



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2013
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room
7pm

Birding Montana in All Seasons

Ed Harper

There is probably no other birder in California that has spent more time birding and photographing birds in Montana than Ed Harper. A native of Montana, Ed grew up with a childhood interest in birds that blossomed into a passion. He started co-leading birding and natural history tours



Upland Sandpiper
Ed Harper

in Montana with Jim Lane in 1980 for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. Since then he has been leading tours in Montana nearly every year, now with his own company, Sandpiper Journeys.

Photography became a driving interest for Ed in the late 70's and he has now photographed over 750 species in North

BIRD AND BREAKFAST AT EFFIE YEAW, MARCH 23-24

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and Sacramento Audubon are teaming up again this year to offer a special weekend of morning birding trips coupled with wonderful breakfast fare. Known as "Bird & Breakfast," this event combines some of our best local bird guides pointing out nests and local rarities together with wonderful food, good coffee and other fun to help raise money for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. No extensive birding experience is necessary—this event caters to all levels. This year will be truly special as it is both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday will be a longer bird walk; the traditional breakfast buffet featuring gourmet casseroles—and all tickets are \$35. Sunday is more family friendly and the breakfast fare will feature pancakes done by the Carmichael Kiwanis plus other breakfast fare. Tickets for Sunday are \$25 for 12 and older, \$10 for ages 6-11. Both mornings start at 8am. As an added treat, Jim and Marilyn from the Mendocino-based Discount Binoculars will be here both days so you can try out their wide range of binoculars and spotting scopes—and they know what birders like!

We encourage you to participate on one of these mornings as the birding and the food are fabulous, plus you'll get to spend the best part of the day with your fellow birders. To make a reservation and set up your method of payment, please call the Nature Center at 489-4918 between the hours of 9am-4pm from Tuesday through Sunday. This event almost always sells out so please make your reservation soon.

America and many more from all seven continents. In doing so, he has covered all the bases in Montana in all seasons of the year. Join us at this month's meeting as Ed takes us through the seasons, sharing with us the great diversity of birds he has managed to photograph. Whether it is a majestic Gyrfalcon in winter or an Upland Sandpiper in summer, you will find a myriad of images that you will find to be both informative and pleasing to the eye.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/sacramentoaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/sacramentoaudubon).

Sally Walters, Program Chair

2012-13 SAS NOMINATIONS

It's time for nominations to the Sacramento Audubon Board for the 2013/14 fiscal year. Positions are: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and five Directors. We are in particular need of a Recording Secretary. The Board recommended slate will be announced in the April newsletter and at the April general meeting. The vote will be held at the May general meeting. If you are interested in running for office please contact one of the Nomination Committees members:

Tim Fitzer, spskua2@comcast.net
Keith Wagner, k.wag@comcast.net
Cathie LaZier, empid@earthlink.net

Field Trip Findings

Yuba County Wetlands (2/10) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: “We had a good day with 11 people out for the trip. Our highlights included 2 Bald Eagles, with an immature flying over us right towards a field of waterfowl we were looking at, causing a nervous reaction. A pair of Prairie Falcons chased prey in front of our moving caravan along the roadside. Almost all duck, geese, raptor, and sparrow species were seen, along with Loggerhead Shrike, Long-billed Curlew, and Burrowing and Great Horned owls. Total for the day was 87 species.”

Sacramento Bar (2/9) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “A group of 14 people came out for a bird walk on a cold frosty morning.

We were able to find 43 species of birds. The highlight of the morning was the Phainopeplas that were in the tops of the trees. Everyone was fascinated by the apparent mating of a pair of Red-shouldered Hawks. We also watched a large group of Great Blue Herons starting a rookery in a cottonwood tree.”

