



# The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

## General Meeting

Thursday, September 20, 2012

Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Assembly Room

7pm

### A Virtual Tour of the Sacramento Region's Unique Ecosystems

Glen Holstein

The Central Valley, California's Heartland, isn't just cities and farms. It's a treasure house of natural areas and rare species. Our virtual tour will explore them and examine the unique geology, climate, and environmental history that molded and created their natural beauty and rich biodiversity. Then, after touring the variety of wonderful natural communities around us, we'll take a closer look at the beautiful and important, but still little known, California prairie ecosystem, one of the very few landscapes on earth dominated by wildflowers. Saving California prairies and the many animal and plant species dependent on them is one of the 21st century's grand challenges.

Glen Holstein, PhD, is Botanist and Chapter Council Representative of the California Native Plant Society's Sacramento Valley Chapter and a board member of the local conservation organizations Tuleyome, Habitat 2020, and Yolo Natural Heritage Program. He has 27 years professional experience as a landscape ecology consultant and has written about California vegetation history for both scientific and lay publications. Although he's a botanist, his interest extends to all living things. He's been an active Audubon member for many years on the Yolo side of the river, where his wife Sue is a board member. The family's best birder is his son Dylan who works at the Center for Biological Diversity and has seen over 700 ABA birds, but dad also occasion-

## Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY, September 29-30, 2012**

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. 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, mcudney@aol.com, or 987-2422 with any questions.

### Monterey Bay Coastal and Pealgic Trip Reservation Form

Saturday/Sunday, September 29-30, 2012      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

ally sees a new bird. The most recent was Colusa's Falcated Duck.

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. See page 8 for written directions to Effie Yeaw.

*Sally Walters, Program Chair*

## Field Trip Findings

\* Because of space restraints this month some *Findings* have been shortened. Early August *Findings* which have been submitted but not printed, will appear in October's Observer.

**Mather Regional Park (7/29)** — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "Families was the theme again as earlier in the month, with 13 gathered to find 36 species. A large number of turkey families greeted everyone at the entrance to the park, as well as blackbird families, Brewer's and Red-winged. Because of a previous sighting of a Least Bittern, the group was alerted to differences in Green Herons, Least Bitterns, American Bitterns and juvenile Black-crowned Night-Herons. Within minutes, the group had an ID challenge when a very cooperative juvenile Green Heron presented itself on the fishing pier. The rest of the morning provided great multiple looks at Green Herons and American Bitterns. A large number of White-tailed Kites was noted all around, and at one point 7 or 8 were noted in one tree. At one point on the south shore looking north, the group saw a bird fly low west to east and started conversing about what we saw. A phone call to one of our group from Gil Ewig who was birding on the north shore indicated we had just witnessed the Least Bittern. Needless to say that was the highlight."

**Carson Pass to Lake Winnemucca (7/28)** — Leader Gary Fregien reported: "On a warm day for the High Sierra, 12 birders and hikers, including two from Maine, made the trek from the Carson Pass Visitor Center at the summit of Highway 88 to Lake Winnemucca, about two miles into the Mokelumne Wilderness, traversing altitudes exceeding 9,000 ft. The warm weather may have contributed to the overall low number of species tallied, 26. However, what was lacking in species number was more than compensated for in highly sought-after birds. Clark's Nutcrackers were everywhere, including begging fledglings and accommodating adults. Highly prized species included Sooty Grouse, Northern Goshawk, Rufous Hummingbird, all female or juvenile, female Williamson's Sapsucker, male Black-backed Woodpecker and a female Pine Grosbeak. Other notable birds included Band-tailed Pigeon, Dusky Flycatcher, Violet-green and Cliff Swallows, Mountain Chickadee, Rock Wren, Western Tanager and Purple Finch. As you can see, we

observed some very attractive birds to match the prolific wildflower displays that contributed to the spectacular scenery and views."

**Mono Lake Basin (7/26-27)** — Linda Pittman, co-leader with Dan Tankersley, reported: "Nine birders (most toting cameras) joined us for two days of birding in the Mono Lake basin on the east side of the Sierra. Thursday, at the Mono Lake County Park, we birded the parking lot, nearby road and lawn areas where we found Orange-crowned and Yellow Warblers, House and Bewick's Wrens and Blue-gray Gnatcatchers before walking down the boardwalk to the viewing platform at the lake. Both Wilson's and Red-necked Phalaropes were close in as well as a few shorebirds (Wilson's Snipe, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpipers, Western and Least Sandpipers). We were able to scope an Osprey and chick in a nest on tufa opposite the platform.

