



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. Many thanks to our wonderful Program Chair Kari Bauer for all the wonderful programs she's arranged. Beginning in September Sally Riggs will be our new Program chair. Have a wonderful summer.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org for further information.



Sacramento Audubon would like to thank Viola E. Lampi Johnson and Mark and Marcia Hutchins for donations in the memory of Irene Henderickson. We would also like to thank the Richard Toulson & Hank Toulson families for their donation in memory of Mary Toulson.

Donations have also been received from Milton Jordan, Barbara, Maureen and Jackie Bennett, and from Alliance Performance Systems in memory of Emelia Gretchen Graham. Her daughter tells us that she joined the Audubon Society in 1929 as a high school freshman, and was a member for 75 years until her death this year.

Donations such as these make it possible to continue the work of the Society.



Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

October 2 and 3, 2004

It's time again to prepare for one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting adventures! This year's two-day trip will take place Saturday and Sunday, October 2 and 3, 2004.

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

On Saturday, 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 Saturday's itinerary and lead the group. Led by Mark Cudney, Sunday's boat excursion on the 71' fishing cruiser *Magnum Force* will highlight the weekend. This is the same comfortable boat as in the past several years. Monterey Bay is perhaps one of the most accessible and productive areas to learn about and enjoy pelagic avifauna and marine mammals. Several species of shearwaters are usually present, not to mention the possibility of close-ups of marine mammals.

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

Special notice to campers: A group campsite (\$4.00 per person per night) is available for Friday night, October 1, and Saturday night, October 2, at Veterans Memorial Campground. Motels and hotels are numerous in the Monterey area but make reservations early. Please fill out the reservations form included below.

Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip Reservation Form

October 2 and 3, 2004 • Trip price: \$75 per person

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Number of persons _____ Total Payment \$ _____

Please reserve me _____ space(s) for Friday night October 1 and _____ space(s) for Saturday night October 2 at Veterans Memorial Park Campground. \$4.00 per night per person in group site. NOTE: You will pay the camping fee separately when you arrive. For bookkeeping reasons please do not include camping fees in your check for the trip.

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

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

Field Trip Findings

Nelson Slough (6/13)–Great views of Lazuli Bunting and Bullock’s Oriole featured this walk on a levee and Feather River floodplain near Bobelaine. Leader Richard Barbieri also reported Blue Grosbeak, a family of five House Wrens, a soaring Swainson’s Hawk, Western Bluebird, Tree Swallow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, and American White Pelican.

Cosumnes River Preserve (6/13)–Six birders who took to the water in canoes and kayaks witnessed a squabble between crows and a young Swainson’s Hawk, and had close-up views of Double-crested Cormorants and Great Blue Herons. The lush, multi-storied riparian canopy and cover limited sightings, but leader Gary Fregien said towhees, wren-tits, nuthatches, titmice and pheasants were heard in the undergrowth.

Yolo Basin (6/12)–Although avian activity was down markedly from last year’s trip at the same time (46 versus 62 species), leader Maureen Geiger said the group enjoyed great looks at several Blue Grosbeaks at Fazio Wildlife Area (“Such a gorgeous bird!”) and a River Otter noisily crunching a crawdad in one of the canals. As always, the heron/egret rookery on Road 103 was alive with breeding-plumaged adults and chicks. Nearby fields that were being plowed attracted a good number of Swainson’s Hawks, Northern Harriers and Turkey Vultures.

Rice Fields, near Airport (6/6)–Osprey and eight Great-tailed Grackles were found, firsts for leader Carl Burke who has birded this North Natomas area since 1980. Other sightings: Black Tern, Swainson’s Hawk, Sora, Tricolored Blackbird and Loggerhead Shrike. Late departing species seen were Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, American Wigeon, Dark-eyed Junco and Brown Creeper. Birders had good comparison views of Bi-colored and Red-winged Blackbirds, and close-up looks at American Bittern, Common Yellowthroat and Tree Swallow.

