



The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society

February General Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2023 at 7 PM via Zoom

The meeting will be held online via Zoom. You must register for the meeting, but there is no cost to register and you do not need a Zoom account. Registration is required due to space limitations set by Zoom. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information on how to join the meeting. You will also receive email reminders about this event. For more information visit www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker.

Papua New Guinea

Presented by Chris Conard

In August 2022, Chris joined a group largely composed of Sacramento area birders to Papua New Guinea (PNG), which comprises the eastern half of the world's second largest island. We had a wonderful time viewing and listening to perhaps the most spectacular avifauna on earth, including the incomparable birds of paradise, bowerbirds, crowned pigeons, and paradise-kingfishers to name but a few. The tour ranged from the humid, leech-infested lowlands to cool, mossy forests over ten thousand feet in elevation, and wrapped up on the volcano-strewn island of New Britain in the Bismarck Sea. PNG is both magnificent and fraught. It is one of the most ethnically complex regions of the world, with a history of human settlement of over fifty thousand years, and twenty percent of the world's languages developed on the island. The capital, Port Moresby, is perennially listed among the ten most violent cities in the world. There is palpable tribal tension in the highlands and shocking poverty in the lowlands. Yet, the local guides were wonderfully helpful and proud to show some of the highlights of their country. If all that wasn't enough, most of the group spent five days in Australia before heading home.

Chris Conard is a Natural Resource Specialist at the Bufferlands in Sacramento County. He regularly leads field trips for Sacramento Audubon Society, serves as a county reviewer for eBird, and is a past president of the Central Valley Bird Club.



Raggiana Bird-of-Paradise

Flooding & Severe Weather Closures

Due to the recent severe weather many of our favorite locations have been closed.

Check the status of local parks, preserves, and sanctuaries at the following websites:

Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary: <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/bobelaine-audubon-sanctuary>

Effie Yeaw Nature Center: <https://www.sacnaturecenter.net/>

Cosumnes River Preserver: <https://www.cosumnes.org/>

Sacramento Regional Parks Status: <https://regionalparks.saccounty.gov/Pages/Park-Status-Update.aspx>



Bobelaine Flooding on Center Trail, just past entrance gate, January 11, 2023

Field Trips: Field Trips February 1 – March 15, 2023

Sacramento Audubon has returned to volunteer-led field trips.

Precautions are still in place for everyone's safety. Unless otherwise noted, field trips are geared towards adults and those over age 13. With wildfires on the rise, smoky conditions may occur. Please note that a forecast of bad air quality (AQI of 100 or higher) will result in trip cancellation. If you are unsure, please contact the trip leader.

For questions regarding the trip, or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please contact the trip leader. Due to insurance requirements, Sacramento Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize ride-sharing/carpools. Any carpool arrangements are private agreements between the driver and the passengers. Drivers must carry adequate insurance coverage. Please be courteous and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios may be helpful. Please arrive early if you need driving directions or plan to carpool as starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place.

COVID-19 Protocols

- Some trips may require advance registration. For those trips, please only sign up if you are committed to attending as field trips have a limited number of participants.
- All participants, including children 5 and up and field trip leaders, must be vaccinated.
- Additional restrictions may be required, such as proof of vaccine or face masks. It varies with each field trip. Please read the description of the field trip carefully. Do not register for a field trip if you are unwilling to comply with the stated COVID precautions.

To Register for a Field Trip, follow the instructions in the trip description or visit <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/field-trips>. If you have questions or need help, email our Registration Coordinator at sacramentoaudubonfieldtrips@gmail.com.

Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Plant

Wednesday, February 1, 8 AM
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Sonja Sorbo, (916) 390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com
Registration is required for this trip and will be limited to 8 participants. Please email Sonja to register for this trip.

We will bird the Lincoln water treatment plant.

There are several large ponds which can hold a variety of ducks. Some years there have been hundreds of Canvasbacks and wigeons present, with an occasional Redhead or Eurasian Wigeon in their midst. Depending on the water level, we might see shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, dowitchers, Dunlin, and Least Sandpipers. While driving on the levees around the ponds, we will search the adjacent trees, fields, and fence posts for raptors, sparrows, woodpeckers, and other resident species. A small wetland area visible from the levees can hold rails, herons, egrets, gallinules, and Marsh Wrens.

