

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



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SEPTEMBER 2015

General Meeting

Thursday, September 17, 2015
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

South America: Birding From Iguazú Falls to Cape Horn

Craig Swolgaard

Craig Swolgaard will show some of the highlights from his 2013 trip that took in Buenos Aires, Iguazú Falls, the Andes and Patagonia, the Atlantic Coast, and the southernmost inhabited islands in the world (Tierra del Fuego and Isla Navarino). The presentation will include the more emblematic bird species and will cover bird groups that adorn each unique ecological community. Although not as diverse as the tropics, birding south of the Tropic of Capricorn is very rewarding and includes scenery that is unmatched in the Western Hemisphere. Craig will show us the diversity there, including birds of the family Furnariidae and birds such as red-eyed vireo that have a geographically separate population. He'll also make recommendations on places to go and how to travel 'on the cheap.'

Craig Swolgaard is a retired California State Parks Scientist with a fair amount of field experience (wildlife surveys, etc.) and research experience (Swainson's hawk studies and a published paper). He has worked over the years as a high school science teacher, an environmental water and soil analyst, and in *General Meeting* continued on page 7



Craig Swolgaard

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, September 26-27, 2015

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

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

Boat space is limited to 30 participants. The price is \$100 per person, still a bargain, if we fill the boat (25 people minimum). You do not need to be a member of Sacramento Audubon to participate. The registration form can be found on page 5 and should be mailed to Mark Cudney.

Monterey Pelagic Trip continued on page 5

SACRAMENTO AUDUBON CONSERVATION GRANTS - 2016

Sacramento Audubon Society would like to fund community based conservation projects that promote the mission of the Society (see page 9 for our Mission statement.) We believe that when organizations work together, we can exponentially magnify our impact. The projects should conserve (or restore) habitats, or help protect species. The geographical area should be within 50 miles of Sacramento. The available grants are for \$500 to \$2,000 for the year 2016.

If your organization is interested in applying for such a grant, please submit a proposal for your project. The proposal should be no more than 2 pages long and should include the project's goals and how they meet one or more of the mission objectives, an action plan with time-line, and the project budget with some breakdowns. Also indicate if this is an ongoing effort or a one-time project and the personnel who will work on the project. The goals should be measurable and achievable within the 12 month grant period.

The Board of Directors of the Sacramento Audubon Society will evaluate each proposal for how well it fits with SAS goals, and the cost to benefit ratio of each project. They reserve the right to request modifications to the project. As with all grant programs, there is limited funding available and not all proposals can be approved. We would like your submissions by October 15, 2015.

Please send proposals either electronically to Larry Hickey, President of SAS, at: President@sacramentoaudubon.org (preferred option) OR by snail mail to Sacramento Audubon Society, Attn: SAS Conservation Grants Program, PO Box 160694, Sacramento, CA, 95816-0694.

Field Trip Findings

Granite Springs Road and Wright's Lake (8/15) — Leaders Ann Burris and Tim Fitzer reported: "Eleven birders enjoyed a day in the Sierra. We observed many hatch birds learning how to forage with parents. Pictures will be on Sacramento Audubon Facebook page. A first for the trip was a Clark's Nutcracker at Wright's Lake. A fun day birding and hiking with very nice people."

William Pond Park (8/12) — Leader Larry Hickey reported: "Nine of us enjoyed a relatively cool start at the William Pond section of the American River Parkway. The park area was nearly devoid of grass and birds, however things improved once we entered the trails. We enjoyed watching Black-chinned and Anna's Hummingbirds chase each other, two groups of California Quail, several Northern Mockingbirds, and dozens of Lesser Goldfinches feasting on the over abundance of Star Thistle. The pond and river gave us good looks at a Green Heron and Spotted Sandpipers still in their breeding plumage. After looking for early migrants all morning, Grant Boice finally found a Wilson's Warbler and a Nashville Warbler for us in with a flock of Bushtits. All in all it was a very pleasant mid-August morning along a beautiful section of the parkway."

Mather Lake (8/9) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "With the weather just right, 13 folks showed up to tally 38 species. The theme for the day seemed to be raptors. We had great looks at both adult and juvenile Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, Swainson's and Cooper's hawks all morning. A sharp-eyed birder spotted a juvenile Barn Owl that got chased by a juvenile Cooper's Hawk. The Barn Owl prevailed. Multiple sightings of Green Herons and Black-crowned Night Herons, juvenile and adult, were enjoyed by all. From the sightings over the summer and on this day, it appears likely at least two Swainson's Hawks were hatched in the Mather Lake area this season."

