

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



VOLUME 68 • NO. 9

NOVEMBER 2016

General Meeting

Thursday, November 10, 2016 (Second Thurssday)
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

Towards a Sustainable Salton Sea
Mike Lynes

Mike Lynes will be speaking about Audubon California's efforts to help create a smaller, sustainable Salton Sea. As the Salton Sea continues to shrink due to water transfers to urban areas in Southern California, tens of thousands of acres of lakebed will be exposed, resulting in a massive loss of habitat and potentially creating the worst air pollution crisis in North America. The Salton Sea provides habitat for over 400 species of birds and is essential habitat for many species already facing population declines. Mike will discuss Audubon's work a broad coalition of nonprofit organizations, state and federal agencies, and private stakeholders to create and implement a plan that will create habitat on the exposed lakebed, reduce dust pollution, and stabilize the Salton Sea ecosystem.



Double Crested Cormorants
Salton Sea Creative Commons

Mike Lynes joined Audubon California as the Director of Public Policy in 2014. Before that, Mike was the Conservation Director and then the Executive Director at the Golden Gate Audubon Society in the Bay Area. Mike previously worked as an attorney representing nonprofit groups in environmental cases and, prior to law school, as a conservation biologist for the Point Reyes Bird Observatory (now Point Blue Conservation Science). Mike's work at Audubon California includes working on conservation-related legislation in Sacramento and Washington, D.C., protecting threatened and endangered species, and making progress on large-scale issues such as the Salton Sea, the Klamath wildlife refuges, and Central Valley wetlands and refuges. Mike lives in Davis, California with his wife and two young sons.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third

General Meeting continued on page 7

SAS EDUCATION PRESENTATIONS

SAS member Subhash Chand, Pleasant Grove High School Teacher Clairise Chapman and her middle school class smile for the camera following Subhash's PowerPoint presentation on *Common Birds of Sacramento*. Clairise remarked that the presentation was 'tperfect', that she had already begun spreading the word to her colleagues, and she hoped the Audubon birding presentation would be an annual event in her classes.

On October 13 Subhash Chand gave a presentation on birds to an attentive audience at Fremont Presbyterian Church. One of Sacramento Audubon's past presidents Pete Hayes attended the event. He remarked that it 'was a great primer on birding for most people'. SAS received a \$50 donation for the presentation.

Contact Gesna Clarke at 343-6303 or email gesna_clarke@sbcglobal.net if you know a classroom teacher(s) who would like a similar presentation.



Subhash Chand and Clairise Chapman with a class at Pleasant Grove High School

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES FOR 2016-2017

Saturday, December 3, Daybreak, ARNHA Wildlife Count

Coordinators: Paul Tebbel and Rachael Cowan
e-mail: rachaelc@sacnaturecenter.net

Annual census of birds and other wildlife on the American River Parkway.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON-SPONSORED CBC DATES

Wednesday, December 21, 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 18, Sacramento Christmas Count

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

Sunday, December 31, 2016, Folsom Christmas Count

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

Saturday-Sunday, January 7-8, 2017, 5th Annual Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count

Compiler: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net

For locations and dates of additional Christmas Bird Counts, visit natureali.org/cbcs.html

Field Trip Findings

Calaveras Big Trees State Park (10/12) — Leader Bill Bianco reported: “Eleven of us were greeted with a clear, calm, cool day, with the dogwoods starting their color show. Sightings were slow with seventeen species being seen. We walked the North Grove trail and had slow sightings, but saw White-headed Woodpeckers, Brown Creepers, Hermit Thrush, and Winter Wren. After lunch we walked the south side of the North Grove Campground where sightings picked up. We observed Red-breasted and Williamson’s Sapsuckers, Mountain Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch and Ruby-crowned Kinglet to name a few. It was a beautiful day for birding and the early autumn colors were a great extra.”

William Pond Park (10/9) — Leader Craig DeMartini reported: “Seven of us enjoyed pleasant morning temperatures on our walk, tallying 47 avian species within the variety of habitats of William Pond park. Cedar Waxwings were abundant, as were the returning White-crowned Sparrows. A mature Cooper’s Hawk remained perched for good long looks through the scope. Acorn, Nuttall’s, and Downy Woodpeckers posted in proximity for a good comparison. A single Ruby-crowned Kinglet delighted us with its antics.”

Mather Lake (10/8) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “A party of 10 enjoyed a mild autumn morning and identified 49 different species. First of season Junco, Common Yellowthroat, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and 3 lingering Tree Swallows. Abundant White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows as well as several Lincoln’s Sparrows and a Savannah Sparrow were spotted. A count of 32 Mute Swans at one point suggested multiple families from surrounding areas, up from the three families with a 16 count early last month. Excellent birding team as usual.”

