

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



General Meetings Return to Effie Yeaw

After a three-year hiatus, the Sacramento Audubon Society is excited to announce the return of our general meetings at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. General meetings are held every third Thursday of the month except for June, July, and December. We will return to Effie Yeaw on **September 21, 7 PM**. We will be holding this meeting as a hybrid session; the first time for this mode of presentation. That means participants can join the meeting on-site or in the comfort of their home. The hybrid session will resume on Zoom

with ongoing registration requirements for online participants only. We will announce in advance for each meeting if the guest speaker will be present at Effie Yeaw or if the meeting will be held via Zoom. Regardless, we will still host the meeting as a watch party at Effie Yeaw. We hope to see everyone soon.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center
2850 San Lorenzo Way
Carmichael, CA 95608

—*Anthony Asay, Director & Monthly Speaker*
Series Committee Chair



Birds Connect

As you may be aware, our Board has begun the process of considering changing the name of the organization. It is long and complicated, and will require a vote from our members. Recently I attended a Zoom meeting with representatives from the majority of Audubon chapters within California to discuss this issue. Several chapters are actively engaged in the process, and many more are considering a name change. The consensus was that a common name would provide greater recognition of who we are affiliated with, both statewide and national. Each chapter is a wholly separate organization from the National Audubon Society (or Audubon California which is simply a state office of the national organization). We are affiliated with the National Audubon Society through a mutual agreement spelled out in the National Audubon Society Chapter Policy document. Changing our name would not sever this agreement, and our relationship with National would remain unchanged. We receive both financial and strategic support from National, and it's critical we maintain this relationship. During the State chapters Zoom meeting, one of the representatives spoke up about the name Seattle has chosen for their chapter, "Birds Connect Seattle." She spoke about the power and truth in associating birds as a connection.



Light in the Darkness, American Robin Torch Bearer by Stephanie Brown

This really resonated with me, and in my own experience I have found this to be so true. Ed Harper's "Birds of Winter" initially connected me to my deep love of birds. Not being able to use binoculars to see birds connected me to Birdability. Birds connected me to Maureen Geiger, who connected me with Bill Bianco, who connected me to becoming a Board member. My work creating and chairing the Accessibility Committee connected me to others with mobility challenges. Birds connected me to Cosumnes

River Preserve, UC Davis Arboretum, and our magical Bobelaine Sanctuary. And, birds also connected me to becoming President. Birds have also connected me to so, so many amazing and dedicated people, who themselves are connected by birds. And most recently birds have connected me to photography. Birds also connect all of us with nature, which is such a profound interconnection. Recent studies have proven that time spent in nature is healing, not only for our bodies but also our minds. At this time in our world the healing reprieve of being with our sacred birds in their natural world is so needed, and they provide this connection.

As we track forward on this journey of changing our name, "Birds Connect Sacramento" is really finding purchase in my heart. If National and State Audubon followed, we would be associated with "Birds Connect America," or "Birds Connect the World," and "Birds Connect California." In truth our sacred birds already do connect the world, and us all!

Note: The artwork was created by Stephanie Brown and is entitled "Light in the Darkness, American Robin Torch Bearer". It hangs on my studio wall and reminds me that our sacred birds light the way.

—*Paul Miller, President*

Field Trips: Field Trips August 1 – September 15, 2023

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.) 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.

Sailor Bar

Thursday, August 3, 7 AM (please note time change)
Expected length: 3-4 hours
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. A Sacramento County Parks Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Meet at the last (gravel) parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area. From Sacramento, take Highway 50 east to Exit 21, Hazel Avenue. 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 Avenue, where you will take another left. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue.

Folsom Point

Saturday, August 5, 7:30 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Rich Howard, (916) 203-0952
rhowarda@gmail.com

Folsom Point juts out into the lake and is one of several good areas for scoping water birds. The open oak woodland usually harbors fair numbers of Western Bluebirds and other expected species for this habitat. The boat launch is fairly reliable for Rock Wren. The entrance fee to the State Recreation Area, 0.5 miles from the Raley's meeting point, is \$12 or free with a state park pass.

Meet Rich in Folsom at the Raley's parking lot, 25025 Blue Ravine Rd (at E. Natoma St). From Highway 50, take the Folsom Boulevard exit (exit 23 — 18.5 miles east of Interstate 5). Go north for 1.5 miles and turn right on Blue Ravine Road. Go 4.4 miles. Turn right into the shopping center parking lot (just before East Natoma Street).

