



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, September 15, 2011

Effie Yeaw Nature Center, Assembly Room
7pm General Meeting

Farming Shorebirds in California's Rice Fields

Khara Strum and Monica Iglecia

California's Central Valley provides important habitat for migratory birds. In a state where over 90% of the natural wetland habitat has been lost, many birds use agricultural fields for foraging and roosting. In fact, flooded rice in the Sacramento Valley provides habitat to 40% of all shorebirds wintering in the Central Valley. PRBO Conservation Science and Audubon California have been working to further enhance California's rice landscape for shorebirds. In cooperation with the California Rice Commission and California's rice growing community we are developing and testing rice field management practices that have the potential to benefit shorebirds during fall migration and winter. PRBO is also developing a long-term, multi-partner survey for wintering shorebirds in California. Come hear about these exciting projects related to shorebird conservation and how you can be involved!

Khara Strum is a Waterbird Ecologist for PRBO Conservation Science. She has worked on developing and testing compatible agriculture practices in rice in California's Sacramento Valley for two years.

Monica Iglecia recently joined Audubon California as the Shorebird Conservation Biologist. She has worked on wetland restoration projects in the San Francisco Bay and is currently working to enhance agricultural lands for shorebirds in the Central Valley.

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.

Sally Walters, Program Chair

New Location for our General Meeting

Effie Yeaw Nature Center is now our new host

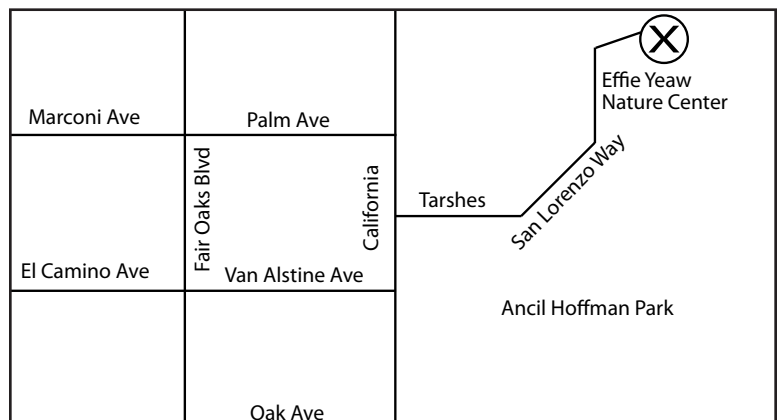
The September general meeting will be our first meeting in our new location at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Ancil Hoffman Park. If you have a Sacramento County Parks Pass or an ARNHA membership card remember display it when you park. If you do not, an Audubon member will be in the parking lot with temporary permits for your dashboard.

Directions to the new monthly meeting location at Effie Yeaw Nature Center (EYNC) in Carmichael, near Sacramento are below. Unless you are extremely familiar with the location of the EYNC please follow these directions:

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.)

You will be given a free parking pass for your car in the lot if you have not purchased an annual Regional Parks Pass. The meetings are free and open to the public. Passes are available at the Dept of Regional Parks 4040 Bradshaw Road, Sacramento or on-line at WWW.arpf.org



Field Trip Findings

Cosumnes River Preserve (8/13) — Co-leader Maureen Geiger reported: “Amazingly, given the time of year and lack of flooded fields, the 15 birders on the Cosumnes trip this morning managed to eke out 42 species. This was in part because John Trochet kindly joined us and shared his great expertise about the birds and trails of this beautiful area. Cathie LaZier co-led and helped with bird and plant identification. Best birds were Hutton’s Vireos, glimpsed disappearing into brush, and some decent looks at Blue Grosbeaks doing the same thing.”

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley (8/7) — Scott Hoppe reported: “It was a great birding day for 13 participants. We started out at Davis Wetlands, then drove down to the Lodi Waste Water Treatment Plant off of I-5, tallying about 60 species over all, with 14 species of shorebird.

At Davis Wetlands, there were many Long-billed Dowitchers, Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, at least 2 Lesser Yellowlegs, lots of peeps, several Semipalmated Plovers and a calling Black-bellied Plover, still in breeding plumage, that flew right over us. But the real highlight here was a Semipalmated Sandpiper, found by Ed Harper. Most in the group got great views at close range.