Bobelaine (10/2) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “The trip today to Bobelaine was the first in a while. Probably the most exciting of the 43 species we saw was an adult Bald Eagle. But Best of Trip, for sure, was the weather! After weeks of heat, 19 of us truly enjoyed the cool breeze with sprinkles of rain as we finished the 2.5 mile walk.”

Putah Creek (10/1) — Leader Ben Graber reported: “On the Putah Creek portion of the trip, the highlights included Wilson’s,

Yellow, and Orange Crowned Warblers, a lone female Western Tanager, and Lincoln’s and Lark Sparrows. At Lake Solano, we had unbeatable looks at a pair of Phainopeplas. We also saw a Willow Flycatcher and a Western Wood Pewee. We heard, but were unable to see, a Yellow Breasted Chat.”

Effie Yeaw Nature Center (9/26) — Leader Bob McCleary reported: “A group of enthusiastic and sharp eyed birders showed up with binoculars in hand at Effie Yeaw. Highlights of the trip were a great view of a beautiful adult Lewis’s Woodpecker, Wood Ducks on the pond, Yellow-Rumped Warblers, both Myrtle and Audubon’s, Cedar Waxwings and American Kestrel adult male. In total we spotted 35 plus bird species. Productive for a warm still morning.”

Ancil Hoffman Park (9/25) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Eight birders saw 63 species of birds on a very pleasant late September morning. Highlights included Chipping Sparrow, Western Wood-Pewee, Willow Flycatcher, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Western Tanager, Swainson’s Hawk, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Hooded Oriole.”

Point Reyes (9/24) — Leader Chris Conard reported: “Seventeen of us had an enjoyable trip to Point Reyes despite a complete lack of vagrants on a trip billed to look for vagrants. Nevertheless, in the wonderful setting of the Outer Point, we enjoyed three species of loons, Black Oystercatchers, a Common Tern among the many Elegant Terns at the Fish Docks, good views of Barn Owls, Great Horned Owls and Tricolored Blackbirds. We ended the trip with a nice walk on the Estero Trail, which produced the most activity of the day, including Marbled Godwits, Willets, Hairy Woodpeckers, a Merlin and a Peregrine Falcon, Pygmy Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, a Pacific Wren, and Pine Siskins. Aside from birds, we enjoyed elk, (relatively) active elephant seals, harbor seals, river otters, and monarch butterflies.”

Sailor Bar, Olive Ave (9/21) — Leader Larry Hickey reported: “On the first cloudy day after a scorching summer, eight of us met at the under-used Olive Ave access to Sailor Bar. We were joined by Cheryl Hogue, a birder and journalist from DC attending a conference in Sacramento and interested in our Western birds. They

did not disappoint. We had good looks at Cooper’s Hawks interacting as if it were spring, Green Herons, many woodpeckers (Acorn, Nuttall’s, Downy, Flicker), and an estimated 160 Cedar Waxwings. The gulls were clearly returning and we were amazed by the numbers of White-throated Swifts and Tree Swallows flycatching overhead beneath the clouds. A River Otter that entertained some of us briefly and a very cooperative Phainopepla were highlights.”

Bucks Creek Trail, Serrano Parkway (9/18) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “Seventeen of us walked the nice Bucks Creek trail and in spite of the very warm morning, saw 42 species. Highlights included Western Bluebirds, first of season crowned sparrows plus one Lincoln’s, Fox and resident Song Sparrows, both House and Bewick’s Wrens, and wonderful close looks at Common Gallinules cruising around the big pond with 3 Green Herons flying by. Surprising was very few Acorn Woodpeckers and a record high 25 Scrub Jays.”

Fall Migration Wild Card (9/17) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Twelve people joined me for a good day afield. We spent the bulk of the day at Bodega Bay. Things started out a bit slow, but soon picked up after a Barn Owl was found at Owl Canyon, appropriately enough, and then an American Redstart was found at Campbell Cove (thanks to Mark Martucci’s dogged pursuit of passerines). Other highlights included a Wandering Tattler out of Bodega Head, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Townsend’s Warbler and a Warbling Vireo hanging out with a flock of Chestnut-backed Chickadees. We also found some Snowy Plovers out on the mud flats at Doran County Park, with lots of other shorebirds. We made a quick stop at Shollenberger Park in Petaluma on the way home, adding Black-bellied Plover and a few other shorebirds to the list. We tallied over 70 species for the day.”

Bushy Lake (9/14) — Leader Dan Brown reported: “Twelve of us had a very good morning. The temperature when we started at 8am was in the 60s with a slight breeze, and topped out at about 80, which felt a bit warm, but the birds didn’t seem to mind, as we had lots of action. We tallied 48 species plus one taxa (a flock of un-id’ed blackbirds that flew

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Field Trips



California Quail
Kirsten Munson

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, for trips through December 4th contact the scheduler Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@comcast.net. For trips from December 5 contact the scheduler Tim Fitzer, spskua2@comcast.net, 870-5207.

