



# ***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**



Scarlet Macaw photo by Judee Adams

Dear Larry, this month Judee Adams is presenting her incredible photos of her recent trip to Costa Rica. Judee first began watching birds with her mother at 6 years old in southern California. After she married her husband Bill, she transferred the bug to him. They were both teachers for 30 plus years and have lived in Redding since 1989. Bill and Judee have been to 9 different countries in Central and South America, four African countries, and Australia, watching birds, animals and butterflies. While Costa Rica is the size of West Virginia, there are over 900 species of birds found there, making it a bird watchers paradise!! It is also one of their favorite locations. (Note: there are only 1120 bird species found in the entire fifty United States)

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

Topic: The Birds of Costa Rica

Time: Dec 13, 2023 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88642816786>

Meeting ID: 886 4281 6786

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One tap mobile

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- +1 564 217 2000 US

Meeting ID: 886 4281 6786

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/u/kehnuRHQfR>

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

To show how much we appreciate our donors we want to recognize you in our monthly newsletter! These are our recent generous donors: Susan Salvesen, Lang Dayton, Jaclyn White, Larry Jordan, Stephanie Hughes - Thank You!

If you donate tomorrow on our Northstate Giving Tuesday page, you will be mentioned on next month's newsletter.

Donations can be made either through our [PayPal link](#) or by check at Wintu Audubon, PO Box 994533, Redding, CA 96099-4533

## DECEMBER 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.**

**Fall River Valley Birding - December 2nd @ 7:00 am**



This is a full day's trip. Always a high species destination, the Valley is a great place to see wintering raptors, various waterbirds and Sandhill Cranes. We will spend a few minutes at the Pit River Falls and Canyon Vista Point, and another quick stop at Fall River Mills Cemetery, on the way to Fall River Lake. Depending on how long we spend at the lake, we will have lunch or head up to Rat Farm Road and Big Lake for lunch. Meet at Kutras Park at **7:00 am sharp** to carpool. Be ready for a full day with a lunch and water. Dress for changing weather. East-county participants can join the group at either the Park and Ride at the intersection of Hwy 299 and 89 at 8 am or the Fall River Vista at 8:30 am. Rarities are possible! Contact Larry for more information at [webmaster@wintuadubon.org](mailto:webmaster@wintuadubon.org).

## Battle Creek Wildlife Area - December 11th @ 7:30 am



Meet your trip leader, Tim Kashuba, at the Battle Creek Wildlife Area parking lot and kiosk at 8:00 am. We'll hike the Oak Tree trail looking for wintering passerines, Picidae and raptors. We will then work our way upstream to the Coleman Fish Hatchery and bird the ponds looking for waterfowl, marsh and shorebirds and more raptors. We will set up a car shuttle to drive us back from the Hatchery to the Battle Creek parking lot.

Please note: A visit to the area requires the purchase of a CDFW Lands Pass. 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 online](#),

by phone at (800) 565-1458, or in-person at locations wherever hunting and fishing licenses are sold.

## Fall River CBC - December 16th @ All day event



We hope you can join us for our 41st count this year. Just as we did in previous years, all counters and section leaders will know their assigned section and their team members prior to count day. All counters will use their own car or be in a team car if arranged with their team leader ahead of time or on the count morning. Count tally forms and section information will be emailed to all counters and section leaders before the count. Please let us know by email at [boby@c-zone.net](mailto:boby@c-zone.net) if you plan to attend and also let us know what section or area you would like to count in. We will do our best to have you in your preferred section. As usual, weather dictates whether we have to pick a

later date but hopefully we will again be lucky counting early in the Christmas count period.

**Shingletown CBC - December 17th @ All day event**



Please contact us at [ShingletownCBC@gmail.com](mailto:ShingletownCBC@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining us for our first count. All details, assignments, maps, and instructions can be discussed over email. We will be using eBird for data collection, but let me know if you require other arrangements. Meet at 7AM in the parking lot on the SE corner of Black Butte Rd and HWY 44 (7527 Black Butte Rd, Shingletown, CA). Please let me know if you would like to do any early/late owling.

We have a group reservation at Little Wheels Restaurant at 6pm for anyone who wants to join after the count. Please RSVP for dinner by Dec 10th.

