

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 2019

MARCH ACTIVITIES

Family/Beginner Bird Walk at Turtle Bay, Saturday, March 2 @ 9:00 am Our family/beginner bird walks are conducted on the first Saturday of every month throughout the year at Turtle Bay. Wintu Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call **John Winchell** at 241-1448, for more information. *We will meet at the Monolith parking lot next to the new Sheraton Hotel at Turtle Bay.*

Second Saturday Bird Walk at Churn Creek Open Space (Minder Park), Saturday, March 9 @ 8:00 am Partially paved trails wind their way through 180 acres of blue oak woodland and open grassland meadow. Sections of the trail meander by Churn Creek itself where this primarily urban stream is still preserved in its more natural state with lush willows, valley oaks, and cottonwoods.

Meet leaders **Alicia** and **Pablo Herrera**, at 8am at Minder Park, in the cul-de-sac at the end of Minder Dr., just to the south of the open space trails. On this 3-mile loop hike we'll encounter woodland and riparian winter residents and early migrant species including Lark Sparrows, Nuttall's Woodpecker, Spotted Towhee, among others. Check www.wintuaudubon.org for details.



GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, March 13 @ 7:00 pm

Birds of the American West

Norman Kikuchi MD This program features a glimpse into the lives of iconic birds of the Western United States drawn from a personal selection of photographs from birding hotspots in New Mexico, Oregon and California. Starting in world famous Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico, we witness the unforgettable spectacle of immense flocks of Snow Geese and Sandhill Cranes. Northwards to lesser-known Cabin Lake, Oregon, the Cascade

NOTE: New Meeting Days & Place!!

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

Board Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the Month at 7:00 PM at One Safe Place, 2250 Benton Drive, Redding. All members are urged to attend to contribute information and new ideas.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Wednesday, March 13 @ 7:00 pm, Birds of the American West. Norman Kijuchi, MD shares photographs from some favorite birding hotspots in the Western United States.

Wednesday, April 10 @ 7 pm, Fire at Whiskeytown; Infrastructure and Wildlife Impacts Bob Shive, National Park Service volunteer and **Matt Switzer**, interpretive ranger and information officer, will report the fire's impacts on park wildlife.



conifer forest interfaces with the Great Basin sagebrush. The dearth of freestanding water for many surrounding miles makes this the premier place to see and photograph Red Crossbills. Southwards to Lassen County, California, the Greater Sage Grouse perform their age old ritual dances on a traditional lek. We then travel on to the breeding birds of the High Sierras at Yuba Pass and adjacent Sierra Valley. Next we go to Clear Lake in Lake County, the largest freshwater lake in California, where both Western and Clarks Grebes exhibit their unique breeding behaviors. Lastly, we view the amazing hummingbirds at the UC Santa Cruz arboretum.

Local Weekday Bird Walk at Mary Lake, Thursday, March 21 @ 8:00 am Mary Lake is a delightful neighborhood lake in West Redding. Meet trip leader **Sally Ne-**

Smith (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.



Wintu Audubon Outing to Dye Creek Preserve, Saturday, March 30, 7:30 am Located in the foothills below Mount Lassen, the 37,540-acre Gray Davis Dye Creek Preserve is an expansive landscape of blue oak woodlands, volcanic buttes, and rolling wildflower fields. The landscape is dissected dramatically by Dye Creek Canyon with its vertical cliffs, clear-water creek, and diverse riparian forests. The forest widens as it leaves the canyon mouth and flows westward, through wetlands, to its confluence

with the Sacramento River. Join **Larry Jordan, 949-5266**, trip leader, for a hike up Dye Creek Canyon. Golden Eagles, Peregrine Falcons and Canyon Wrens are a possibility. Wild flowers should be abundant. The trail is rough and a small stream crossing should provide some excitement. Bring water, a lunch, and sturdy shoes for this all day outing. **Meet at 7:30 sharp** at the Kutras Park on Park Marina Drive to carpool and bring a lunch.