"From the county park, we continued east to Dechambeau Ranch, a historic ranch area, where we found two Great Horned Owls and a number of flycatchers: Gray Flycatcher, Western Kingbirds, Say's and Black Phoebe. Following a picnic lunch at the ranch, we visited the nearby Dechambeau Ponds for Yellow-headed Blackbirds, a few ducks and heard two Virginia Rails.

"In the afternoon at Lundy Lake (at nearly 8,000 feet) we enjoyed nice views of an adult Bald Eagle perched across the lake. We watched a family group of Red-breasted Sapsuckers working sap wells in the aspens. Western Wood-Pewees were abundant and Valerie Phillips found a nest with two young being fed by parents. In the evening we went back out to Cemetery Road for Common Nighthawks and Common Poorwills. The nighthawks put on a nice show at dusk, but the Common Poorwills were less accommodating and not everyone saw them.

"On Friday at the June Lake burn area off of Hwy 395, we were greeted with the kip-kip calls of a pair of Red Crossbills. The burn area was quite active with woodpeckers and sapsuckers including a family group of Williamson's Sapsuckers. Mountain Bluebirds and Pygmy Nuthatches abounded. Most of the group got great looks at Mountain Quail with young chicks.

"At South Tufa an estimated 2,000

Wilson's Phalaropes were on the water and nearby shore feeding on brine flies while an Osprey occupied most of the tufa towers surrounded by water.

"Before leaving at the Virginia Lakes resort, we saw mountain species: Steller's Jays, Cassin's Finches, and Dark-eyed Juncos. The visit finished with close-up views of adult and begging young Gray-crowned Rosy Finches. A total of 91 species were tallied for the trip."

**Wright's Lake (7/22)** — Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Mark Martucci, reported: "Great day out of the valley heat. Best birds: Nashville, Hermit, MacGillivray warblers, Lazuli Buntings, Townsend Solitaire, Common Nighthawk, Williamson Sapsucker, Mountain Bluebirds, Mountain Quail with young, Golden Eagles, Bald Eagle just to name a few. The birding was excellent even late in the season as a result of many of this year's jutes (new juveniles). We totaled 50 species for the day. We had two birders from Utah who said they never had so much fun and good birds. Sixteen people returned to 103 degree heat in the valley, a fun day for everybody."

**Tahoe / Truckee (7/21)** — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "Seven birders enjoyed a beautiful day in the Sierra, tallying 46 species. At Page Meadows near Tahoe's north shore, highlights included Rufous Hummingbird, Dusky Flycatcher, Nashville Warbler, Cassin's Finch and Evening Grosbeak, including adults and a juvenile.

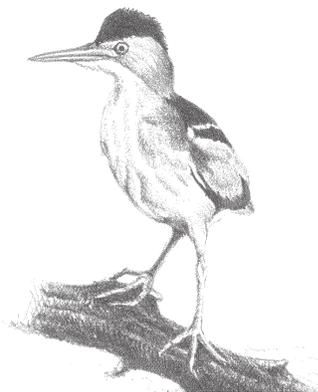
At a stop along the north shoreline of Lake Tahoe, highlights included a Forster's Tern and a family of 7 Common Mergansers (adult female with young) that swam by quite close and began diving for food.

Later, we made a quick stop near Brockway Summit and found another Dusky Flycatcher, but this one was tending a nestfull of young. We all got good views of the young and the adult coming in to feed them.

We finished up the day at Martis Creek Reservoir. Highlights here included Osprey, good views (eventually) of a Wilson's Snipe, Yellow Warbler, Brewer's and Vesper Sparrows, and an unexpected Sage Thrasher, which is rare for this location. All in all a very good day."

*Findings* continued on page 7

# Field Trips



*Least Bittern*  
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 Scott Hoppe, 835-8471, [shoppe01@surewest.net](mailto:shoppe01@surewest.net) for September trips. For October trips contact the scheduler Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, [empid@earthlink.net](mailto:empid@earthlink.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.

**Saturday, September 1, 7:30am**  
**River Bend Park**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**[empid@earthlink.net](mailto: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 2, 6:30am to mid-afternoon**  
**Alpine County**  
**Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610**  
**e-mail: [conardc@gmail.com](mailto:conardc@gmail.com)**

The county with the smallest human population in the state has a lot to offer in terms of birds and scenery. We'll visit a mix of habitats, including coniferous forests, lake shores, and sagebrush flats, looking for migrating and lingering songbirds, woodpeckers, raptors and waterbirds. Expect several short walks at mid-elevation. FRS radios could be especially helpful on this trip. Meet in the Raley's parking lot in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot.