This trip will end around noon; if there is sufficient time, we might drive some nearby roads looking for flocks of geese and/or swans. Bring a spotting scope and your FRS radio if you have them. Dress warmly, since the weather can be cold and windy. Rain cancels the trip. Meeting place and directions will be provided upon registration.

Bodega Bay

Saturday, February 4, 7 AM
Expected length: Full Day
Dan Williams (714) 943-1266
jaegermaestro@yahoo.com

Join Dan for a full day of birding in a variety of coastal habitats. Plan to see waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls and raptors. Rain or shine. Very little hiking. There is one \$7 parking fee. Bring a lunch, water, and binoculars (scope if you have one).

Meet Dan at the Park & Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave. Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park & Ride lot.

Sailor Bar

Wednesday, February 8, 8 AM
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Mark Martucci (916) 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com
Registration is required for this trip. It is limited to 8 participants. Please email Mark to register.

Sailor Bar is on the north side of the river across from Upper Sunrise. The habitat is a mix of riparian, oak woodland, open area, and gravel tailings. Live oaks and blue oaks are

the predominant trees on the hillsides, and there are stands of willow, alder, and cottonwood along the river. Join Mark for a morning walk checking out resident birds and looking for wintering species as well. Registration is required. Please email Mark to register.

Registrants will be sent the exact location and other information. A Sacramento County Park Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Cosumnes River Preserve

Saturday, February 11, TBA
Expected length: 3 hours
Paul Miller (916) 768-7503
paul@pjmiller.com

Registration is required for this trip, and it will be limited to 6 participants. Proof of vaccination is required.

Please email Paul to register for this trip.

Cosumnes River Preserve is a wonderful venue for those with disability challenges. Within a few hundred feet of the main parking lot there is a wooden easily accessible viewing platform. The flooded fields attract a wide range of dabbling ducks. Greater White-fronted Geese, Sandhill Cranes, dowitchers, Wilson's Snipe, and yellowlegs should be present. There are always some passerines and raptors.

Meeting place and time will be provided upon registration.

Beginning Birder Walk William Pond Park

Sunday, February 12
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Contact Cathie LaZier at empid77@gmail.com and put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line.

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's 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. Registrants will be emailed the meeting time and exact location.

Bridgeway Island Pond

Wednesday, February 15, TBA
Ed Harper (916) 704-7954
calidris@surewest.net
Registration is required for this trip. It is limited to 8 participants. Proof of vaccination is required. Please email Ed if you would like to attend.

Bridgeway Island pond in West Sacramento near the eastern edge of the Yolo Causeway was designed to hold storm water for flood control purposes. Almost 200 species have

been reported here including a male Garganey in the winter of 2019, Green Herons, Common Yellowthroats, Marsh Wrens, Pied-billed Grebes, Double-crested Cormorants and American White Pelicans all work the pond. Forster's Terns and several gull species can often be found overhead as well as White-tailed Kites and Red-tailed Hawks in the nearby uplands. Unusually large numbers of Blue-winged Teal show up each winter along with Gadwall, Cinnamon and Green-winged Teal, Black-necked Stilts, and Avocets most of the year. Even during the hot summer, a surprising number of birds can be found here including resident Soras and Virginia Rails.

Meeting time, duration, exact location, and directions will be provided upon registration.

Cosumnes River Preserve

Saturday, February 18, 3 PM
Expected length: 2 hours
Leader: Paul Miller, (916) 768-7503
paul@pjmiller.com
Maximum number of participants: 6
Registration is required for this trip. Please email Paul if you would like to attend.

This is an afternoon trip to Cosumnes River Preserve to hopefully see our beautiful Sandhill Cranes fly-in for the night. The Preserve closes at 5 PM, which is on the early side for fly-in but should be fun. We will also have the pleasure of viewing all the other migrating birds making the Preserve their home for the winter.

Specific meeting place and directions will be provided at the time of registration.

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

Saturday, February 18, 10:30 AM
Expected Length: 1 hour
Please see www.sacnaturecenter.net or call (916) 876-4918 for registration and other details.

