



The Observer

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, February 20, 2020
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Assembly Room, 7pm

Guyana Birding and Nature Tour
Ken Wilson and Gary Fregien

Gary Fregien will introduce the Guyana tour leader, Ken Wilson, of Talon Tours.

Tonight's tour presentation will give a brief orientation of Guyana; its location in north-eastern South America, as well as an overview of its equatorial climate, geography, size, people and population, pristine landscapes and habitats of rainforest to savannah, and specialized activities, focusing on ecotourism, scenic attractions and wildlife. A discussion of Birding Guyana will introduce its Shield Endemics such as the Blood-coloured Woodpecker and the highly endangered Sun Parakeet and Red Siskin. Other species highly prized by international birders include the Guianan Cock-of-the-Rock, Hoatzin and Harpy Eagle. Other wildlife include some 225 species of mammals and 880 species of amphibians and reptiles. Plant diversity is represented by more than 6,500 species. If you're going, be sure to ask about tour groups, guides, logistics and what to expect.

Ken is a resident of Sonoma County, arriving here in 1980. He began birding in the mid 80's and soon began volunteering with many of the local organizations including RROS, Madrone Audubon Society with bird walks, breeding bird atlas's and Christmas bird counts, co-compiling the West Sonoma County Count for 9 years, Audubon Canyon Ranch censusing in Tomales Bay and The Mayacamas Mountains, Golden Gate Raptor Organization counting migrating raptors for over 20 years and with California State Parks counting Peninsular Bighorn Sheep for the past 20 years. Ken

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THIS FEBRUARY 14-17 IS THE ANNUAL GBBC

Greetings from the Great Backyard Bird Count team at Audubon, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Bird Studies Canada! We want to remind you to mark your calendars for the 23rd GBBC, coming up this February, on the 14th through the 17th. Bird watchers of all ages count birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are. This annual event is open to anyone worldwide. It's part of what is called citizen science and helps scientists study the numbers and movements of birds from year to year. We invite you to participate! For at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count, simply tally the numbers and kinds of birds you see. You can count from any location, anywhere in the world, for as long as you wish! SAS has GBBC trips on the 14th, 15th and 16th that you can add to your count. See page 5 of this *Observer*.

If you're new to the count, or have not participated since before the 2013 merger with eBird, you must create a free online account to enter your checklists. If you already have an account, just use the same login name and password. If you have already participated in another Cornell Lab citizen-science project, you can use your existing login information, too. There's more information at gbbc.bird.org.

In 2019, Great Backyard Bird Count participants in more than 100 countries counted more than 6,800 species of birds on more than 200,000 checklists! During the count, you can explore what others are seeing in your area or

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BIRD AND BREAKFAST EVENTS AT EFFIE YEAW

Traditional Event – Saturday, March 28 at 8am

Family-Friendly Event – Saturday, April 4 at 8am

The American River Natural History Association (ARNHA) and Sacramento Audubon are once again teaming up to offer two special weekend morning birding trips coupled with wonderful breakfast fare.

This event, held at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park in Carmichael, starts with bird walks guided by some of our best local birders. For weeks in advance, these guides scout the Nature Study Area so they will be able to point out nests and local rarities. After the walk, join fellow birders for wonderful food and hot coffee to help raise money for the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. No extensive birding experience is necessary—this event caters to all levels.

On March 28, the bird walk will be approximately 90 minutes long, followed by the traditional casserole breakfast buffet provided by some of the best cooks among ARNHA Board members and Nature Center volunteers. Participants can also bid for attractive baskets and experiences in the silent auction.

On April 4, guests can choose to join either a family bird walk (a one hour walk appropriate for children 6 and older) or a longer, 90-minute adult bird walk open to those ages 12 and above. This event features a hot pancake breakfast, cooked and served by the Carmichael Kiwanis Club.

Bird and Breakfast often sells out. Reservations are required. Call 916-489-4918 for information, questions and to make reservations, or register online at www.sacnaturecenter.net/events/bird-breakfast-weekend/.

Field Trip Findings

Mormon Island to Brown's Ravine (1/13) — Leader Rich Howard reported: "Cold weather did not deter 13 hardy and helpful folks from making the trek from Mormon Island to Brown's Ravine and back. Our group included two naturalists from the Folsom Lake State Recreation Area. We were rewarded with good views of Yellow-Rumped Warblers (all Myrtle ssp.), House and Purple Finches for comparison, a soaring adult Bald Eagle, a surprising Northern Harrier, male and female Phainopepla, and five woodpecker species, including the Hairy Woodpecker that eluded the Christmas Count team in this area two weeks ago. As one wag noted, our birds even predicted the outcome of that night's College National Championship football game, when a group of Purple Finches joined a large group of Lesser and American Goldfinches: Purple and Gold — LSU will win! Waterbirds on the lake were disappointing, with only very distant "water dances" of Western/Clark's Grebes. An eBird list of our 37 species, with Larry Hickey's excellent photos can be found online at ebird.org/checklist/S63374127."

William Pond Park (1/12) — 8 beginners joined SAS leaders on a foggy morning. Once the fog cleared we had great looks at a Kestrel, Red-shouldered Hawks at a nest, Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead on the river and Wood Ducks and Pied-billed Grebes on the pond. Species total was 48.

Lincoln Grasslands (1/12) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: "We started off the day with 14 people and by mid trip half had left and probably missed the best half of the trip. Highlights were Ring-necked Duck, Cinnamon Teal, Say's Phoebe, Burrowing Owl, Virginia Rail, Rock Wren, Merlin, Prairie Falcon, probably a good 20,000 Snow Geese, Bald Eagle, and Short-eared Owls. All total for the days was roughly 88 species."

Gray Lodge SWR (1/11) — Leader Carla Barbaro reported: "The weather was sunny providing awesome looks at the thousands of water fowl. Sandhill Cranes, Ibis, Black-necked Stilts, and many duck species were found among the Snow and White-fronted Geese. A highlight, was close looks at several Blue-winged Teal. Also 5 Bald Eagles were spotted, two adults and three immatures, the latter sit-

ting close to the road. At the Colusa wetland we were treated to several Eurasian Wigeon, a Bittern, a Snipe and a Black-crowned Night Heron Rookery numbering near 100. It was great birding."

