



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, November 15, 2012

Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room
7pm

Masters of the Sky

Shawna L Protze

Before humans tamed the skies with aircraft, we trained the beasts that master it. Falconry is one of the oldest sports on earth and the most intricate relationship that humans have had with wild animals in history. Come learn about the history and modern practices and this ancient sport's involvement with conservation and entertainment. Meet two raptor's of the sport up close and get a taste for the sport of kings!

Shawna L. Protze, a general falconer and experienced educator is fortunate to work, volunteer and live with her passion; birds of prey. For over a decade she has been an educator at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Sacramento, presenting non-releasable birds of prey in schools and public forums. She is



Shawna Protzel

currently the Animal Care Supervisor for the non-releasable wildlife at the center and the trainer for their resident birds. As a licensed falconer she continues her educational experience representing the history and modern applications of falconry at historical or hunting events and as a representative for West Coast Falconry (the only falconry center in the western United States).

General Meeting continued on page 6

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON-SPONSORED CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES FOR 2012-2013

Saturday, December 1, Daybreak, ARNHA Wildlife Count

Compiler: Lea Landry, 638-1141, llandry46@earthlink.net
Annual census of birds and other wildlife on the American River Parkway.
See further details in write up on page 8.

Saturday, December 15, Woodfords Christmas Count

Coordinator: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207, e-mail: spskua2@comcast.net
Compiler: Andi Salmi, 691-7216, e-mail: andisalmi@yahoo.com

Sunday, December 23, Sacramento Christmas Count

Compiler: Mark Cudney, 987-2422, e-mail: mcudney@aol.com

Sunday, December 30, Folsom Christmas Count

Compiler: Chris Conard, 203-1610, e-mail: conardc@gmail.com

Saturday, January 12, 2013, 2nd Annual Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count

Compiler: Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277
Contact: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

Other Christmas Bird Counts:

Saturday, December 15, Auburn Christmas Count

Compiler: Deren Ross, (530) 885-9740, derenross@sbcglobal.net

Sunday, December 16, Putah Creek Christmas Count

Compiler: Steve Hampton, stevehampton@gmail.com

Sunday, December 16, Stockton Christmas Count

Compiler: Jim Rowoth, (209) 956-2648, rowoth@sbcglobal.net

Monday, December 17, Benicia-Napa Christmas Count

Contact: Tim Fitzer (Grizzly Island) 870 5207, spskua2@comcast.net
Compiler: Robin Leong, (707) 643-1287, robin_leong@netzero.net

Thursday, December 27, Lincoln Christmas Count

Compiler: Ed Pandolfino, ERPfromCA@aol.com

Friday, December 28, Sonoma Valley Christmas Count

Compilers: Tom Rusert and Darren Peterie, (707) 939-8007
www.SonomaBirding.org

Tuesday, January 1, Angwin Christmas Count

Compiler: Murray Berner, (707) 224-5897, vireocity@hotmail.com

For locations and dates of additional Christmas Bird Counts, visit
<http://natureali.org/cbcs.htm> .

Field Trip Findings

Solano Lake, Putah Creek (10/14) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Eleven birders saw 63 species of birds on a mid October day that started out cool with great birding and then got hot with very little activity. Highlights included Phainopepla, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Osprey, Wood Duck, Western Tanager and Green Heron.”

Cosumnes River Preserve (10/13) — Leader John Huls reported: “Our group of eight enjoyed constant flyovers of Sandhill Cranes, Greater White-fronted Geese, Red-tailed Hawks and Northern Harriers. Waterfowl numbers are increasing as more fields are being flooded. Long-billed Dowitchers, Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, and distant sandpipers were enjoying the great shorebird habitat, with a single Wilson’s Snipe making a short appearance. Good looks at White-tailed Kites and an American Kestrel were appreciated by all. A surprise was a Red-shouldered Hawk that flushed from ground level five feet in front of us as we approached the far end of the wetlands boardwalk. A special thanks to Cathie LaZier and GariRae Gray who helped with this group of mostly beginning birders.”

Folsom Lake (10/7) — Leader Margaret Martin reported: “Eight of us spent the morning at Beal’s Point, where we enjoyed seeing 45 bird species. We had close looks at Rufous-crowned Sparrows and Rock Wrens. Woodpeckers were well-represented with Downy, Nuttall’s, Acorn, Northern Flickers, and a Red-breasted Sapsucker. Western Bluebirds were numerous. A flock of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, an American Kestrel, a Clark’s Grebe among the Western Grebes, and a Violet-green Swallow among the Tree Swallows were nice surprises.”

Mather Regional Park (10/7) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Exceptional weather greeted our group of eight. Early arrivals counted 11 species before we got out of the meeting place. Fox, White-crowned, and Golden-crowned Sparrows presented. Downy and Nuttall’s Woodpeckers, Spotted and California Towhees, and two groups of Mute Swans were sighted. Lively discussions ensued twice on what finally produced consensus on a juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk. Highlight for all was several great looks at a flying Barn Owl. Final count was 43 species.”

