



# The *OBSE*RVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, March 17  
General Meeting 7:30pm  
Shepard Garden and Art Center

### Do Russian & Canadian Forest Birds Speak the Same Language

#### A Comparative Study of Boreal Forest Bird Communities

John Sterling has been an active birder in California since 1971 and has birded throughout North and Central America, Peru, Ecuador, Kenya, southern China as well as Russia. He is currently a member of the CA Bird Records Committee, the President of the Central Valley Bird Club, the northern California editor for EBird, and a member of the Technical Advisory Committee for the CA Department of Fish and Game's Bird Species of Special Concern project. He was formerly a wildlife biologist with Jones & Stokes consulting firm in Sacramento for five years, a staff avian ecologist at the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center for eight years, as well as a biologist with two research groups of the Forest Service and several institutions in Peru and Ecuador.

For his presentation John will discuss a research project of the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center and will illustrate the talk with slides of birds from European Russia and Siberia. This project compared forest bird communities over the course of four summers in Canada, European Russia and Siberia.

We look forward to seeing both you and your guests.

*Sally Riggs, Program Chair*

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Art Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd., in McKinley Park. The program is followed by a social time and the public is welcome. For further information please visit our website [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org).



## Sacramento Audubon Donations

The Sacramento Audubon Society Board has made a donation of \$500 to the Point Reyes Bird Observatory, to further their work in conservation science, and \$500 to the Friends of the Swainson's Hawk, to assist in their efforts towards education about, and habitat preservation for, our Central Valley population of this marvelous bird.

For more information about these organizations you can go to [www.swainsonshawk.org](http://www.swainsonshawk.org), and to [www.prbo.org](http://www.prbo.org).

## Bobelaine Happenings

Recent water releases from Oroville Dam have raised the water level in Lake Crandal and the south slough. This will entice more birds to visit the area and increase the food supply in the lake. Green grass is covering many of the trails and some things are beginning to look like spring. During a recent visit to the sanctuary we witnessed several large waves of geese flying overhead. On the way back home we noticed thousands of ducks on flooded rice fields east of Hwy 99. A reminder to those who visit the sanctuary regularly: please report anything new or unusual that you saw or heard while you were there to either our listserve at [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sacramento\\_birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sacramento_birds/) or our Central Valley Birdbox at 916-783-2331.

*Bill Clark, Co-Manager*



**Stephen D'Amato**

# Field Trip Findings

**Kelton Way (2/13)** – Birders counted 42 species, including two American Bitterns, two Soras and one coyote at the Hansen Ranch Preserve in Rio Linda, leader Joe Seriani reported.

**Foster City/Peninsula, Charleston Slough (2/12)** – Among the 70-plus birds seen were Blue-winged Teals, Hooded, Red-breasted and Common Mergansers, Mew Gull, Horned and Eared Grebes, Lincoln's Sparrow and Common Moorhens, leaders Fritz Steurer and Harlan Perryman reported.

**Grizzly Island/Susuin Marsh State Wildlife Area (2/6)** – Leader Joe Ferreira reported, “We watched a Northern Harrier repeatedly dive at a flock of coots that was bunched together in a tight swimming flock for protection. We weren't sure if the harrier was seriously trying to separate a meal from the gorp or if it was just out to have fun harassing the coots. At Grizzly Island, we saw all the usual waterfowl and some elk at a great distance. At Hill Slough, some of us saw a falcon which was most likely a Merlin. We climbed to the top of the Potrero Hills at the Rush Ranch and saw some White Pelicans gliding overhead.

**Gray Lodge & Western Sutter Buttes (2/5)** – The Cackling Goose that was split off from the Canada Goose last year is barely bigger than a Mallard, so it was easy to pick out three of them

from a flock of Canadas, leader Harlan Perryman reported. Besides tens of thousands of Snow Geese, the group also saw Blue-winged Teals, a Bald Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk, several accipiters, Say's Phoebe, Sandhill Cranes, Tundra Swans, Common Moorhen, and Red-breasted Sapsucker. Total species: 79.