In Lodi, the real stars of the show weren’t shorebirds — an adult Least Tern and a juvenile Brown Pelican. Both are rare in the Central Valley, although Least Tern seems to be increasing in occurrence. There were many shorebirds here, too, as well as several Caspian Terns. All in all a very successful day.”

Sailor Bar (7/31) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Eight birders saw 54 species of birds on a very pleasant late July morning. Highlights included Black-Headed Grosbeak, Lazuli Bunting, Spotted Sandpiper, Rufous-Crowned Sparrow, Green Heron, Black-Chinned Hummingbird and Ash-Throated Flycatcher.”

Truckee to Tahoe Mountain Birding (7/30) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “I had a difficult time planning this trip after scouting locations the week before and finding less than optimum conditions that included wet, muddy, impassable trails, millions of voracious mosquitoes and, worst of all, a lack of birds.

I finally settled on a few Truckee area locales, and 11 participants ended up having a great time. We started out

at Cold Stream Valley, which is on the back side of Donner Memorial State Park. Highlights here included numerous Spotted Sandpipers, Brown Creeper, Warbling and Cassin’s Vireo, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and adult male and juvenile Evening Grosbeaks.

We continued on to Donner Camp, a day-use picnic area north of Truckee, where we had lunch. The highlight here was a pair of Western Wood-Pewees attending a nest with a nestling visible inside.

From there, we went on to Martis Valley and the Martis Creek Reservoir. We stopped near the campground to view a pair of Mountain Bluebirds. At the reservoir the highlights included American White Pelican, many Mallard and Gadwall ducklings, an unexpected adult male Ring-necked Duck, and a couple of Ospreys, one with a fish in its talons.

We ended the day with a few stops along Martis Peak Road. It was pretty quiet here, bird-wise, but we did get good views of Mountain Chickadees. And on the way out, we were serenaded by several Hermit Thrushes. We tallied about 50 species over all.”

Mather Lake (7/24) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Our small group of 5 sighted only 30 species. A fly-over of several Black-crowned Night Herons and two pairs of Mute Swans, one with cygnets, was observed, and a Nuttall’s Woodpecker family, several Western Kingbird families, large numbers of juvenile Robins in the berries at the south end of the levee were highlights for the lake. Burrowing Owl families were also observed on the NE section of the runway.”

Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca (7/23) — Leader Dan Williams reported: “We weren’t certain we’d get this trip in this year due to the extensive snow remaining above 8,000 feet, but we persevered and were treated to a very pleasant day on the Woods Lake Trail. Overall bird numbers did seem a bit low and wildflowers were nearly absent (at least compared to the outstanding display we are used to up there in July). However, we did get to enjoy a few uniquely Alpine experiences: Williamson’s Sapsuckers feeding young, Clark’s Nutcrackers chanting from the pinetops, a flock of Red Crossbills overhead and Dusky Flycatchers and Cassin’s Finches singing all day long.

There were a few species that we usually see several of up there, that we were barely able to scratch up this year, perhaps due to the greater amount of late July snow than normal. We only had one each of Pine Grosbeak, Black-headed Grosbeak, Green-tailed Towhee, Western Tanager, Hermit Thrush, Townsend’s Solitaire, and Hammond’s Flycatcher. We only had one hummingbird zip by which went unidentified (there are usually lots of Rufous traveling through the blooming meadows this time of year). The only species that seemed to be in normal abundance were the Yellow-rumps, Juncos, and White-crowned Sparrows.

Dragonfly Trip (7/17) — Leader Tim Manolis reported on this Sacramento Audubon trip to Bear Creek, just upstream from the junction of Highways 16 and 20, and nearby feeder creek near the entrance to Wilbur Hot Springs in Colusa County. “The creek was higher than it usually is at this time of the year,” he said. “Numbers of many species (except Variegated Meadowhawks) seemed quite low for the season. But we had nice looks at the two ‘target’ species for the trip, Giant Darner and Desert Forktail.” Altogether, 20 species were recorded.

Wright’s Lake (7/16) — Leader Tim Fitzer reported: “We birded up Granite Springs Rd to just past the spring where there is a drop in the road. The side of the hill actually shifted, creating an unsafe crossing. We then turned around and headed to Crystal Basin. Highlights seen were Green-tailed Towhees, Chipping Sparrows, Dusky Flycatchers, Western Wood-Pewees, Lazuli Buntings, MacGillivray’s Warblers, Mountain Bluebirds, and White-headed Woodpeckers. There was a small group and the birds were seen by all; a fun time.”

