



The *OBSE*RVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, March 16

Shepard Garden and Art Center

7:30pm General Meeting

Chickadees and Friends

The Spring Migration of Foraging Flocks of Monterey County

We are pleased to welcome back wildlife biologist, Jessica Griffiths, of Ventana Wildlife Society (VWS), for a presentation discussing the research and monitoring done by VWS's Big Sur Ornithology Lab on spring migration of the Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and mixed-species foraging flocks.

Chestnut-backed Chickadees (approx. 4.25 inches in length) are a foraging species, searching for insects, cone seeds and berries. They prefer dense, moist coniferous forests, but can also be found in deciduous trees and thickets in western and coastal areas from California to Alaska. In spring, they are joined by a wide variety of long-distance migrants, and Jessica will talk about the phenomenon of flocking, as well as detailing the different species that are commonly found in these mixed species flocks.

Jessica has worked in Monterey County for VWS for the last three years. Originally from Chicago, she has seven years of experience as a field ornithologist, studying birds in seven states from coast to coast, including New Hampshire, North Dakota, and Mississippi.

Please feel free to invite guests, friends, and family members to our Thursday evening speaking events at the Shepard Garden and Art Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd, across the street from McKinley Park in Sacramento. Map details can be found on our web site (www.sacramentoaudubon.org) under general meeting information.

Sally Riggs
Program Chair



Kirsten Munson

PARKWAY SUPPORTERS ARISE!

A call to arms to protect the American River Parkway has been issued by Audubon President Peter Watkins.

The Parkway Plan is currently being updated by a citizens' advisory committee representing a wide range of interests; the problem is that only a few are environmentally oriented. Thus when a proposal comes to a vote, the promoters of active recreational use tend to prevail.

By condoning mountain biking and similar activities in the Parkway, the committee is bit-by-bit abandoning the long-established principle that the primary goal of the Parkway Plan is to preserve and protect the Parkway as a natural area, with recreational and other uses permitted only if they are compatible with that primary goal.

It is crucial for Audubon members and other environmentally oriented folks to write, phone, or e-mail the committee to urge them not to stray from this principle in considering proposed uses of Parkway lands, Watkins urges.

You can reach the committee through Sacramento County Planner Sunny Williams at (916) 874-6141 or at williamssu@SacCounty.Net

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATIONS:

Jon Beck and Linda Johnson, for donations to the Conservation and Education Fund

John Peregrim, for a donation to the Bobelaine Sanctuary

BIRD 'N' BREAKFAST

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) holds its annual "Bird 'n' Breakfast" at the Effie Yeaw Nature Area in Ancil Hoffman County Park Saturday, March 11. Beginning at 7am, expert birders from Sacramento Audubon, coordinated by Jack Hiehle, will lead small groups through the nature area, and at 8:30 a hearty breakfast will be served at the nature center.

Send a check for \$30 per person, payable to ARNHA, to ARNHA, P.O. Box 241, Carmichael, CA, 95609-0241. Parking is \$4. The ARNHA fundraiser is not advised for children under 10. For information, call 489-4918.

Field Trip Findings

Grizzly Island/Suisun Marsh (2/12)

Leader Joe Ferreira reported that birders were frustrated that for the second straight year the nature area beyond the headquarters of the state preserve was closed. Still, in great weather, they recorded more than 50 species, including Golden Eagle, Merlin, and Ferruginous Hawk, plus good looks at White Pelicans, Common Yellowthroat, Marsh Wren, Scaup, and puddle ducks.

Yolo Wildlife Area (2/11) — High water prevented birders from driving more than a mile into the area, but White Pelicans and Tundra Swans flew over and they saw Marsh Wren, Say's Phoebe, Cinnamon Teal, a pair of Barn Swallows, Common Moorhen and, a good look at a White-throated Sparrow. Elsewhere in East Yolo they saw Cackling Geese, Loggerhead Shrike, and Lesser Scaup.

