



CHIRP-N-CHATTER

The Newsletter of the Wintu Audubon Society

Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Shasta
and eastern portions of Trinity County, California

January / February 2015

January Activities

General Meeting

Tuesday, January 13 @ 7:00 pm

Badges, Bears and Eagles—The True-Life

Adventures of a California Fish and Game Warden

Award-winning author and retired Fish and Game patrol lieutenant **Steven T. Callan** recounts his adventures during his thirty-year career in *Badges, Bears, and Eagles*, a “Book of the Year” finalist. One of Steve’s most important cases begins with a slain Bald Eagle dropped on the doorstep of the Redding Fish and Game office, along with a note threatening the life of a fellow warden. Throughout his career, one of Callan’s proudest achievements was helping to save a beloved wildlife sanctuary from development. Passionate about the environment, Steve and his wife, Kathy, are avid birders and members of National Audubon. Don’t miss this presentation covering this local author and his hit book.

Field Trips

Discover Birding at Turtle Bay---January 3 @ 9:00 am

Our youth/beginner bird walks are conducted on the first Saturday throughout the year. Bring your family and friends to the Turtle Bay Monolith. Wintu Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call **Dan Greaney, 276-9693**, with questions or for more information.

General 2nd Saturday Bird Walk---January 10 @ 8:00 am

Before this month’s visit to Turtle Bay and Kutrass Lake we hope there has been enough cold weather up north to freeze the lakes and drive the waterfowl down to us. We will assemble in the parking area behind the monolith at Turtle Bay. This ½-day walk with **Chad Scott** is open to the public and all birding skill levels are welcome.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Lema Ranch, Thursday, January 15 @ 8:00 am

Lema Ranch, an oasis of open space in Redding, is excellent year-around birding. The ponds, orchards, and fields of the McConnell Foundation

Headquarters provide an abundance of bird species. We will look for Common Gallenules, Marsh Wrens, Great-tailed Grackles, Lark

Sparrows and other Lema Ranch specialties. This will be a 2-3 hour walk on paved trails with fine public restrooms. Meet our leader, **Chad Scott**, at the north parking lot off Hemmingway Street. Hemmingway Street is across from Mountain View school on Shasta View Drive.

Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge---Saturday, January 24 @ 7:30 am

This nationally known gem is well worth the 90-mile drive. Enormous numbers of waterfowl fill the sky and numerous impoundments in fall and winter. Snow, Ross’ and Greater White-fronted Geese, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers and Gadwalls are assured. Possibilities are White-faced Ibis, Green-winged Teal, Black-necked Stilts and various raptors. We hope to provide 2-way radios to report sightings and alert people in other cars to look for them. Most of the birding is done from cars. Meet at the Redding Convention Center to carpool. Bring a lunch for this full-day trip. **Bill Oliver** will lead.

WINTU A.S. CHAPTER MEETINGS ARE ON THE SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:00 PM at the United Way, 2280 Benton Drive, Redding.

BOARD MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 7:00 PM also at the United Way meeting room. All members are urged to attend to contribute information and new ideas.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 13: Steven T. Callan: ***Badgers, Bears and Eagles.***

February 10: Bud and Margaret Widdowson: ***A Trip to South Africa***

February Activities

General Meeting

Tuesday, February 10 @ 7:00 pm

A Trip to South Africa---Bud and Margaret

Widdowson will present a talk and slideshow from their trip to the Cape area of South Africa. Their search for Cape endemics took them from the Cape of Good Hope across the fynbos, the unique South African chaparral. Highlights include visits to several spectacular botanic gardens, a side trip to the Karoo and swarms of albatross on a World Class pelagic trip

Field Trips

Discover Birding at Turtle Bay---February 7 @ 9:am

Our youth/beginner bird walks are conducted on the first Saturday throughout the year. Bring your family and friends to the Turtle Bay Monolith. Wintu Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call **Dan Greaney, 276-9693**, with questions or for more information.

General 2nd Saturday Bird Walk---February 14 @ 8:00 am

A great cross-section of raptors, waterfowl, gulls, and winter resident passerines can be seen close up with usually a surprise or to on this ½-day walk at Turtle Bay and Kutras Lake. We will assemble in the parking area behind the monolith at Turtle Bay. This walk with **Chad Scott** is open to the public and all birding skill levels are welcome.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Clover Creek

Preserve, Thursday, February 19 @ 8:00 am This preserve within the city limits has a large, permanent pond with surrounding cattails and reed marsh, shallow winter pools and uplands planted to oaks. We should see species rare to urban areas such as Western Meadowlark, Western Bluebird, Say's Phoebe and a variety of ducks and other waterfowl. The Great-tailed Grackle has expanded its range northward to include Shasta County and inhabits the cattail marsh. Meet your trip leader, **Linda Aldrich**, at the preserve near the south end of Shasta View Drive for this ½-day trip.

September/October Trip Reports

Discover Birding at Turtle Bay

September 13---Yellow was the color of the season for Wintu Audubon's September Youth and Beginner Walk at Turtle Bay. No longer fully summer, but not yet autumn, four birders enjoyed the sunny weather and a pleasant walk along our usual loop. While initially disheartened by the total absence of any birds at the first pond, we were soon kept busy tracking the excited, kinetic flits of scores of Yellow Warblers. a few Wilson's Warblers. a couple of

Western Tanagers, and a smattering of Lesser Goldfinches. Other highlights included Belted Kingfishers, plenty of woodpeckers (Acorn, Nuttall's, and Downy), and a final species count of 30.