**Anderson CBC - December 23rd @ All day event**



2023 is the return of the Anderson CBC, after a three-year hiatus. This CBC is starting out with a new Compiler who made some small adjustments to make this more of a team effort. Anderson CBC circle sections are made up of seven sections, so the first thing we did was ask around to find any alumni Section Leaders if they were willing to partake in our restart. The response was great and we filled out 5 sections very quickly. We recruited two new Section Leaders and were off and running. We promoted the idea that each Section Leader should try to recruit help and select volunteers they could work with in the field. Something we did during the Covid years is the Sunrise Start. We will not be meeting in the traditional

way at Anderson River Park. The count window is 7am – 5pm and all section teams will begin with a Sunrise Start at their respective sections. We also promoted the use of eBird® in place of count sheets. This is a great tool I have seen done in other CBCs and I personally found it very effective. It can be challenging though because Audubon CBC Counts for the most part, is data collection of an entire 15-mile diameter circle. Whereas, eBird data collections must be maintained at a smaller scale of data collection, like a central location or possibly a road with limited miles of travel. We will of course still provide printable count sheets and adhere to the guidelines of Audubon's CBC and support the 124<sup>th</sup> annual count and maintain the data collection practices of eBird and Citizen Science. If anyone has any questions, the CBC Compiler email address is: [anderson.cbc23@gmail.com](mailto:anderson.cbc23@gmail.com) I will take names for a waitlist but I might not be able to guarantee any spots this year.

### Redding CBC - December 26th @ All day event



The Redding Christmas Bird Count is scheduled for December 26th, and it promises to be a fantastic event for bird enthusiasts and citizen scientists. Participants will be assigned specific sections to observe and record bird species throughout the day. After a day of birdwatching, there will be an evening compilation dinner held at a location to be determined, providing an excellent opportunity to share observations and socialize with fellow bird lovers. To get involved or learn more about this exciting event, please contact Randy Bush at [rbush10@hotmail.com](mailto:rbush10@hotmail.com). Join us in celebrating the

holiday season by contributing to our understanding of local bird populations and their conservation.

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### Northstate Giving This Tuesday!



Wintu Audubon Society will once again participate in Northstate Giving Tuesday. What is North State Giving Tuesday? North State Giving Tuesday is an online networking and giving event that provides nonprofit organizations the opportunity to gain exposure and start relationships with new donors, and for the people in Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama counties to come together to raise as much money as possible for participating organizations within a 14 -hour period. The effort is organized and implemented by the Community Foundation of the North State with presenting sponsorship provided by Columbia Bank. The online event takes place annually on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving from 6:00 AM PST to

8:00 PM PST. We are proud to be a non-profit organization serving birders in Shasta County! [Here is our Northstate Giving Tuesday page.](#)

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## **THE CONSERVATION CORNER**

### **from Bruce Webb, Conservation Chair**

#### **Fountain Wind Turbine Project Returns**

Wintu Audubon reviewed and commented on the Fountain Wind turbine power project near Round Mountain early in 2018, even before Shasta County began preparing an Environmental Impact Report. The Shasta County process ended with denial of Fountain Wind's permit application, and passage of a County ordinance prohibiting large scale wind turbine projects. The California Legislature subsequently passed a law (AB205) providing for an "Opt In" process whereby such large scale power projects could instead be approved by the California Energy Commission. The Fountain Wind developer has applied to build its project, and the CEC application process is starting now!

National Audubon and Audubon California have taken positions in general favor of wind power projects due to their advantages in combating global warming by replacing the use of fossil fuels. Our chapter Board supports Audubon California's position on wind power in principle, however, we nonetheless had a number of concerns about the project's impacts on birds, particularly bald eagle and other raptors. In addition, the mitigation scheme for potential impacts to these birds was flawed in several important ways.

On Tuesday, November 28, the CEC will hold its first hearing to solicit views on the scope and content of the environmental report they will now prepare for the project. The meeting will be held at the Gaia Hotel, from 2pm to 10pm. (Himalaya Ballroom, 4125 Riverside Place, Anderson, CA 96007.) Masks and social distancing are encouraged, but not required. You can also attend remotely by joining the ZOOM meeting at: <https://energy.zoom.us/j/88198540640?pwd=S2RtczRkdFZ0Vkd6aFU1dXRuamxYUT09> or login at <https://zoom.us/> and enter the Webinar ID 881 9854 0640 and passcode 260713 and follow all prompts. Written comments will be accepted by the CEC until December 4, 2023, although of course comments will again be sought when the new environmental report is issued sometime next year. Rest assured your chapter will be commenting both at this stage and likely at future stages of the environmental review process, so please stay tuned!"