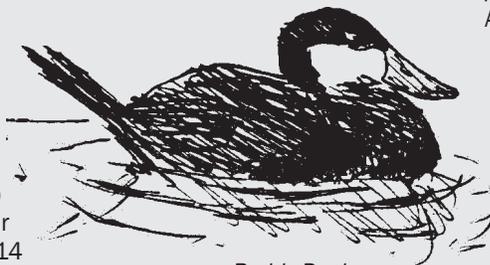
Colusa NWR (2/5) — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: “Our group of 10 birders gathered on the viewing platform at Colusa National Wildlife Refuge on this foggy winter’s day. We enjoyed sorting through the ducks and geese and then drove the auto tour route. Along the way we saw several birds of prey including Great Horned Owls, Red-shouldered Hawks and many Red-tailed Hawks. Also seen along the tour route were Wilson’s Snipe, White-faced Ibis, Long-billed Curlew and abundant Black-crowned Night Herons, in addition to all of the waterfowl. We finished our outing with a walk along the riparian trail near the viewing platform. Along with many sparrows and wrens, our walk produced two more Great Horned Owls, a Cooper’s Hawk, and a great view of two blue morph Ross’s Geese.”

Lincoln Grasslands (2/3) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Eight birders saw 97 species of birds on a very calm and

clear day in Placer and Sutter counties. Highlights included Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk, Barn Owl, Black-bellied Plover, Dunlin, Wilson’s Snipe, Brown Creeper and Hutton’s Vireo.”

Yolo/Solano Big Day (2/2) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Thirteen of us committed to a full day of birding hot spots of the two counties, Yolo and Solano. And we were not disappointed. We tallied 107 species overall.

Among the highlights were 17 species of duck, which included Wood Duck, Redhead, Barrow’s Goldeneye and Hooded



Ruddy Duck
Kirsten Munson

Merganser (I believe there were the most Hooded Mergansers along Lake Solano that I have ever seen in a day). Other highlights included a Merlin in the campground at Lake Solano (first I have ever seen at this location), Ferruginous Hawk and Prairie Falcon. But the real highlight was getting to 107 species. I don’t think any of us expected to get that many. Afterward, most of us gathered for dinner at a local Chinese restaurant in Davis to tally up species. Everyone really enjoyed this addition to the normal field trip outing.”

Western Placer County (1/27) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Nineteen birders enjoyed a great day, tallying 103 species. By far the highlight of the day was seeing 15 species of diurnal raptors. These included Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Prairie Falcon and Peregrine Falcon. We also had 3 species of owls: 2 Barn Owls, 2 Great Horned Owls and 5 Short-eared Owls. In addition, we had at least 40 Lark Sparrows at one spot. The same spot included Savannah Sparrows too numerous to count. And everyone enjoyed seeing tens of thousands of Snow, Ross’s and Greater White-fronted Geese along Brewer Rd. All in all, an incredible day of birding.”

Nimbus Fish Hatchery (1/26) — Leader Dan Kopp reported: “Ten folks joined me on this overcast morning with clearing around 11:30. There were not a lot of gulls, as high river flows have washed down the salmon carcasses, but we did briefly see a Mew Gull among the few California and Glaucous-winged Gulls. A male Ring-necked Duck was notable for the river. Several Phainopeplas were expected for this location, but were especially visible this morning. I alone saw a Rufous-crowned Sparrow across the river in proper habitat while looking through my scope. Two Peregrine Falcons were present this morning and one captured a White-throated Swift within 30 feet of the group as we were near the visitor’s center. A decent showing of expected woodland species brought our total to 57.”

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area (1/22) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “After weeks of cold and wet weather, the Bypass was bathed in sunshine and no winds. Even the auto loop road was in good condition free of mud and ruts. Our group of 10 enjoyed a good variety of birds typically found at the Bypass at this time of year. Highlights included American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Blue-winged Teal, Bufflehead, Ruddy Duck, American White Pelican, White-tailed Kite, Cooper’s Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Long-billed Curlew. We saw two American Bitterns. The first bird was hiding among dried stalks and camouflaged so well that not all participants were able to see it. As we were returning on the home stretch of the auto loop, another Bittern was seen in the open and standing very close to the road. Now everyone got a good look at the bird. Thanks, Bypass, for offering up a good day of birding.”

Road 113, Robinson Road, Bird’s Landing (1/20) — Mark Martucci, co-leader with Paul Cordero, reported: “Thirteen birders saw 59 species of birds on a very cold and clear morning. Highlights included Mountain Plover, Peregrine Falcon, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, Ferruginous Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Great Horned Owl and Burrowing Owl.”