**Saturday, September 8, 7am**  
**Schollenberger Park/Ellis Creek, Petaluma**  
**Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471**  
**[shoppe01@surewest.net](mailto:shoppe01@surewest.net)**

This area can be very productive for waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and other water-loving species. Many interesting birds can turn up in the fall. Last year, we had Pacific-golden Plover, Pectoral Sandpiper and Baird's Sandpiper among the many other birds attracted to this location. We will stop along the way at the wetlands on Highway 37. Meet Scott at the Park and Ride off of 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 9, 7:30am**  
**Sailor Bar, American River Parkway**  
**Leader: Mark Martucci**  
**[matuchbirdman@yahoo.com](mailto:matuchbirdman@yahoo.com)**

Mark will lead you on a morning walk to one of his favorite spots along the American River Parkway. You will see a nice variety of resident birds and maybe some surprises. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, September 15, 7:30am**  
**Discovery Park**  
**Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804**  
**Cell # for that morning only: 281-6652**  
**[mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net)**

This park at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a great place for a walk in any season. Join Maureen to look

for migrants, early winter arrivals, and resident species generally found in the park such as Yellow-billed Magpies, Nuttall's Woodpeckers, Red-shouldered Hawks and White-tailed Kites. Other possibilities include wrens, woodpeckers and bluebirds. Generally, there is an unlocked restroom near the beginning of the walk. This walking trip will last until late morning.

To reach Discovery from I-5, drive east on the Garden Highway, turning right into the park at the first traffic light. Once in the park, you need a Sacramento County Parks Annual Pass, or you must stop at the kiosk and register, paying the \$5 entrance fee. Then turn left at your first opportunity and then left again, driving a short distance to the farthest parking lot at the south end of the archery range where we will meet.

**Saturday, September 15**  
**FAMILY FRIENDLY TRIP**

Fall is coming and migrating and winter birds will be coming back. Good time for families to join the family-friendly field trips and see what's out there. 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](mailto:mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net) or at 444-0804.

**Sunday, September 16, 7am**  
**Sonoma County Migrants**  
**Leaders: Scott Hoppe and Dan Tankersley**  
**Scott, 835-8471**  
**[shoppe01@surewest.net](mailto:shoppe01@surewest.net)**  
**Dan, 662-1290**  
**[dtankers@winfirst.com](mailto:dtankers@winfirst.com)**

*Field Trips* continued on page 4

## *Field Trips* continued from page 3

Join Scott and Dan in pursuit of fall migrants and a change of scenery around Sonoma County. 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. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

**Monday, September 17, 7:30am**  
**Davis Wetlands and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area**  
**Leader: Dan Tankersley 662-1290**  
**dtankers@winfirst.com**

If water levels are appropriate, there may be a wide variety of shorebirds and other water birds at this location. We could encounter some early arriving ducks as well as other migrants. Later in the morning we will go over to the nearby Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area in search of species we may not see at the wetlands. We will be out of our vehicles much of the time, so be prepared for warm and sunny conditions. Plenty of liquids and wide-brimmed hats are a good idea. Please bring scopes and FRS radios if you have them. This outing will end at or before noon. Meet Dan at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento, take I-80 west to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and proceed to the stop light (CR 32A), turn right, pass the driveway to Ikeda's Market and look for the entrance to the Park and Ride on your right. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank.

**Saturday, September 22, 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 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 23, 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.

**Wednesday, September 26, 8:30am**  
**Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area,**  
**Auto Tour Route**  
**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**  
**September 29-30th**  
**Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip**  
**Leader: Mark Cudney, 987-2422**  
**mcudney@aol.com**

The best land and ocean birding of the year – you don't want to miss this trip. See registration information on the front page of this issue and sign up before it fills up.

**Wednesday, October 3, 8am**  
**The Best of Both Sides**  
**River Bend Park and William Pond Park**  
**Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882**  
**empid@earthlink.net**

Meet Cathie at the main River Bend parking lot near the bike bridge. (Follow the main road into the park; after you cross the bike trail (stop sign) go about ½ mile and turn left at the sign "rafting exit, main picnic area" and continue on the road to the large parking area). For the first half of

the walk we'll bird across the bridge into William Pond Park, going downstream along the backwaters of the river and checking out the fishing pond. Then we'll recross the river and go upstream into the oak woodland area. We'll finish before noon, but you may want to bring water and/or snacks. As always, this is a great trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park, (formerly called Goethe Park). If you come from the William Pond side look for us on the bridge. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, October 6, 8am to 11am**  
**Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach**  
**American River Parkway**  
**Leaders: Sally Walters and Don**  
**Schmoldt, 739-6465**  
**dschmoldt25@gmail.com**

Join us for a morning bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. From Highway 50 take Howe Ave north to Fair Oaks Blvd. Turn left onto Fair Oaks and cross over the American River. Turn right on Carlson Ave, which is the first stop light past the American River bridge. Continue on Carlson Ave to its end, at Glenn Hall Park. Meet on top of the levee. This will be a fairly easy walk, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. We hope to see returning wintering sparrows and waterfowl, and resident birds including wrens, towhees, Yellow-billed Magpies and kinglets. Excellent trip for beginners.