**American River (2/1)** – A walk along the parkway from Jacob Lane to Estate Drive yielded a White-tailed Kite, Cooper's Hawk, Lark Sparrow, Snowy Egret and Spotted Sandpiper. “Also, a couple of coyotes, nice looking, good shape, kind of a highlight,” said leader Jack Hiele.

**Sacramento National Wildlife Area (1/29)** – Leader Lisa Moragal reported, “We had a great viewing day. The weather was crisp and the sky was clear. Notable sightings were an adult Bald Eagle perched in the eucalyptus grove near the parking area. Brian Gilmore spotted a gorgeous pair of Hooded Mergansers in the marsh area on the left prior to the platform viewing area. These birds are listed rare for the refuge.

Other notables were the many shorebirds like Dowitchers and Dunlins that swiftly maneuvered in the mudflats to the right of the platform area. They were joined by 200+ Black-necked Stilts and 4 American Avocets. We also were pleased to see a Blue-winged teal and an Eared Grebe identified by Harlan Perryman. Near Zamora, on Rd 16, we were greeted by a significant mammal sighting. A pair of Hungarian Kuvas

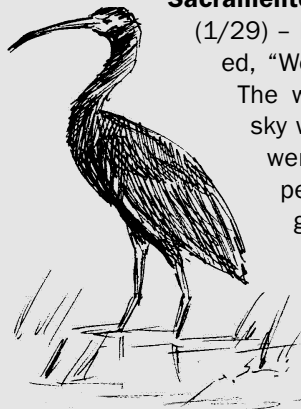
dogs ran up to greet us. These dogs that guard the local sheep are of a breed that was hunted to near extinction during World War II. Also noted was a light adult Ferruginous Hawk perched in the fields. We spotted a Peregrine Falcon riding air currents above us as well. Our total species for the day was 71.”

**Road 113, Robinson Road (1/23)** Leader Tim Fitzer said the highlight was 100 Mountain Plovers in good light at this West Solano County site. Three Rough-legged Hawks, seven Ferruginous Hawks, a Prairie Falcon and three Burrowing Owls also offered good looks.

**Lodi Sewer Ponds, Woodbridge Park, Cosumnes River Preserve (1/22)** Seventy-seven species were ticked off, including close looks at Sandhill Cranes, a Peregrine Falcon on the microwave tower at Cosumnes and 13 ducks and geese, leader Joe Ceriani said. Lodi produced Bonaparte's Gulls and Black-bellied Plovers.

**Point Reyes Mammal Trip (1/14)** – On a nice, clear day, Jack Hiehle's group saw all the mammals it had hoped to see, including a Gray Whale. The lineup at North Beach, Chimney Rock: 100 Elephant Seals with 20 pups, 5 Harbor Seals, 4 Sea Lions, 40 Black-tailed Deer, 1 Fallow Deer, 45 Axis Deer, and 15 Tule Elk. Best birds were Peregrine Falcon, Osprey, Say's Phoebe and Red-breasted Merganser.

*Pete Hayes*



Kirsten Munson

## Our Volunteers Honored

Two longtime Sacramento Audubon volunteers were honored at the January general meeting. Jeff Mangum was recognized for his many years leading field trips, participating in Christmas Counts, and serving on the Field Activities committee. For the last several years he has done all the work associated with the annual Farralons and Monterey pelagic trips.

Tim Fitzer was recognized for many years of service, having held many board positions, and having served on various committees. He has lead over 150 field trips and is currently a member of Field Activities. He is active in conservation and serves on the Habitat 2020 committee. He also sells the Entertainment Coupon books, another of our fund raisers. Anytime something needs doing, you'll find Tim there. Both volunteers received gift certificates to a local book store.

### 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.

# 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 Richard Barbieri, 966-4603 for trips through March 13th. For trips from March 18th through April 17th call the scheduler Cathie Lazier, 457-6882, [empid@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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.

