



# 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

March / April 2015

## March Activities

### General Meeting

**Tuesday, March 10 @ 7:00 pm**

**A Spring Migration Expedition** - Bill and Judee Adams will be sharing pictures from their 90-day spring migration expedition of 2013 when they followed warblers and other songbirds from South Texas up through Ohio and into Southern Ontario, Canada. They saw 38 species of warblers, other songbirds (including tanagers and orioles), owls, hawks, 3 species of Prairie Chickens, and 4 species of rails. They especially enjoyed their experience with the Biggest Week in American Birding at the Magee Marsh boardwalk in Northern Ohio.

### Field Trips

**Discover Birding at Turtle Bay – Saturday, March 7 @ 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.

**Second Saturday Bird Walk – Saturday, March 14 @ 8:00 am**

Discover Birding at one of Shasta County's premier birding hot spots! Turtle Bay offers experiences for all levels of birders. This area, located in the center of town, offers a chance to explore oak woodlands, ponds and marshes, open rivers, high bluffs, and riparian habitats, which attract both local and migratory species. Each month offers chances to identify different species and to experience the variations of plumage and song that each season brings.



**Local Weekday Bird Walk – Anderson River Park, Thursday, March 19 @ 8:00 am**

Anderson River Park is a gem of riparian habitat with many groomed trails. One of our area's 'hot spots' it can be especially good birding during the month of March, because of the possibility of spring migrants passing through. We will assemble at the amphitheater in the Park for this half-day outing.

**Fall River Mills Field Trip - Saturday, March 28 @ 7:00 am**

Leaders will meet the group at about 9 am at the Fall River Vista Overlook just before the town of Fall River Mills. Members wishing to carpool should meet at 7 am at the Civic Center parking lot in Redding and join up with others. This is a full day trip and members should bring their own lunch and liquids. Bring your FRS portable radio if you have one. Bob & Carol Yutzy are your leaders.

We will look for uncommon to rare breeders like Black-throated Sparrow and Brewer's Sparrow on Timbered Crater Road, Long-billed Curlew on Rat Farm Road, Bank Swallow in Fall River, Black-billed Magpie at Fall River Lake, Great-tailed Grackle and Tri-colored Blackbird in Glenburn, Swainson's Hawk near Jim Day/Dee Knoch Roads.

**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

March 10: Bill & Judee Adams: **A Spring Migration Expedition**

April 14: Jay & Terri Thesken: **A Trip to New Zealand's South Island**

# April Activities

## General Meeting

**Tuesday, April 14 @ 7:00 pm**

**A Trip to New Zealand's South Island** - Join Jay & Terri Thesken for a slideshow of their Fall 2014 (Spring in New Zealand) trip to the South Island. The Theskens spent 4 weeks exploring, hiking, kayaking, and bicycling the South Island with its Southern Alps, Fjordland National Park, and several other national parks. They will not only show photos of birds encountered, but also unusual botanical species, and will explain why New Zealand has such a unique flora and fauna.

## Field Trips

**Discover Birding at Turtle Bay – Saturday, April 4 @ 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.

**Second Saturday Bird Walk – Saturday, April 11 @ 8:00 am**

The campus and farmlands of Shasta College offer a wide variety of habitats to explore for migrating and summer resident passerines. These habitats include oak studded lawns, a wastewater treatment pond, riparian woodlands along Stillwater Creek, and agricultural fields. Meet in Shasta College's north parking lot for this ½ day trip that is open to the public. Larry Jordan will lead.

**Local Weekday Bird Walk – Reading Island, Thursday, April 16 @ 8:00 am**

Located at the confluence of Anderson Creek and the Sacramento River southeast of Anderson off Balls Ferry Road, this open space is managed by the Bureau of Land Management. It features magnificent valley oaks, grasslands, riparian areas and secluded backwaters all within a small area. This variety of habitats should provide for a good morning of birding. We will gather as usual in the parking lot south of the Redding Civic Auditorium for this 1/2-day trip. Bill Oliver will lead.

**Bear Creek Watershed Outing and Bird Survey, Saturday, April 18 @ 7:30 am**

A rare chance to bird on private property! Wintu Audubon President Esther Cox belongs to this watershed organization and has interested property owners in learning the bird species that live on their spreads. We will visit several of them. Meet at the Redding Civic Auditorium to carpool at 7:30 am or join Esther at the Share-A-Ride parking lot at the intersection of Hwy.44 and

Black Butte Road at 8:00 am. This will be a full day trip, so bring a lunch and water.

