is still present in the Wright's Lake area the week prior to July 8th, so please call Jack or Phyllis in advance for further details (i.e. meeting time, place and possible rescheduling).

Saturday, July 8, 6am
Martis Valley and vicinity
Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942
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 off the Hwy 80 Horseshoe Bar Rd exit in Loomis. Bring water and lunch and be prepared for several short to moderate walks.

Saturday, July 8
Cosumnes River Preserve
River Walk Bird Count
Leader: John Schick
Cosumnes River Preserve
(916) 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 web site a few days prior to confirm the meeting time and location.

Sunday, July 9, 7:30am
Farrallon Island Boat Trip

At press time Ken Hashagen reported this trip was fully booked.

You may call Ken (916) 316-8596 to inquire about any cancelations.
khashagen@mindspring.com

Saturday, July 15
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 1000ft-plus elevation gain on this 4 1/2 – 5 mile round trip hike. This trip may need to be rescheduled depending on how much snow is still present in the area the week prior to July 15th. So please call Jack in advance for further details (i.e. meeting time, place and possible rescheduling). Bring lunch, water, and clothes appropriate for changeable weather.

Saturday, July 15
Sunrise Tall Forest
Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: John Trochet
(916) 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 web site (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 16, 7am
Yolo Wildlife Area
Leader: Tim Fitzer, 961-5871
spskua@aol.com

Join Tim 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.

Wednesday, 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 22, 6:30am
Loney Meadow
Leader: Scott Hoppe, 652-5409
shoppe01@earthlink.net

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 ft elevation. The area can have some excellent birding. Scott has seen 8 species of woodpecker there (including Pileated, Williamson's Sapsucker and Black-backed); also Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher, 7 species of warbler and last year's trip produced 2 Bald Eagles. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis at 6:30am. The meadow is about an hour and a half's drive from there. Bring water and lunch or a snack.

Sunday, July 23 7:30am
Mather Field Park
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
wayne.blunk@worldnet.att.net

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 29
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 30, 5:30pm
Yolo Wildlife Area Evening Trip
Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
mkgeiger@comcast.net
Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Join Maureen and Cathie for this popular sunset tour of the wildlife area and witness the spectacle of White-faced 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.

Wednesday, August 2
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 5, 6:15am
Alpine County
Leader: Bill Hart
For details call 362-5942
chris.conard@comcast.net

Bill lives in Markleeville and knows this area well. Expect to see resident montane species, migrating songbirds, humming-

birds, 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.

Saturday, August 12, Before Sunrise
River Walk Trail
Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: John Schick
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.

Sunday, August 13, 7am
Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley
Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942
chris.conard@comcast.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. Turn left, and the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left.

Wednesday, August 16, 7:30am
Yolo Wildlife Area
Leader: Dan Tankersley, 359-2829
dtankers@winfirst.com

Join Dan on the second of four quarterly trips to observe how the avifauna and flora change with the seasons. Bring a picnic breakfast/snack and drink to start this half day trip. Dan will lead both a driving tour and short walks through this abundant wetland. Birds to be found include early fall shorebirds and waterfowl, various species of marsh birds, Swainson's Hawks and other raptors. From Sacramento take I-80 across the Yolo Causeway; take the first exit at the west end of the Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign; circle under the freeway, then

make a left up onto the levee and down into the wildlife area. Parking Lot A, our meeting location, is right along the causeway where the road makes a sharp right turn. FRS radios will be helpful.

Wednesday, August 16

Evening Beaver Walk

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

See August 2 trip for details.

Friday, August 18 to

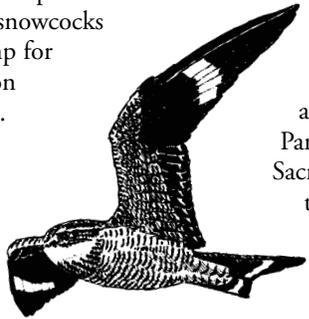
Monday, August 21

Ruby Mountains, Nevada

Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942

chris.conard@comcast.net

The Ruby Mountains near Elko Nevada are one of the most scenic areas of the western U.S. They also hold interesting wildlife, including Himalayan Snowcocks, Black Rosy-Finches, mountain goats, pikas, and long-tailed weasels. On Sunday morning, we will make an easy 2-mile pre-dawn hike to Island Lake, followed by a steep sunrise climb for a chance to see the snowcocks and rosy-finches. We will camp for two nights in Lamoille Canyon and one night at Ruby Marsh. Campsites have been reserved and we are limited to 4-5 vehicles; expect to share camping and gas costs. The trip is limited to 15 participants, so please contact Chris to reserve a spot and to discuss details.



