

The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, May 18, 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.

Understanding Common Raven Behavior and Movement to Protect Western Snowy Plovers Presented by Janelle Chojnacki

From their twisting aerial displays, intimate partner bonding activities, and complex social behaviors, Common Ravens can be exhilarating to observe. These large, glossy black birds are native to Humboldt County's dune ecosystems, but food subsidies from human activities have enabled them to become problematic for many other native species. One such species is the federally threatened Western Snowy Plover, a cryptic beach-nesting shorebird that breeds in Humboldt County. Ravens are the number one nest predator of Western Snowy Plovers, so Cal Poly Humboldt graduate student Janelle Chojnacki is using GPS units and colored leg bands to track and observe beach-going ravens in order to better understand the resources influencing these ravens' behavior. This seminar will discuss the fascinating ecology and interactions of ravens and snowy plovers as well as what we can all



do to sustainably enjoy both species.

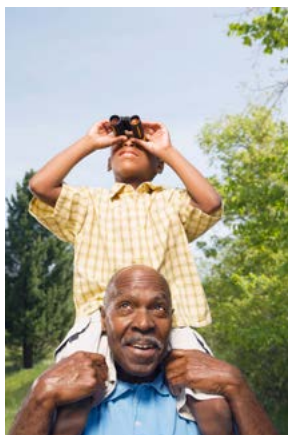
Janelle Chojnacki is a graduate student in Dr. Barbara Clucas's lab at Cal Poly Humboldt, and hopes to use her current research to develop solutions to mitigate the causal factors of high raven numbers and, subsequently, decrease raven predation of protected species. Before joining Cal Poly Humboldt, Janelle received her undergraduate degree in Conservation and Resource Studies from UC Berkeley, then spent several years in a variety of field positions,

largely ornithological, working on projects studying migratory songbird stopover ecology, the role of songbirds in dispersal of native forest seeds, long-term bird banding projects, and other wildlife positions. She also works for California State Parks monitoring Humboldt's snowy plovers, and organizes field trips for the Redwood Region Audubon Society.

Ensuring an Inclusive Future

Names have meaning. For some, the name "Audubon" means Christmas bird counts, sharing lifer pics, and fighting for habitat. For others, Audubon means they are not welcome. John James Audubon may be synonymous with bird paintings, and the society itself has built a name in birding and conservation. But there is no dismissing the fact that John James Audubon's name also means selling Black people as slaves, promoting white supremacy, opposing abolition, and appropriating Black and Indigenous observations on birds. John James Audubon was not an ambivalent product of his time, but a champion of causes considered immoral to most even then. Whatever the name Audubon means to some cannot change what it means to others.

As Seattle, Chicago, New York, Portland, and other Audubon chapters have already declared, we want to ensure our door is open to all, and that goal is more important than preserving a name. This is an independent member organization, and, if we decide to, are empowered to change the Sacramento Audubon Society name without



losing any network or benefits from the California and National societies. We want to hear your input on removing the name Audubon from our society. We believe in taking an incremental approach. At this time we are not considering any replacement names; only whether to remove the Audubon name from our society. 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 encourage you to research this issue. It has gained considerable traction in the national press. The Seattle chapter's website includes a large body of work on this subject. If you feel inclined, please reach out to our Board of Directors to express how you feel about this issue. By any other name, a rose would still smell just as sweet. The same is true for us. We intend to

preserve all the good this society represents no matter our name.

The Board of Directors
Sacramento Audubon Society

Big Day of Giving on May 4, 2023

This year's Big Day of Giving will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2023, from midnight to midnight.

Big Day of Giving is an annual 24-hour giving event that unites caring people to raise funds for nonprofits that strengthen El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties.

Donating during Big Day of Giving is easy and fun!

Here's what you need to know:

- The next Big Day of Giving is Thursday, May 4, 2023, from midnight to 11:59 p.m. Donors who like to plan ahead can make early gifts beginning Thursday, April 20.
- To donate, visit <https://www.bigdayofgiving.org/organization/sacramentoaudubonsociety> during the giving window.
- The minimum gift is \$15. Even small donations can make a big difference because each credit card gift has the chance to be boosted by prizes and match funds.
- The easiest way to donate is to make a credit card gift. All major credit cards are accepted, and each credit card gift counts toward Big Day of Giving tallies and goals. Plus, if you give with a Golden 1 Credit Union debit or credit card, your donations can go even further thanks to a \$100,000 proportional match from Golden 1 Credit Union to boost its members' donations!



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

Voting on the slate opens on May 22nd and closes on June 15, 2023. You can cast your vote in one of two ways: either using an online voting link or by sending in a mail-in ballot. Both will be found in the June issue of *The Observer*. 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.

If you are interested in joining the Sacramento Audubon Society's Board of Directors contact Paul Miller at: sacaudubonpresident@gmail.com

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

Seasonal Sightings March 1 – 30

March is a time of transitions. Migration starts slowly, with waterfowl numbers beginning to decrease and early migrants, like swallows, showing up in force. It's not until at least the second week of April that most of the much-anticipated spring migrants appear, but late March produces the first records of species like **Swainson's Hawks**, **Pacific-slope Flycatchers**, **Western Kingbirds**, **Warbling Vireos**, **Bullock's Orioles**, **Wilson's Warblers**, and **Black-headed Grosbeaks**. Many of our wintering birds will remain through April, but most of the **Sandhill Cranes** and wintering raptors leave before month's end. There was an uptick of **Band-tailed Pigeon** reports toward the end of the month, with a cresting wave appearing in April.

A **Long-eared Owl** was found roosting on the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Bufferlands in a planted live oak on 3/30, accounting for just the third record for the property. This species has been designated as sensitive by eBird, so it will no longer show up on publicly viewable eBird maps or produce eBird rarity alerts. This is an understandable step to protect a species that can be swarmed by dozens of birders and photographers on its roost every day, but it is also unfortunate the specific historical information is no longer readily available, not to mention the palpable joy these birds can give (responsible) observers. There were several **Short-eared Owl** reports from the first week of the month. They came from Yolo County Rd 104 to the west and northwest of the Yolo County (Davis) Landfill, with others along Sankey Rd, Sutter County, between Hwy 99 and the Sacramento River. A **Northern Saw-whet Owl** was found roosting in a planted redwood in Natomas on 3/31.

A **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was found by those looking for the **Summer Tanager** (see below) in William Land Park on 3/17; it continued through the end of the month. The **Hammond's Flycatcher** found last month at Streg Park in Woodland continued, and another was found for much of the month along Babel Slough Rd. The first report for the season of locally declining **Purple Martins** was near the traditional colony at Sutterville Rd near Sacramento City College on 3/18. The **Townsend's Solitaire** at Sacramento City College continued through the

end of the month. **Evening Grosbeaks** in the Gold River neighborhood south of the American River between Sunrise and Hazel Blvds continued from February. There were reports of 20-30 birds, though numbers tapered off by mid-month, and there were scattered reports elsewhere in the region. A **Cassin's Finch** was a nice surprise in Orangevale on 3/13, and a **Clay-colored Sparrow** found in February northeast of Lodi along Buck Rd, south of Acampo Rd, continued through at least 3/8. A bright **Red Fox Sparrow** was at a closed portion of Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 3/25, and the **Swamp Sparrow** at North (Partansky) Pond in Davis continued on 3/2. The **Nashville Warbler** at CRP, first detected on 1/19, continued through at least 3/12. A stunning male **Summer Tanager** was seen consistently near Fairytale Town in Land Park near the Sacramento Zoo beginning on 3/11, continuing into April. It had been seen sporadically on the zoo property earlier in the winter and is almost certainly the same bird that appeared as an immature last winter.

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 Dan Airola, Max Brodie, Aidan Brubaker, Lyann Comrack, Todd Easterla, Leo Edson, Gil Ewing, Marc Fenner, Maureen Geiger, Joshua Greenfield, Cliff Hawley, Leia Hewitt, Mackenzie Hollender, Manfred Kusch, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Daniel Murphy, Frances Oliver, Nora Papian, Michael Perrone, Mark Sawyer, Steve Scott, Alex Single, and John Trochet.. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard

Field Trips: Field Trips May 1 – June 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.

William Pond Park

Tuesday, May 2, 8 AM
Expected length: 2–3 hours
Leader: Cathie Lazier, (916) 502-2699
empid77@gmail.com
Maximum number of participants: 8
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Cathie to register.

On this morning walk we'll visit some different spots on the river, then check out the heron rookery and the pond area. Nesting birds are more visible and more vocal, so we should see a good variety. This is a great trip for beginners. A Sacramento county Parks Pass, or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Meet Cathie at the William Pond Parking lot at the 1st parking lot on your left, just past the entrance kiosk. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east, just under 1 mile, as it runs into the park.

Ancil Hoffman Park

Saturday, May 6, 8:00 AM
Expected length: 3–4 hours
Leader: Dan Williams, (714) 943-1266
jaegermaestro@yahoo.com

We'll check out the river trails upstream and downstream looking for resident, migrating, and nesting birds. This is a great trip for beginners and more experienced birders. A Sac County Park Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Meet Dan at the main picnic area parking lot across from the golf course. 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.

Beginning Birder Walk William Pond Park

Sunday, May 7
Registration for this trip is CLOSED

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.

Spring Migration Hotspots

Sunday, May 7, 6:30 AM
Expected length: 3–4 hours
Leader: Kevin Thomas, (916) 217-6946
bionerdkevin@gmail.com
Maximum number of participants: 8
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Kevin to register.

This trip will focus on a spring migration hotspot in the Sacramento area. Kevin will be scouting areas and reports the weeks prior to the trip to identify a location that has produced good migrant activity and has trails for easy walking. We will expect to see our early migrant flycatchers, vireos, and warblers along with our local breeding birds returning from the south. A Sac County Park Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

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

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Monday, May 8, 8 AM
Expected length: 3–4 hours
Leader: Cliff Hawley, (916) 300-2495
yellowhammerca@gmail.com

The Bobelaine Preserve is a 430-acre National Audubon Sanctuary on the Feather River, managed by Sacramento Audubon. This riparian forest of cottonwoods, sycamores and willows is home to a wide variety of birds and wildlife. Join Maureen for about a 2.5 mile walk along the mowed trails to the River's Overlook looking for resident and migrating birds and enjoy this lush habitat along the Feather River. There is a port-a-potty on site.

Meet at the Bobelaine Preserve Parking Lot. From Sacramento, take I-5 north, then Hwy 99 north toward Yuba City. About 2 miles north of the Feather River Bridge, turn right on Laurel Ave. Follow Laurel to the dead end at the Bobelaine parking lot.

Sailor Bar

Thursday, May 11, 8 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. A Sac 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 Hwy 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 0.5 miles to Illinois Ave, where you will



Say's Phoebe. Photo: Daniel Brown

take another left. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue.

Riparian Corridor in Roseville

Saturday, May 13, 7:30 AM
Registration for this trip is CLOSED

This riparian area is tucked away in a Roseville neighborhood like a secret garden. It hosts resident birds, and in the springtime, there are returning nesting birds as well as migrants passing through, such as warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. A family of wood ducks is often visible if we are stealthy. We will walk for about 2 miles on a level trail (both dirt and paved sections). Bring a snack and water; the trip will last about 3 hours. Space is limited, so sign up soon.

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

Family Friendly Trip to Putah Creek South Fork Preserve

Sunday, May 14, 9 AM
Expected length: 2 hours
Leader: Nicole Barden, (530) 304-5461
nicolembarden@gmail.com

Mother's Day! What better Mother's Day gift than to take your mother on a Mother's Day Birding stroll! Join Environmental Educator Nicole to visit this mixed riparian, upland grassland, and oak savannah habitat. We will be on the lookout for Say's Phoebe, Horned Larks, and raptors in the fields. Traveling along the creek, we will look for herons and otters. We may also get to see any spring migrants that may have stopped over.

This trip is open to all birding levels and ages and will be slow paced. We will be listening for birds as much as looking for them, and will keep an eBird list as we go. Beginning birders and young birders are encouraged to join. The trail is flat, un-paved, and travels through mixed shade and sun. There are no bathrooms available at the preserve. We are expecting to travel no more than 2 miles.

Meet Nicole at the South Fork Preserve parking area. From I-80, go

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Field Trips: continued

south on Mace Boulevard for 2.5 miles to the south side of the creek. The Putah Creek South Fork Preserve will be on the left.

Linda Creek

Tuesday, May 16, 7:30 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Sonja Sorbo, (916) 390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com
Maximum number of participants: 6
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Sonja to register.

This riparian area is tucked away in a Roseville neighborhood like a secret garden. It hosts resident birds, and in the springtime, there are returning nesting birds as well as migrants passing through, such as warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. A family of Wood Ducks is often visible if we are stealthy. We will walk for about 2 miles on a level trail (both dirt and paved sections). Bring a snack and water; the trip will last about 3 hours. Space is limited, so sign up soon.

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

Lake Solano County Park

Friday, May 19, 9 AM
Expected length: 3 hours
Leader: Paul Miller, (916) 768-7503
pjmiller1962@me.com
Maximum number of participants: 6
Registration is required for this trip.
Please email Paul to register.

This is a great area to find woodpeckers, sparrows, Brown Creeper, Wood Duck, and Phainopepla. At this time of year, we may see some winter species which haven't departed yet (such as Hermit Thrush and Cedar Waxwing) and possibly new spring/summer arrivals such as Western Kingbird and Ash-throated Flycatcher. There is an \$8 park entry fee.

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

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk

Saturday, May 20, 10:30 AM
Paid registration is required through Effie Yeaw Nature Center.
Please see www.sacnaturecenter.net or call (916) 876-4918 for registration and other details.

Join Audubon birding leaders Lynn Tweten and Betty Cooper, as well as 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



Wood Duck. Photo: Daniel Brown

know the area and enjoy sharing their knowledge.

Spenceville Wildlife Area

Sunday, May 21, 7 AM
Expected length: 6 hours
Richard Barbieri, (916) 761-1124
offleash227@gmail.com

This scenic recreational area of rolling hillsides, streams, reservoirs, and ponds offers a variety of wildlife. This trip will include several short hikes over uneven terrain. Possible birds include Yellow-breasted Chat, Lewis's Woodpecker, warblers, and more.

Bring lunch, plenty of water, and dress for changeable weather.

Meet Richard at the Park and Ride by Brookfield's Restaurant, 1817 Taylor Rd, Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Rd offramp (exit 105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka and you'll be on Taylor Rd. Turn left just past the Shell station and park on the right in the Park and Ride area.

Auburn State Recreation Area, Catecroft Access (furthest access point south of Cool along Hwy 49)

Saturday, May 27, 7:30 AM
Expected length: 4-5 hours
Craig Swolgaard (530) 334-3023
cswol@sbcglobal.net

This part of Auburn SRA is at about 1500 feet, near the town of Cool, and includes a nice variety of foothill habitats including oak woodland, ponds, grassland, and riparian areas. The trails are fairly level and in good condition. Trails will be shared with horses and mountain bikes but is in a low traffic area of the park.

Weather may be warm late morning but probably less than 90 degrees. Hats will help block the sun. The trail has a

couple of muddy creek crossings. Please bring your own water and food. We should be done by 1 PM. Rattlesnakes occur in the park so stay on the trails. Care should be taken in oak woodlands to avoid poison oak.

Meet Craig at the Holiday Market parking lot on the corner of Hwy 193 and Hwy 49 in Cool. Park near Wells Fargo Bank. From there folks can follow Craig to the trailhead, about a mile south on Hwy 49.

Lincoln Grasslands and Other Habitats

Sunday, May 28, 7 or 8 AM (see below)

Expected length: 6 hours
Leader: John York, (530) 320-4751
johnyork157@yahoo.com

Join John for a day of birding based in Lincoln. We will look for Tri-colored Blackbirds, Western Kingbirds, and the great raptors that inhabit the area. Some easy walking is involved. Bring lunch and drinks.

Registration is not required, but please email John and RSVP so he knows who is joining him.

You can join John and others for breakfast at the Sterling Café at 7 AM. The café is located next to Raley's on Lincoln Blvd at Sterling Parkway in Lincoln. We will leave the parking lot at 8 AM sharp for our excursion which will end about midafternoon, depending on the birding.

From I-80 East, take exit 106 for CA-65 toward Lincoln/Marysville. Use the right 2 lanes to take exit 314 for Lincoln Blvd. In 0.4 miles, keep right at the fork and follow the signs for Downtown Lincoln. Turn right on to Sterling Pkwy. (Sterling Café 820 Sterling Pkwy, #10, Lincoln, CA.)

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

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 8:00 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 required for this trip.
Contact Cathie LaZier, empid77@gmail.com.
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. 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.

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Field Trips: continued

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.

Sacramento Audubon at Community Events

Sierra College Dinosaur Day and Science Fest

Sunday, May 7, 9 AM – 3:30 PM

Registration Required

Sierra College - 5100 Sierra College Boulevard, Rocklin

<https://www.sierracollege.edu/campus-life/things-to-do-on-campus/natural-history-museum/>

Sacramento Valley Conservancy Speaker Series: Changes in Local Bird Populations Over 25 Years (And It's Not All Depressing)

Thursday, May 11, 6 PM – 8 PM

Camp Pollock - 1501 Northgate Blvd, Sacramento

Registration required:

<https://sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/event/speaker-20230511/>

Upcoming Bufferlands Events

Walk on The Wildside

Saturday, May 20, 10 AM – 4 PM

Event and Parking are Free. No Pets.

This free event celebrates International Migratory Bird Day and highlights local efforts in wildlife conservation and protecting and restoring native Central Valley habitat. Visitors can hike the miles of trails, or enjoy tours of restored wetlands and oak forests on Regional San's Bufferlands. Throughout the day, visitors can get up close and personal with wild animals, listen to some great folk music, and check out conservation exhibits.

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

<https://www.regionalsan.com/event/walk-0n-wildside>

Open Trail Day

Saturday, June 3, 7 AM – 3 PM

Event and Parking are Free. No Pets.

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 Freeport Blvd. Take Freeport Blvd south, past the golf course and the small town of Freeport. Turn left at signs opposite Cliff's Marina (8651 River Rd, Sacramento, CA 95832). Follow signs to the parking area.

Field Trip Reports

Beale AFB Nature Trail, (4/14)

Leader Mary Forrestal reported: Six students and four parents joined SAS volunteer Mary Forrestal on a Homeschool Field Trip at the Beale AFB Nature Trail. The young people, who ranged in age from 6-13, were delighted to use "real" binoculars and send a great big "Thank You!" to Sacramento Audubon for providing them. Highlights of the walk included three **Common Mergansers** that remained in place long enough for all to find; a **White-breasted Nuthatch** who demonstrated his downward tree hopping abilities; and numerous **Turkey Vultures** and **Red-tailed Hawks** riding the thermals. One of the six-year-olds summed it up best, 'Awesome'.

Stone Lakes NWR, 4/9

Paul Miller, co-leader with Maureen Geiger, reported: Another successful accessible birding trip! This was a co-led family/wheelchair friendly trip. Paul has been leading accessible birding trips from his electric wheelchair for over a year. Stone Lakes NWR is the perfect location for anyone who is handicapped or needs a flat smooth surface for walking. There are also benches for sitting throughout the trail. A total of ten people joined this trip including one also in an electric wheelchair and someone needing walking staffs. We were treated to a wide variety of bird species including the newly arrived **Western Kingbird** and **Swainson's Hawk**. A total of thirty two species were observed overall. Stand out birds were a **White-throated Swift**, **American Pelican** (fly over), **Great-tailed Grackle**, and **Cinnamon Teal**.

Bufferlands Birds and Blooms, (4/8)

Chris Conard, co-leader with Roger Jones, reported: We had wonderful weather, though the flowers were delayed from the cold winter (the few seen included fiddleneck, a couple blooming poppies, seep monkeyflower, blue dicks, and Ithurial's spear). Bird highlights included lingering **Greater White-fronted Geese**, along with a few **Cackling Geese**, a pair of **Blue-winged Teal**, and a smattering of other dabblers. An **American Bittern** only allowed quick views for a few of us. Among eight raptor species, a **Great Horned Owl** nest with two large chicks stole the show. **Western Kingbirds** had arrived in force, while **Tree Swallows** and **Western Bluebirds** vied for nest boxes.

Foothill Birds and Flowers at North Table Mountain Ecological Reserve, (4/5)

Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: After a winter of seemingly interminable rain, spring finally arrived. Our group of 8 birders was fortunate to have near perfect weather. Although birding was our primary goal, it was at times eclipsed by spectacular views of wildflowers, spreading like a colorful quilt over the rugged volcanic hills. We identified fifteen species of wildflowers, including California goldfields, frying pans and foothill poppies, brodiaea, bird's-eye gilia, sky lupine, mountain jewel flower, rusty popcorn flower, canyon delphinium, purple owl's clover, and Kellogg's monkey flower. Our plan was to hike to Phantom Falls, a 2-mile walk over

continued on next page

Field Trip Reports: continued

volcanic formations; because of all the rains, there were a few seasonal stream crossings as well. En route we noted both **Savannah** and **Lark Sparrows**, and a couple of dozen **Meadowlarks** serenaded us with their lovely song. A pair of **American Kestrels** perched atop an oak and allowed us to admire them for several minutes. As we traversed a small canyon with a nice canopy, we noted a **Hermit Thrush**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, **Bushtits**, and an **Orange-crowned warbler**. Perhaps the birds of the day were two **Lewis' Woodpeckers**, wowing us with their stunning green and rosy colors. Upon arriving at our destination, we were treated to a postcard-like vista, with center stage being Phantom Falls, cascading several hundred feet from the rocky plateau down to the creek below. The aerial acrobatics of numerous **Violet-green Swallows** caught our attention; they seemed to be scouting out the cliffs for nesting sites. A **Canyon Wren's** call was faintly audible on the breeze. Nearby, **Western Bluebirds** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** (Audubon's) flitted around a grassy area; a cluster of oaks hosted **Oak Titmice**, **Lesser Goldfinches**, **House Finches**, and **Acorn Woodpeckers**. A pair of **Rock Wrens** was spotted on some outcroppings, and gave us good looks for several minutes. Although species diversity was not huge, the beauty of the landscape and the moderate challenge of the hiking made the day a memorable one.

Sailor Bar, (4/3)

Leader Nicole Barden reported: Sixteen people met at the Sailor Bar parking lot to enjoy a morning of slow paced birding and learning. As we gathered in the parking lot, enjoying looks at a collection of birds in a large cottonwood tree, our attention was quickly diverted when a **Bald Eagle** flew past behind the tree we were looking in. We knew we were off to a good start. As we started down the trail, three **Greater Yellowlegs** flew overhead, calling out and announcing themselves. Hearing an interesting chattering noise, we turned down a side path and were rewarded with a pair of vibrant **Bullock's Orioles**. We visited the **Great Blue Heron** rookery where we found at least two active nests. The group was delighted when a **Great Blue Heron** stood up and a wobbly baby heron head peeked up through the branches. We took a path to see a known **House Wren** nest, but alas, the birds did not appear so we moved on down the trail. A **Red-shouldered Hawk** was nestled deep in its nest, with only the very top of its head visible. The weather was beautiful and a total of 45 species was found. For a full list please visit <https://ebird.org/checklist/S133569008>

Sacramento Migration Hotspot, (4/2)

Leader Kevin Thomas reported: Early morning start for a Sacramento Audubon Society field trip to Gibson Ranch. We had six participants for this spring morning walk that covered several miles and a mix of grassland, park, and riparian habitat. The morning started chilly with a brisk wind blowing at a crisp 10 mph or so that lasted and gained speed throughout the day. The exceptional rainy season we have had in the valley this year provided some additional wetland habitat in and around the park that greatly increased the diversity of species we saw today. There were good numbers of **American Wigeon**, **Northern Shoveler**, and **Green-winged Teal** in the open water. Best was a pair of **Tundra Swans** lingering later than normal in the valley and a large group of **Snow Geese** flying

north above us. Listening near the wetlands we were able to hear the calls of the elusive **Virginia Rail** and **Sora**. With the wind blowing as it was there were plenty of raptors to see, several **Red-tailed** and **Red-shouldered Hawks** were around along with a **White-tailed Kite** and **American Kestrel**. We were also treated to a few fly by **Yellow-billed Magpies**, always a treat to see one of our endemic birds. Walking through the park we spotted an orange bird sitting atop a large cottonwood, a first of season **Bullock's Oriole** was a nice bird to keep everyone's spirit up on this breezy morning. The breeding season is in full swing with our local breeders like **Oak Titmouse**, **Bewick's Wren**, and **Lesser Goldfinch** singing up a storm in their appropriate habitats. We were also treated to the sounds of some of our non-breeding birds such as **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, and **Orange-crowned Warblers** singing away as they practice for once they reach their breeding grounds. We spent just over four hours watching, listening, and marveling at all the wonderful birds. In total we saw 80 species this breezy morning making for a fantastic spring morning with great company.

Point Reyes, (4/1)

Leader John York prefaced his report with - "Here it is. See if you can spot the April Fools sightings", and reported as follows: A total of nineteen April Fools at Point Reyes on a birding trip, began and ended with a big mammal day. Within a few steps on the Earthquake Trail, we spotted a cooperative California Long-tailed Weasel which came and went from various holes in the grass. About mid-day, we almost ran over a moose which was crossing the road with the Short-horned Elk that were going from pasture to pasture. Late in the afternoon, two stragglers photographed a badger on the Abbott's Lagoon Trail. Finally, we in the leader car sighted a bobcat sitting out on an open hillside, on our way to catch the sunset on the Roosevelt Elk at the top of Tomales Bay. Birds were generally the usual suspects with a steady stream of sightings all day, the highlight for most being clear, close views of a **Great Horned Owl**. The water everywhere was, as expected, very high, so shorebirds and the usual ducks were in short supply. Oddest sighting of the day was a **California Condor** fishing in the lagoon behind Perry's Deli at lunchtime.

Teal Bend, (3/26)

Leader Richard Barbieri reported: I had a big group of 18 people show up for one of the few clear days we've had in awhile. However, it was a breezy and cold biting morning. Because of the low temperature bird activity was pretty slow with the exception of the numerous **Yellow-rumped Warblers** throughout the morning. Highlights were **White-tailed Kites** on a nest, a pair of **Bushtits** building a nest, and a **Red-breasted Sapsucker**. Total for the day was 51 species.

Bucks Creek/Serrano Pkwy, (3/23)

Susan Goodrich, keeping the e-bird list for leader Phyllis Wilburn, who was substituting for Maureen Geiger, reported: 10 birders enjoyed a chilly but fun morning walking Bucks Creek in El Dorado Hills, where 43 species were seen by morning's end. Surrounded by the constant calling and drumming of woodpeckers, we heard and saw not only **Acorn** and **Nuttall's**, but **Downy**, **Northern Flickers**, and viewed a **Red-breasted Sapsucker** as well. Even with overcast skies, signs of spring were all about, as **Oak**



White-tailed Kite. Photo: Ray Rozema

Titmice gathered nest material and retreated into tree knotholes, and **Red-shouldered Hawks** mated. Seven **Hooded Mergansers** and two **Wood Ducks** displayed their spring beauty on the water, as **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, and **White-breasted Nuthatches** showed off their colors in the reeds and trees. **White-** and **Golden-crowned Sparrows** did the same in the bushes and on the ground. **Anna's Hummingbirds** ticked, **Great-tailed Grackles** whistled and clucked, and **Song Sparrows** sang, all contributing to the avian acoustics! Returning along the trail birders were treated to another sign of spring as we viewed the apiarian wonder of a pedunculated bee-swarm, capping a wonderful morning of birding. <https://ebird.org/checklist/S131632992>

Folsom Marshes and Lake, (3/19)

Leader Chris Conard reported: Sadly, we were rained out.

North Natomas Regional Park, (3/18)

Leader Ben Graber reported: After previously having been canceled due to severe weather, our second attempt at this trip was a success. We had a very diverse and engaged group of participants with several first-time birders and some who have been birding with us for decades. We finally figured out what species was nesting in the trees by the pond. It was a rookery of **Black-Crowned Night Herons!** We saw a total of 45 species. Other highlights included **Ring-Necked Pheasant**, **Eurasian Collared-Dove**, **Western Meadowlark**, **American Pipit**, and some early arriving **Barn, Cliff**, and **Northern Rough-Winged Swallows**.

Ancil Hoffman Park, (3/15)

Betty Cooper, co-leader with Rich Howard, reported: We led the group of 12 along the trail between the golf course and the river, which was at a very high level due to recent storms. This reduced the number of birds on the water but a **Barrow's Goldeneye** was seen among the **Common Goldeneyes** and **Common Mergansers**. **Wood Ducks**, **Hermit Thrush**, and a **Western Gull** were found near the end of the trail where the water mingled with the trees and occasional small gravel bar. Very large flyovers of **Greater White-fronted Geese** and **Snow Geese** were seen. The group got good looks at a **Red-breasted Sapsucker**, **Orange-Crowned Warbler** and **Western Bluebirds**. A dozen **Lark Sparrows** were seen on the lawn, and the **Cliff Swallows** have returned to the water tower nesting area. **California Quail**, **Yellow-billed Magpies**, **Tree Swallows** and **Golden-crowned Sparrows** were abundant. Total species: 56

Cosumnes River Preserve, (3/12)

Leader Rodd Kelsey reported that the trip was postponed due to weather.

SAS New Members

Please welcome these new members:

Sharon Bertsch
Doug Herr
Jackie House
Sue Nelson
Jayna Querin
Kelley Shiu
Carol Smith
Lauren Standig
Brenna Thompson
Willa Walker
Joan Williamson

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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, May 30, 2023.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found at sacramentoaudubon.org/board-minutes.

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White-tailed Kite Daniel Brown

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Jane Van Kessel
sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com
P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard
2405 Rio Bravo Circle, Sacramento, CA 95826
(916) 203-1610, e-mail preferred: conardc@gmail.com

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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Big Day of Giving
May 4, 2023

See page 2 for details

May Program

Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 7 PM via Zoom

Understanding Common Raven Behavior and Movement to

Protect Western Snowy Plovers

Presented by Janelle Chojnacki