

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



March General Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 7 p.m.

The speaker will be on-site at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Participants may opt to join the meeting via Zoom.

If you would like to attend the meeting via Zoom, you will need to register online at <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker>.

Magnificent India

Presented by Andy Engilis

Andy Engilis, Curator of the UC Davis Museum of Wildlife and Fish Biology will present a talk exploring the incredible wildlife and birds of India. Andy and his wife Irene have been exploring and studying India's avian diversity with colleagues and former students since 2020. Although India is home to an exploding human population, there are still regions of the country where wildlife abounds. India is truly a birders paradise, the diversity found there is rivaled only by four South American Countries.

Andy will present some of that diversity weaving in tales of India's spectacular wildlife and human elements. Conservation is coming to the forefront in India and presents challenges similar to those faced in California (human population growth, agriculture, water, research). The evening's talk will explore the mid-elevations of the Himalaya Mountains, the coastal plains of Gujarat, the Thar Desert of the far west, and then east to the remote state of Assam.



Updating the Sacramento Area Birds Checklist

Since it was added to the website in 2020 the Sacramento Area Birds Checklist, last updated in 2009, has been one of the most popular pages on the Sacramento Audubon website. In 2023 the website committee decided to see if it could be updated. Starting with eBird data from hotspots within the checklist area and then consulting a panel of experts, the checklist was updated and is now available on the website. <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/sacramento-birds-checklist>. We hope you will be as excited to check it out as we are to introduce it to you.

There have been quite a few changes to the checklist, most notably the addition of 15 species to the primary checklist. They are Mute Swan, Trumpeter Swan, Surf Scoter, Sanderling, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Least Tern, Pacific Loon, Glossy Ibis, Plumbeous Vireo, Red Crossbill, Swamp Sparrow, Tennessee Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, and Summer Tanager. We invite you to take some time and explore the checklist online and discover all that has been updated.

The Sacramento Area Birds Checklist follows the Clements Checklist for naming and order of species. While it may be counterintuitive for Greater Yellowlegs and Lesser Yellowlegs to be separated by Willet, this is how they are now categorized. On the website each family of birds is grouped together within a table. Families are grouped under additional headings such as

Shorebirds. Click on any of these headings and it will take you to the Gallery of Birds - images of these species. You can also click on the name of any species to view images of that species. We are very thankful to all the wonderful photographers that have donated their

pictures for use on the website. We are still looking to add pictures for some of the new species on the checklist.

A color code is used to indicate the likelihood of observing a species in a specific half of each month. The darker the color the more likely the species is to be observed. A key to the colors and other abbreviations and symbols is

Species	Habitat	N	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Snow Goose	AFM:OM													
Road's Goose	AFM:OM													
Greater White-fronted Goose	AFM:OM													
Cackling Goose	AFM:OM													
Canada Goose	AFM:OM	N												
Mute Swan	O	N												
Trumpeter Swan*	FM:OM													
Tundra Swan	AFM:OM													
Wood Duck	ROM	N												
Blue-winged Teal (L:10, 11, 18)	MOMa	RN												
Cinnamon Teal	MOMa	N												
Northern Shovier	OMMsa	RN												
Gadwall	OMMsa	N												
Innate Wigeon (L:1, 17)	OMMsa													
American Wigeon	OMMsaFA	F												
Mallard	wide	N												
Northern Pintail	OMMsaF	RN												
Green-winged Teal	OMMsa	RN												
Canvasback	OM	F												
Redhead (L:20)	OM	RN												

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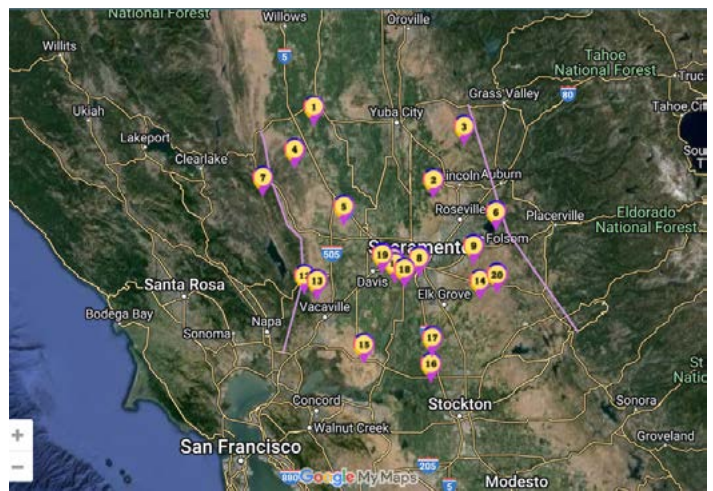
Updating the Sacramento Area Birds Checklist continued from page 1

available below the checklist and on the [Checklist Key](#) page. Additionally, if you are viewing the checklist on a computer, you can hover your cursor over any colored box on the checklist and a note will pop up describing what the color indicates.

Habitat and nesting information are also included. Location recommendations for viewing some of the rarer species is another feature. Those birds with **(L: Number)** following their name have recommended locations at which they could be found. The numbers correlate to a point on the [checklist's map](#). Click on a point on the map for more information on and directions to that location.

Many people have contributed to updating the checklist. The website committee members: Mary Forrestal, Marti Ikehara, Nancy Kapellas, and Jane Van Kessel spent an inordinate amount of time compiling and editing this information. The experts who contributed their time and knowledge: Chris Conard, Dan Airola, Gil Ewing, Maureen Geiger, Dave Johnson, Ed Pandolfino, Michael Perrone, Dan Tankersley, and John Trochet were indispensable. We'd also like to thank John Harding who set-up the original checklist on the SAS website, without his framework we wouldn't be able to share this updated version with you. Thank you to everyone involved in this project.

A printed version of the updated checklist will soon be available for purchase. It will be in the same format as the "blue checklist" that so many of us have



come to rely on when out in the field. Watch for the printed checklist at upcoming outreach events and Sacramento Audubon meetings, as well as in local Wild Birds Unlimited stores and the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

If you have any questions or comments about the checklist or would like to contribute photos, please contact the website committee at sacramentoaudubon@gmail.com.

