



# *The OBSERVER*

Sacramento Audubon Society

## *General Meeting*

**Thursday, May 21**  
**Shepard Garden and Art Center**  
**6:30pm Book Sale**  
**7pm General Meeting**

### **The Distribution and Abundance of the Swainson's Hawk**

Jim Estep is a wildlife biologist who has been working with Swainson's hawks for 25 years. He has conducted research on various aspects of the species' ecology, prepared management and conservation plans, and conducted surveys throughout the Central Valley and elsewhere. He is also the Chair of the Swainson's Hawk Technical Advisory Committee, an ad hoc group of researchers that facilitates research on the species and advises federal, state, and local agencies regarding conservation and land use issues. Jim worked for the California Department of Fish and Game from 1984 to 1989, the natural resources consulting firm of Jones and Stokes from 1989 to 2005, and has been an independent consulting biologist since 2005.

Using data from his 20-year population and ecology study in Yolo County, state- and county-wide surveys, and a variety of research projects, Jim's presentation will focus on the distribution, abundance, and natural history of the Swainson's hawk in California. The discussion will touch on morphology and plumage characteristics, habitat use, nest site selection, foraging behavior and diet, mate and site fidelity, reproduction, migration, and conservation.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park. The public is welcome. Visit our website [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org) and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions.

*Lea Landry, Program Chair*

### **ANNUAL MAY BOOK SALE**

Don't forget to bring your books to the Book Sale which begins at 6:30pm, before our general meeting. John Ginn will again be pricing the books for us so arrive early to give him a head start. The sale includes books, CDs, videos, and maybe even some artwork.

This is always a good fundraiser and we annually donate the monies raised to a worthy organization in the birding

conservation world. Thanks to all of you who participate. For any questions please call Tim Fitzer at 870-5207.

We are also selling Knit Sport Shirts with the SAS logo on them at our monthly meetings. They come in four colors, are 100% cotton and a "must-have." They are available to order for \$20 and will be shipped directly to you. Look for the order form at our Properties table.

## *Farallon Islands Boat Trip*

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 2009

As part of our usual field trip series, Sacramento Audubon Society (SAS) is sponsoring a trip off the coast of San Francisco to the Farallon Islands. We'll travel out the Golden Gate and cruise around Southeast Farallon Island, one of San Francisco's "desert islands" and part of the Point Reyes-Farallon Islands Marine Sanctuary. We'll be on the "Salty Lady", the same boat we've chartered many times in the past. The capacity of the boat is 45 people, but we will restrict the trip to the first 30 that sign up, to ensure everyone has plenty of room. The trip will last approximately 8 hours, departing out of Sausalito.

This will be the 19th year SAS has sponsored this trip, and every year is different! It is a great trip to see new birds to add to your life list. We should see many species that are usually only seen offshore or as a tiny speck in your scope from the shore! A partial list from last year: Cassin's and Rhinoceros Auklets, Pigeon Guillemot, Tufted Puffin, Brown Booby, Black-Footed Albatross, Sooty Shearwater, three species of cormorants, and Northern Fulmar. A naturalist will give a brief pre-departure lecture and will be with us all day to answer questions and provide information on the Islands and the wildlife. What will we see this year? Join us and discover for yourself.

The boat departs Sausalito promptly at 8am and returns about 3:30pm. The pre-trip lecture starts promptly at 7:30am. The trip cost is \$90; the trip is limited to the first 30 people that sign up, so sign up early to reserve your spot. Sign up deadline is June 15.

Detailed instructions and pre-trip information will be provided once you reserve your space. Contact Ken Hashagen (916) 316 8596 cell or (916) 635-4435 home, for further information. Please fill out and return the Registration Form on page 7 to Ken Hashagen.

## Field Trip Findings

**Sailor Bar, American River Parkway** (4/12) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Five birders had 64 species of birds. Highlights included American White Pelican, Great Horned Owl, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Western Kingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Wilson’s Warbler, Bullock’s Oriole and Rufous-crowned Sparrow.”

**Lake Solano/Putah Creek** (4/11) — Leader Dan Kopp reported: “Highlights unfortunately were few: we saw several Brown Creepers in the campground and day-use area, one about five feet away while eating lunch. Also saw my FOS Bullock’s Oriole from the campground across Hwy 128 (we would later see about four below Monticello Dam after lunch). We did see several Black Phoebe nests and a swarm of well over 100 Cliff Swallows finishing off nests below Pleasants Valley Road; most of us also watched an interesting exchange between a pair of Tree Swallows and a pair of Downy Woodpeckers; the swallows were fighting to usurp the woodpeckers’ cavity and they were going ‘round and ‘round for ownership of this limited resource. All I could think was, “what nerve these swallows have,” as it appeared the woodpeckers were still excavating the cavity. This was near the bridge on the campground side just off the trail that goes under the bridge. A late Hermit Thrush and a group of Bufflehead were nice too. Like I said, not much but it was a fun day with about 9 participants. We tallied only 45 species.”

**Yolo Basin Wildlife Area** (4/9) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “Despite threats of rain, three participants completed a satisfying tour of the Wildlife Area before the rains started. Highlights included observing thousands of Yellow-headed Blackbirds at various locations either feeding or roosting in the bulrushes, a Swainson’s Hawk sitting on a nest once occupied by a Great Horned

Owl earlier in the season, a Double-crested Cormorant swallowing a rather large catfish, and a Great Horned Owl sitting on a nest viewable from Parking Lot D. Although we did not see them, it appears the owl was sitting on the nest protecting young. Several American Bitterns were seen flying and we saw American Avocets and Dunlins in breeding plumage.”

