



The *OBSE*RVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, September 21
Shepard Garden and Art Center
7pm General Meeting

Burrowing Owls in California ...an Abundant Endangered Species?

Jack Barclay, cofounder of Albion Environmental, Inc. in Santa Cruz, is a senior wildlife biologist, specializing in the biology and conservation of burrowing owls. This includes inventory and impact assessment of special-status wildlife species as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act and the Endangered Species Act, as well as mitigation planning for special status resources, and environmental compliance management of large, linear-facility construction projects.

Prior to his work in California, he spent eleven years at the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology as coordinator of the Peregrine Falcon reintroduction program for the eastern United States. He has published numerous articles on, and contributed chapters to books on, raptor biology, conservation, and management.

Mr. Barclay organized and chaired the first California Burrowing Owl Symposium which was co-sponsored by the Western Section of The Wildlife Society in 2004, and has been a member of the Bay Area Burrowing Owl Consortium since 1990.

The evening's slide presentation will include photographs, range maps, natural history, habitat associations, and sound files of burrowing owl vocalizations. Mr. Barclay will share information showing population growth of the colony he has been monitoring at San Jose International Airport since 1989 and discuss abundance and distribution in California and address the question: "Why all the fuss about burrowing owls?"

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Art Center in McKinley Park. Please note our new starting time is 7pm. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org for further information, including directions.

Sally Riggs, Program Chair

MESSAGE FROM SAS PRESIDENT KEITH WAGNER

The amount of urbanization being proposed by local governments for the Sacramento region, and the resulting, potential loss of unique and important bird and wildlife habitat, is formidable. The City of Folsom plans to expand south of Highway 50; the City of Galt seeks to expand its Sphere of Influence into the lower Cosumnes River corridor from the south, while the City of Elk Grove tries to move in from the north; the City of Sacramento continues to move forward with development in the North Natomas flood plain despite questionable flood protection; and, the City of Rancho Cordova has recently adopted a general plan that, if implemented, will pave over broad swaths of important grassland and vernal pool habitats in the eastern part of Sacramento County as that City grows from 50,000, to over 300,000 residents. Cumulative growth scenarios in the County of Sacramento threaten a wide range of unique habitats and the bird species that depend on these diverse and unique areas: sandhill cranes wintering on the stubble of Cosumnes basin wheat fields; Swainson's hawks wheeling overhead, as rodents scramble across freshly disked fields; burrowing owls sternly surveying their grassland prairie domain, just to name a very few.

Luckily, many of these local growth proposals are in their formational stages, and opportunities for protecting and preserving the region's locally, regionally and globally significant bird and wildlife habitats still exist, provided that, sooner than later, local citizens come to understand and care about protecting these fragile and dwindling resources for future generations.

The Sacramento Audubon Society Board is already responding to this challenge by allocating substantial resources to its education program this year. The chapter is also hoping to augment these education and mobilization efforts by participating in Audubon California's "Audubon at Home," and collaborative grant programs. Through these programs, the chapter will promote a greater public awareness of the unique natural resources and habitats that the Sacramento region has to offer, and the ways that ordinary citizens can take simple, daily actions to ensure that these unique treasures are preserved for future generations. The Sacramento Audubon Society will also continue its existing efforts to educate local decision makers and the public through its ongoing support of, and participation in, local environmental coalitions such as Habitat 2020 (which serves as Sacramento Audubon Society's Conservation Committee) and the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS).

It is, indeed, an honor to serve as your president, and I look forward to the opportunity to work with the Board and our members on these important issues in the coming year.