Crystal Basin (6/5)–A good day: Leader Frank Gray’s group tallied Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Calliope Hummingbird, MacGillivray’s Warbler, Lazuli Buntings, and Green-tailed Towhees, among others. Black-chinned Sparrows were heard at Cleveland Corral.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center (6/2)–An American Crow, Cooper’s Hawk and a pair of Swainson’s Hawks harassed a Red-tailed Hawk while a White-tailed Kite soared above. Leader Jack Hiehle said his group also saw five American White Pelicans (uncommon here), a covey of

young California Quail flying, Spotted Sandpiper, and Ash-throated Flycatcher.

Bannister Park (5/29)–Birds were fairly common - House Wrens, egrets, a Great Blue Heron standing on its tree-top nest. But leader Barbara Mohr reported what was a new mammal here for most—two goats. Said Barbara: “They were walking behind a couple, untethered and very well-behaved. We were, to say the least, rather surprised.”

Mather Lake (5/23)–Yellow-headed Blackbirds were nesting as usual, but in fewer numbers as breeding Great-tailed Grackles have been moving in, leader Wayne Blunk reported. A half dozen Western Wood-Pewees were counted; Wayne hadn’t seen them in his five years of birding here. Others: Cooper’s Hawk, California Quail, Green Heron, a Pied-billed Grebe on its floating nest of reeds, Bewick’s and House Wrens, Western Bluebird, Warbling Vireo, Song Sparrow, and Double-crested Cormorant.

Sun City, Lincoln (5/22)–A family of four Bewick’s Wrens posed in a single binocular view for leader Dave Pearson’s group, and a scolding Marsh Wren lingered in plain view. Others: American Bittern on the wing, many Cinnamon Teals, grackles, Common Moorhens, Black-necked Stilts, and Wood Ducks. Also, a beaver and a muskrat.

Sailor Bar (5/19)–Bullock’s and Hooded Orioles topped leader Jack Hiehle’s list at this American River site: Others: Western Kingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Green Heron and Ring-necked Pheasant.

Purple Martins in Old Sacramento (5/19)–“Ten of us had nice, close, long looks at Purple Martins going in and out of nest holes, preening, flying and calling,” leader Maureen Geiger reported. “We also saw White-throated Swifts, also nesting in the weep holes under the bridges, as well as Cliff Swallows, a Kestrel and American White Pelicans soaring in the distance.”

Beeks Bight, Folsom Lake (5/16)–Highlights included Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Lazuli Buntings, California Thrashers, Rock Wrens and Orange-crowned Warblers, leader Tim Fitzer reported.

Sweetwater Creek (5/9)–Leader Richard Barbieri’s group had a fleeting view of a Yellow-breasted Chat and great looks at a pair of Hutton’s Vireos just eight

feet away. Also: Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Tanager, Western Bluebird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Wren-tit and Pacific Slope Flycatcher. (Richard said the group encountered a couple that reported seeing a mountain lion crossing the road near the entrance to Sweetwater Creek trail.)

Rayhouse Road, Yolo County (5/8)–En route to this West Yolo County site, birders observed about 1,100 Black-crowned Night-Herons, Cattle Egrets, Great Blue Herons, Ferruginous Hawks and Red-tailed Hawks enjoying a banquet of rodents in flooded alfalfa fields next to Highway 16 between Madison and Esparto. “The flooding following mowing had flushed rodents out of their holes and they were swimming for their lives,” Tim Fitzer said. “But the birds were picking them off like hors d’oeuvres.” At Rayhouse Road, sightings included Rufous-crowned and Sage sparrows, Western Tanager, Warbling Vireos, and Violet-green, and Northern Rough-winged swallows, Lazuli Bunting and California Thrasher.

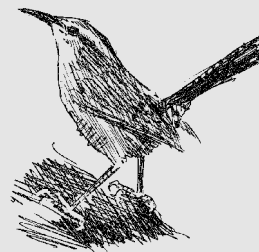
Paradise Beach (5/5)–This American River site yielded Lazuli Buntings, Bullock’s Orioles, Wood Ducks, and Black-crowned Night-Herons, leader Jack Hiehle reported. Jack also noted that nesting trees in a nearby rookery at Caleb Greenwood school had been removed, and trees on nearby Callister Avenue had been heavily pruned.

