

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 2020

JANUARY ACTIVITIES

**Family/Beginner Bird Walk at Turtle Bay
Saturday, January 4th @ 9:00 am**

We invite beginners of all ages to our introductory walks on the first Saturday of each month. The walks begin at 9am and meet in the parking lot near the Monolith structure at the end of the Sheraton Hotel. Binoculars and field guides will be available to loan. Call **Terri Lhuillier, 515-3504**, for more information.

**Board Meetings are held on the first
Wednesday of the Month at 7:00 PM at One
Safe Place.**

All members are urged to attend to contribute information and new ideas.

**Wintu Audubon Society General Meetings
are held on the second Wednesday of the
month at 7:00 PM at One Safe Place, 2250
Benton Drive, Redding. The public is invited.**

**General Meeting - Northern Saw-whet Owls,
Wednesday, January 8th @ 7:00 pm**

What do you know about Saw-whet Owls? If you're like most of us, probably not much. But these little birds are all around us, year round, fighting out their fierce lives in our forests and woodlands. Come learn about these neighbors from Ken Sobon, director of the Northern Saw-whet Owl Research Project in Northern California.



**Second Saturday Bird Walk at Sacramento
River Trail, January 11th @ 8:00 am**

While we have hosted many walks along the River Trail in the Turtle Bay area, this walk will encompass the northern section of the river trail. This will be an opportunity to observe the recovery of the riverine habitat that was burned during the 2018 Carr Fire and observe our winter bird population along this changed habitat. This area is also the area that Wintu Audubon has put up nesting boxes to support cavity nesting birds whose nesting sites were damaged during the fire. Depending on the group, the desire, and the weather, this walk can be up to a four mile loop. It is a great opportunity to see a beautiful resource for our community, and the wildlife that use it. Meet John Winchell at the parking lot at the South end of Diestelhorst Bridge at 8am for this walk along the River Trail.

*The 21st Annual Snow Goose Festival
January 22nd thru 26th*

See the beauty and experience the excitement of avian migration at this action-packed 5-day festival that celebrates the remarkable journey of millions of waterfowl and thousands of raptors that migrate along the Pacific Flyway and call Northern Sacramento Valley their home during the winter months.

<http://www.snowgoosefestival.org/>

**Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge Outing,
Saturday, January 25th @ 7:30 am**

The Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge is a national gem, well worth the short, 90 mile drive to Willows. Enormous numbers of waterfowl fill the sky and the impoundments in fall and winter. Snow, Ross's and Greater White-fronted Geese, Northern Pintails, Northern Shovelers and Gadwalls are assured. Possibilities are White-faced Ibis, Green-winged and Cinnamon Teal, Black-necked Stilts and various raptors, including Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. Most of the birding is done from cars. We will provide 2-way radios to report sightings and alert people in other cars to look for them. Meet your leader at **7:30 am sharp** at Kutras Park on Park Marina Drive to carpool and bring a lunch for this full-day trip. Fees to enter the refuge are \$6 per car for the day. Most carpool drivers have senior lifetime passes and can enter for no additional fee. For more information call Larry Jordan @ 949-5266

A special thank you to Lang Dayton and Collette Streight for their generous recent donations to the chapter.

Such donations help us to further the array of educational outreach and conservation efforts that we all value.

FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

**Family/Beginner Bird Walk at Turtle Bay,
Saturday, February 1st @ 9:00 am**

We invite beginners of all ages to our introductory walks on the first Saturday of each month. The walks begin at 9am and meet in the parking lot near the Monolith structure at the end of the Sheraton Hotel. Binoculars and field guides will be available to loan. Call **Terri Lhuillier, 515-3504**, for more information.

**Second Saturday Bird Walk at Mary Lake,
Saturday, February 8th @8:00 am**

Mary Lake is a delightful neighborhood lake in West Redding. Meet trip leader Sally NeSmith (831-535-2888) at trail head on Lakeside Drive (right past Ridge Drive). Waterfowl are always present, with raptors, herons, egrets, and early migrants. Part of the walk was burned during the Carr Fire, so it will be interesting to see which birds are around now.



**General Meeting - Birds of Costa Rica,
Wednesday, February 12th @ 7:00 pm**

Join Larry Jordan, bird photographer and Wintu Audubon webmaster, for an evening with the many wonders of Costa Rica. Larry spent twelve days with Lifer Tours guide David Rodriguez, to tally 220 bird species and several interesting mammals, from Punta Uva on the Caribbean coast, to several national parks, a Ramsar wetland, at Caño Negro Wetlands, the famous Bogarin Trail in the Arenal region and a brief time along the Gulf of Nicoya on the Pacific coast.

