

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society



Ensuring an Inclusive Future – Part II

Last month's Observer discussed exploring whether to change the name of the Sacramento Audubon Society. Many local chapters have already dropped the name "Audubon" to ensure an inclusive future. We want to take an incremental approach and solicited your feedback on changing the society's name. We received overwhelming support for removing the name Audubon from the society. With this support the Board of Directors intends to remove the name Audubon from the society.

We do not intend to identify a replacement name soon. Any decision on a replacement would be based on significant input from our community and the goals of inclusion and preserving the brand recognition that comes with our large network of birders. We want to hear your suggestions for replacement names, and we want to see whether other local chapters cohere around another replacement name. As more and more chapters retire the Audubon name, we hope the national society also will revisit its decision. Regardless, any replacement name may be temporary until the national society or a majority of local chapters form a consensus. We will have to see.

Please email our President at sacaudubonpresident@gmail.com, with both your name change suggestions and comments.

Thank you for your feedback. Please keep it coming as we work together to identify a new name that represents who we are, who we want to be, and how much we love birds.

Habitat on the Margins

Restoring habitat in a landscape as highly managed as California's often means working with pieces of land that are marginal—sometimes literally. Continuing a tradition of working with private landowners to restore habitat along farm edges, Audubon is leading a project—together with River Garden Farms, River Partners, the Center for Land Based Learning, Yolo County Resources Conservation District, and US Fish and Wildlife Service—to install hedgerows along a one and a half mile section of road at River Garden Farms in Yolo County, along a canal near the Sacramento River. This bird-friendly habitat restoration recently installed a carefully designed suite of native plants, such as coyote brush, black willow, and toyon, along two, 1.6-mile-long linear strips along County Road 98A near Knights Landing, California.

While hedgerows provide a number of important benefits to farmers, they can be invaluable to wildlife. They provide cover and food for pollinator insects and birds, riparian habitat when planted alongside streams (or in this case, a canal), and create wildlife corridors between habitat areas. They also prevent the drift of wind-blown pesticides or weed seeds between fields, filter water and reduce erosion. Our hope for this project is to create a habitat connection and wildlife movement corridor between the Sacramento River and the massive area of protected wetlands on Roosevelt Ranch. The overall project intent is to provide enduring wildlife habitat, with a special focus on increasing riparian bird species abundance and diversity while connecting different habitat areas, an important part of making wildlife more resilient in a changing climate.

—California Audubon

Monthly Speaker Presentations Return September 21, 2023

Sacramento Audubon's monthly speaker presentations are on hiatus for the summer. If you missed any of our fantastic online speakers, or would like to watch the presentations again, they are available at <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/monthly-speaker>, under past presentations. Presentations will resume on September 21, 2023. Check for information on future monthly speaker programs in the August Observer and on the website. If you can't wait for our programs to resume, be sure to check out the June program offered by the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, *Eagles of the American Watershed*. Find more information about this program and all the Sacramento Valley Conservancy offers at <https://sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/events/>.



A hedgerow in Yolo County Photo: Samantha Arthur



Project Phoebe

Avian Urban Ecology

Patricelli and Hahn Labs, UC Davis

Investigating how wild birds respond to novel and rapidly changing environmental conditions.

Project Phoebe

Project Phoebe is an urban ecology research project investigating the lives led by Black Phoebes in the cities of Sacramento, West Sacramento, Davis, and Woodland. The project was started by three UC Davis graduate students (Sage Madden, Jacob Johnson, and Ian Ramshorn Haliburton), who are interested in how well even common “backyard birds” are coping with different challenges posed by the urban environment. What is the greatest challenge that urban Black Phoebes face compared to their non-urban counterparts? Is it higher temperatures, dangerous predators like cats and corvids, fewer bugs to eat, or maybe exposure to chemical pollution? How do these challenges affect the birds’ behavior, their physiology and the survival of their nestlings? The Project Phoebe team is currently working in parks and neighborhoods near you to answer questions like these!

If you are interested in this research or would like to learn more about Black Phoebes or urban ecology in general, please visit <https://projectphoebe.com/> for more information. Also, if you have a Black Phoebe nesting on your home, please consider reaching out to the Project Phoebe team at saamadden@ucdavis.edu to let us know—we would love to incorporate your birds into our study, with your permission!

Yolo Bypass Re-Opened

Yolo Bypass has been closed due to flooding or damage caused by flooding for most of the winter and spring. They are reopen, and while the birding may not be quite as good as in the cooler months, it can still be a fabulous place to visit as it gets warmer.

For more information on the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area visit:

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Lands/Places-to-Visit/Yolo-Bypass-WA>

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

<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/yolo-county/#yolo-bypass>

Upcoming Bufferlands Events

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

Open Trail Day

Saturday, June 3, 7 AM – 3 PM

Event and Parking are Free.

