May Activities

General Meeting
Tuesday, May 13 @ 7:00 pm
The Wildlife of Costa Rica
On a family trip to Costa Rica, a country smaller than Lake Michigan, Ken Bachman saw 113 species of the 900 species of birds that live there. That's despite the fact that only one day was specifically dedicated to birding. Ninety-four were life birds! During a sightseeing expedition on the Bebedera River in Palo Verde National Park, he and his family saw monkeys, crocodiles, bats, iguanas and, of course, birds. Ken is a long-time Audubon member, ardent birder and great story teller. You won't want to miss his presentation on a beautiful country with beautiful birds and beautiful people.

Field Trips

Our Youth/Beginner Bird Walks will continue through the spring. Bring your family and friends to the Turtle Bay Monolith on the 2nd Saturday of each month, 9-11 am. Audubon can provide binoculars and field guides. Call Dan Greaney, 276-9693 with questions or for more information.

Bear Creek Watershed Outing and Bird Survey--
Saturday May 3rd @ 7:30 am
A rare chance to bird on private property! Wintu Audubon President Esther Cox belongs to this watershed organization and has interested property owners in learning the bird species that live on their spreads. We will visit several of them. Meet at the Redding Civic Auditorium to carpool at 7:30 am or join Esther at the Share-A-Ride parking lot at the intersection of Hwy.44 and Black Butte Road at 8:00 am. This will be a full day trip, so bring a lunch and water.

General 2nd Saturday Bird Walk---May 10 @ 8:00 am
The campus and farmlands of Shasta College offer a wide variety of habitats to explore for migrating and summer resident passerines. These habitats include oak studded lawns, a wastewater treatment pond, riparian woodlands along Stillwater Creek, and agricultural fields. Meet in Shasta College's north parking lot for this ½ day trip that is open-to-the-public. Connie Word and Pablo Herrera will lead.

Local Weekday Bird Walk---Battle Creek State Wildlife Area, Thursday, May 15, @ 8:00 am
The California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife has restored riparian habitat along Battle Creek and maintains trails in this wildlife area adjacent to the Coleman National Fish Hatchery. A trail runs along Battle Creek to ponds and surrounding marsh all the way to the Hatchery. During this 1/2-day trip we expect to see a good variety of summer resident passerines, nesting Bald Eagles, and rails (heard only probably). Assemble in the parking lot on the south side of the Redding Convention Center. Wear sturdy shoes. Trails are brushed for the most part but pocket gophers have made the ground uneven. Ken Bachman will lead.
June Activities

General Meeting
Annual Picnic—Tuesday, June 10 @ 6:00 pm
As has been our custom, the last general meeting before our summer meeting hiatus will be a bring-your-own picnic at the Camden House (Tower House) at Whiskeytown National Recreation Area. We will enjoy good birding and good fellowship in this lovely setting. A major attraction of birding is the unexpected and last year’s picnic was no exception. Darlene Horn spotted an Indigo Bunting on the loop trail after the picnic! The parking lot for the Camden House is on the left side of Hwy. 299W just before the turnoff to French Gulch. Some members may wish to carpool or ride with others who have a seasonal or permanent pass for Whiskeytown by assembling in the parking lot of Tops Market on Eureka Way in Redding at 6:00 pm.

Camp-out at Lassen Volcanic National Park—Friday, Saturday & Sunday, June 27-29.
We have enjoyed the birding and camping at the Lost Creek Group Campground over the years, so we are scheduling this event again this year. Group Camp Site #5 has been reserved for the nights of Friday, June 27 and Saturday, June 28. This year the park road should be free of snow by late June and it should be ideal for observing nesting birds. Last year we were a month later and nesting season was mostly over. We are again inviting the Redwood Region Audubon Society and Altacal Audubon Society to join us. Folks can either camp at Lost Creek or drive up for either or both Saturday and Sunday. Campers can arrive at the campground at a time of their choosing on Friday afternoon. Saturday daytrippers should meet at the Redding Civic Auditorium (Convention Center) at 8:00 am Saturday morning to car pool. We will bird Manzanita Lake and vicinity on Saturday morning. The rest of the itinerary is open and will depend on the interests of the participants. Daytrippers for Sunday, June 28, will meet at the campground at 9:00 am. Lassen Creek has primitive facilities--pit toilets and no electricity, but potable water is available. Contact Bill Oliver (Ph. 941-7741 or email wволiver9@gmail.com) for other particulars.

Please Note: Wintu Audubon Society assumes no responsibility for injuries, personal or otherwise, incurred while attending society-sponsored activities and will not be held liable for accidents. You attend at your own risk. A responsible adult must accompany minors on all outings. Rain cancels all activities except Christmas Bird Counts.

Trip Reports

Youth/Beginners Bird Walks
March 8---A mild spring day treated fourteen youths and ten adults to a wide variety of birds—and much of it tuned to the season: On the water a handful of duck species, dabblers and divers, mostly in pairs; In the trees a pair of downy woodpeckers; Overhead the tree swallows, patrolling over the cottonwoods that will likely hold their nests. And nests! A bushtit flew by carrying fluff. We were unable to track down its nest. Not far from incubating Mama Eagle, but much nearer our path (thanks to the Intermediate group for spotting and to Frank Sanderson for scouting) an Anna’s Hummingbird nest, where Mama was busy fetching and forming her out-in-the-open-but-nearly-invisible home. What a treat! By their lonesome were a Great Blue Heron, a Great Egret, and a California Towhee. There is more spring to come.