**Local Weekday Bird Walk at Lema Ranch,
Thursday, February 20th @8:00 am**

Lema Ranch offers a variety of habitats, from ponds to open fields, to woodlands attracting many species of birds. In February, the winter ducks (sometimes including the exquisite Hooded Merganser) and winter sparrows will still be lingering and the earliest spring migrants may have begun to appear, such as the Tree Swallow. A specialty of the park is Common Gallinule. Larry Jordan's bluebird trail produces (sometimes numerous) Western Bluebirds. Various raptor species are possible like the American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk and Merlin. Please join trip leader Sally NeSmith in the parking lot reached from Shasta View to Hemingway at 8:00 am for an interesting mid-week bird walk.

**Gray Lodge Wildlife Area Field Trip,
Saturday, February 29th @ 7:30 am**

Just north of Sutter Buttes, Gray Lodge Wildlife Area is a 9100 acre winter home for over a million waterfowl, numerous raptors, and a rich variety of riparian woodland birds. A leisurely walk through the sloughs always leads to beautiful views and a rich variety of birdlife. A longer car route is an extended option for those interested; last year we found a Loggerhead Shrike out there! The drive to the refuge often yields swans and sandhill cranes. Bring a sack lunch, dress for the weather, and come enjoy! A CDFW Lands Pass (available on site) or a California hunting or fishing license is required at this CA Fish & Wildlife site. Meet at Kutras Park at 7:30 to carpool, or at Parking Lot 14 at Gray Lodge at 9:45 (or so, if we're delayed by birds in some of the flooded fields en route).



TRIP REPORTS

**Beginner/Family Bird Walk at Turtle Bay,
Saturday, November 2nd**

We had a very enjoyable bright & sunny November morning and our small group spotted a nice variety of birds. We began our walk on the 44 Trail and scanned the Pond where we found Ring-necked Ducks, Gadwalls, Mallards, Wood Ducks, Wigeons and a single Hooded Merganser, Belted Kingfisher, Pied-billed Grebe and a Ruddy. We strolled along the Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary Trail where we spotted the usual suspects including; Anna's Hummingbird, Northern Flicker, Scrub Jay, Black Phoebe, Junco, Spotted Towhee, Cedar Waxwing, American Crow, California Thrasher, Killdeer, Bushtit, Mourning Dove, Yellow-rumped Warbler, European Starling and White-crowned Sparrow and a Red-shouldered Hawk. The final stretch along the Sacramento River gave us some good looks at Canada Geese, Cormorants, Great Egrets, and Turkey Vultures.
- Terri Lhuillier

**2019 – 2020
OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS &
DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE**

OFFICERS

President: Dan Greaney 276-9693
Vice-President: John Winchell 241-1448
Treasurer: Beth Brockman 227-4228
Recording Secretary: Catherine Camp 337-6874
Corresponding Secretary: Jeannette Carroll 246-3634

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Programs: OPEN
Education: Terri Lhuillier 515-3504
Conservation: Janet Wall 547-1189
Bruce Webb 515-5324
Newsletter: Larry Jordan 472-31311
Webmaster/Publicity: Larry Jordan 472-3131
Membership: George Horn 244-0581
Field Trips: OPEN

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Harvey Carroll, Linda Aldrich, Bill Oliver, Connie Word, Sally NeSmith, Roberta Winchell

Second Saturday Bird Walk at Clover Creek Preserve, Saturday, November 9th

Can you say sparrow? On a fine walk on a crisp fall morning half a dozen birders found 286 birds at Clover Creek Preserve. Half of them were sparrows, coming in six species. Starting by the parking lot and scattered widely around the preserve, savannah sparrows were far and away most numerous, joined by a smattering of white-crowns. The tules offered a few song sparrows, and scattered brush housed a couple golden crowns, a Lincoln's sparrow, and a California towhee. Other birds came in scattered and few, but still to total 33 species. On the pond a score of coots were joined by a few obligatory mallards and two ruddy ducks. A sole flicker represented the woodpecker clan.

- **Dan Greaney**

Wintu Audubon Outing to Fall River Valley, Saturday, November 23rd

Five birders braved the near freezing temperatures to get a preview of the Fall River CBC. We tallied 63 species from four major locations. We picked up a Townsend's Solitaire and some Purple Finches at the Fall River vista point. Heading over to the Fall River Cemetery we found Cedar Waxwings in the junipers and a single Black-billed Magpie. Several Rough-legged Hawks, Red-tailed Hawks and a single Red-shouldered Hawk were spotted on Rat Farm Road, as well as hundreds of American Goldfinches. Pied-billed, Eared and Western Grebes swam with Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, and Ruddy Ducks on Horr Pond. Heading to Island Drive on McArthur Road we counted 27 Tundra Swan. In the field behind Glenburn Church we counted 4 Wilson Snipe and 10 American Pipit as well as several Greater Yellowlegs. A Cooper's Hawk perched on a telephone pole on the way to Eastman Lake where we found the expected colony of Black-crowned Night-Heron, a couple of Bald Eagles, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet! Interestingly we only saw one Ferruginous Hawk and that was near the Fall River Golf Course on Hwy 299.

