



# The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, October 16, 2014

Effie Yeaw Nature Center  
Assembly Room, 7pm

Northern Pacific Rattlesnakes,  
Biology and Myths  
Mike Cardwell

In this month's presentation Mike Cardwell will summarize what he has learned about the behavior of northern Pacific rattlesnakes during several years of radiotelemetry work in El Dorado and Sacramento Counties. In particular, seasonal movement, reproductive behavior, and winter denning will be discussed, with an emphasis on busting common myths and pointing out how rattlesnake reproductive behavior affects the incidence of human rattlesnake bites.

Mike Cardwell is a retired law enforcement administrator who's now an adjunct professor at Sac State with an MS degree in ecology, evolution and conservation. He

has published many articles on rattlesnakes and snakebite in both technical and non-technical publications, lectured all over the US and Canada on these topics; and his long-term radiotelemetry study of the notorious Mohave rattlesnake was prominently featured in Animal Planet's *Venom* TV series. Mike is a co-editor of *The Biology of Rattlesnakes*, a peer-reviewed 600-page compilation of research by more than 90 scientists (Loma Linda U. Press, 2008) and he currently serves on a panel formulating practice guidelines for physicians treating North

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Mike Cardwell  
with telemetry antenna

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES FOR 2014-2015

**Saturday, December 6, Daybreak, ARNHA Wildlife Count**

Compiler: Bill Avery, 369-0750, 769-3357  
e-mail: [averyw@csus.edu](mailto:averyw@csus.edu) (email preferred)

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

## SACRAMENTO AUDUBON-SPONSORED CBC DATES

**Sunday, December 21, Woodfords Christmas Count**

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

**Saturday, December 27 Sacramento Christmas Count**

Compiler: Mark Cudney, 987-2422, e-mail: [mcudney@aol.com](mailto:mcudney@aol.com)

**Sunday, January 4, 2015 Folsom Christmas Count**

Compiler: Chris Conard, 203-1610, e-mail: [conardc@gmail.com](mailto:conardc@gmail.com)

**Saturday, January 10, 2015, 4th Annual Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count**

Compiler: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, [mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net)

## OTHER CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS

**Sunday, December 14, Putah Creek Christmas Count**

Compiler: Steve Hampton, [stevehampton@gmail.com](mailto:stevehampton@gmail.com)

**Monday, December 15, Benicia-Napa Christmas Count**

Contact: Tim Fitzer (Grizzly Island), 870-5207,  
[spskua2@comcast.net](mailto:spskua2@comcast.net) or

Compiler: Robin Leong, 707/643-1287, [robin\\_leong@netzero.net](mailto:robin_leong@netzero.net)

**Saturday, December 20, Stockton Christmas Count**

Compiler: Jim Rowth, 209/487-3489, [rowth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rowth@sbcglobal.net)

**Saturday, December 20, Auburn Christmas Count**

Compiler: Deren Ross, 530/885-9740, [Dere4nross@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Dere4nross@sbcglobal.net)

**Tuesday, December 30, Lincoln Christmas Count**

Compiler: Ed Pandolfino, [ERPfromCA@aol.com](mailto:ERPfromCA@aol.com)

**Thursday, January 1, 2015, Angwin Christmas Count**

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

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

# Field Trip Findings

**SRCSDBufferlands (9/14)**—Leader Chris Conard reported: “We covered a portion of the Bufferlands visited less often than on the typical tour because construction on the I-5 overpass at Freeport restricted our access. We had good numbers of common migrants, but no major surprises. Among the notables were Vaux’s Swifts, Orange-crowned Warblers, Yellow Warblers, Black-throated Gray Warblers, a Common Yellowthroat, Wilson’s Warblers, and Blue Grosbeaks. Only a few of us saw a single Willow Flycatcher and a single Pacific-slope Flycatcher. A few calling Acorn Woodpeckers were unusual for the location, but this normally sedentary species occasionally disperses to areas where they don’t typically occur.”

**Sailor Bar (9/13)** — Leader Ben Graber reported: “The big highlight was unusually large numbers of Phainopeplas. We had at least 10 of them, which was even more than I saw last week in Arizona! Other highlights were Green Heron, Orange-crowned Warbler, Song Sparrow, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Western Bluebird. The heat seemed to preclude any rare migrants, but the trip was a success overall and seemed well received by the 5 or so participants.”

**Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway (9/7)** — Leader Paul Cordero reported: “A dozen intrepid birders set out, intent on learning the local bird songs. Bird calls identified included: Western Tanager, Bewick’s and House wrens, Oak Titmouse, Killdeer, Spotted and California towhees, Acorn and Nuttall’s woodpeckers, Bushtit, White-breasted Nuthatches, and various warbler chips (Nashville, Yellow, Orange-Crowned, Wilson’s). Seen but not heard: Green Heron, Egrets, and most of those strong, silent types. Bird of the day was an Osprey.”

**North Bay Hotspots (9/6)** — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “With many reports of rarities at Point Reyes during the preceding days, I decided that would be the place to go. So, after a brief stop at Rush Creek Preserve in Novato, we headed out to the “Outer Point” where we spent most of the day. Highlights included Cape May, Prairie and Blackpoll warblers as well as some of the more common western warblers, including Hermit, Townsend’s and many Yellow warblers. Other highlights included 2 Barn Owls and at least 3 Great Horned Owls. At Drake’s Beach Gary

Fregien spotted a Red-necked Grebe off shore, where we shared the beach with lots of Elegant Terns, Heermann’s Gulls and Western, Ring-billed and California gulls. 8 participants enjoyed a great day with mild weather. We tallied about 60 species over all.”

**River Bend Park (8/30)** — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Nine people joined me for this morning walk in the oaks. In addition to the usual residents, we had some very cooperative Black-throated Gray Warblers, giving everyone good looks. We also had Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow, Hermit and Wilson’s warblers, Pacific-slope Flycatcher and Western Wood Pewee, and Sally Walters found us a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. We all enjoyed views of an immature Cooper’s Hawk and a Great Horned Owl.”

**Alpine County (8/31)** — Leader Dan Brown reported: “What a great trip to Alpine County today! Eighteen participants enjoyed great weather with lots of bird activity! Highlights were American Dipper, Williamson’s Sapsucker, Sooty Grouse, Pinyon Jays (numerous) and two Common Terns (previously reported at Indian Creek Reservoir). We saw a total of 52 species.”

**Bodega Bay (8/24)** — Leader Ed Harper, subbing for Andi Salmi, reported: “There were 13 of us and lucky for us, the trip to Bodega Bay went without incident following the early morning reports of the 6.0 magnitude earthquake at Napa. First reports were that



Townsend’s Warbler  
Kirsten Munson

Highway 37 was closed, but by the time we left Sacramento at 7:30am the news declared the road and all bridges and overpasses had been checked and were safe to drive. That was most welcome news heralding the start of a truly marvelous day at the coast. Although many wintering birds were yet to arrive, we still enjoyed 67 species for the day. Highlights included some 175 Elegant Terns at Doran Regional Park where we trailed the

receding tide to observe shorebirds. We had marvelous, close-up views of many species including hundreds of Western Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, and Short-billed Dowitchers. Nearly all the birds were juveniles and their distinctive plumages were a stunning delight to view. Bodega Head had no wind, but provided great views of Black Oystercatchers, both Brandt and Pelagic cormorants, along with distant views of Common Murres and Pigeon Guillemots. Another of the great highlights of the day was a Black-and-white Warbler in Owl Canyon, a lifer for many on the trip. We ended the day with al fresco dining at Pub Republic in Petaluma where good food, brew, and wonderful companionship highlighted the end of a superb day.”

**Marin County Shorebirds (8/23)** — Leader Chris Conard reported: “The bulk of a very full day was spent at Point Reyes, but we made a couple of stops on the way out, adding our only Lesser Yellowlegs at the Novato Airport ponds near Atherton Ave and Hwy 101. We added a good assortment of expected shorebirds at Corte Madera Marsh before continuing to Point Reyes. At the B Ranch, highlights included Red-necked Phalaropes on the pond, very cooperative Great Horned Owls, and Townsend’s and Hermit warblers, which were especially welcome to two of our participants who live east of the Rockies. Other highlights included close views of Pacific Loons and very active Elegant Terns. At Abbott’s Lagoon, highlights included two Baird’s Sandpipers, a Red Knot, and a Peregrine Falcon eating a bird. Non-bird highlights included a small dolphin or porpoise chasing fish, which were jumping out of the water to avoid being eaten, several elephant seals, elk, a hunting coyote at close range, a juvenile northern alligator lizard, and a red-sided garter snake.”

