



The OBSERVER

Sacramento Audubon Society

General Meeting

Thursday, March 19
Shepard Garden and Art Center
7pm General Meeting

Alaska

An introduction to its birds and landscapes
Presented by Chris Conard

This program will include still and video pictures of the trip to Alaska, taken by Chris Conard and his wife, Kimya Lambert, in May and June of 2008. This is an adventure that is at, or near, the top of many nature-lovers' Most-Desired-Trip list. During this, their first visit to Alaska, Chris and Kimya did nothing but view and photograph Alaska's wealth of incredible birds, mammals and scenery during the nearly three weeks of their trip.



Parakeet Auklet
Chris Conard

Among the sites Chris and Kimya visited were Saint Paul Island in the Pribilof Islands, Denali National Park, the Denali Highway, Nome, the Seward Peninsula, and Kenai Fjords National park. They also visited Barrow, the northernmost city and borough in the United States. Birding highlights of their trip included breeding alcids on Saint Paul Island, Northern Hawk-owls, Bluethroats, Bristle-thighed Curlews, Kittletz's Murrelets, breeding shorebirds and thousands of puffins. Mammals included grizzly bears, muskoxen and marine animals. Denali, the frozen Arctic Ocean and the Midnight Sun in Barrow were thrilling sights, as well.

Sacramento Audubon meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at the Shepard Garden and Art Center in McKinley Park. The public is welcome. Visit our website www.sacramentoaudubon.org and click on Society Info/Meetings, for further information, including a map and directions.

Lea Landry, Program Chair

Great Backyard Bird Count

As the Observer is going to press we are in the middle of President's Day Weekend and the GBBC is on. I can't wait to see how the Sacramento area does this year!

Prior to the count, 129 kids and 105 adults attended GBBC presentations given at public libraries all over Sacramento County (including Walnut Grove), at Effie Yeaw Nature Center, and at 5 different schools. Thanks so much to Darrell Mohr, Marlene Ishihara, and Subhash Chand, for helping with presentations and answering questions. Maureen Gieger deserves special recognition because she managed to help at two presentations in one week without going to sleep!

We also managed to get more media attention this year thanks to Bill Dillinger who did a great job of getting the word out to local newspapers and organizations. Julie Serences was interviewed about the GBBC on KDRT. Davis Community Radio.

A new first this year were the field trips organized by Cathie La Zier, Dan Kopp (filling in for Dan Tankersley), Robert Sewell, Julie Serences and Wayne Blunk on three days of the GBBC weekend. See GBBC Field Trip Findings on page 3 for details.

Be sure to check out www.birdsource.org for the latest updates on the 2009 GBBC count!

Julie Serences

CHECK THE RESULTS

Just because the counting is over for 2009 doesn't mean the GBBC is over. Now have some fun checking the results. At press time and just like last year, California was fourth in the number of checklists submitted but second in the number of species. Unlike last year we were third in the total number of birds reported. Washington state had almost 100,000 more birds reported than California. Lakeport, CA was tied for fourth nationwide (with Savannah, Georgia) among localities reporting the most species. Sacramento was ninth in the state for the number of species (two less than Davis) but first in the number of checklists. You can attribute this result to the excellent outreach and hard work of Julie Serences and all those who volunteered to help her!

Check all the results online at www.birdsource.org/gbbc. Then click on "Explore the Results" at the top of the page. You can look for maps, Top 10 and state tally lists. Compare these results to previous years. As of press time 57,958 checklists had been submitted. There was a total individual bird count of 6,459,510 and a species count of 576. However, checklists can be submitted until March 1 so these numbers are still changing. Hope you participated but if not you can still join Project Feederwatch and contribute to ongoing research. Just click on the link to Project Feederwatch if you want to get involved.

Field Trip Findings

Jacob Lane, American River Parkway (2/11) — Leader Jack Hiehle said rain that was forecast didn't materialize and his group saw a pair of White-tailed Kites, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Spotted Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Common Merganser, Common Goldeneye and three American Coots that were somewhat unexpected in this locale.

