



# 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 2016

## January Activities

### General Meeting

**Notice:** The location for this meeting only has been changed to the First Methodist Church at the corner of East and South St. Meeting room is on the street level of East St. Park in the lot on South St. and take stairs or elevator.

**Tuesday, January 12 @ 7:00 pm**

**Birds of Northern California.** Larry Jordan is Wintu Audubon's webmaster and an amateur wildlife photographer, emphasizing his love of birds. He authors his own blog at [TheBirdersReport.com](http://TheBirdersReport.com) concentrating on birds and conservation issues and is the West Coast Beat Writer for the popular "10000 Birds" blog. Larry will be presenting a slide show of Northern California birds featuring several locations familiar to Wintu Audubon field trip attendees, as well as some rarities found in the surrounding areas. View some of your favorite birds close up and see others you may not know, through the camera lens!

### Field Trips

**Discover Birding at Turtle Bay-January 2 @ 9:00am**

Our youth/beginner bird walks are conducted on the first Saturday throughout the year. Wintu Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call **Dan Greaney, 276-9693**, with questions or for more information. **Please remember that we now assemble at the Venture Properties parking lot. Take the first left before the Redding Civic Auditorium.**

**General 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Bird Walk---Turtle Bay and Kutas Lake, January 9 @ 8:00 am**

We will walk the paved trail around Turtle Bay and then walk the Hwy. 44 pedestrian bridge to view waterfowl on the ponds and the main Sacramento River channel. If time allows we will also visit Kutas Lake. Assemble in the

parking lot on the south side of the Redding Civic Auditorium. **Chad Scott** will lead.

**Local Weekday Bird Walk---Mary Lake, Thursday, January 21 @ 8:00 am**

This small lake in west Redding yields a surprising variety of birds in spite of the drought in recent years. We will walk the  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile, paved trail around the lake with a side trip to the Old Catholic Cemetery. Assemble in the parking lot on the south side of the Redding Civic Auditorium to meet your leader **Linda Aldrich**.

**The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge---Saturday, January 30 @ 8:00 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 12: Larry Jordan: ***Birds Northern California.***

February 9: Harry Fuller: ***The Mountain Bird Festival.***

# February Activities

## General Meeting

**Tuesday, February 9 @ 7:00 pm**

**The Mountain Bird Festival---Harry Fuller** 2016 will see the third annual Mountain Bird Festival in May. It's based in Ashland and is focused on the birds found in both the Siskiyou and the Cascades. The festival's logo bird is the Great Gray Owl, a breeding bird in both mountain ranges in southern Oregon. Other species festival-goers are eager to see include: Calliope Hummingbird, White-headed Woodpecker, Williamson's Sapsucker, Mountain Bluebird and Chickadee, Green-tailed Towhee, Vesper Sparrow, breeding Sandhill Cranes. In addition the Klamath-Siskiyou Bioregion is rich in flora with more species of conifers than any area on earth. We will talk about the target birds, their habitat and their future as we all face climate change.

## Field Trips

**Discover Birding at Turtle Bay-February 6 @ 9:00am**

February is especially birdy at Turtle Bay with all the wintering waterfowl. Wintu Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call **Dan Greaney, 276-9693**, with questions or for more information

**General 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Bird Walk---February 13 @ 8:00 am**

We will return again this month to Turtle Bay and environs to view all the wintering waterfowl. As in January we will walk around Turtle Bay, the pedestrian walkway on the Hwy.44 bridge and maybe Kutras Lake. Assemble in the parking lot on the south side of the Redding Civic Auditorium. **Brooke McDonald** will lead.

**Local Weekday Bird Walk---Clear Creek WasteWater Treatment Ponds---Thursday, February 18 @ 8 am**

We are again scheduling a visit to the ponds targeting wintering waterfowl and very early migrating shorebirds. The 4-year drought exacerbated by improvements in tertiary treatment requiring fewer ponds has nearly eliminated habitat for these species. We expect the winter rains will create at least temporary habitat. Assemble at the Treatment Plant's Administration Building at the end of Metz Road at 8:00 am to meet your leader, **Jeannette Carroll**. This is a 1/2-day trip that may end in the early afternoon if the birding is good.