**Yolo Basin Wildlife Area (8/22)** — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “The morning’s tour focused on shorebirds of which there were good numbers. The highlights included Least and Western sandpipers, Dunlins, Red-necked Phalaropes, Long-billed Dowitchers, and avocets. Other water birds included Caspian Terns, White Pelicans, White-faced Ibis, and Northern Shovelers. A quick trip through the auto loop found Swainson’s Hawks, White-tailed Kites, Tricolored Blackbirds,

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# Field Trips



Screech Owl  
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 Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, empid@earthlink.net, for trips through October 29. For trips beginning October 30 and later contact the scheduler Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net.

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.

### **Wednesday, October 1, 8am-11am Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach American River Parkway Leader: Sally Walters Schmoltd, 710-1077, bajaowl@surewest.net**

Join Sally for a morning bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. Sally will be looking for returning winter sparrows and waterfowl, plus the resident wrens, towhees, and other small passerine birds. From Highway 50 take Howe Ave north to Fair Oaks Blvd. Turn left onto Fair Oaks and cross over the American River. Turn right on Carlson Ave, which is the first stop light past the American River bridge. Continue on Carlson Ave to its end, at Glenn Hall Park. Meet on top of the levee. This will be a fairly easy walk, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

### **Saturday, October 4, 7:30am Mather Lake Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457 Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations at all seasons of the year, and he always turns up quite a list of bird species. Join him to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron, Pied-billed Grebe and Common Yellowthroat. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park; from Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles. After crossing Douglas Blvd take the first left into the park area. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass

is valid here. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

### **Sunday, October 5, 8am-noon Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141 llandry46@comcast.net**

This morning walk will include riparian habitat, ridge trails and a good view of Lake Natoma. Lea will be looking for both woodland birds and waterfowl. There may be some short steep climbs on the trail, and if the rains come it may be muddy, so wear appropriate footwear. Bring liquids and snacks if you wish. Lea usually finds a nice variety of birds on this trip, which is suitable for both beginning and experienced birders. Meet Lea in the parking lot of the Snowberry Creek Equestrian Staging area, (Shadow Glen Stables), about 1/4 mile east on Main, from where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale.

### **Wednesday, October 8, 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.

### **Saturday, October 11, 7am Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary Leader: Cliff Hawley, 300-2495 yellowhammerCA@gmail.com**

Bobelaine Sanctuary is a 430 acre remnant Gallery Riparian area on the Feather River opposite the mouth of the Bear River. There are about five miles of trails we can walk with nice river views and many native plants. We'll be looking for later fall migrants and returning wintering birds. Meet Cliff 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 7:30am.

### **Sunday, October 12, 7am SHARP! Solano Lake/Putah Creek Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722 matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

The lake is a good area for wintering ducks including possible Barrow's Goldeneye and Hooded Mergansers. Phainopeplas are possible, and Pileated Woodpeckers have been found in the area several times during the last year. A drive up Putah Creek may turn up wintering passerines as well.

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There is a \$5 per car fee at the Lake Solano Day Use Park. Bring lunch and liquids and meet Mark 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. Plan on a trip lasting into the afternoon.

**Wednesday, October 15, 9am  
Mather Lake**

**Leader: Sheila Green, 813-1470  
raeshei@aol.com**

Mather Lake is a great local birding location, with a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron and Pied-billed Grebes. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park; from Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles. After crossing Douglas Blvd take the first left into the park area. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

**Saturday, October 18, 8am  
American River Parkway,  
Spanos Ct. Access**

**Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999  
mohrdd@gmail.com**

Join Darrell for a leisurely walk on the north side of the river across from the Paradise Beach area. The area is fairly typical of most Parkway locations but does have an overabundance of grapes with slightly less blackberry and elderberry which helps in attracting possible overwintering fruit lovers such as Western Tanager. We may encounter common winter birds such as Fox and Lincoln Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Common Goldeneye and crowned sparrows as well as residents such as Bewick's Wren, Spotted Towhee and California Quail. There are elevated views of the river and well-worn trails. Trip will probably end around 11am. Meet Darrell in the parking area at the end of the Spanos Court cul-de-sac along the levee. Spanos Court runs west off Howe Ave between Northrup and Sierra Blvd.