South Lake Tahoe/Upper Truckee Marsh (8/8) — Leader Linda Pittman reported: "Nine birders explored the Upper Truckee Marsh and south shore of Lake Tahoe, then the forest near Fallen Leaf Lake under sunny skies. Shorebird migration is underway and highlights at the south shore of the lake included a Black-necked Stilt, Willet, White-faced Ibis, and Wilson's and Red-necked Phalarope.

Overhead we saw Osprey and Common Nighthawks. We also saw some bear tracks in the sand, but not the bear the made them. At Fallen Leaf Lake, we saw several warblers: Black-throated Gray, Wilson's, Orange-crowned, Nashville and MacGillivray's. We tallied a total of 65 species between the two locations."

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley (8/2) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "A great group of 13 birders enjoyed a beautiful, relatively cool day studying shorebirds. We tallied 16 species of shorebirds and about 66 species over all. Highlights included a Semipalmated Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Whimbrel and Spotted Sandpiper. We had great opportunities to study the often confusing Western, Semipalmated and Least Sandpipers together. Among the non-shorebird species, highlights included Bank Swallow, and a close-up Barn Owl."

Point Reyes (8/1) — Leader Chris Conard reported: "We had an excellent sampling



Surf Scoter
Linda Pittman

of birds and habitats at Point Reyes, with stops at Bear Valley, the Estero Trail, Drake's Beach, and the Fish Docks/Chimney

Rock area. Highlights included close views of Surf Scoters, a Red-throated Loon in breeding plumage, several Pacific Loons, Black Turnstones, close views of bright Pigeon Guillemots, Caspian Terns, Elegant Terns, Hutton's Vireo, Warbling Vireo, extremely vocal Purple Martins at Bear Valley, Pygmy Nuthatches, Swainson's Thrush (one carrying food for nestlings), Wilson's Warblers, a young Black-headed Grosbeak begging from an adult, two river otters, elk, 29 elephant seals (some calling and a little fighting), and many brightly-colored crabs along the Estero Trail."

Discovery Park (7/29) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "Six of us started early, which was good for a day that was to hit 108 degrees. We had about 30 species, not bad for mid-summer where there is no water. However, we were thrilled to see three(!) Black-throated Gray Warblers, seemingly a bit early, plus

a beautiful Western Tanager. Altogether a nice morning."

Bats and Swainson's Hawks (7/26) — Leader Jude Lamare reported: "At 8:27pm rivers of bats emerged from under the Franklin Bridge to the delight of birdwatchers and also several Swainson's Hawks present and waiting. Some participants saw hawks catch and consume bats. The trip was limited to 12 participants for safety reasons. This trip reservation list filled quickly but you can do this trip on your own any summer evening by traveling south on Franklin Blvd seven tenths of a mile from the Cosumnes River Preserve Nature Center in Galt. At the middle of the bridge, is a safe location to park off the road. Take care at this location. The bats emerge just after sundown. We were delighted by Jo Ellen Arnold's presentation with live rescued bats under her care, and the expert knowledge she shared with us."

Ellis Road Field Trip (7/25) — Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Ann Burris, reported: "With the closure of Hwy 50 due to fire, Ann and I decided to change the Wright's Lake field trip destination and go up Hwy 88 to Ellis Rd. The birding was excellent and some of the highlights were: 25 Mountain Quail including 2 coveys of baby chicks, 6 species of warblers and 6 of woodpeckers. The finale: 2 Pileated Woodpeckers flying and in trees hammering away. Everyone had a wild and crazy time. We totaled 41 species. For details check ebird."

River Bend, American River Parkway (7/22) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "Two birders, Betty and Joanne, joined me for a couple of hours walking in the cool of the morning. Birds were quiet, as expected, and we were surprised by a Barn Owl, not often seen in this area of the parkway. Betty spotted a new Pipevine Swallowtail chrysalis; elderberry was in fruit and buckwheat in flower. E-bird report totaled 31 species."

Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca (7/19) — Gary Fregien, co-leader with Scott Hoppe, reported: "While assembling at Carson Pass, we observed Cassin's Finch, Thick-billed Fox Sparrow, a Brown Creeper and a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers for a nice start to the trip. An even dozen birders hit the trail, perhaps as much for the scenery as for the hard work of birding. That turned out to be a good

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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, shoppe01@surewest.net, 835-8471.