Stephen D'Amato

Saturday, August 19,

Before Sunrise

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 3-4 miles of moderate hiking.

Sunday, August 20, 7am

Bobelaine Sanctuary Walk

Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146

b2gilmore71@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.

Sunday, August 20

Habitat Improvement Work Day

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Help Jack restore native vegetation along the American River Parkway. Tasks vary from month to month so call Jack for details and meeting time, usually early morning.

Saturday, August 26, 7:30am

Bodega Bay

Leader: Andi Salmi, 691-7216

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 27

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.

Wednesday, August 30

Evening Beaver Walk

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

See August 2 trip for details.

Saturday, September 2, 6:30am

Point Reyes

Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942

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 3, 7am - 11am

Migration at the SRCSD Bufferlands

Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942

chris.conard@comcast.net

This is 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); this is the first exit south of Florin Rd. 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.

Sunday, September 3, 6pm

Yolo Wildlife Area, evening

Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804

mkgeiger@comcast.net

Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

empid@earthlink.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 at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left onto the levee, and head into the wildlife area. The trip will begin at the first parking lot on your left at the beginning of the auto tour.

Tuesday, September 5

Evening Beaver Walk

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

See August 2 trip for details.

Saturday, September 9

River Walk Bird Count

Cosumnes River Preserve

Recorded Information: 684-2816

Meet at the Visitor Center on Franklin Blvd. for this monthly birding census trip. It's a great birding area, always full of surprises, and joining the group trip is a good way to find out what's happening at the preserve. You must check the recorded information a day or two before to get the

exact meeting time and any other updated details.

Sunday, September 10, 5pm
Yolo Basin Wildlife Area, evening
Leaders: Mark Martucci, 722-6098
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com
Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Join Mark and Cathie to witness the spectacle of large flocks of White-faced Ibis coming in to roost. There should be several species of wading birds; this is a great time of year for shorebirds. As the sun goes down, foraging owls may be observed. From Sacramento, take I-80 west and take the first exit at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign; go under the freeway and make a left up onto the levee; then down into the wildlife area. The trip will begin at the first parking lot on your left at the beginning of the auto tour.

Saturday, September 16
Tall Forest Bird Count
Cosumnes River Preserve
Recorded Information: 684-2816

The Tall Forest is perhaps the best remaining example of riparian forest remaining in the Central Valley and is not generally open to the public. In this jungle like habitat, excellent rarities and large numbers of migrants have been found, as well as the resident birds. Call the preserve number a couple of days before the trip for the exact meeting time and place. Arrive a little early, as this trip leaves the meeting place promptly.

Sunday, September 17
Habitat Improvement Work Day
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Help Jack restore native vegetation along the American River Parkway. Tasks vary from month to month so call Jack for details and meeting time, usually early morning.

Tuesday, September 26
Evening Beaver Walk
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

See August 2 trip for details. (This is Jack's last Beaver Walk of the season. If you haven't made the trip yet, call him now.)

Society News

BOOK SALE PROCEEDS

The sale of used books and other items at the May general meeting raised \$353. This money will be donated to the Birder's Exchange, to provide equipment and funds to scientists, conservationists and educators in Latin America and the Caribbean. Many thanks to John Gin who priced items and handled the sales. Donations of a scope from Tim Fitzer and binoculars from William Yeates and Maureen Geiger were also received and will be sent to the program.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Sacramento Audubon participated with a table display manned by volunteers at both the Sacramento City Zoo celebration of International Migratory Bird Day, and at the Planning and Conservation League Symposium. Thanks to Marlene Ishihara, Lea Landry, Cathie LaZier and Keith Wagner for their help. We hope to expand Sacramento Audubon's participation in appropriate venues. We have an excellent table display, with many informational brochures. If you know of an event or occasion where you feel Sacramento Audubon should be represented, or if you are interested in volunteering to work at a function, please call or email either Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@comcast.net, or Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, empid@earthlink.net.

