



# ***CHIRP-N-CHATTER***

**The Newsletter of the Shasta Birding Society**

**Chapter of the National Audubon Society serving Shasta  
and eastern portions of Trinity County, California**

**February 2024**



This month we welcome Matt Allshouse who came to Audubon California from Wyoming and has been the Senior Conservation Ranching Program Manager for the state since September 2019. As a rangeland ecologist, he has 13 years of experience associated with land policy, management, and science. Previously, Matt served as Ranch Manager for Antelope Springs Land and Cattle in Wyoming, as a Biologist for the Peregrine Fund in Belize and Guatemala directing conservation field research, and as Ecologist with the consulting firm Trihydro Corporation focusing on restoration ecology. Matt holds a dual Bachelor's degree in Environment and Natural Resources, and Rangeland Ecology and Watershed Management from University of Wyoming.

Matt will present Audubon's Conservation Ranching Program which explains how bird conservation is inextricably linked to management practices on millions of acres of rangelands, the vast majority of which are privately owned. Significant rangeland habitat enhancement can only be achieved through cooperative approaches that work with ranchers that live and work on these lands. Audubon's Conservation Ranching Program uses an innovative, market-based approach to connect conservation-conscious consumers to ranchers who employ bird-friendly management practices in raising their livestock. The program addresses loss in ecosystem function and health through the conservation of focal bird species and the habitat they depend upon. It incentivizes bird-friendly livestock management practices, emphasizing regenerative grazing approaches that improve soil health,

diversify habitat structure, and ensure environmental sustainability that benefits pollinators and other grassland wildlife.

Shasta Birding Society is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Audubon Conservation Ranching Program

Time: Feb 14, 2024 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87589708925>

Meeting ID: 875 8970 8925

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One tap mobile

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• +1 309 205 3325 US

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Meeting ID: 875 8970 8925

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87589708925>

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## 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: Brandilee Jones, NorthState Giving, Jessica Daskal, Harvey and Jeanette Carroll, and Connie Word - Thank You!

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



## FEBRUARY 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.**

### Payne's Creek Wetlands - Saturday, February 10th @ 7:30 am



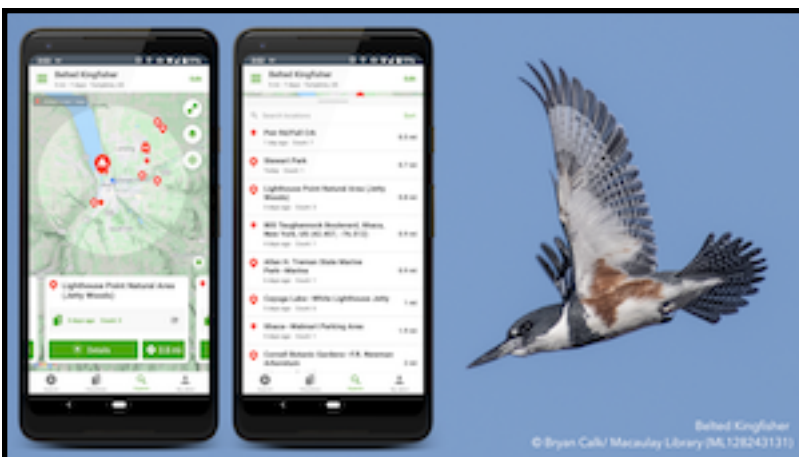
This is a no fee area and a very active hotspot this time of the year, especially with all the recent weather events we have had in 2023 so far. We are planning to meet at the Bass Pond Parking Lot at, 22459 Bend Ferry Rd, Red Bluff, CA 96080, at the main entrances to the Wetlands.

Link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/qQ89aRHfRg7gbHhDA> This half-day event should yield many

varieties of waterbirds, raptors,

woodpeckers, and many songbirds in this unique and open wetlands area. From the parking lot we will start with a walk on a two-mile loop through several ponds to the south side of the road. If time permits, we will take a short drive to Payne's Creek Crossing to round out our journey. Please contact Dan Bye, by text/cell 530 228 9373 or email [danbye56@gmail.com](mailto:danbye56@gmail.com) for more information.

### Birding Basics at Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary - February 15th @ 9:30 to 11:30



Join us for a new series of Thursday bird walks with Tricia Ford of the Shasta Birding Society. Every walk will feature a discussion of a birding skill and/or a hot topic in the world of birding. Beginning birdwatchers are especially encouraged to join us in learning to identify the large variety of avian life in the area.