Farallones Pelagic Trip (7/10) — Leader Linda Pittman reported that the trip was canceled due to high wind and waves.

Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Contra Costa County (7/3) — Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Ken Poerner, reported: “Although the 12 of us had planned to bird in the cool of San Francisco Bay, mother nature had her own ideas. We saw quite a few species of birds, but the heat was intense, and we were all happy to get back to our cars. Diving Caspian Terns and an Ash-throated Flycatcher were especially nice to see.”

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, call the scheduler Scott Hoppe, 835-8471, shoppe01@surewest.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.



Plover
Daniel Kilby

Saturday, September 3, 7:30am

River Bend Park

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

Meet Cathie at the 1st parking lot on your right, just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland, looking for resident small woodland birds and woodpeckers as well as returning migrants. Vinegar Weed, an interesting native plant, may be in bloom. At the river we should see herons, yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpipers and possibly a kingfisher. Walk will end by noon, and it's a great walk for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. As it is the Labor Day weekend the entry fee may be higher.

Sunday, September 4, 6:30am

Point Reyes for Vagrants

Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610

Birding the coast can be very productive this time of year, for both regular migrants and more uncommon birds. Chris is an expert birder who can sort out that confusing fall warbler. Be prepared for several miles of walking. Bring lunch and liquids for a full day of birding. Meet Chris at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Saturday, September 10, 7am

Schollenberger Park/Ellis Creek, Petaluma

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

This area can be very productive for waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and other water-loving species. And some interesting rarities have turned up here as well. We will make a stop on the way at the wetlands along Highway 37. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Sunday, September 11, 8am

Sacramento Bar American River Parkway

Leader: Paul Cordero
email preferred
pkcordero@gmail.com
454-4061

Paul will lead you on a morning walk along the American River. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe some surprises. This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, September 17, 7:30am

Reichmuth Park

Leader: Tim Manolis, 485-9009
ylightfoot@aol.com

Join Tim at the park entrance on Gloria Drive and 43rd Avenue at 7:30am. In the past Tim has found many uncommon in birds Reichmuth Park. The lerp on the

eucalyptus trees are particularly attractive to a wide variety of birds. Tim will be looking for fall migrants including 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.

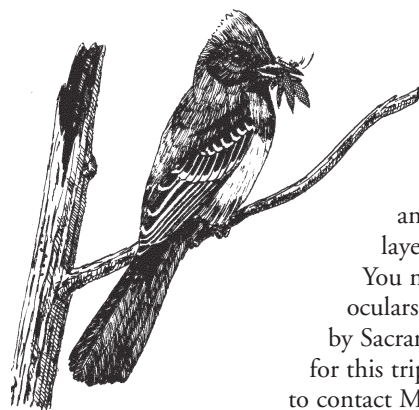
FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIP!!!

Saturday, September 17, 9-11am

Hagan Park, Rancho Cordova

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

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



Stephen D'Amato

Join Sheila at the duck pond at Hagan Park in Rancho Cordova for a bird walk geared towards children, families and beginners. Bring water and snacks, and dress in layers for variable weather.

You may bring your own binoculars or use the ones provided by Sacramento Audubon. Space for this trip is limited, so be sure to contact Maureen Geiger ahead of time to reserve a space. To reach Hagan Park (2197 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova), from Hwy. 50, take Mather Field Road exit and go north; then right on Folsom Boulevard, left on Coloma Drive, and left on Chase Drive which leads to the Park. There is free parking in the lot on the right just before you enter the Park, near the duck pond.

Sunday September 18, 7am

Sonoma County Migrants

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

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

Join Dan in pursuit of fall migrants and a change of scenery around the Santa Rosa area. Annadel State Park, Foothill and Shiloh Regional Parks, as well as the Sonoma Coast may be on the agenda depending on where the birding has been best recently. Bring a lunch, plenty of water, and be prepared for a fair amount of easy to moderate hiking. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento by 7am. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. We will plan to be back by late afternoon.

Saturday, September 24, 7am
Point Reyes for Vagrants
Leader: Mark Cudney, 987-2422
mcudney@aol.com

Join Mark 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 Mark at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.