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

Saturday, August 29, 7am Riverbend Park

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

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk through the oak woodland and down to the river looking for the resident birds of the parkway, as well as possible migrants. This is a good trip for beginners. From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Drive north into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, August 30, 6:30am Alpine County

Leader: Jane Taylor, 444-0429
jg.taylor@att.net

Plan on a series of short walks in a variety of habitats like coniferous forest, sagebrush, lake shore and riparian, which may have benefited from late spring showers. We will look for a number of bird species, both resident and migrant, including passerines, woodpeckers, water fowl and raptors. Please bring FRS radios if you have them and lunch and liquids, planning for a mid-afternoon wrap-up. Meet at the south side of the Bella Bru parking lot, accessed off Highway 50, exit #30B, El Dorado Hills Blvd, at the south end of the Raley's shopping center.

Saturday, September 5, 7am North Bay Hotspots

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

The vast area to the north of San Francisco Bay, known as the "North Bay", has many great birding locations, especially during fall

migration. Join Scott as he explores some of these hotspots. Possible stops include American Canyon Wetlands, the wetlands along Highway 37, Schollenberger Park and maybe a coastal location, time permitting. This will be a full day of birding, so bring lunch and liquids. 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 6, 8am Sacramento Bar, American River Parkway

Leader: Paul Cordero
pkcordero@gmail.com

On this morning walk along the American River, you will see, and hear, a nice variety of resident birds and maybe a few early migrants. Paul will focus on finding and identifying birds by ear. This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, September 12, 8am Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

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

Join Ben for a morning walk checking out the resident birds and looking for early migrants. Meet him at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. This is a good trip for beginners. 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.

Sunday, September 13, 7am-11:30am SRWTP Bufferlands

Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com

The Bufferlands are 2,500 acres surrounding the wastewater treatment plant between Sacramento and Elk Grove and not typically open to the public. Habitats include riparian forest, seasonal wetlands, grasslands, wildlife-friendly agricultural lands, and many habitat restoration sites. This is a good time of year to look for migrating

songbirds. Be prepared for 3 miles of easy walking. From I-5 south of Sacramento, exit at the new Cosumnes River Blvd exit (Freeport Blvd will be temporarily closed between Meadowview and Cosumnes



*Black-throated
Blue Warbler*
Stephen D'Amato

River Blvd. This is the first exit north of Laguna Blvd, and the first exit south of Meadowview/Pocket Rd). Go west toward Freeport Blvd and then turn left (south) toward the town of Freeport. We'll meet in the large gravel lot on the right side of Freeport Blvd at the north edge of the town. This is a new meeting location made necessary because of major road construction.

Saturday, September 19, 7am Fall Migration "Wild Card"

Leaders Scott Hoppe and Dan Tankersley
Scott, 835-8471,

Field Trips continued on page 4

Field Trips continued from page 3

shoppe01@surewest.net
Dan, 662-1290,
dtankers@winfirst.com

Join Scott and Dan in pursuit of fall migrants. But this trip has a twist: the destinations will be a mystery until the day of the trip. Scott and Dan will be watching posts and checking conditions. Depending on where the birding has been best recently, the agenda will likely include coastal or Bay Area locations. So be prepared for an adventurous day in the field. Bring lunch, liquids, dress for possible cooler coastal weather and be prepared for easy to moderate hiking. Meet 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.

Saturday,
September 19,
10:30am
Effie Yeaw Family
Nature Walk

This family friendly nature walk will be at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers and Wild Turkeys are abundant, but sharp eyes and ears may find Spotted Towhees or Bushtits as well. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists from the nature center and birders Maureen Geiger and Cathie LaZier from Audubon. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net.

Sunday, September 20, 7am
Point Reyes for Vagrants
Leader: Dan Williams, 714-943-1266
Jaegermaestro@yahoo.com

Join Dan for this annual trip to the coast for rare fall migrants. With migration in full swing, who knows what might appear. The geography of Point Reyes Peninsula makes it a magnet for warblers and shorebirds. Bring lunch and liquids for a full day of birding. Meet 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.

Wednesday, September 23, 8am
Bushy Lake/Cal Expo Floodplain
Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com

Meet Darrell in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurlley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. We will look for a variety of resident species and migrants. Wood Ducks are a good possibility on the lake. This will be a 1 to 2 mile hike that will take up to 3 hours. Bring water and sunscreen.

Weekend of September 26 and 27
Monterey Bay Pelagic and Land
Birding

See page 1 for more information.

