

# The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



VOLUME 67 • NO. 8

OCTOBER 2015

## General Meeting

**Thursday, October 15, 2015**  
**Effie Yeaw Nature Center**  
**Assembly Room, 7pm**

Japan: Iconic Birds of The North, and the Search For Sandhill Cranes in the South  
Sean Wirth

Join local conservation activist and naturalist, Sean Wirth, on a photographic tour of Japan's fabulous birds. The first stop on the journey will be the frigid winter snows of northern Hokkaido where we will spend time with red crowned cranes, whooper swans, white tailed eagles, Stellar's sea eagles, Blakiston's fish owls, harlequin ducks and many others. And then, we will head to southwestern Kyushu where we will try to find the small handful of sandhill cranes who journey there from Siberia to spend the winter with Japan's hooded and white naped cranes, as well as spoonbills, herons, egrets, snipes, and various waterfowl. You will have to come to the presentation to find out if the sandhills were found.

A native to California, Sean received an undergraduate degree in zoology from UC Berkeley and a master's degree in English literature from SF State. After a successful career as an infill developer, where he bought architecturally and historically interesting buildings and restored them to use as rentals, he retired ten years ago and has since devoted himself to conserving what remains of our natural heritage here in the Central Valley. He currently is the conservation chair for the Mother Lode Chapter

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Red-crowned Cranes  
Sean Wirth

## EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER NATUREFEST 2015 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

The annual NatureFest at Effie Yeaw Nature Center will take place on **Sunday, October 4**, from 10am to 3pm. Mark your calendar now for NatureFest, their largest family event of the year! NatureFest promotes science and nature education and outdoor recreation, and is an excellent opportunity to learn more about local organizations that support our community.

NatureFest includes live animal shows, kids activities, demonstrations, guided nature hikes, and family-friendly food in the beautiful Nature Center area. Enjoy animal shows from Wild Things on the main stage and close up visits with the Nature Center's own ambassador animals at Critter Corner, plus many more creatures of all shapes and sizes!

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

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DATES FOR 2015-2016

### Saturday, December 5, 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

### Saturday, December 19, 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)

### Sunday, December 27, Sacramento Christmas Count

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

### Sunday, January 3, 2016, Folsom Christmas Count

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

### Saturday, January 9, 2016, 4th Annual Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count

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

For locations and dates of additional Christmas Bird Counts,  
visit [natureali.org/cbcs.html](http://natureali.org/cbcs.html)

## Field Trip Findings

**SRWTP Bufferlands (9/13)** — Leader Chris Conard reported: “Twelve of us started out on a cool morning with a moderate breeze that ended rather warm and humid. There were a lot of migrant warblers on the move, but many were detected only by ‘sip’ flight calls or as vanishing silhouettes. Highlights included close views of a Semipalmated Plover, Spotted Sandpipers, and a group of six Vaux’s Swifts that, rare for this species which often evades extended observations, fluttered overhead for several minutes. A late lingering Western Kingbird was a bit of a surprise for the date. Migrant songbirds included a Willow Flycatcher, several Orange-crowned Warblers, poorly seen or heard-only MacGillivray’s Warblers, many calling and briefly seen Common Yellowthroats, Yellow Warblers, good views of Black-throated Gray Warblers, and several Wilson’s Warblers. Some of us had good views of recently arrived Lincoln’s Sparrows, three lingering female/juvenile Blue Grosbeaks, and abundant American Goldfinches in the showy fields of annual sunflower. Perhaps the highlight of the day was a group of up to six river otters that put in several appearances.”

**Sailor Bar, American River Parkway (9/12)** — Leader Ben Graber reported: “Highlights included several Phainopeplas, Cedar Waxwings, a Wilson’s Warbler, Sharp-shinned, Cooper’s, Red-tailed, and Red-shouldered hawks, California Quail, and some close-up looks at a Great Blue Heron. It was a good day overall, not as hot as expected, and with a decent variety of birds.”

**Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway (9/6)** — Leader Paul Cordero reported: “Twenty-seven intrepid birders set out intent on learning the local bird songs. Bird calls identified included: Bewick’s Wren, Oak Titmouse, Killdeer, California Towhee, Acorn and Nuttall’s Woodpecker, White-breasted Nuthatch and Black Phoebe. We had great views of sunning Turkey Vultures, Great Blue Herons and Great Egrets. Migrating warblers included Yellow and Wilson’s, with good views of our local Orange-crowned Warbler. A pair of Ospreys and a late Swainson’s Hawk topped off the day.”

**North Bay Hotspots (9/5)** — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Eight people joined me for a great day of birding a couple of North Bay locations. We started out with a stop at a farm pond west of Petaluma

to look for a Ruff that had been reported. We found the bird almost immediately and everyone got great views. Then, it was on to Point Reyes. Our first stop was at Drake’s Beach where there were a lot of birds just off shore, including many Pacific and Red-throated Loons, Common Murres and Elegant Terns. Another highlight here was at least 5 Barn Owls that often flew between trees by the Visitors Center and trees by Drake’s Monument. At Mendoza Ranch, we had several Great Horned Owls in the trees. We then went out to the Fish Docks, where we had 2 Wandering Tattlers. Our last stop was a farm pond where we counted 34 Red-necked Phalaropes. We tallied about 62 species over all. The Ruff and the Tattlers were life birds for a couple of people.”

**Alpine County (8/30)** — Leader Jane Taylor reported: “Ten birders, including three from San Francisco/Golden Gate Audubon, made the trip to Alpine County on a clear, cool morning. We stopped at Grass Lake, circumnavigating and crossing a copse of trees, where we picked up Wilson’s Warbler, Red- and White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper and Green-tailed Towhee. A target bird there, Sooty Grouse, was found as a pile of feathers where it met its demise. One participant also learned later that Grass Lake is the largest undisturbed sphagnum moss bog in the Sierra and is now part of a preserve. Visiting dilapidated buildings below Luther Pass, we saw Clark’s Nutcrackers and Band-tailed Pigeons flying over. At a West Fork Carson River crossing below Sorenson’s, we had two American Dippers in midmorning preening. We lunched at Indian Creek Reservoir and observed Eared and Pied-billed Grebes, Hairy and White-headed Woodpeckers, Yellow Warbler, Osprey, Bald Eagle, distant Mountain Quail and Pinyon Jays flying out and calling. On our return to Woodford’s store, we saw up-close a mother Mountain Quail with young. Overall, we tallied upward of 60 species, and one of the San Francisco participants added 23 new birds to his list! That group hopes to attend more Sacramento Audubon outings.”

**River Bend Park (8/29)** — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: “Seven people joined me for this morning walk. We spent a good bit of time sorting through flocks of small birds in the oaks, working on the confusing fall warblers. We did successfully

identify Yellow and Black-throated Gray, along with a few “yellow-colored warblers.” Betty Kniffen spotted 2 obscure Green Herons, and Larry Hickey commented on the cryptic coloring of a group of California Quail as they blended into the background grasses. Vinegar Weed and Nude Buckwheat were in flower.”

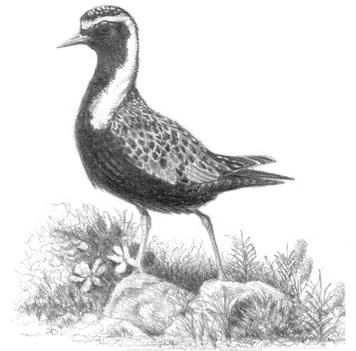
**Cosumnes River Preserve (8/23)** — Leader Jane Taylor reported: “Nine of us met in the parking lot at Cosumnes River Preserve on a sunny, breezy Sunday morning. A couple of us toted scopes and others had good cameras. We walked about 4.5 miles over the accessible trails to and from the river and tallied 30 species for the morning trip. Sightings of note included a good photo-op of a sunlit juvenile Green Heron; side-by-side comparisons of Nuttall’s and Downy Woodpeckers singing; a Long-billed Curlew fly-over with calling; Black-throated Gray Warbler; a large flock of Bushtits and a small flock of Cedar Waxwings keening.”