### Friday, March 4, 8am till noon Effie Yeaw Nature Center Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Meet Jack at 8am in the parking lot of the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park. This is Jack's home ground and as you walk the trails down to the river Jack will point out interesting plants, with information about their uses by native Americans. Early nesting birds should be active and Jack will be keeping an eye out for mammals too.

### Saturday, March 5, 7am Bobelaine Sanctuary Walk Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146 [razorbill35@comcast.net](mailto:razorbill35@comcast.net)

Join Brian on this early morning hike through the riparian habitat of Bobelaine Sanctuary. Depending on conditions, Brian will follow trails less traveled on previous trips. Be prepared for wet grass, gullies, moderate slopes, and distances of 2 to 3 miles. Listening for bird calls and songs will be emphasized. We have a good chance of seeing Great Horned Owls and Red-shouldered Hawks. Bring water and snacks for the trails. Take I-5 north to Hwy 99 towards Yuba City. Two miles after 99 crosses the Feather River, turn right on Laurel Avenue; follow it to the end and meet in the parking lot.

### Sunday, March 6, 7:30am New York Creek, Bass Lake El Dorado Hills Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804 [mkgieger@comcast.net](mailto:mkgieger@comcast.net)

Join Maureen for a walk through this delightful riparian area in search of oak woodland birds such as nuthatches, sparrows, towhees and other passerines. The remainder of the morning will be spent at Bass Lake, another reliable spot to find Hooded Mergansers and sometimes Bald

Eagles. Meet at Bella Bru restaurant in the Raley's shopping center on El Dorado Hills Blvd. just off Highway 50.

### Saturday, March 12 ARNHA Bird & Breakfast Effie Yeaw Nature Center, Ancil Hoffman Park Contact: 489-4918

This morning bird walk is a fund raiser for the American River Natural History Association. Join experienced birders for an informative walk on the Nature Center trails and share in good company during the hearty breakfast. This gathering is for those 13 years of age and older. For more information, and to make reservations, call the Nature Center at 489-4918.

### Sunday, March 13, 7am Bodega Bay Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458 [Naturestoc@aol.com](mailto:Naturestoc@aol.com)

Join Dan for a full day of birding and exploring the many habitats around Bodega Bay. This is often one of the best coastal birding areas, with many gulls, shorebirds and waterfowl to see, in addition to possible vagrant songbirds. Meet Dan at the Park & Ride off Highway 80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Avenue exit; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park & Ride lot. This Park & Ride lot is on the North side of the freeway, NOT THE SOUTH SIDE LOT. We will LEAVE at 7am SHARP. Bring food, (an option for lunch will be the Tides snack bar), water, and warm clothes.

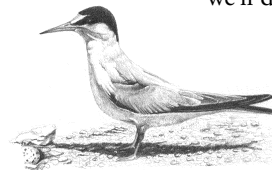
### Friday, March 18, 8am till noon Sailor Bar Area American River Parkway Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Meet Jack at the end of Emperor Drive

in Fair Oaks, near Winding Way and Kenneth, for a morning walk exploring the plants, mammals and birds of this riparian corridor. A trip with Jack always turns up something of interest.

### Saturday, March 19, 9am Bird Walk in Marin & San Rafael area Leader: Ron Storey (707) 762-5276 [ronstorey@ronstorey.com](mailto:ronstorey@ronstorey.com)

Meet Ron at Schollenberger Park in Petaluma (directions can be found at [www.petalumawetlandspark.org](http://www.petalumawetlandspark.org)) at 9am. Here we will look for Virginia Rails, Sora and Blue-winged Teal. Ron will watch for reports of rarities in Marin County; if any are reported we'll search for them. Otherwise, we'll drive to Rush Creek in Novato, followed by a visit to Las Gallinas in San Rafael, and end the day at Corte Madera Marsh where we hope to find Clapper Rails feeding. Bring lunch and liquids, and your sense of humor. Ron's trips are always fun, and in the past have resulted in great looks at some uncommon birds.