Spenceville Wildlife Area (5/2)–At Camp Far West Lake, birders spotted Rock Wrens with young, Osprey, Western Grebe, and Cliff Swallows, leader Richard Barbieri said. At Spenceville, they flushed a pair of Yellow-breasted Chats, and also saw Bullock’s Oriole, Green Heron, and Black Phoebe with young.

Mono Lake/Sage Grouse Weekend (5/1 & 5/2)–Ninety-five species were recorded, including 90 Sage Grouse on the Bodie lek, leader Joe Ceriani reported. Other good sightings included Pinyon Jays, nesting Black-backed Woodpecker, four Pronghorn Antelope and a coyote in front of its den.

Phoenix Field (4/28)–Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Bluebird and Canada Geese were present, leader Jack Hiehle said.

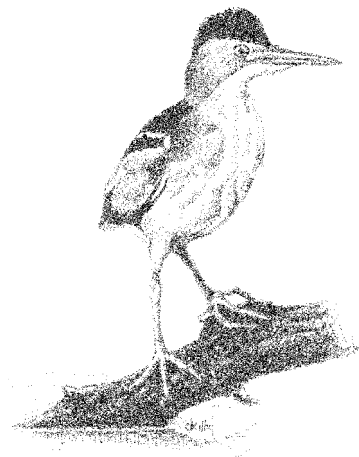
Bufferlands Big Day (4/24)–Leader Chris Conard’s goal was to find 100 or more



Kirsten Munson

Continued on page 7

Field Trips



Daniel Kilby

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, for trips through August 1. Call the scheduler Chris Conard, 362-5942, for trips August 2 through September 5. For trips after September 5 call the scheduler Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, or e-mail empid@sbcglobal.net.

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

Saturday, July 10, 9am Mt Judah & Roller Pass Sierran Wildflowers and Birds Leader: Jack Hiehle 967-0777

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

Saturday, July 10 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 website a few days prior to confirm the meeting time and location.

Sunday, July 11 Farrallon Islands Boat Trip Check the front page of last month's Observer for details. Call Jeff Mangum 988-2802 for current space availability.

Wednesday, July 14th, 9:30am Dragonfly Trip on the American River Leader: Tim Manolis 485-9009 ylightfoot@aol.com

During the warmer sunnier hours when birds are quiet, dragon and damselflies get active. Tim, our resident expert, (and author of a field guide to California's dragon and damselflies), will be looking for colorful skimmers, meadowhawks, darners and bluets along the river. For the more experienced watcher, he'll search for the elusive Olive Clubtail. Bring binoculars, water and sun protection; it's wise to wear shoes that can get wet. Trip will end by noon. Meet Tim at the river access at Howe and La Riviera, just north of Highway 50. There is a park entrance fee of \$4 per car; or you can park along La Riviera and walk in. Attention: Tim would like a call from all interested participants prior to the trip.

Saturday, July 17, 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 website a few days prior to confirm the meeting time and location—in the past, the trip has been canceled due to floods.

Sunday, July 18, 7am Rice Fields Leaders: Tim Fitzer 961-5871 Dan Brown 362-2458

Join Tim and Dan for a morning expedition in the rice fields on a private ranch along Highway 99 North of Sacramento. There should be plenty of nesting avocets, stilts and possibly Black Terns. Some early migrants should already be on their way back, such as dowitchers and Western Sandpipers still in breeding plumage. We will meet at the west corner of Hwy 99 and Elkhorn Blvd. at the park and ride parking lot, about eight miles north of Sacramento at 7 o'clock for this half-day trip.