Glenn Hall Park/Paradise Beach (10/6) — Leaders Don Schmoltdt and Sally Walters reported: “Five peopled shared a really pleasant morning birding with us. We spent most of the time slowly wandering through the riparian woodland/scrub habitat near the American River, and observed 40 species of birds. Highlights were one Common Merganser, one Osprey, one Willow Flycatcher, at least 12 House Wrens, three Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, six Western Bluebirds, one Orange-crowned Warbler, one Lark Sparrow, one Lincoln’s Sparrow and, last but not least, 16 Sandhill Cranes calling as they flew overhead. Also of interest were about 60+ Cedar Waxwings that were “flycatching” insects over the river. All and all, a really great morning birding.”

Beginning Birders Field Trip (10/6) — Cathie LaZier, co-leader with Darrell Mohr and Muriel Parker, reported: “Nine beginning birders joined us for a birding walk at William Pond Park. We started with scope views of Nuttall’s Woodpecker and Cedar Waxwings, and watched migrating Sandhill Cranes overhead. Anna’s Hummingbirds jousting for territory were too active to get in the scope, but a Greater Yellowlegs was more co-operative. Crowned sparrows were active in the blackberries, and we ended the morning with a total 38 species.”

The Best of Both Sides of the River: River Bend Park and William Pond Park (10/3) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Nine birders joined me for the loop walk around William Pond park. Arriving winter birds included Yellow-rumped Warblers, Cedar Waxwings and many Northern Flickers. John Huls pointed out Vinegar Weed in full bloom and Mary Kiernan pointed out the California Buckeye with its ornament-like hanging seed pods. As the temperature rose, birds and people quieted down, and only four people stayed for the River Bend part of the loop, where we added California Quail, White-breasted Nuthatch, Greater Yellowlegs

and Nuttall’s and Downy Woodpeckers. Total species count was 45 birds.”

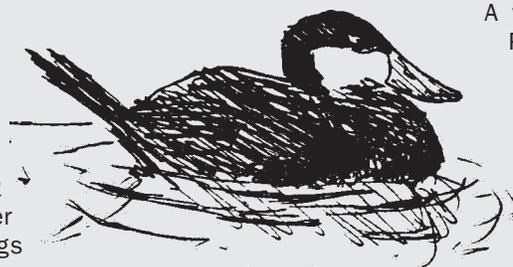
Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip (9/29-30) — Leader Mark Cudney reported: “26 intrepid seabirders braved an unusually cold and foggy day. The sun did not appear until the boat returned to the harbor at the end of the day. No megararities were spotted but the group had unexpectedly large numbers of all three jaegers and over 30 South Polar Skuas. Black-vented Shearwaters, a species not seen on recent trips over the past several years, were in good numbers. Numerous Black-footed Albatrosses were observed at very close range. Two “pelagic” Red-breasted Nuthatches entertained the group and one actually landed on the boat in a bush brought on board by the captain. The highlight of the trip and perhaps the year was the hepatic phase Common Cuckoo seen by a majority of the group after the boat returned in Watsonville. This was a first California record and only the second observed in the lower 48. The land-birding portion of the trip on Sunday produced a Tropical Kingbird at Andrew Molera State Park along with several Blue-winged Teal.

A very cooperative Western Palm Warbler greeted us at the Moonglow Dairy along with numerous species of shorebirds. The group observed many Snowy Plovers which is perhaps indicative of the recovery of this species.”

(The aforementioned Common Cuckoo was spotted Sept. 28 in willows along the

Watsonville Slough trail by Lois Goldfrank, a member of a field trip group led by Steve Gerow, the Watsonville Register-Pajaronian reported. The only previous record of the bird in the Lower 48 states was in Martha’s Vineyard, MA, in the 1980s. — PH)

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (9/26) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “This morning found a nice assortment of raptors. The highlight was a prolonged view of a juvenile Peregrine Falcon resting on a small island west of Parking Lot C. We had ample time to view its juvenile plumage and enjoy its presence. Another surprise was a Barn Owl, which flew low and close to our auto. After its short

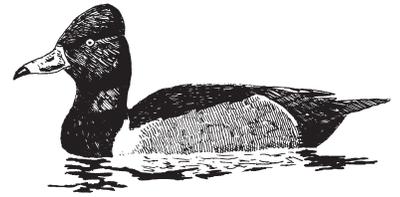


Ruddy Duck

Kirsten Munson

Findings continued on page 7

Field Trips



Ring-neck Duck
Stephen D'Amato

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 Maureen Geiger, 444-0604, mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net for November and December trips.

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.

Nov 3 and 4

Lodi Crane Festival

See Festival notes on page 6.

Saturday, November 3, 8:30am

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Leader: Linda Pittman, 715-1876

pittmani@frontiernet.net

(email preferred)

Bobelaine is a 430 acre National Audubon Sanctuary on the Feather River, managed by Sacramento Audubon. This riparian forest of cottonwoods, sycamores and willows is home to a wide variety of birds and wildlife.

Join Linda for a 1 to 2 mile walk along the trails looking for resident and wintering birds. Herons, egrets, cormorants and grebes should be on the water, and Yellow-rumped Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and a variety of sparrows will be settling in for the winter.

To reach the sanctuary, take Hwy 99 north toward Yuba City; about 2 miles north of the Feather River Bridge, turn right on Laurel Avenue. Follow Laurel to the dead end at the Bobelaine parking lot. Bring water and snacks. This trip will end by noon.