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

Thursday, November 3, 8am
Wolf Ranch Wildlife Sanctuary,
North Natomas
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

This is a little known 60-acre wetlands created when an area of open pasture in Rio Linda was used as a borrow pit to provide dirt for levee improvements in the North area of Sacramento. Good time of year for a variety of species in the open water and wetland perimeters which have been planted with native riparian shrubs and trees. Maureen will walk the loop, exploring the different habitats along the way. This trip will last until late morning and will involve walking on a fairly good, flat trail which may be muddy depending on rainfall. From Sacramento take I-5 north, then follow Hwy 99/70 north 1.1 miles. Take the Elkhorn Boulevard exit 525B and, turning right, continue 3.1 miles, cross Steelhead Creek, and make an immediate right turn on Sorrento into a large, unpaved parking lot. You will see a sign for the Walter S Ueda Parkway in the parking lot.

Saturday, November 5, 8am
Spenceville Wildlife Area
Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
offleash56@yahoo.com

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. Join Richard as he searches this foothill area for wintering waterfowl, raptors and passerine species. The trip involves moderate hiking; wear appropriate footwear and layered clothing. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 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, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

Family Friendly Trip!!!
Saturday, November 5, 9am-1pm
Traylor Ranch Nature Preserve
Leaders: Sandra Steurer, 580-8398
sasteurer@yahoo.com
Wendy Money, 205-3194
wendydougmsn.com

This morning walk with 88 Acres of recreational land located in Penryn will be specifically geared to and appropriate for families and children. Join Sandra in finding interesting birds such as Western Bluebird, California Quail and White-tailed Kite in an open oak woodlands area. Meet at Traylor Ranch on Humphrey Road. From Sacramento, take I-80 to Penryn Road exit. Turn left, go to Taylor Road. Turn right, go to English Colony Way. Turn left, go to Humphrey Road (a few miles). Left on Humphrey and the parking lot is down about 1/2 mile on the right.

From Auburn, take I-80 to Hwy 193 exit (past Placer Farm Supply). At stop sign go straight on Taylor Road for several miles until you reach English Colony Way in Penryn. Turn right, go several miles to Humphrey Road, turn left and parking lot is down about 1/2 mile on the right. Bring liquids and be prepared for a nice walk. There will be a few extra pairs of binoculars for children to use.

Sunday, November 6, 8am
NOTE: Daylight Savings Time Change
Sacramento Wildlife Refuge
Leader: Andi Salmi, 508-7192
andisalmi@yahoo.com

Andi will be looking for the enormous flocks of ducks, geese and swans that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way south. This is also a good place for raptors, and Bald Eagles can be found here regularly. 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. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet 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 \$6 day use fee for each vehicle at the refuge. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

Wednesday, November 9, 8am
William Pond Park
Leader: Larry Hickey, 962-0387
Larryhickey1@gmail.com

Meet Larry along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk, for this morning walk looking for returning migrants and resident birds. Along the river mergansers and possibly goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. California Quail, Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows may be found in the park area, and Larry will be looking for returning White and Golden-crowned Sparrows. Trip will end before noon. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

Saturday, November 12, 7am

Bodega Bay

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471

Scott: shoppe01@surrewest.net

Another chance to bird this great area.

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.

Sunday, November 13, 8:30am

Cosumnes River Preserve

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

cell 502-2699, empid@earthlink.net

Join Cathie for an easy walk of about a mile and a half, viewing the wintering waterfowl, egrets, herons and shorebirds in the flooded wetland ponds. This is an excellent walk for beginning birders. Bring water and snacks and dress for changeable weather. Meet at the north end of the upper parking lot, near the native plant garden; directions available at www.cosumnes.org.

Sunday, November 13

Beginning Birding Field Trip

William Pond Park

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

Wednesday, November 16, 8am

Putah Creek Riparian Reserve

Bill Bianco: 372-3318 or 889-4849

biancowm@yahoo.com

This UC Davis Reserve along the banks of the Putah Creek can be a wonderful place to find migrants this time of year as well as wintering passerines and resident species.

Join Bill for a leisurely morning walk on this easy trail west of UC Davis. This trip is good for beginners and those already familiar with the excellent birding on the Creek and will end before lunch. From I-80 near Davis, take Hwy 113 north and exit on Hutchison Drive, exit 27. Turn left. At the first round-about, stay right, passing new student housing, and at the second round-about go west onto Hutchison Drive. At

about 1 mile, turn left onto Hopkins Road. About 1 mile south, Hopkins deadends. Turn left onto Levee Road and immediately park on your left. You will see one of the entrances to the Reserve.