**Saturday, October 18, 10:30am  
Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk**

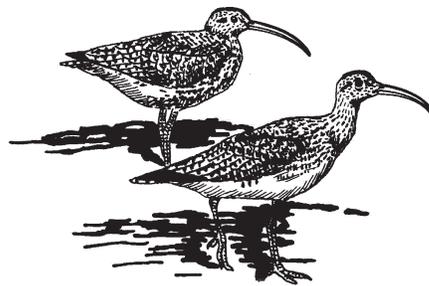
This family friendly nature walk will be at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. In addition to the resident

birds, you may see recently returned White and Golden-Crowned Sparrows, or possibly some Common Mergansers on the river. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with natural-ist/birders John Huls and Ann Burris from Audubon and docents from the nature center who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. For directions, see [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net).

**Sunday, October 19, 8am  
River Bend Park**

**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882  
empid@earthlink.net**

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right just past the entrance kiosk.



*Whimbrel*  
Stephen D'Amato

We'll walk through the oak woodland and down to the river looking for the resident birds of the parkway, as well as returning fall migrants.

This is a very good trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Thursday, October 23, 8am  
Upper Sunrise Park**

**Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758  
Ishim2000@comcast.net**

Meet Marlene at the north end of the Nimbus Fish Hatchery parking lot for this morning walk. We should see some gulls, Goldeneyes, (Common and Barrow's), White-throated Swifts, Phainopeplas, and Western Bluebirds. Expect to walk about two miles at birders' pace. The path will be mostly level and the trip will end by noon. This is a good trip for beginners.

**Saturday, October 25, 7am SHARP!  
Hope Valley-Alpine County**

**Fall Foliage Birding  
Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458  
naturestoc@aol.com**

Autumn color explodes in mid-October at Hope Valley. Join Dan to enjoy the

fall foliage and to look for resident and specialty birds that include: Sooty (Blue) Grouse, Williamson's Sapsucker, Steller's Jay, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Townsend's Solitaire, and Cassin's Finch. Some of the terrain is hilly, so wear sturdy shoes and dress in layers. A camera is a recommended addition to your pack. Bring water and lunch. FRS radios would also be helpful on this trip. Meet Dan at the north end of the Raley's parking lot in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot. We will leave at 7am sharp!

**Saturday, October 25, 3:30pm  
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering  
Birds of the Sacramento Valley  
A Save Our Sandhill Cranes and  
Sacramento Audubon trip  
Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

Our Sandhill Cranes are back! They, as well as a variety of ducks, swans, geese, and shorebirds, feed in the flooded fields and marshy areas of the delta, and hawks patrol overhead. Meet at the Cosumnes River Preserve Visitor Center deck 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 and bring binoculars. Scopes are helpful. 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 [www.cosumnes.org](http://www.cosumnes.org). This is a great trip for beginners.

**Sunday, October 26, 7am  
Bodega Bay**

**Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471  
Mark Martucci, 833-6722  
Scott: [shoppe01@surewest.net](mailto:shoppe01@surewest.net)  
Mark: [matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com)**

Join Scott and Mark 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, October 26, 3:30PM**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley**

Another chance to see our recently returned Sandhill Cranes, as well as other wintering waterfowl. See October 25th trip for details.

**Tuesday, October 28, 8am**  
**Colusa National Wildlife Refuge**  
**Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1290**  
**dtankers@winfirst.com**

The Colusa NWR is another great location in the Central Valley to view large waterfowl concentrations. There will be many duck species and plenty of Snow, Ross's, Greater White-fronted and possibly a few Cackling Geese, as well as other wetland birds. Eurasian Wigeon is often seen here as well, and we can expect many raptors with the possibility of Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. We will spend a good amount of time on the viewing platform, and then take an easy walk on a level trail through riparian habitat next to the main viewing pond. We will then take the short auto tour to finish our outing to this wonderful NWR. Be prepared for cold and damp weather. Weather permitting, there should be ample photo ops. Scopes and FRS radios will be helpful on this trip. Meet Dan at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento, take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride entrance a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Rain, strong wind, or thick fog cancels. Bring snacks and liquids as the trip will end in the very late morning to very early afternoon.

**Saturday, November 1, 7am SHARP**  
**Calaveras Big Trees State Park**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**empid@earthlink.net**

We'll take a leisurely walk on the 1-1/2 mile loop trail through the North Grove of Giant Sequoias, enjoying dogwood, hazelnut, and big leaf maple in fall color. Hoped-for birds include White-headed Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Winter Wren, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. Stellar's Jay and Douglas Squirrel are a certainty. Afterwards we'll picnic at the meadow, so bring a lunch and

liquids, and we'll make a short stop at the visitor center before an optional short afternoon hike. Meet Cathie at the Starbucks in the Raley's Shopping Center in the 8300 block of Folsom Blvd. (between Watt and Howe), to LEAVE at 7am SHARP. Or meet in the large visitor's day parking lot at Calaveras around 9am. There is an entrance fee to this State Park. This trip is good for beginners.