**Mather Field Park** (4/5) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “As 10 of us met in beautiful weather, four raptors were sighted: Cooper’s, Red-shouldered, and Red-tailed hawks and several working White-tailed Kites, one with prey in its talons. More Great-tailed Grackles were present than last year at this time and several Yellow-headed Blackbirds were spotted in their usual locations. We had Brown-headed Cowbirds and White-crowned

sparrows were still present. At least two Orange-crowned warblers were spotted as well as numerous Yellow-rumps. Had fly-overs of Bullock’s Oriole, Black-necked Stilt, Wilson’s Snipe and an American Bittern. FOS Western Kingbirds were spotted in a cluster of 8. Nuttall’s Woodpeckers were heard and a Downy Woodpecker was spotted. A nesting Great Horned Owl was sighted and the two Mute Swans were back from last year. Song Sparrows and a Hermit Thrush added delight. A total of 51 species made for a great morning of birding. A River Otter also was found.”

**Yolo Basin Wildlife Area and Davis Wetlands** (4/4) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: “Some of the highlights

were American White Pelican, American Bittern, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and White-faced Ibis. We saw several species of ducks, Swainson’s Hawk, Common Moorhen, and lots of Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets. There were a few Longed-billed Curlews, along with several Wilson’s Snipes, Dunlin in the start of breeding plumage, and Least Sandpiper. Yellow-headed, Red-winged and some Tricolored Blackbirds were present and Marsh Wren were plentiful as usual. We tallied 50 plus species.”

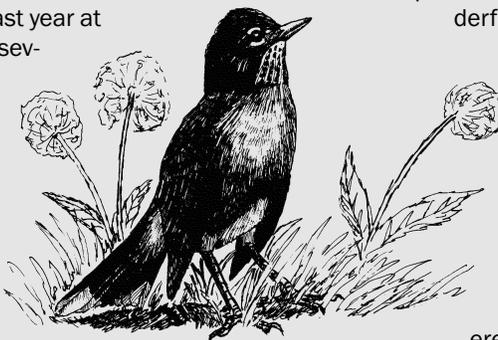
**Bobcat Ranch, Yolo County** (3/29) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “The trip to Bobcat Ranch was so wonderful I hardly know where

to start. We didn’t see any bobcats, but everything else was great. Thirty of us had an amazing day with a long, leisurely hike and a surprising number of species, given the windy condition.

Many wildflower-covered hillsides and a spectacular view east into the valley helped make this a great day.

We had many good birders including Ed Harper and Chris Conard, so I am sure we didn’t miss any good birds. Some favorites were Rufous-crowned Sparrows, singing, many Lark Sparrows, a Lewis’s Woodpecker, Western Bluebirds calling throughout the hike, Western Kingbirds, Violet-green Swallows overhead and Northern Rough-winged Swallows flying low over the meadows. A nice day and we will do this again.”

**Caswell Memorial State Park, San Joaquin County** (3/28) — Leader Gary Fregien reported: “A very pleasant early spring trip for 8 birders to Caswell Memorial State Park produced 53 species, nearly all of them resident in the



Stephen D’Amato

*Findings* continued on page 7

## In Memorium, Bill Hart

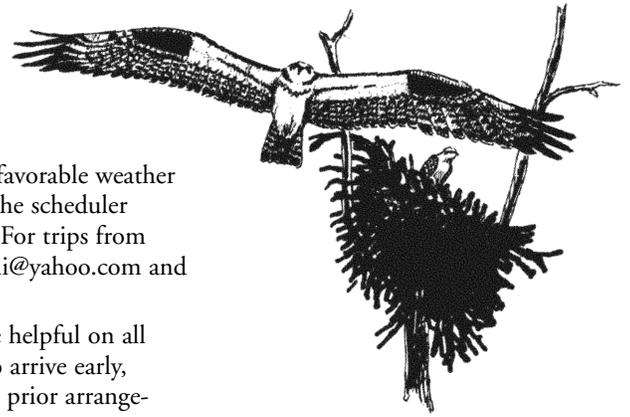
Many of you know Bill Hart from Sacramento Audubon trips, as a staple on the Woodfords CBC, and as a leader of Audubon trips and a general birding authority in Alpine County, where he’d show off his front yard Pinyon Jays, among other birds.

Fortunately many of us got to spend time with him in the field and I’m sad to learn that I won’t see him out at Point Reyes, up in Markleeville, or at that next good bird in the Valley.

Chris Conard

Bill is survived by two sons, two daughters, four grand children, and a great grand baby. After a stint at the aviary at the San Diego Zoo, Bill had a long career with the California Dept. of Fish and Game. He birded throughout his Fish and Game career and devoted a lot of time to birding after his retirement. Among his many qualities he was a practical person. He knew how to do a lot of things and was a problem solver. Perhaps best of all, he never complained, even under the most trying circumstances.

# 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 or she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Carla Barbaro, 486-1198, cbarbaro@comcast.net, for trips through May 17th. For trips from May 20th through June 21, call the scheduler Andi Salmi, 691-7216, andisalmi@yahoo.com and after June 22, call Dan Brown, 362-2458, naturestoc@aol.com.

Consider car pooling 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.

**Saturday, May 2nd., 7am**  
**Auburn State Recreation area/  
Drivers Flat and Ruck-a-Chucky**  
**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**  
**Shoppe01@earthlink.net**

We will be exploring the beautiful canyon of the Middle Fork of the American River off Foresthill Road to look for spring migrants and resident breeding birds.