Carson Pass Lake Winnemucca Loop

Saturday, August 12, 6 AM
Expected length: all day—8 to 10 hours (includes driving time)
Leader: Sonja Sorbo, (916) 390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com
Maximum number of participants: 8
Registration for this trip is FULL.
Please email Sonja to be added to the waitlist.

We will be hiking a 6 mile loop trail at 7000–9000 feet in elevation as we travel from the Carson Pass ranger station toward Lake Winnemucca and two other alpine lakes. Our target species are specific to mountain habitat and include Clark's Nutcracker, Mountain Chickadee, Williamson's Sapsucker, Pine Grosbeak, Townsend's Solitaire, and Cassin's Finch. We'll also be on the lookout for Golden-crowned Kinglet, Western Tanager, Rufous Hummingbird, and Brown Creeper. Although it's a bit late in the season, there may also still be wildflowers since the snowpack is so heavy this year.

The pace will be relaxed but there is a 900 foot (total) elevation change; this coupled with the altitude means that it is a moderately strenuous hike and participants should be in good physical condition. Trekking poles may help.

Wear sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots, and a hat; bring lunch, snacks, plenty of liquids, sunscreen, and bug repellent. Dress in layers and be ready for changing weather conditions. There are bathrooms at the ranger station at the beginning and end of the trip. There is also a day use fee of \$5 per vehicle, bring cash (the Interagency Senior Pass is also acceptable). Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

American Canyon Wetlands Edge Park

Wednesday, August 23, 9 AM
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Nancy Gronert (279) 346-4790
Sacauduboncorsec@gmail.com

We'll meet up at our Napa destination for a hike near the bay in search of birds and cool bay breezes. We may find pelicans, mallards, hummingbirds, doves, gulls, and warblers, along the edge of the Bay. Rarities are always a possibility as well. Recent reports show curlew, Marbled Godwit, Willet, various gulls, and swallows.

Take I-80 west towards Fairfield. Take exit 36 and turn right onto American Canyon Road. In 3 miles turn right onto Broadway. In 0.9 miles turn left onto Rio Del Mar. In 200 feet turn right onto Eucalyptus Dr. In 1 mile turn left. The American Canyon Wetlands Edge parking lot is on your left. 2 Eucalyptus Drive, American Canyon

Bobelaine Preserve

Thursday, August 24, 8 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Maureen Geiger (916) 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

The Bobelaine Preserve is wonderful any time of year, but when the rest of the Valley is brown and dry, Bobelaine continues to be a fairly lush, green riparian habitat that is always fun to explore. Join Maureen for about a 2.5 mile walk on level trails to the overlook where the Feather and Bear Rivers join, looking for whatever might be present.

Meet at the Bobelaine Preserve. 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 Avenue and continue to the Bobelaine parking lot.

UCD Arboretum

Saturday, September 2, 9 AM
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leader: Paul Miller 916-768-7503
pjmiller1962@me.com

Maximum number of participants: 6

Registration is required for this trip.

Please email Paul if you would like to attend.

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 within the UC Davis Arboretum located in the City of Davis, a short drive from Sacramento. This location offers a wonderful opportunity to see a wide variety of bird species, including the elusive Green Heron.

Bring water, a snack, and a smart phone if you have one.

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

Putah Creek and Pedrick Road

Wednesday, September 6, 7 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Nancy Gronert (279) 346-4790
Sacauduboncorsec@gmail.com

The UC Davis preserve along the banks of Putah Creek can be a terrific place to find migrants and resident birds this time of year. We'll take a leisurely walk along an easy dirt path trail. The path is the primary birding area along the river between Pedrick Rd and Hopkins Rd. The best birding is typically between Pedrick and the rope swings, although sometimes a culvert flowing into the creek in line with Hopkins Rd attracts birds. Besides the usual residents,

continued on next page

Field Trips: continued

we'll keep an eye out for the possible fall migrants of warblers, buntings, flycatchers, and orioles.

Meet at the Pedrick Road access to Putah Creek.

Take I-80 west from Sacramento for 17.5 miles. Take exit 67 for Pedrick Road. Turn right to go north on Pedrick Road. Go north for 2.6 miles and turn left into gravel lot after crossing Putah Creek. Meet at the parking lot. A portapotty is available.