Lincoln WWTP and Placer County Roads (1/9) — Leader Sonja Sorbo reported: "The beginning of the day looked ominous; however with faith in the trusty local meteorologist's prediction of clearing weather, 6 of us met up to go birding anyway! Ducks don't mind a bit of rain, so why should we? Things were in full swing at the plant ponds when we arrived; canvasbacks were numerous and were actively paddling around, grabbing an underwater snack now and then. Amongst these striking birds lurked a redhead, trying his best to fit into the crowd. Other participants in the morning swim-and-stretch action were American Wigeon, Bufflehead, Northern Pintail, Mallards, Green-winged Teal, and Northern Shovelers. A few shorebirds joined in the fun, including Greater Yellowlegs and Least Sandpipers. A quick drive over to the west ponds rewarded us with great looks at a Eurasian Wigeon bobbing amongst his American cousins. A pair of Ring-necked Ducks seemed unperturbed to be the only ones of their kind in the pond. Perhaps the greatest spectacle of the day was the sight of TEN male Ring-necked Pheasants grazing in a field adjacent to the pond. The lighting on them was perfect, showing off their stunning plumage. Above the pheasants, several raptors soared, including a couple of Red-tails who engaged in some aerial jousting with a Common Raven. A White-tailed Kite, Cooper's Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and a harrier decided to stay out of the fracas and mind their own business. Our favorite raptor of the day was a beautiful Great Horned Owl roosting in plain view. Some backroads of Placer county in Lincoln yielded swarms of blackbirds, including tricoloreds. A couple of flooded fields were absolutely packed with Tundra Swans and Greater White-fronted Geese. Our drive home was punctuated by the appearance of several American Kestrels, appearing every couple of miles on utility wires, seeming to say "until next time, birders"!!!!"

River Bend Park (1/5) — Leader Dan Brown reported: "Ten of us enjoyed a foggy morning walking the trails of the

park. Despite the fog being with us nearly till the end of the trip, we observed 38 species of wintering birds. The highlights were close views of Bushtits and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet feeding on blossoms, a nice Red-breasted Sapsucker, many Turkey Vultures and Herring Gulls feeding on the remaining Salmon and very nice looks at a cooperative Sharp-shinned Hawk."

Yolo County Hotspots (1/4) — Leader Scott Hoppe reported: "16 people joined me for a wonderful day in the field. We hit several notable Yolo County Hotspots, and each one seemed to hold great discoveries. We got off to a great start with 4 Burrowing Owls. The Davis WTP held many birds including some more uncommon like Mew Gull and Redhead. A farm pond on Road 103 had some goodies, including Hooded Mergansers. Up at the Woodland WTP we were awed by thousands of Canvasbacks, and again, less common species including Bonaparte's Gulls. At the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, we had our only Tundra Swans fly over. We wrapped up the day at Bridgeway Island Pond, hoping for the reported Garganey. It took some time, but sharp eyes picked it out, sleeping with its head tucked the whole time. We tallied about 95 species for the day. I wish to thank all of the enthusiastic attendees. They made the trip a real pleasure."

Cosumnes River Preserve (1/1) — Leader Tim Fitzer reported: "Why sit around in your house watching TV on New Year's morning when you can start the year in fresh air viewing waterfowl. Some of the highlights were: Green, Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teal, Ringed-necked Duck, American Wigeon, Pintail, Gadwall, Shoveler and Wilson's Snipe. We all had a fun time and Happy New Year to All!"

River Walk Park (12/28) — Leader Bill Bianco reported: "Ten of us benefited by clear skies and a sunny winter day. However we encountered noisy drones part way through the walk. Total species count of 32. Highlights were: Katherine spotting a Peregrine atop the tower bridge, Green Heron at river's edge, Cooper's Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Western Bluebirds, White-breasted Nuthatch, Hermit Thrush. As usual, many Yellow-billed Magpies around the boat dock area. Nice group enjoyed the morn-

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2019–2020 CHRISTMAS COUNT RESULTS BY AREA

WOODFORDS, DECEMBER 19

Our total this year (2019) for the Woodfords Christmas Bird Count was 90 species. 15 counters in 5 areas counted 3282 individual birds, most before lunch at 1:30pm. Several of us went back out after lunch and added 3 species, Lewis's Woodpecker (5), one Merlin at Indian Creek Reservoir and 14 Wild Turkeys along Carson River Road. Looking back at the history of the count, (CAWO is the code for this count) I see that there are no count totals recorded prior to 1990. We believe that the count started in 1975 and data has been submitted every year since. We thought that 90 species might be a record high but the high is 91 back in 2012. The low species total is 62 in 2002. The average rounds off to 80.

We did not add any new species to the count list this year but a few species had been observed on fewer than 5 counts. Ross's Goose has only occurred on 3 counts, Greater White-fronted Goose, Turkey Vulture, Lewis's Woodpecker and Say's Phoebe on only 4. Another highlight was 170 Pinyon Jays observed at Indian Creek Reservoir. And a non-bird highlight was a beautiful and very cooperative Bobcat!

Thanks again to everyone who helped!
Compiler Dan Brown.



Bobcat
Dan Brown

SACRAMENTO, DECEMBER 21

The 71st Sacramento Christmas Bird Count took place on December 21, 2019. The weather was most acceptable, with some patchy morning fog giving way to mostly cloudy skies, but no rain and highs in the mid 50s.

158 species were recorded on Count Day, with 6 additional species being recorded during Count Week for a grand total of 164; only 5 shy of our record high of 169 which was reached in 2015. Count week birds included Eared and Horned Grebes, Black-bellied Plover, Western Sandpiper, Forster's Tern, and Chipping Sparrow.

The clear highlight of the count was the continuing young male Vermilion Flycatcher at Tanzanite Park in Natomas, which was originally found there in late October, and was nice enough to stick around and become a first for our count, while getting redder and redder by the day.

Other highlights included a Hairy Woodpecker in West Sacramento (first for the count in 20 years), a pair of Red Crossbills at East Lawn Cemetery (an excellent find in a year when montane species started showing up in fall, but had tapered off dramatically by December), a swamp sparrow at Yolo Bypass, and a splendid variety of gulls at the Yolo County Landfill including a continuing Lesser Black-backed (only the 2nd for the count), and 2 Glaucous Gulls.

Overall themes of this year's count were lower than average numbers of large waterfowl (geese and swans), but continuing increases in dabbling ducks, especially pintail, shoveler, and all 3 teal species. A big bounce-back in the number of Canvasback was nice to see, and a Greater Scaup (the first for the count in 5 years), and an above average 3 Barrow's Goldeneye were a nice surprise (they are quite uncommon in our circle). We had new high counts for long-billed dowitcher (3,830), Townsend's Warbler (an incredible 13!), and Common Raven (65) as they continue to invade the valley. 4 Pacific Wrens was the highest total for our count in 15 years of that species, and footage of the bird along

Bannon Creek in Natomas is being reviewed and may in fact have been the much rarer Winter Wren (the jury is still out on that one!). Compiler Dan Williams.2

FOLSOM, DECEMBER 29

We ran the 42nd Folsom Christmas Bird Count on December 29, 2019, on a cool, overcast and breezy day. We had 76 counters in 32 teams, and five parties did some owling. The species total was 143 (if including Mute Swan), outside the historic range of 123 and last year's high of 148. Unlike counts on the flats of the Valley, this count struggles to come up with waterfowl and shore-birds. We had a single Greater White-fronted Goose and three Cackling Geese, but missed Snow Geese and Tundra Swans. Invasive Mute Swans were at a new high of 61. We missed Lesser Scaup, Canvasback, and Northern Pintail, but did pick up two Cinnamon Teal. For the second year in a row, we recorded only one Wood Duck. Barrow's Goldeneye were low at only 20, while Hooded Mergansers were up to 43. We missed Long-billed Dowitchers, but two Dunlin were good for this count. Among over 17,000 total gulls, we had a single Mew Gull and an adult Glaucous Gull. Two Osprey were found along with 14 Bald Eagles, seven Ferruginous Hawks, six Rough-legged Hawks, and one Golden Eagle. We also found five

Merlins, five Prairie Falcons, three Peregrine Falcons, a single Barn Owl, two Burrowing Owls, and one Western Screech-Owl. Only one Lewis's Woodpecker was found.