Saturday, November 19, 8am

Sutter's Landing Regional Park

Ben Graber, 844-8682

bgraber984@gmail.com

Join Ben to visit a newer birding destination for SAS. He will lead a low-key trip along the American River Parkway to find the common and resident species of this landmark area of Sacramento. This time of year, many species are possible with wintering raptors, shorebirds and songbirds. This is a great trip for beginners and experienced birders as well. The trip will end before noon and is located close to downtown Sacramento. Bring liquids and be prepared to walk several miles in the Parkway. From Business 80 heading east (towards Cal-Expo), exit on E Street, turn left onto E and then right on 28th Street which dead ends at the Park. Heading west on Bus. 80, also take the E Street exit; turn right onto E Street, then right again onto 28th and proceed to the Park

Saturday, November 19, 10:30am

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

This family friendly nature walk will be at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers and Wild Turkeys are abundant, but sharp eyes and ears may find Spotted Towhees or Bushtits as well. Reservations are not needed; families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists from the nature center and birders Richard Barbieri and Sharon Wisecarver from Audubon. For directions, see sacnatu-recenter.net. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, November 20, 8am

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722

matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Mark for a morning walk checking out the resident birds, and looking for fall migrants. This is a good trip for beginners and experienced birders too, with Mark sharing his expertise on identification of the birds and their vocalizations. Meet at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Tuesday, November 22, 8am

River Bend Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 502-2699

empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at the 1st parking lot on your right, just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland, looking for small woodland birds and woodpeckers. We sometimes have good looks at Red-shouldered Hawks or Great Horned Owls. At the river we should see mergansers, goldeneye, herons, yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpipers and possibly a kingfisher. Walk will end by noon, and it's a great walk for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Lincoln Grasslands Trips #1

Saturday, November 26, 8am

Leaders: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124

offleash56@yahoo.com

Tim Fitzer, 870-5207

spskua2@comcast.net

The grasslands and farmlands surrounding Lincoln provide some of the best winter birding in the Sacramento Valley. Because of the diversity and large area to be covered, back to back trips are being offered again this year. Once again, two teams of experienced field trip leaders will enter a friendly competition to show participants as many birds as possible. Richard and Tim will start Saturday, searching for the largest number of raptors and rarities; Scott and Mark will follow Sunday hoping to produce even better numbers. Both days, they will search the back roads of Placer County for a large variety of raptors, shorebirds, ducks, swans and sparrows plus specialty species such as Tri-colored Blackbirds and Lewis' Woodpeckers. These trips will last into the afternoon, so bring lunch and liquids as well as scopes and FRS radios if you have them. Meet in the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road off ramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight past the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station and park on the right in the Park and Ride area.

Saturday, November 26,

3:30pm until sunset

Sandhill Cranes and

Other Wintering Birds

Cosumnes River Preserve/Delta area

Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc.
Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392

Join SOSOC leaders looking for the wide variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, cranes and raptors who feed in the flooded fields and marshy areas of the delta. After birding the boardwalk at the CRP Lost Slough Wetlands, we'll drive along Desmond Road, and possibly to Woodbridge Road or Staten Island to see flocks of cranes coming in to roost. Dress for changeable weather; bring binoculars, snacks and water if you wish. Meet at the north end of the upper parking lot, near the native plant garden, or if the weather is bad, meet on the deck of the Visitor Center. Directions available at www.cosumnes.org.

Sunday, November 27, 8am
Lincoln Grasslands Trip #2
Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net
Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

See write-up for Saturday, November 26.

Sunday, November 27
Beginning Birding Field Trip
William Pond Park

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

Sunday, November 27,
3:30pm till sunset
Sandhill Cranes and
Other Wintering Birds
Cosumnes River Preserve/Delta area
Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc.
Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392

See write-up for Saturday, November 26.

Monday, November 28, 8am
Sacramento Bypass, Yolo County
Co-leaders: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net
Cathie LaZier, 502-2699
empid@earthlink.net

This dense riparian area at the west edge of the Sacramento Bypass is an excellent spot for a variety of bird species in all seasons. Late November should be good for sparrows and resident species. This trip involves a couple hours of walking on a mostly flat trail. There are no restrooms. From Sacramento, take Bus 80/Hwy 50 to the Harbor Blvd Exit #1B. Go right at end

of off-ramp and continue past the light at Reed Avenue where Harbor becomes North Harbor. From here, drive 1.3 miles (note that North Harbor mysteriously becomes Old River Road at some point) and park on the large gravel parking area on the right opposite Road 126. Parking is extremely limited at the trailhead, so we will park in this lot, and condense into as few cars as possible.