Yuba County Wetlands (2/8) — Leader Richard Barbieri reported: "It was a cold and windy day, but no rain! We had brief looks at Rough-legged, Ferruginous, and Red-shouldered hawks along with a Bald Eagle and a couple of Loggerhead Shrikes. Along the way we encountered lots of Tundra Swans, White-fronted and Snow geese, Northern Pintail a wigeon, Northern Shoveler and other ducks. At our final destination we saw a lot of the same including Ring-necked and Wood ducks, many Wilson's Snipes (recently split from Common Snipe), Dunlin and Least Sandpipers. We were treated to a wonderful viewing of a pair of Great Horned Owls on and near their nest. If that wasn't enough, we watched in amazement as a Peregrine Falcon passed over a flooded rice field with scurrying ducks, only to return five minutes later and successfully take and kill a Green-winged Teal. This was a spectacular finish to a decent day of birding. All told, we saw about 60 species of birds."

Rush and King Ranches, Solano County (2/1) — Leader Maureen Geiger reported: "Nineteen of us saw 70 species, including several notables such as 2 Golden Eagles, Ferruginous Hawk, Sora and Virginia Rails, a Common Yellowthroat, 2 Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Rock Wrens, and many ducks and shorebirds. The weather was gorgeous and we ended up in shirt-sleeves, enjoying the ducks at the wonderful wetlands at American Canyon, an add-on at the end."

Lincoln Grand Canyon (1/31) — Leader Dave Pearson reported: "I had the privilege of leading a trip at Sun City Lincoln Hill. Besides a beautiful morning, which started out cold, 11 of us saw 50 spe-

cies. Probably most surprising were two different sightings of Tree Swallows. Seemed a bit early to me. There was mild disagreement about a Sora, but later one was heard and both parties were happy. We saw two Bitterns and maybe a third. The 50 sightings included four species of raptors, four Double-crested Cormorants, four species of ducks, and so it went for a fine day of birding."

("Personal note. I spent a couple of hours on Moore Road to Brewers Road and returning to Lincoln on Catlett Road Jan. 30. Highlights were many hundreds of White-fronted Geese and many hundreds of Snow Geese on Moore Road. The Loggerhead



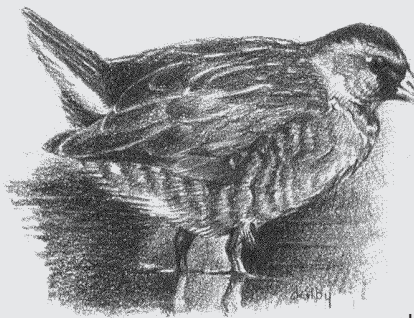
Shrike was still on Brewers Road. There was a surprise sighting of a Merlin, and approximately 30 Long-billed Curlews on Catlett Road. Oh yes, one Tricolored Blackbird at the Dairy.")

Yolo Bypass (1/28) — Leader Marlene Ishihara reported: "Eight participants enjoyed a clear, crisp, sunny day at the Bypass. Waterfowl were abundant. With three scopes to share, everyone had excellent views of Green-winged Teals, Northern Shovelers, Northern Pintails, Buffleheads, Cinnamon Teals, and Gadwalls. A pair of Blue-winged Teal was seen by a few participants. Winter-plumaged Avocets are beginning to gather while Dunlin flocks continue. A large flock of Snow Geese flew overhead. A few raptors such as Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Harrier, White-tailed Kite and a single Cooper's Hawk were seen."

Hansen Ranch Park Preserve (1/25) — Leader Jonilyn Okano reported: "The day began with an overcast and dark-

ened sky when suddenly a beautiful double rainbow appeared and then a quick downpour; luckily we were still inside Starbucks. The weather cleared and 15 participants, some seasoned and some new birders, spotted 43 species in about 3 hours. Cathie LaZier sighted a Great Egret dissecting a very large rat; we were able to observe it devouring its entire meal through scopes. Other highlights were Wilson's Snipe, Long-billed Curlew, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered, and Sharp-shinned hawks and an American Kestrel. Virginia Rail were heard, but not seen. The rookery showed signs of beginning nesting and at one point eight Great Blue Heron gracefully flew in somewhat of a formation out of a tree and into an area with a small pond. Waterfowl species included Green-winged and Cinnamon teal, Gadwall, Northern Shovelers, American Wigeon and Northern Pintail. Smaller species included Golden-crowned, White-crowned and Lincoln's sparrows, Marsh Wren, American Pipits, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Northern Mockingbirds. Mark Martucci found a Ring-necked Pheasant across from the railroad tracks and two American White Pelicans flying overhead. I had a nice time leading my first trip and everyone pitched in to help find the birds."