This is Scott's favorite 'secret' birding spot. Possibilities include several species of flycatcher, including Gray, Hammond's and Pacific-slope; Hutton's, Cassin's and Warbling Vireos; up to 7 species of warbler; Black-headed Grosbeak; Lazuli Bunting and Bullock's Oriole. Walking will be up to a mile at a time with moderate inclines. This trip will end mid-day, but plan to lunch on the banks of the river. Meet at the Horseshoe Bar Rd. Park and Ride in Loomis off I-80 at 7am.

**Sunday, May 3, 7:00am**  
**Sand Creek Road Ridge**  
**Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207**  
**spskua2@comcast.net**  
**and Dan Brown, 362-2458**  
**naturestoc@aol.com**

Sand Creek Rd. is out of Arbuckle, off I-5 North about an hour drive from meeting place. We will be looking for Black-chinned and Sage Sparrows, Wrentits, Mountain Quail, Roadrunners and migrating birds. The road could be muddy if it has been raining, then 4-wheel drive vehicles will be necessary. Bring lunch and FRS Radios, we will return mid-afternoon. Meeting place is the Woodland Jack in the Box. Take 1-5 north toward Woodland; exit at County Road 102 (#536); turn right (north) on 102 and turn right into the Jack in the Box parking lot.

**Tuesday, May 5, 8am - noon**  
**Sailor Bar Area**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Meet Jack at the end of Emperor Street to explore the plants, birds and animals of this riparian corridor along the American River Parkway. From Winding Way, turn south on Kenneth, then east on Emperor Street to the end.

**Thursday, May 7, 7am**  
**Sand Creek and County Road 41**  
**A Yolo Audubon trip**  
**Leader: Sami LaRocca, 530 908-0288**  
**sami182@wavecable.com**

For this trip we'll go north to Colusa County on I-5 to Arbuckle. Proceeding west we'll begin our trip on Sand Creek Road. At this time of year there will be breeding birds such as Western Bluebird, Bullock's Oriole and Western Kingbird. In the dry creek bed can be found Greater Roadrunner and Lesser Nighthawk. Other birds that are found in this chaparral habitat are California Thrasher, Downy Woodpecker and Lawrence's Goldfinch. In addition we may see both Blue and Black-headed Grosbeak. Meet at the Marketplace Shopping Center (near Big 5 Sporting Goods, 1301 W. Covell in Davis, just east of Hwy 113) at 7am. We'll plan on getting back to Davis about 2:30. All levels of birders are welcome. Bring water, snacks/lunch and binoculars.

**Saturday, May 9th, 7:30am**  
**Spenceville Wildlife Area**  
**Leader: Richard Barbieri: 966-4603**  
**offleash56@yahoo.com**

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. This trip will include several short hikes over uneven terrain.

Possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, rails, warblers, and more. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at the Brookfield's Restaurant parking lot, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit #105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station. Brookfield's is behind Shell.

**Sunday, May 10, 7:30am**  
**Riverbend Park on Mother's Day**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**empid@earthlink.net**

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right, just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland, looking for wrens, nuthatches and other small birds with young, also nesting Red-shouldered Hawks and possibly some other birds still in nests. We should also find some spring wildflowers and Pipevine Swallowtail butterflies. This is a good trip for beginners, and will end before noon. From Folsom Blvd., between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). There is a \$5 per car park entrance fee.

**Saturday May 16, 7:00am**  
**San Mateo County Coast/  
Half Moon Bay**  
**Leader: Dan Williams, 714 943-1266**  
**jaegermaestro@yahoo.com**

Join Dan as he explores the coast just south of San Francisco. McNee Ranch State Park near the town of Pacifica is known for its spectacular sea views and vibrant spring wildflower displays. From there we will

*Field Trips* continued on page 4

*Field Trips* continued from page 3

continue south to Half Moon Bay and bird Princeton Harbor and Pilarcitos Creek. Birds we hope to see include California Thrasher, Hermit and Townsend's Warblers, Surf-bird, Snowy Plover, Red Knot and much more (all in brilliant breeding plumage)! Bring a lunch to enjoy in the fresh sea air, and meet 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, on the north side of the freeway.

**Sunday, May 17, 7:30am**

**Sacramento Bar**

**American River Parkway**

**Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722**

**matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Mark will lead you on a morning walk long the American River Parkway. You will see a nice variety of resident and summer nesting birds. From Hwy 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd, turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd, and take the first left on Pennsylvania. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee.

**Wednesday, May 20, 8am - noon**

**Paradise Beach**

**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Meet Jack in Glen Hall Park at the end of Carlson Drive for this interesting morning hike along the American River. Jack will show his skills as an all-around naturalist by pointing out birds, butterflies and wildflowers.

**Saturday, May 23, time TBD**

**Dragonfly trip**

**Location: TBD**

**Leader: Tim Manolis, 485-9009**

**Ylightfoot@aol.com**

Since the weather will affect the best location to see a variety of dragonfly species, Tim will scout his favorite haunts and choose the exact meeting location as the date approaches. Call or email Tim the week before the trip to get the time and meeting place. With his expertise as the author of a field guide to California dragonflies and damselflies, you can be sure that he will lead you to the best possible site. Bring your binoculars and wear shoes that can get wet—just in case!