The most shocking result was missing two species for the first time: Loggerhead Shrike and Horned Lark. Both have been declining, but a complete miss of Horned Lark is really unexpected. Yellow-billed Magpies were up modestly to 65. At 46, Common Ravens came in one shy of the record. Other highlights included singles of Steller's Jay, Brown Creeper, Red-breasted Nuthatch, and two Golden-crowned Kinglets. Four Varied Thrushes could have easily been missed, along with a single White-throated Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat. Two Bell's Sparrows and eight Lawrence's Goldfinches were excellent finds; Purple Finches had a good showing with 48, but 93 Pine Siskins were a surprise in a season where they don't seem widespread. We found 13 Tricolored Blackbirds—a species increasingly easy to miss in rapidly expanding Folsom.

Thanks to all who participated and especially to the area leaders who do a lot of extra work organizing their teams. Compiler Chris Conard.

KIDS, JANUARY 4, 2020

Saturday morning dawned with a thin band of rain and fog going through the Sacramento area and apparently, this discouraged some families from showing up. Thankfully, the weather cleared by the time the families arrived.

Cliff Hawley, Lynne Tweten, Dan Williams, Craig DeMartini and Larry Hickey took two teams out who were able to find 50 species. Everyone's favorite bird was a cooperative Merlin perched for long enough that everyone was able to look through the scopes and see this beautiful falcon. Children always enjoy the turkeys and they did not disappoint with more than 20 seen by the teams. Deer, especially a stag with large antlers were also fun for the kids to see.

CBC RESULTS continued on page 9

Field Trips



White-tailed Kite
Linda Pittman

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or to check the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. For trips through February 11, contact the scheduler Richard Barbieri, offleash56@yahoo.com, 916-761-1124. For trips from February 12 through March 11, contact the scheduler Sonja Sorbo, ssgasdoc@yahoo.com, 916-390-8463.

Due to insurance requirements, Sacramento Audubon leaders are not allowed to organize ride-sharing/carpools. Participants are, however, encouraged to voluntarily share rides. 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 can be helpful on all trips. Try to arrive early, especially if you want driving directions or plan to carpool. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader. In case of INCLEMENT WEATHER contact the trip leader for trip status.

NOTE: Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place.

Saturday, February 1, 7am

Yolo/Solano Big Day

Leader: Scott Hoppe, 916-835-8471
shoppe01@surewest.net

Get set for a full day of birding "hot spots" of Yolo and Solano Counties to see how many species we can tally. We have had as many as 121 species on this trip. We will be hitting many productive locations, targeting the best mix of waterbirds, raptors and passerines. Some likely spots include Lake Solano County Park, Lagoon Valley and Yolo Bypass. For all those wishing to attend, please plan on a full day in the field. We will be making a lot of stops at a wide range of locations, and it helps to have as few vehicles as possible. For those interested, Scott would like to have a casual dinner nearby to tally up species and talk about what was seen. Scopes and FRS radios are helpful. Bring lunch, snacks, and dress for changeable weather. Meet Scott at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride at 7am. From Sacramento, take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd (Exit #75); turn right at the light, then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride entrance, a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market.

Sunday, February 2, 8am

Mather Lake

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 916-206-3767
Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations, and he usually turns up quite a list of bird species. Join him to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, California Quail, American Bittern, Green Heron and Common Yellowthroat. Meet 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. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. This is a wonderful trip for beginning birders.

Tuesday, February 4, 8am

West Yolo County Raptor Ramble

Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net
Ann Burris, 916-947-7573
burris.nellieann@gmail.com

On this trip we'll travel to rural Western Yolo County. Meet in the parking lot behind the Jack In The Box along I-5. Take I-5 north to Road 102, Exit #536; turn right (north) on 102 and take the next right turn onto East Main Street, and turn right into the Jack In The Box parking lot. The trip will last into the late afternoon so bring lunch, liquids and warm clothing. Bring FRS radios and scopes if you have them. Rain cancels.

Saturday, February 8, 8am

Wintering Raptors in the Central Valley

Leader: Craig Swolgaard
530-334-3023, cswol@sbcglobal.net

A published study found that California's Central Valley is one of the richest wintering areas for raptors in the country. The trip will include the whole length of Meiss Road in Sacramento County, plus a good portion of Michigan Bar Road. Many species of raptors have been found along this productive drive during the winter months, including Golden Eagle, Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks, White-tailed Kite, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, and Burrowing Owl. This is also a good area to find Mountain Bluebirds in winter and has potential for

other vagrants. Meet at the small public parking lot on Highway 16 and Sunrise Blvd at 8AM. We will try to car pool to keep the car numbers down, as some of the route uses pullouts on a busy highway. Bring a spotting scope if possible. Trip may go into early afternoon so water and food may be a good idea.

Sunday, February 9, 8am

Bushy Lake

Leader: Dan Brown, 916-704-0951
naturestoc@aol.com

Meet Dan in the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, just south of where Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo. He'll be looking for a variety of resident and wintering species. With most leaves fallen from the trees, there will be better views of the lake, and Wood Ducks are a good possibility. This will be a 1 to 2 mile hike that will take 2 to 3 hours. You may want to bring water. This is a good trip for beginners and more experienced birders.

Sunday, February 9

Beginning Birding Field Trip

William Pond Park

These beginners' field trips are designed to introduce new birders to the fun of birding. Limited to 10 adults per trip with 3 Audubon trip leaders, it's a low-key introduction to finding and identifying birds. On this trip we'll talk about habitat, field marks and bird behavior as we look at individual birds. Registration is required. Contact Cathie LaZier at empid77@gmail.com; put Beginning Birder in the subject line.