Pleasants Valley Road/Putah Creek (1/24) — Leader Gary Fregien reported: "A handful of seasoned birders joined me for a jaunt to Solano County where we birded Pleasants Valley Road from the Vacaville area over to Highway 128 to take in Lake Solano, Putah Creek, and the Monticello Dam area at Lake Berryessa. This trip typically targets winter ducks and we did well there, observing Wood Duck, numerous Bufflehead, both Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, a trip target bird, a high number of Hooded Merganser and a few Common Merganser, among other ducks. Another trip highlight was close-by overflights of Osprey, and Red-shouldered Hawk. A pleasant surprise, at least for me, was a brief look at a Ferruginous Hawk. We saw four



Daniel Kilby

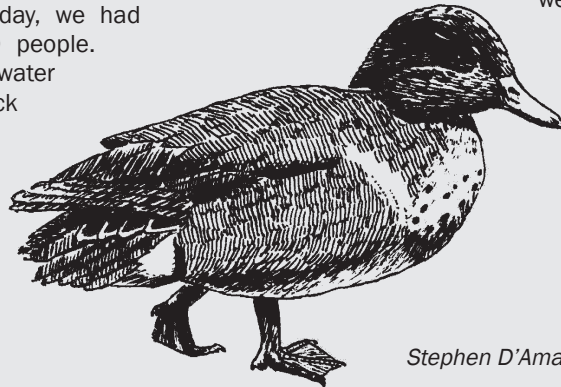
corvids, Western Scrub-Jay, Yellow-billed Magpie, American Crow and Common Raven; three Thrushes, Western Bluebird, Hermit Thrush and American Robin; and

two flycatchers, Black and Say's Phoebe. We saw Phainopepla, another trip target bird, in two locations and were able to locate the resident Lincoln's Sparrow in the cattails next to the docks at Lake Solano. The Western Grebe was the lone species we saw on Lake Berryessa. We tallied 62 species for the day."

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area (1/22) — Rained out.

Davis Wetlands (1/19) — Leader Sami LaRocca reported: "This outing was a local birding trip to see the wintering birds on the open day, Monday. Since it coincided with Martin Luther King Day, a public holiday, we had a good attendance, 20 people. We stopped at the Wastewater Oxidation Ponds to check out the large number of Northern Shovelers. After entering the wetlands we saw all the expected ducks, heron and egrets, and were treated to fly-by Snow Geese, Tundra Swans and Greater White-fronted Geese. Among the anticipated ducks were a number of Blue-winged Teal. After leaving the wetlands we drove by the neighboring landfill to view gulls. As we left we saw a Great Horned Owl in its nest tree on CR 29 and a Rough-legged Hawk over the ag fields on CR 28H."

Sandhill Cranes and other wintering birds of the Sacramento Valley, sponsored by "Save Our Sandhill Cranes" (1/18) — Co-coordinator Mike Savino reported: "We started with Paul Tebbel giving a brief and fascinating talk about Sandhill Crane behavior. We then hiked half the Wetland Walk trail, drove to Desmond Road, and then drove to Staten Island. The number of visitors was so large we had to split into two groups. There were about 50 of us. We saw a wide array of ducks, Tundra Swans, some shore birds and lots of Greater White-fronted geese, and hundreds of Sandhill Cranes. There were two



Stephen D'Amato

unusual highlights. Across from the Visitors Center, while Paul was giving his talk, every one turned around and looked across Franklin Blvd to observe a coyote stalking some birds. It was so close, about 10 yards from the road,

that we could watch every detail. Then, while on the Wetlands Walk, we watched a Great Egret catch, repeatedly wash in the water, and then swallow whole a big, fat, gopher. That coyote was a show-stopper."

Gray Lodge Wildlife Area (1/17) — Leader Dan Kopp reported that his group saw Blue-winged Teal (2 pair, just north of parking lot 14 along the Wetland trail); 3 Eurasian Wigeon along the auto loop at the northernmost stretch as it turns west; 4 Golden-crowned Kinglets (in the trees near the viewing platform along the Wetland trail). He added, "Nothing more out of the ordinary of our total of 70 species at the Wildlife area itself, except for good looks at a few Common Yellowthroats. We took West Butte Road on the way back and tallied 7 more species, the highlights being 2 Prairie Falcons along a rock-studded rolling foothill heading due west, and 6 Mountain Bluebirds in the same area. It was a gorgeous day in January with lots of waterfowl, can't beat that."