Ruby crowned Kinglet
Kirsten Munson

Sunday, September 25, 7am
Bodega Bay
Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net
Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Tim and Mark for a full day of birding and fun, exploring the many habitats around Bodega Bay. 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 #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride. This is a good trip for newer and more experienced birders.

Tuesday, September 27, 8:30am
Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area
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. Raptors such as Peregrine Falcon are possible also. 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 and go under the freeway, then make a left up onto the levee and drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A). Scopes are helpful on this trip, which is a good trip for both beginners and more experienced birders. Trip will end before noon.

Saturday-Sunday October 1 and 2
Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic
Birding
Leader: Mark Cudney, 987-2422
mcudney@aol.com

Don't miss this traditional trip! Saturday's boat trip will produce a variety of seabirds as well as marine mammals. Mark and his experienced team will help you sort out the shearwaters, petrels, guillemots, murrelets and auklets. Sunday's land trip will focus on coastal species, shorebirds and passerine migrants. Use the Reservation Form on page 5 or contact Mark for more information.

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2011-12

Location: William Pond Park on the American River
Dates, (all Saturdays): October 8, November 12 and January 14
Time: 8am, ending by noon
Each Trip Limited to 10 participants: Registration required.

Location: Cosumnes River Preserve
Date: Sunday, November 13
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. A brief parking lot talk will focus on choice and use of binoculars and a brief overview of birding etiquette and ethics. A \$5 donation is requested to cover the costs of hand-out materials. (If you're a repeat participant and already have the materials no donation is requested.) You do not need to be a member of Audubon to participate.

The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats and will be led by two or more experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. 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.

FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIPS

Saturday, September 17, Hagan Park, Rancho Cordova

Saturday, October 15, Traylor Ranch Nature Preserve, Penryn

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.

FIRST ANNUAL SAS KIDS' CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT!!!

Sometime in the 1940's, Sacramento Audubon sponsored its first Christmas Bird Count, and this effort has been going strong ever since. Currently, SAS sponsors three CBC's for adults: Sacramento, Woodfords and Folsom. Information gathered at these counts is used by scientists and others who study birds all over the world.

This Christmas bird count season, SAS is planning its first count for children and youth on January 7, 2012 at Cosumnes River Preserve. Sacramento area kids ages 6 to 16 can join the first group of children to participate in this exciting event. Volunteers are needed to help this event be a success, and reservations are a must for all children. To reserve space or to volunteer, contact Maureen Geiger at 444-0804 or mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net.

GET YOUR ANNUAL COUNTY PARKS PASS NOW!

Every time you access the American River Parkway you pay a \$5 vehicle fee, and it's even higher on holidays. An annual County Regional Parks Pass for vehicles is only \$50 and it pays for itself with just 10 visits—that's less than once a month! In addition you are supporting regional parks; all funds go directly towards maintaining and operating our beautiful 15,000 acre system.

Where to purchase your pass:

- Online through the American River Parkway Foundation @ www.arpf.org/passport.shtml or at their office in William B. Pond Park, Monday through Friday 8:30am till 4pm.
- At REI stores in Sacramento, Roseville and Folsom.
- At Patriot Cycles in Fair Oaks.
- At Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park during normal business hours.
- At Regional Park offices and at park kiosks when they are open.

For further information call 916-875-6961 or put Sacramento County Regional Parks into your computer search engine.

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1-2, 2011

Mark Cudney will lead this year's shore and pelagic birding weekend, one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting birding trips.

Normally protected from heavy sea swells, yet geographically situated to capture an amazing diversity of ocean-going birds, Monterey Bay and the surrounding area is an exceptional place for birding. Saturday's boat excursion will highlight the trip. Monterey Bay is perhaps one of the most accessible and productive areas to learn about and enjoy pelagic birds and marine mammals. Several species of shearwaters are usually seen, not to mention the possibility of close-ups of a variety of marine mammals. On Sunday we will visit the key land and

shoreline habitats on the Monterey peninsula that may yield many migratory and vagrant surprises.

Boat space is limited to 30 participants. The price this year is \$75 per person, if we fill the boat (25 people minimum). You do not need to be a member of Sacramento Audubon to participate.

Cancellation policy: In order to receive a refund you must cancel 2 weeks before the trip.

Contact Mark Cudney, email: mcudney@aol.com, phone: (916) 987-2422 with any questions, then clip out this coupon and send in your reservation before the trip fills!