Join Audubon birding leaders Lynne Tweten and Larry Hickey, and Nature Center docents, for a family friendly nature walk at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Carmichael. Acorn Woodpeckers, Wild Turkeys, and other resident birds such as towhees and Bushtits will be active. Families and individuals are encouraged to enjoy a one-hour walk, in the lovely Nature Area, with naturalists and birders who know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge. Paid registration is required through Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

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Field Trips: continued

Cosumnes River Preserve

Sunday, February 19, 7:30 AM
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Nora Papian, (714) 326-6571
norapapian@gmail.com
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Nora to register for this trip.

This trip will focus on improving field observations, descriptions of bird appearance and behavior, and an introduction to field sketching. We will focus our attention on watching and closely observing birds in one or two locations, and spending time working on field journaling about what we see.

Please bring a notebook and pencil, a phone, a tablet, or any other way to record the birds. You will want to dress warmly and be prepared to be stationary while we make observations.

Meeting location, directions and other details will be provided upon registration.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Wednesday, February 22, TBA
Expected length: 4 hours
Leader: Ed Harper, (916) 971-3311
calidris@surewest.net
Maximum number of participants: 8
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Ed to register.

The Effie Yeaw Nature Area consists of a number of easy trails for walking, and offers extended access to the American River. It can produce a nice list of birds with abundant resident birds being augmented by many wintering species. Signs of Spring will greet us, and birds will respond in kind with song and heightened activity. This trip is leisurely paced, taking time for prolonged looks at birds, and will dwell on songs, calls, specific behaviors, and natural history.

Meeting time and specific location will be provided at the time of registration.

Sacramento Bar

Thursday, February 23, 8 AM
Expected length: 3 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 Highway 50, drive north on Sunrise Blvd, turn left on Fair Oaks Blvd, and take the first left on Pennsylvania and follow it into the park. A Sac County Park Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Gray Lodge (Rescheduled)

Saturday, February 25, 10 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Paul Miller, (916) 768-7503
paul@pjmill.com

This trip is rescheduled from a previous date due to rain.

Registration is required for this trip, if you were not previously registered, you can check with Paul for possible openings. Proof of vaccination is required.

This is a collaborative mindful birding trip lead by Jonelle Mason from UC Davis Project Learning Tree and Paul Miller. The trip will begin with short presentations by Gray Lodge Wildlife Area, UC Davis Raptor Center, Shasta Wildlife Rescue, and Project Learning Tree. Following the presentations, Jonelle will lead a mindful birding trip along the ADA accessible Wetland Discovery Trail.

Directions, fees, and meeting location will be provided upon registration.

Beginning Birder Walk William Pond Park

Sunday, March 5
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is required for this trip.
Contact Cathie LaZier at empid77@gmail.com and put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line.

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's 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. Registrants will be sent the meeting time and exact location, along with other information.

Family Friendly Trip to Phoenix Park

Monday, March 6, 9 AM
Expected length: 2.5 hours
Leader: Nicole Barden (530) 304-5461
nicolebarden@gmail.com

Join Environmental Educator Nicole on a visit to this unique local park which features a winding trail through oak savannah habitat and past vernal pools. We will be looking and listening for wintering birds as well as early spring arrivals. Yellow-billed Magpies are often seen at this park, and we may even locate some of their nests! This trip is open to all birding levels and ages and will be slow paced, keeping an eBird list as we go. Beginning birders and young birders are encouraged to join. The trail is flat, with a mix of paved and unpaved sections, and travels through mixed shade and sun. There are bathrooms available at this location.



Acorn Woodpecker. Photo by Daniel Brown

We are expecting to travel no more than 2 miles. This trip will happen rain (light to moderate) or shine but heavy rain, wind, and flooding will cancel. If you are unsure, please email Nicole to confirm the trip is happening the day before.

Meet Nicole in the Phoenix Park parking lot. From Hwy 50, take Hazel Ave north, turn right on Sunset Ave. Turn right into the park at the first stop sign. The parking lot will be straight ahead.

Ferrari Ranch Ponds, Lincoln

Sunday, March 12, 8 AM
(Note: Daylight Savings time begins.)
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Mary Forrestal, (530) 209-0826
sacaudubonrecording@gmail.com

The Ferrari Ranch Ponds are a series of smaller ponds bordered by a paved bike trail located on the west side of Hwy 65 in Lincoln. We will walk approximately 3 miles on the paved trails looking for resident species and any remaining waterfowl.