Family Friendly Trip, Sailor Bar

Monday, September 11, 8 AM

Expected length: 2 ½ - 3 hours

Leader: Nicole Barden, (530) 304-5461

nicolembarden@gmail.com

Join Environmental Educator Nicole to explore what this popular birding location has to offer! We will be on the lookout for our late summer feathered friends like Wilson's Warbler, Western Tanager, and maybe even Black-throated Gray Warbler. This time of year also brings the possibility of seeing early returning birds like Cedar Waxwing.

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 be keeping an e-Bird list as we go. Beginning birders and young birders are encouraged to join.

The trail we will be walking on is mostly flat, though there are some uneven sections with large, smoothed river rocks. There will be an optional steep section at the end for anyone who wants to bird for a little longer. We will cover no more than 3 miles. Public restrooms are available at this location.

Meet Nicole at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. A Sacramento County Parks Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel Ave. From Hwy. 50, take Hazel Ave. north, turn left on Winding Way, then turn Left on Illinois Ave. Follow Illinois all the way to the end.

Sacramento Bar

Tuesday, September 12, 7 AM

Expected length: 3-4 hours

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.

Meet Darrell at the Sacramento Bar Parking Lot. A Sacramento County Parks Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

From Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd. Turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd and take the first left on Pennsylvania Avenue. Follow Pennsylvania to the parking lot at the end on the right.

Upcoming Bufferlands Events



Photo: Regional San

No Pets, Please! For all Bufferlands events, we respectfully request that you please leave your dogs and other pets at home.

Twilight on the Bufferlands Thursday, August 10, 6:30 – 9 PM

To make your reservation for the August 10 event, please email Twilight on the Bufferlands between August 4 to August 9 at jonesro@sacsewer.com, or contact Roger Jones from at (916) 875-9174.

An email confirmation, including the meeting location, will be sent to you.

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 if you have a pair.

Advanced registration is required for this free event, as space is limited.

For more information visit: <https://www.regionalsan.com/bufferlands-events/twilight-bufferlands-1>

Twilight on the Bufferlands Wednesday, September 20, 5 – 9 PM

To make your reservation for the September 20 event, please email Twilight on the Bufferlands between September 15 to September 19 at jonesro@sacsewer.com, or contact Roger Jones from at (916) 875-9174. An email confirmation, including the meeting location, will be sent to you.

Don't miss the last opportunity of the year to explore some of the Great Central Valley habitats at dusk on the Bufferlands. During the tour, participants may have a chance to see some of our nocturnal animals, like beavers, river otters, muskrats, raccoons, owls and more. These animals are typically hiding during the day.

Please wear appropriate clothing for walking on trails and bring water and binoculars if you have a pair.

Advanced registration is required for this free event, as space is limited.

Reservations will only be accepted from.

For more information visit: <https://www.regionalsan.com/bufferlands-events/twilight-bufferlands-2>

Bufferlands Open Trail Day October 14, 2023 - 7:30 AM – 5 PM

Open Trail Day is another great opportunity to explore some of the Bufferlands. Several miles of trails will be open for hiking at your own pace. Bufferlands biologists and docents will be out on the trails to help you find your way and to answer any nature-related questions. This is a great time to see Fall colors as the forests begin to change from green to gold. The trails will span through riparian forests with trees over 300 years old, oak woodlands, and seasonal wetlands. Many species of songbirds, waterfowl and shorebirds can be seen this time of year.

Event and parking are free. Please sign in at the check-in table and get your trail map. Dress for the weather and bring a water bottle. There will be no food vendors on-site, but feel free to pack a picnic or trail snacks. Wild animals are within the hiking trails.

Field Trip Reports



Marbled Godwit.

Photo by Ron Storey, Bodega Bay



California Quail.

Photo by Ron Storey, Bodega Bay



Caspian Tern.

Photo by Ron Storey, Bodega Bay

Bodega Bay, (7/9)

Leader Ron Storey reported: There were 13 people (including the leader) that met at Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility in Petaluma. While the original intention was to do a short walk around Ellis Creek we only met there, as the birds were few, and left shortly after 9 am and headed directly to Bodega Head at Bodega Bay. The whole day was spent birding off of Westshore Road (the north side of Bodega Harbor). The highlights of the day were **Bald Eagle**, **Pigeon Guillemot** roosting on the cliff at Bodega Bay, **Common Murre** roosting on a large rock a little offshore at Bodega Bay, **Black Oystercatcher**, **Pelagic Cormorant**, **Brandt's Cormorant**, and **Marbled Godwit**. Fun was had by all, and I don't think anyone missed seeing a bird that was seen by others.