Wednesday, July 21 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 24 Carson Pass Leaders: 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 25, 8am

Mather Field Park

Leader: Wayne Blunk 876-0457

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

Saturday, July 31, 7am

Thunder Mountain Alpine Cirque

Leader: Joe Ceriani 922-0768

Join Joe for this high Sierra hike up Thunder Mountain off Hwy 88. We'll be looking for mountain birds, wildflowers, butterflies, mammals and even interesting trees. This is a 7.5-mile loop hike. The hike starts at about 8000 ft. elevation and climbs about 1500 ft. in approximately 3 miles and then descends for approximately 4.5 miles. We will drop off some of our vehicles at the end of the trail and then shuttle to the beginning. Meet Joe at 7am sharp at the north end corner of the Raley's parking lot at the El Dorado Hills exit on Hwy 50 for a full day of mountain birding. Bring lunch and liquids, wear sturdy shoes and be prepared for changeable Sierra weather.

Sunday, August 1, 6pm

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area, evening

Leader: Maureen Geiger (444-0804)

e-mail: mkgeiger@comcast.net

Join Maureen to witness the spectacle of large White-faced Ibis flocks coming in to roost. There should be several species of wading birds, and this is a great time of year for shorebirds. As the sun goes down, foraging owls and bats are a possibility. 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, August 3

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 7, 6:15am

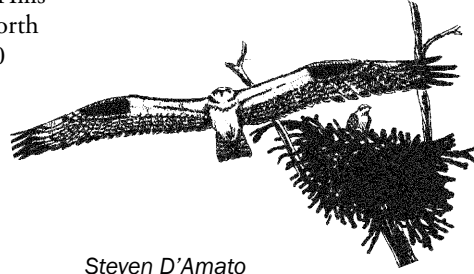
Alpine County

Leader: Bill Hart

For details call 362-5942

e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net

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



Steven D'Amato

Saturday, August 14, Daybreak

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.

Saturday, August 14, 6am

Yuba Pass and Sierra Valley

Leader: Chris Conard (362-5942)

e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net

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

Sunday, August 15, 7am

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley

Leader: Steve Abbott (225-0564)

e-mail: steve@papasula.com

August is a great time to view shorebirds in the Sacramento Valley on migration from their Arctic breeding grounds. Since ideal

conditions change depending on water levels, Steve will take you to the local areas with the best shorebird habitat. This may be in Yolo, Placer, or Sacramento County—or all three. This is a good chance to brush up on the common species and possibly find something unexpected. If you have a spotting scope, bring it, along with water and a snack. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave exit. Turn left, and the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left.

Tuesday, August 17
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 21, Daybreak

Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve

Leader: John Trochet

(Info: 684-2816 ext. 5)

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

Saturday, August 21, 6:15am

Lake Tahoe

Leader: Nancy Bittner (530-525-7373)

For carpool info: 362-5942

e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net

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

Bobelaine

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DIRECT DONATIONS

We want to acknowledge and thank the following people for their direct donations to the Bobelaine Birdathon: Delmar Janson; Douglas & Joanne Schwilk; Salli Warinner; and Betty Kniffen. We appreciate the support and will use the funds wisely.

BOBELAINE NEWS

We have had an early spring and by the look of the grasses in the sanctuary we have reached late summer already. The sanctuary is very dry and presents a high fire danger. All trails have been mowed and are open and usable. Please enjoy the sanctuary, but be aware of the extremely dry conditions and help us preserve this beautiful habitat by respecting the no smoking rules for the parking lot as well as the entire sanctuary. Please, no glass bottles in the sanctuary. A flock of about a dozen white pelicans have been hanging around over the river and on the sandbars. Come visit the sanctuary early to beat the heat as well as enjoy the early morning wildlife activity. Don't forget to take water with you. The temperature has been in the mid nineties.