Heavy rain cancels. Contact trip leader with questions.

Meet Mary at the south-east end of the Home Depot Parking Lot. From Sacramento take I-80 west to Highway 65 north. It is about 10 miles to Lincoln. Take exit 315 for Ferrari Ranch Rod. Turn right onto Ferrari Ranch Rd. Turn right at the first stop light onto Groveland Ln. Follow Groveland Ln until it ends in the Home Depot Parking lot. Address for Home Depot is 1000 Groveland Ln, Lincoln.

Ancil Hoffman Park

Wednesday, March 15, 7:30 AM
Expected length: 3-4 hours
Leaders: Rich Howard (916) 203-0952 and Betty Cooper
rhowarda@gmail.com

A leisurely walk along the American River should turn up many of our resident and winter visiting Oak Woodland and River birds. This trip is suitable for bird lovers of all levels. We will have at least one scope for closer views of more stationary birds.

Parkway Pass or \$6 parking fee (buy at kiosk) required. Accessibility of Ancil Hoffman Park has not been evaluated by Sacramento Audubon at this time (<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/accessible-birding>). Walking in the riparian area is fairly level on an unpaved trail or grass; a paved trail is available farther from the river.

Meet Rich and Betty in the farthest parking area on Tarshes Dr where the road curves right to the golf course clubhouse.

From California Ave in Fair Oaks, take the Tarshes Dr entrance and follow it all the way to the last parking lot on your left. A SAC County Park Pass, or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles. Email Betty if further directions are required: bettycooper@comcast.net

Field Trip Report

Effie Yeaw Nature Center, (12/17)

Dan Williams, co-leader with Lynn Tweten, reported:

We had clear blue skies and brisk temps for our late morning walk on this day. As usual, **Acorn Woodpeckers** abounded, **Wild Turkeys** and Mule Deer strutted past us like we weren't even there, and a **Red-shouldered Hawk** gave us gorgeous views very near the visitor center. An instant highlight was a **TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE** that flew right over our heads on the main trail between the visitor center and the river before heading up the hill towards the houses on the bluff above. This rare visitor from the mountains has been reported a few times at lower elevations than usual this winter. It was a brief view, but its slender gray body and orange central wing stripe was a dead giveaway. We observed many **Buffleheads**, as well as a few **Common Goldeneyes** and **Common Mergansers** on the river, along with a rather big flock of the common three gulls (**Herring, California, and Ring-billed**) loafing on the newly built bar near the shore. We also had a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** and a **Common Raven** fly over while we were by the river side. Upon our return to the visitor center, Lynn spotted a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** in the sycamores along the entrance path, capping off our outing nicely. All told, we had 45 species: not bad at all for our little 90-minute excursion!"

All other trips were canceled due to weather.



Common Goldeneye. Photo by Daniel Brown

Folsom Christmas Bird Count

We ran the 44th Folsom Christmas Bird Count on January 1st, 2023, a precious sunny day during a period of severe storms. We had 64 people in 32 parties, covering approximately 370 miles (approx. 110 on foot) in approximately 190 party hours. We set a species record at 149, with a historical range of 123 to 148, and a total of 21,364 birds. We recorded all the likely geese and swans, though duck diversity was more spotty. Invasive **Mute Swans** (57) appear to be here to stay. **Barrow's Goldeneye** were low again at 13 (10 last year). We recorded 34 **Hooded Mergansers**, and two **Red-breasted Mergansers** were found for count week (cw).

Wild Turkeys appear to be in decline at 100 (74 last year), about a quarter of what we had ten years ago. We recorded just 2,101 gulls, including two **Short-billed (Mew) Gulls** and three **Iceland (Thayer's) Gulls**. The only loons were four **Commons**. We had a single **American Bittern**, but missed Black-crowned Night-Heron. An **American White Pelican** was the first for this count. We found two **Osprey**, missed Golden Eagle, had 11 **Bald Eagles**, three **Ferruginous Hawks**, one **Rough-legged Hawk**, three **Merlins**, two **Prairie Falcons**, and four **Peregrine Falcons**. We had singles of **Barn Owl**, **Burrowing Owl**, **Western Screech-Owl**, and **Northern Pygmy-Owl**. **Lewis's Woodpeckers** had a good showing at 83, and we found three **Hairy Woodpeckers**.