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip Reservation Form

Saturday/Sunday, October 1-2, 2011 Trip price: \$75 per person

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address (with zip) _____

Email (for confirmation) _____

Number of people _____ Total Payment \$ _____

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

Mark Cudney, 102 Feather Falls Circle, Folsom, CA 95630

Phone: (916) 987-2422

Email: mcudney@aol.com



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.

DUCK STAMP 2011-2012 IS NOW AVAILABLE

“Take a Duck Birding”

Actually, take a “Duck Stamp” birding. The Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp (Duck Stamp) is a wonderful and inexpensive opportunity for birders to help protect critical habitat needed by birds and other wildlife. Purchasing an annual \$15.00 stamp entitles you to unlimited admission to any of our 540 national wildlife refuges open to the public throughout the United States. Just make sure you have it with you (hint: they work well as a bookmark in your field guide). The stamps are issued July 1 of each year and are valid to June 30 of the following year. The 2011-2012 stamp depicts a pair of White-fronted Geese. Because the stamps change each year, they are fun to collect and are a wonderful gift for the nature lover in your life.

Originally created in 1934 as the federal license required for hunting migratory waterfowl, Duck Stamps have a much larger purpose today. Federal Duck Stamps are a vital tool for wetland acquisition and conservation. Ninety-eight cents (yes ninety-eight cents!) out of every dollar generated by the sales of the stamps goes directly to the purchase, lease and maintenance of wetland habitat within the National Wildlife Refuge System. In addition to waterfowl, numerous fish, amphibian, reptile, bird and mammal species have benefited from the acquisition of more than 5.2 million acres of habitat. However, additional acreage must be preserved as more than 58,000 acres of wetlands are lost due to human encroachment each year. Also, existing national wildlife refuges must be maintained. Please do your part to keep this program doing what it does by joining many of your fellow Sacramento Audubon Society members who already purchase the Duck Stamp annually.

The stamps are, dollar for dollar, one of the best investments one can make in the future of America’s wetlands. Birders can purchase the stamp on-line at www.duckstamp.com or www.usps.com, at post offices, and at most of the national wildlife refuges’ headquarters including Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. Additional information on this remarkable program is available at www.fws.gov/duckstamps/Info/Constituents/birder.htm.

A pair of white-fronted geese by James Hautman, an artist from Chaska, Minnesota, has been named the winner of the 2011 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. The announcement was made recently at the David Brower Center in Berkeley, California, during the annual competition hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Hautman has previously won the Duck Stamp Contest three times.

Hautman’s acrylic painting of a pair of White-fronted Geese will be made into the 2011-2012 Federal Duck Stamp, which will go on sale in late June 2011. The Service produces the Federal Duck Stamp, which sells for \$15 and raises about \$25 million each year to provide critical funds for conserving wetlands for the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of people.

In Memorium George Waldie

Longtime Sacramento Audubon member George Waldie passed away on July 27, 2011 after a long illness. He had just turned 91.

George was President of SAS from 1981-82 after having been Vice President from 1980-1981. He was also a long standing member of the Field Trip Committee and led field trips for many years. In the late 1970’s he was largely responsible for negotiating an agreement with Spreckels Sugar to preserve the wetlands area in Woodland, now popularly known as the Woodland Sugar Ponds.

We owe George a debt of gratitude for his many efforts on behalf of Sacramento Audubon. He will be missed by his many friends and family.



White-fronted Geese
2011-2012 Duck Stamp
James Hautman

East Africa in 2012

Responding to requests, Ed Harper and Susan Scott will offer another safari to Uganda. Tentative dates will center around 17 days in July. Special highlights include Mountain Gorilla tracking as well as Chimpanzees and other primates. In addition, there will be elephants, hippos, cats, and many other mammals. The birding is spectacular with Shoebill and other Uganda bird specialties being of high priority.

Following Uganda, an option exists for a week of wildlife viewing in Kenya with emphasis being on the migration that moves into the Masai Mara in early August. It will be your own Big Cat Diary! Camps and lodges have been carefully chosen to maximize the wildlife viewing experience. Ed and Susan have just returned from Kenya where they checked all locations and accommodations and report the wildlife viewing was spectacular.