—Mary Forrestal

Outreach Volunteers Needed

We have upcoming spring and summer events where we will need volunteers to help staff our outreach table. You do not need to be an accomplished birder, just someone who enjoys birding and talking to people about our field trips and what SAS's mission is. You would be working with an experienced volunteer. Helpers work either a morning or afternoon session at outreach events.

If you would like to help out on upcoming events please contact Bill Bianco at: biancowm@yahoo.com, or call 916-372-3318.

Board and Chair Openings

We have two Board positions now open. Harriet Saeck has stepped down after four years as Treasurer. Eric Johnson has graciously agreed to take this Board position so we have an opening for Vice President. Our new Recording Secretary Joanne Prakapas also had to step down due to health reasons, so we are also looking to fill this position.

Finally, Daphne Reimer has been filling the Hospitality Chair position for our General Meetings at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Daphne will continue in this role until May, so we need someone who loves to bake cookies and can attend our monthly General Meetings.

Please email Paul Miller at sacaudubonpresident@gmail.com if you are interested and/or require additional information.

SAS Hospitality Chair Vacancy

I'll be leaving my post as Hospitality Chair come May. I don't recall when I started making the refreshments for our monthly speaker meeting (there was a long break during the pandemic), but it's been a while and I am ready to hang up my apron.

So, we need a volunteer, or volunteers, to commit to 8 evenings a year to make sure a few refreshments are available to those attending the meeting. If you are a baker, here's an outlet for you. If you are an organizer, this will be a breeze. Quite simply, you make some coffee, provide the cups and half 'n half, and put some cookies out (homemade or otherwise). Expenses for baked goods and supplies are reimbursable.

Perhaps we'll forego the refreshments if the position goes unfilled—we certainly don't need the extra calories. However, the event will feel less convivial, less welcoming, in my opinion. People enjoy chatting before and after the meetings while grabbing a cup of coffee and a cookie or two. As Hospitality Chair, it's gratifying to know your efforts help support and encourage this gathering.

—Daphne Reimer

Effie Yeaw's Bird and Breakfast March 16 & 24

This annual event, held at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park in Carmichael, starts with bird walks guided by some of the best local birders. For weeks in advance, volunteers scout the Nature Study Area for nests and local rarities. After the walk, 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.

Bird and Breakfast often sells out. Reservations are required. For more information visit <https://www.sacnaturecenter.net/events/bird-breakfast-weekend/>.



Photo: Effie Yeaw

Field Trips March 1 — April 15, 2024

Sacramento Audubon Society is proud to offer field trips to suit a variety of birders and birding abilities, and visit a large range of birding locations. Activities are organized and led by volunteers who offer their time and expertise to those who join them.

- Unless otherwise noted, field trips are geared towards those over the age of 13.
- All trip leaders and participants, including children 5 and up, must be vaccinated against COVID 19.
- Please read the description of each field trip carefully to note any specific requirements.
- Some trips require advance registration. Registration opens when the trip is announced in *The Observer* or posted to the website. (Please note that receiving the electronic *Observer* means you will receive it up to 2 weeks in advance of the paper edition.) On the [website](#): click on the photo or title of the field trip to learn more about the trip and its registration requirements.
- Always check the [website](#) for any last minute updates prior to joining a field trip. Cancellations or last minute instructions will be posted to the website, even for trips requiring registration. Trips are planned up to 3 months in advance and conditions can change. If you are unsure of the status of a field trip, call or email the trip leader.

Trips leave the meeting place at the time stated. Please arrive early if you need driving directions or plan to carpool.

Leaders cannot organize ride sharing or carpools as they 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.

PLEASE NOTE: The entrance fee for all Sacramento County Parks increased as of January 2024. The new daily fee is \$7, and the annual fee is \$70. This includes many popular birding locations such as the American River Parkway, Gibson Ranch, and Mather Regional Park. For more information: <https://regionalparks.saccounty.gov/Parks/Pages/EntranceFees.aspx>

Coyote Pond Park and University Pond, Lincoln

Saturday, March 2, 8 a.m.
Expected length: 3 hours
Leaders: Nancy Gronert (279) 346-4790 and Amy McDonald
sacaudubonconsec@gmail.com
Join us for a morning of birding in Lincoln exploring Coyote Pond Park and nearby University Pond. We'll start at Coyote Park Pond which includes open grasslands, ponds, and riparian habitat. We can expect to see wintering and resident waterfowl as well as a good variety of raptors, woodpeckers, sparrows, and other grassland birds. We will then make a five-minute drive to University Pond on the William Jessup University Campus, where we'll scan the pond for a variety of waterfowl, gulls, and shorebirds.

The two locations are both easy walks, totaling approximately 2 miles on mostly flat, paved trails. At Coyote Pond there are gradual slopes near the meeting spot and on the path to Whistler Pond. A spotting scope is helpful, but not required at University Pond. Your leaders will also have scopes for you to use. There are no bathroom facilities at either location. Bathrooms are available at the Chevron station on the corner of Twelve Bridges Rd and E Joyner Pkwy on the way to Coyote Park Pond.

Meet Amy and Nancy at Coyote Pond Park: Park on Old Kenmare Dr, adjacent to the trailhead at the corner of Old Kenmare Rd and Eastridge Dr (**Note: this is not the main park entrance.**) From N CA-65 in Lincoln, take exit 313 onto Twelve Bridges Dr. Head east on Twelve Bridges Dr for approx. 1.5 miles and then turn right on Eastridge Dr. Stay on Eastridge Dr for .5 miles and then turn left on Old Kenmare Rd. The trailhead is on your right, park along Kenmare Rd.

For the stop at University Pond: Park on Larkspur Dr near the corner of Larkspur Dr and University Ave. Travel NE on Eastridge Dr for .5 miles back to Twelve Bridges Dr. Turn left on Twelve Bridges Dr and in .75 miles turn left on E Joyner Pkwy. Stay on E Joyner Pkwy for 1 mile and then turn left on W Ranch View Dr. In 500 ft turn left on University Ave. In 1 mile, turn left on Larkspur Dr and park on the street.

Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary

Sunday, March 3, 8:30 a.m.
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Maureen Geiger, (916) 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net
Join Maureen for an approximately 2.5 mile walk in this 430-acre National Audubon Sanctuary managed by Sacramento Audubon. We will walk to the rivers' overlook where the Bear River flows into the Feather River looking for resident and wintering birds such as Hermit Thrush, Fox Sparrow, crowned sparrows, both towhees and various raptors along the way. Come and hear about the efforts underway to attract butterflies including Monarchs to the Preserve. This trip will end by noon. The trails are fairly level, however, to access them you must be able to walk up and down a moderately steep levee trail both coming and going.

Meet Maureen at the Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary. From Sacramento, take I-5 north, then Hwy 99 north toward Yuba City; about 2 miles north of the new bridge over the Feather River, turn right on Laurel Ave and continue to the Bobelaine parking lot at the end.

Lake Solano County Park

Wednesday, March 6, 8 a.m.
Expected length: 4-5 hours
Leader: Bill Bianco, (916) 889-4849
biancowm@yahoo.com
Join Bill for an easy walk through low foothills looking for a variety of woodpeckers, warblers, late wintering species and other songbirds. Walk 1 – 1.5 miles on fairly flat terrain. May want to bring a lunch and water. Heavy rain and strong wind cancels. A \$6 Park Fee is required. No dogs and no glass containers allowed in the park area.

Meet Bill at the Lake Solano County Park parking lot. From Sacramento on I-80 west, take Exit 70 for CA-113 north toward Woodland. Take Exit 70 for West Covell Blvd. Turn left on West Covell Blvd/ Road 31. In 7 miles, take a slight left on to Rd 93A. At the traffic circle, continue straight to stay on CA-128/E Grant Ave. Continue to follow CA-128 west. In 4.3 miles, turn left on Pleasants Valley Rd. In 0.2 miles, turn left into the park. 8685 Pleasants Valley Rd, Winters, CA.

Hidden Falls Regional Park

Thursday, March 7, 8 a.m.
Expected length: 5 hours
Leader: Peter Perrine, (916) 661-8787
This trip is FULL

Hidden Falls Regional Park is a beautiful example of the Sierra Nevada foothills in the transition zone between oak woodlands and grey pines. An eBird hotspot, with more than 115 bird species found here (so far), it is a very popular destination not only for wildlife, but also for its scenic beauty and waterfalls. Expect to see a good variety of oak woodland and riparian birds, with early nesters beginning to display, and the usual wintering birds still in good numbers. This will be a somewhat strenuous trip of about five miles to the main falls and back. The first mile from the trailhead descends about 300 feet to a small stream, which means a one mile climb at the end of the day. Not steep, but trails here can be slippery after a rain. Bring water and snacks, or lunch if you wish; there are picnic tables and a restroom near the parking lot.

Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

Golden Gate Park and Sutro Baths

This trip has been CANCELED

Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant, Yolo County

Sunday, March 10, 8 a.m.
Expected Length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Mark Martucci, (916) 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com
Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant is an outstanding location for viewing wintering waterfowl, grebes, gulls, and shorebirds. We will spend three to four hours exploring the ponds and surrounding fields. If you have a scope, it would be very helpful.

To reach WWTP, take I-5 from Sacramento continuing past the Airport. Turn off on the first Woodland Exit, #536 Road 102. Go south on Road 102 about one mile to the light at Road 24 on the left and Gibson Rd on the right. Turn left onto Road 24 and continue to the gravel parking area near the north pond.

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Field Trips March 1 — April 15, 2024 continued

Rossmoor Bar

Saturday, March 16, 2024, 7 a.m.
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Kevin Thomas (916) 217-6946
bionerdkevin@gmail.com
Registration is required for this trip, and it will be limited to 8 participants. Please email Kevin to register.
We will take a stroll along the oak woodland forest and riverbank searching for lingering wintering birds and our early arriving migrants. We can expect to see a good mix of ducks, gulls, raptors, sparrows, and warblers as we close out winter and welcome in spring. We will be walking several miles on flat but uneven terrain.

Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration. A \$7 parking fee or a Sacramento County Parking Pass are required.

♿ Cosumnes River Preserve Accessible Trip

Sunday, March 17, 2024, 9 a.m.
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Paul Miller (916) 768-7503
pjmill1962@me.com
Registration is required for this trip, and it will be limited to 6 participants. Please email Paul to register.
Join Paul for a fully accessible trip to this excellent birding location. Wintering 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. Rain cancels.

Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

Beginning Birder Walk, William Pond Park

Sunday, March 17
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Contact Larry Hickey at: larryhickey1@gmail.com; put Beginning Birder in the subject line. Registrants will be emailed the meeting time and exact location.
These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip, with three Audubon trip leaders, it is a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. On this trip we'll talk about habitat, field marks, and bird behavior, as we look at individual birds.

Morgan Oaks Eternal Preserve, Lincoln

Thursday, March 21, 7:30 a.m.
Expected length: 2-4 hours
Susan Goodrich (916) 201-6871 and Mary Forrestal
sacramentoaudubonfieldtrips@gmail.com
Morgan Oaks Eternal Preserve is a green burial cemetery in the rolling foothills of Placer County. With just over 160 acres, trails meander through grasslands and old oaks and are surrounded by farms and views of the Sierra. This is a new field trip location for Sacramento Audubon. Join us as we discover what this new location has to offer. The trail is mostly flat and dirt, with a few inclines. Bathrooms are present on site. There is not much shade, so bring hats, sunscreen, water and snacks as needed. Heavy rain cancels.

Meet Susan and Mary at Morgan Oaks Eternal Preserve, 421 Fleming Rd, Lincoln, CA 95648. From Sacramento, take HW80 East, then CA 65 North (Exit 106). Continue on CA 65 for about 14.5 miles. Turn right onto West Wise Rd. After 4 miles, turn left on Gladding. After 2.7 miles, turn right onto Flemming Rd. Morgan Oaks is .5 miles ahead on the right.

