



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, September 16
Shepard Garden and Arts Center
7pm General Meeting

California's Tricolored Blackbirds: Current Status and Centennial Trends

Dr. Bob Meese will review the natural history, field identification, history of research, and population trends of the Tricolored Blackbird. The Tricolored Blackbird is a near-endemic California passerine and the most colonial songbird in North America. Bob will present a summary of the results of his own work through a multimedia presentation that includes still images, videos and digital sound files to illustrate the tricolor's extraordinary breeding habits and relationships between landscape changes and impacts on the tricolor's populations in the Central Valley and southern California. Bob will review conservation efforts and consider the prospects for the species' future.

Bob has been with the Information Center for the Environment (ICE), in the Department of Environmental Science & Policy at U.C. Davis for nearly 20 years. He's been working with tricolored blackbirds for six years and banding tricolors for four years and his work with tricolors has taken him from San Diego County to Butte County with a focus on the Central Valley from Kern County to



Tricolored Blackbird
Dave Menke, FWS

SAVE THE AMERICAN RIVER (SARA) AND THE GRASS ROOTS WORKING GROUP for Adequate, Stable, Long Term Funding for Our Regional Parks and Open Space System

Why was the Working Group Formed?

Sacramento County's budget crisis is threatening our Parkways, Regional Parks, and Open Spaces. Without adequate, stable, long term funding for our Regional Parks and Open Space System, our Parkways will suffer from overuse, the budget crisis will increase pressure to split up our Regional Parks and Parkways among nonprofits, cities, and local park districts and to further reduce County funding. SARA has recognized this crisis and is leading a grass roots effort to provide recommendations for securing adequate, stable funding for our Regional Parks and Open Space System. Simply put, our Parkways will not thrive unless the Regional Parks and Open Space System thrives.

This is a time of both crises and opportunity. Either we rise to the challenge of funding our Regional Parks and Open Space System or bear witness to the loss of our magnificent public Parkways and Open Space throughout the Sacramento region.

Vision

The guiding vision of the Grass Roots Working Group is an integrated system of regional parks and open space linked by a bicycle transportation network. A system that is safe, accessible, well-maintained, and provides recreational and educational opportunities to Sacramento County's diverse

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Glenn County. He conducts annual surveys for tricolors to help locate at-risk colonies located in ephemeral habitats, principally farmer's grain fields, and assists in efforts to conserve these colonies, monitoring those that are saved and estimating their productivities. He was formerly a member of the peregrine falcon recovery team for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. In addition to his work with tricolors, he works with a number of state and federal agencies, most recently on projects related to wildlife crossings (for Caltrans) and monitoring of natural resources on State Vehicular Recreation Areas (for California State Parks) and is a member of the World Commission on Protected Areas.

You might enjoy Bob's presentation and visuals a bit more if you bring your binoculars, too.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Arts Center in McKinley Park. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions.

Lea Landry, Program Chair

Field Trip Findings

Evening Beaver Walk (8/10) — In his 22nd year of leading Beaver walks on the American River Parkway, leader Jack Hiehle preserved his record of never having failed to spot our largest rodent. This time there were two beavers, including one that emerged into view from shore some 50 yards from the group and swam 100 yards downstream to an island, hauled itself up on shore and, using the nail on a powerful hind foot, proceeded to groom itself. Birds sighted included White-tailed Kite, Common Merganser, Great Blue Heron, Pied-billed Grebe, Mute Swan, Great Egret, Black Phoebe, Ring-necked Pheasant, Mallard, Mourning Dove, and a Belted Kingfisher that entertained participants most of the evening with noisy feeding forays along the river. Also, Cottontail Rabbit and bullfrog.

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley (8/8) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “While scouting locations the day before showed that many places were pretty dry, on the day of the trip 11 of us did very well at the two locations we visited, tallying about 60 species overall, including 14 shorebird species. We started the morning at Davis Wetlands. Highlights here included a Peregrine Falcon (not really a highlight in this case, considering that it flushed many of the shorebirds at the best pond just before we got there), Loggerhead Shrike and at least 16 Semipalmated Plovers. Our second stop was the Lodi Waste Water Treatment Plant, where we really hit the jackpot. Highlights were one Snowy Plover, a Lesser Yellowlegs and one Baird’s Sandpiper. Other shorebirds included one Black-bellied Plover, American Avocet, Black-necked Stilt, Western and Least Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitcher and Wilson’s Phalarope. All in all, a very good morning of birding.”