Saturday, September 26, 7am
Search for Fall Rarities
Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610
conardc@gmail.com

Point Reyes and Bodega Bay are known for producing rare fall migrants. Chris will be watching posts and checking conditions to see where birding might be best. These locations are both good, so either way it should be a fun trip. This will be a full day, so bring lunch and liquids, and dress for possible cooler coastal weather. Be prepared for up to 3 miles of hiking. Meet 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.



Sanderling
Stephen D'Amato

Sunday, September 27, 7:30am
Discovery Park
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
Cell #: 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

This park at the confluence of the American and Sacramento Rivers is a great place to look for migrants and resident species. Possibilities include wrens, woodpeckers, bluebirds, magpies and Red-shouldered Hawks. This walking trip will last until late morning. This is a great trip for beginners. To reach the park, from I-5 drive east on Garden Highway and turn right at the first traffic light into the Park. Turn left after the kiosk, then left again and drive to the farthest parking lot at the south end of the archery range where we will meet. A Sacramento County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY TRIPS

Sacramento Audubon has joined with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael to offer birding/nature walks as a way of maximizing efforts to serve families with children who are looking for outdoor experiences.

The family friendly trips will be offered on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 10:30am. The trips are listed with our regular field trips, and on the Effie Yeaw website, www.sacnaturecenter.net. Reservations are not needed. Simply show up at Effie Yeaw Nature Center at the appropriate day and time and walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. Our next trip takes place on September 19, followed by October 17.

TOURS OF THE BUFFERLANDS

Twilight on the Bufferlands
Thursday, September 17
5:30 pm to until dark (7:30-8 pm)

Don't miss this opportunity to explore some great Central Valley habitats at dusk. We might see beavers, river otters, muskrats, raccoons, owls and more. A wide variety of songbirds, raptors and water birds will be active during the first hour of the tour.

Be prepared for 2-3 miles of walking on mostly level ground and bring binoculars if you have them. Mosquitoes are possible, but have not been too problematic lately. Bring water, a snack if you like, and good walking shoes or hiking boots.

Let me know if you have any questions and if you'd like to attend at: conardc@sacsewer.com. Directions and other details will be sent upon confirmation.

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

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

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

Monterey Pelagic Trip continued from page 1

Cancellation policy: In order to receive a refund you must cancel 2 weeks before the trip.
Contact Mark Cudney, email: mcudney@aol.com, phone: 987-2422 with any questions.

Monterey Bay Coastal and Pelagic Trip Reservation Form

Saturday/Sunday, September 26-27, 2015 Trip price: \$100 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



KIDS PROGRAM IN SEPTEMBER

Saturday, September 12, 2015, Oh Migration!

Leader: Craig Swolgaard

Where: Stay tuned

When: 8-11am

Ages: 10-13 year olds

Join Craig for a morning walk along the American River to look for migrating birds. Sacramento is located within the Pacific Flyway, which is a route nearly a billion birds take to fly between their spring and winter homes. Do you know many of the birds we see locally in spring and summer spend their fall and winter in South America? Kids will learn why birds migrate, more about where they migrate to, and what birds need along their migratory path to successfully make their long journey twice a year. To register and get exact meeting location, please email Jenner Junghans at writeningbug@yahoo.com. Craig will also be the speaker at our September general meeting.

FALL MIGRATION CLASS

This upcoming class is being offered through the Bufferlands' partner, Sacramento Splash.

September 2-September 19

Instructor: Chris Conard

Location: Splash Education Center, 4426 Excelsior Road, Mather, CA

For details on fees (all proceeds go to support Splash's environmental education programs) and other details: www.sacsplash.org/birds2015

This will be a great class for those who have previously taken the Splash class, Introduction to Birds in the Sacramento Area, and anyone who wants to learn more about the birds in our region. September is one of the most exciting times to be in the field, with many waterbirds, raptors, shorebirds, and songbirds migrating through. We'll discuss the timing of migration and species to expect in different seasons, with a special focus on finding and identifying fall migrant songbirds and shorebirds.

Classes on Weds, 9/2, 9/9, and 9/16 (6:30 to 8:30pm)

And field trips on Saturday, 9/5, 9/12, and 9/19 (8am and running 4-6 hours)

NEONICOTINOID CONFERENCE

Presented by the California Center for Urban Horticulture (CCUH), the UC Davis Department of Entomology and Nematology, and UC Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Truth or Myth: Neonicotinoids and their Impact on Pollinators: What is the Science-Based Research?