**Bodega Bay (8/22)** — Leader Andi Salmi reported: “A group of 15 birders enjoyed a beautiful, balmy, almost windless day at Bodega Bay. We birded Doran Beach wetlands, Bodega Head and Owl Canyon. A variety of shorebirds were enjoyed, including Semipalmated Plover, Least and Western sandpipers, Sanderling, Whimbrel, Marbled Godwit and others. Highlights included a beautiful Ruddy Turnstone with fresh plumage, Black-bellied Plovers with black bellies, and a Red Knot. Large flocks of Elegant Tern and small numbers of Caspian Tern were also viewed. Land birds included MacGillivray’s and Yellow warblers, Warbling Vireo, Western Wood-pewee and Pacific-slope Flycatcher. Purple Martin provided a show of flight overhead.”

**Napa-Sonoma Marshes Wildlife Area (8/16)** — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Thirteen participants enjoyed a great trip to the Napa-Sonoma Marshlands. The group included 3 people from the Napa area. Highlights included a Virginia Rail out in the open for several minutes; 14 species of shorebirds, including Lesser Yellowlegs; at least 2 Willow Flycatchers and 4 species of warblers. The flycatchers and warblers provided a great show from one spot at American Canyon Wetlands. We tallied 65 species over all.”

*Pete Hayes*

# Field Trips



*Black-bellied Plover*  
Daniel Kilby

## 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, empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882 for trips through November 1. From November 2 on, contact the scheduler Maureen Geiger, mkgeiger@comcast.net, 444-0804.

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

### Thursday, October 1, 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. We'll walk through the oak woodland and down to the river looking for the resident birds of the parkway, as well as possible 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. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

### Saturday, October 3, 7:30am

#### Solano Lake/Putah Creek

**Leader: Mark Sawyer, 968-1661**  
**MarkSawyer3383@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.

### Sunday, October 4, 7am SHARP!

#### Solano County Bay to Valley

**Leader: Dan Williams, 714-943-1266**  
**jaegermaestro@yahoo.com**

Join Dan for a full day of birding across Solano County, from the bay shores and

back through the hills toward Vacaville. We'll start at Dan Foley Park across Lake Chabot from Six Flags Marine World in Vallejo. This city park is a hidden gem with mature redwood, bay, and manzanita harboring coastal residents such as Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Varied Thrush, and Townsend's Warbler, and many migrants as well as a nice variety of ducks and gulls on the lake. From there we will take Redwood Boulevard west to a little shopping center with an access point to view White Slough; the tidal flats we pass along Hwy 37 on our way to the coast which are pretty nearly always packed with shorebirds! Turning back east, we'll have lunch at Lynch Canyon Open Space, an excellent vantage point for raptors such as Golden Eagle, Prairie Falcon, and Ferruginous Hawk. We'll finish the day at Lagoon Valley between Fairfield and Vacaville, one of the best locations around for seeing copious amounts of diving ducks. In recent years some very nice rarities have shown up there including Trumpeter Swan, Tufted Duck, and Swamp Sparrow. Bring a lunch and liquids and meet Dan by 7am 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. Please note there is a \$5 parking fee per vehicle at Dan Foley Park.

### Wednesday, October 7, 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 ¼ mile east on Main, from where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale.

### Saturday, October 10, 7am

#### Putah Creek Preserve

**Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682**  
**Bgraber984@gmail.com**

Join Ben for a morning walk along Putah Creek in search of late migrants and wintering riparian birds. If the participants so desire, we may also visit Lake Solano or Monticello Dam. Meet Ben at the Park and Ride lot off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Avenue exit, turn left at the light, and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. This is a good trip for experienced birders and beginners alike.

### Sunday, October 11, 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

*Field Trips* continued on page 4

*Field Trips* continued from page 3

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.