**Sunday, May 24, 6am**

**Sierra Valley**

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**

**shope01@earthlink.net**

The month of May can be a peak time for viewing breeding birds in Sierra Valley. We will stop at Kyburz Flat on the way to look for nesting Mountain Bluebirds and other montane species, and Sandhill Cranes are possible here as well. Birding will be done mostly by car, with numerous stops along the way. Bring lunch and water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Scott at 6am at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis, exit #110 off I-80.

**Saturday, May 30, 7am**

**Crystal Basin**

**Leader: Frank Gray, 723-5249**

**fgray4birds@aol.com**

This area is about 70 miles east of Sacramento. Frank plans several stops with short walks along Icehouse Road and side roads. Many of the areas are at about a mile elevation and are within the area of the '92 Cleveland Fire. There will likely be good chances to view Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Mountain Bluebird, several species of warblers and other birds of the area. Bring lunch, liquids, and footwear suitable for hiking and wet meadows. Both beginners and experienced birders are welcome. Some time will be spent birding by ear and pointing out bird ID features on this slow-paced trip. We expect to return by 2 or 3pm. Carpooling encouraged. Meet Frank in the Raley's parking lot in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd. and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot.

**Sunday, May 31, 8am**

**Sailor Bar, American River Parkway**

**Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722**

**matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Mark will lead you on a morning walk to a lovely spot along the American River Parkway. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe some surprises. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end

of the entrance road. This is a good trip for beginning birders.

**Tuesday, June 2, 11:30am**

**Purple Martins in Old Sacramento**

**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**

**mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net**

Enjoy wonderful close looks at Purple Martins where they nest in Old Sacramento. You will also see nesting White-Throated Swifts and probably Cliff and Tree Swallows. Previous years have turned up other interesting species as well. Meet Maureen on the east side of the Railroad Museum along Second Street.

**Wednesday, June 3**

**Evening Beaver Walk**

**American River Parkway**

**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

This is a great trip if you've never seen a beaver, because Jack reports a 100% success rate! This trip is limited to 8 people, with a minimum age of 7 years old. Please call Jack to reserve a space and to find out the meeting time and place. Jack will, of course, point out the birds and plants, as well as the mammals, on this evening trip.

**Saturday, June 6, 6:30am**

**Mosquito Ridge, Placer County**

**Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942**

**conardc@gmail.com**

We will explore several productive areas outside of Foresthill along Mosquito Ridge Rd, including Grouse Falls and the Placer Big Trees Grove. Expect good numbers of mid-elevation breeding birds, including distant views of Black Swifts at Grouse Falls. There are no services once we leave, so bring all of the food and liquids you will need for a full day. The day trip will end by mid-afternoon. We will be walking about 4 miles over easy to moderate terrain at a comfortable pace. Meet at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis, exit 110 off Hwy 80. If there is sufficient interest, you may choose to stay until dark for some owling, as several species breed in this area. If you plan to stay for owling, contact Chris for additional information.

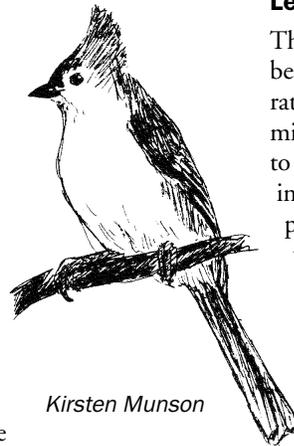
**Sunday, June 7, 7:30am**

**Riverbend Park (formerly Goethe Park)**

**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**

**empid@earthlink.net**

Join Cathie for a walk through the oak woodland to the river, looking for our summer birds on nests or in cavities, singing and feeding young. Some wildflowers



Kirsten Munson

should still be blooming. This is a good trip for beginning birders. The trip will end before noon. Meet in the first parking lot on your right just past the entrance kiosk. There is a \$5 entrance fee per car; if you want to carpool in meet Cathie at 7:20 on Rod Beaudry Drive just off Folsom Blvd.

**Saturday, June 13, 7:30am**  
**Brannan and Sherman Islands**  
**Leader: Dan Williams, 419-9495**  
**jaegermaestro@yahoo.com**

Join Dan for a morning of birding the Delta region. Brannan Island Recreation Area and nearby Sherman Island are located in the very southeasternmost corner of Sacramento County and are home to dozens of breeding bird species including Swainson's Hawk, Blue Grosbeak, Yellow Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat. Due to the unique geographic situation of this part of the county, we have a chance of seeing a few coastal species such as Western Gull, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, and maybe even Least Tern. If there is interest we may cross the bridge into Contra Costa County and bird one of the regional parks there in the afternoon. Meet at the La Bou on West El Camino just west of Truxel at 7:30 to carpool. Bring a lunch and drinks. There is a \$6 per car entrance fee to the Recreation area.

**Saturday, June 13, 5:35am**  
**River Walk Bird Count, Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Recorded information, 684-2816 or**  
**www.cosumnes.org;**  
**check the Activity Schedule**

Meet at the Visitor Center on Franklin Blvd. for this monthly birding census trip. It's a great birding area, always full of surprises; joining a group trip is a good way to find out what's happening at the preserve. You must check the recorded information or the web site a day or two in advance to verify the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

**Sunday June 14, 7:30am**  
**Mather Field**  
**Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457**  
**wayne.blunk@worldnet.att.net**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. Join Wayne to look for a nice variety of resident birds. Targeted birds will be Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Black-headed Grosbeaks, White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey and Green Heron. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's

Nest Road for this morning trip. This is a fee area. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

**Friday, June 19**  
**Evening Beaver Walk**  
**American River Parkway**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Don't forget to bring your binoculars on this evening trip to look for beavers. This trip is limited to 8 people, with a minimum age of 7 years old. Please call Jack to reserve a space and to find out the meeting time and place. In addition to the beavers, you will enjoy observing the birds and plants, and perhaps other mammals.