**Sunday, November 2, 8am**  
**NOTE: Daylight Savings Time Ends**  
**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 Brookfield's restaurant parking lot in Roseville. Take Eureka Road exit off I-80; go right on Eureka and first left at the stoplight (Taylor Road). The restaurant is located behind the Shell gas station.

**Wednesday, November 5, 8am**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve Boardwalk and Woodbridge Road**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**empid@earthlink.net**

Our Sandhill Cranes are back for the winter, joining swans, geese and a wide variety of duck species. Yellowlegs and Wilson's Snipe will be in the shallower water, and other shorebirds are possible. We'll walk the CRP boardwalk loop first; then drive along Desmond Road for more views of waterfowl. Then we'll drive to Woodbridge Road, making a couple of birding stops. Meet Cathie 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. Secondary meeting place is the CRP Visitor Center parking lot about 8:30am. Bring water and snacks and dress for changeable weather. FRS radios and spotting scopes are helpful if you have them. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIPS

Sacramento Audubon has joined with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael to offer birding/nature walks as a way of maximizing efforts to serve families with children who are looking for outdoor experiences.

The family friendly trips will be offered on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10:30am. The trips are listed with our regular field trips, and on the Effie Yeaw website, [www.sacnaturecenter.net](http://www.sacnaturecenter.net). Reservations are not needed. Simply show up at Effie Yeaw Nature Center at the appropriate day and time and walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. Our next trip takes place on October 18.



## FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS - 2014-15

**Location:** William Pond Park, American River Parkway

**Dates:** Tuesday, October 21, and Sundays, November 16, December 7, and January 11

**Location:** Cosumnes River Preserve, (focusing on wintering waterfowl and wetland birds)

**Date:** Saturday, November 29th

**Trips limited to 10 adult participants: Registration required**

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

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

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

## PELAGIC BIRDING IN MONTEREY

If you missed having our usual September pelagic trip there are still opportunities in October if you want to contact a company offering pelagic trips. There are two with good reputations among birders:

**Monterey Seabirds:** [montereyseabirds.com/](http://montereyseabirds.com/) and **Shearwater Journeys:** [shearwaterjourneys.com/](http://shearwaterjourneys.com/)



## DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

A great trip for families, youth groups and beginning birders.

Don't forget to stop by the Cosumnes River Preserve and check out "Ducks In Scopes", where preserve docents have a row of scopes set up, some set lower to accommodate children. They'll focus on giving you good views of the many colorful ducks and geese, as well as some of the more interesting shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts and Common Snipe. A table display features "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. A microscope and hand lens provide close-up looks. 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.

**October:** Saturday 10/18 and Sunday 10/26.

**November:** Sunday 11/2, Saturday 11/15 and Sunday 11/30.

**December:** Saturdays, 12/6, 12/13 and 12/20, and Sunday, 12/28.

Then, start the New Year off right and join us on Thursday, January 1, 2015.

## INTRODUCTION TO BIRDS OF THE SACRAMENTO REGION

**Dates:** October 15 - November 1

**Instructor:** Chris Conard

**Cost:** \$135 (all proceeds go to Splash's environmental education programs: [sacsplash.org/](http://sacsplash.org/))

**Wednesday Classes:** October 15, 22, and 29, from 6:30 to 8:30PM

**Saturday Field trips:** October 18, 25, and November 1, starting at 8AM and running 4 - 6 hours.

Over 300 species of birds are found in the Sacramento region's wetlands, riparian forests, grasslands, oak woodlands, and chaparral. Over the course of three evening classes and three Saturday field trips, this class will introduce you to all of the commonly encountered birds, with a special emphasis on those that are challenging to identify

We expect to observe and become familiar with over 100 species during the field trips. Additional emphasis will be given to migration and seasonality, vocalizations, behavior, how and where to look for birds in the Sacramento area, birds in relation to their habitat, and conservation. Other topics will include optics, recording and documenting your observations, and resources for improving birding skills.