October 4---Eight adults and three youths explored Turtle Bay for the ducks of October—and found them! In addition to Mallards, the group had good views of Gadwalls, Wood Ducks, American Wigeons, and glimpsed a distant Common Merganser. Double-crested Cormorants, Pied-billed Grebes, and plenty of Canada Geese rounded out the fowl on the water. Also present were a couple of Wilson's Snipe, a Western Scrub-jay burying acorns, Great Blue Herons, come-and-go flocks of Bush-tits, Cedar Waxwings, and European Starlings, and other passers-by to total 31 species. Next up? The ducks of November!

Our youth birding leader and newly discovered poet laureate, **Dan Greaney**, occupied his time most wonderfully after the November outing was cancelled.

'Twas the Morn After Spook-night
with apologies to Clement Moore

*'Twas the morn after spook-night and at Turtle Bay
Not a child was stirring, they were still on the bay.
So I hunched out alone in the chill and the fog
To see what I could on that Baskerville bog:
Some mallard-bills glowed with a pumpkin-like hue,
But mostly the marsh-haze darkened the view.
The ghost of a gull floated by in the brume,
And black and white geese sailed round in the gloom,
A merganser's head wafted upstream,
And a coven of wigeons stirred the cold steam.
A few other phantoms—some gadwall, a snipe—
Made spectral showings, but no spirited hype.
Only the brush-birds, whose shade was extended,
Seemed glad for the day whose night had not ended:
Six species of sparrow, including white-throated,
And black-hooded executioners gloated,
Enjoying the fog that shrouded the day
And hallowed that morning at Turtle Bay.*

John Reginato River Access Trail---September 13---

Nine warbler-ready birders spent about four hours marveling the abundance of Yellow Warblers. Best bird of the day would have to be a Northern Waterthrush seen by **Ed Pottmeyer**. We saw or heard a total of 50 species.

Burney Falls State Park & Lake Britton---September

27---Experienced Wintu Audubon leaders, **Connie Word** and **Dan Greaney**, assisted new trip leader **Chad Scott** guide two longtime members and several area residents to Burney Falls and Lake Britton. A dozen or more Band-

tailed Pigeons gathering for a morning drink was the first treat. Interestingly, as each pigeon finished drinking, it would fly across the creek and the next pigeon behind it would move forward for its drink. Meanwhile, a new pigeon would fly in to take position behind the other pigeons and await its turn at the water's edge.

Along the Rim Trail to Lake Britton we spotted a soaring Northern Goshawk, several Dark-eyed Junco's and some nearly fearless Red-breasted Nuthatches. At the water's edge we added a number of species including, Great Blue and Green Herons, Bald Eagles, Wood Ducks, Western Grebes, White-fronted Geese, and, along the shoreline, sparrows, kinglets, sandpipers, and Killdeer.

We returned to the Falls along the creek side trail where we filled out our day's sightings of woodpeckers and Brown Creepers before returning to our cars to spot the only Mountain Chickadees of the day

Upcoming Bird Festivals

16th Annual Snow Goose Festival of the Pacific Flyway



Ross's Geese Taking Off at Colusa National Wildlife Refuge Photo by Larry Jordan

Birders and nature enthusiasts of all ages are invited to attend the 16th Annual Snow Goose Festival, one of the premier birding events in California. This action-packed 5-day event celebrates the millions of waterfowl migrating along the Pacific Flyway that call the Northern Sacramento Valley their home during the winter months.

The Pacific Flyway ranks as one of the greatest migratory pathways in the entire world, stretching from the Bering Strait off the coast of Alaska to the steppes of Patagonia in South America. Millions of birds representing hundreds of species use this great avian highway each year, and nowhere is this abundance of wildlife more accessible than right here in the Northern Sacramento Valley.

Get all of the information about this event at their website: <http://www.snowgoosefestival.org/>

Winter is a **WONDERFUL** time
to bird in the Klamath Basin

WINTER WINGS FESTIVAL

February 12-15, 2015
Featuring: **RICHARD CROSSLEY**
and **JENNIFER WU**

**NEW BIRDING AND PHOTOGRAPHY
FIELD TRIPS, WORKS SHOPS,
AND MINI SESSIONS**
Many old favorites, too

Registration begins in early December
at WinterWingsFest.org

The Winter Wings Festival will once again host four days of activities in Southern Oregon for birdwatchers, photographers, families and those looking for a good time learning about nature. As in years past, they have some great national talent taking center stage.

Richard Crossley is the keynoter in 2015. Richard is an internationally acclaimed birder, photographer, and award-winning author of *The Crossley ID Guide* series.

Their photography keynoter is **Jennifer Wu**, a nature and landscape photographer, specializing in creating stunning images of the night sky and stars.

Call 1-877-541-BIRD or email info@WinterWingsFest.org for program information and registration.

2014-2015 OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS & DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

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PRESIDENT—Esther Cox 474-4379
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Membership Application for Wintu Audubon Society

All proceeds from Chapter Membership support Chapter activities, such as our website (www.wintuaudubon.org), this newsletter, youth/beginner bird walks, and advocating for conservation of our natural resources at the local level.

___ Membership in Wintu Audubon Society for one year \$20. Make check payable to Wintu Audubon Society.

___ Membership in Wintu Audubon Society for TWO years \$35. Make check payable to Wintu Audubon Society.

I wish to make an additional donation of \$_____.

New Membership / Change of Address: Please send all applications for Chapter membership and all changes of address directly to your membership chairman:

George Horn
2516 Lake Redding Dr.
Redding, CA 96003