Pete Hayes

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT FIELD TRIPS

Mather Regional Park (2/15) — Leader Wayne Blunk reported: "Despite weather warnings, four of us showed at Mather for the GBBC trip. Thirty species were spotted for a good winter count. Loads of Double-crested Cormorants populated the lake as well as numerous American Coots. A pair of Common Goldeneyes were swimming with the Coots and Pied-billed Grebes. A number of Yellow-rumped Warblers populated the shrubs and trees. Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Northern Flicker, Nuttall's Woodpecker and hundreds of Tree Sparrows were feeding on the lake. A Red-shouldered Hawk with nest building material was spotted over the golf course making very slow headway against the wind. A pair of Hooded Mergansers were

spotted at the very south end of the lake and a pair of Mute Swans presented on the way back to the parking lot. All in all an invigorating morning of birding."

Sutter's Landing, Downtown Sacramento (2/14) — Julie Serences said: "On a beautiful Saturday morning, Julie Serences and Robert Sewell reported 35 species. Highlights included 2 White-tailed Kites checking out a nest and a Barrow's Goldeneye. Thanks to Sally Walters and Don Schmoldt for helping us with their excellent birding skills!"

Riverbend Park (Formerly Goethe Park) (2/13) — Leader Cathie LaZier reported: "If birders had looked outside rather than relying on the weather report they would have seen SUNSHINE and BLUE

SKIES, but apparently the forecast of rain kept most people in. However, Harlin Perryman joined me for this Great Backyard Bird Count trip to Riverbend Park, and we totaled 39 species, the best being a Great Horned Owl on the nest and a Varied Thrush. There were some early Dutchman's Pipevine blossoms and a California Bay tree about to burst into bloom."

Yolo Basin Wildlife Area (2/13) — Dan Kopp, subbing for Dan Tankersley, reported: "Three people showed up, it was cool but dry the entire time we were out. Highlights were a Great Horned Owl on a nest, a Merlin and lots of waterfowl. Total: 51 species."

Pete Hayes

Field Trips



Kirsten Munson

Field Trip Information

For questions regarding the trip or checking the status of the trip in case of unfavorable weather conditions, please call the trip leader first. If he or she cannot be reached, call the scheduler Richard Barbieri, 966-4603, offleash6@yahoo.com, for trips through March 8th. For trips after March 9th, call the scheduler Mark Martucci, 833-6722, matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Consider car pooling and share gas expenses with the driver. FRS radios can be helpful on all trips. Starting times are the actual time the trip leaves the meeting place. Try to arrive early, especially if you want driving directions or plan to carpool. Groups must make prior arrangements with the trip leader.

Sunday, March 1, 7am
Schollenberger Park and Petaluma Adobe State Park
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

From the West Sacramento Park and Ride, Mark will lead the group towards Petaluma, with possible birding stops along Hwy 37. At Petaluma Adobe State Park he'll search the fields, bushes and trees for a variety of passerine birds. Possibilities are Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Golden-crowned Kinglet, and Hutton's Vireo, among others. Moving on to Schollenberger, he'll look for Blue-winged Teal, a variety of shorebirds, Common Yellowthroat and the occasional rail. Bring lunch and liquids and layered clothing. There is a minimal per person fee at Petaluma Adobe. Meet Mark at 7am 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, on the north side of the freeway. This is a great trip for both beginning and more experienced birders.

Wednesday, March 4, 8am
Yolo Wildlife Area
Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758
IshiM2000@comcast.net

Join Marlene in this great area 10 minutes from downtown Sacramento. She'll be looking for shorebirds and waterfowl and possible raptors such as Peregrine Falcon. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A), on your left. Scopes are helpful on this trip which is good for both beginners and more experienced birders.

Saturday, March 7, 8am
Bushy Lake
Leader: Dan Brown, 362-2458
naturestoc@aol.com

Join Dan for a look at some of the birds that live along this section of the American River Parkway. This will be about a 2 to 3 mile hike and will end before lunch. Bring water and appropriate footwear. Meet in the parking lot of the cul-de-sac at the south end of Ethan Way, located just south of here Hurley Way goes into Gate 12 of Cal Expo.

Sunday, March 8, 8am – noon
Note: Daylight Savings Time begins today.
Upper Lake Natoma and Folsom Lake
Chris Conard, 362-5942
conardc@gmail.com

Be prepared for up to four miles of walking along rolling trails at the upper end of Lake Natoma in Folsom and Mormon Island at Folsom Lake. These sites have proven to be productive during the Folsom CBC. Mormon Island to Brown's Ravine is one of the best sites in the area for Phainopeplas, in addition to more common foothills species. On the lake, we'll look for loons, grebes and other waterbirds. The woods should be alive with the songs of Bewick's Wrens and other resident breeders. From Hwy 50, exit at Folsom Blvd and go north. Make the first right at Iron Point, then a right into the parking lot. Meet across from the Folsom Outlets in the parking lot behind Burger King near the Circle K on Iron Point Road. Steady rain cancels.