Daniel Kilby

### Sunday, March 20, 8am Effie Yeaw Nature Center Leaders: Carla Barbaro & Cathie LaZier Carla, 486-1198 [cbarbaro@comcast.net](mailto:cbarbaro@comcast.net) Cathie, 457-6882 [empid@sbcglobal.net](mailto:empid@sbcglobal.net)

Meet Carla and Cathie at 8am in the Effie Yeaw parking lot at Ancil Hoffman Park for a morning walk along the trails and down to the river. They will be looking for signs of Spring, nesting and singing birds, and early wildflowers. This is a good trip for beginners.

**Sunday, March 26, 8am**  
**Sacramento County Bufferlands**  
**Leader: Chris Conard 362-5942;**  
**chris.conard@comcast.net**

The Bufferlands consist of 2,650 acres of grasslands, riparian forest and wetlands just south of Sacramento. 220 bird species have been recorded. Join Chris in looking for raptors, waterfowl, an egret and heron rookery, and winter songbirds. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to the Meadowview/Pocket/Freeport (Hwy 160) exit and head east. Turn south on Freeport Blvd., go one mile to Stonecrest and turn left just before the town of Freeport. Go over the freeway, then head south until you reach a locked gate. This trip will last until noon. Be prepared for muddy conditions. You may bring a lunch if you wish.

**Saturday, April 2, 7:30am**  
**Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area**  
**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**mkgeiger@comcast.net**

Join Maureen for a driving tour around this local wildlife area. From sparrows and raptors in the drier areas, to Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Black-crowned Night Herons and White-faced Ibis in the wetland areas, there's always something to look at. From Sacramento take I-80 across the Yolo Causeway and turn right on the frontage road just past the causeway. Turn right at the stop sign and circle under the freeway; then make a left up onto the levee and meet Maureen at the first parking lot inside the area. Trip will end before lunch time.

**Sunday, April 3, 8am**  
**Jepson Prairie and Yolo Bypass**  
**Leader: Andi Salmi, 691-7216**  
**andisalmi@yahoo.com**

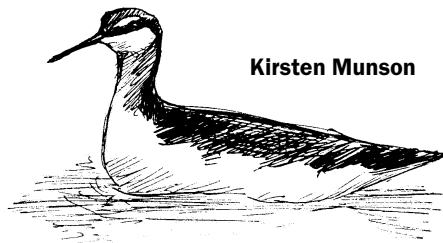
Jepson Prairie is an unusual area of bunch grass prairie and vernal pool habitats, harboring some fascinating native plant species. Wildflowers will be the main focus of the morning and we'll bird the Yolo Bypass in the afternoon. Meet Andi at the Park & Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento at 8am. From Sacramento take the West Capitol exit; turn left and then left again into the lot. Bring a lunch and water. The trip will last into mid-afternoon.

**Wednesday, April 6, Noon - 2pm**  
**Creek Week - Local Fish Fauna**

What lurks in the murky depths of Sacramento's urban creeks? Join SRCSD Bufferlands staff for an introduction to the

local fish fauna. We will demonstrate fish sampling techniques in a local lake, practice hands-on (for those that aren't too squeamish) fish identification, and discuss the natural history of California's diverse fish communities. In addition, we will be able to view one of the direct consumers of the local fish populations as we spy on a large heron and egret rookery. This tour includes a short, ½ mile walk and an opportunity to see some of the Bufferlands riparian and wetland habitat restoration projects.

The meeting location is weather-dependant, so please contact Steve Scott at (916) 875-9307 or e-mail [scottss@saccounty.net](mailto:scottss@saccounty.net) the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.