**Saturday June 20, 5am**  
**Tall Forest Bird Count,**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve**  
**Leader: John Trochet**  
**Recorded information: 684-2816 or**  
**www.cosumnes.org;**  
**check the Activity Schedule**

Meet John at the Farm Center gate 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 in advance to verify the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

**Saturday and Sunday, June 20 – 21,**  
**8am Onsite both Saturday and Sunday**  
**Sierra Valley/Antelope Valley/**  
**Yuba Pass**  
**Leaders: Gary Fregien, 708-0636**  
**calaveri@sbcglobal.net**  
**Mark Martucci 833-6722**  
**matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

This trip offering is designed to accommodate both those who want to do an overnighter and those wanting to bird either the Yuba Pass area or Sierra/Antelope Valleys as a day trip. Antelope Valley is located at the southern end of Sierra Valley near Loyalton/Sierra Brooks, and includes a very productive riparian stream zone adjacent to a previous wildfire. We will bird the Sierra/Antelope Valleys area by car on Saturday, a full day's excursion, and the Yuba Pass area on Sunday until early afternoon. Lodging is available in Truckee, Sierraville, Portola, Calpine and Sierra City. U.S. Forest Service campgrounds are located between Truckee and Sierraville on Hwy 89, and between Yuba Pass and Sierra City on Hwy 49. Gary plans to be at the Yuba Pass campground for the entire week preceding the fieldtrip; thus, he will not be reachable

by email or phone after mid-afternoon Thursday, 6/11. Contact Mark, if necessary. Meet Gary and Mark at 8am at the junction of Hwys 89 and 49 in Sierraville on Saturday, and/or at the Yuba Pass Sno-Park parking lot, at the summit, on Hwy 49 west of Sierra Valley on Sunday. Car pooling is encouraged. Bring along hand held radios, food and water, and dress for probable cool mornings and warm afternoons.

**Saturday, June 27, 7am Sharp!**  
**Wright's Lake**  
**Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870- 5207**  
**spskua2@comcast.net**  
**Phyllis Wilburn, (530) 642-9942**

This high mountain lake near the edge of the Desolation Wilderness offers a good sample of high Sierran bird life. Tim and Phyllis will help you find many of the Sierran bird specialties including Pine Grosbeak, Black-backed Woodpecker, White-headed Woodpecker and Cassin's Finch. Bring water and lunch for a full days birding, bring your FRS radios and be prepared for changeable weather. Meet Tim and Phyllis at the Bella Bru Cafe at the south end of the Raley's parking lot just north of Highway 50 off of El Dorado Hills Blvd, (Exit #30B).

**Sunday, June 28, 8am**  
**Swainson's Hawk Trip**  
**Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722**  
**matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Nesting Swainson's Hawks are the focus of this morning trip, in conjunction with "Friends of the Swainson's Hawk" (FOSH), a group organized to encourage habitat protection. Our local population of Swainson's Hawks differs from other Swainson's Hawks in their migration patterns and wintering grounds. Members of FOSH will be on hand to share information about these interesting birds. Mark will also be looking for other valley nesting birds. Meet Mark 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 left again into the Park and Ride lot, on the north side of the freeway. FRS radios and spotting scopes will be helpful, if you have them.

**Monday, June 29**  
**Evening Beaver Walk**  
**American River Parkway**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

If you missed an earlier trip to see beavers, now is the time to go. This trip is limited

*Field Trips* continued on page 6

*Field Trips* continued from page 5

to 8 people, with a minimum age of 7 years old. Please call Jack to reserve a space and to find out the meeting time and place. Jack, a great all-around naturalist, will point out other animals as well as plants on this short, evening walk.

**Sunday, July 5, 7:30am**  
**Point Pinole Regional Shoreline**  
**Contra Costa County**  
**Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net**  
**Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277**  
**kenpoe@sbcglobal.net**

This lovely park may be new to many local birders. At the confluence of the San Francisco and San Pablo Bays, it is a great place to hike in the summer due to clear, stunning views and its proximity to the water which tends to keep it cool and breezy. Join Maureen and Ken on a four mile, fairly level hike along the shoreline, through the eucalyptus stands and meadows, past the historical munitions areas, and onto the 1,250foot fishing pier in search of resident birds, especially shorebirds. There is a \$3 parking fee; portable toilets are available in several locations in the park. This trip will last until late morning, with an optional lunch at the Chevy's at Hilltop Drive and I-80 in Richmond before heading home. Meet Maureen at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento by 7:30am for a prompt departure. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and left again into the Park and Ride lot, on the north side of the freeway. There is a secondary meeting place in Fairfield—call for details.

**Friday, July 10**  
**Evening Beaver Walk**  
**American River Parkway**  
**Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Here's another opportunity to view beavers along the American River. Bring your binoculars and be prepared for a real treat. This trip is limited to 8 people, with a minimum age of 7 years old. Please call Jack to reserve a space and to find out the meeting time and place.