Classes will be held at the Splash Education Center at 4426 Excelsior Road, Mather, CA 95655. Field trips will involve one to three miles of walking, mostly over easy terrain to sites including Mather Lake, the American River Parkway, Folsom Lake, and the Cosumnes River Preserve. The field trips are optional but highly recommended. There is no charge for the field trips but you must be enrolled in the class to attend. Some sites require a vehicle entrance fee. For more information go to the Splash web page: [sacsplash.org/event/introduction-birds-sacramento-region-0](http://sacsplash.org/event/introduction-birds-sacramento-region-0). (that's a zero)

The instructor, Chris Conard, is a Natural Resource Specialist at the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Bufferlands with a focus on habitat restoration and wildlife monitoring. He is a regular field trip leader for the Sacramento Audubon Society, writes the Seasonal Observations column for their newsletter, and is a board member of the Central Valley Bird Club.

Chris is interested in nearly all things related to birds and nature, with a focus on distribution, conservation, and how bird populations reflect their habitat and the health of the environment.

## General Meeting

continued from page 1

American snakebites. He currently studies Northern Pacific rattlesnakes at two study sites near Sacramento. Mike is fascinated by animals that others unreasonably fear and his favorite pastime is radio-tracking rattlesnakes to learn about their secretive lives.

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](http://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).

## Findings continued from page 2

and Common Ravens. As always, a good trip."

**Granite Springs Road (8/17)** – Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Mark Martucci, reported: "Eighteen birders enjoyed a fun-filled day in the Sierra. Some of the highlights were 2 Golden Eagles, Mountain Quail, Swainson's Hawk, 7 species of Sierra warblers, Pacific-slope and Olive-sided flycatchers, Western Wood-Pewee, Green-tailed Towhee, Lazuli Bunting, Wilson's Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Lewis's and Hairy woodpeckers, and Williamson's Sapsucker. The weather was beautiful, all wonderful people, life is good."

**Mather Lake (8/16)** – Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "Great morning of birding was enjoyed by the group of 11 souls with 40 species reported to eBird. Great looks at Western Bluebird families in the parking lot started the party. Families of Common Gallinules, Pied-billed Grebes, Mute Swans, Robins, and Mocking Birds were observed. A very early Northern Flicker was a great summer treat."

Pete Hayes

## SACRAMENTO AUDUBON CONSERVATION GRANTS

The Sacramento Audubon Society would like to fund community based conservation projects that promote the mission of the Society. We believe that when organizations work together, we can exponentially magnify our impact. The projects should conserve (or restore) habitats, or help protect species. The geographical area should be within 50 miles of Sacramento.

The available grants are for \$500 to \$2,000 for the year 2015.

Sacramento Audubon Society's mission is:

- 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.

If your organization is interested in applying for such a grant, please submit a proposal for your project. The proposal should be no more than 2 pages long and should include the project's goals and how they meet one or more of the above mission objectives; an action plan with time-line; and the project budget with some breakdowns. Also, indicate if this is an ongoing effort or a one-time project and the personnel who will work on the project. The goals should be measurable and achievable within the 12 month grant period.

The Board of Directors of the Sacramento Audubon Society will evaluate each proposal for how well it fits with SAS goals, and the cost to benefit ratio of each project. They reserve the right to request modifications to the project. As with all grant programs, there is limited funding available and not all proposals can be approved. We would like your submissions by October 15, 2014.

This information can also be found on our website: [www.sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/grants.html](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/grants.html)

Please send proposals either electronically to Linda Pittman, President of SAS, at: [President@sacramentoaudubon.org](mailto:President@sacramentoaudubon.org) (preferred option) OR by snail mail to Sacramento Audubon Society, Attn: SAS Conservation Grants Program, PO Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

## *Birding and Nature Events*

### EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER NATUREFEST 2014 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

The annual Nature fest at Effie Yeaw Nature Center will take place on **Sunday, October 5**, from 10am to 3pm. Mark your calendar now for NatureFest, their largest family event of the year! NatureFest promotes science and nature education and safe and healthy outdoor recreation and includes live animal shows, kids activities, demonstrations, guided nature hikes, and family-friendly food in the beautiful Nature Center area.

Check [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net) soon to see who the headliners will be this year! Pictures from the event can be found here: [sacnaturecenter.net/nf14.html](http://sacnaturecenter.net/nf14.html)

Admission (at the door): Adults-\$5; Kids 12 and under-FREE

### LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

The 18th annual Sandhill Crane Festival will be held **November 7-9**, at Hutchins Street Square, 125 S. Hutchins Street, Lodi. 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. As they greeted California's earliest explorers, these magnificent birds darkened the skies over winter marshes. In awe-inspiring numbers, and with a prehistoric call, stately gait, and elegant choreography, the Sandhill Crane continues to attract and inspire visitors.