JAN CLARK HONORED WITH AN AWARD

For a Job Well Done - and Continuing!

Jan Clark doesn't like all the fuss of public acclaim, so the recent award to her, on the occasion of her semi-retirement from Board duties and the hassles of being Membership Chair, was hand delivered by your outgoing President during lunch at a local restaurant.

Jan and husband Bill, have put in countless hours supporting several aspects of the Society's needs over the past couple of decades, These include fund raising, meetings setup, publishing the newsletter and website, and caring for the Bobelaine Sanctuary, which they still do admirably!

The Award and a gift certificate to a local bookstore was well earned. Thank you Jan!

Peter Watkins..

YOLO AUDUBON SOCIETY AVIAN INFLUENZA SYMPOSIUM

The Yolo Audubon Society's Avian Influenza Symposium was held April 15 in Davis and attended by approximately 200 people, representing birders, hunters, public agencies, educational institutions, the poultry and biomedical industries, conservation organizations, and community interest groups. Several members from SAS attended.

Walter Boyce, DVM, Ph.D., professor, UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and executive director of the Wildlife Health Center reported, "Our early warning has occurred, and the first entry will probably happen this year. The risk of human infection is low, but not zero. Urban and suburban ponds where waterfowl congregate can pose potential exposure risks to people and to pets. Birds in backyards and at feeders pose a very slight risk from their droppings. There is a low risk of virus transmission from wild birds to humans. Keep bird feeders clean. Wash your hands using soap and warm water. Keep cats inside so they won't eat birds."

Bob McLandress, Ph.D., president, California Waterfowl Association commented, "Hunters and bird-watchers are integral to the effort to contain and control H5N1. Both groups are motivated to flood and manage wetlands, have detailed, on-the-ground knowledge about wetland conditions, and have a network for finding dead birds."

All agreed and made a point of saying their best advice was to **keep informed** and not rely on word of mouth or rumor for influenza news and prevention. The National Audubon site www.audubon.org has a full statement on the avian flu with links to statements by the Center For Disease Control, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Birdlife International and Wetlands International. These links can be found at the bottom of the avian flu page.

BLACK RAIL STUDY

In 2005, the SAS donated \$5,000 to researchers at UC Berkeley to study black rails in the Sierra foothills, listed as threatened in California due mainly to habitat loss and degradation. Researchers are interested in knowing more about distribution and dynamics of the Black Rail, particularly with regard to habitat relationships in the small wetland areas the rails frequent, as this habitat is in jeopardy in many areas. With such information, conservation planning will be greatly enhanced.

In a recent Progress Report covering June 1 - August 31, 2002-2005, major conclusions indicate:

Rails occurred at over 90 wetland sites in Butte, Yuba and Nevada counties in 2005.

More than half of the sites have a human-granted water source (that is, not naturally occurring), and many are on private land.

Size and proximity to other wetlands are positively associated with occupancy.

Habitat quality may be as critical as wetland area in maintaining the population. Occupancy is positively associated with those fed by springs and/or irrigation ditch leaks but negatively associated with those fed by ponds and creeks.

Rails may go locally extinct but repopulate the same site later, thus the empty patch cannot necessarily be considered unsuitable for future rail habitat.

SAS will continue to receive and report progress on this important study. For copies of this report, contact Maureen Geiger at mkgeiger@comcast.net.

AUDUBON AT HOME

Peter Watkins, Keith Wagner, and Cathie LaZier recently attended a meeting sponsored by Audubon California at Cosumnes River Preserve. It's focus was "Audubon at Home" discussing ideas of motivating community members to improve habitat in their yards and parks for birds, butterflies and other wildlife. In future issues of the Observer we'll be passing along some of these ideas. They include choosing flowers, bushes and trees preferred by birds for food and nesting. Many of these choices include native plants using less water.