Teal Bend

Sunday, March 24, 8 a.m.
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Richard Barbieri (916) 761-1124
offleash227@gmail.com
Join Richard to explore the rich habitat at Teal Bend Golf Course. He will explore a variety of habitats, including wooded and riparian areas, and hopes to see a variety of migrating and resident birds.

Meet Richard at the parking lot at Teal Bend Golf Course. The address is 7200 Garden Highway, Sacramento 95837. From Sacramento, take Highway 5 north, then when it splits into Highway 5 and Highway 99, take Highway 99 north. Take Exit 309 at Elverta Road and turn left (west). Drive about three miles, then turn left onto Garden Highway. After about a mile, turn left into the golf course. Proceed to the parking lot.

Beeks Bight Family Friendly Trip

Saturday, March 30, 8:30 a.m.
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Nicole Barden (530) 304-5461
folsomlake@ports-ca.us
Registration is required for this trip and it will be limited to 15 participants. Please email Nicole to register.
Join Environmental Educator Nicole

to explore what this popular birding location has to offer! We will be on the lookout for our early spring feathered friends like hummingbirds, California Thrasher, and Wren-tit. Open to all birding levels, this trip will be slow-paced, and we will be taking the time to appreciate bird behavior along the way. We will be listening for birds as much as looking for them and will keep an e-bird list as we go. Beginning and young birders are encouraged to join.

Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

Ancil Hoffman Park

Saturday, April 6, 8 a.m.
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Dan Williams, (714) 943-1266
jaegermaestro@yahoo.com
Join Dan for a short morning walk through this historic jewel on the Parkway. We will be looking for early spring migrants as well as resident nuthatches, wrens, towhees, and other small passerines. We'll start out birding the riparian habitat along the river down to the swale below the end of the golf course and finish the loop by walking the path back along the driving range. Trip will end before noon. This is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders. A Sac County Park Pass or \$7 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Meet Dan at the main picnic area parking lot across from the golf course clubhouse. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Marconi, proceed east on Palm Drive. Turn right on California Ave and left on Tarshes Dr into the park. After showing your park pass or paying to park at the kiosk, proceed to the end of Tarshes Dr and park in the farthest lot on the left across from the golf course clubhouse.

North Natomas Regional Park

Sunday, April 7, 8 a.m.
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Ben Graber (916) 844-8682
Bgraber984@protonmail.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, Red-Winged Blackbirds. Herons, egrets, and various species of raptors are also possible. This trip will include approx. 2 to 3 miles of walking over flat terrain; bringing liquids is recommended. This is a great trip for beginning and more experienced birders.

Meet Ben at the parking lot on the north side of New Market Drive, across from Inderkum High School. (2501 New Market Dr, Sacramento 95835) From Sacramento, take I-5 North to Del Paso Rd, Exit 525A. Go right/east on Del Paso Rd. In 0.5 miles turn left onto Town Center Dr.

Sailor Bar

Thursday, April 11, 7:30 a.m.
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Darrell Mohr, (916) 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com
Join Darrell for a morning walk checking out the local birds. Possible birds include Phainopepla and California Quail. This is a good trip for both beginners and experienced birders.

From Sacramento, take Highway 50 east to Exit 21, Hazel Ave. Turn left at the light and proceed north 1.4 miles to Winding Way. Turn left on Winding Way, then proceed .5 miles to Illinois Ave, where you will take a left. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Ave. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area. A Sacramento County Park Pass or \$7 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

♿ Lake Solano

Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m.
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Paul Miller, (916) 768-7503
pjmill1962@me.com
Registration is required for this trip and it will be limited to 6 participants. Please email Paul to register. Please bring an \$8 parking fee.
This trip is specifically designed for beginning to more experienced birders in a location with paved trails, handicapped parking, and fully accessible restrooms. Whether you walk, use a wheelchair, or a walker, this trip is for you. We will travel along paved trails and hard-packed dirt at Lake Solano Park, a short drive from Sacramento. The lake is a good area for lingering ducks including possible Barrow's Goldeneye and Hooded Merganser. Phainopepla and Brown Creepers are possible, and Pileated Woodpecker have been found in the area. Bring water, a snack, and a smart phone if you have one. Heavy rain or high wind cancels the trip.

Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

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Field Trips continued

River Bend Park

Saturday, April 13, 7:30 a.m.

Expected length: 3 – 3 ½ hours

Leader: Dana Miller-Blair (916) 947-9397

djmlblair@gmail.com

A Sac County Park Pass or \$7 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

We will walk through oak woodland and then along the river. We will be looking for small woodland birds, woodpeckers, Red-shouldered Hawk, and possibly Great Horned Owl. We will also have opportunities to see birds on the river. Walk will end by 11 a.m.

Meet Dana at the main picnic area/river rafting exit. From the entry kiosk, enter the park and bear left at the information sign. Drive .31 miles to stop sign, proceed straight ahead another .17 miles, then turn left at the sign for "River rafting exit/main picnic area." Proceed another .2 miles to the parking lot with white dumpster on the right and bathrooms to the left.

From Folsom Blvd, between Bradshaw and Mather Field Road, take Rod Beaudry Dr north into the park.

Beginning Birder Walk, William Pond Park

Sunday, April 14

Maximum number of participants: 10

Registration is required for this trip.

Contact Larry Hickey at: larryhickey1@gmail.com; put Beginning Birder in the subject line. Registrants will be emailed the meeting time and exact location

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip, with three Audubon trip leaders, it is a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. On this trip we'll talk about habitat, field marks, and bird behavior, as we look at individual birds.

Sweetwater Creek

Saturday, April 14, 7 a.m.

Expected length: 3-4 hours

Leader: Richard Barbieri, (916) 761-1124

offleash227@gmail.com

Registration is required for this trip, and it will be limited to 8 participants.

Please email Richard to register.

At this favorite spring hotspot, we should find wildflowers in bloom and may hear the song of the Yellow-breasted Chat. Other possibilities are Lazuli Buntings, Wrentits, California Thrashers, migrating hummingbirds, and colorful warblers. Rain cancels.