Keith Wagner, President
Sacramento Audubon Society

Field Trip Findings

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley (8/13) — Chris Conard, leading 20 birders, reported: "Our first stop was at Yolo Wildlife Area, where we failed to refind the Little Blue Heron that had been found earlier in the week. Best there was a single juvenile Short-billed Dowitcher among a fair number of adult Long-billed Dowitchers. There were a lot of blackbirds, including Yellow-headed Blackbirds. There was a good number of Long-billed Curlews along Rd 105; many later flew into the Davis Waste-Water Treatment Plant (WTP). Among the curlews was a Whimbrel at the WTP. At Track 1 at the Davis Wetlands (just before Stormwater) on the auto route there was excellent habitat and a lot of birds to look through. Highlights included a Black Tern, Semipalmated Plovers, good studies of adult and juvenile Western and Least sandpipers, Wilson's and Red-necked phalaropes, and excellent numbers of other common species. A Ruddy Duck with three young was on Stormwater."

River Walk Trail, Cosumnes River Preserve (8/12) — Leader John Schick reported the group found several Western Tanagers, a Nashville Warbler, a Black-throated Gray Warbler, a few Pacific-slope Flycatchers, a few hundred White-faced ibises and five species of ducks.

Alpine County (8/5) — It was an unusually warm day in the mountains, with temperatures getting to the low 90s for the 10 birders led by Chris Conard, subbing for Bill Hart. Highlights included an Osprey, an adult Bald Eagle, a Prairie Falcon, many family groups of California Quail, Red-

breasted Sapsuckers and White-headed Woodpeckers, two flocks of Pinyon Jays, good views of Brewer's Sparrows, and many Black-headed Grosbeaks.

Yolo Wildlife Area Evening Trip (7/30) Maureen Geiger reported: "There were about 20 of us and we had 35 species, including some early shorebirds such as Western Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers and Dunlin, but very few Ibises. There were hundreds of swallows on the wires and just before we left, we had two Great Horned Owls nice and close."

Farallon Islands Boat Trip (7/29) Originally scheduled for July 9, the trip was canceled due to extremely high winds and rescheduled for July 29. Leader Ken Hashagen reported, "37 folks enjoyed a relatively calm trip to the Farallones and beyond. Actually, only 35 enjoyed the trip; the other two, very sea sick, did not enjoy the trip. As is customary on this trip each year, we saw a variety of marine mammals

- a Gray Whale within 50 yards of the boat, Harbor Seals, Harbor Dolphins, Steller Sea Lions, and California Sea Lions. The birds also cooperated very nicely. We had good looks at Brown Pelicans, three species of comorants (Brandt's, Double-crested, and Pelagic); three terns (Caspian, Forster's, and Elegant), Sooty and Pink-footed shearwaters, a Northern Fulmar,



Stephen D'Amato

a Parasitic and Pomarine Jaeger, lots of Pigeon Guillemots, several Cassin's Auklets, one or two Rhinoceros Auklets, a couple of Black Oystercatchers, and a number of Tufted Puffins, one so close we had great photo opportunities. On two occasions, we had close-up looks at a Black-footed Albatross, a bird not always seen on this trip."

Carson Pass (7/29) — Leader Jack Hiehle reported on this "birdy" trip to the high country: Pine Grosbeak, Williamson's Sapsucker, Red Crossbill, Brown Creeper, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Rufous Humingbird, Rock Wren, Violet-green and Tree swallows, Pine Siskin, Band-tailed Pigeon, White-breasted Nuthatch, Mountain Chickadee, lots of Clark's Nutcrackers, Mountain Bluebirds, Fox Sparrow, Cassin's Finch and Stellar's Jay. Also: Tahoe Chipmunks and Belding Ground Squirrels.

Mather Field Park (7/23) — In the midst of the mid-July heat wave, five intrepid birders recorded 28 species by sight or sound in a shorter-than-usual hike, leader Wayne Blunk reported. The Yellow-headed Blackbirds were still present in the reeds in the N.W. corner of the lake. Early on, the group was greeted by the unusual sight of 20-plus Kildeers on the ground in the picnic area. Northern Rough-winged Swallows were overhead and a pair of

Trip Findings

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Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

September 30 and October 1

Ken Hashagen reports that this year's trip is filling up fast, with more than 21 sign-ups so far. Refer to the last issue of *The Observer* for details about this exciting trip. At press time there were a few vacancies left; a reservation form is included here for your convenience. Ken can be reached at khashagen@mindspring.com or 916-316-8596.

Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip Reservation Form

September 30 & October 1, 2006 • Trip price: \$80 per person

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Email (for reservation confirmation) _____

Number of persons _____ Total Payment \$ _____

Please reserve _____ space(s) for Friday night September 30 and _____ space(s) for Saturday night October 1 at Veterans Memorial Park Campground. \$4.00 per night per person in group site. NOTE: You will pay the camping fee separately when you arrive. For bookkeeping reasons please do not include camping fees in your check for the trip.

Return this form and your check made out to Sacramento Audubon to:

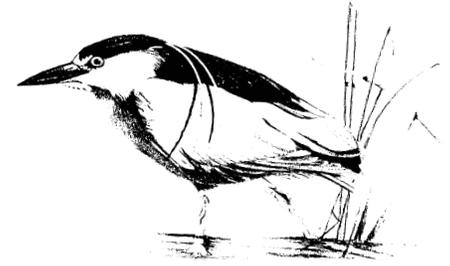
Ken Hashagen, 11375 Buckeye Hill Ct., Gold River, CA 95670

Field Trips

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he/she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Chris Conard, 362-5942, conardc@gmail.com (NOTE new email address for Chris) for the trip on September 3. For trips from September 4 on, please call the scheduler Mark Cudney, 987-2422, mcudney@aol.com.

Plan to pool cars and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on non-local 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.



Daniel Kilby

Sunday, September 3, 7am – 11am Migration at the SRCSD Bufferlands Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942 conardc@gmail.com

This is a good time to view migrating songbirds—especially warblers and flycatchers. We will tour several sites that have produced good numbers of migrants in past years. From Sacramento, take I-5 south. Take the Meadowview/Pocket exit and turn left (east); this is the first exit south of Florin Rd. Turn south on Freeport Blvd. Just before the town of Freeport, turn left on Stonecrest and follow it over the freeway to a locked gate.

Sunday, September 3, 6pm Yolo Wildlife Area, evening Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804 mkgeiger@comcast.net Cathie LaZier, 457-6882 empid@earthlink.net

Maureen and Cathie hope to see good numbers of White-faced Ibis flocks coming in to roost. There should be several species of wading birds, and if water conditions warrant, this is a great time of year for shorebirds. Foraging owls sometimes make an appearance in the late evening. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, and take the first exit at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left onto the levee, and head into the wildlife area. The trip will begin at the first parking lot on your left at the beginning of the auto tour.

Tuesday, September 5 Evening Beaver Walk Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Join Jack on this evening search for beavers and other wildlife; nobody knows more about the flora and fauna of the American River Parkway. The trip is limited to 8 peo-

ple, with a minimum age of 7 years. Call ahead to reserve a place and get the time and meeting location.

Saturday, September 9 River Walk Bird Count Cosumnes River Preserve Recorded Information: 684-2816

Meet at the Visitor Center on Franklin Blvd. for this monthly birding census trip. It's a great birding area, always full of surprises, and joining the group trip is a good way to find out what's happening at the preserve. You must check the recorded information a day or two before to get the exact meeting time and any other updated details.

Sunday, September 10, 5pm Yolo Basin Wildlife Area, evening Leaders: Mark Martucci, 722-6098 matuchbirdman@yahoo.com Cathie LaZier, 457-6882 empid@earthlink.net

Join Mark and Cathie to witness the spectacle of large flocks of White-faced Ibis coming in to roost. There should be several species of wading birds; this is a great time of year for shorebirds. As the sun goes down, foraging owls may be observed. From Sacramento, take I-80 west and take the first exit at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign; go under the freeway and make a left up onto the levee; then down into the wildlife area. The trip will begin at the first parking lot on your left at the beginning of the auto tour.

Saturday, September 16 Tall Forest Bird Count Cosumnes River Preserve Recorded Information: 684-2816

The Tall Forest is perhaps the best remaining example of riparian forest remaining

in the Central Valley and is not generally open to the public. In this jungle like habitat, excellent rarities and large numbers of migrants have been found, as well as the resident birds. Call the preserve number a couple of days before the trip for the exact meeting time and place. Arrive a little early, as this trip leaves the meeting place promptly.