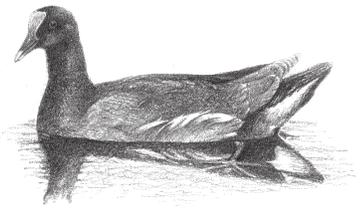
Pete Hayes

SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon



Field Trips



Common Moorhen
Daniel Kilby

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, contact the scheduler Richard Barbieri, 761-1124, offleash56@yahoo.com for trips through March 3. After March 4th contact the scheduler Mark Martucci, 833-6722, matuchbirdman@yahoo.com.

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

Saturday, March 2, 8am
Laguna Creek Wetlands, Elk Grove
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net
Cell that day only: 281-6652

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk on a paved trail along the Laguna Creek wetlands. Although sandwiched between housing on the north and south, this trail meanders along the creek and marshy areas and is bordered by urban plantings including many oaks. The diversity hosts a nice variety of birds such as ducks, herons, passerines, sparrows in winter, and unexpected species always a possibility. This is a good walk for beginners and is handicapped accessible. This trip will last into late morning. Meet Maureen at the Sheldon Road Park and Ride on the east side of Hwy 99 (Exit 288) south of Sacramento to carpool to the Park or 10-15 minutes later at Jack Hill Park. From Hwy 99 south, exit at Elk Grove Boulevard; pass Elk Grove-Florin Road, and less than a mile later turn left onto Porto Rosa Drive. Follow to Jack Hill Park and the parking area. Restrooms are available in the parking lot.

Sunday, March 3, 7am
Highway 37 and Ellis Creek, Petaluma
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

From the West Sacramento Park and Ride, Mark will lead the group towards Petaluma, with various birding stops along Hwy 37. Moving on to Ellis Creek (near Schollenberger Park), he'll look for Blue-winged Teal and a variety of other waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, Common Yellowthroat and the occasional rail and possibly a Peregrine Falcon. Bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. Meet

Mark at 7am at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

Tuesday, March 5, 8am-11am
Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach
American River Parkway
Leaders: Sally Walters and Don
Schmoldt, 739-6465
dschmoldt25@gmail.com

Join us for a morning bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. From Highway 50 take Howe Ave north to Fair Oaks Blvd. Turn left onto Fair Oaks and cross over the American River. Turn right on Carlson Ave, which is the first stop light past the American River bridge. Continue on Carlson Ave to its end, at Glenn Hall Park. Meet on top of the levee. This will be a fairly easy walk, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. We hope to see wintering sparrows and waterfowl, and resident birds including wrens, towhees, yellow-billed magpies and kinglets. It's an excellent trip for beginners.

Saturday, March 9, 8am
Lake Solano/Putah Creek
Leader: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net

This is a great area to find Pileated Woodpecker, Phainopepla, Brown Creeper, Barrow's Goldeneye and many other late wintering birds.

Meet Tim at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at

the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Sunday, March 10, 8am
Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Mark at this Nature Conservancy area 20 minutes south of Sacramento. He will search the ponds and fields on Desmond and Franklin Roads for waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors. Walks along the boardwalk, bridge and trail areas should turn up other interesting species in this rich riparian area. Meet Mark at the Visitor Center parking lot on Franklin Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, (Exit #498); go left (east) about 1 mile to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd: turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the preserve, watch for the visitor center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

Saturday, March 16, 7:30am
Mather Field Park
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
wayne.blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Great-tailed Grackle and Yellow-headed Blackbirds both nest at the lake. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel for this morning trip. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, March 17, 8am-noon
American River between

Field Trips continued on page 4

Watt and Howe

**Leader: Dan Kopp, 213-2791
rey_ality@hotmail.com**

Note that Dan is starting from the Watt Avenue access this time. Join him at one of his favorite spots along the Parkway in search of resident and wintering birds. There are well worn trails and some that require a little more work, so depending on everyone's ability, he will decide how strenuous the walk will be. Meet Dan at the Watt Avenue entrance to the Parkway in the first parking lot on the left as you drive in. Park access is off LaRiviera just east of Watt Avenue. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, March 17

**Beginning Birding Field Trip for adults
William Pond Park
Limited to 10 people; registration
required**

This field trip is for people who aren't entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders. A brief parking lot talk will focus on choice and use of binoculars and a brief overview of birding etiquette and ethics. The field trip will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats and will be led by two or more experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. Each trip is limited to 10 participants. Register via email to Cathie at empid@earthlink.net, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), giving your name, phone number and email address, or by calling Cathie at 457-6882 and leaving your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