Each year thousands of visitors make their way to Lodi area wildlife refuges and farmlands to experience first hand this nature spectacle. The abundance of crane habitat continues to nourish our agricultural roots, with water, soil, and climate that sustains the birds, enriches our lives, and benefits the local economy.

For 18 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 the community to share the wonder of the Sandhill Crane ... and so much more.

Admission is free and there will be the usual great 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](http://www.cranefestival.com) or call (800) 581-6150.

### CALIFORNIA SWAN FESTIVAL

Celebrating the abundant local and migratory wildfowl of the Northern Sacramento Valley, the California Swan Festival, being held in **Marysville, November 7-9**, offers workshops, presentations, field trips and educational programs catering to bird and nature enthusiasts of all ages and levels of interest.

The star of the weekend is the tundra swan, recently arrived from the Arctic to its over-wintering grounds in the Central Valley and concentrated in the wetlands and rice fields of Yuba and Sutter Counties, which provide a brilliant green backdrop to the thousands of white swans feeding and preening. Arriving in the tens of thousands and in close-knit family groups, they make a spectacular show for bird watchers and photographers.

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 in their respective fields. To find out more about the California Swan Festival and to register for tours, visit [www.caswanfestival.com](http://www.caswanfestival.com).

## Symposium and Conference

### CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 18th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium, **November 20-23**, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in **Stockton**. Please come and help us 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*. Ed is a widely known, popular and highly sought after speaker.

Friday night's keynote program is presented by Nat Seavey on *From Flood to Drought: A Bird's-Eye View of Water Management in the Central Valley*. Nat Seavey, is the Research Director of the Pacific Coast and Central Valley Group at Point Blue Conservation Science (formerly PRBO). His research is focused on the ecology and conservation of riparian ecosystems, bird migration, the ecological effects of climate change, and applying science to conservation decision making and public policy.

Saturday night's keynote program is presented by Joel Greenberg on *The Echoes of Their Wings: The Life and Legacy of the Passenger Pigeon*. For the past four years he has been a leader in Project Passenger Pigeon which aims to mark the anniversary of the species' extinction. He is co-producing with director David Mrazek the documentary, *From Billions to None: The Passenger Pigeon's Flight to Extinction*.

Workshops include: *Subspecies for Birders* by Joe Morlan, *What Birders Should Know About Taxonomy in Flux* by Jon Dunn and Kimball Garrett, and a photo workshop by Bob Steele, plus, informative talks by Monica Iglesia, Sara Kross, and Bob Meese. Andy Engilis and his UCD Museum crew will present the very popular Specimen Workshop.

Our 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! To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips or register, check out the website at: [www.2013cvbs.org/](http://www.2013cvbs.org/)

### WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS CONFERENCE

The 39th annual conference of Western Field Ornithologists will be in **San Diego, October 9-12**, at the Marriott Courtyard hotel at Liberty Station. This is a beautiful location on the San Diego Harbor, less than a mile from the San Diego airport.

Field trips will include two pelagic trips, as well as visits to a wide diversity of San Diego's many birding hot spots. In addition, the conference is offering a two-day field trip Sunday and Monday (October 12-13) to the Salton Sea and Imperial Valley area led by Guy McCaskie and Jon Dunn.

There will be workshops on field identification of warblers (Jon Dunn and Kimball Garrett) and sparrows (Homer Hansen), molt (Peter Pyle), specimen preparation (Phil Unitt), and bird sound identification (Nathan Pieplow). The Saturday evening banquet will feature a celebration of the rich 44-year history of WFO. Ed Harper and Nathan Pieplow will again offer their ever-popular sessions on bird ID by sight and sound.

In addition to WFO's usual general science session, the conference will include a symposium on avifaunal change in western North America to be published subsequently as a volume of WFO's monograph series *Studies of Western Birds*.

For registration and a complete conference schedule go to their website at: [westernfieldornithologists.org/conference.php](http://westernfieldornithologists.org/conference.php).

### THANK YOU FOR THE GREAT RESPONSE

Autumn and winter events are on the calendar now and we recently put out a call for volunteers. Thank you to everyone who volunteered a few hours to help Sacramento Audubon get the word out about our organization and the wonderful world of birds and nature. Even if you didn't volunteer please stop by our table at any of the events for additional information you may not find at our meetings, or just to say hi! You can also see how fun and easy it is to help a few hours at a festival or nature event.