Sailor Bar (8/1) — Leader Mark Martucci reported: “Fourteen birders had 50 species of birds on a very pleasant August morning. Highlights included Black-chinned Hummingbird, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Yellow Warbler, Western Tanager, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Lark Sparrow and Black-headed Grosbeak.”

Truckee to Tahoe Mountain Birding (7/31) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “It was another beautiful Sierra day, and

we spent most of the morning enjoying Page Meadows, an awesome series of meadows above Tahoe’s northwestern shore. Among the highlights were a flyover Sharp-shinned Hawk with what appeared to be a bird in its talons, Spotted Sandpiper, Williamson’s Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Pacific-slope and Dusky Flycatchers and Clark’s Nutcracker. After lunch at a nice little park, we continued on to Lake Forest, just east of Tahoe City, to bird the Lake Tahoe shoreline. Highlights here included more Spotted Sandpipers, at least 2 Vaux’s Swifts and at least that many Bank Swallows—both species flying overhead with the numerous Tree, Cliff and Barn Swallows. And a single adult male Yellow-headed Blackbird flew in to keep things interesting. Our final stop was at the upper end of Martis Creek Reservoir just outside Truckee. Here we had American White Pelicans, White-faced Ibis, several species of waterfowl, including one Redhead, several Red-tailed Hawks including two dark-phase birds, one or two calling Virginia Rails, Yellow Warblers and Song Sparrows in the willows, and Horned Larks and a Brewer’s Sparrow in the nearby uplands. A very good day for 16 intrepid birders.”

Mather Lake (7/25) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Eleven birders and 40 species of birds combined for a lovely morning of birding. As last month provided lots of examples of family-raising, so did this trip. Robins, turkeys, mockingbirds, House Finches, Tree Sparrows, and House Wrens were evident in family groups. The nesting Pied-billed Grebe that had three eggs in her nest was feeding the three in the same spot this day. Shortly into the walk, a noisy racket indicated an arriving Black-necked Stilt near the fishing dock. This was a first for this birder in over 10 years of birding Mather and the same for the rest of the observers. An additional surprise occurred later in the walk when we happened on a lone juvenile Black-necked Stilt in the shallows next to the trail on the south side of the lake. We were within 10 feet of the baby stilt. On the return walk the adult was reunited with the juvenile near where we first noticed the juvenile. Lots of conversation speculating on whether the stilt bred there at the lake. The Mute

Swans were spotted, three adults and two cygnets, down one cygnet from last month. An American Bittern was spotted but no juveniles as in the last two years. Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Swainson’s hawks, and White-tailed Kite were the raptors of note. The last bird spotted back at the starting point was a Western Bluebird.”

Carson Pass and Winnemucca Lake (7/24) Leader Dan Williams reported: “This year’s trip to the Carson Pass area was superb from start to finish. This was a great group and a great trip. As soon as we arrived at Woods Lake Campground we were watching multiple Pine Grosbeaks and Siskins feeding all around the parking lot. Highlights from the hike up to Winnemucca Lake included Williamson’s Sapsucker, Townsend’s Solitaire, Dusky Flycatcher, Rufous Hummingbird, and Green-tailed Towhee. The meadows were indescribably brilliant, with lupines, paintbrush, and columbine just to name a few. The link trail between Winnemucca and Round Top provided great looks at, and photo opportunities of noisy Clark’s Nutcrackers. We weren’t on that trail long before we spotted a single Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch at the bottom corner of a melting snow field. On the way back down we got a few more good looks at Pine Grosbeaks, as well as Cassin’s Finches, Western Tanagers, and still bright breeding plumage Yellow-rumps. We made it back to our cars just before a pretty epic afternoon hailstorm!”

Pt. Pinole Regional Shoreline, Contra Costa County (7/18) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: “We had a great day. There were 22 of us and we saw about 50 species which included grassland birds, shorebirds, terns, osprey and many sandpipers. The nicest part of this trip is the long, leisurely hike through varied terrain. Everyone enjoyed themselves.”