Open Trail Day is a great opportunity to explore some of the Bufferlands. Several miles of trails will be open for you to hike at your own pace. 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 the riparian forests with trees more than 300 years old, oak woodlands, and seasonal wetlands, all in their spring beauty. During this time of year, Swainson’s Hawks are seen soaring in the sky, broods of ducklings and goslings are readily spotted in the wetlands.

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 whatever trail snacks you think that you will need.

Directions:

Take I-5 or Highway 99 south from Sacramento. Exit at Cosumnes River Blvd. Take Cosumnes River Blvd west to Freepoint Blvd. Take Freepoint Blvd south, past the golf course and the small town of Freepoint. Turn left at signs opposite Cliff’s Marina (8651 River Rd, Sacramento, CA 95832). Follow signs to the parking area.

Twilight on the Bufferlands

Thursday, June 8, 6:30 – 9 PM

Advanced registration is required for this free event, as space is limited. Reservations will only be accepted from June 1 to June 7.

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.

To make your reservation, please email Twilight on the Bufferlands or contact Roger Jones during the timeframe listed above at (916) 875-9174. Email confirmation, including the meeting location, will be sent to you.

Sacramento Audubon Society Slate Of Officers and Directors for 2023-2024

Voting on the slate will open on May 22, 2023 and closes on June 15, 2023. You can cast your vote in one of two ways: either using the online voting link (<https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/board-election>) or by sending in a mail-in ballot. The link to vote online will also be emailed to members. As per the SAS bylaws, one must be a dues-paying SAS member in order to vote.

President	Paul Miller
Vice President	Eric Johnson
Treasurer	Harriet Saeck
Recording Secretary	Joanne Prakapas
Corresponding Secretary	Nancy Gronert
Directors	Anthony Asay, Taylor Florence, Susan Goodrich, and Bill Weaver

MAIL-IN BALLOT TO VOTE FOR THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY BOARD OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2023-2024

To vote, complete and mail the ballot below to:

Sacramento Audubon Society, PO Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816

A ‘yes’ answer indicates your approval of all of the nominated board officers and directors for the 2023- 2024 fiscal year of the Sacramento Audubon Society. Voting will close on June 15, 2023. Please vote only once. Only dues-paying members should vote. Thank you.

Yes, I confirm the appointment of the above slate of Board Officers for the Sacramento Audubon.

No, I do not confirm the appointment of the above slate of Board Officers for the Sacramento Audubon Society.

Name:

First _____

Last _____

Your name will only be used to verify your membership.

Field Trips: Field Trips June 1 – July 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.

Crystal Basin

Saturday, June 3, 8 AM at Bella Bru
Expected length: Plan to return to Bella Bru, mid to late afternoon.
Leaders: Phyllis Wilburn, (530) 642-9942, abirder@aol.com Maureen Geiger, (916) 281-6652, mkgeiger@comcast.net
Registration is not required, but please email Maureen so she and Phyllis know who is joining them.

Phyllis will visit a variety of sites along Ice House Road and side roads. The group will be looking for Lazuli Bunting, Green-tailed Towhee, Mountain Bluebird, warblers and vireos, and other birds of the area. They hope to see the beautiful Calliope Hummingbird again. Beautiful wildflowers may also be in bloom. Bring lunch, liquids, and footwear suitable for hiking. Both beginners and experienced birders are welcome. Meet Phyllis and Maureen at 8 AM at the Bella Bru in Raley's Shopping Center in EI Dorado Hills. From Hwy 50 east take Exit#30B; turn right on El Dorado Hills Blvd. and go north under the freeway to the shopping center on your right.

Beginning Birder Walk William Pond Park

Sunday, June 4
Maximum number of participants: 10
Registration is CLOSED for this trip.

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. 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.

UC Davis Arboretum

Saturday, June 10, 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.

Camp Pollock

Sunday, June 11, 8 AM
Expected length: 2 hours
Bill Bianco, (916) 889-4849
biancowm@yahoo.com

Join Bill at Camp Pollock, the Sacramento Valley Conservancy property on the American River just east of downtown Sacramento. Some of you will know this as the old Boy Scout Camp, which it was for many years. Bill will survey the property which is composed of wide grassy areas interspersed with huge old cottonwoods, oaks, a large native plant nursery, and a variety of shrubs. Bill will look for a Bald Eagle nest, which may be visible from the property and will possibly still contain young. Restrooms are not available.

Meet Bill at the Camp Pollock parking lot. Going north on I-5 from downtown Sacramento, take the Garden Hwy exit. Go east on Garden Hwy. Turn right on Northgate Blvd. Proceed for a short distance and turn right into Camp Pollock.