Here are the directions to the Clear Creek Plant. Take Hwy. 273 and look for River Ranch Road after crossing Clear Creek. Cross over the Railroad tracks and turn left on Eastside Road. The entrance on Metz Road is on the right.

**Gray Lodge State Wildlife Area---Saturday, February 27 @ 7:30 a.m.**

Gray Lodge State Wildlife Area is west of Gridley about 100 miles south of Redding so this will be an all day trip. We should see Snow Geese, Ross's Geese, possible Sandhill Cranes, Eurasian Wigeon among many other species of waterfowl---all this with a backdrop of the beautiful Sutter Buttes. Bring your camera! There is a \$4.32 per person entrance fee. If you have a California hunting or fishing license there is no charge. We will meet at the Redding Civic Auditorium to carpool so bring a few dollars for gas also. Your trip leader will be **George Horn**.

## Trip Reports

### Discover Birding at Turtle Bay

**November 7--**Eight birders and a few hundred Super-hero Joggers enjoyed a beautiful fall morning at Turtle Bay. Both groups offered photo-ops to Chris Fuente, who was shooting for the Visitors' Bureau. Additionally, the birders tallied thirty-five avian species. Yellow-rumps and a Black Phoebe started us off right from our meeting place at Venture Properties. Highlights included a handful of Belted Kingfishers chattering at one another some 80 feet up over Rock Pile Pond; their loud, choppy excitement continued through both our trip out and then back. And the ducks have returned! Joining our summer Mallards and Common Mergansers were plenty of Gadwall, American Wigeon, buffleheads, and a few Ring-necked Ducks, Northern Shovelers, and Hooded Mergansers, too. An Osprey hunted, and a flock of Cedar Waxwings held court high in a cottonwood. Holding up the mammalian representation, an otter appeared, but ate the evidence it briefly showed of other vertebrates in the water.

### December 5--Third Annual Turtle Bay Mini-

**Christmas Bird Count**—A cool and cloudy morning treated nine bird-counters—three youths and six adults—to a few perching birds and a lot of ducks and other beauties. The woodpeckers were skittery, not offering their usual good views. But a beautiful young, dark-morph Red-tailed Hawk sat long and still; the Bald Eagles toted sticks to a second nesting site (maybe a hundred yards downtrail from the Sundial Bridge; I'm betting on the original site to hold their hearts); and a Hooded Merganser tried to swallow a fish bigger than his head while his brothers tried to take it from him. The duck-dappled water was largely black and white with Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, a few Common Golden-eyes, and, enjoying the bay beneath the cliffs, a spreading flotilla of American Coots. All in all, the count tallied 39 species and 506 individuals—six more species and seventeen more birds than in our previous one-party count.

**Local Weekday Bird Walk--Clover Creek Preserve with extension to Lema Road, November 19.** Nine birders gathered in the Clover Creek Preserve parking lot in chilly weather that improved through the morning to a very pleasant Fall day. Corporately, we saw 46 species, including 6 species of sparrows: White-crowned, Song, Lincoln's, Savannah, Golden-crowned and Lark. The large flotilla of American Coots were querulous – we saw a sparring match in which two of them grabbed feet in the water, and many showing their white rump spots in warning. Two open space specialists put in appearances – Western Bluebird and Say's Phoebe. Some of us caravanned to the Lema Road entrance to Lema Ranch where we added 13 of the total species among which was a Marsh Wren that was vigorously singing. Mule Pond itself was devoid of waterfowl – perhaps because two otters were there.

**General 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Bird Walk—Battle Creek State Wildlife Area, November 14** Five hardy birders braved threatening skies that soon cleared to reveal 28 species seen, plus 2 heard, the two rails, Sora and Virginia. We got good looks at a Red-breasted Sapsucker that thrilled all but especially one participant who had never seen that species.