**Whole Earth and Watershed Festival, Saturday, April 25, 10am to 4pm**

Now in its 8th year, the Whole Earth and Watershed Festival takes place at Redding City Hall and Sculpture Park where Wintu Audubon will have a booth. The purpose of the festival is to increase awareness of what it will take to live more sustainably as individuals and as a community within our ecosystem, better conserve and appreciate our natural resources, and foster support of our local businesses and community agencies.

## Trip Reports

**Discover Birding at Turtle Bay, January 3rd** - Ten troopers met Saturday morning for the first club walk of the new year. The air was brrrr-isk but clear and provided great lighting conditions along the path that runs alongside Highway 44. Just out of the parking lot we spotted numerous Golden Crown and White Crown Sparrows along with a couple of Western Bluebirds. Above us, throughout the day, were the frequent fly-overs of crows, gulls, starlings, and robins and the occasional Turkey Vulture. In the first pond (the small one with the dam), we had a glimpse of one of the local resident muskrats nibbling on some vegetation while near by jays and sparrows kept us busy. Nearby, we hear the clatter of a Belted Kingfisher as he flew west to east and back numerous times. It's possible that he was concerned by the too-close-for-comfort perched Red-Shouldered Hawk rather than the twitchy antics of the Ruby Crowned Kinglets or the random Phoebe or Yellow-Rumped Warblers. Other highlights of the count included wading and shorebirds (Great Egrets, Great Blue Herons, one Snowy Egret, several Killdeer, and handful of Wilson's Snipe, and one lonely sandpiper). While the floaty, ducky birdies haven't arrived in great numbers this year, we were treated to plenty of Hooded Mergansers, Common Mergansers, Gadwalls, Mallards, American Wigeons, Coots, Ruddies, Buffleheads, Common (and two Barrows) Golden Eyes, Canada Geese, Cormorants, and a couple Lesser Scaup. Redding's resident Bald Eagles were working on their nest and, undoubtedly, keeping a watchful eye on the circling Red-Tailed Hawks

**Second Saturday Bird Walk, January 10th** - Six people were lucky enough to get out to Turtle Bay on a mild winter morning full of ducks and raptors. The eagle pair was very active, nest building and generally being evident all around. Briefer appearances were made by a red-tailed hawk, a merlin, a peregrine falcon, and a Cooper's hawk. All the normal ducks were on the byways or in the main channel. Insectivores included black phoebes, yellow-rumped warblers, a hermit thrush, and a western bluebird, while golden-crowned sparrows dominated the seed-eater

category. Passersby appreciated views of goldeneyes and buffleheads, and reported splendid evening views of flocking robins “murmuring” like blackbirds before going to roost—best viewed from the east side of the 44 Bridge.

#### **Lema Ranch Weekday Bird Walk, January 15th -**

Taking advantage of a break between storm fronts, four of us gathered at Lema Ranch for a quick (by birder standards) stroll of the McConnell Foundation campus. I suppose I often forget about how large their ponds really are because when you started counting that actual number of birds, the numbers quickly reach 20 or 30 or even 50 birds of any one species... and that’s just at one end of the lake. Earlier in the morning we had requested, and were granted, access to the areas generally off limits to visitors. The chief advantage was the ability to scan the pond, cattails, and trees from a vantage point at the top of the dam. This made counting the species below easier, even if we were exposed to a rather cool, stiff breeze.

Plenty of wigeons, coots, ring-necks, cormorants, and ruddies overwhelmed the handful of gadwalls, common mergansers and a single canvasback. Above them, a red-shouldered hawk kept an eye on things. Other highlights: western bluebirds, white-fronted geese, 10 cackling geese grazing smack-dab in the middle of a flock of Canada geese, a tiny tree FILLED with goldfinches and serenaded by dozens of nearby red wing black birds. We had a great little group, eager to share field mark tips with each other and to enjoy the company of the other birders.

#### **Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, January 24th -**

We picked a great day this year for the Sacramento NWR field trip, the temperature was in the high 60’s with no wind, and it was very birdy. Ten observers ended up seeing 63 species plus a possible Willet that I didn’t list. We were looking into the morning sun and the light just wasn’t good enough. To us its profile and actions cancelled out other possible shorebirds. We ended up spending over 5 hours on the auto tour route and enjoyed every minute of it.