East Lawn Cemetery (2/5) — On a pleasant Sunday in this East Sacramento neighborhood, Mary Beth Metcalf's group of beginning and experienced birders enjoyed views of many of the usual suspects, plus a beautiful male Black-throated Gray Warbler, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Brown Creeper and Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Gray Lodge & Sutter Buttes (2/4)

Despite some sprinkles, it was a nice day for leader Harlan Perryman's group, yielding 75 bird species plus numerous deer, coyotes and rabbits. Best of the birds were Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagle, Rock Wren, Burrowing and Great Horned owls, Hooded Merganser, at least two

Eurasian Wigeons, and many Greater Sandhill Cranes. Harlan notes that most of the Sandhill Cranes in the Sacramento area are Lessers, which are significantly smaller and nest as far away as Siberia.

American River Parkway, Jacob Lane (2/1)

— American Pipit, Bufflehead, Barrow's and Common Goldeneyes, Wood Duck, Double-crested Cormorant, Common Merganser and White-tailed Kite were among the species spotted by leader Jack Hiehle's group. Non-avian species included a River Otter, two Pond Turtles, and a Horsehair Worm.

Nimbus Fish Hatchery (1/29)

— High water from Nimbus Dam releases chased away most of the gulls, but the group found a Ferruginous Hawk at Payen Road, according to leader Frank Gray, who subbed for Jeff Mangum.

Sacramento National Wildlife Area (1/28)

— Winds of 35-40 mph weren't helpful, but participants recorded Eurasian Wigeon, Burrowing and Great Horned owls, and Ring-necked Pheasants, along with the full range of ducks and geese. Shoreline species and sparrows were absent, Doug O'Bannion, leader with John York, reported.

Road 113, Robinson Road & Birds Landing (1/22)

— "The south wind was blowing so hard you had to hang on to your scope to keep it from blowing over," leader Tim Fitzer reported. But his group managed to list Mountain Plovers, Ferruginous Hawk, Prairie Falcon and the off-course Ovenbird at Putah Creek and Mace Blvd.

Lodi Sewer Ponds, Peltier Road & vicinity (1/21)

— On a cold, windy day, leader Richard Barbieri's group listed Bonaparte's Gulls, Common Snipe, Black-bellied Plover, Common Yellowthroat, Sandhill Cranes, Great Horned Owls, Tundra Swans and White-fronted Geese.

Sacramento National Wildlife Area (1/14)

— Leaders Brian Gilmore and Lisa Moraga reported: "Our trip to SNWR began with a unanimous vote to see the Snowy Owl reported in Solano County. Lucky for us, we had good views of this rare visitor on Liberty Island Road. From there we headed to SNWR where a Bald Eagle and several Turkey Vultures were perched high in the eucalyptus trees at the visitor center, drying their wings after the morning rain. Clear skies prevailed for the remainder of our trip and along the driving route we had close views of a Prairie Falcon perched in a willow tree. Since we arrived a little later than usual, we were fortunate to see many thousands of Snow Geese returning from the fields—among them were two blue morph Snow Geese. At the western-most parking area, Gary Fregien scoped a rufous morph Red-tailed Hawk, Virginia Rail and a female Hooded Merganser. We also saw most of the expected species: Ruddy Duck, Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Northern Pintail, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Eared Grebe, Dowitcher and Dunlin".

Pete Hayes

Great Backyard Bird Count

Results Online

The ninth annual Great Backyard Bird Count took place February 17-21, and as of press time 15,101 checklists had been submitted. There was a total individual bird count of 1,869,382 birds and a whopping species count of 515. Every participant contributed to scientific knowledge by reporting information that creates a mid-winter snapshot of what the birds are doing across North America.

Participants noted the highest number of each species they saw at any one time and entered their sightings online at www.birdsource.org/gbbc. If you go to this site click on "Explore the Results" for maps, Top 10 and state tally lists. There are also detailed reports and a report about snow depth and its relation to bird movement.



Rosemary Gilbert Bell

Birding Festivals Online

National Audubon's web site now includes a new Birding Festivals and Events Calendar found at <http://audubon.org/birdingcalendar/index.html>. Users can view an entire year of bird related activities around the country for all seasons, from national counts, to annual migrations, to local festivities.