For some ideas for your yard go to www.audubon.org/bird/at_home/index.html

Bobelaine Sanctuary

BOBELAINE BIRDATHON RESULTS

As of this time, we have received less than half of the funds required to keep the sanctuary open and safe. We underestimated the increased fuel costs as well as the amount of fuel required to clean up after this springs unprecedented four and a half months of flooding. With fuel prices not expected to subside we estimate it will take about \$3000+ to maintain the sanctuary for a twelve month period. From what I have been told, only one person has used the Birdathon as a means to raise funds for Bobelaine. A few have directly donated monies to Bobelaine and we appreciate every dollar we get. Thank you to those who have contributed toward this worthy cause.

In 1975, when Bobelaine was given to the National Audubon Society (NAS), the Sacramento Audubon Society asked NAS for the maintenance and management responsibility of the sanctuary and has a signed agreement with them. I am a bit perplexed as to why most of the five hundred + members of this birding organization don't seem to want to support a wonderful birding location such as Bobelaine. We all profess to be conservation minded people. We have joined a birding organization to help in whatever way we can to insure the remaining bird habitat is preserved and protected and/or to enjoy the varied birding trips. I have explained through various articles in this newsletter what Bobelaine is and why we need the support. I would ask that you please reconsider your reasons for not participating and evaluate what your membership in this organization means to you.

Bill Clark, Bobelaine Management

BOBELAINE HAPPENINGS

We have finally opened all but one trail at Bobelaine after an unprecedented four and a half months of flooding. Everything in the sanctuary is showing healthy growth after the long soaking it has had. The understory has responded to the reduced amount of shade over the past fourteen or so years since the fire and has dramatically increased in size. Wildlife is prevalent everywhere: deer, coyote, hawks, quail, a bobcat and birds of all varieties. Our picnic area adjacent to the parking lot has been trimmed; new handouts, with maps, have been provided in our map box for your information and trail guidance. Do you need a break? Do you want to get away for a while and enjoy a couple of peaceful hours watching wildlife? Come stroll along mowed grass trails in a lush riparian forest and visit the sanctuary and enjoy this preserved bit of "habitat".

Bill Clark, Bobelaine Management

THANK YOU FOR THE GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE BOBELAINE SANCTUARY:

Much thanks to June Persson for her success in obtaining donations for the Bobelaine Birdathon. To date she has raised over \$700.

William Bianco, Morris Jerome, Peter Watkins, Gary Freigien, Karen Griffin, M.W. Hayward, Mary W. Wilkinson, Kevin M. McRae, Geraldine Evans, Cary S. Hart, Marian V. Mangum, and Paul Beach all contributed to the Bobelaine Sanctuary.

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. There is no Board Meeting in July. The next meeting will be August 29 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

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.

Trip Findings

continued from page 2

Vic Fazio Wetlands/Yolo Wildlife Area (5/18) – “The top find of the day was made by Valerie Phillips who spotted our target birds, a pair of Western Snowy Plovers,” leader Dan Tankersley reported. “They had been reported to be at the refuge just four days prior to this outing.” The six birders combined several short walks with the auto tour loop, finding a good number of marsh and waterbird species, including many Marsh Wrens, White-faced Ibises, Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets in alternate plumage. A pair of alternate plumage Long-billed Dowitchers, and 40+ American White Pelicans were also enjoyed by the group.

Purple Martins in Old Sacramento (5/17) As always, this annual trip went well, with leader Maureen Geiger’s 13-member group enjoying very close looks at the martins in front of the Railroad Museum. “I was also able to show them the bats which hang out (literally!) in the cracks under the overpass just north of the Museum,” Maureen said.

Paradise Beach (5/16) – Better birds were Black-chinned and Anna’s Hummingbirds, Black-crowned Night-Herons, Green Heron, Western Bluebirds and California Quail, leader Jack Hiehle reported. The number of Night-Herons usually seen was drastically reduced following the removal, for sanitation reasons, of half a dozen trees that were being used as a rookery at Caleb Greenwood Elementary School on Carlson Drive.

Goethe Park (5/14) – “A large, fuzzy, immature Great Horned Owl sitting near a parent bird was a treat for the many beginning birders on this trip,” Cathie LaZier reported. “We also saw two immature Red-shouldered Hawks, still in the nest. Tree Swallows and House Wrens were singing and we spotted Western Bluebirds and Ash-throated Flycatchers.”

