

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



VOLUME 69 • NO. 9

SEPTEMBER 2017

General Meeting

Thursday, September 21, 2017

Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Assembly Room, 7pm

Migration and Wintering Locations
of Swainson's Hawks

Dan Airola

Update on Habitat Preservation for
Swainson's Hawks in Sacramento

Jude Lamare

Dan Airola will be speaking on a study, partially funded by SAS, of migration and wintering locations of Swainson's Hawks that nest in the greater Sacramento region. The study members put satellite transmitters on hawks to track their movements

during spring and fall migration and to locate and describe wintering areas. They found an unprecedented diversity of wintering areas from western Mexico to central South America, which appears to distinguish the Central Valley population from those residing elsewhere in western North America.

Jude Lamare, PhD and President of Friends of the Swainson's Hawk, will give a brief update on the status of habitat preservation locally along with other current issues. She'll include a power point presentation with nest site maps and photos of nests with young.

Dr Lemare is a retired consulting political scientist (PhD, UCLA, 1973). She was the founding manager and managed the Clearner Air Partnership of Sacramento from 1986 to 2005. She, Jim Pachl, and Vicki Lee founded

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Swainson's Hawk
David Rosen

CALLING YOUNG BIRDERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

SIXTH ANNUAL KIDS CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, January 6, 2018 and Sunday, January 7, 2018

Mark your calendars for January 6 and 7, the first weekend of 2018! Please join the Effie Yeaw Nature Center (EYNC) and Sacramento Audubon Society in the Sixth Annual Kids' Christmas Bird Count.

These family Bird Counts provide an exciting opportunity for kids, young adults and their families to be outside looking at birds and enjoying nature. Participants will be joining citizen scientists all over the world and will gain practice finding, identifying and counting all the birds they see. Day 1 for the younger birders, aged 6 to 10, will be January 6 from 9 to Noon and will be followed by a companionable lunch with other birder families at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

This year we hope to have a second site for older birders 10 years and up and their families. This will occur on Sunday, January 7 with faster paced birding for more experienced young people. The location has yet to be determined; more soon.

Space is limited for both days so children **must be pre-registered** to attend. Registration is first come, first served and opens on December 1, 2017.

EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER'S NATURE FEST

This year's Nature Fest will be Saturday, October 8. It's their largest family event of the year, and promotes science and nature education and is an excellent opportunity to learn more about local organizations that support our community. This family-friendly event includes live animal shows, kids activities, demonstrations, guided nature hikes, and food. Attendees especially enjoy animal shows 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!

This very low-cost event draws a variety of attendees including nature enthusiasts, families, boys and girls scouting groups, and other youth organizations. Exhibitors represent natural resource, natural history and healthy recreation businesses. From frogs to fly-fishing, and from bats to native basket-weaving, this event truly has something of interest for everyone!

SAS CAPS ON SALE NOW

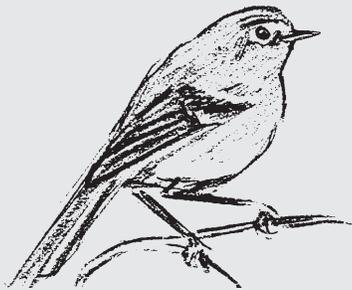
SAS ball caps, with our logo, are now on sale for \$20 each. Bill Bianco will have them for sale at the monthly meetings and at upcoming festivals. If anyone is interested in purchasing one they can also contact Bill and he can work out the purchase. Ann Burris also has a few she is selling on her field trips. Contact Bill Bianco at biancowm@yahoo.com, or 372-3318.



Field Trip Findings

Napa-Sonoma Marshes (8/13)—Leaders Scott Hoppe and Dan Tankersley reported: “With somewhat challenging weather (high fog, wind and cold) to start with, our first stop was perhaps the most productive. This was on Highway 37 in some of the restored wetland habitat. Even though it was high tide, we had hundreds of birds, including huge flocks of American Avocet, many Black-necked Stilt, Black-bellied Plover, Marbled Godwit, near-by Western and Least Sandpipers and one Red-necked and several Wilson’s Phalaropes. As well as Caspian and Forster’s Terns. Next, we made our way up to the Huichica Creek unit on the north side of the Wildlife Area. This was a bit slower over all. But we did manage to find 7 Red-necked Phalarope and a couple of Lesser Yellowlegs. Then on to American Canyon Wetlands. Everyone enjoyed watching the shorebirds become more active as the tides receded from one of the main ponds. Among the highlights here was a non-avian species: River Otter. A family of them came quite close as they devoured fish that were being drawn into the culvert that drained the pond as the tide receded. We tallied about 50 species of birds over all. It was a relatively small group of 7 of us, but I have to commend a couple of people who attended the previous day’s trip and got up early for this one too.”