**Saturday, October 6**  
**Beginning Birding Field Trip**  
**William Pond Park**

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 people per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net, 457-6882.

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

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations, and he usually turns up quite a list of bird species. Join him to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, Wild Turkey, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron, Pied-billed

Grebe and Common Yellowthroat. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Zinfandel. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

**Thursday, October 11, 7:30am**

#### **Folsom Lake**

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

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

### **FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2012**

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

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

**Time:** 8am

**Each Trip:** Limited to 10 participants

#### **Registration required.**

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

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

Register via email to Cathie at [empid@earthlink.net](mailto: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 – STARTING AGAIN!**

**September 15th and October 20th**

Fall is coming and migrating and winter birds will be coming back. Good time for families to join the family-friendly field trips and see what's out there. The first will be September 15th, probably at Mather Lake, the second on October 20, probably at Traylor Ranch near Penryn. Both will be lead by Sandra Beseler, a very popular trip leader plus several co-leaders to help.

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

### **NEW BINOCULARS FOR SAS!**

Eagle Optics has come through again. Continuing their commitment to supporting children's birding, they have given SAS a substantial discount on additional pairs of binoculars to be used for children's birding in the family-friendly field trips. The initial supply, which proved insufficient for the number of kids and beginner adults who need them, was also donated to SAS on a 50% matching basis.

We know those who will be using these excellent binoculars in the field will appreciate this generosity.

### **DUCK STAMP 2012-2013 IS NOW AVAILABLE**

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 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 2012-2013 stamp depicts a Wood Duck painted by Joseph Hautman. Because the stamps change each year, they are fun to collect and are a wonderful gift for the nature lover in your life.

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. 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](http://www.duckstamp.com) or [www.usps.com](http://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/duck-stamps/Info/Constituents/birder.htm](http://www.fws.gov/duck-stamps/Info/Constituents/birder.htm).

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.

### **THE CENTRAL VALLEY SHOREBIRD SURVEY (CVSS)**

**Help count shorebirds if shorebirds count to you!**

The CVSS is a regional survey of the larger Pacific Flyway Shorebird Survey (PFSS), a multi-partner monitoring program led by PRBO Conservation Science. The goal is to inform management and conservation of wintering shorebirds in the Pacific Flyway. Annual winter survey data are entered online and stored in the California Avian Data Center.

Want to participate? Here's what you will need:

- A passion for shorebird conservation
- Shorebird identification skills
- Binoculars and scope
- Reliable transportation
- Computer and internet skills

**Time commitment:** 3 days

**Training Day:** Attend a protocol training session and get your site assignment. TBD.

**Scouting Day:** Become familiar with your site, make sure you know the access points and how long it will take to cover the area. Do this on your own.

**Survey and Data Entry Day:** One day between November 15th and December 15th.

Take this survey to let us know when you are available: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/CVSS2012](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CVSS2012). To learn more, get involved, or ask a question please contact: Monica Iglecia, [miglecia@audubon.org](mailto:miglecia@audubon.org), 916-649-7600 x115. Or visit the website: [prbo.org/pfss](http://prbo.org/pfss)

## Birding and Nature Events

### EIGHTH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The eighth annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival, being held September 13-16, is home to one of the most spectacular birding and wildlife venues in North America. The Monterey Bay Birding Festival is honored to present *The Big Year* birder Greg Miller as the keynote speaker September 15 at the Watsonville Civic Plaza. All field trips for the festival, including pelagic and kayak tours are lead by top quality, friendly leaders. Registration for each birding event is offered a la carte, so you can mix and match outings according to personal interests. More information and registration can be found at [montereybaybirding.org](http://montereybaybirding.org)

### EFFIE YEAW NATURE FEST OCTOBER 7

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

### CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

On November 15th-18th, 2012, the Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 16th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium at the Stockton Hilton Hotel, in Stockton. Please come and help us kick off this year's CVBS! Come meet the CVBS board and staff members! Reconnect with old friends! Meet new ones! Take advantage of the scrumptious hors d'oeuvres buffet and No Host Bar on Thursday night. Events include a "Century of Field Identification" by Joe Morlan, Bird ID Workshop by Jon Dunn and a sketching workshop by Sophie Webb. The field trips always turn up exciting birds. Lots more information to follow in next month's *Observer* or to look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips check out the website at: [www.cvbs.org](http://www.cvbs.org)