Creek Week Festivities Online

Check out these sites for Creek Week festivities and a chance to volunteer to clean up our creeks. Meet your neighbors, help out and have fun!

Start with www.sacriver.org/events and then click on "April". There are several options including links to events in Sacramento, Markham Ravine in Lincoln and Placer County events including Rocklin and Roseville.

Field Trips



Stephen D'Amato

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he/she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Richard Barbieri, 966-4603, for trips through March 12. Call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 722-6098 for trips from March 13 through April 16. For Creek Week Trips please call Alta Tura at 454-4544.

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.

Thursday, March 2, 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 base on the American River Parkway, and as you walk the trails to the river he 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 as well.

Saturday, March 4, 7am

Bodega Bay

Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458

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, and possibly various vagrant songbirds. Meet Dan at the Park & Ride off Highway 80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Ave. exit; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park & Ride lot. This 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 at The Tides snack bar), water, and warm clothing.

Sunday, March 5, 7:30am till noon

Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills

Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
mkgeiger@comcast.net

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk through this riparian habitat and look for resident birds such as woodpeckers, nuthatches, towhees, wrens, bluebirds and marsh birds as well as winter warblers and sparrows. River otters are a possibility. Time permitting, a second walk along New York Creek

is possible. This is a great trip for beginners and experienced birders alike. Meet at Bella Bru restaurant at the Raley's shopping center on El Dorado Hills Blvd. just off Highway 50. Trails may be muddy.

Saturday, March 11

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 through the Nature Center grounds and share in good company during the hearty breakfast. This gathering is for those 13 years and older. For more information and to make reservations, call the Nature Center.

Sunday, March 12, 8am

North Natomas Area

Leader: Carl Burke, 747-8781

holbur@cwol.net

Join Carl for a morning expedition through the agricultural area that remains in North Natomas. This area hosts a good variety of migrating ducks and shorebirds and holds the possibility of early migrants. Returning Swainson's Hawks are also a possibility and Burrowing Owls may still be found. Meet Carl at 8am at the Park & Ride on the southwest corner of Highway 99 and Elkhorn Blvd., (first exit on 99 after it splits from I-5 north).

Thursday, March 16, 8am to 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 18, very early

Tall Forest Bird Count

Cosumnes River Preserve

Leader: John Trochet

Recorded Information:

684-2816 or check

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

Sunday, March 19, 7:30am

Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146

Meet Brian at 7:30am in the Effie Yeaw parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park, on Tarshes Drive off California Avenue in Fair Oaks, for a morning walk along the trails and down to the river. Early nesting birds should be active. This is a good trip for beginners.

Wednesday, March 22, 7:30am

Old City Cemetery

Riverside Blvd. & Broadway

Sacramento

Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804

mkgeiger@comcast.net

Join Maureen for an early morning walk in the cemetery to discover the common and

perhaps uncommon resident and vagrant species. Goldfinches, kestrels, jays, crows, kinglets, hummingbirds and robins are just a few of the possible species you may see on this one to two hour walk through 28 acres of trees, shrubs and flowers. Meet Maureen at 7:30am at the 10th Street gate in downtown Sacramento. Park across the street in the parking lot between 9th & 10th Streets on Broadway. This tour is offered in association with the Old City Cemetery Committee.

Saturday, March 25
7:30am in West Sac
9:30am at Stow Lake, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco
Leader: Ron Storey, (707) 762-5276
ronstorey@ronstorey.com
Coordinator: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at the Park & Ride on West Capitol Ave. off I-80, to LEAVE at 7:30am or meet Ron at 9:30am at the boat house at Stow Lake in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Ron will lead us to the top of the hill that makes the island in the middle of Stow Lake. Pygmy Nuthatch, Townsend's Warbler and Brown Creeper are common here. In the past this area has produced Tufted Duck. We will then bird around Middle Lake (Mew Gulls) in the park; then venture to the Sutro Baths area near Ocean Beach and Cliff House. Here we usually see both Turnstones (Ruddy and Black), Surfbirds, and Wandering Tattler.

