



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, October 18, 2012

Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room
7pm

The San Joaquin River—History, Wildlife and Restoration

Meghan Hertel

The San Joaquin River is the second largest river in California, yet for decades it has run dry for 60 miles. Now part of one of the largest river and salmon restorations in the country, the San Joaquin River will once again be a living river. Meghan Hertel, Audubon California's San Joaquin River Project Manager, will present the river's history, its importance to birds and other wildlife, and Audubon's campaign to ensure its future. Come learn how you can be a part of bringing a living San Joaquin River back to the Valley.



Meghan Hertel

Meghan Hertel, Audubon California's San Joaquin River Project Manager, oversees Audubon's engagement in the San Joaquin Valley working with partner organizations and private landowners to enhance and protect migratory bird habitat. Meghan has been with Audubon for two years with

prior experience working on Central Valley issues with the public charity Resources Legacy Fund. She also brings agricultural

General Meeting continued on page 6

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

Saturday, December 1, Daybreak, ARNHA Wildlife Count

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

Saturday, December 15, Woodfords Christmas Count

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

Sunday, December 23, Sacramento Christmas Count

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

Sunday, December 30, Folsom Christmas Count

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

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

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

Other Christmas Bird Counts:

Saturday, December 15, Auburn Christmas Count

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

Sunday, December 16, Putah Creek Christmas Count

Compiler: Steve Hampton, stevehampton@gmail.com

Sunday, December 16, Stockton Christmas Count

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

Monday, December 17, Benicia-Napa Christmas Count

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

Thursday, December 27, Lincoln Christmas Count

Compiler: Ed Pandolfino, ERPfromCA@aol.com

Friday, December 28, Sonoma Valley Christmas Count

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

Tuesday, January 1, Angwin Christmas Count

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

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

Field Trip Findings

Discovery Park (9/15) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “Had a nice trip to Discovery Park. Warm and clear, we five only had about 35 species, but did have a nice array of wrens, tanagers, warblers and woodpeckers. Warming up by the time we returned to the cars.”

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway (9/9) — Leader Paul Cordero reported: “A group of about 15 enjoyed a fun outing at Sailor Bar, sharpening up our birding-by-ear skills. Highlights included great looks at Orange-crowned Warblers, a young Cooper’s Hawk, Phainopepla, Spotted Sandpiper, Cedar Waxwing, Common Gallinule and Red-Shouldered Hawk. Many summer residents were around, including noisy Acorn Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches, and Bewick’s Wren.”

Shollenberger Park/Ellis Creek, Petaluma (9/8) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “A relatively small group of 5 birders enjoyed a good day of birding with nice weather. While Shollenberger Park itself was rather slow, we had some good “birdy” stops at the beginning and end of the day. We made a couple of stops in the morning along Highway 37, the best being Skaggs Island Rd. The end of the road where it deadends at a locked gate proved to be a good stop. Here we found a juvenile Great Horned Owl, a Willow Flycatcher, 2 Western Wood-Pewees, 2 Yellow Warblers, and House Wren, as well as several other more common species. The tidal flats along the road also provided good views of the more common shorebird species, at one point giving us good side-by-side views of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs. We also found Bonaparte’s Gulls in the area. After Shollenberger Park, where the best birds were a group of 5 Red-necked Phalaropes, we continued on to Cypress Hill Memorial Park in Petaluma. Birding here was somewhat slow as well. Best bird was a Brown Creeper. After lunch we decided to head in the direction of home and make a stop at American Canyon Wetlands in Napa County. This proved to be a good decision as the wetlands had thousands of shorebirds, waterfowl and other water-loving species. We were able to spend time comparing Western and Least Sandpipers at close range, identifying Long-billed Dowitchers by their call and picking out waterfowl species in their drab fall plumage. A good way to round out the day.”

