

# **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 2020**

## **MARCH ACTIVITIES**

### **Family/Beginner Bird Walk at Turtle Bay Saturday, March 7th @ 9:00 - 11am**

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.

### **General Meeting - Northern Spotted Owls, Wednesday, March 11th @ 7:00 - 8:30pm**

The spotted owl, to itself no more upsetting than a robin, has become a focal point of human controversy in the Pacific Northwest. Stephanie Houtman, Environmental Planner/Biologist for Caltrans, will present an in-depth history and natural history of Northern Spotted Owls. Her discussion will include the owl's decline and the impacts of forestry, regulation, the Barred Owl invasion, and fire. This is an opportunity to learn of this substantial interface of conflicting demands and conditions in our back yard.

### **Second Saturday Bird Walk at Cascade Park, March 14th @ 8:00am 'til noon**

If this year's walk is anything like last year, there will be lots of Western Bluebirds. The amount of waterfowl we see will depend a lot on the amount of water being released from the Shasta Dam, but we have seen Mallards, American Wigeon, Canada geese, Pied-billed Grebes and

Wood Ducks if we are lucky. The old Cottonwood trees attract Northern Flicker and Acorn Woodpeckers. Spotted Towhee and California Towhee love the brush. California Quail frequent the park but are often hiding as many people walk their dogs in the park. Great Blue Heron and Great Egrets are typical visitors. Turkey Vultures are regular inhabitants and often roost in the taller trees at night. Robins are usually busy in the lawn areas if the berries are all gone.

After the park walk, birders are invited to inspect Carroll's backyard bird feeders a few blocks away. White-breasted Nuthatches, Lesser Goldfinches and House Sparrows are guaranteed at Carroll's place at 3111 Island Drive. Mallards are available there 12 months of the year. A cup of coffee or tea is available as well as bathroom facilities. Everyone is welcome.

**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.**

**Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant,  
Saturday, March 28th @ 8:00am 'til noon**

Interested in meeting Shasta County's avian migrants? Biologist, David Pluth will lead a walk through the Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant to seek both resident and migrant bird species who visit the wastewater treatment plant each year. In total, there have been 215 species reported at the Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, making it one of the best birding locations in the county. On a good day 50 - 70 species may be seen! Some of the more uncommon species that have been observed at the plant during this time of year include long-billed curlews, black-necked stilts, black-chinned hummingbirds, yellow-headed blackbirds, and blue-winged teals to name just a few. Come join your fellow birders for a casual and informative morning stroll.

Meet David at the entrance gate to the Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant, located at 2200 Metz Rd. (left exit off 273 to Eastside Rd, 1 mile south of Win River). David will also provide waiver forms that will allow individuals to visit the plant on their own.

For those interested, after the walk we will have lunch at Kutras Lake.

*The 25th Annual Godwit Days  
April 15th thru 21st*

Come celebrate the Marbled Godwit and explore the lush Redwood Coast. Observe many bird species and other wildlife through our selection of field trips, lectures, and workshops led by experienced local guides during our annual week-long festival each April. Tour the expansive mudflats, the wild river valleys and the rocky ocean coast of this sector of the Klamath bioregion in northwest California.

<https://www.godwitdays.org/>

Thank you to Barb Klasson, Kathryn Mantri and Linda Aldrich for generous donations to the chapter, which helps us to expand the programs we can undertake for birds and the people around them.

## APRIL ACTIVITIES

**Family/Beginner Bird Walk at Turtle Bay,  
Saturday, April 4th @ 9:00 - 11am**

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.



**General Meeting - Turtle Bay's Education  
Birds, Wednesday, April 8th @ 7:00 - 8:30pm**

Turtle Bay Exploration Park's animal show will focus on birds, native and far. The bird World is very diverse, from the smallest of hummingbirds to the largest of eagles. Like all animals, birds have adaptations to help them find food, shelter, water and mates. Some have defensive adaptations to overcome the hunting adaptations of other animals. We will look at a variety of birds and explore their different methods to survive. Many of these birds will be free flying while others may demonstrate their unique abilities on the ground.