This is an excellent trip for beginners who want to birdwatch outside of their normal areas. Bring a lunch and plan on spending the day birdwatching in San Francisco. You can call or email Ron for additional information, and visit his website at www.ronstorey.com.

Sunday, March 26, 7am
Caswell Memorial State Park
Leader: Gary Fregien, 451-2767
calaveri@sbcglobal.net

This is a new trip offering for our members. Caswell Memorial State Park is located in the Central Valley near the town of Ripon, about an hour south of Sacramento. The park's position along the meandering Stanislaus River affords a combination of water and riparian vegetation. Although now merely a remnant, the park's 258 acres are mostly wild, in stark contrast to the sur-

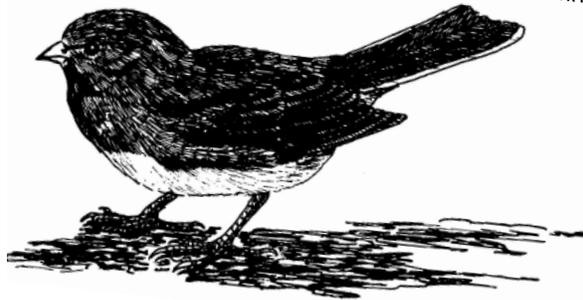
rounding agricultural lands, and present a pristine example of the once extensive riparian corridor along the river. The habitat is primarily mature riparian valley oak woodland. Its multi-level canopy provides lush cover, nesting and feeding grounds, and is a magnet for a variety of resident and migrant species. This habitat also harbors the endemic riparian brush rabbit, not known to occur elsewhere. For more information about the park, go to www.parks.ca.gov, click on "Find A Park" and use the drop-down menu to find Caswell.

There may be a day use fee to enter the park, and there are sure to be mosquitoes aplenty. We plan to spend several hours in the park along some of the numerous nature trails, so bring food and water.

We will meet at the Park & Ride on the southeast side of Hwy 99 at the Sheldon Road exit.

Saturday, April 1, 8am
Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary
Leader: Mark Martucci, 722-6098

Wolf Ranch is a 60 acre wetland created by Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency. We will be looking for waterfowl, shorebirds



Stephen D'Amato

migrants. Meet at the Ueda Parkway staging area at Elkhorn Blvd. and Sorrento Road, 2.6 miles east of Highway 99.

Sunday, April 2, 8am
(Note: Daylight Savings Time)
Goethe Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland and along the river, looking for spring wildflowers and nesting birds. Trip will end before noon. This is a good trip for beginners. There is a \$4 per car entrance fee to the park; if you wish to carpool in meet Cathie at 7:50am on Rod Beaudry Drive just off Folsom Blvd.

Wednesday, April 5, 8am – Noon
Bannister Park
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Explore another beautiful area along the American River with Jack. As always, you can share in his knowledge of the natural history of the parkway. Meet Jack in the parking lot at the end of Bannister Road, south off Fair Oaks Blvd., west of Sunrise Blvd.

Saturday, April 8, 8am
Yolo Wildlife Area
Leader: Dave Feliz
Contact: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804,
email: mkgeiger@comcast.net

This is a great opportunity to explore the south end of the Yolo Wildlife Area with Dave Feliz who manages this huge, complicated and evolving area so well. The Tule Ranch, acquired in 2001 and not generally open to the public, consists of grasslands and native forb communities with vernal pools which will be in bloom if the timing is right. In addition to shorebirds and the many resident species to be found there, Grasshopper Sparrows and Burrowing Owls are a good possibility. Meet Dave and Maureen at the Wildlife Area headquarters at 45211 Chiles Road, (officially known as County Road 32B). The headquarters is about half way between the entrance to the Wildlife Area and Mace Blvd., on the south side of I-80. Call Maureen for additional directions if needed. This trip will last till about noon.

Saturday, April 8
Cosumnes River Preserve
River Walk Bird Count
Leader: John Schick
Info: 684-2816, ext 5, or
www.cosumnes.org

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

Sunday, April 9, 8am – 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

where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale, (1/4 mile east on Main), 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 Hawk, 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 a snack if you wish.