APRIL ACTIVITIES

Family/Beginner Bird Walk at Turtle Bay, Saturday, April 6 @ 9:00 am Our family/beginner bird walks are conducted on the first Saturday of every month throughout the year at Turtle Bay. Wintu Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call **John Winchell** at 241-1448, for more information. *We will meet at the Monolith parking lot next to the new Sheraton Hotel at Turtle Bay.*



GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, April 10 @ 7 pm

Fire at Whiskeytown - Infrastructure and Wildlife Impacts What really are the impacts of the Carr Fire on our closest National Park lands? Infrastructure damage from the fire and ensuing weather will be reviewed by **Bob Shive**, NPS volunteer and Wintu Audubon member. **Matt Switzer**, interpretive ranger and information officer, will report the fire's impacts on park wildlife. We all know that fire is part of our ecosystem, but what can we expect from burns like the Carr Fire?



Second Saturday Bird Walk at Shasta College, April 13 @ 8:00 am Shasta College campus consists of oak woodlands, a wastewater treatment pond, Stillwater Creek riparian area, and open fields which support a wide variety of species. Meet in Shasta College's north parking lot for this morning trip that is open to the public. **Connie Word 245-0846** will lead.

2019 Earth Day & Watershed Festival, Saturday, April 20 from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm Wintu Audubon will staff a table at this all-day event celebrating the earth and sustainable living at Redding City Hall and Sculpture Garden. It is a free event with lots of activities for everyone. If you are available to help with staffing our table, please contact **Bea Currie at 243-3955**. For further information, check the Earth Day website: www.wholeearthandwatershedfestival.org.

24th Annual Godwit Days, Arcata, April 17-23 Come celebrate the Marbled Godwit and explore the lush Redwood Coast. Observe many bird species and wildlife through a selection of field trips, lectures, workshops,

Board of Director OPENINGS

We have several positions to fill out our Board of Directors:

Vice President, Program Chair
Membership Coordinator, Newsletter.

This an opportunity to get involved in your local Wintu chapter. We welcome new ideas and perspectives. There is a monthly board meeting where events are planned, policy discussed, issues raised. Be a part of a dedicated, friendly group.

Contact Dan Greaney
@ 276-9693



2017 – 2018 OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRS & DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

OFFICERS

President: Dan Greaney 276-9693

Vice-President:

Treasurer: Beth Brockman 227-4228

Recording Secretary: Catherine Camp
337-6874

Corresponding Secretary: Jeannette
Carroll 246-3634

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Programs:

Education: Roberta & John Winchell
945-8342, Jody Greaney 646-9631

Conservation: Janet Wall 547-1189
Bruce Webb 515-5324

Newsletter: Sally NeSmith

Webmaster/Publicity: Larry Jordan
949-5266

Membership: George Horn 244-0581,
Janice Hunter 244-2935

Finance: Catherine Camp 337-6874

Field Trips: Linda Aldrich 223-5341

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Harvey Carroll, Bea Currie, Esther Cox,
Bill Oliver, George Horn, Connie Word

and boat excursions led by experienced local guides during this annual week-long festival. Tour the expansive mudflats, the wild river valleys and the rocky ocean coast. Two distinguished keynote speakers are worth the price of admission:

- **Peter Marra:** Birds & Outdoor Cats
 - **Noah Strycker:** Birds of the Photo Ark
- Plus free community activities: vendors and exhibit booths, optics, art show, student art competition, and family nature activities. Check: www.godwitdays.org for registration and additional information.

TRIP REPORTS

Redding Christmas Bird Count

The 43rd annual Redding Christmas Bird Count was held with some trepidation because the Carr Fire burned much of the western side of the Count circle. For those unfamiliar with the protocol: the count is conducted within a 15-mile diameter circle positioned to include Shasta College Campus on the East, Whiskeytown NRA on the West, Shasta Dam on the north and portions of Clear Creek on the south. Twenty participants were divided into 11 teams. Despite being unable to survey the south side of Whiskeytown Lake, and missing higher elevation winter residents such as Townsend's Solitaires, they tallied 14,906 individuals comprising 109 species. Both species and individual numbers were about average for the 43 years of the Count but below the recent averages. Since a similar pattern of results were reported from Counts in areas unaffected by the fires, we cannot speculate as to a reason for the lower numbers. We thank all the participants for their diligence under trying circumstances. ~ **Bill Oliver**