We recorded two **Loggerhead Shrikes**, nine **Hutton's Vireos**, a **Steller's Jay**, just 19 **Yellow-billed Magpies**, and 70 **Common Ravens** (15 years ago we didn't get ravens at all). We had single **Tree** and **Barn Swallows**. A single **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was a nice surprise. At 155, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** set a new low by over 100. The continuing (eastern) **Winter Wren** was detected for cw. Two **Mountain Bluebirds** and a single **Varied Thrush** were good finds. We had 46 **Purple Finches**, just four **Pine Siskins**, and six **Lawrence's Goldfinches**. A **Grasshopper Sparrow** was a count first. We had six **Chipping Sparrows**, two **Bell's Sparrows**, two **White-throated Sparrows**, a **Vesper Sparrow**, and four **Thick-billed Fox Sparrows** were an interesting pickup. We missed Orange-crowned Warbler and had a single **Common Yellowthroat**.

It's important not to overlook what I consider the stars of the show: we had 523 **Acorn Woodpeckers** (about avg.), 494 **Oak Titmouses** (about avg.), 670 **Western Bluebirds** (about avg.), and 735 **Lesser Goldfinches** (+/- recent numbers but down from the early years). There's much more to say, but I'll leave it there for now.

Thanks to all of the participants and especially the area leaders for making this happen!

—Chris Conard



Top: White-throated Sparrow. Bottom: Yellow-billed Magpie.
Photos by Daniel Brown

Seasonal Sightings December 1 – 31

This December was another month where there were too many highlights to fully detail them all. Christmas Bird Counts document our common birds as well as unusual finds, and both types of observation are important. Numbers of wintering geese in the Sacramento area continue to climb. This began with increasing numbers of **Greater White-fronted Geese** in the past 20 years or so, and now increasing, sometimes staggering, numbers of **Snow Geese**, along with good numbers of **Aleutian Cackling Geese** (the latter especially at the southern margin of our regularly covered area: Staten Island and Woodbridge Rd in San Joaquin County). **Redheads** are pretty rare in Sacramento County, so one spending the month and beyond along the American River Parkway (ARP) just downstream of the Sunrise Bridge was a treat. A **Surf Scoter** was found in the San Joaquin River off Sherman Island on 12/17 where they are semi-regular.

The only **Mountain Plover** reports in the region were along Hwy 45 in Yolo County, south of County Line Rd, throughout the month. Most reports were under 50 birds, but one was over 100 when something flushed the entire flock. It doesn't appear that any were detected in the former stronghold south of Dixon. It was a good fall for **Ruff**, and that continued into December, with one found along Yolo County Rd 103 on 12/3, continuing throughout the month. One of the most exciting finds, and a first for Sacramento County, was a **Black-legged Kittiwake** found from 12/5-12/7 from Folsom Point at Folsom Lake where it was also seen flying well into El Dorado County waters. Uncommon loon reports were few, so a **Pacific Loon** seen from Folsom Point on 12/6 and 12/14 is notable. **Least**

Bittern reports, never common, are much rarer in winter. Whether it's because most of them leave the area in winter or if they're just more secretive, it is difficult to say. One was recorded calling at the Davis Wetlands on 12/19 and another was found at Cache Creek Wild Wings Park on 12/28. A **Long-eared Owl** was found in the Wildhorse neighborhood of Davis during the latter half of the month and continued into January. A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** found on 12/26 near the Elkhorn boat ramp by the Elkhorn Volunteer Fire Department also continued into January. A **Tropical Kingbird** was a nice surprise on 12/16 along County Rd 104 on the Solano-Yolo County line south of Maxwell Ln. Typically any **Winter Wren** report is notable (the eastern species compared with **Pacific Wren**; the two were split in 2010), but there were three found this December, continuing from November. One was along the railroad tracks at the end of Payen Rd, just across the Sacramento County line into El Dorado. Another was at Lake Solano Park, continuing into January, and yet another was wintering nearby at the Putah Creek Fishing Access #2. **Pacific Wrens** are getting increasingly difficult to find wintering in the Valley in the past decade, so it's surprising that these Winter Wrens were found. Other notable reports include a **Townsend's Solitaire** at the Sacramento City Cemetery on 12/24 through