**Saturday, April 15, 7:30am
Mather Field**

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road for this half day trip. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

**Saturday, April 15, 8:30am - 11am
Beale Air Force Base**

**Leaders: Ed Pandolfino
ERPfromCA@aol.com
Deren Ross, (530) 885-9740
derenross@sbcglobal.net**

Department of Defense facilities throughout the country protect some of North America's best and most pristine wild-life habitats still in existence. Beale Air Force Base near Marysville is certainly no exception. There are extensive grasslands and outstanding riparian areas that harbor species now difficult to find in other parts of Yuba County. We very rarely have the opportunity to bird this area so don't miss this chance.

This trip is offered through Sierra Foothill Audubon. You must contact Ed or Deren to get info on the trip, including the morning meeting point. Names and driver's license numbers will be required for all participants.



Daniel Kilby

Events & Announcements

BIRDING THE BIG SKY COUNTRY AND YELLOWSTONE

There are still some places left on Ed Harper's popular Montana tour this summer. The Yellowstone leg of the tour from June 10-17 has several places left. Again the tour size is being kept small, about 7 or 8, so that it will offer more viewing and learning opportunities for everyone. For a full itinerary, price, and availability contact Sandpiper Journeys via calidris@surewest.net or call Ed at (916) 971-3311.

SAS BOOK SALE IN MAY

Start saving your books now for our Book Sale in May. Anything with a natural history theme is welcome, including of course birding books, CDs, and videos. Look for information in future issues of *The Observer* about where to bring your books prior to the sale. This is a great fundraiser that we try to schedule every year and there are always lots of great bargains!

DON'T FORGET THE BOBELAINE BIRDATHON

Another reminder about that the annual Bobelaine Birdathon fund raiser takes place in April-May of this year. The Birdathon raises funds for the maintenance of our sanctuary including fuel and equipment costs. Watch for more information in next month's issue of *The Observer*.

**Saturday, April 15, very very early
Tall Forest Bird Count**

**Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: John Trochet
Info: 684-2816, or 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. You must check the recorded information or the web site a day or two before to get the exact meeting time and other updated details.

**Sunday, April 16, 8am
Snipes Pershing Ravine
Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603**

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 conducive habitat for a variety of bird species. 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.

CREEK WEEK TRIPS AND EVENTS

**Saturday, April 22, 9am till noon
INVASIVE WEED REMOVAL
WORK PARTY
American River Parkway
Organizer: Frank Wallace, 427-5694**

Sacramento Weed Warriors, as part of Creek Week, will host an invasive weed community work group along the American River Parkway. They will provide an orientation to invasive plants and educational materials, as well as tools and gloves. Call Frank Wallace at 427-5694 to sign up and get directions.

**Saturday, April 22, 1:30 - 3:30pm
Bufferlands Birds and Blooms Tour
A Creek Week trip**

Thousands of waterfowl winter at the Fishhead Lake wetlands, and many live year-round to nest and raise their young. California poppies, lupines, owl's clover and baby blue-eyes grow around the uplands and wetland edges. Come enjoy the birds and flowers. The meeting location is weather-dependant, so contact

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Roger Jones at 874-9174 or email jonesro@saccounty.net the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

**Saturday, April 22, 2:00 – 3:30pm
Creek Walk at Arcade Creek Park
A Creek Week Trip
Leader: Debra Bishop, 414-5800**

Debra Bishop, Senior Restoration Ecologist with ED&W, Inc., will lead a short walk along Arcade and Verde Cruz Creeks. The focus of the trip will be floodplain interaction, riparian vegetation, and restoration of urban creeks. Meet at Arcade Creek Park. From Manzanita Ave. go west on Verde Cruz Way and north on Hackberry Lane (or south on Hackberry from Madison Ave.). Take Omni Drive west into the park. For additional information call 414-5800 and ask for Debra.