Thursday, March 21, 7:30am

**Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1290
dtankers@winfirst.com**

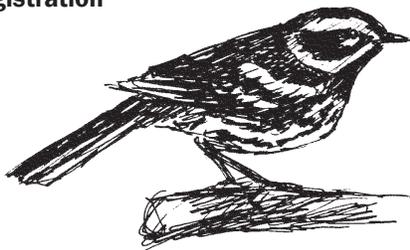
Join Dan to enjoy the birds of the River Walk and Wetlands Walk Trails at the Cosumnes River Preserve. At this time of year, many species will be busy setting up house and in some cases, feeding young. This will be a walk of 3 to 4 miles and depending on bird activity and weather, it could last beyond noon or end as early as 10:30. Be prepared to be on your feet the entire duration of the walk, and dress

for changeable spring weather. Remember to bring water and snacks. The Preserve is a short drive from Sacramento – south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The group will meet at 7:30am in the Visitor Center parking lot on your left; the entrance is just south of the driveway leading to the Visitor Center.

**Saturday, March 23, 7:30am
Sunrise Boulevard section of the
American River**

**Leader: Jane Taylor, 444-0429
jg.taylor@att.net**

The Sunrise Blvd stretch of the American River Parkway offers good spring birding for resident and returning riparian birds. This is a good trip for beginning birders and those wishing to hone their birdsong



Townsend's Warbler
Kirsten Munson

identification skills. Dress for walking dirt trails and bring liquids and snacks as the trip will last into late morning. Meet Jane at the parking lot at the foot of the pedestrian bridge east of Sunrise Blvd. Take

Highway 50 to Sunrise Blvd, north on Sunrise and right on South Bridge Street. Pay a \$5 per-vehicle entry fee, use your Sacramento County Parks Pass, or park where allowed on South Bridge St and walk in. Rain cancels.

**Sunday, March 24, 8am
Sacramento Bar**

**American River Parkway
Leader: Paul Cordero, email preferred
pkcordero@gmail.com, 454-4061**

Paul will lead you on a morning walk along the American River. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe a few early spring migrants. This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Tuesday, March 26, 8:30am
Yolo Wildlife Area**

**Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758
IshiM2000@comcast.net**

Join Marlene in this great area 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. Depending

on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl and possible raptors such as Peregrine Falcon. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A), on your left. Scopes and FRS radios are helpful on this trip which is good for both beginners and more experienced birders. Note: trip will be canceled if bypass is closed due to flooding.

**Saturday, March 30, 7:30am until
mid-afternoon**

**Eastern Sacramento County Foothills
Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com
Participants must RSVP.
The trip is limited to 15.**

This is a joint SAS and Central Valley Bird Club offering. We will have access to normally closed portions of the Deer Creek Hills preserve, in addition to visiting Latrobe, Michigan Bar, and, if time allows, Meiss Rds. Access to some sections of these roads is dependent on recent weather. Vast areas of open grassland and blue oak woodland interspersed with rocky outcrops and the Cosumnes River provide habitat for winter raptors, resident and winter songbirds, Lewis's Woodpeckers and, perhaps, a surprise or two. Be prepared for up to three miles of walking through rolling terrain and bring lunch and liquids for the day.

Sunday, March 31, 8am

**Sailor Bar, American River Parkway
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Join Mark for a morning walk checking out the resident birds, and looking for early nesters and spring migrants. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. This is a good trip for beginners. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, April 6, 2013 7am

**Caswell Memorial State Park
Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com**

Caswell Memorial State Park is on the Stanislaus River, about an hour south of Sacramento. The mature cottonwood ripar-



Oak Titmouse
Kirsten Munson

ian and valley oak woodland provides lush cover, nesting and foraging habitat, and is a magnet for a variety of resident and migrant bird species. 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. Passerines, including several species of swallows, sparrows, woodpeckers and warblers are park specialties in spring and summer, and Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, and Great Horned Owls nest here. Swainson's Hawks are also seen regularly here as are California Thrasher and Wren-tit.

