

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



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FEBRUARY 2017

General Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Assembly Room, 7pm

Historical Birding Records and Modern Data

Stephanie Clymer

The Dale Twining Birding Records Project was initiated to preserve 75+ years of an avid birder's records, from 1935 to 2014. In order to preserve these records, his friends and family, together with the Wyncote Audubon Society, initiated an effort to digitize them and make the data available to researchers.

Stephanie Clymer is working to preserve this valuable data by encouraging others to retrieve records from drawers and boxes and to use their methods to digitize them. Even archived records should be uploaded to online databases to facilitate use of the data.

With more records, researchers will be better able to trace the environmental history of climate change, pesticide use, and urban development as they have affected bird populations in the past century. This historical perspective will improve our understanding of bird populations.

Stephanie L. Clymer is the Project Director for the Dale Twining Birding Records Project and a teacher in Springfield, Massachusetts. She previously worked as a Research Assistant for the Smithsonian Institution's Neighborhood Nestwatch and has also worked with an urban watershed partnership in Philadelphia and studied plant ecology. Stephanie received her B.A. in Biology from Arcadia University and has experience in environmental education, community outreach, wildlife rehabilitation, bird banding, and field research. Her interests include engaging citizen scientists in research and exposing urban students to science and nature.

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/sacramentoaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/sacramentoaudubon).

Sally Walters Schmoldt, President and Program Chair

2017 Sacramento Kids' Christmas Count

Saturday–Sunday, January 7-8

Well, we love the rain but it cancelled both days of our Kids' CBC. Next year we'll have alternate days in case of rain. Thanks to everyone who signed up!

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

FEBRUARY 17-20, 2017

We want to remind you to mark your calendars for the 20th GBBC, coming up February 17-20. Last year a total of 18,637,974 birds were counted worldwide. Birders submitted a total of 162,052 checklists and found 5,689 different species. The birdcount.org site also contains a gallery of participants' bird photography including contest winners and category itemization by criteria such as behavior and habitat.

The GBBC is again integrated with the eBird program and now there are dedicated GBBC apps for android and iOS platforms. The BirdLog app from BirdsEye is the exclusive mobile data entry app for the GBBC and can be found at gbbc.birdcount.org/birding-apps/. So take part in an exciting and valuable citizen science project. People from all over the world take part. and you can be one of them!

BIRD AND BREAKFAST AT EFFIE YEAW, MARCH 18-19

Bird and Breakfast - Traditional Event – Saturday, March 18 at 8am

Bird and Bagels - Family-Friendly Event – Sunday, March 19 at 8am

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and Sacramento Audubon are once again teaming up to offer a special weekend of morning birding trips coupled with wonderful breakfast fare.

This event, held at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park in Carmichael, starts with Bird Walks guided by some of our best local birders. For weeks in advance, these guides scout the Nature Study Area so they will be able to point out nests and local rarities. After the Walk, you will join fellow birders for wonderful food and hot coffee to help raise money for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. No extensive birding experience is necessary—this event caters to all levels.

On Saturday the Bird Walk will be approximately 90 minutes long, followed by the traditional casserole breakfast buffet provided by some of the best cooks among ARNHA Board members and Nature Center volunteers. Participants can also bid for attractive baskets and experiences in the silent auction.

On Sunday, guests can choose to join either a Family Bird Walk, a one hour walk appropriate for children 6 and older, or a longer, 90-minute, Adult Bird Walk open to those ages 12 and above. The Sunday event features an extensive continental breakfast, including a lovely selection of bagels and delicious fruit.

BIRD AND BREAKFAST continued on page 7

Field Trip Findings

Robinson Rd./Bird's Landing (1/14)

— Leader Bill Bianco reported: "Started out with a foggy morning and Road 113 closed. The five of us rerouted to Hwy 84 and 106 to Rio Vista, and got to the Robertson Road area with the fog lifting. We viewed 33 species for the day with 35 Mountain Plovers being the highlight bird. Also viewed six Burrowing Owls, Tricolored Blackbirds, Peregrine Falcon, Loggerhead Shrikes, Say's Phoebes, Horned Larks and others, which made for an enjoyable trip."

Cosumnes River Preserve (1/14) — Cathie LaZier reported: "Trip was canceled—Cosumnes River Preserve was flooded."

Colusa Wildlife Refuge (1/10) — Leader Dan Tankersley reported: "Trip was canceled—the refuge was closed due to flooding."

Wintering Raptors (1/8) — Leader Craig Swolgaard reported: "Trip was rained out, but rescheduled for March 12th."

Gray Lodge and Colusa WLRs (1/7) — Leaders Daniel and Pam Thompson reported: "Our trip was rained out. We arrived on time, but there were no attendees. Instead, we drove around checking out river levels and then hiked the trail at Sacramento Bar. The river was magnificent!"

Mather Lake (1/6) — Leader Mark Sawyer reported: "The trip went on without a hitch. 12 participants saw 40 species. Highlights were Nuttall's and Downy Woodpecker males next to each other. We also had an Orange-crowned Warbler,

good looks at a Common Yellowthroat, and great looks at a Hermit Thrush."

Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach (1/4)

— Leader Sally Walters reported: "Yes, it was wet and drizzling! Only the leader braved the trip with 27 species, some even called/sang in the rain. The sky got so dark by 11:30am I thought it was sunset! The highlight was a 12-inch long skinny little rattlesnake in the flotsam from the recent Folsom Dam water releases. Of note, 1/2 of the formerly common immature/female plumaged common mergansers have transitioned into male plumage."

Cosumnes River Preserve, Family Trip (1/1)

— Leader Tim Fitzer reported: "The kid friendly New Year's Day walk at the preserve was braved by 15 tough birders. We enjoyed views of 12 species of beautiful drake ducks and a Wilson's Snipe found by the Ducks In Scopes gang. We all had a fun time even though it was freezing cold."

Sandhill Crane Trip (12/24)

— Leader Mike Savino reported: "Eleven well bundled up visitors came out to see the Sandhill cranes on a clear, cold Christmas Eve. Their efforts were well rewarded. After the usual talk at the Visitor Center of the Cosumnes River Preserve we proceeded to Staten Island where we saw scores of cranes close to the road feeding in corn stubble. The visitors seemed particularly thrilled to get the surprise "bonus" close-up viewing of two Great Horned Owls in the broke down water tower. In fact it seemed to be the high light of the evening. While we did

get good views of lots of cranes and a few shore birds, ducks and Tundra Swans and some good fly overs of geese, for the first time ever we did not see a crane fly-in. This was unprecedented for Staten Island at least in the short memory of the trip leader. It could be that there were fly-ins near the levees where the water was not too high, but close to the road where the water appeared to be too deep for roosting there were no cranes. This was so from the silo to the water tower. We did not go any further south. It may also be that we missed some fly-ins because no one wanted to leave looking at the owls until it was almost dark!"

Sacramento Wildlife Refuge (12/23)

— Ann Burris, co-leader with Tim Fitzer reported: "Rain cancelled the trip, but Tim and I went anyway."

Salt Springs Valley (12/17)

— Leader Lou Regenmorter reported: "A group of seven had a sunny clear crisp day to visit the Salt Springs area. A total of 57 species were seen. Highlights included at least 5 Ferruginous Hawks, a Merlin and Prairie Falcon, Barn and Burrowing Owls, Hooded Mergansers, Tri-colored Blackbirds, and very obliging Lincoln's Sparrows at several locations. The scenery was also enjoyed by all. The hills and valley were starting to green-up from the recent rains. Water was flowing along Rock Creek Road and reservoirs were full. The clear weather allowed impressive views of the snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains and across the central valley to Mount Diablo."

Cathie LaZier

2016-2017 FOLSOM CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Compiler Chris Conard reported: "We had a good Folsom CBC on 31 December 2016, on a cold, dry day aside from a little drizzle in the early morning. There were 67 counters in 30 parties, and several areas did a little owling. The species total was 144, within an historic range of 123 to 146 over the past 39 years. We missed all geese except for Canada, but found Tundra Swans as well as a much less welcome 20 Mute Swans. In terms of ducks, we recorded a surprising low of only five Wood Ducks, while notable finds included a Eurasian Wigeon, a Blue-winged Teal (a count first), nine Cinnamon Teal, which we often miss, zero Northern Pintail, one Canvasback, 75 Ring-necked Ducks, one Lesser Scaup, 32 Barrow's Goldeneye, 34 Hooded Mergansers, and one Red-breasted Merganser. A Mountain Quail near Sweetwater Creek was just the second count record. A conservative count of 10 Common Loons were recorded (it's often difficult to determine the potential double-counting by different parties seeing the same birds) and a continuing Red-necked Grebe was a very nice find. We missed both American Bittern and Black-crowned Night-Heron.

"We nearly missed Osprey, but ended up with one. Even trying to correct for double-counting, an impressive 14 Bald Eagles is a conservative total. We found seven Ferruginous Hawks and two Rough-legged Hawks, but missed Golden Eagle, as we often have in recent years. Sticking with birds of prey, we found six Merlins, six Prairie Falcons, and one Peregrine Falcon. Five Barn Owls was a nice total for a species sometimes missed, and we recorded a single Western Screech-Owl and three Burrowing Owls.

"We missed Long-billed Dowitcher, as we sometimes do on this count with low shorebird diversity. Among 35,000+ gulls, none were unexpected species, though we did have a few Thayer's and Glaucous-winged gulls, and three Mew Gulls. One Band-tailed Pigeon was

Folsom CBC Results continued on page 6

Field Trips



Merlin
Stephen D'Amato

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, for trips through February 26 contact the scheduler Richard Barbieri, offleash56@yahoo.com, 761-1124. For trips from February 27 contact the scheduler Sonja Sorbo, ssgasdoc@yahoo.com, 390-8463.

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.