Mines Road/Del Puerto Canyon (5/13) Early on during this trip to Alameda, Contra Costa and Stanislaus counties the group had excellent looks at a pair of Rufous-crowned Sparrows, leader Gary Fregien reported.

They were followed by these highlights: Western and Clark’s Grebes, two Green Herons, five Wood Ducks, an immature Golden Eagle, nesting Lewis’s Woodpecker, late season Say’s Phoebes, five swallow species, including Violet Green, White-throated Swift, four species of Wren, including Rock and Canyon, three California Thrashers at the same time,

Western Bluebird, Phainopepla, Western Tanager, Lazuli Bunting, and Lawrence’s Goldfinch. On the return leg of the trip, but still in the count area, part of the group observed about 50 Swainson’s Hawks feeding in a fresh-cut field on I-5 just south of the I-5/I-205 junction. “For those who witnessed it, this was the highlight of the trip,” Gary said. Total species: 81.

Mono Lake (5/10-5/11) – Pinyon Jays, Mountain Bluebirds, Cassin’s Finches and Sage Thrashers were among the birds seen on the Mono Lake trip, in addition to the Greater-Sage Grouse displaying on the Bodie lek. Dan Tankersley, co-leader with Cathie, found a nesting Say’s Phoebe at the Mono Lake Visitor Center.

(For a description of the Greater Sage Grouse’s flamboyant courtship display, see the “Sage Grouse” column on page 9 in this issue. – PH)

Cronan Ranch, Coloma Area (5/7) “We saw and heard many birds,” leader Dan Brown reported, “including Western Kingbird, Bullock’s Oriole, Hutton’s Vireo, Black-headed Grosbeak, Lark Sparrow, Western Wood Pewee and Wrentit. Our best two species were Yellow-breasted Chat and a very unusual find, a Black-throated Sparrow seen by half of our group through the scope before we lost it in the grass.” Cronan Ranch is located about six miles north of Coloma on Highway 49 on Pedro Hill Road.

Sweetwater Creek (5/6) – Leader Richard Barbieri’s group saw an area favorite, a Yellow-breasted Chat and heard its distinctive courtship medley of whistles and gurgles. Also: Wilson’s Warbler, Western Wood Pewee, Black Grosbeak, Ash-throated Flycatcher and Western Tanager.

Phoenix Field (5/2) – Western Kingbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, White-breasted Nuthatch, Great Egret, Canada Goose and Black Phoebe were reported by leader Jack Hiehle.

Spenceville Wildlife Area (4/30) A Wilson’s Snipe performing its high “winnowing” flight display was a trip standout, leader Richard Barbieri reported. Others included Wilson’s Warbler, Bullock’s Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, Rough-winged Swallows, Rock Wrens, Western Grebes, Warbling Vireos, Lark Sparrows and Ash-throated Flycatchers. Yellow-breasted Chats were heard. “Seeing Cliff

Swallows fluttering with their wings held back as they collected mud next to the road for nests was a treat,” Richard said.

Arbuckle, Sandcreek Rd. (4/29) “Highlights were Hutton’s and Cassin’s Vireos, California Thrasher and great views of Sage Sparrows.” said Dan Brown, co-leader with Tim Fitzer. “We heard Black-chinned Sparrow and Mountain Quail. On the trip back down to Arbuckle, we saw a Eurasian Collared Dove.”

Bufferlands (4/29) – Leader Chris Conard reported several notables on the Spring Migration tour of this 2,650-acre Sacramento County Regional Sanitation wetlands area, including Sanderling, Blue-winged Teal, Hammond’s Flycatcher and Hooded Oriole. “The Sanderling was a nice find,” Chris said, “with typically only one or two records each season between Sacramento and Yolo counties.” Others included Hermit Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, a very cooperative singing male Lazuli Bunting, and several Great-tailed Grackles. Migrants were well-spaced, but not numerous other than Wilson’s Warblers, which seemed to be everywhere.

Beeks Bight, Folsom Lake (4/23)

Leader Tim Fitzer’s group found singing Phainopeplas, Wrentits, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, California Thrashers, and Black-chinned and Anna’s Hummingbirds. Ordinarily, this trip would have yielded as many as five or six hummers, including Calliope, Rufous-tailed

and Costa’s, but the late spring this year delayed blooms of Buckeye trees that attract them, Tim said.