Alpine County (9/2) — Leader Chris Conard reported: “Our trip to the Markleeville area of Alpine County went well. There were only eight of us, so it made visiting multiple sites quite easy. By far the best sighting was a male and female Red Crossbill that allowed long scope views. We were able to watch the male extract seeds from a Jeffrey Pine cone. Other highlights included a Red-shouldered Hawk (rare on the east side of the Sierra), Band-tailed Pigeons, Clark’s Nutcrackers, an American Dipper, and good scope views of a Townsend’s Solitaire. Unfortunately the large flock of Pinyon Jays present a week earlier were not seen or heard.”

River Bend Park (9/1) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Eleven people joined me on this pleasant morning on the American River Parkway. Greater Yellowlegs and Spotted Sandpipers were back on the gravel bars, and White-breasted Nuthatches and Oak Titmouses/mice were noisy. Starlings were already in their fall plumage. Valerie Phillips helped some newer birders with bird calls and identification. As it was fairly slow birding, we also looked at plants, including blooming Vinegar Weed, Nude Buckwheat, and Common Madia.”

Paradise Beach/American River (8/26) — Leader Dan Kopp reported: “Approximately 16 people joined me for this trip, which started off cool and breezy before warming a bit. We had a few migrants that included Black-throated Gray, Wilson’s, Orange-crowned and Yellow warblers, and a few Western Tanagers and Lazuli Buntings as well. Other birds of note were Common Merganser, Western Kingbird, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Greater Yellowlegs, Barn Swallow, Yellow-billed Magpie, Cooper’s Hawk, Green Heron and Cedar Waxwings. It was a great morning of birding along the American River and we tallied 44 species.”

Marin County Shorebirds and other Surprises (8/25) — Leader Chris Conard reported: “The Marin shorebirds trip produced a good sampling of expected species, with a few highlights. Our first stop at Corte Madera Marsh allowed good views of many regular species, including Black-bellied Plovers in various stages of molt (a few nearly in perfect breeding plumage), numerous Willets, a few Marbled Godwits and Long-billed Curlews, Least

and Western Sandpipers, and a single Red-necked Phalarope. Unfortunately we didn’t detect any Clapper Rails. After a couple of quick stops that were not very productive, we made the long drive out to Abbott’s Lagoon at Point Reyes where we spent the rest of the day. A Peregrine Falcon or two kept the shorebirds on their toes, but we had good numbers and diversity. Highlights included 250-300 Red-necked Phalaropes, with five or more Red Phalaropes seen on the ocean from the beach, and a fly-by Parasitic Jaeger. Single Black and Ruddy Turnstones were nice to see feeding on a sand spit in the lagoon.”

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (8/22) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: “Since the Bypass had no shorebird habitat, we redirected the tour to other locations such as Farmers Central, Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant, Davis Wetlands, and Roads 105 and 103 agricultural fields. Eight participants saw a good variety of birds and specifically shorebirds, which were the target species for the day. Among the highlights were Marbled Godwit, Western Sandpipers, Wilson’s Phalaropes, Least Sandpipers, Cattle Egrets, White faced Ibis, and young Black-crowned Night-Herons at the Road 103 rookery. White Pelicans were seen at several locations as well as White-tailed Kites which were seen either perched on a snag or kiting. It was a good morning of birding, which ended before it got too hot.”

Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Contra Costa County (8/18) — Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Ken Poerner, reported: “There were 8 of us and we saw about 40 species; best were shorebirds such as Spotted Sandpipers, Ruddy Turnstones, Black-bellied Plovers plus 3 gull species, Caspian Terns, and Osprey with fish nearly as big as they were. The weather was cool and refreshing, unlike the Valley weather!”

Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area (8/12) — Leader Linda Pittman reported: “Nine participants, eight from the Sacramento area and one from Napa, joined me for a nice respite from high temps in the Sacramento area. We traveled to foggy American Canyon where it was only 53 degrees when we started our wetlands walk and the tide was very low, exposing lots of muddy islands. At the

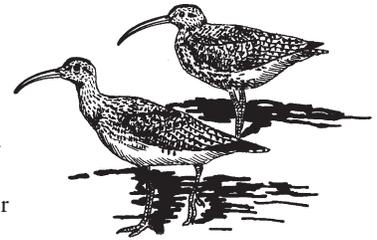
Findings continued on page 7

Field Trips

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 October trips. For November trips, contact the scheduler Maureen Geiger, 444-0604, 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.