**Saturday, July 11, 6am**  
**Loney Meadow**  
**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**  
**or 652-5409**  
**shoppe01@earthlink.net**

Come join Scott for this July trip. Loney Meadows is a beautiful mountain meadow north of Grouse Ridge near Bowman Lake at about 6000' elevation. The area can have some excellent birding. Scott has seen 8 species of woodpecker there (including Pileated, Black-backed and Williamson's Sapsucker); also Townsend's Solitaire, Calliope Hummingbird, Willow Flycatcher, 7 species of warbler and previous trips have produced Bald Eagles. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride on Horseshoe Bar Road in Loomis, exit #110 off I-80, at 6am. The meadow is about an hour and half's drive from there. Bring water and lunch or a snack.

**Sunday, July 12**  
**Farallons Pelagic Trip**

Shearwaters, puffins, petrels and more, as well as marine mammals such as whales and porpoises. Don't miss this fun trip. See the front page article and the registration form on the opposite page.

## **National Audubon Establishes New Endowment to Pay for Management and Upkeep of BOBELAINE SANCTUARY**

### **SAS Board Proposes to Rededicate Previously Earmarked Funds to Conservation and Education.**

Audubon's Bobelaine preserve, located at the confluence of the Bear and Feather rivers in Sutter County, was established under a joint agreement between National Audubon Society and Sacramento Audubon. The sanctuary's purpose is to preserve and protect rare remnants of the riparian forests that once blanketed the Great Valley of California. Under their joint agreement, Bobelaine is owned by National Audubon, but is managed and maintained by the Sacramento chapter.

Prior to 2009, Sacramento Audubon Society was solely responsible for funding management and upkeep of the sanctuary. Several years ago, in recognition of the need for secured funding, the chapter's Board of Directors elected to establish an endowment fund to cover such costs. At present, this Board-established fund now has an accumulated balance of approximately \$7,000.

In 2008, National Audubon Society received a substantial bequest from the estate of Bob and Elaine Crandall (for whom Bobelaine is named). National has placed the Crandall bequest into a new endowment fund, which now covers the chapter's ongoing maintenance and upkeep costs for the sanctuary.

With National's establishment of the Crandall endowment to fund Bobelaine's maintenance and upkeep, there is no longer a need for the chapter to maintain a separate endowment for identical purposes. Accordingly, the Sacramento Audubon Society's Board of Directors has determined that the funds now sitting idle in the chapter's Bobelaine endowment should be moved to the chapter's Conservation and Education account. Once transferred, these funds can actually be used by the chapter to support its many, ongoing conservation and education programs and activities.

At the chapter's May 21, 2009 general meeting, the chapter's membership will be asked to ratify the Board's decision to transfer the chapter's Bobelaine endowment fund to the chapter's Conservation and Education account.

If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please email Keith Wagner, at [president@sacramentoaudubon.org](mailto:president@sacramentoaudubon.org), putting "Bobelaine Endowment" in the subject line.

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## **NEWLY ELECTED SAS BOARD FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2008/2009**

The nominations were unanimously approved at the April general meeting.

President	Keith Wagner
Vice President	Ken Hashagen
Treasurer	Cathie LaZier
Corresponding Secretary	Joanne Vinton
Recording Secretary	Jan Tankersley
Directors	Tim Fitzner, Roy Greenaway, Lea Landry Darrell Mohr, Julie Serences

## Farallon Islands Boat Trip Reservation Form

Sunday, July 12, 2009 Registration deadline: June 15, 2009

Tour departs from Harbor Drive, Sausalito. Trip price: \$90 per person

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons \_\_\_\_\_ Total Payment \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to carpool? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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

Ken Hashagen, 11375 Buckeye Hill Ct., Gold River, CA 95670



### *Findings* continued from page 2

park. Notable exceptions included such migrants as the Swainson's Hawk; there were several of them providing aerobatics and mating calls throughout the day. We also had nice looks at a perched Red-shouldered Hawk, and an overflight of a dark phase Red-tailed Hawk. An overflight of 9 American White Pelicans was an added treat. The number of Spotted Towhee was rivaled only by nearly equal numbers of Nuttall's and Downy Woodpecker. Acorn Woodpecker and Northern Flicker were also observed. House Wren were also well-represented, with their songs almost always audible, along with a few Bewick's Wren. We saw 3 kinds of thrushes; Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush and American Robin. The warblers were represented by the "normal" winter species in the valley, Orange-crowned and Yellow-rumped. As should be expected, the sparrow species were the best-represented group of birds. We saw Spotted and California Towhee, Fox, Song and Lincoln's Sparrow, White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco. House Finch, Lesser and American Goldfinch represented that group. On the river (Stanislaus), we had Wood Duck, American Wigeon, Mallard and Common Merganser. We settled for only 2 swallow species this year, Tree and Northern Rough-winged, indicating we may have been a week or so early for spring migration. Good reason to go back, as if we need one."

**Lincoln Grasslands** (3/22) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: "Seventeen birds had 86 species of birds. Highlights

included Western Kingbird, Merlin, Great Horned Owl, Barn Owl, Rock Wren, Bald Eagle and Tricolored Blackbird."