Beginning Shorebirds (8/12) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “A great morning with a great group (as everyone agreed). We ended up going to American Canyon Wetlands in search of shorebirds to study. I started with a talk focusing on size and shape, and types of shorebirds and their behavior. Then we were out into the field. It took some time getting views of Least and Western Sandpipers together (these can be the hardest for new birders to separate) but we finally got it. A good variety of other shorebirds was also seen, including an ID quiz on very distant Dowitchers. We tallied 11 species of shorebirds over all.”



Vireo species
Kirsten Munson

Mather Lake (8/9) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: “Because of construction on the dam, a shortened morning of birding was enjoyed by seven souls. Thirty species were identified just on the NE shore. Juvenile Swainson’s and Cooper’s hawks were observed as well as adult White-tailed Kite and Red-shouldered hawks. Besides the one family of 9 Mute Swans, the other highlight was two White Pelicans that treated us to a take off and climb up the invisible thermals over the lake to altitude. Short but good morning.”

Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley (8/6) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: “Although the trip was titled, *Shorebirds of the Sacramento Valley*, I was having quite a bit of difficulty beforehand locating good spots, due to inaccessibility, inadequate management and overall dry conditions. So I decided, what’s more important, birding in the Sacramento Valley, or viewing shorebirds. The answer was clear. In the quest for shorebirds, we headed down to American Canyon Wetlands north of Vallejo and nearby environs. It was a fun day for just a small group of 6 of us, and everyone had a good attitude and great sense of humor. We tallied 12 species of shorebirds and 50 species overall.”

Common Nighthawks Yuba Gap (8/5) — Leader Dan Brown reported: “12 participants enjoyed a break from the valley heat with overcast skies, a starting temperature of 61 degrees F. and heavy rain! The rain stopped and we were able to bird the area as scheduled. A big thank you to Dan’s sister, Linda Brown for arranging access to the Snowflower campground! The birds were scarce for most of the time but we managed to observe/hear 31 species. The highlights were, Lazuli Buntings, Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Mountain Quail and of course Common Nighthawks, at least 50 seen, 15 to 20 at a time in the evening sky. The best species of the day was a pair of Black Swifts, spotted by Linda Brown, a non birder without binoculars! She didn’t know what they were but Dan was quickly able to ID them for the group.”

Post-drought Sierra Birding (7/30) — Leader Jane Taylor reported: “Eleven of us made our way to forest and meadow habitat north of Truckee. At a new venue, Perazzo Meadow, numerous mosquitos and Dark-eyed Junco families greeted us on the trail above the Little Truckee River. Highlights included Hairy and White-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Clark’s Nutcracker, Spotted Sandpiper, Belted Kingfisher and Brown Creeper. On the shore of newly-public Webber Lake, we lunched as Osprey fished. Nearby Lacey Meadow had few birds in the afternoon, but the group’s photographers shot a profusion of wildflowers, toads, frogs and a snake. Our last stop at Martis Creek Reservoir yielded Wilson’s Snipe, Song and Fox Sparrow, Barn Swallow and Pied-billed Grebe as well as considerable beaver pond engineering. With only 26 species tallied it was a slow day, and these spots might be better visited earlier in the season, avoiding Sunday due to I-80 traffic congestion heading home.”

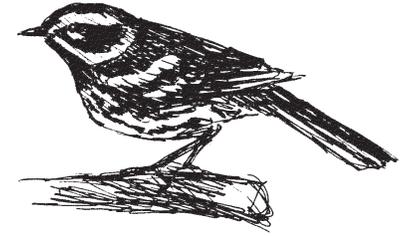
Sacramento Bar (7/29) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: “Eleven people showed up for this walk along the American River. The parking lot was active with birds. We had only gone a short distance before some one spotted a young Hooded Oriole in the top of a tree and it stayed long enough for everyone to have a good view. As we approached the pond a Beaver was spotted swimming towards shore. As we went to move a pair of very dark phase Swainson’s Hawks were perched in a tree a short distance from the trail. Our total species count for the day was 34. Not bad for a hot day.”