### EAST AFRICA IN 2013!

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

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

### SAS HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE!

Thanks to the efforts of SAS members Cliff Hawley and Dan Brown the SAS facebook page is active and available at: [facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon)

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

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

### BRINGING NATURE HOME

#### Transitioning to a Beautiful, Water-Wise Native Garden

Saturday, September 8, 9am - 4pm

Effie Yeaw Nature Center, located inside Ancil Hoffman Park, 2850 San Lorenzo Way, off Tarshes Drive in Carmichael  
Cost: \$35, CNPS members \$25

Want a native garden, but not sure where to start? Taught by local experts, this day long workshop will take you from beginning your garden's transition, to designing your garden, caring for your native plants, and inviting nature into your yard. You'll be inspired by a show of native plants of the Sacramento region and guided walks with a naturalist. Brought to you by the Sacramento Valley Chapter of California Native Plant Society.

#### Workshop Agenda

- Beginning your transition - How to Tear Out a Lawn, Area Preparation
- Design Principles, Simplify Your Life with Good Planning
- Show of Native Plants of the Sacramento Region
- LUNCH (organic, catered, casual, included in the price)
- Participants are invited on a 30 minute Walk with a Naturalist.
- Care & Maintenance of Native Plants and Pruning demonstration
- Bringing Nature Home

Contact: Chris Lewis, 812-2876,  
[LewisC916@yahoo.com](mailto:LewisC916@yahoo.com)

Website: [SacValley.CNPS.org](http://SacValley.CNPS.org)

Reservations: Betsy Weiland,  
(916) 488-3894, [flweiland@yahoo.com](mailto:flweiland@yahoo.com)

*Findings* continued from page 2

**Farallons Pelagic Trip (7/15)** — Coordinator Linda Pittman reported: “After last year’s disappointing cancellation due to high seas, this year 30 participants were able to enjoy a relatively smooth trip. On the way out to the islands, we were treated to unusually high numbers of Sooty Shearwaters. Additionally, we saw a few Pink-footed Shearwaters, lots of Common Murres (including some chicks), and four species of terns (Elegant, Forster’s, Caspian and one Common). At one point, the boat was completely surrounded by a large mixed group of frolicking Pacific White-sided Dolphins and Northern Right-whale Dolphins numbering in the thousands. We detoured briefly to watch a group of four Blue Whales before we reached the islands and we were treated to a rare sight of a couple of Blue Whales fluking. Close to the islands, we saw several Tufted Puffins in flight, Rhinoceros and Cassin’s Auklets, and Pigeon Guillemots. and a Gray Whale. We spent extra time and a lot of effort trying to find the Northern Gannet that has been seen on and off recently on the Farallon Islands. Everyone scanned through thousands of Common Murres on the islands but could not find the gannet. A nice variety of mammals were also seen in and around the islands including: Harbor Seal, California Sea Lion, Steller’s Sea Lion, Gray Whale, and Humpback Whales. As we started the long trip back, we were treated to the unexpected sight of a Laysan Albatross. Spotters Tim Fitzer, Mark Martucci, Dan Brown, Todd Easterla, John Sterling and Fritz Steurer (chummer) did a great job of spotting and getting participants on the birds. A total of 33 bird species were seen.”

**Dragonfly Trip (7/14)** — Leader Tim Manolis reported: “The field trip to Bear Creek and the Wilbur Hot Springs vicinity, in Colusa County, was attended by 5 observers. This was a trip to see dragonflies, and we were pleased to find 22 species, having great looks at our primary target species, the Giant Darner, North America’s largest dragonfly. Other species seen included American Rubyspots, California and Sooty Dancers, a Blue-eyed Darner in hand, White-belted Ringtail, Gray Sanddragon, and Pale-faced Clubskimmer. We also had nice looks at a pair of soaring Golden Eagles.”

**Mather Lake (7/8)** — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Eleven participants enjoyed great looks at 51 species for the morning. Families were likely as every species

was numerous. Seen were Mute Swans, Wild Turkeys, American Bitterns, Green Herons, White-tailed Kites, Common Gallinule, Killdeer, Nuttall’s and Downy Woodpeckers, Ash-throated Flycatchers, Barn Swallows, Bushtits, American Robins, Northern Mockingbirds, European Starlings, California Quail, California Towhee, Red-winged Blackbirds, Great-tailed Grackles, Bullock’s Orioles, and House Finches. An additional highlight was a Barn Owl that was flushed by a group of grackles. Missing were the Yellow-headed Blackbirds.”