Sunday, September 17 Habitat Improvement Work Day Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Help Jack restore native vegetation along the American River Parkway. Tasks vary from month to month so call Jack for details and meeting time, usually early morning.

Saturday, September 23, 6:30am Point Reyes for Vagrants Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942 conardc@gmail.com

Join Chris on this annual trip to the coast for rare fall migrants. With fall migration in full swing, who knows what will appear. The geography of Point Reyes Peninsula makes it a magnet for warblers and shorebirds migrating south. Bring lunch and liquids for a full day of birding. Meet Chris at the Park & Ride in West Sacramento at 6:30am. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Avenue exit off I-80; turn left at the stop light, then left into the Park & Ride.

Sunday, September 24, 7:30am Reichmuth Park Leader: Tim Manolis, 485-9009

Join Tim at the park entrance on Gloria Drive and 43rd Avenue at 7:30am. In the past Tim has found many uncommon birds in Reichmuth Park. He will be looking for fall migrants, warblers, vireos and flycatchers. This is a good chance to work on

identifying birds in confusing fall plumage, and Tim has the expertise to do it.

Tuesday, September 26

Evening Beaver Walk

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

See September 5th trip for details. This is Jack's last Beaver Walk of the season. If you have not made this trip yet, call him now.

Saturday and Sunday

September 30 and October 1

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

Two-day Monterey Trip

Leader: Mark Cudney, 987-2422

Reservations:

Ken Hashagen, 316-8596

Please see last month's *Observer* for details. On page 2 of this month's *Observer* there are some additional details and a registration form. Saturday: The best pelagic birding in North America – Monterey Bay. Sunday: Visit several Monterey Peninsula and adjacent area hot spots for land and shore birds.

Sunday, October 8, 7:30am

Goethe Park

Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882

empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie at the first parking lot on the right past the entrance kiosk at 7:30am for this morning walk. We will look for resident birds and wintering species along the levee, in the oak woodland and down at the river. This walk will end before noon, and is a good trip for beginners. Goethe Park is at the end of Rod Beaudry Drive, off Folsom Blvd. From Highway 50 take the Bradshaw exit; go north to Folsom Blvd., east to Rod Beaudry Drive, and turn left. There is a \$4 park entrance fee; call Cathie if you want to carpool into the park.



THANKS FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Karen French and Barbara Klocek to the **General Fund**

Yoshino Hatanaka, Dorothy Tribbett, Robert L. Smith, Peggy Kennedy, Gordon Walthall, Nancy Earl, Mercedes Gay, Marie Heid, and Kenneth and Lucille McKenzie to the **Conservation and Education Fund**

Bobelaine Sanctuary

BOBELAINE AT A CRITICAL JUNCTURE

Bobelaine Sanctuary Needs Your Input and Guidance!

As of August 1, 2006, Jan and Bill Clark have retired from their post as managers of the Bobelaine Sanctuary, with the following message to the chapter's members:

Yes, August 1st marked the time to step down and take full advantage of our golden retirement years. Jan and I have enjoyed working at and managing Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary for the past seventeen years or so. Much work has been done over the years to preserve the sanctuary for the wildlife that call the sanctuary home and secondarily for public enjoyment and study. I know you will support the Sacramento Audubon Society Board as they contemplate their management of the sanctuary.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those who have supported the sanctuary over the years with both their time as well as funding. Many of you consider it to be that special place that scholars have described as "one of the best examples of riparian forest left in the state".

Jan & Bill Clark, Retired Managers

Sacramento Audubon Society, in turn, sincerely thanks the Clarks for their dedication to Bobelaine, and for the thousands of hours of time and hard work they have spent caring for the sanctuary and its wildlife over the years.

With the Clarks' retirement, the chapter now seeks members who are interested in helping guide and manage Bobelaine's future. We are also initiating discussions with National Audubon to discuss this critical juncture in Bobelaine's history.