Tuesday, March 10, 8am
Riverbend Park
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

Meet Cathie in the first parking lot on your right just past the park entrance. We'll look for early nesting birds and a few early wildflowers, as well as lingering winter birds. This walk will end by noon and is excellent for beginners. There is a \$5 park entrance fee.

Saturday, March 14
ARNHA Bird and Breakfast Fund Raiser
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
489-4918

Join Sacramento Audubon leaders for a birding walk followed by a delicious breakfast. This fund raiser for the American River Natural History Association is an annual event, and the leaders usually find nesting Anna's Hummingbirds and Bushtits. Various woodpeckers and other small woodland birds, as well as herons, egrets and waterfowl on the river, will also be seen. Red-shouldered Hawks are frequently found in the oak woodland. This fund raiser supports ARNHA's educational work. There's more information on page 6. For sign-up information phone the Nature Center at 489-4918.

Sunday, March 15, 8am
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Leader: Cathie LaZier, 457-6882
empid@earthlink.net

This area of the parkway is excellent for birding and Cathie will be looking for early nesting birds and returning migrants, as well as blooming wildflowers. This is a very good trip for beginners, as well as more experienced birders. Meet in the Nature Center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park in Fair Oaks. The trip will end by noon.

Thursday, March 12, 8am-noon
Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Meet Jack in the Nature Center parking lot in Ancil Hoffman Park for a 4 hour walk on the trails winding through the oak woodland and down to the river. This is an excellent birding area and Jack will also share his knowledge of the native and non-native plants and trees of this parkway area.

**Saturday, March 21, 8am
Cosumnes River Preserve
Leader: Brian Gilmore, 451-9146**

Join Brian at this Nature Conservancy area 20 minutes south of Sacramento. He will search the ponds and fields on Desmond and Franklin Roads for waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors. Walks along the boardwalk, bridge and trail areas should turn up other interesting species in this rich riparian area. Meet Brian at the Visitor Center parking lot on Franklin Blvd. From I-5 take the Twin Cities Road exit and go east 1 mile to Franklin Blvd. Go south on Franklin into the Preserve; the Visitor Center parking lot will be on your left.

**Sunday March 22, 7:30am
Lincoln Grasslands
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722,
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com**

We will search the back roads of Placer County for raptors, Tri-colored Blackbirds, Lewis' Woodpeckers and Western Kingbirds. Meet Mark at the Brookfield's Restaurant parking lot, 1817 Taylor Road, in Roseville. From Sacramento on I-80, take the Eureka Road offramp (Exit 105A) and continue straight through the signal light at Eureka Road and you'll be on Taylor Road. Turn left just past the Shell Station. Brookfield's is behind Shell. Bring lunch, scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

**Tuesday, March 24, 8am - noon
Sailor Bar Area, American River
Parkway
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Meet Jack at the end of Emperor Street to explore the plants, birds and animals of this riparian corridor along the American River Parkway. From Winding Way, turn south on Kenneth, then east on Emperor Street to the end.

**Saturday, March 28, 7am
Caswell Memorial State Park
Leader: Gary Fregien, 708-0636
calaveri@sbcglobal.net**

Caswell Memorial State Park is located in the Central Valley near the town of Ripon, about an hour south of Sacramento. The park's position along the meander-

ing Stanislaus River affords a combination of water and mature riparian valley oak woodland vegetation. Its multi-level tall tree canopy, low scrubs and vines provide lush cover, nesting and feeding grounds, and are a magnet for a variety of resident and migrant species. For more information about the park, go to www.parks.ca.gov, click on "Find A Park" and use the drop-down menu to find Caswell.

Passerines, including several species of swallows, sparrows, woodpeckers and warblers are park specialties in Spring and Summer, and resident Red-tailed and Red-shouldered Hawks, and Great Horned Owls nest here. California Thrasher and Wrentit, rarities on the valley floor, are also here.

There is a day-use fee per vehicle to enter the park. Plan to spend several hours in the park along some of the numerous nature trails, so bring food and

water. The trails are primarily level, but these paths and the vegetation along them may be damp. Dress appropriately. We will meet at the Park and Ride on the east side of Hwy 99 at the Sheldon Road exit.