**Ice House Road and Crystal Basin Area (7/7)** — Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Richard Barbieri, reported: “Beautiful day in the Sierra out of the valley heat. Best birds were Mountain Quail, a male right next to the road; Common Poorwills, Golden Eagles, Bald Eagle, Lewis’s Woodpeckers, Mountain Bluebirds, Williamson’s Sapsucker and Hermit Warbler. Two guys from Utah attended and emailed me they got 4 lifers and never had so much fun on a field trip. Fun day for all.”

**Loney Meadows (7/1)** — Scott Hoppe reported: “While the birding was rather slow overall for the location, 17 birders enjoyed a beautiful day at an awesome mountain meadow. For many of the attendees it was a first visit. Highlights included numerous Red-breasted Sapsuckers, several Orange-crowned, Nashville and MacGillivray’s Warblers and good views of a singing Warbling Vireo plus singing Olive-sided Flycatchers and Fox Sparrows. An unexpected treat was a flock of American White Pelicans soaring up on a thermal overhead. And one member of the group heard a calling Northern Goshawk, which we were unable to locate later. A stop at the Sierra Discovery Trail on the way out produced several American Dippers.”

**Swainson’s Hawk Trip (6/30)** — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Seventeen hawk watchers joined a trip to two nest sites in Sacramento, one at O Street and the Sacramento River and the other at the I-5 South Rest Stop in Natomas. Mike Bradbury, wildlife biologist specializing in Swainson’s Hawks, explained nesting and migration behavior, and shared many insights from his research. The group viewed Swainson’s Hawk adults, both light and dark morphs, and chicks, including feeding of the chicks. Other species seen included Anna’s Hummingbird, Western Kingbird, and Red-tailed Hawks. Of the 17 participants, four came from Placer County, two from Sonora County and one from Solano County. Wayne and

Jude Lamare of Friends of the Swainson’s Hawk scouted for acceptable viewing sites.”

**Purple Martins at Sutterville Road (6/23)** — Dan Kopp, co-leader with Dan Airola, reported: “We had a great turnout of 22 people on a cool morning. It took the martins a while to start bringing insects to the nest holes—the weep holes under the Sutterville Road concrete overpass. But when they started, most folks were able to see they were carrying something in their bills on their way to their nest holes. No kestrel noted this morning but there was a pair of kingbirds with a likely nest nearby; at one point a few martins and a kingbird had a minor aerial squabble but it fizzled out before I could tell what was going on.

**BKS Preserve, North Sacramento County (6/24)** — Leader Frank Gray reported: “A total of 13 birders had a great morning visiting this habitat mitigation area, as well as other nearby sites in North Natomas. The goal was to learn about local habitat restoration as well as view birds. Birding highlights included good views of a Peregrine Falcon, an out-of-place Canvasback, a large flock of actively feeding American White Pelicans, and American Bitterns at BKS. At least 9 Burrowing Owls, including juveniles, and an almost fledged Swainson’s Hawk on a nest were seen at nearby sites. I discussed the history and operation of the BKS preserve, including management actions to benefit the endangered giant garter snake. Weather conditions were excellent and over 40 bird species were seen during the morning, in addition to the habitat discussions.”

**Fremont Weir (6/23)** — The Fremont Weir, which can be very hot with big meadows in full sun, was cool and breezy for the First Teens-only trip sponsored by Sacramento Audubon. Six youths enjoyed good looks at most of the 34 bird species seen, which included Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Western Meadowlark, Swainson’s Hawk, House Wren, Western Wood-Pewee, and more. Western Grebe and a fly-over Caspian Tern were firsts at that location for leader Maureen Geiger, who was assisted by co-leader Sandra Beseler. The boys also had a great time examining insects and other creatures along the way, such as velvet ants and headless lizards.

**Sierra Valley/Antelope Valley/Yuba Pass/Gold Lakes Basin (6/17-18)** — Leader Gary Fregien reported: “Fifteen

*Findings* continued on page 8

## CALIFORNIA BURROWING OWL CONSORTIUM MEETING

September 20, 2012, 10am to 2pm at 45211 County Road 32B, Davis, CA 95618

There will be many speakers and topics of concern those interested and working with Burrowing Owl populations. We advise that attendees bring their lunch as folks usually like to network during the break and the meeting room is about a mile from fast food. ESA has kindly offered to provide light snacks and drinks.

There is no fee to attend the Consortium meeting, but donations are welcome.

Registration is required due to limited occupancy of the meeting room. More information including speakers and their topics can be found in the July-August *Observer*.