When: Wednesday, September 9,
10am-4pm

Where: UC Davis Conference Center

Cost: \$50 per person—includes lunch and social after the program.

Topics:

- Overview of neonicotinoids and pollinators
- CA pesticide regulation of neonicotinoids
- Current and past neonicotinoids and pollinator research
- Neonicotinoid risks associated with invasive species management
- Stakeholder panel on neonicotinoids: issues and concerns

For more information and to register, please visit their website: ccuh.ucdavis.edu/public/copy_of_public/neonicotinoid-pollinator-conference-2015/neonic

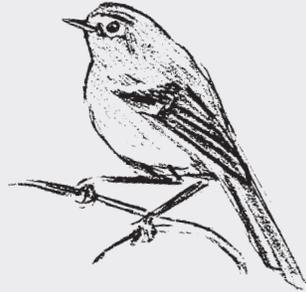
If you have questions, please contact Kate Lincoln at kmlincoln@ucdavis.edu.

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strategy because when we were busy hiking and looking around, and catching our breath, we were rewarded with pockets of birds. One such spot produced Orange-crowned, Nashville, Yellow-rumped, Hermit and Wilson's warblers, Mountain Chickadee, Chipping Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco and great looks at a male Williamson's Sapsucker, who gave us views from all sides, including the bright yellow belly. Just a short distance up the trail we found the flicker-looking female Williamson's. We were also being serenaded by Northern Flicker and Hermit Thrush, and our first sights and sounds of Clark's Nutcracker. We also had a pair of Townsend's Solitaire. Soon we were in the realm of sage brush where we found Green-tailed Towhee and Brewer's Sparrow. An Osprey flew over to check out Frog Lake. At Frog Lake we added Tree and Cliff swallows. On the last mile of trail to Lake Winnemucca, at an elevation near 9,000 feet, we looked for Sooty Grouse, which eluded us this year. But, again, the scenery including wildflower fields and views of Caples Lake sufficed. At Lake Winnemucca we saw both Red-breasted and White-breasted nuthatches, another pair of Williamson's Sapsucker and a Rufous Hummingbird. Clouds were now starting to build on the crest, as we began the return trip to Carson Pass. During the last half mile, we needed to pick up the pace as lightning and thunder showers rained down on us, a beautiful ending to a great day of birding. The group tally this year was 33 species."

Hidden Falls Regional Park Near Auburn (7/18) – Leader Ben Graber reported: "We heard the Yellow-breasted Chat but only caught a brief glimpse. Other highlights were Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Pacific-slope and Ash-throated flycatchers, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Hutton's Vireos, and Black-headed Grosbeaks."

Farallon Islands Pelagic Trip (7/12) – Leader Linda Pittman reported: "Our annual trip to the Farallon Islands was sold out and those on board were treated to one of the most beautiful days ever for this trip. It was sunny and warm and the ocean was smooth all day! From the continental shelf drop off past the Farallon Islands, we could clearly see the



Vireo species
Kirsten Munson

mainland and San Francisco, over 30 miles away! We saw all of the expected species (total of 21), though numbers of shearwaters and auklets (Rhinceros and Cassin's) were low. We had great looks at the target bird, Tufted Puffin, with a few on the island, on the water near the boat and flying overhead. The best sighting was a large Leatherback Turtle that gave us great views and photo ops. We also saw a rare Fin Whale and enjoyed two fin-slapping and breaching Humpback Whales."

Dragonfly Trip (Bear Creek, Wilbur Hot Springs) (7/11)

– Leader Tim Manolis reported: "Sooty Dancer: one male seen well perched on a rock in the stream; Giant Darner: we had nice looks at fly-by males. All told, we saw about 2-3; White-belted Ringtail: 3-4 of these seen, including one ovipositing female; Gray Sanddragon: 4-5 of these seen, including a pair copulating on the shoreline; Red Rock Skimmer: 2-3 males were seen flying along Wilbur Hot Springs Creed (our first stop.)"

Bushy Lake Cal Expo Floodplain (7/5) – Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "A southwest breeze and cool temperature greeted all 10 people at the start of our tour of the Bushy Lake area. House Finches and Lesser Goldfinches abounded in the Star Thistle. Kingbirds and Ash-throated Flycatchers were also in good numbers. Perhaps, the most interesting bird was a Red-tailed Hawk with a juvenile that were cavorting in the trees and above Cal Expo. We had a total 30 species of birds for the morning. However, no Wood Ducks."