April 12---The season has changed: the temperature, the birds, and the participants. No youth made it out on their first day of spring break, so just three veterans of the walk travelled the Monolith/Sundial loop. They found 35 species, including three late Common Goldeneyes and plenty of nesting arrivals. Swallows dominated the air. Cliff Swallows both swooshed about their dwindled neighborhood at the Monolith and mobbed the Sundial Bridge in a swirling flock that gathered mud and dabbed up their nests in ragtag unison. Tree swallows soared over and through the cottonwoods, and it seemed every snag was crowned by a blue and white male while his mate gathered old grass into the hole just below him. A couple Northern Rough-winged Swallows joined the Tree Swallows skimming over the water below the bridge.
Other spring arrivals included an Ash-throated Flycatcher and a Northern Oriole, heard but not seen. Other highlights included a feeding at a Bushtit nest and the music of Bewick’s wrens, Song Sparrows, White-breasted Nuthatches, Oak Titmice, Greater Yellowlegs, Yellow-rumped Warblers, and host of other cries and murmurings.

Clover Creek Preserve Outing, March 20
Seven (later joined by an 8th) birders assembled in the Clover Creek parking lot for a morning of birding under clear skies and gradually warming weather. Outstanding sightings included a White-tailed Kite seen several times – perched, flying around and hovering. The open space specialists were there: Western Meadowlark, Western Bluebird and Killdeer. A falcon zinged by overhead – consensus was that it was a Merlin. Also of note were a Greater Yellowlegs, several singing Marsh Wrens, Lark Sparrows, Great-tailed Grackles and Wilson’s Snipe. In all, we saw 43 species.

Clear Creek Waste Water Treatment Ponds, March 29
You missed a great birding trip by being intimidated by the recent rains. It never rained a drop. In fact, the sun shown weakly by late morning. Four birders weren't intimidated and witnessed the greatest concentration of waterfowl I had have ever seen on the treatment ponds reports Bill Oliver---at least 500 individuals of 19 species!! The most prevalent species was Northern Shoveler. The highlights were two pair of Blue-winged Teal, a small group of American Avocets, a large flock (about 30) of Greater Yellowlegs, a bright male Common Yellowthroat, and a FOS, for most, a Bullock's Oriole.

Dye Creek Preserve Outing, April 19
Gray Davis/Dye Creek Preserve is a 37,540-acre preserve located in the foothills of Mount Lassen. The landscape is dissected dramatically by Dye Creek Canyon with its vertical cliffs, clear-water creek, and diverse riparian forests. On this pleasant April day, eleven birders traversed this gorgeous canyon to the cave at Camp Seco. They found 60 cooperative species of birds to enjoy with their birding companions. Another 17 species were observed between the preserve and Cone Grove. A couple of highlights were the flocks of Tricolored Blackbirds seen and heard as they foraged in the fields and flew into a local pond near the entrance to the preserve, and the Canyon Wren we found singing from the top of the canyon wall.

The full trip report http://www.wintuaudubon.org/about-us/trip-reports/, as well as a calendar of events and our newsletter can be seen on Wintu Audubon's website: http://www.wintuaudubon.org/. The current featured video is of a Canyon Wren singing, similar to what our group observed yesterday.

Wintu Audubon Logo T-shirts Available!

Our new Wintu Audubon logo T-shirts are now available in three colors, stone blue, serene green, and desert sand, in sizes small to XX-large. You can order our T-shirts on our website (www.WintuAudubon.org) by clicking on the "shirts" tab on the navigation bar at the top of the page, or better yet, save 6 bucks and pick one up at the next Wintu Audubon general meeting held on the second Tuesday of the month, September through May.
Mountain Bird Festival

May 30th, May 31st, and June 1st, Ashland, Oregon

The Mountain Bird Festival offers guided bird walks, keynote presentations, fine art galleries, cocktail parties, music, local foods, and a feel-good community atmosphere. We will have half-day and full day field trips both Saturday and Sunday (specialty mountain bird species are listed below). For non-birders Ashland provides a variety of activities. There are over a dozen boutique wineries within a half hour’s drive. The downtown has many interesting shops and galleries. There are brewpubs, book stores, coffee shops, boutiques, movie theatres and a variety of specialty shops. Also, Ashland is home to the widely acclaimed Oregon Shakespeare Festival with afternoon and evening plays all three days of the festival. Be sure and get your tickets well in advance.

Some of our target birds are: Mountain Quail, nesting Sandhill Cranes, Ferruginous Hawk, Swainson’s Hawk, dancing Western and Clark’s Grebes, Black Terns, Great Gray Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Vaux’s Swift, Calliope Hummingbird, Prairie Falcon, Lewis’s Woodpecker, Williamson’s Sapsucker, White-headed Woodpecker, Hammond’s Flycatcher, Dusky Flycatcher, Cassin’s Vireo, Mountain Chickadee, Townsend’s Solitaire, Mountain Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Hermit Warbler, MacGillivray’s Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Green-tailed Towhee, Vesper Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Lazuli Bunting.