Kirsten Munson

**Saturday, April 9**  
**River Walk, Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Recorded information: 684-2816 or**  
**check [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org)**

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 info or the website a day or two before to get the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

**Saturday, April 9, 1:30pm - 3:30pm**  
**Creek Week Wetland and**  
**Wildflower Tour, SRCSD Bufferlands**

The Fishhead Lake mitigation wetland is a nice example of wetlands created as mitigation for earlier wetland losses. The wetland has both a permanent and seasonal component as well as a surrounding upland buffer. Thousands of waterfowl winter at the wetland and many remain year-round to nest and raise young. Much of the area is planted to native wildflowers that bloom in early spring. California poppies, lupines, owl's clover, baby blue-eyes and many others can be seen spreading about the uplands and wetland edges. Visitors will receive a packet of native flower seeds to start their own native garden.

The meeting location is weather-dependant, so please contact Roger Jones at

(916) 875-9174 or e-mail [jonesro@saccounty.net](mailto:jonesro@saccounty.net) the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

**Sunday, April 10, 8am till Noon**  
**Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek**  
**Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141**  
**llandry@softcom.net**

Meet Lea in the parking lot of the Snowberry Creek Equestrian Staging Area (please leave your horse at home) where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale, for a morning walk which will include some riparian habitat, some ridge trails, and a good view of Lake Natoma. Possible sightings include Cooper's Hawks, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and an assortment of waterfowl and warblers. There may be some short steep climbs on trails, so wear comfortable hiking footwear. Bring liquids and snacks, binoculars, a scope if you wish, and clothing appropriate for the day's weather conditions.

**Saturday, April 16, very early**  
**Tall Forest Bird Count**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Leader: John Trochet**  
**Recorded information: 684-2816 or**  
**check [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org)**

Meet John at the Farm Center ON TIME to join him on this monthly bird count. John has an appreciation of nature on many levels, and a trip with him is always exciting, whether it's a sighting of an elusive otter, a warbler in migration or just some insights into the resident birds and mammals of the area. You must check the recorded info or the website a day or two before to get the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

**Sunday, April 17, 8am**  
**Snipes Pershing Ravine**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri 966-4603;**  
**offleash@sbcglobal.net**

Richard will lead you on a half day trip into this interesting area near Lake Natoma. A part of the State Park system along the American River Parkway, this watershed with its deep ravines offers a conducive habitat for a variety of bird species. Richard will be on the lookout for the Rufous-Crowned Sparrow, which has a preference for the type of steep terrain found here. Meet at the corner of Twin Lakes Avenue and Snipes Blvd. off Main Ave. in Orangevale. Wear sturdy footwear and be prepared for narrow paths and uneven terrain.

## BOBELAINE BIRDATHON COMING UP!

A reminder to start thinking about the upcoming Bobelaine Birdathon fund raiser in April-May of this year. We have always been able to raise sufficient funds to maintain the sanctuary each year, however in the past few years we have been working partially on accumulated funds from previous Birdathons. The increased cost of fuel for sanctuary equipment has raised the overall cost of managing the sanctuary. Watch for more information in next month's issue of the Observer.

*Bill Clark, Co-Manager*

## BIRDFEEDER PRECAUTIONS

The California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is encouraging northern California residents to remove bird feeders for at least one month to help slow an outbreak of salmonellosis, a disease affecting pine siskins that live primarily in wooded areas. To help control the disease, DFG biologists are urging residents to discontinue feeding birds for at least 30 days, and when feeding is resumed, to:

Replace all food in birdfeeders and water in birdbaths daily. Clean up old food around feeders daily, and only use small amounts of food.

Decontaminate feeders by using a 10 percent solution of household bleach in water, preferably cleaned just prior to adding new food.

Spread small amounts of seed over a large area in the sun, instead of using bird boxes or feeders. Also, vary the location of seeds to avoid encouraging a concentration of birds at one site.

Replace wooden bird feeders with plastic or metal. Wood harbors salmonella bacteria and cannot be sanitized as effectively.

Use gloves when handling dead birds and bird feeders and wash hands with anti-bacterial soap when finished.