#### **Update on the Redding Riverfront Specific Plan Coalition**

Wintu Audubon President Rebeca Ladrón de Guevara was appointed in September to the new Redding Riverfront Specific Plan Coalition, an advisory committee of the City of Redding providing input to the Specific Plan process. Rebeca provided extensive input during the four Coalition meetings in October and November, which concluded with the November 20 meeting. Although all of the issues Rebeca stressed have been explained to various City folks in previous letters and meetings, the Coalition forum provided an excellent opportunity to reiterate our position and make our concerns well known to staff and the consultant; those concerns include:

The City should establish early consultation with Dept of Fish and Wildlife on their recommendations for wildlife and riparian protection;

The need for scientifically designed riparian No-Disturbance buffers;

Improved trails, edge effects, increased human access, and new light and noise sources will all impact riparian areas;

The City should amend the consultant's scope of work to accommodate a thorough biological resource analysis of the existing riverfront;

The Specific Plan should also include: A review of special status species; a review of existing public riparian access points; and examine opportunities to restore the riparian zone where possible.

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## **Proposed Jenny Creek Development Threatens Birds**

Written by Tricia Ford, Education Chair of the Wintu Audubon Society

From tiny Anna's Hummingbirds to Turkey Vultures with six-foot wingspans, the Jenny Creek watershed in West Redding supports a wide range of bird life year round. On the November 8 walk sponsored by Shasta Environmental Alliance along the proposed trail, I identified 17 species of birds and created a list of them on eBird.org.

Following Jenny Creek through the Sunset Terrace neighborhood, I had a difficult time keeping my footing and watching birds at the same time. It was dangerous to take my eyes off the ground for most of the trip. One member of our group tripped and fell and needed to turn back. Although the proposed trail starts out on the fairly even ground of an old road near T.R.Woods Park, it quickly ascends into a steep and narrow canyon with rocky, uneven, and slippery surfaces.

It was hard to imagine how the proposed 12-foot, paved trail could be cut into the steep hillsides without destroying so much of the blue oak woodlands and the riparian areas lush with willows and berry bushes that this greenbelt offers. The only views that the trail provides are the vegetation of the canyon itself and the backyards of the residents on either side of the creek, creating a privacy issue for many homeowners.

As a thirty-year resident of Sunset Drive and avid birdwatcher, I can attest to the fact that the greenbelt supports a healthy year round population including, but not limited to, California Scrub Jay; Acorn, Nuttall's and Downy Woodpecker; Oak Titmouse; White-breasted Nuthatch; both the California and Spotted Towhee; Mourning and Eurasian Collared Dove; a breeding pair of Red-shouldered Hawk; Red-tailed Hawk; Turkey Vulture; Wild Turkey; Anna's Hummingbird; Western Bluebird; and Lesser Goldfinch.

Among the birds that spend just the winter months here in Redding, I found these migrants on our November 8 walk: White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrow; Ruby-crowned Kinglet; Dark-eyed Junco; Yellow-rumped Warbler; and Northern Flicker.

Constructing a wide, paved trail along Jenny Creek will undoubtedly be detrimental to not only the birds, but to all wildlife of the area by bulldozing a great deal of vegetation, creating soil erosion, noise, pollution, and the interruption of the migration of the wildlife found there. Additional public access to the greenbelt from the connection with the Sacramento River Trail via the Overhill Drive access point will also bring increased risk of fire, vandalism, and trespassing, and may be disruptive to birds and other wildlife from noise impacts, particularly during breeding season of the resident raptors.

In response to the proposed trail plan, a new nonprofit environmental group has been formed, the Friends of Jenny Creek. If you are interested in joining this group or receiving their emails and newsletter, please contact Marcia McGetrick-West at 530-246-0550 or by email at [friendsofjennycreek@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofjennycreek@gmail.com).