Loney Meadows, (7/8) (rescheduled from 6/24 due to snow)

Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: The snow finally melted from the Loney Meadow trail so our group of eight enjoyed a lovely day of birding at altitude, accruing 29 species on our day list. Early in the hike we were greeted by a **Wilson's Snipe** who called repeatedly from the meadow but wouldn't show itself. The willows in the meadow hosted **Brewer's** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** as well as a **Song Sparrow**. The woodpecker family was generous, allowing us nice views of several **White-headed Woodpeckers**, **Northern Flicker**, and **Red-breasted Sapsuckers**. Flycatchers were quite active, with an **Olive-sided** calling for "quick three beers" from the top of a tall conifer. Meanwhile, several **Western Wood-Pewees** sallied around; we followed one to a nest where it popped a tasty insect into the gaping mouth of a baby flycatcher. Meanwhile, a **Dusky Flycatcher** called several times but remained hidden. We were surprised to discover a second nest a while later—this time it was the hanging home of a **Warbling Vireo** pair. We were unable to determine whether it held young or not. Perhaps the bird of the day was a gorgeous male **MacGillivray's Warbler** who perched nearby at eye level in good light; it was the best view that several birders had ever had of that species. **Nashville**, **Orange-crowned**, **Wilson's**, and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** rounded out the warbler category. Other species which were present included **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Mountain Chickadee**, **Stellar's Jay**, **Western Tanager**, **Black-headed Grosbeak**, **Green-tailed Towhee**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Lincoln's Sparrow**, and a solitary **Violet-green Swallow**.

Indian Grinding Rocks SP, (7/2)

Leader Cliff Hawley reported: Our trip to Indian Grinding Rocks State Park on July 2nd was notable

for hitting 97°F by 10:45 am. Despite the heat I was joined by four birders at the carpool meeting and an additional group of three park employees and volunteers and three of their kids at the park. Birding was a bit slow with the heat but the park was still active with local breeding birds with nestlings and fledglings to feed. We found nest sites of **Western Bluebirds** and **Acorn Woodpeckers**. The territorial **Pacific Wren** was very responsive from his usual area by the creek through the conifers. We ended up a bit early due to the heat with 28 species, including **Chipping Sparrow**, **Hairy Woodpecker**, **Chestnut-backed Chickadee**, **Brown Creeper**, and **Purple Finch**. View checklist online at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S143448260>

Wright's Lake, (7/1)

Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Phyllis Wilburn, reported: As can happen with the magical sport of birding, a trip that looked like it might be a disaster turned out to be just wonderful! For 12 of us, Wrights Lake lived up to its reputation as an excellent place to see birds of the 7,000' elevation that are not found even just a few thousand feet lower.

The excellent, long views of a female **Williamson's Sapsucker** is one example. This beautiful bird is hard to find but reliable in this location. Highlights of other species are **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, **Green-tailed Towhee**, **Fox Sparrow**, **Olive-sided Flycatchers**, **Mountain Chickadees**, **Western Tanagers**, **Hairy Woodpeckers** and three species of warblers including **Yellow-rumps** in brilliant breeding plumage, always a surprise for those of us who see them all winter looking like different species! Add the **Bald Eagle** and the **Osprey** and what a day! Vivid wildflowers, slushy snow and wet meadows reminded us of what a long, wet winter it was in the Sierra.

Sailor Bar, (6/29)

Leader Darrell Mohr reported: Nine people met in the parking lot at Sailor Bar for a tour of the area. We proceeded up the trail towards the dam looking for **Rufous-crowned Sparrows**. Did not find the bird. We did see **Double-crested Cormorants**, plus **White-throated Swifts**. At this point we turned around and headed back towards the boat ramp. In the parking lot there is a cottonwood tree where a **Bullock's Oriole** was moving around. We saw three **Great Blue Herons**, many domestic ducks and **American Crows**. From there we proceeded along the American River. As we were walking we saw a **Phainopepla** at the top of an oak tree. From the river trail we walked to the pond. There were only a few ducks on

the pond, however, a **Green Heron** flew by. Also an **Ash-throated Flycatcher** landed on a branch of an oak tree. We all had a good look at the bird. Our total number of species for the day was 41.