Cabbage Patch, Calaveras County (7/25) — Leader Bill Bianco reported: “With a large group of two, we had a total count of 15 species. Some of our sightings were White-headed Woodpecker, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Brown Creeper, Green-tailed Towhee, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Western Tanager, Mountain Chickadee, and Western Bluebird. Although we missed seeing Black-backed Woodpeckers it was an enjoyable search and a beautiful day in the Sierras”

Bats and Swainson’s Hawks (7/23) — Leader Dan Brown reported: “Eleven participants enjoyed a surprisingly cool evening learning tons about bats during JoEllen Arnold’s presentation. She

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Field Trips



Townsend's Warbler
Kirsten Munson

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 September 11, contact the scheduler Scott Hoppe, shoppe01@surewest.net, 835-8471. For trips from September 12 through October 11, contact the scheduler Cathie LaZier, empid@earthlink.net, 502-2699.

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. 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.

NOTE: Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place.

Thursday, August 31, 6pm

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area

**Leaders: Maureen Geiger, 281-6652, mkgeiger@comcast.net
Cathie LaZier, 502-2699, empid@earthlink.net**

Early evening is a great time to be at the Wildlife Area. Join Maureen and Cathie for a drive through this diverse area. We will drive to the end and back looking for large numbers of ibis coming in to roost for the night, summer birds still present, and depending on the amount of water, possible marsh and shorebirds. On the way back to the main parking area, barn and great horned owls are possible, and seeing the wonderful spectacle of bats flying out from under the west end of the I-80 bridge is a good possibility. This trip will end at sundown when the entry gates are closed.

Saturday, September 2, 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 3, 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. As it is the Labor Day Weekend, a Sac County Park Pass or \$8 (holiday) entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Tuesday, September 5, 8:30am

Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area

Leader: Dan Tankersley, 662-1951 (morning of trip only) dantank1016@gmail.com

Join Dan for a morning of birding in this wonderful area close to Sacramento. We will look for raptors, shorebirds and other fall migrants. From Sacramento take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee; then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot, Lot A, on your left. Bring your morning liquids and snacks. Also, if you have them, bring your spotting scope and FRS radio. This trip, which will end before noon, is a good one for beginners.

Saturday, September 9, 8am

Teal Bend

Leader: Richard Barbieri, 761-1124 offleash56@yahoo.com

Join Richard on a trip into Sutter County after first exploring the rich habitat at Teal Bend Golf Course. We'll then work our way north through the open grass lands and fields in search of shorebirds and hawks. Meet at the Raley's Shopping Center on Arena Blvd at 8am. From Sacramento, take I-5 north to Arena Blvd, go west (left) over the freeway. Take the first left, Duckhorn Rd, and then turn right into the parking area. We will meet on the north side of the parking lot between Wells Fargo and Golden 1.

Sunday, September 10, 7am

Trip lasts until Noon

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.**

New directions: Take I-5 south from Sacramento and exit at Laguna Blvd. Drive east to Franklin Blvd and turn left. Go past the stoplight at Bighorn Blvd and turn left at the next block (Sims Rd—no stoplight) with poplar trees and a brick planter. Drive 0.6 mile and turn right on Laguna Station Rd. Drive 0.5 mile and turn left at Glacier Way before reaching the guard station (If using GPS, enter Glacier Way, Elk Grove, CA 95758). Drive 0.25 mile to the Bufferlands office entrance at the end of

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Glacier Way. A large gate will be open and the front glass doors will be unlocked.

**Thursday, September 14, 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 Hurley 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.

**Saturday, September 16, 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 from Audubon. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, September 16, 7am
Fall Migration "Wild Card"
Leader: Scott Hoppe, 835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net**

Join Scott in pursuit of fall migrants. But this trip has a twist: the destinations will be a mystery until the day of the trip. Scott 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.

**Sunday, September 17, 8am, SHARP
Family Friendly Trip
Woodfords/Markleeville area
Leaders: Wendy Money, 205-3194,
wendydoug@msn.com
Sandra Steurer, 580-8398,
sasteurer@yahoo.com**

Bring your camera for fall foliage and birds! We will be looking for mountain specialty species like: Woodpeckers, Sapsuckers, Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadees, Townsend's Solitaires, Pinion Jays, Golden Eagles and other raptors. Wear sturdy shoes and dress in layers for cool mornings. Bring water, snacks, and lunch. Meet Sandra and Wendy at the Bella Bru in El Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit #30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right. Meet at the far north end of the parking lot. We will leave at 8 am and it will be an all day trip. Loaner binoculars available. Questions? Contact Wendy or Sandra. This is a great trip for beginners, young birders, and everyone else.