Saturday, December 3
ARNHA WILDLIFE COUNT
American River Parkway
Contact: Rachael Cowan
rachaelc@sacnaturecenter.net

Join a team counting birds, mammals and other wildlife on this annual event. There is more information on page 6, middle column, bottom of the page.

Sunday, December 4, 9:30am
Nimbus Fish Hatchery/American River
Leader: Ed Harper, 971-3311
calidris@surewest.net
One of two gull trips!

Join Ed for an informative walk along the American River and a chance to sharpen your identification skills. 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. Herring, Thayer's, Glaucous-winged, California, Ring-billed and Mew Gulls are all possibilities. Spotting scopes will be very useful, and be sure to bring your field guides and bird apps for this intensive study. This trip will end before noon. Meet Ed in the hatchery parking lot. From Hwy 50 go north on Hazel Avenue; turn left on Gold Country Blvd and the hatchery is on your right.

Family Friendly trip!
Sunday, December 4, 9:30-11am
Mather Lake
Leader: David Rosen, 801-0944
wildphoto@aol.com

Mather Lake is an excellent birding location any time of the year, but the winter months are especially good for a variety of ducks, geese, raptors, egrets, and herons. Other possibilities include Great-tailed Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, Common

Gallinule, a few species of sparrows, and some shorebirds. For budding birders, David will share the basics of birding and provide lots of opportunities to see birds through a spotting scope. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park. From Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel Drive about 2-1/2 miles to Douglas Road. Cross Douglas Road then take the first left into the Mather Regional Park parking area. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. Loaner binoculars will be available.

Wednesday, December 7, 8am
Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach
American River Parkway
Leader: Sally Walters Schmoltdt
710-1077, bajaowl@gmail.com

Sally birds this area regularly, and she'll be leading a field trip here the first Wednesday of every month. Joining her in the different months will give you a good idea of the seasonal changes along the parkway. From Highway 50 take Howe Ave north to Fair Oaks Blvd. Turn left onto Fair Oaks and cross over the American River. Turn right on Carlson Ave, which is the first stop light past the American River bridge.

Continue on Carlson Ave to its end, at Glenn Hall Park. Meet on top of the levee. This will be a fairly easy walk, ending about 10am, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Saturday, December 10, 8am
Nimbus Fish Hatchery/American River
Leader: Craig DeMartini, 599-3300
Cloudwalk7@icloud.com
The second of two gull trips!

Join Craig for a morning walk identifying gulls and riparian species along the American River downstream of Lake Natoma and Nimbus Dam. Craig will focus on the typical gull species that winter on the American River; such as California, Ring-billed, and Herring, as well as the less common species; Thayer's, Glaucous-winged and Mew Gulls; while keeping an eye out for the unusual and surprise arrivals. Raptors, including Osprey, Bald Eagle, and Peregrine Falcon are always a welcome sight. Spotting scopes are useful, as are field guides and the various birding apps for identification. Prepare for variable weather. This trip ends late morning. Meet Craig in the hatchery parking lot. From Hwy 50 go north on Hazel Avenue; turn left on Gold

Field Trips continued on page 6

Field Trips continued from page 5

Country Blvd and the hatchery is on your right.

**Sunday, December 11, 8am
Bobelaine Sanctuary**

**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net**

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 Maureen for a 2-1/2 mile walk along the trails looking for resident and wintering birds. Herons, egrets, cormorants and grebes may be on the water, and a variety of sparrows and other passerines settled in for winter. Meet Maureen 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. If you wish to meet at Bobelaine, take Hwy 99 north toward Yuba City and 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. The group will probably arrive there about 8:30.

**FIELD TRIPS FOR
BEGINNING BIRDERS**

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sunday, November 13 and
Sunday, November 27

These beginner 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. Trips are limited to 10 adult participants and registration is required. Register via email to Cathie at empid@earthlink.net, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 457-6882, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

**TONES OF FALL AT THE
BUFFERLANDS**

November 12, 9am-12pm

Each fall, the riparian forests and wetlands change colors from lush greens to the familiar shades of autumn. Many species of wildlife leave the area, while many others come into the valley to spend the winter. Come see and listen as our biologists explain the physiological and ecological reasons behind these changes.

The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at jonesro@sacsewer.com the week preceding the event for exact meeting location and directions.

**EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER
FALL AND WINTER CAMPS**

The Effie Yeaw children's 2016 Fall Camps are offered November 21 and 22 of Thanksgiving Week and their 2016 Winter Camps are offered December 27-29 and January 3-5.

Most camps are 10am to 1pm, so kids should bring a snack and a water bottle. Depending on the weather, a sweatshirt or jacket and hat are also a good idea.