Sunday, November 4, 7am

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS

Bodega Bay

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

Join Scott for a full day of birding around Bodega Bay, taking in a variety of habitats. Plan to see waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and raptors. Bring lunch, water and warm clothes. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento take the West Capitol Ave exit. Turn left, and the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

Saturday, November 10, 8am

Bushy Lake

Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999

mohrdd@gmail.com

Meet Darrell in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. Darrell will be looking for a variety of resident and wintering species; Wood Ducks are a good possibility on the lake. This will be a 1 to 2 mile hike that will take 2 to 3 hours. You may want to bring water. This is a good trip for beginners and more experienced birders.

Sunday, November 11, 8am

Buck's Creek Trail/Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills

Leader: Maureen Geiger

444-0804/281-6652

mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk through this riparian habitat and look for resident and wintering species such as woodpeckers, nuthatches, towhees, wrens, bluebirds, warblers, marsh birds and sparrows. This area has good and varied habitat and there is always the possibility of finding unusual birds such as the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker of several years ago. She will also be scouting for the Folsom Christmas Bird Count which includes this area. Meet at the southeast corner of the intersection of Silva Valley Parkway and Serrano Parkway. To reach this spot, exit Hwy 50 at El Dorado Hills Boulevard and turn right. Pass the large Raley's shopping complex and turn right onto Serrano Parkway, then left on Silva Valley Parkway. Park on the right.

Thursday-Monday, November 15-18

Central Valley Birding Symposium

Contact: Frances Oliver

(209) 369-2010

hummer52@sbcglobal.net

Join others from near and far and enjoy the company of great birders and naturalists such as Ed Harper, John Sterling, Ron LeValley, Joe Morlan and Jon Dunn in a variety of workshops to hone your skills. Enjoy the ever popular "stump the experts" bird ID panel which is always fun and interesting. Field trips visit surrounding hot spots to celebrate the diversity of birds wintering in the Central Valley. Check the schedule of field trips and programs, then register at www.cvbs.org. More information can be found on page 8.

Sunday, November 17, 8am

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge

Leader: Andi Salmi, 508-7192

andisalmi@yahoo.com

Andi will be looking for early flocks of ducks and geese that winter in the valley or feed on their way south. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well. This trip will last into early afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. Please note there is a fee for each vehicle at the refuge: either \$6 for a day pass or a \$12 Refuge Annual Pass. Meet Andi at the Park and Ride in West Sacramento. From I-80 take the West Capitol Ave exit; turn left at the light; then left again into the lot.

Saturday, November 24, 8am (Note corrected date)

Pleasants Valley Rd./Putah Creek (Solano Co.)

Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636

Calaveri.gary@gmail.com

This outing entails driving to the Vacaville area to pick up Pleasants Valley Road, and birding our way up to Hwy 128, then Putah Creek, Solano Lake and the Monticello Dam Overlook. We will make

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

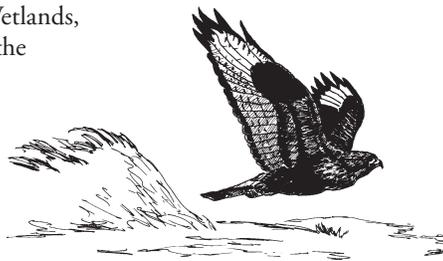
several stops along Pleasants Valley Rd, looking for migrating passerines, including Phainopepla, Western Bluebird and Say's Phoebe. Along Putah Creek and Solano Lake we may see Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, American Dipper and Osprey. At the Monticello Dam Overlook, we'll be watching and listening for Canyon and Rock Wrens, and possibly Peregrine Falcon. Plan to spend 3-4 hours birding, plus driving time getting there and back. There will be minimal hiking, but dress for seasonal conditions. Bring along hand-held radios, food and water. Our lunch spot will be at Solano Lake County Park, where there is a day-use fee. We'll also look for Pileated Woodpecker and owls there. Meet Gary at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Ave exit; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Car pooling is strongly encouraged, due to limited access at stops and the distance traveled.

Saturday, November 24, 3:30pm Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley A Save Our Sandhill Cranes-sponsored trip

Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392

Sandhill Cranes are the focus of this trip but ducks, swans and geese, as well as shorebirds, feed in the flooded fields and marshy areas of the delta, and hawks patrol overhead. Meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center parking lot at 3:30pm to hear a brief presentation of Sandhill Crane behavior, biology and status. Then we'll stroll the boardwalk in the Lost Slough Wetlands, enjoying views of the cranes, wintering waterfowl and shorebirds. Afterwards, we'll drive along Desmond Road and possibly to Woodbridge Road or Staten Island, to see

flocks of cranes fly in to roost for the night. Dress for changeable weather; bring binoculars, scopes and FRS radios if you have them. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road; go left (east) 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



Northern Harrier
Stephen D'Amato

www.cosumnes.org. This is a great trip for beginners and families.

Sunday, November 25, 8am Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Leaders: Tim Fitzer and Mark Martucci Tim, 870-5207, spskua2@comcast.net Mark, 833-6722 matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Tim and Mark will be looking for the great flocks of ducks and geese that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way heading south. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well from which to see a variety of raptors, sparrows, and other wintering birds as well as waterfowl. This trip will last into early afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet Tim and Mark at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1.