Cabbage Patch, (6/25)

Leader Bill Bianco reported: With very good weather two of us had a total count of 17 species. Interesting sighting was a pair of **Western Tanagers** harassing two **Stellar's Jays** at Stanislaus River campground. Got a two minute view, and within ten foot of a **Fox Sparrow** feeding. Other good sightings were **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, **Green-tailed Towhee**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, **White-headed Woodpecker**, **Hairy Woodpecker**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, and **Western Wood-Pewee**. Throughout the walk it was a chorus, with so many bird singing. Unfortunately we couldn't see all of them. Great day to be in the mountains.

Purple Martin Trip, (6/21)

Leader Dan Airola reported that the trip had to be canceled due to site changes.

Mather Lake, (6/18)

Leader Mary Forrestal reported: 17 birders met up at Mather Lake to see what they could find on this early Sunday morning walk. The lake was nearly empty of waterfowl, including a noticeable lack of **Mute Swans**. Only two were spotted flying away from the lake. **Western Kingbird**, **Nuttall's Woodpecker**, **Tree** and **Barn Swallows** were some of the more numerous species of the morning. **Bullock's Oriole**, **Snowy Egret**, **Green Heron**, and **Northern Harrier** were fewer in number but no less exciting. Possibly the highlight of the morning was a **Northern Flicker** peeking its head out of its tree cavity nest. You can see the entire species list at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S141960634>.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center, (6/17)

Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Dan Williams, reported that the trip had to be canceled.

Tell's Creek, (6/17)

Leader Craig Swolgaard reported: I had to cancel the trip after I went up to scout and found it still snowed in.

Seasonal Sightings June 1 – 30

June can be a challenging month for birding in the Central Valley. It has the lowest species diversity of any month, with migrants and wintering birds leaving us by May, and many not returning until August, September, or later. By the last week of the month, the first of the southbound shorebirds begin to arrive, but real shorebirding doesn't pick up until July. Odd things can turn up, though few did this June. One might be tempted to say June is a quiet month, but that's not quite true. In lush areas, bird song is quite evident. It is one of the most important times for our local nesting birds as many wrap up their breeding efforts, with some carryover into July. The effects of the record flooding this year persisted, with melt water from the heavy snow pack keeping rivers high, and leaving some sites in the low floodplain partially flooded through the first half of June and beyond.



Peregrine Falcon. Photo by Daniel Brown

Least Bitterns continued to be found on surveys at the western tip of Sherman Island, but weren't reported elsewhere in the region. The **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron** seen for one day in May (5/11) in Natomas was found at the nearby North Natomas Regional Park on 6/11 among a huge nesting colony of **Black-crowned Night-Herons**, **Snowy Egrets**, and **Cattle Egrets** numbering well over 500 total ardeids. It was only a little easier to find than a needle in a haystack, but was reported sporadically into early July. There was no sign reported that it was paired with another night-heron. Aside from one site in Yolo County and a few reports south of Dixon, Burrowing Owls were absent from the region this June. In just the past ten years, this species has gone from uncommon but regular as a summer resident to almost completely absent—quite shocking! We do expect an influx of wintering owls by October. Now to a regionally increasing bird, **Peregrine Falcons** once again nested at the UC Davis Med Center, producing four young this year. With multiple wintering **Townsend's Solitaires** in the Valley earlier this year, perhaps one found



Yellow-breasted Chat. Photo by Daniel Brown

on 6/9 at Stone Lakes NWR is a little less surprising than it otherwise would have been. For the first time in more than two decades, Grasshopper Sparrows were unreported from their usual haunts in eastern Sacramento County. On 6/9, up to three **Yellow-breasted Chats** were singing near Fishing Access #1 in the Putah Creek canyon, upstream from Winters; a chat was also singing at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 6/21 near where one had been found on 5/30. A heard-only **American Redstart** was reported near Fishing Access #1 in the Putah Creek canyon on 6/13, and three to four **Yellow Warblers** were on territory near the Accidental Forest at CRP continuing the local recolonization in the past few years of this small portion of the Central Valley.