Wednesday, February 1, 8am Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach American River Parkway Leader: Sally Walters Schmoltdt, 710-1077, bajaowl@gmail.com

Join Sally on her monthly walk in this area and see what changes have occurred along the parkway. 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, ending about 11am, but expect some uneven terrain, gravel, sand, and rock cobble. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Saturday, February 4, 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, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron and Common Yellowthroat. Meet in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park; from Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles. After crossing Douglas Blvd, take the first left into the park area. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

Sunday, February 5, 7:30am till noon Michigan Bar and vicinity Leader: Chris Conard, 203-1610 conardc@gmail.com

We will focus on Michigan Bar Rd and may visit portions of Latrobe and Meiss Rds, though access will be partially dependent on road conditions and recent weather. Vast areas of open grassland and blue oak woodland interspersed with rocky outcrops and the Cosumnes River provide habitat for winter raptors, resident and winter songbirds, and perhaps a surprise or two. We'll have a mix of car birding (bring FRS radios if you have them) and short to moderate walks. Meet at the Park and Ride on Hwy 16 (Jackson Hwy) just west of Sunrise Blvd and the Folsom South Canal (7 miles east of Watt Ave). Steady rain will cancel the trip.

Wednesday, February 8, 1:30pm Colusa National Wildlife Refuge Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1951 (day of trip only) dtankers@winfirst.com

Approximately 1 hour north of Sacramento, Colusa NWR is the winter home to large numbers of many waterfowl species. In addition to Snow, Ross's and Greater White-fronted geese, there will be lots of duck species and other wetland birds. Eurasian Wigeon is often seen here and we can expect raptors with the possibility of Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. Birding will include a good deal of time on the viewing platform, as well as a drive around the tour route. Be prepared for cold and damp weather. Please bring scopes, FRS radios and cameras if you have them. Meet Dan at the Colusa NWR in the parking area near the restrooms. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Williams; use Exit 578, Hwy 20 east to the refuge entrance, approximately 6 miles. Rain, strong wind, or thick fog may cancel the outing. Call Dan the morning of the trip between 11am and 12:30pm if the weather is questionable. You

may want to bring snacks and liquids as the trip will end around 4:30pm.

Friday, February 10, 8am Robinson Road, Road 113 and Bird's Landing Leader: Mark Sawyer, 968-1661 MarkSawyer3383@yahoo.com

This is a great area for wintering Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, Prairie Falcons, Merlins, curlews, possible Mountain Plovers, shrikes and other interesting birds. Bring liquids, lunch, warm clothes, spotting scopes, and FRS radios if possible. Meet at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride exit a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Heavy rain or high winds cancel the trip, which will end in the late afternoon.

Saturday, February 11, 7am Merced and Mariposa County Grasslands Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207 spskua2@comcast.net Ann Burris, 947-7573 burris.nellieann@gmail.com

This area is located in western Merced County east of Le Grand, about a two hour drive from the Galt Park and Ride. From Le Grand we will travel 35 miles on paved, gravel and dirt roads through grasslands and rolling foothills. This area is known for big numbers of raptors, including all the winter species (Ferruginous, Rough-legged, Prairie Falcon, Merlin). Both species of eagles have also been seen in the area, as well as Mountain Bluebirds.

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The trip will last all day so bring lunch, liquids and warm clothing. Bring FRS radios and scopes if you have them. Meet at the Galt Park and Ride. From Sacramento take Hwy 99 south to the Twin Cities Rd/Hwy 104 exit(#277); turn left (east) on Twin Cities Rd, cross the freeway and turn right (south) on Stockton Blvd. The Park and Ride is just south of Twin Cities Road. Heavy valley fog or rain cancels.

Sunday, February 12, 8am
Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124
offleash56@yahoo.com

This is a great time to visit the preserve as all the wintering birds are in. Sandhill Cranes, Greater White-fronted Geese and a wide variety of duck species frequent the preserve. Yellowlegs and Wilson's Snipe will be in the shallower water, and other shorebirds are possible. A variety of passerine species frequent the willows and grassy areas. The group will stop by the "Ducks In Scopes" event at the boardwalk, and you'll have a chance to view the strange invertebrates that the ducks are eating. Meet at the CRP Visitor Center Parking lot. From Sacramento, take I-5 south to Twin Cities Road; go left (east) to the stop sign at Franklin Blvd; turn right (south) on Franklin and, driving through the Preserve, watch for the Visitor Center parking lot on your left. Further directions and maps are available at www.cosumnes.org.

GBBC
February 17 through 20
Great Backyard Bird Count
www.birdsource.org/gbbc

Count birds for 15 minutes or more in your backyard or other favorite birding locale; then post your results online and see what's happening in your area and across the country. It's fun for all ages and skill levels. Check the website for more information, or join one of the following field trips and the leader will input the group's checklist.