**Second Saturday Birding Millville Plains,  
Saturday, April 11th @8:00am 'til noon**

Both birds and the spring vernal pool wildflower displays are on the menu for this half-day trip. We will look for Ferruginous Hawk, Merlin, Prairie Falcon, Shrikes, Say's Phoebe and other open country denizens. Bring a lunch. Meet trip leader, John Winchell, at the Kutras Park parking lot for carpooling.

**2020 Earth Day & Watershed Festival,  
Saturday, April 18th from 11am to 5pm**

At the city's celebration of the Earth and sustainable living, held at Redding City Hall and Sculpture Garden, Wintu Audubon will again offer a busy booth. We'll have bird and chapter information displays, quail-call making, and nest-box construction. Come enjoy! If you would like to help staff our booth, please contact Dan Greaney at 276-9693. For further information, check the Earth Day website: [www.wholeearthandwatershedfestival.org](http://www.wholeearthandwatershedfestival.org)

## TRIP REPORTS

**Beginner/Family Bird Walk at Turtle Bay,  
Saturday, January 4th**

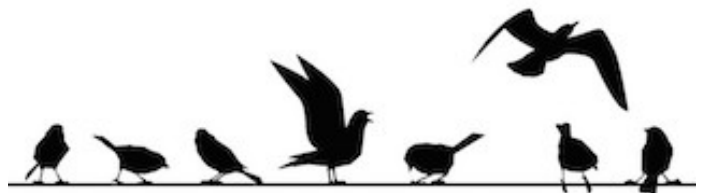
We had a crisp but clear January morning and our lively group of 5 adults & 2 youth spotted 26 different species. The Pond along the 44 Trail didn't disappoint & we saw groups of Gadwalls, Coots, Ring-necked Ducks and Mallards. A Belted Kingfisher made an appearance along with our resident pair of nesting Bald Eagles. As we circled around the Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary Trail we saw smaller birds including; Oak Titmouse, Black Phoebe, Northern Flicker, California Scrub-Jay, Nuttall's Woodpecker, White-crowned & Golden-crowned Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco, European Starling, & American Crow. We finished up our walk with sights of Canada Geese, Double-crested Cormorants, Great Egrets, Gulls, Turkey Vultures, Buffleheads & Common Goldeneyes along the river. - **Terri Lhuillier**



**Second Saturday Bird Walk - Sacramento  
River Trail, Saturday, January 11th**

Eight birders met at the Diestelhorst Bridge parking lot on a beautiful winter morning to get a little exercise and see a lot of birds. In the course of the 5.4 mile round trip around the quieter, but in my opinion, more beautiful section of the river trail, we had the opportunity to see the recovery of the area after the 2018 Carr Fire, the bird boxes that Audubon installed for cavity nesting birds after the loss of habitat from the fire, as well as 43 species of birds. Highlights for me were the abundant Kinglets, both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned, browsing along the trail, a close sighting of a Red-shouldered Hawk allowing all of us a good look, quick flybys of both a Merlin and a Sharp-shinned hawk, and the abundance of waterfowl along the river. We also finally identified a Herring Gull, after he patiently sat on a mid-river rock allowing us to scope him from both sides of the river. All together an enjoyable morning.

- **John Winchell**





**Wintu Audubon Outing to Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge, Saturday, January 25th**

The weather was a bit overcast but turned into a gorgeous day at the refuge as nine enthusiastic birders tallied 65 species. We began our adventure in the parking lot where we got good looks at several Marsh Wrens and a Cooper's Hawk. The visitor center gave up several sparrow species as well as American and Lesser Goldfinch. The most exciting observation of the day would have to have been the Merlin perched in a tree on the wetland trail, right behind the visitor center, plucking what appeared to be a Golden-crowned Sparrow! Thousands of geese, including Snow and Ross's, filled the impoundments, along with several species of duck, loads of White-faced Ibis and a large flock of American White Pelican. A total of nine Bald Eagles kept the waterfowl stirred up as three Great Horned Owls slept in secret locations. Even though we dipped on the usual Peregrine Falcon sighting, we did see a Loggerhead Shrike!