**Sunday, April 23, 10am OR 1pm
Mather Vernal Pools
A Creek Week Trip**

Join the Mather vernal pool docents of the Sacramento Chapter of the California Native Plant Society for a tour in Mather Regional Park. These unique wildflowers bloom only for a brief period in the spring. We will be enjoying these flowers at the beginning of the blooming cycle.

From Highway 50 take Sunrise Blvd. south for 4 miles. Turn right on Douglas Blvd. and take the first left just after the huge statue. Meet at the picnic pavilion on the east side of Eagle's Nest Road. Bring \$2.00 for County Park parking. For more information and to sign up, call Bonnie at (916) 574-0372. To reserve space for the Saturday April 15 tours at 10am or 1pm call (916) 737-WILD.

**Sunday, April 23, Noon – 3pm
McClellan Nature Area Visit
A Creek Week Trip**

Come visit a 250 acre wetlands nature area tucked away in the back of the former McClellan Air Force Base. Vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, Magpie and Don Julio Creeks and Beaver Pond are home to a wide variety of plants and wildlife. Expect to see black-tailed hares, pheasants, quail, great blue herons, great egrets and others. The walk will be on well-used dirt paths, and gravel or paved roads. From Interstate 80 take the Winters Street exit and travel north. Turn right at Dudley Blvd., Turn left onto Fulcrum Ave. Turn left onto Dean St. Turn right onto Lang. Continue to the nature area. Park on the left in the commercial parking lot.

**Sunday, April 23, 1:30 – 3:30pm
Arcade Creek Park
A Creek Week Trip**

As we walk along the trail in the Arcade Creek Park, we'll look for some of the many birds visiting or living in the area. We'll scout the creek's underwater interactions, looking for macroscopic aquatic organisms as well as aquatic invertebrates. Come and discover this diverse outdoor world. For ages 5 and above. Take Hackberry Lane south from Madison Ave., turn right on Omni Drive. Meet at Arcade Creek Park parking lot at the end of Omni Drive. Call 482-8377 for more information.

**Wednesday, April 26, Noon – 2pm
Local Fish and Fauna
A Creek Week Trip**

What lurks in the murky depths of Sacramento's urban creeks? Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (SRCSD) Bufferlands staff will demonstrate fish sampling techniques, help with hands-on fish identification, and discuss the natural history of California's diverse fish communities. This tour includes a short ½ mile walk and an opportunity to see some of the Bufferlands riparian and wetland habitat restoration projects within the Morrison Creek floodplain. The meeting location is weather dependent, so contact Steve Scott at 875-9307 or email scottss@saccounty.net the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

**Wednesday, April 26
6:30pm
Steelhead Creek
Beaver Pond Walk
A Creek Week Trip**

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 Ueda Parkway Staging area parking lot on Elkhorn Blvd. and Sorrento Rd. east of Steelhead Creek. Call 925-1933 or email mtappel@waterboard.ca.gov for further information or directions. NOTE: this event will be cancelled in the event of heavy rain.

**Thursday, April 27, 9am till 11am
Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary Tour
A Creek Week Trip**

Natural Resource Specialists Sarah Ross and Amy van Riessen will lead a tour of Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary, a 60 acre wetland created by Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA). The wetland is a major habitat feature of northern Sacramento and has a large variety of watchable wildlife. Meet at the Ueda Parkway staging area at Elkhorn Blvd. and Sorrento Rd. just east of Steelhead Creek. Please call 874-6099 or email rosssa@saccounty.net for more information.

**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 March 28 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.



Stephen D'Amato

**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.

SAS BOARD AND OFFICERS

President	Peter Watkins	929-6623	P2Watkins@chw.edu
Vice President	Dan Tankersley	359-2829	dtankers@winfirst.com
Past-President	Roy Greenaway	631-3536	
Treasurer	Cathie LaZier	457-6882	empid@earthlink.net
Recording Secretary	Lisa Seto	933-4803	caleastern@yahoo.com
Corresponding Secretary	Dorothy Harvey	921-6126	
Directors	Tim Fitzer	961-5871	Spskua@aol.com
	Maureen Geiger	444-0804	mkgeiger@comcast.net
	Lea Landry	638-1141	llandry@softcom.net
	Sheila Deaner	488-1768	deaner@skymail.csus.edu
	Jan Tankersley	359-2829	jtankers@winfirst.com