Meet at the south side of the Bella Bru parking lot in the Raley's shopping center 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 the right.

Field Trip Findings

William Pond Park, (2/14)

Leader Mark Martucci reported: Four birders detected 55 species of birds on an overcast morning along the American River Parkway. Highlights included **Wood Duck, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Red-breasted Sapsucker, White-tailed Kite, and Purple Finch.**

William Pond Park, Beginners' Walk, (2/11)

Larry Hickey, co-leader with Jane Van Kessel and Nancy Kapellas, reported: Eleven enthusiastic and sharp-eyed beginning birders joined our February beginning birder field trip at the William Pond part of the parkway. The morning started out clear and cold but warmed up quickly. Right away, before we left the parking lot, we were treated to close views of **Red-shouldered Hawks** carrying nesting materials. One was being harassed aggressively by a small group of noisy **Yellow-billed Magpies** as it tried to carry sticks. Large numbers of **American Coots** continued to occupy the open water part of the park, and we had nice scope views of a **Green Heron, Snowy Egrets** in their breeding plumage, a **Great Egret** and about 30 **Great Blue Herons** on and around their nests.

Cosumnes River Preserve, (2/10)

Leader Paul Miller reported: Five people joined me on an accessible birding trip to Cosumnes River Preserve. The trip was set for the afternoon to catch the **Sandhill Crane** fly-in. Unfortunately only a small flock arrived but well after the participants had left. However we did get to see two large **Snow Goose** flocks getting airborne simultaneously not far from the Boardwalk. Highlights of the day included a **Sora, Cinnamon Teal, Marsh Wren,** and a large flotilla of **Ring-necked Ducks.**

Napa Sonoma Marshes, (2/8)

Nancy Gronert, co-leader with Amy McDonald, reported: Five birders showed up for a fabulously sunny, windless day at the Huichica Creek Unit of the Napa-Sonoma marsh area. The pond water levels were quite high after recent rains with not much mudflat area close and lots of sunning birds on the far sides. Participants noticed skeins of hundreds of **Cackling Geese** landing somewhere in the valley. In the pretty full ponds we enjoyed **Bufflehead, Ruddy Ducks,** and some **Northern Shovelers** as well as the longer legged **Greater Yellowlegs, American Avocets, Willets,** and **Black-Necked Stilts**. A **Great Horned Owl** flew over the group and we tallied a **White-tailed Kite,** swooping **Northern Harriers,** and **Red-tailed Hawks** along with **Tree Swallows** and a **Barn Swallow**. As usual we heard the calls of **Sora** and **Virginia Rail** but didn't get looks. There was a nice selection of **Eared Grebes, Pied-billed Grebes,** a couple of **Horned Grebes,** and a **Western Grebe**. A troop of **Forster's Terns** entertained with their dives and pruning on posts. **Least Sandpipers** and **Black-bellied Plovers** sunned themselves on the levee, with many more shorebirds and gulls too distant to identify. **Song Sparrows** and **Savannah Sparrows** were out and about singing in the sun.

Robinson Rd, Solano County, (2/4)

Leader Maureen Geiger reported: Trip was canceled due to stormy weather.

Bodega Bay, (2/3)

Leader Dan Williams reported: Our intrepid group of 18 ventured out between storms and Bodega Bay did NOT disappoint! We started as we usually do at Doran Regional Park where there was little activity on the beach, but we followed the flying flocks of **Brant** from the ocean side across the entrance road to the tideflats, where we enjoyed multitudes of **Marbled Godwits, Willets, Dunlins, Sanderlings, and Greater Scaup.** We managed to find one **Snowy Plover** running and pausing amid the chaos. It was then that we ran into the great Peter Pyle who graciously informed us that he had just seen something up the road that we were going to need to divert to immediately! We jumped back in our cars, departed Doran, and drove 5 minutes north to Smith Brothers Road. After about 10 minutes of checking multiple **Commons** and at least one **Red-throated,** there it was...a beautiful first winter **YELLOW-BILLED LOON!** A life bird for many of us, and for myself only the 2nd in 30 years of birding! We circled back to Doran Park and spent some time birding the harbor mouth and jetty where we were able to locate multiple **Red-necked Grebes, Red-breasted Mergansers, Surf Scoters, Black Oystercatchers, and Black Turnstones** as well as **Western, Glaucous-winged, Short-billed,** and (one) **Bonaparte's Gull.** Next, we stopped by The Tides Wharf, which was entertaining as always. Below the back deck was a goofy pile of lounging California Sea Lions, and some Harbor Seals also swam by for good comparisons. We picked up some provisions there, then continued on to Porto Bodega for lunch and to see if we could locate another reported rarity there. Sure enough, it didn't take but 2 minutes before the first winter male **LONG-TAILED DUCK** appeared among the **Buffleheads** and **Surf Scoters** near the marina. He was VERY actively dive-foraging, but eventually observations were made by all and photos taken by some. Next, we headed to Campbell Cove and Hole-in-the-Head where a **Pied-billed Grebe,** a **Sharp-shinned Hawk,** several "Myrtle" **Yellow-rumped Warblers,** and a **Fox Sparrow** were added to the trip list. Then just as we were getting in the cars, a **White-winged Scoter** appeared in the channel below back down by the jetty. Up on the Head the winds were light, and conditions were good to spot birds on the open ocean. The sea stacks had multiple Pelagic and one **Brandt's Cormorant** and a few more **Black Oystercatchers.** Out past the breakers, we spotted a first winter **Pacific Loon** which completed our FOUR LOON DAY and one of the most epic editions of this long-standing annual trip.

continued on next page

Field Trip Findings continued

Gibson Ranch, (1/28)

Leader Kevin Thomas reported: We arrived at 7 am to a light fog across the landscape knowing that the day was predicted to be unseasonably warm for this time of year. It turned out to be just that as it was already into the low 60's by the time we finished at 10:15. We had a great group of 11 people which provided for some great conversation and bird spotting. We started the morning with a good bunch of raptors with several **White-tailed Kites**, a few **Red-shouldered** and **Red-tailed Hawks**, and a **Bald Eagle**. The pond was rather quiet as it can be on warm winter days, a few **Common Goldeneye** were the highlights. As we made our way around the pond we were treated to a large flock of **Long-billed Curlews** that circled around for a bit before settling somewhere to the west in some grasslands, only the second occurrence at Gibson Ranch in the eBird database. We stopped at the flowering eucalyptus trees to watch the dozens of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** feeding and the **Anna's Hummingbirds** buzzing around. We made our way over to the Dry Creek trail where the largest stands of oak woodlands remain. We were treated to a pair of **Red-breasted Sapsuckers**, a lifer for one in the group! We finished the morning looping back around to the parking lot with one final look at the pond. There were a few gulls around but the non-resident waterfowl were absent. It was a great morning with great folks.