Monday, February 10, 8am

Sailor Bar

**Leader: Mark Sawyer, 916-968-1661
Marksawyer3383@gmail.com**

Join Mark for a morning walk checking out the resident and wintering birds. This is a good trip for beginners and experienced birders too. Meet 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. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

GBBC

**February 14 through 17
Great Backyard Bird Count
gbbc.birdcount.org**

Count birds for 15 minutes or more in your backyard or other favorite birding locale; then post your results online and see what's happening in your area and across the country. It's fun for all ages and skill levels. Check the website for more information, or join one of the field trips and the leader will input the group's checklist.

**Friday, February 14, 8:30am
William Pond Park, a GBBC trip
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 916-502-2699
empid77@gmail.com**

Meet Cathie along the first parking area just past the entrance kiosk. We'll walk down to some different spots on the river, where mergansers and goldeneye can be found in the backwaters and wrens and towhees call from the bushes. We'll check out the heron rookery, then look at the pond area and grassy park. Trip will end before noon. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east and it runs into the park. This is an excellent trip for beginners.

**Saturday, February 15, 8am
Family Friendly Trip, a GBBC trip
North Natomas Regional Park
Leader: Ben Graber, 916-844-8682
Bgraber984@gmail.com**

Join Ben for a leisurely morning walk around the North Natomas Regional Park. We can expect to see a wide variety of grassland species including Meadowlarks, Ring-necked Pheasants, and Savannah Sparrows, along with herons, egrets, and waterfowl. Various wintering species of raptors, including falcons, are also possibilities. This trip will include approximately 2 to 3 miles of walking over flat terrain, and bringing liquids is recommended. Meet Ben at the parking lot on the North side of New Market Drive across from Inderkum

High School. New Market Drive is off Truxel Road approximately a mile north of Interstate 80. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders. Loaner binoculars are available.

**Sunday, February 16, 8am
Tonzi Road and Western Amador
County, a GBBC trip
Leader: Gary Fregien, 916-708-0636
calaveri.gary@gmail.com**

Join Gary on a trip featuring the waters and back-country roads of the Sierra foothills in western Amador County. There is a surprising variety and number of passerines and raptors in this area, with a possibility of Lewis's Woodpeckers, Hermit and Varied Thrushes, sparrows, Prairie Falcons and Ferruginous Hawks. This trip also includes stops for waterfowl and shorebirds at ponds near Sutter Creek and Ione. We may also stop at Lake Camanche, where a day-use fee is charged. There will be minimal hiking, but dress for winter conditions. Bring along hand held radios if you have them, food and water. Meet Gary at the Local Bean Cafe in the Rancho Murieta shopping center. Turn right at the 1st traffic light; junction of Hwy 16 (Jackson Rd) and Murieta Drive, and right again just past the fire station.

**Tuesday, February 18, 8:30am
Lake Solano/Putah Creek
Leaders: Tim Fitzer, 916-870-5207
spskua2@comcast.net
Ann Burris, 916-947-7573
burris.nellieann@gmail.com**

This is a great area to find a variety of woodpeckers, Phainopepla, Brown Creeper, Barrow's Goldeneye and many other late wintering birds. Meet at the Mace Blvd Park and Ride. From Sacramento take I-80 west towards Davis to Mace Blvd, Exit #75; turn right (north) and then right again at the signal light to the Park and Ride lot a short distance beyond Ikeda's Market. Meet on the south side of the parking lot in the row nearest the big round water tank. Heavy rain or high winds cancel the trip, which will end in the late afternoon, so you may want to bring lunch and water.

**Saturday, February 22, 9am (in
Petaluma)
Bodega Bay
Leader: Ron Storey, 707-479-0171
ronstorey@ronstorey.com**

Join Ron for a full day of birding around Bodega Bay, taking in a variety of habitats. Plan to see waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls

and raptors. Meet at Shollenberger Park in Petaluma at 9am and carpool from there. For directions, go to colintalcroft.com/Sonoma_County_Bird_Watching_Spots/Shollenberger_Park,_Petaluma.html. This is a full day trip; bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. FRS radios can be helpful.

**Sunday, February 23, 7am till noon
Michigan Bar and vicinity
Leader: Chris Conard, 916-203-1610
conardc@gmail.com**

We will focus on Michigan Bar Road and may visit portions of Latrobe and Meiss Rds, though access will be partially dependent on road conditions and recent weather. Vast areas of open grassland and blue oak woodland interspersed with rocky outcrops and the Cosumnes River provide habitat for winter raptors, resident and winter songbirds, and perhaps a surprise or two. We'll have a mix of car birding (bring FRS radios if you have them) and short to moderate walks. Meet at the Park and Ride on Hwy 16 (Jackson Hwy) just west of Sunrise Blvd and the Folsom South Canal (7 miles east of Watt Ave). Steady rain will cancel the trip.

**Thursday, February 27, 8am
Lincoln WWTP and
Placer County Roads
Leader: Sonja Sorbo, 916-390-8463
ssgasdoc@yahoo.com**

In this morning trip we will start by birding the Lincoln water treatment plant. There are several large ponds which can hold a variety of ducks. Some years there have been hundreds of Canvasbacks and Wigeons present, with an occasional Redhead or Eurasian Wigeon in their midst. Depending on the water level, we might see shorebirds such as Black-necked Stilts, Greater Yellowlegs, Dowitchers, Dunlin, and Least Sandpipers. While driving on the levees around the ponds, we will search the adjacent trees, fields, and fenceposts for raptors, sparrows, woodpeckers, and other resident species. A small wetland area visible from the levees can hold rails, herons, egrets, gallinules, and Marsh Wrens. This trip will end around noon; if there is sufficient time we might drive some nearby backroads of Placer county, searching flooded fields for wintering geese. We will meet at the parking lot of Dry Creek Community Park at 9235 Walerga Road in Roseville at 8AM. FRS radios will be helpful. Bring a spotting scope if you have one. Dress warmly as the weather on the

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levees can be cold and breezy.

IMPORTANT ADVISORY — there is currently a huge bridge construction project underway on Walerga Road near the entrance to Dry Creek Community Park. Watch carefully for signs directing traffic to the park; the usual entrance is blocked and the new/temporary winding access road is not easily visible.

Saturday, February 29, 8am

Sailor Bar, American River Parkway

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

Join Darrell for a Leap Year 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. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way just west of Hazel. Meet at the last parking lot on your left, just before the boat launch parking area. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.

Sunday, March 1, 8am
Bridgeway Island Pond

Leader: Dan Murphy,
916-541-4213
dmmurpete@gmail.com

Join Dan for a trip to Bridgeway Island Pond. Target birds include Blue-winged Teal, other waterfowl, raptors and marsh birds. We should finish by noon. Bring a snack and liquids. Meet at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Avenue, Exit #81, turn left at the light, and then left again into the Park and Ride lot. Meet in the south east section of the parking lot.