Take Hwy 99 south from Sacramento to the Sheldon Road exit. Turn left and cross over the freeway to the second signal light; turn right on East Stockton Blvd and proceed about ¼ mile to the lot.

**Sunday, March 29, 7:30am
Bobcat Ranch, Yolo County
Leader: Maureen Geiger, 444-0804
mkgeiger@sbcglobal.net**

This wonderful 7,000-acre property owned by Audubon California is currently open to the public solely for docent-led trips. Join Maureen and Rodd Kelsey, Audubon California's ecologist, for our second visit to this area. We will look for local, late wintering, and migrating bird species as well as learn about the restoration efforts taking place. We should have great blooming wildflowers and fabulous views of the valley. This outing will involve hiking on unpaved ranch roads and possibly a small amount of rougher trails with occasional moderate elevation gain. The hike should last until early to mid-afternoon. Bring liquids and lunch. Meet at the Park and Ride in West Sacramento no later than 7:30am. Alternate meeting place is Steady Eddy's at 5 E. Main Street, next to the parking lot at the inter-

section of Main and Railroad in Winters by 8:15am sharp. To reach the Park and Ride, from I-80, take the West Capitol Avenue exit, turn left at the light and left into the lot.

**Friday, April 3, 8am - noon
Bannister Park
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777**

Explore another beautiful area along the American River with Jack. As always, you can share in his knowledge of the natural history of the parkway. Meet Jack in the parking lot at the end of Bannister Road, south off Fair Oaks Blvd, west of Sunrise Blvd.

**Saturday, April 4, 8am
Yolo Basin Wildlife Area and
Davis Wetlands
Leader: Richard Barbieri, 966-4603
offleash56@yahoo.com**

Depending on the extent of the flooded fields, there may be good numbers of shorebirds, Black-necked Stilts and American Avocets. Tri-colored and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are also a good possibility, as are Marsh Wrens and Common Yellowthroats. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway.

Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A), on your left.

**Sunday, April 5, 7:30am
Mather Field Park
Leader: Wayne Blunk, 876-0457
wayne.blunk@worldnet.att.net**

Mather Lake is one of Wayne's favorite birding locations. The lake and its surrounding grasslands host a wide variety of birds. Great-tailed Grackle and Yellow-headed Blackbirds both nest at the lake. Meet Wayne in the parking lot of Mather Regional Park at the corner of Douglas Road and Eagle's Nest Road. There is a \$5per car entrance fee. This is a great trip for beginning birders.

**Thursday, April 9, 8am - 12pm
Yolo Basin Wildlife Area
Leader: Marlene Ishihara, 635-9758
IshIM2000@comcast.net**

Meet Marlene in the first parking lot on your left as you enter the Wildlife area.



Stephen D'Amato

Field Trips continued on page 6

Birding, Events & Opportunities

ANNUAL BIRD AND BREAKFAST AT EFFIE YEAW

The Bird and Breakfast, Saturday, March 14th, is an Annual Spring Classic at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center. Explore the miracles of spring in the beautiful oak woodland and meadows of the Effie Yeaw Nature Area, in small groups guided by Audubon experts. Return to a hot, hearty breakfast (vegetarian option available) served in the new Assembly Building at the Nature Center in Ancil Hoffman Park, California Ave. and Tarshes Drive in Carmichael.

Participants (not advised for children under 12) should wear comfortable walking shoes and bring binoculars. On this walk one can expect to see some 30 bird species among more than 100 that populate the lower American River's environs.

Reservations are always necessary for the space-limited, \$30 per person fund-raiser for educational programs on the American River Parkway. Call the center at 489-4918 for details. Checks payable to ARNHA may be mailed to P.O. Box 241, Carmichael, CA 95609. Be sure to include your telephone number.

OLYMPIC BIRDFEST 2009

Don't forget the Olympic birdfest in Sequim, Washington, April 3-5. Grab your binoculars and join the Olympic BirdFest celebration at the Dungeness River Audubon Center. Marbled Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, Harlequin Ducks, Black Oystercatchers, Peregrine Falcons, and Pygmy Owls will be sporting their finest spring plumage for this celebration. Guided birding trips, boat tours; and a traditional salmon bake await you. Check out the offerings by going online at www.olympicbirdfest.org, or calling for a brochure. You can contact them by phone, at (360) 681-4076.