There is a day-use fee per vehicle to enter the park. Plan to spend several hours in the park along the nature trails, so bring food and water. The trails are generally level, but may be damp. We will meet at the Park and Ride on the east side of Hwy 99 near the Sheldon Rd exit. Take Hwy 99 south from Sacramento to the Sheldon Road exit. The new off ramp here cloverleaf's and then crosses over the freeway. After crossing, proceed to the second signal light; turn right on East Stockton Blvd and proceed about a ¼ mile to the lot.

Sunday, April 7, 8am
Lincoln in Spring
Leader: John York, 409-9276
sunofyork@att.net

Meet in Raley's parking lot in Lincoln, off 65 and Sterling Parkway. I will be in the Sterling Cafe getting breakfast and we will head off for various areas around Lincoln at 8am. We will hit some of the usual hot-spots, but will also be looking for the influx of spring birds and local nesters that will be arriving around that time. We will explore some grassland areas for local raptors, waders and little guys as well. Bring lunch and scopes if you have them.

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2013

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sunday, March 17 and Sunday, April 7

Each Trip: Limited to 10 **adult** participants
Registration required.

These outings are geared toward people who aren't entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders.

The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on where to look and what important field marks to look for. This walk will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. An optional brief session at a picnic table afterwards will cover field guides, smart phone applications and optical equipment.

Register via email to Cathie at empid@earthlink.net, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number, email address and the field trip date of your choice, or by calling Cathie at (916) 457-6882 and leaving your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

THE 16TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FEBRUARY 15-18, 2013, CHECK THE RESULTS

The Great Backyard Bird Count took place from February 15-18. The object of the GBBC is for participants to count all the birds seen in their backyard (or chosen location) in 15 minutes. This can be done any time during the 4 days or once each day. The record is then submitted to the GBBC website. With submissions from across the country this gives scientists a great snapshot of how the birds are doing at this point in time and they can compare this year's results to years past for a look at population trends. This year for the first time, anyone with internet access could contribute their results, so scientists will have a start at looking at world wide trends. At presstime there is a realtime map showing where checklist submissions are originating from. California is 1st in the United States with checklists submitted, followed by New York. So just because the counting is over for 2013 doesn't mean the GBBC is over. Now have some fun checking the results.

Check all the results online at www.birdsource.org/gbbc. Then click on "Explore the Results" at the top of the page. You can look for maps, Top 10 and state tally lists. Compare these results to previous years. However, checklists can be submitted until March 1 so total numbers may be changing. We hope you participated but if not you can still join Project Feederwatch and contribute to ongoing research. Just click on the link to Project Feederwatch if you want to get involved.

Also this year's GBBC was conducted in conjunction with eBird. Participants were able to view what others were seeing on interactive maps and contribute their tallies for ongoing bird research and conservation efforts. For the first time, participants were able to upload their counts from the field using the eBird BirdLog app for Apple or Android smartphones. Use eBird for submissions year round and tally birds for yourself, see what others are finding and contribute to bird science.

YOUR DUES AND DONATIONS AT WORK

The Sacramento Audubon Society Board has voted to make the following donations:

- \$500 to Feather River Land Trust to support their work conserving the meadows and wetlands of the Sierra Valley.
- \$500 to Point Reyes Bird Observatory to support the Rich Stallcup Memorial Fund.
- \$50 and a copy of our book, *Birding in the Sacramento Region*, to the Department of Fish and Wildlife for their Nature Bowl children's environmental program.
- \$200 to ECOS, (Environmental Council of Sacramento), to further their environmental work.
- \$500 to Habitat 2020 to further their conservation work.
- \$432 towards costs for the Bufferlands calendar.
- \$1800 towards radiocollars and a fiber-optic camera for Dave Wyatt's Ringtail den site study in the Sutter Buttes.

Birding and Nature Events

GODWIT DAYS, ARCATA

The 18th annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held **April 18-24** in Arcata, CA. Godwit Days is a week long, spring migration bird festival celebrating California's North Coast. The northern coast of California offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats on Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where 271 species of birds have been sighted. Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover and even whale watching. This year's keynote speaker will be Dr. Gary Langham, who was named Audubon's Chief Scientist in June, 2011, after four years as Director of Bird Conservation for Audubon California. At Audubon California, Dr. Langham led a team that developed a model that identifies specific habitat areas and species at risk from climate change. Audubon is now expanding this groundbreaking approach to encompass 600 bird species across North America. He also pioneered many successful conservation solutions benefiting diverse bird species, including the endangered California Condor and threatened Western Snowy Plover.