Bill Clark, Co-Manager
916-783-8305

Saturday, August 28, 7:30am
Bodega Bay
Leader: Andi Salmi (691-7216)
e-mail: andisalmi@yahoo.com

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

Sunday, August 29, 7am-11am
Migration at the SRCSD Bufferlands
Leader: Chris Conard (362-5942)
e-mail: chris.conard@comcast.net

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

Tuesday, August 31
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, September 4, 7am
Point Reyes
Leader: Chris Conard
(362-5942)
e-mail:
chris.conard@comcast.net

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

Sunday, September 5, 6pm
Yolo Basin Wildlife Area, evening
Leader: Maureen Geiger (444-0804)
e-mail: mkgeiger@comcast.net

Join Maureen to witness the spectacle of large White-faced Ibis flocks coming in to roost. There should be several species of wading birds, and this is a great time of year for shorebirds. As the sun goes down, foraging owls and bats are a possibility. 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.



Kirsten Munson

Friday, September 10
Evening Beaver Walk on the American River Parkway
Leader: Jack Hiehle 967-0777

This trip is limited to 8 persons with a minimum age of 7 years, in order to ensure optimum viewing for participants. Jack's leisurely pace allows plenty of time to view the resident birds and he'll point out some

interesting plants as well as beaver and muskrats. Call Jack to reserve a place and get meeting time and place.

Saturday, September 11
Cosumnes River Preserve
Willow Slough Trail Bird Survey
Leader: John Schick
Info phone: 684-2816 ext. 5
web site: www.cosumnes.org

Meet at the trail head for an early morning census of local birds. John has been leading this monthly trip for several years, and knows the area well. Early migrants should be showing up and there are frequently surprises. Call the Preserve number during the previous week for exact meeting time and place. Bring a snack and water and be prepared for 4 miles of moderate walking.

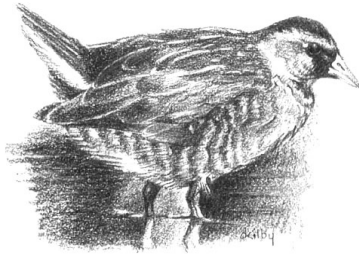
Sunday, September 12, 7:30am
Goethe Park morning walk
Leader: Cathie LaZier 457-6882
e-mail: empid@sbcglobal.net

Join Cathie for a morning walk in the parkway while it's still cool. Even at this time of year there are some interesting things along the river. Vinegar weed and tarweeds should be blooming; California Buckeye butterflies are active, and kites and Red-shouldered Hawks are usually highly visible. The smaller passerine birds are active in the cool of the morning too, and early migrants

are always a possibility. This is a good trip for beginners.

Saturday, September 18, Daybreak Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: John Trochet
Info Phone: 684-2816 ext. 5
web site: www.cosumnes.org

The Tall Forest is perhaps the best remaining example of riparian forest in the central valley, and is not generally open to the public. In this jungle like habitat, John has found excellent rarities, large numbers of migrants and resident species. Call the Preserve number during the previous week for the exact meeting time and place, and be a little early, as John leaves promptly. Bring water, a snack, insect repellent and be prepared for 4 to 5 miles of moderate hiking.



Steven D'Amato

Sunday, September 19, 7:30am
Point Diablo Hawk Watch
Leader: Joe Ceriani 922-0768

Join Joe and other raptor enthusiasts for the annual trek to Marin Headlands to witness one of the Pacific Flyway's most dramatic events as migrating hawks funnel down to the coast and head over the straits near the Golden Gate. Buteos, accipiters, falcons and eagles are frequently seen. Migrating swifts, swallows and Band-tailed Pigeons may also show up. Mornings are foggy but the fog usually breaks by noon, giving great views. The site can be quite windy, so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and liquids. Meet Joe at the Park & Ride in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave. exit off I-80; turn left at the stop light, then left into the Park & Ride.

Friday evening, September 24
Beaver walk on the American River Parkway
Leader: Jack Hiehle 967-0777

This trip is limited to 8 persons with a minimum age of 7 years, in order to ensure optimum viewing for participants. Jack's leisurely pace allows plenty of time to view the resident birds and he'll point out some interesting plants as well as beaver and muskrats. Call Jack to reserve a place and get meeting time and place.