Western Meadowlark / Larry Jordan; The Birder's Report

Wintu Audubon Outing to Arcata,

January 26 The comprehensively knowledgeable **Ken Burton** crafted an excellent birding experience for eight Wintu birders on a beautiful January day in Arcata. We began midmorning in the fields west of town, where highlights included a snipe and many raptors, led by the falcons – Kestrel, Prairie, and a young, gray-phase Gyrfalcon visiting from parts north. Then we headed to a lunch break and the marsh, where extensive flocks of Least Sandpipers were contrasted with just a few Western Sandpipers. Dunlin and Long-billed Dowitchers further coated the mudflats along with yellowlegs, godwits, curlews, Black Turnstones, and Black-bellied and Semi-palmated Plovers. The ponds were confettied with ducks, including Green-winged and Cinnamon Teal, a Eurasian Wigeon, two female Redheads, and a few Greater Scaup. A dozen Forster's Terns commanded high-tide pilings. More raptors capped the day; Red-tails and Red-shouldered Hawks, a passing White-tailed Kite; and a female Northern Harrier catching and drowning a dowitcher and then staring down a Peregrine that swooped in to steal it. A great day to be out among the feathers - 67 species in all! ~ **Dan Greaney**

Keep current of upcoming
events & birding information.
Visit our website
wintuadubon.org



Local Mid-week Bird Walk @ Lema Ranch, February 21 Five hearty birders withstood the cold wind on a walk through this beautiful open space. Hundreds of White-fronted Geese covered the grassy area, Woodpeckers – Acorn, Downy & Flickers were spotted and although the duck numbers were low, there were many species; Gadwalls, Ring-necks, Mallards, Buffleheads. Pied-billed Grebes and Coots were in all the ponds. Plenty of Western Bluebirds, Yellow-rumped Warblers, Oak Titmice, and several Sparrow species were flitting among the oaks.

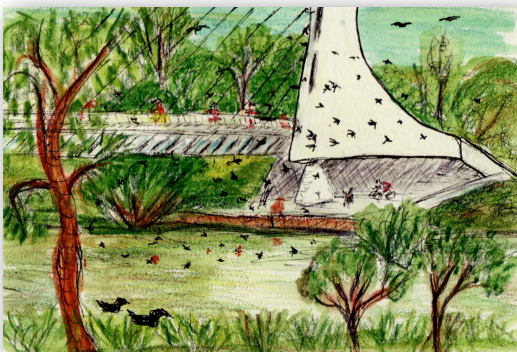
Wintu Audubon Outing, Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, February 23 Six birders enjoyed a great day on this beautiful refuge this late in the winter. By this time with the hunting season ended, the great flocks of geese had dispersed to surrounding lands. Nevertheless, we tallied 76 species. Notables for this participant were a Say's Phoebe sitting on a post right next to

the entrance the entrance kiosk. At the viewing platform, the cottonwoods were alive with early arriving Tree Swallows and even a couple of Barn Swallows. Sharp eyes spotted a pair of Redheads and two pairs of Blue-winged Teals. Meadowlarks and Ring-neck Pheasants were a treat to observe, and two Great-horned Owls were tucked away in willow trees.



Great Horned Owl / Larry Jordan; The Birder's Report

The Swallows of Sundial Bridge!



Cliff Swallows arrive with Spring to find great accommodations underneath the Sundial Bridge where they construct their mud nests. Then they awe their human audiences with impossible arial acrobatics, weaving in, out – hundreds on the wing – gathering insects at crazy speeds, dizzying twists & turns. Look closely under the glass on the bridge to

find some mud nests with skylights! You can glimpse their home life, watch them fly in and out.

For more on these remarkable birds, see

www.wintuadubon.org/reddings-miracle-of-the-swallows/



Illustrations – Sally NeSmith

WINTU AUDUBON SOCIETY
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REDDING, California 96099-4533

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March / April 2019



Saturday, April 20 • 11 am – 5 pm
Redding City Hall & Sculpture Gardens

From its inception, the **Whole Earth & Watershed Festival** has been focused on **promoting healthy living, building healthy communities & restoring a healthy planet.**

The Festival is dedicated to featuring exhibitors whose products, mission, or activities promote healthy living in some way. There will be fun, engaging, healthy activities throughout the day. A wide variety of local, healthy food options are also available from food vendors. Join Wintu Audubon in celebrating this Annual Earth Day Celebration!