Sanderling
Stephen D'Amato

**Sunday, September 17, 8am
River Bend Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 502-2699
empid@earthlink.net**

If you don't have time to do the excellent Woodfords trip, meet Cathie for a morning walk through the oak woodland and down to the river looking for the resident birds of the parkway, as well as possible migrants. Meet in the first parking lot on your right just past the entrance kiosk. 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.

**Wednesday, September 20, 7:30am
Mather Lake
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations, but this trip will be limited to the northeast shore of the lake, due to construction at the dam. Wayne will still be able to turn up quite a list of bird species, including raptors, water birds and small passerines. 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 and experienced birders alike.

**Saturday, September 23, 7am
Bodega Bay
Leader: John York, 409-9276
Johnyork157@yahoo.com**

Join John for a full day of birding around Bodega Bay, taking in a variety of habitats. Plan to see waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and raptors. Meet John 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. Bring fluids and dress for changeable weather. It will be a full day of birding, and John is planning to stop for lunch in Bodega Bay.

**Sunday, September 24, 8am
American River between Watt
and Howe
Leader: Dan Kopp, 213-2791
rey_ality@hotmail.com**

Join Dan in the area where he discovered birding, as he searches for early fall returns, migrants still heading south and our residents. There are well established trails that wind through oak woodland, riparian areas and around backwater coves. The trip will last until lunch time. Meet Dan at the Watt Avenue entrance to the Parkway in the first parking lot on the left as you drive in. Park access is off La Riviera just east of Watt Avenue. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles or you can park on La Riviera and walk in. Dan plans on making it to the Howe Access before turning around, an approximate 2 mile walk. This is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders.

**Monday, September 25, 8am
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Leader: Bob McCleary, 960-3390
bobmccleary@comcast.net**

Bob is a docent at the Nature Center and knows the trails, and where to find the birds. On this morning walk he'll be looking for both resident and wintering birds. Meet him in the Nature Center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park. This is a good trip for beginners as well as more experienced birders. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, September 30, 7am
Point Reyes for Fall Vagrants
Leader: Dan Williams, (714) 943-1266
jaegermaestro@yahoo.com**

Join Dan for a full day of birding at Point Reyes. Bring a lunch and plenty of water and be prepared for a full day of chasing rare birds, wherever they might be! Late September at the Point is always exciting, and Dan will let the most recent rare bird reports dictate the day's itinerary. Every fall is different and of course there are no guarantees in birding, but this trip in the past has turned up such goodies as Broad-winged Hawk, Buff-breasted Sandpiper, White-winged Dove, Least Flycatcher, Yellow-green Vireo, and just about every warbler imaginable! Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave, Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

**September 30-31
Saturday: Monterey Bay Pelagic Trip
Sunday: Coastal Land Birding
Co-ordinator for both days: Linda Pittman, pittman@frontiernet.net**

**Sunday, October 1, 7am
Putah Creek Preserve
Family Friendly Trip
Leader: Ben Graber, 844-8682
Bgraber984@gmail.com**

Join Ben for a morning walk along Putah Creek in search of late migrants and wintering riparian birds. If the participants so desire, we may also visit Lake Solano or Monticello Dam. Meet Ben at the Park and Ride lot off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Avenue exit, turn left at the light, and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. This is a good trip for experienced birders, beginners and younger birders alike. Loaner binoculars are available.

**Wednesday, October 4, 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. For directions, see sacnaturecenter.net. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Saturday, October 7, 8am
Sacramento Bar
Leader: Darrell Mohr, 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com**

Darrell will be checking for mergansers, goldeneye, and other birds on the river. Among the more common passerines, such as crowned sparrows, towhees, goldfinches, and wrens, there's a possibility of the less common Phainopepla, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and who knows what other surprises! This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders. From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd; turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

**Sunday, October 8, 7am
Ancil Hoffman Park Fall Migration
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

Mark will be looking for fall migrants, as well as returning wintering birds, and maybe something unexpected may turn up. This will be a 2 to 4 hour walk. A SAC County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. Meet Mark at the main parking lot across from the golf course. From California Ave in Fair Oaks take the Tarshes Drive entrance and follow it to the golf course area parking lot.

**Tuesday, October 10, 7am
Sand Creek Road
Leader: Bill Bianco, 372-3318,
889-4849, biancowm@yahoo.com**

Join Bill for a trip to Arbuckle and then up Sand Creek Road. Target birds include Sage Sparrow, Lawrence's Goldfinch, Western Kingbird, Roadrunner, Western Screech Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Mountain Quail and other migrants. The road can be rough and all wheel drive is recommended. Bring a lunch and liquids and be prepared for an afternoon return. We will meet at the Woodland Jack-in-the-Box. Take I-5 north toward Woodland; exit at County Road 102, (exit 536); turn right (north) on 102 and turn right into the Jack-in-the-Box parking lot. FRS radios are helpful on this trip.