Long-eared Owl.
Photo by Daniel Brown

the end of the month, plus another at Sacramento City College on 12/26 continuing into January. A **Cassin's Finch** was reported at Sacramento Bar (ARP) on 12/15 and two **Red Crossbills** were reported at Lower Sunrise (ARP) on 12/20. After a fall with many **Tennessee Warblers**, one more was found at Cosumnes River Preserve on 12/4. The **Palm Warbler** along County Rd 104 on the Solano-Yolo County line south of Maxwell Ln continued from 11/26 through most of December. A **Summer Tanager** was a nice surprise along the bike path east of Slide Hill Park in Davis, beginning on 12/6 and continuing into January. 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: Dan Airola, Max Brodie, Aidan Brubaker, Brent Campos, Bruce Christensen, Lyann Comrack, Lily Douglas, Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Frank Fabbro, Stephen Fettig, Joshua Greenfield, Cliff Hawley, Radha Krishna, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Adam Panto, Nora Papian, Michael Perrone, Mark Sawyer, Steve Scott, Sean Smith, Cameron Tescher, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, and Bart Wickel. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard

Dr. Madhavi Colton Takes Helm of Audubon California

Veteran conservationist brings a wealth of experience protecting marine and coastal ecosystems.

The National Audubon Society announced today that it has hired Dr. Madhavi Colton as vice president and executive director of its California office, Oakland-based Audubon California.

Colton brings deep expertise in conservation and science. Throughout her career, she has used her scientific knowledge and insights into human nature to achieve lasting, measurable conservation outcomes for communities and ecosystems around the world. For the past decade, she has worked with the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), most recently as executive director. Prior to that, as CORAL's conservation program director, she managed a large team spread across five countries, navigating different cultures and languages to implement locally appropriate conservation solutions. While at California Ocean Science Trust, she led the development of monitoring programs for the emerging California marine protected area network. In a charged socio-political environment, she brought policymakers, environmentalists, scientists, and resource managers and users to common ground.

"I'm thrilled to join the Audubon California flock and am looking forward to continuing to grow our exceptional programs that are helping birds both in California and along the Pacific Flyway," said Colton. "This is a natural fit for me: Audubon California works to protect a wide variety of coastal and inland ecosystems that birds depend on, from beds of eelgrass that allow forage fish to spawn in San Francisco Bay to restoring a tidal marsh at the mouth of Sonoma Creek to protecting Central Valley wetlands for migratory shorebirds."

"Dr. Colton is the right leader for Audubon California at this critical time for birds, habitats, and communities," said Suzanne Dixon, senior vice president, flyways for the National Audubon Society. "California has a long history of leading the way in conservation, and we know this will continue with Madhavi's energy and vision. We are fortunate to have her."

Colton received her PhD in marine ecology from the University of Melbourne, Australia. She lives in Berkeley.

—National Audubon Society

Ducks In Scopes At The Cosumnes River Preserve

Saturdays, February 4, 11, and 18, 2023

Last of the season; come any time between 10 AM and 2 PM.

Wintering waterfowl and cranes are still here but will be migrating north soon. Don't miss this chance to see them in the seasonal wetlands at the Cosumnes Preserve. CRP docents have a row of spotting scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you excellent views of the many colorful ducks, other waterfowl, shorebirds and more.

Microscopes and hand lens provide close-up looks at "Duck Soup", dishes of water dipped from the pond full of water fleas, rat-tailed maggots, scuds and other squiggly things that provide the protein the birds are feeding on.

The Preserve is a quick drive from Sacramento – south on I-5 to Twin Cities Rd; left (east) on Twin Cities for 1 mile; then right (south) on Franklin Blvd. The viewing area is in the first parking lot on your right as you drive into the preserve. **Steady rain or high wind cancels event.**

Great Backyard Bird Count February 17 – 20

Birds are everywhere, all the time, doing fascinating things. Join in February 17-20, when the world comes together for the love of birds. Participating is easy, fun to do alone or with others, and can be done anywhere you find birds.