Friday, February 17, 8:30am
Ancil Hoffman Park-Effie Yeaw
Nature Center
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 502-2699
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie in the Effie Yeaw parking lot for this birding walk, looping around the golf course with a couple of side trips down to the river, then returning to the parking lot on Effie Yeaw Nature Center trails. This walk is approximately 3 miles, with some

up and down slopes and uneven footing. Wear comfortable shoes and you may want to bring water or snacks. We'll end the trip by noon, and Cathie will post our bird species total on the GBBC website. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Saturday, February 18, 8am
North Natomas Regional Park
Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682
Bgraber984@gmail.com

Join Ben for a leisurely morning walk around the North Natomas Regional Park. We can expect to see a wide variety of grassland species including Meadowlarks, Ring-necked Pheasants, and Savannah Sparrows, along with herons, egrets, and waterfowl. Various wintering species of raptors, including falcons, are also possibilities. This trip will include approximately 2 to 3 miles of walking over flat terrain, and bringing liquids is recommended. Meet Ben at the parking lot on the North side of New Market Drive across from Inderkum High School. New Market Drive is off Truxel Road approximately 2 miles north of Interstate 80. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

Saturday, February 18, 10:30
Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

Join Sac Audubon leaders Lynne Tweten and Sue Darst and Nature Center docents for a family friendly nature walk at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers, Wild Turkeys, and other resident birds, as well as some wintering species, will be active. Reservations are not needed, families can simply show up and enjoy a one-hour walk in the lovely Nature Area with naturalists/birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net.

Sunday, February 19
Adult 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 adults 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. Complete information can be found at the top of page 6.

Sunday, February 19, 9am
Family Friendly Trip

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

This morning walk along the American River will be geared to children and their families. With Paul's skill, you will see and hear a nice variety of resident and wintering birds. This is a great area for children and families to be reminded how nice a walk along the River can be! This trip will last about 2 hours, and loaner binoculars are available. 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.

Wednesday, February 22, 8am
Gibson Ranch County Park
8556 Gibson Ranch Road, Elverta
Leader: Deb Weston, 337-2818
notsewbed@mac.com

Join Deb for a 2+ mile hike around Gibson Ranch. The lake will have gulls, cormorants and assorted ducks and geese. With luck the Green Heron will be hunting near the reeds. Northern Flickers, Western Bluebirds, American Pipits, and the occasional Red-breasted Sapsucker may be seen on this trip, along with other resident birds. Our walk will border open fields, tree lined paths and a section of Dry Creek. From Highway 99 north take the W Elverta Rd exit and drive east approximately 7.2 miles to Gibson Ranch Rd on your left. From Watt Ave turn west on Elverta Rd and drive .7 miles to Gibson Ranch Rd on your right. There is a \$5 parking fee or your Sac County Park Pass works here. After the ranger hut drive through one stop sign and park in lot B on the right. The terrain is mostly level, but there may be muddy areas. Thankfully, there are numerous restrooms at this location, so feel free to bring your hot coffee or cocoa. This trip will end before noon. Bring water, snacks and dress for cold weather. If it's sprinkling the trip will go forward, but heavy rain will cancel.

Saturday, February 25
Merced County wetlands and refuges
Leader: Dan Brown, 704-0951
naturestoc@aol.com
Co-leader: Dale Azevedo

Join Dan and Dale for a full day of birding some of the many wetlands in the Merced County area. We will start Saturday morning birding one, possibly two, private duck club properties. Duck season is over in mid February and the duck clubs in the area can really be packed with birds! The leaders will

check out the area prior to the field trip for best birding and access, as muddy roads can be a problem and are not recommended for low clearance vehicles. We plan on birding the private area(s) until early afternoon then spend the rest of the day birding the National Wildlife areas nearby, ending the day at Merced National Wildlife Refuge to enjoy the cranes and geese at sunset. We will be taking several short hikes during the day, so wear appropriate shoes. Also bring lunch, liquids and snacks, as lunch will be in the field. Because we will be visiting private lands, this trip will be limited to 15 participants. Please contact Dan Brown for information on meeting place and time in Merced County on Saturday morning.

Sunday, February 26, 7am
Highway 37 and Schollenberger Park, Petaluma
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

From the West Sacramento Park and Ride, Mark will lead the group towards Petaluma, with various birding stops along Hwy 37. Moving on to the Petaluma area, he'll look for Blue-winged Teal and a variety of other waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, Common Yellowthroat and the occasional rail and possibly a Peregrine Falcon. Bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. Meet Mark at 7am 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 great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

Wednesday, March 1, 8am
Glenn Hall Park, Paradise Beach
American River Parkway
Leader: Sally Walters Schmoltd
710-1077, bajaowl@gmail.com

Join Sally for her monthly bird walk along the levee and willow covered sand bars of the American River. Sally will be looking for migrants and resident breeding birds, wrens, towhees, and other small passerine birds. 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. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

Saturday, March 4, 8am
Bucks Creek Trail/Serrano Parkway, El Dorado Hills
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

Join Maureen for a leisurely walk through this riparian habitat and look for resident and wintering species such as woodpeckers, nuthatches, towhees, wrens, bluebirds, warblers, marsh birds and sparrows. In this varied habitat, there is always the possibility of unusual finds. Meet at the southeast corner of Silva Valley Parkway and Serrano Parkway. To reach this spot, on Hwy 50, pass the El Dorado Hills Boulevard exit, and take Exit #31 to Silva Valley Parkway. Turn left onto the Parkway and continue to the light at Serrano Parkway. Make a u-turn at this light and immediately park on the right. This is the trailhead.