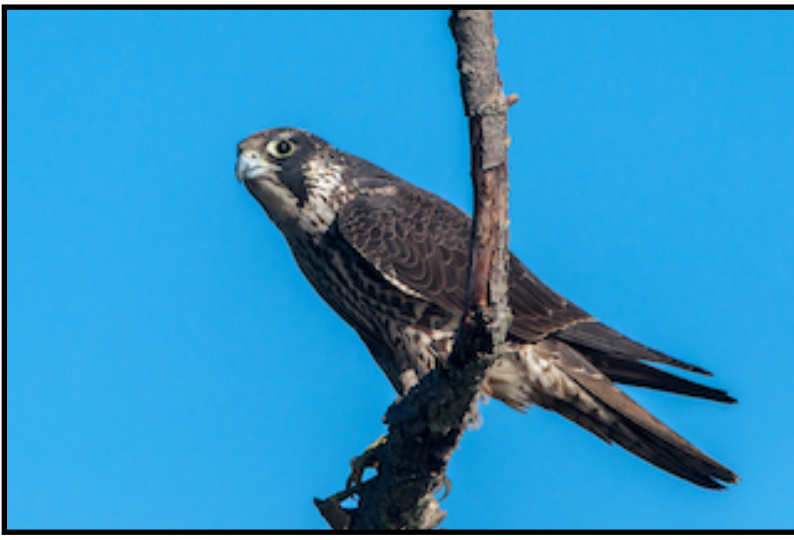
The February 15th walk will

discuss how and why to use eBird, a free app for your cell phone that can keep track of all your birding adventures and allow you to participate in community science. We will meet each month for a leisurely two-hour stroll along the Sacramento River Trail. Meet at the Turtle Bay Redding Boat Launch, located behind the Redding Civic Auditorium (Map to meeting place: <https://shorturl.at/twRVX>). Join us for a leisurely two-hour stroll on both paved and gravel trails. Bathrooms can be found at three locations along the way.

[triciathebirdnerd@gmail.com](mailto:triciathebirdnerd@gmail.com) for more info.

### Iron Canyon Outing - Saturday, February 17th @ 7:15 am

Join us for a 3.5-mile easy birding hike at the Iron Canyon trail on the Sacramento River Bend in northern Tehama County. The trail is on the Tuscan Formation, a vast and ancient volcanic flow that carried volcanic rocks and boulders from the Cascade Mountains down toward the northeastern part of the



Central Valley. Due to the mixture of rocky grasslands, oak and juniper woodlands, and high canyon cliffs overlooking the Sacramento Valley and the surrounding mountain ranges, the landscape is home to a fascinating array of birds. We may expect to see any or all of 4 falcon species: Peregrine Falcon, Prairie Falcon, Merlin, and American Kestrel. Other species likely to be encountered are Lewis's and

Acorn Woodpecker, Western Meadowlark, Horned Lark, Rock Wren, American Pipit, Western or Mountain Bluebird, Bald or Golden Eagle. Stay a bit longer after the hike, and we will bird at Hog Lake for waterfowl, just a 2-minute drive up the road. Meet at the Iron Canyon trailhead at 7:15 am. The hike is easy but due to the rocky terrain, please wear sturdy hiking shoes. GoogleMaps link: <https://rb.gy/c7jhz3> Directions from Red Bluff: From Highway 99, take Highway 36 East toward Susanville/Lassen Volcanic National Park. Continue for 5.2 miles until you reach the gravel parking lot on the left.

### **Lema Ranch Bird Walk - Saturday, February 24th @ 8:00 am**



The wide-open vistas, grassy fields, large ponds and oak woodlands of Lema Ranch offer quite a variety of bird species. Winter waterfowl, woodpeckers and sparrows are a particular treat this time of year and if we're lucky, we might spot a Canvasback or a Merlin! Meet at 8:00 am at Gate 10 located at the end of Lema Road, just past the maintenance facility. Park on the right-hand side of the road by the maintenance facility. We will walk the paved trails to view all five ponds. There is a bathroom

located near Gate 10. Rain cancels the outing. Contact Larry Jordan at [webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org](mailto:webmaster@shastabirdingsociety.org) for more information.





## GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT - FEBRUARY 16th - 19th

Each February, for four days, the world comes together for the love of birds. Over these four days we invite people to spend time in their favorite places watching and counting as many birds as they can find and reporting them to us. These observations help scientists better understand global bird populations before one of their annual migrations. Whether you count one bird or hundreds, participating is easy and fun for all ages! Let birds bring you closer to nature and to each other by spending four days in February with us! Participating is easy, fun to do alone or with others, and **can be done anywhere** you find birds. You can find all the information on the Great Backyard Bird Count at <https://www.birdcount.org/about/>

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### **THE CONSERVATION CORNER** **from Bruce Webb, Conservation Chair**