Dragonflies

Sunday, June 11, 9 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Tim Manolis, (916) 485-9009
ylightfoot@aol.com
Maximum number of participants: 15
Registration is required for this trip. Please email Tim to register.

This annual trip to see dragonflies and damselflies is always a treat. With Tim's expertise as the author of a field guide to California dragonflies and damselflies, you can be sure to see a variety of species. Tim will spend 2 or 3 hours looking for dragonflies in a location to be determined, ending the trip around noon.

Bring your binoculars, water to drink, and a snack. You may wear footwear suitable for wading, although it won't be a requirement. You will probably be walking through weeds for a short stretch (including star thistle) so long pants and shoes might be preferable.

Tim will be scouting several sites prior to the day of the trip and will select the best one.

Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided to registrants.



Ash-throated Flycatcher.
Photo by Daniel Brown

Tells Creek

Saturday, June 17, 8 AM
Expected length: Full Day
Leader: Craig Swolgaard
(530) 334-3023, cswol@sbcglobal.net
Maximum number of participants: 8
Registration is required for this trip. Please email Craig to register.

This trip will explore a little birded part of the Sierra Nevada off Ice House Road, at over 6000 feet elevation. Tells Creek flows through Van Vleck meadow just west of the Desolation Wilderness. A trailhead for equestrians and hikers begins at the parking lot but we will follow a road that circles the meadow itself. This is a good spot to see a variety of Sierra Nevada birds including Lazuli Bunting, MacGillivray's Warbler, Purple and Cassin's Finch, Green-tailed Towhee, Red-breasted Sapsucker, Lincoln's Sparrow, Brown Creeper, and others. In the past, an Indigo Bunting spent most of the summer there. The trip will include other stops as well. This trip will last into the early afternoon so bring a lunch and water. Hiking is easy and fairly level.

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

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

Saturday, June 17, 10:30 AM
Registration is required through Effie Yeaw Nature Center.
Please see sacnaturecenter.net for registration and other details.

Join Audubon birding leaders Dan Williams and Maureen Geiger, 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.

continued on next page

Field Trips: continued

Mather Lake

Sunday, June 18, 7 AM

Expected length: 3 hours

Leader: Mary Forrestal, (530) 209-0826
cmforrestal@yahoo.com

Mather Lake is a favorite birding location. Join Mary to look for a nice variety of resident and summer birds including White-tailed Kite, Swainson's Hawk, Western Kingbird, Green Heron, and if we're lucky Yellow-headed Blackbird. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

Meet Mary in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park. From Highway 50, go south on Zinfandel about 2-1/2 miles. After crossing Douglas Blvd take the first left into the park area. A Sacramento County Parks Pass, or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Purple Martins in Sacramento

Wednesday, June 21, 8:30 AM

Expected length: 2 hours

Leader: Dan Airola, (916) 494-1283
d.airola@sbcglobal.net

Maximum number of participants: 15
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Dan to register.

Purple Martins have suffered a dramatic decline in the Central Valley for years. Join Dan to see and learn about these beautiful birds as they raise their young in the weep holes of the overpass in one of their few remaining nesting sites in this area.

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

Loney Meadow

Saturday, June 24, 6 AM

Expected length: 1 1/2 hours each way driving and 4-5 hours birding

Leader: Sonja Sorbo, (916) 390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com

Maximum number of participants: 8
Registration is required for this trip. Please email Sonja to register.

As summer's heat hits the Central Valley, the Sierra becomes a lovely refuge for birds and birders alike. Our trail is located off of the Highway 80 corridor at about 6000 feet in elevation, and it is a great place for a birdy day hike. A large meadow and the surrounding conifer forest attract neotropical songbirds and provide habitat for several delightful resident species. We will be walking for several miles on a generally well-maintained dirt trail with just a small elevation gain.

We will look for warblers such as Nashville, Wilson's, Black-throated Gray, and MacGillivray's, plus, Western Tanagers, Black-headed Grosbeaks, Warbling and Cassin's vireos. Several species of flycatchers are possible to see, including Western Wood-pewee,

Olive-sided, Dusky, and Hammond's Flycatchers. This area is also home to some great woodpeckers, and if we're lucky we'll get binocs on a White-headed or a Pileated beauty.

Additionally, Mountain Quail can often be heard calling, but we'll have to be very stealthy and lucky if we hope to view one.

The last couple of miles of road to the trailhead are fairly sketchy dirt and rock, so a high-clearance vehicle is recommended. Wear sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots, and bring a hat, sunscreen, lunch, snacks, and plenty of water.

