



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

October 2022



Join us and Audubon California at our regular 2nd Wednesday meeting as they update us on the Working Lands program. This work encourages bird-friendly practices on farms, wetlands and other managed lands in the Central Valley. It is done by cultivating relationships with landowners, advocating for statewide policies that secure water and habitat for birds, and engaging our grassroots network in their communities. Our work provides protection for focal species like the Long-billed Curlew, Tricolored Blackbird, and Western Grebe. The presentation will also focus on what we know, and fear, about the impact of the mega-drought on birds, especially in the critically important Pacific Flyway as it passes through the Central Valley.

Wintu Audubon Society is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Audubon California "Working Lands" Program

Time: Oct 12, 2022 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84895170010>

Meeting ID: 848 9517 0010

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,84895170010# US (Tacoma)

+16699006833,,84895170010# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

Meeting ID: 848 9517 0010

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88469902069>

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,88469902069# US (San Jose)

+16694449171,,88469902069# US

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 669 444 9171 US

+1 719 359 4580 US

Meeting ID: 884 6990 2069

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88469902069>

Reminder: last year the chapter moved from subscription to a donation-based membership. At the beginning of each new operating year in the fall we encourage members to donate - suggested amount \$20-\$30 - either through our [PayPal link](#) or by check at Wintu Audubon, PO Box 994533, Redding, CA 96099-4533. Thank you so much! Check our [membership page](#) for a look at what your donation supports!

Shasta Environmental Alliance City Council Candidates Forum

Here's an opportunity to ask City Council candidates a question and show them that there is a constituency that values a healthy environment! A candidate's forum for the Redding City Council election focusing on environmental issues important to our local region will be held Monday, October 3, 2022, at 6 pm at the First United Methodist Church, 1825 East St., Redding. The forum is jointly Sponsored by Shasta Environmental Alliance, Shasta Group of Sierra Club, **Wintu Audubon Society**, North State Climate Action, and the Shasta Chapter of California Native Plant Society.

This forum will cover areas of concern important to our community and local environmental organizations including expanding and protecting Redding's tree canopy, adoption of a new Redding tree ordinance, climate change, Turtle Bay, protection of riparian areas and open spaces as well as written questions of concern from the audience. The forum will be video recorded and later placed on YouTube.

The supporting organizations will not be endorsing or supporting any candidates.

The forum will follow the format of the League of Women Voters with candidates giving opening statements followed by written questions submitted by the supporting groups and the audience and read by the moderator. Each candidate will be allowed to respond to all questions submitted.

The forum will be on the lower first floor of the Methodist Church at 6 pm. There is parking behind the church and on South Street. The public is invited. For more information call David Ledger at 530-355-8542 (cell) or at david@ecoshasta.org.

Wintu Audubon Is Now A Project NestWatch Chapter



In September, Wintu Audubon Society became the first Project NestWatch chapter in Northern California and only the third in all of California. NestWatch is a nationwide nest-monitoring program designed to track status and trends in the reproductive biology of birds. The project is coordinated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which is responsible for eBird, Merlin, Project FeederWatch, and many other endeavors to study birds. For the past five years, Wintu Audubon Society has maintained and monitored five nest box trails in Shasta County. Each trail has between ten and twenty nest boxes. We record all data, including nest building, number of eggs laid, eggs hatched, and fledglings on the Project NestWatch website. In 2022, we had 69 nest boxes, 93 nesting attempts, 434 eggs laid, 326 young, and 282 fledglings. Wintu Audubon encourages engagement in citizen science - participating in projects in which volunteers and scientists work together to answer real-world questions. Would you like to become a Project NestWatch citizen scientist by helping us monitor a nest box trail? Four of the five trails are on public property and need monitors: the North Sacramento River Trail off Harlan Drive, the South Sacramento River Trail off Middle Creek Road, the Lema Ranch Trail, and the Palo Cedro Community Park Trail. The volunteer commitment is approximately one morning per week from March through July, and we can provide substitutes if you are absent for medical or travel reasons. We provide hands-on training in the field and online in February 2023 to get ready for the next spring nesting season. Please contact Education Chair Tricia Ford at 530-246-4404 or triciathebirdnerd@gmail.com if you are interested in volunteering for the project. While you are contributing valuable information to science, you will have a front-row seat to nature's most heart-warming spring show: baby birds hatching, growing bigger day by day, and eventually launching into flight for the first time!

Northern Saw-whet Owl Program Set To Begin This Fall!



Shasta County's first Northern Saw-whet Owl citizen science program will begin this fall, with a special thanks to Wintu Audubon members and donors, who have made this program possible!

The Northern Saw-whet Owl (NSWO, *Aegolius acadicus*) is a common but poorly-understood North American owl. Researchers first learned this species exhibited migratory behavior in 1906 when many washed up on the shores of Lake Huron after an autumnal storm. It is now widely recognized that large numbers of Northern Saw-whet Owls move south from breeding areas each fall, traveling as far south as Alabama, Louisiana, and northern Florida. Since then, folks around North America have begun efforts to lift the veil on the movements of these adorable creatures. Thanks to long-term monitoring by Project Owlnet

cooperators, we have more knowledge about NSWO migratory behavior than ever before.