Loney Meadow (6/28) – Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "I was a bit apprehensive before this trip. I had experienced some somewhat un-birdy days in the Sierra during the past couple of weeks. But I could not have been more pleasantly surprised. And all 11 of us in attendance agreed that it was a great birding day in an incredibly beautiful mountain meadow location. It was not so much the number of species (37), as it was overall bird activity and numbers of birds. At times, we didn't know where to look first, as there were so many birds flitting around. One of the highlights occurred before we even got to the meadows: great view of a cooperative

MacGillivray's Warbler at the Discovery Trail, our pit stop along the way. At the meadows, we had more White-headed Woodpeckers than I had ever seen in one area at one time, several Red-breasted Sapsuckers, Olive-sided Flycatcher, lots of singing Warbling Vireos, families of Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Orange-crowned Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow and more. One highlight was finding a Warbling Vireo nest with a couple of nestlings sticking their heads up begging from the adult that would occasionally come by to feed them. The numbers of wildflowers were also breath-taking for all of us. A really great day."

Indian Grinding Rocks State Park (6/27)

– Leader Cliff Hawley reported: "It was a small group with 4 participants out with me. The biggest highlight was incredible close views of a singing Pacific Wren. Overall the birding was a little slow due to an extreme lack of water. The meadow was very dry but there were still some wildflowers. We had 35 species for the morning."

Mather Lake (6/21) – Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "Text messages from offspring while birding on Father's Day... doesn't get any better. Around 15 birders showed up (I forgot to count) to identify 41 species. Robins, American Bitterns, Cliff Swallows, Barn Swallows, Great-tailed Grackles, Canada Geese, Common Gallinule, Mute Swans, Black Phoebe, Red-winged Blackbirds and Double-crested Cormorants all had fledglings. We saw 3, maybe 4, Swainson's Hawks that suggests the possibility of breeding for the lake. Additional raptors included Red-tailed Hawk, White-tailed Kite, Coopers Hawk, and Red-shouldered Hawk. Great morning of birding."

Granite Springs Road (6/20) – Tim Fitzer, co-leader with Richard Barbieri, reported: "Eleven folks met early Saturday morning to go to the Sierra and Granite Springs Rd for a fun day of birding. Some of the highlight birds of the day were: 3 Common Nighthawks, 3 Golden Eagles, MacGillivray, Nashville and Audubon warblers. Woodpeckers seen were Lewis's, Hairy and close looks at Black-backed at Wright's Lake. Great day in the fresh air of the mountains but returning to 96 degrees in the valley not good. There will be a list of all birds on ebird. Lots of laughs and a fun time on a day of birding."

Pete Hayes

Birding Festivals

11TH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The 11th annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival will take place from **September 24-27**. The Monterey Bay area is home to one of the most spectacular birding and wildlife venues in North America. From soaring golden eagles, effortlessly gliding California condors, cheeky bushtits, gorgeous Townsend's warblers, scampering snowy plovers, to thousands of sooty shearwaters streaming along the ocean's surface, few places can match the diversity of species as the Monterey Bay region.

September marks the peak of fall migration, with wintering shorebirds arriving en masse. Warblers and other passerines are doing the same, and the first appearances of wintering ducks and other waterfowl is sometimes seen in September. Meanwhile, just a few miles offshore, jaegers, shearwaters, and alcid are present in good numbers. There's no better time to visit the Monterey Bay area to see the greatest number of species or to find a rarity.

The Monterey Bay Birding Festival field trips leaders are all extraordinary birders who delight in sharing their love of birds and favorite birding venues with you. Each year they have a stellar line-up of evening presentations and daily workshops to augment your birding festival experience.

This year's lineup, trips and registration are now online at their website montereybaybirding.org. Check there for more detailed information.

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 19th Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium November 19-22, at the Stockton Hilton Hotel 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.

Thursday night's Keynote speakers are Ed Harper and Ed Pandolfino presenting a program on *A Central Valley Year of Sights and Sounds*. The CVBS gets off to a supercharged start with this lively and informative presentation. Both Eds are widely known, popular and highly sought after speakers.

Friday night's keynote program is presented by Steve N.G. Howell on *Shift Happens: Rare {Vagrant} Birds in North America*. Steve is an acclaimed field ornithologist and prolific Writer. He is an international bird tour leader with WINGS and a Research Associate at Point Blue Conservation Science (formerly PRBO).