Many of these suggestions are good precautions to take all year round. Further information can be found at [www.dfg.ca.gov/news/news04/04060.html](http://www.dfg.ca.gov/news/news04/04060.html) or call the DFG Office of Communications at (916) 651-9130

## Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be February 22 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

# Events & Announcements

## BIRDING MONTANA AND THE BIG SKY COUNTRY

Ed Harper will be offering his popular Montana tours this summer during the height of the region's peak birding activity, June 11-26. This year both the Yellowstone Loop and the Glacier Loop are being offered. Participants may choose either loop or both since each segment provides unique viewing opportunities. Tour size is being kept small to simplify logistics and to maximize the outdoor experience. For the full itinerary and price, contact Sandpiper Journeys via [calidris@surewest.net](mailto:calidris@surewest.net) or call Ed at (916) 971-3311.

## CALIFORNIA AUDUBON NEWS

Graham Chisholm joined Audubon California on 28 February 2005 as Deputy State Director and Conservation Director. Graham served as The Nature Conservancy's California Director for the past four years guiding the Conservancy's largest chapter.

Dan Cooper has decided that he is ready to move on to new challenges and opportunities. He offered his resignation effective 1 March 2005 after five-and-a-half years of service as the Director of Bird Conservation.

Dan has done a terrific job leading our bird conservation efforts statewide. The publication of the California Important Bird Areas book in 2004 was a culmination of several years of effort spearheaded by Dan. That book and the 150 IBA's form the foundation for us moving forward in California with a vision to conserve birds and habitats.

Glenn Olson, Vice President, Executive Director, Audubon California

For more information about Audubon California go to [www.ca.audubon.org](http://www.ca.audubon.org)

## ADDITIONAL CREEK WEEK ACTIVITIES

### Arcade Creek Walk, Tuesday, April 5, 9am - noon

Get an introduction to Sacramento County's new Stream Watch Program with Paul Olson and Jeanette Watson. Activities will include water quality monitoring, photo monitoring and a vegetation scavenger hunt. Learn about Arcade Creek and how you can get more involved in streams. Meet at Renfree Field parking lot on Bridge Road. Call (874) 4711 for more information.

### Steelhead Creek Beaver Pond, Tuesday, April 5, 6:30pm

Early evening is the best time to see beaver activity and lots of other local wildlife. Take a stroll with Mary Tappel along Steelhead Creek. Meet at the Elkhorn Blvd. parking lot by Steelhead Creek west of the City of Rio Linda and east of New North Natomas. Call 925-1933 or email: [mtappel@waterboard.ca.gov](mailto:mtappel@waterboard.ca.gov) for further information or directions. NOTE: this event will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain.

Keep a watch on your local news stations and newspapers for more information regarding the annual Creek Week festivities. Volunteers are always needed to help clean our local creeks and there are many other events planned also. The web site for our Urban Creeks Council is [www.sacto-ucc.org](http://www.sacto-ucc.org).

## Observations continued from page 6

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

Thanks to the following for their reports (the majority were taken from [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central\\_valley\\_birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central_valley_birds/) and [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sacramento\\_birds/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sacramento_birds/)):

Steve Abbott, Roger Adamson, Jennifer Albright, Peter Armstrong, Vicki Boffin, Dennis Braddy, Daryl Coldren, Andrew Engilis, Gil Ewing, Mike Feighner, Jim Gain, Maureen Geiger, Brian Gilmore, Steve Glover, Richard Hall, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Joan Humphrey, Dave Johnson, Jon King, Dan Kopp, Lea Landry, Robin Leong, Ron Melcer, Martin Meyers, Kurt Mize, France Oliver, Ed Pandolfino, Terry Ronneberg, Jim Rowth, Mary Schiedt, Stan Snyder, Rick Soehren, Jim Steinert, John Sterling, Vi Strain, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, Liz West, Jim White, Sylvia Wright, and David Yee.