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, Dan Airola, Lyann Comrack, Justin Dunbar, Andy Engilis, Jr., Gil Ewing, Frank Fabbro, Joshua Greenfield, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, Mackenzie Hollender, Jim Holmes, Stanton Hunter, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Michael Perrone, Zane Pickus, Tom Pritchard, Steve Scott, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Kevin White, and Bart Wickel. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard



Harvest Day

Saturday, August 5

8 AM–2 PM

Fair Oaks Horticulture Center 11549 Fair Oaks Boulevard.

Free.

Featured horticultural experts will speak about

Home Reforestation: Correct Planting and Establishment of Landscape Trees, Vegetables, and Climate Change and Native Pollinator Populations.

Visit local community organizations at their booths to get free info, shop at the garden specialty merchants, and picnic with a snack from one of the food vendors.

Master Gardeners will be available in all areas of the garden so it's a great opportunity to ask lots of questions and listen in on a wide variety of mini-talks throughout the day.

Upcoming Birding Festivals

Monterey Bay Birding Festival

October 13–15, 2023

Registration opens August 1

This year the theme is "A joyful celebration of the life and the death of birds"

With this theme, the festival wants to give space for people to learn about the human-made issues that birds face, grieve the death of all the birds we've lost, and celebrate the life of the birds that are all around us right now.

<https://www.birdschoolproject.org/festival>

Lodi Sandhill Crane Festival

November 3–5, 2023

Registration opens September 5

<https://lodisandhillcrane.org/>

Birdbath Tips: Help Wild Birds by Creating a Clean Water Source in Your Yard

When a wild bird visits your yard, clean water to drink and to bathe in is a welcome sight. Even though some birds obtain a small amount of water from the insects or fruits they eat, most wild birds search for fresh water on a daily basis. You can help wild birds find water by setting up a birdbath in your yard! Experts say that supplying fresh water for wild birds is a lot more important than supplying them with seed or other foods. Wild birds use birdbaths to drink water, cool themselves, bathe, and to remove parasites. Climate change may make summers hotter and longer in the future; so wild birds and other wildlife will benefit when there is clean water available in our yards!

Setting Up a Birdbath

Many birdbaths used today are often made out of cement. However, cement is a very difficult surface to clean due to all the nooks and crannies present. In addition, cement birdbaths are frequently made too deep and will often crack in freezing temperatures. Basins made of hard plastic are a better choice. They are easier to clean, don't break if they fall, and don't usually crack in cold weather. You can either purchase a birdbath or make your own.

You can make a birdbath at home by using a 2 inch deep, shallow basin (or round container), such as a garbage can lid, old frying pan, cake pan, or a flower-pot saucer that's used to collect draining water. Avoid flimsy or lightweight basins that will blow over in the wind. A heavy rock can be used to anchor down a basin. Here are some additional tips on having a birdbath in your yard:

- Choose a shady or partially shady site so that the water stays cool and birds can cool off. Water that's in a shady location will evaporate slower and will stay fresher longer. Bushes or trees should be close by so that birds using the birdbath can find shelter quickly when necessary.
- The water in the basin should only be 1-2 inches deep. Shallow water will give young birds more confidence to drink from your birdbath when venturing out their own.
- Empty and replace the water every 1-2 days.
- Large pebbles or flat rocks positioned slightly higher than the water's surface should be placed



Bushtits. Photo by Mary Forrestal

inside the basin. This will offer perching surfaces and will help wild birds feel more secure. Gravel or sand can be added to the bottom of the birdbath so that the surface isn't slippery.

- Your birdbath should be positioned as close to the ground as possible. Birds naturally drink water from puddles on the ground. It's also nice to position the birdbath where you can see the birds.
- You may want to purchase a device for your birdbath to keep the water moving or agitated (like a bubbling fountain). The sight and sound of moving water will attract more birds to your birdbath. Mosquitoes lay their eggs in still or stagnant water. So a birdbath with moving water is less likely to be used by mosquitoes for egg laying.
- There are also birdbath heaters that prevent the water from freezing in the winter.