You can register online, via fax/mail or by phoning the Nature Center at 489-4918. The online address is www.sacnaturecenter.net/ for more information and registration. Participants must be pre-registered and pre-paid.

**ANNUAL ARNHA COUNT
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3**

Two of Audubon's greatest accomplishments are the 116 years of the North American Christmas Bird Count data and the new high tech bird list system we all know as ebird. Both of these citizen science monitoring efforts have taught us more about bird population status, movements and migration than any single research effort. Sacramento has its own local citizen science effort counting birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians along the American River Parkway – the annual ARNHA Wildlife (or Critter) Count. This is our 32nd year of this first Saturday in December effort and the coordination of the count is returning to the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Anyone interested in being added to the communication list should send an email to Rachael (rachaelc@sacnaturecenter.net). This year's count is on Saturday, December 3. Your participation is encouraged—there is no fee.

**FREE TUNDRA SWAN TOURS
THIS FALL AND WINTER**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is offering free swan tours near Marysville on Saturdays beginning in November and extending through January 2017.

Co-hosted by local rice farmers, the naturalist-led tours will focus on tundra swans in one of the premier locations for viewing swans in California. The swan tour offers participants a spectacular opportunity to encounter these stately, elegant birds, which weigh more than 20 pounds with a 5.6 foot wingspan. Ducks, geese, shorebirds, herons, egrets and raptors, are commonly seen in this area also, which contains 23,000 acres of rice fields.

Tours will be held on Saturdays from 9:30am to 11:30am and from 1pm to 3pm. The driving tours will also involve walking a short distance.

Pre-registration is required at www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regions/2/Swan-Tours. As many as 30 people may register for each tour.

DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

A great trip for families, youth groups and newer birders. This is an opportunity to work on duck identification as well as other wetland birds.

Stop by the Cosumnes River Preserve and check out Ducks In Scopes, where docents have a row of scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you good views of the many colorful ducks and other wetland birds. A microscope and hand lens provide close-up looks at 'Duck Soup', dishes of water dipped from the pond full of sand fleas, dragonfly nymphs, and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on. 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. Come any time between 10am and 2pm, on the following dates:

November: Saturdays 11/5, 11/12, 11/19 and 11/26 and Sunday 11/6

December: Sundays 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18

Then, start the New Year off right and join us on Sunday, January 1, 2017.

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

Sally Walters Schmoldt, President and Program Chair

Findings continued from page 2

over). Highlight species were many warblers, (mostly Yellow Warblers along with Wilson's and one Orange-crowned), Say's Phoebe, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Phainopepla (Hatch Year — a juvenile bird), and an Olive-sided Flycatcher." (Dan later reported: "Pretty much the whole area that we birded yesterday burned today in sa large fire! Sad.")

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (9/7) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported "The trip didn't start until 8:30 and was fairly warm, so fairly quiet. Six of us had between 35-40 species with no really unusual birds except we did get close looks at the continuing, half dozen Egyptian Geese. The rice checks were filled in pretty well and the flooding west of parking lot C was just in progress, so shorebird habitat that we could reach was pretty slim. Nice morning anyway with good company."

Pete Hayes
Cathie LaZier

THANK YOU PETE HAYES!

Well, when a guy turns 90 he's ready for a change and so our wonderful *Field Trip Findings* editor is going to retire. Pete has worked on this column for most of its existence it seems and while doing so also served as President of SAS, and co-editor and contributing writer of *An American River Almanac: Reflections on Nature Throughout the Year* and *The Outdoor World of the Sacramento Region*.

Thank you Pete from all of us at Sacramento Audubon and from all the people whose enjoyment of the American River you've contributed to!

Another very hard-working SAS volunteer, Cathie LaZier, is stepping up to serve as our new editor of *Field Trips Findings*.

Birding Festival

LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

The 21st annual Sandhill Crane Festival will be held **November 4-6**, at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi. The event is free. Long before Lodi existed, Sandhill Cranes descended into the rich delta wetlands at the end of a long migratory journey, some from nesting grounds as far away as Siberia. In awe-inspiring numbers, and with a prehistoric call, stately gait, and elegant choreography, the Sandhill Crane continues to attract and inspire visitors.

We have tours designed to appeal to everyone, led by experienced guides and experts in their field. The choices are many: crane fly-out and fly-in tours; kayaking and cruise tours; birding field trips; expert-led photography field trips; and winery tours. In between tours, check out informative presentations and workshops. Learn more about the event and register for tours at www.cranefestival.com or call (800) 581-6150. Tours fill up quickly so register or call early!