White-faced Ibis
Daniel Kilby

**A VOLUNTEER IS STILL NEEDED
WITH EXCEL EXPERIENCE**

SAS is looking for a volunteer with extensive Microsoft Access experience to work with several of us to evaluate a custom membership Access database developed by another chapter to decide if it will meet our chapter's membership needs. If it does, we'll also need help importing our current Excel data and getting started. We have been evaluating several commercial membership databases and this alternative would be much less expensive. If you are interested, contact Diana Hickson at 709-3563 or dianahickson@comcast.net.

**BUFFERLANDS EVENTS
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**TWILIGHT ON THE BUFFERLANDS
Wednesday, September 20,
6:30pm-9pm**

Don't miss this unique opportunity to explore some of the Great Central Valley habitats at dusk on the Bufferlands. During the tour, participants may have a chance to see beavers, river otters, muskrats, raccoons, owls and more.

Please wear appropriate clothing for walking on trails and bring water and binoculars. Please contact Roger Jones (jonesro@sacsewer.com) to confirm your reservation and meeting location. This will be the last Twilight on the Bufferlands of the year.

Open Trail Day on October 14
Tones of Fall on November 11

POST-FLOOD BOBELAINE SANCTUARY NEEDS HELP

Damage to the Oroville Dam spillway this winter resulted in massive flooding and debris deposition along the Feather River, including at the 430-acre Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary on the river's west bank. When the floodwaters receded, we found that trees had fallen across several trails and our new benches and trail signs had washed away. Debris needs to be cleared so we can mow the trails. Although National Audubon owns the Sanctuary, Sacramento Audubon Society is responsible for maintaining it, and this year's funding needs exceed our budget. SAS contracts with the Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps in a very successful education partnership, but we'll need their crews for more days this year than budgeted. We are hoping to open Bobelaine to the public again this November and to begin monthly Audubon walks there as well. If you would like to help, please send donations to SAS marked "Bobelaine" at PO Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816, or use our website, sacramentoaudubon.org. Thank you, The SAS Bobelaine Committee

CONDOR CAMS AT DEVIL'S GATE STRETCHING AND FLAPPING THE CHICK GROWS UP!

Well, the condor chick seems to be doing quite well. He's grown, that's for sure. Lately he's been balancing on a rock, stretching and flapping his wings, and trying to pull up vegetation just for good measure. Those in the know predict he will be fledging in another 40 to 60 days. (He can't wait.)

This is the third year in a row the public has a unique opportunity to get up-close and personal with a California Condor chick through livestreaming video of a nest. The chick and its parents live in the remote mountains near Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Ventura County, California. The camera was made live for the public on May 31st, by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service along with partners, including the Cornell Lab of Ornithology which will carry the live camera on its Bird Cams website at www.cams.allaboutbirds.org/channel/49/California_Condor/

There is also a twitter feed at twitter.com/CornellCondors. You don't need an account to view the many photos and interesting comments.

SAS OUTREACH, VOLUNTEER, HELP OUT, HAVE FUN!

Fall events are coming up and we need volunteers to work at the SAS table. Your help would be appreciated at one of the following festivals:

- NatureFest at Effie Yeaw, Sunday, October 8 (SAS table and Kids table)
- Lodi Crane Festival, Saturday and Sunday, November 4 and 5
- Swan Festival, Yuba City, Saturday and Sunday, November 11 and 12
- Central Valley Birding Symposium, Stockton, November 16-19. This event only requires our table set up on Friday, November 17 and table take down on Sunday afternoon November 19.

You do not need to be an accomplished birder to help at the SAS tables, just someone who enjoys birding and talking to people about our field trips, birding and SAS. You would be working with an experienced volunteer.

If you can work a 3 or 4 hour shift on one of the above days, please contact Bill Bianco at biancwm@yahoo.com, or 372-3318.

Birding and Nature Events

13TH ANNUAL MONTEREY BAY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The 13th annual Monterey Bay Birding Festival this year will be one day only, **Saturday, September 23**.

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.

This year's keynote speaker is the renowned Ornithologist, Peter Pyle, who will present *Ecology and Conservation of the Gulf of the Farallones*. Peter will also host an educational workshop on *Adventures in Molt*. Film Director, Maya Khosla, will screen her beautiful documentary film: *Searching for the Goldspot: The Wild after Wildfire*.