Whimbrel
Stephen D'Amato

Wednesday, October 3, 8am

The Best of Both Sides

River Bend Park and William Pond Park

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

Meet Cathie at the main River Bend parking lot near the bike bridge. (Follow the main road into the park; after you cross the bike trail (stop sign) go about ½ mile and turn left at the sign “rafting exit, main picnic area” and continue on the road to the large parking area). For the first half of the walk we’ll bird across the bridge into William Pond Park, going downstream along the backwaters of the river and checking out the fishing pond. Then we’ll recross the river and go upstream into the oak woodland area. We’ll finish before noon, but you may want to bring water and/or snacks. As always, this is a great trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). If you come from the William Pond side look for us on the bridge. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, October 6, 8am to 11am

Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach American River Parkway

Leaders: Sally Walters and Don Schmoldt, 739-6465
dschmoldt25@gmail.com

Join us for a morning bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. From Highway 50 take Howe Ave north to Fair Oaks Blvd. Turn left onto Fair Oaks and cross over the American River. Turn right on Carlson Ave, which is the first stop light past the American River bridge. Continue on

Carlson Ave to its end, at Glenn Hall Park. Meet on top of the levee. This will be a fairly easy walk, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. We hope to see returning wintering sparrows and waterfowl, and resident birds including wrens, towhees, Yellow-billed Magpies and kinglets. Excellent trip for beginners.

Saturday, October 6

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 people 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, October 7, 7:30am

Mather Lake

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake is one of Wayne’s favorite birding locations, and he usually 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 at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

Thursday, October 11, 7:30am

Folsom Lake

Leader: Margaret Martin, 599-0181
margaret.martin6@me.com

Meet Margaret at the Raley’s shopping center, northwest corner of Douglas Blvd and Auburn-Folsom Road, at the east end of the parking lot near the animal hospital and Goodwill. We will carpool from there to one of the nearby entrances to the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area as the entrance fee is \$10 per car. We will look for Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Rock Wren, and enjoy a variety of other birds including bluebirds, sparrows, hawks, ducks, and grebes. We will bird into the early afternoon, so bring lunch and water. This is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders.

Saturday, October 13, 8:30am

Cosumnes River Preserve

Leader: John Huls, 485-2789
johnhuls@sbcglobal.net

Meet John at the Visitor Center parking lot for this morning walk looking for returning migrants. Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Northern Shovelers and Gadwall should be in the ponds, along with Black-necked Stilts, Common Snipe and Yellowlegs. Marsh Wrens may be heard in the tules, and there’s always the possibility of Sandhill Cranes. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road, (Exit #498); go left (east) about 1 mile to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd: turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org. This is an excellent trip for beginners, and for those who want to brush up on their waterfowl identification skills.

Sunday, October 14, 7am SHARP!
Solano Lake/Putah Creek

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

**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. There is a \$5 per car fee at the Lake Solano campground. 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.

**Tuesday, October 16, 7:45am
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 main 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 and finish our outing with a return visit to the platform. 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 at 7:45am. 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. We will leave the meeting area at 8am SHARP.

**Saturday, October 20, 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, Stellar'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, Oct 20
FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIP**

Autumn is here and migrating and winter birds are returning, so plan to join a family-friendly field trip and see what's out there. These monthly birding and nature walks are specifically geared to and appropriate for families and children. There is a trip limit to ensure a quality experience for all. Register for trips by contacting Maureen Geiger, at mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net or at 444-0804.

**Sunday, October 21, 8am
American River between Watt and Howe**

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

Join Dan at his favorite spot along the Parkway in search of our wintering birds, and get to know an area he knows well. He'll find our resident and wintering birds, and will be looking for uncommon species; he's found a White-throated Sparrow the last four years. There are well worn trails and some that require a little more work, so depending on everyone's ability, he will decide how strenuous the walk will be in the morning. The trip will last until lunch time. Meet Dan at the Watt Avenue entrance to the Parkway in the first parking lot on the left as you drive in. Park access is off La Riviera just east of Watt Avenue. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles or you can park on La Riviera and walk in. This is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders.