Please note there is a fee for each vehicle: either \$6 for a day pass, or a \$15 Federal Duck Stamp.

Sunday, November 25, 3:30 pm Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley A Save Our Sandhill Cranes-sponsored trip Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392

See description for
Saturday, November 24,
above

Wednesday, November 28, 8am Isenberg Crane Preserve/Cosumnes River Preserve Boardwalk Leader: Dan Tankersley,

**662-1290
dtankers@winfirst.com**

Join Dan to look for wintering geese and ducks, including Gadwall, Northern Shovelers, teal and wigeon. In shallow water there may be shorebirds, such as dowitchers, sandpipers, yellowlegs, Dunlin, and maybe some surprises. Our wintering Sandhill Cranes will be back, and the usual herons and egrets will be around. The boardwalk is

also a good place to look for the noisy but hard-to-see Marsh Wren, and the cryptic Wilson's Snipe. Meet Dan at the Nugget Market at 8am. Going south on I-5, take the Florin Road West exit; go west to the first signal light (Greenhaven Drive), and make a U-turn. The parking area for the market will be on the right. This trip will end by noon. Bring FRS radios and spotting scopes if you have them. This is a great trip for both beginners and experienced birders. Rain, strong wind, or thick fog cancels.

Saturday, December 1 American River Natural History Association Annual Animal and Bird Count

Compiler: Lea Landry, 638-1411

Join Lea and other volunteers to assist with this annual count of birds and other creatures along the American River Parkway sponsored by the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA). Results of this count are important to future planning for the Parkway, and the goal is to have 11 teams of two or more persons each. The count differs from other Christmas Counts in that teams count species rather than total numbers of each species. This is a great warm-up for the CBCs to follow. Contact Lea for details, team assignments, and meeting and compilation locations. See further write-up on page 8.

Sunday, December 2, 9am-Noon Gulls at Nimbus Dam Leader: Ed Harper, 971-3311 calidris@surewest.net

Join Ed for an informative walk along the American River. Ed is a great birder who will be looking for any interesting or unusual birds, with emphasis on tricky identification of the many gulls that winter on the River near Nimbus Dam. This trip will last until late morning. A scope is useful in addition to binoculars. Meet at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery parking lot near Hwy 50 and Hazel Avenue (about 15 miles east of Sacramento).

Saturday, December 8, 7am American River-Gristmill to Mayhem Drain

**Leader: Cliff Hawley, 300-2495
yellowhammerCA@gmail.com**

Join Cliff at his favorite area along the Parkway in search of our wintering birds. He'll find our resident and wintering birds, and will be looking for uncommon species;

NEW PROGRAM FOR SAS THE SPEAKER'S BUREAU!

The Sacramento Audubon Society has set up a Speakers Bureau to help educate children and adults about birds. The speakers can make presentations to groups on topics such as *Common Birds of Sacramento*, *Cool things that birds do*, *Why do birds do that?*, *Bird Courtship Behavior*, and *Variety of Bird Habitats in Sacramento*. Each presentation is supported by a slide show. If you know of a group that would like such a presentation, please contact Subhash Chand at (916) 966-0747 or at subhashc@aol.com. We are also looking for volunteers who would like to share their love of birds with others by making such presentations. You will be provided training on how to make the presentations and can go along with an experienced presenter to see how it is done. If you can help, please contact Subhash as listed above.

Field Trips continued:

a wintering Northern Parula was found here a few years ago, and Red-breasted Nuthatches have been around this Fall. 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 in the morning. The trip will last until lunch time and is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders. Meet Cliff at the Gristmill entrance to the Parkway. Park access is off Mira Del Rio Drive. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles, or you can park on Mira Del Rio Drive and walk in. Cliff will be at the Gristmill entrance road into the Parkway.

Sunday, December 9, 7:30am
King Ranch/Lynch Canyon/American Canyon Wetlands
Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net
kenpoe@sbcglobal.net

Solano County has wonderful birding in a variety of habitats. Join Ken and Maureen on a drive through the King Ranch looking for eagles, falcons and other raptors, and burrowing owls; Lynch Canyon for a short hike into the valley looking for species similar to those at King but also including riparian species along the creek and ducks and grebes at the reservoir pond; then west to the American Canyon Wetlands where there will be myriad shorebirds, ducks and a few raptors as well which, depending on the tide, may be close enough for very good looks. This trip will last to mid-afternoon, so bring lunch and liquids. FRS radios will be useful. Meet Maureen at the Park and Ride in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave exit. Turn left; the Park and Ride will be on your immediate left. Secondary meeting place

in front of the Safeway just west of the Waterman exit in Fairfield BY 8am.

Sunday, December 16, 9am
East Lawn Cemetery
Leader: Mary Beth Metcalf, 456-7382

Join Mary Beth for a 2-3 hour slow-paced walk through East Lawn cemetery where many common wintering species can be found. Often, there will be less common finds such as red-breasted sapsuckers or golden-crowned kinglets, and red-breasted nuthatches. Meet Mary Beth at the entrance gate at 43rd Street and Folsom Boulevard. There is street parking on 42nd and 43rd streets.