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

Cabbage Patch, Calaveras County

Sunday, June 25, 7 AM

Expected length: 10 hours

Leader: Bill Bianco, (916) 889-4849
biancowm@yahoo.com

Bill will bird the old Ramsey Fire (2012) site, located in eastern Calaveras County at 6600 ft. elevation. It is a 2 - 2.5 hr. drive from the meeting site. We plan to walk the fire roads looking for woodpeckers, Western Tanagers, and the other passerine birds. Depending on time, we may stop at the Stanislaus River campground for additional birding. The trip will last until late afternoon. Bring lunch, liquids, insect repellent, sunscreen, and FRS radios for drive communication.

Meet Bill at the Twin Cities Road Park and Ride Lot near Galt. From Sacramento, take Hwy 99 south to Twin Cities Rd./Hwy 104, Exit #277; turn left (east) on Twin Cities; cross the freeway and turn right (south) on Stockton Blvd. The Park & Ride is just south of Twin Cities Rd.

Sailor Bar

Thursday, June 29, 8 AM

Expected length: 3 hours

Leader: Darrell Mohr, (916) 225-3999
mohrdd@gmail.com

Join Darrell for a morning walk checking out the resident birds. This is a good trip for beginners. A Sac County Park Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Meet Darrell at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. 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. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, near the boat launch area.

Wrights Lake Area

Saturday, July 1, 8 AM

Expected length: All day

Leaders: Phyllis Wilburn and Maureen Geiger, (916) 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

Maximum number of participants: 12
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Maureen to register.

Escape the valley heat and join Phyllis and Maureen in searching for a variety of montane birds in the Wrights Lake area. The High Sierra offers a wide variety of woodpeckers, finches, towhees, and other passerines, and it's a good trip for beginners, as well as more experienced birders. They will be checking eBird for any rarities. Wear footwear for some trail hiking. Bring mosquito repellent and plenty of water and lunch for a full day of birding. FRS radios are useful. Registration is limited to 12 participants.

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

Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park

Sunday, July 2, 7 AM

Leader: Cliff Hawley, (916) 300-2495
yellowhammerCA@gmail.com

Join Cliff for a day of birding at this State Park. The birdlife varies depending on the season, but many species are seen year round, including Turkey Vultures, Scrub and Steller's Jays, California Quail, Acorn and Hairy Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, Hermit Thrushes, Wild Turkeys, and Red-breasted Nuthatch. In summer, the bright colors of the Western Tanager, Bullock's Oriole, Calliope and Anna's Hummingbirds can be seen in the woods around the meadow. A bird list is available at the museum. Trip goes until 12 or 1 PM, so bring water and we often end with lunch at the small picnic area. There will be some light to moderate walking.

Meet Cliff at the Starbucks parking area in the College Greens Shopping Center in the 8300 block of Folsom Blvd (near Florin-Perkins, between Watt and Howe) at 7 AM. Alternatively, you can meet up with us at the parking lot at the park by the museum at 8 AM.

Bodega Bay

Sunday, July 9, 9 AM

Expected length: 7 hours

Leader: Ron Storey, (707) 479-0171
ronstorey@ronstorey.com

We will meet at Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility in Petaluma at 9 AM, where we will have a brief walk in search of Least Bittern. We will head to Bodega Bay from Ellis Creek and the itinerary for the trip will be determined

from what is reported the week before the trip. Please bring a lunch and plan for cold and hot weather, as we will be at the Pacific Ocean and the weather is unpredictable.

Meet Ron at the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility in Petaluma. From Sacramento drive west on Hwy 80 to Vallejo. In Vallejo take Hwy 37 West towards San Rafael/Novato. Turn right onto Lakeville Highway (approximately 22.5 miles and the second traffic light after getting onto Hwy 37). Go approximately 14 miles and turn Left on Pine View Way (first left turn after passing sewer ponds the left side) and go to the end of the street. Turn left on Cypress Dr and go straight into the Ellis Creek Water Recycling Facility's parking lot where the road makes a turn to the left. Go through the gate and you will see parking in a very short distance. If you miss Pine View Way, don't panic, you can turn left on S McDowell Blvd and go to Cypress Dr.

Point Reyes

Saturday, July 15, 7 AM

Expected length: All day

Leader: Dan Williams, (714) 943-1266
jaegermaestro@yahoo.com

Escape the valley heat for a day at one of California's most magnificent parks! We will plan to start the day at the Bear Valley Earthquake Trail and Visitors Center. Birds we will have a good chance to see there include Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Pygmy Nuthatch, Pacific Wren, Swainson's Thrush, and Wilson's Warbler. Plan to have a picnic lunch near the visitors' center. After a brief stopover in Inverness to scan Tomales Bay, we will make our way to Abbotts Lagoon to seek migrating shorebirds and any seabirds we can scope from the beach. Abbotts is a moderate, mostly level, and approximately 3-mile roundtrip hike with some sand walking, so bring sturdy shoes, lunch, and plenty of water.