**Thursday, October 25, 8am
Riverbend Park**

**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net
cell phone, morning of walk only,
502-2699**

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right just past the entrance kiosk, for this morning walk through the oak woodland and along the river looking for the resident birds of the parkway, as well as fall migrants. This is a 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.

**Saturday, October 27, 8am – noon
Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek
Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141
llandry46@earthlink.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 ¼ mile east on Main, from where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale.

**Saturday, October 27, 3:30pm
Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering
Birds of the Sacramento Valley
A Save Our Sandhill Cranes-sponsored
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. This is a great trip for beginners and for families.

Sunday, October 28, 7:30am

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.

Sunday, October 28, 3:30pm

Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds of the Sacramento Valley

A Save Our Sandhill Cranes-sponsored trip

See information for Saturday's SOS trip.

Tuesday, October 30, 8:30am

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area Auto Tour

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

Join Marlene in this great area 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. Depending on the extent of flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds and waterfowl as well as raptors. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A) on your left, at the beginning of the auto tour. FRS radios and scopes are helpful on this trip, which is a good trip for both beginners and more experienced birders. Trip will end before noon.

Nov 3 and 4

Lodi Crane Festival

See Festival notes on page 6.

Saturday, November 3, 8:30am

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Leader: Linda Pittman, 715-1876

**pittmanl@frontiernet.net
(email preferred)**

Bobelaine is a 430 acre National Audubon Sanctuary on the Feather River, managed by Sacramento Audubon. This riparian forest of cottonwoods, sycamores and willows is home to a wide variety of birds and wildlife. Join Linda for a 1 to 2 mile walk along the trails looking for resident and wintering birds. Herons, egrets, cormorants and grebes should be on the water, and Yellow-rumped Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and a variety of sparrows will be settling in for the winter.

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

Sunday, November 4, 7am

Bodega Bay

**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net**

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

Saturday, November 10, 8am

Bushy Lake

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

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

Sunday, November 11, 8am

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

**Leader: Maureen Geiger
444-0804/281-6652
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net**

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk through

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

Thursday-Monday, November 15-18

Central Valley Birding Symposium

**Contact: Frances Oliver
(209) 369-2010**

hummer52@sbcglobal.net

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

Sunday, November 17, 8am

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge

**Leader: Andi Salmi, 508-7192
andisalmi@yahoo.com**

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

Saturday, November 26, 8am

**Pleasant Valley Rd./Putah Creek
(Solano Co.)**

**Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
Calaveri.gary@gmail.com**

Field Trips continued on page 6

Birding and Nature Events

LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL

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

EFFIE YEAW NATURE FEST OCTOBER 7

The annual Nature Fest will be held from 10am-3pm, on October 7th at Ancil Hoffman Park in Carmichael. There will be free parking and kids up to the age of 12 are admitted free. Adults are \$3 per person. The Nature Fest is a full day of nature related activities, demonstration and hands-on opportunities. All proceeds will benefit the Nature Center Education programs. There will be vendors and Sacramento Audubon will definitely be included. The Nature Fest is a community service of the American River History Association. The Natures Fest website is sacnaturefest.com for more information and to look at the schedule of events.

FRIENDS OF THE SWAINSON'S HAWK PROGRAM AT REI.

Join Friends of the Swainson's Hawk on Wednesday, October 24 from 7 to 8:30pm, as they present an educational session about California's Swainson Hawks. The event is being held at REI, Sacramento and will feature a presentation by Mike Bradbury, Environmental Resources Coordinator for State Department of Water Resources, who will address the nesting, foraging and migration of the Swainson's Hawk populations in the Sacramento-San Joaquin-Yolo-Solano area, and current conservation issues. His talk will be followed with a question and answer session about this threatened bird of prey. Come early to see a live Swainson's Hawk. The event is free and reservations are welcome at rei.com/event/44576/session/57668

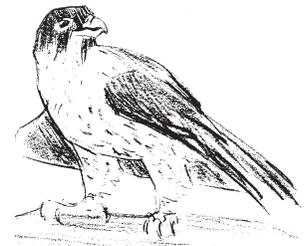
EAST AFRICA IN 2013!