**Cosumnes River Preserve** (3/21) — Leader Brian Gilmore reported: "Along Desmond Road were an appreciable number of shorebirds, ducks, sandpipers, plovers, and others. Most notable was a Eurasian Wigeon spotted by Harlin Perryman with his scope. Among four Black-bellied Plovers was an individual in near-breeding plumage. Many of the Avocets, Greater/Lesser Yellowlegs and a few Dunlin were also well into their breeding plumage. Several thousand Greater White-fronted Geese also were seen flying in the area. There were also at least 75 or so Least Sandpipers foraging with the Killdeers, American Pipits, and Yellowlegs in the mud near the road. Along the boardwalk a Barn Swallow was seen among the many Tree Swallows, and a Wilson's Snipe was cooperative for a good view through the spotting scope. Marsh Wrens, Song Sparrows and a single Common Yellowthroat were singing despite the wind. Along the Cosumnes River Walk trail a Fox Sparrow was seen with a group of White- and Golden-crowned Sparrows, and a nesting pair of Swainson's Hawks were spotted at the nest located on the south side of the river. The nest, although visible with a spotting scope, was obscured by a clump of mistletoe. In all 72 species were seen for a half-day of birding."

*Pete Hayes*

## AUDUBON CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY

### **The Future of Conservation Audubon California Assembly 2009**

Every 18 months California Audubon has a statewide assembly at Asilomar in Monterey. It's a great opportunity to meet other folks active in local chapters and check out what they are doing. This year SAS was represented by Keith Wagner and Julie Serences. Additionally local members Marty Maskall and Subhash Chand attended.

The focus was the Future of Conservation. Befitting the theme, six youth programs from around the state gave presentations that kicked off the Assembly with hope for the future of conservation. Students came from Dorsey High in South Central Los Angeles, Eco-Oakland program Golden Gate Audubon Oakland, Debs Park in Orange County, Richardson Bay Audubon Center, Audubon California Starr Ranch Sanctuary and SLEWS (Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship) program, Audubon California Landowner Stewardship program and Center for Land-based Learning here in the Sacramento Area. It was very exciting to see what young folks are accomplishing!

Highlights also included talks by Ruth Coleman, Director, California State Parks and Steve Blank, Chair, Audubon California Board of Directors and workshops held on various conservation topics. To top it off Jack Laws was there for inspiration!

If you get a chance try to attend the next Assembly—very informative and a lot of fun. P.S. Some great field trips are also part of the Assembly!

## Birding and Nature Festivals

### KERN RIVER VALLEY SPRING NATURE FESTIVAL

The 15th Annual Kern River Valley Spring Nature Festival exhibits and activities will take place the weekend of May 2-3, 2009. Bob Barnes' Kern River Valley Birding will again handle the field trips from April 29th through May 5th. The Kern River Valley is one of nature's most diverse homes: 350 bird species (c. 233 species per Nature Fest and over 200 nesting species!), Spring bird migration creates an exciting time for birders visiting the Kern Valley Spring Nature Festival. The last five festivals have averaged 233 bird species!

Saturday and Sunday, Audubon-California's Kern River Preserve in Weldon, hosts numerous free events including bird walks led by Kerncrest Audubon Society volunteers, bird banding with the Southern Sierra Research Station, and information booths and exhibits located in the large, shaded front yard of Preserve Headquarters. For further information including activities, trip descriptions, accommodations, and a list of the birds seen last year visit <http://kern.audubon.org/bioregion.htm>.

### SPRING WINGS BIRD FESTIVAL

The twelfth Annual Spring Wings Bird Festival takes place in Fallon, NV and coincides with International Migratory Bird Day and the height of spring migration in the Lahontan Valley wetlands. This year's festival is May 8-10. These internationally recognized wetlands are temporary home to over 260 species of birds, including thousands of White-faced ibis, Long-billed dowitcher, American white pelicans, Black-necked stilts, American avocets, and many other waterfowl and waterbirds. During the 2008 festival, 147 different species were logged- not quite the festival record of 2007 but still a good number of species! More information can be found at [www.springwings.org](http://www.springwings.org), so save this date.

### MONO BASIN BIRD CHAUTAUQUA

The 8th Annual Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua will be held June 19-21. There will be field trips including owling, Yosemite, Lee Vining, Rush Creek Delta and Mono Basin. living in the Mono Basin area. There is quite a variety of field trips, including one to identify the six possible chipmunks found in the area. A trip to Lake Crowley offers the largest Bank Swallow colony in the Eastern Sierra, Common Nighthawks harvesting the insect-rich air space over the lake, and typical sagebrush denizens, such as Sage Thrasher, Brewer's Sparrow, Sage Sparrow, and, with luck, Loggerhead Shrike and Greater Sage-Grouse. There are many other popular field trips throughout the region but several are full already so register soon. Special events include a kayak tour of Mono Lake. The website for more information and registration is [www.birdchautauqua.org](http://www.birdchautauqua.org).

### 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.

### Native Bee Workshop

On Saturday, March 20th, 30 people attended the first SAS Native bee workshop. Jessa Guisse of the Xerces society, led off describing the importance of native pollinators and the kinds of habitat necessary to insure their health. Open bare ground is an important aspect of the breeding of most native bees, while other species need nesting cavities. Providing cavities in fencing, dead branches or bee tubes is relatively easy for homeowners, but providing bare ground in our yards is harder. She asked us to become aware of areas—median strips, corners of large parks etc. that may be of value to native bees as well as butterfly populations and advocate for those bare spaces. Byron Love, local native bee expert, showed us how deceptive mother nature is when it comes to bee/wasp/fly look alikes. Yes, I did say flies—they are pollinators too! He also explained why native solitary bees pose only a small, stinging threat. Survival for the solitary nesting native bees involves avoidance behavior, not the aggressive hive protection behavior of European bees. Lastly Mile DaPrato, a restoration specialist, for California Audubon showed us what Audubon is doing to restore habitat for pollinators in Yolo county. He had dramatic photos of work done over several years to increase habitat along the margins of fields and in drainage pools built to aid farmers with seasonal flooding.