Sunday, March 1
Beginning Birding Field Trip
William Pond Park

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Wednesday, March 4, 8am

Estates Drive American River access

Leader: Craig DeMartini

916-599-3300

Cloudwalk7@icloud.com

This area is a great example of established riparian habitat. The American River meanders, creating islands and ponds where we will look for Wood Ducks, herons, egrets, and kingfishers. Further inland there are several very old Valley Oaks along a trail that has been referred to as the Avenue of Giants, where we will look for towhees, wrens, titmice and nuthatches. From Watt Ave take American River Drive east to Estates Dr. Turn south on Estates and follow until it dead-ends at the levee

Saturday, March 7, 6:30am

Arrowhead Marsh and Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline

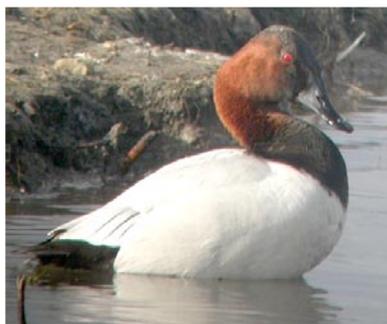
Leaders: Scott Hoppe, 916-835-8471

shoppe01@surewest.net

Mark Martucci, 916-833-6722

matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Arrowhead Marsh and MLK, Jr Regional Shoreline, encompassing much of San



Canvasback
Chris Conard

Leandro Bay, is an extremely productive birding area. It is well known for Ridgway's Rails, lots of wintering ducks and hundreds of shorebirds during the falling tides. It has also produced rarities and hard to find species such as Nelson's and Swamp Sparrows. We will likely spend most of the day there.

However, time permitting, we may visit other nearby locations. Bring lunch and liquids, and dress for possible cold early morning temps. Meet Scott and Mark at the Park and Ride off I-80 in West Sacramento. From Sacramento, take the West Capitol Ave Exit #81; turn left at the light and then left again into the Park and Ride lot.

Sunday, March 8, 7:30am

NOTE: Daylight Savings Time Begins

Mather Lake

Leader: Wayne Blunk, 916-206-3767

Wayne.Blunk@gmail.com

Mather Lake can be a hotspot for birding, with a variety of possibilities. Join Wayne to look for a nice variety of resident and migrant birds. Possibilities include White-tailed Kites, California Quail, American

Bittern, Green Heron and Common Yellowthroat. Meet 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. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee; your Sac County Parkway pass is valid here. This is a wonderful trip for beginning and more experienced birders.

Wednesday, March 11, 8am

William Pond Park

Leader: Larry Hickey, 415-305-0651

Larryhickey1@gmail.com

This park has varied habitats and a variety of birds may be found. Larry will be looking for early spring migrants and nesting birds as well as resident wrens, towhees and other passerines. He'll check out the heron rookery and the pond area. Trip will end before noon. From the intersection of Fair Oaks and Arden, follow Arden east, just under 1 mile, and it runs into the park. Meet along the first parking area on your left, just after the kiosk. A Sac County Park Pass or \$5 entry fee is required for all vehicles.



FIELD TRIPS FOR BEGINNING BIRDERS 2020

Location: William Pond Park, American River Parkway

Dates: Sundays, February 9, March 1, and April 5

*Trips limited to 10 adult participants, and require a minimum of 3 participants: Registration required.

These outings are geared toward people who aren't yet entirely comfortable joining field trips as well as those who have birded a bit but would like to be better birders. It is not necessary to be an Audubon member to participate.

The field trips will focus on finding and identifying common birds in a variety of habitats, with an emphasis on looking and listening. This walk, covering about a mile and a half, will last about 3 hours and will be led by two or more friendly and experienced Sacramento Audubon trip leaders. You can sign up for just one session, or for more than one.

Register via email to Cathie at empid77@gmail.com, (put "Beginning Birder" in the subject line), and give your name, phone number and email address, or phone Cathie at 916-502-2699, and leave your name and phone number. Following registration you will receive additional information regarding the field trip.

CONSERVATION TIP OF THE MONTH

When hand-washing dishes, never run water continuously. Wash dishes in a partially filled sink and then rinse them using the spray attachment on your tap. It may feel more virtuous to wash by hand, but it's actually more wasteful: You use up to 27 gallons of water per load by hand versus as little as 3 gallons with an ENERGY STAR-rated dishwasher. Finally, just scrape off the food scraps instead of rinsing each dish before you load it.



Merlin
Stephen D'Amato

LOCAL BIRDING TRIPS OF INTEREST

These are not Sacramento Audubon field trips, but are great opportunities for birders and are all Family Friendly.

Birding for Families at Effie Yeaw Nature Center February, Saturday, 10:30am

Bring the family out for a birding and nature walk led by a Naturalist and our special guest guides, Mary Forrestal and Craig DeMartini from the Sacramento Audubon Society. Birdwatchers of all levels welcomed. Make sure to bring your binoculars or borrow a pair from us.

Cost: General, \$5. Ages 4-11, \$3. 3+Under FREE.
Members receive \$1 off each admission.

These family-friendly weekend programs fill quickly, so please CALL TO REGISTER and save your spot 916-489-4918. Programs start promptly at stated time and run 30-60 minutes depending on content and are offered only once per day.

Effie Yeaw Nature Center is in Ancil Hoffman Park. Directions can be found at www.sacnaturecenter.net. There is a \$5 per car parking fee or you can use your ARNHA membership card or County Parks pass.

Sandhill Cranes and Other Wintering Birds January 25 and 26, Saturday and Sunday, 4:20pm

Free trips in the delta to view the Sandhill Cranes coming in to roost for the evening are run by Save Our Sandhill Cranes, Inc. Of course they also look at the wintering waterfowl and other birds in that habitat. They begin at either Woodbridge Road or Staten Island and meet in the late afternoon on the last weekend of each month. Current information is at soscranes.org/visit-the-cranes/free-tours/. The Coordinator is Mike Savino, yogoombah@yahoo.com.

DUCKS IN SCOPES AT THE COSUMNES RIVER PRESERVE Every Saturday in January and February, anytime between 10am and 2pm.

It's late winter and before you know it the wintering waterfowl and cranes will be heading back up north. Don't miss this chance to see them in the seasonal wetlands at the Cosumnes Preserve. CRP docents have a row of spotting scopes set up, including lower ones for children, giving you excellent views of the many colorful ducks, other waterfowl, shorebirds and more.