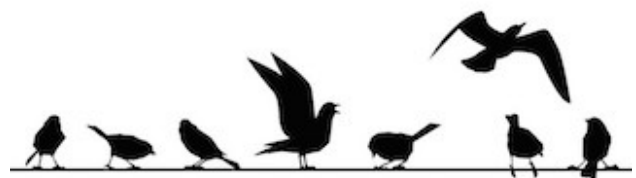
- **Larry Jordan**



Fall River Christmas Bird Count, Saturday, December, 14th

Sixteen intrepid birders spent a nice but cool day (32-39 degrees) on the Fall River Christmas Bird Count. Fog as usual started the morning but cleared, leaving a cloudy day without any rain. The count total was the lowest since 2010, with 117 species. The average for all counts over the years is 115 species. Highlights included the second sighting in two weeks of a magnificent Gyrfalcon at McArthur. There was an injured Gyrfalcon turned in to Fish & Game from the same area in December of 1987! A continuing Red-breasted Merganser was on Eastman Lake. A White Pelican was hanging out with waterfowl at Glenburn and there were also two different Harlan's Red-tailed Hawks around the Glenburn area. The most unique find was a seen and heard Northern Waterthrush (the 5th county record no less) by Ken Able on a private ranch off Island Road. We were again very lucky to have John Muegge kayak the River areas. Many thanks to all counters - an impressive group in a wonderful location!

- **Bob Yutzy**



Redding Christmas Bird Count, Friday, December 27th

Twenty-four participants counted 14,000 birds comprising 115 species. The number of species was up from last year's 109 species but down from the 125 species seen in the recent past. Fewer individuals were tallied than last year and about 5,000 fewer than seen in recent past. Clearly the Carr Fire was a major factor. Highlights were a Surf Scoter seen by Randy Bush at Lema Ranch. The big surprise was reported by Emily Culhane and David Garza at the boat ramp on the west side of Keswick Lake —an **American Tree Sparrow** and they have a very clear photo to prove it. This eastern U.S. specie is a first for the Count and may be a first sighting for central Shasta County. Although the species is seen occasionally east of the Cascades in the Fall River Valley. Many thanks to all the birders that made the Count a success.

Red Bluff Christmas Bird Count, Saturday, December 28th

The 42nd Red Bluff CBC, was held on December 28, 2019, with a temperature of 37 at start time, under partly cloudy skies and mild daytime temperatures. We had up to 17 people counting throughout the count circle, with some making a partial day out of it. Even with the good weather, the total number of birds seems a little lower than in the past. The variety of duck species was noticeably low, as we missed on a few usual species, but have picked a couple of them up as "count week" birds. The final tally was 105 species. Thank you to all that participated and looking forward to next year.
- Michele Swartout

Thanks to Dr. Wendy Schackwitz for her presentation on California Birds in a Changing Climate. Wintu Audubon members are now ready to help gather information on Bluebirds in Shasta County!

Coffee - Organic, Fair Trade, and Shade Grown

Most coffee is grown in monocultures that replace rich tropical habitat with biological wastelands. Shade-grown coffee produces less beans/acre, but our migrants and the local fauna can thrive in the diverse habitat. Birdsandbeans.com is working with Audubon to provide a bird-friendly brew, available in light or dark roast, regular or decaf, whole bean or ground. Cost: \$11.70 per 12 oz. bag. (Depending on the size of our order each month, that price may include up to 64 cents as a donation to Wintu Audubon.) To order: Orders may be placed at each Audubon monthly meeting and picked up at the next meeting, or contact Stephanie Hughes at shughess123@gmail.com or 530-771-7938. -- Also watch for the order form, coming soon to wintuaudubon.org

WANTED: BIRDY VOLUNTEERS

The Wintu Audubon Board of Directors is beginning the process of Board and Committee selections for the year 2020-2021. Board Meetings are held the first Wednesday of the month from August – May. Board members often serve on Committees, and can serve as the chair or co-chair with others. We are especially looking for people willing to help develop monthly membership programs (identify speakers or films of interest to birders and nature lovers) and people willing to help develop field trips (identify from among the many area birders people willing to lead half or full day walks). We look forward to new volunteers who can spend some time getting to know the Board, if required. Please talk to one of us at the next Audubon Membership meeting (January 8, 7 p.m., One Safe Place, 2250 Benton Drive, Redding, Program on Northern Saw-whet Owls).



P.O. Box 994533
REDDING, California 96099-4533



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Do you want more detailed information about birds? Cornell Lab's superb informational website "Birds of North America Online" will become "Birds of The World" in February, and they are giving our members a 20% discount for a two year membership!

When you sign up just use the code **WINTU20** at <https://birdsna.org>