Meet Dan at the Park & Ride off I-80 at West Capitol Ave in West Sacramento by 7 AM. We will plan to return by 5 or 6 PM. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave, Exit #81, turn left at the light, and then left again into the Park & Ride lot. Meet in the southeast section of the parking lot.

Field Trip Reports

Riparian Corridor in Roseville, 5/13

Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: Coincidentally, this was the Global Big Day of birding, and our group of eight people contributed a list of fifty species seen during the morning. Actually, the trip may be best described as a “warbler-palooza” with amazing numbers of several species viewed. Migration is definitely in full swing and the list reflects that.

At the beginning of the walk, **Warbling Vireos** seemed to be everywhere. A **Cassin’s Vireo** teased us with its call but we didn’t get a good look until the end of the morning. Nearby, a **Black-headed Grosbeak** also finally showed itself. We were treated to great views of **Wilson’s, Orange-Crowned, Yellow, Townsend’s, Hermit, and MacGillivray’s Warblers** as they foraged in the canopy and understory. (In fact, some of the tallies raised flags on the eBird list—12 Townsend’s and 18 Wilson’s).

Flycatchers were well represented, and included **Western Wood-Pewee, Olive-sided, Ash-throated, Pacific Slope, and Black Phoebe**. A **Willow Flycatcher** was actively calling and flitted into view much to our delight, uttering its characteristic “fitz-bew” call. Earlier, a pair of **Western Kingbirds** had chased each other around a snag quite close to the trail, entertaining us with their chattering and aerial acrobatics. Woodpeckers were plentiful—two **Downy**, seven **Nuttall’s** and fifteen **Acorn** all made appearances. A pair of **Acorn Woodpeckers** brought food to young in a nest hole. Many resident birds were active, including **Western Bluebird, American Robin, Bushtit, Oak Titmouse, Bewick’s Wren, White-breasted Nuthatch, California Scrub-Jay, Lesser Goldfinch, and House Finch**. **Spotted and California Towhees** were plentiful, often landing right on the trail. Several species rested together atop a tall snaggy oak, including **Cedar Waxwings, Western Tanagers, a Red-shouldered Hawk**, and a lone **Northern Rough-winged Swallow**. A **Tree Swallow** and half a dozen **Cliff Swallows** buzzed overhead. A **Bullock’s Oriole** called but remained hidden from sight. Down below, in the creek, several **Mallards** and a male **Common Merganser** paddled around.

Sailor Bar, 5/11

Leader Darrell Mohr reported: Four people ventured out for the tour of Sailor Bar. At the parking lot a large cottonwood tree had a **Red-shouldered Hawk** in a nest. We watched as the parent brought food to the new hatchlings. About the same time a pair of **Bullock’s Orioles** landed in the same tree. No Oriole nest was observed in the tree. From the parking lot we ventured down the bank of the American River. The American River was essentially deserted of water birds. Along the trail we spotted a **Bushtit’s** nest hanging in a tree. The birds were actively building the nest. Flying around and above were plenty of **Tree Swallows**. At the pond a **Green Heron** was waiting for us and immediately flew away. We had a total 46 species of birds.

Bobelaine Sanctuary, 5/8

Leader Cliff Hawley (substituting for Maureen Geiger) reported: The Bobelaine trip was pretty solid. Warblers numbers were low. We had two **Swainson’s Thrush**, a couple of **Bank Swallows**, big flocks of **American White Pelicans** at the river, and a **Bald Eagle**. The **Bank Swallows, Bald Eagle, American**

White Pelicans, and three **Forster’s Terns** were seen at the Ken Poerner River Overlook. The summer resident **Bullock’s Orioles** put on a show by the parking lot on the way out. View the checklist online at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S136667165>

Spring Migration Hotspots, 5/7

Leader Kevin Thomas reported: An early 6 AM call for this Sacramento Audubon Society field trip. A great group of nine birders showed up to take a stroll through the valley oak woodland gallery and along the American River. It was still a bit unseasonably cold in the morning, as we started around 48 degrees. Little wind until about 9 AM when it kicked up to a 10 mph or so breeze. We had hopes of a big pulse of migrants overnight but the dawn song chorus made it clear that wouldn’t be the case. We did have good luck with **Wilson’s Warblers** and **Warbling Vireo** seeing and hearing several of each. Our resident breeding birds were relatively quiet as many are likely sitting on nests right now ushering in the next generation. We were fortunate to see an **Oak Titmouse** coming and going from a nest cavity in a fallen tree and saw a **Lesser Goldfinch** carrying nesting material to supplement its nest tucked in some low branches on an oak tree. We had great looks at a **White-tailed Kite** doing its namesake method of hunting over the grasslands. The highlight of the morning was a cooperative **Gray Flycatcher** that allowed looks for everyone while flitting around perches, preening, and doing its characteristic tail wag down. It was a wonderful morning with good conversation around birds in the Sacramento area.