William Pond Park, Beginners' Walk, (1/28)

Larry Hickey, co-leader with Rich Howard and Heather White, reported: Our January beginning birder field trip had to be postponed due to the weather, so our group ended up being smaller than originally planned. However, six of us had perfect weather for the rescheduled field trip on a day that felt more like spring than winter. **Yellow-billed Magpies** were very noisy and active and we were able to watch as they refurbished nests. **Red-shouldered Hawks** were also active and one flew in and occupied a nest. We ended up with over 40 species including large numbers of **American Coots**, **Bufflehead**, **Common Goldeneye**, and **Wood Ducks** on the open water. Highlights included a pair of **Northern Shovelers**, good scope views of **Snowy Egret** and **Great Blue Heron**, and a pair of **Chipping Sparrows** foraging in the grass.

Staten Island, (1/27)

Betty Cooper, co-leader with Rich Howard, reported: With the assistance of fellow birder Bob Jensen, we led the group of 13 after meeting at the north end of Staten Island Road. The group was greeted by a large flock of **Cackling Geese** as we consolidated to four vehicles for ease of roadside parking. As we started the slow roll down the road there were hundreds more **Cackling Geese** as well as **Sandhill Cranes**. A stop for scoping gave us good views of the cranes and a few **Snow Geese** scattered in among the **Cackling Geese**. Also present in the trees near a farmhouse were **House Finches**, **Phoebes** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers**. Further along we found large groups of waterfowl and shorebirds primarily consisting of **Long-billed Dowitchers**. Also present were **Tundra Swans** and the afternoon ended with flying swans and large

flocks of **Snow Geese**. A total of 30 species were observed as we ended the day with beautiful views of the sun setting behind Mt. Diablo.

Lincoln WTP, (1/25)

Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: The weather cooperated and gave us a lovely winter birding day, with no wind and scattered clouds. Our group of ten birders had barely begun to drive towards the east pond levee when we spotted several raptors perched in oak trees. We tallied two **Red-tailed Hawks**, a **Merlin**, two **Northern Harriers**, and an **American Kestrel**. While scoping these beauties, we noted a group of brightly-colored male **House Finches** and a host of **Western Meadowlarks** whose bright yellow bellies almost glowed in the morning sunlight. We were amused by a pair of **Canada Geese** perched on the roofline of a barn, standing out like sore thumbs. Upon arrival at the levee, we noted that the east pond was populated exclusively by **Bufflehead**. Feeding along the shore were over a dozen **Least Sandpipers**, a **Black-necked Stilt**, and a pair of **Greater Yellowlegs**. Scope views of a small pond east of the water treatment plant revealed several dozen ducks, including **Northern Shoveler**, **Gadwall**, **Mallard**, and **Green-winged Teal**. A **Pied-billed Grebe** and a pair of **Coots** wove in and out of the ducks, while a **Great Blue Heron** watched the goings-on from the bank. A **Ring-necked Pheasant** came out of nowhere, skimmed over the pond, and dropped into some reeds. A lovely surprise came in the form of a flock of **Horned Larks**, numbering at least one hundred. They were courteous enough to land in the short grass next to a nearby shallow puddle, giving everyone great looks through scopes and binoculars. Moving over to the west ponds, we were rewarded with good views of several additional species of ducks, including **Canvasback**, **Lesser Scaup**. Four **Double-crested Cormorants** lounged around on the levee, accompanied by a **Snowy Egret** and **Canada Geese**. Our final sighting was two **Bald Eagles** on a distant tree, keeping watchful eyes on their territory; total species for the morning was 48.

Effie Yeaw Family Walk, (1/20)

Sandra Steurer, co-leader with Lynne Tweten, reported: We had 16 people join us, with EYNC docent Hannah Steurer. It was overcast with rain starting to come down just after we finished the walk. We had 23 species of birds.

Michigan Bar, (1/20)

Leader Chris Conard reported: We lucked out with a break in a rainy period and nine of us had an enjoyable outing to Michigan Bar Rd in eastern Sacramento County. Windy conditions kept songbird activity low, but we had excellent waterbirds and raptors. The Cosumnes River produced **Wood Ducks**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Hooded** and **Common Mergansers**, a **Belted Kingfisher**, and about eight **Wilson's Snipe** that were finally detected after careful scrutiny of the rocks below Michigan Bar Bridge. At least five **Bald Eagles** of various age classes, a briefly-seen **Golden Eagle**, and a **Ferruginous Hawk** were highlights. The trip seemed over as the wind got up to 20 mph, but most decided to drive Meiss Rd anyway. New

species for the day included **Canvasback**, **Prairie Falcon**, **Burrowing Owl** at a mini-cliff on a hillside, a **Loggerhead Shrike**, and a **Vesper Sparrow** photographed by one member of the group. Considering that everyone had debated staying home because of the forecast, the day turned out far birdier than expected.

Cosumnes River Preserve, (1/20)

Leader Paul Miller reported: Trip was canceled due to rainy weather.

Teal Bend Golf Course, (1/14)

Leader Richard Barbieri reported: The day started off with a promising warming sun with 7 people joining my walk. We were first entertained by a pair of kites and their flight displays and callings but as the day wore on it became cold and overcast which led to a bit of a slowdown in activity. However, the day produced 57 species with a few highlights including 2 **Brown Creepers**, 2 **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, a **Bald Eagle** fly over carrying a kill, and a **Varied Thrush**.