- Larry Jordan



**Beginner/Family Bird Walk at Turtle Bay, Saturday, February 1st**

Nine lucky birders strolled the Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary loop with pleasant weather and even more pleasant birding. Forty-two species observed included a Barrow's Goldeneye bank-side of the gravel bar below the Sundial Bridge and a small flock of Golden-crowned Kinglets a couple hundred yards downstream from there, just down from an overwintering Green Heron. Plenty of Common Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, and Common Mergansers dotted the river, along with a few Ring-necked Ducks and, in calmer pools, Mallards and four Gadwalls. A smattering of Tree Swallows swirled overhead, and the woodland sparrows and gleaners did not disappoint. Hard to ask for better morning!

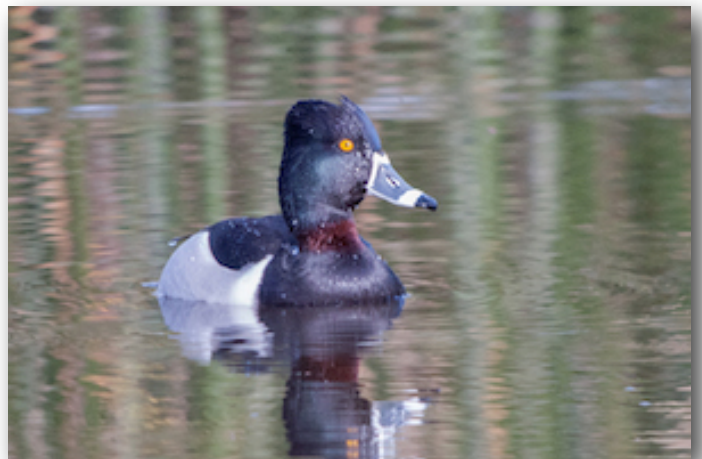
- Dan Greaney



**Second Saturday Bird Walk at Mary Lake, Saturday, February 8th**

Eight birders gathered on a cold, sunny morning to be greeted by a tree-full of Cedar Waxwings. Nice start to a day. Between Canada Geese honking, Scrub-jays squawking, Mockingbirds in song, and Red-winged Blackbirds calling out all sorts of sounds, it was not a quiet day at the lake. Egrets, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vultures and Cormorants were the larger birds around. We saw Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Song Sparrows, Golden-Crown Sparrows, Bewick's Wren, California and Spotted Towhees. Waterfowl galore: Gadwall, Mallard, American and Eurasian Widgeon, Hooded Merganser, Wood Ducks, Ruddy Ducks, one lonely Bufflehead, and lots of Coots of course. Enjoyed the companionship and the total of 42 species observed.

- Sally NeSmith



## Local Weekday Bird Walk at Lema Ranch, Thursday, February 20th

Eight sharp-eyed birders enjoyed finding 44 species during our stroll through Lema Ranch. A Hermit Thrush started us off, then Juncos, White-crowned Sparrows and an abundance of Greater White-fronted Geese and Canada Geese. Ring-necked Ducks, Bufflehead, American Wigeon, Ruddy Ducks, Mallards, Coots, and Pied-billed Grebes were in the ponds. Some Killdeer and the sought-after Common Gallinule were spotted. We were an enthusiastic group and enjoyed the sights and sounds.

- **Sally NeSmith**



## 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](mailto:shughess123@gmail.com) or 530-771-7938. -- Also watch for the order form, coming soon to [wintuaudubon.org](http://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 (March 11th, 7 p.m., One Safe Place, 2250 Benton Drive, Redding, Program on Northern Spotted Owls).

A special thank you to **Dawn Smith** for her generous donation of wood and the **California Heritage Youthbuild Academy** aka **CHYBA** for manufacturing our nest box kits so important for our kid's "Build Your Own Nest Box" activity at the **Whole Earth and Watershed Festival**





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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 March, 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>