Keeping your Birdbath Clean

Neglecting your birdbath may cause more harm than good. Birds need both fresh water and a clean birdbath. Dirty birdbaths can harbor harmful bacteria and spread viruses. Birds are more attracted to birdbaths with clean surfaces too. Here's how to go about cleaning your birdbath:

- Pour out the old water from the basin.
- Rinse the basin off with a hose.
- Scrub the basin with a wire brush using a solution of one part vinegar and nine parts water. Let the solution soak inside the basin for several minutes. Avoid using household cleansers because they may adversely affect the essential oils that are naturally on birds' feathers.
- Empty out the solution inside the basin and thoroughly rinse the basin with a hose.
- Allow the basin to dry. Then return it to its location in your yard and fill it with water.

—Jane Van Kessel

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Closing Some Visitor Areas

The Gray Lodge Wildlife Area in Butte County closed some visitor areas on its west side to accommodate wetland habitat work and related construction. The ponds along the Flyway Loop Trail, a year-round hiking trail between Parking Lots 14 and 18, will be enhanced this summer. The related heavy construction work will force the closure of portions of the hiking trail, viewing hides, and Parking Lot 18 through early September. Visitors might also encounter occasional roadway blockages and impediments during this period. Renovations will improve water management, wildlife habitat, and the visitor experience. Construction delays could impact the timing of reopening, but work is expected to conclude no later than the first week in September, restoring full public access in time for birdwatching during peak fall and winter migrations. For questions or additional information, please contact the Gray Lodge Wildlife Area directly at (530) 846-7500.

This habitat work is being funded through a million-dollar North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant (Wetlands of the Sac Valley, Phase IV) in partnership with the California Waterfowl Association.

— *California Department of Fish and Wildlife*

2023-2024 Sacramento Audubon Society Board Officers and Directors

Sacramento Audubon Society's Board Officers and Directors for the 2023-2024 fiscal year were approved via electronic and mail-in ballot with voting closing on June 15, 2023.

President: Paul Miller

Vice President: Eric Johnson

Treasurer: Harriet Saeck

Recording Secretary: Joanne Prakapas

Corresponding Secretary: Nancy Gronert

Director: Anthony Asay

Director: Taylor Florence

Director: Susan Goodrich

Director: Bill Weaver

Past-President: Bill Bianco

Bill Bianco continues to serve as Past-President, a non-elected position.

SAS New Members

Please welcome these new members:

Gay Currier
Naomi Ferster
Olivia Huff
Jeff Le Bard
Susie Real
Margaret Rice
Nkauj lab Yang

Thank You For Your Generous Donations!

General Fund

Bill Bianco, Betty J. Cooper, Bob Eernisse, Susan Fregien, Anne Geraghty, Timothy & Angela Jackson, Barbara Jeffus, Peggy Jenkins, Bruce & Peggy Kennedy, Kimya Lambert & Chris Conard, Nancy Lapp, Robert & Anne Meagher, Barbara Mendenhall, Kathy Moore & Dan Brown, Patricia Morehead, Dan Murphy, Susan R. Oie, Lana Paulhamus, Patty Reetz, Susan Scott & Ed Harper, Beverly J. Spencer, Christie Vallance, Mary Weideman, Nkauj lab Yang

Education and Conservation Fund

Bill Bianco, Rachael Cowan, Gary Demar, Susan Fregien, Constance George, Anne Geraghty, Timothy & Angela Jackson, Tony Julian, Nancy Lapp, Lana Paulhamus, Patty Reetz, Susan Scott & Ed Harper, Vivian Yost

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Bill Bianco, Maxine Cornwell, Gary Demar, Susan Fregien, Maureen K. Geiger, Anne Geraghty, Christine Hansen, Timothy & Angela Jackson, Meegan Murray, Patty Reetz, Susan Scott & Ed Harper, Christie Vallance, Richard & Salli Warinner

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.

See the Latest SAS Action on Facebook

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

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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, August 29, 2023.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found at 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.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

www.sacramentoaudubon.org

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

SAS Membership per address/household (for 12 months): \$ 35

I want to add an extra Donation of: \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Mail this form with your check payable to Sacramento Audubon Society to the address shown above. You can also use your credit card or PayPal account on SAS website:

<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/join-renew>

Name _____ Date _____

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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 _____.

Sacramento Audubon Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit. #94-1615830

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White-tailed Kite Daniel Brown

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The Observer Editor: Carla Resnick, e-mail: carlaphoto@gmail.com

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.



General Meetings Return to Effie Yeaw

After a three-year hiatus, the Sacramento Audubon Society is excited to announce the return of our general meetings at Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

We will return to Effie Yeaw on **September 21, 7 PM.**