DRAWING CLASS WITH JACK LAWS

Don't forget to mark your calendars for an all day drawing class with Jack Muir Laws at Effie Yeaw on April 16. The cost will be \$125 (for SAS members) and will be quick to fill. So if you are interested please contact Julie Serences at education@sacramentoaudubon.org for further information and pre-registration.

KERN RIVER VOLLUNTEER OPPORTUNITES

Though it's a distance from Sacramento, the Friends of the Kern River Preserve have projects that volunteers can help with including the South Fork and Kelso Valley Butterfly Counts scheduled on April 25-26 and Rare Plant Surveys that will be conducted in early March and late May. The Southern Sierra Research and EREMICO will conduct MAPS bird banding projects starting in mid-May. You can visit their website at <http://kern.audubon.org> for exciting opportunities to participate in citizen science or contact Alison Sheehy to find out more. Her email is krpfriends@audubon.org.

SUCCESSFUL OUTREACH

Spring is a busy time for our Outreach table. If you haven't signed up to work at one of these, please consider doing so. It's lots of fun talking about the birds we all love! Just call or email Cathie LaZier at 457-6882, or empid@earthlink.net.

Saturday, April 4 Earth Fest at the Sacramento City Zoo

Wednesday, April 22 Earth Day at Cosumnes River College

Saturday, April 25 Creek Week Celebration at American River College

Saturday, May 9 Walk On The Wild Side, Beach Lake

Field Trips continued from page 5

Depending on the extent of the flooded fields on the auto tour route, there may be good numbers of shorebirds, American Avocets and Black-necked Stilts. Tri-colored and Yellow-headed Blackbirds are also possible. From Sacramento, take I-80 west, take the first exit (#78) at the west end of the Yolo Causeway. Turn right at the stop sign, go under the freeway, make a left up onto the levee, then drop down into the Wildlife Area. The trip begins at the first parking lot (Lot A), on your left. This is a good trip for both beginners and experienced birders. Bring scopes and FRS radios if you have them.

Saturday, April 11, 7:30am
Lake Solano/Putah Creek
Leader: Dan Kopp, 213-2791
rey_ality@hotmail.com

Dan will be looking for spring migrants and resident birds along Putah Creek and Solano Lake. Phainopepla, Hairy Woodpecker and Pileated Woodpecker are also possible. There is a \$5 parking fee at Lake Solano. Meet Dan 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, on the north side of the freeway. This trip will last into mid afternoon, so bring a lunch and liquids.

Sunday April 12, 8am
Sailor Bar, American River Parkway
Leader: Mark Martucci, 833-6722
matuchbirdman@yahoo.com

Join Mark for a morning walk checking out the resident birds, and looking for early nesters and migrants. Sailor Bar is at the south end of Illinois Avenue, off Winding Way, just west of Hazel. There is a \$5 per car entrance fee. Meet Mark at the boat launch parking area at the very end of the entrance road. This is a good trip for beginning birders.

Tuesday, April 14, 9am - noon
Phoenix Field
Leader: Jack Hiehle, 967-0777

Join Jack at Phoenix Field (Jim David Park) for a walk around the beautiful vernal pools. This trip will feature rare plants and spring blooms in the vernal pools. Jack will lend his expertise in identifying these unusual plants. Phoenix Field is located on Sunset Blvd just east of Hazel Ave. Don't forget your binoculars to view the resident birds.

SAS NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these
new members:

Sharon Dale Larry D Kelley
Michael E Davis Charles T Mitchell
Kay Gist Casey Newton
Willis Boyd Jensen Richard Wood

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 held on March 31, at 7pm at the SMUD Building, 6301 S Street, Sacramento.

FUTURE SPEAKERS AND PROGRAMS

April 16 – John (Jack) Muir Laws, *Exploring the Sierra Nevada as a Naturalist and an Artist*. Julie Serences will be coordinating an Education Program with Jack on the 16th, prior to the General Meeting

May 21 – Jim Estep, *Swainson's Hawks*

PLEASE, WHEN YOU MOVE!

Sacramento Audubon spends over \$50 annually to resend *The Observer* to members who have not shared their address changes with us. We'd rather spend that money on activities which enhance our enjoyment of wildlife. In my 3 year tenure, only 2 members have sent me their changes of address. Thanks so much.

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

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.

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

Lea Landry, Membership Chair

11054 Autumnwind Lane, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4224

llandry@softcom.net (916) 638-1141

Date _____ *The Observer* Newsletter \$25 per address \$ _____

Donation for Conservation/Education \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to Sacramento Audubon Society

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

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Email _____

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS!