Dragonfly Trip (7/17) — Leader Tim Manolis reported: “Only had two participants (Jerry Marinovich and Frank Verstraete), but the three of us had a very nice morning seeing good numbers of the ‘usual suspects’ along Bear Creek and its Wilbur Hot Springs tributary. They included great looks at Giant Darners and Desert Forktails, here at the northern extremes of their ranges in California, plus lots of American Rubyspots, Sooty

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Field Trips



Pileated Woodpecker
Kirsten Munson

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Mark Cudney, 987-2422, mcudney@aol.com, for trips through October 3rd. From October 4th on, call the scheduler Cathie LaZier, 457-6882, 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.

Wednesday, September 1 **Evening Beaver Walk**

Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Beaver walks end with the coming of autumn so don't miss these last opportunities to go out with Jack and find beavers. Jack has never had a trip without at least one beaver, and frequently he also finds otter and muskrat. Herons and egrets, Black Phoebes and other birds are also active in the cool of the evening. Give Jack a call to learn the meeting time and place for this trip.

Sunday, September 5, 6am **Pt. Reyes for Vagrants**

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

Birding the coast can be very productive this time of year, for both regular migrants and more uncommon birds. Scott 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 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.

Saturday, September 11, 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 birds in Reichmuth Park. The lerps on the large eucalyptus tree are particularly attractive to a wide variety of birds. Tim will be looking for fall migrants, warblers, vireos and flycatchers. This is a good chance to work on

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

Sunday, September 12, 8am **Sunrise Area,** **American River Parkway** **Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722** **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. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd.; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd. and take the first left on Pennsylvania. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee if you don't have a County Parks Pass. This is a good trip for both beginners and more experienced birders.

Wednesday, September 15 **7am-11am** **Spring Migration at the Bufferlands** **Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610** **conardc@gmail.com**

This morning tour of the Bufferlands will occur during the peak of fall migration. We will focus on finding migrant songbirds, lingering nesting birds, raptors and early waterfowl. Exploring riparian forest, oak woodlands, grasslands and wetlands should produce a good sample of the species present. The Bufferlands contain 2,650 acres of wetlands, riparian forest, grasslands, vernal pools, and restored habitats. From Sacramento, take I-5 south. Exit at Meadowview/Pocket Rd (just south of Florin Rd) and turn left (east) over the freeway. Turn right (south) on Freeport Blvd (the third light). After one mile, just before the town of Freeport, turn left on Stonecrest and follow it over the freeway

and south to a locked gate. Be prepared for potentially muddy trails and up to 3 miles of walking.

Wednesday, September 15 **Evening Beaver Walk** **Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

This will be one of your last opportunities this year to view beaver with Jack on this evening walk. The seasons are changing and you don't want to miss the opportunity to go on one of these trips. Give Jack a call for a meeting time and place.

Saturday/Sunday, **September 18-19th** **Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip** **Two-Day Monterey Trip** **Leader: Mark Cudney, 987-2422** **Reservations and questions:** **Ken Hashagen, 316-8596**

It's time again to prepare for one of Sacramento Audubon's most interesting field trips! This year's 2-day coastal and pelagic trip will take place on Saturday, September 18 (shore) and Sunday, September 19 (boat).

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. On Saturday, we will visit the key land and shoreline habitats on the Monterey peninsula that may yield many migratory and vagrant surprises. Sunday'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 men-

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tion the possibility of close-ups of a variety of marine mammals.

Boat space is limited to 30 participants. As of press time there were 4 spaces left for the trip. The price this year is \$75/person, if we fill the boat (25 people minimum). Once again, Sacramento Audubon will be joining with Monterey Seabirds to offer this trip. To sign up, call Monterey Seabirds, (831) 375-4658, identify yourself as a Sacramento Audubon participant, and give them a credit card number or mail them a check. You may also sign up online at: www.montereyseabirds.com. You do not need to be a member of Sacramento Audubon to participate.

Saturday, September 25, 6:30am
Point Reyes for Vagrants
Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@earthlink.net

There will be two trips to Point Reyes this fall for rare migrants. Scott is one of the best field birders in Sacramento Audubon. Be prepared for several miles of walking. Bring lunch and liquids for a full day of birding. 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 26, 8am
River Bend Park, 8am
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 the 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). Without a County Park Pass there is a \$5 per car park entrance fee.

Saturday, October 2, 7am
Point Reyes for Vagrants
Leader: Chris Conard, 362-5942
conardc@gmail.com

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.