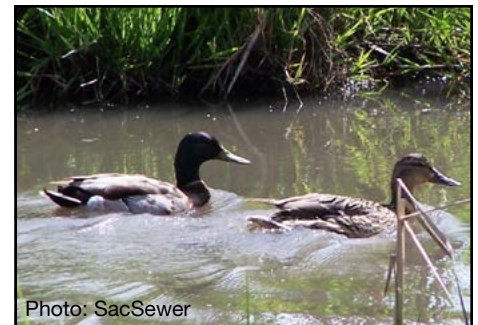


Photo: SacSewer

Bufferlands: Birds and Blooms

April 6, 2024, 9 a.m. – noon

Join Bufferlands biologists along with the Bufferlands docent team for a guided walk through the grassland, wetland, and riparian habitats of the 2,000+ acre open space preserve surrounding the EchoWater Facility. It's a great time of the year to identify a wide variety of plants that are in bloom and to see a number of the 246 different bird species that have been recorded on the property.

To register, please email Chris Conard at conardc@sacsewer.com. **Reservations will only be accepted one week before the event date, so please plan accordingly.**

Seasonal Sightings January 1 – 31, 2024

This month produced many interesting reports although local Christmas Bird Count (CBC) compilers noted there were relatively low waterfowl numbers this season. Up to three **Red-breasted Mergansers** were found throughout the month on Folsom Lake, and one was found on the Sherman Island CBC near Brannan Island on 1/2. More impressive was the report of at least 29 **Red-breasted Mergansers** on a Lake Camanche boat trip on 1/28. Mid-winter **Common Poorwills** are very rare, but not completely unexpected. After all, they are the only birds known to hibernate. One was found on 1/28 along Yolo County Rd 53 to the west of the Capay Valley. A well-seen and photographed male **Costa's Hummingbird** spent most of the month in northeast Davis.

Mountain Plover reports were a little more encouraging this winter than in recent years. They continued in the fields along Hwy 45 in Yolo County, just south of the Colusa County line, with a high of just over 100 reported. A high of 54 at the old hotspot south of Dixon along Flannery Rd was a pleasant surprise after so few have been found there in recent years.

Western Sandpipers appear to be getting a bit more common in winter, with three reported on the 1/2 Sherman Island CBC, up to 13 found at the Sacramento Regional WTP, and 21 on 1/20 at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP). An adult **Glaucous Gull** was reported as a flyby near the Gristmill access to the American River Parkway on 1/26 and over the nearby Rosemont neighborhood on 1/28. During the first week of the month, Hill Slough Wildlife Area, south of Fairfield, hosted a **Neotropic Cormorant**. This species is marching north into our area and is already breeding in the southern Central Valley.

Most of the recent news about **Burrowing Owls** has been bad, so the discovery of six on a private ranch in southeastern Sacramento County was a pleasant surprise. This has been a very poor winter for finding **Short-eared Owls** in the region, and the only reports were of up to three birds along Sankey Rd in Sutter County, east of the Sacramento River. By mid-winter, it became very difficult to find **Lewis's Woodpeckers** locally. Oddly, one persisted from December at the Orr portion of CRP where they aren't expected. They were mostly absent from their typical, low foothills haunts. It is all the more surprising in a winter season with high numbers of **Acorn Woodpeckers** at sites on the flats of the Valley (CRP and the Bufferlands, for example) where they are often absent or nearly so.

A **Steller's Jay** was a nice find on a private ranch in southeastern Sacramento County on 1/29. Earlier in the season they were showing up more widely in our area. At least two different **Winter Wrens** were reported upstream of Lake Solano along Putah Creek between Fishing Access #3 and Fishing Access #1. Up to three **Red Crossbills** were at the old Sacramento City Cemetery from 1/21-1/25.

There were surprisingly few **Vesper Sparrow** reports, with only singles along Robinson Rd, south of Dixon, on 1/14, and along Meiss Rd on 1/20. The



Western Sandpiper. Photo by Daniel Brown

Orchard Oriole found at the UC Davis Arboretum on 10/11 continued into February. A **Bullock's Oriole**, very rare in winter, was found on Brannan Island on 1/2. Perhaps the bird of the month was an **Ovenbird** found on 1/24 at the WPA Rock Garden in Land Park. Despite how secretive this bird has been, many were able to see it into February, and some were even able to get nice photos. The first-winter male **American Redstart** found on 12/31 in El Dorado Hills continued into January. A **Wilson's Warbler** was found on 1/7 along the Lost Slough portion of CRP; they seem to be turning up more often in winter in recent years. The male **Summer Tanager** that has spent three winters in Land Park in the vicinity of Fairytale Town continued into February.

To view photos of some of the highlights, visit www.sacramentoaudubon.org/bird-sightings, and then click on the highlighted eBird checklists.

The Sacramento Area is roughly defined as lying between Hwy 20 to the north, Hwy 12 to the south, and the 1000-foot contour to the east and west, plus all of Sacramento and Yolo counties. Many reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club listserv (groups.io/g/centralvalleybirds) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but we thank the following for their reports: Steve Abbott, Ralf Baker, Dan Brown, Lyann Comrack, Konshau Duman, Andy Engilis, Jr., Gil Ewing, Kasey Foley, Robert Furrow, Linda Gal, Susan Goodrich, Joshua Greenfield, Cliff Hawley, Marcel Holyoak, Scott Hoppe, Mackenzie Hollender, Emmett Iverson, Logan Kahle, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Dominik Mosur, Roger Muskat, Adam Panto, Ron Pozzi, Samuel Schmidt, Steve Scott, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Dan Williams, and Lynette Williams. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard

In 2024, Governor Newsom Continues to Cut Climate Investments Underscoring Need for a Climate Bond

In January, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced his 2024 budget proposal. Despite speculation of a \$68 billion budget deficit, the Governor's budget accounts for a significantly smaller, yet still challenging budget deficit of approximately \$39 billion. To address the deficit, Governor Newsom's budget includes cuts (or "reversions") to many important programs, including a \$2.9 billion reduction in climate-related programs, in addition to \$1.9 billion in delays of expenditures to future years.