If you would like to be placed on the planning list or would like more information regarding prices and itineraries, contact Ed at calidris@surewest.net or call him at (916) 704-7954 or (916) 971-3311.



Martial Eagle
Masai Mara, Kenya
Ed Harper

Findings continued from page 2

Loney Meadow (7/9) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “16 birders enjoyed perfect weather for this Sierra trip. Highlights included Spotted Sandpiper, Black-chinned and Rufous Hummingbirds; Red-breasted Sapsucker and Hairy and White-headed Woodpeckers, Nashville, Yellow, MacGillivray’s and Wilson’s Warblers; Green-tailed Towhee; and great views of singing Thick-billed Fox Sparrows.”

Calaveras Big Trees State Park (6/25) — Leader Dan Brown reported: “Seventeen participants enjoyed very mild temperatures while we walked the North Grove at the Park. Highlights were Black-headed Grosbeak, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Sapsucker and White-headed Woodpecker, all in the Grove. We heard a number of species that we did not see despite much effort. They were Pacific Wren, Pacific-slope Flycatcher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Pileated Woodpecker. After lunch, we stopped at the Stanislaus River where it crosses the park road and found a Canyon Wren and a Townsend’s Solitaire.

“PS. After the trip dispersed, Linda Pittman, Karen Zumwalt and Terry Atkinson birded Waverly road, east of Stockton where Karen found an Upland Sandpiper! This appears to be a first record for the species in the Central Valley. Congrats to the Ladies!”

Sierra Valley/Antelope Valley/Yuba Pass (6/18-19) — Gary Fregien, co-leader with Linda Pittman, reported: “Nineteen birders took part in the annual Sierra Valley/Yuba Pass/Antelope Valley weekend under very pleasant conditions, even though we were limited to where we could travel in the Yuba Pass area due to the snow-bound conditions of U.S. Forest Service roads that had not been plowed. In Sierra Valley on 6/17, the seven birders on the scouting expedition had some interesting wildlife activity to watch. While observing nesting waterfowl at a small pond, we noticed a few adult Canada Geese with goslings, standing guard. Then a young coyote became apparent. While watching this standoff, we saw another being played-farther away in the valley. There, another coyote was having a faceoff with a Pronghorn. The coyote finally tired of the stare-down and departed.

On the morning of 6/18 in the valley, a light-phase hawk on a utility pole caused an identity discussion, but as it flew off, it showed patagials and a reddish tail, confirming its species, but its race is still a matter of question. On Saturday evening we divided into two groups, one revisiting the valley floor while the other covered the Vista Point for nightjars. Only the Common Poorwill could be heard at the Vista Point, while those in the valley

were treated to several Short-eared Owls. These owls were the first observed of the species for this annual trip; at least in the experience of the leader.

On Sunday at Yuba Pass, some patience paid off with good looks at a pair of Pine Grosbeaks. One of the grosbeaks, presumably the female, was the russet variant. As a group, we did well on raptors, thrushes, flycatchers, warblers and woodpeckers, and very well overall on the count. We tallied 125 species for the weekend.”

Purple Martins at Sutterville Rd (6/18) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “This was the annual Purple Martin trip. Dan Airola and Dan Kopp talked to 9 of us about the natural history of these lovely birds on the West Coast and particularly in the Sacramento area while they flew over our heads and larked about above us. We had good close looks at close to 20 martins and were able to study the various plumages and ages. Kingbirds, cormorants, pelicans and some of the more common birds were in evidence also.”

Pete Hayes

Birding and Nature Events

7TH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The seventh annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival is being held September 22-25. Where else in the country could you look for Wrentits, Lawrences Goldfinch, Clark's Grebes, White-tailed Kites, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, Yellow-billed Magpies, Snowy Plovers, California Thrashers, California Towhees, and Black-footed Albatrosses, just to name a few? The festival theme this year: *The Evolution of Birding-From Field guides to High Tech* will celebrate the days of John James Audubon to the modern days of hi-tech innovations in birding. Featured speakers are Joe Morlan, Debbie Shearwater and Stephen Shunk

Designed for birders of all levels, as well as outdoor lovers, the festival offers a unique opportunity to explore, learn and appreciate world-class habitats such as the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Pinnacles National Monument. You'll be able to go on outings in the mountains, shoreline, chaparral, sloughs and grasslands.