CALIFORNIA SWAN FESTIVAL

The CA Swan Festival, **November 11-13**, is held annually in Marysville, with tours and ancillary events held throughout the Yuba-Sutter region. Positioned just 45 miles north of Sacramento, Yuba and Sutter counties are within the Pacific Flyway route, making the area a premiere waterfowl viewing location. More than 50 million birds can be seen here over the migratory season. This includes the beautiful and elegant Tundra Swan. Moving south from Alaska and Canada, the Swans will make the rice fields and rich, marshy grasslands their winter home. The festival begins Friday, November 11, with a Swan Sighting and continues exploring the wide range of wildfowl habitats and other assets of the beautiful Yuba-Sutter region.

Parking and entry to the Swan Festival are free, as are a wide range of workshops and presentations on wildlife education, natural sciences, ecosystem management and photography. Vendors are on site, specializing in wildlife information and goods. More than 35 field trips are offered at affordable prices and hosted by experts. Registration has already begun so hurry to www.caswanfestival.com.

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 20th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium **November 17-20**, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in Stockton. Please join us for this special 20th anniversary CVBS!

The CVBS gets off to a great start with Thursday Night's Keynote speaker, professional bird photographer Bob Steele, presenting a program on "Birding in the Central Valley Over the Past 20 Years".

Friday Night's keynote program is presented by Kimball Garrett on *The Central Valley's Prominent Place in the Past and Present of California Field Ornithology*. Saturday Night's keynote program is presented by Ed Harper and friends on *Celebrating 20 Years of the CVBC and the CVBS*.

Workshops include: a specimen workshop with Andy Engilis, *Convincing Details and Other Birding Fiction* by Joe Morlan, a workshop on challenging shorebird ID by Jon Dunn, and *CVBC/CVBS Studies in Review*, a series of 15-20 minute programs by Dan Airola and Ed Pandolfino. Plus, attend informative workshops by Bob Steele on Image Editing, Keith Hansen on Bird Sketching, Sal Salerno on Beginning Birding and Jim Burcio on carving.

Field trips, offered Friday, Saturday and Sunday, always turn up exciting birds. Add in the entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts at the Birder's Market and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time!

To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and fieldtrips, check out our website at: www.cvbsreg.org. Registration has already begun.

**SAS OUTREACH
THANK YOUR FOR YOUR HELP**

Led by Outreach Chairman, Bill Bianco, SAS volunteers manned our table at the recent Effie Yeaw Nature Fest. Pictured from left to right are Sue Darst, Jane Taylor, Bill Bianco and Grant Boice.

Thank you to the volunteers and also to all who came out to make the Nature Fest a success.



**SAS OUTREACH
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

SAS Outreach has the Galt Winter Bird Festival coming up on January 21, 2017. We need a couple of volunteers to work our table at the event. You do not have to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding and talking to people about our field trips and SAS. You would be working with an experienced volunteer. If you can work a 3 or 4 hour shift on Saturday, January 21st, please contact Bill Bianco at biancowm@yahoo.com, or 372-3318.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S FIELD TRIPS

SPONSORED BY:

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY AND EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Taylor Ranch | Saturday, November 5 |
| Leaders: Sandra Steurer/Wendy Money | |
| Family Nature Walk | Saturday, November 19 |
| Location: Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael | |
| Mather Lake | Sunday, December 4 |
| Leader: David Rosen | |
| Cosumnes River Preserve | Sunday, January 1, 2017 |
| Leader: Tim Fitzer | |
| Kids' Christmas Bird Counts—2 dates: | |
| Ages 6 to 10 | Saturday, January 7, 2017 |
| Ages 10 and Up | Sunday, January 8, 2017 |
| The Kids' CBCs require pre-registration. For both dates, visit sacnaturecenter.org | |
| Family Nature Walk | Saturday, January 21 |
| Location: Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael | |
| Humbug Creek | Saturday, January 28 |
| Leader: Mara Weston | |

For more information and directions to events at Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael, visit sacnaturecenter.org.

Other events are sponsored by Sacramento Audubon. For more information, visit sacramentoaudubon.org or [facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

**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.

**ANDROID APP NOW AVAILABLE
BIRDING IN THE
SACRAMENTO REGION**

SAS has just released BirdWalk, a new app that puts our publication *Birding in the Sacramento Region* on your android phone. The app helps you find birding trails and lets you know what you can expect to see at local birding hotspots. Download BirdWalk from the Google Play Store and start exploring our region! BirdWalk was a generous donation from Josh Louie and Margaret Gabil and made available for FREE.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
GENEROUS DONATIONS!**

Alan Kilgore, Richard and Salli Warinner, and Doctors JW and Patricia Wells made donations to the **General Fund**.

Clifford E Anderson, Joe Easley, Alan Kilgore, M A Nunes, Joyce C Rietz, Doctors JW and Patricia Wells, and Liz Williamson made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Thank you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community.