**Wednesday, October 14, 8am**  
**Nimbus Fish Hatchery/American River**  
**Leader: Craig DeMartini, 599-3300**  
**Cloudwalk7@aol.com**

Join Craig to check out the returning gulls and waterfowl as well as wintering passerines. Herons and egrets, Double-crested Cormorants, and White-throated Swifts can usually be seen, and Osprey, falcons and the occasional Bald Eagle are also possibilities. This is a good trip for both beginning and more experienced birders. Meet at the Nimbus Fish Hatchery parking lot. From Hwy 50 go north on Hazel Avenue; turn left on Gold Country Blvd and the Hatchery is on your right.

**Saturday, October 17, 8am**  
**American River Parkway**  
**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 cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. (Same meeting place as Bushy Lake trips, but the trip will go upstream.)

**Saturday, October 17, 10:30am**  
**Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk**

This family friendly nature walk will be at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers and Wild Turkeys are abundant, but sharp eyes and ears may find Spotted Towhees or Bushtits as well. Reservations are not needed; families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with

naturalists from the nature center and birders Maureen Geiger and Sharon Wisecarver from Audubon. For directions, see [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net). A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Sunday, October 18, 7:30am**  
**Newell Open Space Preserve/  
American Canyon**  
**Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652**  
**mkgeiger@comcast.net**  
**Ken Poerner, 707-580-6277**  
**kenpoe@sbcglobal.net**

This recently opened Preserve has several miles of hiking trails in the beautiful rolling ranchland of Napa County. Join Maureen and Ken on a walk to see what Fall brings to the riparian area and the oak-studded hills. After a walk of about 1.5 miles on an easy trail, we will drive to the American Canyon Wetlands to have lunch, then bird our way along Wetlands Edge Road where we should find good numbers of ducks and shorebirds due to the low tide. Bring lunch, liquids and layers in case of chilly marine weather. FRS radios and scopes will be helpful. This trip will last into early afternoon. Meet Maureen at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento at 7:30. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Alternate meeting places are the Safeway parking lot in Fairfield by 8:15. From I-80W, take exit #47B right onto Waterman Road, then left into the Safeway parking lot. Or you can meet us at the Newell Preserve by 8:30. From I-80W, take the American Canyon Drive exit #36; turn right at the stop; proceed about half a mile and turn right onto Newell Drive. The trailhead is at the end of Newell which dead-ends at the parking lot.

**Monday, October 19, 8am**  
**Effie Yeaw Nature Center**  
**Leader: Bob McCleary, 960-3390**  
**bobmccleary@comcast.net**

Bob is a docent at the Nature Center and knows the trails, and where to find the birds. On this morning walk he'll be looking for both resident and wintering birds. Meet him in the Nature Center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park. This is a good trip for beginners as well as more experienced birders. For directions, see [sacnaturecenter.net](http://sacnaturecenter.net). A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Wednesday, October 21, 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 24, 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 7:30.

**Saturday, October 24, 4:30pm—sunset**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Wintering Birds**  
**Cosumnes River Preserve/Delta area**  
**Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc**  
**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

Our Sandhill Cranes are back! And your SOSOC leaders will also be looking for the wide variety of waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors who feed in the flooded fields and marshy areas of the delta. After birding the boardwalk at the CRP Lost Slough Wetlands, we'll drive along Desmond Road, and possibly to Woodbridge Road or Staten Island to see flocks of cranes coming in to roost. Dress for changeable weather; bring binoculars, snacks and water if you wish. Meet at the CRP Visitor Center for a brief presentation of Sandhill Crane behavior, biology and status prior to the trip. 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](http://www.cosumnes.org).

**Sunday, October 25, 7am**

**Bodega Bay**

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

**shoppe01@surewest.net**

**Mark Martucci, 833-6722**

**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. Participants on last year's trip said "Our outing with you was the best Audubon trip we have taken . . . added 10 birds to my life list!"

**Sunday, October 25, 4:30pm—sunset**  
**Sandhill Cranes and**

**Other Wintering Birds**

**Cosumnes River Preserve/Delta area**

**Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc**

**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

See write up for trip on October 24th.