William Pond Park (4/18) – Cathie LaZier, subbing for Jack Hiehle who was busy receiving a well-deserved award from the Sacramento County Supervisors, reported that this morning walk in the William Pond area of the American River Parkway provided good looks at Bullock’s Orioles and Western Kingbirds, Downy Woodpeckers, a Black-throated Gray Warbler and a pair of Bushtits at an active nest. Lupines and Poppies also provided a good show.

Snipes Pershing Ravine (4/16) – Rained out.

Cosumnes River Preserve (April/May) Leader John Schick reported some migrants in April and May surveys – orioles, kingbirds, Ash-throated Flycatchers, and Black-headed Grosbeaks.



Kirsten Munson

Pete Hayes

Seasonal Observations

April 1 to May 31

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

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The wet weather from March continued well into April, and many areas were flooded into mid-May. The spring migration appeared to linger later than usual, and many winter residents were recorded late in the season. Shorebird habitat at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) and Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) was flooded past the heart of the migration, though there were still a few good shorebird finds.

For most observers, spring migration means migrant songbirds. In addition to reports of common Western species, there were a few unexpected highlights. At CRP, a **Plumbeous Vireo** was reported on 5/18, and, on 5/28, a singing male **Blue-winged Warbler** was found in the Tall Forest. A singing male **Chestnut-sided Warbler** was found at the Sacramento Bypass along Yolo County Rd 126 on 5/31. There were also a few continuing rarities: the **Ovenbird**, first found last December, continued through at least 4/9 where Mace Blvd crosses Putah Creek, and the **Evening Grosbeak**, first found on 3/14, continued through at least 4/2 in the neighborhood adjacent to Slide Hill Park in Davis.

The limited available shorebird habitat did produce a few very good finds. A **Pacific Golden-Plover** was reported from CRP on 4/25, and a **Golden-Plover** was found on 4/18 at the Valensin portion of the preserve, but the species was not determined. A single **Marbled Godwit** was at the latter location along with a good number of common species; two **Marble Godwits** were reported in Yolo County on 4/29 from Rd 155, and one was seen on 5/13 from Kentucky Rd in

Woodland. There were a surprising eight reports of **Solitary Sandpipers** in the area, with six at or near CRP. A **Sanderling** was found at the Sacramento Reg. WTP on 4/29. And finally, a pair of **Snowy Plovers** was found at YWA on 5/14, and stayed to nest.

Other highlights from the period include an adult **Little Blue Heron** seen in both Yuba and Sutter Counties near Olivehurst on 5/18, an adult **Northern Goshawk** reported over a Folsom residence on 5/13, a **Red-naped Sapsucker** from the same location on 4/25, a **Black Swift** over Lagoon Valley

near Vacaville on 5/22, a male **Costa's Hummingbird** from the Solano side of the "Ovenbird Bridge" on 5/6, and a **Black-throated Sparrow** at the Cronin Ranch near Coloma on 5/7. Interesting breeding and potential breeding species include a pair of **Phainopeplas** at Lower Sunrise along the American River Parkway on 5/1, a female **Yellow Warbler** with nesting material followed by a male on 5/31 at CRP, and confirmed breeding of **Savannah Sparrows** from YWA in addition to singing birds into June at Stone Lakes NWR. An apparent **Pileated Woodpecker** nest was found at the Lake Solano campground on 4/30 and observed through at least 5/6.

Lingering winter species include a single **Sandhill Crane** from CRP on 5/5 and continuing into June, a **Golden-crowned Sparrow** from the Sac. Reg. Bufferlands on 5/16, a **White-crowned Sparrow** from the Putah Creek Sinks on 5/24, and a **Purple Finch** from CRP on 5/9. A **Say's Phoebe** on 4/11 from YWA was quite late. Finally, **Eurasian-collared Doves** continue their colonization of our area, with several reports from Sacramento and the surrounding counties.

Thanks to all for their reports; the majority first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit www.cvbirds.org and click "Listserv" for details.

Chris Conard

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