William Pond Beginners’ Walk, 5/7

Cathie LaZier, co-leader with Larry Hickey, Darrell Mohr, and Jane Van Kessel, reported: 13 enthusiastic beginners joined us on this sunny morning. Sharp-eyed beginners spotted **Western Kingbird**, adult **Great Horned Owl** and **Northern Flicker**. Other favorites were **Red-shouldered Hawk** on nest, a **Bushtit** nest, **Bullock’s Orioles** and the noisy **Yellow-billed Magpies**. We totaled 43 species.

Ancil Hoffman Park, 5/6

Leader Dan Williams reported: It seems occasional showers throughout the morning kept anyone from showing up for this walk, and understandably so. The weather looked formidable with dark clouds all around and puddle-filled roads. Waiting at the meeting spot until a quarter past the meeting time, I decided to call it, but took myself on the walk anyway just to see what I could see...

My group of one was not disappointed! The trip started out with 22 species from right in the picnic area parking lot, including **Bullock’s Oriole, Western Tanager**, several **Yellow-billed Magpies, Acorn Woodpeckers**, and a pair of **White-breasted Nuthatches** feeding their young in the bottom of an overturned tree. **Warbling Vireos** and **Wilson’s Warblers** were singing the entire morning seemingly from everywhere. Anytime I looked up to see something else, I saw two or three of each of them. Truly prolific! There was a significant amount of bird activity pretty much the entire morning, but by far the most exciting moments came at the bottom of the loop in the densest riparian area between the south end of the golf course and the river. Following a warbler song I didn’t quite recognize along a footpath off the main trail, I came to a small clearing where there were at least six **Western Tanagers**, multiple singing **Townsend’s Warblers**, one **Hermit**

Warbler, two **Swainson’s Thrushes**, and the singer which initially had me stumped: a **MacGillivray’s Warbler**. It was one of those magical times when you hit a migrant sweet spot and it feels like anything might appear next! All told I saw 54 species despite the rather drippy, gray, British weather morning (appropriate for Coronation Day)!

William Pond Park, 5/2

Leader Cathie LaZier reported: Four birders joined me in light rain which quickly stopped. Highlights were two young **Great Horned Owls** in nest, a **Bushtit** nest, a **Red-shouldered Hawk** at a nest, and a very colorful pair of **Bullock’s Orioles**.

Knickerbocker Creek, Auburn SRA, 4/30

Leader Timothy Jackson reported: Five birders saw 47 species during a four hour walk on a beautiful morning in the foothills. The temperature at the start was 54°F and 72°F at the finish with a 10 mph breeze. Highlights included some lingering **Lewis’s Woodpeckers** seen by the whole group and a brief look at a **Lazuli Bunting** by some. The group observed **Ash-throated Flycatchers** entering and leaving a tree cavity and **Western Kingbirds** carrying nesting material. The ebird checklist is at <https://ebird.org/checklist/S135606856>. A **Red-winged Blackbird** struck a close pose on a small tree stump for the group (refer to one of the pictures in the ebird checklist). Noticeable misses included warblers and orioles.

Sweetwater Creek, 4/29

Leader Richard Barbieri reported: With a small group of 10 people we set off on a nice cool morning up into the Sweetwater Creek drainage. There wasn’t the usual variety and numbers of birds that we’ve come to expect on this trip, unfortunately. However, some of our highlights were **Black-headed Grosbeaks, Yellow-breasted Chats, Western Tanagers, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and Hairy Woodpecker**. Total species count for the morning was 40.

Lake Solano, 4/28

Leader Paul Miller reported: The walkway at Lake Solano runs along the water’s edge which is covered with cattails. At this time of year the male **Red-winged Blackbirds** are displaying their magnificent red patches while perched atop the cattails and singing. Just magical! Our group identified a total of twenty five species, including a FOS **Wilson’s Warbler**. The **Lewis’s Woodpeckers** were still present but in fewer numbers than in the fall. Gone are the flocks of waterfowl including the always numerous **Buffleheads**. However the river is always home to the **Double-crested Cormorant, Canada Goose, Great Blue Heron, and Green Heron**. We were hoping to see or hear a **Pileated Woodpecker** that had been spotted two weeks earlier, but to no luck. Other woodpecker species including **Nuttall’s, Downy, and Acorn** were all around.