If you would like to volunteer for any upcoming event, please contact Cathie LaZier at [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.net), or 457-6882.



Common Nighthawk  
Stephen D'Amato

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Craig De Martini, Maureen Geiger, Georganna Griffin, Michael Harris, Marie Heid, Kevin McRae, Violet Vaira, Christie Vallance, Salli Warriner made donations to the **General Fund**.

Alice Bauman, Valerie Brown, Ruth Gay, Maureen Geiger, Denise Gonzales, Marie Heid, Peggy Kraus-Kennedy, Kay Lovegrove, Mary Beth Metcalf, Kevin McRae, Joyce Mihabovich, Mike Savino, and Joyce Strand made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

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

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Wanda Kilbourne

Kaj Olson

Cat Scrima

### 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 October 28, 2014 at 7pm, at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.



**SEE THE LATEST  
SAS ACTION ON  
FACEBOOK**

facebook.com/  
SacramentoAudubon

### SAS JANUARY PROGRAM

For our first general meeting of 2015 our speaker will be David Arsenault, with a presentation on Flammulated Owls. It'll be a hoo, hoo, hoo-hoot.

### YOUR DUES AND DONATIONS AT WORK

The Sacramento Audubon Board has voted to make the following donations

- \$500 to the City of Galt to support their annual Winter Bird Festival.
- \$380 to Effie Yeaw Nature Center to support field trips for inner-city school children.
- \$500 to the American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) to support their 2014 Nature Fest at Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

## JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

### Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry46@comcast.net

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.

### 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
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*Observations* continued from page 10

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

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](http://cvbirds.org)) and in eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Dan Airola, Ashley Casey, Terry Colborn, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Scott Hoppe, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Mark Martucci, Ron Pozzi, Mark Sawyer, John Sterling, Michael Strom, Jim Thomas, John Trochet, and Sharon Wisecarver.

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

*Chris Conard*

# Seasonal Observations

August 1 to August 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

[www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm](http://www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm)

What an exciting time to be in the field. Some days can be uncomfortably hot, for sure, but others, mornings in particular, can seem magical when birds materialize in what only yesterday were quiet trees. A report of 42 migrants on the morning of 8/28, 19 of which were **Black-throated Gray Warblers**, in remnant oaks in a West Sacramento suburb is just one example of what we might hope to find any morning during the protracted "fall" migration period (roughly July-October).

Up to two **Least Bitterns** continued at Mather Lake from the previous month, while an adult **Glossy Ibis** near the Tall Forest of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 8/16 appears to be a first record for Sacramento County. A high of four **Snowy Plovers**, perhaps continuing from July, were reported at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) from 8/10-17; four were also at the Sacramento Regional WTP (SRWTP) on 8/11. A **Solitary Sandpiper** was found at CRP on 8/6, and a **Willet** and a **Marbled Godwit** were reported by several observers along Desmond Rd at CRP on 8/3. Four **Willetts** were at the Woodland WTP on 8/4. A **Stilt Sandpiper** on 8/20 at YBWA was an excellent report. A **Sanderling** was found on 8/16 at SRWTP, and a **Baird's Sandpiper** was at the same site on 8/26-27; a **Baird's** was also at Folsom Lake near Beals Point on 8/23. The male **Costa's Hummingbird** contin-

Sacramento Audubon Society  
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ued at a south Sacramento yard from 5/31 into September, while another was reported in early August visiting a feeder in Fair Oaks. The **Costa's** banded

in its hatch year last September along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters returned in late July and continued into September. A female or immature **Calliope Hummingbird** visited a feeder in Fair Oaks on 8/12. A **Gray Flycatcher** at Sailor Bar along the ARP on 8/31 was a rare report for the fall. Perhaps in response to dry conditions elsewhere, large concentrations of **Phainopeplas** (a high near 30) were found along the upper American River Parkway. A juvenile **Black-throated Sparrow** was a first for the Bufferlands on 8/11. The **Summer Tanager** that stayed all of July near the Tall Forest was last seen on 8/6 and the male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** found at the entrance to Rossmoor Bar on 7/26 continued through at least 8/1. Two **Lawrence's Goldfinches** along Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd on 8/30 were unusual for that location on the Valley floor.

## Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

**Internet Address:** [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org)

**Membership/Subscriptions:** Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
[lrandry46@comcast.net](mailto:lrandry46@comcast.net)

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

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

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

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

*Observations* continued on page 9