Saturday night's keynote program is presented by Kate Marianchild on *Our Magnificent Valley Oaks; Hubs of their Habitats*. Kate Marianchild is a naturalist, birder, and author of the best-selling *Secrets of the Oak Woodlands: Plants, and Animals among California's Oaks*.

Workshops include: Birding: the *12-step Program--Bird ID* explained by Steve N.G. Howell; *Shorebird ID Workshop* by Jon Dunn; *A Mini Tricolored Blackbird Symposium* moderated by Dan Airola; and a photo workshop by Bob Steele. Plus, informative workshops by Philip Garone, Keith Hansen, Sal Salerno and Jim Burcio.

Our field trips always turn up exciting birds. Add in the always entertaining and educational Bird ID Panel, the wonderful display of art and gifts for yourself or others at the Birder's Market and the camaraderie of hundreds of like-minded folks, and you know you'll have a good time! There's something for everyone interested in birds. Come and join us to bird, learn, and just have fun!

To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and fieldtrips. Check out our website at: www.cvbsreg.org

REGISTRATION is now open: www.regonline.com/centralvalleybirdingsymposium2015

CVBS Steering Committee
209-369-2010

General Meeting continued from page 1
agriculture as an advisor. Now he's trying to balance time between travel, part-time work as a biologist, playing music, chasing and photographing birds, and taking care of his home in Georgetown. Over a course of 40



Yellow-headed Caracara
at Iguazú Falls
Craig Swolgaard

years he has spent over three years traveling time in Latin America in 13 different countries. His Spanish is polished to the point that he has no trouble making

friends and carrying on conversations.

Speaking the language, or at least trying, is the best way to travel. He's only seen about 1/4 of the species in Latin America, roughly 900!

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/Sacramento Audubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER NATUREFEST 2015 SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

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

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

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

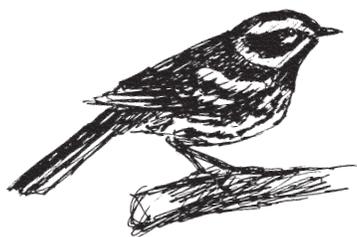
SACRAMENTO AUDUBON FUTURE PROGRAMS

2015

- October 15** Sean Wirth, *Iconic Birds and Wildlife of Northern Japan, and the Search for Sandhill Cranes in Southern Japan*
- November 12** David C Rice, *Why We Bird* Books for sale and signing
- December** No meeting

2016

- January 21** Ron LeValley, *Climate Change*
- February 18** Maya Khosla, *Black-backed Woodpeckers*
- March 17** Eric C Hansen, *Giant Gartersnake*
- April 21** Ed Harper, *Birding Alaska*



Townsend's Warbler
Stephen D'Amato

SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Irene Bond and Kevin McRae made donations to the **General Fund**.

Bruce Forman, Tim Jackson, Peggy Jenkins, Patricia McVicar, Linda Melching, June Ritzman and Del Tura made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Thank you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community.

BIRDING IN THE SACRAMENTO REGION

PDFs of the site information are now available online for Sacramento Audubon's book *Birding in the Sacramento Region*. They can be found at sacramentoaudubon.org/bookcontents.html. This 2008 book (which is currently being revised) contains lists of over 110 sites in the Sacramento



area. Areas covered include American River Parkway, City of Sacramento, County of Sacramento, Folsom Lake Area, and selected sites in Yolo County, North of Sacramento, San Joaquin County, Solano County, and Foothills and Sierra Nevada.

Each site includes concise descriptions of where and when to find resident, wintering and migrating birds. Since the information is from 2008 some things (e.g. the entrance/ parking fees) may have changed. The PDF format makes it possible for you to print out only the information you need for a day trip to the location of your choice.

Seasonal Observations

June 1 to July 31

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

June is a very important month for birds, as it is one of their most active breeding months, but for birders in the Sacramento area it is the slowest month in terms of diversity. But the birding drought doesn't last too long, as by the end of June and into August is the best time for shorebird diversity and numbers—plus there usually are a few vagrants to spice things up. **Least Bitterns** were detected at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) from May into July, with adult and juveniles seen in early and mid-July; a single was also found at Mather Lake on 6/12. **Ospreys** are locally scarce as breeders, so a pair working on a nest along the Sacramento River near Elverta Rd on 7/10 was notable. The two to three **Black Rails** found singing and calling along the River Walk at CRP continued from 5/23 to at least 6/6.