**Tuesday, October 27, 8am**

**Colusa National Wildlife Refuge**

**Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1290**

**dtankers@winfirst.com**

Fall migration is underway, and Colusa NWR is a great location to view various species of newly arrived ducks and geese. We will spend a good amount of time on the viewing platform, and possibly take an easy walk on a level trail through riparian habitat next to the main viewing pond. We will take the short auto tour to finish our outing to this wonderful NWR. 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.

**Friday, October 30, 8:30am**

**Cosumnes River Preserve**

**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. Meet Cathie at the CRP Visitor Center parking lot about 8:30am. Bring water and snacks and dress for changeable weather. Spotting scopes are helpful if you have them. This is a great trip for beginning birders. 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.

**Saturday, October 31, 8am**

**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. Possibilities include Yellow-headed Blackbird, Common Yellowthroat, American Bittern, Green Heron, and Pied-billed Grebe. 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 31, 4:30pm—sunset**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Wintering Birds**

**Cosumnes River Preserve/Delta area**

**Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc**

**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

See write up for trip on October 24th.

**Sunday, November 1, 8am**

**Note Change to Daylight SavingsTime**

**Spenceville Wildlife Area**

**Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124**

**offleash56@yahoo.com**

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. Join Richard as

he searches this foothill area for wintering waterfowl, raptors and passerine species. The trip involves moderate hiking; wear appropriate footwear and layered clothing. Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Richard at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight past the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just after the Shell Station, and park on the right in the Park and Ride.

**Sunday, November 1, 3:30pm—sunset**  
**Sandhill Cranes and Wintering Birds**

**Cosumnes River Preserve/Delta area**

**Trip by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc**

**Coordinator: Mike Savino, 446-1392**

See write up for trip on October 24th, but note that October crane trips begin at 4:30pm and November trips begin at 3:30pm due to Daylight Savings change.

**Saturday, November 7, 8am**

**Sutter's Landing Regional Park**

**Ben Graber, 844-8682**

**bgraber984@gmail.com**

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

**Sunday, November 8, 8am**

**Sacramento Wildlife Refuge**

**Leader: Andi Salmi, 508-7192**

**andisalmi@yahoo.com**

Andi will be looking for the enormous flocks of ducks, geese and swans that winter in the valley or stop to feed on their way south. This is also a good place for raptors, and Bald Eagles can be found here regularly. There is a 3.7 mile driving route and a great viewing platform as well.

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*Field Trips* continued from page 5

This trip will last into early afternoon, so bring lunch, drinks and warm clothes. FRS radios are helpful on this trip. Meet at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. Please note there is a \$6 day use fee for each vehicle at the refuge. This is a good trip for newer birders and experienced birders alike.

**Wednesday, November 11, 8am**  
**Putah Creek Riparian Reserve**  
**Leader: Bill Bianco, 372-3318**  
**or 889-4849**  
**biancowm@yahoo.com**

This UC Davis Reserve along the banks of the Putah Creek can be a wonderful place to find migrants this time of year as well as wintering passerines and resident species. Join Bill for a leisurely morning walk on this easy trail west of UC Davis. This trip is good for beginners and those already familiar with the excellent birding on the Creek and will end before lunch. From I-80 near Davis, take Hwy 113 north and exit on Hutchison Drive. Turn left and at the first round-about, stay right, passing new student housing, and at the second round-about go west onto Hutchison Drive. At 1.3 miles turn left onto Hopkins Road. About 1 mile south on Hopkins you will find a parking lot on the left and the entrance to the Reserve.

## **TOURS OF THE BUFFERLANDS**

**Tones of Fall**  
**November 7, 2015**  
**9:00am-12:00pm**

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

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

## *Birding and Nature Events*

### **LODI SANDHILL CRANE FESTIVAL**

The 20th annual Sandhill Crane Festival will be held **November 6-8**, 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.

For 20 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. Tours fill up quickly so register or call early!