For those (few) members who may be unfamiliar with the sanctuary, Bobelaine is located near Highway 99 on the Feather River in south Sutter County. The 430-acre sanctuary, which was donated to National Audubon in 1975 by Bob & Elaine Crandall, is a rare remnant of the riparian forests that once lined the rivers of the Central Valley. The sanctuary is registered as a "State Ecological Reserve," and is also listed as part of an "Important Bird Area" by the National Audubon Society.

While we are interested in hearing from chapter members who may have practical knowledge or experience in conservation land management, such experience is not, at all, required. Members who are interested in taking an active, and long-term interest in helping to shape, and then implement, the sanctuary's future should contact Keith Wagner at 916-609-5000, or Tim Fitzer at 916-961-5871.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS TO THE BOBELAINE SANCTUARY:

John Huls, Delmar Janson, Margaret Jenkins, Robert L. Smith, Kevin McRae, Norman Eade, Timothy Jackson, Jean Roche, Nancy Earl, Mercedes Gay, Christie Vallance, Walter Lawson, Marie Heid, Phyllis Wilburn, and David & Gloria Popham have all contributed recently to the Bobelaine Sanctuary. The Popham's donation was made in Memory of Mr. & Mrs. Morris Batie, and Phyllis Wilburn's in Memory of Evelyn Smith.

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

As a Chapter of the National Audubon Society, we will focus on conservation and environmental education to ensure that the Sacramento region's natural ecosystems and diverse bird populations are preserved, restored, and made available for study and enjoyment.

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 September 26 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

SOME UPCOMING PROGRAMS You Won't Want To Miss

- October:** Martin Meyers
Birds of the Tahoe Rim Trail
- January:** John Trochet -
The Ivory-billed Woodpecker
- March:** Allen Fish -
Identifying Perched Raptors

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON NEEDED

The Sacramento Audubon Society is in need of a volunteer to chair its Publicity Committee. This committee is primarily responsible for circulating notice of the speakers and topics for Sacramento Audubon Society's monthly membership meetings to the local press. Beyond this basic function, the Committee's broader role of promoting and publicizing the chapter's mission and goals, as well as its meetings and events, is subject to definition by the committee chair, with input and guidance from the Sacramento Audubon Society Board of Directors.

This "entry level" position requires no special skills other than a willingness to spend a few hours each month circulating notices to the local media regarding upcoming meetings and events. Proposed meeting and event descriptions will be provided, and we already have basic media contact information to get you started!

Members interested in this opportunity to help the chapter by chairing this important committee should contact Keith Wagner at 916-609-5000.

A NEW KID ON THE BLOCK - SOS CRANES

Late last year a new local 501 (c) 3 formed called SOS Cranes – Save Our Sandhill Cranes. SOS Cranes is a non-profit organization which is dedicated to the conservation of the California Central Valley's Sandhill Crane populations, and associated open space, through education, outreach, and community activism. Of particular concern to SOS Cranes are the threats to the remaining suitable winter habitats in the Central Valley of California. Pending urban development and the shift from corn and rice production to vineyards is likely to dramatically diminish what little remains of the winter migratory habitat of the Cranes and other wildlife in this region. The Lesser Sandhill Crane and Greater Sandhill Crane, which is a state listed threatened species, are both found in these areas and exhibit a high degree of loyalty to their specific wintering grounds and any disturbance there will result in them being uprooted. If we lose the present population, it is highly unlikely that Sandhill Cranes from another location and population will come and take their place. Most individual birds return to the same site each year.

Our main emphasis, so far, has been on land use issues as they pertain to open space Sandhill Crane habitat in the areas south of Elk Grove. We are presently engaged in discouraging the Del Webb project northwest of Galt and also commenting on Galt's attempt to increase its sphere of influence over more land and specific developments. We firmly believe that the next 10 years are going to decide which areas will be set aside as wild or agricultural lands and which will be paved over. We encourage you to check our website, www.soscranes.net, and consider joining the effort in whatever capacity you are able. The Sandhill Crane is probably the most charismatic emblem symbolic of our natural heritage in the Central Valley. If we cannot save this beloved visitor, we will have lost more than we will ever be able to account for.