Family Friendly Trip!!!
Sunday, March 5, 8:30am
Beals Point, Folsom Lake
Leaders: Sandra Steurer, 580-8398
sasteurer@yahoo.com
WendyMoney, 205-3194
wendydougmsn@msn.com

This is a great spot for family members of all ages and early March is a good time to find a nice variety of birds. Join Sandra and Wendy on a 1 to 2 mile walk in the oak woodlands with views of the lake. Recently, in addition to expected species, specialty birds such as Phainopepla, Rock Wrens, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow have been found. The trip will end before noon. Meet in the parking lot of the Beals Point unit of the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (turn left as you enter the parking lot, to park near the first row). The entrance to Beals Point is on Oak Hill Drive off Auburn-Folsom Rd, about 2 miles south of Douglas Blvd and about 3 miles north of Greenback Lane. The entrance fee is \$12 per car, or you may use a state (not county) park pass. There will be an optional picnic after the walk. Each person can bring a sack lunch and beverage. If weather is not on our side, we may go to a nearby family-friendly restaurant.

Sunday, March 5, 6:30am
Arrowhead Marsh and the Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline
Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net
Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Arrowhead Marsh and MLK Jr. Regional Shoreline, encompassing much of San

Leandro Bay, is an extremely productive birding area. It is well known for Ridgway's Rails, lots of wintering ducks and hundreds of shorebirds during the falling tides. It has also produced rarities and hard to find species such as Nelson's and Swamp Sparrows. We will likely spend most of the day there. However, time permitting, we may visit other nearby locations. Bring lunch and liquids, and dress for possible cold early morning temps. Meet Scott and Mark at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Tuesday, March 7, 8am
Lake Solano/Putah Creek
Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net
Ann Burris, 947-7573
burris.nellieann@gmail.com

This is a great area to find a variety of woodpeckers, Phainopepla, Brown Creeper, Barrow's Goldeneye and many other late wintering birds. Meet Tim and Ann at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride exit a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. We will meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Heavy rain or high winds cancel the trip, which will end in the late afternoon.

Saturday, March 11, 8am
Bushy Lake, Cal Expo Floodplain
Leader: Darrell Mohr, 973-9841
mohrdd@gmail.com

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

Sunday, March 12, 8am
Wintering Raptors in the Central Valley
Leader: Craig Swolgaard,
530-334-3023, cswol@sbcglobal.net

This trip has been rescheduled from the rained out one of January 8th. The day will focus on wintering raptors. A published study found that California's Central Valley is one of the richest wintering

Field Trips continued on page 6

Field Trips continued from page 5

areas for raptors in the country. The trip will begin at Meiss and Dillard Roads and end at Clay Station and Dillard Roads following a 33 mile loop used as a survey route in a past study. Many species of raptors have been found along this productive drive during the winter months, including Golden Eagle, Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, and Burrowing Owl. This is also a good area to find Mountain Bluebirds in winter and has potential for other vagrants. Meet Craig at the small public parking lot on Highway 16 and Sunrise Blvd at 8am. We will car pool to try and keep the car numbers down, as some of the route uses pullouts on a busy highway. Bring a spotting scope if possible. Trip may go into early afternoon so water and food may be a good idea.

Folsom CBC Results continued from page 2

a nice find for this non-invasion year. Only four Lewis's Woodpeckers was a big decline from recent years, but not unexpected for a species that is highly variable in annual abundance. Three Hairy Woodpeckers was a decent total for this count of a species recorded about two-thirds of the time. A total of three Loggerhead Shrikes was down slightly from last year's five.

"Two Steller's Jays were a nice pickup for this non-invasion year, while only 13 Yellow-billed Magpies was shockingly low. Common Ravens used to be rare, but were up to a new record of 47 among five parties. We found three Brown Creepers, but missed Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Mountain Bluebird, and Varied Thrush. Two American Dippers were a very nice find. Seven California Thrashers, 105 Phainopeplas, three Orange-crowned Warblers, one Common Yellowthroat were all notable. We recorded an impressive six Chipping Sparrows and one White-throated Sparrow, but a low of only 63 Savannah Sparrows is quite surprising. Out of 45 Fox Sparrows reported, two were Slate-colored, and two of 534 Dark-eyed Juncos were Slate-colored. We managed to find 12 Tricolored Blackbirds, so as to not miss this threatened species, but missed Pine Siskin this year after finding 115 and 355 in the past two years respectively.

"Thanks to all who participated and especially to the area leaders who do a lot of extra work organizing their teams."

FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sunday, February 19, March 26 and April 23

Trips are limited to 10 adult participants and registration is required.