*Chris Conard*

# Seasonal Observations

January 1 to January 31  
Rare and Unusual Bird Reports  
783-2331

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

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A couple of the best reports from January came in the form of waterbirds from Yolo County. A **Red-necked Grebe\***, only the third record for the county, was found on 1/28 in a created water ski pond along Rd 29 just east of Rd 102. It was seen by many through press time. The county's first **Harlequin Duck\*** record was a male legally shot by a hunter at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) on 1/23. In Sacramento County, one of the best reports was of a **Pacific Loon\*** found on the 1/2 Folsom CBC at Lake Natoma. The bird was seen sporadically through at least mid-month at the upper end of the lake. Several **Horned Grebes** and up to three **Common Loons** were also reported. Both loon species proved to be unpredictable and often missed by hopeful observers. A **Pacific Loon** was also found off of the Folsom Peninsula portion of Folsom Lake in El Dorado County on the Folsom CBC. A **Greater Scaup** reported the same day from Cameron Park Lake was a nice addition. A **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** was reported from Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 1/9.

The songbird highlight of the month came in the form of a **Summer Tanager\*** photographed in a private yard in South Land Park on 1/30. A **Green-tailed Towhee\*** found mid-month at Lincoln Hills in Placer County and continuing through press time was also photo-documented. A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was photographed at Jepson Prairie on 1/9. A flyover **Red Crossbill\*** in Citrus Heights on 1/9 was the first report of this species in Sacramento County this winter, and a **Cassin's Finch\*** from Elk Grove from 1/2 - 1/4, recorded on the Rio Cosumnes CBC, was an excellent report. Out of season

swallows continued, with local reports of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows**, **Barn Swallows**, **Violet-green Swallows**, and the first **Cliff Swallows** of the season from the Sacramento County Bufferlands on 1/27.

The most sought after bird of the month was surely the continuing **Common Black-Hawk\*\*** in north Stockton. It was seen by many observers from 1/17 through the end of the month at North Lake (off Benjamin Holt Drive just west of I-5). It left many disappointed with its random appearances and complete absence on other days. People came from as far away as Los Angeles to see it, while some locals never saw it despite many hours of waiting over several days. The

bird likely continues nearby, but the reports were even less regular by press time and many had given up looking.

Other highlights include the continuing **Eastern Phoebe\*** (through press time) and **Swamp Sparrow\*** (last reported 1/4) from CRP. **Pileated\*** and **Hairy Woodpeckers\*** continued at Lake Solano, but were not always easy to find. Three **Hairy Woodpeckers** were reported from the Rd 40 bridge over Cache Creek off of Hwy 16 near Rumsey. An adult **Western Gull\*** continued at the Davis WWTP, along with one to two immatures. A gull showing characteristics of a "**Kumlien's Gull**" was reported from the Yolo County Landfill on 1/15. A high of 227 **Mountain Plovers** were reported along Flannery Rd near Hwy 113 in Solano County, and were seen by many throughout the month. 42 were also reported from Rds 102 and 17 in Yolo County on 1/30. One of the few **Short-eared Owl** reports came from the remote Rd 155 in southern Yolo County on 1/29 and 1/30, along with two **Burrowing Owls** on 1/30 (please continue to post all Burrowing Owl sightings, or send them to Chris Conard (see contact info on page 6).

From December, a **Clapper Rail\*** was reported on the Benicia CBC on 12/27 at Joyce Island, and the Marysville CBC highlights from 12/14 included the **Bewick's race of Tundra Swan**, **Black Rail\*** (heard at two sites), **Semipalmated Plover\*** (seasonal rarity), and **Western Tanager**.

*Observations* continued on page 5

## Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

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

**Membership/Subscriptions:** Jan Clark, (916) 783-8305,  
e-mail: [Jan\\_c@sacramentoaudubon.org](mailto:Jan_c@sacramentoaudubon.org)

**Seasonal Observations:** Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,  
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