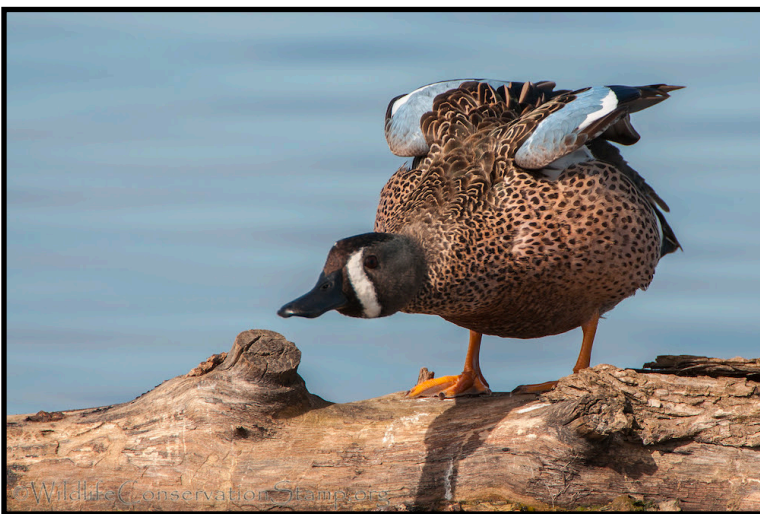
The Shasta County banding station will be the fourth NSWO station in the state of California. To obtain a clearer picture of NSWO population in the West, our results will be compared to those of other stations regionally. Capturing migrant owls largely depends on the use of mist nets and a mechanical audiolure to attract them out of the sky during their night-time migrational journeys. They are then 'processed', with the upmost of care, for specific data including sex, age and mass, and are given a band with an identification number. They are then safely released to complete their autumn migration, with hopes that another station in North America might encounter one of our banded owls, providing more details into the NSWO migration puzzle.

2022 NSWO banding will occur within Lassen National Park boundaries under an approved scientific collecting permit. Erika Iacona, NSWO program lead, is a USGS permitted owl bander. Erika has been banding birds since 2013, and NSWO since 2016, with the Altacal Audubon Society at the Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve in Forest Ranch. She is enthusiastic about sharing the experience of owl banding with Wintu Audubon members. Wintu Audubon members are encouraged to attend NSWO banding observational opportunities and educational events. More information on such occasions to follow. Hoot hoot!

SEPTEMBER ACTIVITIES

Note: All participants, ages 5 and older, must provide proof that they are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours and sign a waiver prior to all field trips.

World Migratory Bird Day Outing to Gray Lodge - October 8th @ 6:30 am



Gray Lodge's diversity and location along the Pacific Flyway make it a haven for wildlife. Surrounded by miles of rich agricultural lands, the approximately 9,100-acre area is managed for the wildlife that call Gray Lodge home for all or part of the year. Reflective ponds, grassy fields and wooded riparian areas provide food, water and shelter for more than 300 species of resident and migrant birds and mammals.

We will look for Sandhill Cranes in the flooded fields along the highway during the two hour drive to the refuge. Meet at the Kutas Park parking lot at 6:30am to carpool or at parking area 14 at the refuge at 8:30am. Bring a lunch and water as it looks to be in the high 80's by the afternoon. A [CDFW Lands Pass](#) must be in possession by each visitor who is 16 years of age or older, however, visitors who are in possession of a valid California hunting or fishing license in their name are exempt from this requirement. Lands passes may be [purchased on-line](#), by phone at (800) 565-1458, or in-person at locations [wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold](#). They are also available in the parking area at Gray Lodge for \$4.50.

Return of the Salmon Festival - October 15th @ 9:00 am



Join us as we celebrate the 28th annual Return of the Salmon Festival. This family friendly event is free to the public and will have over 50 booths with information and activities. View salmon spawning operations, a salmon aquarium, natural resource information booths and much more. Wintu Audubon will sponsor a booth with activities for all. Coleman Fish Hatchery is resuming its Return of the Salmon Festival and Wintu Audubon will once again offer a booth for the

birds, not to mention the festival goers! At our booth we hand out information on birds and the chapter, and help lucky children make quail-calls! **If you can spare a couple hours to help staff our booth, please contact Dan Greaney at greaneys@yahoo.com** . No expertise but friendliness required!

Nur Pon Open Space - October 20th @ 9:00 am



Join Wintu Audubon Society for a bird walk around Nur Pon on Thursday, October 20 at 9:00 am. Nur Pon, or “Salmon Run” in the Wintu language, was once known as Henderson Open Space before the City of Redding and numerous other agencies began a restoration project that established a side channel along the Sacramento River for salmon spawning. The

parkland has been cleared of debris, much of the non-native vegetation has been removed, the area fenced and secured, and more restoration work is underway.