### **CALIFORNIA SWAN FESTIVAL**

Celebrating the abundant local and migratory wildfowl of the Northern Sacramento Valley, the California Swan Festival, being held in **Marysville, November 13-15**, offers workshops, presentations, field trips and educational programs catering to bird and nature enthusiasts of all ages and levels of interest. This year's keynote speaker is Brian L Sullivan from Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

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. Registrations has already begun so hurry to [caswanfestival.com](http://caswanfestival.com).

### **CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM**

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 19th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium **November 19-22**, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel. Please come and help us kick off this year's CVBS!

Thursday night's Keynote speakers are Ed Harper and Ed Pandolfino and Friday night's keynote program is presented by Steve N.G. Howell on *Shift Happens: Rare {Vagrant} Birds in North America*. Saturday night's keynote program is presented by Kate Marianchild on *Our Magnificent Valley Oaks; Hubs of their Habitats*. Workshops include programs by Steve N.G. Howell, Jon Dunn, Dan Airola; and a photo workshop by Bob Steele.

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! There's something for everyone interested in birds.

For further information on the line-up of speakers, workshops, and fieldtrips and registration check out our website at: [www.cvbsreg.org](http://www.cvbsreg.org). or call (209)369-2010.

## KIDS PROGRAM IN OCTOBER

**Saturday, October 17, 2015, Annual Mather Lake Cleanup**

**Leader: Mara Weston**

**Where and When: Mather Lake, 9am–noon**

**Ages: Families and children of all ages**

Families and children of all ages are welcome to this annual event to clean up trash as we take a leisurely walk around Mather Lake. Each year many animals and birds are injured or die from trash left in their environment, such as fishing line and plastic bags. Bring your sack lunch or a picnic to enjoy after the cleanup, while Mara leads the children in an educational discussion about the importance of picking up trash and its impact on wildlife and the environment. We'll provide the trash bags, and recommend you bring gloves, boots or shoes that can get wet, sunscreen, a hat and water to drink. Please contact Mara with questions at 208-3222 or mara\_weston@yahoo.com.

## FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS

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

**Dates:** Sunday, October 18, Saturday, November 28, and Sunday, December 13

These beginner field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on where to look and what important field marks to look for. This walk will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. Trips are limited to 10 adult participants and registration is required. Register via email to Cathie at empid@earthlink.net, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 457-6882, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

## DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

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

Stop by the Cosumnes River Preserve and check out Ducks In Scopes, where docents have a row of scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you good views of the many colorful ducks and other wetland birds. A microscope and hand lens provide close-up looks at 'Duck Soup', dishes of water dipped from the pond full of sand fleas, dragonfly nymphs, and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on. The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento—south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve. Come any time between 10am and 2pm, on the following dates:

**October:** Saturdays 10/24 and 10/31

**November:** Saturday 11/14 and Sunday 11/29

**December:** Sunday 12/6 and Saturdays 12/12, 12/19 and 12/26

Then, start the New Year off right and join us on Friday, January 1, 2016.

## ENDANGERED SPECIES LEAD COUNTY TO RECONSIDER MATHER DEVELOPMENT

BRAD BRANAN

Sacramento County supervisors have scuttled a plan 25 years in the making to redevelop the former Mather Air Force Base because of concerns about endangered and threatened species.

Supervisors late Wednesday directed staff to come up with a different direction for the former base after an overflow crowd overwhelmingly indicated opposition to the plan calling for industrial, commercial and residential development and major infrastructure improvements. More than 300 people crowded into board chambers or watched monitors outside as the board held a four-hour hearing. About 40 people spoke to the board, with all but one indicating opposition to the project. They raised concerns about additional traffic and environmental harm.