Sacramento Bar, 4/26

Leader Mark Martucci reported: Eleven birders detected 65 species of birds on a very nice spring day along the American River Parkway. Highlights included **Ash-throated Flycatcher, Western Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Phainopepla, Bullock’s Oriole, Yellow Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler, Western Tanager, and Black-headed Grosbeak**.

continued on next page

Field Trip Reports continued

William Pond Beginning Birder Walk, 4/23

Cathie LaZier, co-leader with Darrell Mohr and Jane Van Kessel, reported: A **Great Horned Owl** with two young in the nest was the highlight for the nine beginners who joined us. A **Cooper's Hawk** carrying a snake, a **Bushtit** nest, and herons and egrets in the large rookery added to our total of 38 species.

Cosumnes River Preserve Unusual spots, 4/22

Leader Rodd Kelsey reported: We had a great trip with eleven of us enjoying a beautiful spring morning at the Cosumnes River Preserve. We took our time birding along the grasslands, still partially flooded rice fields, wetlands and riparian corridors adjacent to the Preserve's remaining old floodplain forest. Much of the landscape had been underwater until recently, so it was interesting to see the landscape blossom in the sunny weather. We had a nice mix of remaining winter species, like **Dunlin** molting into breeding plumage, **Greater Yellowlegs**, and **Northern Pintails**, as well as recently arrived and migrating birds, like **Wilson's Warbler**, **Western Tanager**, **Bullock's Oriole**, and **Western Kingbird**. In total we had 65 species for the morning.

Grasslands Regional Park, 4/19

Leader Nancy Gronert reported: Seven birders showed up for a sunny, calm day south of Davis. We were greeted by chattering **Western Kingbirds**, **Bullock's Orioles**, an **Ash-throated Flycatcher**, **Pacific-slope Flycatcher**, **Wilson's Warblers**, and late season sparrows. **Swainson's**, **Red-tailed**, and **Red-shouldered Hawks** circled and called over the high trees. We ended the morning's outings at South Fork Preserve at the Mace Blvd bridge. At this location we were able to observe a **Cooper's Hawk** nest and a **Red-shouldered Hawk** nest as well as the numerous wrens and **Tree Swallows** swooping over the creek from nearby grasslands.

Lake Solano Regional Park, 4/17

Leader Bill Bianco reported: Six of us started with a cold, windy and overcast morning. At the bridge we sighted **Cliff Swallows**, **Phainopepla**, **Black-headed Grosbeak**, and **Bufflehead**, which was the start of the 60 species we saw on the trip. Other sightings were **Lewis's Woodpeckers**, **Osprey**, **Bullock's Orioles**, **White-breasted Nuthatch**, **Black-throated Gray Warbler**, **Cedar Waxwings**, **Western Kingbird**, **Wood Ducks**, and **Wilson's Warbler**, to name a few. A **Sora** was heard, not seen. Was an enjoyable time for all.

Kanaka Valley - Pine Hill Preserve, 4/16

Leader Chris Conard reported: We had a very enjoyable outing on a sunny day with light to moderate wind. There was a nice flower show with extensive views of buttercups, good amounts of lupine, and patches of butter and eggs, popcorn flower, blue dicks, blue-eyed grass, and a few irises. Among the special plants of Pine Hill Preserve, we noted Pine Hill ceanothus and Red Hills soaproot. Bird highlights included multiple flybys of **Band-tailed Pigeons**, extended views of a **Hammond's Flycatcher**, a pair of **Hutton's Vireos**, a singing **Cassin's Vireo**, **Violet-green Swallows**, good views of **Blue-gray Gnatcatchers**, briefly heard and seen **California Thrashers**, singing **Purple Finches**, **Chipping Sparrows**, good views of **Bell's Sparrows**, extended views of a male **Bullock's Oriole**, plus **Orange-crowned** and **Wilson's warblers** among the abundant **Yellow-rumped Warblers**.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 4/15

Leaders Sandra Stuerer and Dan Williams split the large (30+) group up. Sandra, with EYNC docent Hannah, reported: In my group we saw 22 species and lots of deer. Highlights were a **Red-shouldered Hawk** eating lunch (possibly a vole), and finding a **Lesser Goldfinch** nest. It was a beautiful day with perfect weather, lots of beautiful flowers and pipevine

butterflies.

Dan reported: Our group took the Pond Trail to the Riverview Trail and back up the middle to the nature center. Highlights for us included scope views of a singing **Spotted Towhee**, a mewling **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher**, a nest-building **White-breasted Nuthatch**, and a courting pair of **Cooper's Hawks**. A personal highlight, which I unfortunately wasn't able to show the group, was a singing **Black-and-white Warbler** near the Pond Trail pond; a very distinctive song, but the bird was far enough back and near the canopy that there was no getting our group on it, and this group of beginners wasn't particularly interested in that one particular bird when there were many much closer to see! The river afforded scope views of a resting **Common Merganser** on its shores and a pair of **Killdeer**, but the real crowd pleaser was a couple of River Otters that we got to watch for several minutes as they tumbled through the racing mid-channel waters. Of course as always, the **Acorn Woodpeckers**, **Wild Turkeys**, and Mule Deer were ever-present, and while we failed to get decent looks at them, it was nice to hear a couple of chattering **Bullock's Orioles** and brtt-ing **Ash-throated Flycatchers** newly returned.