Shorebird highlights included a **Pacific Golden-Plover** at Yolo Bypass Wildlife

Area (YBWA) 7/25-27 and a **Snowy Plover** at the same location on 7/14. There were a handful of **Willet** and **Marbled Godwit** reports in mid-July at both YBWA and Woodland WTP. A molting adult **Sanderling** found at the Sacramento Regional WTP (SRWTP) on 7/21 continued for an impressive eight days. Most of the **Baird's Sandpiper** reports in our area are of juveniles, so the 7/14-17 report of an adult photographed at the Woodland WTP was notable for its age and for arriving about a month before most of our records for that species. Another early **Baird's Sandpiper** was reported at Cosumnes River Preserve on 7/22. A **Ruff** in partial breeding plumage was found at the Davis Wetlands on 6/29, with another reported from CRP on 7/6. A pair of **Least Terns** was found at SRWTP on 7/5; they nested despite the late date and had two chicks by early August. A single pair nested at SRWTP from 2008-2012, made a brief appearance in 2013, and did not return in 2014, so their reappearance was a pleasant surprise. Another **Least Tern** was

found and photographed on 7/17 at the Woodland WTP.

A **Long-eared Owl** at West Pond in Davis on 7/24 was an unexpected surprise, and a male **Costa's Hummingbird** put in an appearance along Putah Creek between Davis and Winters on 6/23. A **Lewis's Woodpecker** at Babel Slough on 6/6 was quite a surprise for the date, and the female **Hairy Woodpecker**, found with a male earlier in the year along Lake Natoma downstream of Young Wo Circle, continued through at least 6/6.

After an intriguing backlit photo of a kingbird was posted to Facebook the previous day, an experienced birder heard a **Cassin's Kingbird** call several times at the William B Pond access to the American River Parkway (ARP) on 6/24, but it was not subsequently detected. A **Red-eyed Vireo** was a nice find on 6/8 along Cache Creek upstream of Woodland and Rd 94B, accessed from Wild Wings County Park. A **California Thrasher** photographed at Sailor Bar on 6/21 provided the only

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Chuck Heath
Jean Kerins
Janette Miller
Carol J Spradlin
Ken and Janet Stites

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento
Audubon Society is to:

- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds;
- Promote the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach;
- Provide, encourage and support environmental educational opportunities; and
- Provide proactive leadership in the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

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

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

Lea Landry, Membership Chair, llandry46@comcast.net
11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

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

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Email _____

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

record for Sacramento County this year. A **Northern Parula** was found at the William B Pond access to ARP on 6/25 and a singing male **Northern Parula** was recorded at the Sacramento Bypass (Yolo County) on 6/29. **Grasshopper Sparrows**, including recently fledged young, were found along Yolo County Rd 104, south of Rd 38A on 6/29. For the second year in a row, a **Summer Tanager** took up residence along Wood Duck Slough at the Tall Forest of CRP. This year one was seen and heard singing from at 6/16 to 7/18. A second-year male **Rose-breasted Grosbeak** was a nice find near the Tall Forest at CRP on 6/19, as was a singing male **Indigo Bunting** at Spenceville Wildlife Area from 5/30 through at least 6/6.

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

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000' contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento

and Yolo Counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird.

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

Stuart Angerer, Keith Bailey, Ted Beedy, Brent Campos, Lily Douglas, Leo Edson, Gil Ewing, Claire Gallagher, Melissa Gates, Maureen Geiger, Ian Gledhill, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Stanton Hunter, Afton Kern, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, John Luther, Phil Lutz, Michael Perrone, Ron Pozzi, David Rial, Jim Rowth, Steve Scott, John Sterling, Gene Trapp, and John Trochet.

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

Chris Conard

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on September 29, 2015 at 7pm. The new address for the Board meetings through November is Lemon Grass Cafe Meeting Room, 601 Munroe St, Sacramento, 95825. There is no meeting in December.

Minutes of Board Meetings through April 2015 can be found online at sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html. Scroll down to Board Minutes.

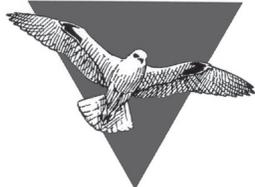
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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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Copy deadline is the 15th of the month. Send all copy to the Editor. Observations must reach the Seasonal Observations Editor by the 8th of the month.

The Observer is published monthly January through December, except June and August, by the Sacramento Audubon Society.

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

October 15, 2015

Craig Swolgaard: *South America: Birding
From Iguazú Falls to Cape Horn*

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm