



The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society

Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Restoration at Riverbend

The next phase of the Water Forum salmon and steelhead habitat improvement project will take place this summer or early fall, in the upper River Bend section of the American River Parkway, just across from Ancil Hoffman Park. The best estimate is that it will take about 8 weeks beginning in August, but final determination of the date will depend on water flows.

Salmon habitat restoration projects have been occurring somewhat regularly in different sections of the river in recent years to provide enhanced habitat for salmon and steelhead to nest and for newly hatched fish to grow before returning down river to the ocean. Even though these projects have been on-going, it is still a shock to see heavy equipment in and around the river. It is expected that access to some sections of Ancil Hoffman and Riverbend will be restricted during the project.

For more information on the project, visit the Water Forum website: <https://www.waterforum.org/the-river/habitat-management/>

—Larry Hickey



Thank You for Making Big Day of Giving 2023 a Huge Success

Big Day of Giving is an annual, online fundraising event which helps local nonprofits raise needed funds to help carry out their missions.

This year, the gifts of many generous donors raised a total of \$4,783!

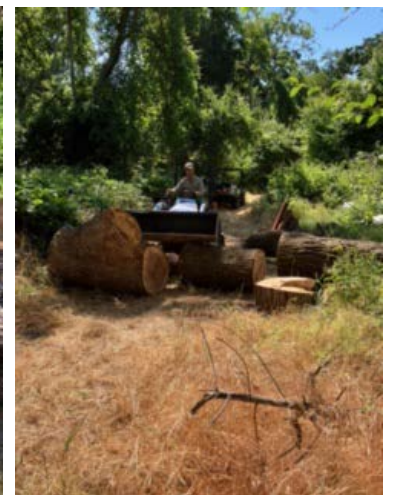
Thank you for supporting Sacramento Audubon Society!



Bobelaine Update

All trails at Bobelaine are open for public use again. We were finally able to access the large tree blocking Oak Trail. Big thanks to Steven Hall for cutting and clearing the tree trunk. Volunteers also completed mowing the portions of South Trail and Oak Trail that had been flooded.

—William Bianco



Field Trips: Field Trips July 1 – August 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. For questions regarding the trip, or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions or air quality contact the trip leader. Please note that a forecast of bad air quality (AQI of 100 or higher) will result in trip cancellation.

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

- All participants, including children 5 and up and field trip leaders, must be vaccinated.
- Please read the description of the field trip carefully to note any other field trip requirements.

To Register for a Field Trip,

follow the instructions in the trip description or visit <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/field-trips>. Registration opens when the trip is announced in the *Observer* or posted to the website. If you have questions or need help, email our Registration Coordinator at sacramentoaudubonfieldtrips@gmail.com.

Field Trip Cancellations

Over the last month, we have unfortunately needed to cancel a few of our field trips. Two were canceled due to snow in the mountains and one was canceled because the trip leader, in reviewing the location, discovered it had drastically changed since his visit the previous year. Field trips are planned up to three months in advance, and often the trip leader has no idea what current conditions will be like for that future field trip. Cancellations will be posted on the website <https://www.sacramentoaudubon.org/field-trips> and in the Sacramento Audubon Society Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/889738711138150>. Even if you have registered be sure to check prior to attending any field trip.

Wrights Lake Area

Saturday, July 1, 8 AM

Expected length: All day

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

Registration for this trip is CLOSED.

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.

Loney Meadows

Saturday, July 8, 6 AM

(Rescheduled from June 24 due to snow)

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 neo-tropical 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 binoculars 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.

Just a warning—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.



Hammond's Flycatcher.
Photo by Daniel Brown

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

continued on next page

Field Trips: continued

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 round trip 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.

Woodland Wastewater Treatment Plant and Farm Pond, Yolo County

Thursday, July 20, 7 AM

Leader: Maureen Geiger, (916) 281-6652
mkgeiger@comcast.net

Late July heat can be brutal in the Sacramento Valley, but shorebirds migrate south anyway. Join Maureen to see what might be present at the Water Treatment Plant in Woodland and, if water is present, the nearby Farm Pond on Road 102. There is no shade, so water and sunscreen are musts, and there are no restrooms. This trip will end mid- to late morning depending on conditions.

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

Walk and Roll Birding Trip - UC Davis Arboretum

Saturday, July 22, 8 AM

Expected Length: 3 hours

Leaders: Paul Miller (916) 768-7503,
Maureen Geiger (916) 281-6652
paul@pjmillier.com

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 within the UC Davis Arboretum located in the City of Davis, a short drive from Sacramento. This location is truly magical and offers a wonderful opportunity to see a wide variety of bird species living along Putah Creek and Lake Spafford. The trip is led by Maureen Geiger, and Paul Miller who specializes in birding from a wheelchair with custom built

scope and camera mounts. If you use a wheelchair, Paul can help improve your birding adventures. But even if you don't use a wheelchair or walker, join Paul and Maureen for an exciting trip to the Arboretum. Bring binoculars, water, and lunch or snacks.

Meet Paul and Maureen at Nature's Gallery Court, UC Davis Arboretum, Garrod Drive, Davis, CA. From I-80 west, exit Old Davis Road off-ramp. Turn right onto Old Davis Road. At the roundabout turn left onto La Rue Road. Turn left at the next intersection to stay on La Rue Road. Turn left onto Garrod Drive. Park on Garrod Drive at the entrance to the Arboretum.

Google Map Link: <https://goo.gl/maps/SDq8mFYYP85iw5Sh7>

Summertime Blues at the Bufferlands

Sunday, July 23, 6:30 AM

Expected Length: 4 hours

Leader: Chris Conard, (916) 203-1610, conardc@gmail.com

Maximum number of participants: 20
Registration is required for this trip. Please email Chris to register.

Summer in Sacramento can be tough, but an early morning start can make for an enjoyable outing. We'll focus on trying to find a local specialty, Blue Grosbeak, and other summering species. Here in the low floodplain, the seasonal wetlands and riparian forests stay lush. We'll listen and look for summer singers, and we might even see a couple of blues (butterflies), a bluet or two (damselies), and perhaps a blue dasher (dragonfly). The 2500-acre Bufferlands, surrounding the Sacramento Regional WTP, provide an open space buffer between the treatment plant and the community. A wealth of habitat has been preserved and enhanced by over 30 years of restoration of native habitats and management for wildlife. Expect a walk of up to two miles on mostly level gravel/dirt roads and mowed paths. Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

Napa Wetlands

Wednesday, July 26, 9 AM

Expected length: 4 hours

Leaders: Nancy Gronert 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.

We'll meet up at our Napa destination for a hike near the Bay in search of birds and cool bay breezes. We may find pelicans, Mallards, hummingbirds, doves, gulls, and warblers, along the edge of the Bay. Past sightings include Gadwall, American Avocet, California

Gull, egrets, Green Heron, Osprey, Golden Eagle, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Black Phoebe, Ash-throated Flycatcher, swallows, Western Bluebird, and Savannah Sparrow. Directions and confirmation of exact meeting location and time will be provided upon registration.

Stevens Trail, near Colfax

Sunday, July 30, 2023, 7 AM

Expected length: 6 hours

Leader: Ben Graber, (916) 844-8682
bgraber984@protonmail.com

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

Join Ben for this trip to one of his favorite birding spots. He has seen Lazuli Bunting, Cassin's Vireo, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Canyon Wren along the trail. The birding and scenery are excellent for whoever can brave the long, steep trail and Ben's sense of humor.

This is a strenuous 8 mile round trip hike down to the American River, 4 miles down and 4 miles up, which is a 1400 foot elevation gain. Be sure to wear good walking or hiking shoes and bring liquids and snacks. This will be a half day trip.

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

Sailor Bar

Thursday, August 3, 7 AM

Expected length: 3-4 hours

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

Join Darrell for a morning walk checking out the local birds. Possible birds include Phainopepla and California Quail. This is a good trip for both beginners and experienced birders. A Sacramento County Parks Pass or \$6 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Meet at the last (gravel) parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area. From Sacramento, take Highway 50 east to Exit 21, Hazel Avenue. Turn left at the light and proceed north 1.4 miles to Winding Way. Turn left on Winding Way, then proceed .5 miles to Illinois Avenue, where you will take another left. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue.

Folsom Point

Saturday, August 5, 7:30 AM

Expected length: 3 hours

Rich Howard, (916) 203-0952
rhowarda@gmail.com

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

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

Carson Pass Lake Winnemucca Loop

Saturday, August 12, 6 AM

Expected length: all day—8 to 10 hours (includes driving time)

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

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

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

The pace will be relaxed but there is a 900 foot (total) elevation change; this coupled with the altitude means that it is a moderately strenuous hike and participants should be in good physical condition. Trekking poles may help. Wear sturdy walking shoes or hiking boots, and a hat; bring lunch, snacks, plenty of liquids, sunscreen, and bug repellent. Dress in layers and be ready for changing weather conditions. There are bathrooms at the ranger station at the beginning and end of the trip. There is also a day use fee of \$5 per vehicle, bring cash (the Interagency Senior Pass is also acceptable).

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

Field Trip Reports

Dragonflies, (6/11)

Leader Tim Manolis reported:

Not a remarkable trip to report. I did not go down to the Parkway behind Rio Americano High School as I usually do, because very few odonates are emerging along the river which is running very high, fast, and cold. So I took the group down to a suburban park in Elk Grove, Jack E. Hill Park. A stretch of Laguna Creek runs for about a mile from that park to another small park (Del Meyer Park), it has a paved walking/biking trail, with scattered dirt trails through the fields and marshes along the creek. A very nice little parkway, really. We saw nothing unusual, though just the usual common species, and some of these were very scarce (We only saw ONE bluet, a female! I don't think I have ever spent so much time (about 3 hours) at this season in such nice damselfly habitats and only seen one individual). The species list just made it to double digits : **Bluet sp.** (1 female!), **Pacific Forktail**, **Common Green Darner**, **Western Pondhawk**, **Blue Dasher**, **Flame Skimmer**, **Twelve-spotted Skimmer**, **Widow Skimmer**, **Common Whitetail**, **Black Saddlebags**, **Variiegated Meadowhawk** (1!) A typical walk at this time of year along American River Parkway would normally bag all of these plus at least 5–6 more species (mostly, additional species of damselflies. I don't know why this trip produced so few damsel species, even my recent visits along the ARP have at least produced 3–4 damselfly species, but many fewer dragonfly species).

Camp Pollock, (6/11)

Leader Bill Bianco reported:

Fifteen of us had a cooler than normal morning for our walk. Started off at the parking lot looking at a **Swainson's Hawk** on nest. Other top sightings were **Western Kingbird** at nest, **Black-chinned Hummingbird**, **Western Bluebird**, **White-breasted Nuthatch** to name a few. Heard plenty of **Bewick's Wrens**. Total of 22 species for our 2 hour walk. Was a pleasurable time for all.

U C Davis Arboretum, (6/10)

Leader Paul Miller reported:

UC Davis Arboretum is such a stunning accessible birding locations. With miles of paved trails along Putah Creek and extensive flower blooms, it provides hours of great birding. A total of eight people joined this trip, including two long time birders who recently moved to Sacramento but needed an accessible location. Highlighting our time were the vociferous **House Wrens** busy with their nesting duties. Two UC Davis students were checking bird houses and told us they found several with Wren eggs. We were treated with many **Western Bluebirds**, adorable **Bushtits**, the ever present **California Scrub-Jays**, and **American Crows**. Raptors included **Red-shouldered** and **Cooper's Hawks**.

William Pond Park Beginners' Walk, (6/4)

Larry Hickey, co-leader with Cathie LaZier and Darrell Mohr, reported:

On a beautiful morning in early June at the William Pond part of the American River Parkway, ten of us participated in the beginning birder field trip. When we first arrived **Yellow-billed Magpies** were loudly calling and fussing about along with **European Starlings**, and a large family of **Bushtits** flitted past. High, fast water in the river meant that shorebirds



Pileated Woodpecker. Photo by Daniel Brown

were elsewhere, but **Tree Swallows** and **Cliff Swallows** flew all around us. Highlights included a very cooperative male **Western Bluebird**, **Western Kingbirds**, and **Bullock's Orioles**. We were all delighted, however, when we found three young **Red-shouldered Hawks** that had just fledged from their nest and a second **Red-shouldered Hawk** chick still occupying another nest on the other side of the park.

Crystal Basin, (6/3)

Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Phyllis Wilburn, reported:

Since I first went to the Crystal Basin area years ago, I remember it as a magical place to bird. Then I discovered that Phyllis Wilburn led a trip there every June. I have joined her most years since then, making it an annual pilgrimage to a beautiful area with wonderful birds. Yesterday was no exception, with 24 of us hitting the same hot spots as in years past, submitting lots of eBird lists, and seeing many birds and species. Phyllis, ever the Energizer Bunny, walked most of us into the ground by the end of the day marching along the trails and roads. A special treat was hearing several **Mountain Quail** calling throughout our walk to the valley where the **Calliope Hummingbirds** are always found, this year no exception. **Green-tailed Towhees**, **Purple Finches**, **Fox Sparrows**, **Golden-crowned Kinglets** and **Olive-sided Flycatchers** were just a few of the species we found pretty much where Phyllis said they would be. Over the course of the day, we saw and heard six species of warblers and had good looks at a **Pileated Woodpecker**. Two more highlights were a **Thick-billed Fox Sparrow** at the Big Hill lookout that posed several times on a wire for lots of good photos and close by, a huge, gorgeous **Ceanothus Silk Moth** found peacefully napping among the thick, blooming Ceanothus. A very successful day with lots of very tired birders by 5 PM!

Lincoln Grasslands, (5/28)

Leader John York reported:

We set out with six to hit some of the hot little micro-habitats, most of which were not hot due to water being or not being where it was supposed to be. The usual suspects including a lot of **Western Kingbirds**, and **Northern Mockingbirds** were ubiquitous. A highlight came at the end of the trip, with a stop on

Nader Rd, with a flock of 40 **Tricolored Blackbirds**, a target and lifer for several in the group. Sitting on the fence at the same spot was a **Northern Rough-winged Swallow**, certainly the most unexpected bird on the trip. And we got a tour of a beaver dam, not bad for a nice morning of birding.

Auburn SRA, Catecroft Access, (5/27)

Leader Craig Swolgaard reported:

Birding today was pretty good. The trip lasted from 8:45 AM till 12:30 PM. There were 11 people with me, and we walked about 4.5 miles in a loop that covered lots of varied habitats, including ponds, riparian areas, oak grassland, and Knickerbocker Creek ravine. Weather was mild and comfortably cool. We listed 40 species, including **Band-tailed Pigeon**, **Pacific-slope Flycatcher**, **Wilson's Warbler**, **Violet-green Swallow**, **Chipping Sparrow**, and **Yellow-breasted Chat**. This area has a lot of promise for more surprises in the future.

Spenceville WLA, (5/21)

Leader Richard Barbieri reported:

It was a really nice spring day of birding with seven other people into the foothills, although the temperature did become quite warm towards the end of our day. Some of the highlights we had were **Yellow Warbler**, **Rufous-crowned Sparrows**, two different **Osprey** on nests, two mature **Bald Eagles**, and **Lawrence's Goldfinches**. We had a total species count of 71 for the day.

Effie Yeaw Family Nature Walk, (5/20)

Lynne Tweten and Betty Cooper reported that twenty birders, adults, young children and babes in arms, joined them for this walk, so the group split up. Lynne reported:

We enjoyed a clear, warm morning at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. **Wild Turkeys** and friendly looking deer walked the trails with us as we watched and heard noisy **Acorn Woodpeckers**, **European Starlings**, and a **Nuttall's Woodpecker** in the oak trees. We enjoyed a fast flowing river along with **Common Mergansers**, **Mallards**, and **Canada Geese**, while a **Red-shouldered Hawk** swooped to pluck its lunch from the river nearby. A **Bewick's Wren** shared its nesting location with us. **Western**

continued on next page

Field Trip Reports continued

Scrub-Jays, Tree Swallows, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Oak Titmouse, Anna's Hummingbirds, and Lesser Goldfinches kept us company on this lovely birding walk.

Betty added: My group also saw and heard Killdeer and yellowlegs along the river, and a very vocal House Wren protecting a nest cavity along the bluff.

Lake Solano County Park, (5/19)

Leader Paul Miller reported:

Lake Solano is a wonderful accessible birding location. Four people joined this trip including one using a wheelchair, along with Paul Miller who also uses a wheelchair. The day started great by seeing a male Hooded Oriole and a female Phainopepla. Barn Swallow nesting activity had slowed under the bridge, but the Red-winged Blackbirds were out in full display. In total we observed twenty three species including some adorable Canada Goose goslings.

Linda Creek, (5/16)

Leader Sonja Sorbo reported:

Seven birders tracked 43 species of spring migrants, summer nesters, and resident birds this morning at the Linda Creek Open Space. Our priority was warblers, and we were rewarded with views of Wilson's, Townsend's, Yellow, Hermit, and MacGillivray's. Not to be outshone were Western Tanagers, a couple of whom sat out in the open for us. Flycatchers were also cooperative, including Western Wood-Pewee, Ash-throated, Black Phoebe; a calling Willow Flycatcher, who briefly perched in full sun, was a thrill for a couple of birders who had never seen one.

Other life birds for some in our group were Cassin's Vireo, Warbling Vireo, and Black-headed Grosbeak. Resident birds were abundant—Western Bluebird, California and Spotted Towhee, Oak Titmouse, Bushtit, House and Bewick's Wren, Northern Mockingbird, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, Lesser Goldfinch, House Finch, and Anna's Hummingbird. Downy, Nuttall's, and Acorn Woodpeckers were actively moving from tree to tree, occasionally stopping to forage for tasty morsels in the bark.

The creek itself held several Mallard as well as a Great Egret, which was stalking prey in the water and didn't seem flustered by a group of human admirers. Looking upwards revealed some circling Cliff Swallows, a lone Northern Rough-winged Swallow, and a Turkey Vulture. A Red-shouldered Hawk announced its presence from afar but remained out of view.

Putah Creek So. Fork Preserve, (5/14)

Leader Nicole Barden reported:

12 bird enthusiasts, including several mothers, met for a lovely spring walk to celebrate Mother's Day by enjoying some spring birds. Highlights include an Osprey flying overhead, several Ash-throated Flycatchers, a Black-headed Grosbeak singing, different morphs of Swainson's Hawks, and several Western Kingbirds. There was a flock of sheep grazing down the meadow area, which I imagine attracted a nice bug feast for birds in the area. Our total for the day was 34 species and you can see the full eBird list here: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S141463233>

Seasonal Sightings May 1 – 30

May has many faces. The first week or ten days are often the most exciting period for migrant songbirds all spring, if not all year. Migration is highly variable, so some days can be very slow, while others are much better. This month, the large flow of migrants quickly dried up by Mother's Day, though there were a few surprises to come. Melt water from the heavy snow pack kept rivers high, and left some sites in the low floodplain connected to the high Delta waters and with limited access. By the end of the month, reports of migrants had really slowed, though mild temperatures and breezy days made for pleasant if not bird-filled outings.

A few widely scattered Calliope Hummingbird reports came in during the first eleven days of May. Among the unexpected shorebirds, a Semipalmated Sandpiper, much less expected in spring than in July and August, was found at the Robben Rd ponds, south of Dixon, from 5/13-5/15. A Solitary Sandpiper was found on 5/2 north of Vacaville, near the intersection of LeisureTown and Allendale Rds. An adult Franklin's Gull was a nice surprise on 5/21 at the Robben Rd ponds. A Least Bittern was singing from a marsh at a normally closed portion of Cosumnes River Preserve on 5/27; three were found on surveys at the western tip of Sherman Island, though this site doesn't have public access. A Yellow-crowned Night-Heron in Natomas was an excellent find on 5/11 at River Birch Park, just east of Truxel Rd at Terracina Dr. It was only seen for one day until almost certainly the same bird was found nearby in June.

A Northern Saw-whet Owl was photographed roosting in a tree in Davis on 5/22. Slowly but surely, Dark-eyed Juncos are establishing themselves as breeders in the Sacramento area. Two singing males, one with a family group, were found at Willowbank Ditch in Davis. Another was singing at Slide Hill Park, and a pair has nested for four years in a row on the UC Davis campus. Another pair was regularly noted in Sacramento near U and 42nd Streets, and fledged young of this pair were confirmed in June. Single Brewer's Sparrows were found on 5/5 at Sacramento Bar along the American River Parkway (ARP), and from more expected grassland sites along both Michigan Bar and Meiss Rds on 5/13. A Vesper Sparrow was a bit of a surprise at Mississippi Bar on 5/1, with another in more expected habitat along Payen Rd on 5/6. Hoped-for vagrant warblers came in the form of two Ovenbirds,



Vesper's Sparrow. Photo Daniel Brown

both on the same day, and a Palm Warbler.

The Ovenbirds were both found on 5/21: at Bobelaine in Sutter County and along Deer Creek off Latrobe Rd in El Dorado County. The Palm Warbler was on Rayhouse Rd on 5/7, found during an all-day hike that began before 3 AM along this remote Yolo County Rd. A female-type Summer Tanager was photographed on 5/26 near the Glenbrook Park access to ARP between Howe and Watt Aves.

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, Michael Barnett, Max Brodie, Aidan Brubaker, Kristi Carr, Lyann Comrack, Andy Engilis, Jr., Gil Ewing, Frank Fabbro, Robert Furrow, Cliff Hawley, Jim Holmes, Jeri Langham, Andrew Lee, Mark Martucci, Roger Muskat, Nora Papian, Michael Perrone, Zane Pickus, Karen Richardson, William Rockey, Steve Scott, Sean Smith, Kirk Swenson, Kevin Thomas, and John Trochet. Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

—Chris Conard

Harvest Day

Saturday, August 5
8 AM–2 PM
Fair Oaks Horticulture
Center 11549 Fair Oaks
Boulevard.
Free.



Featured horticultural experts will speak about Home Reforestation: Correct Planting and Establishment of Landscape Trees, Vegetables, and Climate Change and Native Pollinator Populations.

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

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

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer at Bobelaine Audubon Sanctuary

To keep up with the trail and caretaker duties Sacramento Audubon is requesting volunteer help. We will keep a list of helpers. Helpers will be emailed the monthly work days and can advise Bill Bianco on which days they are available to volunteer. Typical duties include cutting brush and overhead growth along the trails, removing invasive plants, mowing weeds, and cleanup around the picnic area and equipment shed. Be aware that poison oak is prevalent in the sanctuary. If you would like to help out, please email Bill Bianco at biancowm@yahoo.com, and provide your contact information.

Sacramento Audubon Education Chair

The Education Chair is a volunteer position that coordinates the efforts of lead volunteers on the Education Committee. The chair and lead volunteers are responsible for a variety of activities focused on reaching out to both adults and children. Examples of these activities include community outreach, beginning birder activities, and family friendly and youth activities. The Education Chair also serves as the primary contact to the general public, fielding inquiries and passing them on to the appropriate committee member. If you are interested in this position and helping Sacramento Audubon fulfill one of its primary missions, please contact the President of Sacramento Audubon at sacaudubonpresident@gmail.com.

Website Maintenance

The Website Committee is seeking volunteers to help with maintenance of the Sacramento Audubon website. Contact the Sacramento Audubon Webmaster at sacramentoaudubon@gmail.com for more information or to volunteer.



Photo: Regional San

Twilight on the Bufferlands Wednesday, July 12, 6:30 – 9 PM

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

Don't miss this unique opportunity to explore some of the Great Central Valley habitats at dusk on the Bufferlands. During the tour, participants may have a chance to see beavers, river otters, muskrats, raccoons, owls, and more.

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

Advanced registration is required for this free event, as space is limited. Reservations will only be accepted from July 6 to July 11.

To make your reservation, please email Twilight on the Bufferlands at jonesro@sacsewer.com, or contact Roger Jones from July 6 to July 11 at (916) 875-9174. Email confirmation, including the meeting location, will be sent to you.

For more information visit: <https://www.regionalsan.com/bufferlands-events/twilight-bufferlands-0>

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

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

Yurok California Condor Restoration Program

The reintroduction and management of California condors (*Gymnogyps californianus*) is one of the Yurok Tribe's flagship conservation projects. The Yurok Tribe, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are partners in the Northern California Condor Restoration Program (NCCRP)—the collaborative effort to restore condors to Yurok Ancestral Territory and the Pacific Northwest. Through these efforts, the Yurok Condor Restoration Program (YCRP) endeavors to reestablish an apex scavenger that has been absent for more than a century, restore the balance and biodiversity that existed prior to Euro-American colonization of the region, and promote a thriving ecology for the benefit of wildlife and humans.

The Yurok Tribe is one of many indigenous cultures that considers condors sacred. California condors, or *prey-go-neeesh* in Yurok, have been spiritually tied to the Yurok Hlkelonah—the cultural and ecological landscape—since the beginning of the world. Condors feature prominently in the Tribe's origin narrative, and its feathers and songs are foundational components of Yurok World Renewal ceremonies. Management and conservation of condors in Yurok Ancestral Territory and the Pacific Northwest is part of the Yurok Tribe's obligation to restore balance to the world. YCRP seeks to return the condor to the integral role it plays in healthy ecosystems and, in doing so, to renew and strengthen the spiritual lifeways of the many tribes who revere this majestic species.

Read more about this program at <https://www.yuroktribe.org/yurok-condor-restoration-program>

SAS New Members

Please welcome these new members:

Lisa Auble
Daniel Bell
Anita Bunter
Carolyn Duran
Holley Malchow
Bradley Knabe
Alexandra Reichman and Scott Kingham
Shelley Richardson
Susan Tabor
Catherine Trejo

Thank You For Your Generous Donations!

General Fund

Marilyn Armbruster, Lisa Auble, Anne L. Bersinger, Betty J. Cooper, Robert L. Garcia, Lynda Hughes, Elizabeth Johnson, Jo Ann Ludwig, Rosemary Mayfield, Arla McGuire, M. Kevin McRae, Lisa Moraga, Sharon Patrician, Valerie Phillips, Joanne Prakapas, Daphne Reimer, Jan Schori & Case Butterman, Emily & Kelley Shelton, Your Cause-NPO Nonprofit

Education and Conservation Fund

Sue Elefant & Michael Fromer, Rosemary Mayfield, Lisa Moraga, Valerie Phillips, Jan Schori & Case Butterman, Catherine Trejo, Alta & Del Tura

Bobelaine Sanctuary

Janice Caravantes, Gary O. Fregien, Rosemary Mayfield, Lisa Moraga, Valerie Phillips, Alta & Del Tura

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

See the Latest SAS Action on Facebook

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

You can enjoy the photos and commentary without joining Facebook

Follow SAS on Instagram

[@sacaudubon](https://instagram.com/sacaudubon)

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:



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

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

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

The next board meeting is:

Tuesday, August 29, 2023.

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

JOIN THE SACRAMENTO AUDUBON SOCIETY

Your membership supports the SAS mission of conservation, environmental education and protection of the region's natural ecosystems and diverse wildlife populations. Members receive our online newsletter, *The Observer*; so be sure to include your email address.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

www.sacramentoaudubon.org

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

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

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

Total Enclosed \$ _____

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

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

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Tel _____

Email _____

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

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

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

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White-tailed Kite Daniel Brown

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

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

Copy deadline is the 15th of the month. Send all copy to the Editor. Observations must reach the Seasonal Observations Editor by the 8th of the month.

The Observer is published by the Sacramento Audubon Society, monthly, January through December.

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/>.