More can be found at [www.sacbee.com/news/local/environment/article35643627.html#storylink=cpy](http://www.sacbee.com/news/local/environment/article35643627.html#storylink=cpy)

*General Meeting* continued from page 1 of the Sierra Club and on their executive committee; on the executive committee for the Sacramento Group of the Sierra Club; co-chair of Habitat 2020; on the board and the executive committee of the Environmental Council of Sacramento; and a founding member of Save Our Sandhill Cranes. He has led natural history birding tours for Save Our Sandhill Cranes for the last ten years. When he is not fighting or trying to improve a poorly sited or conceived development, or working to improve policy to include more habitat protection, he travels far and wide seeking out the last great remaining habitats. Several years back he renewed his interest in photography in an effort to record the lessons he learned, and the beauty he experienced while traveling, so that he could bring them back and share them with others. The trip to Japan featured in this slide presentation was particularly rich in both lessons and beauty, and the photographic conditions there were unparalleled resulting in a slew of "once in a lifetime" images.

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).

## FIRST LIVE-STREAMING VIEWS OF WILD CONDOR NESTS CONNECT PEOPLE TO RARE SPECIES

Today, people around the world have the unprecedented opportunity to observe nesting California Condors and their young chicks in real time via live-streaming webcams. Biologists installed webcams in two California Condor nests located in the rugged terrain of Ventura and Monterey counties to enable the public to watch California Condor chicks and their parents. "What started out as a way for biologists to monitor the health of endangered California Condor chicks and the breeding success of the species has become an important tool for outreach about this incredibly rare bird," said Joseph Brandt, a USW Service biologist. Cams can be found at [ventanaws.org](http://ventanaws.org) and [cams.allaboutbirds.org/channel/49/California\\_Condor/](http://cams.allaboutbirds.org/channel/49/California_Condor/). Condor species information can be found at [allaboutbirds.org/bird-cams-faq-california-condor-nest/](http://allaboutbirds.org/bird-cams-faq-california-condor-nest/).

## SACRAMENTO AUDUBON FUTURE PROGRAMS

### 2015

**November 12** David C Rice, *Why We Bird*  
Books for sale and signing

**December** No meeting

### 2016

**January 21** Ron LeValley, *Our Changing Oceans*

**February 18** Maya Khosla, *Black-backed Woodpeckers*

**March 17** Eric C Hansen, *Giant Gartersnake*

**April 21** Ed Harper, *Birding Alaska*

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Susan Fregien, Denise Gonzalez, Michael Harris, Leslie Marshall and Geilan Topozada made donations to the **General Fund**.

Denise Gonzalez, Georganna Griffin, E King, Thomas Manning, Joyce Mihanovich, and Geilan Topozada made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Robert and Anne Meagher have also made donations on an ongoing basis.

Thank you for your generous donations. If you have made a donation recently that was not acknowledged I apologize. Your donations are very important and enable us to continue to fulfill our mission. Larry Hickey

President

Sacramento Audubon Society

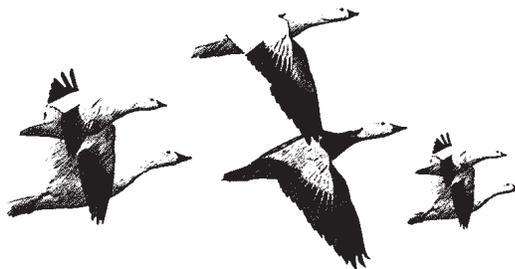
## YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK

The generous donations made by SAS members were used for the following projects in 2014-15:

Education & Outreach Expenses		Conservation Expenses	
ARNHA Nature Fest Festival	500	ECOS Membership	200
Galt Winter Bird Festival	500	ECOS Earth Day Sponsorship	250
Sandhill Crane Festival	1000	Habitat 20/20 dues	500
CV Birding Symposium	1000	Sandhill Crane Workshop	500
Wildlife Care Assoc	1000	Feather River Land Trust	500
Bufferlands Calendar	584	ECOS -Cordova Hills Appeal	2500
Stone Lakes Walk on the Wildside	250	Casa Robles High School	530
ARNHA (memorials, on behalf of)	250	Lake Davis Flammulated Owl Study	1500
ARNHA (Speaker Bureau Fees)	710	Black-backed Woodpecker film	1700
Inner city School trip to Effie Yeaw	380	Swainson's Thrush Study	2000
Tabling fees at festivals	180	Misc. Conservation expenses	43
Misc. Edu. & Outreach expenses	455	<b>Total: Conservation</b>	<b>\$10,223</b>
<b>Total: Education and Outreach</b>	<b>\$6,809</b>		

A summary of the actual income and expenses for 2014-15 can be seen at:  
[www.sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html) ;

The Board of Directors would like your help in raising \$15,000 in donations in 2015-16. Please donate generously so SAS can continue supporting Education and Conservation efforts in the Sacramento area. Please send donations to:  
Sacramento Audubon Society, PO Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694.