The selection of over 100 small group field trips, lectures, workshops, boating excursions, and community activities are led by experienced local guides. For further information and registration visit www.godwitdays.com or call 1-800-908-WING.

DON'T MISS THE 4TH ANNUAL POINT REYES BIRDING AND NATURE FESTIVAL!

Save the dates of **April 26-28th** for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Enjoy birding at the height of spring migration with some of the best naturalists around. The Festival will once again be headquartered in Point Reyes Station and will include field trips in and around the Point Reyes National Seashore. Jeff Gordon, president of the American Birding Association, will deliver the keynote address at the Saturday evening banquet.

For more information, visit www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org. Registration began in late February and many of their field trips sell out fast so sign up soon. All proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS CONFERENCE

Start planning now. The thirty-eighth Annual Meeting of Western Field Ornithologists will take place at **Olympia, Washington, August 22-25, 2013**. More details will be posted as they become available. Registration will open in early May. For details and the conference flyer go to www.westernfieldornithologists.org and click on the 'Annual Conference' banner in the middle of the page.

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:

- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds;
- Promote the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach;
- Provide, encourage and support environmental educational opportunities; and
- Provide proactive leadership in the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

TABLES FOR BOBELAINE

Wanted: 2 sturdy picnic tables for Audubon's Bobelaine Preserve. This would be a great project for a scout, a class or group to earn the money to buy tables or get donated wood and build them, and deliver them.

Contact: Bajaowl@gmail.com

Subject: PICNIC TABLES for BOBELAINE PRESERVE (all caps)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Karen Brookhyser and Judith Tracy to the **General Fund**.

Karen Brookhyser, Tim Fitzer, Marti Ikehara, Truman Holtzclaw, Peter Stoddard, Carol Sughrue, Bruce Swinehart and Judith Tracy to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2013 PROGRAMS

April 18	Linda Pitman, <i>Pelagic Birds</i>
May 16	Debbie Miller, <i>Arctic Summer</i>

THE NEW SPEAKER'S BUREAU ALREADY AT WORK!

The speaker's bureau has been busy and we need more folks to make presentations. **Volunteers needed:** If you would like to help in getting more people enthused about birding by either making presentations or helping schedule presentations to kids or adult groups, please call Subhash Chand at subhashc@aol.com. SAS has presentations available and can provide training in making presentations.

NATURE/BIRDING MAGAZINE EXCHANGE

At the next general meeting take time to check out the birding and nature magazines on offer on the magazine counter. Browse and take home any of interest to you.

Finished with your birding and nature related magazines, but hate to throw them away? Bring them to our general meeting and leave on our magazine counter for others to enjoy.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Catherine A Globus

David Harlow

Robert L Klass

Judy Manhart

Tim Treichel

NEW Email Address—Please NOTE

Lea Landry, our membership chair has a new email address. Please change it in your address book.

llandry46@comcast.net

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 on March 26, at 7pm, at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

OBSERVER OUTREACH

The Galt Winter Bird Festival debuted the video "Common Birds of the Sacramento Area" a DVD created by Subash Chand, showing a variety of our common birds with accompanying songs and calls. Darrell Mohr, Cathie LaZier and Jonilynn Okano worked at the Audubon table, chatting with people about their birding experiences and encouraging them to come out on our field trips and to our meetings.

Upcoming events are Animal House Art Show in Carmichael, Return of the Swainson's Hawk at Sutter's Landing on the American River, ECOS Earth Day at Southside Park, and Walk On The Wild Side at Beach Lake. As always, we are in need of additional people to help at these events. If you're interested, contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, or 916-457-6882. You do not need to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding, and you would work with an experienced volunteer.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Your membership supports the SAS mission of conservation, environmental education and protection of the region's natural ecosystems and diverse wildlife populations. Please include your email address if you would like to be added to our Action Alert List for letter/email writing on conservation issues.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry46@comcast.net (916) 638-1141