Zack Bonnin of the Redding Parks Department, project manager for the proposed trail, was contacted by Bruce Webb, Wintu Conservation Chair about the status of City approval and construction. A grant was awarded to the City to build the trail, but CEQA environmental review is pending and expected before the end of the year. Please be assured your chapter will be carefully reviewing the environmental documents and commenting as needed.

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## TRIP REPORTS

### Gray Lodge Wildlife Area on November 4th



Before reaching our destination, the group in our vehicle found over 500 Sandhill Cranes in the surrounding areas on the way to Gray Lodge Wildlife Area. Once we arrived, six excited birders spent three hours traversing the two mile Flyway Loop Trail spotting 58 species. Thousands of Snow, Ross's and Greater White-fronted Geese continuously rose into the skies creating incredible displays for all to see. There were large numbers of Black-necked Stilts and White-faced Ibis, plus we found the roosting Black-crowned Night Herons in the reeds on the north side of the permanent pond near the end of the trail.

After a quick lunch we found 39 species on the auto tour loop including a Eurasian Widgeon, Wilson's Snipe, Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk and a couple of Northern Harriers.

### Clover Creek Preserve on November 11th



The loud and kind of goofy whinnies of Soras hidden in the thick vegetation around the little lakes at Clover Creek Preserve drove ten birders a bit crazy on this pre-holiday outing. We regularly heard their two-noted ker-wee calls as well, but try as we might, we never got a look at them. Chatty but unseen Marsh Wrens played a similar game with us, but we did manage to spot Fox, Lincoln's, and Savannah Sparrows playing hide-and-seek in the reeds. The best find of the trip among the 41 species identified

was probably a lone Say's Phoebe fly-catching amidst a flock of Western Bluebirds. The runner-up may have been the 62 Cedar Waxwings resting in the birch trees of a home adjacent to the preserve.

## Grace & Nora Lakes Trip was cancelled because of rain on November 18th ...



However, our Field Trip Chair, Tim Kashuba, and Larry Jordan drove up to Shingletown the day after the rains and scared up 21 species around the two lakes. Hairy Woodpeckers made themselves readily known with their often heard pounding on the trees and Ruby-crowned Kinglets seemed to be everywhere. The best bird of the day was obviously the Varied Thrush Tim spotted in a nearby tree.

## Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary on November 25th



On a brisk November morning nine of us birded Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary and were greeted by the lovely diversity of late autumn. We counted a total of 59 species including a great view of the iconic Bald Eagles of Turtle Bay. The Sacramento river was home to a diversity of waterfowl including swaths of Bufflehead and Ring-necked Ducks, a good number of Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, and a few Hooded Mergansers, Wood Ducks, Green-winged Teals, and Lesser Scaup. In the trees along the river, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Cedar Waxwings, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Bushtits foraged, while White-crowned and Golden-crowned Sparrows were plentiful in the underbrush. Overall, Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary definitely didn't leave us disappointed!

## Announcing Our New Name



After much thoughtful conversation and consideration over this past year, the Board of Directors has concurred with the Chapter Name Committee to change the name of our conservation group from Wintu Audubon Society to Shasta Birding Society.

The new name, Shasta Birding Society, reflects where we are located and what we do, probably for most people better than the old name did. We will retain our long-standing associations by using the tagline A Wintu Country

Chapter of the National Audubon Society, which connects us to our original name and umbrella organization, as well as to this land and its indigenous peoples.

During this time of reexamination of the inequities still prevalent in much of American society, use of the name Audubon has generated much controversy in the birding world. John James Audubon may have been the first well-known bird artist of our country, but he was also an enslaver, racist, and defiler of indigenous gravesites.

The National Audubon Society recently debated changing its name but ultimately decided against it, feeling that the term "Audubon" was tightly entwined with bird conservation, and changing the name would cause confusion. Many local chapters felt differently and have decided to drop the name Audubon from their titles but maintain their connections with the umbrella organization. This was the conclusion reached by our local chapter.

Beginning in January 2024, the new name will be deployed on our website, newsletter, and publications. The graphics of our logo, featuring a female Belted Kingfisher, will remain the same.

# DEATH SPEAR



**Belted Kingfishers Build Nests Out of the Bones  
of their Prey**