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

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

EDUCATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

SAS TO PARTICIPATE IN BUSHY LAKE RESTORATION PROJECT

CSUS Environmental Studies Professor Michelle Stevens joined Education Committee members at their January 6 meeting. At the committee's request Michelle came to discuss a proposed student internship in which she is seeking help from SAS to develop a bird monitoring and data analysis program. Field Activities member Dan Williams also attended the meeting and offered to work with Professor Stevens and a CSUS student intern to lead the bird monitoring and data analysis program. More specific details about the project and how you may be a part of the SAS team will appear in the March issue of *The Observer*.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Friday, January 10, Bill Bianco and Frank Gray led a small group of Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps students on a field trip through Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA). Bill reports that it was foggy most of the trip making it near impossible to see too far into the ponds. The best sightings were a Peregrine Falcon, a couple of Red-tailed Hawks and Long-billed Dowitchers. Other sightings included the regular ducks, Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Wigeon, Green-winged and Cinnamon Teal. Although the fog hampered visibility, the experience was new and different for the novice birders who, hopefully, will share what they learned about YBWA with other classmates. The next field trip is scheduled for January 17 at Putah Creek

SAS SUPPORTS LOCAL BIRDING CLUB

California Montessori Project's (Capitol Campus) Dean of Students, Shannon Schmidt, reached out for support and SAS donated several resource books and field guides to the club. When asked what her motivation was for starting a birding club Shannon commented: I decided to start a birding club at my school because I want to share my own passion for birding. I want kids to be out in nature, observing and learning to be still. A highlight of our first meeting was a moment when a 6 year old member was being picked up by her mom, all the while jumping up and down squealing, "We need to get a field guide, mommy!" Another highlight was supporting a nine year old boy in identifying his first bird, a Northern Flicker—he can even tell you it's the red-shafted variety!! My vision for this club is to foster this joy and sense of accomplishment in every child. The club will schedule once a month field trips on Saturday and hope that SAS bird

EDUCATION UPDATE continued on page 8

General Meeting

continued from page 1

started Talon Tours in 1995 with a tour to Mexico followed by tours to Costa Rica, Belize, Honduras, Panama, Guyana, Brazil, Thailand, New Zealand, Australia and most recently to Uganda in Africa.

Gary Fregien met Ken Wilson more than 20 years ago on an annual Peninsular Bighorn Sheep count in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. Gary has been doing that count annually since 1981. They also count the birds at their blind there, when they aren't catching Zs (oops, sheep). Gary became active with Sacramento Audubon after retiring from a 37-year career with California State Parks. He has served on the SAS Board of Directors and leads field trips for both SAS and Mount Diablo Audubon Society, when he's not busy with North American and international birding, including Guyana.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center Assembly Room in Carmichael. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions. To keep up with current happenings follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon](https://www.facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon).

Anthony Asay, Program Chair

EDUCATION UPDATE continued from page 7

ers may accompany club members on trips, pending their availability. Contact education@sacramentoaudubon.org if you are interested in helping out on one of the Saturday field trips. The schedule is pending.

NATURE BOWL

EXTENDED COACHES WORKSHOP

Sacramento Valley Conservancy's Camp Pollock is the host site for the February 1 extended coaches' workshop coordinated by Sacramento Audubon Society and facilitated by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. This session is primarily available to new team coaches to help them better prepare their teams for semi-finals. Read more about Nature Bowl at www.wildlife.ca.gov/Regions/2/Nature-Bowl. If you are a teacher or group leader and want to enroll a team at Camp Pollock for the March 31 semi-finals, contact education@sacramentoaudubon.org.

BUFFERLANDS EVENTS

INTRODUCTION TO BUFFERLANDS BIRDS

Sunday, February 2, 9am–Noon

The Bufferlands is home to more than 240 species of birds. Some of them are large and recognizable, but many are small, secretive and harder to identify. If you are a beginning birder or are just interested in our local birdlife, come join us as we identify birds through riparian forest, grasslands and wetland edges.

The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Chris Conard at 916-203-1610 or conardc@sacsewer.com to confirm your reservation and meeting location. Please note, we can only take reservations the week preceding the event.

ROOKERY TOUR

Saturday, March 14, 9am–Noon

Come and experience an up-close view of a nesting colony of herons, egrets and double-crested cormorants. These beautiful birds nest in communal groups, high in the riparian forest. This area has more than 150 nests.

The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at 916-875-9174 or jonesro@sacsewer.com to confirm your reservation and meeting location. Please note, we can only take reservations the week preceding the event.

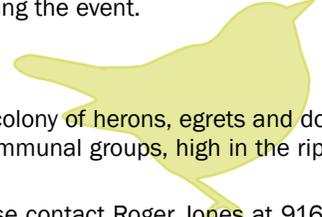
CREEK WEEK BIRDS AND BLOOMS TOUR

April 11, 8:30am–10:30am

The Fishhead Lake mitigation wetland is a nice example of wetlands created as mitigation for earlier wetland losses. The wetland has both a permanent and seasonal component as well as a surrounding upland buffer. Thousands of waterfowl winter at the wetland and many remain year-round to nest and raise young. Much of the area is planted to native wildflowers that bloom in early spring. California poppies, lupines, owl's clover, baby blue-eyes, and many others can be seen spreading about the uplands and wetland edges. Visitors will receive a packet of native flower seeds to start their own native garden.

The meeting location is weather-dependent, so please contact Roger Jones at 916-875-9174 or jonesro@sacsewer.com to confirm your reservation and meeting location. Please note, we can only take reservations the week preceding the event.

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



Findings continued from page 2

ing and walk. For some, a first time at the river walk."

Lynch Canyon (12/22) — Maureen Geiger, co-leader with Ken Poerner, reported: "The trip was canceled due to rain."

William Pond Beginners' Walk (12/15) — Larry Hickey, co-leader with Darrell Mohr and Craig DeMartini, reported: "5 exceptionally engaged and interested beginners joined us and we totaled 48 species. Some highlights for me were the Osprey feeding on the fish it had just caught and the Red-breasted Sapsucker."

Cosumnes River Preserve (12/15) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "3 experienced birders and 1 beginner joined me on this sunny morning. The group totaled 53 species, but missed Wilson's Snipe. A Sora by the boardwalk and Tundra Swans overhead were group favorites."

Sailor Bar (12/14) — Leader Darrell Mohr reported: "Started off clear and cold. All 6 people were eager to go find birds. We went towards the Dam to look for Rufous-crowned Sparrows and our effort paid off, as we saw 6 of them. Then headed down river and a Blue-grey Gnatcatcher appeared out of the bushes. The American River had a number of duck species floating on the water, including Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Buffleheads and many gulls. After we left the river bank several Phainopepla landed in the top of an oak tree. At that point we headed back to the parking lot and overhead we spotted a Bald Eagle. Our species count for the day was 52 species. It was a good day."

Cathie LaZier

CBC RESULTS continued from page 3

There were so many raffle gifts that all children were able to pick three gifts from the tables—this, of course, is always a hit. After the raffle, Rachael Cowan, the Volunteer Coordinator for Effie Yeaw, brought out Orion, a Swainson’s Hawk who can fly but sadly, is so imprinted on humans he would not be safe in the wild, so now he will be cared for permanently by Nature Center staff. He was very calm, and everyone was incredibly impressed with how beautiful he was.