#### In Memoriam

We are greatly saddened by the passing of Victor (Red) Modeen in October 2015. Red was a valued member of Wintu Audubon Society for more than a decade as Secretary and an At Large Member of the Board of Directors. His organizational and administrative skills were uniquely thorough and essential to the Society. Both Red and his wife Nancy actively participated in field trips where his jolly nature and enthusiasm to share his skill in bird identification always made a successful outing.

Both Red and Nancy spent careers in the U.S. Navy. Upon retirement they set out to cast a fly in all the major trout streams in the U.S. After 8 years of nomadic life, they settled in Redding to be near one of their favorite--- Hat Creek. Fly fishing can lead to an appreciation of all of nature's wonders and it led them to birding as their second love.

We miss Red and appreciate all that he brought to Wintu Audubon and its members.

### 2015-2016 OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS & DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

#### OFFICERS

**PRESIDENT**—Chad Scott 619-852-4555  
**VICE-PRESIDENT**— Linda Aldrich 223-5341  
**TREASURER**—Connie Word 245-0846  
**RECORDING SECRETARY**—Jeannette Carroll 246-3634  
**CORRESPONDING SECRETARY**--Beatrice Currie 243-3955

#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**PROGRAMS**--Linda Aldrich 223-5341  
**EDUCATION**—Dan Greaney 276-9693  
**CONSERVATION**-- Janet Wall 547-1189, Bruce Webb 275-2076, and Catherine Camp 337-6874  
**NEWSLETTER**--Bill Oliver 941-7741  
**WEBMASTER**--Larry Jordan 472-3131  
**MEMBERSHIP**—George Horn 244-0581  
**PUBLICITY**---Larry Jordan 472-3131  
**FINANCE**---Beth Brockman 227-4228  
**EVENT COORDINATOR**---Chad Scott 619-852-4555

**DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE** Harvey Carroll, Catherine Camp, John Winchell, Roberta Winchell

#### *...A Word from the Nominating Committee*

Wintu Audubon conducts a wide array of programs including conservation, education, field trips, newsletter publication, and website presence. The more member input, the more we can take on to promote understanding, appreciation, and conservation of birds and their associated habitats. Current needs are not so much for Committee Chairs as Committee members, especially in Newsletter publishing, Membership (list maintenance), and Field Trip scheduling. Unassigned Director-at-Large positions are also available to allow exploration of interest areas.

Don't be bashful! Volunteer by contacting any Board Member or Dan Greaney, Nominating Committee Chair, 276-9693 or [greaneys@yahoo.com](mailto:greaneys@yahoo.com).

### Snow Goose Festival, January 27-31 in Chico, California

Birders and nature enthusiasts of all ages are invited to attend 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. Attendees can choose from over 60 field trips and workshops that are sure to please a wide variety of interests and ability levels. For more information and to register checkout the website [info@snowgoosefestival.org](http://info@snowgoosefestival.org). Don't delay in registering as many activities fill up quickly.

**WINTU AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
P.O. Box 994533  
REDDING, California 96099-4533

## ***CHIRP-N-CHATTER***

**January / February 2016**



### **The Great Backyard Bird Count February 12th-15th**



The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are across the world. Anyone can participate---from beginning bird watchers to experts. It's free, fun and easy---and it helps the birds. Here's how:

1. Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes on one or more days of the count period. You can count longer than that if you wish. Count birds in as many places and on as many days as you like---one day, two days, or all four days. Submit a separate checklist for each new day. You can submit more than one checklist per day, if you count in other locations on that day.
2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together at the same time.
3. When you are finished, enter your results through the website: <http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc>. You'll see a button marked "Enter Your Checklist" on the website home page beginning on the first day of the count. It will remain active until the deadline for data submission on March 1. If you do not have internet access, you can phone (530-941-7741) Bill Oliver for more directions and your results.