Sean Wirth

Society News

KUDOS TO OUTGOING PRESIDENT PETER WATKINS

Many thanks to Peter Watkins for his exemplary service as President of SAS for the past five years. Prior to serving as President, Peter was Vice President for two years and Treasurer for ten years. Peter will continue his dedicated service to SAS as a member of the Board of Directors. Thanks, Peter, for your ingenuity, enthusiasm and continued leadership.

OUR OUTREACH COMMITTEE AT WORK!

Fair Oaks Horticultural Center's Harvest Day Fair was the most recent activity for our Outreach Committee. Using our photographic display of locally common birds, Kathy Moore and Cathie LaZier assisted various fair-goers to identify birds that frequent their yards, or, in one case, road-kill (a Barn Owl). With a variety of helpful brochures covering feeding birds in your yard, eco-friendly gardening, plants to attract birds and butterflies, and information on Avian Flu and West Nile Virus, this outreach activity introduces people to Sacramento Audubon, and often is the impetus they need to start coming on field trips. If you would be interested in volunteering for an occasional few hours please call or email either: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, empid@earthlink.net, or Maureen Geiger, 444-0804, mkgeiger@comcast.net. You do NOT need to be a super birder for this activity, just a friendly person.

TRANSFER OF THE WYMER BEQUEST

Due to increased conservation spending, (support for University of Davis research projects on Yellow-billed Magpie and Tri-colored Blackbird, and construction of nesting platforms in Texas Audubon sanctuaries severely damaged by last season's hurricanes), the Sacramento Audubon Board has voted to transfer the balance in the "Wymer Bequest" Certificate of Deposit, approximately \$2,200, to the general fund. This requires approval by the general membership, and will be voted on at the general meeting September 21, 2006.



Trip Findings

continued from page 2

Tree Swallows were observed feeding fledglings. Coveys of California Quail were sighted and heard. This year's juveniles of Pied-billed Grebe, House Sparrows, and Red-winged Blackbirds were spotted. A Bewick's Wren was heard singing overhead but not sighted and our sole raptor tallied was a calling Red Shouldered Hawk towards the golf course. Mammal sightings included lots of Cotton Tails, adults and juveniles, and a family of six River Otters in the northern section of the lake.

Loney Meadow (7/22) — "A female Blue Grouse with a few chicks was the hit of the trip," leader Scott Hoppe reported. Also observed in this flower-bedecked area at the 6,000-foot level near Bowman Lake were six warblers — Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Hermit and MacGillivray, along with Cassin's Vireo.

Yolo Wildlife Area (7-16) — Shorebirds included Western and Least Sandpipers, Greater Yellowlegs, Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets, leader Tim Fitzer reported. Blue Grosbeak highlighted others such as American White Pelicans, Swainson's hawk, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Western Kingbirds, Barn and Tree Swallows, and goldfinches.

Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve (7-15) — "One bird transformed this outing from hum-drum to memorable," leader John Trochet reported. "We had a singing male Hooded Warbler that, despite being very uncooperative, eventually allowed almost everyone to see it. At least all got to hear it sing for about 90 minutes."

Mt. Judah & Roller Pass (7/15) — This High Sierra trip led by Jack Hiehle and John Ranlett recorded Townsend's Solitaire, American White Pelicans at 9,000 feet, White-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Rock Wren, Pine Grosbeak, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Raven, Western Tanager, Rufous Hummingbird, Fox Sparrow, Golden-crowned Sparrow, Brown Creeper, Mountain Chickadee, Stellar's Jay, Olive-sided Flycatcher and Cassin's Finch. A total of 130 plants, shrubs and trees were counted.