Sunday, October 3, 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 lot. This is a good trip for newer and more experienced birders.

Wednesday, October 6, 8am
William Pond Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk down to some different spots on the river, looking for water birds, and watch the trees and shrubs for resident wrens and towhees, as well as returning migrant sparrows, flickers, kinglets and others. Vinegar Weed, an interesting native plant, may be in bloom. We'll check out the pond area for grebes, herons and blackbirds, before returning through the park area where we may find bluebirds and warblers. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. Trip will end before noon, and there is a park entrance fee of \$5 per car if you don't have a County Parks Pass. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Saturday, October 9, 8am - noon
Shadow Glen/Snowberry Creek
Leader: Lea Landry, 638-1141
llandry@softcom.net

This morning walk will include riparian habitat, ridge trails and a good view of Lake Natoma. Lea will be looking for both woodland birds and waterfowl. There may be some short steep climbs on the trail, and if the rains come it may be muddy, so wear appropriate footwear. Bring liquids and snacks if you wish. Lea usually finds a nice variety of birds on this trip, which is suitable for both beginning and experienced

birders. Meet Lea in the parking lot of the Snowberry Creek Equestrian Staging area, (Shadow Glen Stables), about ¼ mile east on Main, from where Main and Sunset Avenues meet in Orangevale.

Sunday, October 10
Meet at Arena Blvd at 8:35am or
Bobelaine Sanctuary, 9am - Noon
The Quotable Naturalist
Leader: John Huls, 284-7021
johnhuls@sbcglobal.net

Aldo Leopold, Donald Culross Peattie, E.O. Wilson...the list of inspirational natural history writers is very long. Bring some of your favorite quotes to share as we check out the flora and fauna of Bobelaine in the early fall. The leisurely walk will begin at 9am, but you are encouraged to meet at 8:35am for voluntary carpooling at the Bel Air shopping center on Arena Blvd. From Sacramento take I-5 north to Arena Blvd; go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking lot. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1. Or you can meet the group in the Bobelaine parking lot at 9am. Take Highway 99 north toward Yuba City; about 2 miles north of the Feather River bridge turn right on Laurel Ave. Follow Laurel to the dead end at the Bobelaine parking lot. This is a joint trip with the Sacramento Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ ABOUT?

Come hear a presentation about native bees and their place in the urban landscape on September 18, from 1:30-2:30pm at the Sylvan Oaks Public Library. As part of the *Audubon at Home Series, Beyond Bird Baths and Bird Feeders*, this is a 45 minute presentation by Julie Serences of the Education Committee of the Sacramento Audubon Society. You'll learn about the fascinating life cycle of native bees, why they are important to the ecology of our home landscapes, and how we can attract them to our landscapes. Bee watching adds a whole new level of entertainment to our outdoor experiences. It's free.

Sponsored by the Sylvan Oaks Branch Library, 6700 Auburn Blvd. Citrus Heights, 95621, and the Educational Committee of the Sacramento Audubon Society. Further information at education@sacramentoaudubon.org or (916) 264-2920

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communities. This system will incorporate farmlands and wildlands thereby allowing the people of Sacramento to enjoy the health and welfare benefits of clean air and water, locally grown food, and abundant opportunities to walk, hike, bike, and recreate.

Mission

The Mission of the Grass Roots Working Group is to identify an appropriate structure to manage our regional parks and open space system linked by a non-motorized transportation network, coupled with a reliable funding stream that adequately provides for the operations, maintenance, and expansion of the system.

How Do I Donate?

1. Make your Check Payable to "Save the American River Association",

2. Write "Grass Roots Effort" on the memo line on the face of the check (This will ensure that the contribution will be directed to a restricted account limited to paying the costs of the Grass Roots Effort with first priority for paying the costs of implementing the TPL Proposal),

3. Please write "ok" near the memo line on the face of the check if you are agreeable to being listed publicly as a supporter of the Grass Roots Effort, and

4. Mail your check to: Save the American River Association, 4441 Auburn Blvd. Suite H Sacramento, CA 95841-4139

Please note that SARA is a 501(c)3 organization. Tax ID: 94-2987563.