Saturday, December 22, 8-11am
Miners Ravine/Roseville
Leader: Scott Dietrich, 208-4976
dietrichscott71@yahoo.com

Come out and enjoy an easy walk in Miners Ravine nature area, a great place to see winter birds. The area is one of the better places in Roseville for wintering sparrows and as many as 7 different species have been seen here including Fox, Savannah, and Lark Sparrows. Some interesting local waterfowl such as Wood Ducks, Common and Hooded Mergansers have been found in the creek wetland area. This walk is also good for raptors such as Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, White-tailed Kite, Cooper's Hawk, American Kestrel and possibly Sharp-shinned Hawk or Merlin. This is a great trip for beginners or families who want to enjoy an easy winter walk. Directions: Eureka exit from I-80, right onto E Roseville Parkway, left onto Orvieto Dr, then quick left into gravel parking lot.

2ND ANNUAL KIDS CBC!!

January 12, 2013 is the date for the Second Annual Sacramento Area Kids' Christmas Bird Count. Instead of Cosumnes River Preserve - where the winds can howl a zillion miles an hour - this year, the count will be held at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. There will be a little more room and so the possibility of more teams than last year's six. For more information and to volunteer to assist or to register the children in your life, contact Maureen Geiger at 444-0804 or mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net. This was a truly memorable event last year, so everyone is encouraged to join us in 2013!



FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2012

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sunday, November 25th

Time: 8am

Each Trip: Limited to 10 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.

Birding and Nature Events

LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

The 16th annual Sandhill Crane Festival will be held November 2-4, at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi. For 15 years, Lodi's Sandhill Crane Festival has celebrated the return of the cranes. In partnership with the City of Lodi, the Festival continues this November, welcoming an ever-growing circle of friends to their community to share the wonder of the Sandhill Crane . . . and so much more. Admission is free and there will be wildlife tours, workshops and presentations, an art show, live animal displays, family activities, and an exhibit hall with vendors and displays. (Stop by the Sacramento Audubon table.) Learn more about the event and register for tours at www.cranefestival.com or call (800) 581-6150.

17TH ANNUAL MORRO BAY WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

Morro Bay's 17th Annual Winter Bird Festival will be held January 18-21, 2013. Located on California's scenic Central Coast, Morro Bay is an area recognized worldwide for its diversity of both resident and wintering birds, and at last year's festival, over 200 species of birds were identified! To register and for more information about the Festival, check their website at www.morrobaybirdfestival.org.

6TH ANNUAL WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

The City of Galt in Collaboration with the Cosumnes River Preserve and Galt Joint Union Elementary School District are pleased to bring you the 6th Annual Winter Bird Festival, Saturday, January 26, 2013. Many migratory and resident birds call Galt their winter home. Guided tours offer an exciting opportunity to see the birds that spend their winters in the Central Valley! Wetlands, songbird and sandhill crane tours are included so hop on a bus and have your binoculars ready! Questions! Call (209) 366-7115 or google Galt Birding Festival for more detailed information.

SNOW GOOSE FESTIVAL OF THE PACIFIC FLYWAY

The 14th Annual Snow Goose Festival will be held in Chico on January 24-27, 2013. This year's festival planning is under way and registration will begin in December. Further information can be found at snowgoosefestival.org or by email at info@snowgoosefestival.org and phone (530) 345-1865. Since many of their great trips fill up fast, it is best to get on their mailing or email list, available on their website.

General Meeting

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Shawna also assists in raptor rescue and rehabilitation with the California Foundation for Birds of Prey, transporting injured raptors to the rescue facility as well as providing free-flight training for young or healed birds that can be released back to the wild.

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. See page 7 for written directions to Effie Yeaw.

Sally Walters, Program Chair

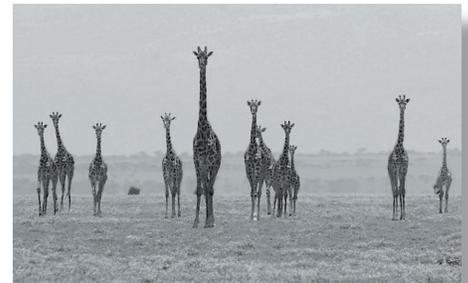
RECENT BOARD ACTIONS

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

- \$250 to Feather River Land Trust, as support to conserve and steward the special places of the Feather River Watershed.
- \$500 sponsorship of the Nature Fest at Effie Yeaw Nature Center, to benefit their education programs.
- \$5,000 to the University of California, Davis, to support Dr. Holly Ernest's local bird conservation research projects.
- \$500 to ECOS (Environmental Council of Sacramento) to support their Environmentalists of the Year 2012 event.
- \$1,000 as a sponsor of the Central Valley Bird Club's Birding Symposium.
- \$150 for a Magiscope for use in the Ducks In Scopes program at the Cosumnes River Preserve.

EAST AFRICA IN 2013!