#### **Discover Birding at Turtle Bay, February 7th -**

February’s early rains sandwiched a gray but balmy first Saturday, allowing two youths and five adults to explore what Turtle Bay would present—which was low in quantity but pretty decent in quality. Gulls and turkey vultures rode the wind as an overture, and then a merlin gave us long looks from his cottonwood perch right by the 44 sidewalk. The eagles put on a show, with Mama crowing from the nest, Papa perched nearby, and an immature floating around and about, seemingly disregarded. Terri Lhuillier, of local eagle-watching fame, told us that the eagle-cam showed a first egg laid the afternoon before. The river was muddy and duck numbers were down, but we did see a few mallards and gadwalls, a sprinkling of buffleheads, and a couple

common goldeneyes and mergansers, one of which came up with a fish.

**Local Weekday Bird Walk – Clover Creek Preserve, February 19th -** Eight birders assembled in the parking lot of the Preserve in dense fog. The fog proved to be patchy, and later dissipated entirely, permitting the identification of 52 species. The "best bird" was a Common Gallinule, a species that none of us had sighted here before. Also of note were the large number of American Pipits, about 25 to 30. Specialty birds for this site showed up - Western Meadowlark, Great-tailed Grackle, Say's Phoebe and Western Bluebird. What had started out as an unpromising day turned out to be quite satisfying.



#### **SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2015 - 2016 COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND 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** - Bea Currie 243-3955

##### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

**PROGRAMS** - Linda Aldrich 223-5341  
**EDUCATION** - Dan Greaney 276-9693  
**CONSERVATION** - Janet Wall 547-1189 Bruce Webb 515-5324  
**NEWSLETTER** - Bill Oliver 941-7741  
**PUBLICITY/TECHNOLOGY** - Larry Jordan 472-3131  
**MEMBERSHIP** - George Horn 244-0581  
**FINANCE** – Beth Brockman 227-4228  
**EVENT COORDINATOR** - Chad Scott 619-852-4555

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

#### **Wintu Audubon Society Constitution and Bylaws**

Wintu Audubon Society is updating our constitution and bylaws, mainly to recognize how we really operate and to allow for technology possibilities. Interested parties can preview the proposed changes to this important document a here: <http://goo.gl/WybqWA>

## Upcoming Bird Festivals

### 19<sup>th</sup> Annual San Diego Bird Festival, March 5th – 8th

In a world where social media and smart devices seem to be taking over, birds are a lovely reminder that the world is full of real experiences. All you need to do is Look Up! We hope you will join us for the celebration, and we'll give you plenty of opportunities to "look up" and see the birds of San Diego. Know that your experience is giving something back to the birds: the proceeds of this festival support the education, conservation, and sanctuary programs of San Diego Audubon Society. More information at <http://www.sandiegoaudubon.org/index.php/events/bird-festival>



### Godwit Days, April 15th - 21st

Come celebrate the Marbled Godwit and explore the lush Redwood Coast. Observe many bird species and wildlife through our selection of field trips, lectures, workshops, and boat excursions led by experienced local guides. Tour the expansive mudflats, the wild river valleys and the rocky ocean coast of this sector of the Klamath bioregion in northwest California. More info at <http://godwitdays.org/>

### Whole Earth and Watershed Festival, April 25th

Stop by our booth at the Whole Earth and Watershed Festival on April 25th from 10am to 4pm at the Redding City Hall and Sculpture Park. The festival features over 130 Innovative Exhibitors with interactive, educational fun for the entire family, give-aways, local artists, great local food, live music on 2 stages, and activities for people of all ages! More information can be found at <http://wholeearthandwatershedfestival.org/>

### Point Reyes Birding and Nature Festival, April 24 – 26

Hundreds of birding enthusiasts from the Bay Area and all across the country, including New York, Mississippi, Texas, Montana and Washington, have enjoyed the Point Reyes Birding & Nature Festival. The Festival features fabulous walks and presentations about birds, wildflowers, butterflies, dragonflies, native grasses, marine mammals, bats, and wildlife photography. On Friday evening at the Inverness Yacht Club we have a wine and dessert reception with lecture presentation. On Saturday early evening birders enjoy for happy hour and silent auction. The evening dinner banquet is always delicious, featuring local, organic cuisine. More information at <http://www.pointreyesbirdingfestival.org/site/>

### 2015 Mountain Bird Festival, May 29th – 31st

The award winning Mountain Bird Festival is back, celebrating the natural wonders of southern Oregon and northern California. The 2015 Mountain Bird Festival will be held in Ashland, Oregon from May 29th-31st. Registration for the Festival is available on the Klamath Bird Observatory website at [www.klamathbird.org](http://www.klamathbird.org). The Mountain Bird Festival offers guided bird walks, a keynote presentation, fine art galleries, local wine, microbrew and food vendors, and a feel-good community atmosphere. Registration includes half-day or full-day field trips offered on both Saturday and Sunday.