Saturday, Sunday, September 25-26
Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park
Canoe & Camping

Northeastern Shasta County
Leader: Gary Fregien (916) 451-2767
cell: (916) 708-0636

This trip to lava country on the Modoc Plateau requires "paddle power"; a canoe or kayak is preferable. Enjoy spectacular views of Mt. Shasta to the west and Lassen Peak to the south, while watching for Bald Eagles, Osprey, Sandhill Cranes, Swainson's Hawk, Lewis' Woodpecker, and many other species of birds. Primitive camping (no water, pit toilets), in nine sites on the shoreline of Big Lake, accessible only by water, makes this a very special trip. For a sneak peek, go online at www.parks.ca.gov and open "Find a Park". Big Lake can be reached from a PG&E public boat launch known as "Rat Farm". Turn left off Highway 299 onto Main Street in the town of McArthur; continue past the Inter-mountain Fairgrounds; across a canal and through a gate, and go about three miles north on

a graded dirt road. Meet Gary at the launch ramp at noon on Saturday. You can also make arrangements to caravan to the area with Gary early on Friday morning. This trip requires confirming your attendance with Gary at least one week in advance. Please call Gary to confirm and to discuss travel information. Inclement weather may cancel or reschedule the trip.

Mission Statement **Sacramento Audubon Society**

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

Sacramento Audubon Chapter **Board Meetings**

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next board meeting is our annual year-end potluck dinner at Kari Bauer's house on June 29.

All board members and committee chairmen are welcome!

Call Kari Bauer, 916-483-2315 for further information and to RSVP.

THE WEST NILE VIRUS

In efforts to resist the spread of the West Nile Virus (WNV), the Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District is asking the public to report a dead bird, particularly a crow, jay or magpie, by calling 1-877-968-2473. Mosquitoes get the disease from infected birds while taking blood, and can later transmit it to humans, birds, horses and other animals during subsequent blood feeding.

Mosquito control officials said under normal progression the disease could reach the Sacramento region from Southern California this summer. Nationwide in 2003, there were 8,912 reported human WNV cases, with 211 deaths.

The California Department of Health Services, California West Nile Virus Surveillance Information Center has an informative web site with pictures of the affected species, (many more species are being affected than was first anticipated) an online reporting system, as well as maps and data about confirmed WNV bird deaths in California at <http://westnile.ca.gov/>. The Center for Disease Control, CDC website also has some very interesting information on both the number of human cases as well as the numbers of birds affected. www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/index.htm. A necropsy at a certified lab is the only way to verify the presence of WNV.

For those who do not have internet access, an informational pamphlet is available from the California Department of Health Services. This can be provided at no cost from Bill Clark at 916-783-8305.

Thanks to Bill Clark and Tim Manolis for this important and timely information.

Seasonal Observations

Continued from page 8.

Thanks to the following for their reports:
Steve Abbott, Roger Adamson, Jennifer Albright, Peter Armstrong, Mel Bolinder, Austin Booth, Brent Campos, Daryl Coldren, Phil Dunn, Francine Dunn, Dave Feliz, Tim Fitzer, Maureen Geiger, Cheryl Glackin, Steve Glover, Richard Hall, Jeanne Hammond, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Amy Hibbitt, Karen Hochgraf, Joan Humphrey, Dave Johnson, Jon King, Jeri Langham, Sami LaRocca, Robin Leong, Bob Lewis, John Luther, Ron Melcer, Kurt Mize, Roger Muskat, Kris Olson, Ed Pandolfino, Peter Perrine, Michael Perrone, June Persson, Andy Pfeffer, Ryan Phillips, Jim Rowth, Kathryn Sanderson, Mary Schiedt, Steve Scott, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, C.V. Vick, and Sylvia Wright.

Chris Conard

Coastal Biology Class at CRC

Exploring the California Coast (Biology/Geography 390), a 2 unit, team taught biology/geography field course, will be offered at Cosumnes River College during the fall semester. The class meets 4 Tuesday evenings, 7-9:40 pm and takes 2 three-day field trips; September 17-19 to Monterey/Big Sur area, and October 8-10 to the Point Reyes area.