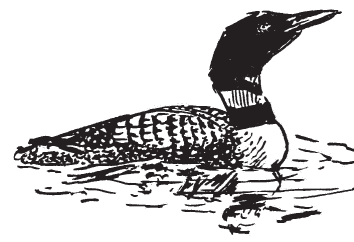
Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Carole Sughrue to the **General Fund**.

Loraine Holden, Phillip & Marilyn Isenberg, Leah Newton, Andrea Salmi, Peter Stoddard and Nancy Weagly to the **Conservation & Education Fund**.

Sara Gillespie to **Bobelaine**.

Tim Fitzer made a donation to the **Conservation and Education Fund** in memory of Sheila Deaner Martignetti.



Kirsten Munson

Observations continued from page 8 for details. With nearly 100 reports, it is impossible to list everyone; however, I want to thank the following for reports on the above species and for providing additional information:

Roger Adamson, George Chanot, Todd Easteria, Andy Engilis, Gil Ewing, Steve Hampton, Cliff Hawley, Scott Hoppe, Jeri Langham, Don Lotter, Karl and Karlin Oettle, Ed Pandolfino, Mary Schiedt, Zach Smith, John Sterling, Craig Swolgaard, John Trochet, Bruce Webb, and Dan Williams.

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

Chris Conard

Seasonal Observations

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

This month was fairly dry with long stretches of inviting spring like weather. It also wrapped up the Christmas Count season, with the Rio Cosumnes CBC on 1/3 and the Folsom CBC on 1/4. The bird of the month was a gorgeous male **Summer Tanager** visiting a private yard in Orangevale. It was found on 1/29 and continued through at least 2/9.

Scouting for Rio Cosumnes produced a **Long-eared Owl** at Cosumnes River Preserve (CRP) on 1/1. That bird was not refound on 1/3, but other CRP highlights included a **Eurasian Green-winged Teal**, a **Least Bittern**, a **Cassin's Vireo**, and two **Chestnut-collared Longspurs**. A rare blue morph **Ross's Goose** was reported within the count circle on Merritt Island, Yolo County. Folsom CBC highlights included two **Steller's Jays** (one near Lake Natoma, the other at the Peninsula portion of Folsom Lake), a flock of **Red Crossbills** in Folsom, and five **Lawrence's Goldfinches** near Sweetwater Creek.

The Folsom CBC also produced an adult **Western Gull** and a first-winter **Glaucous Gull** at Folsom Lake. The latter was found again on 1/14. The Davis Landfill and Wastewater Treatment Plant hosted thousands of gulls, which feed at the landfill and roost on the treatment pond levees. The highlights were at least three different **Glaucous Gulls**, including an adult, at least three **Western Gulls**, and a very impressive 350 **Thayer's Gulls**.

Sacramento Audubon Society
11054 Autumnwind Lane
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A **Yellow-shafted [Northern] Flicker** was reported in North Davis on 1/22, with another at the Nimbus Hatchery on 1/23. Caution is always advised to rule out intergrades with **Red-shafted Flickers**. These are far more common than "pure"

birds (note especially the face pattern, crown and cheek color). An adult **Northern Shrike** was at CRP's Valensin unit on 1/14, and another adult was reported near Catlett and Brewer Rds on 1/26. Two **Greater Scaup** were found at the Yolo Wildlife Area on 1/17, and there were several reports of a **Eurasian Wigeon** from that location, along with scattered reports throughout the Sacramento area. Highlights from a 1/10 visit to CRP included a "**Western**" **Flycatcher** (Pacific-slope/Cordilleran), and four to five **Western Tanagers** (owing to an excellent wild grape crop this fall). Other interesting finds include a **Swainson's Hawk** over Davis on 1/30, a **Selasphorus Hummingbird** (Rufous/Allen's) at UC Davis on 1/25, and two **Chipping Sparrows** at the Masonic Lawn Cemetery in Sacramento near Broadway and Riverside on 1/18.

Many of these reports first appeared on the Central Valley Bird Club Listserv. Visit www.cvbirds.org and click "Listserv"

Sacramento Audubon Society Information

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

Internet Address: www.sacramentoaudubon.org

Membership/Subscriptions: Lea Landry, 11054 Autumnwind Lane
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

(916) 638-1141, e-mail preferred: llandry@softcom.net

Seasonal Observations: Chris Conard, 2405 Rio Bravo Circle,
Sacramento, CA 95826
(916) 362-5942,

e-mail preferred: conardc@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.

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Observations continued on page 7