More information about SARA can be found on their website www.sarariverwatch.org and additional information about the Grass Roots Working Group can be found at www.sarariverwatch.org/grassroots.html. SARA's phone is (916) 482-2551 or you can email: info@SARAriverwatch.org

Warren Truitt
President, SARA

NOTE: Sacramento Audubon Society has already lent its name in support of the Grassroots Working Group' efforts, and the Board is presently considering what direct financial support SAS as an organization will be contributing toward this effort.

Thanks, Keith Wagner, SAS President

Birding and Nature Events

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS

Time: 8am, ending by noon

Location: William Pond Park on the American River or similar area

Available Dates, (all Saturdays): Oct. 9th, Nov. 13th and Jan. 8th

Each Trip Limited to 10 participants: Registration required.

These outings will be 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.)

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. Each trip is limited to 10 participants. 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

EAST AFRICA 2011

Ed Harper has announced there are still a few openings for the Tanzania safari he and Susan Scott are leading July 1 - 15, 2011. Drawing on their many years of experience, Ed and Susan have designed a highly productive itinerary. Camps and lodges have been carefully chosen to maximize the wildlife viewing experience. This friendly and inviting country is very safe and has some of the best wildlife viewing opportunities in all of Africa.

Responding to requests, Ed and Susan will offer another safari to Uganda. Tentative dates are from July 19 to August 3, 2011. Special highlights include Mountain Gorilla tracking as well as Chimpanzee tracking. The birding is spectacular with Shoebill and other Uganda bird specialties being high priority.

For more information for prices and itineraries, contact Ed at calidris@surewest.net or call him at (916) 971-3311 or (916) 704-7954.

6TH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The sixth annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival is being held September 23-26. Where else in the country could you look for Wrentits, Lawrences Goldfinch, Clark's Grebes, White-tailed Kites, Yellow-billed Magpies, Snowy Plovers, California Thrashers, California Towhees, and Black-footed Albatrosses, just to name a few?

You'll be able to go on outings in the mountains, shoreline, chaparral, sloughs and grasslands. you'll travel to the region's best birding hotspots, including Big Sur and the Ventana Wildlife Society to witness the return of the California Condors; take a pelagic trip to one of the world's most productive regions for albatrosses, shearwaters, storm-petrels and more; and explore in a kayak to get closer to nature. Other workshops and outings will focus on photography, raptor identification, and seeing the world through an artist's eyes.

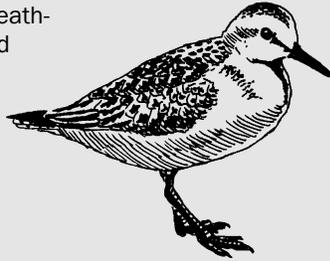
Registration for each birding event is offered a la carte, so that participants can mix and match outings according to personal interests. Online registration is now available at www.montereybaybirding.org. Registration is \$40 for the weekend. Activities costs range from \$5 to \$130. Most field trips depart from the Civic where parking is free. Check the program for your particular field trip, as some meet at the site.

and California dancers, Gray Sanddragons and White-belted Ringtails, among other dragons and damsels (19 species seen in all)."

Farallon Islands Pelagic Trip (7/11) — Leader Ken Hashagen reported: "About 27 Sacramento Audubon members and non-members set forth for the Farallones under a high overcast, but in very calm seas. Really great weather for bird watching and whale watching! We had great looks at Tufted Puffins, Black-footed Albatross, Common Murres, Red-necked Phalaropes, and Pigeon Guillemots, to name just a few of the birds. We saw nothing really unusual, but all of the usual species were present. We had really good looks at nearby Gray Whales and humpbacks. SAS members Mark Martucci, Dan Brown, and Tim Fitzer called out the birds and identified them for the group."

Loney Meadow (7/10) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "12 birders enjoyed mild, sunny weather in the Sierra, tallying 45 species over all. Among the highlights were 6 species of woodpecker, including a Pileated that flew in front of Gary Fregien's pick-up on the way out. We all

stopped and tried to re-find it, with only a brief sighting through the trees before it disappeared. We also tallied 6 species of warbler. A stop at Sierra Discovery Trail (both going and returning) has become a regular event on this trip. Here we found American Dipper, 2 Townsend's Solitaires, Lazuli



Sanderling
Stephen D'Amato

Bushy Lake/Cal Expo Flood Plain (7/3) — Leader Dan Brown reported: "My Bushy Lake field trip was a success with great, cool weather for the 3rd of July. Eight participants enjoyed 42 species with many really nice scope views. The highlights were lots of young birds, families groups of Spotted Towhees, a nice juvenile Red-tailed Hawk (with no patagial marks!), Black-headed Grosbeaks, a Cooper's Hawk in the parking area, a Black-chinned Hummingbird, Wood Ducks, Black-crowned Night-Herons, White-throated Swifts, and lots of Yellow-billed Magpies."