City of Redding 2045 General Plan

The Redding Planning Commission is finalizing its review of the draft General Plan Update which will guide growth to the year 2045. The stakes are high as revisions to the Natural Resources Element hold the potential to aid in conserving oak woodlands and bird and wildlife habitats throughout the City's Sphere of Influence, including infill, undeveloped and open space areas. Shasta Birding Society has filed several written and verbal comments with the Commission, urging them to put stronger language into protecting woodland, riparian and open space habitats, to guide future decisionmakers to solutions which help preserve Redding's unique wildlife resources. The result is a mixed bag: my review of the draft presently in circulation reveals a number of revisions to the Natural Resources element were made in apparent response, while many chances to tighten the language were inexplicably passed over. For example, "Goal NR7A – Strive to maintain, preserve, and enhance the habitat linkages/wildlife corridors...created by the open-space ("Greenway") network..." Has been revised to remove "Strive to". THIS IS A POSITIVE CHANGE. Yet the following "Goal NR7C – Explore options to prevent unlawful uses and damage to public and private open space areas and ensure habitat values are maintained and/or enhanced." should have been strengthened by simply removing "Explore options to". Using this permissive, non-obligatory language makes it too easy for decision-makers to allow future development which harms our wildlife just because appropriate protection may be inconvenient or more expensive. It will also make environmental review under CEQA of future development decisions more difficult, because the proposed General Plan language will not insure that decisions consistent with the Plan won't have impacts on wildlife. I urge you to make the Commission aware of your concerns. It's not too late to tell them to strengthen ALL the goals and policies so we can improve the City's stewardship of its bird and wildlife resources. You can read the current draft Plan at

[https://www.cityofredding.gov/government/departments/development\\_services/planning/draftgeneralplan.php](https://www.cityofredding.gov/government/departments/development_services/planning/draftgeneralplan.php)

Please comment to the Commission by sending your email message to [gpccomments@cityofredding.org](mailto:gpccomments@cityofredding.org)



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events & birding information.  
Visit our website  
[shastabirdingsociety.org](http://shastabirdingsociety.org)**

# TRIP REPORTS

## Kum Bay Xerel on January 7th



A very cool and frosty January morning started off the 2024 Shasta Birding Society's new year. David Garza lead a warmly dressed group of 11 birders along the Sacramento River on the City of Redding Kum Bay Xerel Trail and adjoining Bureau of Land Management property. A total of 62 species were tallied with Common Goldeneyes, Ring-billed Gulls and Ring-necked Ducks being the highest in number.

Raptors were well represented despite the cold with Golden and Bald Eagles, Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned Hawks and an Osprey.

## Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on January 14th



A cold rainy Saturday moved our January visit to the City of Redding Clear Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant grounds to an overcast Sunday. A group of six birders were rewarded with a great variety of 68 species over the 4+ hour, 2.5 mile walk. American Robins lead the tally with over 500 individuals sighted, many feasting on the this season's plentiful Toyon berries. Large flyovers of Snow and Greater White-fronted geese filled the foggy skies above while large groups of Common Goldeneyes, Ring-necked Ducks and Mallards in the ponds and on the

Sacramento River. A lone male Cinnamon Teal was one of the more interesting birds seen, floating on one of the ponds. Shorebirds were sparse despite lots of good habitat in the ponds from the recent rains. Raptors were well represented despite the overcast skies with Bald Eagles, Red-tailed, Cooper's, and Red-shouldered Hawks, a Merlin and a pair of American Kestrels.





## Martin Luther King Day on January 15th



The Shasta Birding Society joined in the celebration at Sequoia Middle School by showing people how to download and use Merlin on their cell phones, how to use binoculars and bird guides, giving out information about our organization and displaying an amazing variety of songbird nests. Tricia and Stephanie were impressed with the moving program in the auditorium and the support and participation by the Redding community.

## Birding Basics at Turtle Bay Bird Sanctuary on January 18th



The natural area around the Sundial Bridge is a great place to easily see a wide variety of birds. Our beginning bird watchers marveled at the 36 species that we saw in just two hours and only a mile of walking! We were scolded by Oak Titmice, mobbed by Yellow-billed Magpies, and stared at very sternly by a Red-tailed Hawk perched overhead. Trip leader Tricia Ford even found a lifer – a White-throated Sparrow, which had eluded her

for years. Participants are looking forward to watching the birds change with the seasons as this trip will continue every month in the same location.

## Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge on January 27th



Eleven enthusiastic birders found 73 species on a gorgeous day at Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge. We began birding the “Wetlands Walk” adjacent to the yet unopened new visitor center, spotting all three of our expected falcons, American Kestrel, Merlin and Peregrine Falcon. The sound of hundreds of Red-winged Blackbirds filled the air as a dozen Wilson’s Snipe flew over the marsh. Questionably, the best bird on the walk was a Loggerhead Shrike. The

auto route gave up 60 species, including thousands of geese (including Cackling Geese), and ducks including all three “Teals”, Long-billed Curlew, White-faced Ibis, a pair of Great Horned Owls perched next to each other, and eight Bald Eagles! Another Peregrine Falcon, a Red-shouldered Hawk, several Red-tailed Hawks, and Northern Harriers rounding out the raptors.