**SACRAMENTO AUDUBON
FUTURE PROGRAMS**

2017

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| January 19 | Mike Caldwell, <i>Things that Bite and Sting</i> |
| February 16 | Steph Clymer, <i>Historical Records into e-Birdg</i> |
| March 16 | Paul Bannick, <i>A Year in the life of North American Owls</i> |
| April 20 | Steven T Callan, <i>The Game Warden's Son</i> |
| May 18 | Joe Ferreira, <i>Asian Nature Transect: Enjoying the Wildlife of India, Bhutan and Thailand</i> |

*Seasonal
Observations*

September 1 to September 30

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

Periods of transition are always interesting and September may be the richest transition period of the year. Warblers and other migrants move through in high numbers, tapering off a bit by the end of the month, while winter residents begin arriving in the form of waterfowl, cranes, and sparrows, to name a few. If that isn't enough, this September was richer than most in terms of rarities.

A few **Least Bittern** reports continued into this month, with singles at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) reported from 9/5-10 and one to two were calling from a wetlands mitigation bank on private land near Colusa NWR on 9/22. Shorebird activity tapered off a bit from last month, but there were still some interesting reports. A juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found at YBWA on 9/6, and **Pectoral Sandpipers** were reported there from 9/1-21, with a high of three. Two **Baird's Sandpipers** and five **Pectoral**

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

AnnChrista Reed
Denise Eiseman
Kathryn Moodie

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. After the summer recess the next meeting will be on November 29, 2016 at 7pm. Board meetings are held at the Lemon Grass Cafe Meeting Room, 601 Munroe St, Sacramento, 95825.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html. Scroll down to Board Minutes.

SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon



Observations continued

Sandpipers were reported from the Lincoln WTP on 9/2. Additional **Pectoral Sandpipers** were found at the Davis WTP from 9/26-28 (a high of four), and the Lost Slough portion of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) from 9/11 into October, with a high of eight. A **Solitary Sandpiper** was found downstream of the Capay Bridge along Cache Creek on 9/3 and another was at the Davis WTP on 9/26-27. A juvenile **Long-tailed Jaeger** was a nice surprise at the YBWA on 9/2, as was a juvenile **Sabine's Gull** at the Sacramento Regional WTP from 9/26 through 10/1.

A migrating **Common Poorwill** at the Sacramento City Cemetery was a nice find on 9/2. Single **Hammond's Flycatchers** were reported from the Sacramento County Bufferlands on 9/2, the Lost Slough portion of CRP on 9/4, and Babel Slough on 9/23-24. A **Plumbeous Vireo** was reported in north Davis on 9/22, but even more remarkable was a **Philadelphia Vireo** reported at Upper Sunrise along the American River Parkway on 9/13. This bird was well-seen but unfortunately

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

Mara Weston, Membership Chair, mara_weston@yahoo.com
7708 McClintock Way, Sacramento, CA 95828-4321

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.

did not linger for others to see or photograph it. An **Ovenbird** was reported from a Woodland yard on 9/18 and single **Northern Waterthrushes** were found at Blue Oaks Park in Roseville on 9/4, YBWA on 9/16, and one was mist-netted and banded at Stone Lakes NWR on 9/21. An **American Redstart** was found along the Garden Hwy on 9/11, **Blackpoll Warblers** were reported from Babel Slough on 9/23 and along the Garden Hwy on 9/28, and a **Canada Warbler** at Lake Solano on 9/7 was an excellent find. A **Clay-colored Sparrow** at Michigan Bar on 9/11 was the first photographed in Sacramento County. Other interesting reports from Michigan Bar include a **Brewer's Sparrow** on 9/5 and a **Vesper Sparrow** on 9/24. A **Green-tailed Towhee** was found at Ancil Hoffman Park on 9/3, a **Thick-billed Fox Sparrow** was reported along Putah Creek upstream from Winters on 9/13, and a female-type **Orchard Oriole** was reported along Babel Slough on 9/10.

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 in eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Keith Bailey, Laura Davis, Matt Davis, Lily Douglas, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Stephen Fettig, Frank Fogarty, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Stanton Hunter, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Mark Martucci, Frances Oliver, Michael Perrone, Ron Pozzi, Brad Rangell, Jim Rowoth, Mark Sawyer, Steve Scott, Robert Shields, Ian Souza-Cole, Kirk Swenson, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Charley Walker, and Stan Wright.

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

Chris Conard

Sacramento Audubon Society
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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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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.

The Observer is published monthly January through December, except June and August, by the Sacramento Audubon Society.

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

November 10, 2016 (Second Thursday)

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm

Mike Lynes: *Towards a Sustainable
Salton Sea*



Mitigation Wetland Near the Salton Sea
Andrea Jones