Ed Harper reports an active interest in the planned safaris for 2013 but reports a few openings remain on each of the three offerings. Each safari is different and each has its own special appeal. Briefly, these are the three: Tanzania, July 1-15: Outstanding game viewing with an even mix of birds and mammals in spec-



tacular locations, this safari packs it all in. Uganda July 19-August 4: Gorilla and chimpanzee tracking with the best primate numbers and the most outstanding birding on the continent. Kenya August 7-16: This is a luxurious safari bound to spoil you as you experience the most outstanding mammal concentrations in the world highlighted by the wildebeest migration and the associated predator interactions. The exquisite locations and comfortable accommodations for this trip qualify it as truly the "trip of a life time!"

For itineraries and additional information, contact SANDPIPER JOURNEYS, Ed Harper or Susan Scott at calidris@surewest.net or call (916) 971-3311 home, (916) 704-7954 cell.

DIRECTIONS TO EFFIE YEAW

The Center is nearer to Hwy 50 than to Hwy 80. Depending on where you are coming from get onto Fair Oaks Blvd. From Watt Ave you will go East onto Fair Oaks Blvd and from Sunrise Blvd you will go West onto Fair Oaks Blvd.

Once on Fair Oaks Blvd, go east onto Van Alstine Ave (or Oak Ave); left onto California St; and right onto Tarshes, then left onto San Lorenzo, then right into the first parking lot. Walk the short trail to the center. (Please note that Palm Ave only allows vehicles to exit the park onto Palm Ave.)

Findings continued from page 2

flight, the owl dropped down into the vegetation and disappeared. Other raptors seen were a Red Shouldered Hawk, numerous White-tailed Kites, and several Red-tailed Hawks. Other birds of interest included a lone Horned Lark, hundreds of White-faced Ibises, and many White Crowned Sparrows. The usual ducks have returned, and there was plenty of water in the fields to accommodate them. As always, a good morning of birding in the Bypass."

Bodega Bay (9/23) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: "Seven birders saw 69 species of birds on a cool day in Bodega Bay with little or no wind. Highlights included Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Sanderling, Black Turnstone, Whimbrel, Black Oystercatcher, Elegant Tern, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Clay-colored Sparrow."

Point Reyes for Vagrants (9/22) — Leader Mark Cudney reported: "The trip started slowly for the small but manageable group of six individuals seeing only numerous Red-Breasted Nuthatches and a Peregrine Falcon at the first two stops. The day picked up with the sighting of a previously undiscovered Tropical Kingbird at the Elephant Seal Overlook. The breeding plumage Red-throated Loon and abundant Red-necked Phalaropes provided a nice distraction. Numerous other bird groups were not reporting anything when we spotted an elusive yellow bird at the Chimney Rocks residence. With great persistence we eventually identified it as a female Orchard Oriole! A short time later we spotted two male Harlequin ducks basking at close range. The completely gray female Western Tanager provided another identification challenge. The group backtracked to Ranch Number one and obtained great looks at a female American Redstart. The Spaletta ponds provided a great, close study of numerous shorebirds including several Pectoral Sandpipers and a Baird's Sandpiper. Sacramento Audubon proved that we can find the birds."

Davis Wetlands and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (9/17) — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: "While at the Davis Wetlands, our group of nine, including a couple from Woodstock, II, enjoyed sorting through flocks of shorebirds and the many eclipsed plumaged ducks. Also holding our interest were close looks at White-tailed Kites and at least four Barn Owls hunting in mid-morning. Our best bird of the day was a Solitary Sandpiper located south of Parking Lot C at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area."

Sonoma County Migrants (9/16) — Scott Hoppe, co-leader with Dan Tankersley, reported: "Fifteen participants enjoyed a good day of birding varied habitats in Sonoma County. We started off at Spring Lake Regional Park in Santa Rosa. Several species of migrants were found here, including Western Wood-Pewee, Warbling Vireo and Yellow Warbler. And the Vaux's Swifts overhead were too numerous to count. These were accompanied by several White-throated Swifts, and 4 species of swallows: Violet-green, Tree, Cliff and Barn. Unfortunately, what would have easily been the bird of the day was missed. As we were about half way around the lake we ran into a couple of birders who said that a Yellow-throated Vireo had been found. We hurried to the location described with our fingers crossed. We arrived to find several other birders trying to relocate the bird, but no one could find it. It seems we were about 20 minutes too late. After lunch we continued on to Bodega Bay. Among the more notable birds here were 4 Red Knots and a couple of very early Brants. And everyone got good views of a Barn Owl at Campbell Cove."

Tom and Karen Cadil also found a Rhinoceros Auklet out at Bodega Head. In addition, we found a warbler at Owl Canyon that was not seen too clearly, but when Dan T. and I compared notes later, we were confident that the bird was a Chestnut-sided Warbler. All in all a very good day."

Pete Hayes

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Delberta Bass, Paul Beach, Wayne Blunk, Jeanne Conry, Jon Courtway, Stanley Ford, Georganna Griffin, Michael Harris, Delmar Janson, Connie Schwartz and Barbara Smith, to the **General Fund**.

Tom Adams, Clifford Anderson, Karen Benson, Jon Courtway, Joe Easley, Charlene Eberwine, Mercedes Gay, Lura Harding, John Huls, Marlene Ishihara, Debara Johnson, Jim and Nancy Joye, Thomas Manning, Mary Beth Metcalf, Candace Miller, M.A. Nunes, Carmen Pereira, Janet Roser, Connie Schwartz, Rick Sohren, Gellan Topozada, Joanne Vinton and Frank Wallace, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.



DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES AT CRP

During the waterfowl season the Cosumnes River Preserve hosts a wide variety of birds, including some of the most colorful ducks such as Cinnamon Teal, Green-winged Teal, and Bufflehead, as well as geese, swans, herons and egrets, and Sandhill Cranes. On various dates docents from the preserve will have a row of scopes set up near the boardwalk, some set lower to accommodate children, and they'll focus on giving you good views of these birds. In addition there are often hawks overhead, and some of the more interesting shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts and Common Snipe are often seen.

The Preserve is a quick 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 viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve.

The time is always 11am to 2pm, and it's a great day trip for families. Scheduled dates are:

- Sunday, November 11
- Saturday, November 24
- Sunday, December 2
- Saturday December 8
- Saturday, December 22
- Saturday, December 29
- Tuesday, January 1st (New Year's Day)

16TH ANNUAL CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

From **November 15th-18th**, the Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting their 16th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium at the Stockton Hilton Hotel, in Stockton.

Please come and help them kick off this year's CVBS! Come meet the CVBS board and staff members! Reconnect with old friends! Meet new ones! Take advantage of the scrumptious hors d'oeuvres buffet and No Host Bar on Thursday night

Thursday night's keynote speaker is Ed Harper presenting a program on "Appreciating the Birds of the Central Valley". Come sit back and watch as Ed takes you on a photographic journey to catch a glimpse of the avian world of the Central Valley.

Friday night's keynote program is by Sophie Webb on "Seabirds and Marine Mammals of the Tropical Eastern Pacific". Sophie will give us a wonderful glimpse into the natural history of the fascinating birds and mammals she has encountered on research vessels over the deep seas, emphasizing those that venture close to the California coast, especially during migration.

Saturday night's keynote program is by Carlos Bethancourt on "The Natural Splendor of Panamá!" Come sit back and watch as Carlos takes you on a photographic journey across Central Panama, where myriad tropical birds, bizarre mammals and unusual reptiles and amphibians are seen in their natural setting! From Toucans to hummingbirds, Mouse Opossums to tongue-wielding Orange Nectar Bats, Carlos will keep you spellbound with his stories of discovery and vivid images. Come experience why Panamá is indeed the country of Natural Splendor!

Also on Saturday, Paul J. Baicich will present "Access Matters: Why Birders Should Care" Is access to birding locations important? Well, only if you want to see birds! Other events include a "Century of Field Identification" by Joe Morlan, Bird ID Workshop by Jon Dunn and a sketching workshop by Sophie Webb.

The field trips always turn up exciting birds. Add in the always entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts for yourself or others at the Birder's Market and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time! There's something for everyone interested in birds. Come to bird, learn, and just have fun. To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips check out their website at: www.cvbs.org

2012 AMERICAN RIVER NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION WILDLIFE COUNT, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

The ARNHA Wildlife Count was originally organized as a fund-raising Bird-a-thon in 1985. Jack Hiehle provided the impetus and organization to get it going. He then maintained the momentum and records through its transformation into a Wildlife Count in 1993. In 2010, Jack served as a mentor while Lea Landry took over the coordination of the 26th Annual Count. The count is utilized by the Staff of Effie Yeaw and ARNHA to follow the population trends of various species of wildlife in the American River Parkway as well as their affect on other aspects of the Parkway.

Twelve teams (including 1 team with 6 counters in canoes) participated in the 2011 Wildlife Count on December 3, tallying 108 bird species. The count was 15 species fewer than 2010. This may be explained, in part, by the high winds that were encountered along the entire count area, throughout the day. A Yellow-headed Blackbird was seen on the count for the first time ever! The Mew Gull was not seen for the second time in Count History. The rarities included Greater White-fronted Goose, Lesser Scaup, Horned Grebe, Peregrine Falcon, Sora, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and Cattle Egret.

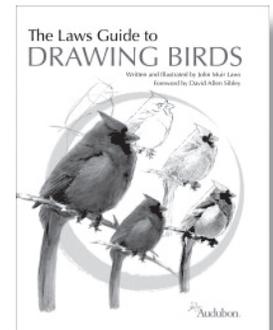
Fourteen mammal species were seen, including 58 whitetail deer (down from 114 seen in 2010), 26 ground squirrels, 48 western gray squirrels, 4 house cats and 4 California Sea Lion (is the American River becoming a Seal Lion wintering ground?) As in 2010, there were no coyotes seen in the 2011 Count.

Folks who are interested in participating in the 2012 Wildlife Count can email their name, email address and phone number to Count Coordinator, Lea Landry at llandry46@earthlink.net or phone her at 638-1141. Unless you have a specific area of the Parkway you're interested in, your name will be provided to the Team Leaders who need more participants on their teams. The Count starts about 7am, finishing by 3pm. Different leaders have different start times and specific meeting places.