These beginner 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.

Register via email to Cathie at empid@earthlink.net, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 457-6882, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

DUCKS (AND MORE) IN SCOPES

A great trip for families, youth groups and newer birders.

This is an opportunity to work on duck identification as well as other wetland birds.

Stop by the Cosumnes River Preserve and check out Ducks In Scopes, where docents have a row of scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you good views of the many colorful ducks and other wetland birds. A microscope and hand lens provide close-up looks at 'Duck Soup', dishes of water dipped from the pond full of sand fleas, dragonfly nymphs, and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on. The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento—south on I-5 to Twin Cities Road; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve. This program ends in February, when the cranes and waterfowl begin their northern migration, so don't miss the chance to see them wintering here.

Come any time between 10am and 2pm, on the following dates:

February: Saturdays, 2/4, 2/18 and 2/25 and Sunday 2/12

Join Us For Family Field Trips!

Sacramento Bar. On **Sunday, February 19**, at **9am**, Paul Cordero will lead a family-friendly trip to Sacramento Bar. This morning walk along the American River will be geared to children and their families. With Paul's skill, you will see and hear a nice variety of resident and wintering birds. This is a great area for children and families to be reminded how nice a walk along the River can be! This trip will last about 2 hours, and loaner binoculars are available. 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. Paul's contact information is: pkcordero@gmail.com, 454-4061. Paul prefers email contact.

Beals Point, Folsom Lake. On **Sunday, March 5**, at **8:30am**, Sandra Steurer and Wendy Money will lead a trip to this great spot for family members of all ages and early March is a good time to find a nice variety of birds. Join Sandra and Wendy on a 1 to 2 mile walk in the oak woodlands with views of the lake. Recently, in addition to expected species, specialty birds such as Phainopepla, Rock Wrens, and Rufous-crowned Sparrow have been found. The trip will end before noon. See page 5, middle column, for meeting place and leaders' contacts.

Clarksburg Branch Line Trail, West Sacramento. On **Saturday, April 22** at **9am** Ann Burris will lead families on a morning walk along a section of West Sacramento's Clarksburg Branch Line Trail. The paved trail and adjacent pond provide lots of good habitat for a variety of birds. Meet Ann in the parking lot east of Nugget Market off of Lake Washington Blvd. The walk will end by noon. More information, including directions and leader contact information will be in next month's Observer.

There is so much interest in these events that family-friendly trips are being planned for most months. Check [Facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon) or the SAS website at SacramentoAudubon.org for more details.

Birding and Nature Events

CALIFORNIA DUCK DAYS, FEBRUARY 24-25, 2017

Yolo Basin Foundation sponsors this annual event, which takes place in the heart of the Pacific Flyway, minutes from Sacramento. It features a wide variety of field trips, workshops, and special activities for people of all ages. There are two events: a reception Friday night and then the all day festival on Saturday. Enjoy field trips to sites around the region. Workshops such as waterfowl identification, wood duck box building, and duck calling for kids are held throughout the day. One of the most popular events at Duck Days is the kids' fishing activity. Children may fish for trout in the demonstration wetlands and then have their fish cleaned and packed to take home. The Duck Days Exhibit Hall will have interactive displays from local environmental organizations and will feature the crowd-pleasing Mallard ducklings (they will quack you up!), as well as live raptors, and activities for kids. More information and tickets can be found at yolobasin.org/california-duck-days/.

2017 KLAMATH FALLS WINTER WINGS FESTIVAL FOUR DAYS! FEBRUARY 16-19, 2017

The 38th Annual Winter Wings Festival will be held in **Klamath Falls, Oregon**. The 2017 festival is once again loaded with birding and nature photography talent. There are numerous photography workshops and field trips including some especially for youth; many raptor and owl prowls, and Bald Eagle flyouts. Registration is now open and required for all activities with an associated fee. The website with the complete schedule and registration information and forms is at winterwingsfest.org. Further information is available at 877-541-BIRD (2473).

OLYMPIC BIRDFEST 2017, SEQUIM, WASHINGTON

From **April 7-9** the 14th annual Olympic Birdfest will take place in **Sequim, WA**. The festival offers a most spectacular setting where you can visit the rain shadow of the Olympic Peninsula to discover the birds of the coastal Pacific Northwest. Pre and post-festival trips are also offered in this fascinating area. More information can be found at www.olympicbirdfest.org.

GODWIT DAYS, ARCATA

The 22nd annual Godwit Days Spring Migration Bird Festival is being held **April 19-25** in Arcata, CA. Godwit Days is a week long, spring migration bird festival celebrating California's North Coast. The northern coast of California offers towering redwoods, rocky ocean coasts, wild river valleys, expansive mudflats on Humboldt Bay, and the world-renowned Arcata Marsh and Wildlife Sanctuary, where over 270 species of birds have been sighted. Held at the peak of spring migration, shorebirds abound and special opportunities are planned to see many other species, including Marbled Murrelet, Spotted Owl, and Snowy Plover and even whale watching. Further information can be found at www.godwitdays.org or call 1-800-908-WING.