Registration is now open and can be found at the festival website www.montereybay-birding.org/. This is a very popular festival in a spectacular area and field trips can sell out quickly, so check out the field trips and workshops you'd like to participate in and sign up!

CENTRAL VALLEY BIRD SYMPOSIUM

The Central Valley Bird Club will be hosting the 21st Annual Central Valley Birding Symposium **November 16-19, 2017** at the Stockton Hilton Hotel in Stockton.

Their field trips always turn up exciting birds. Other events include the 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! There's something for everyone interested in birds. The Saturday night keynote speaker will Noah Stycker presenting *Birding without Borders*.

To look over the line-up of speakers, workshops, and field trips check out their website at: www.cvbirds.org. Registration starts September 8 and it's recommended that you sign up early for the popular field trips.

General Meeting continued from page 1

Friends of the Swainson's Hawk, a citizen advocacy group, in September, 1994, and she has served as president since then.

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://facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

Sally Walters Schmoldt, President and Program Chair

FARMERS & CONSERVATION EXPERTS CELEBRATE FIVE YEARS OF HELPING TRICOLORED BLACKBIRDS

In 2017 farmers with rare Tricolored Blackbirds nesting in their fields have again aided the birds' survival. By delaying silage harvest, the farmers allowed the birds sufficient time to fledge their young. Working with the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Audubon California, Western United Dairymen, Dairy Cares, California Farm Bureau, and Sustainable Conservation, farmers have helped save over 200,000 birds in the past four years. During the 2017 nesting season, the partnership protected five colonies on dairy farms, totaling nearly 75,000 birds, in Kern, Merced and Tulare counties. Two additional colonies were protected in Madera and Riverside County through the NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

"This unique partnership of dairy farmers and conservation experts continues to help protect both an imperiled bird and the long-term sustainability of California's dairy industry," says Carlos Suarez, NRCS state conservationist for California.

Each spring, Tricolored Blackbirds build large colonies of nests in Central Valley areas that were once marshy ecosystems and are now cropland. About 40 percent of the birds now use silage crops such as triticale and wheat to build their nests. Since Tricolored Blackbirds are colonial nesters, thousands of birds may occupy a single farm. Farmers in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Riverside, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties, with Tricolored Blackbirds in their fields are offered payments to help offset the expense, and possible crop damage caused by delaying harvest until fledging has finished.

Audubon California efforts to protect Tricolored Blackbirds include:

- Locating and protecting breeding colonies
- Engaging with farmers where Tricolored Blackbird colonies have been found to nest and partnering with them delay harvest so the young birds have time to fledge
- Partnering with and supporting our chapters to monitor colonies and work with volunteers on projects that enhance nesting habitat
- Creating and protecting safe habitat areas where the birds can breed
- Advocating for legal protections

From a Audubon California press release.

Findings continued from page 2

had a couple of non-releasable bats to share along with her "bat radar" gadget! A little after sunset we were treated by thousands of Mexican Free-tailed Bats emerging from the roost, flying east straight into the forest and then looping around and streaming off to the west, looking like a wisp of smoke. A smaller group flew south along the bridge and then over the river to the west. The bats waited till well after sunset to fly, which was not good for the four Swainson's Hawks that were waiting for them! The hawks did not get to dine on the bats this night! The SWHA's gave up! We tallied 22 species of birds while we waited for the main attraction, BATS!"

Carson Pass and Lake Winnemucca (7/22) — Leaders Gary Fregien and Scott Hoppe reported: "Ten hiker-birders ascended from the Carson Pass parking area to the 9000+ ft. crest of the trail and over to Lake Winnemucca. After several years of drought conditions, this hike was quite different, as we encountered snow on portions of the trail, "icebergs" in the lake, still heavy snowfields on the flanks of the surrounding peaks and the usual gorgeous wildflower fields. Also of note, we had a beginning birder from Pennsylvania, who bagged many check marks on her fledgling life list. It's always such a pleasure to assist new, young birders on their beginning quests for birds. Bird species highlights included Band-tailed Pigeon, Cassin's Finch, Dusky Flycatcher, Rufous Hummingbird, singing Hermit Thrush, Townsend's Solitaire, Green-tailed Towhee, Brewer's Sparrow, Clark's Nutcracker and a surprise American Dipper at the lake. Conspicuously absent was Steller's Jay. This year the snowfields in the high elevations did not produce any rosy-finches. The group tallied 39 species on the hike, very similar to prior years."