NEW BOOK FROM JOHN MUIR LAWS

John Muir Laws, beloved naturalist, birder, artist and educator, has published a new book in conjunction with Audubon, entitled *The Laws Guide to Drawing Birds*. This remarkable book provides unique insight and instruction on the joys of birding, drawing, and observing nature. In his foreword, ornithologist David Sibley proclaims, "I wish this book had been available to me when I was starting out, because it is filled with tips and tricks that took me decades to learn."

Rather than focusing on species or location, Laws goal is to present a process of observation and technique that truly captures the presence and life of each bird. exploration of our relationship with nature. It shows the importance of spending time outdoors, the richness of a life lived under the trees, and the natural beauty of this world that we are all responsible for.



This how-to guide will enhance the skills of serious artists, but perhaps more importantly, it will provide guidance for those who believe they can't draw.

Learn to:

- Fine-tune your observational skills
- Form a deeper understanding of bird anatomy and structure
- Focus on key details that make drawings come alive

Laws' vision, similar to Audubon's central mission, is that of naturalists coming together to appreciate and preserve the wild world. This fall he is putting on a series of free workshops at REI stores in the Bay Area in the hopes that through education and outreach, he can help build a community of stewards who care about the earth. Details of his upcoming events can be found online at JohnMuirLaws.com.

"Watching birds is a window into wilderness. Birds are fiercely alive, simultaneously vulnerable and resilient. Study them to quiet your mind. As you grow in patient observation, the world will open and you will be changed forever."

John Muir Laws

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Lisa Harding

Susan Palazzo

Roberta Pearson

Margaret Pulley

Roy Sundstrom

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 November 27, 2012 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2013 PROGRAMS

January 17 David Wyatt, *Ringtail Cat*
February 21 Brian Sullivan, *eBird*
March 21 Ed Harper, *Birding Montana*

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.

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@earthlink.net (916) 638-1141

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

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

Observations continued from page 10

banded along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters on 9/20 and a hatch-year **Calliope Hummingbird** in north Davis on 9/5; **Lewis's Woodpecker** reports on the Valley floor, with up to four from Putah Creek near UCD on 9/14-16 and a juvenile at the Sacramento County Bufferlands on 9/27 (a first of the site); a male **Yellow-shafted Northern Flicker** at Reichmuth Park on 9/25; a **Green-tailed Towhee** in north Davis on 9/22; a **Brewer's Sparrow** at the YWA on 9/23; and a **Large-billed (montane) Fox Sparrow** at CRP on 9/14.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent sightings.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:

Murray Berner, Terry Colborn, Chris Dunford, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Pat Hildreth, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Phil Lutz, Michael Park, Michael Perrone, Linda Pittman, Ron Pozzi, John Sterling, Michael Strom, John Trochet, Amy Welsh and Daniel Welsh.

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

Chris Conard

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Seasonal Observations

September 1 to September 30

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

Interesting songbird reports were widespread, with some excellent highlights, especially along Putah Creek near UC Davis between Hopkins and Pedrick Rds, and Babel Slough south of West Sacramento. **Red Crossbills** made an appearance in the Davis area, with a high of 20 along Putah Creek on 9/2; an invasion of montane birds may be coming, with widespread reports and high numbers of **Red-breasted Nuthatches** and an influx of **Pine Siskins**.

Typically eastern songbirds are much-sought prizes and this September proved richer than most. **Least Flycatcher** reports came from Yolo Grasslands Park on 9/2-3 and Babel Slough on 9/8. A **Great Crested Flycatcher** (a state review species) was reported from Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 9/14. A wren was photographed at Babel Slough on 9/23 showing characteristics of an (eastern) **Winter Wren** (a state review species; since the 2010 split, the western birds have been called Pacific Wrens). Excellent warbler reports included **Tennessee Warblers** reported from a private yard in Carmichael on 9/9, Putah Creek from 9/16-18, and Babel Slough on 9/23 and 9/26; a **Northern Parula** near Freeport on 9/3; and, most notable, Yolo's first **Bay-breasted Warbler** at Babel Slough on 9/19. An impressive five **Blackpoll Warblers** were found in the area, includ-

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ing Putah Creek between Davis and Winters on 9/11, Babel Slough and Lagoon Valley on 9/14, Lake Solano on

9/16, and the Sacramento City Cemetery on 9/25. A **Yellow-breasted Chat** was found at Bobelaine on 9/8 and another was regularly detected along Putah Creek for the first week of September. A hatch-year **Orchard Oriole** was another Yolo County first, found along Putah Creek near UCD, often in the vicinity of **Hooded Orioles**, from 9/11-18.

Other interesting reports included a **Brown Pelican** at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) on 9/7; a continuing **Least Bittern** at Mather Lake on 9/1; an apparent **American Avocet X Black-necked Stilt** hybrid at the Davis Wetlands early in the month; a **Solitary Sandpiper** at YWA on 9/17; a juvenile **Sanderling** at the Granite Bay launch at Folsom Lake on 9/11; a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** heard along Putah Creek on 9/1; four **Greater Roadrunners** along Sand Creek Rd west of Arbuckle on 9/1; a hatch-year **Allen's Hummingbird**

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
638-1141, e-mail preferred: llandry46@earthlink.net

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95826
203 1610, e-mail preferred: conardc@gmail.com

Editor: Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, 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