Register for the meeting with Stephanie Parsons, sparsons@esassoc.com, 564-4500

## WESTERN FIELD ORNITHOLOGISTS CONFERENCE: PETALUMA, CA – SEPTEMBER 26-30, 2012

Each year WFO holds a multi-day conference with scientific papers, field trips, workshops, panels, a keynote address, the annual membership meeting, and other events. This year's Annual Conference will be held close to home in Petaluma, CA Sept 26-30, 2012. There are numerous field trips including Pelagic and Photographic trips on Bodega Bay, and trips to Pt. Reyes, Napa County, Petaluma Wetlands and Schollenberger Park. Workshops include Shorebird, Pelagic, and Raptor Identification and Bird Sketching. On Saturday afternoon there is a Sound Identification Team Challenge. To register and see further details go to [www.westernfieldornithologists.org](http://www.westernfieldornithologists.org) and click on the 'Annual Conference' banner in the middle of the page. Though you do not have to be a member of WFO to attend the conference, membership in WFO is \$35 per year and members receive four issues per year of *Western Birds*, regular newsletters, discounted rates for the annual conferences, and the opportunity to register for WFO-sponsored tours. All students in grades 6 through 12, who attend the conference, automatically receive a scholarship waiver of the \$89 conference registration fee.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Valerie Brown, Craig DeMartini, Julie Haas, Ed Harper, Marie Heid, Laurie Lamers, Kevin McRae, Robert Meager, Patricia Morehead, Susan Oie, Michael Savino, Robin Thompson and Ruth Younger, to the **General Fund**.

Bernardette Behar, Valerie Brown, Craig DeMartini, Norman Eade, Denise Gonzales, Jim Hagedorn, Ed Harper, Yoshino Hatanaka, Marie Heid, Timothy Jackson, Peggy Kennedy, Robert Meager, Joyce Mihanovich, Susan Oie, Kevin Petrik, Sarah Phelan, Valerie Phillips, June Ritzman, Michael Savino, Robin Thompson and Harry White to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

## DIRECTIONS TO EFFIE YEAW

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

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

### 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.

*Findings* continued from page 7

birders took part in the annual Sierra Valley/Yuba Pass weekend under very warm weather conditions; thus, no snow encountered this year. In the Sierra Valley on Saturday, the group was treated to views of at least three Short-eared Owls in the afternoon; this after a morning of viewing most of the usual target species, including American Avocets, Willets and Pied-billed Grebes, each species with chicks. On Saturday evening some of the group visited Vista Point for nightjars, observing Common Poorwill and Common Nighthawk. A Long-eared Owl was also heard at Vista Point. On Sunday at Yuba Pass, we had good looks at a female Pine Grosbeak, many Evening Grosbeaks and Cassin's Finches, and a few Pine Siskins. The bird of the day, and for some in the group, the bird of the trip as a "lifer," was the Least Flycatcher at Yuba Pass. Of special note, we believe the total number of birds observed is down considerably from a few years ago, although the actual species count seems to be stable or even up a bit. We tallied 119 species for the weekend."

Pete Hayes

## DEER CREEK HILLS NEW TRAILS FOR BIRDERS

Sacramento Valley Conservancy's mission is to preserve the beauty, character and diversity of the Sacramento Valley landscape and thus far they have brought more than 15,000 acres under their conservancy. They have protected vernal pools, uplands, grasslands and riparian areas. Some areas they manage are the Elkhorn Basin Ranch in Yolo county, Valensin in the Cosumnes River Area, Kiefer Landfill Wetland Preserve and the Sacramento Prairie Vernal Pool Area.

A few of these protected areas are open to the public and one of those is the Deer Creek Hills area in Eastern Sacramento County. Sacramento Audubon has led field trips there in the past when it was still closed to the public. Now they have a new schedule of being open every Saturday through November, for self-guided hikes from 7:30am to 11am so the general public can bird watch on their own.

Registration is required for the self-guided hikes. The forms can be downloaded at their website [sacramentovalleyconservancy.org](http://sacramentovalleyconservancy.org). More information is available there including a map of the Deer Creek Hills area and ways to help with donations or by volunteering. On the website under resources there is also a trail-guide and bird checklist.

## SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these  
new members:

Milton Briggs      John Randolph  
Zoe Brown          Beverlee  
Tyler Hickey        Richardson

### 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 September 25, 2012 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

### SACRAMENTO AUDUBON 2012-2013 PROGRAMS

**October 18**      TBA  
**November 15**    Jamie Washington,  
                         *Effie Yeaw Naturalist*  
**2013**  
**January 17**      David Wyatt, *Ringtail*  
                         *Cat*  
**February 21**     Brian Sullivan, *eBird*  
**March 21**        Ed Harper, *Birding*  
                         *Montana*

### SAS OUTREACH

Maureen Geiger and Cathie LaZier took the Audubon At Home message to the Fair Oaks Harvest Festival, encouraging attendees to plant native plants and reduce water and pesticide use to provide habitat for native birds, bees, butterflies and bugs. Julie Serences shared her extensive knowledge of bees and other insect pollinators with interested festival goers.

Upcoming events this fall include the Nature Fest at Effie Yeaw Nature Center on October 7th and the Lodi Crane Festival on November 3rd and 4th.

We need some new people to get involved. Volunteer to work a morning or afternoon shift at one of the above events with an experienced Audubon member, talking to people who stop by and ask about birds in their yard and our field trips. If you'd like to come and help us, contact Cathie LaZier at empid@earthlink.net.

## JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

### Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry46@earthlink.net (916) 638-1141

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP + 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

*Observations* continued from page 10

Two adult male **Allen's Hummingbirds** were captured and banded along Putah Creek upstream of Davis on 6/28. This species has proven to be rare but regular, though very difficult and often impossible to separate from the much more common **Rufous Hummingbird**. An immature male **Calliope Hummingbird** was found in Fair Oaks on 7/31. A **Gray Catbird** was found singing in Solano County along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters on 6/19. A very ratty hatch-year **Northern Parula** was found near the Tall Forest at CRP on 7/21, leading to speculation about the origin of this bird; was there a nest nearby? A **Northern Waterthrush** was found in Colusa County on 6/7 along Sand Creek Rd. Breeding by **Lazuli Buntings** was confirmed at CRP and the Sacramento Co. Bufferlands, where they only breed sporadically, and **Dark-eyed Juncos** were detected breeding in at least two sites at CRP, as they have since first detected in 2000.

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

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo Counties are included. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve ([cvbirds.org](http://cvbirds.org)) and eBird.

It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Dan Airola, Gil Ewing, Brandi Gartland, Maureen Geiger, Cory Gregory, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Phil Lutz, Linda Pittman, Dennis Pleau, Jim Rowoth, John Sterling, John Trochet, Magill Weber, Dan Welsh, and Ed Whisler.

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

*Chris Conard*

# Seasonal Observations

June 1 to July 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

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

**Brown Pelicans** were found in unprecedented numbers in the Sacramento area this summer. In addition to the individual that has been in West Sacramento since 8/24/11, two others were at the Port of Sacramento on 7/14. On 7/6, two **Brown Pelicans** flew over Rd 103 and were later found at the Yolo Landfill on Rd 28H. One was found at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) on 7/15 and 7/21. At Sherman Lake Marina in southwestern Sacramento County, one was found on 7/8 and continued in the vicinity, with sporadic reports along W Sherman Island Rd through the end of the month. Aside from the continuing bird in West Sacramento, all of the **Brown Pelicans** reported have been hatch-year birds. Prior to 2004 there was only one record for Sacramento County—the first, in 1976, was only the second for the entire Central Valley!—and the first Yolo County record wasn't discovered until 2008. The recent influx is likely due to a combination of a high population that rebounded since the banning of DDT and periodic shortages of anchovy and sardine schools close to shore, such as have been reported this year. The inexperienced juveniles of this almost exclusively coastal species are far more likely to turn up inland looking for food than are adults.

Out of season **Horned Grebes** were found at the Davis Wetlands on 6/3-10 and at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on

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**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.

6/10. Both birds appeared to be molting out of breeding plumage. A **Least Bittern** was detected at Mather Lake

from 7/4 into August. Two **Willetts** were found in rice fields at CRP on 6/27. Two **Marbled Godwits** were along E Levee Rd in Natomas on 7/1 and another two were at CRP along Desmond Rd on 7/13; up to 50 were found in Yolo County on 7/21 (29 at YWA and 21 at the Yolo Landfill Pond), where they are far more regular. A juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpiper** was found at the Woodland WTP on 7/29. On 6/22 there were 800 **California Gulls** and a first-cycle **Glaucous-winged Gull** at the Davis WTP. A near-adult **Herring Gull** summered nearby. One to two **Western Gulls** were reported at Sherman Island from 7/8 onwards. **Least Terns** nested for the fifth straight year at the Sacramento Reg. WTP, but failed to fledge young. Two chicks were detected on 7/19, but only one was seen on 7/22, and after 7/24 there were no additional sightings. The adults continued at the site into August. A single adult was seen along E Levee Rd in Natomas on 7/4.

*Observations* continued on page 9