Step 1: Decide where you will watch birds.

Step 2: Watch birds for 15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days, February 17–20, 2023.

Step 3: Identify all the birds you see or hear within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

- If you are a beginning bird admirer and new to bird identification, try using the Merlin Bird ID app to tell us what birds you are seeing or hearing.
- If you have participated in the count before and want to record numbers of birds, try the eBird Mobile app or enter your bird list on the eBird website (desktop/laptop).

If you already contribute to Merlin or eBird, continue what you are doing! All entries over the 4-days count towards GBBC.

For more information on the Great Backyard Bird Count, visit <https://www.birdcount.org/>



House Finch. Photo by Daniel Brown

Save the Date for Effie Yeaw's Bird and Breakfast

March 18 and 26

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>.



Sacramento Audubon Pin

Show your support for Sacramento Audubon.

Order your SAS pin today! \$10 online at

<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/store/lapel-pin>

or pick one up at outreach events for \$5



Bird Festivals

Galt Winter Bird Festival Saturday, February 4

Events include bird tours, bird photography exhibit, free childrens' activities, live wild animal presentation, youth art contest, and more.

<https://www.cityofgalt.org/our-city/special-events/winter-bird-festival>

Winter Wings Festival in Klamath Falls, Oregon February 17 – 20

Festival runs Friday through Monday, with free Friday afternoon presentations, including updates on the Klamath Basin and stakeholder initiatives.

<https://winterwingsfest.org/>



Olympic Peninsula Bird Fest April 13 – 16

This festival provides participants the opportunity to view a wide variety of birds normally seen on the Olympic Peninsula. Field trips are planned for Sequim Bay, Port Angeles Harbor, Ediz Hook, Dungeness Spit and the Elwha River, as well as trips through wooded areas to view songbirds and locate owls in the evening.

<https://olympicbirdfest.org/>

Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival April 21 – 23

Point Reyes National Seashore provides the main backdrop for the festival, where the Pacific Flyway, Pacific Ocean, and other influences provide an ideal location for birding and wildlife viewing.

<https://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org/>

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SAS NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members:

Mark Barnes
Paul Barth
Michael Kress
Martha Mathison
Terry O'Neill
Chris Ronshausen
Nina Valder
Paul Veisze

Thank You For Your Generous Donations!

General Fund

Patricia Ayres, Carolyn J. Berton, Bill Bianco, Charles Binder, Bruce Bostick Karen Brookhyser, Robert & Maureen Burness, Patrick & Nancy Carney, Liz Chasse-Crouse, Betty J. Cooper, Mike Cruikshank, Terry Dozier, Carol Edwards, Taylor Florence, Lani Fuzessery, Susan Goodrich, Kathryn M. Griffin, Lois Harter, Pamela Herlihy, Larry Hickey, Brian Hunter Harvey Kaufmann, Maria Nicholas Kelly, Bruce & Peggy Kennedy, Kimya Lambert & Chris Conard, Len & Rita Marowitz, Scott Muldavin, Paula Newcomb, Susan & Bob Potter, Paul & Tracie Ramsey, Gwenda Schoen, Marjorie Shock, Prem Turner

Education and Conservation Fund

Karen Brookhyser, Milton Briggs, Dennis & Meg Bryerton, Elliot Chasin & Reanna Wights, Mike Cruikshank, Carol Edwards, Lani Fuzessery, Larry Hickey, Nancy Kniskern, Len & Rita Marowitz, Scott Muldavin, Rosemary & Robert Mundhenk, Colene Rauh, Candace Schurkamp *In Memory Of Bud Nobili*, Sonja Sorbo

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Bill Bianco, Karen Brookhyser, Mike Cruikshank, Carol Edwards, Kim Erickson Lani Fuzessery, William Gardner, Larry Hickey, Marti Ikehara, Beverly Moon, Scott Muldavin, Linnea Osborne, Paul & Tracie Ramsey, Alison Rood, Nora Williams, Maxine Wollen

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.

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, February 28, 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 _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Email _____

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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Program Chair: Anthony Asay, e-mail: sacaudubonmeetings@gmail.com

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.

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February Program Papua New Guinea

Presented by Chris Conard
Thursday, February 16, 2023, 7 PM via Zoom