Registration is \$40 for the weekend but some events may be full at this late date. Please check the website, www.montereybaybirding.org/registration.html for detailed registration information.

15TH ANNUAL CENTRAL VALLEY BIRDING SYMPOSIUM

This year's 15th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium will be held November 17-20 in Stockton. They are hosting the usual great workshops, speakers and field trips led by many local experts. It's also your chance to shop for optics from the several leading vendors that attend. Bird related art is also available. The complete program including registration is now available online at www.cvbs.org.

Keynote speakers include our own Ed Harper, John Sterling and Ron LeValley. Jeffery A. Gordon will present *The Ten Birds that Changed Birding* on Saturday night. Jon Dunn will lead a Warbler ID workshop on Sunday.

For more info, check their website at www.cvbs.org. Contact information offline is c/o Frances Oliver, 1817 Songbird Pl Lodi, CA 95240
E-mail address: CVBSreg@gmail.com. Phone: (209) 369-2010

16TH MORRO BAY WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

Morro Bay's 16th Annual Winter Bird Festival will be held January 13-16, 2012. Located on California's scenic Central Coast, Morro Bay is an important stop on the Pacific Flyway and one of the country's pre-eminent birding spots. The area is recognized worldwide for its diversity of both resident and wintering birds, and at last year's festival, over 200 species of birds were identified!

The Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival is sponsored by MCAS and gives you the chance to join local and national birding experts on a variety of field trips and workshops. Field trip group sizes are limited to maximize spotting and identification opportunities. The Festival also offers workshops aimed at sharpening your birding skills, as well as evening programs with outstanding speakers.

The keynote speaker Saturday, January 14th will be Jon Dunn, presenting a program on the diversity of Wood Warblers of North America. Jon is one of the primary experts on field identification in North America and is a tour leader for WINGS Birding Tours.

To register and for more information about the Festival, check their website at www.morrobaybirdfestival.org. Registration starts on October 1, 2011 and the brochure will be available then. The deadline is December 31, 2011 but early signups are encouraged as the most popular events fill up quickly.

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2011-2012 PROGRAMS

October 20 John Sterling
Bird Species Changes in Central Valley
November 17 Mark Jorgensen
Anza-Borrego's Sister Park in Mongolia

2012

January 19 Josh Hull
Great Grey Owls (program change)
February 16 TBD
March 15 David Carle
Around the World Starting at Mono Lake
April 19 TBD
May 17 TBD

AUDUBON OUTREACH

The **Harvest Festival** at the Fair Oaks Horticultural Center was bigger than ever this year. Julie Serences and Cathie LaZier talked with many visitors about restoring native habitat to our gardens, making them bird/bee/bug and butterfly friendly! Julie shared her extensive knowledge of our native bees and Cathie helped a few people with identifying their garden birds.

Upcoming autumn activities include a **Friends of the Swainson's Hawk** program at REI, the **Lodi Crane Festival** and the **Central Valley Birding Symposium**. We'll have our Outreach table at all these events, so come by and visit our table, or if you'd like to help out contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net.

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 held on September 27, at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Debara Johnson

Laurie Lamers

Gil Schoefer

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Paul Beach, Carolyn Broeren, Ed Harper and Susan Scott, Marie Heid, John Huls, Allen Jamieson, Peggy Kennedy, Ann Kohl, Ross Little, Kevin McRae, Robert Meagher, Mike Savino, Barbara Smith and Stuart Walthall to the **General Fund**.

Valerie Brown, Sue Bucholz, Craig De Martini, Norm Eade, Denise Gonzales, Ed Harper and Susan Scott, Peter Hayes, Marie Heid, John Huls, Allen Jamieson, Delmar Janson, Peggy Jenkins, Peggy Kennedy, Rosemary Mayfield, Mary Beth Metcalf, Joyce Mihanovich, June Ritzman, Mike Savino, Barbara Smith and Salli Warinner to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Peter Hayes made a donation to Sacramento Audubon in memory of George Waldie.