For more information, please contact the Biology instructor, Andrea Salmi (salmia@crc.losrios.edu, 916-691-7216); or to learn more and sign up log on to www.losrios.edu.



Rosemary Gilbert Bell

Continued from page 2

species at the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's Bufferlands, and his group found exactly 100. Two Greater White-fronted Geese were a nice surprise on the wetlands, Chris said, along with four Blue-winged Teal and four Redheads. Also single male Canvasback and Ring-necked ducks, 30 Semipalmated Plovers, a Lesser Yellowlegs and Long-billed Curlew. Others: Tricolored Blackbird flock, five Vaux's Swfts, an Acorn Woodpecker, a rarity for the Bufferlands, as was a Hammond's Flycatcher. A pair of Burrowing Owls, a Great Horned Owl with two nestlings, and about a dozen Swainson's Hawks in a nice variety of morphs were highlights for many participants.

Sweetwater Creek (4/18)—A Sharp-shinned Hawk that “buzzed right over our heads” was a highlight on a beautiful day at this Folsom Lake area site, leader Craig DiMartini said. Sixty-one species were recorded, including Western Wood-Pewee, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Cliff, Tree, Violet Green, Rough-winged and Barn swallows, Western Bluebird, Hutton's and Warbling Vireos, Bullock's Oriole, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Nashville and Wilson's warblers.

Goethe Park (4/17)—Good views of Cooper's Hawk on-and-off-the-nest and a Great Horned Owl on the nest enlivened a sunny morning for a small, not-quite-beginner crowd. Leader Mary Beth Metcalf, subbing for Cathie LaZier, said titmice, bush-tits, Acorn Woodpeckers and Tree Swallows were evident everywhere. The group saw and heard several House Wrens, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, bluebirds and a few Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Pete Hayes

Follow-up on the Human Race

May 1st dawned clear and bright, a good omen for the several hundred participants in the 5k walk/run/wheel Human Race at Roseville's Maidu Center. Racing along with the contestants were lots of dogs belonging to Canine Companions for Independence (mostly large dogs but also including 3 Welsh Corgis). More than 35 organizations participated. It was quite a merry crowd. Participating for the first time, Habitat 2020 netted just under \$400 for its coffers. Look for more about Habitat's new focus, “Monitoring Habitat Mitigation in Sacramento County” in the next issue of the Observer.

Mary Bisharat, Conservation Chair

Effie Yeaw Presentation

Tim Manolis, Sacramento author and illustrator of the recently published *Dragonflies and Damselflies of California*, one of the Natural History Guides Series of the University of California Press, will present a video-assisted talk on Tuesday, July 27 at 7 p.m. at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park. Refreshments will be served.

For more information or for directions to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center telephone the Nature Center at 489-4918. Dragonflies and damselflies are an important part of wetland wildlife. Among the most beautiful flying insects, they are also among the most ancient of living creatures.

Tim Manolis grew up in Sacramento in a nationally-recognized birding family. He has his Ph.D. in biology from the University of Colorado and is currently working on the illustrations for another book in the same UC Press series, “Butterflies of the San Francisco Bay Region and the Sacramento Valley,” to be authored by Arthur Shapiro of the University of California, Davis.

Mystery Birds in Our Yards

My wife and I receive an average of one to two calls a day regarding some form of bird/birding question. They range from “I found a dead bird, do I report it?” to “what is it?” A recent example went something like this. We received a call regarding a large bird in a nest with three chicks that had moved in to a tree in front of a home in north west Roseville. The area was built out about nine years ago and nearly all trees were new to the area at that time. After extensive discussion with the caller, who had a bird book and binoculars, and who wanted to know who his new “tenants” were we decided to go see if we could identify the new guests.

Upon arrival I got a glimpse of one of the adult birds and was surprised to see an adult Black crowned night heron watching me. The nest, with it's three large chicks, was about fifteen to twenty feet off the ground in a tree in the front yard of a home at the end of a cul-de-sac. The back of the lot abuts an elementary school yard with hundreds of noisy kids.