## Seasonal Observations

### August 1 to August 31

#### Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

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

While Sacramento area residents still suffer the hot days of summer, by August there are many birds to keep them company. Shorebird migration peaks from mid-July through August and by early August the numbers of migrant warblers, flycatchers and other songbirds are often quite impressive, especially in the first couple hours of light on hot summer days. This August, despite the unusually dry conditions brought on by the continued drought, provided many highlights and a good showing of the expected migrant shorebirds and songbirds that keep us heading into the field.

After many reports from the Yolo Bypass

Wildlife Area (YBWA) last month, one-to-two **Least Bitterns** were seen and photographed at the Bridgeway Island Pond near West Sacramento from 8/7-9. Shorebird highlights included a handful of **Willet** and **Marbled Godwit** reports from traditional sites in Yolo County, along with a single **Willet** report from Sacramento County at the Sacramento Regional WTP (SRWTP) on 8/7 and a single **Marbled Godwit** at Cosumnes River Preserve on 8/15. The only **Sanderling** report of the month was from the Woodland WTP on 8/7. A **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found at Camanche Reservoir in Amador County on 8/7, apparently a first county record, and two were found there the following day. Another **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found and photographed at SRWTP from 8/24-26. The only August **Baird's**

**Sandpiper** reports were of one at the Woodland WTP on 8/12-13 and one at the Anatolia Vernal Pool Preserve off Sunrise Blvd on 8/22, with two reported there on 8/24.

The pair of **Least Terns** that nested at SRWTP had two flying young on 8/18, though only one juvenile was seen after 8/19. It was regularly seen into early September along with one or both adults. A **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** was reported calling and was briefly seen near the Mayhew Drain, downstream from the Gristmill access along the American River Parkway (ARP). The male **Costa's Hummingbird** that was banded in September 2013 has since been sporadically reported along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters, including several times this August.

Songbird highlights included a female

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Jane and Bob Blum  
Angelique Goodhue  
Kathy Leuterio  
Therese Lowrey

### 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, llandry46@comcast.net  
11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

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.

### SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

[facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon)



or immature **American Redstart** found at the Gristmill access to ARP on 8/30. There was a flurry of **Green-tailed Towhee** reports, with one along Putah Creek near Pedrick Rd on 8/22, one at the Wood Duck Lakes along South River Rd near West Sacramento on 8/26, and one at the Sacramento Bypass off of Rd 126 on 8/30. A male **Indigo Bunting** photographed at YBWA on 8/8-9 was a nice surprise, and a flyover **Pine Siskin** on 8/31 at Grassland Regional Park in Yolo County was the only one for the season so far.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site ([sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent-sightings.html](https://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](https://cvbirds.org)) and in eBird. It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Keith Bailey, Jon Dunn, Leo Edson, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Clifford Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Eric LoPresti, Harry Oakes, Ed Pandolfino, Michael Perrone, Mark Sawyer, Steve Scott, John Sterling, Kirk Swenson, and John Trochet.

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

*Chris Conard*

### 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 27, 2015 at 7pm. The new address for the Board meetings through November is Lemon Grass Cafe Meeting Room, 601 Munroe St, Sacramento, 95825. There is no meeting in December.

Minutes of Board Meetings through April 2015 can be found online at [sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html](https://sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html). Scroll down to Board Minutes.

Sacramento Audubon Society  
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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

### Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

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

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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.

### ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

**October 15, 2015**

**Sean Wirth:** *Japan: Iconic Birds of The North, and the Search For Sandhill Cranes in the South*

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm



Sean Wirth