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 \$ _____

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

Observations continued from page 10

A male **Allen's Hummingbird** was observed performing a display flight at CRP on 6/19 and **Allen's Hummingbirds** were captured and measured (the only safe way to separate this species from **Rufous Hummingbirds** aside from the display flight) along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters. Other highlights included an adult **Snowy Plover** at the Lincoln WTP on 6/15-16, 21 **Willetts** at SRWTP on 7/22, a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the Davis Wetlands on 7/15-17, three **Common Nighthawks** along Meiss Rd in eastern Sacramento County on 6/11, an unprecedented June record (6/12) of a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** in full song on Yolo County Rd 98, north of the town of Yolo, and an immature male **Summer Tanager** on Todhunter Ave near Riverbank Road in West Sacramento on 7/20. The **Steller's Jay** that wintered in Curtis Park continued through at least 6/18. Adult **Purple Martins** and their recently fledged young were noted in impressive numbers at Paradise Beach along the American River Parkway, with 65 on 7/26, a high of 92 on 7/27, and 40 or more continuing into mid-August.

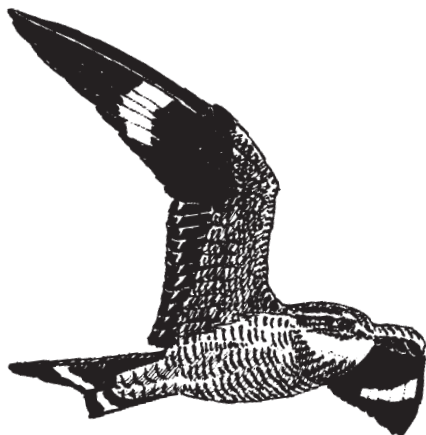
We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recent sightings.html).

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve. Visit cvbirds.org and click "Listserve" for details. With more than 100 reports, it is impossible to list everyone; however, I want to thank the following for reports on the above species and for providing additional information:

Roger Adamson, Dan Airola, Mel Bolinder, Dawn DeBerry, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Nancy Gronert, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Pablo Herrera, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Frances Oliver, Michael Perrone, Linda Pittman, Ron Pozzi, Jennifer Rycenga, John Sterling, John Trochet, and Ed Whisler.

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

Chris Conard



Nighthawk
Stephen D'Amato

Seasonal Observations

June 1 to July 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

With abundant late rain this spring it is not too surprising that migrant songbirds were somewhat delayed, with fair numbers coming through well into June. A sample day on 6/5 at Slide Hill Park in Davis included a **Hammond's Flycatcher**, a **Dusky Flycatcher**, a "Western" **Flycatcher**, an **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, a **Swainson's Thrush**, a **Wilson's Warbler** and a **Townsend's Warbler**. Also surprising for this summer season were a few unusual and/or unprecedented breeding records. **Hooded Mergansers** were confirmed nesting for the first time in Sacramento County at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) near the Valensin Forest, and **Yellow Warblers** were found to have nested successfully for the first time at CRP, with an adult feeding two recently fledged young. The first solid nesting record of **Yellow-breasted Chat** at CRP was less heartening: a chat was seen feeding a young **Brown-headed Cowbird**. A pair of **Least Terns** nested for the fourth year in a row at the Sacramento Reg. WTP (SRWTP), fledging three chicks. At least two **Bell's Vireos** were found singing at the Yolo Wildlife Area for the second year in a row, but no solid evidence of nesting was discovered, and the last detection was on 7/10.

The unchallenged highlights for the period were a couple of rare shorebirds, both first records for the Central Valley. An **Upland Sandpiper** was found along Waverly Rd

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to the east of Stockton, just south of the area typically covered by this column, on 6/25. It was seen by many, with some seeing and hearing its wonderful flight display. At other times during its stay through 6/28 it remained out of sight, disappoint-

ing many others. On 7/15-17, an adult **Little Stint** was found and seen by many at the Davis Wetlands. Fortunately both of these birds were well photographed (check the SAS Web site under "Recent Sightings").

On 6/1 a juvenile **Brown Pelican** was found in West Sacramento. The following day it was on the front lawn of the Post Office on Industrial Blvd. It was picked up by a wildlife rehabber that afternoon since it was walking into traffic. Another **Brown Pelican** found on 6/3 at the Folsom Dam did not survive. A juvenile **Brown Pelican** found at the Lodi WTP on 7/20 continued into August. This species is quite rare in the Valley, but it has become more regular over the past two decades. On 6/3 an adult **Western Gull** was among over 300 **California Gulls** at the Davis WTP. The **California Gulls** nested for the second year in a row, but none of the chicks survived to fledging, likely because of the sustained efforts by aerial and ground predators.

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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.

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