In responding to many inquires, Ed Harper and Susan Scott have set up several 2013 itineraries for East Africa. July 1 - 15 will be Tanzania, a favorite destination for many at the coolest time of the year. Many have called Tanzania the most outstanding trip of their lifetime. Uganda is also being offered again this year with dates July 19 - August 4. This trip is filling rapidly driven by interest in tracking Mountain Gorillas and Uganda's fabulous birding. There is also interest building around Kenya for August 7 - 16. This trip will highlight the wildebeest migration moving into the Masai Mara and will feature the greatest number of mammals to be seen anywhere in the world. Lions, Cheetahs, and Leopards are all expected plus a healthy mix of birds. Kenya will feature luxury tented camps and you will definitely be spoiled by this one!

Much planning has already gone into preparing for these safaris since more than a year of advance planning is required if one is to obtain choice locations and accommodations. Now all is ready for you. Ed and Susan are veterans at leading these trips through their company, Sandpiper Journeys, and cater only to folks sharing common interests and values, people that travel well together as they enjoy the natural world. They have designed itineraries that are the best for the season and wildlife viewing. For more information and tour specifics and pricing, contact Ed or Susan through calidris@surewest.net or call (916) 704-7954 or (916) 971-3311.

Field Trips continued from page 5

This outing entails driving to the Vacaville area to pick up Pleasants Valley Road, and birding our way up to Hwy 128, then Putah Creek, Solano Lake and the Monticello Dam Overlook. We will make several stops along Pleasants Valley Rd, looking for migrating passerines, including Phainopepla, Western Bluebird and Say's Phoebe. Along Putah Creek and Solano Lake we may see Barrow's Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, American Dipper, and Osprey. At the Monticello Dam Overlook, we'll be watching and listening for Canyon and Rock Wrens, and possibly Peregrine Falcon. Plan to spend 3-4 hours birding, plus driving time getting there and back. There will be minimal hiking, but dress for seasonal conditions. Bring along hand held radios, food and water. Our lunch spot will be at Solano Lake County Park, where there is a day-use fee. We'll also look for Pileated Woodpecker and owls here. Meet Gary at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. Take the West Capitol Ave exit; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Car pooling is strongly encouraged, due to limited access at stops and the distance traveled.



Peregrine Falcon
Kirsten Munson

General Meeting

continued from page 1

experience to the position, having spent one year working on a family farm outside of Atlanta, Georgia. She has a Master's degree in Environmental Science and Policy from Clark University, was a 2009 Water Education Foundation William R. Gianelli Water Leader, and a 2006 Albert Schweitzer Fellow.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions. See page 8 for written directions to Effie Yeaw.

Sally Walters, Program Chair

DIRECTIONS TO EFFIE YEAW

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

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

FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIPS – STARTING AGAIN!

October 20th

Fall is coming and migrating and winter birds will be coming back. Good time for families to join the family-friendly field trips and see what's out there. Our next family friendly trip will be on October 20, probably at Traylor Ranch near Penryn. It will be lead by Sandra Beseler, a very popular trip leader plus several co-leaders to help.

These monthly birding and nature walks are specifically geared to and appropriate for families and children. There is a trip limit to ensure a quality experience for all. Register for trips by contacting Maureen Geiger, at mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net, or 444-0804.

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2012

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Saturday, October 6th and Sunday, November 25th

Time: 8am

Each Trip: Limited to 10 participants

Registration required.