SAS Education Committee members—Maureen Gieger, Cathie Lazier, Jan Tankersley, Dan Tankersley and Julie Serences—started planning the workshop last November. Schedules were checked and re-checked, the room was booked, publicity (thanks to Bill Dillinger), and all last minute details made this a real team effort. Thank you team!

By the way, bee tubes will be available at the May meeting for a \$2.50 donation to the SAS Education Committee. In case you didn't know: bee watching is not the same as bird watching. For one thing, there are over 1600 native bee species in California! But as backyard naturalists, it is an incredibly fascinating life cycle and happening all around us!

*Julie Serences*

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Robert C Austin      Elaine Livingston  
Bonnie Breeze        Nancy Schoellkopf  
James K Hepler      Frank Severson  
Craig Lee

### 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 held on May 26, at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Judith Bietz, Chris Conard, Bud Getty, Nancy Gilbert, Jeff Mangum and G.R. Swafford to the **General Fund**.

Susan Barstis, Judith Bietz, Bonnie Breeze, Suzanne Brown, Chris Conard, Marlene Egeland, Ed Greaves, Craig Lee, Peter Watkins and S. Woody Wray to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Michael Corlew to **Bobelaine**.

Frank Severson and Sharon Wisecarver to the **Purple Martin Project**.

Dan and Jan Tankersley to the **Purple Martin Project** in memory of Grace Tankersley.

### PLEASE, WHEN YOU MOVE!

Sacramento Audubon spends over \$50 annually to resend *The Observer* to members who have not shared their address changes with us. We'd rather spend that money on activities which enhance our enjoyment of wildlife. In my 3 year tenure, only 2 members have sent me their changes of address. Thanks so much.

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

## 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

llandry@softcom.net (916) 638-1141

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP + 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Observations* continued from page 10

to be found among the usual suspects. Other interesting reports include single **Merlins** from the upper ARP on 3/26 and 3/31, a **Band-tailed Pigeon** visiting a Rancho Cordova yard on 3/1 and about 20 band-tails at the Bobcat Ranch on 3/6. A well-described **Red-naped Sapsucker** was found at the Gristmill access to ARP on 3/31. A **Common Raven** nest on the famous Peregrine Falcon microwave tower along Bruceville Rd near CRP adds yet more emphasis to their overwhelming expansion into the heart of the Sacramento area. A **Red Fox Sparrow** was found at CRP on 3/4, and **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** numbering around 1,500 made an impressive spectacle at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) during the last ten days of the month. **Pine Siskins** were considered abundant in Davis, regular in parts of Sacramento and the ARP, but were absent from CRP and other sites in the low floodplain where they had been regular in the fall. From February, a nicely photographed juvenile **Harlan's Hawk** at YWA was present from at least 2/21-24.

Beginning with January 2009, we are now featuring photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site ([sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent-sightings.html](http://sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent-sightings.html)).

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit [www.cvbirds.org](http://www.cvbirds.org) and click "Listserv" for details. With over 100 reports, it is impossible to list everyone; however, I want to thank the following for reports on the above species and for providing additional information:

Roger Adamson, Paul Buchanan, Dan Brown, Todd Easterla, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Scott Hoppe, Dan Kopp, Gary Langham, Jeri Langham, Cathie LaZier, Ed Pandolfino, Vance Russell, John Sterling, and John Trochet.

Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

*Chris Conard*

# Seasonal Observations

March 1 to March 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports  
[www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm](http://www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm)

After a wet and stormy February, a very spring-like March brought with it a complement of spring arrivals and breeding activity from resident species. As expected, our regular swallows were busily scouting nesting sites by the first week of the month, aside from the much rarer and later-arriving **Bank Swallow**. The first **Purple Martin** of the season was visiting the Roseville Rd colony on 3/11, with another martin seen flying at the Bobcat Ranch near Winters on 3/29, far from a known nesting site. **Western Kingbirds** and **Bullock's Orioles** added a splash of color from the south by the last week of March. A few migrants beat the turning of the calendar with March arrivals. First-of-season reports of **Cassin's Vireo** (3/29), **Nashville Warbler** (3/29), and **Wilson's Warbler** (3/25) were slightly early at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP).

As noted in last month's column, some of the marquee gulls at the Davis Wastewater Treatment Plant continued well into March. The adult **Slaty-backed Gull** found on 2/27 continued through 3/7. The putative first-winter **Iceland Gull** (possibly of the nominate race *glaucoides*) was found again on 3/23 and 3/28. There was some debate whether this was a different bird than the one found last month, or just farther advanced into its molt. A second-winter **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found on 3/23. Documentation of the three species above should be submitted

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to the California Bird Records Committee ([californiabirds.org](http://californiabirds.org)). At least two **Glaucous Gulls** continued well into April. It was stated last month that up to four **Glaucous Gulls** were found on a single day, but it should be noted that based on plumage

characteristics at least seven different individuals were present in February and March. The numbers and late occurrence of the species that was only recently considered very rare are obviously unprecedented. An adult **Western Gull** at the Ancil Hoffman access to the American River Parkway (ARP) was reported on 3/17 and 3/26.



An amazing 11,300 **Dunlin** along with 2,800 **Long-billed Dowitchers** were at CRP on 3/26. Unfortunately, much of this habitat literally evaporated (or drained) prior to the most dynamic period of the spring shorebird migration in April and early May, when rarities are most likely

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**Editor:** Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, [sawise7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sawise7@sbcglobal.net)

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 9