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

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

Observations continued from page 8

The first winter **Northern Shrike** found in Sutter County off Pacific Ave near Striplin Rd on 12/27 continued through at least 1/2; another was reported on Phillip Road in Placer County on 1/2, while yet another was reported from the Colusa NWR on 1/14. Other interesting reports include an impressive 23 **Red-breasted Nuthatches** found on the UCD Winter Bird Count on 1/23, the **Winter Wren** near Lake Solano continuing into February, a **Townsend's Solitaire** at Nimbus Flat (Lake Natoma) on 1/7-8, **Sage Thrashers** from Putah Creek near UCD on 1/7 and Tonzi Rd NE of Lone on 1/28 into February. A **Palm Warbler** was found during a survey at Prairie City OHV Park on 1/3, and a **Red Fox Sparrow** was at the Valensin portion of CRP on 1/30. The north Davis **Harris's Sparrow** continued through at least 1/10, and the bird found in Fairfield on 12/17 continued into February. **Red Crossbills** continued at the south end of the Sacramento City Cemetery through at least 1/7, and the male **Common Redpoll** found on 12/31 continued at a feeder near Lincoln only through 1/1.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html). The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Steve Abbott, Murray Berner, Kathy Blankenship, Summer Brasuel, Dan Brown, Rudy Darling, Matthew Dodder, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Claire Gallagher, Frank Gray, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Jim Laughlin, John Luther, Brian O'Connor, Ed Pandolfino, Kathy Parker, Linda Pittman, Don Schmoldt, Dan Skalos, Gwen Starrett, John Sterling, Craig Swolgaard, Dan Tankersley, John Trochet, Charley Walker, Bruce Webb, Ed Whisler, and John York.

Without them, this column would not be possible.

Chris Conard

Seasonal Observations

January 1 to January 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

After a very wet December, January was dry, clear, and often cold. It appears the lack of rain encouraged many reports from the field. One to two **Trumpeter Swans** were reported in Sutter County at Hwy 70 near Striplin Rd from 1/13-17. **Brant** are very rare in the Central Valley, so two reports created much interest: Staten Island from 1/18-19 and Colusa NWR from 1/19-25. On 1/30, a **river otter** captured a swimming **Wood Duck** at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) by diving and grabbing it from beneath the water's surface. Distinctive male **Eurasian Green-winged Teal** were found south of Dixon on Creed Rd on 1/11-12 and at Colusa NWR on 1/14. Two male **Surf Scoters** were seen in the San Joaquin River from Sherman Island on 1/29. A female **Red-breasted Merganser** continued into the new year at Greenhaven Lake, and a first county record was found for Sutter County on 1/8-10 at Hwy 70 and Marcum Rd (the same site as the continuing **Horned Grebe**). A **Pacific Loon** was on Lake Natoma near Negro Bar along with a **Common Loon** from 1/11 into February, and the **Red-throated Loon** near the Folsom Lake Dam persisted from October.

An **American White Pelican** photographed at Bridgeway Island Pond in West Sacramento on 1/8 proved to have been banded in Idaho as a youngster in 2012. **Rough-legged Hawk** reports continued

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in good numbers throughout the area. A **Pacific Golden-Plover** was found at Stone Lakes NWR on 1/4 and two **Western Sandpipers** along Arno Rd near Galt on 1/1 were unusual for the winter. While regular in our area closer to the Delta, a

Mew Gull found on 1/21-29 in Yuba City along the Feather River was a first for Sutter County. An adult **Iceland Gull** (a state review species) was reported and photographed at the Davis WTP on 1/19-22. A **Lesser Black-backed Gull**, continuing from December, was found at the Davis WTP on 1/9, and a **Slaty-backed Gull** (another state review species) was reported at the same location on 1/27.

A **Long-eared Owl** was at the Yolo Grasslands Park from 1/12-14 and another was found at the Valensin portion of CRP on 1/30. **Short-eared Owls** were widely reported, with up to 8 along Riley Rd near Galt, and multiples from Yolo County Rd 30, and near Brewer and Nicholas Rds in Sutter County. A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was found on 1/27 and continued into February near Bear River High School, Lake of the Pines. On 1/3, single **Red-naped Sapsuckers** were reported from Rosemont and from Sailor Bar. A **Hairy Woodpecker** was a rare find for Sacramento County near Lake Natoma off of Young Wo Circle on 1/7.

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

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Observations continued on page 7