Wintu Audubon Education Chair Tricia Ford will lead the easy walk of approximately 1.5 miles, taking two to three hours to identify the birds of river and oak woodland. Binoculars will be available for loan. Hiking boots are recommended for the river cobble. Bring water and a snack. Nur Pon is off Hartnell Avenue at the intersection of Parkview Avenue and Henderson Road on the east side of the river. Park behind the Cobblestone Shopping Center (once the site of Raley’s Supermarket) inside the wrought iron fence.

Birding Manzanita Lake - October 22nd @ 6:30 am

Let's take a short 2-mile hike around Manzanita Lake to enjoy the fresh air and fall colors. We'll look for the interesting variety of upland, forest and water



species that surround the lake. Carpools/Caravan leave Kutrass Lake parking lot at 6:30 am or meet at the Loomis Museum parking lot at 7:30 am. Wear good hiking boots and dress for changeable weather, bring snacks and lunch. Entrance fee is \$30 for a 7-day Vehicle Pass, available ahead of time on-line or at the park entrance. Annual Pass for

Whiskeytown National Recreation Area, America The Beautiful Pass, and Senior Pass are also valid for entrance.

TRIP REPORTS

Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on September 3rd



Two birders spent about three and a half hours scouring the wastewater treatment plant before the afternoon heat arrived. Even though the ponds were devoid of birds, 44 species showed their colors in other locations, along the tree lined perimeter of the ponds and in the river! Notable encounters were a pair of Phainopeplas, a few Yellow Warblers, and a male Black-throated Gray Warbler. We also

sighted a Pacific-slope Flycatcher, a Willow Flycatcher and a Western Wood-Pewee.

John Reginato River Access Trail on September 10th



Fall migration was on track as a group of three birders encountered numerous small flocks of Yellow Warblers along the Sacramento River. Several Orange-crowned Warblers were interspersed among the Yellows. A solitary Band-tailed Pigeon made a surprise appearance from one of the big river oaks. Tricia, Larry and Dawn spotted 31 species through the smoky haze of a hot September

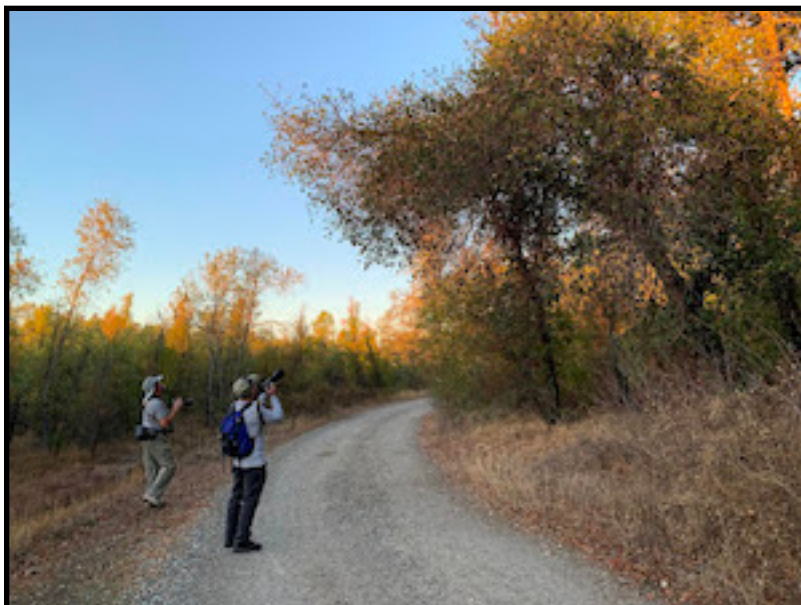
morning.

US Army Corps of Engineers, Buckhorn and Burris Creek Recreation Areas on September 17th



Five eager birders started their adventure at Black Butte Lake (Tehama County) on an early morning with clear skies and cool temperatures. The day's goal was to list observations within two eBird Hotspot locations, first at Buckhorn Recreation Area, then 5 miles to the south at Burris Creek Recreation Area. The day's total species observed was 48 which included: Clark's and Western Grebes, Greater White-fronted Geese, Least and Western Sandpipers, Caspian Terns, American Kestrel, Osprey, five woodpecker species: Lewis's, Acorn, Nuttall's, Downy, and Northern Flicker, and three warbler species: Orange-crowned, Yellow, and MacGillivray's.

Gold Dredge Clear Creek Outing on September 24th



Four birders enjoyed a crisp early autumn walk along Clear Creek on September 24, 2022 to kick off migration. We were treated in the parking lot to a couple of skeins of Greater White-fronted Geese high overhead heading south. A large group of Cedar Waxwings were hawking bugs over the creek along with a group of young and mature Phainopeplas. Warblers were lurking along the willows and oaks lining the creek represented by Yellow, Orange-crowned, Wilson's, Black-throated Gray and a Common Yellowthroat in the reeds next to the large steppingstone crossing. First of the year White-crowned Sparrows were sighted along with Fox, Song and Lincoln's. A total of 33 species were tallied.



If you haven't visited the website lately you may not realize that our past president, Dan Greaney, continues to write BirdWord articles every month, found on our [Blog page](#)! The articles are always interesting and informative. The current article is titled "Small Hawks Arriving for Winter"