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

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

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

Findings continued from page 2

restoration pond, we encountered shorebirds and ducks in good numbers: Willets, Marbled Godwits, Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, dowitchers, Black-necked Stilts, Least and Western Sandpipers and Cinnamon Teal. On the way to the Napa River, we found a Loggerhead Shrike stationed on top of a Century Plant flower stalk. In the Green Island pond near the river, among impressive numbers of shorebirds, we added Whimbrel, Semipalmated Plovers, Black-bellied Plovers (some still in breeding plumage), American Avocets, and Northern Pintails. A Peregrine Falcon, seen perched on a post in the pond earlier, flew over the pond and flushed hundreds of peeps. Other raptors were also seen: Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kites, Red-tailed Hawks, American Kestrels and a Cooper's Hawk. Although August is sometimes not the most productive month, we tallied 61 species for the trip and enjoyed a nice cool walk."

William Pond Park (8/11) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "On a very hot day, seven intrepid birders joined me for a morning walk at the river. We began with some Western Bluebirds and Lark Sparrows, and then followed the river downstream, trying to stay in the shade. Dan Tankersley generously carried his scope, and offered good scope views of Green Heron, Belted Kingfisher, and a young and querulously calling Cooper's Hawk. Hooker's Evening Primrose was in full bloom around the pond as Dan pointed out that the male Mallards in eclipse plumage were still identifiable by their bill color, yellow. We ended the trip mid-morning because of the heat, but still totaled 33 species."

Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway (8/8) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "Seven of us who met at Sacramento Bar immediately spotted a young Cooper's Hawk trying to catch an Acorn Woodpecker. Unfortunately for the hawk, the woodpecker escaped. We had a total of 30 different species before

temperatures warmed and we returned to our vehicles."

Sailor Bar (8/5) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: "Seven birders saw 47 species of birds on a very pleasant early August morning. Highlights included Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Bullock's Oriole, White-tailed Kite, Spotted Sandpiper, Phainopepla, Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Lazuli Bunting."

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley (8/4) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "Although conditions at the usual local shorebird 'hotspots' have not been optimal, 9 birders saw about 63 species of birds overall, and everyone had a good time. A lot of birds were seen at the receding pond in front of the Davis Landfill. There were about 120 Least Sandpipers accompanied by a few Western Sandpipers and Semipalmated Plovers, a good sized group of Long-billed Dowitchers, as well as American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts. Quite a large flock of California Gulls were here as well. And a lone Lesser Scaup presented an ID challenge at first, due to the distance and the fact that it was either a female or a nonbreeding male and it spent much of the time with its head down preening. Opposite the landfill, a flock of about 60 Long-billed Curlews came in to land in a field to the south. This field also contained many Swainson's Hawks. Later, we were to find an estimated 100 Swainson's to the southeast of here in (and above) a field along Road 105. While there were not many shorebirds at the Davis Wetlands, we were able to find 2 Willets there in the company of a small group of Greater Yellowlegs and dowitchers. Willets are uncommon visitors to the Central Valley in migration. We also located a single Bank Swallow here, another uncommon migrant. Other notable birds for the trip included a couple of Barn Owls, one at Davis Wetlands and one at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, and a Peregrine Falcon, also at the bypass. All in all a nice morning of birding."

Pete Hayes

16TH ANNUAL CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2012 AMERICAN RIVER NATURAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION WILDLIFE COUNT

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

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

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

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

A NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE "FRIENDS GROUP" LIKE NO OTHER

Recently, "The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp" formally launched their new website.

The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp organization is unlike any other "Refuge Friends Group" you may be familiar with. Instead of connecting with a single refuge, refuge complex, or wildlife management district, it connects with any landscape secured through the Federal Duck Stamp program. The organization advocates the growth of the National Wildlife Refuge System through the sales and promotion of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp, funding that to date has helped build 249 refuges in the System.

The Friends of the Migratory Bird/Duck Stamp has defined its role as the promotion, preservation, sales, and better understanding of the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (commonly called the Duck Stamp). They foster an appreciation of how the funds collected, through sale of



2012-2013 Federal Duck Stamp
Wood Duck by artist Joseph Hautman

the Stamp and deposited into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, build the National Wildlife Refuge System, and it emphasizes the conservation of habitat and the many wildlife species (waterfowl and much more) that benefit from Stamp sales.