Granite Springs Road (7/18) — Leaders Tim Fitzer and Ann Burris reported: "Our

day in the Sierra was a nice escape from the valley heat. Of the ten participants three were visitors, one from Connecticut. Highlights were, Lewis's and Hairy Woodpecker, MacGillivray's Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Mountain Quail, Golden Eagle and Pygmy Nuthatch. We had a great time and several of our visitors went home with new life birds."

Farallons Pelagic Trip (7/16) — Coordinator Linda Pittman reported: "Our annual trip to the Farallon Islands on July 16, 2017 was sold out as usual. Although it was sunny and warm, the winds were strong offshore and we had to navigate through rough swells and wind waves. After enjoying humpback whales fin slapping and feeding just outside the Golden Gate bridge, we headed up the coast to Double Point (Pt Reyes) and then turned west to slip down to the islands. Once we reached the lee side of the islands, we enjoyed the many species that breed and/or feed here including Cassin's Auklet, Rhinoceros Auklet, Pigeon Guillemot and of course, thousands of Common Murres. We saw several Tufted Puffins but the stars of the day were the Brown Booby and Blue-footed Booby on Sugarloaf, followed by a flyover by the Northern Gannet as we left the islands."

Dragonfly Trip (7/15) — Leader Tim Manolis reported: "Only one person showed up for the trip, Betty Kniffen, but we had a nice morning trip to Bear Creek before it got too hot. We saw 20 species, a nice total. Highlights were male Desert Forktail, one in the hand, here at the northern limit of the range of this species in California, lots of White-belted Ringtails and Gray Sanddragons seen well close up, a Western River Cruiser, and a Giant Darner. Also saw Red Rock Skimmer and quite a few Pale-faced Clubskimmers."

Cathie LaZier

PUBLICITY CHAIR FOUND!

Kevin Wren, who has relocated here in Sacramento from Seattle Audubon, has volunteered to be our new Publicity Chair. He'll be connecting with local newspapers to publicize our meetings and special events that the public may be interested in. Thank you so much Kevin.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Due to an early deadline this month we aren't able to thank those who donated recently. They will certainly be acknowledged next month.

We do have two generous donations to **Bobelaine** that we would like to thank. They are Alan Baron and Valerie Phillips. As noted on page 6, Bobelaine Sanctuary is in particular need this year due to last year's flooding. There is much clean-up and restoration needed before it can re-open. Thank-you both for these donations.

We would also like to thank the Golden 1 Credit Union for making a match donation during the **Big Day of Giving**.

Thank you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community. As mentioned, any donations to the Bobelaine Sanctuary for its restoration after all the flooding will be gladly accepted.

SAS HOSPITALITY HELP NEEDED

The Board of Directors is requesting volunteers to help with the meeting hospitality. We hope to get enough volunteers, so we can make it a rotating service. Duties are basically making the coffee, lemon water, providing cookies or pastries; and setting up and clearing the hospitality table. Helpers will be reimbursed for their costs. If you have questions and/or want to help out contact Bill Bianco at biancowm@yahoo.com, or 372-3318.

Join Us For Family Friendly Field Trips!

Saturday, October 14, Family Friendly Trip

Koobs Nature Area, Carmichael, Leader: Cliff Hawley, details later

Saturday, October 21 Elk Grove area, 8 am

Welcome Back Sandhill Cranes! Join Sandra and Wendy for a drive and easy walk looking for cranes, early arriving species of waterfowl, migrating shorebirds, and the year round residents who make this location such a wildlife jewel. Intrigued? Meet us at 8 am at the intersection of Bruceville and Desmond Rds. We will plan to finish our birding by noon, but bring water and snacks. We will have scopes to bring those wonderful birds in closer. Expect your children to exclaim, "Wow!" Loaner binoculars available. Questions? Contact Wendy Money 205-3194, wendydoug@msn.com or Sandra Steurer 580-8398 or sasteurer@yahoo.com

Sunday, December 10, Yolo Bypass, 9 am

Join Sandra and Wendy in this great seasonal floodplain 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. We will enjoy the returning ducks, geese, swans, pelicans, raptors, and watch for stealthy rails and owls. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, and then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A) on your left, at the beginning of the auto tour. On this trip we stay in our vehicles, as blinds, most of the time, popping out for brief scope-aided views. The trip will end before noon, but bring water and snacks as needed. Loaner binoculars available. Questions? Contact Wendy Money 205-3194, wendydoug@msn.com or Sandra Steurer 580-8398 or sasteurer@yahoo.com