These cuts to environmental and climate programs, such as Regional Climate Resilience and Redondo Beach Wetlands Restoration, underscore the urgent need for different funding sources in conserving California's critical biodiversity.

Proposed Budget Cuts and Reversions

Governor Newsom's proposed budget includes significant cuts to various programs that fund wildlife and climate resilience, including:

- Cuts (otherwise known as decreases in the amount of funding allocated to specific programs, initiatives, or expenditures) \$1.4 billion in investments over multiple years to support drought resilience.
- Reverts (otherwise known as returning funds back to the original account or fund they were allocated from) \$88.4 million and cuts \$350 million over the next two years for various watershed climate resilience programs.
- Reverts \$15 million for two nature-based solutions programs, Redondo Beach Wetlands Restoration & Resource Conservation Investments Strategies.
- Cuts \$40.1 million for the Extreme Heat and Community Resilience Program.
- Cuts \$50 million for the Regional Climate Resilience Program at the Office of Planning & Research.

- Reverts \$5 million for the Climate Adaptation and Resilience Planning Grants at the Office of Planning & Research.
- Reverts \$220.9 million for Sea Level Rise activities back to the General Fund.
- Reverts \$171.1 million for Coastal Protection & Adaptation activities back to the General Fund.
- Reverts \$35 million for Ocean Protection funding back to the General Fund.

We are pleased to see that despite extensive cuts and reversions, the proposed budget includes \$65.2 million for the Salton Sea Management Program, a key Audubon California funding priority.

Historically, California has prioritized other needs over the environment. The prioritization of agricultural and urban development has led to the loss of 95% of the state's historic wetlands and significant ongoing losses in native habitats. As a result, many bird populations in California have declined significantly.

Creating an equitable, prudent state budget is always a challenge, particularly as the state faces the second year of significant deficits and potentially several more years of fiscal restraint. Essential programs to serve Californians, especially vulnerable communities, need to be maintained.

At the same time, if California and its leadership are committed to protecting birds and other wildlife, reliable funding mechanisms for conservation and climate resilience programs must be found. While solutions such as the proposed climate and water bonds can provide years of funding, California's leadership must also take full advantage of budget surplus years and find new funding mechanisms to pay for the projects necessary to close the gap in conservation investments necessary to harness a greener future.

Audubon California's Support for a Climate Bond

Faced with limited resources to conserve the state's biodiversity and protect against climate change impacts, a climate bond remains essential.

Audubon California remains steadfast in its support of a \$15 billion bond to fund necessary climate investments, benefitting both people and birds, including but not limited to:

- Expanding access to nature and its benefits for everyone.
- Protecting water supplies in the places birds and communities need it most.
- Investments in our state's natural and working lands to sequester carbon, reduce emissions, and build resilience to climate change.
- Restoring the Salton Sea.
- Siting renewable energy projects on land and in the ocean to reduce impacts to birds, other wildlife, and communities.
- Conserving 30% of California's lands and waters.

Advocacy and Next Steps

Over the course of 2024, Audubon California will be engaged in state and federal advocacy for the above priorities. In May 2024, the May Revision will be released, and over the following months, the legislature and Governor's administration will work together to formulate a state budget reflective of California's priorities.

Audubon California looks forward to making strides in conserving California's birds and their habitats while enhancing the state's resilience to climate change. Stay up-to-date on our progress by signing up for our newsletter. You'll get email updates about our advocacy and conservation work and be the first to hear about opportunities to help birds in California.

—Audubon California

All North American Birds Named After People Will Soon Get New Names

The American Ornithological Society (AOS), the organization of bird scientists that determines the official English and Latin names for North America's bird species, recently announced that they are embarking on a process to change the English names of the approximately 152 North American birds and 111 South American birds named after people.

Birds with eponymous names can be found in every section of a field guide, from the Bullock's Oriole to the Ross's Goose and Wilson's Plover. Among sparrows alone, 11 different species are named after people. Although birders use these names on a regular basis, their origins can be opaque and have often

been nearly forgotten. Across the globe, many eponymous names were coined in the 18th and 19th centuries as white naturalists "discovered" new birds in territories previously held by non-white peoples, naming them after the original collectors of bird specimens, fellow scientists, other prominent figures of the time, and even their family members.

Read more at <https://www.audubon.org/news/all-north-american-birds-named-after-people-will-soon-get-new-names>

—Rebecca Heisman, National Audubon Society

SAS New Members

Please welcome these new members:

Kirill Aleksandrov
Willow Germs
Barbara & Bud Hunt
Allison Russell

Thank You For Your Generous Donations!

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Sal Acosta & Suzanne Hutchinson,
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Taylor & Tina Florence, Mary Gaspari,
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Cynthia L. Rogers, Prem Turner,
Harry & Karen White

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Theresa Arciniega, Bill Bianco,
Carol Edwards, Mary Gaspari,
Roberts & Robin Rogerson,
Harry & Karen White

Many thanks to all of you for your continued support of Sacramento Audubon and its work in the community. Donations to the Bobelaine Sanctuary are encouraged to help defray the cost of management.

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Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:



- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds.
- Foster the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach.
- Encourage, support, and provide environmental educational opportunities.
- Advocate for the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Please contact President, Paul Miller, at sacaudubonpresident@gmail.com to find out how the Board Meeting is being held. Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month, except for June, July, and December when no meetings are held.

The next board meeting is:
Tuesday, March 26, 2024.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found at [sacramentoaudubon.org/board-minutes](https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/board-minutes).

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. Members receive our online newsletter, *The Observer*; so be sure to include your email address.

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New members will receive *The Observer* in color via email. Please provide your email address above. If you would prefer a black & white, paper copy mailed to you instead, please email sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com.

If you would like to be added to the SAS Action Alert list, check here _____.

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White-tailed Kite Daniel 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.

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March General Meeting

Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 7 p.m.

Magnificent India

Presented by Andy Engilis