Martis Valley (7/8) — Leader Chris Conard reported that perhaps the bird of the trip was a fast flyover that escaped positive identification. "It was a *Chaetura* swift that appeared to be a Chimney Swift," he said. "The bird appeared very dark and slightly longer-winged than a Vaux's Swift." Others: Solitary Sandpiper, Willow Flycatcher, a single Bank Swallow with

hundreds of Cliff Swallows, and 20-plus Common Nighthawks over Martis Creek Wildlife Area.

Wright's Lake (7/8) — This trip to the high mountains with leaders Jack Hiehle and Phyllis Wilburn yielded Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Mountain Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Orange-crowned, MacGillivray's and Wilson's warblers, Chipping and Fox sparrows, Western Tanager, Pine Grosbeak and Green-tailed Towhee. Dry conditions limited wildflowers, Jack said.

Cosumes River Preserve (7/8) "Highlights were a Blue-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Hutton's Vireo, Rough-winged Swallow, Great-tailed Grackle, Blue Grosbeak and 11 Bullock's Orioles," leader John Schick said.

Evening Beaver Walk (7/5) — As usual, leader Jack Hiehle found beaver, five-plus of them along with two muskats in the American River. Recorded birds included Canada Geese, Red-shouldered Hawk and Great Egret.

Goethe Park (7/2) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported:

"Highlights were a pair of Brown-headed Cowbirds courting, displaying and giving burbling calls. An Ash-throated Flycatcher dismantled a butterfly by tearing off its wings before consuming it. Other good birds were a Downy Woodpecker, Bullock's Oriole and Hutton's Vireo. A stand of Purple Penstemon was very nice."

Ice House Road and Crystal Basin (7/1) — "The Cassin's Vireo was a good sighting as it's often heard but not seen," co-leader Phyllis Wilburn said. "Like the Warbling Vireo that we heard often, they are hard to see and often sing from their nests. We finally saw the Warbling Vireo, coming down to a stream for a drink or bath." Also enjoyed were a fledged family of MacGillivray's Warblers, Calliope Hummingbird, and Green-tailed Towhee. Tim Fitzer was co-leader and Phyllis's husband, Jack, identified penstemon, monkey flowers, forget-me-nots and others for wildflower fans.

Evening Beaver Walk (6/30) — Leader Jack Hiehle reported at least five Beaver and three Muskrats were spotted along with two fence lizards, a doe and cottontail.

Yuba Pass-Sierra Valley-Antelope Valley (6/23-25) — Sacramento Audubon was joined by three people from Bay Area bird

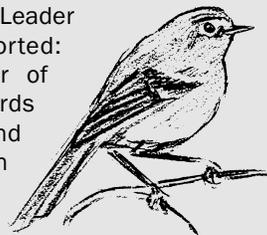
clubs for birding the lush conifer forests of Yuba Pass and the wetlands of Sierra Valley and vicinity on a trip led by Gary Fregien and Dan Tankersley. Among the 107 species counted were seven woodpecker species, including Williamson's Sapsucker, Black-backed, Lewis's and Pileated Woodpecker; six species of flycatcher including Olive-sided, Hammond's, Gray and Dusky Flycatcher; raptors including Peregrine Falcon and Swainson's Hawk; Black Tern; Wilson's Phalarope; Wilson's Snipe; Common Nighthawk and Common Poorwill; Black-billed Magpie; Golden-crowned Kinglet; Swainson's and Hermit Thrush; Hermit and MacGillivray's Warbler; Green-tailed Towhee, Chipping, Brewer's, Vesper and the large-billed Fox Sparrow; Lazuli Bunting; Tricolored and Yellow-headed Blackbird; Bullock's Oriole; Purple and Cassin's Finch; Pine Siskin; and Evening Grosbeak. Some members of the group recorded several life-list birds.

Mather Field (6/18) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "A good morning that started with a number of turkeys in the field across from the entrance to the park. Early in the walk we heard a singing Bewick's Wren and saw it on the way out. Spotted an Ash-throated Flycatcher and heard a singing Black-headed Grosbeak. Too many Great-tailed Grackles to count but the good news was that the Yellow-headed Blackbirds were spotted all around the lake, not just the usual

S.E. section." Also among total 28 species: over-flying Swainson's Hawk, Cliff Swallow among Northern Rough-winged Swallows, a fishing Belted Kingfisher, a covey of young California Quail and Green Heron. Before the walk, the group viewed baby cotton tails in the parking lot.