Mission Statement

Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:

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

Seasonal Observations

June 1 to July 31

Rare and Unusual Bird Reports

www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

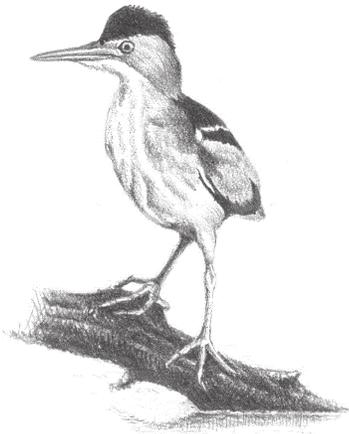
As expected, shorebird reports dominated the period, with Arctic migrants showing up in our area by the last week of June. Much more surprising was a report and distant photographs of a possible **Neotropic Cormorant** on 7/8-9 at the Stockton Sewage Ponds. This species has been expanding its range north, so we should keep an eye out for them in the future. **Least Bitterns** were found at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) from 6/14-7/16, with a high of two, at Bridgeway Island Pond in West Sacramento from 7/18-27, and at Mather Lake from 7/9-21. A very vocal **Black Rail** was a nice surprise at Bridgeway Island Pond from 7/18 through at least 7/27.

A **Snowy Plover** on 7/9 at the YBWA was a nice find, although this species usually turns up a few times in the summer. **Solitary Sandpipers** were well represented, with one at the Anatolia Vernal Pool Reserve off of Sunrise Blvd on 7/23, one at the Woodland WTP on 7/28, and a high of four at the Sacramento Reg. WTP (SRWTP) Bufferlands from 7/25-8/3. There were good numbers of **Marbled Godwits** at YBWA in July, with a high of over 50. A **Willet** was at the Anatolia Vernal Pool Reserve on 7/21, and one was at SRWTP from 7/6-10. A **Red Knot** was a really nice find at the Davis WTP from 6/28-30, and a **Semipalmated Sandpiper** found on a tour of the SRWTP Bufferlands on 7/29. A **Least Tern** pair nested again at SRWTP (as they have in all but two years since 2008), but the three chicks that hatched by 6/11 disappeared in their

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. There are no meetings over the summer. The next meeting will be on September 26, 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.



American Bittern
Daniel Kilby

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.

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Observations continued

first week, surely by way of an unknown predator. A **Black Skimmer** found at YBWA on 7/4 was a first for Yolo County and a really nice surprise. It was likely the same bird that was reported the previous day from Sacramento NWR, to the north of our area, but it was not found again after 7/4.

A **Say's Phoebe** in juvenile plumage was a surprise at the North Mather Drive Wetlands on 7/29. This species is not known to nest in our immediate area. A late singing **Swainson's Thrush** was found in the Orr Forest of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 6/24, but not on followup visits, and **Yellow Warblers** were singing and seemingly on territory there, and may have nested. The only real songbird vagrant of the period was a singing male **Northern Parula** at William B Pond along the American River Parkway on 6/4.

Up to five **Grasshopper Sparrows** at CRP in the pasture off of Bruceville Rd were a nice find in mid-July. The singing male **Summer Tanager** at CRP's Orr Forest found on 5/27 continued through at least late July, but there was no indication that he found a mate despite singing incessantly throughout the day.

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:

Keith Bailey, Paul Cordero, Hugh Dingle, Lily Douglas, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Stephan Fettig, Ted Gilliland, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, John Harris, Cliff Hawley, James Holmes, Stanton Hunter, Logan Kahle, Dan Kopp, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Mark Martucci, Michael Perrone, Jason Riggio, Jim Rowth, Steve Scott, John Sterling, John Trochet, Adam Warner, Rick Williams, and David Yee.

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

Chris Conard

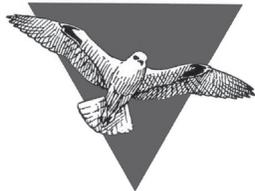
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White-tailed Kite Dan Brown

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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 by the Sacramento Audubon Society, monthly, January through December, except June and August, when we publish abbreviated editions.

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

Thursday, September 21

At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 7pm

Dan Airola: *Migration and Wintering
Location of Swainson's Hawks*

Judith Lemare: *Update on Habitat
Preservation of Swainson's Hawks*

FUTURE PROGRAMS

October 19: Paul Tebbel, *Sandhill Crane
Biology and Viewing*

November 9: Please note the early date,
TBD

January 18: Ed Harper, *Norway/Svalbard*