This Friends Group is for birders, wildlife photographers, environmental educators, hunters, anglers, refuge friends, and, ultimately, for any who value wildlife and wild places. You can find out more about the group, its mission, and how to engage through the new website: www.friendsofthestamp.org.

Give it a look.... And, if you can, please spread the word, and add an announcement or link to a newsletter, website, listserv, or blog. (Also note they have a Facebook page!)

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Gail Dellagnena
Rixon Johnson
Daydre Roser
Sandra Wilmot

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 30, 2012 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2012-2013 PROGRAMS

- November 15** Jamie Washington,
Effie Yeaw Naturalist
- 2013**
- January 17** David Wyatt, *Ringtail
Cat*
- February 21** Brian Sullivan, *eBird*
- March 21** Ed Harper, *Birding
Montana*

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:

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

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry46@earthlink.net (916) 638-1141

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

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

SAS HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE!

Thanks to the efforts of SAS members Cliff Hawley and Dan Brown the SAS facebook page is active and available at: facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

Begun in June, SAS Facebook is now totally full of great photos, friends, tips, field trip info, and just plain great bird and nature information. Check it out and add your name to the growing list of participants. Send the link to your friends too. You do not have to be registered with Facebook to enjoy all that the page has to offer in the way of information, photos and birding fun.

We all owe a great deal of thanks to Cliff Hawley especially, for getting our page up and maintaining it. Dan Brown, one of our many great photographers, has also contributed much enthusiasm along with his photos. It's a happening thing!



Observations continued from page 10

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html). The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties are included.

Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Dan Airola, Bruce Deuel, Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Gil Ewing, Maureen Geiger, Kevin Guse, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Keiller Kyle, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Phil Lutz, Frances Oliver, Michael Perrone, Linda Pittman, Will Rockey, Jim Rowoth, Don Schmoltdt, John Sterling, John Trochet, and Ed Whisler.

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

Widespread reports of common migrant shorebirds and songbirds accounted for most of the activity this month. Several rare shorebird reports were most notable, including two **Snowy Plovers** in Colusa County along Husted Rd south of Hwy 20 on 8/26, a **Willet** at Sherman Island in southwestern Sacramento County on 8/11, four juvenile **Red Knots** at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) on 8/26, a **Sanderling** at the Sacramento Reg. WTP on 8/4, and a juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the Farmers Central Pond near the Woodland WTP on 8/14-15. An adult male **Ruff** at the Woodland WTP molting out of breeding plumage on 8/1-2 may have been the same bird as the **Ruff** found at YWA on 8/26-27.

An immature **Hooded Merganser** at the Davis Wetlands (DW) on 8/31 is consistent with the continuing expansion of this species in the region. **Brown Pelican** reports continued, with one along the Sacramento River north of the Rio Vista Bridge on 8/11, and three the same day in the San Joaquin River off of Sherman Island. Additional reports came from DW on 8/25 and YWA on 8/27-30. Up to two **Least Bitterns** were detected at Mather Lake from 7/4 through the end of August. Large communal roosts of **White-tailed Kites** were reported, with 250 in Elverta in early August and up to 128 in Wilton in late August.

Sacramento Audubon Society
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A **Long-eared Owl** was found roosting in willows along with numerous **Barn Owls** at Mather Lake on 8/5-26. An imma-

ture/female **Calliope Hummingbird** was reported in East Sacramento on 8/22, and another was found at the Colusa NWR on 8/26. Interesting songbird reports from Cosumnes River Preserve included an early **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** on 8/19, a large grayish **Hermit Thrush** typical of breeders in the western mountains on the early date of 8/25, and a "ratty" **Northern Parula** near the Visitor Center on 8/11. An early **White-crowned Sparrow** was found along Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd on 8/30. Immature male **Summer Tanagers** were reported on 8/10-25 along Putah Creek between Winters and Davis, and in North Davis on 8/15. A gorgeous male **Indigo Bunting** at the Sacramento Bypass off Yolo County Rd 126 on 8/4-19 was seen by many, and female and juvenile buntings in the area suggest that it may have bred locally—possibly with a female **Lazuli Bunting**.

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

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

Observations continued on page 9