All in all, the children, their families and the SAS leaders all had a grand time! Compiler Maureen Geiger.

4TH ANNUAL TEENS, JANUARY 5, 2020

Twenty teens, parents, and leaders eagerly trekked the trails of Wm B Pond Recreational Area in search of birds in the fog—a perfect time to learn how to listen for birds. As the walk wrapped up, the fog was burning off and we found we had a total of 59 species of birds, 11 of them being new to this count. Thank you to Teen Leaders/Mentors: Craig DeMartini, Cliff Hawley, David Rosen, Sandra Steurer, and Jane Van Kessel, who made the bird world very engaging to our teens and their families. We ate lunch at our traditional Mexican restaurant and had our drawing for door prizes. Thank you to the SAS membership for donating so many exciting items to choose from. What a good way to get our teens started in the study and appreciation of birds. Trip highlights mentioned by participants included: seeing a Cooper’s and Sharp-Shinned Hawk for comparison, flashy color on Ruby-Crowned Kinglets, Blue-Gray Gnatcatchers, very cute Bufflehead, and seeing deer swimming in the river as they crossed. Notable finds were: Greater White-Fronted Geese and Pine Siskins flying over, a lone Gadwall, Yellow-Billed Magpies, a Hermit Thrush, and Phainopepla. Compiler Wendy Warren Money.



GBBC continued from page 1

around the world. Share your bird photos by entering the photo contest, or enjoy images pouring in from across the globe. You can even add photos and sounds to your checklist. Understand how at gbbc.birdcount.org/adding-media-to-your-gbbc-checklist.

A helpful page that answers those differences between sparrows and between Cooper’s and Sharpies can be found at birdcount.wpengine.com/learn_about_birds/.

Explore Species Tool

Begun in 2018, one of the coolest tools for anyone who participates in the GBBC or uses eBird is the Explore Species feature. You’ll find it at ebird.org/explore. The eBird team rolled this out and its database includes ALL the species in the world (that we know about, anyway).

So gather friends, family, coworkers and all the birders you know and start counting. It’s something simple you can do to contribute to our knowledge of the changes taking place on our home planet.

Birding and Nature Events

13TH ANNUAL WINTER BIRD FESTIVAL

The **City of Galt**, in collaboration with the Cosumnes River Preserve and Galt Joint Union Elementary and High School Districts, is pleased to bring you the 13th Annual Winter Bird Festival, **Saturday, February 1, 2020**. The festival guests will enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the Cosumnes River Preserve and the incredible opportunity to catch sightings of waterfowl, shorebirds and wildlife in their winter habitat. Festival headquarters will provide a starting point for exclusive preserve tours, educational presentations, wildlife shows, art displays, wine walk, hometown history and hands-on activities. This is a winter celebration you’ll always remember!

Registration for the annual festival is open so check online or call ASAP so you don’t miss any of your favorite tours. Space for tours is limited, so sign up as soon as possible at the Galt city website below. Visit ci.galt.ca.us/about-galt/special-events/11th-annual-winter-bird-festival for registration and more information or call 209-366-7180, if you have any questions.

CALIFORNIA DUCK DAYS

California Duck Days Festival will take place on **Saturday, February 23** at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area Headquarters. This annual event, which takes place in the heart of the Pacific Flyway, features a wide variety of field trips, workshops, and activities for people of all ages. This is a family oriented, community-based outdoor festival with activities for people of all ages. Field trips are led by some of the region’s most experienced birders and naturalists. On-site activities for families include interactive exhibits, wetland themed arts and crafts, trout fishing in their ponds, and much more. Information is at yolobasin.org/californiaduckdays/ You can also volunteer with Chelsea Hopkins at Chopkins@yolobasin.org.



Tree Swallow
Jim Dunn, Preserve Volunteer

VOLUNTEER FOR THE SWALLOW BOX SURVEY

Help is needed at Cosumnes River Preserve from March to July this year to monitor swallow boxes in order to determine the annual survivorship rate of fledging Tree Swallows.

There are various routes of Tree Swallow boxes throughout the Preserve, about 40 boxes per route. Teams of 4 volunteers will be assigned to each route, 2 monitoring at a time. The boxes will be monitored twice a week with teams deciding amongst themselves which days they prefer to monitor.

If you are interested or if you would like to be put on the email list for future news, trainings, and anything swallow box related please email J1Davis@blm.gov.

Future trainings will occur on March 16. Please RSVP to the email listed above.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

Donald & Margaret Brown, Dennis & Meg Bryerton, Elliot Chasin & Reanna Wights, David & Maxine Clark, Marcia Ferkovich, Michael Flaningam, Dale Flynn, Kathryn M Griffin, Larry Hickey, Brian Miller, Thomas & Carol Murphey, Sonia Santa Anna, Sonja Sorbo and Carolyn Woodruff made donations to the **General Fund**.

Carla R Barbaro, Tom Biglione, Karen Brookhyser, Dennis & Meg Bryerton, Gesna Clarke, Richard & Mary Howard, Len & Rita Marowitz, Rosemary & Robert Mundhenk, Jill Pease, Craig Swolgaard and J Randall & Margaret Williams made donations to the **Education and Conservation Fund**.

Carla R Barbaro, Bill Bianco, Dennis & Meg Bryerton, Tom Graham and Marguerite Roth made donations to the **Bobelaine Sanctuary**.

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 continuing restoration and management.



SEE THE LATEST SAS ACTION ON FACEBOOK

facebook.com/SacramentoAudubon

You can enjoy the photos and commentary without joining Facebook

VOLUNTEER AT BOBELAINE

HELP IS NEEDED THURSDAY AND SATURDAY THIS MONTH

To keep up with the trail and caretaker duties SAS is requesting some volunteer help. We will keep a list of helpers and when work load requires we will contact volunteers. We are designating the second and fourth Wednesday of each month as Bobelaine work days. However, the work days for this month also include Thursday, February 6 and Saturday, February 22.

If you would like to help out, provide your contact info to: Bill Bianco; biancowm@yahoo.com; 916-372-3318. Bill will contact you for help as needed.

Typical duties will be cutting brush and overhead growth along the trails. Removing invasive plants, mowing weeds and cleanup around the equipment shed. Be aware that poison oak is prevalent in the sanctuary.

INCREASE IN ANNUAL DUES THE FIRST IN 18 YEARS!

On August 27, the Sacramento Audubon Society Board of Directors approved a \$10 increase in annual membership dues. Effective January 1, 2020 dues will increase from \$25 to \$35 annually. This increase will support the chapter's mission, programs and goals, and support ongoing service improvement. One example is the current project to rebuild and redesign the website by moving it to a more contemporary and user-friendly platform.

The Board is grateful to chapter members for generous donations beyond their dues, and we appreciate your support for this increase.