Wright's Lake (6/26) — Leaders Tim Fitzer and Phyllis Wilburn reported: "25 people ventured on the Wright's Lake

field trip. The Lake area was closed due to snow and tree cutting. Highlights were Williamson's Sapsuckers, White-headed Woodpeckers, Western Wood-Pewees, Olive-sided Flycatchers, Lazuli Buntings and MacGillivray's Warblers. A beautiful day in the Sierra, with 49 species and a fun day of birding."

Purple Martins at Sutterville Road (6/19) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "The Purple Martin trip with Dan Airola and Dan Kopp went very well. It was cool and windy, not great for flying, insect-catching martins, but they performed well for 26 of us. Dan Airola talked at length about the ecology of these birds and it was, as always, very interesting and informative. We also saw Western Kingbirds, several swallow species, killdeer, and at one point, 5 martins harassing a pass-over kestrel."

Evening Beaver Walk (6/16) — Leader Jack Hiehle reported his group saw four-plus Beaver, two Muskrats, a Meadow Mouse, and Cottontail Rabbit. Bird species included White-tailed Kite, Rock Pigeon, European Starling, American Crow, Tree Swallow, Mourning Dove, Canada Geese, Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, and Mute Swan.

Pete Hayes

GENERAL MEETING NOTES

ARNHA has given SAS some wonderful Birds of the American River Parkway posters. These will be available for free to anyone attending the September General Meeting. This is a great poster to have to remind you of all those great walks along the river and why we need to do whatever we can to preserve these spaces.

Please go to the Save the American River Website to find out what you can do to support: Adequate, Stable, Long Term Funding for Our Regional Parks and Open Space System and read the article from their President, Warren Truitt, beginning on the front page of this *Observer*.

BRING YOUR OWN CUP TO DONATE!

Our coffee/tea mugs are suffering a sad attrition and we need more! Bring your own extra cup to the next program; enjoy a cup of coffee or tea with one of Marlene Ishihara's excellent and delicious organic treats, and leave the mug with us to augment our supply. And thanks for helping eliminate some Styrofoam and cardboard from the landfills.

BIRDING MAGAZINES TO SHARE?

Are those birding magazines piling up at home? Already read them, no space to save them but too good to throw away? Bring them to the general meetings and we'll have a table for an informal magazine exchange.

YOU'RE STILL INVITED TO RUN THINGS!

VOLUNTEER TO BE OUR NEXT PROGRAM CHAIR

After enjoying the challenge and satisfaction of locating and scheduling Speakers and Programs for the Sacramento Audubon Society's General Meetings for 3 years, Lea Landry has decided it's time for someone else to step in and take over the position. Programs are already scheduled through April 2011, so there's plenty of time for someone to check in and learn how it's done. The SAS Program Chair does not have to be a SAS Board Member, nor does he/she/they have to be in attendance to introduce programs at the General Meeting.

The work entailed can easily be done from home, by phone or email. Programs are arranged by contacting potential speakers (Lea has a list of past speakers as well as a compendium of potential speakers and sources of nature-oriented presentations) and setting up the schedule. The Web Master and Newsletter Editor are provided with write-ups for the presentation, and on Meeting nights, equipment and other logistical requirements for the speaker are at Shepard Garden and Arts Center are set up for the presentation. Lea will work with her replacement to make sure all bases are covered before turning over the position.

Anyone interested in assuming this position may contact SAS President, Keith Wagner, or Lea Landry at llandry@softcom.net (preferred) or phone (916) 638-1141, to volunteer or get more information.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Margo Lira, Linda Melching, and
John and Marsie Mott

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 28, 2010 at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Jeanne Conry, Craig De Martini, Carole Girard, Marie Heid, Angela Jackson, Iona Luke, Kevin McConnen, Patricia Morehead, Sally Powell, Barbara Smith, to the **General Fund**.