Traylor Ranch, 4/15

Leader Mary Forrestal reported: A **California Thrasher**, an **Osprey**, and a juvenile **Bald Eagle** were just three of the unexpected and exciting birds seen by the 10 participants on this Saturday morning trip at Traylor Ranch in Penryn. Other highlights included a **Lewis's Woodpecker** and 24 **Whimbrel**. Newly arrived **Western Kingbird** and **Ash-throated Flycatcher** made appearances and the wonderful regulars for this location such as **California Quail**, **Western Bluebird**, **Tree Swallow**, and **Acorn Woodpecker** did not disappoint. In total 46 species were seen on this beautiful spring morning. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S133893165>

Seasonal Sightings April 1 – 30

Many commented that much of this April felt more like March. This has been an uncommonly cool early spring and several low-lying areas remained flooded from the very wet winter. With warming temperatures and bulging rivers expected for the next two months, some of our local sites like Cosumnes River Preserve may not be fully accessible until June or later. In March, **Band-tailed Pigeon** numbers increased, and for most of April they were quite regular in Sacramento County from about Orangevale east into the low foothills. A flock on 4/4 was photographed at Deer Creek Hills documenting a staggering 177 pigeons!

It is not that often our region produces rarities of statewide significance. Those records are typically reserved for coastal areas, the ocean, and desert oases. A **Ruddy Ground-Dove** visiting a rural yard southwest of Clarksburg was certainly an exception. It was first heard on 4/26, seen and photographed by many on 4/27, but not detected thereafter. A **Common Poorwill** was found along Babel Slough on 4/26; they seem to be turning up less frequently in migration than a decade ago. An **Allen's Hummingbird** was found at the same site as the ground-dove on 4/27-4/28; this location has been consistent in recent years for this locally-rare hummingbird species. On 4/13 along Swan Rd in the vicinity of Winship Rd, there was a group of eight **Pacific Golden-Plovers** and another two about a half-mile away. This general area, south of Dixon, appears to be a local hotspot for this species. There were few **Solitary Sandpiper** reports this spring, but a long-staying bird was found on 4/15 that continued through the end of the month near LeisureTown Rd at Allendale Rd, off Hwy 505 between Winters and Vacaville. Another was found on 4/26 through the end of the month at the North Area Drainage Pond in Davis.

Since the widespread adoption of eBird, locally uncommon **Empidonax flycatcher** reports are proving to be more common than had been appreciated. Especially in the second half of the month, there were impressive numbers of **Hammond's**, **Gray**, and

Dusky Flycatchers; the report of seven **Gray Flycatchers** from a private ranch in southeastern Sacramento County on 4/17 deserves special mention. **Say's Phoebes** are consolidating their status as local breeding birds. A nest with three chicks was found at Marysville High School on 4/19, apparently the first breeding record for Yuba County. Coming off an excellent winter for **Townsend's Solitaires**, singles were reported at Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area on 4/17 and from Slide Hill Park in Davis on 4/27. A few **Evening Grosbeaks** lingered from the March invasion, with one in Rancho Cordova on 4/1, four in Elk Grove on 4/2, and one north of Lake Camanche on 4/7. There were several reported **Brewer's Sparrows** in eastern Sacramento County, where they are regular, and one at Rossmoor Bar on the American River Parkway on 4/22 where they are less expected. On 4/15, a **Black-and-white Warbler** was reported singing and briefly seen at Effie Yeaw Nature Center. The **Summer Tanager** found consistently near Fairytale Town in William Land Park beginning on 3/11 continued through at least 4/14. 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, Lyann Comrack, Gil Ewing, Cliff Hawley, Greg Hemig, Tim Howell, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Barbara Leary, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Ethan Monk, Nora Papian, Asher Perla, Michael Perrone, Steve Scott, Kevin Thomas, John Trochet, Tom Uslan, and Dan Williams. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard

SAS New Members

Please welcome these new members:

Judith Allen
Elizabeth Anderson
Edward Bielski
Celia Buckley
Bea Cooley
Nicole Carr
Kenneth Dawson
Katie Jacobson
Vicki Rondeau
Ashley Simmons

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- 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.

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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.

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White-tailed Kite Daniel Brown

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