CHOOSE TO RECEIVE THE COLOR *OBSERVER* BY EMAIL

If you are interested in switching from a paper *Observer* to an emailed pdf version, please contact Jane Van Kessel at sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com and let her know. Please make sure you are emailing her from the address with which you want to receive your *Observer* pdf.

The benefits of getting the *Observer* by email are several. You will help us save printing and mailing; save tree resources; get the *Observer* earlier so you can plan your field trips sooner; have a pdf version on your phone, tablet and/or pc; and now the pdf version comes in color! If you prefer to keep getting the printed *Observer* in the mail, you don't need to do anything.



Seasonal Observations

December 1 to December 31 Rare and Unusual Bird Reports www.cvbirds.org/ListServ.htm

The extended dry period this fall finally broke up in late November, with moderate rainfall occurring on and off throughout December. Many of the interesting birds for the period were found during local Christmas Bird Counts or from increased scouting and followup visits the counts inspired. Among notable waterfowl was a female/immature **Red-breasted Merganser** downstream and later in the vicinity of the Nimbus Hatchery. It was first reported on 12/17 and found sporadically into January. A well-photographed male **Blue-winged x Cinnamon Teal** was at the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area (YBWA) on 12/27.

Lesser Black-backed Gull reports continue to increase in our region. On 12/21, a third cycle **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was found at the Yolo County Landfill Pond and an adult was at the Davis WTP on the same day. An adult **Lesser Black-backed Gull** was photographed at the Anatolia Vernal Pool Preserve on 12/21 and refound there for a few days. It or another adult was also found near the Nimbus Hatchery on 12/28. Two **Glaucous Gulls** were found on 12/20 along Yolo Rd 104, with probably the same birds found at the nearby Yolo County Landfill on 12/21. An adult **Glaucous Gull** was photographed just downstream of the Nimbus Hatchery on 12/29. A **Barred Owl** on private property in south Davis, apparently the first for the Central Valley, was reported publicly on 12/11. It was roosting in a barn and

Mission Statement Sacramento Audubon Society

The mission of the Sacramento Audubon Society is to:

- Promote the protection and scientific study of wild birds;
- Promote the enjoyment and appreciation of wild birds through community outreach;
- Provide, encourage and support environmental educational opportunities; and
- Provide proactive leadership in the conservation of open space in the Sacramento region.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Please welcome these new members.

Patricia Ayres	JoAnn McAllister
Lorrie Baladad	Judy Meade-Silaj
Charles Binder	Marc Pelletier
AJ Blanco	Jennifer Schmidt
Liz Chasse-Crouse	Richard Serrano
Penelope Cross	SpanishLinguists.com
Jennifer and Cale DeLuca	Patricia Valentine
Claudia Funari	J. Randall and Margaret Williams
Jennifer Kidwell	

Sacramento Audubon Chapter Board Meetings

Board Meetings of the Sacramento Audubon Society are held the last Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be on February 25, 2020, at 7pm. This Board Meeting will be held at a **new** location, Turley Associates, 2431 Capital Ave, Sacramento, CA 95816.

Minutes of Board Meetings can be found online at sacramentoaudubon.org/societyinfo/archives.html. Scroll down to 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. Please include your email address if you would like to be added to our Action Alert List for letter/email writing on conservation issues.

Sacramento Audubon Society Membership Application

www.sacramentoaudubon.org
sacaudubonmembership@gmail.com
 P.O. Box 160694, Sacramento, CA 95816-0694

Date _____

The Observer Newsletter \$35 per address (1 Year) _____

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

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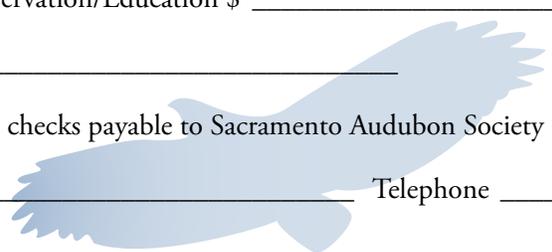
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Check if you would prefer to receive the *Observer* in PDF form by email []

Send address changes to our Membership Chair to help keep down our costs.



Observations continued adjacent trees and turned up again in early January. Approximately 12 **Long-eared Owls** continued at a communal roost on 12/28 on a portion of Cosumnes River Preserve with restricted access.

The **Tropical Kingbird** found along Sherman Island East Levee Rd on 11/23 continued into January, as did the young male **Vermillion Flycatcher**, becoming increasingly bright red, first found at Tanzanite Park in Natomas on 10/30. A **Plumbeous Vireo** was found in Winters from 12/8 through at least 12/15.

Tanzanite Park also produced a **Clay-colored Sparrow**, first found and photographed on 12/27; it continued through at least 12/29 in the vicinity at a private yard. Additional notable reports included a **Harris's Sparrow** visiting a Woodland yard on 12/13, the continuing **Swamp**

Sparrow at YBWA, an **Evening Grosbeak** at Slide Hill Park in Davis on 12/14, four **Red Crossbills** over a Carmichael yard on 12/28, and a **Tennessee Warbler** found in Davis on 12/29 near the Birch Lane Elementary School. The **Worm-eating Warbler** in southeastern Davis found on 10/27 at San Marino Park continued through the end of the month, while a **Wilson's Warbler** was a surprise near Larchmont Park along the American River Parkway on 12/8, as was an unseasonable **Black-headed Grosbeak** at Lake Solano on 12/15.

We feature photos of some of the highlight birds on the Sacramento Audubon Web site (sacramentoaudubon.org/activities/recentsightings.html).

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 listserve (cvbirds.org) and in eBird (ebird.org). It is impossible to list everyone, but I want to thank the following for their reports:

Max Brodie, Lyann Comrack, Suzanne Day, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Ed Harper, Cliff Hawley, James Holmes, Rich Howard, Emmett Iverson, Tony Kurz, Jeri Langham, Sami LaRocca, Andrew Lee, Dan Murphy, Michael Perrone, Mark Sawyer, Steve Scott, Sean Smith, John Sterling, Kirk Swenson, John Trochet, Bart Wickel, and Dan Williams.

Thanks to everyone for their reports—without them, this column would not be possible.

Chris Conard

Sacramento Audubon Society
P.O. Box 160694
Sacramento, CA 95816

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White Tailed Kite Dan Brown

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: 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, cend86@gmail.com

Editor: Sharon Wisecarver, e-mail, sawise7@sbcglobal.net

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, except June and August, when we publish abbreviated editions.

ATTEND THE NEXT SACRAMENTO AUDUBON PROGRAM

**Thursday, February 20, 2020, at 7pm
At the Effie Yeaw Nature Center**

Ken Wilson and Gary Fregien, *Guyana
Birding and Nature Tour*



Guianan Lodge