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to all
of these new members:

Katie Semion	Dorothy Hodel
Carol Kern	Janis Moore
Christine Campton	Robert Carrington
Linda Johnson	Jan Summers
William and Susan Venables	Melody Baldwin
	Karen Parr



Seasonal Observations

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Rounding out the Christmas Count finds was a **Pacific Loon** on Folsom Lake near Mormon Island on 1/1 and another **Pacific Loon** on the Valensin portion of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 1/3. A **Eurasian Collared-Dove** was found at CRP on 1/3, continuing this species' colonization of the area. An **American Dipper** was a nice find at Sweetwater Creek on 1/1 during the Folsom Count. Other excellent highlights for the month include a **McCown's Longspur** reported on Elverta Rd near Hwy 99, a **Semipalmated Plover** at the same location on 1/5, and a first-year **Glaucous Gull** at the Davis Landfill on 1/21 and continuing at the Davis WTP. From CRP, a male **Pink-sided Junco** was found on 1/8 and **Least Bitterns** continued through the month. In Yolo County, a **Red-necked Grebe** was found at the Winters Sewage Ponds on 1/11, the **Mountain Chickadee** found at Slide Hill Park in Davis on 11/23 continued through the month, a **Steller's Jay** was reported from the same location on 1/7, and two **Snowy Plovers** were found on Rd 155 on 1/12.

Thanks to the many observers for their reports (the majority were taken from http://groups.yahoo.com/group/central_valley_birds/). With the activity sparked by the Christmas Counts and the Snowy Owl search, there are literally too many to mention.

Chris Conard

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Seasonal Observations

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

The bird of the month was without a doubt the **Snowy Owl** found on 1/13 and continuing on 1/14 in Solano County on Liberty Island Rd south of Davis. Lucky were those who could make it to the area the first afternoon or the following day. There was an early morning report from 1/15, but despite dozens, if not hundreds, of observers combing the area, the bird was not seen again. This was the first record for the state since 1978. Despite an invasion into Washington and Oregon, so far this is the only **Snowy Owl** to be found in the state this winter. In previous decades, they have been more likely to turn up along the north coast. In 1967 a **Snowy Owl** was found dying in the Yolo Bypass. The only other Central Valley record is from Gridley in 1916 (per the California Bird Records Committee Master List). This year's **Snowy Owl** appears to have been an immature male.

Solano County was the hotspot in the state this January. In addition to the owl, the **Ovenbird** first found on 11/5 continued at the Mace Blvd bridge over Putah Creek, where it occasionally strays into Yolo County. An immature **Northern Shrike** was found on 1/4 along Pleasants Valley Rd near Winters and continued through the month. With fewer

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records in the state than the **Snowy Owl**, though not as dramatic, was a still quite charismatic **Blue Jay** first found on 12/19 and continuing through the month. It was seen mostly at the Iwama Market in Fairfield and in the adjacent neighborhood.

This was a month with almost too many exciting birds, and next month may well

be a bit of a let down. Another amazing report from Friday, 1/13, was that of a **Laysan Albatross** flying south over Interstate 5 near downtown Stockton. Unfortunately, this bird was not refound. The **Harlequin Duck**, first found at the Stockton Sewage Ponds on 11/20, continued molting to look more like a classic male.

There were several excellent reports from the American River Parkway. An immature **Northern Goshawk** was reported on 1/12. It was seen both in flight and perched at the Sacramento Bar access. The male **Red-breasted Merganser** first reported on 12/15 at Sailor Bar continued into January and was later reported on Lake Natoma. An immature male of the same species was found on 1/16 at Upper Sunrise. A third-year **Western Gull** was reported from Rossmoor Bar on 1/8 and a **Vesper Sparrow** was away from its typical grassland haunts on 1/4 at Lower Sunrise. The **Red-naped Sapsucker** reported at Goethe Park on 11/30 continued sporadically into January.

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