POINT REYES BIRDING AND NATURE FESTIVAL

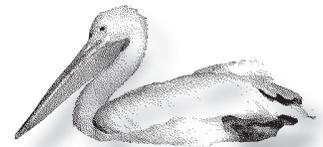
Save the dates of **April 28-30** for the Bay Area's best birding and nature extravaganza! Enjoy birding at the height of spring migration with some of the best naturalists around. For more information and to sign up for their email newsletter, visit pointreyesbirdingfestival.org. Tickets are scheduled to go on sale on February 17, and all proceeds benefit the habitat conservation work of the Environmental Action Committee of West Marin.

Bird and Breakfast continued from page 1

Scouting and youth groups may be eligible for a scholarship to pay for event admission. For more information about scholarships, please contact the Effie Yeaw Nature Center at (916) 489-4918.

Mendocino-based Out of This World Optics, will be on-site Saturday showcasing a wide range of binoculars and spotting scopes for sale. They feature over 25 styles of binoculars and scopes, made especially for birding, to compare and test. This event is the perfect time to shop for new birding equipment!

Bird and Breakfast Weekend often sells out. Reservations are required. Call 489-4918 for information, questions and to make reservations or register online at www.sacnaturecenter.net/birdandbreakfast.html.



American White Pelican
Photo Illustration

SAS LAUNCHES ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

A few months ago the SAS Conservation Committee, chaired by Larry Hickey, proposed the establishment of an Environmental/Birding Education Program for corps members of the Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps (SRCC). SRCC is the largest education and workforce training program in Sacramento for young adults between the ages of 18 and 25. SRCC Corps members help maintain the grounds at Bobelaine Sanctuary, as per contract with SAS.

SAS Education Committee Chair, Gesna Clarke, worked with SRCC administrators, and local naturalist John Huls and biologist Katherine Howard to develop the pilot program. It combines classroom instruction at John Muir Charter School with field trips to Bobelaine Sanctuary, the American River Parkway, the Yolo bypass and Cosumnes River Preserve.

This outreach effort is intended to stimulate corpsmember interest in birding, nature and possibly a future career in the field of ornithology or environmental research and education. The pilot program launches January 27 and runs through May 19. Corpsmembers who successfully complete the program will receive a certificate.

Gesna Clarke

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Bruce and Peggy Kennedy, Terrance Kopp, Brad Lael, Bob and Becky Norris, Marie Putnam, Sonja Sorbo and the American Endowment Foundation made donations to the **General Fund**.

Carla R Barbaro, Karen Brookhyser, Robert and Maureen Burness, Alice C Corley, David Harlow, Loraine Holden, Dr J M Langham, Bob and Becky Norris, Jill Pease, Noreen R Rademacher, Anne Rogers, Andrea Salmi, Sonia Santa Anna, Sonja Sorbo, Alan Wade, Rich Wilcoxon and Carolyn Woodruff made donations to the **Conservation and Education Fund**.

Bill Bianco made a generous donation to the **SAS Bobelaine Sanctuary**.

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

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.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S FIELD TRIPS SPONSORED BY: SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY AND EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER

Family Nature Walk Location: Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael	Saturday, February 18
Sacramento Bar Leader: Paul Cordero	Sunday, February 19
Beals Point, Folsom Lake Leaders: Sandy Steurer and Wendy Money	Sunday, March 5
Family Nature Walk Location: Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael	Saturday, March 18
Clarksburg Branch Line Trail, West Sacramento Leaders: Ann Burriss	Saturday, April 22

For more information and directions to events at Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael, visit sacnaturecenter.org.

Other events are sponsored by Sacramento Audubon. For more information, visit sacramentoaudubon.org or [facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

SAS OUTREACH YOUR CHANCE TO HELP AND HAVE FUN TOO

Spring events are on the calendar and we need volunteers to work at our table. You do not need to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding, and talking to people about our field trips and SAS and you would work with an experienced volunteer.

Your help would be appreciated at one of the following events.

- Wildflower Wonders, CNPS: Saturday, March 25
- Return of Swainson's Hawk: Sunday, April 2
- Creek Week, Carmichael Park: Saturday, April 29
- Walk on the Wild Side, south of Freeport: Saturday, May 20
- Wildlife Art Festival: Saturday and Sunday, July 22 and 23

If you can work a 3 or 4 hour shift at one of these events, please contact Bill Bianco at biancowm@yahoo.com, or 372-3318. Thanks to all volunteers present and future!

SACRAMENTO COUNTY BREEDING BIRD ATLAS 2.0

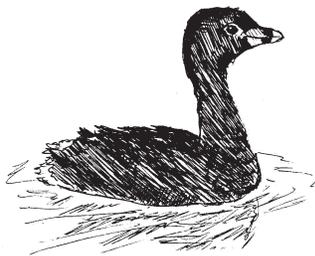
In the late 1980s and early 1990s Tim Manolis organized a Sacramento County Breeding Bird Atlas and we have all the (unpublished) data from that effort. We decided that it would be great to begin a NEW Sac BBA to document how breeding bird distributions have changed in recent decades.