It has been my experience that Black crowned night herons are quite shy and do not mix well with people. However this is an excellent example of what is happening to our wildlife as we continue to plant homes in nature's front room. In this case this bird family has done well so far and has adopted the neighborhood. Of course other species of wildlife such as Mountain lion, fox and coyote don't fair as well. We all must do everything possible to preserve greenbelts, our dwindling riparian areas, wetlands and wildlife habitat if we are to preserve wildlife for future generations to enjoy.

Bill Clark, Vice President, Bobelaine Sanctuary Co-Manager

Seasonal Observations

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

Most reports from April and May concerned the arrival of the first waves of songbird migrants in early April, the peak numbers from mid-April to mid-May, and decline in numbers for most species by the end of May. Good numbers and diversity of regular Western migrants were reported, though reports of unusual species were few. One exception was a singing **Red-eyed Vireo** found at North Davis Farms on 5/28. Another was a singing male **Northern Parula** found at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 5/9. A second singing male **Northern Parula** was found at the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District's Bufferlands on 5/23 and 5/24.

Hammond's, Dusky, and Gray Flycatchers were well reported this spring. These empids are on the rarer end of the spectrum for expected local migrants. **Hammond's Flycatcher** reports were regular, with **Dusky Flycatchers** being reported at the end of April from CRP and on the early date of 4/13 from the Putah Creek Sinks southeast of Davis. Single **Gray Flycatchers** were reported from central Davis on 4/24 and from near Slide Hill Park on 4/25, 4/26, and 5/17. **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were also well represented, especially along the upper American River Parkway (ARP). On 5/10 there were up to four at William B Pond and six to eight were reported from Sacramento Bar on 5/15.

Other good songbird reports include a **Brewer's Sparrow** from Sailor Bar along the ARP, and a **Swamp Sparrow** from the Putah Creek Sinks on 4/8, perhaps continuing from a 3/23 report. A **Green-tailed Towhee** was reported from the Orr Ranch portion of CRP on 5/16, as was a **Grasshopper**

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Sparrow pair. The singing male was first found on 4/15. A singing **Grasshopper Sparrow** was also regular at a private location in the Yolo Bypass through April. **Dark-eyed Juncos** continued to show evidence of breeding at a couple of locations at CRP. A male **Lawrence's Goldfinch** was found at CRP on 5/14.

The **Brown Thrasher**, first found on 10/31/03 at Woodbridge Regional Park in Lodi, was last reported on 4/19. A **Bell's Vireo** reported along Putah Creek west of Old Davis Road would be a great record, but requires careful documentation. Though absent

today, in the first half of the 20th Century it was one of the most common Valley riparian species and its song pervaded the forest. Grinnell and Miller noted steep declines by 1944 (*The Distribution of the Birds of California*) due to cowbird nest parasitism, and, surely, habitat loss and fragmentation.

A **Black Rail** heard singing at CRP on 4/24 was a third record for the preserve. Two were found in 1998, which suggests that these reports may reflect regular, if very rare, movement of this species through the area. A male **Least Bittern** was found at the east end of Yolo County Rd 30 on 5/24. The species was reported from the same location last year. Three **Pacific Golden-Plovers** were reported from the Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant on 4/4 to at least 4/14.

Other interesting reports include a late **Ferruginous Hawk** near Winters on 4/1, a **Band-tailed Pigeon** over N Davis on 4/26, three **Marbled Godwits** and a **Merlin** at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 4/17, and a **Least Bittern** and two **Solitary Sandpipers** from Colusa NWR on 4/18. Three separate **Common Poorwills** reported east of Davis during the period were interesting, as this species is rarely found on the Valley floor. Correction: the **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was reported from Sacramento Bar along the ARP on 3/13 and 3/14, not Sailor Bar (This month's reporters are thanked and listed on page 6.)

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Chris Conard