Tall Forest, Cosumnes River Preserve (6/17) — Leader John Trochet reported: "The day was only mildly rewarding regarding the birds. Best were a Greater Yellowlegs (odd time of year), a *Selasphorus* (almost certainly an Allen's) Hummingbird, an Orange-crowned Warbler and three Yellow Warblers, including a pair on territory.

Sun City/Lincoln Hills (5/20) — Leader Dave Pearson reported a good trip, recording three American Bitterns at the pond behind the anglers cove, a Green Heron, a nesting Great-tailed Grackle, nesting Pied-billed Grebe, and many ducklings. Total: 41. Favorite mammals of the day were two beavers at different locations.



Kirsten Munson

Pete Hayes

Seasonal Observations

June 1 to July 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports
www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

Sacramento Audubon Society
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This period covered a lot of the avian calendar, with hints of spring, summer, and fall. Due to the late rains and extended flooding, it was an atypical season. Many observers noted an extension of the songbird migration well into June. Much of the best shorebird habitat that had been underwater during April and May was finally available in late May and June. Most of the birds had already passed us by, but there were a few new records for early June at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) of species such as **Black-bellied Plover**, **Marbled Godwit**, **Western Sandpiper**, **Least Sandpiper**, and **Dunlin**.

There were a number of excellent rare songbird finds. As is often the case, Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) was the location of several, including a male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** on 6/21, a **Red-eyed Vireo** on 6/23, and a **Hooded Warbler** on 7/15. An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was reported and seen by several observers on 6/4 in Solano County where Mace Blvd crosses Putah Creek. A male **Black-throated Green Warbler** was found on 6/23 in Solano County on the UCD Reserve, just upstream from the campus. A late **Warbling Vireo** was found on 6/16 at Slide Hill Park in Davis; its song indicated that it was likely an eastern bird. An adult male **Indigo Bunting** and an apparent female were present at the Fremont Weir from 6/9 to 6/19. A singing male **Indigo Bunting** was present at the Sac. Reg. Sanitation District Bufferlands from 7/10 through press time.

Yellow-billed Cuckoos were found at the Fremont Weir on 6/16 and 7/30. This species has been reported a bit more regularly in Yolo County for the past couple of years. Singing **Yellow Warblers** were widespread in Sacramento County into June—especially at CRP, where a nest was found, though it was ultimately unsuccessful.

Fall migration for shorebirds starts early, with the first adults returning from their breeding grounds by the last week of June. The highlight of the early migration was

eight **Willetts** at the Davis Wetlands on 7/1. A **Solitary Sandpiper** was found at CRP on 7/26. The best migrant finds came from the Stockton Sewage Ponds, where a **Red Knot**, two **Semipalmated Sandpipers**, and a **Ruff** were reported on 7/31. The nesting **Snowy Plovers** at YWA, first found on 5/14, continued through June. **Snowy Plovers** and **Least Terns** (up to 100) were also found at Grizzly Island, just west of the area typically covered here.

Other interesting reports include a small heron with patchy "calico" plumage, consistent with immature **Little Blue Heron**, seen flying at CRP on 7/2; a late **Sandhill Crane** at CRP on 6/4, and a surprising five **Sandhill Cranes** over the Davis Wetlands on 6/10. One to three **Common Nighthawks** were found along Meiss Rd (where they were present last year) from 6/4 through at least 7/12, and **Common Poorwills** were heard along Latrobe Rd, just up from Stone House Rd, where the species is a potential breeder. A **Say's Phoebe** at the Valensin portion of CRP on 6/25 was a real surprise for the season. A **Bishop** (likely an **Orange Bishop**—an African species sometimes kept as a pet) near Cal Expo and Bushy Lake in June and July was a real eye-catcher.

The majority of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv.

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