The new "twist"—connection with eBird

eBird gives us the opportunity to invite anyone who birds the county (whether a little or a lot) to contribute data to this effort. Just note any breeding behaviors on your eBird lists (a full list of the codes is found under the 'details' tab on both online eBird and the mobile app).

In addition, check out the new web page on the CV Bird Club site (<http://www.cvbirds.org/birding-resources/sacramento-county-breeding-bird-atlas/>) to learn more about the use of these breeding codes (download the pdf) AND stay up-to-date as we make progress.

Chris Conard, Ed Pandolfino



Pied-billed Grebe
Kirsten Munson

Seasonal Observations

December 1 to December 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

Reports from this December were dominated by birds found on our local CBCs. A few other birds of note were found, but overall, it was a quiet month without a lot of surprises. High numbers of **Blue-winged Teal** continue to be reported at Bridgeway Island Pond in West Sacramento. The seasonal high so far was 224, recorded on 12/11. On the 12/31 Folsom CBC, a female or young male **Red-breasted Merganser** was photographed on the American River near the Nimbus Fish Hatchery. A **Mountain Quail** was found on the Folsom CBC near Sweetwater Creek above Folsom Lake. This species is surely regular in the area, but rarely reported, and this was only the second record on this CBC in 39 years. A **Red-necked Grebe** (initially found in November) was reported on 12/31 from Beals Point at Folsom Lake.

SAS NEW MEMBER

Welcome to this
new member:

Ed Harris

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 February 28, 2017 at 7pm. Board meetings are held at the Lemon Grass Cafe Meeting Room, 601 Munroe St, Sacramento, 95825.

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

FUTURE SAS PROGRAMS

2017

- March 16** Paul Bannick, *A Year in the life of North American Owls*
- April 20** Steven T Callan, *The Game Warden's Son*
- May 18** Joe Ferreira, *Asian Nature Transect: Enjoying the Wildlife of India, Bhutan and Thailand*

Observations continued

Bald Eagle reports are climbing locally, and a conservative total of 14 on the 12/31 Folsom CBC is remarkable; early signs of nesting were also reported from Lake Natoma. Raptor reports from the Dunnigan Hills on 12/17 and 12/19 near the intersection of Rds 14 and 88 included up to four **Ferruginous Hawks**, two **Rough-legged Hawks**, a **Golden Eagle**, and a **bobcat**. For at least 11 years one to three **Merlins** have spent winter nights in the 2300 to 2700 blocks of Anza Ave in north Davis, and at least two birds were reported this month. From ten to over 50 **Mountain Plovers** were reported throughout the month at the traditional location, south of Dixon, along Robinson Road north of Flannery Road. On the 12/28 Lincoln CBC, single **Semipalmated Plovers** were found northwest of Lincoln, both in Sutter (Cornelius Ave) and Placer counties (Waltz Rd; continuing on 12/30). Two **Short-eared Owls** were reported in the vicinity of Robinson and Flannery Rds on 12/2.

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

Mara Weston, Membership Chair, mara_weston@yahoo.com
7708 McClintock Way, Sacramento, CA 95828-4321

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.

SEE THE LATEST
SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon



A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was found on the 12/18 Putah Creek CBC at the same location as last year, along Cantelow Rd in Solano Co. The male **Vermillion Flycatcher** found last winter returned to the Maxwell Cemetery in Colusa County and was reported from 12/26 into January. A **Cassin's Vireo** was found at the Sacramento City Cemetery on 12/13, and two **American Dippers** were found along Sweetwater Creek on 12/31. The lack of **Varied Thrush** reports this winter continue and only one was recorded on the Sacramento CBC, while the species was missed on other local counts. **Mountain Bluebirds** were reported multiple times near Yolo County Rds 16 and 89, a **Wilson's Warbler** was a nice surprise on the 12/3 ARNHA Count near the Spanos Court access to the American River Parkway, and an impressive eight **Thick-billed Fox Sparrows** were found at the top of Mix Canyon Rd in Solano County on the Putah Creek CBC.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (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. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Dan Airola, Peter Armstrong, Keith Bailey, Elliot Chasin, Lily Douglas, Chris Dunford, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Dan Kopp, Jeri Langham, Sami LaRocca, Ed Pandolino, Jim Rowoth, Kirk Swenson, John Trochet, and Charley Walker.

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

Chris Conard

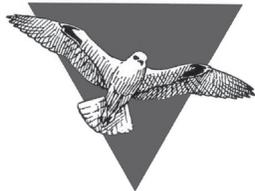
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Sacramento Audubon Society



www.sacramentoaudubon.org



White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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203-1610, 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.

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

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

Thursday, February 16, 2017

Stephanie Clymer:

*Historical Birding Records and
Modern Data*

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm



Stephanie
Clymer,
with Peregrine
eyass