Valerie Brown, Sue Bucholz, Craig De Martini, Norm Eade, Mercedes Gay, Carole Girard, Georganna Griffin, Marie Heid, John Huls, Angela Jackson, Peggy Kennedy, Bobby Kramer, Linda Melching, Mary Beth Metcalf, Joyce Mihanovich, Carolyn Sandie, Christie Vallance, Michael Vecchio, Salli Warriner, to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

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.

AUDUBON OUTREACH

The Harvest Festival in Fair Oaks was very well attended and we met with lots of folks who are interested in coming on our birding field trips. Our Audubon At Home program, encouraging use of native plants and reducing water and pesticide use to attract birds, bees and butterflies, found a receptive audience.

We have some popular upcoming events where we could use help at our table; Saturday and Sunday, November 6th and 7th, at the Lodi Crane Festival, and Saturday, January 29, 2011, at the Winter Bird Festival in Galt. If you can help at one of these events send an email to Cathie LaZier, empid@earthlink.net, with Outreach in the subject line.

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

llandry@softcom.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.

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and occasionally seen on a ridge above Lake Oroville from 6/26 to mid-July.

We are now featuring photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (<http://sacramento-audubon.org/activities/recent sightings.html>).

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit www.cvbirds.org and click "Listserv" for details. With nearly 200 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, Ruth Baylis, Dan Brown, Todd Easterla, Gil Ewing, Dave Feliz, Steve Hampton, Scott Huber, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Frances Oliver, Ed Pandolfino, Tim Ruckle, John Sterling, John Trochet, Ed Whisler, Dan Williams, and David Yee.

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

These are months that many birders choose to skip in the Valley—a good time to go on vacation, to visit the Sierra. Nonetheless, there are always some interesting reports. The period is bookended by a couple of often highly productive weeks. Early June is late spring migration, a time when interesting songbirds can be found, and the latter half of July is among the most active stretch of shorebird migration.

While the birding might be considered blasé, it is a most important time for our local breeding birds, and those trying to establish a breeding presence. The **Bell's Vireos** found singing from two separate locations south of Parking Lot G at the Yolo Wildlife Area (YWA) beginning on 4/16 were seen with likely females, but nesting was never confirmed. **California Gulls** attempted to set up a colony at the Davis WTP for the first nesting in Yolo County and the first for the Central Valley since the 1920s. While a high of 76 nests were detected and a few chicks hatched, predators (coyotes, raccoons, **Great Horned Owls**) ultimately destroyed the colony. On a happier note, the **Least Tern** pair returned to the Sacramento Regional WTP for the third year in a row and successfully fledged one chick. A **Turkey Vulture** nest was found on the ground in thick vegetation at the Orr Forest of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 6/18. Nests of this species are rare, or at least rarely found, on the Valley floor.

Sacramento Audubon Society
11054 Autumnwind Lane
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

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June songbird highlights were less numerous than in previous years and there were no real standout rarities in July, which often occur, and are not always easy to explain. This year we had to be contented with two **Northern Parulas** on 6/3 from

the Trestle Pond area east of I-5 near Woodland, an **American Redstart** along Jefferson Blvd, south of West Sacramento on 6/5, a striking male **Chestnut-sided Warbler** in Loomis along King Rd on 6/12, and a **Red-eyed Vireo** in Galt on 6/24. Interesting shorebirds included a **Snowy Plover** from the Woodland WTP on 7/13 and two adult **Semipalmated Sandpipers** at YWA the same day, a **Snowy Plover**, a **Solitary Sandpiper**, and a juvenile **Semipalmated Sandpiper** at the Lodi WTP on 7/23, and two Sacramento County **Marbled Godwit** reports, where they are far less regular than in Yolo: a pair at Sherman Island on 7/12 and four at the Sacramento Reg. WTP Bufferlands on 7/19. An early "fall" **Wilson's Warbler** was found at CRP on 7/16, and single juvenile **Grasshopper Sparrows** were found at CRP and along Chamberlain Rd north of Lincoln on 7/17. An **Indigo Bunting** was also at CRP on 7/17. Outside our area but worth a mention was the very unexpected find of a **Mexican Whip-poor-will** (recently split from **Eastern Whip-poor-will**) calling

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

(916) 638-1141, e-mail preferred: llandry@softcom.net

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95826
(916) 362-5942,

e-mail preferred: conardc@gmail.com

Editor: Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, 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.

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